



**The International MA Program in
Conflict Resolution and Mediation**
The Gershon H. Gordon
Faculty of Social Sciences
Tel Aviv University

Law and Conflict Resolution 10444024

Between War and Peace: How Does Law Shape the Conflict?

Fall 2026

Wednesdays, starting October 21, 2026 in Naftali 004

Lecturer: Brig. Gen. (res.) Roni Katzir, Former Head of the International Law Division, IDF

Email: katzirroni@gmail.com

Description: This course introduces the role of international law in armed conflict and its relationship to conflict resolution, using Israel's recent multi-front war - spanning Gaza, Lebanon, Iran, and beyond - as a reference point. The course approaches law and force not as opposites but as points along the same continuum, and asks throughout: in what ways does international law, and the law of armed conflict in particular, shape how armed conflicts are conducted, and does it contribute to their resolution?

The course provides theoretical background on the basic rules and principles of key areas of international law, including the normative sources of international law, the Law of Armed Conflict, the prohibition on the use of force (*jus ad bellum*), and the law governing the conduct of hostilities (*jus in bello*). It will examine how these rules have played out across Israel's recent conflicts.

By the end of the course, students should have an overview of the primary topics in international law (sources, actors, and substantive fields), an understanding of the legal and diplomatic mechanisms through which armed conflicts are paused, managed, or resolved, and a grounded understanding of the international-legal dimensions of the conflicts involving Gaza, Lebanon, and Iran.

Course materials: There are three types of reading material for each session: The first includes the materials/slides and presentations used by the lecturer during the classes. These materials will be made available on the course's Moodle website. The second includes additional required reading, which will typically provide basic theoretical background as well as practical analysis of a real-world example. The third is optional reading.

Professor Malcolm Shaw's landmark book "International Law" is used as the base treatise throughout the course. The syllabus will refer to the (9th) edition of the book. In the event that students are using other version, it is quite simple to find the relevant chapter(s) as they are very similar.



**The International MA Program in
Conflict Resolution and Mediation**
The Gershon H. Gordon
Faculty of Social Sciences
Tel Aviv University

Assessment Breakdown:

- **Participation:** 15%
- **Class Assignments & In-Class Simulation:** 35%
- **Final Exam:** 50%

Participation

Students are expected to complete all assigned readings, attend class consistently, and engage actively in discussions and course activities. Meaningful participation is essential for developing a strong understanding of the material and contributing to a productive learning environment.

Class Assignments

Students will complete **one to two short assignments** during the semester. These may include:

- A **one-page opinion paper**, or
- A **five-minute class presentation**

Students will receive **at least two weeks' notice** before each assignment is due.

In-Class Simulation

During the course, students will participate in a practical simulation exercise. Each student will be assigned a role representing a relevant actor in the international system (e.g., a State, an international organization). Students will:

- Present the interests and legal positions of their assigned actor
- Engage in negotiation or conflict-management scenarios

Before the simulation, students must submit a **short preparatory document** outlining their actor's interests, arguments, and strategic considerations.

Guidelines for the Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Assignments:

The use of AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT) is **permitted and encouraged**, provided students adhere to the following principles:

- **Ethics and Academic Integrity** - AI tools must not replace your own intellectual work. Assignments must demonstrate your personal reasoning, analysis, and understanding.
- **Reliance on Personal Understanding** - Your submitted work must reflect your own knowledge and skills. AI may assist with: Information retrieval, drafting initial ideas, structuring arguments, generating images and brainstorming. However, submitting AI-generated work **as if it were entirely your own** is prohibited.
- **Transparency and Proper Use** - Each assignment must include a **short paragraph** explaining: Which AI tools were used, how they contributed to your work, how you evaluated or modified the AI output. This ensures responsible and transparent use.
- **Critical Review and Responsibility** - Students are fully responsible for the accuracy and quality of their submissions. AI outputs may be incomplete, unreliable, or incorrect. You must critically review, verify, and refine any AI-generated content before submission.
- **Privacy** - Do not share personal, sensitive, or confidential information when using AI tools.



**The International MA Program in
Conflict Resolution and Mediation**
The Gershon H. Gordon
Faculty of Social Sciences
Tel Aviv University

Consultations: I would be happy to meet or converse with students. As I am a practicing lawyer, I will not be able to keep regular office hours at the university. However, I shall be available to students via email (katzirroni@gmail.com).

