

| Research Article |

Islamic Law, International Humanitarian Law, and Indonesia's Diplomacy: A Constructivist Reading of Prabowo's UNGA Speech on Gaza, 2025

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Abstract: Studies on the normative overlap between Islamic law and International Humanitarian Law (IHL) have consistently shown how both traditions converge in their commitment to human dignity. What has received far less attention is how this convergence travels into the practice of state diplomacy and shapes the construction of foreign policy identity. This article takes up that question by reading President Prabowo Subianto's 2025 address to the UN General Assembly as a diplomatic text through which the convergence between *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* and IHL is articulated and publicly justified in Indonesia's response to the Gaza crisis. The central argument is that Prabowo's speech frames Indonesian foreign policy as value-based diplomacy anchored in Islamic ethics and in widely recognized humanitarian norms. Using qualitative content analysis within a constructivist framework, the study treats *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* not only as an ethical doctrine but as a normative resource that informs identity construction and shapes diplomatic conduct. The analysis shows that Prabowo's speech reflects an Indonesian foreign policy grounded in justice and humanity and draws the protection of life (*hifz al-nafs*), justice (*'adl*), and global solidarity into a single ethical vocabulary that projects Islamic values into modern diplomacy. Read together, these findings suggest that Indonesia's diplomacy operates as a site of cross-civilizational moral articulation, linking Islamic ethics with universal humanitarian standards while contributing to a more inclusive and morally grounded diplomatic paradigm. The article thus contributes to constructivist international relations scholarship by showing how religious normative frameworks can serve as intersubjective sources of international norms that shape state identity and diplomatic behavior. On that basis, it proposes a value-based humanitarian diplomacy model that bridges Islamic ethics and contemporary humanitarian law in global political practice.

Keywords: Islamic Law, International Humanitarian Law, United Nations, Prabowo, Palestine.



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Introduction

In his address to the 80th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on September 23, 2025, at UN Headquarters in New York, Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto argued that genuine peace is only possible where justice and universal humanitarian values are respected. His appeal to protect civilians, halt attacks on public facilities, and support a two-state solution for Palestine rests on the view that morality must sit at the foundation of global policy. That position resonates with classical Islamic legal principles, which have long emphasized the protection of life (*al-nafs*), property (*al-māl*), and reason (*al-‘aql*) (al-Shāṭibī, 1997), and with the spirit of International Humanitarian Law, which is built upon a commitment to universal humanity (Ahmad et al., 2023; Bartels, 2022; Sunga, 2021; Warner, 2023). Both traditions grow from a shared moral starting point, a commitment to respect humanity, even though they draw on different epistemological frameworks (Ahmad et al., 2024; Lefolle, 2022; Magon & Earnshaw, 2025; Mekky, 2023; Nabiebu, 2023). Against that backdrop, this article examines the intersection of Islamic law, International Humanitarian Law, and Indonesian diplomacy by reading Prabowo’s 2025 UNGA address on the Gaza crisis as a case in which Islamic ethical values and universal humanitarian principles are brought into a single diplomatic register.

The existing literature can be grouped into three broad clusters: comparative work on Islamic law and IHL, scholarship on the enforcement and violation of IHL in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and studies of Indonesian diplomacy on the Palestine question. Work in the first cluster treats Islamic law and IHL as complementary foundations for humanitarian protection during armed conflict. Elshobake (2024) identifies persistent research gaps around proportionality and the protection of vulnerable groups, while Ahmad, Lilienthal, and Ahmad (2023) argue that the distinction between combatants and non-combatants was established in Islamic law well before the rise of modern IHL. Nabiebu (2023) and Van Engeland (2008) draw parallels between the Islamic concept of *siyar* and the Geneva Conventions, while noting that Islamic contributions are often overlooked in the codification of international law. Lefolle (2022) reinforces this view by mapping the shared commitment of both systems to human dignity, including respect for victims of war. Taken together, these studies confirm a normative continuity between the two traditions and point to the need for a more integrative framework that brings Islamic legal principles and IHL into closer conversation.

Studies on enforcement and violation of International Humanitarian Law in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict consistently point to weak compliance and thin accountability. Mahwati and Nanda (2022) read Israeli violations against Palestinian civilians as a failure to implement Geneva Convention principles, while Soraya, Muhammad, and Ladiqi (2023) argue that ICC jurisdiction continues to apply because Palestine is a party to the Rome Statute. Wells et al. (2024) document serious violations of children’s rights produced by Israeli military operations in Gaza; Bin Ghaith (2024) contends that these actions meet the legal elements of war crimes and genocide; and

Romadhona, Kinasih, Oktafenanda, and Kim (2025) argue that the blockade of Gaza has produced a humanitarian crisis that demands more effective global legal enforcement. Jaber and Bantekas (2023) close this strand by concluding that Gaza remains occupied territory under effective Israeli control, which implies ongoing violations of international occupation law. Even so, this body of scholarship is largely descriptive and institutionally focused. It tends to frame enforcement gaps as legal and procedural problems without examining how states construct and justify moral and legal claims in multilateral forums, and it leaves open the question of how humanitarian legal arguments are combined with religiously grounded ethics in state diplomacy.

Building on that literature, work on Indonesian diplomacy has turned to how the state positions itself on the Palestine issue by drawing on both religious values and humanitarian norms. Ikram, Fautanu, and Rizal (2025) read Prabowo's speech at the D-8 Summit as a form of modern Islamic diplomacy that foregrounds global justice and community solidarity, while Setiawati (2024) and Gati and Hafid (2024) underline Indonesia's long-standing preference for peaceful settlement through diplomatic channels. Yunazwardi and Rimapradesi (2025) examine the temporary relocation policy for Gaza residents as a pragmatic instrument within humanitarian diplomacy, while Fogg (2015) and Hasram and Suryana (2025) trace the deeper historical roots of Islamic values in Indonesian foreign policy since independence. Febrianti and Prihatini (2023) add an institutional angle by highlighting the role of parliamentary diplomacy in strengthening Indonesia's position on the Palestinian question in international forums. Yet this literature remains primarily policy-descriptive or historical in emphasis. It rarely explains the discursive mechanism by which Islamic moral commitments and humanitarian legal language are integrated to construct Indonesia's diplomatic identity in high-profile multilateral settings. The overall picture is one in which Indonesian diplomacy on Palestine is normatively driven and publicly legitimized through religious and humanitarian frames, yet room remains to examine how those values are articulated as a coherent moral and legal identity at the level of UN diplomacy.

This article moves beyond these three clusters by integrating the comparison between Islamic law and IHL, debates on IHL enforcement in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and analyses of Indonesian diplomacy within a single analytical framework. To our knowledge, no prior study has systematically examined Prabowo's 2025 UNGA address as a site where *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*-based ethical reasoning and IHL principles are jointly articulated to construct and legitimize Indonesia's diplomatic identity. In this study, the moral legitimacy of foreign policy refers to the public justification of external action through universally recognizable humanitarian legal norms while remaining anchored in ethical commitments that are embedded in the domestic political culture. By showing how Islamic principles such as *ḥifẓ al-nafs* and *'adl* are translated into IHL-compatible claims in multilateral diplomacy, the article clarifies how religious norms can function as intersubjective sources of international

legitimacy. On that basis, it proposes a value-based humanitarian diplomacy model that could be adapted by other norm-oriented or Muslim-majority states seeking to align religious ethics with international legal standards in global forums.

