

Research Article

A Comparative Analysis of Western Nations' Actions in Russia-Ukraine and Israel-Palestine Conflicts

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Abstract

This study explores and contrasts the responses of Western nations, specifically the United States (US), the United Kingdom (UK), and the European Union (EU), to two pivotal conflicts: the 2022 Russia-Ukraine conflict and the 2023 Israel-Palestine conflict. Adopting a multidisciplinary approach, the analysis delves into the political, historical, and humanitarian dimensions of these responses, aiming to unravel the intricate factors that shape Western foreign policy. Through a qualitative content analysis of diplomatic statements, and policy actions, the research discerns the motivations guiding the approaches of these key Western players to these conflicts. By using a comparative in foreign policy framework, a pivotal finding emerges, emphasizing that diverse in responses are primarily driven by interstate perspectives, thereby revealing nuanced positions influenced by varying regional alliances within the US, the UK, and the EU.

Keywords: Comparative Analysis, Western Alliance, Foreign Policy, Middle East

INTRODUCTION

Today, nations face many complex global challenges, ranging from geopolitical tensions to humanitarian crises. How countries respond to these challenges not only reflects their foreign policy priorities but also shapes the dynamics of international relations. Understanding the nuances of this reaction is crucial to describing the complexity of global politics. In recent years, the Russian-Ukrainian conflict on February 24, 2022, and the escalating Israeli-Palestinian conflict following the events of October 7, 2023, has highlighted the complexities of navigating global crises. Although the international community calls for humanitarian principles in responding to such conflicts, the actions of Western powers, including the United States (US), the United Kingdom (UK), and the European Union (EU), reveal various approaches and sometimes display policies that are sometimes contradictory.

The study aims to uncover the complexity of contemporary international relations by examining the response of major Western nations to the Russian-Ukrainian and Israeli-Palestinian conflicts. By investigating the motivations behind these responses, the study seeks to provide valuable insights for both academics and policymakers. Previous studies have explored various aspects of how Western nations respond to international conflicts. In this study, we specifically reference the perspectives of three different authors. The first

article is "The Strategic Challenge of Society-Centric Warfare" by Ariel E. Levite and Jonathan Shimshoni (2018) discusses the growing significance of society in modern warfare (Levite and Shimshoni, 2018). The authors argue that Western countries need to adapt strategies to consider the societal dimension in conflicts, especially given contemporary threats from adversaries like the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). The paper suggests a shift towards developing better theories and practices to address society-centric challenges, moving beyond reliance solely on technology and operations. Emphasizing the role of society in warfare, the paper underscores the necessity of evolving strategies to effectively combat modern threats.

Meanwhile, Luljeta Kodra's (2015) article "The Civil War in Syria and the International Response" offers a detailed study of the involvement of Western countries in the Syrian conflict and the reaction of the global community. This article delves into the challenges faced by Western countries, including the United States, Turkey, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia, as they support factions of the armed opposition, like the Syrian Liberation Army. It examines internal debates within Western governments regarding potential military intervention, expressing concerns about escalating conflict and the heightened suffering of Syrian citizens. Emphasizing the Security Council's role, particularly that of its permanent members, the article underscores the need for objective UN goals and judicious use of vetoes in serious crime cases (Kodra, 2015). Overall, it offers valuable insights into the complexities of Western involvement in the Syrian conflict, making significant contributions to literature on this subject.

On the other hand, the article "How to boost the Western response to Russian hostile influence operations" by Jacob Janda (2018) explores the Western reaction to Russian aggression, focusing on non-military detachment strategies (Janda, 2018). This review identifies trends that reveal limited action by many Western and Southern European countries, with the US and the UK primarily relying on defense sanctions. Janda stressed the need for a comprehensive strategy to counter Russian influence operations, put forward recommendations such as acknowledging threats, implementing firm defensive measures, and undertaking joint research efforts to understand the scope of disinformation campaigns.

In the context of international relations research, there is a gap in the understanding of Western states' responses to international conflicts across these three studies. Previous studies, such as those by Levite & Shimshoni (2018) and Kodra (2015), have examined Western attitudes towards international conflicts, emphasizing the importance of factors such as humanitarian intervention and geopolitical interests. Janda (2018) also highlights Western responses to Russian aggression, with an emphasis on non-military strategies. Despite their shared thematic focus, each article adopts a unique approach, enriching our understanding of how the Western world responds to significant conflicts. For instance, while Levite and Shimshoni (2018) offer critical insights into the growing significance of societal dimensions in modern warfare, their study primarily focuses on non-state actors, thus overlooking state-to-state conflict dynamics which are essential for this research. Similarly, Kodra's (2015) thorough analysis of Western involvement in the Syrian conflict does not compare responses across different conflicts, which is necessary to understand

the broader patterns of Western foreign policy. Meanwhile, Janda's (2018) recommendations for countering Russian aggression are valuable, but his analysis does not extend to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which limits its comparative applicability. All three provide an understanding of Western states' responses in conflicts; however, they fall short of providing an understanding of the more complex dynamics behind Western foreign policy, particularly in the context of humanitarian crises. This research aims to fill that gap by using a comparative approach to analyze Western responses in the Russia-Ukraine and Israel-Palestine conflicts. Through contrasting and comparing the policies of Western nations, our goal is to identify patterns, differences, and implications, offering a deeper insight into the dynamics of Western responses to international conflicts and providing valuable perspectives on their strategies and reactions.

This research contributes to the field of international relations by offering a nuanced understanding of the complex dynamics involved in Western countries responding to global conflicts. The unique approach of this study lies in its thorough analysis of the complex interactions among various factors that shape Western foreign policy. Specifically, it sheds light on the intricate dynamics involving alliances, historical relationships, and other interstate factors that influence Western actions during humanitarian crises. Focusing on specific conflicts such as those in Ukraine and Israel-Palestine, the research accurately examines the responses of Western states. By doing so, it aims to provide a detailed insight into the decision-making processes and policy outcomes, thereby enhancing our comprehension of Western foreign policy behavior in critical global scenarios.

