



SRMUN ATLANTA 2022
November 17 - 19, 2022
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Esteemed Delegates,

Welcome to SRMUN Atlanta 2022 and the League of Arab States (LAS). My name is Xander Swain, and I have the pleasure of serving as your Director for LAS. This will be my second time as a SRMUN Atlanta staff member, having previously served as the Assistant Director of the General Assembly Plenary. I also attended SRMUN Atlanta twice as a delegate. I am a senior currently pursuing my bachelor's degree in Political Science, Environmental Science, and Sociology. Our committee's Assistant Director will be Charles Lenoir. This will be Charles' first time as a staff member. Charles has attended four SRMUN Atlanta conferences since 2018. Charles recently graduated with a bachelor's degree in Political Science and Anthropology.

The mission of LAS is to foster cooperation between its 22 Member States to find solutions to the economic and security problems of the Middle East-North Africa region. Considering the seriousness of the conflicts throughout the region, multilateral solutions developed by LAS are needed now more than ever. Focusing on the mission of LAS, we have developed the following topics for the delegates to discuss come conference:

- I. Strengthening Multilateral Security Measures to Mitigate the Diffusion of Intrastate Conflict
- II. Developing Solutions to Increasing Desertification

This background guide will serve as the foundation for your research, yet it should not be the extent of the research. Preparation is given to each topic to help guide delegates in their initial research, and to serve as a starting place for more in-depth studies. It is expected that delegates go beyond this background guide in preparation for their position paper and to better prepare themselves for contribution within the committee in November. Further, each delegation is required to submit a position paper for consideration. Position papers should be no longer than two pages in length (single spaced) and demonstrate your Member State's position, policies, and recommendations on each of the two topics. For more detailed information about formatting and how to write position papers, delegates can visit srmun.org. **All position papers MUST be submitted no later than Friday, October 28th, by 11:59pm EST via the SRMUN website in order to be eligible for Outstanding Position Paper Awards.**

Both Charles and I are excited for the opportunity to serve as your dais for LAS. I wish you all the best of luck in your conference preparation and look forward to meeting and working with each of you. Should questions arise as you begin to prepare for this conference, contacting those on your dais is always encouraged.

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Committee History of the League of Arab States

In 1944, the Member States of Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Transjordan (Jordan), and Lebanon sent delegates to discuss the future of a Pan-Arabic government, as well as removing influence of foreign powers inside the region.¹ This led to the signing of the Alexandria Protocol on October 7, 1944, which authorized the creation of the organization that would become the League of Arab States (LAS).² The goal of the LAS is to strengthen the ties of all Arabic governments through joint defense and coordination of implementing policy, reducing foreign influence in the region, and obtaining statehood for Palestine.³ The LAS operates under the guidance of the League of Arab States Charter, which was signed on March 22, 1945 in Cairo.⁴ The signatories of the founding Charter were Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, North Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Transjordan.⁵ The Charter acts to endorse the idea of an Arabic homeland, while ensuring the individual sovereignty and interests of the Arabic Member States.⁶

The body of the LAS meets twice a year, in March and September, with emergency summits upon the request of two or more Member States.⁷ The main body of the LAS is the Council of the Arab League.⁸ There are also seven specialized committees that fall under the jurisdiction of the Council: Communications, Cultural, Economic, Health, Legal, Political, and Social.⁹ Each Member State receives equal voting rights, regardless on the size of the delegation present.¹⁰ The headquarters of the LAS is located in Cairo, but is allowed to convene at any location deemed by the organization.¹¹ The Executive of the LAS is the Secretary-General (SG), whose responsibilities are to oversee departments, represent the interests of the LAS in other international forums, and mediate disputes between Arab States.¹² The SG is selected by the League Council with a two-thirds majority for a renewable five-year term.¹³ Currently, Ahmed Aboul Gheit of Egypt is the incumbent for the office of SG.¹⁴ Unless otherwise stated in the Charter, a simple majority is needed for policy or regulation to be adopted by the body, with resolutions only binding for Member States who voted in favor.¹⁵ This developed a challenge of holding Member States accountable for implementing council resolutions, as Member States can ignore resolutions unfavorable to their domestic and foreign policy.¹⁵

While the LAS maintains a cooperative relationship with the United Nations (UN) and other organizations, it is autonomous.¹⁶ The UN has a specific office for maintaining the LAS as a permanent observer, which allows LAS to send delegates attend and speak on behalf of the LAS whenever relevant.¹⁷ Despite the LAS' stance on reduction of

¹ Alexandria Protocol, "League of Arab States," Yale Law School, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/alex.asp. (Accessed May 27, 2022).

² Protocol, "League of Arab States."

³ Chris Toffolo and Peggy Kahn, *The Arab League* (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 2008), 44.

⁴ *Charter of Arab League*, The League of Arab States, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b3ab18.html>. (Accessed May 27, 2022).

⁵ *Charter of Arab League*.

⁶ *Charter of Arab League*.

⁷ *Charter of Arab League*.

⁸ *Charter of Arab League*.

⁹ *Charter of Arab League*.

¹⁰ *Charter of Arab League*.

¹¹ *Charter of Arab League*.

¹² *Charter of Arab League*.

¹³ *Charter of Arab League*.

¹³ *Charter of Arab League*.

¹⁴ "Arab League Reappoints Ahmend Aboul Gheit Secretary-General" Africa News, March 3, 2021 (accessed August 1 2022) <https://www.africanews.com/2021/03/03/Arab-league-reappoints-ahmed-aboul-gheit-secretary-general/>

¹⁵ Nabil Sharaf. "The Arab League's Many Failures." Arab Center Washington DC, October 8, 2020. <https://arabcenterdc.org/resource/the-arab-leagues-many-failures/>, (accessed May 27, 2022).

¹⁶ *Charter of Arab League*.

