International conflicts and cooperation

By

Assist Prof . Dr. Shamal husain

Department : International relation and Diplomacy

Third year

International conflicts and cooperation

Conflict and cooperation represent two sides of the balance in international relations, conflict and international cooperation constitute one of the basic and important issues in the process of international interactions, and therefore they are considered among the basic features in the field of relations.

Traditionally, the term "international conflict" referred to conflicts between different nation-states and conflicts between people and organizations in different nation-states. Increasingly, however, it also applies to inter-group conflicts within one country when one group is fighting for independence or increased social, political, or economic power (e.g., Sudan/South Sudan, Iraq (now that the US has largely left), and Syria.

The world we live in always seems to contain wars and conflicts. Just by looking back over 100 years, history is filled with major wars like the two World Wars, the

constant scare of escalation of threat during the Cold War and more recently The Afghan and Iraq War. Despite the fact that people always talk about the need for peace, the world is instead filled with fear and constant security threats. Since the First World War many theorists and political scientists have tried to come up with a solution on how to create a peaceful international environment but with no real achievement.

The phenomenon of conflict is a phenomenon of extremely complex and intertwined dimensions, whose existence represents one of the constant features of human reality, as the human experience of conflict goes back to the first human inception, where it was known by its relations at its various levels: individual or collective, and also in its various dimensions: psychological or cultural. Political, economic, social, or historical, when looking at the historical course of human life, we find that the conflict represents one of the most important proven facts in the reality of man and the community at various levels and frameworks. In its biological framework, we find the conflict between races and individuals, the psychological

conflict with which man suffers with himself, and the anthropological conflict in the cultural conflict, not to mention the economic, social, political and other different types of conflict.

First: Defining the concept of conflict.

Returning to some stages of history, we note the occurrence of the term conflict in ancient civilizations such as the Greek and Roman civilization, where the term "conflict of the gods" was used to express the conflict between the supernatural forces in Greek mythology, such as the Achilles conflict and Hector in the legendary epic of Troy. What we find from the formulation of a theory in the literature of the Greeks that reflects their vision of the conflict, we also find it in and between other civilizations, up to the positive and then Abrahamic religions, and the subsequent intellectual transformations that changed the structure of human relations and led to the building of the modern state, which in turn led to the emergence of a new level of conflict Represented in the international conflicts.

International conflicts can be defined as "the conflict of national wills of countries resulting from the difference in their interests.

Second: the approaches to analyzing the causes of international conflicts

Theoretical premises of the phenomenon of international conflict

There are many approaches and theoretical premises that attempt to explain the phenomenon of international conflict in international relations, in connection with the following

§ First / the entrance related to national interests:

Within the scope of power struggles by seeking to protect these interests by doubling the state's resources of force, or as Hans Morgenthau defined it * that the motive that moves man is the struggle for power for survival, to Confrontation the challenge and self-affirmation, interest is nothing but a synonym for power.

§ Second / entrance related to the nature of the international political system:

Conflicts and wars will not end in the presence of the principle of national sovereignty and the survival of the international system based on a plurality of states

Third: the political approach:

The conflict that is based mainly on the logic that says that the existence of conflicting international blocs and alliances comes at the top of the factors that lead to or precipitate war, explains how the policies of balance of power based on alliances affect the escalation of tension and international conflict.

Fourth: the economic approach:

Which means that all wars that occur are motivated by economic reasons and motives, and within this framework are the Marxist and non-Marxist theory such as Hobson's theory that appeared at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Fifthly: the geopolitical approach:

Which converge most of his theories on a basic axis related to the pressures generated by the conditions of the natural place on the process of struggle for survival

and growth, and we can refer here to the theories of F. Ratzel, H. Mackinder and N. Spykman.

Sixth: the ideological approach:
The pioneers of this current are based on considering the ideological contradictions between the great powers behind the international conflicts, especially the Marxists who base their analysis on the inevitability of the class struggle, which, according to their belief, reflects international life through the socialist and capitalist systems.

Seventh : entrance related to the nature of the political system:
The advocates of this approach are based on the logic that recognizes the existence of a relationship between dictatorship and conflict, and from this logic the proponents of this logic consider that totalitarian regimes by virtue of their faith and the motives and goals that motivate them are the main reason behind the increasing intensity of conflict in the international community.

Eighth: the psychological approach:

Associated with the tendency to aggression that exists in man through the instinct of love of domination and control on the one hand, and on the other hand, the advocates of this tendency attribute the motive to conflict to the factor of frustration and a feeling of dissatisfaction, which leads to violence and aggression, as Eric Fromm says .

