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To cite this article: Ivor Chipkin (20 Nov 2025): From revolution to anti-imperialism: Does South Africa's ICJ case against Israel help resolve the organic crisis within the ANC?, South African Journal of International Affairs, DOI: [10.1080/10220461.2025.2587021](https://doi.org/10.1080/10220461.2025.2587021)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/10220461.2025.2587021>



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Published online: 20 Nov 2025.



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From revolution to anti-imperialism: Does South Africa's ICJ case against Israel help resolve the organic crisis within the ANC?

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the decision by South Africa's government to charge Israel with genocide at the International Court of Justice (ICJ). It situates this decision in the context of an 'organic crisis' in the African National Congress (ANC) related to its 'revolutionary' character. The article offers a periodisation of post-apartheid history in terms of how various ANC leaders have tried to manage this crisis. Thabo Mbeki sought to reinvent the meaning of 'national democratic revolution' (NDR) – the ANC's dominant political discourse since 1969 – in terms of the 'developmental state'. Jacob Zuma re-signified the NDR in terms of 'radical economic transformation'. Cyril Ramaphosa, unable to give revolutionary meaning to ANC politics domestically, has tried to build its revolutionary credentials on the international stage as a vanguard of anti-imperialism and the struggle against colonialism internationally. The ICJ case emerges in this context, with several implications for South African foreign policy.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 6 April 2025


Accepted 4 November 2025

KEYWORDS

African National Congress; organic crisis; National Democratic Revolution; International Court of Justice; South Africa

Introduction

On 29 December 2023, the South African government brought a case against Israel at the International Court of Justice (ICJ). The application instituting proceedings argued that 'the acts and omissions by Israel ... are genocidal in character because they are intended to bring about the destruction of a substantial part of the Palestinian national, racial and ethnical group'.¹ Post-1994 and South Africa's transition to democracy, the government's only other legal engagement in a global organ occurred in 2016, when it submitted a notice to withdraw from the International Criminal Court (ICC). The year before, the government had been criticised for hosting the Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir on South African soil, despite the fact that there was an ICC warrant for his arrest. In less than 10 years, the South African government appeared to have overcome its suspicion of global legal institutions.

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This article poses the question, why did South Africa's government, under the leadership of President Cyril Ramaphosa, take Israel to the International Court of Justice?

At first glance, Ramaphosa was an unlikely candidate to pursue such charges. Ramaphosa succeeded Jacob Zuma as president of the African National Congress (ANC) and later of the country on a platform to redress the 'lost' years of state capture and of large-scale corruption. From the moment of his election as ANC president in 2017, his focus was on internal party unity. 'You have insisted that the people who lead this movement should not be from one or another faction, but should serve our people in their own right as representatives of the membership as a whole,' he declared in his victory speech.² Ramaphosa had narrowly won against individuals and groups in the ANC implicated in state capture and committed to 'radical economic transformation'. His alliance included the Congress of South African Trade Unions and the South African Communist Party, based on a commitment to 'reindustrialise' the economy and fight corruption.

Despite this support from left-leaning groups in the alliance, there were reservations. Ramaphosa himself had been linked to the 2012 Marikana massacre that saw striking workers gunned down by the South African police.³ The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa announced shortly after his election that 'Ramaphosa as president is not a victory for workers. We must expect a more diligent, effective and ruthless pursuit of neo-liberal capitalist policies by the ANC government'.⁴ Sean Jacobs and Benjamin Fogel summed up a widely shared view that 'Ramaphosa represents ... a return to the classic ANC model of social compact, putting forward a collective vision that favours developmental capitalism, collective aspiration, social harmony – but by and for elites, at the expense of workers'.⁵

This leaves observers with a paradox: a president elected with a strong domestic agenda to reinvigorate the economy and to rebuild state institutions, widely suspected of being aligned to big business, has proceeded to endorse the country's most radical foreign policy intervention since 1994 in the form of the ICJ case.

Drawing on the work of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, this article discusses the theory of national democratic revolution as constituting the ANC's 'general field of discursivity'.⁶ Discourses are made up of phrases and terms referred to as elements. In a hegemonic formation, the meaning of these terms is more or less stable; in such cases, according to Laclau and Mouffe, these discursive 'elements' are discursive 'moments'. Hence, a 'hegemonic formation' may also be described as an 'ensemble of discursive moments'.⁷ Laclau and Mouffe propose that hegemonic formations experience an 'organic crisis' when the meaning of their terms is contested in such a way that these 'moments' become 'floating' and are available for re-signification in a new or competing discourse.

An organic crisis is not simply one of meaning and of political tactics and strategy. Some terms bind the discursive series of elements, not semantically, but through affect. Political actors come to admire or love the party – they are ready to give their lives for it, for the 'revolution', for the 'struggle'. In other words, a discursive formation does not just make sense, it generates love, commitment and solidarity as well. An organic crisis thus produces incoherence at the level of strategy and tactics. It also produces disenchantment among supporters and officers with their 'beloved' movement.⁸

This article argues that, on becoming president, Ramaphosa inherited an organic crisis in the ANC linked to its revolutionary character. He has tried to resolve this crisis by

drawing on the symbolic and political resources available to him from the party's own political repertoire, the theory of national democratic revolution (NDR). Moreover, he has used his presidency of the republic, a position combining a role as prime-minister and as head of state, to mitigate divisions in his party. On the one hand, he has mapped and institutionalised the ANC's schisms onto his government. He has appointed representatives of different party tendencies within the ANC to positions in his cabinet as ministers and allowed them wide discretion in their portfolios.⁹ The result, even before the elections of 2024 when the ANC was forced to form a government of national unity, has been policy incoherence in his government. On the other hand, he has reinvented his government, and by association the party, as a revolutionary force on the international stage. In this regard, in 2018 he appointed Naledi Pandor, a politician aligned to 'anti-imperialist' tendencies in the ANC, as the minister of international relations and cooperation, all the while seeking investment and markets for South Africa's manufactured goods in the US and Europe, especially. Policy incoherence has been compensated, however, by a symbolic prize. It is argued here that it has enabled Ramaphosa's administration to claim fidelity to the party's revolutionary history based on its anti-imperialist actions on the international stage. The article concludes, however, by arguing that the pursuit of a 'revolutionist' foreign policy has failed to overcome the ANC's organic crisis.

