

IMPACT OF ISRAEL-IRAN WAR ON AFRICA

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Abstract

The complexity of integrated global value chains, large-scale migration flows, the diffusion of technology, enhanced interpersonal connectivity, and the concurrent operation of bilateral, multilateral, regional, and global systems collectively ensure that events occurring in one part of the world can generate ripple effects across distant regions. Wars may be limited to certain regions, their repercussions may be geographically localized but their consequences are global, widespread and multifaceted. The Israel-Iran conflict in the region neighbouring Africa has led to significant political polarization on a global scale and has exposed critical shortcomings in military preparedness for potential large-scale conflict. The present paper attempts to analyse the repercussions that Africa could have due to this ongoing conflict. It also deals with the comparative analysis of Israel's and Iran's diplomatic, economic, and strategic engagements with the African continent.

Keywords: Israel-Iran conflict, The Red Sea, Intifada, The Horn of Africa

Introduction

The reverberations of Israel-Iran confrontation are being perceived as far afield as China, Australia, and Brazil. The immediate neighbour, Africa can feel the strongest heat of this conflict. The already fragile unity of the African continent could further deteriorate due to the probable instability in the Red Sea region. The Red Sea connects the northeastern Africa with the Arabian Peninsula. Through the Red Sea region, a significant portion of global merchandise is transported. About 12% of maritime trade especially transit of oil, gas and defence supplies passes through it. The route through the Red Sea is fastest and most economical route between Europe and Asia instead of going round Africa's the Cape of Good Hope. The geographical positioning of the Red Sea is such that it links Asia, Africa and Europe. Through the Gulf of Eden and Bab el-Mandeb Strait it connects to the Indian Ocean; and through the Suez Canal it links with the Mediterranean Sea. The African countries lying on the western flank of the Red Sea are "Egypt, Sudan, Eritrea and Djibouti", those on the Eastern coast are Saudi Arabia and Yemen. Egypt, Israel, Jordan and Saudi Arabia share the coastline of the Gulf of Aqaba which is an extension of the Red Sea. The whole region becomes high risk. Mailhack's opinion as quoted by

Schwikowski (2025) is that, “if the conflict between Israel and Iran escalates further, there is a risk that the various interconnected wars around the Red Sea could also expand.”

The geostrategic and geopolitical significance of the Red Sea region is underscored by the establishment of military and naval bases by major global powers such as the United States, Russia, China, and France within the region. These states strategically position their forces to ensure the security of vital maritime trade routes and aim to sustain and extend their political and economic influence across the African continent. Any disruption in the region can impact the global trade and businesses. As RIS (2025, pp.1) reports “experts anticipate that the fallout from the disruptions in the Red Sea could disproportionately impact consumers and economies across the world.”

Both Israel and Iran have ties with several African countries but majority of the relations are neither historical nor sustained. Despite the direct economic and political relations being very limited, Africa may still get affected substantially by the war in direct or indirect way. While certain African countries have shown support for one of the warring sides, often due to historical connections or strategic interests, the majority have remained committed to international law and upheld the sovereignty of nations. Nevertheless, the impact of the conflict on the African continent is expected to be multifaceted, significant and complex. This conclusion is drawn on the basis of comprehensive analysis of secondary sources, contemporary news sources, blogs and scholarly discourse.

The bilateral relations of both Iran and Israel with the African continent have historically lacked substantive depth and resilience, failing to endure true, long-term strategic depth. This volatility in their engagements can be attributed primarily to Africa’s peripheral status as a strategic or economic partner, often ignored as a meaningful channel for advancing shared interests. Post-independence African states largely maintained their dependency on former colonial powers, thereby constraining their sovereign agency to act independently on the global stage. As a result, for several decades, African territories functioned predominantly as theatres for proxy conflicts orchestrated by external actors, in which the continent itself remained a passive and non-combatant entity.

Bahramzadeh & Mohammadi (2021) sees that Israel's earlier engagements with Africa were often tactical and short-lived, like military cooperation with South Africa or backing Ethiopia and Nigeria during regional conflicts. These relationships were largely transactional and faded once

strategic priorities shifted. Similarly, Iran's engagement in Africa oscillated and never had a durable relationship. Overall, rather than fostering resilient, multi-dimensional partnerships, both Iran and Israel treated African nations as peripheral players, engaging with them only when expedient instead of establishing steadfast strategic alliances.

