



Islamic and Western Rules of Warfare

In Islam and, supposedly, Western international law, rules of warfare are meant to preserve human dignity, limit suffering, and protect civilians. But in Gaza today, the framework of “war” does not apply. What we are witnessing is not a conflict between two equal forces — it is a one-sided, systematic extermination of a besieged population. It is genocide.

However, how come that those who do call it a war, do not abide to their own rules of warfare?

Islamic Ethics in Times of Armed Conflict

Islamic law strictly defines ethical conduct in battle. The Qur’an, Hadith, and the actions of the Prophet Muhammad (saw) and his companions set clear boundaries: do not kill civilians, do not harm women, children, or the elderly, do not destroy homes, crops, or water sources. Even during military campaigns, compassion, restraint, and justice were fundamental.

When Abu Bakr sent armies to Syria, he instructed: *“Do not kill women or children or the infirm. Do not cut down fruit-bearing trees. Do not destroy inhabited places”* (Al-Tabari). During Salah ad-Din’s recapture of Jerusalem in 1187, he refused mass revenge against Christians, offering safe passage instead. These were not symbolic gestures, they were the moral obligations of a just system of warfare led by the Khilafah, the Islamic State.

Western Rules

Western nations are signatories to the Geneva Conventions, which prohibit targeting civilians, using starvation as a weapon, or destroying civilian infrastructure. Yet these standards are applied selectively. Gaza has become the clearest example of this double standard.

Since October 2023, over 60,000 Palestinians have been killed, with thousands more missing under the rubble. Entire families have been wiped out in Israeli airstrikes. Civilian infrastructure like hospitals, schools, and UN shelters have been repeatedly targeted. Access to water, electricity, and food has been deliberately blocked. These are not the unfortunate by-products of war. They are coordinated acts of extermination.

Independent experts, including UN special rapporteurs and international legal scholars, have warned of a genocide in Gaza. Yet the Jewish entity faces no real consequences. Instead, it continues to receive weapons, funding, and diplomatic protection from the very nations that claim to uphold international law.

Western Recognition of Palestine

In an apparent shift, several Western nations have recently announced they now recognize Palestine as a state. In May 2025, Norway, Spain, and Ireland officially recognized the State of Palestine. Other countries, like Slovenia, France, Malta, and Canada, have voiced support and are in the process of formal recognition.

But such recognitions often serve as symbolic acts to deflect criticism. They rarely come with concrete measures: no sanctions on the Jewish entity, no suspension of military cooperation, no push for war crimes trials. Recognition without accountability is an empty gesture, especially when the genocide continues unchecked.

Conclusion

In Islam, even in war, human life remains sacred. In the West, international law promises protection for civilians. But in Gaza, those rules are suspended and replaced by genocide, indifference, and political calculation. The hypocrisy is blatant: while Western leaders offer symbolic gestures of statehood, they continue to fund and shield the very crimes they pretend to condemn. Without real accountability, recognition means nothing, and justice remains tragically out of reach.

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