

Conflict Resolution in the Middle East. Is „Give War a Chance” Needed to Avoid Premature Peacekeeping?

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Abstract: The Middle East remains a region marked by a deeply entrenched web of conflicts shaped by historical grievances, geopolitical rivalries, and intricate socio-cultural dynamics. Over the past decades, a range of political, diplomatic, and academic initiatives have sought to address these challenges through various conflict resolution mechanisms. Despite these efforts, durable solutions have often proven elusive, with many interventions yielding limited or inconclusive outcomes. In this context, the present research critically examines the applicability of Edward Luttwak’s 1999 controversial proposition to “give war a chance” as a means to avoid premature peacekeeping. Through a comprehensive analysis of the Israeli-Arab conflict, from its roots in the late 19th century to the ongoing Gaza War in 2025, this article challenges the theoretical and practical relevance of Luttwak’s framework. While the notion may resonate with realist or *realpolitik* logic under certain conditions, it ultimately offers a reductive and insufficient approach to understanding conflict dynamics in the Middle East. By underestimating the complexity and interconnected nature of contemporary warfare and by overstating the capacity of violence to produce sustainable political outcomes, Luttwak’s thesis neglects the deeper structural and societal dimensions of protracted conflicts. Furthermore, it embodies a pessimistic worldview that risks marginalizing the potential for diplomacy, coexistence, and regional development. By integrating ideas from political science, international relations, and peace studies, the article argues that sustainable peace in the Middle East necessitates a more inclusive and multidimensional approach, one that extends beyond military solutions to encompass reconciliation, inclusive peacebuilding, and cooperation.

Keywords: Middle East; conflict resolution; war; peacekeeping; Israel; Palestine.

Introduction. Conventional and alternative mechanisms of conflict resolution

Conflict resolution in the Middle East has always been a complex and multifaceted issue in both diplomatic and academic fields, as the region is well-known for a long history of discord and tensions provoked by ongoing territorial disputes, religious differences, ethnic rivalries, ideological struggles, access to vital resources, and geopolitical competition (Bregman, 2017, pp. 25-31). In these murky circumstances, as Ahrari (2016, pp. 1-20) demonstrates, efforts to resolve conflicts in the region have been forever challenging due to the deep-seated grievances and competing interests between local actors, as well as the numerous external interventions involved. However, especially after the Second World War, several approaches and mechanisms have been employed by politicians, statesmen, and researchers in attempts to address and mitigate different conflicts and crises in the Middle East, with varying degrees of success.

In theory, Rasmussen and Oakley (1992, p. 6) acknowledge that conflict resolution thinkers have become entangled in two major debates: either a comparison between realism and idealism or the role of quantitative analysis. So, it comes down to either

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“wars begin in the minds of men” or, as a result of structural causes, conflict occurs in international relations. The solutions are calibrated according to the addressed optics.

In practice, Crocker (2022, pp. 240-255) explains how diplomatic engagement and peace talks have been a central approach to conflict resolution in the Middle East over the last few decades. These negotiations, which often do not involve “sweet talk,” encourage direct contact between conflicting parties or mediated discussions facilitated by third-party mediators, such as international organizations, neighboring states, or major global powers. Beyond classic negotiating procedures, which are a complex process that sometimes involves exerting pressure, raising uncomfortable questions, probing assumptions, or exploring sensitive possibilities, diplomacy can also be supported by coercive measures, such as binding deterrence, sanctions, vetoes, or offers of assistance and support. Some examples include the Oslo Accords between Israelis and Palestinians, the Camp David Accords between Israel and Egypt, and various rounds of talks aimed at resolving the Syrian civil war and the Yemeni crisis.

Furthermore, as Yassine-Hamdan and Pearson (2014, pp. 185-210) explain at length in their study, international mediation efforts have played a crucial role in facilitating peace processes and negotiations in the Middle East. Mediators, including the United Nations, the United States, the European Union, and regional organizations such as the Arab League, have been extensively involved in mediating conflicts and brokering peace agreements in the region. These efforts often involve shuttle diplomacy, confidence-building measures, and the drafting of peace proposals to bridge gaps between conflicting parties. However, as Crocker (2022, p. 243) argues in the case of UN-backed mediators, being representatives of a divided Security Council, these envoys often face an additional problem: an apolitically fragmented Middle East. Thus, such diplomatic incoherence may impact the prospects for building leverage for effective mediation, and crises can deepen.

When established courses of action fail, recourse is taken to Track II diplomacy, a term coined recently by Joseph Montville, an American Foreign Service officer (Davidson & Montville, 1981). These models, outside of the official realm as Jones (2015, pp. 7-31) confirms, involve unofficial, informal channels of dialogue and engagement between non-governmental actors, including civil society organizations, academics, religious leaders, and grassroots activists, aimed at fostering understanding, trust, and cooperation between conflicting parties. Track II initiatives complement official diplomatic efforts and can help build momentum for peace processes by addressing underlying grievances and promoting people-to-people dialogue (Kaye, 2007, pp. 5-8).

Furthermore, regional cooperation and dialogue also played some role in conflict resolution in this region. Thus, various regional cooperation initiatives and dialogue platforms have been established in the Middle East to address common challenges, promote confidence-building measures, and enhance regional security. Notwithstanding, as Debre shows (2021, pp. 4-6), organizations like the League of Arab States (*LAS*), Gulf Cooperation Council (*GCC*), and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (*OIC*) did not yield the best results in terms of diplomatic engagement, conflict prevention, and crisis management among member states. Unresolved conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa testify to their limited success. Thus, according to Aarts (1999), the Middle East has often been characterized as a “region without regionalism” due to the perceived weakness of its prominent regional organizations.

As a means of resolution, it is worth noting that various conflict resolution mechanisms have been employed in the Middle East to manage and mitigate conflicts, including ceasefire agreements, peacekeeping operations, and international sanctions. Naturally, these mechanisms aim to reduce violence, protect civilians, and create conditions for political dialogue and reconciliation (Braithwaite, 2023, pp. 41-53).

However, despite these complex efforts, conflict resolution in the Middle East remains a daunting and sometimes Sisyphean task, as many conflicts persist and new challenges emerge over time.