Africa and Iran Relations

The Cold War period engendered a heightened strategic impetus among burgeoning superpowers, notably the United States and the Soviet Union, to assert influence and occupy the geopolitical vacuum left by the retreat of traditional colonial powers in Africa. This dynamics was particularly pronounced in the Horn of Africa and the wider Eastern African region, where both states sought to advance their ideological and strategic interests through diplomatic, military, and economic engagement.

Iran had political and diplomatic relations with a few countries of Africa in 1960s. But later by 1970s the ties were extended to thirty African countries according to Steele (20221). Ethiopia was one of the first country of sub-Saharan Africa to have relations with Iran. The Shah believed that Ethiopia could help in limiting the Soviet influence in East Africa. Iran's then Africa policy, according to Lefebvre (2019) sought only to pierce the Nasserist and Soviet presence in Sub-Saharan Africa as Mohammadreza Pahlavi, then Shah of Iran was nervous of the increasing presence of the erstwhile Soviet Union.

The three-day 1971 celebration in Persepolis to commemorate the "2,500-year of the Empire of Iran" was well attended by the African leaders that strengthened the relationship between African nations and Iran. Steele (2024) is of the view that it located Iran as a friendly country and fortified the diplomatic ties with Africa. At the same time Iran was not in a comfortable position in the Arab world. Iran was facing territorial disputes with the UAE and Bahrain. Iran's rising oil revenues positioned the country advantageously to extend financial assistance to economically challenged African states. This strategic engagement facilitated the expansion of Iran's diplomatic influence across the continent and contributed to the cultivation of a more favourable and cooperative international image.

Steele (2024) believes that Pahlavi adopted a grand strategy in order to augment and extend Iranian influence in Africa and in the Indian Ocean region by building alliances. He built alliances with the pro-Western leaders to counter the Soviet influence and socialist policies in Africa.

Elsewhere Steele (2021, p. 1387) quotes the recorded conversation between the Shah and the Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs, Abba Eban in May 1973 which says that, “He [the Shah] sees a triangle—Israel, Ethiopia, and Iran—which if buttressed by the US support will be a stabilizing influence.” Till that time the relation between Iran and Israel were cordial and full of confidence.

In the immediate post-revolution period, the relationship between Iran and Africa were predominantly based on Iran’s ideology and lacked interest to partner with newly-independent African nations in their development journey. The first President of Iran to make a visit to Africa post-Revolution was Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani. He held the office from 1989-1997. According to Bagheri (2021) Rafsanjani elevated Iran’s engagement with Africa from a marginal diplomatic interest to a key component of strategic policymaking, aimed at securing economic relief and diversifying geopolitical alliances. He pursued this by significantly expanding diplomatic interactions, establishing trade partnerships, and projecting Iran’s revolutionary ideology—efforts that created a durable framework for ongoing Iranian involvement across successive governments.

President Ahmadinejad who was president of Iran from 2005-2013, played a very crucial role in the revival of Africa-Iran relations. Fakude (2023) believes that “Ahmadinejad was the first Iranian president to demonstrate real interest in meaningful engagement with Africa.” He insists that if Iran continues to be perceived to be sponsoring terrorism, many African countries will hesitate to deal with Iran. He concludes “Iran has a mountain to climb in recalibrating relations with Africa. It will have to prioritize its public diplomacy efforts. Continuing with its Shia expansionist projects will likely backlash. The country must relook at its general communications strategies in Africa. Importantly it must drop its hyper religious and Iranian culture specific public diplomacy efforts in Africa if it is to succeed.” There was revival of relations and in 2010 the Iran-Africa Summit was organised by Iran with focus shifting to other small countries of Africa like Togo and Guinea-Bissau other than the strategic Horn region.

Realising the importance of natural resources of Africa for Iran, President Raisi of Iran (2021-2024) sought to re-engage aggressively with Africa. It has begun to deepens its ties with African nations. Its entry into the BRICS has placed it in the stronger position to approach the African countries. Egypt, Ethiopia and South Africa are its members and with a support from Russia, Iran can have a better access to African nations. Iran has increased

its diplomatic missions in Africa to 22 from 9 in the pre- Revolution period. Saudi Arabia and Israel continuously counter Iranian influence in Africa by strengthening its relations with the continent.