¹⁷ United Nations. "About Permanent Observers." United Nations, 2022. <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/about-permanent-observers>, (accessed May 27, 2022).

foreign influence, Arab Member States still cooperate with international actors and organizations to solve crises inside Member States' borders.¹⁸

The LAS' first major action occurred in 1948, when the League intervened in the Arab-Israeli War on behalf of the Arab population uprooted by Israel in Palestine.¹⁹ While the conflict did not end in favor of the Arab coalition, it led to the signing of the Joint Defense and Economic Co-operation Treaty, which was a result of the growing influence of Israel in the region.²⁰ The conflict also led to the creation of the Joint Defense Council (JDC), an organization charged with organizing mutual defense.²¹

In 2005, the Arab Parliament began conducting business as a body of the LAS.²² The Arab Parliament is unique in the sense that it embodies the thoughts and opinions of Arabic citizens, as opposed to the governments, and aims to strengthen democratic ideals in the region.²³ The purpose of the Parliament is to rule on matters pertaining to social, economic, and cultural issues.²⁴ The Parliament has no authority outside of giving statements, but still has seen success. Regarding the 2006 crisis in Somalia, the Arab Parliament requested Ethiopia to remove all troops and petitioned the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to remove all foreign presence.²⁵ In 2011, due to the ongoing repression of the people of Syria by the Assad regime, the Arab Parliament submitted the recommendation to suspend the status of Syria as a member of the LAS.²⁶ The recommendation was adopted by the Council and Syria had its membership suspended on November 16, 2011.²⁷ As the Syrian conflict has continued to rage, the LAS has found itself locked in heated internal disagreements concerning how to best bring about a resolution to the crisis.²⁸ As of October 2019, the LAS has focused its efforts on investigating chemical weapon attacks allegedly launched by the Assad regime, and condemning Iran's continued involvement in the country.²⁹ Although the LAS as an organization has not been directly involved in military strategy, Iraq and Saudi Arabia have engaged in combat.³⁰

The League originally functioned to curb foreign influence and protect Palestinian interest, but expanded to include protecting the right of protesters during recent demonstrations, monitoring conflict to ensure protection of non-combatants, and holding conferences emphasizing the importance of Arabic human rights.³¹ During the 26th Arab Summit in March 2015, the Council voted in favor of the creation of a military force to combat the increasing problem of terrorism in the region.³² This military coalitions' viability and effectiveness is seen in the fight against

¹⁸ United Nations Security Council. "Cooperation between the UN and the League of Arab States, March 2022 Monthly Forecast." Security Council Report, March 2022. <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2022-03/cooperation-between-the-un-and-the-league-of-arab-states-3.php>, (accessed May 31, 2022).

¹⁹ Jonathan Masters, and Mohammed Aly Sergie. "The Arab League." Council on Foreign Relations, February 19, 2020. <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/arab-league>, (accessed May 27, 2022).

²⁰ Jonathan Masters, and Mohammed Aly Sergie. "The Arab League." Council on Foreign Relations, February 19, 2020. <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/arab-league>, (accessed May 27, 2022).

²¹ "The Arab League."

²² "The Arab League."

²³ "Background: The Arab Parliament," European Parliament, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/dmed/dv/5b_arabparliame/5b_arabparliament.pdf, (accessed May 27, 2022).

²⁴ "Background: The Arab Parliament."

²⁵ Chris Toffolo and Peggy Kahn, *The Arab League*, (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 2008), 51.

²⁶ "Arab League Parliament Urges Syrian Suspension," Al Jazeera, September 21, 2011, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/09/201192017594330402.html>, (accessed May 27, 2022).

²⁷ David Batty, and Jack Shenker, "Syria Suspended from Arab League," *The Guardian*, November 12, 2011, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/nov/12/syria-suspended-arableague>, (Accessed May 27, 2022).

²⁸ Macaron, Joe. "The Muted Arab Attempt to Restore Influence in Syria." Arab Center Washington DC, March 18, 2020. <https://arabcenterdc.org/resource/the-muted-arab-attempt-to-restore-influence-in-syria/>, (accessed May 27, 2020).

²⁹ "Arab League Calls for Syria Chemical Attack Investigation," *Deutsche Welle*, April 15, 2018, <https://www.dw.com/en/arab-league-calls-for-syria-chemical-attack-investigation/a-43397735>, (accessed May 27, 2022).

³⁰ Zachary Laub. "Syria's War and the Descent Into Horror." Council on Foreign Relations, March 17, 2021. <https://www.cfr.org/article/syrias-civil-war>, (accessed May 27, 2022).

³¹ "Arab Charter of Human Rights," Humanrights.ch, March 11, 2020, <https://www.humanrights.ch/de/ipf/grundlagen/rechtsquellen-instrumente/regionale/arabische-liga/arabische-charta/?search=1>, (accessed May 27, 2022).

³² Michael Bröning. "The All-Arab Army?" *Foreign Affairs*, April 7, 2015. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/persian-gulf/2015-04-07/all-arab-army>, (accessed May 27, 2022).

the terrorist organization the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). Member States have contributed to the fight against ISIL in Libya, Iraq, and Syria by providing troops, intelligence, and military strategy.³³ Renewed tensions between Israel and Palestine have emerged as a security threat to the LAS region, which has seen multiple bouts of violent unrest resulting in multiple casualties.³⁴ Should this crisis erupt into more widespread violence, LAS would likely be drawn into the conflict. To take proactive steps towards avoiding such an outcome, LAS has hosted a summit regarding the recent violence in Gaza in 2018.³⁵ Despite these ongoing tensions, the 2020 and 2021 annual LAS summits were postponed until March 2022 due to concerns surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic.³⁶

³³ Guy Taylor. "Arab League Agrees to Use Military Force against ISIS in Libya, Unsure on Airstrikes." *The Washington Times*, August 18, 2015. <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/aug/18/arab-league-agrees-use-military-force-against-isis/>, (accessed May 27, 2022).

³⁴ Al Jazeera. "Palestine Quits Arab League Role in Protest over Israel Deals," September 22, 2020. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/9/22/palestine-quits-arab-league-role-in-protest-over-israel-deals>, (accessed May 27, 2020).

³⁵ The New Arab. "Arab League to Hold Emergency Palestine Meeting." *The New Arab*, April 2, 2018. <https://english.alaraby.co.uk/news/arab-league-hold-emergency-palestine-meeting>, (accessed May 27, 2022).

³⁶ "Arab League delays annual summit amid surge in COVID-19 cases," Aljazeera, January 23, 2022, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/1/23/arab-league-delays-annual-summit-amid-surge-in-covid-19-cases>, (accessed March 3, 2022).

