**The death knell**

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Amidst the clamour that ruptures the placid night sky above the Muslims living in Gaza, missiles are constantly set into projectile motion over the holy land with full impunity and without the sanction of a myth that is incapable of being termed as “international law”.

The potency of such westerly coated rules and regulations have never slid the world into such dubiety than the recent atrocities that were witnessed in the Palestinian land, exhibiting one of the worst spasms of violence in recent history. This is not the first time in recorded history that a country has cloaked international law in a manner that aids them to slither past the already limited barriers placed for transgressors of the same rules that were strategically articulated to protect them in the first place.

Before analysing the horrors of the hollowness of international law, let us take a dig into the sugar-coated laws that were meant to pave guidelines for states to follow before and after a war; however time has corroborated the stark reality that they are no less than a whistle in the wind.

[PM says NAB recovered Rs484bn during PTI's govt](https://nation.com.pk/26-May-2021/pm-says-nab-recovered-rs484bn-during-pti-s-govt)

Article 2(4) and Chapter VII of the UN Charter allegedly lays down conditions for using force or waging a ‘just war’ (Jus ad bellum) and once a war is waged the International Humanitarian Law (IHL), along with The Hague and Geneva Conventions, regulates the ‘conduct of War’ (Jus in Bello). As promising as these laws might sound, the mockery of these guidelines by nation states and the non-existence of an effective system of international policing has rendered international law to be no less than a shaggy dog story at most.

Article 2(4) of the UN Charter, on the face of it, deters nation states from waging war and threatening or using force against the political independence or the territorial integrity of any other nation state. Without prejudice to the foregoing, Article 51 of the UN Charter lays down conditions under which a nation state may use force; self-defence being the only condition.

[Pakistan loses Rs209 billion in tobacco taxes in last five years: Report](https://nation.com.pk/26-May-2021/pakistan-loses-rs209-billion-in-tobacco-taxes-in-last-five-years-report)

The veto power granted to the UN Security Council’s permanent 5 member states under Article 27(3) of Chapter V of the UN Charter allows powerful states such as Israel to constantly breach jus ad bellum as international law allows them to do so at the cost of precious Muslim lives. As idealistic as Article 2(4) may sound, Israel has interpreted and articulated this section in a way that permits it to use force against the Palestinians in violation of their political independence and territorial integrity and hence, jus ad bellum virtually does not apply to Israel.

As long as it lives in the warm bosom of the United States, Israel can continue to act without fear of consequence, in the absence of an executive authority in international law. Smirking ‘realists’, while reading this article would argue, and rightly so, that the asymmetry of power between big states and small states is the sole consideration while imposing responsibility of jus ad bellum over states.

[Govt makes COVID tests mandatory for international passengers](https://nation.com.pk/26-May-2021/govt-makes-covid-tests-mandatory-for-international-passengers)

Since its first veto in 1970 (while protecting Israel), the US has exercised its power more liberally than any other permanent member to bail out naughty little Israel and this should be a reason good enough to mockingly applause all the liberalists out there who thought the world would have been a better place under the umbrella of the most feeble and spineless set of rules, they term as ‘international law’.

After chucking the tenets of jus ad bellum in the bin, Israel continues to breach jus in bello with equal impunity while flattening hundreds of flats to rubble, forceful evictions and the blockade that has blatantly been choking the Gaza Strip since years.

As thousands of Palestinians are forcibly evicted from their homes and as Israeli soldiers attack non-combatants and frail civilians beyond what is reasonable, they commit not acts of war, but acts of murder.

Law is often described as a set of rules developed by the legislature and enforced through the executive authority. In international law, nation states play the role of the executive; however there exists no effective mechanism to enforce such laws and this adds to the impotency of such weak laws. Without the sanction of an executive authority the efficacy of any law, let alone international law, can very easily be eroded as states simply are not bound to follow it.

[Pakistan reports 2,724 new COVID cases in one day](https://nation.com.pk/26-May-2021/pakistan-reports-2-724-new-covid-cases-in-one-day)

Ethnic cleansing, apartheid and shooting at unarmed worshippers might be a contribution to Zionism, on Israeli’s part, but in actuality the blatant violations of impotent rules and regulations may have very well sounded the death knell of international law, once and for all.

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