Drawing from the phenomena and previous studies, the complex interaction of interests, values, and strategic considerations that drive the Western response to global conflict represents an important study. Therefore, this article seeks to explore what factors contribute to the formation of both similarities and differences in responses to both situations? How do these factors impact Western countries' reactions to the humanitarian aspects within these conflicts? By answering these questions, this research seeks to offer a comprehensive knowledge of the forces that shape foreign policy decisions in international crises and to reveal the intricate relationship between geopolitical dynamics, responses to conflict, and adherence to humanitarian principles.

METHOD AND THEORY

Method

Comparative Foreign Policy Analysis (CFP) is a sub-field in the study of international relations that deals with decision-making processes related to significant events and day-to-day interactions between nations. This approach involves exploring the causes of country behavior and its implications through the development, testing, and refinement of foreign policy decision making theories in a comparative perspective (Hermann, 1968). The CFP is inter-disciplinary, combining theories and ideas from various related disciplines, and as a relatively young field, it continues to evolve over time, enriching our understanding of the dynamics of international relations.

The primary objective of the CFP is to understand and analyze the country's decision-making process and its response to interaction with other countries. This includes examining the factors causing state behavior and its impact. The CFP seeks to build, test, and refine foreign policy decision-making theories in a comparative perspective, providing a deeper understanding of the dynamics of international relations (Lantis and Beasley, 2017). The importance of the CFP lies in its contribution to the science of international relations in a wider sense. By studying the factors driving foreign policy, it provides valuable insights into the dynamics of the international system, internal factors within a country, and the impact of leadership policy on foreign policy (Kaarbo, Lantis and Beasley, 2012). This knowledge can provide critical information to policymakers, supporting a deeper understanding of global politics and intergovernmental interactions. Comparative analysis serves as a crucial approach in deciphering the complexities of Western states' responses to international conflicts by providing a structured framework for examining and understanding the nuances of foreign policy decision-making for three reasons.

First, comparative analysis allows researchers to identify common patterns and clear differences in the way Western states respond to international conflicts. By comparing the actions, statements, and policies of key Western actors, such as the US, UK, and EU, researchers can find common motivations as well as different approaches to conflict resolution. This helps highlight the nuances of Western foreign policy and the various factors that influence their responses.

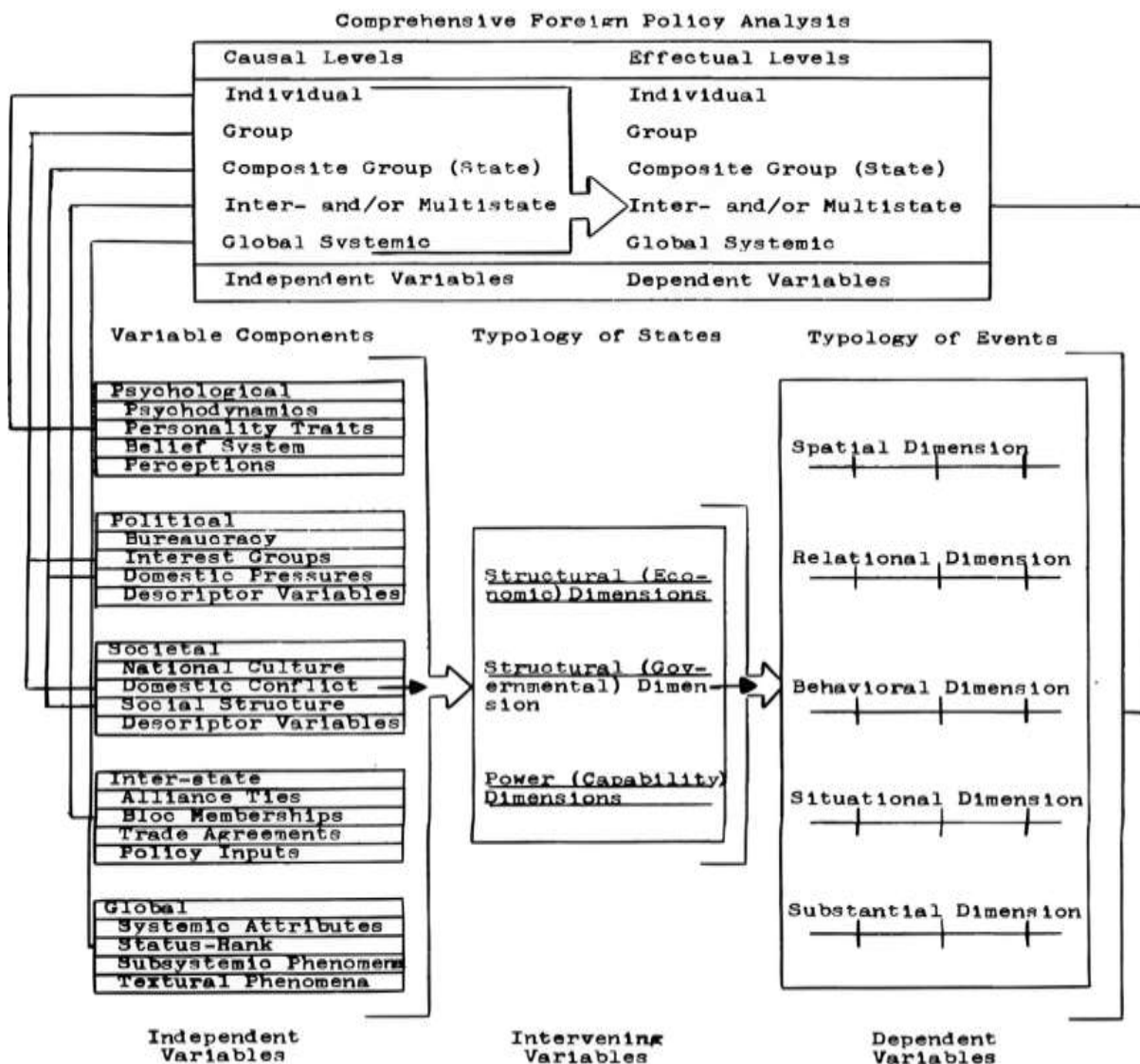
Second, comparative analysis enhances our understanding of the complex dynamics involving Western states by examining the factors that shape their responses to global crises. By studying the interplay of interests, values and strategic considerations, researchers can gain insight into the motives underlying Western foreign policy decisions during international conflicts. This knowledge can support a deeper understanding of global politics and intergovernmental interactions.