The article proceeds with an overview of the theory of NDR and then periodises the ANC's contemporary organic crisis, starting with its origin during the presidency of Thabo Mbeki. The second period runs through Jacob Zuma's administration and coincides with the time of state capture. The third period, unfolding as the article is written, is characterised by moves to re-establish the revolutionary character of the ANC by pursuing Israel at the ICJ. The article considers each period in turn.

The theory of national democratic revolution (NDR)

For the last 56 years, and more likely the last 70 years, the ANC has understood itself as a revolutionary movement. This understanding is core to the party's self-identity, both historically and currently. The 1955 Freedom Charter did not use the term, but, nonetheless, set out a vision of fundamental transformation. The term 'revolution' formally entered the organisation's vocabulary in 1969 at the Morogoro conference in Tanzania when the ANC adopted the theory of national democratic revolution as part of its strategy and tactics. At its 2022 national elective conference, nearly 30 years into its rule in South Africa, the party reaffirmed its commitment to 'fundamental transformation' in accordance with the principles of the NDR,¹⁰ and on 18 March 2023, an ANC delegation met with leaders of the South African Communist Party (SACP) to review the state of the NDR.¹¹

The NDR originates from post-Second World War debates in the Soviet Union about the character of anti-colonial struggles. Should the Communist Party support them? Of special concern was that in colonial societies, capitalism was poorly developed and the working class small and poorly organised; anti-colonial struggles were usually led by national liberation movements whose social base was 'petit bourgeois'. When the Cominform was announced in 1947, communists in colonial, semi-colonial or dependent societies were instructed to avoid alliances with national bourgeoisies, who were deemed naturally in the imperialist camp.¹² By the 1960s the Cominform position had

proved untenable. Firstly, post-colonial states had not affiliated themselves to metropolitan powers but had remained 'non-aligned'. Secondly, many pursued far-reaching social and economic reforms. By 1956 the Soviet position had changed, seeing nationalists as potential allies for the working class and for communists in the struggle against imperialism. According to the theory of NDR, when communist and nationalist interests aligned, they were engaged in a national democratic revolution.

National democratic revolutions were described as having a socialist orientation, even when they were led by nationalist movements that promoted the growth of private property. This apparent contradiction was resolved by distinguishing between national and international contexts. According to Marxism-Leninism, imperialism represented the most advanced stage of capitalism.¹³ A country that opposed imperialism on the global stage qualified, therefore, as anti-capitalist or 'socialist-in-orientation', even if it upheld or expanded private ownership on the national front. The argument was highly opportunistic. Was it not essentially a way of saying that countries aligned with Soviet foreign policy qualified as national democracies?

The innovation of the Marxist scholars of the 1970s in South Africa is that they faced up to this critique and answered it. The national democratic revolution was 'socialist-in-orientation' because of its opposition to South Africa's economic structure, not because the ANC and SACP followed the political line of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The 'radical' historiography that emerged from the 1970s argued that the appropriation of workers' surplus value was made easier and hence more intense by their oppression as blacks. In other words, racial domination made class exploitation possible. When black people resisted their oppression, therefore, they called into question both the system of racial oppression and also the system of capitalist exploitation. The national struggle (against racism) and the socialist struggle (against capitalism) were aligned. In Raymond Suttner and Jeremy Cronin's summation:¹⁴

One of the peculiarities of the South African society is that written into its structure is this systematic national oppression of all blacks. It is one of the factors that facilitates capitalist exploitation in South Africa. National oppression and capitalist exploitation are inextricably interlinked.

From the 1970s this analysis has become the centrepiece of the ANC's own understanding of apartheid and informed its strategic alliance with the Communist Party and, in the 1980s, with the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu). The analysis has important political consequences for the present. On the one hand, the ANC worldview tends towards socialism because of the way it ties race domination to capitalist exploitation. On the Soviet definition, on the other hand, the South African situation is revolutionary when the country pursues an anti-imperialist foreign policy, irrespective of the radical nature – or lack thereof – of local policies.

NDR as bourgeois revolution

From the perspective of the SACP and the ANC, the 1994 transition represented a historic breakthrough – not only for South Africans, but also for left, socialist and progressive movements globally.¹⁵ It brought to power an alliance of African nationalists, communists and trade unionists at precisely the moment when progressive forces elsewhere were in retreat: the Soviet bloc had collapsed, and national democratic strategies across the

Global South had been blunted.¹⁶ This, in effect, constituted a national democratic alliance. Yet within the new global context, a pressing question emerged: what did a national democratic strategy now entail? The issue was particularly acute given the ANC's struggle in government to reconcile the competing interests of workers, blacks and women. At its 2005 national conference, reflecting on more than a decade in power, the ANC reviewed its historical role. It noted that 'political democracy brought with it the dividend of new opportunities for self-advancement for black South Africans, especially Africans', observing that this had enabled the rise of black capitalists, senior managers and executives, civil servants, professionals and a black lower middle class.¹⁷ The SACP, however, took a more critical view. Setting aside what it described as the '1996 class project' – a deliberate effort to marginalise it – the party regarded ANC statements of this kind as evidence of an ongoing battle for the heart and soul of the national democratic revolution.¹⁸

In South Africa it is common to account for the 'neoliberal' turn in ANC policy in the 1990s as 'betrayal'.¹⁹ The theoretical and political discourse of the ANC, however, was always much more ambiguous about private property than claims of treachery suggest.²⁰ Moreover, in 1994, when public ownership of the means of production was in retreat everywhere, even or especially in China under the Communist Party, the turn to the market was pragmatic.²¹ In this context, the ANC proposed that the industrial working class in South Africa was in decline and questioned whether, relative to the growing 'middle class', it could still be considered a 'core motive force'.²² This issue had long been controversial in the ANC, which from 1985 considered 'Africans' rather than 'workers' as the truly revolutionary force. Here the ANC seemed to be going further, wondering if there was a role for the working class at all in the NDR.²³

Thabo Mbeki tried to resolve these tensions by reinterpreting the national democratic revolution in terms of the developmental state. As a state that fostered industrialisation and economic growth through black economic empowerment while also expanding welfare provisions for poor and working families, South Africa he insisted was, under his administration, advancing the national democratic revolution. The South African Communist Party and the Congress of South African Trade Unions, together with the ANC Youth League under Julius Malema, were not convinced; they mobilised vigorously against Mbeki's presidency.²⁴ The revolt against Mbeki came to a head at the ANC's national elective conference in Polokwane in 2007, when Jacob Zuma was elected as president of the organisation, displacing Mbeki who was now ineligible to stand for state president at the elections planned for the following year.

