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**The Humanitarian Crisis in Gaza: The Discourse Analysis of the UNSC Permanent Three Member States'  
Statements**

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## **Abstract**

The humanitarian crisis in Gaza covers an unfortunate range of situations, starting from the massive displacement of citizens, the damage of the majority of necessary infrastructure for the survival of people, shortages of supplies and essential goods, the significant amount of suffering, and ending with lives of thousands of innocents. Thus, this research aims to analyze how the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) addressed the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip by analyzing the statements of P-3 member states, the United States, the United Kingdom, and France, during UNSC meetings from October 16, 2023, to January 31, 2024. For the analysis, the research uses discourse analysis (DA) to understand the content of the speeches of those P-3 member states and the broader context, which is an essential aspect of the given issue. The results of the study showed that the representatives of the US, the UK, and France often tend to use arguments more favorable to Israel rather than Palestine, showing three common arguments presented in all of their speeches throughout the given period. There is a possibility that the discourse that occurred with the following disputes within the UNSC caused the potential ineffectiveness of the UNSC in addressing the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Thus, there is a need for further studies related to the given topic.

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## **Introduction**

From the beginning of the Post-October 7 war, within the first month of the issue, there was a displacement of over 40% of Palestinian citizens and the destruction of 50% of city infrastructure, including necessary building for the sustainability of residents in the Gaza Strip (the UNSC meeting record, October 24, p. 29). By May 2024, as stated by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the number of displaced people achieved a total of 1.7 million, constituting approximately 75 percent of all people living in the Gaza Strip, with the majority being women and children (UNOCHA, 2024). As the UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, stated, Gaza is turning into a graveyard for kids (the UNSC meeting record, November 15, p. 3). The scale of the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip turned into a concerning case. Therefore, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) held emergency meetings regarding the situation in the Middle East, including the question of Palestine. From October 16, 2023, to January 31, 2024, the UNSC held a total of 20 meetings regarding this topic. Nevertheless, as stated above, the situation was worsening, and many states' representatives, along with researchers, accused P-3 member states that are the United States, the United Kingdom, and France, of being preferential in supporting Israel. One can say that the discourse established by P-3 member states through their statements that can be considered leaning towards support of Israel within the UNSC meetings holds the aid to Palestinians on pause. This research aims to answer the question of how the UNSC addressed the humanitarian crisis in Gaza through the analysis of the speeches of P-3 member states within the UNSC meetings. By examining these dynamics, we hope to understand in depth not only the discourse but also the speeches shared by the P-3 member states and find out whether Palestinians' humanitarian needs were adequately addressed or outweighed.

## **Literature Review**

The conflict started when Israel was founded in 1948 after a war that Israelis call the War of Independence and Palestinians call the Nakba, which translates as a catastrophe (Reinhart, 2002, p. 7). During the Nakba, most Palestinians were expelled from their homes by the Israeli army, despite claims of voluntary withdrawal by Israel's side and the UNSC resolutions. After the establishment of the Israeli state, the Green Line was set, which was drawn with green ink on a map and represented armistice boundaries between Israeli and Palestinian states. Nonetheless, the shift of the initial Green Line toward the advantage of Israel raised severe concerns (Shlay & Rosen, 2010, p. 359). Israel's recognized

borders are roughly the size of New Jersey and cover nearly 80 percent of the area called "Palestine" after World War I (Gelvin, 2014, pp. 1-5). The persecuted population sought to find safety and establish their state, but this became the reason for the forced eviction of a significant part of the local population of another nation. Therefore, this led to the effect of ethnic cleansing in the land that became Israel (Reinhart, 2002, p. 7). According to Caplan, the situation with this approach and its main characters has drawn sharp criticism due to the shift towards predominantly right-wing Israelis (2020, p. 5).

Academic researchers such as Sinai (1995), Farsakh (2017), Bicchi and Voltolini (2018), Huber (2021), Rabee and Hammash (2021), Chen and Guo (2023) gave in-depth analyses of the significance of assisting the humanitarian crisis happening in Palestine for the international community. These authors had a critical viewpoint towards the global system for not being able to support Palestine as a State. While Israel was often judged for oppressing the civil rights of Palestinians and claimed to be using a discriminatory regime through its settlements, Palestinians are known as primarily dependent on the UNSC for obtaining a resolution (Huber, 2018, p. 354). The given issue highlights most of the essential existing paradoxical problems of the international system and shows the UNSC's lack of effectiveness in addressing humanitarian crises (Morphet, 1990, p. 357). The UNSC is one of the vital platforms that are supposed to protect minorities and address issues of human rights violation (Morphet, 1990, p. 351), yet, as stated by Popovski (2000), the international community, in the face of the UNSC, often abused humanitarian interventions for personal interests (p. 251).