Third, comparative analysis facilitates meaningful inference. Comparative analysis, along with thematic analysis and content analysis, provides a methodological foundation that facilitates the extraction of meaningful conclusions about Western responses to the Russia-Ukraine and Israel-Palestine conflicts. In unraveling these complex dynamics, comparative analysis plays a key role by disaggregating the various dimensions of Western states' responses.

Framework for Comparative Analysis of Foreign Policy Behavior

Drawing on the framework of Stephen J. Andriole (et.al) (1975), this article provides a detailed and structured analytical approach to understanding foreign policy behavior (figure 1). It underlines factors such as alliances, national interests, and other domestic factors that influence foreign policy decisions, providing a solid foundation for understanding the complex dynamics behind Western policy responses to global conflicts (Andriole, Wilkenfeld and Hopple, 1975).

Figure 1. Framework for Comparative Analysis of Foreign Policy Behavior



Source: Andriole (et al) (1975) p.182

The framework offers a systematic approach to understanding foreign policy behavior, providing a structural lens to comprehensively analyze state action. The framework consists of three sets of interrelated variables: independent, intervention, and dependent variables. First, independent variables are factors or variables that are the cause or trigger of the change or variability in the dependent variable. Independent variables are variables that can be changed or manipulated in a study to see their effect on the dependent variable. Second, Intervening variables, are factors that are between the independent variable and the dependent variable in a relationship. The intervening variable acts as a mediator or link between the independent variable and the dependent variable. This variable affects or changes the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. Third, the dependent variable is a result or effect of changing or manipulating the independent variable. In the context of foreign policy behavior analysis, the dependent variable is the foreign policy behavior to be understood or explained through the influence of independent and intervening variables.

The framework of comparative foreign policy offers a comprehensive perspective on how and why countries react differently to international situations. By considering the interplay of independent, intervening, and dependent variables within the context of Western responses to the Russian-Ukrainian and Israeli-Palestinian conflicts, deeper insights are gained into the complexities of state actions and policy decision-making processes. The distinction between independent, intervening, and dependent variables provides a structured lens through which to analyze the factors influencing foreign policy behavior. In the case of the Western responses to these conflicts, independent variables such as policy objectives, strategic priorities, and historical relationships play a pivotal role in shaping the outcomes. For example, the differing aims of supporting Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity in the Russian-Ukrainian conflict and achieving sustainable peace in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict serve as crucial independent variables guiding Western decision-making.

Intervening variables, such as economic sanctions, military aid, and diplomatic efforts, act as mediators between the independent variables and the dependent variable of foreign policy behavior. These factors influence the relationships between policy objectives and actual policy actions taken by Western countries in response to conflicts. The dependent variable, which represents the foreign policy behavior exhibited by Western countries, is influenced by the interplay of independent and intervening variables. By examining how policy objectives translate into specific actions, such as implementing economic sanctions or providing military aid, insights can be gained into the nuanced differences in Western responses to conflicts. Through this integrated analysis, the multifaceted dynamics underlying foreign policy decision-making in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian and Israeli-Palestinian conflicts can be elucidated, highlighting the diverse factors at play and the varying approaches adopted by Western states based on their specific priorities and objectives.

RESULT AND ANALYSIS

Russia-Ukraine Conflict

The conflict between Russia and Ukraine is rooted in a complex history, including the status of Crimea and the separatist movement in eastern Ukraine. This tension began with the independence of Ukraine in 1991 and was exacerbated by the Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014. This move is further tightening the already tense relationship between Russia and Ukraine. Another major factor contributing to this conflict is the ongoing separatist movement in eastern Ukraine, in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions (Sergei, 2022). Pro-Russian separatists declared independence in 2014, leading to conflict with the Ukrainian government. Russia is accused of supporting and supplying the separatists, although Russia denies direct involvement.

Since 2022, tensions escalated as Russia began gathering troops along the Ukrainian border, raising concerns about a potential invasion. This military buildup is seen as a response to Ukraine's increasing efforts to align itself with the West, including seeking North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) membership and deepening ties with the

European Union. This situation reflects the ongoing geopolitical struggle between Russia and the West, with Ukraine at the center of this power game (Ekman, 2023). In February 2022, Russia started a large-scale military operation, invading Ukraine from various directions. It has resulted in widespread destruction, loss of life, and evictions. The international community condemns Russia's actions, drops further sanctions, and gives support for Ukraine. This conflict has significant global implications, including economic and humanitarian impacts (Dodds et al., 2023). Long term outcomes are still uncertain, with potential long-term impacts on Ukrainian infrastructure and population.

Israel-Palestine Conflict

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict dates back to the late 19th century, coinciding with the rise of national movements such as Zionism and Arab nationalism. In 1917, the Balfour Declaration was endorsed by the British Government, which expressed its support for the establishment of a homeland for Jews in Palestine (Regan, 2017). This declaration encouraged Jewish immigration to the region. On 29 November 1947, the United Nations passed Resolution 181, which approving the termination of the British Mandate for Palestine from 1 August 1948 and the division of Palestine into territories for Jews and Arabs, with large areas of Jerusalem, including Bethlehem, under international control. The Jewish side obtained the coastal area around Tel Aviv, the area around the Lake Galilee and the area in the Negev Desert. Meanwhile, the Arabs gained the remnants of Palestine including a small enclave of Jaffa. The plan was approved by the United Nation' (UN) General Assembly with 33 votes in favor, 13 against, and 10 neutral (Bregman, 2002).

