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## The Role of International Law in Global Conflict Resolution: A Comprehensive Analysis of Mechanisms, Limitations, And Emerging Challenges

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### ABSTRACT

*The international law is the main mechanism of managing and solving international conflicts. It is increasingly becoming the system of precepts that now regulates the relations between the sovereign states. This article uses a doctrinal legal approach supplemented by comparative case studies analysis and relies on empirical research of quantitative studies investigating territorial disputes. It focuses on the efficacy of international law machinery, that is, adjudication of territorial controversies by the International Court of Justice to the mediation work of the United Nations, and critically analyzes structural constraints presented by state sovereignty and the Security Council veto. The research differentiates between hard and soft law, investigates ethical dilemmas of international criminal justice and evaluates emerging threats like cyber warfare and armed non-state actors. The results have shown that international law has led to the establishment of stability by way of boundary delamination as well as codification of human protection norms. Experience demonstrates that in cases where the principles of law are clear, and one party has an unambiguous advantage, disputes are fifty-seven percent more likely to be resolved peacefully. However, the international law is still hampered by lack of enforcement mechanisms, political gridlock and a state centric system which restricts the participation of non-state actors. The article closes by observing that institutional reforms, strengthened veto restraint devices, integration of various dispute resolution practices and strategic use of soft law as a bridge to progressive legal development are all needed.*

**Keywords:** International Law, Conflict Resolution, Sovereignty, Global Governance, Security Council Veto, Focal Point Theory

### Introduction

The definition of law in international law and order is a complex system of precepts that govern the relations of defined groups of persons or entities that are referred to as the subjects of law (Pandey, 2025, p. 46). In contrast to domestic legal systems, international law is implemented in an anarchic environment with competing sovereignties, where compliance is not often enforced by a central enforcement body (Pandey, 2025). Even with these underlying issues, international law has stood as the backbone of the modern global governance, where it provides the norms, treaties, and conventions that are now needed to manage disputes and outline mechanisms that can be used to hold the accountable after conflicts (Ubanyionwu, 2025). Since the founding 1648 Treaty of Westphalia up to the 1945 formation of the United

Nations, the history of international law reflects a longstanding struggle to replace coercion with the rule of law (Ubanyionwu, 2025, p. 115). The devastating effects of two world wars caused the international community to mobilize to create institutional structures that could prevent any future conflict, which culminated in the Charter of the UN, which is a constitutional document outlawing aggressive war and stipulating binding obligations to peaceful resolution of disputes (United Nations, 1945). The nature of an international conflict and dispute resolution has been fundamentally transformed by globalization. As Spain (2013) points to, armed conflicts have ceased being more of an interstate affair to becoming more of an intrastate one. The worldwide issues like climate change, terrorism and health pandemics are fueling the creation of collaborative problem-solving strategies. There are new players that require more involvement in the adjudicatory forums that are challenging the wisdom of state centric approaches. There has been a proliferation of international courts and tribunals, becoming increasingly professional and creating uncertainty and fragmentation (Spain, 2013, p. 45). The changes pose challenges as well as opportunities to international dispute resolution. It is in this light that this article seeks to respond to three main research questions: what processes within international law have proven most effective in mediating inter-state and intra-state conflicts; how do structural constraints, especially the sovereignty of states and politics within the Security Council, limit the ability of international law to mediate conflicts; and what legal innovations are required to respond to emerging modalities of conflict such as cyber operations and armed non-state actors? The analysis is limited to the public mechanisms of international law to resolve conflicts, but not the private international law or the international economic law except where directly relating to peace processes. The time frame includes the developments between the adoption of the UN Charter in 1945 and 2026, with a special emphasis on the case studies after 2000.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This research project assumes a hybrid theoretical framework, which joins liberal institutionalism, constructivism and focal point theory. According to liberal institutionalism, international institutions have the ability to alleviate anarchy by lowering transaction costs, supplying information and enabling mutual cooperation (Keohane, 1984). In this view, international law has been seen as being an efficiency generating mechanism that allows states to benefit each other by acting in a coordinated manner. The journal of the territorial dispute of the International Court of Justice is a classic that illustrates such a dynamic: by offering a neutral adjudicative platform, the Court allows states to resolve the territorial dispute without mobilizing military resources (Farid et al., 2025). Liberal institutionalism describes the motivation of states in establishing international legal institutions, even though this may incur short term costs of binding commitment; the long-term benefits of predictable cooperation outweigh the short-term costs of binding commitment. Constructivist theory underlines the influence of international legal norms on state identities, interests and perceptions about how to act appropriately (Wendt, 1999). Constructivism, in contrast to rationalist approaches, demonstrates that interaction with legal norms will alter the ways states comprehend their interests. The Responsibility to Protect doctrine represents the constructivist logic: although it is not a binding document, it has increasingly changed normative expectations concerning the issue of state sovereignty and humanitarian intervention (Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, 2025). The reason why states are increasingly finding themselves to be obliged to justify military action in legal terms is explained by Constructivism which explains why states are increasingly feeling compelled to justify military actions in legal terms even when they are in violation of international law, a phenomenon which demonstrates the constitutive nature of