Iran's relationship with Africa in the post-Revolution era has been inconsistent yet had a continental presence with a non-linear, president-driven approach shaped by the ideological orientation, strategic priorities, and personal visions. Regarding Iran's Africa policy, Fakulde (2023) argues "that varying socio-political and economic interventions by different presidents of Iran towards Africa have led to political inconsistencies that have largely failed to yield results."

Africa and Israel Relations

After the establishment of Israel in 1948, it had a long-standing relation with many African nations since 1960s. But there have been phases of good relations and phases when Israel-Africa relations ebbed. Israel maintained strong and friendly relations with numerous African nations at the time when they were gaining their independence around 1960. There was extensive cooperation between the two regions in sectors such as agriculture and security. But situation changed after the 1973 fourth Arab-Israeli War, also known as the Yom Kippur War. It was initiated by Egypt and Syria on the "Jewish holy day of Yom Kippur and during the holy month of Ramada." The War was fought between combined Arab states and Israel. The fight mostly concentrated in the Sinai Peninsula and Golan Heights (two-thirds of the area came under Israeli occupation after the Six-Day War of 1967). The Soviet Union supported Egypt and Syria while the US made emergency supply line to Israel after initial hesitation. The extreme pressure from the Arab League out of solidarity with Egypt, one of the founders of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), made African countries cut diplomatic ties with Israel. Following the 1973 Yom Kippur War, the deterioration of the relations between African countries and Israel continued for a very long time. Oded (2018) expresses that the period of renewal of relations between Israel and African countries began in 1982 when many African nations chose to tap into Israel's innovative expertise across various domains, and consequently gain support from both Israel and Arab states. The first African country to recommence relations with Israel in 1986 after the Yom Kippur War was Cameroon.

It was after the Oslo Accords (1993) and the Abraham Accords that the resurgence of relations between Israel and some African countries could be seen. But the Second *Intifada* or the *Al-Aqsa Intifada* from 2000-05 marked the period of Palestinian uprising against Israeli repression. Awad

(2000, p.407) states that the *Intifada* included “beatings, shootings, killings, house demolitions, uprooting of trees, deportations, extended imprisonments, and detentions without trial.” This resulted in large number of casualties of both Israelis and Iranians. This long drawn-out Second *Intifada* weakened the results of previous efforts and deteriorated the gains in establishing the ties between Israel and the African countries. Israeli diplomatic missions that were opened in Morocco and Tunisia in the 1990s faced closure during *Intifada*.

In more recent years, Israel has made concerted efforts to restore and enhance its diplomatic and economic relations across the African continent, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa. Salman (2022) believes that the improvement in Africa-Israel relations over the past twenty years has changed due to the underlying motivations of both Israel and various African nations.

In the 1950s Israel's engagement with Africa was largely driven by shared values, but current Israeli interests are primarily focused on securing political backing from African states, especially in the context of international forums like the United Nations, where Israel aims to seek greater legitimacy in the context of Israeli-Palestinian conflict. He stresses that in recent years, opinion of the African countries is shifting in favor of Israel, reflecting the success of strengthened diplomatic ties. In a bid to expand its engagement further with Africa, Israel has increased its diplomatic visits, deepened security cooperation, and extended civilian aid programs. Oded's (2018) data shows that currently, Israel maintains diplomatic ties with around 41 African countries; and African countries are integral to the security, economic, and diplomatic strategy of Israel. Similarly, Auge (2020) believes that Israel also views Africa to be of strategic importance and must be engaged through multiple channels. According to Auge (2020, p.11)

“the Israeli government today views Africa either as a longstanding sphere of influence (Ethiopia, Eritrea, Cameroon, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Uganda and for the last two decades Rwanda) that needs to be strengthened, or as a new sphere of influence to be developed (the Sahel countries, central Africa, etc.) These relations operate through various conventional channels, including some that have been significantly weakened by Benjamin Netanyahu when he was Israeli prime minister between 1996 and 1999 and since 2009.” (2020, p.11)

Israel and countries of Africa have maintained a complex layered relationship shaped by a history of evolving geopolitical situations, shifting diplomacy, fluctuating alliances, ideological objectives, and strategic reasons for collaboration. Different phases of Africa-Israel relation can be seen. In the first phase of early engagement, after gaining independence, Israel faced a massive diplomatic isolation. In order to overcome this diplomatic isolation, Israel pursued to collaborate with the newly sovereign African nations. Ghana formalized diplomatic ties with Israel as early as 1956. The next phase saw rupture in relation between Africa and Israel. The Yom Kippur War in 1973 was the first turning point of the Israel-Africa relations. African countries had to cut diplomatic ties with Israel due to the ensuing oil embargo prompted by the Arab states and growing solidarity with the Palestinian cause. Then the reshaping of relations post-Oslo Accords brought a ray of hope. Diplomatic relations gradually eased and gained momentum after the 1993 Oslo Accords and further boosted by the 2020 Abraham Accords, which marked a major shift as some Arab nations began normalizing ties with Israel.

