# The Human Security Approach in Confronting Pandemics within the Requirements of International Law: Challenges and Prospects

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**Abstract:**
Pandemics constitute a multidimensional challenge that goes beyond the health aspect to include direct threats to human security, as they affect the fundamental rights of individuals such as the right to life, health, education and work. In this context, international law emerges as a key regulatory framework for managing the collective response through the International Health Regulations and cooperation mechanisms via the World Health Organization. However, reality has revealed a structural deficiency in the effectiveness of these requirements, especially with regard to the equitable distribution of medical resources, weak international solidarity, and the conflict of national interests with collective commitments. This study aims to discuss the position of the human security approach in addressing these problems, by highlighting the challenges facing the international legal system, and proposing prospects for its development in a manner that enhances the protection of human beings as a central goal, and makes the response to pandemics more equitable and effective at the regional and international levels.

**Keywords :** human security approach, international law, pandemics.

**Introduction:**
The world has witnessed in recent decades the return of pandemics and transboundary diseases as one of the most prominent nontraditional challenges to security and stability, which has raised fundamental questions about the ability of international law to keep pace with these transformations. Pandemics do not have their effects limited to public health only, but extend to affect various dimensions of human security, including the right to life, food security, social stability, and economic development.

While international law, through its mechanisms and tools, foremost among them the International Health Regulations, is supposed to constitute the regulating framework for international cooperation in confronting pandemics, reality has revealed its limited effectiveness, as a result of the absence of sufficient international solidarity, the growth of narrow nationalist tendencies, in addition to the great disparity in the capacities of states to respond to health crises.
The importance of this study is manifested in the fact that it seeks to highlight how the human security approach can constitute an alternative and necessary entry point for strengthening international law in confronting pandemics, by refocusing attention on the protection of human beings as a central goal instead of merely protecting states. Its objectives are:

1.      Analyzing the dimensions of the threats posed by pandemics to human security.
2.      Evaluating the effectiveness of existing international legal requirements in dealing with pandemics.
3.      Proposing practical prospects for enhancing the response of international law to achieve greater equity and effectiveness.

**Study Problem:**
Despite the multiplicity of international legal mechanisms for confronting pandemics, foremost among them the International Health Regulations, recent experiences have highlighted deficiencies in the effectiveness of this system, whether at the level of international coordination or in ensuring equity in access to medical resources. This reality poses a fundamental problem represented in: To what extent can the human security approach contribute to enhancing the role of international law in confronting pandemics, and overcoming the challenges related to weak international solidarity and the conflict of national interests with the requirements of protecting human beings as a central goal?
Methodology Used: Based on the nature of the study, the descriptive method was adopted, as it helps to cover the different aspects of the topic, in terms of describing it and tracking its details, leading to results. The analytical method was also used, especially in dealing with some texts of international conventions and treaties and analyzing them.

**Study Division:**
**First Axis:** Pandemics as a Threat to Human Security: Dimensions and Repercussions
**First:** The concept of the human security approach and international law.
**Second:** The repercussions of pandemics on fundamental rights .
**Second Axis:** The International Legal Framework for Confronting Pandemics
**First:** The role of international law in protecting human rights in light of pandemics mechanisms and international agreements.
**Second:** Challenges that hinder the effectiveness of international law in confronting pandemics.
**Third Axis:** Prospects of the Human Security Approach in Enhancing the Effectiveness of International Law
**First:** How the concept of human security can redirect international policies.
**Second:** Proposals for reforming the international legal system to achieve fuller protection for humans against pandemics.
**First Axis: Pandemics as a Threat to Human Security: Dimensions and Repercussions:**
Pandemics and diseases have appeared widely at the world level and successively over long periods of time and these pandemics have caused many human and material losses and caused the deaths of millions of people so that they led to major demographic, political and economic changes. And our world has been exposed to many natural and unnatural calamities and disasters and these disasters and diseases have caused the deaths of many people in addition to being the main reason for exposing humans to continuous violations of their rights in light of global pandemics and others .