People blame the international system for setting double standards for Israel while it pushes a two-state solution into a one-state reality (Baruch, 2016, p. 1). In particular, the studies of Baruch (2016) and Farsakh (2017) analyze the one-sided support towards Israel, ignoring the struggle of the Palestinians for sovereignty caused by the conflict and how unsuccessful the UNSC resolutions that were supposed to protect the rights of the Palestinians turned out to be. Seventy years have passed since the UN partition plan for historic Palestine that gave Israel land and half a century since the adoption of the first UNSC that is Resolution 242, which was a guarantee for all peace agreements but did not mention the Palestinian territory and people, and to some extent unfair because it paid more attention to the expectations of Israelis than to the general world order and the interests of the Palestinian nation (Farsakh, 2017, p. 56). Nevertheless, after the Israeli side showed discrimination against Palestinians, the UNSC resolutions addressed the idea of prohibiting

only those illegal settlements without taking into consideration other measures towards the State of Israel (Baruch, 2016, p. 4).

As stated in the article by Popovski (2000), to find a fair yet feasible solution for addressing the humanitarian crisis experienced by Palestinians, the UNSC had to establish an investigation of this issue (p. 249). However, the structure of the UNSC allows any member to use veto power to ban any authorization. It is known that the UN cannot put pressure on the Permanent-5 countries (Chen & Guo, 2023, p. 283). The P-5 can challenge and postpone prosecutions (Popovski, 2000, p. 250). The superpowers usually use their veto to guarantee the protection of their interests (Morphet, 1990, p. 341). The fundamental question is to what extent P-5 states are willing to act on conflict rather than find justifications using the Westphalian excuses (Popovski, 2000, p. 251). Hence, the question of whether moral judgment is possible in international affairs arose. Additionally, the skepticism of many states contained the awareness of neglecting international law and its misuse due to the veto power and bias of those P-5 members in the UNSC (Morphet, 1990, p. 343).

Khalid and Mwangi (2015) reveal that international organizations are usually oriented toward powerful countries as those states play a crucial role in the global arena, as a possible reason for international organizations' impracticality (pp. 96–106). They used an example of the UNSC's dependence on the United States to support their statement. In particular, the financial dependence of the UNSC on the US, which since 1945 has been known as one of the leading economic sponsors, caught the authors' attention (Khalid & Mwangi, 2015, p. 96). Moreover, it is essential to understand that according to Mearsheimer and Walt (2007), historically speaking, the US and Israel maintain a sufficient relationship, which originated after the Six-Day War of 1967, when the US Middle East policy focused on unconditional support for Israel (p. 2). Mearsheimer and Walt highlight the bond between the US and Israel that affects the US' decision-making processes. To be exact, he shows that Israel, which has significant military forces and financial resources, actually exerts influence through a powerful lobby consisting mainly of American Jews, who shape the US's foreign policy and exert considerable influence on decisions and actions regarding Israel (2007, p. 13). Consequently, the recognition of Palestine as a state by the UN General Assembly raises financial risks, which are described by Eran and Sabel (2012) as 'financial suicide' because previously, in practice, the US already cut its funds to \$60 million to the UNESCO after this international organization approved Palestine as a full member (p. 2). The given argument may be one of the reasons why Israel had undeniable support from the US in the existing discourse about the Israel-Palestine conflict.

The international system is claimed to be paradoxical, uncovering flaws that exist in international law generally and the UNSC resolutions, as in the given conflict between Israel and Palestine, the system forced Palestine to negotiate its rights by birth with the occupying power - Israel (Huber, 2021, p. 2), (Bicchi & Voltolini, 2018, p. 127). Huber claims that while Israel applied a discriminatory dual regime in the territory and separated Palestinians from their rights, the West played a role in normalizing this occupation in the international arena (2018, p. 352). There is an opinion that the UK uses veto power in the UNSC regarding Israeli issues due to its financial relations with Israel (Bicchi & Voltolini, 2018, p. 138). Moreover, the author covers both bilateral and unilateral levels to explain the occurring gap between discourse and practice in the case of the EU to show how the EU states often declare settlements illegal in the global arena and, yet, continuously undermine these positions by tightening their economic system with Israel (Huber, 2018, p. 357). Israel is a vital political and economic partner of the EU states, adding complexity to an already complicated issue (Bicchi & Voltolini, 2018, p. 128). The EU states often may overlook their policies on the bilateral level as they have economic interests in maintaining their trade partner in the face of Israel. Therefore, the EU states should be the ones pushing the international community for justice instead of developing better economic relations with Israel that make illegal settlements possible (Huber, 2021, p. 5).