The major challenges and complexities for Israel-Africa relations is the Palestinian Issue. Though there are contrasting stances of African nations, but the Israeli-Palestinian conflict continues to be a major point of contention, with South Africa at the forefront of opposition to Israel's policies. It has accused Israel of genocide at the International Court of Justice. Then Israel has to contend with growing influences and competition from other global actors such as Russia, China, Turkey and Iran, all of whom are intensively deepening their engagement in Africa not only diplomatically but also through massive economic aid, large infrastructure projects, and security collaborations.

In the contemporary context, Hama's October 7, 2023 terrorist attack on Israel and Israel Defense Force's (IDF) counter-offensive called for severe international criticism and a set-back to Israel's diplomatic, economic and security cooperation with Africa especially with the countries of North Africa. South Africa, the President of the AU Commission, Chad's Moussa and Comoros President Azali Assoumani openly condemned Israel. The United Nations (UN) resolution for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza was voted in favour by 38 African nations.

Contrasting the outcomes of the earlier wars, after October 7 terrorist attack on Israel and ensuing conflicts, African countries did not sever their relations with Israel. Sebban-Bécache & Seroussi (2024) stresses that, unlike the Yom Kippur War, the Second *Intifada* and the first Gaza War of 2009, even Muslim-majority nations such as Morocco, Chad, and Sudan

have only public condemned the war in Gaza. This according to Sebban-Bécache & Seroussi is due to the “old relationship that has survived previous ups and downs.” There is also an understanding that Africa was disillusioned with the Arab leaders when they did not keep their promise of supporting Africa, particularly in the energy sector “in exchange for the break with Israel.”

Zanin (2025) also insists on the survival of Africa-Israel relation in the face of above events. Zanin’s maintains that despite military operations in Gaza, the 46 African countries that have diplomatic relations with Israel have not severed their relations. There is business as usual with African countries. Even South Africa did not cut ties with Israel despite its severe criticism. Zanin (2025) opines that “African nations may separate political statements from broader strategic partnerships.”

The contemporary geopolitical and geoeconomic issues have made it imperative for both Africa and Israel to continue their relationships as strategic alliances for mutual growth and development. The lack of concerted effort for sustained relations may be ascribed to lack of mutual confidence and investment of limited resources to nourish the relationship. Africa is keeping its options open and looking for alliances elsewhere; and Israel es well is securing new markets for its products. Both these regions are gaining grounds at different multilateral and transnational fora through their diplomatic efforts. The refinement of their foreign policies is facilitating them to rise the ladder of the global political hierarchy. Africa’s enhanced political influence, improving economic growth and increasing role in global decision making has reduced its susceptibility to external pressures. Israel’s advancement in many areas such as technology, agriculture, security can provide Africa with solutions that are more suitable and viable to deal with its development challenges. African leaders have expressed their reluctance to forgo these strategic interests and continued their relations as such with Israel.

Differences in the nature of Israel’s and Iran’s Engagements with African Nations

The evolving relations of Israel and Iran with Africa are fundamentally different. Iran has very limited relations with the countries of Africa which is guided by its limited motivation. Ideological influences and anti-west sentiments influence its engagement with Africa primarily through the religious and political channels. On the other hand, with the aim to dilute regional isolation, Israel bases its relation with Africa on need-based

practical cooperation, like offering technology for water management and agriculture, or security support building through diplomatic channels. Israel's growing ties with Africa can be judged by the presence of forty-four diplomatic missions in Africa. In case of Iran, its militant association is viewed with suspicion, discouraging many African countries to intensify their relation with it.

According to Yarde (2025) Iran's investment in Africa is "part of a broader anti-imperialist resistance to the West, and it has elevated the continent to a strategic priority." Iran has ventured into drone diplomacy as in the case of Sudan, it has increased the high-level visits to Africa and established Islamic institutes in over thirty African countries. Yarde opines that Iran is expanding her resistance against Israel and the United States through Africa, "particularly the Sahel, where it perceives a rise of anti-Western sentiment—as a historic opportunity."