Lesson Plan:

Schedule Overview

Date	Session
Wed 21.10.26	Introduction and Course Framing ; Lesson 1: What is International Law? Sources - Treaties and custom
Wed 28.10.26	(no class)
Wed 04.11.26	Lesson 2 - The History of Law of Armed Conflict (LOAC)
Wed 11.11.26	Lesson 3 - <i>The History of the Region: War, Peace with Egypt and Jordan, Oslo, and "Peace Again"</i>
Wed 18.11.26	(no class)
Wed 25.11.26	Lesson 4 - <i>Jus ad Bellum: Use of Force is Prohibited, Unless... The US - Israel - Iran War(s)</i>
Wed 02.12.26	Lesson 5 - Double session - Jus in Bello: Theory and Practice – Fighting a Legal War in Seven Fronts
Wed 09.12.26	(no class)
Wed 16.12.26	Lesson 6 - The End of War? The case of Gaza and Lebanon
Wed 23.12.26	Lesson 7 - Double session Part 1: Guest Lecture - UNSC Resolution 1325: Women, Peace and Security Part 2: Domestic Investigation of War Crimes
Wed 30.12.26	Lesson 8 - Double session - International Legal Proceedings - The Israeli cases in the ICC and the ICJ
Wed 06.01.27	Lesson 9 – Simulation
Wed 13.01.27	Lesson 10 - Course Summary and Exam



**The International MA Program in
Conflict Resolution and Mediation**
The Gershon H. Gordon
Faculty of Social Sciences
Tel Aviv University

Lesson 1 (21.10.26):

1) *Introduction and Course Framing* - Syllabus walkthrough, grading, reading expectations, course logistics.

2) *What is International Law? Sources - Treaties and custom*

Required reading:

- [What is international law? An animated explainer](#)
- [Article 38\(1\) of the Statute of the International Court of Justice](#)
- Shaw, *International Law* (9th ed.): pp 1–9 (Introduction); 58–64 (Custom); 78–82 (Treaties)
- Practical POV:
 - o Roni Katzir & Hadar David, [Identifying Customary LOAC in Practice](#), EJIL: Talk! (August 2023)

Optional reading:

- Shaw: pp 10–11 (the function of politics); 68–75 (state practice and opinio juris); 82–88 (general principles of law); 92–96 (judicial decisions and writers)

NO CLASS ON OCTOBER 28

Lesson 2 (04.11.26)

The History of Law of Armed Conflict (LOAC)

Required reading:

- Amanda Alexander, [A Short History of International Humanitarian Law](#), *The European Journal of International Law* Vol. 26 no. 1 (2015)

Optional reading:

- Yoram Dinstein, [Keynote Address: The Recent Evolution of the International Law of Armed Conflict: Confusions, Constraints, and Challenges](#), *Vanderbilt Journal of Transnational Law*, Vol. 51 (2018)

Lesson 3 (11.11.26)

The History of the Region: War, Peace with Egypt and Jordan, Oslo, and “Peace Again”

Required reading:

- [Israel–Egypt: A Review of Bilateral Ties](#)
- [Israel-Jordan Peace Treaty \(1994\) — overview and key provisions](#)
- [Israel-Jordan Armistice Agreement \(1949\), Preamble, Arts. I–IV](#)



**The International MA Program in
Conflict Resolution and Mediation**
The Gershon H. Gordon
Faculty of Social Sciences
Tel Aviv University

- [Overview of Israeli-Palestinian agreements since 1993](#)

Optional reading:

- [Balfour Declaration \(1917\)](#)
- [UN Security Council Resolution 242](#)
- [The Oslo Accords 30 Years On](#)
- [How I Invented Areas A, B and C in the West Bank](#)

NO CLASS ON NOVEMBER 18

Lesson 4 (25.11.26)

Jus ad Bellum - Force is Prohibited, Unless... : The US – Israel Iran War(s)

Required reading:

- [UN Charter, Articles 2\(4\) and 51](#)
- Yoram Dinstein, *War, Aggression and Self-Defence*, 6th ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2017), selected excerpts: pp. 87–99, 197–205, 222–235, 249–252
- Practical POV:
 - o [Operation “Rising-Lion” - key factual and legal aspects](#) (Ch 1-2,4)
 - o Eliav Lieblich, [Double Preemption, Imminence, and the U.S. Attack Against Iran](#), Just Security (March 2026)
 - o Michael N. Schmitt [Is the United States \(Still\) at War? How Wars Begin and End](#) Just Security.

Optional reading:

- Amichai Cohen & Yuval Shany, [The International Community at a Crossroads Over Iran](#), Just Security (March 2026)
- Tom Dannenbaum & Rebecca Hamilton, [Aggression, Plain and Simple](#), Just Security (March 2026)
- Tess Bridgeman & Oona Hathaway, [At the 60-Day Mark, the Iran War is Triply Illegal](#), Just Security (May 2026)
- Gal Cohen, [The Legality of the Use of Interstate Force during the 2026 Israel/US-Iran Hostilities: What States Said and did not Say](#), EJIL:Talk! (July 2026)

Lesson 5 (02.12.26 - double session):

Jus in Bello: Theory and Practice – Fighting a Legal War in Seven Fronts



**The International MA Program in
Conflict Resolution and Mediation**
The Gershon H. Gordon
Faculty of Social Sciences
Tel Aviv University

Required reading:

- Shaw: pp 1047–1054 (The Conduct of Hostilities);
- Practical POV:
 - o Yuval Shani & Amichai Cohen, [Unpacking Key Assumptions Underlying Legal Analyses of the 2023 Hamas-Israel War](#), Just Security (October 2023)

