

War and Its Effects

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ABSTRACT

War is a destructive force that has been present throughout human history. It has caused immense suffering and destruction and has had a lasting impact on the world. When a dispute between the States is not settled by peaceful means and ultimately by coercive means, then States may resort to war. Therefore, War is an ultimate means of settling international disputes. In the modern period, many armed conflicts have taken place in which neither the war was declared, nor the rules of war were followed and nor there were the effects of war in accordance with the laws of war. It is still a valid rule of international law that some declaration or ultimatum is necessary for the commencement of war. It could resort to by the States as a means of self-help or as an ultimate means for the settlement of disputes. Since there is a ban on the use of force by the States, it is apparent that resort to war is forbidden under the Charter, and it can no longer be justified by the invocation of the old concept of absolute sovereignty.

The first and foremost effect of war is that public armed forces of the belligerents on each side are invested with the right of starting hostilities according to the rules of warfare. War is inherently destructive; arguably its most defining trait. It leads to the loss of human life, the destruction of infrastructure and resources, and damage to the environment. Beyond the immediate physical toll, war can also dismantle the political and economic systems; both within countries and across international borders that support the functioning of societies. Achieving lasting peace demands intentional effort, open dialogue, and a readiness to confront deep-rooted issues such as inequality, past injustices, and structural imbalances.

Keywords: War, Destruction, Non- War Armed Conflict, Amendment, Challenges, Militant Attack

INTRODUCTION

War is a destructive force that has been present throughout human history. It has caused immense suffering and destruction and has had a lasting impact on the world. War is often caused by a combination of factors, such as economic, political, and social tensions. Economic factors can lead to war when one nation seeks to gain control of resources or markets from another. Political factors can also lead to war when one country seeks to gain power or influence over another. The effects of war are far-reaching and devastating. War causes immense destruction of property and infrastructure and loss of life. It also causes psychological trauma for those who have experienced it firsthand. War can also have long-term economic effects, such as increased poverty and unemployment. War can also lead to the displacement of people, as seen in the millions of refugees who have been forced to flee their homes due to conflict. War can also have political effects, such as creating new nations or weakening existing ones. It can also lead to the rise of authoritarian regimes in many postwar countries. War can also lead to increased militarization as nations seek to protect themselves from future conflicts.¹

When a dispute between the States is not settled by peaceful means and ultimately by coercive means, then States may resort to war. Therefore, War is an ultimate means of settling international disputes. According to Hall, "when difference between States reach a point at which both parties resort to force, or one of them does acts of violence which the other chooses to look upon as a breach of peace, the relation of War is set up, in which the combatants may use regulated violence against each other, until one of the two has been brought to accept such terms as his enemy is willing to grant." Starke has also pointed out that "War in its most generally understood sense was a contest between two or more States Primarily through their armed forces, the ultimate purpose of each contestant or each contestant group being to vanquish the other or others and impose its own conditions of peace". Vattel opined that War was the condition in which nations prosecute their rights by force. According to Washington J., of the United States Supreme Court in **Bas v Tingy**, War was "an external contention by force between two nations". Wheaton opined that War is essentially a struggle between States involving the application of force.

¹Dawit Negussie, "Impact of War on Society" retrieved from

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/368653359_Impact_of_War_on_Society, visited on September 25, 2025 at 8:40 p.m.

G. Von. Glahn stated that War serves two basic purposes in international society: it provides an effective method of self-help to achieve the enforcement of rights in the absence of competent international tribunals and it also supplied States with a method, again of the self-help type, to change the rules of International Law and to adopt them to basically changed conditions. The second function can be compared with a domestic revolution carried on to change laws no longer considered tolerable and it appeared to be particularly justified in the continuing absence of any agencies of international legislation.

According to Prof. Oppenheim "War is a contention between two or more states, through their Armed Forces, for the purpose of overpowering each other and imposing such conditions of peace as the victor pleases". Jurist Oppenheim mainly laid emphasis on the concept of "Total War".