As this article is being written, the October 7, 2023, war in Gaza has already been ongoing for almost two years. Provoked by Hamas' "Al-Aqsa Flood" rocket attack, terrorist infiltration, and hostage-taking, the war resulted in tremendous human losses, outright destruction, and unimaginable tragedies. Incidentally, in a spillover register, all of the Middle East has been plunged into a dangerous escalation, from clashes between the IDF and Hezbollah, Houthi naval attacks in the Red Sea, and the strikes on Israel; the involvement of Iranian-affiliated armed groups from Syria and Iraq; the unprecedented Iranian-Israeli direct strikes; and the vast socio-political and security implications for the West Bank, Egypt, and Jordan. Nevertheless, this conflict has again highlighted the fragility of peace in this region, marked by historical and ongoing disputes and cyclical instability, with dire consequences and setbacks on the global stage.

As the conflict continues, neither Israel's military incursions nor the relentless diplomatic efforts by the Arab, Western, or international community have succeeded in achieving an enduring ceasefire and restoring regional stability. For that matter, it is worth noting that in recent years, the region has been on a serious track toward diplomacy, de-escalation, and normalization. Only in the last 3-4 years have we witnessed the Abrahamic Accords between Israel and some Arab states, the ending of the internal strife between GCC members, the slow rapprochement between Turkey and key Gulf actors, the important Saudi-Iranian agreement, as well as the readmission of Syria into the Arab League and the commitment of the new interim authorities in Damascus to an inclusive transition. It finally seemed that regional actors would incline toward peace, integration, and cooperation.

Nevertheless, besides still some persistent crises, tumultuous proxy conflicts, arms and drug trafficking, religious extremism, and strong rivalries between different states, the prolonging of the crisis in Gaza can lead to a rapid deterioration of regional stability and security. We are talking about the resurgence of the idea of a preemptive strike on Iranian nuclear facilities, the uncertainty regarding the Syrian file, and the future status of Gaza and the West Bank.

On the matter, it's worth pointing out that the Arab-Israeli conflict, ideologically originating in the late 19th century with its first war in 1948, remains the most complex and protracted issue in the Middle East due to its deep-rooted historical grievances, overlapping national aspirations, significant religious and cultural dimensions, persistent geopolitical ramifications, and continuous cycles of violence, making its resolution critical yet exceedingly challenging (Soleimani, 2020, pp. 72-76). On another tone, Kissinger's "softened version" of a presidential report to Congress back in the 1970s described it as "a problem with serious elements of intractability" (2011, p. 1276).

In due course, considering the ongoing confrontational dynamics of the Arab-Israeli conflict (*the longest crisis in the region*), the objective of the article is to scrutinize, deconstruct, and ascertain the soundness of Edward Luttwak's idea that "giving war a chance" can prevent premature peacekeeping (*that blocks the organic settlement of a dispute*). Consequently, through an in-depth analysis and critical examination of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict spanning from the late 19th century to the October 7, 2023, war, this research will endeavor to uncover whether an armed conflict can offer a viable solution to this enduring intergenerational rift. Thus, the central focus lies in exploring whether war can serve as either a catalyst for spiral violence or as a tool for achieving a just and lasting peace that benefits both sides and fosters stability and cooperation in the region.

As a methodology, this article employs qualitative analysis and a case study approach, combining historical research with a critical review of Edward Luttwak's 1999

proposition to “give war a chance.” As such, the analysis examines how this theory holds up in the context of a long-term and complex conflict, drawing on a range of sources, including academic writings, historical records, and policy debates. Additionally, the article presents a combination of ideas from political science, international relations, and peace studies to challenge realist theories. Instead of focusing only on the short-term outcomes of conflict, the paper dives into the deeper social and political issues that are often overlooked.

„Give War a chance” and the need to avoid premature peacekeeping

In his renowned article, “Give war a chance,” the Romanian-born American scholar Edward Luttwak (1999, pp. 36-44), a specialist in international relations, offers a controversial yet bold statement that warrants careful examination. Therefore, the renowned researcher asserts the power of war in achieving lasting peace.

As such, Luttwak (1999, pp. 36-37) affirms that war can resolve political conflicts and lead to peace. However, after passing a culminating phase of violence, all belligerents become exhausted, and hopes for military success fade away. However, with the founding of the United Nations and the preeminence of the Security Council’s great-power politics, conflicts between weaker nations have seldom been permitted to play out naturally, a phenomenon called *premature peacekeeping*. Consequently, through enforced ceasefires and armistices, the Security Council has halted many battles early on before they could exhaust themselves and lay the groundwork for a long-term settlement, thus allowing belligerents to rebuild and rearm themselves in a prolonged conflict. In this case, Luttwak gives the example of the Arab-Israeli conflict of 1948–1949, which could have ended in a couple of weeks had it not been for foreign intervention and *premature peacekeeping*.

Before analyzing this reasoning, it’s worth mentioning that the phrase “give war a chance,” rooted in the realist thinking of international relations, may be often used rhetorically to express frustration or skepticism about the potential for peaceful resolution of conflicts, suggesting that sometimes violence or war may be necessary to achieve certain objectives or to bring about change. Realism, as a theory in international relations, posits that the global system is anarchic and that states are primarily concerned with their survival, power, and security. From this perspective, conflict and war are often seen as inevitable and sometimes necessary to maintain order or achieve strategic objectives. Moreover, it underscores the belief that lasting peace often emerges from the resolution of conflicts, sometimes through decisive military action (Mearsheimer, 2003, pp. 29-54).

The 1948-1949 war Luttwak is referring to is part of the much longer Arab-Israeli conflict. This complicated file includes an old series of political incursions, socio-economic unrests, diplomatic maneuvers, and even fierce battles (1948-1949, 1956, 1967, 1973, 1982, 2006, the two Intifadas, and the post-2000 wars in Gaza) between the Arabs (Palestinians and their Arab allies) and Israel. Thus, a careful analysis of the history of this conflict – the central file of the Middle East – is required to validate or refute the assertion of the Romanian-born American researcher.

Hence, the roots of the Arab-Israeli conflict can be traced back to the late 19th century with the emergence of Zionism and Arab nationalism movements, both of which were driven by the desire for self-determination and sovereignty (Morris, 2011, pp. 37-42). Zionism, as articulated by Theodor Herzl and other early advocates, sought to establish a Jewish homeland in Palestine as a response to anti-Semitism and persecution in Europe (Sachar, 1976, p. 23). Concurrently, as Khalidi (2020, p. 12) explains, Arab nationalism was burgeoning as Arabs sought to assert their independence from the Ottoman Empire and later European colonial powers, viewing the influx of Jewish immigrants as a direct threat to their aspirations for nationhood.