**First: The concept of the human security approach and international law.**
**1.      Human Security Approach:**

We find for human security a definition that it is " human security from fear (oppression, violence, marginalization) and need (deprivation and lack of social empowerment ) that is an attempt to create a dynamic that integrates humans into development and political priorities instead of focusing on the stability of the political system and its environment, as the Human Security Commission defines it as "protecting the essentials of survival in a way that advances human rights and freedoms "[1]The human security approach focuses on the individual instead of the state in every security building process, and makes it the basic starting point for analysis. The recommendations of the United Nations Development Programme report for 1994 on security identified seven main levels based on this approach:

1.      Individual : by protecting humans from various forms of physical violence and all the sources that feed it.

2.      Political: by ensuring a comprehensive democratic and rights political system.

3.      Societal: by ensuring the cohesion of the state's social fabric with its diversity and value richness.

4.      Economic: by ensuring a minimum income for each individual.

5.      Food : by ensuring a minimum of food for each individual.

6.      Environmental: by protecting humans from natural disasters and protecting the environment from the harm that humans inflict on it.

7.      Health: by ensuring a minimum of protection and health care from diseases and preventing them.

The 1994 Human Development Report identified four basic characteristics of human security, which are:[2]

1.      Human security is universal concerning all humans and in all parts of the world, in rich and poor nations. Because there are several common threats to all humans such as unemployment, drugs, pollution and human rights violations, and their severity may vary from one region to another in the world but they are all present and in growing forms.

2.      The components of human security are integrated each depending on the other, as the exposure of this security to threat is not confined to the national borders of states, but affects all nations and peoples.

3.      Early prevention is easier and less costly than subsequent intervention in maintaining human security as confronting those threats is less costly at their beginning than in the later stage.

4.      Human security is centered on humans and concerns the quality of life of humans in all parts of the world.

Justifying the adoption of the human security approach in order to understand the security policies of states would achieve social peace and multisectoral development. It is the theoretical framework that will allow analyzing international reality especially when talking about societal security and political security given the specificity of the state and systems in this world.

## 2.      Concept of International Law:

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[1] Rakkouk Mohand, Human Security and the Paradoxes of Globalization, date accessed 09/10/2018: via the link boulemkahel.yolasite.com/.../العولمة20%مفارقات20%و20%الإنساني20%الأمن.doc

[2] Jamal Mansar," Transformations in the Concept of Security: From Security of Means to Security of Ends," Notebooks of Politics and Law No. 01(2009), pp. 125-139.

Law is a set of rules that regulate the lives of persons in that society. Thus every society provides itself with means to organize its collective life and regulates its relations with societies in a consistent manner, according to established "rules of the game" known to all. Law has a customary role for establishing standards of conduct and a judicial role to ensure means of applying respect for provisions.

With the emergence of the term international law for the first time by the English philosopher Bentham who used it for the first time in his book that appeared in 1789[3]. And under international law whose focus of attention is the protection of human rights in general and this role increases during periods of wars and disasters and pandemics . And the reason for the increase in the role of international law in protecting human rights during abnormal conditions is that they become vulnerable to violation under the cover of measures to combat the virus and others and the abuse of using health restrictions for the purpose of achieving political purposes under the pretext of preventive health measures . Therefore the role of international law increases in importance in such conditions in order to protect human rights that international law guaranteed in all normal or abnormal conditions.[4]

International law is a set of rules and principles that regulate relations between states and international organizations and other entities with international status, with the aim of achieving international peace and security and regulating various dealings. International law includes multiple aspects, such as human rights, diplomatic relations, international treaties, economic and environmental laws, and humanitarian law that regulates armed conflicts. The sources of international law vary between international agreements, international customs, general legal principles, and decisions of international courts.