ELEMENTS OF WAR

There are four important elements of Wars:

- (i) War is a contention, i.e. a violent struggle by applying armed forces. It is different from aggression where a State uses the armed forces against another State. Aggression itself is not a War. It may lead to War when it is answered by similar hostile acts by the other side.
- (ii) the contention must be between two or more States. Therefore, War is different from civil War where two opposing parties within a State struggle for the purpose of overpowering each other or where a large portion of the population of a State uses arms against the legitimate government.
- (iii) War is a contention between States through their armed forces. Therefore, in the War, non-combatants are not made the object of direct attack by the armed forces of the enemies, because it is a contest between the armed forces.
- (iv) The purpose of the War is to overpower each other. The purpose of War is not to be confused with the ends of War. Whereas the purpose of War is always the same, i.e., the overpowering and utter defeat of the opponent, the ends may be different in each case. Ends may be achieved only when the purpose is fulfilled i.e., when the opposite party is overpowered.²

NON-WAR-ARMED CONFLICT

As remarked by Lord Mac Naughten, "The law recognizes a State of peace and State of war but it knows nothing of an intermediate State which is neither one thing nor the other-neither peace nor war." As pointed by another authors "the legal condition of war has not arisen since 1945, and upon an optimistic view of international relations and the role of the United Nations is unlikely to occur in the near future. But the text books of international law distinguish only conditions of war and peace, not the conditions of limited hostilities which have occurred, and unhappily will continue to occur. The question that arises is how much of the traditional law of war is applicable to this twilight situation which is neither peace nor war and is unrecognized by many jurists".

He further adds, "Finally, a definition of limited war will prove to be, helpful in classifying the concept of law to be utilized. It is proposed that the expression 'limited war' covers the situation of hostilities not amounting to declared war, which, are limited in engaged. We have sufficient experience of limited war in this sense for international respect of (a) the area of operations; (b) the weapons employed, and (c) the target engaged. We have sufficient experience of limited war in this sense for international lawyers to be able to propose new rules for what is new phenomenon. As pointed Starke, significant changes have come in the modern wars. In the modern period, many armed conflicts have taken place in which neither the war was declared, nor the rules of war were followed and nor there were the effects of war in accordance with the laws of war. In this connection he cites the examples of the Korean conflict from 1950 to 1953; Indo-China War; Congo conflict of 1960 to 1963 and Indo-Pak, conflict of 1965. Since the declaration of war is not made, neither are there full effects of war in accordance with laws of war nor the duties and rights of the neutral States are properly defined and determined. In view of this consideration, Starke has called such wars as non-war armed conflicts. In his view following are some of the reasons for the development of this category of war:

- (1) The States concerned do not want that their conflicts should be regarded as the violation of obligations arising out of international treaties. For example they do not want that the conflict should be regarded as the violation of the Paris Pact of 1928 through which the States had renounced war as an instrument of national policy.
- (2) The belligerent States also do not want that the States not taking part in the wars may declare their neutrality so as to evade the rules of neutrality.
- (3) It is also their desire to localize the conflict and not to allow it to take the form of general war.

Further, practice in the non-war conflicts has revealed the tendency of States to apply most of the rules governing a war stricto sensu to non-war hostilities. For example, the Geneva Red Cross Conventions were expressly applicable to such non-war armed conflicts. But every such armed conflict must vary in its special circumstances and the rules to be

² Dr. Jyoti Rattan, Dr. Vijay Rattan, "Public International Law, United Nations, Human Rights & IHL", Bharat Law House Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 2014, p. 229-230.

applied must also depend upon the circumstances. In case the U.N. Security Council is taking enforcement action "actual decisions or recommendations adopted by the Security Council under Articles 39 et. seq. of the United Nations Charter, for the guidance of States engaged in the hostilities, may fill the place of rules of international law."³

