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## Avinash Kumar



*Avinash Kumar has completed his Ph.D. in International Investment Law from the Dept. of Law & Governance, Central University of South Bihar. His research work is on "International Investment Agreement and State's right to regulate Foreign Investment." He qualified UGC-NET and has been selected for the prestigious ICSSR Doctoral Fellowship. He is an alumnus of the Faculty of Law, University of Delhi. Formerly he has been elected as Students Union President of Law Centre-1, University of Delhi. Moreover, he completed his LL.M. from the University of Delhi (2014-16), dissertation on "Cross-border Merger & Acquisition"; LL.B. from the University of Delhi (2011-14), and B.A. (Hons.) from Maharaja Agrasen College, University of Delhi. He has also obtained P.G. Diploma in IPR from the Indian Society of International Law, New Delhi. He has qualified UGC – NET examination and has been awarded ICSSR – Doctoral Fellowship. He has published six-plus articles and presented 9 plus papers in national and international seminars/conferences. He participated in several workshops on research methodology and teaching and learning.*

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# **STATEHOOD AND RECOGNITION: THE CASE OF PALESTINE**

AUTHORED BY - TANVI JAIN  
5TH YEAR BBA LLB  
CHRIST (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), BANGALORE

## **ABSTRACT**

This research paper delves into the intricate question of Palestinian statehood within the international community. Departing from the prevalent narrative of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it focuses on the broader legal and diplomatic dimensions of Palestine's status. By examining Palestine's adherence to the Montevideo criteria for statehood, its bilateral and multilateral recognition, and its evolving relationship with the United Nations, the paper seeks to determine whether Palestine can be considered a state. The research begins by exploring the theoretical frameworks of statehood and recognition, analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of declaratory and constitutive theories. It then applies these concepts to the Palestinian case, examining its historical claims, diplomatic relationships, and its evolving strategy toward statehood.

The paper subsequently focuses on the multilateral dimension of Palestinian statehood, analyzing Palestine's relationship with the United Nations, particularly its 2012 upgrade to non-member observer state status and its membership in the International Criminal Court in 2015. By examining these developments, the paper assesses the impact of multilateral recognition on Palestine's international standing. Ultimately, this research provides insights into the challenges and prospects for Palestinian statehood in the contemporary international order. It offers a nuanced understanding of the complex factors that shape Palestine's status and contributes to ongoing debates about the nature and future of statehood in the global context.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The question of Palestine's statehood remains a highly debated topic within the international arena. Traditionally, the issue has been primarily framed within the context of the ongoing conflict with Israel. However, this research seeks to transcend this narrow perspective and examine Palestine's status as a state in its own right. In recent years, Palestinian authorities

have shifted their approach from negotiations with Israel to a more unilateral strategy aimed at securing recognition through bilateral and multilateral efforts. This shift raises significant questions about Palestine's capacity to be treated as a state within the international system.

The research explores the evolving strategies employed by Palestinian authorities, from the era of Yasser Arafat to that of Mahmoud Abbas. It analyzes the impact of the ongoing impasse in negotiations with Israel on Palestine's efforts to gain recognition. Furthermore, the study delves into the multilateral dimension of Palestine's statehood quest, focusing on its relationship with the United Nations and its engagement with international justice mechanisms. By examining these factors, the research aims to provide a nuanced understanding of Palestine's progress towards statehood and the challenges it faces in the international arena.

## **1. INTERNATIONAL LAW, STATEHOOD AND RECOGNITION**

### **1.1 THE MONTEVIDEO CRITERIA OF STATEHOOD**

The concept of "state" remains central to international law and relations, yet a universally agreed-upon definition remains elusive<sup>1</sup>. The Montevideo Convention outlines four essential criteria: a permanent population, a defined territory, a government, and the capacity to enter into relations with other states.

The territorial aspect demands a government's control over a specific territory, though there's no minimum area requirement. A permanent population is indispensable, and a government capable of exercising authority over the population and territory is necessary. The capacity to enter into relations with other states is generally considered a consequence rather than a prerequisite. This theory is also supported by the notion that obligations that states must fulfil in the international community come from individual state consent, and as Crawford argues "while the existence of a new state will bring such legal obligation to the existing state, the existence of this new state should be by the consent of the existing state"<sup>2</sup> The Montevideo Convention's limitations lie in its lack of political criteria and the ongoing debate surrounding the role of recognition. The declaratory theory emphasizes the fulfillment of legal criteria, while the constitutive theory underscores the importance of recognition by other states.