law. The focal point theory, which initially was created by Schelling (1960) and applied to the international law by Huth, Croco, and Appel (2011) is also used in this analysis. A solution which results out of mutual expectations and mutual knowledge, helping parties to organize their behavior in the absence of central authority is known as a focal point. Huth and colleagues opine that in the case of two states being involved in a territorial dispute, international law can form a focal point of solving the dispute, when two conditions are met, namely that the relevant legal principles are clear and well established, and that one of the states, has an unambiguous legal advantage over their opponent (Huth et al., 2011, p. 421). In such cases, the apportionment of disputed territory implied by international law assists leaders to surmount distribution issues, which is the main challenge in reaching a final agreement. The narrowing of the focal point reduces the number of acceptable results, decreases the credibility of bluffs, and makes negotiations more effective. This framework offers a specific mechanism of cognizing when and how international law encourages peaceful dispute resolution as an addition to the overall insights of liberal institutionalism and constructivism.

### **Methodology**

The research methodology is a qualitative and doctrinal approach to law, which is the most common approach to international legal research, and is supplemented by comparative case study research and exposure to quantitative empirical results. Doctrinal research is a systematic study of primary legal sources, such as treaties, customary law, and judicial decisions, and secondary sources, such as scholarly commentary and policy reports to identify legal rules, principles, and their interpretative development (Hutchinson and Duncan, 2012). Such a methodology is especially suitable to explore the conflict resolution role of international law since it can be rigorously used to analyze legal texts and take into account contextual factors that determine its implementation. Primary sources are the Charter of the UN (1945) and its subsequent resolutions, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (1998), the ICJ Statute and the judgments of controversial cases of 1947-2024, the records of the Security Council veto since 1946 to 2026, and treaties that govern armed conflicts including the four Geneva Conventions (1949) and their Additional Protocols. Peer reviewed journal articles published between 2010 and 2026, UN Secretary General reports, Security Council Report publications, and policy documents of the Global Centre of the Responsibility to Protect and the Lieber Institute will be considered as secondary sources. The study is also based on the empirical results found by Huth, Croco and Appel (2011) who examined 165 territorial disputes between 1945 and 2000 using multinomial logistic regression and rare events logistic regression. Their data set contained 3,840 observations of the challenger month in the first stage of the dispute resolution, 1,140 rounds of negotiations in the second stage, and 96 final agreements in the third stage. This numerical fact is a solid support to the theoretical arguments of the pacifying effects of international law. Successful ICJ resolution, the Syria conflict as Security Council paralysis, and cyber operations in the Russia-Ukraine war are illustrations with case studies including *Burkina Faso v. Mali* (1986), Syria conflict, and cyber operations in the Russia-Ukraine war. The analysis is carried out in four steps, namely normative mapping to identify legal frameworks that can be applicable to each type of conflict; effectiveness assessment to evaluate the outcomes against the standards of dispute resolution, compliance rates, and prevention of conflict recurrence; constraint identification to analyze the structural, political, and resource constraints that can limit the effectiveness of international law; and comparative synthesis to draw cross case patterns on the role of international law in resolving disputes. This methodology is incapable of establishing any kind of certainty in terms of cause and effect concerning the independent effect of international law in all cases due to

the confounding variables which include the asymmetry of power, economic interdependence and internal politics.