The study examines Prabowo's 2025 UN General Assembly speech on Gaza in order to explain how Islamic legal values, particularly *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, are articulated alongside IHL principles within Indonesian diplomacy. A constructivist approach reads the speech as a diplomatic text that produces ethical justification for foreign policy and projects Indonesia's role identity in a multilateral forum. Two research questions guide the analysis: (i) how Prabowo's UNGA speech integrates *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* values with IHL principles in framing the Gaza crisis, and (ii) how this integration contributes to the construction of Indonesia's diplomatic identity and moral positioning at the United Nations.

The central argument is that Prabowo's 2025 UNGA speech functions as a form of value-based humanitarian diplomacy, translating *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* ethics into internationally legible claims that are consistent with International Humanitarian Law. Read through a constructivist lens, the speech projects Indonesia's diplomatic identity as a moral actor that places justice, civilian protection, and global solidarity at the center of its foreign policy. On this reading, Indonesian diplomacy is not only strategic messaging. It is also a practice of norm articulation that seeks to connect Islamic ethical reasoning with universal humanitarian standards in a multilateral forum. At the same time, the interpretation is bounded in two important ways: a single speech cannot fully capture policy behavior on the ground, and its normative claims may also be read as rhetorical positioning shaped by domestic politics and by the constraints of international diplomacy.

Methods

The study adopts a qualitative interpretive design that relies on qualitative content analysis to examine President Prabowo Subianto's address at the 2025 United Nations General Assembly. The speech is treated not simply as a statement of policy, but as a diplomatic text that produces meaning, constructs Indonesia's identity, and advances specific normative claims in the international arena. Consistent with this focus on the constitutive role of language, the study is situated within an interpretive constructivist paradigm that understands discourse as a practice shaping social reality and foreign policy orientation. Within that framework, the research asks how the 2025 UNGA speech constructs Indonesia's diplomatic identity and articulates the normative humanitarian claims that underpin its moral legitimacy.

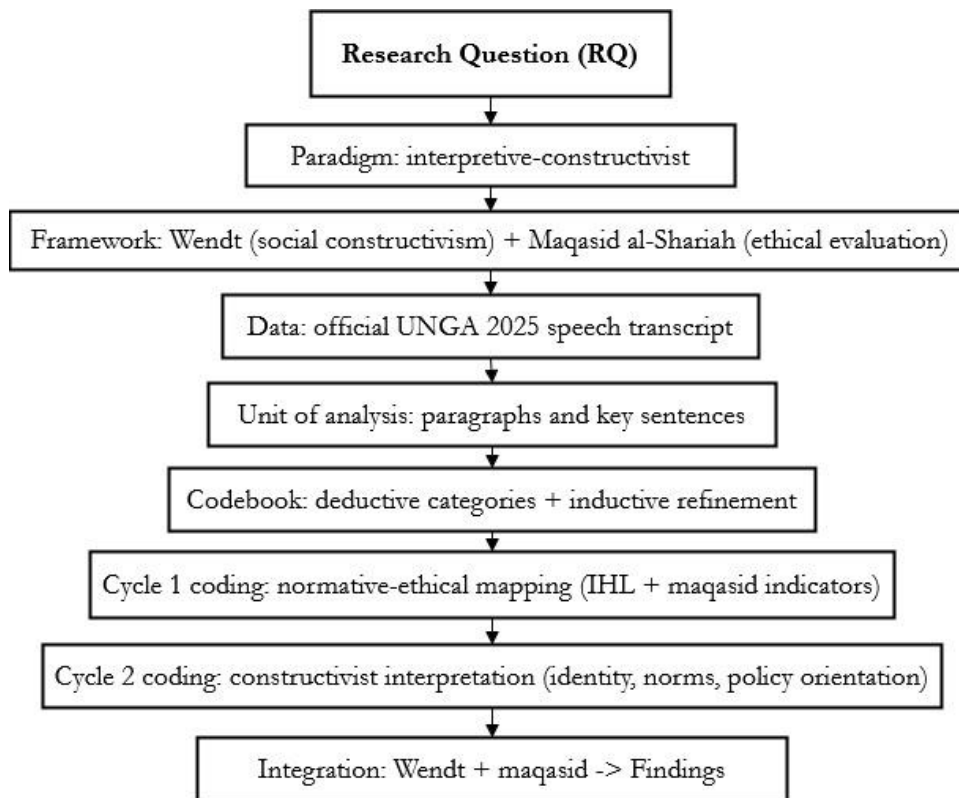
The theoretical foundation of the study draws on Alexander Wendt's social constructivism, which holds that state identities and interests are constituted through intersubjective meanings generated in processes of social interaction, including under conditions of anarchy (Wendt, 1992, 1999). On this view, diplomatic speech is a site

where identity and norms are simultaneously produced and legitimized. The analysis, therefore, traces how the narrative of the speech affirms Indonesia's role identity, articulates normative commitments such as the protection of civilians, respect for human dignity, and appeals to global morality, and positions Indonesian foreign policy within a multilateral framework (Wendt, 1992, 1999).

Alongside the constructivist lens, the study uses *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* as an evaluative framework to assess the ethical dimension of the norms articulated in the speech. Within the tradition of *uṣūl al-fiqh*, *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* aims at the realization of human welfare through the protection of five essential interests: religion (*ḥifẓ al-dīn*), life (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*), intellect (*ḥifẓ al-'aql*), lineage (*ḥifẓ al-nasl*), and property (*ḥifẓ al-māl*) (al-Ghazālī, 1993; al-Shāṭibī, 1997; Zaidan, 2006). These five objectives are operationalized as a coding frame that complements the constructivist reading by mapping the relevant linguistic indicators in the Analysis section (al-Qaraḍāwī, 2005; Zaidan, 2006). Given the humanitarian focus of the UNGA speech and the scope of this study, the ethical assessment places particular emphasis on the protection of life (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*) and justice (*'adl*) as the most salient evaluative benchmarks. Coding, therefore, prioritizes textual indicators related to civilian protection, the mitigation of harm, and appeals to legal and moral accountability as expressions of *ḥifẓ al-nafs* and *'adl* within a contemporary diplomatic narrative.

The primary data consist of the official transcript of the 2025 UNGA speech obtained from UN channels and cross-checked against credible sources to ensure textual accuracy. Secondary sources include scholarly literature on constructivism, normative diplomacy, the principles of International Humanitarian Law, and studies on *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*. The unit of analysis is defined as meaning units within the text, particularly paragraphs and key sentences, which serve as coding units. The coding process relies on an initial theory-driven codebook developed deductively from constructivist concepts and *maqāṣid*, and then refined inductively through themes emerging from the text. The analytical procedure involves text segmentation, normative ethical coding, interpretation of discursive functions in the construction of identity and foreign policy orientation, and the integration of constructivist analysis with *maqāṣid*-based ethical evaluation. To ensure traceability, each key category is supported by explicit indicators and illustrated with representative excerpts presented in the Analysis section.