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<sup>1</sup> George Kyris, *The Recognition of a Right to Statehood and Palestine*, 20 GLOBAL JURIST (2020), <https://doi.org/10.1515/gj-2020-0033>.

<sup>2</sup> James Crawford, *The Creation of States in International Law* 13 (2d ed. 2006).

## *1.2 THEORIES OF STATEHOOD: STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES*

Recognition, while not a direct requirement for statehood, is crucial for practical purposes. States without widespread recognition, known as de facto states, face limitations in international participation. Somaliland is an example of a de facto state that meets the legal criteria but lacks recognition. The problem with de facto states is that the lack of recognition hinders them from benefitting of all the advantages related with the achievement of a de iure status. These can be summarized in four points:

- Only recognized states may be part of international treaties with other states;
- Only recognized states can be full members of intergovernmental organizations like the UN, the IMF or the WB;
- Only recognized states have the power to bring claims against other states before the ICJ;
- Finally, recognized states are the unique recipients of Foreign Direct Investments from the IMF or the WB.<sup>3</sup>

Political and strategic considerations often influence state recognition, hindering the recognition of secessionist entities. The ongoing debate between the declaratory and constitutive theories highlights the complexities of statehood and recognition in the contemporary international system.

Furthermore, it's important to note that the concept of statehood has evolved over time, reflecting changes in international relations and the global political landscape. The Cold War era saw a proliferation of newly independent states, while the post-Cold War period witnessed the disintegration of empires and the emergence of new states. These developments have challenged traditional notions of statehood and raised questions about the applicability of the Montevideo criteria in contemporary contexts. Additionally, the rise of non-state actors, such as transnational corporations, international organizations, and terrorist groups, has blurred the lines between states and other entities. These non-state actors can exercise significant influence on international affairs, raising questions about their role in shaping the global order and the extent to which they should be subject to the same rules and regulations as states.

The concept of statehood remains a complex and evolving one, with significant implications for international law and relations. The Montevideo criteria provide a foundational framework

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<sup>3</sup> Bridget L. Coggins, *Secession, Recognition and the International Politics of Statehood* 46–47 (Ohio State Univ., Dep't of Phil., 2006) (Ph.D. dissertation).

for understanding statehood, but their limitations and the ongoing debates surrounding recognition highlight the need for ongoing discussions and adaptations to address the challenges of the contemporary world. In examining statehood, the ongoing debate between the declaratory and constitutive theories remains fundamental. However, real-world examples provide valuable insights into how these theories operate in practice. Kosovo, for instance, declared independence in 2008 and has since been recognized by over 100 UN member states. While it arguably meets the Montevideo criteria, its statehood remains contested due to the lack of unanimous recognition and opposition by states such as Russia and Serbia. Conversely, Taiwan operates as a fully functional sovereign entity with strong governmental capacity and international relations, yet its limited formal recognition (due to the “One China” policy) curtails its international legal status. These examples reveal that recognition is often driven by political strategy rather than legal objectivity, reinforcing Bridget Coggins’ assertion that “states are recognized or denied based on their geopolitical utility to major powers.”

Furthermore, **Crawford** underscores that recognition, although not constitutive of statehood per se, is crucial in enabling states to access international mechanisms and participate fully in the global order. This supports a middle-ground approach: while Montevideo remains the legal foundation, recognition is the key to operationalizing sovereignty on the international stage.

## 2. THE CASE OF PALESTINIAN STATEHOOD

### 2.1 A BRIEF HISTORY OF PALESTINIAN CLAIMS

The Palestinian territories, which include regions that are now Israel, were once part of the Ottoman Empire. After World War I, the area came under the British Mandate, with the League of Nations recognizing the provisional existence of independent nations in "Class A Mandates." This was intended to lead to the establishment of independent states, including Palestine.

In 1947, due to rising tensions and increased Jewish migration, the British referred the issue to the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), which adopted Resolution 181, recommending a Partition Plan that aimed to create separate Arab and Jewish states by October 1948. Following the expiration of the British Mandate on May 14, 1948, Israel declared independence, citing the UNGA resolution as justification<sup>4</sup>. This set the stage for conflict, as hostilities erupted between Jewish and Arab communities, leading to the 1948 Arab-Israeli

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<sup>4</sup> Francis A. Boyle, *The Creation of the State of Palestine*, 1 Eur. J. Int'l L. 301 (1990).