COMMENCEMENT OF WAR

From very ancient period, there has been the practice of giving some sort of information or making some declaration or giving some ultimatum in regard to the commencement of war. During sixteenth century there was a custom of regarding heralds to give information of the outbreak of war or otherwise declaration wassome messenger, etc. This practice ended by the end of sixteenth century. In seventeenth century, Grotius expressed the view that declaration is essential. Despite this view, many wars took place in which no formal declaration was made. By the end of nineteenth century, however, it was generally accepted that some sort of ultimatum or warming was necessary before the start of war. In this twentieth century, there is no warning in the practice of the States in regard to the commencement of war. In 1904, Japan started war against Russia without any formal declaration or ultimatum. In 1907, the Hague Convention propounded the rule that a formal declaration was necessary for the start of war and an ultimatum should also be given before resorting to war. It was also provided that information regarding the commencement of war should also be given to the neutral States. But as is well known, these rules were flagrantly violated during the two World Wars. Despite this in the present time it is still a valid rule of international law that some declaration or ultimatum is necessary for the commencement of war.

LEGAL REGULATIONS ON WAR

From the ancient time, war was recognized as a legal act. It could resort to by the States as a means of self-help or as an ultimate means for the settlement of disputes. It was within the power of a State to gain advantage over another by direct recourse to war. International Law did not consider war as an illegal act. However, Grotius by introducing the concept of 'just war' had imposed certain limitations on this unfettered power of the States to wage War, According to him war could be resorted provided the rights of others are not infringed, and consequently, the use of force, which does not violate the rights of others is not unjust. Even some of the writers of nineteenth century made a distinction between 'just and unjust wars' and between 'right and wrong wars'. Woolsey has asserted that war may be waged to procure good or prevent evil by force; and just war is an attempt to obtain justice or prevent injustice by force, or in other words to bring back an injuring party to a right state of mind and conduct by the infliction of deserved evil.' He further stated that a justifiable war, again, is only one that is waged in the last resort, when peaceful means have failed to procure redress, or when self-defence calls for it. We have no right to redress our wrongs in a war of violence, involving harm to others, when peaceful methods of obtaining justice would be successful.'

However, the contemporary trend has been in the sense of suppressing not only aggression but also those wars which might be called 'just', 'legal' or 'justifiable'. Modern conscience condemns in principle the use of force for the settlement of any controversy, even if the State resorting to war can prove that a wrong has been committed against it. From the beginning of the present century attempts have been made to limit the right of a State to resort to war. The Hague Convention of 1907 respecting the "Limitation of the Employment of Force for the Recovery of Contract Debts" restricted the use of force as a legal remedy for the-recovery of contract debts. The 'Brayan treaties' introduced a check upon the right of war by imposing upon the parties the duty not to begin hostilities prior to the report of the conciliation commission.⁴

WAR AND THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

The fight for the outlawry of war began in real sense when the great majority of the State became parties to the Covenant of the League of Nations which made notable regulations for resorting war. Members of the League agreed that if a dispute arises between them, they will submit the matter either to arbitration or judicial settlement or to the inquiry by the Council,' and they also agreed that in no case war shall be resorted until three months after the award by the arbitrators, or by the judicial decision or the report by the Council.' The three months' time, i.e., 'cooling period' was provided as it was believed that it will be able to prevent the accidental outbreak of hostilities. If any State resorted to war without following the above procedure it would be deemed as to have committed 'an act of war against all other, members of the League', which is tantamount to aggression against the community of States. Such an aggression in violation of International Law, customary as well as positive and against the supreme interest of humanity. Thus, limitations were imposed by the Covenant for waging -war. However, the limitations were confined only to members of the League.

Many treaties concluded in twenties of the present century also condemned war in certain cases. For instance, Article 1 of the draft of the abortive Treaty of Mutual Assistance of 1923 declared that aggressive war is an international crime, and severally undertake that no one of them will be guilty of its commission. As expressed in the Preamble, the Treaty was negotiated for the chief purpose of facilitating the application of Articles 10 and 16 of the Covenant and the reduction and limitation of armaments. The same conception governed the Geneva Protocol of 1924 which is officially

³ Dr. S.K. Kapoor, "International Law & Human Rights", Central Law Agency, Prayagraj, 2021, p. 729-730.