To strengthen analytical rigor and accountability, the study uses an explicit coding scheme with predefined categories and indicators, including civilian protection, proportionality, human dignity, and global morality. Interpretive consistency is maintained through source triangulation, peer debriefing, and analytic memo writing. This design establishes a transparent analytical path from theoretical foundation to textual interpretation, which helps ensure that the resulting argument is methodologically grounded and directly responsive to the research question.

Figure 1. Research Design and Analytical Framework

Prabowo's Speech at the UN General Assembly

During the UN General Assembly session, President Prabowo Subianto delivered a speech that placed the Israeli-Palestinian conflict at its center. He reaffirmed that a two-state solution remains the most equitable and realistic path toward ending a cycle of violence that has now lasted for decades. Without recognition of Palestinian sovereignty and independence, he argued, genuine peace will remain out of reach. Indonesia, he continued, will remain consistent on the Palestinian question as a matter of constitutional mandate and diplomatic heritage (tvOneNews, 2025). In taking that position at a global forum, Prabowo positioned Indonesia as one of the most vocal supporters of Palestine and demonstrated how the country articulates its foreign policy interests through the combined vocabulary of international legal and moral principles.

Figure 2. President Prabowo delivering his address at the UNGA, 2025

Source: Kementerian Pendayagunaan Aparatur Negara dan Reformasi Birokrasi, 2025

Building on that political positioning, Prabowo turned to the humanitarian dimension that is inseparable from Middle East politics. He emphasized that the suffering of Gaza's people, and especially of children and women, is the tragic consequence of the international community's failure to uphold humanitarian principles. He condemned attacks on civilian facilities such as hospitals, schools, and places of worship, which plainly violate international humanitarian law (tvOneNews, 2025). That appeal reflects Indonesia's concern for civilian victims and underscores the consistency of its moral diplomacy, which treats humanity as the primary foundation for any effort toward political resolution. Indonesia's stance on the Palestinian issue is therefore not purely political; it also reflects a sense of ethical responsibility in the global arena.

This moral commitment is then translated into Indonesia's readiness to take concrete steps in support of peace. Prabowo stated that Indonesia is prepared to deploy peacekeeping forces if a formal mandate is issued by the United Nations (tvOneNews, 2025). The statement signals that Indonesia's commitment extends beyond rhetorical diplomacy and includes willingness to act on the ground. As a country with a long track record in UN peacekeeping missions, Indonesia has the capacity and credibility to contribute effectively. The offer positions Indonesia not only as a critic of global policy but also as a proactive and solution-oriented actor, and it reinforces an image of a country that pairs its humanitarian values with practical responsibility on the global stage.

Prabowo further strengthened this moral and practical commitment through a rhetorical strategy that emphasized global solidarity. He called upon UN member states to unite in halting violence and upholding universal humanitarian values, stressing that the tragedy befalling the Palestinian people is not a regional issue alone but a collective responsibility of the international community (tvOneNews, 2025). In doing so, Indonesia is trying to help build international consensus amid the political deadlock that frequently stalls peace processes. Read through the lens of multilateral diplomacy, the appeal strengthens Indonesia's moral position while mobilizing broader support for peaceful solutions, so that the speech functions both as a statement of foreign policy and as an instrument of moral diplomacy that ties justice, humanity, and peace together within the global political order.

The argumentative structure of the speech rests on three connected claims: support for a two-state solution, the protection of civilian populations, and Indonesia's readiness to contribute through the deployment of peacekeeping forces (tvOneNews, 2025). These three elements reflect political concern but also rest on strong normative foundations drawn from Islamic law and international humanitarian law. Although the speech is delivered within a political framework, it carries a normative resonance that links religious values, humanitarian morality, and international legal principles. The next section offers a more detailed analysis of the relationship between Islamic law and International Humanitarian Law (IHL).

Islamic Law and International Humanitarian Law in Civilian Protection

The protection of civilians in armed conflict is a fundamental concern in contemporary law and international relations. Throughout human history, religious legal traditions and modern positive legal systems have each developed sets of norms intended to limit violence and preserve human dignity amid warfare. Islamic law and International Humanitarian Law (IHL) occupy important positions in this landscape because both draw on ethical principles that emphasize respect for human dignity, justice, and restraint in the use of armed force. Although they emerged from different historical and epistemological contexts, they share strong common ground in regulating the conduct of parties to conflict, particularly in their prohibitions on aggression, protection of non-combatants, and respect for universal humanitarian values.

In contemporary conflicts such as the one in Gaza, the relevance of Islamic law and IHL becomes especially visible. Violations of the basic principles of both systems reveal a moral crisis and a failure of international law enforcement in protecting civilians. A comparative study of Islamic law and IHL is therefore important not only for affirming normative similarities but also for exploring what Islam can contribute to enriching the global legal framework. The analysis also has practical significance for Indonesian humanitarian diplomacy, which seeks to combine the legitimacy of

international law with Islamic moral values in pursuit of global justice and peace. The discussion that follows first outlines the basic principles of Islamic law on civilian protection and the ethics of warfare. Mapping those principles matters because it shows how Islamic teaching constructs a normative framework that balances justice, humanity, and self-defense. The analysis then turns to International Humanitarian Law as a modern legal system with similar objectives, namely protection for humanity in the midst of armed conflict. A comparative reading allows the two systems to be examined together, so that points of convergence, relevance, and implications for contemporary humanitarian diplomacy can emerge.

1. *Islamic Law*

Within the Islamic legal tradition, the concept of *aḥkām al-jihād* (the laws of jihad) emphasizes that warfare may only be conducted within strict legal boundaries and for the purpose of self-defense, not as an instrument of unrestrained expansion or aggression (Kelsay, 2007). The Qur'an explicitly limits the legitimacy of war to conditions of self-defense and prohibits indiscriminate destructive action against those not involved in hostilities (QS. al-Baqarah: 190 & 194; QS. al-Anfāl: 61). Classical Muslim thinkers such as al-Māwardī emphasized high moral standards in the conduct of jihad, specifically prohibiting the killing of non-combatants and establishing that women, children, the elderly, and religious scholars must not become targets of warfare (al-Māwardī, 1996; Johnson & Kelsay, 2014). This ethical framework reflects a deep commitment to minimizing violence and protecting civilian lives (Ramadan, 2005). Analytically, this norm corresponds to the principle of *distinction* in International Humanitarian Law, which requires a clear separation between armed parties and civilians (Henckaerts & Doswald-Beck, 2009, pp. 3–7).