War, which resulted in Israel controlling much of the territory designated for the Arab state and displacing approximately 750,000 Palestinians. In 1964, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was established to represent Palestinian interests, gaining observer status at the UN in 1974. The 1967 Six-Day War further shaped Palestinian nationalism, with Israel capturing the West Bank and Gaza Strip, leading to ongoing disputes over territory, refugees, and the status of Jerusalem.

Despite various attempts at negotiation, including the 1978 Camp David Accords and the 1993 Oslo Accords, peace talks stalled, mainly due to settlement expansion and violence from both sides. The Oslo Accords led to the creation of the Palestinian Authority (PA) and outlined a framework for self-governance, but final status issues, including borders and Jerusalem, remained unresolved. The failure of the Camp David talks in 2000 sparked the second intifada, leading to increased violence. In the following years, multiple attempts at reviving peace talks, including the 2003 "Road Map to Peace," faced challenges, exacerbated by Hamas's rise to power in 2006. The situation has become further complicated by international dynamics, such as the U.S. recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital under the Trump administration, which has fueled tensions.

## ***2.2 PALESTINIAN FULFILLMENT OF THE MONTEVIDEO CRITERIA***

The events leading to the current status of Palestine have influenced its ability to meet the Montevideo criteria for statehood. The PLO's 1988 Declaration of Independence expressed the desire for a state with Jerusalem as its capital.

The first criterion, a defined territory, is largely acknowledged for Palestine. Although borders remain disputed, the international community, including the UN and EU, recognizes the "Green Lines" as the legitimate boundaries between Israeli and Palestinian territories. Since the Oslo Accords, the pre-1967 borders have been seen as a basis for future negotiations. The second criterion, a permanent population, is also met, as Palestinians reside in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The third criterion, a government, is more complex; the PA has some governing authority, though it operates under constraints imposed by Israeli occupation. Finally, the fourth criterion, the capacity to enter into relations with other states, has been partially fulfilled, as Palestine has engaged in diplomatic relations and joined international organizations. Despite meeting several Montevideo criteria, Palestine's statehood remains a contentious issue within the international system, reflecting the complexities and challenges of the Israeli-Palestinian

conflict. The quest for recognition and statehood continues amid ongoing disputes and shifting political landscapes.

Scholars like Al Zoughbi have emphasized that Palestine's ability to fulfill the Montevideo criteria is not only legal but also rooted in political and historical legitimacy. The claim to a defined territory is supported by international consensus around the pre-1967 borders. Despite the fragmentation of authority especially the Hamas-Fatah divide Palestine maintains a centralized governing body through the Palestinian Authority (PA), which engages in diplomatic relations and administers services. Comparatively, other entities like Western Sahara or Northern Cyprus have varying degrees of recognition and governance capacity but lack the same level of international diplomatic support. Palestine has established embassies in over approx. 90 countries and is recognized by more than 135 UN member states, significantly strengthening its claim to satisfy the fourth Montevideo requirement: the capacity to enter into relations with other states.

Even in terms of population and governance, Sayigh notes that while divided, Palestinian institutions still represent a significant portion of the population through civil governance, international diplomacy, and legal action particularly via the ICC. Thus, despite occupation and territorial disputes, Palestine presents a strong case for de facto statehood.

### **3. PALESTINE AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY**

#### ***3.1 ENGAGEMENT WITH THE UNITED NATIONS***

Palestine's interactions with the UN began in 1974<sup>5</sup>, a pivotal moment when it was granted observer status through UN General Assembly Resolution 3237. This status allowed the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) to participate in General Assembly sessions, marking an essential step toward international recognition. Although observer status did not confer full membership or voting rights, it symbolized the UN's acknowledgment of the Palestinian people's aspirations for self-determination. Over time, this status enabled Palestine to engage diplomatically on various global issues. A major milestone came in 2012 when Palestine's status was upgraded to "non-member observer state" by the UN General Assembly through Resolution 67/19. This development was a significant political victory, as it recognized Palestine as a state, at least in a symbolic sense. However, the upgrade stopped short of full UN

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<sup>5</sup> Errol Mendes, *Statehood and Palestine for the Purpose of Article 12(3) of the ICC Statute*, 12 Asian J. Int'l L. 1 (2010).

membership, which would grant Palestine voting rights and other privileges accorded to sovereign states<sup>6</sup>. The decision to upgrade Palestine's status was supported by an overwhelming majority of UN member states but faced opposition from countries like the United States and Israel.