⁴ Dr. H.O. Aggarwal, "International Law and Human Rights", Central Law Publications, Allahabad, 2017, p. 556-557.

denominated Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Controversies. Article 11 of the Protocol provided that in no case war shall be resorted to except in the specific cases enumerated therein. The Locarno Treaty of 1925 also provided that parties shall not attack or invade each other subject to certain exceptions. The Sixth Pan-American Conference held in February 1928 adopted a resolution wherein it declared that 'war of aggression constitutes a crime against mankind and 'all aggression is illicit and as such is declared prohibited'.⁵

WAR AND THE UNITED NATIONS

The Second World War created so much terror in the minds of the Allied Powers that when they established the United Nations it was mentioned in the first paragraph of the Preamble of the Charter that "we the peoples of the United Nations determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind." Although the term war was not used in the Charter, it prohibited the use of force by a member of the United Nations. The right to make war in the old traditional sense has been definitely ruled out. Article 2, Para 4 of the Charter provided that "all members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations." It follows that the Charter did not recognize the legitimacy of war waged for the purpose of redressing a real or alleged wrong. There cannot be any just, legal or justifiable war in the new international order.

If any dispute arises amongst the members, the Charter laid down under Para 3 of Article 2 that they shall settle them by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security, and justice are not endangered. Further Article 39 laid down that the Security Council shall determine the existence of threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or an act of aggression and shall make recommendations, or decide what measures shall be taken in accordance with Articles 41 and 42, to maintain or restore international peace and security. While Article 41 lays down the measures which are short of war, Article 42 provides that it may take such action by air, sea and land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security. Action under Articles 41 and 42 may be taken by all or some members of the United Nations as the Security Council may determine.¹ The decisions of the Security Council are binding on the members, and "the members of the United Nations agree to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council in accordance with the present Charter."

The above provisions reveal that resort to war is forbidden under the Charter. Prohibition on the use of force has become a part of international peremptory law or jus cogens, as was affirmed by various States at the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties. It has been repeatedly asserted in subsequent years in the United Nations. It implies that any treaty providing for the use of force contrary to the above principle shall be null and void. Since there is a ban on the use of force by the States, it is apparent that resort to war is forbidden under the Charter, and it can no longer be justified by the invocation of the old concept of absolute sovereignty.

EFFECTS OF OUTBREAK OF WAR

The first and foremost effect of war is that public armed forces of the belligerents on each side are invested with the right of starting hostilities according to the rules of warfare.

Diplomatic and Consular Relations

It has also the effect of ceasing diplomatic intercourse and the envoys receive their passports. The retiring envoy is entitled to diplomatic immunities throughout his journey back to his country. The official residence of a departed envoy is usually entrusted to a representative of a neutral State, and the archives, if left behind, are placed under a seal. Consuls are also not allowed to function and their archives are left in charge of the consul of another State.

Commercial Intercourse

With the outbreak of war, with certain limitations, almost all legal relations between the two contending States are either suspended or dissolved. The result is that all commercial intercourse between enemy subjects becomes illegal. Great Britain during the two World Wars passed the Trading with the Enemy Acts of 1914 and 1939, which forbade all transactions during the war which would improve the financial position of a person trading or residing in any enemy country. War produces a state of things giving rise to well-known special rules. It prohibits all trading with the enemy except with the Royal license, dissolves all contracts which involve such trading. But the principles upon which commercial intercourse must cease between nations at war with each other can only be where the heads of the State have created the war. In order to produce the effect, either nationally or municipally, it must be a war between the two nations. No contract or other transaction with a native of the country which afterwards goes to war is affected by the war. The remedy is indeed suspended; an alien enemy cannot sue in the court of either country while the war lasts; but the rights on the contract are unaffected, and when the war is over, the remedy in the courts of either is restored. Further, threatened war or anticipated war or imminent war is peace, which may not after all result in war; and

⁵ Id. p. 567-568.

to apply the rules of war to insurance against loss before war breaks out would paralyze commerce, and often without any real necessity.⁶

Contracts

No fresh contracts can be entered into with belligerent subjects during the war and if, in spite of this interdictment, they are entered into, courts declare them to be ab initio void and illegal, unless entered into under a special license. In case of contracts entered into before the war, they are either dissolved or suspended according to their nature. If the contracts are executor agreements or if the time was of the essence of the contract, they are automatically dissolved.