On that basis, as Jewish immigration to Palestine increased, tensions between the Jewish and Arab populations intensified. The British government's issuance of the Balfour Declaration in 1917, which supported the establishment of a "national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine, further exacerbated these tensions and remains, to this day, a significant source of debate (Schneer, 2010, p. 153). The declaration was perceived by the Arab population as a betrayal, especially given the British promises of independence for Arab lands following World War I and their involvement in the downfall of the Ottoman Empire through the Great Arab Revolt. Thus, the conflicting promises to both Jews and Arabs from the Great Powers set the stage for a protracted conflict, which we see has spanned decades, characterized by mutual distrust and competing nationalist movements.

The conflict timeline

Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, the general situation in Palestine started to deteriorate as Jewish land purchases and immigration continued to grow, leading to increasing Arab resentment and sporadic outbreaks of clashes. The British, who held the mandate for Palestine, struggled to maintain order and were often seen as favoring one side over the other, further inflaming hostilities (Shipler, 1986, p. 97). Consequently, the Arab Revolt of 1936-1939 was a significant turning point, highlighting the depth of Arab opposition to the Zionist project and British rule. Despite the suppression of the revolt, the underlying issues remained unresolved, and the conflicting nationalisms and inter-ethnic distrust only grew stronger.

The end of World War II and the Holocaust horrors intensified international support for the establishment of a Jewish state, culminating in the United Nations' 1947 partition plan, which proposed the creation of separate Jewish and Arab states. Most obviously, this plan was accepted by the Jewish community but vehemently rejected by the Arab states and Palestinian Arabs, leading to increased violence and, ultimately, the outbreak of the 1948 Arab-Israeli War following the declaration of the State of Israel in the same year (Khalidi, 2020, p. 141; Sachar, 1976, p. 329).

The 1948-1949 Arab-Israeli War, the one Luttwak refers to in his article and also known as the War of Independence for Israelis and the Nakba (Catastrophe) for Palestinians, was a pivotal conflict involving multiple actors. As Schneer (2010, p. 303) explains, everything started with the UN General Assembly's approval of the Partition Plan for Palestine (*resolution 181, which proposed the partition of Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab states, a plan accepted by the Jewish leadership but rejected by the Arab states and Palestinian Arabs*), which provoked a civil conflict that got more militarized and deadly.

As mentioned above, the immediate trigger of a regional conflict was the declaration of the State of Israel on May 14, 1948, which was followed by the attack of the newly formed state by Egypt, Transjordan, Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq. These Arab states, alongside local Palestinian forces, sought to prevent the establishment of Israel and to support the Palestinian population in resisting partition. In their turn, the Jewish armed forces, initially composed of various paramilitary groups, unified into the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) following the declaration of statehood (Sachar, 1976, p. 330) and, despite the initial disadvantages in manpower and equipment, managed to secure a series of decisive victories, largely due to better organization, internal unity, and strategic acumen.

The international community, particularly the United Nations, played a significant role in attempting to mediate the conflict. As the war escalated, the UN appointed Count Folke Bernadotte as a mediator, though he was assassinated shortly in September 1948. Moreover, the UN declared several truces on June 11, July 18, and October 22, 1948, but with seemingly little impact, as both sides continued to violate them. Subsequently, UN Resolution 194 (December 11, 1948) was adopted, calling for a ceasefire, the return of

refugees, and the establishment of a Conciliation Commission to facilitate peace (Khalidi, 2020, p. 146). The Great Powers, particularly the United States and the Soviet Union, recognized Israel and supported various UN initiatives, although their direct involvement in halting the war was limited. Armistice agreements were eventually signed in 1949 between Israel and its neighboring Arab states, with the Green Line established as the demarcation boundary (Shipler, 1986, p. 120).

Reactions to the 1948-1949 war were deeply polarized. From the Israeli perspective, the conflict was seen as a necessary and just struggle for survival and independence, with David Ben-Gurion and other leaders framing it as “a historic moment” of Jewish self-determination and redemption (Sachar, 1976, p. 351). Conversely, for Palestinians and the Arab states, the war was a catastrophic loss that resulted in the displacement of seven hundred thousand Palestinian Arabs and the depopulation of around 400 villages (Morris, 2004, pp. 602-604), an event memorialized as the Nakba. The Arab leaders and many in the international community criticized the partition plan and the subsequent war as unjust, with lingering resentment and a sense of betrayal by Western powers (Khalidi, 2020, p. 151). The enduring legacy of the war, characterized by demographic shifts and geopolitical changes, laid the groundwork for ongoing conflict and shaped regional dynamics for decades to come.

Even if the 1948-1949 war had been consummated in a matter of weeks if the UN and others had not intervened, as Luttwak argues, most likely with an outright Israeli victory, the war likely would have been longer, bloodier and potentially more territorially limited or unstable. The United Nations proposed a Partition Plan (which created international legitimacy for a Jewish and Arab state), called for ceasefires (three major ceasefires during the war helped pause hostilities and gave Israel time to reorganize and rearm), and exerted diplomatic pressure (in the end the war was primarily decided by ground military action, not diplomacy, as the fundamental military balance was gradually shifting toward Israel). As such, as historians declare that Israel likely still could have won the 1948 war without UN involvement, the absence of ceasefires and international legitimacy might have made the war longer, riskier, or more diplomatically costly. UN intervention helped limit escalation and buy time for diplomacy, but its absence wouldn't have guaranteed peace, as deep-rooted regional rivalries and conflicting national goals made lasting resolution unlikely.

Moreover, the impact on the Arab world would likely have been even more substantial. It is, therefore, reasonable to infer that the events surrounding the Nakba might have been more deeply felt, potentially intensifying the Palestinian national movement, further undermining the credibility of Arab leadership, and amplifying calls for retribution across the region. Last, but not least, it should not be overlooked that the defeat of the Egyptian kingdom in the 1948-1949 war, which Luttwak argues was prematurely interrupted, gave decisive momentum to the Nasser-led revolution (Abou-El-Fadl, 2019, pp. 101-122). An even more bitter Arab defeat could have triggered more political earthquakes in the Middle East, and the wars would have continued anyway.