Following the UN decision, on May 15, 1948, Israel declared its independence, triggering the first Arab-Israeli war the next day. This conflict resulted in at least 2 problems that form the basis of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to this day. First, this war resulted in at least 700,000 Palestinians becoming refugees, a humanitarian problem. Second, this war divided the region into Israel, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip (Almassri, 2023). In 1967, the Six-Day War between Israel and an Arab coalition led to Israel's occupation of the West Bank, East Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip, and the Sinai Peninsula. This event deepened tensions between Israel and the Arab states and Palestine (Laron, 2018). These tensions persisted until 1993, when both countries agreed to the Oslo Accords, which were expected to bring about peace. However, the implementation of the agreement has not been fully successful. Tensions between Israel and Palestine continued to escalate; for instance, in 2000, there was a wave of protests and violence known as the Second Intifada (Barari, 2003).

The establishment of Israeli settlements in the West Bank in the 2000s added to the complexity of the conflict, and two wars in the Gaza Strip in 2008-2009 and 2014 caused significant losses on both sides (Cohen et al., 2017). Despite efforts to open up a peace dialogue, the conflict continued to escalate in the 2010s until it peaked on 7 October 2023 with the outbreak of the latest armed conflict (Selján, 2024). The conflict of 7 October 2023

was triggered by an aggression provoked by Hamas, the ruling Palestinian authority on the Gaza Strip since 2007 (Tivadar, 2022).

Comparison of Western Countries' Response to the Russian-Ukrainian and Israel-Palestine conflict

For this study, data collection is limited to the first four months of each conflict: February to May 2022 for the Russia-Ukraine conflict, and October 2023 to January 2024 for the Israel-Palestine conflict (table 1). Data includes diplomatic statements, policy actions, and relevant statistics, providing a comprehensive examination of Western nations' responses during these critical periods.

Table 1. Comparison of Western countries' response to the Russian-Ukrainian conflict February - May 2022

State	Diplomatic Statements	Policy Actions	Humanitarian Action	Civillian Casualties
US	Condemned Russia's actions and expressed support for Ukraine's sovereignty (Cavandoli and Wilson, 2022)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide \$800 million security assistance package to Ukraine (U S Department of Defense, 2022) Imposed sanctions on Russia, targeting individuals and entities involved in the conflict(Karazanishvili, 2024) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Called for an immediate ceasefire ((Reuters, 2022) Approve a more than \$225 million in humanitarian assistance (Office of Press Relations, 2022) Submitted a draft resolution to United Nations (UN) Security Council intended to end Russian military actions (Security Council Report, 2022). 	The number of civilian casualties, as verified by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), amounted to 17,882 from February to June 2022. This total includes 9,728 individuals who were killed and 8,154 who sustained injuries. (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2024)
UK	Condemned Russia's actions and provide support for Ukraine (Humeniuk, 2022)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Imposed sanctions on Russia, targeting individuals and entities involved in the conflict (Timofeev, 2022) Provided £2.3 billion in military support to Ukraine (Mills, 2024) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Called for an immediate ceasefire (Sharma, 2022) Provide £1.5 billion in humanitarian and economic aid since February. (GOV.UK, 2022a). Voted in favor of a draft resolution aimed at stopping war (GOV.UK, 2022b). 	
EU	Condemns Russia's military aggression against Ukraine (EU Directorate-General for Communication, 2022)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Imposed sanctions on Russia including restrictions on trade and investment (Sanus, Akgül-Açıkmeşe and Karaoguz, 2024) Provide €500 million military equipment to Ukraine (Clapp, 2022) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Called for an immediate ceasefire (EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, 2022) Provided €143 million in humanitarian aid (EU Directorate-General for Communication, 2022) Submitted a draft resolution to UN General Assembly that demanding the withdrawal of all Russian military forces from Ukraine (European External Action Service, 2022) 	

Source: Compiled by researchers from various sources

During the first four months of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, the collective position of Western nations, including the US, UK, and the EU, showed strong and united condemnation of Russia's actions. This solidarity is underlined by their undeniable support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. The US has used diplomatic channels to articulate a strong rejection of Russian actions. The US diplomatic statement not only condemned Russia's actions, but also urged an immediate ceasefire while urging Russia to reduce the conflict diplomatically. Along with these diplomatic efforts, the US is taking concrete policy steps to overcome the crisis. The cancellation of US\$800 million security assistance for Ukraine's urgent needs was approved, reflecting a commitment to strengthening Ukrainian defence capabilities. At the same time, the US has imposed sanctions targeting individuals and entities directly involved in the conflict, marking a punitive response to Russian actions.

Meanwhile, UK's policy reflects the feelings of its Western allies, condemns Russia's actions and increases support for Ukraine through a diverse approach. This approach includes imposing sanctions on Russia, targeting individuals and entities directly involved in the conflict. In addition, UK's significant military support to Ukraine, amounting to £2.3 billion, demonstrates its commitment to strengthening Ukraine's defence capabilities in the face of Russian aggression. In addition, UK has allocated £1.5 billion in humanitarian and economic aid since February, underlining its commitment to alleviating the humanitarian impact of the conflict on Ukrainian civilians. Similarly, the EU condemns Russian military aggression against Ukraine and takes decisive steps to overcome the crisis. In addition to imposing sanctions on Russia, including trade and investment restrictions, the EU has doubled its budget to 1.5 billion euros to support EU member states in supplying military equipment to the Ukrainian Armed Forces. In addition, the European Union expressed its readiness to provide economic and humanitarian assistance to Ukraine, stressing its commitment to support Ukraine's stability and resilience in the face of the ongoing conflict.