The no-longer revolutionary ANC

To the disappointment of those on the left, however, Jacob Zuma did not fundamentally change course. He radicalised Mbeki's project by interrupting existing businesses (referred to as 'white monopoly capital') and repurposing state institutions to create new black elites – though the Gupta brothers, his family members and immediate political allies were the main beneficiaries.²⁵ The national democratic revolution as radical economic transformation briefly stabilised the ANC internally, though it failed to establish a new hegemony.²⁶ Zuma's assault on the constitutional structure and the hollowing out of key state institutions, including state-owned enterprises like Eskom and Transnet, discredited his presidency, his government, and the African National Congress.²⁷ A large

movement of civil society organisations arose, including former leaders of the ANC-aligned Cosatu, as well as a wide variety of community organisations, business leaders, and a few academics and advocacy organisations. They often had little in common other than broad support for constitutionalism in South Africa. Matters came to a head at the ANC's national elective conference in Johannesburg in December 2017. The Zuma faction candidate for ANC president, Jacob Zuma's former wife Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, was defeated by Cyril Ramaphosa. Zuma himself was forced to resign as president of the country a few days later, a moment fraught with political danger.²⁸

Cyril Ramaphosa has struggled to manage the crisis that he inherited, however. He was deputy president of the country during Zuma's presidency and was criticised for his very 'light touch' in opposing state capture.²⁹ As president, especially in his first term, he retained many of the people that Zuma appointed.

Ramaphosa has tried to restore the ANC's credibility by distancing it from corruption and state capture. He has focused on fixing the country's electricity crisis and ending the frequent rolling blackouts that endangered the economy. To do this, he has collaborated with big business – ironically, the same groups Zuma once called 'white monopoly capital'.³⁰ This has reinforced the impression among left-wing analysts that Ramaphosa was 'always the top choice for big business' and that the ANC is now 'under heavy hegemonic control of big business'.³¹ Edward Webster and David Francis called him 'the face of neoliberal extractivism and worker exploitation', adding that the ANC can no longer be regarded a revolutionary party.³²

This statement implies that Ramaphosa's administration has had a clear political and ideological direction; this is arguably not the case. Rather, this analysis proposes that he has prevented political and ideological contestation in the party from undermining his presidency by institutionalising it in the cabinet system. In other words, different tendencies in the party have been given their own cabinet portfolios and Ramaphosa has allowed the responsible ministers to have wide latitude to run things as they see fit. Instead of a series of politicians competing for access to one or two key political sites, he has taken pressure off his position by, effectively, creating a system of parallel circuits. The result is that Ramaphosa's administration lacks policy coherence.³³ The Integrated Resource Plan, for example, moots a diversified energy mix, including a substantial role for renewables.³⁴ Yet the responsible minister is openly suspicious of renewables and committed to coal-fired power stations and drilling for oil.³⁵ Similarly, in the agricultural sector, the National Policy on Food and Nutrition Security explicitly links food security to farm-level production, especially by smallholder and emerging farmers.³⁶ Yet, Ramaphosa's government has also endorsed ANC policies in favour of expropriation of land without compensation, which would disrupt agricultural output.³⁷

In the field of foreign policy, the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) has been granted very wide autonomy to function largely as a free agent. This autonomy has come with a high cost for South Africa's international relations and industrial and trade policy. It has also come with a very major benefit to the ANC; the department's avowed anti-imperialism has given Ramaphosa a resource with which to try to solve the ANC's organic crisis.

Earlier, the article noted that in terms of the theory of national democratic revolution, a party is considered revolutionary when it is anti-imperialist on the international stage, even if it leaves the structure of capitalism locally intact; this is what the ANC is

accused of doing in South Africa.³⁸ In other words, the theory of national democratic revolution provides for the revolutionary character of the party to be expressed in its foreign policy. Originally, this meant fidelity to the international positions of the Soviet Union. Today, the content of anti-imperialism is less determinate. As the ANC put it in 2022, it is 'an integral part of the Progressive International Revolutionary Movement to liberate humanity from the bondage of imperialism and neo-colonialism'.³⁹ At various points, the party has developed closer ties with China, or joined BRICS – an association of countries promoting multilateralism in international affairs and seeking to build a counterweight to Western influence in global bodies⁴⁰ – to demonstrate this anti-imperialist bent. South Africa has refused to condemn the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 or to refer to the war between Russia and Ukraine as such. 'This can no longer be described simply as a Russia-Ukraine war – it is primarily a conflict between the US and US-led NATO and Russia in pursuit of the objectives of the so-called Wolfowitz doctrine,' it proclaimed in late 2022.⁴¹

As will become evident in the following analysis, during the Ramaphosa period the ANC's anti-imperialism has come to be defined chiefly by its support for the Palestinian cause.

In pursuit of South Africa's 'national interest'?

In 2020, several prominent international relations scholars argued that the country's international stature had declined notably. Once a 'highly respected' actor on the world stage, a 'leader' in Africa and in the Global South, they lamented that the country's reputation had been 'tarnished' by the corruption of the political class, poor economic growth, xenophobic outbursts in the country and incompetence in the handling of international affairs.⁴² South Africa's poor reputation also reflected, they proposed, a loss of clear strategy in international affairs.⁴³ Daniel Bradlow, Elizabeth Sidiropoulos and Luanda Mpungose called for a coherent strategy and proposed that it be organised around six questions: (1) how should it define its national interest?; (2) what role should economic diplomacy play in dealing with the domestic challenges of inequality, unemployment, poverty, and the challenges of sustainable development?; (3) what are the optimal institutional arrangements for producing effective foreign policy?; (4) on what global issues should South Africa play a leading role?; (5) what lessons could it learn from the last 25 years?; and (6) how could DIRCO engage effectively with non-state actors?⁴⁴

In 2022, DIRCO replied to this and several other commentators with the publication of the Framework Document on South Africa's National Interest and its Advancement in a Global Environment.⁴⁵ To begin with, the framework largely rejects definitions of the 'national interest' that place exclusive focus on domestic goals. Instead, the national interest is defined in relation to the country's (1) defence interests, (2) economic interests, (3) world order interests and (4) ideological interests. Drawing on the work of Donald Neuchterlain, an American foreign policy academic and former diplomat, DIRCO explains the third and fourth points with these statements:⁴⁶

[W]orld interests include the maintenance of an international political and economic system in which the nation-state may feel secure, and in which its citizens and commerce may operate peacefully outside its borders ... [Ideological interests] relate to the protection and

furtherance of a set of values that the people of the nation-state share and believe to be universally good.