In an international society, states are the basic operating elements. States adopt agreements or treaties and each state remains maintaining its sovereignty, but it may choose to limit its sovereignty by providing commitments through such treaties, which limit its freedom of movement in certain areas in a manner compatible with national law. Thus, international law is the set of rules that states adopt to regulate relations either between them (public international law) or between individuals or legal entities of different nationalities (private international law). National legal systems vary but can be grouped into major legal families. Some systems have been influenced by Roman and German law and some by Anglo Saxon law and some by religious legislation especially Islamic law and some by an idea like communism. But international law constitutes a compromise between all these sources and customs. It expresses the general rules that states have agreed to organize their relations and share a minimum of principles and defend the concept of international public order. We also note the expression of existing international courts of various legal systems, in terms of composition, administration, shared rules and principles.

In fact some difficulties have arisen in defining the term international law, as this term was first used by Jeremy Bentham in 1870 in his work: «Introduction to the Principles of Ethics and Legislation» and this term replaced another old term which is «law of nations» or what is called in French: «law of peoples». And (Oppenheim) defined international law in a traditional definition by saying «that it is a set of customary rules and treaties that states consider binding law in their relations with each other». And the scope of this law revolves around two basic branches: the law

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[3] Dr. Issam Al Atiyah, Public International Law, Al Sanhouri Library, Ed./2005 p.23.
[4] Mahmoud Sharif Bassiouni, International Criminal Law: General Principles, Dar Al Shorouk, Egypt .200

of nations (law of peoples), and international agreements and treaties (international agreements and treaties), which are two different branches from the standpoint of theoretical foundations and they should not be confused.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights issued by the United Nations Organization in 1948 stipulated in Article 3 that (Every individual has the right to life, liberty and security of person)[5]. And therefore the right to life and the right to liberty are among the rights inherent to every human being . And he has the right to exercise them at all times and circumstances because they are internationally protected rights .

At the same time Article 2 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights indicated that all civil and political rights are the right of all humans without any discrimination between one person and another or gender or race and in all circumstances and that all states must establish their domestic legislation in line with the provisions of this covenant and everything related to human rights[6] .

**Second: The repercussions of pandemics on fundamental rights .**

And pandemics are one of the abnormal exceptional circumstances that the world in general or a regional group always witnesses . And the spread of these pandemics causes many human casualties as well as many economic, social, political and other damages . And therefore the impact of pandemics on human rights is a great impact .

And since one of the objectives of international law is to protect human rights and under any circumstances and that the basic goal of public international law since its inception is to preserve the concept of humanity and surround it with clear and transparent legal frameworks, which aim to protect the rights and freedoms of all peoples in the world[7].

And the last of the pandemics is the Corona 19 pandemic that struck most countries of the world and which at its beginning the world was not aware of the seriousness of this pandemic and over time this pandemic spread increasingly in most countries of the world which prompted governments of states to take numerous measures aimed at controlling this pandemic and these states imposed many measures that included closing borders and airports and stopping transportation inside and outside the state as well as implementing quarantine measures and prohibiting leaving the home as well as stopping all levels of education through closing kindergartens, schools and universities and moving to distance learning (electronic learning) and restricting communications in addition to many measures that restricted human rights. But in fact these measures taken by states contain restrictions and violations of human rights and some governments of states have applied these measures and restrictions at the time of the Corona pandemic the aim of which was to control this pandemic but the implementation of these measures must be coupled with conditions to ensure they are not used for the purpose of violating humans but on the other hand we see that some governments of states have exploited the period of the Corona pandemic and imposed many measures under the pretext of controlling the pandemic but the aim of which was to restrict human rights .

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[5] Universal Declaration of Human Rights, United Nations Organization, 1948, Article/3.

[6] International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, United Nations Organization, 1966, Article /2.