The 2012 status change gave Palestine greater access to international institutions and treaties, allowing it to further its diplomatic and legal objectives on the global stage. However, the lack of full UN membership remains a critical challenge for Palestine, as such recognition would elevate its standing and enable it to fully participate in international decision-making processes.

### **3.2 MEMBERSHIP IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

Beyond the United Nations, Palestine has pursued an active strategy of multilateral diplomacy to strengthen its international presence by seeking membership in various international organizations. This strategy aims not only to demonstrate functional aspects of statehood but also to gradually normalize Palestine's role in the international system. Perhaps the most significant success in this regard came in 2011, when Palestine became a full member of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). This was a landmark development, as it marked the first time a UN agency granted full membership to Palestine, recognizing it as a state for purposes of participation.

Membership in UNESCO provided Palestine with a platform to protect and promote cultural and historical heritage within its claimed territories, including East Jerusalem, Hebron, and Bethlehem, which are of immense political and religious significance. For instance, the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem was recognized as a World Heritage Site in 2012 under Palestinian sponsorship — a move seen by many as an assertion of sovereignty and control over cultural narratives. Such recognitions serve as symbolic assertions of Palestinian statehood and counter Israeli efforts to claim exclusive authority over contested territories.

However, the move triggered significant political backlash. Both the United States and Israel strongly opposed Palestine's accession to UNESCO, arguing that statehood must come through direct negotiations with Israel, not unilateral actions. As a result, the U.S. withdrew its funding to UNESCO, which at the time constituted approximately 22% of the organization's budget,

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<sup>6</sup> Yezid Sayigh, *Redefining the Basics: Sovereignty and Security of the Palestinian State*, 49 Middle E. J. 579 (1995).

and eventually withdrew entirely from UNESCO in 2018, alongside Israel. This episode highlights how Palestine's efforts to gain legitimacy through international institutions are often constrained by geopolitical power dynamics and the threat of institutional retaliation by powerful states opposed to its recognition strategy.

Despite these setbacks, Palestine has continued to pursue membership in other international bodies. It has successfully joined several treaty-based international organizations, such as the International Criminal Court (ICC), the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol), the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), and the Group of 77 plus China (G77) at the United Nations, where it assumed the rotating chairmanship in 2019. Each of these memberships reinforces Palestine's functional engagement with the international legal order and expands its diplomatic footprint.

These developments reflect a broader legal trend wherein international organizations are increasingly willing to treat Palestine as a state actor, particularly in areas governed by treaties that allow for broader definitions of membership. In many cases, Palestine's accession is permitted because the relevant treaty or institution does not require UN membership as a prerequisite — only that the applying entity has full treaty-making capacity or is considered a "state" under the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties. This creates space for de facto recognition even where formal UN membership remains blocked.

Moreover, the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations supports the argument that Palestine exercises key aspects of sovereignty, as it has established diplomatic missions in over 90 countries and hosts embassies from dozens of others in Ramallah. Over 135 UN member states currently recognize Palestine as a sovereign state, and these bilateral recognitions are often accompanied by treaties, cultural exchanges, and economic cooperation, lending further weight to its claim under international law.

Yet, challenges persist. Israel and its allies continue to oppose Palestine's participation in many international forums, asserting that such actions prejudice final status issues meant to be resolved through negotiation. This stance, however, places Palestine in a diplomatic paradox — it is asked to refrain from engaging with international mechanisms until its status is resolved, while its lack of status simultaneously limits its ability to advocate for itself on the global stage.

### 3.3 *ENGAGEMENT WITH INTERNATIONAL COURTS*

One of the most significant dimensions of Palestine's international strategy is its engagement with global legal bodies, particularly the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the International Criminal Court (ICC). In 2004, the ICJ delivered a landmark advisory opinion on the legality of the separation wall constructed by Israel in the West Bank. The court ruled that the wall was illegal under international law and called for its dismantling. While the opinion was non-binding, it was a significant legal victory for Palestine, affirming its rights under international law and reinforcing global opposition to Israeli actions in the OPT.

In 2015, Palestine took another major step by becoming a member of the ICC. This membership allows Palestine to bring forward cases of alleged war crimes and human rights violations committed in the OPT. Palestine's accession to the ICC represents a crucial tool in its legal strategy, as it seeks to hold Israel accountable for actions in territories that Palestine claims as part of its future state. The ICC's involvement has the potential to shape the legal discourse surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, although its impact remains limited by the broader geopolitical context, particularly Israel's refusal to recognize the court's jurisdiction<sup>7</sup>.