After careful evaluation of all relevant types of academic literature regarding the topic of the ineffectiveness of previous UNSC resolutions aimed at solving the Israel-Palestine conflict with a focus on P-3 member states' support of Israel that is claimed to be one of the reasons why the UNSC is not assisting the humanitarian crisis, it is noticeable that while there are many articles and books written about the pre-historical content of the Israel-Palestine conflict along with its complexity, origins in addition to already prevailing amount of research constituting the UNSC's ineffectiveness in the given matter, these literature are primarily outdated or considered to be lacking. In addition, there are only a few pieces of literature focusing on the relations between Israel and the US and the EU countries that aspired to clarify reasons why those P-3 member states used to strongly support Israel within the discourse of the UNSC on the matter. The gap between the discourse and practice of the US, the UK, and France on this topic should be studied further because they are known as P-3 members of the UNSC.

## Methodology

To begin with, we got familiarized with recordings of the UNSC meeting on the situation in the Middle East, which covered the post-October 7 conflict between October 7, 2023, and January 31, 2024. We discovered that liberal states such as the US, the UK, France (P-3 member states), and Japan showed strong support for Israel. In contrast, other states such as Russia, China (other permanent member states), Arab countries, and North American countries tend to support Palestine because the UNSC is not a governing body of other states but a volunteer organization that functions based on the desire and commitment of states to inter-assist each other, promoting the ideology of human rights and equality (United Nations Peacekeeping, 2024). Consequently, we decided to analyze statements from the US, UK, and French representatives at the UNSC meeting on the Israel-Hamas conflict, considering the roles of P-3 members in the UNSC structure to see how these states shape discourse to support Israel in the post-October 7 conflict.

We chose Discourse Analysis (DA) as a research method to analyze statements from the US, UK, and French representatives in our research. DA is the most suitable method due to several reasons. Firstly, its primary goal is to study the text and the context in which it was produced (Halperin & Heath, 2017, p. 365). It will allow us to deepen into the context of the conflict in addition to analysis of the way P-3 member states shaped their arguments in support of Israel. Secondly, DA aims to reveal how political actors use different ideas and concepts to produce or reproduce meanings (Halperin & Heath, 2017, p. 364). We are willing to attain that to understand how those P-3 member states shaped particular sets of beliefs in support of Israel in the UNSC arena. Thirdly, DA aims to demonstrate how political actors create meanings and how these meanings provide reasons for people to act (Halperin & Heath, 2017, p. 366), which is an essential part of our research because we are concentrating on how P-3 member states' support to Israel in the ongoing conflict motivate others to act. We intentionally chose the UNSC meetings as an arena where discourse occurs because the UNSC is a significant international organization that provides security concepts and maintains global stability (Curran & Holtom, 2015, p. 2). In addition, it establishes a platform in which various opinions and claims encounter one another, aiming to find a solution (Teixeria, 2003, pp. 25-26). Therefore, analyzing the discourse in such an arena may lead to gaining vital information to understand how the discourse is shaped and operated.

For the philosophy of inquiry, we will use interpretivism as it is appropriate for deeply exploring and understanding the meanings and beliefs. According to Halperin and Heat, to understand human reasoning and behavior, we should interpret the intentions and values of the actors behind them (2017, p. 50). However, not only physical texts can be



interpreted as everything may be treated as 'text,' including the behavior of those we are willing to understand or even particular government actions (Bryman, 2012, p. 528).

The discourse about the Israel-Palestine conflict since October 7, 2023, includes questions of who has the right to what, which are shaped by the norms and values within the UNSC system. Superpower states may practice using their power (represented in the way they interpret the problem and by using particular words, phrases, comparisons, and arguments) to shift the perception of the given issue by others. In particular, the US, which is also the leading financial supporter of the UNSC, claimed to interpret the reality of the Israel-Hamas war in favor of Israel due to the 'unbreakable bond' between these two states and accused of vetoing resolutions that are not favorable to Israel's policy. The discourse often prioritizes the rights of one state (Israel) over those of another state (Palestine). The reality constructed by the discourse of P-3 member states in the UNSC tends to justify the actions of Israel to secure itself even when innocent lives are at stake. Thus, the discourse method helps us analyze how these P-3 member states construct sets of norms that complexify and shift reality in the international arena by intensely focusing on what they said and what they were missing in their speeches.