Islamic law also recognizes the instrument of *hudna* (ceasefire) as a mechanism that allows the cessation of hostilities for the sake of civilian safety. *Hudna* is understood not simply as a political strategy but as a moral choice that prioritizes human values over military ambition (Khadduri, 1955). Ibn Taymiyyah, for instance, argued that *hudna* is a legitimate measure to prevent the kind of conflict escalation that harms vulnerable groups (Ibn Taymiyyah, 1997; Kelsay, 2007). In this sense, *hudna* sits close to the principle of proportionality in IHL, which requires that the use of force be neither excessive nor indifferent to its impact on civilians. Read together, *aḥkām al-jihād* and *hudna* function as ethical instruments within the framework of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* that orient Islamic law toward the protection of human life (*ḥifz al-nafs*) (al-Shātibī, 1997).

Within the same framework, the concept of *amān* (a grant of safety) occupies an important place in Islamic law, particularly in relation to civilian protection. *Amān* provides a security guarantee for individuals, including enemies, who seek protection from Muslim authorities (Abou El Fadl, 2002). In jurisprudential literature, even an ordinary Muslim has the standing to grant *amān* to a non-Muslim, and political authorities are obliged to respect that decision. This arrangement signals Islam's

recognition of universal humanitarian values that cross religious and ethnic boundaries (Khadduri, 1955). From an IHL perspective, *amān* corresponds closely to the principle of humanity, which entails the duty to protect and treat human beings with dignity without discrimination (Henckaerts & Doswald-Beck, 2009). The analysis shows that Islamic teaching and IHL share not only similar objectives in limiting violence but also a common ethical foundation that places the protection of human life at the top of the hierarchy of values in any situation of conflict.

Consistent with this foundation, *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* treats the protection of life (*ḥifẓ al-naḥs*) as one of the core objectives from which Islamic legal norms are derived (Al Idrusiah et al., 2024; Kurniawan et al., 2020). The prohibition on killing non-combatants, respect for prisoners of war, and protection of places of worship all serve the preservation of human dignity and the continuity of human life. The principle makes clear that Islam, from the outset, placed the value of life above militaristic logic and imperial ambition. Its relevance is especially visible in the Gaza context, where the majority of casualties are civilians not directly engaged in combat. When compared with IHL, the principle of *ḥifẓ al-naḥs* corresponds conceptually to the principle of humanity in the Geneva Conventions, which mandates the protection of human life regardless of the status or identity of the parties involved (Henckaerts & Doswald-Beck, 2009). Islam and contemporary international law therefore converge in treating humanity as a universal value that must be preserved even in the midst of war.

Beyond the protection of life, *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* places the principle of justice (*'adl*) at the center of the rules that govern war and peace. This conception of justice rejects arbitrary violence and demands proportionality in every military action (Zaidan, 2006). In the view of classical jurists (*fuqahā'*), actions that cause extensive damage to civilian infrastructure, such as places of worship, schools, and health facilities, are categorized as *fasād fi al-arḍ* (corruption on earth), which cannot be justified morally or legally (Abou El Fadl, 2002). This norm intersects with the principle of proportionality in IHL, which prohibits attacks that produce civilian harm out of proportion to the expected military advantage (Henckaerts & Doswald-Beck, 2009).

When the two traditions are read comparatively, both Islam and IHL reject indiscriminate attack. In contemporary armed conflict, military action directed at densely populated areas, hospitals, and schools clearly violates the principle of distinction, which is the primary foundation of IHL (Henckaerts & Doswald-Beck, 2009). Classical Islamic literature affirms the same position through the prohibition on attacking civilians, women, children, and places of worship (Kelsay, 2007). Contemporary humanitarian violations therefore expose a bitter reality in which both legal systems, Islam and IHL alike, are routinely disregarded by political actors. Analytically, this convergence of values strengthens the case for treating religious norms and international law as shared resources for moral critique of aggression and

humanitarian violation (Abou El Fadl, 2002). Academic discourse on conflict can, on this reading, serve both as normative study and as an effort to build conceptual bridges between two legal traditions that are each oriented toward humanity and universal justice.

The relevance of Islamic law also extends to the treatment of prisoners of war, where protecting and honoring their dignity is central. Classical jurisprudence consistently affirms that prisoners have rights to food, protection, and the possibility of release through ransom or peace agreements (Khadduri, 1955). The principle rests on respect for human dignity even in situations of enmity. This position is normatively equivalent to provisions in the Geneva Conventions that establish standards for the humane treatment of prisoners of war (Henckaerts & Doswald-Beck, 2009). Serious violations of this norm in contemporary practice expose the gap between normative values and field implementation. A comparison between the two systems shows that the value of justice in Islam does not end at the level of ideal religious discourse but has practical relevance for the global legal order (Kelsay, 2007). On that basis, Islamic principles can enrich and strengthen the international humanitarian legal framework through ethical and moral contributions rooted in universal human values.

In the end, both Islamic law and IHL seek to limit the excesses of warfare and protect civilians. Both reject military absolutism and place human values at the core of the law of armed conflict. Seen from an academic perspective, this similarity opens a path toward a trans-traditional ethical consensus that can strengthen the moral legitimacy of the international legal order. For Indonesia's diplomacy, this ethical foundation gives the country a moral basis on which to consistently call for civilian protection and the cessation of violence in international forums, as reflected in Prabowo's UNGA speech. Studies of Islamic law and IHL therefore do not stop at the level of conceptual normativity but also find purchase in global political practice. That move links the discussion of civilian protection to the analysis of Indonesia's diplomatic role at the UN, where religious morality and humanitarian responsibility meet in foreign policy.

2. *International Humanitarian Law*

International Humanitarian Law (IHL) developed as a global legal instrument designed to limit the destructive impact of warfare on individuals and civilian society. Its primary instruments are the 1949 Geneva Conventions and the 1977 Additional Protocols, which set out the basic principles of human protection in armed conflict, whether international or non-international in character (Henckaerts & Doswald-Beck, 2009). These provisions are effectively universal because they have been ratified by virtually every state in the world, and states involved in conflicts are legally bound to comply with them. The fundamental principles of IHL extend protection to those who are not, or are no longer, engaged in hostilities, including civilians, medical personnel, and prisoners of war (Pictet, 1985). IHL therefore functions as a universal humanitarian safety net, ensuring that humanitarian values are preserved even in the

midst of warfare, and it affirms the urgency of international norms that set the moral and legal boundaries on the use of armed force (Kelsay, 2007).

One of the key principles in IHL is distinction, namely the obligation to differentiate clearly between combatants and non-combatants in every military operation. This principle strictly prohibits any form of indiscriminate attack that cannot distinguish between military and civilian targets, since such action constitutes a grave breach of the Geneva Conventions (Henckaerts & Doswald-Beck, 2009). The principle also extends to the protection of civilian objects such as homes, schools, hospitals, and places of worship, which must not be targeted for military attack. The norm is directly relevant to contemporary armed conflict, where attacks on densely populated areas have produced large numbers of civilian casualties. Repeated violations show a serious erosion of compliance with Geneva Convention obligations. Academically, the principle of distinction has not only a formal legal basis but also a moral foundation consistent with classical Islamic law, which affirmed the prohibition on killing non-combatants and the obligation to preserve human integrity in warfare from the outset (Kelsay, 2007; Abou El Fadl, 2002).