Israel and Iran engage with African nations in essentially different ways, reflecting contrasting priorities and methods. Israel engagement is through formal diplomacy and technology transfer whereas Iran ideological soft power, limited defence and economic maneuvers guides it relations with Africa.

Impact of Israel-Iran War on Africa

Relations between Africa and either Iran or Israel lack the level of confidence seen in other global partnerships. This is largely due to a history of skirmishes, conflicts, and wars between Israel and Arab nations. Any progress made during peaceful periods is often undone when new conflicts arise. However, as the nature of international relations shifts, new partnerships emerge, driven by changing objectives. In the past, Africa's ties with Israel or Iran were shaped more by external influences especially the regional conflicts than by their own needs. These relationships were often a reflection of the alliances of friendly nations involved in the regional conflicts. Moreover, earlier wars tended to be geographically limited and had minimal effects on other countries. Today, the landscape has changed due to globalization and the growing role of non-state actors. In an increasingly interconnected global economy, disruptions in supply chains, whether involving raw materials or the transport of goods, can have far-reaching consequences. While direct impacts may be limited to the regions involved, those sharing strategic sea routes often face significant indirect effects. Thus "African nations situated along critical maritime corridors are experiencing both direct and indirect impacts—ranging from

disrupted oil and food imports to heightened maritime militarization and regional instability” (Deif, 2025).

Any military confrontation between Israel and Iran, two major actors in the geopolitically delicate Middle East, intensifies concerns about supply disruptions in an area that contains a sizable portion of the world's oil reserves. Nearly 20% of the world's oil shipments flow through the Strait of Hormuz, which is under the jurisdiction of Iran, a significant oil producer and member of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). The stability of this crucial marine route has been threatened by increased tension or military action, which has caused volatility in oil prices, according to the analysis of *US Energy Information Administration* (2025).

The escalation of hostilities between Israel and Iran in 2025 has produced significant geopolitical and economic reverberations across the African continent. The multifaceted impacts of the conflict on Africa's economies, diplomacy, security environments, trade systems, and humanitarian conditions may not be immediately so visible but trends of the previous wars in the region can inform about the consequence of the present war on Africa. The Diplomatic challenge for the African nations would be substantial despite the fact that Israel and Iran have limited diplomatic and political reach with Africa as argued by Nebe (2025). It could mean that the fallout from the Israel and Iran would mainly have “indirect geopolitical effects.” The potential short-term disruption which she has identified was limited to trade, increased market instability, rising oil prices, and growing economic pressure.

There are contrasting opinion of impact of Israel-Iran war on Africa. Scholars like Nebe (2025); Auge (2025) are of the view that the war may not impact Africa substantially. But others like Gopaldas & Ndhlovu (2025); Mamoudou (2025); Deif (2025); Dabbagh (2025) stress that the impact may be significant both for short-term and long term. Auge (2025) argues that though Israel has diplomatic relations with more than 40 African countries “doesn't necessarily mean Israel wields significant influence in Africa.” He feels that since both Iran and Israel have weak diplomatic relations with Africa, so the war between them may not have a dramatic impact. But there will undeniably pressure on African states to take sides. He is also of the opinion that since this conflict is peripheral to Africa, most African countries could only frame their position under international law because there is nothing substantial to gain by strongly taking sides. But with the involvement of major powers makes it a bone of contention. With repercussions or the loss of aid because of seeming

disobedience, they might be pushed to make difficult decisions between Washington and Tehran.

Being a peripheral of any direct consequences of the military contestation between Israel - Iran, Africa still has some short-term and long-term effects from the ongoing conflict. The religious affiliation, economic interconnectedness, strategic alliance to military build-ups, Africa is involved with this region in direct way. Being structurally vulnerable, Africa through its geo-positional proximity is directly connected with the middle-east. The WANA (West Asia and North-Africa) is being considered as Greater Middle East by Zoubir & Benabdallah-Gambier (2021, p24). The cultural, religious connect of north Africa with middle-east has made this conflict a trans-regional crisis.

