

AMITY NOIDA MODEL UNITED NATIONS 2013

# LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES



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Dear Delegates,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to ANMUN 2013 and particularly to the Arab League. My name is Sukrit Virmani and this is my third year in ANMUN. I have always found the Middle East to be fascinating and writing this study guide was an absolute treat. The executive board has spent hours researching, writing and editing this Background Guide. This guide is designed to be the beginning of your research process. Indeed I learned a great deal in the process. It is my hope that as you read and consider the issues raised in the guide you too, whether or not you are very familiar with the Middle East, will gain an appreciation of the role that the Arab League has played in the region, and form your own opinion as to what role it could play. Most of all, I hope we will all do our homework and come prepared to articulate our own positions, listen and consider those of others, and ultimately make the most of our committee.

Feel free to contact us with any questions or doubts in the coming weeks and Good Luck in your preparation for the conference. Of course, we will be discussing important issues, but fun will be the name of the game both within and outside of the committee. See you in August.

Sukrit Virmani  
Secretary General

Oditi Anand  
Deputy Secretary General

Amrita Walia  
Rapporteur

## History

The League of Arab States was formed in 1945 with a goal of strengthening economic and political ties. The original members were: Egypt, Iraq, Transjordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, and Syria. Today, the League of Arab States, or Arab League as it is commonly referred to, has 22 members. They have come together over issues of political integration, economic cooperation, and security measures.

One of the main concerns for several Arab states was the formation of Israel in 1948. This action convinced several Arab states to join the Arab League, so they could be unified in collective defense, strengthen Arab cultural across borders, and to safeguard their sovereignty from potentially intrusive neighboring states. From this, a mutual defense treaty was created in 1950. From that point, the Arab League has been committed to further integrating themselves through other economic and political means.

A common market for the Arab League was established in 1965, with the ultimate goal of total economic integration, through the removal of

tariffs and duties on goods and services, especially in agriculture, as well as the free flow of labor across borders.

In addition to a common market and collective defense policy, the Arab League has also undertaken several initiatives that promote the well-being of all Arab citizens. This includes the establishment of the Arab League Educational, Cultural, and Scientific Organization, which was established in 1964. This organization aims to promote universal education, works towards advancing women's rights in Arab society, and promotes Arab culture and heritage.

The member states of the Arab League are all granted one vote on matter brought before the League Council. However, any resolutions passed are only binding to the states that voting in favor of it.

## Introduction

The concept of an “Arab Spring” offers as an opportunity to understand historical changes in the Middle East such as colonialism and decolonization. The Arab spring is a term used to describe the series of events that spread across the Middle East. Events such as protests, wars and public agitation have been at the center stage ever since 18<sup>th</sup> December 2010

The common man wants to bring down the regime and wants democracy to take over. Many protests received violent responses from the authorities

Anti-government demonstrations occurred in many countries in the Middle with protesters inspired by the proceedings in the neighboring countries. The protests began in Tunisia and spread to Egypt, Libya, Iran, Yemen, Syria, and other countries. This resulted in the downfall of embattled Egyptian president, Libya's Muammar al-Qaddafi, and Tunisia's Gen. Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali, and led to international sanctions against Syria's dictator.

Taking a closer look at the post protest era, one can only see disappointment and resentment. The changes such as a civic state and rights, security, and all issues for which the common man fought so hard are not in place. On the contrary, turmoil, violence, hatred, and political instability are taking place and seem dreadfully prevalent.



"Winning the Arab Spring"

## Egypt

Egypt was once known as a nation of stability in the Middle East, its ex-president, Hosni Mubarak (in power 1981– 2011) assumed the presidency on 14 October 1981, following the assassination of President Anwar



Sadat.