Optional reading

- Shaw: pp 1054–1062 (International and Non-International Armed Conflicts)
- Roni Katzir, [“Four Comments on the Application of Proportionality under the Law of Armed Conflict”](#), 51 Vanderbilt Journal of Transnational Law (2018)
- Practical POV:
 - o Israel-Hamas War 2023, Key Legal Aspects: <https://www.gov.il/en/pages/hamas-israel-conflict2023-key-legal-aspects>
 - o Israel-Hamas War 2023, FAQs: <https://www.gov.il/en/pages/swords-of-iron-faq-6-dec-2023>
 - o [Operation “Rising-Lion” - key factual and legal aspects](#) (Ch. 3)
 - o Michael N. Schmitt, [Israel-Hamas 2024 Symposium – Israel’s Jus ad Bellum and LOAC Obligations and the Evolving Nature of the Conflict - Lieber Institute West Point](#), Articles of War (August 2024)

NO CLASS ON DECEMBER 9

Lesson 6 (16.12.26):

The End of War? The cases of Gaza and Lebanon

Required reading:

- Yoram Dinstein, [“The Initiation, Suspension, and Termination of War”](#) 75 *International Law Studies* 131, 143–159 (2000)
- United Nations Office of Legal Affairs, [Handbook on the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes between States](#) (United Nations, 1992), pp. 1–8.
- Practical POV:
 - o [UN Security Council Resolution 2803 \(2025\)](#)
 - o [UN Security Council Resolution 1701 \(2006\)](#)

Optional reading:



**The International MA Program in
Conflict Resolution and Mediation**
The Gershon H. Gordon
Faculty of Social Sciences
Tel Aviv University

- [United Nations Charter, Chapter VI, Pacific Settlement of Disputes](#), Arts. 33–38.
- [United Nations Charter, Chapter VII, Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression](#), Arts. 39–51.
- Catherine Turner, [“International Law and the Securitisation of Peacemaking: On Chapter VII, the Security Council and the Mediation Mandate in Yemen,”](#) *Journal of Conflict & Security Law* 28(1) (2023), pp. 165–169.
- Practical POV:
 - o Laurie Nathan, [Implementing the Gaza Ceasefire](#), just security
 - o [Background on Israel-Lebanon maritime agreements](#)
 - o [Elvina Pothelet, Follow the Law, not the Plan: Legal Considerations for Third States in Gaza](#), Just Security (2026)
 - o Michael N. Schmitt, [The Suspension of Hostilities in the Israel-Hezbollah Armed Conflict](#), Articles of War (December 2024)

Lesson 7 (23.12.26 double session):

Part 1: *Guest Lecture: UNSC Resolution 1325 — Women, Peace and Security*

Required reading:

- [UNSC Resolution 1325 \(2000\), full text](#)
- [TBD — to be coordinated with the guest lecturer]

Optional reading:

- [TBD]

Part 2: *Domestic Investigation of War Crimes*

Required reading:

- Shaw: pp 1064–1069 (Enforcement of Humanitarian Law)
- [Tukel Commission, Second Report \(February 2013\)](#), Chapter A, General Principles for Conducting an “Effective Investigation,” pp. 118–134
- [Noam Lubell, Jelena Pejic & Claire Simmons, Guidelines on Investigating Violations of International Humanitarian Law](#), Just Security (September 2019)
- [Rome Statute, Article 17 \(complementarity\)](#)

Optional reading:

- Michael N. Schmitt, [Expert Backgrounder: Military Justice in the Israel Defense Forces](#), Just Security (August 2026)
- [Guidelines on Investigating Violations of International Humanitarian Law](#), ICRC/Geneva Academy, 2019, pp. 3-15.



**The International MA Program in
Conflict Resolution and Mediation**
The Gershon H. Gordon
Faculty of Social Sciences
Tel Aviv University

Lesson 8 (30.12.26 double session):

International Legal Proceedings - The Israeli/Palestinian cases in the ICC and the ICJ

Required reading:

- Shaw, Ch. 7: Individual Criminal Responsibility in International Law
- [Rome Statute, Articles 6–8](#)
- Shaw, Ch. 18: The International Court of Justice
- Practical POV
 - o [Explainer on South Africa v. Israel \(genocide case\)](#)

Optional reading:

- Practical POV:
 - o [Explainer on ICC arrest warrants in the Situation on Palestine](#)
 - o [South Africa's Application: 'Introduction' pp 4–7, 'Facts' pp 13–16](#)
 - o [Israel's Opening Statement, pp 12–22](#)
 - o [Explainer on 2025 Advisory Opinion](#)
 - o [Summary of 2025 Advisory Opinion, pp 1–3](#)
 - o Yuval Shany & Maria Varaki, [The Removal of the ICC Prosecutor and the Edge of the ICC's Political Universe](#), EJIL:Talk! (August 2026)

Lesson 9 (06.01.27): *Simulation/Field Trip*

- [TBD — scenario]

Lesson 10 (13.01.27 — final lesson): *Course Summary and Exam*