The collective efforts of UK and the EU, together with the US, emphasize a united Western response to the Russian-Ukrainian conflict. By condemning Russia's actions, imposing targeted sanctions, and providing substantial support to Ukraine, these Western nations demonstrate their commitment to abide by international law, safeguard Ukraine's sovereignty, and seek a peaceful solution to the crisis. Despite rising humanitarian costs, the UK and the European Union remain steadfast in their support for Ukraine, stressing the importance of solidarity and cooperation in tackling one of Europe's most pressing security challenges.

The conflict that erupted on October 7, 2023, was ignited by an aggressive move instigated by Hamas, the governing authority in the Palestinian territory of the Gaza Strip since 2007. This event marked a significant escalation in tensions between Hamas and Israel, resulting in a deadly cycle of violence and retaliation. The reported casualties from the ensuing war, as documented by UNOCHA reporting, paint a grim picture of the human cost of the conflict. According to statistics approximately 1,200 Israelis lost their lives, with an additional 5,431 Israelis sustaining injuries (table 2). On the Palestinian side, the toll was even more devastating, with an estimated 22,313 fatalities and 57,296 injuries

recorded among Palestinians in Gaza alone (Statista, 2024). These figures underscore the immense human suffering and loss experienced by both Israeli and Palestinian communities because of the conflict.

Table 2. Comparison of Western countries' response to the Israel-Palestine Conflict
October 2023-January 2024

State	Diplomatic Statements	Policy Actions	Humanitarian Actions	Civilian Casualties
US	strongly condemned Hamas' attacks on Israel (Zanotti, Sharp and Blanchard, 2023)	Provided military support to Israel, dispatching 244 cargo planes and 20 ships loaded with more than 10,000 tons of weapons and others military equipment (Action on Armed Violence (AOAV), 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No call for a ceasefire. Vetoed a UN Security Council resolution that would have called for "humanitarian pauses," and "immediate humanitarian ceasefire" (Amnesty International, 2023). Provided \$100 million in humanitarian assistance for Palestinian in the West Bank (Office of Press Relations, 2023) 	The reported casualties from the war between Hamas and Israel since October 7, 2023, based on United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) reporting, indicate that approximately 1,200 Israelis were killed, 5,431 Israelis were injured, 22,313 Palestinians in Gaza were killed, and 57,296 Palestinians in Gaza were injured. (Statista, 2024)
UK	Condemned the Hamas attack and reaffirmed the UK's unequivocal support for Israel (Reuters, 2023)	Provided two Royal Navy ships, surveillance aircraft, and military assets to provide practical support to Israel (Lovatt, 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No call for a ceasefire. Abstained from voting on a UN Security Council resolution that called for "humanitarian pauses," (Pons Rafols, 2024) Allocating almost 87 million pounds additional funding, and urging Israel to increase aid flow through various routes (Mada, 2023) 	
EU	The EU strongly condemns multiple indiscriminate attacks by Hamas in Israel, (Council of the EU, 2023)	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No call for a ceasefire. Called for humanitarian pauses (Al Jazeera, 2023) Commitment to humanitarian aid for Gaza by allocating €125 million humanitarian assistance for civilians in Gaza (EU Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), 2023) EU welcomes UN Security Council resolution on Gaza aid (Delegation of the EU to the UN, 2024) 	

Source: Compiled by researchers from various sources

In response to the escalating violence between Hamas and Israel, the United States, the United Kingdom, and the European Union each articulated their positions and actions regarding the conflict. Despite their shared condemnation of Hamas' as terrorist attacks, the responses of these entities varied in terms of diplomatic actions and calls for a ceasefire. The US, while providing substantial military support to Israel and condemning Hamas' actions, notably refrained from endorsing a ceasefire and controversially vetoed a UN Security Council resolution proposing a humanitarian pause. In contrast, the UK, while offering support to Israel and condemning Hamas' attacks, abstained from the UN Security Council resolution vote and emphasized the importance of diplomatic efforts and global unity. Similarly, the European Union condemned Hamas' aggression, expressed condolences for the casualties, and called for an immediate cessation of violence, although it did not take specific policy actions.

However, the condemnation and reluctance to advocate ceasefire, those western nations in response to the humanitarian crisis have made efforts to provide aid. The United States has allocated \$100 million in humanitarian aid to Palestinians affected by the conflict (Office of Press Relations, 2023). This substantial contribution underscores the U.S.'s commitment to alleviating the suffering of civilians caught in the crossfire. Similarly, the United Kingdom, despite its strong support for Israel, pledged £87 million in additional funds for humanitarian aid (Mada, 2023). This gesture reflects the UK's recognition of the urgent need to address the humanitarian crisis and its willingness to provide assistance to those affected by the conflict. Additionally, the European Union has also stepped up its efforts, allocating an additional EUR 125 million for humanitarian aid (EU Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), 2023). This commitment demonstrates the EU's acknowledgment of the severity of the situation and its determination to support relief efforts in Gaza. Together, these contributions from the US, UK, and EU highlight the importance of international solidarity and cooperation in providing essential aid to alleviate the suffering of civilians affected by the conflict.

Unveiling Parallels and Distinctions in Western Responses to Global Conflicts

Faced with two different geopolitical crises - the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the Israeli-Hamas conflict - Western countries such as the US, the UK, and the EU show a united front in criticism while revealing nuanced and strategic differences in their response. In both conflicts, diplomatic statements from the US, the UK, and the EU unite in a strong condemnation of the Russian aggressors and Hamas. The call for an immediate ceasefire echoed through the rhetoric of each entity, stressing the urgent need to end hostilities and seek a diplomatic resolution. This shared stance highlights the unity of the West in advocating peace and stability.

Sanctions emerged as a general tool used by the three entities to express disagreement and put pressure on aggressors. When targeting Russia in the Ukrainian theater, economic constraints underline the Western commitment to hold them accountable for their actions. The enforcement of sanctions served as a demonstration of collective diplomatic power and a unified response to aggression. In terms of policy action,

military support stands out in the Western response to both conflicts. The US, The UK, and the EU, respectively, have donated military aid to the affected countries. The US, for example, not only condemns Russia's actions, but also approves the withdrawal of \$800 million in security aid for Ukraine's urgent needs, demonstrating a real commitment to support its allies. Similarly, the UK allocation of £2.3 billion for military support and the European Union's decision to double its budget for the supply of military equipment to the Ukrainian Armed Forces underline a joint commitment to enhancing the defense capabilities of the affected countries.