Another result of war is that a contract between a belligerent subject and a neutral cannot, so long as the war lasts, be performed if the belligerent subject has agreed to carry it out in the enemy country.

The American practice has thus been described by Hyde: "If a contract necessitates communications between the territories of opposing belligerents, its continuance would be incompatible with the state of war. Numerous agreements are of such kind, and consequently appear to suffer dissolution when war ensues."

The outbreak of war entails dissolution of contracts for the sale of goods as also contracts of agency between persons who subsequently become enemies. Contracts of insurance, if entered subsequently before the war, with companies who have acquired enemy character, are merely suspended in their operation by war.⁷

Treaties

According to the old view, all treaties are terminated between belligerent States after the outbreak of war. In the present times, many significant changes have come in this respect. The present practice of States shows that all the treaties between the belligerent States do not come to an end. Some treaties are completely terminated, some remain in force, while some others are simply suspended during war times.

There are two main tests in this connection namely; subjective test and objective test. According to the subjective test, in order to ascertain whether the treaty concerned is to be terminated at the outbreak of war, intention of the parties to the treaties is examined. If it is clear from the intention of the parties that the treaties are only to peace time, then they are terminated at the outbreak of war. In case it is clear from the intention that the treaties will remain in force irrespective of the war, then the treaties remain in force. According to the objective test, the termination or remaining in force of the treaties depends upon the facts whether the provisions of the treaty can be enforced in the context of war or to put it more precisely whether they are inconsistent or not with the outbreak of war.

On the basis of the above tests the practice of the States and the views of the jurists, Starke has summed up as follows:

- (i) Those treaties between the belligerent States for which common political action or good relations are essential, terminate at the outbreak of war. An example of such type of treaty is a treaty of alliance.
- (ii) Treaties regarding the establishment of completed situations or the fixation of boundaries remain unaffected by war.
- (iii) The treaties or conventions regulating the conduct of war remain binding during war upon the parties to such treaties or conventions. The Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907 are such types of Conventions.
- (iv) These multilateral law- making treaties which are related to health, medicines, protection of industrial property, etc. are not completely terminated at the outbreak of war. They are simply suspended and are revived after the end of war.
- (v) Sometimes there are express provisions in the treaties which make it clear whether the treaties will remain in force at the outbreak of war.
- (vi) There are some types of treaties, such as, treaties relating to extradition which are simply suspended at the outbreak of war.
- (vii) A state complying with the resolution by the U.N. Security Council concerning action with respect to threats as to the peace, breaches of the peace or acts of aggression, must either terminate or suspend the operation of a treaty, as to which it is a party, if the treaty would be incompatible with the Security Council's resolution (Institute Resolution, Article 8).

Thus, much depends upon the provisions of the treaties, intention of the parties, nature of treaty etc.⁸

CURRENT WARS IN THE WORLD

1. ISRAEL AND HAMAS WAR

Since October 7, 2023, Israel has been at war with the Palestinian Sunni Islamist group Hamas (a U.S.-designated foreign terrorist organization, or FTO), which led an attack that day from the Gaza Strip into Israel. More than 1,200

⁶ M.P. Tandon, "Public International Law", Allahabad Law Agency, Faridabad, 2008, p. 524-525.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Supra Note 3, p.734-735.

