

The Illusion of International Law: Power, Impunity, and the Jungle

The sad reality of the modern world is that the rules-based international order is a hollow facade, crumbling under raw power. Nowhere is this more evident than in the case of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his government's campaign against Palestinians, described as mass murder and terrorism. Despite international legal bodies like the ICC, ICJ, and UNGA, these institutions are impotent against powerful states and allies. Arrest warrants, verdicts, and resolutions are symbolic gestures, failing to yield consequences. International law is void for figures like Netanyahu, and the global system is governed by the law of the jungle, where might makes right and human civilization is a veneer over barbarism.

The ICC, established to prosecute war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide, lacks teeth when facing powerful actors. It may issue warrants for Netanyahu or his administration, but these are unenforceable. Western leaders, who champion the ICC's mission in rhetoric, lack the will to act. The U.S., Israel's ally, shields it via UN vetoes or pressure. Other Western nations, wary of tensions, follow suit, rendering ICC efforts futile. Justice is selective, applied to those without power. For Palestinians, enduring decades of violence and oppression, the ICC's failure is a reminder that law bends to the powerful.

The ICJ, tasked with settling state disputes and issuing opinions, is equally powerless. It may condemn Israel's actions—settlements, annexation, or force in Gaza—but rulings lack weight. Israel, backed by the U.S. and Western powers, ignores the ICJ without fear. The court's inability to compel exposes the fragility of international law against military and diplomatic clout. For Palestinians, ICJ verdicts are moral victories, fleeting in a world refusing to hold oppressors accountable. Violence continues, as law proves an empty promise.

The UNGA, despite its democratic appearance, shows the impotence of law. It has passed countless resolutions condemning Israel's actions—occupation, Gaza blockade, civilian killings. These, backed by majorities, reflect global consensus on Israel's violations. Yet, they are non-binding, lacking enforcement. The UN Security Council, where power resides, is paralyzed by U.S. vetoes shielding Israel. UNGA resolutions are gestures, piling up unread. For Palestinians, they offer no relief, no end to suffering by a state with impunity.

The implications are chilling: the rules-based order is dead. Justice, equality, and accountability are fictions for the powerful. The U.S. and allies, self-styled moral guardians, reveal hypocrisy in selective law application. They champion institutions when it suits, ignore them when it doesn't. This double standard is clear to the global south, seeing the system as a tool of hegemony. The Palestinian struggle is a microcosm: the world is governed by might. The failure to hold Netanyahu accountable is a symptom—a world where law is a weapon of the powerful, not a shield for the vulnerable.

Human civilization, with ideals of progress and rights, is fragile. Palestinian suffering, met with indifference, underscores the absence of a civilized order. We inhabit a world where power determines truth, the strong commit atrocities, and the weak beg for justice. The failure to hold Netanyahu's government accountable reveals a deeper malaise—a world where the law of the jungle prevails, and civilization is a myth.

In conclusion, the Palestinian plight under Netanyahu exposes the hollowness of international law and the myth of a rules-based order. ICC warrants, ICJ verdicts, and UNGA resolutions are meaningless without Western action and with U.S. support for Israel. The global system, far from civilized, operates by might. For Palestinians, this is a lived reality of violence and despair. The law of the jungle rules, and until the world faces this, justice remains a dream, out of reach for those who need it most.