### **The Architecture of International Law: Hard and Soft Frameworks**

Article 38 of the ICJ Statute (which identifies treaties, customary international law, and general principles of law as major sources) outlines the primary modalities of international law. The most direct type of international legal obligation, and which works in the same way as contracts under domestic law, are treaties, which are written agreements that bind consenting states. The customary international law is the result of the state practice with the presence of the *opinio juris*, the belief that such practice is legally obligatory, not just a mere habit. General principles of law accepted by civilized nations, like good faith, estoppel and *res judicata*, fill gaps in which treaties and custom do not provide guidance. Hard law is legally binding tools that require a certain consequence due to non compliance (Pandey, 2025, p. 48). Examples of hard law obligations are the UN Charter, Geneva Conventions, and major human rights treaties. The merit of hard law is its accuracy and delegations, that is, the explicit rules with the authority to interpret and enforce a rule by a third party (Abbott and Snidal, 2000). But the binding nature of hard law creates increased costs of sovereignty, resulting in states negotiating detailed, restrictive provisions or simply opt out. The experience of the United States in the non ratification of the Rome Statute and the withdrawal of Russia in the International Criminal Court show how the hard law can repel the states when the obligations are not in accordance with the perceived national interests. The contemporary legal environment is where soft law is becoming more and more dependent (Pandey, 2025, p. 49). Soft law is very vital in international development as it provides flexibility and generates cooperation in areas where the states are unwilling to make a commitment to binding obligations, such as the environmental law and human rights (Pandey, 2025). An example of the evolutionary potential of soft law is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), which initially took the form of a non binding General Assembly resolution but is now widely accepted as either customary international law or has been codified as a binding treaty. Soft law is used as a pilot project to test newly developed legal principles, and states are able to experiment with norms before they are codified into hard law (Pandey, 2025, p. 50). Whether legal principles can generate a focal point of bargaining is critical to the effectiveness of international law in resolving disputes (Huth et al., 2011). In cases where applicable legal principles are evident, and where one party has an undisputed legal upper hand, a law based focal point arises. This point of focus can assist leaders in overcoming distribution issues because they reduce the scope of possible solutions. As an example, the principle of the legal concept that a boundary line must lie in the middle of the main navigable section of a river, known as the *thalweg* principle, is a distinct and well-established customary norm which has assisted in the resolution of several river boundary disputes (Huth et al., 2011, p. 422). In the international law, on the contrary, where legal principles are vague or when both sides of the dispute have mixed legal claims, the international law fails to provide a focal point and disputes are more likely to be left unresolved or escalate to violence.

### **Principal Judicial Organs and Dispute Resolution**

As the main judicial organ of the United Nations, the International Court of Justice is playing a crucial role in the peaceful resolution of territorial disputes (Farid et al., 2025, p. 245). The ICJ, based in The Hague, in the Netherlands, has fifteen judges who have been elected by the General Assembly of the United Nations and the Security Council. Using principles like *uti possidetis juris*, the ICJ has been able to adjudicate on a number of landmark cases. The doctrine helps to keep border conflicts in the state of stalemate during the decolonization

process by keeping territorial configurations frozen at independence. In *Burkina Faso v. Mali* (1986), the Court used *uti possidetis* to demarcate a disputed frontier region along one-hundred-kilometer stretch, preventing a situation leading to full scale warfare between the two West African states (Farid et al., 2025, p. 249). They both accepted the decision and enforced the boundary demarcation without any additional violence. Equally, *Qatar v. Bahrain* (2001) ended a long standing maritime and territorial dispute which had simmered decades, involving sovereignty over the Hawar Islands and the shoals of Fasht al-Dibal and Qit'at Jaradah. The comprehensive ruling of the Court, which spanned more than two hundred pages, not only delimited maritime boundaries but also apportioned sovereignty with neither party dissatisfied with the result. There are however great limitations to adjudication. States according to Spain (2013) are hesitant to refer significant issues to a third-party decision-making body. The ICJ has limited jurisdiction; as of 2025, only 73 states had accepted the compulsory jurisdiction of the Court under Article 36(2) of its Statute, the Optional Clause, with many acceptances being based on substantive reservations (ICJ, 2025). Other major powers such as China, France, Russia and the United States have not made or made and withdrawn acceptances following adverse judicial determinations. The case of the United States in 1986 led to the withdrawal of the United States after the case of the Nicaragua. This means that the ICJ is unable to determine most politically sensitive cases without the consent of respondent states. Besides, the characteristics of the adjudication process do not permit the multilateral involvement, and the majority of adjudicatory forums do not allow non-state actors (Spain, 2013, p. 63). In spite of these shortcomings, over 136 cases have been ruled by the International Court of Justice in contentious cases between the years 1947 and 2024, with compliance rates estimated to be about eighty percent of cases where both the parties had agreed upon jurisdiction in advance (Schulte, 2014). In addition to the ICJ, the Permanent Court of Arbitration offers specialized dispute resolution services, such as arbitration and conciliation, allowing parties to choose arbitrators with relevant technical expertise (Permanent Court of Arbitration, 2026).

