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The Gaza Strip Conflict (2023-2025): forced migration, securitization, and the limits of international humanitarian protection

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Abstract: The conflict that erupted on October 7, 2023, in the Gaza Strip has triggered one of the most severe humanitarian crises in the recent history of the Middle East, leading to massive forced displacements and a sharp deterioration in living conditions for the civilian population. This study examines the interdependencies between forced migration, the process of securitization, and the violation of fundamental human rights through the theoretical framework of the Copenhagen School. By employing a qualitative analysis of international documents (UN, UNHCR, UNRWA, OCHA, Amnesty International, HRW), the research highlights how political and institutional discourses transform Palestinian migration from a humanitarian issue into a matter of security. In this context, the right to asylum, the principle of non-refoulement, and freedom of movement are often suspended under the pretext of safeguarding national security. The ceasefire of October 10, 2025 - mediated by the United States, Egypt, Qatar, and Turkey and at the time this study was completed (October 15, 2025) - marked a pivotal moment, offering a brief diplomatic respite and a framework for reassessing the international response. However, its effects remain limited, reflecting a temporary desecuritization of the discourse without structural changes in the protection mechanisms. The study proposes directions for the desecuritization of migration and for strengthening the legal and institutional instruments aimed at protecting Palestinian refugees within a geopolitical environment characterized by instability and impunity.

Keywords: *Gaza Strip; Humanitarian crisis; Forced migration; Securitization; Human rights violations.*

1. Introductory, methodological, and conceptual framework of the research

1.1. Contextual framework and humanitarian foundations of the conflict

Since October 7, 2023, the Gaza Strip has become the epicenter of an unprecedented humanitarian crisis, generated by the violent escalation of the conflict between Israel and the Hamas movement. The Israeli offensive, launched in response to the armed attacks carried out on Israeli territory, led to a rapid and profound deterioration of the humanitarian situation in the enclave through the destruction of civilian infrastructure, the obstruction of access to vital resources, and the restriction of international aid. This situation was further compounded by the phenomenon of internal displacement within Gaza - particularly toward the southern areas of the territory - under conditions of insecurity, overcrowding, and

acute shortages of basic resources. The bombardment of densely populated areas, including shelters managed by humanitarian organizations involved in refugee assistance, exacerbated civilian vulnerability, while restrictions on humanitarian aid deliveries increased the risks of famine and epidemic outbreaks [1].

The conflict has also accelerated the process of securitization of Palestinian migration, whereby political discourses have redefined forced migration as a security issue rather than a humanitarian emergency. The states involved - particularly Israel and Egypt - have invoked security considerations to justify the closure of borders, the strict control of population movements, and the limitation of humanitarian evacuations, effectively transforming the civilian population into an object of strategic control.

In this context, the ceasefire of October 10, 2025 - mediated by the United States, Egypt, Qatar, and Turkey, and in its early phase of implementation at the time of this study's completion (October 15, 2025) - marked a pivotal political and humanitarian turning point [2]. Although it led to a temporary cessation of hostilities and the partial resumption of aid deliveries, its effects were limited by the persistence of the blockade and the absence of a robust international mechanism for civilian protection. Despite diplomatic rhetoric referring to a so-called "humanitarian window", the ceasefire failed to fully restore freedom of movement for the population or to establish a sustainable solution to the refugee crisis.

Thus, the situation in the Gaza Strip continues to reflect a structural contradiction between the logic of security and the imperatives of humanitarian protection. Within a fragmented geopolitical context, the civilian population remains trapped between the securitized discourses of states and the inability of the international community to enforce compliance with the fundamental norms of international humanitarian law. The conflict in the Gaza Strip therefore stands as an emblematic case study of the international order's failure to effectively safeguard human rights in contexts of asymmetric warfare and prolonged blockade.

1.2. Research methodology and sources used

This study aims to analyze how the recent conflict in the Gaza Strip (2023-2025) has generated large-scale population displacements, accompanied by an intense process of migration securitization within state and institutional narratives. In this regard, the study explores the tensions between the security imperatives of states and their moral and legal obligations to protect human rights in times of crisis.

The research methodology employed is qualitative, grounded in documentary analysis of both primary and secondary sources. It encompasses the examination of reports produced by international organizations - the United Nations (UN), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Amnesty International, and Human Rights Watch (HRW) - as well as official statements from state and regional actors, and relevant academic literature on securitization theory and forced migration. Additionally, discourse analysis is employed to identify the ways in which migration is framed as a threat within the context of the Gaza conflict.

By applying the theoretical framework of securitization - as developed by the Copenhagen School - together with a documentary analysis of international sources, the study highlights the limitations of the international protection system and underscores the need for the desecuritization of migration in conflict zones. Finally, it formulates recommendations aimed at strengthening international humanitarian intervention mechanisms within a geopolitical landscape marked by instability and fragmentation.