Humanitarian aid emerged as a basis for the Western response, emphasizing the commitment to alleviate the human suffering caused by conflict. The varied approach is evident in the allocation of funds. While the US has agreed to substantial increases in humanitarian aid to Ukraine, the UK focuses on economic aid, and the European Union, through additional funding, aims to support military and humane needs. This diversity reflects a nuanced understanding of the challenges posed by conflict. Nevertheless, the differences in approaches and priorities are evident. In the context of Ukraine, the US, the UK, and the European Union showed a cohesive response, using diplomatic channels in the UN to overcome the crisis. However, in the Israeli-Hamas conflict, different nuances emerged. The US, uniquely, vetoed a UN Security Council resolution linked to the humanitarian pause, while the UK abstained in the vote. None of these countries expressed a call for a ceasefire, showing different diplomatic attitudes in the settlement of the conflict.

Interstate as the Main Variable Driving Varied Western Responses

Interstate relations are the intricate interactions and dynamics between different states or countries. These ties include diplomacy, trade agreements, security alliances, and cultural exchanges. Interstate relations can range from cooperative and peaceful to competitive and conflictual, making diplomacy and negotiation critical tools for ensuring global stability and tackling global concerns. Such relationships are influenced by political, economic, and social considerations, as well as historical background, and play an important role in determining the path of international affairs (Kamola, 2020). In this context, we aim to examine the intricacies of interstate relations in Western countries regarding their responses to two conflicts, focusing on political and cultural factors.

Geopolitics and the History of Western Alliances

Geopolitics is a multifaceted concept encompassing the examination of how geography intricately shapes politics and international relations. It investigates into the dynamic interplay between geographical factors and a nation's foreign policy decisions (Dodds, 2019). It involves a thorough analysis of how various elements, including territorial boundaries, access to waterways, and proximity to other nations, significantly influence a country's political and strategic choices on the global stage. Geopolitics extends beyond the purely physical aspects, incorporating cultural and economic landscapes into its framework (Pickering, 2017).

Geopolitics holds profound significance in global history and politics, dating back to ancient times. It has been a fundamental force shaping state formation, conflicts, and foreign policy decisions. Geopolitical concepts have historically influenced territorial divisions, power expansion, and competitive interactions among nations (Sloan, 2017, pp. 1–8). The crucial importance of geopolitics in global political dynamics lies in its ability to guide diplomatic involvement, foster the formation of alliances and agreements based on geographical positioning, and align with perceived global interests (Saaida, 2023).

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), established in 1949, acts as a linchpin alliance binding the U.S., the UK, and numerous European nations. Originally formed to ensure collective defense during the Cold War, NATO underscores a shared commitment to mutual defense and a common understanding of security concerns (Thompson, 2023). The European Union, while not a military alliance, wields considerable influence in shaping the foreign policies of its member states. Emphasizing a unified approach to international relations, the EU's collective stance holds sway. The Treaty of Lisbon, in effect since 2009, has bolstered the EU's role in foreign policy, enabling a more cohesive and coordinated response to global challenge (Viceré, Tercovich and Carta, 2020).

The institutionalized relations between NATO and the EU, established in the early 2000s, have significantly shaped the collective response of the United States, the United Kingdom, and European Union to global conflicts (Ewers-Peters, 2021). The alliance between NATO and the EU builds upon steps taken in the 1990s to promote European responsibility in defense matters, leading to a cooperative and mutually reinforcing role in supporting international peace and security.

Political and Cultural Influences on Western Responses

In the context of the Ukraine conflict and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, cultural and political factors play an important role in shaping the responses of Western countries, the United States, the United Kingdom and the European Union. Cultural factors include the history of bilateral relations, political values and national identities. Meanwhile, political factors include various aspects, such as geopolitical interests, strategic alliances, and each country's foreign policy. These factors shape the views and actions of these countries in dealing with these conflicts.

Ukraine-Russia Conflict

Cultural factor of the US' historical commitment to democracy and sovereignty influenced its strong support for Ukraine. The cultural value of promoting democratic principles and defending allies played an important role in shaping US attitudes and decisions. The US is seen as a major supporter of Ukraine, emphasizing democratic values and condemning any violations of international law. Military and financial aid from the US to Ukraine is often framed as assistance to confront external aggression against democratic values (Kondratenko, 2020).

Political factor of the United States (US) as a global leader in upholding human rights and international law influences its condemnation of Russian aggression in Ukraine. As a country that upholds democratic values and the rule of international law, the US placed a strong emphasis on these principles in its response to the conflict. Political values that emphasize freedom and self-determination also guided US actions in the conflict. In this context, the US tends to support Ukraine and take a strong stance against Russia's actions, as this is consistent with its political identity and values (Jim, 2024).

Cultural factor of the United Kingdom support for Ukraine is a part of its commitment to the principles of democracy and state sovereignty. As a country that upholds democratic values, the UK places importance on supporting countries that seek to champion the principles of democracy. In the context of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, the UK portrays its support as being in line with Ukraine's democratic and freedom interests. They believe that supporting Ukraine is a move that is consistent with their political values, and as a democratic country, they have a moral responsibility to support countries that are struggling to defend their sovereignty from external interference (Hrubinko, 2020). The historical ties between the UK and Ukraine, along with a shared commitment to democratic governance, contribute to the perception of the UK as a supporter of Ukraine's sovereignty.