### **Mediation and Comprehensive Dispute Resolution Methods**

Mediation is an important mechanism of preventing violence by introducing a neutral third party to facilitate the dialogue (Zhomartkyzy, 2023, p. 170). Its main aim is to establish a spirit of trust in which the parties in conflict are able to seek compromises that can satisfy their respective interests as opposed to entrenching the zero-sum positions. To be effective, mediation requires that the mediators remain neutral, impartial and confidential (UN Guidance to Effective Mediation, 2012). The 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action that restricted the nuclear program of Iran and the inter Korean *détente* of 2018 are examples that were successful (Zhomartkyzy, 2023, p. 174). Nonetheless, the mediation process also encounters severe challenges, such as the unwillingness of the parties to negotiate, strongly rooted ideological differences, the role played by external actors, who may use the process as an instrument of foreign policy rather than as a tool of good faith conflict resolution (Zhomartkyzy, 2023, p. 176). Spain (2013) goes on to argue that international institutional support of international dispute mediation is still wanting. No standing institution exists that is comparable to the ICJ in that it would offer mediation services to the states. Even though the Permanent Court of Arbitration and the International Centre of Settlement of Investment Disputes engage in conciliation, they do not provide mediation. The Mediation process does not have formal enforcement by international law and therefore its compliance is voluntary or is coerced through political pressure. No universally recognized procedural rules that regulate the use and practice of mediation exist, and there is no venue by which standards or the qualification of international mediators can be determined and that is generally accepted by

the international community (Spain, 2013, p. 66). The combination of various modes of dispute resolution is one of the promising developments. The integrated international dispute resolution is observed when two or more approaches are used to the same dispute in series or when the elements of different approaches are combined to form one process (Spain, 2013, p. 66). Indicatively, in the case of Malaysia Singapore land reclamation, the International Tribunal of the Law of the Sea incorporated fact finding and facilitation into its judicial process by calling on the creation of a team of independent experts to research the matters and provide recommendations. In the Pedra Branca case between Malaysia and Singapore, the two nations engaged in negotiations before and after referring the case to adjudication before the ICJ (Spain, 2013, p. 67). Integrated strategies are the best since they maximize participation of the stakeholders, include other parties who would have been left out, and offer venues of resolution where the legal rights might still be uncertain. The implementation of rights based and interests-based processes has some important contributions, which ought to be identified and developed.

### **The Security Council and the Veto Dilemma**

The biggest threat to the effectiveness of international law is the political gridlock in the UN Security Council due to the veto power of its five permanent members: China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States (Security Council Report, 2026, p. 3). Article 27(3) of the UN Charter provides that any decision taken by the Council on non procedural matters must have a vote of at least nine votes including the concurring votes of all permanent members meaning one negative vote kills any resolution. This is the voting procedure referred to as great power unanimity which was created with the aim of making sure that the Security Council would not compel major states to act in ways that are against their vital interests. The veto, originally meant to be a safety valve to ensure great participation in the power following World War II, has frequently been used in self serving ways which hinder the maintenance of international peace and security (Security Council Report, 2026, p. 5). The frequency of veto has increased dramatically since 2000, with forty-seven vetoes cast between 2015 and 2024 alone (Security Council Report, 2026, p. 8). This paralysis has been especially acute with respect to atrocity crimes in Syria, Ukraine and the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Russia and China have cast several vetoes on resolutions that would impose sanctions or refer the situation to the International Criminal Court on Syria. On Ukraine, Russia vetoed resolutions condemning its 2014 annexation of Crimea and its full-scale invasion in 2022. The United States has also vetoed dozens of resolutions which are critical of the Israeli policies on the Occupied Palestinian Territory (Security Council Report, 2026, p. 12). A number of programs have come up to limit the veto. The Code of Conduct Regarding Security Council Action against Genocide, Crimes against Humanity or War Crimes, which was adopted by more than 120 states by 2026, obliges signatories to ensure that they do not veto resolutions against mass atrocities (Security Council Report, 2026, p. 15). The Liechtenstein led veto initiative, adopted as a General Assembly resolution A/76/262, now obligatory, requires a General Assembly meeting within a period of ten days whenever a veto is cast, requiring the vetoing state to explain its action publicly. Although this does not stop vetoes, it raises the cost of politics and transparency. When the Security Council is in a state of complete deadlock, the General Assembly may resort to the Uniting for Peace procedure under the 377 A Resolution, so that it can make recommendations in favor of collective actions which may include the use of armed force, as necessary (Security Council Report, 2026, p. 18). The rule of obligatory abstinence is established under the UN Charter, article 27(3), which prohibits parties to a dispute to vote. The rule has however been interpreted narrowly, that is, it includes only Chapter VI and not Chapter VII, in which most of