I. Strengthening Multilateral Security Measures to Mitigate the Diffusion of Intrastate Conflict

Introduction

Intrastate conflict has been broadly defined as: “physical conflict between advantaged or disadvantaged minority or majority groups and the political/juridical state, or among the groups themselves, to gain either a greater share of limited resources or autonomy or control over the territorial state.”³⁷ Intrastate conflicts can range from formalized civil wars, highly localized ethnic conflicts, or conflicts between terrorist or insurgent groups and the state.³⁸ Since the end of the Cold War, intrastate conflict has risen to become the most prominent form of strife in the modern world.³⁹

Intrastate conflict being defined by its containment to a certain region does not isolate its influence and consequences to surrounding Member States.⁴⁰ The destabilization of a region or Member State can have serious implications for not only the area in which the conflict is directly taking place, but also neighboring Member States.⁴¹ This destabilization can include an escalation of violence in neighboring regions and Member States, the diffusion of conflict.⁴² Intrastate conflict can diffuse to neighboring Member States due to conflict escalation, a rise in regional terrorist activity, a breakdown of trade routes and necessary interstate infrastructure, or the massive displacement of persons internationally.⁴³ In recent history, this issue has become increasingly prominent in the Middle East and North African (MENA) region, bringing into the forefront of the League of Arab States (LAS)’s agenda.⁴⁴

History

Intrastate conflict has existed for as long as the concept of independent states.⁴⁵ Records of historical intrastate conflict are commonplace for any national history, manifesting as civil war, civilian uprising, government conflict with extremist groups, and other internal conflicts.⁴⁶ Intrastate conflict occurs at a higher rate in unstable regions and Member States deeply impacted by mid-20th century conflicts and colonialism.⁴⁷ This has led to a concentration of modern intrastate conflicts the MENA region, as well as Southeast Asia, Central Africa, and European Post-Soviet States.⁴⁸

Causes of intrastate conflicts vary widely, from territorial disputes to religious persecution, or the desire to obtain control of government.⁴⁹ These conflicts often do not remain local, however, and can easily spill across international borders, creating international security concerns.⁵⁰ The wide geological and ideological range of intrastate conflict means a response must be tailored to the region and causes with a deep understanding of the conflict, its roots, and its effect.⁵¹

³⁷ Dobkowski, Michael, and Isidor Wallimann. “Ch. 12: Intrastate Conflict and Sustainable Development: Lessons from Bosnia, Somalia, and Haiti.” In *The Coming Age of Scarcity: Preventing Mass Death and Genocide in the Twenty-First Century*, 245–68. Syracuse University Press, 1998. <https://surface.syr.edu/books/23/>.

³⁸ World 101 from the Council on Foreign Relations. “Understanding Intrastate Conflict,” 2022. <https://world101.cfr.org/how-world-works-and-sometimes-doesnt/conflict/understanding-intrastate-conflict> (accessed May 24, 2022).

³⁹ World 101 from the Council on Foreign Relations. “Understanding Intrastate Conflict.”

⁴⁰ World 101 from the Council on Foreign Relations. “Understanding Intrastate Conflict.”

⁴¹ World 101 from the Council on Foreign Relations. “Understanding Intrastate Conflict.”

⁴² Rodt, Annemarie Peen. “Diffusion of Conflict.” *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Self-Determination*, 2022. <https://pesd.princeton.edu/node/261> (accessed May 31, 2022).

⁴³ World 101 from the Council on Foreign Relations. “Understanding Intrastate Conflict.”

⁴⁴ World 101 from the Council on Foreign Relations. “Understanding Intrastate Conflict.”

⁴⁵ World 101 from the Council on Foreign Relations. “Understanding Intrastate Conflict.”

⁴⁶ World 101 from the Council on Foreign Relations. “Understanding Intrastate Conflict.”

⁴⁷ Young, Harold. “Intrastate Conflicts: Refocus on the Intractable.” *Midwest Political Science Association*, September 12, 2017. <https://blog.mpsanet.org/2017/09/12/intrastate-conflicts-refocus-on-the-intractable/> (accessed May 24, 2022).

⁴⁸ Young, Harold. “Intrastate Conflicts: Refocus on the Intractable.”

⁴⁹ Young, Harold. “Intrastate Conflicts: Refocus on the Intractable.”

⁵⁰ Young, Harold. “Intrastate Conflicts: Refocus on the Intractable.”

⁵¹ World 101 from the Council on Foreign Relations. “Understanding Intrastate Conflict.”

The rise of intrastate conflict in the 20th century came about through the Cold War and a wave of decolonization throughout the Global South.⁵² Between 1955 and 1965, 47 new postcolonial states were founded, leading to conflicts as various factions fought for control of new governments.⁵³ These states also emerged at the height of the Cold War, in which hegemony vied for stakes in these emerging frontiers.⁵⁴ The Cold War struggle for hegemony led to world powers such as the Soviet Union and the United States of America to look to the MENA region for opportunities to strengthen their position in the conflict, and both Member States utilized intrastate conflict as a means to achieve power.⁵⁵ As such, many intrastate conflicts in the region being intertwined with foreign interests, such as the United States' support of Iran's 1953 coup to bring a western-aligned leader into power, or the Soviet Union's support of Egypt's 1952 ousting of their leader.⁵⁶

Intrastate conflict has had a notable presence in the MENA region since the foundation of the LAS in 1945.⁵⁷ The 1950s saw regional unrest in various coups and regime changes.⁵⁸ The 1958 overthrow of Iraq's monarchy led to a mass emigration of Iraqis into neighboring Member States.⁵⁹ The Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979 forced intrastate conflict into the Cold War.⁶⁰ The Iranian Revolution established a fundamentalist Islamic state under the leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini, replacing one of the largest Member States in the region's western-aligned government with a nationalist religious government.⁶¹ The Iranian Revolution led to the 1980 Iraqi invasion of Iran, as well as a surge in fundamentalist groups and associated terrorism that spread throughout the region.⁶² The Iranian Revolution would set a precedent for an increase in ideologically motivated conflict to become a more prominent force in the next decades.⁶³

In the 1980s, the most prominent regional conflict involved North and South Yemen, with the latter experiencing a civil war in 1986.⁶⁴ The two states would unify following another war in 1990 to form Yemen.⁶⁵ In 1990, the Iraqi invasion of neighboring Kuwait invoked sanctions from the United Nations (UN) and a subsequent involvement of a coalition of forces consisting of the United States, France, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the United Kingdom to repel the invasion.⁶⁶ The UN coalition of forces successfully repelled Iraq from Kuwait in 1991.⁶⁷ Following the failed invasion, Iraq would experience a series of anti-government protests and violence within the Member State.⁶⁸ The initial invasion of Kuwait would also lead to a mass emigration of Palestinians in the Member State to neighboring states.⁶⁹ The invasion of Kuwait marked a shift in the conflict landscape of the MENA region, solidified at the beginning of the 21st century.⁷⁰ The MENA region experienced more informal extremism in the wake of the United

⁵² Aksu, Eşref. "The UN's Role in Historical Context: Impact of Structural Tensions and Thresholds." In *The United Nations, Intra-State Peacekeeping and Normative Change*. Manchester University Press, 2003. <https://academic.oup.com/manchester-scholarship-online/book/29306/chapter-abstract/243629576?redirectedFrom=fulltext>.

