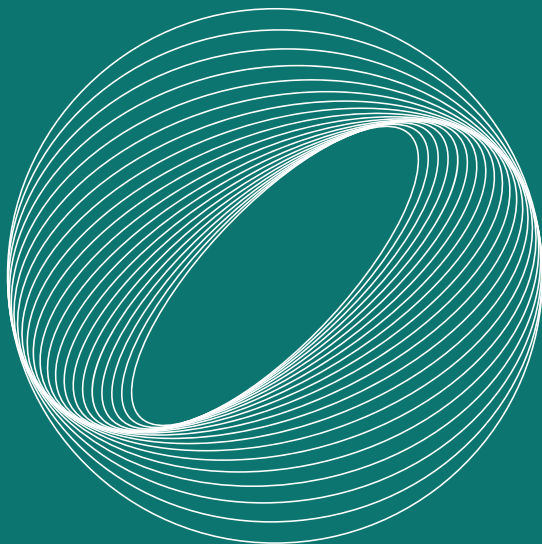




Institute of  
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DEPT. OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY



# ***FORTNIGHTLY REVIEW #64***

**1 FEBRUARY – 15 FEBRUARY 2024**

## SOUP IN THE PAINTING OR NO SOUP AT ALL?

On January 28, 2024, two climate activists threw soup at the Mona Lisa at the Louvre Museum in Paris, shouting slogans supporting a sustainable food system as farmers protested the government's failure to address low wages and other issues (Moench, 2024). This nonviolent action has caused public confusion, dividing opinions on the action. Some argue that this action is not counterproductive, but it is a way to raise public awareness about the urgency of climate change. However, some people are dissatisfied with the activists' method. They question the relationship between throwing soup, climate change, and the painting, claiming that property destruction is both unacceptable and irrelevant. This divide raises a unique question of how throwing soup can effectively address climate change.

Although their motives differ, a significant aspect of their action is the endeavour to shock the world, mobilizing and drawing public attention to their cause. In some cases, the number of 'views' and 'surprises' generated by this action will receive far more international media attention than any other mainstream nonviolent method, such as a demonstration (Feinberg et al., 2020).

Despite several backlashes from public views, an activist throwing soup at a famous painting is perceived as violent, radical, and, to some extent, ecoterrorism, whereas climate inaction is not (Pote, 2022). In this case, the French government has failed to provide farmers with better access to healthy food and a decent income (Aljazeera, 2024), and this inaction is not typically associated with the term 'violent'. Furthermore, the public must understand the message behind their actions, such as how today's society may force activists to humiliate themselves by throwing soup, chaining themselves on hot streets, and risking their lives to disrupt the toxic structural system and make changes. (Dollin Ardan, HI UGM 2021).

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## LESSONS LEARNED FROM SOUTH AFRICA'S SUPPORT FOR PALESTINE THROUGH THE ICJ

South Africa's hearing in ICJ gained much support from the international community. Demonstrations of international solidarity are evident through the support extended by nations such as Bolivia, Brazil, and Colombia, along with millions worldwide advocating for an end to the massacre (Corbyn, 2024). Substantial support originates from countries in the Global South, reflecting a shared experience of occupation and plight for freedom. Despite Israeli aggression against Gaza, Palestine is still going without any sign of abating.

As of 14 January, the President of Namibia released a response supporting Palestine and criticizing Germany for defending Israel's genocidal onslaught on Palestine (Isilow, 2024). Namibia's statement was based on their experience of being colonized. The statement also highlighted racism, dual standards, and blatant showcase impunity, as said in both Western countries' acts of silence and their interventions. Indonesia and Slovenia also backed the ICJ proceedings against Israel. Slovenia also stated they would participate in the proceeding in February (The New Arab, 2024). Indonesia's Foreign Minister Marsudi is still gathering input for the February proceedings. Mexico and Chile also decided to refer Israel to the International Criminal Court. Mexico made the decision based on numerous reports from the United Nations detailing many incidents that could constitute crimes—which, according to the country, should be under ICC's jurisdiction (Aljazeera, 2024).

The sustained support from the Global South reflects the capacity of these nations to express their aspirations and opposition against the occupation and ongoing massacre. This signals a transformation in the international political arena, moving away from exclusive dominance by the North. It is crucial for this momentum to endure, not just to bring an end to the ongoing massacre against the Palestinians but also to address Israel's impunity for violations of international law. **(Fikri Haikal Panggabean, General Public).**

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# WHAT PURPOSE DOES THE SHIFT TO CRYPTOCURRENCY SERVE IN ARGENTINA?

One of the cryptocurrencies, Bitcoin, has experienced widespread adoption in Latin American countries, including Argentina. The tweet of Diana Mondino, the Argentine Minister of Foreign Affairs, has expressed Argentina's position that the government endorses the use of Bitcoin in contractual agreements (Mondino, 2023). Despite its rising popularity as an electronic means of transaction, Bitcoin has received scepticism from governments because of its nature, which is accessible from the intervention of central banks (Baer et al., 2023). In the case of Argentina, Bitcoin has emerged as a popular currency and innovation used for transactions, especially amid growing distrust in economic and government institutions due to historical inflation and devaluation issues (Cifuentes, 2019).

The never-ending currency battle vis-à-vis the US Dollar and relatively high political and economic pessimism towards the government have led Argentines and their newly-elected president, Javier Milei, to embrace Bitcoin (Ward, 2023). Amid Argentina's turbulent financial past, the embrace of Bitcoin offers promise in addressing hyperinflation and bolstering economic resilience as the finite amount of its currency could serve as a buffer against inflation and help Argentinians maintain their purchasing power. Its smartphone accessibility and low transaction costs provide a viable transaction alternative, particularly for the unbanked, circumvents foreign currency exchange restrictions (Moreno, 2016; Liu, 2019). However, the main challenge that may hinder the mainstream adoption of Bitcoin as a long-term solution is harmonising with conventional financial institutions that place crucial environments to protect investors. The absence of unified rules among all Argentinian federal states on cryptocurrencies and regulatory gaps among institutions also affect the establishment of essential infrastructures to prosecute cybercrimes (e.g. money laundering and financing of terrorism) and control cryptocurrencies (Bethular & Grassi, 2023). Another challenge is pertinent to the accessibility of Bitcoin across Argentine society. Moreover, the limited supply cap of Bitcoin at the amount of 21 million to mine puts absolute limits on the sustainability of Bitcoin (Ulaşan, 2022). **(Jessica Devy Ayuningtyas, HI UGM 2021).**

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