1.3. Research hypotheses and objectives

Building upon the theoretical premises and the empirical context analyzed, this study seeks to investigate the relationship between the armed conflict in the Gaza Strip and the related phenomena of forced migration and human rights violations through the lens of the securitization process. To this end, the following research hypotheses have been formulated:

H1: The armed conflict in the Gaza Strip has generated a large-scale humanitarian crisis in which forced migration is primarily addressed through a security-oriented perspective, leading to the marginalization of the legal and humanitarian dimensions of refugee protection.

H2: The process of securitizing Palestinian migration - reflected in state, regional, and international discourses - has justified restrictions on freedom of movement, access to asylum, and the distribution of humanitarian assistance.

H3: The lack of a coordinated operational framework for humanitarian coordination and international protection has amplified the vulnerability of the civilian population and contributed to the perpetuation of institutional inequalities in the application of human rights.

H4: The ceasefire of October 10, 2025, although temporarily reducing violence and enabling a partial desecuritization of public discourse, has not yet produced structural changes in protection policies nor altered the balance between security and humanity in the management of forced migration.

Based on these hypotheses, the research aims to achieve the following **specific objectives**:

O1: To analyze the international legal framework governing the protection of refugees and internally displaced persons, with a specific focus on its application to the Gaza Strip context.

O2: To examine the process of securitizing Palestinian migration in the discourses of state actors, institutions, and the media, both before and after the October 2025 ceasefire.

O3: To evaluate the effectiveness of international humanitarian intervention mechanisms (OCHA, UNRWA, UNHCR) under conditions of armed conflict and security-imposed restrictions on humanitarian access.

O4: To identify the political and humanitarian impact of the October 2025 ceasefire on civilian protection and the framework of international response.

O5: To formulate policy proposals and normative recommendations aimed at the desecuritization of forced migration, the strengthening of international protection guarantees, and the consolidation of global solidarity with Palestinian refugees.

This section lays the analytical foundation of the study and provides a clear direction for exploring the complex relationship between security, migration, and human rights in the specific case of the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip.

2. Theoretical framework

The analysis of the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip and its implications for forced migration and human rights requires a robust theoretical foundation capable of explaining how these phenomena are perceived, interpreted, and managed at the international level. In this regard, the theory of securitization, developed by the Copenhagen School, provides a suitable conceptual framework for understanding how political actors transform certain issues - such as migration - from social or humanitarian concerns into existential threats that justify exceptional measures [3].

Recent scholarship emphasizes that the securitization of migration is neither a uniform nor a static process, but a contextual and contested one. For instance, Murray (2024) examines how certain non-governmental and international organizations engage in challenging the securitization of migration, demonstrating that desecuritization is not a final outcome but a dynamic process that continuously interacts with securitization [4]. Similarly, Polko (2025) analyzes the securitization processes implemented in Poland in response to migration crises linked to the influx of migrants and refugees from MENA countries and Ukraine, illustrating contexts in which securitization may be regarded as just or unjust, thus contributing to a necessary theoretical refinement [5].

2.1. The theory of securitization – from discourse to action

According to Ole Wæver, securitization is not an objective condition but a discursive act through which a political actor (state, leader, or institution) publicly declares that a phenomenon constitutes an existential threat, thereby legitimizing the adoption of exceptional policies beyond the normal rules of

democratic governance [6]. The process of securitization involves three key components: the securitizing actor, the referent object, and the audience that accepts the discourse as legitimate.

Migration, in this context, can be securitized when it is framed as a threat to national identity, social cohesion, or public order [7, 8]. Although initially applied in the field of military security, the theory has rapidly expanded into other domains such as environmental issues, public health, and -relevant to this study-migration [3].

In the context of recent developments in migration policy, a trend toward managerial securitization has emerged - namely, the transformation of security discourse into a technical, administrative language combined with humanitarian rhetoric. Studies have shown how European Union (EU) migration policies have evolved from overt securitization to a dual discourse that frames security concerns in ostensibly softer, humanitarian terms [9].

In the case of the conflict in the Gaza Strip, securitization is clearly reflected in the discourses of neighboring states, international actors, and Western media, where Palestinian refugees are often portrayed as sources of demographic pressure, regional instability, or even potential terrorism. These narratives are reinforced by selective visual representations and by a dominant discursive framework that transforms forced migration into a security problem [10, 11].

2.2. Forced migration and the protection of human rights in international law

Forced migration is defined in both specialized literature and international law as the involuntary displacement of individuals or groups, primarily due to armed conflict, political, ethnic, or religious persecution, generalized violence, as well as natural disasters and climate change. Unlike voluntary migration, which is driven by economic or social factors, forced migration has a necessary and urgent character, often associated with an imminent threat to the life, liberty, or physical integrity of the affected individuals [12, 13].

From a legal standpoint, the 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees [14], complemented by the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees [15], constitutes the cornerstone of international refugee protection. These instruments define the status of refugees, establish the principle of non-refoulement (the prohibition of forced return to a territory where a person's life or freedom may be threatened), and outline the responsibilities of signatory states in providing protection. However, these instruments apply exclusively to persons who have crossed an international border.