⁵³ Aksu, Eşref. "The UN's Role in Historical Context: Impact of Structural Tensions and Thresholds."

⁵⁴ Aksu, Eşref. "The UN's Role in Historical Context: Impact of Structural Tensions and Thresholds."

⁵⁵ Aksu, Eşref. "The UN's Role in Historical Context: Impact of Structural Tensions and Thresholds."

⁵⁶ Ashley, Sean Paul. "Cold War Politics in the Middle East." *E-International Relations*, August 30, 2012. <https://www.e-ir.info/2012/08/30/cold-war-politics-in-the-middle-east/>, (accessed June 24, 2022).

⁵⁷ Ashley, Sean Paul. "Cold War Politics in the Middle East."

⁵⁸ Ashley, Sean Paul. "Cold War Politics in the Middle East."

⁵⁹ Dee, Liz. "The Iraqi Revolution – of 1958." *Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training*, July 2, 2014, <https://adst.org/2014/07/the-iraqi-revolution-of-1958/>, (accessed August 3, 2022).

⁶⁰ Al Jazeera. "Timeline: The Middle East Conflict," *Al Jazeera*, June 21, 2008, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2008/1/21/timeline-the-middle-east-conflict>, (accessed June 24, 2022).

⁶¹ Al Jazeera. "Timeline: The Middle East Conflict."

⁶² Al Jazeera. "Timeline: The Middle East Conflict."

⁶³ Al Jazeera. "Timeline: The Middle East Conflict."

⁶⁴ Al Jazeera. "Timeline: The Middle East Conflict."

⁶⁵ Al Jazeera. "Timeline: The Middle East Conflict."

⁶⁶ Al Jazeera. "Timeline: The Middle East Conflict."

⁶⁷ Al Jazeera. "Timeline: The Middle East Conflict."

⁶⁸ Al Jazeera. "Timeline: The Middle East Conflict."

⁶⁹ Al Jazeera. "Timeline: The Middle East Conflict."

⁷⁰ Al Jazeera. "Timeline: The Middle East Conflict."

States' 2001 invasion of Afghanistan and 2003 invasion of Iraq.⁷¹ This extremism is now a prominent force in the region, shaping intrastate conflict in the present day.⁷²

Historically, LAS has taken a non-interventionist approach to the diffusion of conflict, with any direct action usually taking place through collaboration and support to more directly focused UN forces.⁷³ This has been accomplished mostly through collaborative regional financial and material support, although as of 2015 a joint Arab military force was announced as a collaboration of LAS Member States' military forces for use in intervention when requested by a Member State in need.⁷⁴

Current Situation

Intrastate conflict in the MENA region in the 2010s stems from the 2010 emergence of protest and regional civil unrest, commonly referred to as the Arab Spring.⁷⁵ This series of protests, a response to authoritarianism and a push for democratic governance by citizens of various governments, would lead to an ousting of the leaders of Egypt and Tunisia in 2011, following massive citizen protests and outbreaks of violence.⁷⁶ This would also lead to the ousting and killing of long-time Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi by anti-government forces.⁷⁷ Especially notable in the various protests which would become the Arab Spring was its use of the media and internet to spread updates and ideas throughout the region, which allowed for citizens of many Member States in the region to see real-time updates of fighting and to organize action domestically.⁷⁸ For long-lasting intrastate conflict, the Arab Spring would spark civil wars in Yemen and Syria which are ongoing and continue to be massive crises.⁷⁹ Exacerbated by the Arab Spring, the Syrian Civil War has evolved into a broad multi-sided conflict of multiple parties vying for control of the Syrian government.⁸⁰ The Syrian Civil War saw an infrastructure breakdown, leading to huge numbers of refugees fleeing the Member State and dispersing throughout the MENA region and beyond.⁸¹ The Syrian government has continued to fight against a number of extremist groups, such as Jabhat al-Nusra, in territorial disputes, with the government holding northern Syria and other forces holding various sections of the southwest.⁸² Syria's membership in LAS has been suspended since 2011 due to destabilization caused by the conflict.⁸³

A notable force in intrastate conflict in the MENA region is the emergence of extremist groups detrimental to regional security.⁸⁴ Fundamentalist religious extremist groups such as Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) have become prominent in the region following military action in the early 2000s in Afghanistan and Iraq, and even more so in the aftermath of the Syrian Civil War and the Arab Spring.⁸⁵ Their impact on intrastate conflict was exemplified most prominently by ISIL in Iraq and Syria. In 2015, the group was able to launch a military-style campaign of territorial conquest in the two Member States, seizing large swaths of land, including major cities such as Mosul.⁸⁶ A notable consequence of this rise to prominence was the development of small-scale

⁷¹ Al Jazeera. "Timeline: The Middle East Conflict."

⁷² Al Jazeera. "Timeline: The Middle East Conflict."

⁷³ Aksu, Eşref. "The UN's Role in Historical Context: Impact of Structural Tensions and Thresholds." In *The United Nations, Intra-State Peacekeeping and Normative Change*. Manchester University Press, 2003. <https://academic.oup.com/manchester-scholarship-online/book/29306/chapter-abstract/243629576?redirectedFrom=fulltext>.

⁷⁴ Aksu, Eşref. "The UN's Role in Historical Context: Impact of Structural Tensions and Thresholds."

⁷⁵ Encyclopedia Britannica. "Arab Spring." January 27, 2021, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Arab-Spring>, (accessed August 25, 2022).

⁷⁶ Encyclopedia Britannica. "Arab Spring."

⁷⁷ Encyclopedia Britannica. "Arab Spring."

⁷⁸ Encyclopedia Britannica. "Arab Spring."

⁷⁹ Encyclopedia Britannica. "Arab Spring."

⁸⁰ World Bank. "Syria Overview." World Bank, April 21, 2022. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/syria/overview>, (accessed June 24, 2022).

⁸¹ World Bank. "Syria Overview."

⁸² Wilson Center. "The Nusra Front: Al Qaeda's affiliate in Syria." Wilson Center, June 17, 2016, <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/the-nusra-front-al-qaedas-affiliate-syria>, (accessed August 25, 2022).