For example, in his work *Orientalism*, Edward Said concentrated on how the West portrays Eastern civilizations, usually shaping wrongful misconceptions and incorrect stereotypes by establishing discourse around Middle Eastern cultures. As Said mentioned, there were attempts to identify Middle Eastern people by adding up supreme fiction that created an opportunity for manipulation and collective hatred (1977, p. 14). Additionally, the author noted how the US used discourse as an instrument to portray Arabs and the Islamic world as terrorists as a reaction to Islam for not being 'liberal,' which significantly contributed to the division between 'us' and 'them' (referring to the Eastern people) (1977, p. 300). Edward Said mentioned the goal of humankind, which is to widen this discourse without limiting it to the dominant power to control. Moreover, he cited the need to solve the struggle for equality both in Palestine and Israel, referring to the peaceful co-existence of both states (1977, p. 19).

Moreover, according to Stump and Dixit (2012), discourse can be understood in many ways, from statements to language and practices, all of which begin from specific points of view (p. 108). Regardless of these definitions, discourse is shaped by how things come together to form a shared understanding and identity (Stump & Dixit, 2012, p. 108). Therefore, studying terrorism as a discourse implies analyzing how processes form our general ideas about the world (Stump & Dixit, 2012, p. 108). As specified by Jackson, the representation usually constructs the image of the

"terrorist enemy" as atrocious, extraneous, and dehumanized (2005, pp. 62-63). Additionally, according to Stump and Dixit (2012), analyzing discourses related to terrorism provides an understanding of how identity formation occurs and allows for the exploration and identification of categorization processes (p. 113).

Qualitative data, particularly secondary data, will be used to perform this diploma project. The research aims to analyze all the UNSC meetings related to situations in the Middle East, including the question of Palestine, between October 16th, 2023, and January 31st, 2024. The research will focus on speeches from representatives of the US, the UK, and France, who play critical roles in the decision-making process of the UNSC, highlighting power dynamics within its system. We entered an official webpage of the UN ([research.un.org](https://research.un.org)), found the 'UN Security Council Meetings & Outcomes Tables' section, and chose Security Council Meetings in 2023 and 2024. We particularly looked at dates and then at the topic section to establish whether the meeting record shown was relevant to our case. We only looked at meeting records under the theme 'The situations in the Middle East, including the question of Palestine.' There were a total of 20 written scripts from the UNSC meetings related to the situation in the Middle East. Entering each document link, we looked for all the information given, focusing attentively on the statements of the US, the UK, and France's representatives. In particular, we were looking for keywords 'Israel,' 'rights of Israel,' 'Israel's rights,' 'support to Israel,' 'self-defense,' 'security,' 'vetoed against,' 'strongly support,' 'protect from terror,' 'blaming,' and 'terrorism.' Our goal was to carefully analyze the common trends and arguments used by the representatives of the US, the UK, and France to support Israel in the post-October 7 conflict.

### **Limitations**

Our study has one major limitation, namely the time frame. As mentioned before, the conflict between Israel and Palestine has a history of more than 75 years, with key dates including 1948, 1967, and 2000s (Jamal, 2016, pp. 370-372). We understand that the timeframe that we chose is relatively short, from October 7, 2023, to January 31, 2024, and covers only four months of the given conflict. Nevertheless, it should be noted that these first four months were a critical period as they covered the escalation of the conflict and intensified work by member states of the UNSC in those meetings, which intended to assist the situation. Moreover, the UNSC Resolutions on this matter were created and vetoed, with only one resolution (S/RES/2712) passing that aimed to address the humanitarian crisis that occurred in the

Gaza Strip, Palestine (UNSC, 2023). Due to the scale of its outcomes, we chose this time frame and did our best to cover notable aspects and analyze the trend within those UNSC meetings. Thus, our research is concentrating on this time frame for our analysis. In addition, we also provided the historical background of the conflict in our literature review section. We also stated that further research in this field covering the following time frame is necessary.

### **Data Analysis**

As mentioned above, in this part, we are focused on answering the question of how the UNSC addressed the humanitarian crisis in Gaza through the analysis of P-3 member states' statements about the situation within the UNSC meetings between October 7, 2023, and January 31, 2024. Although we will also provide statements of other states' representatives along with the opinions of experts to explore the context around the topic and different perceptions of the conflict, our focus is precisely on the US, the UK, and France's statements and speeches regarding the Israel-Palestine conflict due to several reasons. Firstly, the US alone vetoed three times and, therefore, did not let resolutions by the UNSC assess Palestine and implement the immediate ceasefire. Secondly, during the given period, the UK and France also tend to strongly support Israel, which may cause the escalation of the situation.