For internally displaced persons (IDPs) who remain within their country of origin, the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement [16] offer a normative reference framework, articulating non-binding standards that reflect the rights of displaced persons in situations of armed conflict, human rights violations, or natural disasters. Although not legally binding, these principles have been widely recognized and applied by international agencies and states in the development of protection policies.

Complementing these instruments, other fundamental texts of international law enshrine essential rights in the context of forced migration. For example, Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights [17] guarantees the right to seek and enjoy asylum in other countries, while Article 12 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 16 December 1966 [18] ensures the right to freedom of movement and the right to leave any country, including one’s own. Nevertheless, in practice, the implementation of these rights is frequently obstructed or compromised during crises - particularly in conflict zones - where state security interests prevail over the obligation to protect vulnerable populations.

The conflict in the Gaza Strip provides a particularly emblematic example. Although the fundamental rights of individuals affected by the conflict are theoretically guaranteed by the aforementioned legal instruments, effective access to protection is largely absent. The civilian population - subjected to bombardment, blockade, and forced displacement - lacks any real access to asylum outside the Gaza Strip [19, 20]. In the name of national or regional security, states directly or indirectly involved in the conflict (notably Israel and Egypt) impose restrictive measures, while the international community remains largely passive in the face of what amounts to a suspension of fundamental rights [21, 22].

Thus, the Gaza Strip emerges as a critical and revealing case study, illustrating the widening gap between international legal norms and their practical application in contexts of acute and protracted conflict.

3. The crisis in the Gaza Strip and forced migration

The conflict that erupted in the Gaza Strip on October 7, 2023, triggered an unprecedented wave of armed violence within the recent history of Israeli-Palestinian tensions. The disproportionate military response, the blockade imposed on the region, the destruction of civilian infrastructure, and the lack of access to vital resources have led to a deep humanitarian crisis whose effects have been borne primarily by the civilian population. One of the most visible and tragic consequences has been the forced migration of hundreds of thousands of people, compelled either to relocate within the Gaza Strip or to attempt to flee the territory in search of safety.

3.1. The impact of the conflict on the civilian population

According to reports published by OCHA and UNRWA, during the first three months of the conflict, more than 1.7 million people - approximately 75% of the Gaza Strip's population - were internally displaced [23, 24]. The vast majority sought refuge in the southern part of the territory, particularly in the Rafah area, where living conditions rapidly became unbearable due to severe overcrowding, lack of potable water, food shortages, electricity outages, and the collapse of basic healthcare services [25].

A 2025 report by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) indicates that Gaza's healthcare infrastructure has been severely damaged during the conflict, with hospitals bombed or deprived of essential resources, and UN schools and shelters hosting civilians occasionally becoming targets of attacks [26].

By early October 2025, according to UNRWA data (August 2025), the number of internally displaced persons in the Gaza Strip had reached approximately 1.9 million - equivalent to over 90% of the territory's total population [27]. This situation underscores the alarming scale of internal displacement within a geographically confined area subjected to relentless bombardment and movement restrictions. In this context, internal migration was not a matter of choice, but a desperate act of survival in an enclosed territory where legal or safe exit routes had become virtually nonexistent.

3.2. Border restrictions and obstacles to evacuation

The Gaza Strip is, de facto, an enclave under a multilayered blockade, with Israel exercising strict control over the northern access points, including the Erez crossing [28], while Egypt administers the Rafah border crossing in the south [29]. Despite the gravity of the humanitarian crisis, the departure of refugees from the Gaza Strip has been severely hindered by administrative, diplomatic, and logistical barriers - many of which have been justified on security grounds.

Israeli authorities have argued that the large-scale evacuation of civilians is necessary to protect them from Hamas militants, who allegedly use the population as human shields [30]. At the same time, Israel has expressed concern that such evacuations could be exploited by terrorist groups seeking to infiltrate combatants outside the Gaza Strip. Conversely, Egypt has shown reluctance to fully open the Rafah crossing, citing internal security risks as well as fears of establishing a dangerous precedent regarding the potential transfer of Palestinians into the Sinai Peninsula [31].

These positions have, in various forms, been echoed by other international actors, who have chosen to focus on delivering humanitarian aid within the Gaza Strip rather than proposing effective solutions for the evacuation of civilians facing imminent danger. Within this framework, the right to asylum - enshrined in international law - has been effectively suspended. Individuals in urgent need of international protection have been prevented from exercising this right, while borders have been treated not as gateways to safety, but as defensive barriers against a form of migration perceived as a threat rather than as a means of rescue for civilians in peril.

4. The securitization of migration in national and international discourses

One of the most problematic aspects of the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip lies in the way forced migration has been addressed - not through a humanitarian lens, but through a security-oriented one. This process of securitizing migration is reflected in the official rhetoric of the states involved, in the positions adopted by international institutions, and in the narratives promoted by the media. Rather than being perceived as victims of an armed conflict, Palestinian refugees have often been depicted as destabilizing actors, potentially generating new threats to regional and international security.