⁸³ Al Jazeera. "Arab League decides to suspend Syria. News." Al Jazeera, November 13, 2011, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2011/11/13/arab-league-decides-to-suspend-syria/>, (accessed August 25, 2022).

⁸⁴ Encyclopedia Britannica. "Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant." March 12, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Islamic-State-in-Iraq-and-the-Levant> (accessed June 24, 2022).

⁸⁵ Encyclopedia Britannica. "Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant."

⁸⁶ Encyclopedia Britannica. "Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant."

groups and sympathizers away from the main fighting between ISIL and Member States, manifesting as smaller-scale terrorist attacks throughout the region.⁸⁷ In addition to its combat against Member State governments and militaries, ISIL notoriously engaged in brutal, large-scale violence against civilians in the region.⁸⁸ The attacks on civilians reached such a peak in 2015 that the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights accused ISIL of committing genocide and ethnic cleansing of Yazidi Kurds.⁸⁹ Since the 2015 peak, huge losses in territory and personnel have hindered the fighting ability of ISIL, with a majority of its territorial claims being retaken by Member States in collaboration with a coalition of foreign aid including Saudi Arabia.⁹⁰

Actions Taken by LAS and the United Nations

The LAS, since its founding, has been involved with intrastate conflict, as the issue has been pervasive throughout the region historically.⁹¹ The LAS has no formalized military force.⁹² The historic non-militarization of the LAS has led to a sparse record of direct involvement with intrastate conflict.⁹³ A 2015 initiative by the League has put forward the foundation of a highly regionalized collaborative military force.⁹⁴ This force can be deployed within the region, including in the mitigation of intrastate conflict, as a more localized form of peacekeeping.⁹⁵ Notably, the suspension of Syria from the LAS coincided with sanctions and collaborative economic measures in response to the Member State's conflict.⁹⁶ The League has also put forward proclamations and collaborative anti-extremism measures more broadly to help combat the diffusion of terrorism throughout the MENA region.⁹⁷ The most prominent of these was a 2014 resolution calling for the combatting of ISIL in their territorial disputes in Syria and Iraq.⁹⁸ This resolution called for military intervention by LAS members in Syria and Iraq, as well as multilateral economic, cultural, and political measures to curb the spread of this extremist group, and to fight it where it exists.⁹⁹

LAS has historically focused on economic and cultural regional initiatives, collaborating with or calling upon other groups international organizations the UN when the issue of conflict arises.¹⁰⁰ UN peacekeeping operations are a major part of combating the diffusion of intrastate conflict, as involvement with internal conflicts is a delicate subject for the international community.¹⁰¹ Following the Cold War, UN peacekeeping operations saw an emergence of internal conflicts in the MENA region.¹⁰² Through the 1990s, UN involvement in intrastate conflict became increasingly complex and challenging, such the 1993 UN Operation in Somalia I to restore order and establish

⁸⁷ Encyclopedia Britannica. "Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant."

⁸⁸ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, "Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the human rights situation in Iraq in the light of abuses committed by the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and associated groups," A/HRC/28/18, March 13, 2015, http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session28/Documents/A_HRC_28_18_AUV.doc.

⁸⁹ Encyclopedia Britannica. "Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant." March 12, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Islamic-State-in-Iraq-and-the-Levant>, (accessed June 24, 2022).

⁹⁰ Encyclopedia Britannica. "Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant."

⁹¹ Ryan, Curtis. "Regional Responses to the Rise of ISIS." Middle East Research and Information Project, December 5, 2015. <https://merip.org/2015/12/regional-responses-to-the-rise-of-isis/>, (accessed June 24, 2022).

⁹² Ryan, Curtis. "Regional Responses to the Rise of ISIS."

⁹³ Ryan, Curtis. "Regional Responses to the Rise of ISIS."

⁹⁴ Al Jazeera. "Arab League pledges to tackle Islamic State." Al Jazeera, September 7, 2014, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2014/9/7/arab-league-pledges-to-tackle-islamic-state>, (accessed August 25, 2022).

⁹⁵ Al Jazeera. "Arab League pledges to tackle Islamic State." Al Jazeera, September 7, 2014, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2014/9/7/arab-league-pledges-to-tackle-islamic-state>, (accessed August 25, 2022).

⁹⁶ Al Jazeera. "Arab League decides to suspend Syria." Al Jazeera, November 13, 2011, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2011/11/13/arab-league-decides-to-suspend-syria>, (accessed August 25, 2022).

⁹⁷ Al Jazeera. "Arab League pledges to tackle Islamic State."

⁹⁸ CBS Interactive. (2014, September 8). "Arab League Issues Proclamation on ISIS." CBS News, September 8, 2014, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/arab-league-agrees-to-take-urgent-measures-to-combat-isis/#:~:text=Arab%20League%20issues%20proclamation%20on%20ISIS%20Updated%20on%3A,Sunni%20tribal%20fighters%20and%20security%20troops%20in%20Iraq>, (accessed August 25, 2022).

⁹⁹ CBS Interactive. "Arab League Issues Proclamation on ISIS."

¹⁰⁰ Ryan, Curtis. "Regional Responses to the Rise of ISIS."

¹⁰¹ Aksu, Eşref. "The UN's Role in Historical Context: Impact of Structural Tensions and Thresholds." In *The United Nations, Intra-State Peacekeeping and Normative Change*. Manchester University Press, 2003. <https://academic.oup.com/manchester-scholarship-online/book/29306/chapter-abstract/243629576?redirectedFrom=fulltext>.

¹⁰² United Nations Peacekeeping. "Our History." United Nations Peacekeeping, 2022. <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/our-history>, (accessed June 24, 2022).

channels for humanitarian aid during the Somali Civil War.¹⁰³ Following criticism on the shortcomings of UN peacekeeping operation in the 1990s, the Security Council scaled back physical operations in intrastate conflict, instead pushing for a more legislative role in other conflicts rather than having a physical presence.¹⁰⁴ Due to issues of sovereignty and resource allocation, intervention in intrastate conflicts from the UN is often limited in scope to either peacekeeping operations, aid allocation, or sanctions.¹⁰⁵ Sovereignty as a prevalent issue in intrastate conflict has led to the prominence of peacekeeping forces as the broad solution to intrastate conflict.¹⁰⁶ Peacekeeping action has usually been in collaboration with regional committees as opposed to highly regionalized solutions.¹⁰⁷