Further on, the 1956 Arab-Israeli War (9 days), also known as the Suez Crisis, was deeply connected to the unresolved issues from the 1948 war. The first conflict left Israel in control of territories beyond those allocated by the UN partition plan, and a large number of Palestinian refugees created ongoing regional tension. As expected, the armistice agreements of 1949 did not result in lasting peace, and intermittent border skirmishes, particularly with Egypt, continued to fuel animosity (Lesch, 2008, p. 120). By the mid-1950s, Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser had emerged as a leading figure in the Arab world, promoting the charismatic and largely embraced Pan-Arabism and opposing Western influence, which gradually set the stage for another major confrontation.

As Schulze (2013, p. 85) explains, the immediate catalyst for the 1956 war was President Nasser's decision to nationalize the Suez Canal in July of that year. This move alarmed

Britain and France due to its implications for their economic interests and control over a vital maritime route. In response, France and Britain entered into a secret agreement with Israel, which sought to counter cross-border attacks by Egyptian-supported fedayeen (Palestinian militants) and to secure navigation rights through the canal. On October 29, 1956, Israel launched a military operation into the Sinai Peninsula, rapidly advancing toward the canal zone. Simultaneously, Britain and France issued an ultimatum to both Egypt and Israel to cease hostilities, ostensibly to protect international shipping and ensure regional stability. When Nasser refused, the ultimatum served as a pretext for Anglo-French military intervention, marking the onset of the Suez Crisis.

The intervention of the United Nations and the international community had a significant impact on closing the conflict. Being concerned about the potential Cold War escalations and deterioration of the Middle East, the US pressured Britain, France, and Israel to withdraw. President Eisenhower, in particular, was adamant about maintaining a neutral stance and preventing Soviet influence in the region. The UN General Assembly called for an immediate ceasefire and the withdrawal of foreign troops through Resolution 1001, leading to the establishment of the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) to supervise the ceasefire and facilitate the withdrawal of invading forces (Oren, 2013, p. 273). Eventually, by March 1957, British, French, and Israeli forces had withdrawn from Egypt, and UNEF troops were deployed along the border.

That being said, the Suez Crisis had significant local and regional implications. Nasser emerged as a prominent figure in the Arab world, with his defiance of Western powers enhancing both his personal stature and the broader appeal of Arab nationalism. Conversely, the crisis exposed the waning influence of Britain and France in the Middle East, marking a shift toward increased American and Soviet involvement in regional affairs. Israel secured temporary strategic gains by diminishing the fedayeen threat and reopening the Straits of Tiran to its shipping; however, the broader conflict with its Arab neighbors remained unresolved (Henkin, 2015, p. 162). More broadly, the crisis highlighted the volatility of the Middle East and set a precedent for future international involvement in regional disputes.

Referring specifically to Luttwak's perspective, while Nasser emerged from the 1948 war as a charismatic leader and benefitted politically from the outcome, it was Israel - having gained territory in the previous war - that initiated the 1956 conflict by launching a military attack against Egypt. Although Israel cited ongoing fedayeen raids and Egypt's rapid military buildup as justifications, it can be argued that its motivations were shaped as much by economic and geopolitical considerations - such as securing access to the Suez Canal and the Red Sea - as by immediate security concerns. Nevertheless, had international intervention not brought the war to a halt within nine days, the conflict might have escalated into a broader regional war, potentially drawing in additional Arab states, amplifying Cold War tensions, and destabilizing the Middle East.

Further on, the 1967 Arab-Israeli War (commonly known as the Six-Day War) was deeply connected unsurprisingly to the unresolved issues from the 1948 and 1956 wars. The establishment of Israel in 1948 and the subsequent conflicts left significant territorial disputes and a large Palestinian refugee population, fostering enduring hostility between Israel and its Arab neighbors. Moreover, the 1956 Suez Crisis, while temporarily reducing immediate threats, failed to resolve these underlying tensions and, in many ways, set the stage for future confrontations (Quigley, 2013, p. 45). As such, the regional power dynamics and the rise of nationalism under leaders like Nasser further exacerbated these tensions.

As Oren (2017, p.92) shows, the immediate lead-up to the Six-Day War involved a series of escalating incidents and strategic maneuvers. In May 1967, Egypt demanded the withdrawal of the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) from the Sinai Peninsula. Subsequently, it closed the Straits of Tiran to Israeli shipping, effectively blockading the

port of Eilat. Israel perceived this move as an existential threat. Simultaneously, Egypt formed military alliances with Syria and Jordan, further raising Israeli security concerns. Therefore, feeling increasingly isolated and threatened, Israel launched a preemptive strike on June 5, 1967, targeting Egyptian airfields and effectively neutralizing the Egyptian Air Force.

Thus, the conflict rapidly escalated, with Jordan and Syria joining Egypt in the hostilities against Israel. Over the following six days, Israel's army achieved decisive victories on multiple fronts, capturing the Sinai Peninsula and Gaza Strip from Egypt, the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) from Jordan, and the Golan Heights from Syria. Finally, the war concluded on June 10, 1967, with a UN-brokered ceasefire. Israel's swift and comprehensive victory significantly reshaped the Middle East's geopolitical landscape, resulting in significant territorial changes and a reconfiguration of the regional balance of power (Shlaim, 2012, p. 157).

The United Nations and the international community played key roles in attempting to mediate the aftermath of the conflict. UN Security Council Resolution 242, passed in November 1967, called for the "withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict" and the "termination of all claims or states of belligerency" (Quigley, 2013, p. 123). However, the resolution's deliberately ambiguous language—particularly regarding the extent of withdrawal and the mutual recognition of sovereignty—led to divergent interpretations among the parties involved, contributing to protracted diplomatic negotiations. As Oren (2017, p. 217) suggests, the war's consequences were far-reaching: it led to increased Israeli control over significant territories, altered the demographics and political landscape, and set the stage for future conflicts and peace processes. The regional impact was also considerable, as the Arab defeat contributed to increased political radicalization and helped catalyze the rise of Palestinian nationalism, eventually leading to the growing prominence of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

The necessity of the 1967 war is a contentious topic among historians and political analysts. Proponents argue that Israel's preemptive strike was essential for national survival. On the other hand, critics suggest that diplomatic alternatives might have been pursued more rigorously and that the rapid escalation into conflict could have been avoided through greater international mediation and pressure. Or, as Karsh (2010, p. 269) suggests, "the outcome of the 1967 war demonstrated to the Arabs that military force had its limits and that the destruction of Israel might have to be pursued by other means. This marked a shift in Arab strategies towards more political and diplomatic efforts".