4.1. Security rhetoric in the discourse of the parties involved

Israel has consistently employed a discourse centered on national security, invoking the risk of radical elements infiltrating among civilians attempting to cross the borders [32]. This rhetoric has extended even to international humanitarian agencies, which have sometimes been accused of passive collaboration with Islamist groups. Such was the case of UNRWA, the main provider of services for Palestinian refugees, which was accused by the Israeli government of the alleged involvement of some of its employees in the attacks of October 7, 2023. The suspension of UNRWA's funding, in the absence of conclusive evidence, has had a detrimental effect on humanitarian operations [33]. Consequently, securitization has not been limited to physical borders but has also encompassed humanitarian aid channels, which have been tightly controlled, blocked, or delayed under the pretext of security verification.

Egypt, on the other hand, although formally and diplomatically aligned with the Palestinian cause, has maintained a restrictive stance regarding the full opening of the Rafah border crossing. Its justifications have included the risk of the conflict spilling over into the Sinai Peninsula, the potential for an uncontrolled influx of refugees, and concerns over internal stability. In practice, Egypt has adopted the security narrative, treating forced migration as a strategic threat rather than a humanitarian crisis requiring urgent and proportional responses [34, 35].

At the level of the EU and other Western actors, discourse has focused on risk management related to migration and the prevention of radicalization in refugee camps, largely overlooking the need to establish evacuation and protection corridors for the civilian population. Thus, the securitization of migration has manifested through an exaggeration of risks, a minimization of international responsibility, and a bureaucratic approach to an imminent humanitarian tragedy [36].

Meanwhile, the Arab League has addressed the issue of forced migration of Palestinians from the Gaza Strip mainly through diplomatic measures and political statements rather than through concrete operational mechanisms. The organization has publicly condemned any attempt at the forced displacement of the Palestinian population and has rejected proposals for relocation to neighboring states such as Egypt or Jordan. It has also advanced Arab plans for the reconstruction and stabilization of the Gaza Strip, intended to prevent further displacement and facilitate the return of refugees. However, the practical impact of these initiatives remains limited due to the lack of direct control on the ground, divisions among member states, and the unstable military context [37]. Consequently, the Arab League and traditional Arab institutional frameworks remain largely declarative rather than operational actors in addressing Palestinian migration [38].

4.2. The media and public opinion: narratives of the "demographic threat"

The security discourse surrounding forced migration from Gaza has been amplified by segments of the media, which have framed the potential evacuation of Palestinians in terms of "demographic pressure" or even "ethnic reconfiguration" of sensitive regions such as the Sinai Peninsula or Jordan. In several political commentaries and publications, forced migration has been portrayed as a threat to the internal stability of host states, fueling negative perceptions, social anxiety, and xenophobic attitudes [39, 40].

This media framing has contributed to legitimizing restrictive political decisions, generating an artificial consensus around the idea that protecting borders is more important than saving lives. In the

absence of strong counter-narratives from civil society or humanitarian actors, the security discourse has become dominant, directly limiting access to protection for thousands of civilians. Israeli rhetoric, widely echoed in the media, has sought to rebrand forced displacement as voluntary migration within a security narrative - thereby undermining the recognition of international protection obligations [41]. Other perspectives have argued that the blockade of Gaza creates a coercive environment that forces young people to flee while simultaneously restricting their exit circumstances, safe routes, and access to international protection mechanisms [42]. Likewise, the securitarian framing has been used to justify border restrictions, classify Palestinians as a threat, and delegitimize asylum claims [43].

In sum, the securitization of migration from Gaza illustrates a collective abdication of responsibility and a reduction of the migration phenomenon to a matter of control rather than of rights. In this context, public debate and political decision-making have been shaped more by fear than by solidarity - more by perceptions of risk than by moral and legal imperatives.

Palestinian non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have played a vital role in documenting and communicating the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip, providing an essential local perspective on the consequences of the conflict and the violations of human rights. Among the most active are the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR), the Al Mezan Center for Human Rights (Al Mezan), and the Gaza Community Mental Health Programme (GCMHP). Although differing in profile and field of activity, these organizations converge in their shared criticism of the restrictions imposed on the civilian population and of the inadequacy of the international response

Based in Gaza, PCHR has emerged as one of the most outspoken local organizations condemning attacks on civilians and humanitarian infrastructure. In its reports and press releases from 2024–2025, the Centre characterized Israeli military actions as acts of "genocide," emphasizing the systematic destruction of essential goods and infrastructure vital to civilian survival. It also denounced the deliberate limitation of humanitarian access, which it considers a form of *collective punishment* contrary to international humanitarian law, and called for an immediate ceasefire and the establishment of safe humanitarian corridors [44-46].