Palestine's accession to the International Criminal Court (ICC) in 2015 marked a turning point in its use of legal mechanisms to assert statehood. While this move allowed Palestine to bring cases related to alleged war crimes, it also provoked sharp criticism from Israel and its allies. Legal scholars such as Francis A. Boyle argue that the ICC membership confirms that Palestine is treated as a state by one of the most significant legal institutions in the world. He posits that "state practice by international organizations, particularly where legal obligations are imposed, constitutes strong evidence of recognition."

However, Errol Mendes has criticized the ICC's acceptance of Palestine's Article 12(3) declaration, suggesting that it bypasses the traditional requirement of full UN membership and stretches the Rome Statute's provisions. This raises broader concerns about whether legal strategies can substitute for negotiated political solutions. Nonetheless, Palestine's ability to bring claims before the ICC for example, regarding the Gaza conflict and settlement activity demonstrates its functional legal identity as a state. These actions also reflect the use of lawfare; a strategy that employs international law to gain legitimacy and challenge power asymmetries

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<sup>7</sup> Michele Pitta, *Statehood and Recognition: The Case of Palestine* (Sept. 2017) (Univ. of Barcelona) (on file with Universitat de Barcelona), [https://diposit.ub.edu/dspace/bitstream/2445/123175/1/TFM\\_Michele\\_Pitta.pdf](https://diposit.ub.edu/dspace/bitstream/2445/123175/1/TFM_Michele_Pitta.pdf).

in the absence of full diplomatic recognition.

### **3.4 CHALLENGES AND OBSTACLES**

Despite these diplomatic and legal victories, Palestine's path to full international recognition remains fraught with challenges. The most significant hurdle is the continued opposition from powerful states, particularly the United States, which has consistently blocked Palestine's attempts to gain full membership in the UN. As a permanent member of the UN Security Council, the U.S. wields veto power, effectively preventing any resolution that would grant Palestine full UN membership. This opposition is rooted in the broader geopolitical dynamics of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, where the U.S. remains a staunch ally of Israel.

Moreover, internal divisions within Palestinian leadership complicate its international strategy<sup>8</sup>. The ongoing conflict between Fatah, which controls the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank, and Hamas, which governs Gaza, undermines the cohesion of Palestinian governance and weakens its diplomatic standing. The division between these two factions has created political instability, making it more difficult for Palestine to present a unified front in its pursuit of statehood.

Beyond geopolitical opposition, internal fragmentation remains a formidable challenge for Palestinian statehood. The split between the Palestinian Authority (PA) in the West Bank and Hamas in Gaza presents both legal and political difficulties. While both claim legitimacy, the lack of unity undermines Palestine's ability to present a coherent front internationally. As Yezid Sayigh notes, this division impacts the legitimacy and capacity of Palestinian governance, especially in terms of security coordination, law enforcement, and international negotiations. Moreover, the United States' use of veto power in the UN Security Council continues to block Palestine's bid for full UN membership, despite support from the General Assembly. This underscores how power politics override legal criteria, making Palestine's path to statehood highly contingent on shifts in the global order. The recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital by the U.S. in 2017, in direct contravention of international consensus, further illustrates how unilateral actions by powerful states can frustrate multilateral progress.

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<sup>8</sup> Sonia Boulos & Xavier Abu Eid, *Recognizing Palestinian Statehood: Some Critical Comments*, Security in Context (Apr. 12, 2021), <https://www.securityincontext.org/posts/recognizing-palestinian-statehood-some-critical-comments>.

## 4. COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY

The question of statehood is not unique to Palestine; various other entities with varying degrees of recognition, control, and legitimacy offer illuminating parallels. These case studies illustrate that while the Montevideo criteria provide a foundational legal framework, recognition and political will remain decisive factors in achieving full statehood within the international legal order.

### 4.1 KOSOVO

Kosovo declared independence from Serbia in 2008, following a prolonged period of conflict, NATO intervention in 1999, and administration by the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). Since its declaration, it has been recognized by over 100 UN member states, including most Western nations such as the United States and members of the European Union.<sup>9</sup> However, key global powers like Russia, China, and India continue to withhold recognition, largely due to concerns about setting a precedent for secessionist movements within their own borders.