§ Ninth: the entrance related to the factor of the arms race:

And the competition between states in the field of achieving and developing military power in order to ensure a balance of forces or a deterrent that can achieve superiority through the factor of technological superiority in the armament systems, which also pushes to display force as a means of pressure in connection with the diplomatic settlement, which leads to charging conflicts with more tension and violence as well as The framework of secrecy associated with the arms race creates an atmosphere of doubt, fear and uncertainty among the concerned parties, which does not help them to resolve political disputes, but may even be a reason for pushing towards clash and conflict. However, the

most important criticism directed at this approach lies in the fact that the arms race in and of itself cannot be a single cause for the creation of international conflict. Although it leads to an increase in tension and fueling the atmosphere of conflicts, it does not in itself produce a conflict. The conflict will continue, even in light of The possibility of reaching disarmament measures, because the roots of the conflict are still unresolved, and then what is required is the liquidation or settlement of these roots, which justifies the weakening of resort to the arms race.

10- . ruling elite complex   theory

It is also called the military complex theory, where the causes of international conflicts are due to interest groups or ruling elites in countries. This theory was developed from the example of the USA, where after the Second World War there was a strong alliance between politicians and industry, and it was interpreted This theory enters the USA into Afghanistan, considering that the USA's economy is a war economy, as the desire to get rid of old weapons and experiment

with new weapons prevailed in difficult and rugged places such as Afghanistan

In the light of the various approaches and trends of theorizing in the interpretation of the conflict and its various causes, it is possible to stand on the following two postulates:

The first fact: it relates to the sources of conflict at the international level. Referring to that, whatever the direct sources of conflict, it is usually related to the efforts of its parties and their competition among themselves to support their aspirations to increase or maintain their power, and to work to increase and support it, and to control new resources or sources to confirm that power. The success of one of the parties to the conflict in achieving one degree or another of success in this area increases the fears of the other parties, and their search for alternative ways or sources of power through which they can restore or correct the balance in the power relations with those parties, which leads to a trend towards conflict. between states or their involvement in it in general

The second fact: It relates to the fact that conflict - in general - is a very complex compound phenomenon in terms of its components, dimensions and levels. Hence, the attempt to explain the conflict based on the influence of a single variable often leads to a serious lack of understanding of the conflict phenomenon on the one hand, which imposes the need to adopt an integrative vision of conflict as a necessary matter, if not a prerequisite not only for understanding and analyzing the conflict phenomenon, but also for the success of Strategies to confront the conflict situation.

Classical Realist Theory in its Analysis of International Conflicts:

First of all, it should be noted the basic assumptions on which the classical realist theory is based in the analysis, and they comply with the following:

1. The state is the lonely and primary actor in international relations.
2. The absence of a supreme authority that exceeds the authority of the state in the international system, meaning that the international system is governed by chaos.
3. In light of the chaotic environment of the international system, the dangers threatening states increase and their security becomes highly vulnerable to loss, and accordingly states seek to use all available means, especially military force, in order to ensure their security of survival.
4. The interests of each state differ from another, but the first interest that all states share is the interest of

survival, as states seek to achieve their national interest.

5. One of the most important goals that countries seek is to increase their military power, in particular, and their economic power in general.

Classic Realist Analysis of International Conflicts:

Hans Morgenthau attributes the causes of conflict behavior in states to the dark human nature that is governed by the instinct of power and love of control and domination, as this aggressive nature increases when it moves from the individual level to the state level, as a result of the latter's ability to mobilize and use its material capabilities to harm other states.

The neo-realist theory in its analysis of international conflicts:

This theory has basic premises on which it depends in the analysis, which are as follows:

1. Considering the state as the basic unit of analysis, despite the presence of several other actors such as international organizations and multinational

companies, but it remains of little importance, and they consider the state to be a unitary and rational actor, and neo-realism believes that national security is always at the top of the priorities, and It is military security.

2. Neo-realism stems from the assumption that war and conflict are unavoidable phenomena due to the chaos of the international system and the absence of a supreme authority over states. with other countries.