[7] Haider Adham Abd Al Hay, Studies in Human Rights Law, Dar Al Hamed for Publishing and Distribution, Amman, Jordan, 2009, p.9

Where some governments assaulted and arrested citizens under the pretext of violating quarantine rules and also prevented the right to demonstrate and sit in or any manifestation of protest against the policies of those governments and carried out many arrest, raid and arrest campaigns against citizens as an abuse of power under Corona pandemic measures which is considered a violation of human rights, as it is supposed that the implementation of the concept of detention the purpose of which is to prevent the accused from fleeing and not any other purpose whether during the Corona pandemic period or without it[8].And among the human rights that were violated during the Corona pandemic period are economic rights the results of quarantine measures were staying at home and not going out and due to this measure many citizens lost their work or the right to work and therefore negatively affected the living standard of the citizen, the economic rights of humans which international law guaranteed the state must compensate citizens financially so that the citizen can continue to live decently after losing his work due to quarantine measures .Also among the human rights that were affected in light of the Corona pandemic is press and media freedom where many governments of states imposed restrictions on press freedom and freedom of expression which caused the closure of many channels and newspapers and the cancellation of many festivals, concerts, gatherings, cultural forums, workshops and seminars. And these measures resulted in the violation of human rights in terms of and expression .Also this was reflected in terms of legislating laws or issuing instructions or supporting the ruling authority by preventing demonstrations or conducting referendums or any political gatherings or any type of protests against the authority by legislating laws and instructions that prevent all these peaceful manifestations, exploiting the precautionary measures taken in light of the pandemic which is considered a flagrant violation of human rights in abnormal circumstances .And the High Commissioner for Human Rights issued guiding principles specific to Corona 19 . Where the Commissioner considered that the Corona pandemic is considered the most difficult test for societies, states and individuals during the modern era . And everyone ( governments and individuals ) must cooperate and show solidarity to confront this virus, in order to mitigate its social and economic effects as well as its negative effects that affected human rights as a result of the quarantine measures that states took to confront the emerging virus[9] .

Human Rights Watch said in a report it issued today that the first year of the global pandemic resulting from the Coronavirus caused rights crises in all parts of the world. As the year approaches since the World Health Organization announced the classification of Coronavirus as a pandemic, many countries must change course urgently to ensure exit from this health crisis in a way that respects rights. Governments must work together to expand the scope of vaccine manufacturing and distribution to achieve comprehensive and equitable access to the vaccine.[10]

**Second Axis: The International Legal Framework for Confronting Pandemics**
Health is a fundamental human right indispensable for the enjoyment of other human rights , and every human being has the right to enjoy the highest attainable standard of health that leads to

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[8] Khairi Ahmad Al Kabaash, Criminal Protection of Human Rights, Munshaat Al Maarif, Alexandria, 2008, p. 86.
[9] Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Guiding Principles Specific to COVID 19, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights website, 2020
[10] Accessed on 26/09/2025 via the following website: https://www.hrw.org/ar/news/2021/03/04/378072

living with dignity , and the realization of the right to health can be pursued through numerous and integrated approaches such as developing health policies , or implementing health programs developed by the World Health Organization.[11] At the outset we point out that the term guarantees means those principles and legal rules contained in an international or domestic legal system, which aim to protect and ensure rights and freedoms, which are called legal guarantees.[12]

**First: The role of international law in protecting human rights in light of pandemics mechanisms and international agreements.**

The World Health Organization is one of the specialized agencies affiliated with the United Nations, it was established in 1946 and currently has 194 member states, and its headquarters is in the city of Geneva.[13] Its mission is to promote the highest possible level of health for all without discrimination based on race, religion, gender or economic or political status, considering that the right to health is a fundamental human right guaranteed by international law. The World Health Assembly, composed of all member states, carries out the main legislative function of the organization.[14]

During the Corona pandemic, the organization found itself before an unprecedented test, as it initiated to coordinate global response efforts, through disseminating preventive measures, providing technical support and treatments, and cooperating with pharmaceutical companies to develop an effective vaccine. However, these efforts faced major difficulties represented in the opposition of some governments to the measures, weak international solidarity, and accusations of absence of justice in the distribution of vaccines and treatments. The organization was also criticized regarding the slowness of response in the early stages, and regarding not taking firm positions towards the violations committed under the cover of quarantine and closure measures, which affected fundamental human rights.[15]