DIRCO expressed the view that South Africa should find these values in the 'liberation struggle against colonialism, racism, patriarchy, and apartheid'. It proposed that the country's national interest lies in seeking three goals. These goals are, firstly, realising the 'human security of its citizens' and 'eradicating poverty', which includes a host of other developmental goals (ie, shelter, education, work); secondly, 'restoring and maintaining South Africa's image, stature, moral high ground and standing in the region, continent and in global affairs'; and thirdly, 'oppos[ing] colonialism and neocolonialism in all its forms'.⁴⁷

How do these elements fit together concretely? In other words, how does 'challeng[ing] the predominance of Western powers and the liberal international economic order'⁴⁸ assist improved access for South African products to major global markets?⁴⁹ DIRCO Minister Naledi Pandor, in office at the time, explained it thus:⁵⁰

We are part of a nation that has waged a mighty battle for freedom under the throes of oppression, and our experience has resulted in strong bonds being established with all who strive for freedom. Our ideals of Pan Africanism, progressive international solidarity and Ubuntu underpin our national interest ... [We] will pursue these in our foreign policy and practice focused primarily on our three significant national challenges in South Africa, unemployment, poverty, and inequality. We will strive to achieve success while simultaneously promoting the values and principles I have referred to.

The framework document implies that there is a positive relationship between these global and ideological interests, on the one hand, and meeting the country's domestic challenges, on the other. At the very least, they should not contradict each other. Pandor's speech was more ambiguous. She portrayed the relationship between these two elements of foreign policy as temporal. That is, South Africa would protect its local interests while simultaneously pursuing its world and ideological interests. Lesley Masters and Chris Landsberg argue in a 2024 article that the problem with the framework document does not end there. Despite promises, the strategy is incoherent, failing to provide a clear South African position on foreign policy. It is an amalgamation of three distinct doctrines, they suggest: realist, rationalist and revolutionist.⁵¹ The 'realist' doctrine is focused on preserving state sovereignty in the face of an anarchic world. 'Rationalist' policies take into consideration the interests of other states in pursuit of local interests. The 'revolutionist' doctrine is premised on the idea that a particular state 'represents the "true international interest" and as such, seeks to define the interests of other states'.⁵² In other words, a 'revolutionist' doctrine pushes foreign affairs officials to work as a vanguard on the international stage. The 'continued presence of diverse positions within the framework has not provided for a clear South African position', they conclude.⁵³ It is arguably not so much the lack of clarity in South African foreign policy that is the problem, however. Under Minister Naledi Pandor, a 'revolutionist' doctrine came to the fore, which, in the name of international solidarity put South Africa's other interests at risk.

International solidarity of a special kind

As we have seen, DIRCO has placed a great importance on 'oppos[ing] colonialism and neo-colonialism in all its forms'.⁵⁴ As interpreted by previous DIRCO Minister Naledi

Pandor, this required that the South African government 'assert a solid commitment to solidarity with those who are still striving for freedom'. In her speech of August 2022, Pandor singled out the Palestinian cause for special mention:⁵⁵

We assert that South Africa's liberation movements artfully built a solid wall of global support against apartheid through direct persuasion, links to active organs of civil society in a wide range of sectors and clear articulation of the objectives desired by a free South Africa. As firm supporters of the Palestinian cause for freedom we have been urging our Friends in Palestine to do more to create similar bonds of global activism and assure them of our active support.

In this spirit, South Africa has become the vanguard of the 'Palestinian cause' on the international stage. Following the Hamas atrocities against Israelis of 7 October 2023, the Israeli government launched a major invasion of the Gaza strip to destroy the military capability of Hamas and free the approximately 250 Israeli hostages taken captive. Some have argued that Israel's intentions were genocidal *ab initio*.⁵⁶ Three months later, on 29 December, the South African government brought a charge before the International Court of Justice that Israel was committing genocide there. The privileging of this cause over many others (Ukraine, Armenia, Azerbaijan) and closer to home (Sudan, Burundi, Libya) only sharpened criticism that there was 'organised hypocrisy' in the way that South Africa applied foreign policy.⁵⁷ Inconsistencies in foreign policy do not invalidate principled action in other areas, however. Acting selectively is still preferable to inaction, in the view of this author. It does raise a question, though. Why did the South African government find its courage on this issue and not on others? The situation is so much more curious in light of the fact that South Africa's boldest intervention on the international stage against the 'West' was taken by an ANC government that, as we have seen, is heavily criticised in many circles for being the most aligned to Western interests.⁵⁸ While claims have circulated about foreign funding behind the decision of the ANC to bring the case to the ICJ, at the time of writing no concrete evidence had emerged showing any direct payments from Iran to the ANC.⁵⁹ The more plausible explanation lies in a convergence of ideological alignment and domestic political strategy.

Lobbying South African foreign policy

The African National Congress has long viewed the Palestinian struggle as a mirror of its own fight against apartheid. Since the liberation era, the ANC has expressed deep solidarity with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), a relationship formalised through diplomatic recognition in 1995.⁶⁰ Nelson Mandela repeatedly affirmed this alignment, famously declaring, 'our freedom is incomplete without the freedom of the Palestinians'.⁶¹ It is worth recalling the remainder of the speech:⁶²

[A]ll of us marvelled at the progress made a few years ago, with the adoption of the Oslo Agreements. Leaders of vision, who ... had at least found a workable approach towards friendship and peaceful co-existence in the Middle East. I wish to take this opportunity to pay tribute to these Palestinian and Israeli leaders. In particular, we pay homage to the memory of Yitzhak Rabin who paid the supreme sacrifice in pursuit of peace. We are proud as humanists, that the international consensus on the need for the implementation of the Oslo Agreements is finding expression in the efforts of the multitude of Israeli and Palestinian citizens of goodwill who are marching together, campaigning together, for an end to prevarication.