#### **4.1. The United States**

The first significant argument that the US representatives usually highlight is the right of Israel for self-defense. In the UNSC meetings' discourse, the US representatives established a strong sense of the necessity to support Israel in its defensive measures, referring to the right that Israel has to secure itself. In particular, the representatives of the US were openly talking about Israel's "inherent right to self-defense" (UNSC meeting record, October 16, p. 3), (UNSC meeting record, October 24, p. 14), (UNSC meeting record, October 30, p. 11), (UNSC meeting record, December 8, p. 12), expressing dissatisfaction that draft resolutions made no mention of Israel's right of self-defense (UNSC meeting record, October 18, p. 5), (UNSC meeting record, November 15, p. 2), (UNSC meeting record, December 8, p. 5), (UNSC meeting record, December 29, p. 14) as one of the reasons for rejecting other resolution's drafts that were possible due to intense work and collaboration of other Member states' desire to assist the catastrophe. Although Mrs.

Thomas-Greenfield, the US representative, stated that "Like every nation in the world, Israel has the inherent right of self-defense" (UNSC meeting record, October 18, p. 5), the discourse created by the US shifted perspective into maintaining Israel's rights without taking into consideration the needs of Palestinians. When Palestinian representatives talked about the losses held in the Gaza Strip during the first ten days of the war that resulted in the assault of more than 2 million innocent civilians (UNSC meeting record, October 30, p. 2), both the US and Israeli representatives were balancing the dispute by referring to the Holocaust that Israelis faced a few decades ago and compared it with the situation occurred on October 7, 2023, to express the scales of damage made to Israel (UNSC meeting record, October 16, p. 3), (UNSC meeting record, January 12, p. 6), (UNSC meeting record, January 31, p. 6). "That was the worst massacre of Jewish people since the Holocaust. I want to say that once again: that was the worst massacre of Jewish people since the Holocaust" (UNSC meeting record, October 16, p. 3) - these are the exact words with which the representative of America, Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield, started her speech at the first UNSC meeting on the matter of the post-October 7 situation. The discourse turned into a significantly complex matter as the US, which has essential power in the UN, including permission to veto resolutions, concentrated on the right to the sovereignty of Israel without the same enthusiasm towards the right to the sovereignty of Palestine.

Moreover, it was evident that the US was "in close contact with the Prime Minister of Israel, Netanyahu," as was stated by Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield, the US representative at UNSC meetings, who said that Israel is not one to be blamed for the significant explosion of hospitals in Gaza Strip (UNSC meeting record, October 18, p. 14). Thus, there is a possibility that American representatives' statements did not present the massive aggression towards Palestinians living in Gaza on a scale according to reality. This fact can be seen in the speeches of experts invited to contribute to the discourse to gain a precise understanding of the given issue during the UNSC meeting on the situation in the Middle East. For example, as Mr. Lazzarini, Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, stated, almost 70 percent of those reported killed in the Gaza Strip are children and women. Only within the first three weeks of the war 3200 children were killed (UNSC meeting record, October 30, p. 2). The raised question of the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip demanded fast decision-making. Nonetheless, as stated by the representative of Russia, Mr. Nebenzia, "one could get the impression that the Security Council is happy to make do exclusively with Israel's terms on humanitarian pauses at its own discretion" (UNSC meeting record, November 15, p. 2).

The second vital point that the US representatives often emphasize is the threat faced by Israel in the face of terrorist attacks, stressing the necessity to assist globally to Israel. In particular, it can be seen by the statement of the US representative made on October 16, 2023, "As President Biden made clear, we are working with Israel to ensure that it has what it needs to defend the Israeli people, rescue hostages, and take the necessary action to hold terrorists accountable for the attacks" (UNSC meeting record, p. 4). According to Caplan, the discourse around a particular conflict is shaped by how those who assess conflicts use particular terminologies to divide groups of people into heroes and villains. The words they often choose reveal the feelings of people who are assessing the situation. To be precise, observers are the ones who decide whom to claim with pejorative connotations, like 'terrorists,' and whom to name in a more flattering way, like 'freedom fighters' (2020, p. 6). Therefore, it can be suggested that the US representatives can intentionally choose specific words to promote the favorable portrayal of reality. For example, not only did the US representatives constantly highlight the fact that Hamas is a terroristic organization, but they also used widely spread stereotypes about Muslims and purposefully mentioned Iraq with its terroristic movements in the past. As Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield commented, "The brutality of Hamas brings to mind the most heinous atrocities committed by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham" (UNSC meeting record, October 16, p. 3).