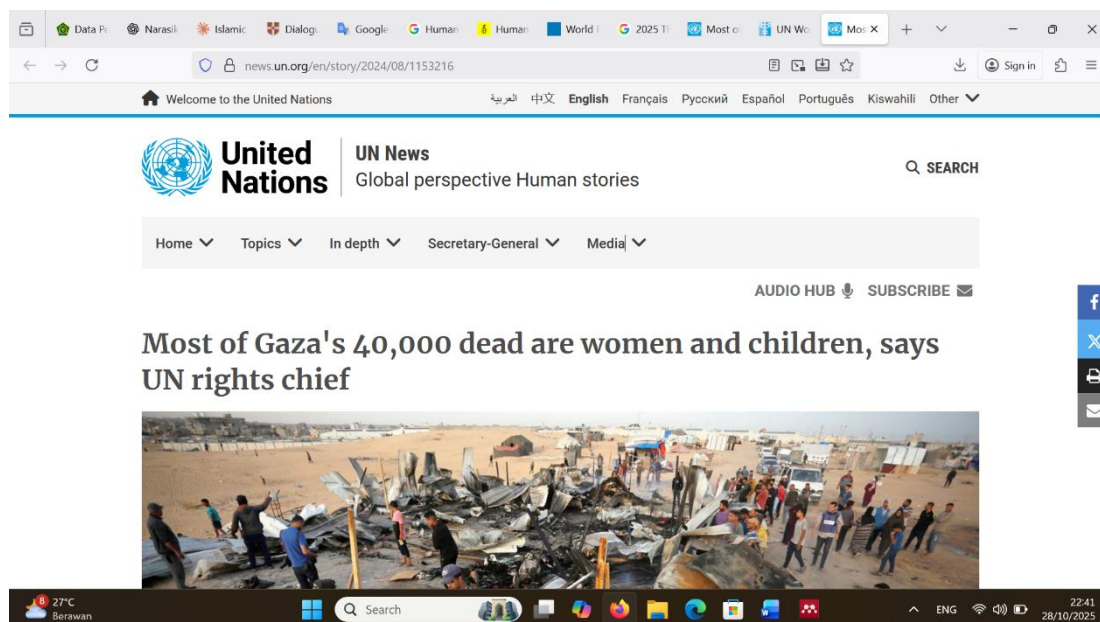
A second important principle in IHL is *proportionality*, which prohibits the use of force whose resulting civilian harm is out of proportion to the expected military advantage. Applying this principle in practice requires careful calculation and ethical assessment before an attack is carried out (Henckaerts & Doswald-Beck, 2009). The use of high-explosive weapons in densely populated areas, for example, is considered disproportionate because it creates serious risks to civilian life. Various reports from international organizations indicate that military operations in contemporary armed conflicts frequently breach proportionality limits, producing civilian casualties and extensive destruction of civilian infrastructure. These conditions have sparked global debate about violations of proportionality as one of the main pillars of modern warfare law. In the Islamic tradition, this norm corresponds conceptually to the prohibitions on *isrāf* (excess) and *fasād* (corruption on earth), which affirm that military action must not be destructive and must be bounded by values of justice and human welfare (Kelsay, 2007; Zaidan, 2006).

A third principle in IHL is humanity, which requires humane treatment of every individual in situations of conflict, including prisoners of war. The principle rejects all forms of torture, degrading treatment, and brutal attack against unarmed or surrendered individuals (Henckaerts & Doswald-Beck, 2009). It also prohibits the use of weapons or warfare methods that inflict unnecessary suffering. Conditions in various conflict zones reveal serious violations of this principle, including the destruction of health facilities, the blockade of humanitarian aid access, and the inhumane treatment of civilian and political detainees. Such actions contradict the basic value of humanity that forms the moral core of the Geneva Conventions. Comparative analysis shows that the concept of *hifz al-nafs* in Islamic law is very closely oriented with the principle of humanity, since both place the protection of life

and human dignity at the top of the hierarchy of values in warfare ethics (Kelsay, 2007; Abou El Fadl, 2002). The normative link between Islam and IHL therefore reinforces the view that humanitarian values are universal and provide a shared foundation for global peace.

The record of Israeli violations against Gaza's civilians has been widely documented in international reporting. Organizations such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International have documented attacks on civilian facilities that should be legally protected, including hospitals, schools, and shelters for displaced people (Human Rights Watch, 2025; Amnesty International, 2024). Official UN data indicate that the majority of deaths in Gaza are women and children, who clearly fall outside the category of combatants (United Nations, 2024). These patterns point to a failure by Israel to comply with the principles of distinction and proportionality, two fundamental norms of IHL on which civilian protection in warfare rests. The blockade of humanitarian aid channels has further deepened the humanitarian crisis and represents a violation of international obligations to ensure access to aid for civilian populations. From an IHL perspective, this situation can be classified as *grave breaches* of the Geneva Conventions, which fall potentially within the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court (ICC). Gaza therefore illustrates the empirical reality of a failure to implement the principles of modern warfare law, and it reinforces the urgency of humanitarian diplomacy in the pursuit of global justice.

Figure 3. United Nations Reporting on Civilian Casualties in Gaza



Sources: United Nations, 2024.

Compared with Islamic law, IHL shows significant normative convergence on civilian protection in warfare. Classical Islamic law clearly prohibits the killing of

women, children, the elderly, and individuals seeking refuge in places of worship. The prohibition aligns with the principle of distinction in IHL, which limits military targets to active combatants (Kelsay, 2007). Islam also rejects the use of excessive and destructive force, as reflected in the prohibitions on *isrāf* (excess) and *fasād fī al-ard* (corruption on earth), which map onto the principle of proportionality in the Geneva Conventions (Henckaerts & Doswald-Beck, 2009). The concept of *amān* in Islamic law extends universal protection to every individual, including parties on the enemy side, who seeks a security guarantee. This alignment of values shows that Islam and IHL share a moral paradigm in which humanity serves as the starting point of warfare ethics and peace. The convergence is therefore not only conceptual but also opens an opportunity for constructive normative dialogue between Islam and modern international law in strengthening the global humanitarian order.

Beyond normative similarities, both Islam and IHL face serious implementation challenges in practice. The Gaza case shows how legal norms are often disregarded in contemporary military practice. A paradox emerges when a body of law that enjoys strong moral and legal legitimacy is sidelined by armed actors (Dannenbaum & Dill, 2024). The situation raises fundamental questions about the effectiveness of international legal norms in asymmetric conflict, where imbalances of military and political power weaken enforcement (Krever et al., 2024). Academically, this reality opens a broader research agenda on international legal enforcement mechanisms and on the need to strengthen global accountability instruments. At the same time, it underscores the importance of revitalizing warfare ethics in the Islamic tradition so that humanitarian principles can serve not only as moral doctrine but also as usable resources in the dynamics of contemporary conflict.