Kosovo's inability to secure recognition from the UN Security Council, primarily due to Russian and Chinese vetoes, has prevented its full admission to the UN.<sup>10</sup> Despite functioning independently, Kosovo remains in a legal limbo sovereign in fact but not fully accepted into the international legal community. This situation underscores that recognition is a political act, not simply a legal one, and that strategic alliances and veto powers often override legal qualifications for statehood.

### 4.2 WESTERN SAHARA

The case of Western Sahara offers a contrasting example where territorial control and self-governance are extremely limited. Claimed by the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) but largely occupied by Morocco, the region is listed by the United Nations as a non-self-governing territory.<sup>11</sup> The SADR has been recognized by several countries and is a full member of the African Union, yet it does not exercise effective control over most of its claimed territory.

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<sup>9</sup> International Law of the Unilateral Declaration of Independence in Respect of Kosovo, Advisory Opinion, 2010 I.C.J. 403 (July 22).

<sup>10</sup> James Crawford, *The Creation of States in International Law* 447–52 (2d ed. 2006).

<sup>11</sup> Erika de Wet, *The Recognition of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic as a State*, 12 Max Planck Y.B. United Nations L. 1, 14–18 (2008).

This situation illustrates the inverse problem of Palestine: a political entity with recognition and membership in international organizations, but without territorial control or unified governance. It demonstrates that international recognition alone does not amount to effective statehood in practice. The lack of administrative and territorial control undermines the SADR's claim under the Montevideo framework, particularly with respect to governance and the ability to enter into relations with other states in a consistent, independent manner.<sup>12</sup>

#### **4.3 TAIWAN**

Taiwan arguably presents one of the most fully functioning examples of a de facto state. It meets all the Montevideo criteria: it has a defined territory, a permanent population, a stable and democratic government, and it conducts diplomatic and economic relations with numerous countries. Taiwan issues its own currency, maintains its own military, and operates independently from the People's Republic of China (PRC)<sup>13</sup>, which claims it as a renegade province.

However, Taiwan's international status is curtailed by the One-China Policy, which is upheld by most countries to preserve diplomatic ties with Beijing. As a result, Taiwan is recognized by only a handful of UN member states and is excluded from the UN<sup>14</sup> and many international organizations. This exclusion occurs despite its clear legal qualifications, and it reflects the harsh reality that geopolitical dynamics can override legal statehood tests. Taiwan's limited recognition is largely due to China's strategic influence, economic leverage, and permanent seat on the UN Security Council.

#### **4.4 LESSONS FOR PALESTINE**

These comparative case studies reveal that statehood in international law is shaped as much by power politics and diplomatic maneuvering as it is by legal principles. Palestine's path toward recognition mirrors elements of all three cases: like Kosovo, it seeks recognition amid Security Council opposition; like Western Sahara, it struggles with territorial control and internal governance; and like Taiwan, it operates diplomatically and institutionally in many ways like a state, yet lacks full UN membership.

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<sup>12</sup> U.N. General Assembly, Question of Western Sahara, G.A. Res. 74/101, U.N. Doc. A/RES/74/101 (Dec. 13, 2019).

<sup>13</sup> Lung-chu Chen, *The U.N. and Taiwan: United Nations Membership and the International Legal Status of the ROC*, 3 *Asian-Pac. L. & Pol'y J.* 1 (2002).

<sup>14</sup> Michael Sheng-ti Gau, *The Status of Taiwan in the United Nations*, 2 *Chinese J. Int'l L.* 1 (2003).

Thus, Palestine exists at the intersection of law and geopolitics, where its formal qualifications for statehood may be legally sound, but its political circumstances impede full international recognition. These cases highlight the inherent tension between legal doctrines and international political realities in determining statehood.

## CONCLUSION

This research highlights the complexities of Palestinian statehood within the international community. By focusing on legal and diplomatic dimensions rather than solely on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it reveals that while Palestine meets several criteria for statehood—such as defined territory and a permanent population—significant challenges remain, particularly regarding governance and effective control. Palestine's strategic shift from negotiations with Israel to seeking broader international recognition demonstrates its commitment to asserting its status. Key milestones, including its 2012 upgrade to non-member observer state status and ICC membership, signify important advancements in gaining international legitimacy, despite ongoing geopolitical constraints.

Ultimately, the quest for Palestinian statehood is not just about recognition; it involves broader themes of self-determination and justice. The future of Palestinian statehood will depend on effective governance and the global community's willingness to engage meaningfully with these issues, shaping Palestine's role in the international order.

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