His almost thirty-year presidency made him Egypt's longest-serving ruler. After the Tunisian conflict arose, it inspired protesters to speak out in other nations, notably Egypt. The protests emerged, allowing the people to speak out against police brutality, the restrictions of freedoms including the freedom to vote and the freedom of speech, corruption, high unemployment, inflation, and minimum wages. The people utilized their protests as a way express their distaste for Mubarak and against the Emergency Law that had been

implemented since 1981. Under this Emergency Law, elections were postponed and the people did not have a voice in the course of their government's progression. The protest was mostly lead by the Egyptian youth (members of society who were technology friendly and able to spread their message easily over the Internet) but others joined the revolution including the formerly outlawed Muslim Brotherhood. There is not one dominant leader to the protests, as a general trend in the uprisings has been a movement away from the status quo, returning more power to the hands of the people. On 25<sup>th</sup> January 2011 President Hosni Mubarak dismissed his government, later appointing a new cabinet.



On the 27th January 2011 the Egyptian government shut down the

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Internet in Egypt. SMS and other services were also blocked, nearly all routes to Egyptian networks were taken down at the same time. It was also reported that the Egyptian government shut down official Domain Name Servers.

Later that year On 10 February Mubarak had resigned from the presidency and transferred power to the Armed Forces of Egypt (Note: The Armed Forces of Egypt promised to lift the nation's thirty-year "emergency laws" after dissolving the Egyptian Parliament and suspending the Constitution of Egypt.) Hosni Mubarak and his interior minister were convicted to life in prison on charges of premeditated murder of peaceful protestors during the 2011 Egyptian revolution. On 24 June 2012, Mohamed Morsi won Egypt's presidential election, thus becoming the first democratically elected president (NOTE: Morsi was a leading member in the Muslim Brotherhood)

**But The Egyptian government is now in shambles again,** on 22 November 2012 a new wave of protests erupted further granting rise what is now called the "2013 Egyptian coup d'état". This recent uprising on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of July 2013 had the

military overthrow the government and have President Morsi removed from power, This is a very hostile and insecure arrangement, and it is now uncertain how the nation will rebuild and reshape.



Egypt still faces many of the same challenges that sparked the popular revolt against the Mubarak regime, including anger over police brutality and torture, rampant unemployment and new economic challenges. The uncertainty that has paralyzed business has only grown in the past two years.

Also ever since the Arab spring, restrictions on religion include the use of force against religious groups; failure to prevent religious discrimination; favouritism of Islam over other religions; prohibitions on Muslims converting from Islam to other religions; and restrictions on religious literature or broadcasting. Not only were each of these government restrictions present

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in Egypt, but the intensity of each of these restrictions was higher than in other countries.

### Government Restrictions on Religion Highest in Egypt

2011 Government Restrictions Index score on a scale of 0 (lowest) to 10 (highest)



Arab Spring Adds to Global Restrictions on Religion, June 2013  
PEW RESEARCH CENTER

## Libya

Mass uprisings in Libya began on February 15th 2011 in the city of Benghazi, focusing on human rights abuses, social program mismanagement, and political corruption, finally demanding the end of Muammar Gaddafi's rule. The formation of the National Transitional Council of Libya was announced in the city of Benghazi on 27 February 2011 with the purpose to act as the "political face of the revolution".

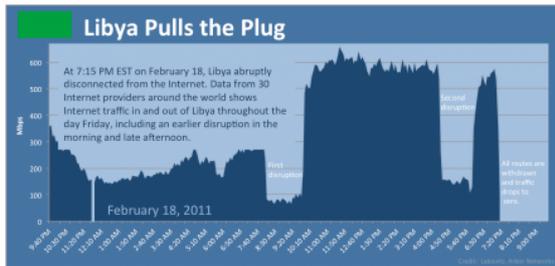
Gaddafi's response was to assume the defensive rallying supporters and refusing to cede control at any price. As the NTC solidified its agenda making Gaddafi crack down in retaliation, the peaceful protests

developed into a bloody civil war that only officially ended with Gaddafi's death and the NTC's declaration of victory on the 20th October 2011.

Despite the defeat of Gaddafi's loyalists, capture of last loyalist cities and Gaddafi's assassination, Saif al-Islam, Gaddafi's son and successor, remained hiding in the southern region of Libya until his capture in mid-November 2011 whilst trying to flee to Niger.