the consequential resolutions fall (Security Council Report, 2026, p. 19). Making a Chapter VII vote obligatory would go a long way to fewer self-interested vetoes.

### **International Criminal Justice and the Peace versus Justice Debate**

The International Criminal Court is an institution that was established by the 1998 Rome Statute (Ubanyionwu, 2025, p. 120). There are 124 signatories to the Rome Statute as of 2026, but well-known non-signatories include China, India, Russia, and the United States. The Court can exercise jurisdiction either by referral by the Security Council, by the Prosecutor acting *proprio motu*, or by referral by a state party. The fact that the Court operates in active peace processes causes a constant tension between the sense of accountability and the need to bring violence to an end (Rodman, 2012, p. 60). The legalist vision is that prosecution is a binding obligation that cannot be compromised due to political factors, whereas a consequentialist view suggests that the Court lacks the capability to enforce and cannot be compromised by political factors (Rodman, 2012, p. 64). According to Spain (2013), the agreement-peace justice tension is a key normative issue to international dispute resolution. In Uganda, it was feared that the indictments of the Lord Resistance Army of Joseph Kony by the International Criminal Court would upset peace talks (Spain, 2013, p. 69). Whether to afford amnesty to enhance peace at the cost of seeking justice is a typical issue. The new area of transitional justice, such as the Gacaca courts of Rwanda and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa, is an attempt to reconcile these conflicting goals. Empirical studies of the territorial conflicts give an insight on the instances when leaders are inclined to settle the territorial conflicts with the help of international legal dispute resolution as compared to bilateral negotiations. According to Huth, Croco, and Appel (2011), a democratic leader who has weak legal claims is much more likely to decide to prefer a settlement by a formal legal dispute resolution process such as arbitration or adjudication, instead of direct bilateral negotiations. In their data set, democracies that had weak legal claims pursued formal legal dispute resolution forty four percent of the time, and those leaders that needed less domestic cover did so only sixteen percent of the time (Huth et al., 2011, p. 431). This is equivalent to a 175 percent increased risk. This is because international legal institutions offer domestic political cover; leaders can afford to distance themselves to the outcome of unpopular territorial concession by attributing the outcome to an impartial third party. This reasoning can be applied to the context of the International Criminal Court, where leaders who may be targeted by indictments may have incentives to undergo legal procedures that can shield them against the wrath of their compatriots, although the situation is different when leaders themselves are the subject of indictments.

### **Emerging Challenges: Armed Non-State Actors and Cyber Warfare**

The traditional international law, which is designed to deal with wars between sovereign states, is becoming more ill adapted to handling modern inner state conflicts involving armed non state actors, such as rebel groups, terrorist organizations and transnational criminal networks (Schulenburg, 2020, para. 4). These actors frequently blend with the local communities in cities, and it becomes challenging to distinguish humanitarian roles. Existing international law does not say much about armed non state actors, which creates a legal vacuum allowing the use of unilateral interventions, which often bypass the UN Charter (Schulenburg, 2020, para. 7). Non international armed conflicts are governed by international humanitarian law, namely, Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocol II, but these are primitive compared to those of international armed conflict. Also, armed non state actors are not signatories to treaties and cannot be formally bound though customary international law arguably applies to all organized armed groups whether consent is provided or not