Structural Realist Analysis of International Conflicts:

Unlike the classic realism of Hans Morgenthau, who relies on the statement that states, like humans, have an innate desire to control others, which leads them towards collision and war, the realism of kenneth waltz came with the need to study the international community in addition to the individual, in his book "Man, The State and War" Kenneth Waltz poses the following question:

Which is better to understand man in society: the study of man or the study of society? It seems that the satisfactory response comes through the question with a tool . and the satisfactory answer comes with a tool

(both), but the initiation of one of them before the other in the interpretation of events can make a difference. Accordingly, the levels of analysis in Kenneth Waltz were based on the following trilogy in understanding political phenomena, including conflicts

1- The structure of the international system: through (the distribution and concentration of forces - the number of active units - the role of non-state actors).

2- The state: through (the nature of the political system - the economic situation - the role of institutions and bureaucracies in decision-making - public opinion).

3- The individual: through (the personality of the decision-maker - the ideology of the decision-maker - the decision-maker's perception of international issues

Structural realism also sees that by focusing on the main causes of conflict, we find that they lie in human nature and result from selfishness in dealing, and avoiding conflicts is caring for the individual and achieving his social existence. Possession and control over others.

And in linking them between conflict and international chaos, it results from the absence of a supreme authority above the authority of the state because it is

sovereign, and for this it thinks according to its interest, and here conflicts occur and war becomes in it afterwards a means to achieve many desired results, and in light of this chaos must Consistency and each country has to use its strength to achieve the goals it set in the beginning

The structural realists distinguish between two causes of war, one of which is war as a means of resolving direct conflict over interests between two states, and the second reason is the search for their security by two or more states. As for offensive realism, you see that the international system is more hostile, intolerant, and ambiguous, and this is what leads countries to adopt defensive strategies that often lead to war, and defensive realism, on the other hand, is that security is not a rare case as you see offensive realism, because international chaos is not in The power of the countries themselves that are in conflict or at war, but rather defense strategies in order to provide security

From the above it can be concluded that classical realism focused its attention on the first level on the aggressive human nature, as a driving factor in international conflicts, while structural realism proposed the necessity of studying the international

system in addition to the individual "in other words, man and his surroundings or the state and its surroundings" with emphasis On the third level, by focusing on the chaotic structure of the international system as a major cause of conflicts

Organsky distinguishes in this regard between 4 groups of states:
Strong and contented states - weak and contented states - strong and dissatisfied states - weak and dissatisfied states
We mention, by way of clarification:
Strong and unsatisfied countries: they do not feel that the size of the influence they exert is not proportional to the size of their potential of power, the extent of its spread and the worthy place in it, so they work to modify the international situation to be replaced by a new situation that matches their capabilities and the danger increases if these countries are strong enough to enable them to Destabilization and the outbreak of

wars, for example: Germany, launching the First and Second World Wars, and destabilizing the world.

Weak and unsatisfied states: They are the ones that, despite their awareness of their weak capabilities, feel unsatisfied with their international position and position as a result of their feeling of great injustice, unfairness, pain in their position, and the exploitation of them by the stronger states.

The stages and levels of international conflicts

Among the concepts related to conflict and expressed in rivalry and the struggle of wills, according to their seriousness, is the concept of tension, crisis, conflict, and war.

1- Tension: Tension refers to a group of attitudes and tendencies as a result of doubt and mistrust. And tension, according to Merle, is "conflict situations that do not lead, at least locally, to resorting to the armed forces." Tension is not the same as conflict, because the latter refers to actual and explicit conflict and

mutual efforts between the parties to influence each other, while tension is nothing more than a state of hostility, fear, doubts and perception of divergent interests, and accordingly tension is a stage prior to the conflict.

2. Crisis: means a set of sudden circumstances and events that involve a clear threat to the stable status quo in the nature of things, which is the critical point, and the decisive moment at which the fate of a development is determined, either for the better, or for the worse, such as life or death, war or peace, in order to find A solution to a problem or its explosion

Robert North points out that the international crisis is a sharp escalation of action and reaction, that is, a process of dissent that causes changes in the level of effectiveness among states, and leads to an increase in the degree of threat and coercion. But not all of them lead to wars as they are settled peacefully, freeze or calm down. The specificity of the concept of crisis becomes more difficult if it takes into account the fact that the concept is frequently used by many specialists

in psychology, social sciences, politics, history, and in other fields of social sciences.

According to the above, Robinson sees that there is a general tendency towards using the concept to indicate a turning point that distinguishes the outcome of an event in a desirable or undesirable manner, between life and death, violence or non-violence, solution or extended conflict .

Usually, the crisis is confronted by managing it, or by manipulating its constituent elements and its parties with the aim of maximizing the benefit from it for the benefit of national security.