18 February 2011, that Libya experienced a complete Internet shutdown. The country totally vanished from the Internet for 6.8 hours until service was partially restored Saturday morning at around 8:01 a.m. It was cut off once again at around 10:00 p.m. the next day, Saturday, 19 February 2011 (local time) for another 8.3 hours. It is speculated that the Internet shutdown in March was aimed at preventing anti-government protests planned for the days to follow.



Throughout the NTC's rebellion, International influence was a key cause for success through multiple mechanisms. On 17th march'11 the UNSC resolution 1973 was adopted, authorizing a no fly zone over Libya, and provided the framework for the NATO intervention that provided air strikes, weapons and military training to rebel forces. Two days later, France, the United States and the United Kingdom intervened in Libya with a bombing campaign against pro-Gaddafi forces

The Arab Spring had both short-term and long-term implications. Both are enormous. Both are historic. Here, for the first time, we have seen a region-wide people's uprising taking place. After the uprising in Libya authorities in Egypt, Niger, Algeria, Israel, and Tunisia expressed concern over the leakages of weaponry from Libya across their borders. Israeli officials commented that whilst it was not a "major qualitative enhancement" it was a cause of concern. Due to Arab spring not only did Libya

experience a civil war with death tolls as high as 30,000 and a complete overthrow of their government, but also have suffered the worst losses in terms of GDP than any other country within the Arab Spring. Libya's GDP has seen a loss of around 28.3% or approximately \$6.5 billion.

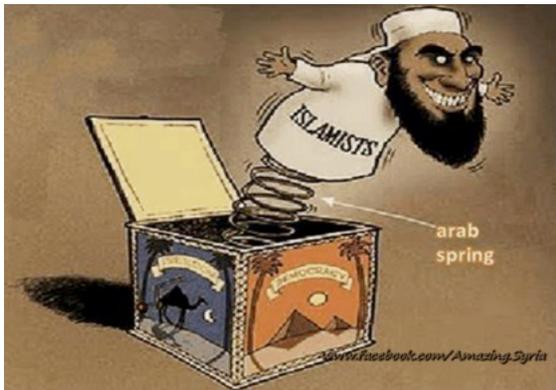
As Libya's economy is heavily reliant upon its oil and gas reserves, the nearly six-month civil war disrupted both the production and exportation of oil and gas, damaging the economy as its most important industry continues to struggle following the Arab Spring revolution.



The latest aftermath of the Libyan civil war, is The 2013 Benghazi conflict that began after clashes erupted between protesters and militants from the Libya Shield brigade on June 8, 2013 (at least 31 people were killed and 100 wounded).

## TUNISIA

In 1987 Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali became president. He continued with a hard line against Islamic extremists, but inherited an economically-stable country. Although Tunisia under Mr Ben Ali introduced some press freedoms and freed a number of political prisoners, the authorities tolerated no dissent.



Mr Ben Ali faced reproach at home and abroad for his party's three "99.9%" election wins. The opposition condemned changes to the constitution which allowed him to run for re-election in 2004, and in 2009. The fact that Tunisia also – like other states in the region – had a repressive government, a corrupt political elite and growing economic stagnation was often overlooked. Discontent with his autocratic rule erupted in into mass street demonstrations which prompted Mr

Ben Ali to step aside in 2011 – This was the first and one of the many uprisings across the region that became known as the Arab Spring. It was a remarkable domino-effect – to the Arab world and beyond. It is safe to say that the Arab Spring originated in Tunisia.

Tunisia has been in transition since President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali fled in January 2011 following widespread unrest. Islamists and secular parties have vied for power since the election of an interim parliament in October 2011.