Additionally, Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield, a representative of the US, misinterpreted the historical facts of the Israel-Palestine conflict, accusing Hamas of "its decades of cruelty" actions over Israel without following explanations on the given matter. To be exact, she stated, "Hamas has wrought misery and destruction on Palestinians and the region, and it has done so for decades" (UNSC meeting record, October 18, p. 14, part 2), without giving exact statistics or any metrics. In response to other Member States' concerns in Gaza, Mr. Wood, the representative of America, on November 10, 2023, stated, "Hamas cynically and atrociously uses Palestinian civilians as human shields, putting its command posts, weapons, and ammunition within or beneath the very hospitals about which we are speaking today and in residential buildings, schools, and mosques," (UNSC meeting record, p. 11) blaming Hamas for all the actions happening in Gaza Strip instead of holding Israel accountable for its extreme defensive measures that were resulted in bombing and attacking innocent civilians living there. In addition, at the UNSC meeting on October 30, 2023, Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield once more delivered a speech stating the necessity to respect international humanitarian law, referring only to Hamas to stop its actions: "That means that Hamas must not use Palestinians as human shields — an act of unthinkable cruelty and a violation of the law of war" (UNSC meeting record, p. 11). Therefore, it can be the case that the selective usage of

words and misinterpretation of context may contribute to a biased portrayal of the conflict, reinforcing stereotypes and promoting ideas in favor of Israel. The US representatives' statements often show generous support towards Israel, referring to the need to support Israel as "the bare minimum" and asking members to take collective measures in aiding Israel (UNSC meeting record, October 18, p. 5), (UNSC meeting record, October 24, p. 14), (UNSC meeting record, November 22, p. 11), (UNSC meeting record, December 22, p. 5).

The third essential factor that the US representatives repeatedly stress is the suffering of Israeli citizens. Furthermore, many statements by the US representatives included words with an emotional tone. For example, on October 24, 2023, Mr. Blinken, another representative of the US, spoke in detail about the consequences of the terrorist attack on Israel, "babies riddled with bullets; young people hunted down and gunned down with glee; people, young people, beheaded; etc." (UNSC meeting record, p. 5). Similarly, on November 22, 2023, Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield mentioned that "but many members of the Council seem to have forgotten or attempted to erase the horrors of that day," talking about the October 7, 2023, attack while continuing with "and many still cannot bring themselves to unequivocally condemn Hamas's acts of terror," creating a potential to cause the feelings of blame to member states' representatives (UNSC meeting record, p. 11). In addition, they considered it necessary to bring the group of people whose family members were taken as hostages by Hamas to provide evidence of who suffered the most when the issue was not to compare but to assist both states.

In the meanwhile, the representatives of the UAE, Albania, and Jordan referred to the prehistoric context of the situation in Gaza with three rounds of conflicts that led to a catastrophic scene as 1.3 million people were left in need of urgent aid for survival reasons, half of which were children (UNSC meeting record, October 16, p. 7), along with the illegal occupation of Palestinian territory by Israel (UNSC meeting record, October 16, p. 8). Moreover, the Secretary-General Antonio Guterres were constantly reminding others of the urgency of taking rightful collective actions in the example of resolutions for immediate ceasefire in Gaza Sector and mentioned ineffectiveness of humanitarian aid due to inability of covering all innocent lives that are in desperate need of help (UNSC meeting record, January 23, p. 3). Accordingly, the discourse around the Israel-Palestine conflict since October 7, 2023, showed how the US representatives probably tended to balance the dispute in favor of Israel and maybe aimed to gather international sympathy and increase support for Israel by doing so while the humanitarian crisis was escalating quickly and every second was counted.

## 4.2. The United Kingdom and France

The discourse presented by the UK and France in the UN Security Council can be partially one-sided, as both representatives strongly supported Israel. Although not without significance, France and Great Britain's statements at the UNSC may create a hierarchy in the assessment of events, and these liberal countries possibly form a different reality, emphasizing their influence and significance.