(Sivakumaran, 2012). Spain (2013) points out that the state centric character of the international legal system constrains the ability of the international dispute resolution. A good dispute resolution mechanism must include all the other relevant stake holders such as non state actors yet many forums do not provide this or have stringent conditions on their membership. Non state actors are becoming increasingly more like subjects, as opposed to objects of international law. Corporations and individuals are seeking international dispute resolution outside their governing state, and non governmental organizations are impacting the formulation of norms (Spain, 2013, p. 61). However, without formal recognition under the international legal regime, this opening up of the system also contributes to lack of clarity about the extent of state power and the rights and responsibilities of non state actors. The time has come to re examine the place of states in the international dispute resolution system. The online world also poses some of the most difficult legal issues. Although states agree that the international humanitarian law is applicable to cyber operations, there exists a significant reluctance to elaborate upon how core principles, such as distinction, proportionality, precaution, or necessity, apply to data corruption, service degradation, or functional disablement as opposed to kinetic destruction (Biller, 2026, p. 3). The Tallinn Manual 2.0 (NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence, 2017) is the most authoritative scholarly attempt to apply the existing law to cyber operations, but it is not legally binding. As of 2026, cyber activities are projected to be used more often as a strategic measure, such as demoralizing populations by degrading essential services like power grids and financial networks, instead of as a tactical measure on the battlefield (Biller, 2026, p. 5). The pace of artificial intelligence in cyber operations endangers to overtake the traditional human centric legal review processes and shift the responsibility to system designers and commanders, instead of direct operators. No government or international court of law has given definite responses as to criminal responsibility when an autonomously operating AI system attacks a civilian target. To seal these gaps, various approaches must be employed: negotiating new treaties, developing customary law by means of consistent state practice, extending the jurisdiction of the existing tribunals and the utilization of soft law tools as provisional guidelines. An example of the soft law approach is the UN Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications, which issues consensus reports confirming applicability of international humanitarian law to cyber activities without resolving interpretative disputes (UN GGE, 2021).

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The success of international law in resolving conflicts depends on its flexibility, the political goodwill of states in cooperating with each other, and the clarity of the law (Abbas, 2023, p. 90). The practical experience of the territorial conflicts shows that in those situations when the legal principles are obvious and one of the sides possesses an unquestionable advantage, the international law can provide the focus point, which will significantly contribute to the peaceful resolution (Huth et al., 2011). Strong legal claim challengers are fifty eight percent more likely to settle in an ultimate agreement and disputes with asymmetric legal claims are fifty seven percent more likely to end in an ultimate agreement. These conclusions are a challenge to the realist argument that the international law is epiphenomenal to the interests of the states. Nevertheless, the design of the international law including the International Court of Justice, International Criminal Court, Responsibility to Protect framework, and mediation institutions has been defective due to the limitation of enforcement, concerns of state sovereignty, and the power imbalances enabling selective application. Security Council veto has been frustrating the efforts to respond to the mass atrocities, and the proliferation of international courts has led to

fragmentation and uncertainty (Spain, 2013). A few suggestions arise after this analysis. One, the international community can enhance enforcement mechanisms by increasing the investigative capacities of the International Criminal Court, creating special enforcement funds, and establishing multilateral sanctions enforcement mechanisms. Second, various states are to encourage veto restraint by the further application of the obligatory abstention rule under Article 27(3) of the UN Charter to Chapter VII votes, increased use of the ACT Group Code of Conduct, and continued use of the Liechtenstein veto initiative to promote transparency. Third, more investment in developing non binding instruments, to serve as transitional steps toward eventual codification of treaties, is necessary. Fourth, they should promote integrated dispute resolution approaches, which combines adjudication, mediation, fact finding and conciliation in mutually reinforcing ways (Spain, 2013, p. 66). Fifth, access to international legal forums should be improved to non state actors and democratic leaders with weak legal claims who require domestic political cover which can facilitate peaceful resolutions which otherwise would not be possible (Huth et al., 2011; Spain, 2013). Future studies ought to test quantitative relationships between the involvement of the International Criminal Court and the duration of conflicts, comparative effectiveness of various veto restraint mechanisms, artificial intelligence governance structures of autonomous weapons systems, and the engagement model of armed non state actors that integrates legal accountability without justifying violence. The cross-cutting of climate change and conflict, which is increasingly being perceived by the Security Council as an amplifier of threats, needs further legal analysis in terms of displacement, shortages of resources, and adaptation demands. Finally, although international law cannot displace the political functions of the Security Council and cannot eliminate power politics in international relations, it can nevertheless perform its tasks of codifying norms, providing neutral adjudication platforms, creating focal points to negotiate over, and socialize states towards peaceful resolution of disputes (Farid et al., 2025, p. 253; Huth et al., 2011; Schulenburg, 2020, para.) 9). The conflicts of the twenty first century do not call into question the international law itself but rather demand a strategic adaptation to it, recognizing the limitations of the law and the impossibility to replace it.

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