International Humanitarian Law therefore provides a universal legal framework that in many respects runs parallel to Islamic teaching. Both normative systems emphasize civilian protection, proportionality in the use of force, and humane treatment of prisoners of war. The record of Gaza violations underscores the urgency of strengthening compliance with these norms and confirms the importance of global commitment to humanitarian principles. For Indonesia, the convergence between Islamic law and IHL offers a strong normative foundation for humanitarian diplomacy in international forums, including at the United Nations. On this foundation, Indonesia can speak with two forms of legitimacy at once, in the language of universal international law and in the language of Islamic values rooted in the country's moral tradition. The move therefore connects IHL analysis with Indonesian diplomacy as a site where moral identity and global norms are brought together in the pursuit of justice and international peace.

Indonesia's Diplomacy at the UN: A Constructivist Analysis

Indonesia's diplomacy on Palestine at the UN can be examined through constructivism, which holds that state interests and behavior are shaped by socially constructed identities and shared norms rather than by material power alone (Wendt, 1999; Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998). This approach is better suited to the case than realism or liberal institutionalism, because Indonesia's consistent pro-Palestine stance is hard to explain solely in terms of material interest or institutional bargaining. Constructivism instead turns attention to the way diplomatic discourse articulates values, legitimizes claims, and projects a role identity in multilateral forums. Prabowo's UNGA speech can therefore be treated as a diplomatic text through which Indonesia performs and justifies its normative positioning.

Indonesia's stance is rooted in a constitutional and ideological value orientation, including the anti-colonial mandate in the Preamble of the 1945 Constitution, which affirms that "independence is the right of all nations, and therefore colonialism must be abolished in the world because it is not in conformity with humanity and justice" (Sardinha, 2025). That framing helps explain why Indonesian leaders have long treated solidarity with Palestine as a moral commitment of foreign policy (Fogg, 2015; Bachtiar et al., 2021; Andriansyah, 2024). At the same time, Indonesia's dual identity as a Muslim-majority democracy can produce tensions of emphasis, since narratives of religious solidarity must be balanced with pluralist commitments and diplomatic moderation. Domestic politics also shape the stance. Public opinion, religious organizations, civil society mobilization, and parliamentary voices can intensify demands for a principled position even as the government faces pragmatic constraints in navigating international pressures and the limits of UN enforcement.

Beyond identity, constructivism emphasizes norms as key drivers of diplomatic behavior, namely the shared standards that define appropriate conduct in international politics. Read through this lens, Indonesia's Palestine diplomacy can be placed within the norm life-cycle framework, in which norms emerge, gain wider acceptance through a cascade, and eventually become internalized as taken-for-granted expectations in multilateral forums (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998). Prabowo's UNGA speech illustrates this mechanism by translating domestically embedded ethical commitments into internationally legible humanitarian claims, a process often described as norm localization, in which global norms are mediated and made resonant with local normative sources (Acharya, 2004). The speech aligns Islamic ethical imperatives with IHL language in several ways. It calls for the protection of civilians, which echoes *ḥifẓ al-nafs* in *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* (Kurniawan et al., 2020; Kurniawan et al., 2025) and the principle of humanity in the Geneva Conventions (Gul et al., 2025). It also condemns attacks on civilian facilities such as hospitals and schools, advocates for a two-state solution as a justice-based framework, and expresses readiness to contribute to UN-mandated peacekeeping. These examples show that Indonesia does not simply adopt international norms but actively frames and

legitimizes them through religious and constitutional moral vocabulary, so that global humanitarian standards are shaped and mediated by domestic identity rather than merely imported.

Prabowo's speech can also be read as an instance of Indonesia acting as a norm entrepreneur within a constructivist account of diplomacy, in which state identities and interests are shaped through shared meanings and normative expectations in international interaction (Wendt, 1999). Norm entrepreneurs, in this literature, are actors that promote and advance standards of appropriate behavior and help move norms through stages of emergence, cascade, and internalization (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998; Stefan, 2021). By reiterating the two-state solution, emphasizing civilian protection, and expressing readiness to contribute to UN-mandated peacekeeping, Indonesia is not only affirming existing humanitarian norms but also working to raise their salience in a multilateral forum (Setiawati, 2024). The success of such norm entrepreneurship can be assessed through observable indicators, including whether Indonesia's framing is echoed by other states in subsequent debates, whether it translates into coalition-building and sustained agenda-setting, and whether it is reflected in concrete diplomatic outputs such as co-sponsorship patterns, voting alignment, or the adoption of specific language in UN resolutions and official statements. At the same time, limited impact is an expected outcome when humanitarian norms collide with structural constraints, particularly power asymmetry and the political deadlock associated with Security Council dynamics and veto politics, which can blunt enforcement and implementation even when normative support is widespread (Hermawanto & Heriningsih, 2025; Szalai, 2025). Any claim that Indonesia is a moral leader in this domain should therefore be grounded in evidence of sustained norm promotion and recognition by relevant audiences, for example, consistent multilateral advocacy and identifiable uptake of its framing in UN forums, rather than treated as an attribute that can simply be assumed (Febrianti & Prihatini, 2023).

Indonesia's normative positioning on Palestine is not merely rhetorical, because it is repeatedly enacted through UN diplomacy that foregrounds civilian protection, a two-state solution, and compliance with international law. The continuity is visible across time and across levels of representation. In Prabowo's address during the 80th UNGA General Debate on September 23, 2025, Indonesia reiterated its commitment to multilateralism and used the UN platform to frame the Gaza situation in a humanitarian register while sustaining the two-state horizon as the legitimate political endpoint (United Nations General Assembly, 2025). A similar script appears in Indonesia's statement on the Question of Palestine during the 79th UNGA on September 28, 2024, which foregrounds civilian casualties and calls for action aligned with humanitarian imperatives and legal obligations (Republic of Indonesia, 2024).

From a constructivist perspective, these recurring interventions operate as norm advocacy and can be read as a form of norm entrepreneurship, because they repeatedly justify standards of appropriate conduct in a high-legitimacy multilateral arena (Wendt, 1999; Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998). This advocacy is not limited to speech alone, since it is also translated into institutional outputs. For example, the December 5, 2024, Emergency Special Session draft resolution on Gaza lists Indonesia among the sponsors and embeds language on obligations under international humanitarian law, accountability, and the protection of civilians within its framing (United Nations General Assembly, 2024). The normative vocabulary that anchors this advocacy is also legible in earlier General Assembly language, including Resolution A/RES/ES-10/21 adopted on October 27, 2023, which explicitly links civilian protection to legal and humanitarian obligations and reiterates the two-state solution as the basis for a just and lasting settlement (United Nations General Assembly, 2023).

It is analytically safer to describe Indonesia primarily as an advocate and coalition-builder rather than a direct mediator, and to treat mediation claims as a bounded self-image that appears in parts of the literature (Djuyandi et al., 2021). The impact assessment is stronger when it rests on observable indicators such as sponsorship, coalition alignment, and the uptake of humanitarian legal language in UN texts (United Nations General Assembly, 2024; United Nations General Assembly, 2023). At the same time, converting General Assembly legitimacy into binding enforcement is structurally constrained by Security Council veto politics, as illustrated by the United States veto of a Gaza ceasefire draft on November 20, 2024, despite 14 votes in favor, and again by a U.S. veto on June 4, 2025, that blocked a draft demanding an immediate and permanent ceasefire (United Nations, 2024b; United Nations, 2025).