Israelis and foreign nationals (including 46 U.S. citizens in Israel) were killed on October 7, and Hamas and other groups also seized some 251 hostages. Iran has provided material support to Hamas for decades, but the Office of the Director of National Intelligence assessed in February 2024 that "Iranian leaders did not orchestrate nor had foreknowledge of" the attack. The conflict that has ensued in the past year has posed major challenges for U.S. policymakers. Since October 7, 2023, Israel has been at war with the Palestinian Sunni Islamist group Hamas (a U.S.-designated foreign terrorist organization, or FTO), which led attacks on that day from the Gaza Strip into Israel. The nature and extent of the October 7 assault stunned Israelis and many others, and includes allegations of sexual violence. Iran has long provided material support to Hamas, but the Office of the Director of National Intelligence assessed in February 2024 that "Iranian leaders did not orchestrate nor had foreknowledge of" the attack. Israeli officials may have missed signals, over-relied on technological solutions, overestimated their own defense capabilities, and/or misread Hamas's intentions and capabilities.

The Israel-Hamas war has presented several challenges for U.S. policy in the Middle East. These include how to bolster Israel's security from attacks and threats posed by Iran-supported actors near its borders, how to prevent the spread of conflict in the region and manage relationships among Israel and its neighbours, how to provide security assistance for Israel without endangering civilians, how to provide humanitarian aid for civilians displaced or otherwise affected by the fighting, how to help the parties reach a cease-fire agreement that secures the return of hostages (some of whom are U.S. citizens), and how to reconcile Palestinian desires for statehood and post-conflict recovery with Israeli efforts to eliminate Hamas as a political and military force in Gaza.

This report focuses on selected major aspects of the war and issues for Congress. Other CRS products address some related matters, including Israeli domestic politics, developments affecting the West Bank, and broader historical context regarding Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Additional CRS products address elements of broader regional struggle involving Israel (with help from the United States and some Arab states) against Iran and its various allies in Lebanon, Yemen, and elsewhere.⁹

2. RUSSO-UKRAINIAN WAR

The Russo-Ukrainian War began in February 2014 and is ongoing. Following Ukraine's Revolution of Dignity, Russia occupied and annexed Crimea from Ukraine. It then supported Russian paramilitaries who began a war in the eastern Donbas region against Ukraine's military. In 2018, Ukraine declared the region to be occupied by Russia. These first eight years of conflict also included naval incidents and cyberwarfare. In February 2022, Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine and began occupying more of the country, starting the current phase of the war, the biggest conflict in Europe since World War II. The war has resulted in a refugee crisis and hundreds of thousands of deaths.

Beginning in 2021, there was a massive Russian military buildup near Ukraine's borders, including within neighboring Belarus. Russian officials repeatedly denied plans to attack Ukraine. Russia's president Vladimir Putin voiced expansionist views and challenged Ukraine's right to exist. He demanded that Ukraine be barred from ever joining the NATO military alliance. In early 2022, Russia recognized the DPR and LPR as independent states. While Russian troops surrounded Ukraine, its proxies stepped up attacks on Ukrainian forces in the Donbas.

On 24 February 2022, Putin announced a "special military operation" to "demilitarize and denazify" Ukraine, claiming Russia had no plans to occupy the country. The Russian invasion that followed was internationally condemned; many countries imposed sanctions against Russia, and sent humanitarian and military aid to Ukraine. In the face of fierce resistance, Russia abandoned an attempt to take Kyiv in early April. In August, Ukrainian forces began liberating territories in the north-east and south. In September, Russia declared the annexation of four partially occupied provinces, which was internationally condemned. Since then, Russian offensives and Ukrainian counter offensives have gained only small amounts of territory. The invasion has also led to attacks in Russia by Ukrainian and Ukrainian-backed forces, among them a cross-border offensive into Russia's Kursk region in August 2024. Russia has repeatedly carried out deliberate and indiscriminate attacks on civilians far from the frontline. The ICC opened an investigation into war crimes and issued arrest warrants for Putin and several other Russian officials.¹⁰

3. SUDANESE CIVIL WAR (2023–PRESENT)

A civil war began on 15 April 2023 between two rival factions of the military government of Sudan. The conflict involves the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), led by General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), commanded by Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo (commonly known as Hemedti), who also leads the

⁹ Sharp, Jeremy M.; Zanolini, Jim "Israel and Hamas Conflict in Brief: Overview, U.S. Policy, and Options for Congress", retrieved from <https://www.congress.gov/crs-product/R47828>, visited on September 26, 2025 at 11:15 a.m.