Gopaldas & Ndhlovu (2025) are of the views that impact of the war on Africa will be multidimensional. They say that the war is creating volatility in Africa that may cause security vulnerability. It may pull in global powers like Russia or China that may escalate the war and “Africa often becomes an unintended theatre of competition and collateral.” Iranian missiles were seen in Cairo. Iran or its proxies (Houthis) may target the US base in Djibouti or in Somalia and Israel’s assets in Eritrea. Western countries are supporting Ukraine war and Africa may not be well resourced to be able to manage transnational threats. The war may fuel refugee influx into Europe that might limit an option for vulnerable African populations. The religious tensions could create disturbances in multi-faith societies of Africa with some groups expressing solidarity with Iran. Diplomatically Africa will be forced to take sides. In case of multilateral organisations like the expanded BRICS could feel the strains or Africa’s collective strength may be eroded because of internal divisions in the UN. The economic and fiscal pressure could be more tangible like strengthening of dollar, rising debt servicing cost of heavily dollar-indebted countries or cost of living increases. They stress that, “The Iran crisis may rage abroad, but its sparks are falling on African soil – and the continent must brace for impact.”

The conflict has made already difficult issues of investment flows, energy availability, and inflation for Africa even worse. The foremost immediate and tangible impact of this war, apart from human tragedy is effect on African economies. It includes the price hike in oil and disruption in shipping and trade routes. Due to its reliance on foreign trade, energy imports, and complex market arrangements, the African continent is nevertheless economically vulnerable despite major continent being at a distance from the location of war. The spike in oil prices has had one of

the greatest direct impacts on African economies. Due to their locations in vital energy-producing regions, Israel and Iran tensions have interrupted previously also the oil supply networks and raised oil prices globally as stated in a report by OPEC (2024). According to the Mamoudou (2025) the fear of closure of the Strait of Hormuz caused global oil prices to increase by over 10%.

The countries which import oil like Ghana, and South Africa saw increase in fuel prices that cause inflation and weakening of their currencies according to Deif (2025). The rising cost of gasoline may put strain on public budgets, raised transportation expenses, and cause food prices to rise because many African nations are net importers of oil. The World Bank (2024) notes that nations such as Kenya and Senegal have experienced significant increases in consumer prices after the intensification of conflicts.

Dabbagh (2025) asserts that the increase in oil prices would not even benefit Africa's oil-producing nations because it would severely hinder the flow of oil. He said, "there are estimates of losses suffered by oil-producing countries like Nigeria, Libya, Gabon, Angola, etc., which were unable to benefit from the increase in oil prices, primarily because of blockade and, secondly, because they were unable to adjust the production to prevailing prices."

Auge (2025) believes that there might be ripple effect or indirect impact of the war with regard to the oil price increase. He also argues that the price of oil is presently low and markets are well-stocked, therefore, temporary increase in oil prices will have limited impact. He further explains that Iran's oil production is low due to longstanding sanctions. So, neither the production nor the transportation of oil may be affected.

There will be many geopolitical and security ramifications of the war on Africa as Africa has always been a field for Proxy Conflicts. Iran's strengthening alliance with Yemen's Houthi movement has now extended into East African region. Somalia is already feeling the spillover effects further raising concerns about potential instability across the Horn of Africa. DW News (2025) reports that regional experts warn of Iran's covert support by way of funding or weapons for armed factions such as Al-Shabaab. Domestic Security Threats will become a palpable issue as "countries like Nigeria and Niger, already battling Boko Haram and Sahelian insurgents, face increased risks of weapon proliferation and ideological radicalization stemming from broader regional realignments" according to Deif (2025).

The political instability spoils the investment climate and adversely impact the financial stability. The consequence of such a situation is capital flight and local Currency Volatility. The uncertainty surrounding the war has also caused a fall in investor confidence and investors pulling out the funds from emerging African stock markets. Even earlier in similar situation, the IMF Report (2024) found foreign direct investment (FDI) decreased and capital outflows from African stock markets increased because of global capital shift toward safer assets. The decrease in investment may delay the infrastructure development throughout the continent and hamper efforts of economic recovery that was taking place following the COVID-19. Deif (2025) reports that the resulting capital flight has weakened African currencies and led to stock market volatility in Nigeria, Kenya, and South Africa. The US dollar has historically strengthened because of capital outflows triggered by global instability. Many African nations with significant dollar debt may subsequently experience this financial strain and inflation.