The statements made by the representatives of the United Kingdom also strongly supported the rights of Israel, justifying its actions and referring to international law. On October 24, 2023, Tugendhat, the representative of the UK, confirmed the UK's position and said, "Israel is a grieving country. The United Kingdom strongly supports Israel in its quest to protect itself from terror" (UNSC meeting record, p. 22). This statement confirms the UK's firm position in supporting Israel's response to terrorist threats. On the one hand, another representative of the United Kingdom, Barbara Woodward, reflects the country's position on the draft proposed by the Russian Federation. He stressed that "The United Kingdom could not support draft resolution S/2023/795" because it did not recognize Israel's right to self-defense, which was considered the central point for the United Kingdom. On the other hand, the representative of Russia, Mr. Nebenzia, expressed disappointment at the failure to adopt a resolution that focused on a humanitarian ceasefire (S/2023/795). In his speech, he stated that "national interests — frankly, self-centered ideological and political interests - prevailed over the goal of stopping the unfolding humanitarian catastrophe" (UNSC meeting record, October 25, p. 3).

Representatives of France's statements emphasize the importance of Israel's right to self-defense and security. In their speeches, both countries openly expressed solidarity and supported the right to territorial security based on international law. On October 18, 2023, the representative of France, De Riviere, in his speech, expressed "unwavering commitment to Israel's security" and recalled "its right to self-defense," thereby guaranteeing support from France (UNSC meeting record, p. 11). Also, in her statements, Ms. Colonna, another representative of France, quoted the words of the President of the French Republic that Israel has the right to defend itself and its people so that such an "attack will never happen again" (UNSC meeting record, October 24, p. 16). The French delegates emphasized Israel's right to self-defense in line with "international rules" in each of their statements (UNSC meeting record, October 18, p. 11), while they usually overlooked issues related to the security of the people that should have been addressed. The representative of Palestine expressed his belief about international law, saying, "International law does not give the right to commit mass murder. Israel commits mass killings in Gaza every single day" (UNSC meeting record, October 18, p. 17).

Consequently, it should be noted that the representatives of France, in their statements speaking about the protection of Israel's rights and its security, often mention at the end of their speech "in accordance with international law," ignoring the meaning of this word and justifying Israel's actions.

Moreover, the press Secretary of the United Kingdom, Dame Barbara Woodward, expressed particular concerns about the threat to the continued existence of the Israeli state and commented on the importance of supporting Israel. To be precise, in her speech delivered on October 16, 2023, she stressed the seriousness of Hamas's actions, calling it an "existential blow" and paying particular attention to Israel's security along with its protection in the international arena (UNSC meeting record, p. 4). Analyzing the speeches of the representatives of the United Kingdom from October 7, 2023, to January 31, 2024, the trend remained unchanged. For example, Dame Barbara Woodward expressed concern about the Council's inattention, saying, "It is unconscionable for the Council to ignore the largest terrorist attack in Israel's history" (UNSC meeting record, October 16, p. 4). However, a representative of the United Arab Emirates, Mrs. Nusseibeh, pointed out that "Gaza was already one of the most desperate places on Earth to live" before the unjustified Hamas attack on October 7, 2023. He stated, "Hamas does not represent the Palestinian people or the people of Gaza who are suffering immensely today" (UNSC meeting record, October 16, p. 7), especially drawing attention to the fact that over the past decade, the residents of Gaza have experienced three rounds of significant conflicts.

Furthermore, during her statement, Ms. Colonna, the French delegate, highlighted the significance of backing Israel and voiced specific worries about the threat to the state of Israel's continued existence. She may seem to press the Council, highlighting its responsibilities and emphasizing the need to act without delay to fulfill the essential obligations. Furthermore, Ms. Colonna noted the "large-scale, inhumane and reprehensible attack on civilians who were killed, tortured and raped in cold blood" (UNSC meeting record, October 24, p. 16). She expressed her conviction in the need for absolute condemnation of such incidents as unacceptable and contrary to the principles of humanity and international law. Another representative, Mr. De Riviere said, "The terrorist attack carried out on the 7 October by Hamas is, without a doubt, the worst such attack experienced by Israel since its creation" (UNSC meeting record, October 16, p. 8). Ms. Colonna also stressed the seriousness and ruthlessness of the terrorist attacks, denouncing them as a breach of UNSC values and a danger to public safety (UNSC meeting record, October 24, p. 16). Hence, it may be expressed that their views, which shape and describe the reality of the conflict, influence the discourse on how P-3 member states often



prioritize Israel's security. In addition, the speeches of the French delegates emphasized the need for the international community to support Israel.