3 . disputes : International disputes came in an introduction to theory and history by Joseph Nye that international disputes should be an essential part that studies the reason for the complexity of international disputes within the complexities of international politics so that it is possible to stand and understand the conflicting phenomenon. According to Raymond Aron, the international conflict "is not the result of the present time, but has existed since ancient times and is the result of conflicting interests." What is meant by

international conflict is that "a dispute between two countries over a legal issue or a specific incident, or that causes a conflict between their legal views or their interests."

Some studies have identified the conflicting elements as follows:
• Resources or wealth, such as: territories, money, energy and food sources, and how those resources are distributed.
• Authority, as the dispute over how to divide governance mechanisms and political participation in the decision-making process.
• Identity related to cultural, social and political groups.
• Social and political conditions, including the extent to which people feel that they are treated with respect and appreciation, and that their government preserves their social traditions.
• Values, especially those represented in government systems, religion and ideology.

4. War : As for war, it can only take place in one image and in one way, which is the direct fusion between states, the actual collision with the means of armed violence, in order to resolve the radical contradictions with which the use of other, or less extreme, means is no longer feasible. War represents the end point in some international conflicts. There is no agreed definition of war, as Dukaki defined it from a legal point of view "as a legal state that equally allows two or more enemies to continue their conflict by the use of armed force

Circles and levels of conflict

Circles and levels of conflict are represented in

1- Individual or personal circle: Conflict usually exists between peers, spouses, children, friends and neighbors. It is noticeable that the special feature of conflicts and disputes at this level is that what leads to a loss in the personal or individual relationships of its parties may extend in the long run.

Societal level: Conflicts occur in more than one circle: social organizations such as churches, clubs,

associations of homeowners, neighbors and security unions, all witness examples of conflict between individuals and groups, as well as in workplaces between workers, managers, supervisors, employees and business owners, and these conflicts may develop and expand It reaches higher levels among senior managers and members.

3. The conflict between industrialists, and between members of associations for the protection of public interests and government agencies, and multiple levels, and have serious and devastating effects on society.

4- The international level, where the models of international conflicts are more clear in their forms and levels, although they are often characterized by extreme complexity and overlap.

Fourth: Means and methods of managing international conflict

There is no specific or comprehensive definition of the concept of international conflict management, but we can define it as those moves and efforts that aim to control or contain conflicts that may arise between political actors within the state or between states

through the integration of a third party so that the management process aims to reduce the losses of the parties to the conflict. In addition, the conflict did not escalate.

So that "conflict management" is resorted to in cases where a final settlement of the conflict has failed, and the third party usually relies on one of four methods to manage the conflict as follows

1. The diplomatic method: it relies on all kinds of diplomacy, whether traditional or non-traditional, to reach an agreement between the parties to the conflict; It includes negotiation, mediation, good offices, investigation and conciliation.

2. The judicial method: so that in this method resort to the judicial institutions and bodies entrusted with the removal of recognition or the application of laws with the aim of putting pressure on the parties to the conflict [22], where there are many judicial organizations that are resorted to by states to settle disputes among them, but the issues of maritime disputes Mostly its parties move either to the International Court of Justice or the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea

3. The economic tool (economic sanctions): the use of coercive and coercive methods such as pressure to impose economic sanctions, and economic sanctions, as Naylor says, mean a set of punitive measures of an economic nature taken by an international party (a state or an international organization) in the face of another international party, and the most important of these measures are In the siege, and embargo, which are used in order to achieve political goals for the party using them, which focus most of the time on changing the political orientations of the party subject to sanctions in line with the desire or interest of the party using them.

4. Threat to use or actual use of force: It mainly includes the threat or actual use of armed force with the aim of persuading one of the parties to the conflict, and it is an act of diplomacy, but more violent, as the use of armed force is considered the last resort in case the previous methods of managing the international conflict fail.

Conclusion:
Based on all of the above, we conclude:

We conclude that the phenomenon of international conflict is very complex and intertwined, as there are many definitions, causes and methods of conflict management, but the international conflict can be defined as "the conflict of national wills of countries resulting from the difference in their interests." The conflict over natural resources, the contradiction of thought, ideologies, ethnic and racial conflicts, and conflict can be considered On the international position, and technological progress is one of the most important causes of international conflict, and that it is possible to rely on several methods for managing international conflict, including the diplomatic method, the judicial method, the method of economic sanctions, and the method of using force or threatening to use it