Case Study

The Yemeni Civil War

Lying on the Arabian Peninsula, Yemen shares land borders with Saudi Arabia to the north and Oman to the East, while being separated from Djibouti and mainland Africa to the west by the Bab-el-Mandab strait.¹⁰⁸ In 2014, an insurgency of Houthi rebels attempted to overthrow the national government, plunging Yemen into civil war.¹⁰⁹ The Houthis, a group of Shiite Yemenis opposing the Sunni government in the Member State, moved to oust president Abdrabbuh Hadi and install a Shiite-aligned government.¹¹⁰ The Houthi insurgency would eventually cause the president of Yemen to resign in 2015.¹¹¹ However, President Abdrabbuh Hadi would retake the presidency later that year.¹¹² Following President Abdrabbuh Hadi's return, a military force backed by a coalition of Arab States, headed by Saudi Arabia, began fighting within Yemen to retake control of the Member State from the Houthi.¹¹³ As of February 2022, the death toll of the Yemeni Civil War is approximately 377,000, mostly from indirect causes such as lack of food, infrastructure security, and other humanitarian concerns.¹¹⁴ Another 13.5 million people are at risk of starvation due to the breakdown of agriculture and infrastructure within the Member State.¹¹⁵ The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has played a role in being a mediating force to the conflict.¹¹⁶ However, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic has further complicated the distribution of aid and the mitigation of conflict throughout Yemen.¹¹⁷ The problems faced within Yemen, and those caused to neighboring Member States through crises such as refugee flight and conflict spillover, has kept Yemen as a topic of discussion for the international community.¹¹⁸

The Yemeni Civil War has diffused to other Member States through economic and refugee crises.¹¹⁹ Refugee influx into other Member States has been a very prevalent impact of this conflict.¹²⁰ Approximately four million Yemeni civilians have been displaced from the conflict, leading to a massive influx of refugees within Yemen, into neighboring Member States, and beyond the MENA region.¹²¹ The massive displacement has been described by the

¹⁰³ United Nations Peacekeeping. "Our History."

¹⁰⁴ Wani, Ibrahim J., "Chapter 6. United Nations Peacekeeping, Human Rights, and the Protection of Civilians," in *The State of Peacebuilding in Africa: Lessons Learned for Policymakers and Practitioners*, Palgrave Macmillan: Switzerland, 2021.

¹⁰⁵ Wani, Ibrahim J., "Chapter 6. United Nations Peacekeeping, Human Rights, and the Protection of Civilians," in *The State of Peacebuilding in Africa: Lessons Learned for Policymakers and Practitioners*, Palgrave Macmillan: Switzerland, 2021.

¹⁰⁶ Wani, Ibrahim J., "Chapter 6. United Nations Peacekeeping, Human Rights, and the Protection of Civilians,"

¹⁰⁷ Wani, Ibrahim J., "Chapter 6. United Nations Peacekeeping, Human Rights, and the Protection of Civilians,"

¹⁰⁸ Global Conflict Tracker. "War in Yemen." Council on Foreign Relations, May 4, 2022, <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/war-yemen>, (accessed August 25, 2022).

¹⁰⁹ Global Conflict Tracker. "War in Yemen."

¹¹⁰ Global Conflict Tracker. "War in Yemen."

¹¹¹ Global Conflict Tracker. "War in Yemen."

¹¹² Global Conflict Tracker. "War in Yemen."

¹¹³ Global Conflict Tracker. "War in Yemen."

¹¹⁴ Campaign Against Arms Trade. "The War on Yemen's Civilians." *Campaign Against Arms Trade* (blog), February 15, 2022. <https://caat.org.uk/homepage/stop-arming-saudi-arabia/the-war-on-yemens-civilians/>, (accessed August 4, 2022).

¹¹⁵ UN News. "UN Humanitarian Office Puts Yemen War Dead at 233,000, Mostly from 'Indirect Causes,'" December 1, 2020. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/12/1078972>, (accessed May 25, 2022).

¹¹⁶ UN News. "UN Humanitarian Office Puts Yemen War Dead at 233,000, Mostly from 'Indirect Causes'"

¹¹⁷ UN News. "UN Humanitarian Office Puts Yemen War Dead at 233,000, Mostly from 'Indirect Causes.'"

¹¹⁸ Global Conflict Tracker. "War in Yemen."

¹¹⁹ Global Conflict Tracker. "War in Yemen."

¹²⁰ UN High Commissioner for Refugees. "Yemen Humanitarian Crisis," UN High Commissioner for Refugees, 2022, <https://www.unrefugees.org/emergencies/yemen/>, (accessed July 30, 2022).

¹²¹ UN High Commissioner for Refugees. "Yemen Humanitarian Crisis,"

UN Refugee Agency as “a humanitarian catastrophe.”¹²² The Yemeni refugee crisis has led to international need for coordination, aid, shelter, travel, and disease prevention within large amounts of refugees without access to necessary healthcare.¹²³

There have also been localized interventions attempting to stabilize the Member State, such as the diffusion of refugees beyond the MENA region.¹²⁴ Saudi Arabia has come to the forefront of international interests in the conflict, as a powerful member of the LAS with direct economic and security concerns as a result of the Yemeni Civil War.¹²⁵ Since 2015, Saudi Arabia has supported various initiatives of military and economic action within Yemen, with logistical and material support from the United States.¹²⁶ The Saudi initiative has consisted of aerial bombing campaigns, as well as the deployment of personnel into Yemen.¹²⁷ Although prominent, this initiative has struggled to make significant impact in the range or length of combat within and spilling over from the country due to fragmentation within fighting forces within Yemen and a multi-front approach.¹²⁸ Some Member States have also seen this as a response to other tensions within the region, with concern being raised that the Yemen conflict is serving as a proxy war for outside groups.¹²⁹

Conclusion

Intrastate conflict has been a pervasive issue throughout the world, and therefore has been a focus of LAS since its inception.¹³⁰ Intrastate conflict impacts not only those inside of the affected conflict zone, but also those in the region and around the world through the diffusion of conflict and conflict’s consequences.¹³¹ The wide-reaching effects of intrastate conflict can cause serious problems on humanitarian, economic, and political fronts.¹³² Steps have been made by regional and international organizations to help mitigate the effects of intrastate conflict and conflict diffusion.¹³³ However, conflict continues to exist within various LAS Member States, disrupting peace throughout the region.¹³⁴ It is necessary for steps to be taken to mitigate the effects of intrastate conflict and to keep a hold on its diffusion throughout the world.¹³⁵

Committee Directive

Delegates must consider the causes of intrastate conflict, and the effects that intrastate conflict can have on the affected state, neighboring Member States, and more broadly throughout the world. Delegates should consider what methods may be most effective in curbing the diffusion of conflict within the region. Delegate should seek to understand the regional collaboration between LAS Member States and the political climate and issues facing the Arab world today. Delegates should ask themselves: How can the collaborative avenues afforded to Member States by their membership in the LAS be used to mitigate intrastate conflict? What peacekeeping methods could fit the needs of the MENA region in mitigating intrastate conflict? How can conflict mitigation be used both to ease existing conflicts and to prevent conflict in the future? How can a multilateral approach to intrastate conflict best be utilized, and what benefits does this afford the region when compared to a singular approach?