Table 1. Empirical Indicators of Indonesia's Norm Advocacy in the UN System

Type of Action	Evidence (Source)	Analytical Function as "Norm Advocacy"
Head of State statement at the UNGA	President of Indonesia, Statement at the 80th UNGA (2025)	Demonstrates articulation of norms on a stage of global legitimacy
Statement by Foreign Minister	Republic of Indonesia, Statement at the 79th UNGA (2024)	Reinforces humanitarian framing and legal obligations
Sponsorship of UNGA Resolution	UNGA Draft Resolution, ESS December 2024	Evidence of institutional engagement beyond rhetoric
Normative foundation	UNGA Resolution A/RES/ES-10/21 (2023)	Provides the normative language referenced in advocacy
Structural constraints	UN News (2024, 2025)	Explains institutional limits on enforcement

Source: Compiled by the authors based on UNGA General Debate (2025), UNISPAL (2024), UNGA Resolution A/RES/ES-10/21 (2023), and UN News reports (2024–2025).

Indonesia's involvement in the Palestinian question also illustrates how domestic norms are projected into global politics through recognizable channels of influence. Public solidarity with Palestine has become deeply embedded in Indonesian public opinion, media narratives, and religious discourse, and this has produced sustained expectations that foreign policy should reflect humanitarian concern and moral responsibility (Nuraini et al., 2025; Umar & Azizah, 2025; Wolf, 2023). The domestic environment creates political incentives for leaders to maintain consistency and to frame Indonesia's UN diplomacy in a moral and humanitarian register that resonates both at home and abroad. A constructivist reading suggests that diplomacy is not simply an elite product but a practice shaped by socially shared values, so that Prabowo's speech can be understood as an articulation of norms that are already salient within Indonesian society. At the same time, the normative framing may also serve instrumental purposes, since aligning with widely supported moral claims can strengthen domestic legitimacy, which means that moral discourse and political strategy can operate simultaneously within foreign policy.

A constructivist reading also helps clarify how Indonesia positions itself within global affairs. By emphasizing peaceful solutions, civilian protection, and justice, Indonesia seeks to take part in the global normative current that rejects aggression. The position offers a reputational advantage, since Indonesia is perceived as a country that consistently defends humanity. Yet that consistency is also tested by the logic of

realpolitik, particularly the dominance of great-power vetoes in the Security Council (Hermawanto & Heriningsih, 2025; Szalai, 2025). The constraint was visible when the United States vetoed a Security Council draft on November 20, 2024, despite 14 votes in favor, and again on June 4, 2025, when a U.S. veto blocked a draft demanding an immediate and permanent ceasefire (United Nations, 2024b; United Nations, 2025).

In constructivist terms, these episodes show that Indonesia's normative agency operates within structural limits, because institutional power asymmetries can prevent moral claims from becoming binding outcomes (Wendt, 1999). Constructivism nevertheless explains that norms can continue to form the foundation of identity even when implementation is limited, because diplomatic discourse keeps reproducing expectations of appropriate conduct. In response, Indonesia can adopt adaptive strategies such as coalition-building in the General Assembly and supporting Emergency Special Sessions through sponsorship and sustained agenda-setting. Indonesia can also practice forum-shopping by shifting emphasis from the Security Council to arenas where majority support and moral legitimacy are more attainable, even if the resulting decisions are non-binding. Bilateral diplomacy and contributions to UN-mandated initiatives further allow Indonesia to demonstrate commitment beyond speeches while navigating multilateral deadlock. The implication is that Indonesia's future diplomatic strategy is likely to combine sustained normative advocacy with pragmatic coalition management in order to maintain credibility and keep humanitarian norms salient even when enforcement remains constrained.

The consistency of this normative identity is clearly visible in Prabowo's UNGA speech, which continues an Indonesian tradition of normative diplomacy that runs back to the Bandung Conference and the Non-Aligned Movement (Wicaksana, 2023). In each historical moment, Indonesia has affirmed its commitment to global solidarity and international justice, including on the Palestinian question (Andriansyah, 2024). Viewed through a constructivist lens, this continuity shows that Indonesian diplomatic orientation is shaped by the internalization of norms into national identity. Prabowo's speech, on this reading, is not only a response to the current geopolitical situation but a manifestation of a diplomatic identity that has long been in place, and it reinforces the view that Indonesian diplomacy rests more on normative values than on short-term material interests.

The same continuity is reflected in how Indonesian diplomacy at the UN frames the Palestinian question as part of an identity and norm construction that are deeply rooted in the country's self-understanding. Indonesia's identity as a democratic Muslim-majority country brings Islamic values and IHL principles into conversation and helps orient foreign policy toward ethical and just outcomes. In this setting, Prabowo's speech becomes a concrete representation of Indonesia's role as a *norm entrepreneur* on the global stage. By affirming a two-state solution, the protection of civilian populations, and a readiness to deploy peacekeeping forces, Indonesia

demonstrates an active commitment to maintaining a norm-based world order. Within the constructivist frame, this diplomacy can be understood not only as strategic calculation but as an articulation of national collective identity, so that Indonesia's role on the Palestinian question reveals a synergy among Islamic law, international humanitarian law, and normative diplomacy, and shapes the country's image as a moral actor in global politics.

Normative Synergy: Islam, International Humanitarian Law, and Indonesian Diplomatic Identity

Scholarly work on the Gaza conflict is often framed in terms of politics or security, yet those approaches tend to overlook the normative dimension that in fact shapes conflict dynamics. In this context, a direct comparison between Islamic law, International Humanitarian Law (IHL), and Indonesian diplomacy becomes especially relevant. Indonesian diplomacy, and particularly Prabowo's UNGA speech, reflects an effort to integrate religious norms, international norms, and national political identity. A constructivist perspective allows diplomacy to be understood not simply as an instrument of power but as an expression of identity, values, and moral commitments upheld by the state. Within this framework, the analysis examines how religious norms and international law meet and interact, with the aim of tracing the form of normative synergy that strengthens Indonesia's position on the Gaza issue at the global level.

This synergy is visible in the way Islamic law places humanitarian protection at the core of its doctrine on armed conflict. From the outset, Islam has affirmed the importance of protecting civilians through provisions of *aḥkām al-jihād* that limit the legitimacy of warfare to specific conditions and prohibit destructive action against non-combatants (Kelsay, 2007). This is reflected in classical jurisprudential works such as *Al-Aḥkam al-Sulṭaniyyah* by al-Māwardī and *Al-Mughnī* by Ibn Qudāmah, which explicitly prohibit the killing of women, children, and clergy in warfare (al-Māwardī, n.d.; Ibn Qudāmah, 1968). The concept of *amān*, for its part, is elaborated in *al-Mabsūṭ* by al-Sarakhsī and *I'lām al-Muwaqqi'īn* by Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, which affirm every individual's right to a security guarantee (al-Sarakhsī, 1989; Ibn al-Qayyim, 1968). Both legal instruments make clear that the protection of human life (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*) is the primary objective of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* (Al Idrusiah et al., 2024; Kurniawan et al., 2020; Samae & Arbi, 2025) in every conflict situation, and they provide moral flexibility for Muslim authorities to prioritize peace and humanity (al-Nawawī, 1992).