Any war-like situation often leads to the food insecurity of the most vulnerable population and cause debilitating humanitarian conditions. One such situation is rising food price which has been discussed before. The impact on transportation and increase in oil prices has pushed up the cost of food imports across Africa. The war has also put pressure on the world's food supply chains. Africa imports an extensive amount of food along with fertilizer and grain. African importers will face higher prices and delayed shipments and international insurance premiums climb and marine routes become riskier. For nations in the Horn of Africa that are already struggling with food insecurity, this disruption is especially severe (FAO, 2024). Sunrise Uganda (2025) reports that humanitarian agencies warn of worsening hunger among internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees in conflict-affected zones.

The issue of human security is often overlooked as a major consequence of war. The indirect effects of war may be a threat to human security, which includes political instability, food supply disruptions, economic instability, and health care issues. The disruption of the world's oil supply and the rise in energy prices, which put pressure on African economies that rely on fuel imports, are the main causes for concern. Consequently, this raises the price of food and transportation, pushing vulnerable people towards crisis. Furthermore, humanitarian responses and peacekeeping operations on the continent may be hampered if international attention and assistance are diverted from African crises—such as those in Sudan, the Sahel, and the Horn of Africa—to the Middle East. Sunrise Uganda (2025) writes that,

“reallocation of aid towards Middle Eastern humanitarian crises threaten to reduce international assistance to African countries already dealing with famine, conflict, and economic shocks.” Consequently, underfunded Africa will face added pressure on for development.

Difficult African Position

Africa has historically often turned into an unanticipated arena of rivalry and disaster whenever the big powers clash. The war runs the possibility of entangling other superpowers, including the USA, China and Russia. Then the rising costs of necessities, a decline in investment, and increased uncertainty brought on by the conflict could weaken the basis for Africa's economic development. With power and wealth at the center of these strategies, the area is more vulnerable to political manipulation and proxy conflicts, which creates the perfect environment for extremism to flourish.

Administrations in African countries may adopt different foreign policy stances due to internal political pressures and public opinion, which is frequently affected by religious and cultural elements. There are serious risks associated with the breakdown of regional unity. Africa's collective negotiating leverage on the international front is diminished by fragmentation, which also makes it more difficult for the continent to resolve internal issues through coordinated action. Africa must put neutrality, non-alignment, and intra-continental solidarity first to preserve its unity and make sure that regional peace and development are not jeopardized by exterior conflicts.

According to the New Arab Staff (2025), “African nations remain split, with some condemning Israel's strikes on Iran and others staying silent” in this ongoing confrontation. While several states, like Mauritania, Sudan, and South Africa, denounced the attacks, others chose not to do so. The African Union has called on all parties to refrain from taking additional military action and has voiced its “deep concern” about the violent escalation that left thousands of Iranians injured and hundreds of dead.

The polarization of views among African nations runs the risk of weakening regional unity as governments take differing positions, undermining years of progress toward continental solidarity and collective action. Reaching an agreement especially in relation to taking stand on conflicting sides, it is difficult for Africa due to the continent's diverse political philosophies, religious connections, and strategic interests. African countries often shape their stance on Iran or Israel based on their bilateral relationships or shared religious affiliations. For example, often

believed is that because of the anti-Western sentiments or a shared Islamic solidarity, nations like Sudan and Algeria gravitate towards Iran, while nations like Kenya and Ethiopia have worked with Israel on security and technology. These divergent viewpoints could cause diplomatic tensions within sub-regional organizations like SADC and ECOWAS or regional blocs like the African Union (AU), undermining attempts to promote collaboration on crucial continental issues like development, peace building, and climate change.

Concluding Remarks

The 2025 conflict between Israel and Iran has had far-reaching consequences for Africa, revealing the continent's susceptibility to global crises. A more immediate consequence has been the surge in oil prices, which has added pressure on oil-importing African nations and contributed to rising inflation. At the same time, instability in the Red Sea due to attacks from Iran-backed Houthi forces is hindering the shipping routes to East Africa. the consequences is the delivery delays and higher freight insurance costs. On the diplomatic front, African nations find themselves navigating delicate terrain as global powers push for alignment, complicating their foreign policy decisions as they are under pressure to take positions in a global conflict. This is straining Africa's relation with both western countries and BRICS nations. On the security front, conflict could spill into the unstable parts of Horn of Africa, overstressing fragile peacekeeping operations. Overall, these developments highlight Africa's deep integration into regional and global dynamics emphasizing the urgency for strategic diversification, enhanced regional collaboration, and stronger economic resilience to withstand external shocks.

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