¹⁰ "Russo-Ukrainian War" retrieved from https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russo-Ukrainian_War, visited on September 25, 2025 at 8:50 p.m.

broader Janjaweed coalition. Several smaller armed groups have also taken part. Fighting has been concentrated in the capital, Khartoum, where the conflict began with large-scale battles, and in the Darfur region. Many civilians in Darfur have been reported dead as part of the Masalit massacres, which have been described as ethnic cleansing or genocide. Sudan has been described as facing the world's worst humanitarian crisis; nearly 25 million people are experiencing extreme hunger. On 7 January 2025, the United States said it had determined that the RSF and allied militias committed genocide.

Famine alone has killed an estimated 522,000 children, while the overall death toll of the war, including fatalities from violence, starvation, and disease, is even higher; thousands more remain missing or have been killed in targeted massacres, primarily attributed to the RSF and allied militias. At least 61,000 people have died in Khartoum State alone, of which 26,000 were a direct result of the violence. As of 5 February 2025, over 8.8 million were internally displaced and more than 3.5 million others had fled the country as refugees. In August 2024, the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Famine Review Committee (FRC) confirmed famine conditions in parts of North Darfur.

Foreign involvement in Sudan's conflict has included arms shipments from China, Russia and Turkey. Regional support for the RSF comes from the UAE and Chad, while Egypt supports the SAF, amid regional tensions. The war has triggered a massive humanitarian crisis marked by extreme shortages of food, water, medicine, and aid access, widespread hospital closures, disease outbreaks, mass displacement, looting of humanitarian supplies, and the near-collapse of education and infrastructure, leaving over half the population in urgent need of assistance. There have been calls for more aid, legal protections for humanitarian workers, refugee support, and an end to arms supplies to the RSF, particularly by the UAE. Both the SAF and RSF have waged sophisticated disinformation campaigns using social media, fake footage, and AI-generated content to manipulate public perception, discredit opponents, and influence international opinion. In response to the conflict, the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, and the European Union imposed sanctions on individuals, companies, and entities linked to the SAF and RSF for ceasefire violations, human rights abuses, and destabilizing activities.¹¹

4. INDIA-PAKISTAN WAR

A deadly militant attack in Pahalgam, Indian-administered Kashmir, has triggered a sharp escalation between India and Pakistan, with both sides exchanging gunfire across the Line of Control and downgrading diplomatic ties. On May 6, India announced the launch of "Operation Sindoor," a military strike targeting nine sites in Pakistan and Pakistan-administered Jammu and Kashmir, which it alleged were used to plan the attacks. With Operation Sindoor, the Modi Government has delivered India's most forceful military message to Pakistan that it has had enough of Pakistan's terror shenanigans and from now on was willing to execute a no-holds-barred retaliation. Operation Sindoor, as a strike was branded, was as much a military retaliation as a symbolic gesture, evident to its name and logo- vermilion powder, a marker of a married women's status in the Hindu tradition, spilling from the 'OS' in Sindoor. It was a poignant reference to the women who were widowed when terrorists ruthlessly gunned down 26 innocent men in the Baisaran meadow of Pahalgam. India was avenging their loss as it were. The Modi government further reinforced the Nari Shakti (women's empowerment) narrative when it got two women officers from the armed forces to brief the press on the operation.¹²

That old military adage held true for the sixth war between India and Pakistan which ended abruptly in a ceasefire on May 10, 2025, four days after it had begun. India planned to deliver a strong punitive deterrent to Pakistan's aiding and abetting terror strikes on our soil, including the attack in Pahalgam this April. It achieved that goal in its very first strike, in the early hours of May 7, 2025, when its armed forces launched precision attacks across the international border and the Line of Control, targeting the headquarters and training camps of key Pakistan-backed terror groups. Having deliberately avoided hitting military installations, India informed Pakistan that it had no interest in escalating hostilities further and only if Islamabad retaliated would it respond.¹³