Nevertheless, the role of the organization remains pivotal in coordinating international health policies, concluding relevant treaties, and cooperating with governmental and nongovernmental organizations, including the Red Cross, Doctors Without Borders and the World Bank. However, what the pandemic produced in terms of challenges and accusations reflects the urgent need to reform the organization's work mechanisms and enhance its ability to balance the requirements of protecting public health and respecting human rights.[16]

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[11] General Comments Adopted by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, in, Twenty-Second Session (2000) General Comment No. 14: The Right to the Enjoyment of the Highest Attainable Standard of Health (Article 12 . p.82

[12] Ahmad Al Rashidi, Human Rights A Comparative Study in Theory and Application Al Shorouk International Library, Cairo, Ed. , .156 , p.2003

[13] Dr. Nasser Mohieddine Mallouhi, Nanomedicine Nanotechnology Medicine, Dar Al Ghasak for Publishing, Syria, 2019, p.160 .

[14] Daniel Innerarity, Pandemic of Democracy, Philosophy in the Coronavirus Crisis, Galaxy Gutenberg Publication, Spain, 2020, p.11.

[15] Fatima Ahmad Al Khazaalah, Communication and Education Technology, Dar Amjad for Publishing and Distribution, Amman, 2005, p.40

[16] Dr . Muhammad Kamel Leilah, Political Systems, Dar Al Fikr Al Arabi, Cairo, 1961, p.892.

**Second: Challenges that hinder the effectiveness of international law in confronting pandemics.**

The world during the Corona pandemic showed several variations and differences, in terms of managing the pandemic, where states and blocs remained unable to understand the spread of the pandemic first, and how to develop a successful strategy like some states, such as China as a model, in addition to the absence of international cooperation mechanisms,[17] and human solidarity, which formed a widening gap between a group of blocs, most notably the European Union which showed through some of its members, such as Italy from its overwhelming anger, and its isolation in confronting the pandemic, which resulted in numerous infections and deaths due to the rapid spread of the pandemic,[18] which called for the removal of the European Union flag as an expression of the absence of any support or solidarity from the latter, despite the late awakening. But despite that some states within the European Union differed in developing a strategy to confront the crisis, all these matters contributed and even hastened the removal of the European Union flag within Italy, and raising the Chinese flag as a token of its solidarity, and establishing strong relations in the future, unlike the abandonment of the "America First" policy of old allies, such as the European Union which may constitute a blow to America and support for the rising Chinese dragon in a steady and balanced manner, which formed a set of repercussions of pandemics on international security:

The broad concept of security as it includes economic, environmental and political dimensions, and in this framework identified three repercussions of pandemics on security:

1 Political Stability: Pandemics challenge the ability of political systems to confront their dangers, especially in developing countries that do not have good health infrastructure, which raises concern in society, and may push it to resentment of the existing political system.[19]

2 Economic Growth: Pandemics leave an impact on economic growth, in the case of Corona, for example, Wuhan is considered one of the most important industrial cities, and the spread of the virus caused the closure of factories and stopping the movement of the economy, which cost the city huge economic losses, and the Shanghai Stock Exchange was affected, where it declined by 8%, and economic growth in China declined by about 0.2% in the first quarter of 2020 due to Corona. And the value of losses is expected to reach 62 billion dollars, and experts also expected that the global economy would incur losses exceeding 160 billion dollars due to the virus.[20]

3 Human Security: Pandemics pose escalating risks to human security, especially in light of the current features of globalization, and ease of movement from one region to another, which warns

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[17] Idris Al Kirini, American Leadership and Pressure of Crises, article published on the electronic website http://www.alkhaleej.ae

[18] Batoul Sulaiman, Cuba the Besieged... Partner of Italy and the World in Combating Corona, article published on the electronic website, https://al-akhbar.com/World/285732

[19] Jad Mustafa Al Bustani, Muhammad Al Sayyid, Future of the Liberal Model in the Post Corona World, research study on the website of the Arab Democratic Center https://democraticac.de

[20] Sabri Al Hou, Security Council Meeting an Opportunity for International Solidarity to Confront the Spread of Corona? Or the Beginning of China's Leadership of the World? Article published on Banassa website https://banassa.com

of the possibility of the virus transmitting relatively easily, despite the emergence of the virus in China, it has moved to about 23 countries so far.[21]