This moral foundation intersects with International Humanitarian Law, which places civilian protection at the core of contemporary warfare ethics. Through the Geneva Conventions, IHL affirms three principal principles: distinction, proportionality, and humanity (Dinstein, 2014). The principle of distinction requires a clear separation between combatants and non-combatants; proportionality requires

that attacks not produce civilian harm that is excessive in relation to the expected military advantage; and humanity requires that every individual be treated humanely, including prisoners of war (Solis, 2010). The scale of violations committed by Israel in Gaza, which have produced thousands of civilian casualties, shows weak compliance with these basic principles (Richter et al., 2024). International norms, therefore, have already provided a legal framework aligned with Islamic values on the protection of life and human dignity (Abou El Fadl, 2002). The alignment opens a path toward constructive dialogue between the Islamic legal tradition and IHL on strengthening global humanitarian protection.

The alignment between Islamic values and IHL principles is reflected in Indonesia's diplomacy at the UN. As the world's largest Muslim-majority country with a democratic system, Indonesia treats the Palestinian question as a representation of the moral commitments to anti-colonialism and global justice it has carried since independence (Quah, 2025). Prabowo's UNGA speech demonstrates continuity of that identity through its emphasis on a two-state solution, the protection of civilian populations, and commitment to international peace. From a constructivist perspective, this identity not only shapes Indonesian diplomatic orientation but also provides a source of moral legitimacy for every statement and action taken in a global forum. The combined presence of Islamic and IHL norms in Prabowo's rhetoric shows how Indonesia seeks to integrate religious values and international law within a normative diplomacy, and it allows Indonesian diplomacy to appear not simply as an instrument of strategic interest but as an expression of the country's values and moral identity on the world stage.

The integration of values behind this diplomacy becomes even more visible when Islamic law and IHL are read side by side. The two frameworks share significant convergence on humanitarian principles and the protection of non-combatants (Kelsay, 2007). The principle of *ḥifẓ al-nafs* in *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* parallels the principle of humanity in the Geneva Conventions, and the value of *'adl* aligns with proportionality in international law. The prohibition on killing women, children, and the elderly in Islamic teaching also corresponds with the principle of distinction, which requires a clear separation between combatants and civilians (Ibn Qudāmah, 1968; Henckaerts & Doswald-Beck, 2009). Protection of places of worship, civilian infrastructure, and prisoners of war further reveals ethical similarity between the two frameworks. Islamic law and IHL are therefore not only compatible but also mutually reinforcing in the formation of a universal humanitarian ethic, and this is a resource Indonesia uses to strengthen its moral position and diplomatic legitimacy in international forums (Cryer et al., 2014).

Even with these convergences, fundamental differences remain between Islam and IHL, particularly in matters of epistemology and the source of normative legitimacy. Islamic law rests on revelation and religious tradition, whereas IHL emerges from the secular consensus of the international community (Johnson &

Kelsay, 2014). The concept of *jihād* in Islam is sometimes perceived differently from lawful combatancy within the IHL framework, even though both share the objective of limiting violence in warfare (Kelsay, 2007). In international diplomatic practice, however, this conceptual tension can be managed through an emphasis on shared humanitarian values. The approach allows diplomatic efforts to present Islam and IHL as two normative sources that complement each other in rejecting violence and advancing peace, and it preserves the relevance of humanitarian dialogue, global acceptance, and the capacity to combine religious foundations with universal values without losing normative integrity.

By managing this epistemological difference, Islamic law and IHL are no longer positioned as two opposing legal systems but as value sources that can work synergistically to form just diplomatic practice. The synergy between Islamic law and IHL then strengthens Indonesia's position in the global arena through a diplomacy grounded in universal humanitarian values while remaining rooted in Islamic tradition. Prabowo's UNGA speech is a concrete expression of this integration of religious values, international norms, and foreign policy identity within a normative diplomacy. The approach confirms that Indonesian foreign policy is oriented not only toward material interests but also toward the moral values that shape state behavior. From a constructivist perspective, the synergy demonstrates that norms, including religiously derived ones, shape national identity and action on the international stage. Empirically, Indonesia's diplomacy on Gaza affirms the function of Islamic law and international law as a basis of moral and political legitimacy. The study therefore offers a conceptual synthesis in which Islamic law and IHL are not separate systems but mutually complementary frameworks that shape contemporary diplomatic practice, and it enriches international relations discourse by opening space for the integration of religious norms into the theory and practice of contemporary global diplomacy.

Conclusion

The article shows that Prabowo's UNGA speech does more than state Indonesia's foreign policy position. It performs a normative construction grounded in Islamic values and the principles of International Humanitarian Law. Read as a diplomatic text through a constructivist lens, the speech functions as a site of norm articulation that projects Indonesia's role identity in a multilateral forum. Its calls for a two-state solution, the protection of civilians, and Indonesia's readiness to contribute to peacekeeping align with *maqāsid al-sharī'ah* (the objectives of Islamic law), particularly *hifz al-nafs* (the protection of life) and *'adl* (justice). The speech also resonates with the core IHL principles of distinction, proportionality, and humanity, which allows Indonesia to advance claims that are legible within both Islamic ethical reasoning and widely recognized humanitarian norms.

The convergence offers three specific contributions to scholarship on religion and international relations. First, it shows how *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* can be operationalized in contemporary diplomatic practice, extending the concept beyond its traditional jurisprudential domain into state discourse at the United Nations. Second, it provides an empirical illustration of constructivist claims that norms, including religiously derived ones, shape identity construction and diplomatic behavior through publicly articulated justifications. Third, it offers a methodological template for analyzing how non-Western ethical traditions can be translated into internationally legible claims in multilateral settings, and this template can be adapted for comparative studies of other civilizational moral vocabularies.

Important limitations remain. The study analyzes a speech and therefore cannot by itself demonstrate policy effectiveness or causal impact on outcomes in Gaza, and Indonesia's norm entrepreneurship operates within structural constraints such as Security Council veto politics and power asymmetries. Future research should therefore triangulate beyond rhetoric by examining voting records, sponsorship patterns, coalition behavior, and whether Indonesia's framing is taken up in subsequent UN documents and debates. At a moment when International Humanitarian Law faces acute legitimacy challenges across multiple conflicts, this case suggests that strengthening humanitarian norms may require not only enforcement mechanisms but also moral resonance across diverse traditions. As scholars working within a constructivist and normatively pluralist orientation, we recognize that alternative theoretical lenses might interpret the same diplomatic text differently. Yet the larger question remains whether international order can be truly universal without being genuinely pluralist in its moral foundations.

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