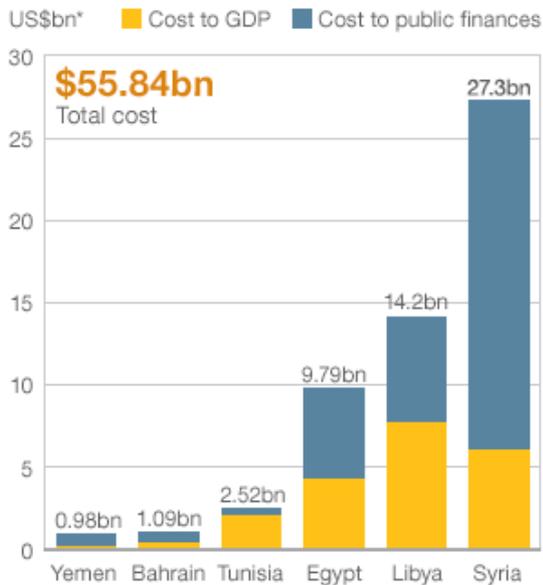
Veteran dissident Moncef Marzouki was installed as president in December 2011, a few months after the popular protests.

The months following the change of regime eventually saw Tunisians competing for elections in October 2011 to a 217-member constituent assembly. An-Nahda became the largest party with 37% of the vote and ninety-one seats, and formed a governing coalition with two other traditional opposition parties.

Then, on 6 February 2013, the assassination of secular politician

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### Cost of the Arab Spring



\*Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Geopolicity

Chokri Belaid by an unknown (at the time of writing) person threw post-revolution Tunisia into political turmoil. On 8 February, tens of thousands of people marched through the capital to Chokri Belaid's funeral, turning the event into a mass demonstration against the Islamist-led government. Two years after the "Arab Spring", which saw the fall of the old regime and brought democracy to Tunisia, life remains difficult for a large part of the country.

The demands for full citizenship, for the recognition of individual political rights, were a powerful unifying theme across the Arab revolutions.

The shock troops of most of these revolutions, the young people behind these movements, were motivated in large part by their own economic exclusion. The flagrant corruption of the old ruling elite had publicly expanded the chasm between the haves and have-nots within society. The post-revolutionary regimes have not to date shown any clear idea, beyond the neoliberal orthodoxy preached by their predecessors, about how they will deliver meaningful growth or even live in a politically stable society.

There is a danger, that the pressing demands for economic transformation will be side lined and the newly empowered but largely inexperienced political parties will fight over secondary issues, such as dress codes and the policing of morality, which they have clear positions on but which of themselves do not deliver hope for meaningful change or prosperity.

However Tunisia continues to offer hope for the populations of the Arab world that sclerotic dictators can be overthrown and a better freer future is possible through a unified political mobilization.

## Syria

The Syrian uprising began in March 2011 with anti-government protests in provincial areas. The government of President Bashar al-Assad responded with a bloody crackdown on initially peaceful gatherings, along with piecemeal concessions that



stopped short of genuine political reform.

Syria's vast intelligence services, the infamous mukhabarat, penetrate all spheres of society. The fear of the state is one of the reasons why so many Syrians simply took the regime as a fact of life. But the outrage over the brutal response of the security forces to the outbreak of peaceful protest in Spring 2011, documented on social media, helped generate the

snowball effect as thousands across Syria joined the uprising.



After almost a year and a half of unrest, the conflict between the regime and the opposition has escalated to a full-scale civil war. Army defectors formed armed groups that wage a guerrilla war on government forces. By mid-2012 the fighting has reached capital Damascus and commercial hub Aleppo, with growing numbers of senior army officers deserting Assad.

However, key army units remain loyal to the regime, and while Assad's long-term survival chances don't seem great, he is far from finished. A prolonged bloody civil war lies ahead, with possibly disastrous consequences for Syria's multi-

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religious and multi-ethnic society. As it is religiously mixed society and the increasingly sectarian nature of violence in some areas of the country has contributed to the wider Sunni-Shiite tension in the Middle East. International community fears that the conflict could spill over the border to affect the neighboring Lebanon, Iraq, Turkey and Jordan, creating a regional disaster. For these reasons, global powers such as the US, European Union and Russia all play a role in the Syrian civil war.



The regime of Bashar al-Assad is relying on the armed forces and increasingly on pro-government paramilitary groups to fight the rebel militias. On the other side is a broad range of opposition groups, from Islamists to leftwing secular parties and youth activist groups, who agree on the need for Assad's departure,

but share little common ground over what should happen next.