The ANC-PLO relationship was institutionalised through party-to-party ties and multilateral platforms like the Non-Aligned Movement. As president, Jacob Zuma used language that was sometimes hardened vis-à-vis Israel and he publicly entertained the idea of welcoming a Hamas office in South Africa, but his government remained faithful to Mandela's broad approach – two states for two peoples.⁶³ Nonetheless, what is notable is that during this period foreign policy was increasingly made not in government by the relevant ministries, but in the ANC, which Palestinian solidarity activists celebrated as being more and more under their influence.⁶⁴

During the Ramaphosa administration, however, policy shifted notably. In other words, the ANC government's conduct on the international stage under Ramaphosa is not a mere extension of what was done before. It represents a break with historic ANC positions on Israel/Palestine and a shift in the South African government's posture. Ramaphosa, the research indicates, increasingly reconciled government policy on Palestine with the arguments of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) coalition.

This section traces how lobbying efforts by pro-Palestinian activists, especially those aligned with the BDS movement calling for Pretoria to break off relations with Israel, successfully reoriented the ANC's foreign policy from support for the PLO to open engagement with Hamas. It explores how this realignment unfolded institutionally and symbolically, culminating in the ICJ case.

The South African government was quick to respond to the Hamas attack on Israel. On the same day, 7 October 2023, DIRCO Minister Naledi Pandor called the leader of Hamas, Ismail Haniyeh. According to a subsequent DIRCO statement, she 'reiterated South Africa's solidarity and support for the people of Palestine'.⁶⁵ There was an important and noticeable slippage in the ANC government's language, however. In the official response to the Hamas attack no mention was made of Hamas itself or of its atrocities. Instead, the statement released by DIRCO, referred to 'Israelis' and 'Palestinians'. 'The new conflagration', the statement read, 'has arisen from the continued illegal occupation of Palestine (sic) land, continued settlement expansion, desecration of the Al Aqsa Mosque and Christian holy sites, and ongoing oppression of the Palestinian people'.⁶⁶ The names of the organisations that had launched the attack on 7 October were not there. The same was true of the DIRCO statement six days later, which already accused Israel of starving civilians in Gaza.⁶⁷ One enthusiastic commentator noted that the South African government 'did not criticize the Gaza resistance', even though it drew what he called 'malicious' responses from the Israeli ambassador in South Africa.⁶⁸

The conflation by late 2023 of Hamas with the 'Palestinian resistance' was the result of a 'great deal of agitation' by activists in various advocacy organisations, most notably the BDS coalition, to bring the 'Palestinian cause' to the centre of ANC foreign policy.⁶⁹ Na'eem Jeenah, a member of the steering committee of the Global Anti-Apartheid Conference for Palestine, writes that, from around 2006 when Hamas won the majority of parliamentary seats in occupied Palestinian territories, despite losing the popular vote, 'many had begun to question the notion that the PLO and through it, the [Palestinian Authority], was the "sole and legitimate representative" of the Palestinian people'.⁷⁰ In fact, they had gone much further than this. As Jeenah observes, this group of activists, himself included, declared that Fatah and the PLO under the leadership of Mahmoud Abbas had become 'quite irrelevant'.⁷¹ They set about shifting South Africa's foreign policy away from its focus on the PLO to other political factions, notably Hamas – notwithstanding that, in

the words of Rashid Khalidi, the organisation was 'uncompromising', 'anti-Semitic' and 'committed to violence'.⁷² Senior ANC officials, including ministers and diplomats, had already been actively cultivating ties with Hamas and other Islamist factions during the mid-2000s, with the Damascus embassy serving as a hub for these engagements.⁷³ Mohammad Dangor, brother to the current Director General of DIRCO, was the South African ambassador to Syria at the time, and in 2008 he began reaching out to Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine – the very organisations involved in the attack of 7 October 2023.⁷⁴ It is unclear whether these were ANC missions or those of the South African government.

At this time, according to Jeenah, South African officials in the embassy in Damascus were grappling with how to unify the Palestinian resistance against Israel, especially reconciling Iran and Hamas after their fallout in 2011/2012 over the Syrian civil war.⁷⁵ Hamas had opposed Bashar al-Assad's brutal crackdown on opposition parties and allied with Sunni forces supported by Saudi Arabia and other Arab states. This had caused a break in relations with the Syrian government and a frosting of relations with Iran. This was a problem because Hamas was regarded a vital flame in the 'ring of fire' surrounding Israel.⁷⁶ South African diplomats were, effectively, working in accord with Iranian interests in the region by drawing the 'Palestinian cause' into the geopolitical conflict between Israel and Iran, and also into the complex cold war between Iran and Saudi Arabia.⁷⁷ Moreover, they were drawing South Africa onto the side of Palestinian political forces that exhibited an authoritarian and racist-religious ideology – a far cry from South Africa's democratic and secular constitutional culture.⁷⁸

In December 2012, at the 53rd National Conference of the ANC, delegates resolved to support the campaign to boycott, divest and sanction Israel.⁷⁹ By 2017, the ANC's policy conference recommended downgrading South Africa's diplomatic presence in Israel and in 2018, the ambassador there was recalled. With the election of Cyril Ramaphosa in 2018, the move away from the PLO and the Palestinian Authority and towards Hamas (allied with other groups) became government policy. The BDS campaign had successfully lobbied the ruling party, during a period in which the ANC, according to close observers, played an increasingly predominant role in South Africa's foreign policy decision-making.⁸⁰

With the collapse of the regime of Bashar al-Assad in Syria in 2024 and the military humiliation of Iran's government at the hands of Israel supported by the United States in 2025, not to mention the weakening of Hezbollah as a military force following a campaign by Israel in 2024,⁸¹ the 'proxy war' Iran has been waging against Israel appears to be over for now, and South Africa finds itself on the losing side. By appearing to side with Iran and Hamas against Israel – despite a declared policy of non-alignment in general⁸² – Pretoria has in the meantime alienated key trade partners, especially the United States.⁸³ South Africa's close association with avowed enemies of the United States has, for example, risked generating economic shocks that touch, especially, working South Africans. The African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), which, *inter alia*, provides duty-free trade preferences for South African products to the United States, was due for renewal on 25 September 2025. In the meantime, on 1 August 2025, the US imposed a 30% tariff on South African exports that would normally benefit from AGOA's duty-free status, effectively overturning the act.⁸⁴ This will especially affect passenger vehicle

exports and the sale of fruit and wine in US markets. Relative to other countries and regions, the tariffs imposed on South Africa are among the most severe. Meanwhile, a bill triggered by South Africa's foreign policy, which is perceived as contrary to US interests, passed in the US House of Representatives on 23 July 2025, including provisions which if enacted would review all bilateral agreements between the US and South Africa and impose sanctions on South African officials.⁸⁵

South Africa's ICJ case

When on 29 December 2023 South Africa brought an application to the International Court of Justice against Israel in terms of the Genocide Convention of 1948, it alleged that Israel had committed, and was continuing to commit, acts prohibited by the Genocide Convention (Article II). These acts included killing members of the group, causing serious bodily or mental harm, inflicting conditions of life calculated to bring about physical destruction (in whole or in part), and measures to prevent births within the Palestinians in Gaza. Crucially, the South Africa legal team argued that such actions taken together were 'genocidal in character because they are intended to bring about the destruction of a substantial part of the Palestinian national, racial, or ethnic group'.⁸⁶ In support of this argument, the legal team referred to a range of statements made by Israeli political and military leaders, as well as patterns of military behaviour in Gaza itself.