The political factor of the UK supporting Ukraine reflects their strategic interests and political values. As a member of NATO, the UK has a geopolitical interest in maintaining stability in Eastern Europe. Their support for Ukraine is not only an expression of solidarity with a country facing external aggression, but also an attempt to prevent the expansion of Russian influence in the region. In addition, the UK's deeply held values of democracy and human rights provide a moral basis for their support of Ukraine. Through this support, the UK sought to reinforce the principles of democracy and state sovereignty, and to send a message that aggression against a sovereign state would not be tolerated in the international community (Landsman, 2024)

Cultural factors of the European Union, as an entity based on the principles of democracy, human rights and peace, is culturally bound to these values. EU support for Ukraine is reflected in its commitment to democratic development, respect for human rights, and support for countries that seek to champion these values. The EU's pluralist and inclusive culture also plays a role in its support for Ukraine. The EU showed solidarity with Ukraine in reaction to Russia's human rights violations and territorial invasions. This approach is based on the belief that strengthening Ukraine in its efforts to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity is important for maintaining stability in Europe and promoting the development of democracy in the region (Bosse, 2022). Its stance on the Ukraine conflict aligns with the principles of democracy, human rights, and international law. The EU's collective response emphasizes diplomatic efforts, sanctions against the aggressor, and support for Ukraine's democratic aspirations.

EU political factors as a regional bloc focused on economic and political integration among its member states has a strategic interest in maintaining stability in Eastern Europe and supporting partner countries that share democratic values. In the context of

the Russia-Ukraine conflict, the EU has shown strong support for Ukraine by condemning Russian aggression, imposing economic sanctions against Russia, and providing financial assistance and development aid to Ukraine. The EU's support also has geopolitical goals, namely counterbalancing Russia's influence in the region and promoting peace processes and stability in Eastern Europe. Moreover, the EU's support for Ukraine also reflects its awareness of threats to the territorial integrity and sovereignty of countries in the region (Kotlyar, Lymar and Ahieieva-Karkashadze, 2022). By taking a firm stand against Russian aggression, the EU seeks to affirm its commitment to the principles of international law that respect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of states.

Israeli-Palestinian conflict

Cultural factors of US relationship with Israel have deep roots in their shared cultural ties, history, and values. The US has been one of Israel's strongest supporters since its creation in 1948. US support for Israel is not only political, but also stems from strong cultural and historical ties with the Jewish community. These factors include the significant role of Jews in US history, such as their contributions in areas such as culture, economy and politics. In addition, the US narrative of its identity as a country that protects freedom, democracy and human rights also creates a strong resonance with Israel's similar historical narrative (Ramos and Hikmawan, 2022). Despite its stated commitment to a two-state solution, US policy often aligns with Israeli security concerns. The perception is that the US tends to prioritize its alliance with Israel over its adherence to a neutral stance in the conflict.

Political factors of American foreign policy generally focus on the fight against global terrorism. Since the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the United States has expanded the definition and range of its operations in the war on terrorism, covering not only acts of terrorism at home but also abroad. In the context of this incident, the United States emphasized its support for Israel's right to defend itself. This is due to the United States' view that Palestinian aggression is a form of terrorism act (The White House, 2023).

Cultural factors maintains Britain's historical ties with Israel, which has been considered a supportive country (Bermant, 2024). The UK-Israel relations had a long and complicated trail, which dates to the end of World War I when Britain offered to act as guardian and administrator of Palestine, which was intended to be a homeland for the Jewish people. A partnership between the two countries initially developed, with Britain offering guidance and administration while Israel made significant economic contributions.

Political factors of the UK asserted that Israel had the "absolute right to defend itself" after thousands of rockets were fired from the Gaza Strip in a surprise attack by the militant group Hamas (Rogers, 2023). This was emphasized because the UK considers aggression by Hamas as a form of terrorism. This stance reflects the UK's foreign policy that focuses on stability and security in the Middle East as well as a strong view towards countering terrorism. This policy is based on the strategic interests of maintaining

regional stability, energy security, and military-intelligence cooperation, as well as on a commitment to fighting global terrorism and protecting national security. By supporting Israel, the UK not only seeks to maintain stability and security in the Middle East region but also demonstrates its consistency in countering terrorism in the international arena.

Cultural factor of Israel and the European Union (EU) have a long history, which dates back to the EU's dedication to promoting security and peace in the Middle East (Pardo and Zahavi, 2024). In order to foster stability and collaboration, the EU has actively participated in the Middle East peace process, collaborating closely with Israel and other regional players. Moreover, the EU has provided Israel with a great deal of political and financial support, including commercial cooperation, humanitarian aid, and development assistance (Ringby, 2023).

In the context of the events of October 7, 2023, the political factor of EU stands in solidarity with Israel, which has the right to defend itself against terrorist attacks (Casinge, 2023). This stance reflects the EU's foreign policy focus on stability and security and countering terrorism. The EU considers stability in the Middle East essential for global and regional security, as well as preventing the spread of extremism.

Interstate Dynamics of Western Countries' Responses to Humanitarian Crises in Conflict Zones

Interstate dynamics play an important role in shaping Western states' responses to humanitarian crises in conflict zones, influencing both similarities and differences in their approaches. When analyzing Western responses to conflicts such as the Russia-Ukraine conflict and the Israeli-Palestinian situation, it becomes clear that interstate factors interact intricately with humanitarian principles and international law. These factors encompass a range of dynamics, including political alliances, historical relationships, economic interests and cultural ties, which collectively influence how states perceive and engage with global crises. While alliances and shared values often lead to coordinated action and solidarity, different interests and historical relationships can give rise to nuanced or different responses among Western countries.

Humanitarian crises and conflicts have long been intertwined, giving rise to complex challenges that demand urgent attention and decisive action. At the heart of these crises lies the imperative to uphold the principles of humanitarian law, also known as the law of war or international humanitarian law (IHL). Humanitarian law serves as a beacon of hope amidst the chaos of armed conflict, providing a framework of rules and principles designed to mitigate the suffering of those affected and uphold fundamental human rights (Wallace, 2019). Humanitarian law serves to safeguard individuals not engaged in hostilities and regulate wartime methods. It aims to alleviate suffering and uphold human rights during armed conflicts. By setting rules, it limits the impact of war and fosters respect for human dignity. The law's significance lies in promoting adherence to humanity's principles and shaping public attitudes toward proper conduct in times of war, underscoring its pivotal role in mitigating the human toll of armed conflicts and championing fundamental rights amid hostilities.