The most powerful opposition actors on the ground are hundreds of armed rebel groups, which have yet to develop a unified command. Rivalry between various rebel outfits and the growing role of hard-line Islamist fighters prolong the civil war, raising the prospect of years of instability and chaos even if Assad were to fall.

When faced with the beginnings of political discontent at the start of the Arab Spring, the ruling elite in Syria divided, with those favoring an all out assault on the demonstrators winning. As a result the extended military campaign by the Syrian army has been against largely urban-based protests across the country. The violence meted out by the regime quickly forced militarization on its opponents. Local Coordination Committees were formed in dissenting communities to try and offer protection to the ongoing demonstrations, and consequently Syria descended into civil war.

Its use of sectarian ideology has solidified its base amongst the Allawite community and fears of radical Islam and uncontrolled

violence have forced other minority communities to offer their begrudging support. However, as the violence has continued, it is clear that an increasingly large section of the population has withdrawn its support or even passive tolerance from the regime.

Attempts at international mediation have so far failed to break this bloody stalemate. With the government showing no signs of compromise and the opposition largely incoherent, neither able to overthrow the regime nor enter into sustained negotiations, the temptations for some form of military intervention comparable to Libya are increasing. That said, the lessons of intervention in Iraq, where the aftermath of regime change was far more murderous than the military action itself, have not been completely forgotten.



## Conclusion

The political situation in the Arab World remains highly fluid. The transition to democracy is still facing many problems with the major problems being holding elections in line with democratic standards. The other major issue in almost all the Arab states is of security. Possibilities of Civil war and terrorist attacks are a major threat to the security of the citizens and state. Hence, disarmament in the Middle East region is a very important issue in the political world at present.

Moreover, the social cohesion of some Arab countries undergoing the transition to democracy process revealed new forms of internal political polarization. The most usual is the division between secular and Islamist forces

However, people have welcomed the "Arab Spring" as it has led to an overall democratic gain. Fair elections were held for the first times in many countries. Common man and Non-Government agencies have a more decisive role now. Rights for a common man are being instilled and measures are being taken to make

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sure they are implemented and protected.

However the governments of the world think that an economic lapse would mean a democratic failure. The supposed governments of the middle east are mostly unsettled and only time will tell whether the countries would prosper or not but the citizens are happy to live in a free world.

## Important Dates

- **December 2010** – Protests arose in Tunisia following Mohamed Bouazizi's self-immolation.
- **January 2011** – Protests arose in Lebanon, Oman, Yemen, Egypt, Syria, & Morocco. The government was overthrown in Tunisia on 14 January 2011.
- **February 2011** – On 11 February, the President of Egypt Hosni Mubarak resigned, and transferred his powers to the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces.
- Committee of the Red Cross officially declared that the Syrian uprising was now a civil war.
- **March 2013** – the Syrian National Coalition was granted Syria's membership in the Arab League.
- **July 2013** – Mohamed Morsi is deposed as President of Egypt following Mass Protest.
- **October 2011** – On 20 October, Muammar Gaddafi was captured and killed, by rebels, in the city of Sirte.
- **February 2012** – Starting on 3 February, the Syrian government began an attack on the city of Homs.
- **May 2012** – On 23 & 24 May, the Egyptian people voted in the first round of a presidential election.
- **July 2012** – On 12 July, the Syrian army carried out a massacre in the Village of Tremseh. On 15 July, the

## Questions to be considered

- What actions can the Arab League take to address issues of collective security and governmental concerns caused by the Arab Spring?
- What areas of collective security need to be addressed for the Arab League to act effectively, why, and what methods could the Political Affairs Committee use to achieve these changes?
- Should the Arab League and the United Nations collaborate more on agreements, envoys, or any other tasks?
- Has the Arab League supported all outside attempts at intervention and aid focused on the Arab Spring? If not, what should the Arab League's policy be in the future regarding this?
- What actions could the Arab League take in addressing political prisoners?
- What can the individual countries do to establish political stability in their countries for both short term and long term periods?
- What steps should be taken to ensure disarmament of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East?

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