In the wake of the attack, tit-for-tat measures by India and Pakistan have driven bilateral relations to their lowest point in recent years. New Delhi first took measures to downgrade ties with Pakistan, suspending the Indus Waters Treaty, terminating a visa-free travel regime with Pakistan, and closing the Attari border crossing between the two countries. In turn, Pakistan rejected the suspension of the water treaty, warning that any attempts to alter Pakistan's Indus River

¹¹ Sudanese civil war (2023–present), retrieved from [https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sudanese_civil_war_\(2023%E2%80%93present\)](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sudanese_civil_war_(2023%E2%80%93present)), visited on September 26, 2025 at 11:25 a.m.

¹² India Today, May 19, 2025, p.24.

¹³ India Today, June 2, 2025, p.29.

flows would be considered “an act of war.” Islamabad also moved to close Pakistani airspace to all Indian commercial airlines, halted a special visa regime for Indian citizens, and suspended bilateral trade.¹⁴

NEED FOR AMENDMENT OF THE LAWS OF WAR

According to Judge Nagendra Singh, in view of change in the methods of war of development of devastating weapons, particularly nuclear weapons, it has become necessary to bring about changes in the laws of war. Besides this, following are the reasons which have necessitated changes in the laws of war: (1) Development of the concept of total war; (2) Expansion of the world community as a result of the independence of new States; (3) Development of human rights; (4) Need for protecting the civilian population from the scourge of war; (5) Need for enforcement of human rights during war; and (6) The laws of war were codified long ago; since then revolutionary changes have taken place. They should, therefore, be revised and recodified. The First and Second World Wars exhibited the inadequacy of the existing laws of war. Josef L. Kunz has, therefore, rightly remarked, "That the Laws of War are actually in a chaotic state and urgently need revision, is a fact which cannot be challenged. Despite the urgent need for the amendment in the laws of war there is no likelihood of sincere efforts to amend them for the obvious reason that war, may even use of force have been prohibited under the charter for the settlement of international disputes. It is feared, and rightly too, that if laws of war are amended, they may put the existing position of the outlawry of war to the reverse gear."¹⁵

CONCLUSION

War is inherently destructive; arguably its most defining trait. It leads to the loss of human life, the destruction of infrastructure and resources, and damage to the environment. Beyond the immediate physical toll, war can also dismantle the political and economic systems; both within countries and across international borders that support the functioning of societies. Its impact isn't limited to those directly involved; neutral or uninvolved nations often feel the broader consequences as well. War can reshape entire systems, altering the global landscape for all nations, not just the combatants. During conflict, the effects are clear: people are killed, nations win or lose, and some states may cease to exist while new ones emerge. The long-term effects, however, are harder to define. Since death is an inevitable part of life, one might argue that war merely accelerates what is already destined to happen.

The dynamics of war and peace remain central to understanding both historical trajectories and contemporary global challenges. As this article has explored, war is rarely the result of isolated events; rather, it emerges from complex, interconnected systems involving political structures, economic inequalities, identity-based grievances, and information flows. Peace, likewise, cannot be reduced to the mere absence of conflict. It encompasses a broader spectrum of conditions including social justice, institutional legitimacy, and sustainable development; that collectively foster resilience against violence. Achieving lasting peace demands intentional effort, open dialogue, and a readiness to confront deep-rooted issues such as inequality, past injustices, and structural imbalances. On one side peace is never simple to attain, its long-term benefits are profound, it creates an environment where education prospers, economies strengthen, cultural exchange flourishes, and humanity can come together to tackle shared global challenges like climate change, poverty, and public health. On the other side, war never brings victory to any state, rather it is always a defeat of Humanity.

It is very beautifully remarked by Ralph Waldo Emerson:
“The real and lasting victories are those of peace and not of War”

¹⁴ Centre for Prevention, “Conflict between India and Pakistan”, retrieved from <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/conflict-between-india-and-pakistan>, visited on September 26, 2025 at 12:10 p.m.

¹⁵ Id. p. 730-731.