Analyzing the statements of the representatives of Great Britain about the creation of long-term relations between two states in which Israel and Palestine will peacefully coexist, one can note their support for this idea while overlooking the rights of the Palestinian people, which exacerbates the dire consequences of the humanitarian crisis. On October 30, 2023, the representative of the United Kingdom, Barbara Woodward, stated, "The United Kingdom retains the long-term goal of a two-State solution, with Israel and Palestine coexisting peacefully," stressing the implementation of two-state solution and emphasizing that this will lead to an end to the conflict. She also noted that "the Palestinian Authority should play a central role, and nothing should be done that cuts across progress towards a two-State solution" (UNSC meeting record, p. 21). In addition, Representative Barbara Woodward stressed that Israel must be able to counter the threat posed by Hamas following international law so that they can purposefully work on a two-state solution that will ensure state sovereignty for the Palestinians and the security of Israel (UNSC meeting record, December 8, p. 6).

The representative of France similarly stated her position, saying, "We all know the conditions for achieving such a lasting peace — fully guaranteeing Israel's security and establishing a State for the Palestinians" (UNSC meeting record, November 10, p. 15). Mrs. Broadhurst Estival called on the Council to restore the political process and noted that the only viable solution is the creation of two states. Thus, France showed its commitment to implementing the resolution, considering it the only way to ensure peace. Meanwhile, the representative of China, Mr. Zhang Jian, stressed that Mr. Xi Jinping has repeatedly expressed the opinion that the primary means of resolving the Palestinian issue is to create an independent state. He noted that the repeated outbreaks of the crisis in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict are due to insufficient progress in the implementation of the two-state solution, and the Middle East peace process has "come down from the right path". Furthermore, he highlighted this because the relevant UN resolutions need to be implemented more effectively (UNSC meeting record, October 16, p. 6). As mentioned above, according to Farsakh, the two-state solution was never a viable option for resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict because it did not take into account the rights of Palestinians (2017, pp. 56-57). From this, it should be noted that in their speeches, according to the statements of the representatives of France and the UK, due to constant reminding of the two-state solution, they may be viewed as unintentionally leaning towards supporting Israel and bypassing the rights of the Palestinians, which contributes to the terrible consequences of the humanitarian crisis.

## **Results & Interpretation**

After carefully evaluating 20 documents with official scripts of the recorded UNSC meetings related to the subject of the situation in the Middle East, we found the following two common argumentative trends within the statements of representatives of P-3 member states that are the US, the UK, and France: concentrating on the right of Israel for self-defense and focusing on threats from terrorist attacks. To be clear, the first argumentative trend in this regard concerns the way P-3 member states paid a significant amount of attention to the rights of Israel, possibly aiming to justify its actions presented as defensive measures. The second argumentative trend covered the Orientalist approach of those P-3 member states that often misinterpret facts and wrongfully stereotype or generalize certain groups of people for their benefit. Furthermore, two additional separate arguments were found in statements from the US and the UK with France. To be exact, the representatives of the US used the sufferings of Israeli citizens with emotional portrayal as one more reason to support Israel worldwide. In addition, one can get the impression that the representatives of Great Britain and France, in their statements, noted the two-state solution as the only opportunity for peace, unintentionally overlooking the rights of Palestinians that are not covered in Resolution 242 regarding the two-state solution. By paying significant attention to Israel's rights, this emphasis has caused serious humanitarian losses to Palestinian citizens in Gaza. The analysis shows that the P-3 member states, the USA, Great Britain, and France, possibly needed to pay more attention to the humanitarian crisis in Gaza during the specified period.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, as mentioned above, the main objective of the research was to answer how the UNSC addressed the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip. Therefore, we conducted a discourse analysis of P-3 member states' statements regarding the situation in Palestine during the UNSC meetings. Throughout the data analysis, we discovered that these states' representatives may unintentionally promote ideas favorable to Israel, which may be one of the reasons why the UNSC is ineffective in solving the given issue. During the research, we identified three arguments that each of these P-3 member states used, from which Israel possibly benefited more than Palestine. In the meantime, it is known that the

humanitarian crisis occurred in the same territory and mostly happened to innocent people. It can be said that the given situation revealed particular issues within the UNSC and international system, generally speaking. The ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestine is a crucial situation, leading to further escalation of the humanitarian crisis that is often ignored or neglected, with predictions that hostilities in this area are likely to continue (UNOCHA, 2024). All the given statistics and information highlights the need for an urgent humanitarian ceasefire that is yet to come. As we mentioned before, P-3 member states that are the US, the UK, and France, have shown relative support for Israel rather than Palestine in their discourses, which is costing Palestinians not only their rights but their lives. The support of those P-3 member states revealed potential contradictions in international law and UNSC resolutions. Although numerous studies have been made on the conflict, not including existing ones, updated and precise research is needed on the relationship between these P-3 member states and their impact on UNSC discourse and its effectiveness.

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