

## **Gaza war threatens credibility of the West's commitment to human rights and the rule of law**

Recent articles appearing on the Al Jazeera and Common Dreams websites raise serious questions about the Israel-Hamas conflict that have implications that reach far beyond the fate of the parties involved or even the Middle East. At stake is the credibility of the West's professed commitment to human rights and the rule of law.

**Richard Falk, Emeritus Professor of International Law at Princeton University**, notes the racialized nature of external support for the parties to the conflict, with the Global West (white settler colonial states and the former European colonial powers) standing with Israel and the Global South supporting the Palestinians. He sees this alignment derailing efforts to end the violence through the norms and procedures of international law. This is especially troubling in light of the West's claim of moral superiority. Professor Falk also discusses the futility of military action to solve complex geopolitical issues and the importance of nonviolent activism in moving governments to act.

**Saul J Takahashi, Professor of Human Rights and Peace Studies at Osaka Jogakuin University** in Osaka, Japan, reflects on the double standard that so often characterized the West's response to gross violations of human rights and international law. He notes that this discrepancy is especially stark when it comes to the right to self-determination.

Both articles place the conflict in Gaza in a wider historical context and provide valuable insights that have implications for the entire world.