**Third Axis: The repercussions of health security on international relations in light of the Corona pandemic.**

The Corona pandemic had positive and negative effects on international relations; due to its enormous political, economic and social repercussions. In terms of positive effects we will find that the pandemic has restored the power and influence of the national state as a main actor in international relations and internal and external interactions, after its role declined in recent decades in favor of other actors, such as international and regional organizations and multinational corporations, which had an active role in determining many global policies at the expense of the interests of states and their citizens, and thus states became more powerful and influential in achieving the interests of their citizens according to their capabilities and capacities, and in increasing their role in taking precautionary and economic measures to reduce negative effects and protect their citizens. The repercussions of Corona also contributed to the increasing role of the state in the economic field and in production, as the state is no longer the guard according to the neoliberal theory which restricts state functions to law enforcement, defense and foreign policy, but has become the strong central force capable of confronting crises, all of this gave the national state more confidence among its citizens, which gave it more strength and influence on the international scene .

And it is worth noting that the Corona pandemic has also contributed to the decline of the role of non state actors, such as organizations, militias and armed movements within states, which escalated their role significantly during the past decade due to the political changes witnessed by the Arab world since 2011, such as ISIS, AlQaeda and armed organizations in Iraq, Syria, Yemen and Libya, which posed a challenge to the national state and weakened its power and institutions, which had a serious negative impact in dealing with challenges. And naturally those militias were unable to confront the danger of the virus, and retreated in favor of the state's role in taking quarantine measures, imposing curfews, providing goods and others, which always confirms the importance of the role of the national state, as national armies have had important roles other than military roles, as the Corona crisis highlighted that different states relied mainly on their armed forces in managing the crisis, and in containing the danger of the spread and expansion of the virus, and also highlighted the economic role of armies in providing goods and services. Therefore all of this was a reminder to states of the need to deepen their interdependence and achieve their mutual needs, in order to miss the opportunity for military and sectarian organizations and militias that tore apart states and peoples.

And this pandemic led to achieving a kind of balance and stability in international relations, through structural changes to some extent in the international system, and transitioning it from a unipolar world led by the United States of America to a multipolar world. It is mentioned that the United States was making accusations at the time of the pandemic, while China and Russia were providing humanitarian and therapeutic assistance to a number of Third World countries, but also to some European countries (Italy, France, Serbia) for humanitarian and ethical reasons, not

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[21] Noam Chomsky, Post Corona is More Dangerous than the Current Situation, article published on the electronic website https://www.independentarabia.com

political and self interested, and this matter led to a state of solidarity and cooperation between countries of the world.

And China could have exploited the state of economic and financial weakness of affected countries to create dependencies, not only in Africa but also in Europe, through its humanitarian assistance and support for strategic infrastructure especially with increased demand for its resources.

There is indication of the existence of another aspect of work to combat the virus related to security policy, during the coronavirus crisis, Venezuela and Colombia began exploring possibilities of cooperation in combating the pandemic through the Pan American Health Organization. And in Libya, international actors engaged in negotiations to reach a ceasefire due to COVID19, and the world also witnessed support from the UAE, Qatar and Kuwait to Iran with medical assistance. As for the Philippines, President (Rodrigo Duterte) ordered a ceasefire for one month in fighting against communist rebels, to allow the armed forces to focus on fighting the virus. And even the United States, despite years of conflict with Russia, sent humanitarian assistance to the Abkhazia region .

The COVID19 crisis has proven that the isolation of any state is not possible, but costly, as trade related disruptions, such as closing ports and airports, may also prevent vital supplies from reaching places that need help. Therefore, such solutions may lead to serious economic consequences at the global level, as well as for countries that depend on trade, or rely heavily on tourism as a source of national income, regardless of the fact that environmental benefits may be greater than the benefits for these countries .