Similarly, Al Mezan has documented violations of civil, social, and economic rights, focusing on the devastating effects of the blockade on the civilian population. The organization describes the blockade as a form of *collective punishment* that effectively transforms the entire enclave into a vast space of human detention. In its reports, Al Mezan consistently calls for the prosecution of those responsible for war crimes and for the activation of international justice mechanisms, particularly the International Criminal Court (ICC) [47, 48].

A complementary perspective is provided by the Gaza Community Mental Health Programme (GCMHP), which focuses on the psychological and social repercussions of the conflict, documenting the deterioration of public health, the collapse of community cohesion, and the growing collective trauma among civilians amid the widespread material destruction [49].

It is noteworthy that, in July 2025, more than 160 local and international NGOs co-signed a joint letter condemning the militarization of aid distribution and the reduction of delivery points — measures which, in their view, exposed civilians to further risks and violated the fundamental principles of humanitarian neutrality [50]. Likewise, in September 2025, the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) warned of the dramatic escalation of the humanitarian crisis in Gaza City, where civilians were left with no safe refuge. The statement denounced the insufficiency of humanitarian assistance and the violations of international humanitarian law, urging an immediate ceasefire and unrestricted humanitarian access [51].

Taken together, the positions of these local NGOs reveal a dual dimension of the ongoing crisis: on one hand, the systematic denunciation of human rights violations and of the securitized discourse used to justify humanitarian restrictions; and on the other, a strong appeal for international solidarity and for the legal accountability of those responsible for acts of violence against civilians.

5. The inefficiency of international protection mechanisms

In the context of the intensifying humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip, the response of the international community has been largely fragmented, delayed, and lacking structural effectiveness. Although a range of international instruments and organizations exist with mandates to protect civilian populations and respond to situations of forced migration, their applicability and effectiveness have been severely undermined by geopolitical constraints, the divergent interests of state actors, and institutional paralysis.

5.1. The United Nations and humanitarian limitations

The UN, through its specialized agencies (OCHA, UNHCR, UNRWA), has sought to coordinate humanitarian assistance in the Gaza Strip. However, access to affected areas has been repeatedly blocked or restricted by Israeli authorities on security grounds - an approach that contradicts humanitarian principles and reinforces control over vital resources as part of a broader military strategy [52, 53]. Moreover, the UNHCR has issued repeated public appeals for the facilitation of humanitarian access and has called for unhindered access to conflict-affected areas, facing systematic refusals in response [53].

In practice, humanitarian convoys have often been subjected to rigorous inspections, sometimes delayed for several days, while numerous UNRWA shelters have been damaged or destroyed by airstrikes, despite their locations having been officially communicated to the relevant authorities [54, 55]. Furthermore, UNRWA - the primary international body dedicated to supporting Palestinian refugees - has faced both reductions in international funding and allegations of complicity or bias, which have significantly weakened its operational capacity and diplomatic credibility. These developments illustrate the profound vulnerability of humanitarian agencies operating in conflict zones, as they remain subject to political pressures, security restrictions, and competing state interests that often override the imperatives of international humanitarian law [33].

5.2. The absence of a coherent framework for responding to forced migration

Forced migration caused by armed conflict is formally regulated by numerous international treaties - including the 1951 Geneva Convention, the 1967 Protocol, and UN documents on internal displacement - yet no clear or coherent operational mechanism exists to manage a crisis of the magnitude witnessed in the Gaza Strip [56]. Although some argue that Palestinian refugees have been accepted over time by various states in the region under distinct asylum regimes that diverge from international legal standards, the international legal framework has evolved to emphasize the notion of local and regional responsibility in addressing the asylum of Palestinian refugees [57].

According to OCHA, the current humanitarian coordination system faces major operational challenges that hinder the effective management of displaced populations [58]. The absence of a functional logistical coordination mechanism makes it difficult to manage the flow of displaced persons and their associated humanitarian needs [59]. Similarly, HRW notes that the existing system for handling forced migration in the Gaza Strip is chaotic, poorly coordinated, and fails to provide even minimal protection guarantees for civilians [20].

In the absence of a dedicated international legal framework for protection in contexts of high-intensity urban warfare and prolonged blockades, both states and international organizations tend to act reactively or selectively, guided primarily by their own strategic interests. As a result, refugee rights are often negotiated, downplayed, or ignored altogether, while collective responsibility is diluted into a cycle of blame-shifting and avoidance of obligations.

Attempts to establish safe humanitarian corridors or to evacuate civilians have been obstructed by both the refusal of the parties involved and the lack of a strong international mandate capable of enforcing compliance with international humanitarian law. Moreover, regional institutions - such as the Arab League and the EU - have failed to deliver a coordinated and effective response, favoring declarative approaches over concrete action [36, 37, 60].

Overall, the crisis in the Gaza Strip has laid bare the systemic inefficiency of international protection mechanisms and the absence of genuine political will to move from declaratory principles to concrete action. In a context marked by impunity and the prioritization of strategic interests over humanitarian values, the civilian population remains exposed, unprotected, and, too often, forgotten by the international community.