On 26 January 2024, the court issued provisional measures in response to the case brought by South Africa. It reaffirmed that under the Genocide Convention the obligations are *erga omnes partes* (owed to all states parties), so South Africa had the right to invoke a wrong being done on behalf of the Palestinians in Gaza. Most significantly, an overwhelming majority of judges found that 'some of the conduct alleged by South Africa appears capable of falling within the provisions of the Convention'.⁸⁷ The meaning of this sentence is not easily discerned and is frequently interpreted to mean that the court found that Israel was plausibly committing genocide.⁸⁸ After the ruling, Judge Joan Donoghue, then-President of the ICJ, gave a widely discussed interview in which she clarified that the court did not determine that genocide is occurring and that it did not say that South Africa's claim of genocidal intent was plausible.⁸⁹ It did find that Palestinians have a plausible right to be protected from genocide, and that this right is under real and imminent threat given the situation in Gaza. Her 'clarification', however, invoked a highly technical term, a 'plausible right', only compounding the confusion. What this author understands by the ruling is as follows: The killing of Palestinians in Gaza and other actions by Israel would, if genocidal intent is later established, constitute genocidal acts and would, therefore, trigger the rights of Palestinians to be protected from such violence. Notably, the ICJ did not grant South Africa's request to order a complete cessation of Israel's military operations in Gaza or a general cease-fire, implying that plausible rights had not (yet) become established rights.

DIRCO's geopolitical calculations may help explain one of the most surprising aspects of the ICJ case. Israel was accused of genocide, but Hamas was not, even though Hamas leaders had in the past expressed genocidal intent and, on 7 October 2023, Hamas attackers targeted Israeli citizens and others indiscriminately as Jews.⁹⁰ South Africa's submission to the court only noted that the country 'unequivocally condemns all violations of international law by all parties, including the direct targeting of Israeli

civilians and other nationals and hostage-taking by Hamas and other Palestinian armed groups', before shifting the focus to Israel in the very next sentence.⁹¹

On another point of argumentation, Advocate Vaughan Lowe proposed during oral testimony on behalf of South Africa that the ICJ's jurisdiction under the Genocide Convention is limited to disputes between states. 'As the Court will understand, Hamas is not a State and cannot be a party to the Genocide Convention; and cannot be a party to these proceedings'.⁹² South Africa, however, did not even try to make the case for Hamas to be considered a state actor, despite substantial legal and social science scholarship suggesting that Hamas qualifies as one. Sharon Lecocq, for example, in her review of several new books on Hamas and Hezbollah notes: 'readers catch themselves wondering whether these [Hamas and Hezbollah] groups can still be considered "non-state" or should rather be seen as (a part of) the "state"'. She notes that they exercise roles performed by state institutions, including the provision and redistribution of goods and services, and the exercise of violence.⁹³ Michelle Pace and Polly Pallister-Wilkins discuss the concept of 'liminality' in international relations, applying it to Hamas to describe its ambiguous status between state and non-state actor. They argue that Hamas's governance role in Gaza places it in a transitional category, challenging the binary classification of actors in international law.⁹⁴

Moreover, the legal situation is not as straightforward as the South African lawyers proposed it to be. Judge Chile Oboe Osuji, the former President of the International Criminal Court, argues that as the elected government of Gaza, Hamas qualified in law as a state actor. 'South Africa should also have impleaded Hamas in that litigation. That is to say, South Africa should have included Hamas as respondents in the case, alongside Israel', he argued at a conference in South Africa in 2024. He continued:⁹⁵

Hamas became a Palestinian state actor when it came into power in Gaza. It is the agency of government in the enclave. To that extent, its conduct will attract international legal responsibility of the State of Palestine, as a matter of international law. That being the case, the State of Palestine can be made a nominal respondent in ICJ proceedings – in that way, the processes of the ICJ will reach Hamas as a matter of law.

Not only must the observer ask why South Africa did not seek any court order against Hamas, but why it did not even try.

Electoral impact of the ICJ case

To revisit the original question of this article, has South Africa's ICJ case against Israel helped resolve the organic crisis within the African National Congress? To answer this question, analysis considers the impact of the case on ANC electoral outcomes in the 2024 national elections.

The ICJ case was heard in December 2023. The court issued its provisional order in early 2024, months before the May election. It appears to have had no consequence either for internal party contestation or for the election outcome. In the first place, with regard to contestation within the ANC, it did not stop party stalwarts such as Jacob Zuma and leaders of the ANC loyal to him from quitting the organisation; in the province of KwaZulu-Natal whole ANC branches switched allegiance to Zuma's new party, the MK party (referring back to Umkhonto We Sizwe, the military wing of the then-banned

ANC). Clearly, an internationalist framing of the NDR did not stabilise elite contestation within the party.

In the second place, the attempt to portray the ANC as the vanguard of an anti-imperial agenda in the Middle East did not staunch the party's electoral decline. The party had been losing support slowly and consistently since 2009, when it lost its two-thirds majority in the national assembly. Ten years later, it was down to 57.5% of the vote – still holding a healthy majority but not the two-thirds required to amend the constitution. But in May 2024, the party suffered a major electoral shock, with its share of the vote falling more than 17 percentage points to 40% and a loss of its outright majority in parliament.⁹⁶ The ANC was forced to enter a coalition arrangement, joining up with the former official opposition, the Democratic Alliance. In the province of KwaZulu-Natal, the ANC collapsed altogether. Support fell from just over 55% in 2019 to less than 18% in 2024, an almost 70% decline between elections. In the Western Cape, where the ANC's internationalism was expected to resonate with Muslim voters especially, ANC support continued to decline. In 2019, the party won just over 31% of the provincial vote. In 2024 the African National Congress was down to a little more than 21%.⁹⁷ In contrast, the Patriotic Alliance, a party in the South African political landscape that is outspoken in its support for Israel, saw a rise from 0.3% of the provincial vote in 2019 to 7.33% of the vote in 2024.⁹⁸

Objectively, the Ramaphosa government's revolutionary internationalism neither reduced intra-party contestation nor stalled electoral decline. In short, the ANC government's 'revolutionist' foreign policy has not resolved the party's organic crisis.