Had the UN and other international players not intervened, the war could have had a different, potentially more devastating outcome, as the region is foremost unpredictable. The rapid victory achieved by the IDF was partly due to the element of surprise and superior military strategy. However, prolonged fighting could have drawn in additional actors, leading to a broader regional war with greater destruction and higher casualties. The United Nations' efforts to broker a ceasefire helped to limit the conflict's duration and scope, preventing further escalation and possibly averting a superpower confrontation, given the Cold War context.

While the 1967 war brought Israel immediate military and strategic advantages, most notably through the expansion of its territorial holdings, it also entrenched and intensified long-standing political and refugee issues. The occupation of the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Golan Heights, and the Sinai Peninsula introduced new and complex geopolitical challenges. These territories became focal points in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and broader Arab-Israeli tensions, with their legal and political status remaining contested in international discourse. Although some Israeli policymakers viewed the war as a necessary preemptive action to address existential security concerns, its long-term

consequences contributed to the deepening of the conflict and the creation of enduring diplomatic and humanitarian dilemmas.

The 1973 Arab-Israeli War was closely tied to the unresolved issues and geopolitical dynamics that emerged after the 1967 Six-Day War. The establishment of Israel in 1948 and the subsequent territorial gains in 1967 left deep grievances among Arab states, particularly Egypt and Syria, who sought to recover territories lost in the previous conflict (Kapeliouk, 2022, p. 78). The failure of peace initiatives, coupled with ongoing territorial disputes, has exacerbated tensions and created conditions for renewed hostilities.

As Morse (2015, p. 112) explains, the war commenced on October 6, 1973, when Egypt and Syria launched coordinated surprise attacks on Israeli positions in the Sinai Peninsula and the Golan Heights, respectively. The timing of the assault, occurring on the Jewish holy day of Yom Kippur, caught Israel by surprise and initially inflicted heavy casualties. The conflict rapidly escalated into a full-scale war, with both sides mobilizing their forces and receiving significant support from regional allies. The Soviet Union, supporting Egypt and Syria, provided military assistance, while the United States, backing Israel, initiated a large-scale airlift of military supplies to reinforce Israeli defenses.

International efforts to bring the conflict to a halt were spearheaded by the United Nations, along with major powers such as the United States and the Soviet Union. A series of UN Security Council resolutions called for an immediate ceasefire and the commencement of negotiations to resolve the crisis. The war ended with a ceasefire on October 25, 1973, facilitated through UN mediation, which helped stabilize the immediate situation but left unresolved the core issues of territorial disputes and Palestinian rights (Menshaw, 2017, p. 145). In this sense, the aftermath of the war highlighted the limitations of military solutions and underscored the importance of diplomatic initiatives for achieving lasting peace in the region.

The 1973 war had profound local and regional implications. For Israel, the initial setbacks and heavy casualties prompted a reassessment of its security strategy, catalyzing diplomatic efforts toward peace with its neighbors. Egypt, under President Anwar Sadat, emerged from the conflict with renewed international stature, setting the stage for future peace negotiations, including the landmark Camp David Accords in 1978. The war also intensified regional rivalries and influenced Cold War dynamics, as both the United States and the Soviet Union sought to expand their influence in the Middle East (Kapeliouk, 2022, p. 92). However, the unresolved status of the occupied territories and ongoing Palestinian aspirations for statehood continued to fuel tensions and conflicts in the decades that followed.

Thus, the debate arises again in terms of necessity and inevitability, this time for the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. From the Arab perspective, particularly that of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, the war was viewed as a necessary step to regain territory lost in the 1967 war and to assert Arab dignity and sovereignty (Menshaw, 2017, p. 112). Sadat believed that diplomatic efforts alone were insufficient to achieve these goals and that a limited military engagement could compel Israel to negotiate seriously for peace. The war's outbreak caught Israel by surprise and initially resulted in significant Arab gains. Had it not been for U.S. military assistance through airlifts and diplomatic pressure for a ceasefire, the conflict could have escalated further, potentially drawing in more regional actors and exacerbating Cold War tensions.

In terms of outcomes, Kapeliouk (2022, p. 78) argues that the 1973 war did not fundamentally alter the territorial status quo established after the 1967 war. However, it did lead to important diplomatic initiatives. Sadat's willingness to engage in peace negotiations after the war, demonstrated by his visit to Israel in 1977 and the subsequent Camp David Accords in 1978, marked a significant shift in Arab-Israeli

relations. These agreements paved the way for Egypt's return to the Sinai Peninsula. They laid the groundwork for a framework of peace, albeit one that left the Palestinian issue largely unresolved and focused on normalization at the political level.

In line with Luttwak's concept of "give war a chance," while the 1973 conflict led to some short-term diplomatic successes, its long-term implications were more complex. The war exposed the vulnerabilities of both sides and underscored the necessity of comprehensive peace agreements to address the region's underlying grievances. The unresolved status of the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and Golan Heights remained central sources of conflict, contributing to subsequent uprisings and wars in the region. Therefore, although the 1973 war led to temporary gains and diplomatic openings, it did not resolve the broader Arab-Israeli conflict and left enduring challenges for peace and stability in the Middle East.

The 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon was closely linked to the lingering effects of the 1973 Yom Kippur War and the ongoing Palestinian struggle. As Cobban (1984, p. 75) explains, the primary objective of the invasion was to dismantle PLO's bases in southern Lebanon, which Israel viewed as a significant threat due to their cross-border attacks and growing influence. The 1973 war had highlighted the strategic importance of securing Israel's northern border, and continued Palestinian activities in Lebanon prompted Israel to take decisive military action.

The 1982 conflict involved multiple actors, including Israel, the PLO, various Lebanese factions, and Syrian forces stationed in Lebanon. The Israeli Defense Forces launched a full-scale invasion on June 6, 1982. The operation quickly escalated into a broader conflict, with Israeli forces advancing towards Beirut and besieging the city in an effort to expel the PLO and its leader, Yasser Arafat (Chomsky, 1983, p. 94). The PLO, supported by various Lebanese militias and Syrian troops, resisted the Israeli advance, resulting in heavy casualties and widespread destruction.

International intervention played a crucial role in bringing the three-year-long conflict to a close. The Security Council passed Resolution 509, which called for an immediate Israeli withdrawal, though Israel initially ignored it. Ultimately, US diplomatic efforts played a crucial role in negotiating a ceasefire and facilitating the evacuation of PLO forces from Beirut. Under international supervision, Arafat and the PLO leadership were relocated to Tunisia, marking a significant shift in the Palestinian struggle away from Lebanon (Ben-Ami, 2006, p. 179). The presence of multinational forces, including U.S., French, and Italian troops, temporarily stabilized Beirut, though long-term peace remained elusive.