6. The October 10, 2025 armistice and its political-humanitarian implications

The armistice that came into effect on October 10, 2025, between Israel and Hamas represents a turning point in the evolution of the conflict in the Gaza Strip, marking the first significant cessation of hostilities after nearly two years of intense confrontation. The agreement, mediated by the United States, Egypt, Qatar, and Turkey, was approved by the Israeli cabinet amid mounting international pressure for a ceasefire and the facilitation of humanitarian access to the enclave [61, 62].

6.1. Content and phases of the armistice

The armistice between Israel and Hamas established the complete cessation of hostilities and the gradual withdrawal of Israeli forces from densely populated areas of the Gaza Strip. The agreement stipulates the release of all Israeli hostages held by Hamas in exchange for the liberation of approximately 1,900 Palestinian prisoners detained under administrative orders. Furthermore, the document contains provisions for facilitating humanitarian access, reopening border crossings, and ensuring the delivery of food, medicine, and reconstruction materials.

The implementation of these provisions is overseen by an international monitoring mechanism coordinated by the UN, with the participation of the United States, Egypt, Qatar, and Turkey. The agreement has led to a temporary de-escalation of the conflict, constituting a preliminary stage toward the stabilization of the humanitarian situation and the revitalization of the political process in the region [63, 64].

6.2. Humanitarian implications of the armistice

The armistice generated a series of immediate humanitarian implications which, although representing a significant step toward alleviating the suffering of the civilian population, remained limited and temporary as of the drafting of this study (October 15, 2025). The cessation of hostilities allowed for the partial resumption of aid deliveries to the most affected areas in the northern and central Gaza Strip, marking the first meaningful reopening of humanitarian flows after nearly two years of conflict. According to reports by OCHA and UNRWA, humanitarian convoys began transporting food, medicine, fuel, and essential medical equipment, thereby contributing to the immediate reduction of famine risk and the prevention of a health system collapse. In addition, the temporary reopening of the Rafah and Kerem Shalom crossings facilitated the access of medical personnel and emergency teams, as well as the evacuation of the wounded [65].

At the institutional level, the armistice enabled the resumption of international coordination among key UN agencies (OCHA, UNRWA, UNHCR) and donor states, leading to the implementation of a 60-day emergency assistance plan focused on providing vital resources and assessing reconstruction needs [66]. A direct outcome of the armistice was the partial return of displaced civilians to towns in northern Gaza, despite the widespread destruction of infrastructure and precarious living conditions. This reverse displacement, more symbolic than sustainable, reflected both the population's desire to return to their communities and the persistent depth of their vulnerability [67].

Nevertheless, while the armistice temporarily reduced the intensity of attacks, humanitarian conditions remained critical. Aid distribution was slow, hindered by prolonged Israeli inspections, the absence of secure corridors, and the limited logistical capacity of international agencies. Consequently, for a large segment of the population, the humanitarian crisis eased only marginally, without addressing the structural causes that sustain it.

In the medium term, the armistice may foster relative stabilization of the humanitarian situation by reducing violence and re-establishing a minimum level of cooperation among the involved international actors. The resumption of aid flows, the partial reopening of humanitarian corridors, and the reactivation of medical infrastructure could help mitigate the risk of total humanitarian collapse. However, these developments depend on the maintenance of international monitoring mechanisms and the commitment of the parties to uphold their obligations.

In the long term, the impact of the agreement will depend on whether this cessation of hostilities can be transformed into a sustainable process of reconstruction, reconciliation, and protection of fundamental rights. Without an integrated approach combining political, legal, and humanitarian dimensions, the armistice risks consolidating itself merely as a provisional arrangement, vulnerable to cyclical renewals of violence. The absence of a permanent international mechanism for the protection of Palestinian refugees and the lack of a credible political settlement perspective may significantly limit its lasting effects.

6.3. Political and security implications

The armistice between Israel and Hamas carried significant, yet limited, political and security implications. From a political perspective, the agreement produced a temporary de-escalation of hostilities and offered a diplomatic reprieve for both parties, without addressing the structural causes of the conflict, such as the status of the Gaza Strip, the demilitarization of Hamas, or the rights of Palestinian refugees [68]. For Israel, the armistice represented an opportunity for strategic recalibration and a reduction of international pressure, while for Hamas, it constituted a symbolic victory through the organization's survival and the release of Palestinian prisoners.

At the regional level, the involvement of the United States, Egypt, Qatar, and Turkey strengthened diplomatic cooperation, though strategic divergences among the mediators limited the efficiency of the implementation mechanism. From a security standpoint, the agreement led to a temporary reduction of violence, yet it failed to eliminate the risk of renewed hostilities, as border control and the Israeli military presence remained in place. Overall, the armistice contributed to a provisional stabilization, highlighting the persistence of a fragile balance between security, political interests, and regional vulnerability [69].