Accordingly, the United States, UK, and the European Union are the countries that have ratified or signed various conventions on humanitarian law (International Committee of the Red Cross, 2024). These conventions aim to protect individuals and vulnerable groups in situations of armed conflict. Some examples of conventions that have been ratified or signed by the three States include; (1) the Geneva Convention of 1949: Regulating the Protection of the Wounded, Sick, and Sick Persons in the Navy; (2) the Additional Protocol I of Geneva 1977: Regarding the Protection for the Victims of International Armed Conflict; (3) the Supplementary Protocol II of Geneva 1977: Regulation of the protection of the victims of non-international armed conflict.

In the context of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, Western nations, demonstrate a strong commitment to humanitarian principles. Their condemnation of Russia's actions and calls for an immediate ceasefire underscore their recognition of the negative impact of armed conflict on civilians. Furthermore, the imposition of targeted sanctions on individuals and entities involved in the conflict reflects their commitment to holding perpetrators of human rights violations accountable. The provision of military and humanitarian aid, particularly by the United States, aligns with the principles of the Geneva Convention, emphasizing the protection of civilians and the provision of humanitarian assistance in times of conflict.

Similarly, in the Israeli-Palestine conflict, Western nations show consideration for humanitarian principles, albeit with nuanced differences influenced by geopolitical interests. Despite its strong support for Israel, the United States allocates significant humanitarian aid to Palestinians affected by the conflict, recognizing the dire humanitarian situation. The UK and the EU also commit additional funds for humanitarian aid, reflecting a shared recognition of the need for assistance in conflict-affected areas.

However, challenges arise in assessing humanitarian compliance, particularly in situations where geopolitical interests clash with humanitarian imperatives. The United States' veto of a UN resolution proposing a humanitarian ceasefire in the Israeli-Hamas conflict raises concerns about the prioritization of geopolitical interests over urgent human needs. While the US justifies its actions by citing the need to defend Israel, questions arise about the consistency of Western countries in upholding humanitarian principles in politically sensitive situations.

Meanwhile, The United Kingdom's abstention from UN Security Council resolutions proposing humanitarian ceasefires in the Israeli-Palestine conflict underscores its careful navigation of diplomatic complexities. While the UK acknowledges the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, its abstention signals a reluctance to take unilateral action that could potentially strain its relationship with Israel, a longstanding ally. The UK's decision reflects the delicate balance between supporting Israel's security concerns and addressing the humanitarian needs of Palestinians, highlighting the intricate interplay between geopolitical interests and humanitarian imperatives

Correspondingly, the European Union's approach to the Israeli-Hamas conflict demonstrates a cautious stance influenced by geopolitical dynamics within the region.

While the EU emphasizes the importance of a humanitarian pause and calls for de-escalation, it may also refrain from proposing ceasefires or taking decisive actions that could disrupt its diplomatic engagements with Israel and other regional stakeholders. The EU's reluctance to intervene unilaterally underscores the complexities of the conflict and the challenges of aligning diplomatic action with humanitarian principles in a politically sensitive context.

As summary, the behavior of the West in the Ukrainian and Israeli-Hamas conflict shows different levels of adherence to humanitarian principles. The calls for aggression, the call for a ceasefire, and the allocation of humanitarian aid reflect commitment to international law and ethical considerations. However, challenges arise when geopolitical interests collide with human necessity, which emphasizes the need for a careful evaluation of the Western response in the growing global conflict landscape.

CONCLUSION

The comparative analysis of Western nations' responses to the Russia-Ukraine and Israel-Palestine conflicts elucidates the intricate dynamics of international relations and underscores the imperative of comprehending the determinants behind foreign policy decisions. Drawing upon Stephen J. Andriole framework for comparative analysis of foreign policy behavior, the study employs a structured approach to dissecting the multifaceted nature of foreign policy behavior, parsing through various dimensions including independent variables, intervention variables, and behavioral dimensions.

The study reveals that interstate perspective serves as pivotal determinants in shaping Western responses to international conflicts. In the context of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, geopolitical strategies, historical alliances, and national interests emerge as prominent influencers. Similarly, within the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, historical contexts, political values, and geopolitical strategies exert significant sway. These intervening variables elucidate the diverse perspectives within the Western world, reflecting a labyrinthine network of alliances, historical grievances, and strategic calculations that shape responses to conflict.

Moreover, the study highlights a contrasting pattern in the West's commitment to international law. Western nations tend to selectively invoke international law in accordance with their strategic interests. For instance, while condemning Russian violations in Ukraine, they exhibit a strong commitment to humanitarian principles, advocating for measures such as promoting a ceasefire and facilitating peace through diplomatic channels and humanitarian aid. However, Western states have been less critical of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Despite their recognition and concern for humanitarian aid, they exhibit inefficacy in fostering peace efforts, evidenced by a reluctance to advocate for a ceasefire and a propensity to abstain or veto resolutions aimed at de-escalating the conflict and initiating peace dialogues within the UN Security Council. These findings yield valuable insights into the complexities of Western foreign policy, offering a nuanced understanding of the motives underpinning Western decisions, thereby serving as a resource for policymakers, academics, and the broader public.

Nevertheless, this study has some limitations, mainly due to its focus on specific conflicts and Western actors. Future research efforts could broaden the scope to include additional stakeholders and more diverse conflict types, as well as investigate domestic political factors that influence foreign policy decisions. These initiatives should aim to explore the responses of alternative actors, analyze a wider range of conflict scenarios, and delve deeper into the domestic political underpinnings of foreign policy decisions.

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