

About the Journal

MAGLAW is a bi-annual, peer-reviewed, and refereed student law journal published by the Department of Laws, Panjab University, Chandigarh. In continuous publication since 2019, the journal provides a scholarly platform for students to engage with contemporary legal issues and showcase original research and academic writing of high quality.

MAGLAW specifically invites research essays from students enrolled in three-year and five-year LL.B., LL.M., and Ph.D. programmes, fostering a rigorous academic environment for legal scholars.

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About the Issue:

International Law at Crossroads: Navigating Geopolitical Friction

MAGLAW Journal, Volume V, Issue 1 (2026) [Special Issue] is centred on the historical juncture defined by a constant state of geopolitical friction. Over the last decade (2016–2026), the rules-based global order has faced systemic fractures, marked not by isolated diplomatic disagreements but by elongated geopolitical friction, structural paralysis of multilateral organizations, and armed conflicts that test the efficacy of international law. From the armed escalation in Eastern Europe and open hostility in the Middle East to simmering maritime boundary non-compliance in the South China Sea and aggressive posturing over colonial or historic territorial claims, the international arena is experiencing acute instability and disorder.

These contemporary disturbances are fundamentally reshaping international jurisprudence. Rather than turning to international tribunals as a routine avenue for administrative or trade reconciliation, sovereign states increasingly utilize international forums; including the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA); to contest existential legal matters concerning state responsibility, statutory definitions of genocidal intent, and the thresholds of state immunity. The systemic deadlock of enforcement mechanisms,

such as the UN Security Council and the World Trade Organization (WTO) Appellate Body, further compounds this friction, leaving international law at a critical crossroads between judicial determination and raw geopolitical power.

To anchor the academic submissions of our contributors, this table details the prominent ongoing and recently concluded international legal disputes that have come to define this turbulent decade. It is pertinent to note that these disturbances are not limited to just the following:

Sr. No.	Year	Parties / Region	Forum / Instrument	Dispute Type	Legal Issue Involved
1.	2023	South Africa v. Israel	International Court of Justice (ICJ)	International Humanitarian Law	Application of the 1948 Genocide Convention during military operations in the Gaza Strip.
2.	2022	Ukraine v. Russian Federation	International Court of Justice (ICJ)	Interventionism & Sovereign Immunity	Allegations of Genocide under the 1948 Convention and Financing of Terrorism under the ICSFT.
3.	2026	Democratic Republic of the Congo v. Rwanda	International Court of Justice (ICJ)	Armed Conflict & State Responsibility	Accountability for alleged military abuses, sovereignty violations, and territorial incursions.
4.	2016	Philippines v. China	Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) / UNCLOS	Maritime Boundaries & Sovereignty	Validity of China's "Nine-Dash Line" claim and maritime entitlements in the South China Sea under UNCLOS.
5.	2026	Pakistan v. India	Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA)	Transboundary Water Rights	Legal dispute over the technical interpretation and implementation of the historic 1960 Indus Waters Treaty.
6.	2019	The Gambia v. Myanmar	International Court of Justice (ICJ)	Human Rights / Erga Omnes	State responsibility for alleged genocidal acts against the Rohingya minority under the Genocide Convention.
7.	2021	United States v. European Union	World Trade Organization (WTO) DSB	Weaponization of Trade	Legality of unilateral steel/aluminum tariffs (Section 232) and aircraft subsidy disputes.

8.	2023	Iran v. United States	International Court of Justice (ICJ)	Economic Sanctions Legality	Violations of the 1955 Treaty of Amity due to the reimposition of unilateral U.S. financial sanctions.
9.	2018	Guyana v. Venezuela	International Court of Justice (ICJ)	Territorial Boundary Validity	Legal validity of the 1899 Arbitral Award concerning sovereignty over the Essequibo border region.
10.	2021	Armenia v. Azerbaijan	International Court of Justice (ICJ)	Human Rights / Racial Discrimination	Reciprocal claims of treaty violations under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD).

Table A: Landmark Contentious Cases and Arbitral Proceedings (2016–2026)