¹²² UN High Commissioner for Refugees. “Yemen Humanitarian Crisis,”

¹²³ UN High Commissioner for Refugees. “Yemen Humanitarian Crisis,”

¹²⁴ Global Conflict Tracker. “War in Yemen.”

¹²⁵ Global Conflict Tracker. “War in Yemen.” Council on Foreign Relations, May 4, 2022, <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/war-yemen>, (accessed August 25, 2022).

¹²⁶ Global Conflict Tracker. “War in Yemen.”

¹²⁷ Global Conflict Tracker. “War in Yemen.”

¹²⁸ Haykel, Bernard. “The Houthis, Saudi Arabia and the War in Yemen.” Hoover Institution, June 15, 2021, <https://www.hoover.org/research/houthis-saudi-arabia-and-war-yemen>, (accessed August 25, 2022).

¹²⁹ Haykel, Bernard. “The Houthis, Saudi Arabia and the War in Yemen.”

¹³⁰ United Nations Peacekeeping. “Our History.” United Nations Peacekeeping, 2022. <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/our-history>, (accessed June 24, 2022).

¹³¹ World 101 from the Council on Foreign Relations. “Understanding Intrastate Conflict,” 2022. <https://world101.cfr.org/how-world-works-and-sometimes-doesnt/conflict/understanding-intrastate-conflict>, (accessed May 24, 2022).

¹³² World 101 from the Council on Foreign Relations. “Understanding Intrastate Conflict.”

¹³³ World 101 from the Council on Foreign Relations. “Understanding Intrastate Conflict.”

¹³⁴ World 101 from the Council on Foreign Relations. “Understanding Intrastate Conflict.”

¹³⁵ World 101 from the Council on Foreign Relations. “Understanding Intrastate Conflict.”

II. Developing Solutions to Increasing Desertification

Introduction

In 1949, French botanist André Aubréville published *Climates, Forests, and Desertification in Tropical Africa*, first coining the term “desertification.”¹³⁶ Desertification refers to the “land degradation in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas resulting from various factors, including climatic variations and human activities.”¹³⁷ As such, desertification research includes the general degradation of land, including the temporary or permanent decline in the quality of soil, vegetation, and water supplies for a variety of reasons.¹³⁸ When land is continuously degraded, Member States face economic, environmental, and security impacts.¹³⁹

As of 2022, 12 million hectares of land are lost to desertification globally each year.¹⁴⁰ The effects of desertification are particularly impactful to Member States in the League of Arab States (LAS).¹⁴¹ With over 70 percent of the land in the Middle East and Northern Africa (MENA) region classified as arid and drylands, LAS must act to prevent further degradation and desertification of the region for economic, environmental, and security reasons.¹⁴²

History

Desertification is caused by a variety of independent yet interconnected factors. Recurring drought and decline in rainfall contribute to desertification.¹⁴³ Years of below-average rainfall culminate in water shortages, affecting agricultural production due to the viability of arable soil.¹⁴⁴ The effects of drought on desertification also accelerate with increased and excessive water consumption caused by a growing population.¹⁴⁵ Population growth in desert regions where mining jobs and tourism are rising has increased pressure on the environment, particularly vital resources like water and firewood.¹⁴⁶ As populations migrated from arid lands in search of farm and grazing land, the arable land became overused and exploited.¹⁴⁷ Wooded areas are removed for farming and grazing, while the wood is used for fuel and cooking, creating vulnerability to soil erosion.¹⁴⁸ Livestock that grew with the population caused overgrazing, leaving soil further exposed to erosion.¹⁴⁹ Additionally, accelerating global climate change has caused desert regions to become warmer and drier, as there is on average less rain now in these regions than in the 1970s.¹⁵⁰ As such, it is not a single factor, but rather a culmination of several factors that contribute to the pace at which desert regions are expanding.¹⁵¹ Desertification’s causes and effects are more severe in arid parts of the developing world, such as the MENA region.¹⁵²

¹³⁶ Sterk, Geert, John Boardman, and Ann Verdoordt. “Desertification: History, Causes and Options for Its Control.” *Land Degradation & Development* 27, no. 8 (2016): 1783–87. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ldr.2525>.

¹³⁷ “United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa,” entry into force December 26, 1994, *United Nations Treaty Collection*, registration no. 33480, https://treaties.un.org/doc/Treaties/1996/12/19961226%2001-46%20PM/Ch_XXVII_10p.pdf.

¹³⁸ McSweeney, Robert. “Explainer: Desertification and the Role of Climate Change.” Carbon Brief, August 6, 2019. <https://www.carbonbrief.org/explainer-desertification-and-the-role-of-climate-change/>, (accessed May 27, 2022).

¹³⁹ McSweeney, Robert. “Explainer: Desertification and the Role of Climate Change.”

¹⁴⁰ Al-Zu’bi, Maha Ali. “Desertification in MENA - Causes and Solutions.” *Echoing Sustainability in MENA*, February 17, 2022. <https://www.ecomena.org/desertification-mena/>, (accessed May 27, 2022).

¹⁴¹ Al-Zu’bi, Maha Ali. “Desertification in MENA - Causes and Solutions.”

¹⁴² Al-Zu’bi, Maha Ali. “Desertification in MENA - Causes and Solutions.”

¹⁴³ Cindrić, Hrvoje. “Droughts and Desertification.” *Buro Happold*, January 4, 2022. <https://www.burohappold.com/articles/droughts-and-desertification/>, (accessed May 27, 2022).

¹⁴⁴ Cindrić, Hrvoje. “Droughts and Desertification.”

¹⁴⁵ Cindrić, Hrvoje. “Droughts and Desertification.”

¹⁴⁶ BBC Bitesize. “Desertification,” 2022, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zctymnb/revision/4>, (accessed May 27, 2022).

¹⁴⁷ BBC Bitesize. “Desertification.”

¹⁴⁸ BBC Bitesize. “Desertification.”