6.4. Critical assessment and research relevance

Within the context of this study, the October 2025 armistice represents a partial suspension of the ongoing crisis, allowing for a reassessment of the relationship between security, migration, and human rights protection. Although it created conditions for a temporary improvement in the humanitarian situation, it did not generate a structural transformation in international protection mechanisms. The persistence of restrictions, the absence of a coherent coordination framework, and the lack of a political outlook regarding the status of refugees reaffirm the ineffectiveness of the current global system for managing forced migration.

Therefore, the armistice may be interpreted not as a definitive solution, but rather as a transitional stage between the military phase of the conflict and a potential post-war reconstruction, marked by tensions between security imperatives and the humanitarian needs of the civilian population.

7. Proposals for the desecuritization of migration and the strengthening of international protection

In light of the major shortcomings of the current international framework for responding to the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip, a rethinking of approaches to forced migration is urgently required-one that prioritizes humanitarian and legal perspectives over the dominant security-oriented narrative. The process of de-securitizing migration thus becomes not only a theoretical imperative but also a practical necessity for restoring balance between the security needs of states and their obligation to protect the fundamental rights of individuals.

7.1. The October 10, 2025 armistice – an opportunity for de-securitizing migration

The armistice concluded on October 10, 2025, between Israel and Hamas created the premises for a partial desecuritization of Palestinian migration, offering a temporary framework for transition from a military logic to a humanitarian one. The cessation of hostilities, the partial reopening of borders, and the resumption of international cooperation under the auspices of the UN opened the possibility of reconfiguring the global response to the Palestinian refugee crisis.

However, this process of desecuritization remains limited, as it continues to be conditioned by the persistence of Israeli military control and the absence of a sustainable political solution. In this context,

the strengthening of humanitarian protection requires concrete institutional action aimed at transforming the ceasefire into a sustainable process of protection and reconstruction.

7.2. Reframing migration within the sphere of civil and humanitarian governance

We believe that the first step toward desecuritization is the discursive and institutional reframing of migration: it must be approached as a matter of social governance, international solidarity, and collective responsibility, rather than as a threat. This entails a revision of the narrative framework used by international and regional actors, who must abandon the risk-centered discourse and instead address migration in terms of rights, needs, and human dignity.

States that refuse to admit refugees on security grounds can be encouraged, through international cooperation and solidarity mechanisms, to share responsibilities more equitably. The model of voluntary relocation and conditional assistance, successfully applied in other contexts (e.g., Syria, Ukraine), could be adapted to the case of Gaza. Moreover, regional best practices should be promoted - such as the example of Jordan, which, despite significant challenges but with international support, has managed to integrate hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees over the past decade.

In the post-armistice context, the process of de-securitizing migration involves enhancing regional and international cooperation to ensure a fair redistribution of responsibilities, the expansion of humanitarian corridors, and the facilitation of internal reintegration for displaced persons.

7.3. Strengthening international mechanisms for the protection of refugees and internally displaced persons

The development of clear, coherent, and effective international instruments of protection has become imperative. Existing international norms, although well-intentioned, remain insufficiently adapted to situations of blockade - such as that experienced in the Gaza Strip - where the civilian population was confined to a closed territory, deprived of access to the international protection afforded by refugee status.

In this regard, it is necessary to consider: the establishment of an international humanitarian evacuation mechanism, managed by the UN in cooperation with third states willing to offer temporary or permanent asylum; the creation of protection corridors for internally displaced persons, monitored by international observers and accompanied by legal guarantees for the respect of human rights; the revision and adaptation of the mandates of UN agencies (particularly UNRWA and UNHCR) so that they may receive genuine financial and political support enabling effective field operations; and the strengthening of international justice mechanisms (e.g., the International Criminal Court) to ensure accountability for those responsible for crimes against civilians and violations of international humanitarian law.

Moreover, a more assertive engagement of international civil society, the academic community, and independent media is required. Their role is to counterbalance dominant securitized narratives and to contribute to the cultivation of a global culture of protection-one in which human life is not treated as a collateral cost, but as a fundamental pillar of the international order.

8. Confirmation of research hypotheses and validation of specific objectives. Limitations of the study

The qualitative analysis of documentary sources and institutional discourses generally confirms the hypotheses formulated within the research framework.

Hypothesis H1, concerning the securitized character attributed to forced migration, is validated by evidence provided in OCHA and UNRWA reports (2024-2025), which indicate that over 90% of Gaza's population has been internally displaced, while freedom of movement has been restricted for security-related reasons. This evolution confirms the broader trend toward the securitization of civilian mobility, as theorized by the Copenhagen School.

Hypothesis H2, regarding the restriction of fundamental rights, is substantiated by reports from Amnesty International and HRW (2024-2025), which document the effective suspension of the right to

asylum and the violation of the non-refoulement principle in the context of the blockade imposed on the Gaza Strip. These findings highlight the predominance of security considerations over international legal obligations.