The consequences of the 1982 war were profound, both locally and regionally. In Lebanon, the war exacerbated internal divisions, contributing to the prolonged civil war that devastated the country. The invasion and subsequent occupation of southern Lebanon by Israeli forces until 2000 created a complex and volatile security situation, fueling further resistance movements, most notably Hezbollah. Regionally, the war highlighted the complexities of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the broader Arab-Israeli tensions (Fisk, 2001, p. 112). In the end, as Ben-Ami (2006, p.330) explains, the 1982 Lebanon War was a "war of choice" because it was initiated by Israel not out of necessity for defense but as a deliberate decision to alter the political landscape in Lebanon and weaken Palestinian and Syrian influence, reflecting broader strategic ambitions rather than immediate security threats.

In conclusion, the 1982 Israeli war in Lebanon was a significant episode in the ongoing Arab-Israeli conflict, deeply intertwined with the aftermath of the 1973 war and the Palestinian cause. It involved multiple actors and had far-reaching consequences, shaping the regional geopolitical landscape for decades to come. The war ended through international diplomatic efforts, but its legacy of destruction and displacement continued to influence Middle Eastern politics and security dynamics.

The necessity and inevitability of the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon are subjects of intense debate among historians and political analysts. From Israel's perspective, the invasion was seen as a necessary action to eliminate the PLO's presence in southern Lebanon, which posed a continuous threat (Chomsky, 1983, p. 108). However, many critics contend that the invasion was neither necessary nor inevitable, arguing that diplomatic solutions and less aggressive measures were not sufficiently explored.

The aftermath of the war yielded mixed results for the parties involved. Israel successfully expelled the PLO from Lebanon, thus achieving its immediate military objective. However, this victory came at a high cost, both in terms of human lives and international reputation. The war inflicted significant civilian casualties and destruction in Lebanon (Shlaim, 2001, p. 395). For the Palestinians, the war resulted in a strategic setback as they lost their base of operations in Lebanon. However, the PLO's expulsion did not diminish the Palestinian cause but instead dispersed its leadership, which eventually contributed to a shift towards diplomatic engagement, culminating in the Oslo Accords a decade later. Lebanon, already fragmented by civil war, witnessed further destabilization and human suffering, which exacerbated sectarian divisions and prolonged the civil conflict. As Cobban (1984, p. 87) argues, had the United Nations and other international players not intervened, the war might have continued for a more extended period with even greater devastation.

Ultimately, while the 1982 war achieved some of its military objectives, it also created significant humanitarian issues and had long-term political repercussions. The conflict highlighted the limits of military solutions to political problems and underscored the need for comprehensive diplomatic efforts to address the underlying issues. Moreover, the war exacerbated regional tensions and contributed to the rise of new militant groups, such as Hezbollah, which continued to challenge Israeli security for decades. Thus, the 1982 war, rather than fixing the broader issues, added to the complexity and intractability of the Middle Eastern conflict, especially the Palestinian-Israeli file.

Remaining within the same regional context, the 2006 Lebanon War - lasting approximately one month - was closely linked to unresolved issues stemming from the 1982 War and broader regional dynamics, including the Palestinian question. Following the 1982 conflict, Israel maintained a military presence in southern Lebanon until its withdrawal in 2000, a period that fueled widespread resentment and resistance, particularly from Hezbollah. The war began on July 12, 2006, when Hezbollah launched a cross-border raid into Israeli territory, capturing two Israeli soldiers and killing others. This incident prompted a large-scale Israeli military response aimed at degrading Hezbollah's military infrastructure and reasserting deterrence (Cordesman & Sullivan, 2007, p. 13).

As Matthews (2011, p. 29) notes, the conflict primarily involved the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) and Hezbollah, with significant regional implications. The war also had an indirect international dimension, as Iran and Syria provided support to Hezbollah, while the US and several Western countries offered political and logistical support to Israel. Civilians on both sides were heavily affected, with high casualties and widespread destruction, particularly in Beirut and southern Lebanon.

As in previous conflicts, international intervention played a pivotal role in bringing the 2006 Lebanon War to a close. The UN Security Council passed Resolution 1701, which called for a cessation of hostilities, the deployment of the Lebanese Armed Forces in southern Lebanon, and the consolidation of the UNIFIL to monitor the ceasefire. The resolution also stipulated the disarmament of all armed groups in Lebanon - implicitly referring to Hezbollah - although this provision has not been fully implemented (Farquhar, 2010, p. 44). The conflict officially ended on August 14, 2006, with a UN-mediated ceasefire, though sporadic clashes and political tensions have persisted.

The 2006 Lebanon War had notable local and regional repercussions. In Lebanon, the war deepened existing political and sectarian divisions, contributing to a fragile post-war recovery and ongoing tensions between Hezbollah and other political factions. Regionally, the conflict illustrated the proxy nature of contemporary Middle Eastern wars, with Iran and Syria's support for Hezbollah reflecting broader strategic rivalries with Israel and its Western allies. The conflict also had implications for the Palestinian cause, as Hezbollah's military resistance enhanced its standing among Palestinians and the broader Arab public as a symbol of opposition to Israeli military actions (Gleis & Berti, 2012, p. 62).

In terms of outcomes, the 2006 Lebanon War produced no decisive victory. While Israel achieved limited tactical successes, it failed to dismantle Hezbollah, which emerged with its military capacity largely intact and its political influence in Lebanon strengthened. Although rooted in long-standing tensions, the war could have been avoided; Hezbollah's cross-border raid and the abduction of Israeli soldiers, which triggered the conflict, might have been addressed through diplomatic channels. Ultimately, both actors sought strategic and symbolic gains, but the war resulted in substantial human and material losses without durable political resolution (Matthews, 2011, pp. 28-29; 61-65).

International intervention - particularly through UN-mandated ceasefires and the deployment of peacekeepers - was critical in preventing further escalation of the 2006 Lebanon War, which otherwise could have resulted in greater destruction. However, the conflict did not address its root causes; instead, it deepened regional tensions and facilitated Hezbollah's further entrenchment in Lebanon, illustrating the limitations of military approaches to resolving deeply embedded political and sectarian disputes (Cordesman & Sullivan, 2007, p. 44). The war underscored the need for sustained diplomatic efforts to achieve long-term stability.