And within the framework of the positive benefits of the pandemic on international relations, the pandemic showed that Asian power and at its head China is determined to acquire a new centrality in the new world system, through its control over the consequences of the pandemic with its high capacity for social control, unlike many Western countries and at their head the United States which could not control the pandemic, and incurred large human and economic losses, and this in turn will open new prospects and international relations between China and Third World countries, at the expense of Western colonial countries, and thus this will increase the openness of Third World countries to China, without looking at the political and security calculations that shackled Third World countries for decades, and this contributed to China reshaping the world system in its image with the BRICS group. ([22]

The Corona pandemic has proven that the cohesion and cooperation of relations of states with each other contributes significantly to warding off pandemics and epidemics, and an example of this is what happened when the Ebola virus spread in West Africa during 2014, as one of the factors that contributed to the success of containing the epidemic was the cohesion of international and diplomatic relations, along with military support. However this was not the case with the Corona pandemic, it is true that the army has a logistical role, but soft power and international relations are often as effective as hard power when it comes to health security, or when military and diplomatic humanitarian assistance is provided as a form of smart power. Among the paradoxes that occurred during the COVID19 crisis is that European countries, such as the Netherlands,

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[22] Sabri Al Hou, Security Council Meeting an Opportunity for International Solidarity to Confront the Spread of Corona? Or the Beginning of China's Leadership of the World? Article published on Banassa website https://banassa.com/orbites/17659.html?fbclid=IwAR2DkJpHLMhz7ZabSpXdHLTlVAxBiStAHyDD2Ql gnM6qfKN4lLi5kVq1SVA , visit date 28/09/2025

Slovakia, Spain, the Czech Republic and Italy, sought help from China to help them confront the outbreak of the pandemic, after other European Union countries let them down. And it goes without saying that their request for assistance from a country like China, which is their first adversary in security and politics, and even their acceptance to receive the assistance they requested immediately, reflects the extent of desperation they reached. While China dealt with the first wave of the pandemic successfully, which enabled it and will enable it in the future to use this experience in its favor.[23]

As for the negative aspects of the Corona pandemic on international relations, this pandemic has pushed a number of countries in the world and at their head the United States, Germany, Britain and China to impose protectionist restrictions on their national products, by raising the customs value on imports, until it reached the point that the United States imposed new customs duties on its imports from China that reached 25%. And China responded in kind, as it imposed additional fees on American exports coming to it, and those fees ranged between 525%. And this of course led to a decline in cooperation between the two most important economic powers in the world, which negatively affected global trade exchanges, and led to raising their prices significantly, and one of its effects was that it harmed Third World countries that depend in many of their needs on imports. And all of this exposed the world system to cracks, and pushed both China and the United States to remobilize and redistribute the global conflict in a different manner.

And if the curfew and closing of borders and airports between many countries of the world has led to preventing the arrival of the pandemic to their citizens, then it at the same time led to a decline in tourist movement between countries of the world, which played an important role as soft power in getting acquainted and bringing closer viewpoints between many peoples and countries of the world, which contributed to solving many global problems, as this (tourist) sector contributes to feeding the budgets of a number of countries in the world. And if we look at the size of losses that affected this sector we will find that they exceeded 50 billion dollars according to estimates of the World Tourism Organization.

The strict Chinese closure operations directly affected the volume of global trade, as a result of their impact on the Chinese economy, and then on the largest factories in the world, as it is known that China is considered one of the most important trading partners for most countries. According to World Trade Organization data China is the largest exporter, and the second largest importer in the world of many goods, including oil and iron ore, and based on that the decline in China's economic activity would affect the decline in global trade exchanges, which represented a lever for cooperation between countries of the world.[24]

And it should be noted that the polarization policy adopted by major powers, and the lack of trust between many governments of the world, and limiting cooperation between states to the exchange of some information and medical equipment, all of this has led to the failure of many countries of the world to deal with the pandemic, which reflected negatively on the global cooperative response

[23] Dominique Vervoort, Xiya Ma, Jessica G Y Luc " COVID-19 Pandemic: A Time for Collaboration-- and A Unified Global Health Front " , Oxford University Press in association with the International Society for Quality in Health Care, mzaa065,27 June 2020 .