Conclusion

This article has argued that South Africa's African National Congress is grappling with an 'organic crisis' linked to its 'revolutionary' character. The crisis manifests as internal party disunity, policy incoherence, and a significant loss of popular support and member commitment.

ANC leaders have attempted to manage this crisis by reinterpreting the national democratic revolution, which has been the dominant political discourse for the ANC since 1969. Thabo Mbeki sought to redefine the NDR through the lens of the developmental state, while Jacob Zuma pursued radical economic transformation. Neither strategy proved sufficient. In Zuma's case, the pursuit of radical economic transformation came to be associated with state capture and mass corruption, discrediting the party and compounding the party's internal crisis.

Cyril Ramaphosa managed contestation in the ANC by, on the one hand, institutionalising it within his first cabinet, granting to ministers drawn from diverse tendencies in the party their own cabinet portfolios and wide discretion. On the other hand, he positioned South Africa as a revolutionary vanguard on the international stage, appointing Naledi Pandor as minister of international relations and cooperation and giving her wide autonomy to define the substance of this role. This she did, by making the 'Palestinian cause' the centre-piece of South Africa's foreign policy.

The International Court of Justice case against Israel on charges of genocide, initiated by South Africa on 29 December 2023, is the most prominent manifestation of this strategy. Ostensibly this move was rooted in the ANC's long-standing solidarity

with the Palestinian struggle, however this study demonstrates that from 2018 (and earlier within DIRCO), the South African government shifted its allegiance away from the PLO and a two-state solution in Israel/Palestine to supporting Hamas and advancing Iranian geopolitical interests. This reflected the successful lobbying efforts of pro-Palestinian activists, particularly those aligned with the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement. This goes a long way to explain a peculiarity of the South African legal strategy, charging Israel with genocide while treating Hamas, at least in front of the ICJ, as largely blameless.

Ultimately, this foreign policy strategy has failed to resolve the ANC's organic crisis domestically. While it has garnered some international goodwill, it has not stemmed the party's electoral decline nor stabilised elite contestation within the party. The failure of the international strategy, moreover, has created a vicious cycle: it will likely result in an increase in economic and political pressure on the country, which will exacerbate the very 'organic crisis' it was intended to resolve for the party domestically.

Notes

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3. The judicial inquiry into the Marikana massacre dismissed claims that Cyril Ramaphosa was responsible for the killing of mineworkers. It did not exonerate him, however, finding that he had discouraged the resolution of the dispute through negotiation. See David Bruce, *Summary and Analysis of the Report of the Marikana Commission of Inquiry* (Johannesburg: Council for the Advancement of the South African Constitution (CASAC), 2015), <https://www.casac.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Summary-and-Analysis-of-the-Report-of-the-Marikana-Commission-of-Inquiry.pdf>.
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63. 'Statement by President Jacob Zuma Addressing the 67th General Assembly, New York,' <https://www.dha.gov.za/index.php/statements-speeches/46-statement-by-president-jacob-zuma-addressing-the-67th-general-assembly-new-york#:~:text=Any%20act%20of%20aggression%20or,the%20UN%20at%20all%20times> (accessed September 30, 2025). Zuma's openness to Hamas seems to be based on the belief that the organisation was committed to a two-state solution.
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75. Jeenah, *Democratic South Africa's relations with Israel and Palestine*.
76. Nasrin Akhter, 'Understanding a Decade of Syria-Hamas Relations, 2011–2021,' (2023), 13–18.
77. See K. Ghattas, *Black Wave: Saudi Arabia, Iran, and the Forty-Year Rivalry That Unravelling Culture, Religion, and Collective Memory in the Middle East* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 2020). Kim Ghattas describes the competition between Saudi Arabia and Iran as a forty-year struggle for religious, political, and cultural dominance in the Muslim world, in which both states weaponized faith and identity to project power and reshape the Middle East after the 1979 Iranian Revolution.
78. Hamas's founding charter is rooted in Sayyid Qutb's political Islam. Qutb's concept of *jahiliyya* (a state of pre-Islamic ignorance) requires *jihād* against any regime not based on Shari'a. Furthermore, Qutb's extensive writings explicitly describe Jews as 'behind materialism,' having 'animalistic sexuality,' destroying societies, and using Zionism and cosmopolitanism as plots against Islam, deeming Israel problematic precisely because it is Jewish, ie, *jahili*. See S. Qutb Qutb, *In the Shade of the Qur'an (Fi Zilal al-Qur'an)*, trans. Adil Salahi (Leicester, UK: Islamic Foundation, 2003) and S. Qutb, *Milestones*, ed. A.B. al-Mehri (Birmingham: Maktabah Booksellers and Publishers, 2006). Although Hamas attempted to temper these ideas in 1993 by replacing the term 'Jew' with 'Zionist' and framing the conflict as a nationalist one, the organisation retained its original jihadist Charter. See Imad Alsoos, 'From Jihad to Resistance: The Evolution of Hamas's Discourse in the Framework of Mobilisation,' *Middle Eastern Studies* 57, no. 5 (2021): 833–56, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00263206.2021.1897006>. Even with subsequent efforts to reposition itself as a nationalist movement fighting Zionists, its concept of Zionism remains deeply tied to an anti-Semitic ontology regarding Jews.
79. African National Congress, *53rd National Conference Resolutions, Mangaung, December 2012* (Pretoria: African National Congress, 2012). See especially Resolution 39(b) and 35(g). See too the BDS response: Ali Abunimah, 'In Historic Decision, South Africa's ANC Makes Support for Israel Boycott Its Official Policy,' *The Electronic Intifada*, December 20, 2012. <https://electronicintifada.net/blogs/ali-abunimah/historic-decision-south-africa>.
80. Lesley Masters and Chris Landsberg, 'South African Foreign Policy and the National Interest.' They write: 'South Africa has seen the centralisation of foreign policy in the predominant role played by the presidency and foreign policy decision-making elites (Masters 2012; 2017). During the Zuma (2009–2018) and Ramaphosa (2018–) administrations the position of the African National Congress (ANC), as the ruling party, has expanded with the party flagrantly occupying a position in foreign policy decision-making' (3).
81. S. Maloney, 'Iran's Dangerous Desperation: What Comes After the 12-Day War,' *Foreign Affairs*, August 6, 2025, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/iran/irans-dangerous-desperation> (accessed November 5, 2025).
82. R. Lamola, 'How Non-Alignment Shapes South Africa's Foreign Policy in a Multipolar World,' *Daily Maverick*, September 2, 2025. This opinion piece is also on the DIRCO website: <https://dirco.gov.za/how-non-alignment-shapes-south-africas-foreign-policy-in-a-multipolar-world-daily-maverick-by-ronald-lamola-2-september-2025/>.