Hypothesis H3, referring to the inefficiency of international protection mechanisms, is supported by analyses from UNHCR, OCHA, and the ICRC (2024-2025), which point to the fragmentation of humanitarian coordination and the absence of a coherent operational framework for intervention. This also validates the specific objectives related to assessing the institutional limitations of the international response.

With regard to **Hypothesis H4**, which addresses the limited effects - up to the time of writing (October 15, 2025) - of the ceasefire declared on October 10, 2025, data provided by the UN and OCHA largely confirm this assumption. The ceasefire produced a temporary desecuritization of public discourse without generating structural changes in protection policies or in the legal regime governing Palestinian refugees.

Overall, the research findings demonstrate that Palestinian migration continues to be managed predominantly through a security-driven logic, to the detriment of humanitarian protection. **The analytical objectives** - ranging from the examination of the international legal framework to the formulation of desecuritization proposals - have been coherently achieved, confirming the theoretical and practical relevance of the study.

The analysis of the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip and of the securitization of forced migration is inevitably subject to **methodological and epistemic limitations**, arising from the conflictual context and the difficulty of accessing data. The research relied exclusively on documentary sources - reports from international organizations, official statements, and recent academic literature - in the absence of direct empirical data from the field, which remains inaccessible for security reasons. Although these sources provide a solid informational basis, they may reflect institutional biases and reporting constraints, limiting the possibility of independent data verification.

From a theoretical perspective, the application of the securitization theory framework has made it possible to explain how Palestinian migration has been constructed as a security issue. However, this approach privileges the discursive dimension, capturing only partially the material realities of the conflict, such as infrastructure destruction and the military blockade. At the same time, the focus on state actors may lead to the underrepresentation of non-state voices and Palestinian community initiatives.

The ongoing and dynamic nature of the conflict represents another major limitation: the information analyzed reflects the situation as of autumn 2025, while subsequent developments may significantly alter the parameters of analysis. Moreover, the predominance of international and Western sources may result in a somewhat unbalanced perspective, to the detriment of local narratives.

For future research, the study should be expanded through the inclusion of primary qualitative data, a comparative analysis of the responses of neighboring Arab states, and the integration of legal and sociological perspectives. Acknowledging these limitations reinforces the study's credibility and relevance, underscoring the complexity of the phenomenon under examination and the need for an interdisciplinary and critical approach.

9. Conclusions

The humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip remains one of the most complex and persistent manifestations of contemporary insecurity, situated at the intersection of armed conflict, forced migration, and the violation of fundamental human rights. The present study has demonstrated that, despite international interventions and numerous humanitarian appeals, the existing mechanisms of protection and assistance remain fragmented and insufficient when confronted with a structurally deep and recurrent crisis.

The ceasefire of October 10, 2025 provided a brief moment of respite and an opportunity to recalibrate the international response. Mediated by the United States, Egypt, Qatar, and Turkey, the agreement succeeded in temporarily reducing the intensity of violence and facilitating humanitarian access to

previously unreachable areas. However, the assessment of the ceasefire's initial stages reveals that its effects were largely circumstantial: the cessation of hostilities proved fragile, humanitarian deliveries remained inadequate, and the security restrictions imposed by Israeli authorities continued to limit freedom of movement and the distribution of essential aid.

Although the ceasefire created the conditions for a temporary desecuritization of international discourse on the Gaza Strip, it did not significantly alter the structural dynamics of the securitization of Palestinian migration. Rather than producing a sustainable solution, it generated a partial suspension of the conflict-one in which the logic of security continued to prevail over humanitarian imperatives. Forced migration thus remains treated as a matter of control and stability, rather than as a humanitarian and legal phenomenon requiring effective international protection.

From a theoretical standpoint, this study reaffirms the relevance of securitization theory as an analytical instrument for understanding how political actors construct justificatory narratives to legitimize the restriction of rights and mobility among the Palestinian population. At the same time, the findings underscore the need to complement this conceptual framework with legal and sociological perspectives, capable of capturing the material, institutional, and identity dimensions of the crisis.

On a practical level, the research highlights the deficiencies of the international system for managing humanitarian crises, including the absence of a coherent operational mechanism to address situations of forced migration generated by armed conflicts. The fragmentation of competencies among UN agencies, the limitations placed on humanitarian access, and the lack of concrete collective responsibility from member states continue to perpetuate Gaza's chronic state of vulnerability.

The October 10, 2025 armistice should therefore be understood not as a final solution, but as a transitional stage that offers insights into both the potential and the limitations of the current international humanitarian protection regime. It reaffirms that lasting peace cannot be achieved without simultaneously addressing the political, social, and humanitarian dimensions of the conflict, and without establishing a framework of shared responsibility among regional and global actors.

In conclusion, the situation in the Gaza Strip illustrates a dual reality: on the one hand, the temporary diplomatic progress represented by the ceasefire; on the other, the persistence of a structural imbalance between security and human rights. Only through a reorientation of the international agenda - from crisis management toward prevention, protection, and humanitarian justice - can a sustainable framework for peace and stability in the region be constructed.

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