The 1982 and 2006 conflicts also reflect strategic miscalculations that continue to resonate amid the recent clashes between Israel and Hezbollah in 2025. In the broader context, despite normalization agreements with Egypt (1979) and Jordan (1994), the Palestinian issue has steadily deteriorated, marked by rising instability in Gaza and the West Bank and mounting social and political unrest across the region.

The First Intifada, which erupted in December 1987, marked a significant turning point in the Palestinian struggle for self-determination. Triggered by a traffic accident involving an Israeli military vehicle and a Palestinian civilian car in Gaza, the uprising quickly spread across the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The First Intifada was characterized by widespread civil disobedience, including strikes, boycotts, and demonstrations, as well as violent confrontations with Israeli forces. The Palestinian population confronted the Israeli Defense Forces, who responded with tear gas, rubber bullets, and live ammunition (Peretz, 2019, p. 42). This grassroots movement underscored the Palestinian frustration with Israel's policies and highlighted the limitations of conventional military responses to an asymmetric conflict (Catignani, 2008, p. 78).

The Second Intifada, also known as the „Al-Aqsa Intifada,” began in September 2000, following a visit by Israeli opposition leader Ariel Sharon to the Temple Mount, a site sacred to both Jews and Muslims. This visit was perceived by Palestinians as a provocation and led to widespread riots and violence. Unlike the First Intifada, the Second Intifada saw a significant increase in the use of firearms and explosives by Palestinian militants, including suicide bombings targeting Israeli civilians. The IDF responded with increased military operations, including incursions into Palestinian towns and targeted assassinations of militant leaders (Scott-Baumann, 2023, p. 112). The violence resulted in thousands of casualties on both sides and further entrenched mutual hostility, undermining peace efforts initiated by the Oslo Accords.

As Palestinian problems and grievances deepened, Gaza post-2000 started to witness several intense conflicts, particularly following Israel's unilateral disengagement in

2005, which saw the withdrawal of Israeli settlers and military forces from the Gaza Strip. However, the situation remained volatile, exacerbated by the victory of Hamas in the 2006 Palestinian legislative elections and its subsequent takeover of Gaza from Abbas and the Palestinian Authority in 2007. This led to a blockade by Israel and Egypt, severely restricting the movement of people and goods. As such, the first major conflict post-disengagement was "Operation Cast Lead" (2008-2009), where Israel launched a large-scale military operation in response to rocket fire from Gaza (Pappé & Chomsky, 2013, p. 87).

The cycle of violence continued with subsequent conflicts, including „Operation Pillar of Defense“ in 2012 and „Operation Protective Edge“ in 2014, both triggered by escalating rocket attacks from Gaza and subsequent Israeli airstrikes. These conflicts led, yet again, to more civilian casualties and destruction. The international community, including the United Nations, repeatedly called for ceasefires and condemned the violence. UN investigations highlighted potential violations of international law by both sides and called for accountability (Blumenthal, 2015, p. 67). However, ceasefires often proved temporary, with underlying issues, such as the blockade, settlement expansion, and a lack of political progress, perpetuating the cycle of conflict.

The most significant Gaza conflicts before 2023 - the 51-day war in 2014 and the 11-day escalation in 2021 - underscored the ongoing human cost of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Despite ceasefires brokered by Egypt and other international actors, core issues remained unresolved. The subsequent humanitarian challenges and persistent internal divisions between Fatah and Hamas hindered peace perspectives. Delays in final-status negotiations have deepened mutual grievances, contributing to rising tensions and diminishing prospects for a lasting resolution. These recurring conflicts have also had broader destabilizing effects, fostering regional volatility and radicalization. Although neither side secured a decisive outcome, the persistence of violence highlights the need for a comprehensive and durable political solution (Hasian Jr., 2016, p. 103).

Finally, the 2023 Hamas-led "Al-Aqsa Flood" attacks - including rocket fire, armed infiltration, and hostage-taking - along with the subsequent Israeli military responses in Gaza, Lebanon, and beyond, underscored the enduring depth of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. These events reflect longstanding historical grievances, unresolved political disputes, and mounting tensions. Israel continues to face persistent security threats, while the protracted delay in achieving Palestinian statehood, deteriorating socio-economic conditions in Gaza and the West Bank, and ongoing civilian casualties on both sides have contributed to decades of mutual distrust, frustration, and disillusionment.

On the other side, the October 7 attacks and the wide-ranging Israeli military response should be viewed not only as a military escalation but also as a manifestation of the underlying political stagnation and collective despair that has long characterized the conflict. About Edward Luttwak's theory, the events since 2023 suggest that "giving war a chance" has not led to resolution; instead, the extended use of force appears to have reached its limits. No international actor has successfully mediated a lasting ceasefire, and meaningful diplomatic engagement remains elusive.

After nearly two years of ongoing clashes, neither party has fully achieved its stated objectives; whether the dismantling of Hamas and enhanced security guarantees for Israel or Hamas's political recognition and broader Palestinian statehood aspirations. Regionally, the conflict has had far-reaching economic, socio-political, and security consequences, contributing to instability across the West Bank, Lebanon, the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden, and the Levant to Iran, thereby affecting the broader Middle East. These developments suggest that continued reliance on military means has only exacerbated regional insecurity and invited greater foreign involvement, underscoring the urgent need for renewed diplomatic initiatives and a re-evaluation of conflict resolution strategies.

Discussions

As the history of Arab-Israeli conflicts - including those of 1948–1949, 1956, 1967, 1973, 1982, 2006, the two Intifadas, and the post-2000 Gaza wars - demonstrates, military confrontations have not resolved the Israeli-Palestinian issue. On the contrary, as Waxman (2019, pp. 63–101) argues, recurrent cycles of violence have made political normalization increasingly difficult and popular reconciliation almost unattainable.

Even if Israel were to claim a strategic victory in Gaza, the broader cost may be profound, as heightened animosity and radicalization could resonate for generations across societies. This raises critical questions about the future of regional normalization efforts. While further diplomatic agreements based on the Abraham Accords model may proceed at the state level, public acceptance across the Arab world may remain somewhat limited. As Hitman and Kertcher (2018, pp. 48–52) observe, even decades after their peace treaties with Israel, societal normalization in Egypt and Jordan remains constrained, largely due to the unresolved Palestinian question.