83. US tariffs have been levied on South Africa following executive orders out of the Trump administration. In addition, South Africa is likely to be delisted as eligible for benefits under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) should it be renewed on the basis that Pretoria has acted in ways that are contrary to US national interests. See B. Kurdyak, 'The US-South Africa Imbroglia, and Its Implications for US-Africa Relations,' *Foreign Policy Research Institute*, April 8, 2025, <https://www.fpri.org/article/2025/04/the-us-south-africa-imbroglio-and-its-implications-for-us-africa-relations/> (accessed October 27, 2025).
84. B. Kurdyak, 'The US-South Africa Imbroglia, and Its Implications for US-Africa Relations,' *Foreign Policy Research Institute* (FPRI), April 8, 2025, <https://www.fpri.org/article/2025/04/the-us-south-africa-imbroglio-and-its-implications-for-us-africa-relations/> (accessed October 27, 2025).
85. See comments by Foreign minister Ronald Lamola and Trade Minister Parks Tau as reported in the Business Day, Business Day, 'US Tariffs Cancel Out AGOA, Say Tau and Lamola', April 4, 2025, <https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/national/2025-04-04-us-tariffs-cancel-out-agoa-say-tau-and-lamola/> (accessed August 11, 2025). Moreover, the U.S. Customs & Border Protection (CBP) agency explicitly states that AGOA (and GSP) preferences cannot be claimed on entries that are subject to additional tariffs such as Section 232. In short: when an across-the-board additional tariff applies, it overrides the AGOA duty-free benefit. See U.S. Customs and Border Protection, *Additional Duties: Application to Preference Programs (AGOA, GSP)* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2025), <https://www.cbp.gov/trade/priority-issues/trade-agreements/special-trade-legislation/generalized-system-preferences> (accessed August 15, 2025). At the time of writing, South African officials were in tariff negotiations with US counterparts.
86. South Africa, 'Application Instituting Proceedings: Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip (South Africa v. Israel),' December 29, 2023. The Hague: International Court of Justice, para. 1, <https://www.icj-cij.org/case/192> (accessed September 29, 2025).
87. International Court of Justice, 'Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip (South Africa v. Israel), Order of 26 January 2024 (Provisional Measures),' The Hague: ICJ, 2024, para. 30, <https://www.icj-cij.org/case/192> (accessed September 29, 2025).
88. See International Commission of Jurists, *Gaza: Israel Must Implement Provisional Measures Ordered by the International Court of Justice*, January 26, 2024, <https://www.icj.org/gaza-israel-must-implement-provisional-measures-ordered-by-the-international-court-of-justice/> (accessed September 29, 2025). See also Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Gaza: ICJ Ruling Offers Hope for Protection of Civilians Enduring Apocalyptic Conditions, Say UN Experts*, January 31, 2024, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/01/gaza-icj-ruling-offers-hope-protection-civilians-enduring-apocalyptic> (accessed September 29, 2025).
89. J. Donoghue, Interview by S. Sackur, HARDtalk, BBC, April 25, 2024, <https://genome.ch.bbc.co.uk/m001yplc> (accessed September 29, 2025).
90. S.E. Brown, *Hamas' Genocidal Violence* (International Association of Genocide Scholars, 2023), <https://genocidescholars.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Policy-brief-Sara-E.-Brown.pdf>. See too A.R. Shalev, 'Hamas' October 7th Genocide: Legal Analysis and the Weaponization of Reverse Accusations: A Study in Modern Genocide Recognition and Denial,' *Israel Law Review* (2025), https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=5183482.
91. International Court of Justice, 'Application Instituting Proceedings and Request for the Indication of Provisional Measures,' 6.
92. International Court of Justice (ICJ), 'Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip (South Africa v. Israel), Verbatim Record 2024/1 of the Public Sitting held on Thursday 11 January 2024' (The Hague: ICJ, 2024), 76.
93. Sharon Lecocq, 'Hamas and Hezbollah: Hybrid Actors Between Resistance and Governance,' *International Affairs* 96, no. 4 (2020): 1072, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iaaa104>.

94. Michelle Pace and Peter Pallister-Wilkins, 'EU– Hamas: Actors in a State of Permanent Liminality,' *European Security* 25, no. 3 (2016), <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41268-016-0080-y> (accessed June 11, 2025).
95. Chile Eboe-Osuji, 'Ending the Cycle of Violence,' *African Global Dialogue*, 2024, <https://africanglobaldialogue.org/chile-eboe-osuji/> (accessed June 11, 2025). See too M. Abuamer and Y. Nassar, 'To Be or Not to Be: The Hamas Dilemma in International Law and Community,' in *Gaza's Cycle of Destruction and Rebuilding: Understanding the Actors, Dynamics, and Responses* (Springer, 2024); International Bar Association, 'The Israel-Hamas Conflict,' n.d., <https://www.ibanet.org/The-Israel-Hamas-conflict> (accessed June 11, 2025).
96. See the results of the national and provincial elections in South Africa on the website of the Independent Electoral Commission at <https://results.elections.org.za/dashboards/npe/>.
97. See <https://results.elections.org.za/dashboards/npe/> (accessed August 15, 2025).
98. In May 2025, a 22-member delegation from the Patriotic Alliance visited Israel expressing 'steadfast support for the Jewish state' and explicitly opposed the ruling ANC's pro-Hamas stance. One PA councillor stated, 'The Patriotic Alliance is with Israel.' See Steve Linde, 'South African Patriotic Alliance Delegation Visits Israel,' *Jewish News Syndicate*, May 26, 2025.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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