[24] Zeinab Mustafa Rouweiha, Limited Response: The Role of the African Union in Light of the Corona Crisis (Study), study on the electronic website, Al Sahrawi https://www.saharawi.net/?p=46340 visit date: 28/09/2025

to the pandemic collectively, and thus wasted opportunities for success in permanently eliminating the pandemic.

The failure of containment efforts globally, regionally and locally led during and after the period of the spread of the pandemic to restricting travel and immigration, and disrupting international supply chains as a result of strict trade restrictions, and this later led to the entry of the global economy into a phase of complete recession, which caused economic and social pressures in many countries of the world, which in turn led to political instability in most countries of the world.[25]

And in this context several statements were issued by officials of some countries, especially from European countries that suffered severely the repercussions of the pandemic. For example, the Serbian President (Aleksandar Vucic) denied the existence of European solidarity, and explained that this solidarity is merely an illusion and a fictional story on the other hand, French President (Emmanuel Macron) warned of the collapse of the European Union "as a political project", unless it supports the devastated economies, and helps them recover from the pandemic and in Austria, Chancellor (Sebastian Kurz) was quoted as saying: "After the crisis ends, there will be difficult decisions within the European Union and thus, the Union seems divided and disappointing, and its member states could not have the ability to provide assistance to their neighbors who share many values with it, and its leaders failed to employ their knowledge and expertise in preparing plans to combat the pandemic.

And whatever the case, the extent of the state's health preparedness and readiness may become a criterion for the extent of its strength and position on the international scene, and a determinant of the degree of its security and the security of its people. And if the COVID19 pandemic represents a global crisis that does not recognize national borders, then on the other hand it contributes to enhancing national sovereignty, and forces states to selfsufficiency, as the varying impact of COVID19 on societies, regions and countries has raised a broader discussion about how to increase resilience, and how to better prepare for health shocks, when many states, including members of the World Trade Organization, were forced to make a decision to close borders and impose travel restrictions to contain the spread of the pandemic. And while acknowledging that this closure was not driven by trade considerations, but for public health reasons, it necessarily had a significant negative impact on trade, tourism and education sectors, which requires states in the future to prepare to reduce these impacts, and follow alternative local measures that enhance their selfsufficiency.

**Conclusion and findings:**

The study of the subject of international law in its part related to health security through highlighting international efforts to confront various threats that affect global health security, leads us to a chronological tracking of the various stages that the concept of health security has gone through especially in light of the emergence of many diseases and pandemics that posed a direct threat to global security and health, and starting from all of this it was necessary to find a comprehensive approach aimed at securing the lives of individuals from various health risks and accordingly the study reached a set of results and findings perhaps the most important of which are:

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[25] Edgar Morin, On the Coronavirus Pandemic, Health Isolation, Science, Globalization and the Future of Humanity, on the electronic website, https://couua.com

1.      Health security is considered one of the most important dimensions of national security, because it is directly related to the human being who is the basic building block of states, and the basis for achieving desired development, and because any threat that harms health security will harm the national security of any state.

2.      The importance of health security requires states to redraw national policies so that health security is placed on the list of priorities of those policies, and achieving health security for the state requires it to cooperate and coordinate with countries of the world to benefit from their expertise and experiences.

3.      The nature of threats affecting health security, especially those related to infectious and transboundary diseases and pandemics, requires the state to have international cooperation in confronting them.

4.      The study proved the validity of its hypothesis, as the spread of the Corona 19 pandemic led to achieving rapprochement and cooperation between a group of countries of the world (China, Russia, Italy, Serbia, Turkey, South American countries), some of which provided humanitarian, medical and relief assistance to each other, while it led to tension in relations between other countries (some Western European countries: France, Italy, Germany, the United States)

5.      The study showed that the application of the ideas and premises of idealist theory contributed to the realization of cooperation, solidarity, security and stability in international relations, while international relations tended towards clash, conflict and tension when realist theory principles were applied, and when states presented their own national interests at the expense of other countries.