After nearly two years of continuous hostilities, the strategy of “giving war a chance” has yielded little progress toward a final settlement. Despite sustained international engagement and numerous diplomatic initiatives, armed clashes in Gaza have persisted, underscoring the limitations of military approaches and the urgent need for renewed political dialogue.

Thus, applying Edward Luttwak’s notion of “giving war a chance” appears increasingly ill-suited to the realities of the contemporary Middle East. While one may argue that it held partial relevance in specific historical contexts, most notably the 1973 war, this perspective fails to account for the broader complexities of the region. The Middle East’s dense tapestry of historical grievances, religious sensitivities, cultural divisions, and geopolitical rivalries renders simplistic solutions, such as war, both reductive and counterproductive. In the 21st century, where regional conflicts are deeply interconnected and globalized, armed confrontation rarely offers sustainable outcomes. Military escalations often exacerbate existing tensions, fuel proxy confrontations, and perpetuate cycles of violence, as demonstrated by the enduring conflicts in Syria, Yemen, and Libya. In such a context, warfare seldom remains locally contained; it reverberates across borders, destabilizing neighboring regions and drawing in external powers.

Given these complexities, the region demands comprehensive, multilateral approaches to conflict resolution. This entails swift and coordinated international responses involving key actors such as the United Nations, the UN Security Council, the European Union, the Arab League, and other relevant regional organizations. First, preventing the geographic and political spread of a conflict is essential, as recent crises have shown how rapidly localized disputes can evolve into broader struggles for influence and control. Second, diplomatic strategies should prioritize inclusivity - engaging all relevant stakeholders, including those with indirect interests or challenging positions. In certain instances, practical diplomacy may require difficult compromises, including the reconsideration of entrenched positions, norms, or interests, to create the conditions necessary for dialogue.

A judicious blend of hard and soft power tools must be consistently employed and pursued with determination. This includes sanctions, incentives, mediation, strategic pressure, and humanitarian engagement, depending on the nature of the conflict and the actors involved. Inclusive diplomacy should be centered on mutual recognition, reconciliation, and the meaningful addressing of legitimate grievances. Any durable resolution must engage with the structural drivers of instability, such as governance failures, socio-economic marginalization, contested identities, and asymmetries of power, while also fostering respect for the region’s diverse cultural and religious landscapes.

In conclusion, the argument for “giving war a chance” may appeal to realpolitik logic in certain circumstances, but it presents an overly narrow and ultimately flawed framework for understanding the dynamics of conflict in the Middle East. It underestimates the complexity and interconnectedness of modern warfare and overstates the capacity of violence to produce lasting political settlements. Moreover, it reflects a pessimistic worldview that risks sidelining possibilities for cooperation, coexistence, and peaceful transformation. In an era of unprecedented regional interdependence and technological interconnectedness, the consequences of unchecked warfare could be so catastrophic as to be unjustifiable. Sustainable peace requires vision, patience, and a willingness to invest in diplomacy, not war, as the foundation of future stability.

Conclusions

The Middle East stands out as a particularly complex and volatile region, shaped by a convergence of interrelated conflicts, civil wars, proxy interventions, sectarian divisions, and ideological extremism. The sheer number and diversity of actors engaged in concurrent conflicts in recent years reflect a broader pattern of somewhat regional dysfunction, complicating efforts to establish durable peace and stability.

Against this backdrop, principles such as Edward Luttwak’s “give war a chance” may appear initially compelling, especially when viewed through a narrow strategic lens. However, they ultimately fall short when confronted with the realities of the Middle East. The region’s historical entanglements—geopolitical, cultural, religious, and ideological—render simplistic solutions inadequate. In the context of the decades-long Arab-Israeli conflict, Luttwak’s framework proves particularly unconvincing. While one might argue that certain military confrontations, such as the 1973 war, prompted subsequent diplomatic openings, this outcome is the exception rather than the rule. The long-term trajectory of the conflict suggests that warfare has not resolved the core issues and instead has entrenched political hostility and undermined prospects for popular reconciliation.

Moreover, military approaches often overlook or exacerbate the structural causes of conflict in the region, including contested national identity, unmet political aspirations, economic disparities, and historical grievances, while generating new crises through escalation, foreign intervention, and civilian suffering. As history shows, war in the Middle East rarely remains localized; it spreads quickly, destabilizes neighboring states, and invites the involvement of global and regional powers, thereby transforming local disputes into internationalized crises. This dynamic is evident in the current Gaza War, the latest in a long series of Israeli-Palestinian confrontations. After nearly two years of hostilities, the conflict has failed to deliver decisive outcomes for either side. Israel has not achieved its primary security objectives, and Palestinian political aspirations remain unmet. Furthermore, the conflict has expanded beyond Gaza, affecting the West Bank, Lebanon, and maritime zones in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, with more implications for the broader Middle East.

Thus, the present conflict reinforces the broader conclusion that the strategy of “giving war a chance” is neither constructive nor viable in this regional context. Rather than resolving disputes, repeated recourse to military force has intensified grievances, fostered radicalization, and disrupted regional stability. The long-standing Arab-Israeli file demonstrates that war has not, and will not, serve as a path to lasting peace. Instead, what is required is a sustained commitment to inclusive diplomacy, conflict resolution, and the addressing of root causes, without which the cycle of violence is likely to continue, with increasingly dangerous consequences for the entire region.

Ultimately, it is worth noting that this article presents a fresh perspective by critically reassessing Edward Luttwak’s 1999 “give war a chance” theory and applying it to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. While the theory has been influential in realist and realpolitik

circles, the present article challenges its relevance in the context of the aforementioned file and the broader Middle East. By referring to a specific case study, the article adds depth and nuance to the ongoing debates surrounding the utility of violence in resolving protracted conflicts. Beyond the theoretical standpoint, the paper tests Luttwak's thesis of practical applicability over a nearly century-long historical trajectory, providing a fresh perspective on the theory's shortcomings in real-world conflicts. Moreover, this paper challenges the reductive logic of realist frameworks and emphasizes the importance of understanding deeper social and political dynamics in long-term conflicts. By integrating ideas from political science, international relations, and peace studies, the article argues that sustainable peace in the Middle East necessitates a more inclusive and multidimensional approach, one that extends beyond military solutions to encompass reconciliation, inclusive peacebuilding, and commitment to cooperation. Nonetheless, this critique can offer practical relevance for policymakers and peacebuilders seeking more durable and transformative solutions in the Middle East and beyond.

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