¹⁴⁹ BBC Bitesize. “Desertification.”

¹⁵⁰ BBC Bitesize. “Desertification.”

¹⁵¹ BBC Bitesize. “Desertification.”

¹⁵² Cindrić, Hrvoje. “Droughts and Desertification.”

Desertification was first identified as a global issue in the 1960s.¹⁵³ For parts of the MENA region, a severe decline of rainfall starting in 1968 caused the worst periodic drought in recent Sahel history.¹⁵⁴ By 1973, an estimated 250,000 square miles of arable land had been transformed into desert by the drought.¹⁵⁵ Scientists in the 1970s argued increasing desertification seen in the Sahel could possibly be attributed to detrimental human use of land: overpopulation, unregulated water resource practices, unsustainable food production techniques, nomad customs including overgrazing of livestock, and insufficient transportation systems.¹⁵⁶ The major droughts of the late 1960s extended into the 1970s and 1980s, further eroding the quality of the soil in the Sahel region and causing the death of millions due to water scarcity, food loss, and poverty.¹⁵⁷ Being located north of the Sahel, the MENA region has increasingly seen land degradation after the Sahelian drought.¹⁵⁸

Drought continued into the late 1990s and early 2000s, as heat extremes in the MENA region were the most intense in the past century.¹⁵⁹ Drought, extreme heat, and natural degradation of the 2000s and 2010s led to prolonged periods of political change in the region.¹⁶⁰ Since 2002, the MENA region has received less-than-normal rainfall and above-normal temperatures, peaking between 2006 and 2009.¹⁶¹ The late 2000's drought caused LAS Member States to receive up to ten percent less rainfall than normal and an increase in ambient temperature by around 4-degrees Celsius above average.¹⁶² Member States, most notably Syria and Iraq, lost large parts of their agricultural systems and livestock to the desertification of arable land.¹⁶³ These droughts exacerbated existing political tensions within the MENA region, as governments were unable to address the basic needs of citizens that were eroded due to increasing drought and desertification.¹⁶⁴ As a result, many citizens of LAS Member States used this inability to provide aid as an underlying motive for the Arab Spring, a series of anti-government protests and revolts across the MENA region.¹⁶⁵

Current Situation

Desertification can lead to a variety of socioeconomic outcomes.¹⁶⁶ Populations in degraded land areas can experience food shortages, volatility in food prices, increased release of carbon and nitrous oxide, and threat of social instability and forced migration.¹⁶⁷ The UN Environmental Programme (UNEP) also warns that desertification disproportionately affects the most vulnerable: rural communities, small farmers, and the extremely impoverished.¹⁶⁸

¹⁵³ United Nations Environmental Programme. "From Chile to China: The Global Battle against Desertification." UNEP, February 10, 2022. <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/chile-china-global-battle-against-desertification>, (accessed May 27, 2022).

¹⁵⁴ Cohn, Theodore. "The Sahelian Drought: Problems of Land Use." *International Journal* 30, no. 3 (1975): 428–44. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40201254?origin=crossref>.

¹⁵⁵ Cohn, Theodore. "The Sahelian Drought: Problems of Land Use."

¹⁵⁶ Cohn, Theodore. "The Sahelian Drought: Problems of Land Use."

¹⁵⁷ Cohn, Theodore. "The Sahelian Drought: Problems of Land Use."

¹⁵⁸ Al-Zu'bi, Maha Ali. "Desertification in MENA - Causes and Solutions." *Echoing Sustainability in MENA*, February 17, 2022. <https://www.ecomena.org/desertification-mena/>, (accessed May 27, 2022).

¹⁵⁹ Karami, Nasser. "The Modality of Climate Change in the Middle East: Drought or Drying Up?" *The Journal of Interrupted Studies* 2, no. 1 (June 14, 2019): 118–40, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/333867000_The_Modality_of_Climate_Change_in_the_Middle_East_Drought_or_Drying_up.

¹⁶⁰ Karami, Nasser. "The Modality of Climate Change in the Middle East: Drought or Drying Up?"

¹⁶¹ Karami, Nasser. "The Modality of Climate Change in the Middle East: Drought or Drying Up?"

¹⁶² Karami, Nasser. "The Modality of Climate Change in the Middle East: Drought or Drying Up?"

¹⁶³ Karami, Nasser. "The Modality of Climate Change in the Middle East: Drought or Drying Up?"

¹⁶⁴ "The Arab Spring and Climate Change: A Climate and Security Correlations Series." Center for American Progress, February 2013. <https://climateandsecurity.files.wordpress.com/2012/04/climatechange-arabspring-ccs-cap-stimson.pdf>.

¹⁶⁵ "The Arab Spring and Climate Change: A Climate and Security Correlations Series." Center for American Progress.

¹⁶⁶ UNEP. "From Chile to China: The Global Battle against Desertification."

¹⁶⁷ UNEP. "From Chile to China: The Global Battle against Desertification."

¹⁶⁸ UNEP. "From Chile to China: The Global Battle against Desertification."

The World Bank reported human security has decreased due to the effects of climate change.¹⁶⁹ As the MENA region experiences more desertification, LAS Member States may experience a 30 percent decline in crop yields.¹⁷⁰ For example, as drought and land degradation endangers 45 percent of Iraq's agricultural land, desertification threatens up 90 percent of Iraq's total land area, pushing the arable lands on the brink of crisis.¹⁷¹ Water decreases from the Tigris River and its tributaries have decreased significantly, some tributaries by more than half since 2019.¹⁷² Farmers in previously arable lands have reported they are unable to maintain a crop yield with the drying land and water scarcity.¹⁷³

When faced with environmental and food loss, populations become increasingly unstable.¹⁷⁴ As arable land decreases, farmland becomes scarce, and livestock dies, populations become displaced in search of employment to purchase what the populations were once able to grow themselves.¹⁷⁵ Decreasing food production and increasing employment demands have led to the outbreak of conflict in several LAS Member States.¹⁷⁶ For example, some protests during the Arab Spring in 2011 focused on the failure of governments to meet the basic needs of food and water during periods of drought and increasing desertification.¹⁷⁷

Today, the MENA region continues to struggle with the compounding challenges of desertification in combination with other timely issues, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, conflict displacement, and economic concerns surrounding the decline in global demand for oil.¹⁷⁸ Desertification, however, continues to be a major threat to the livelihood of the MENA region.¹⁷⁹ Shrinking arable land will continue to become drier, posing additional threats to the environment and public health.¹⁸⁰ The increased aridity of soil has created an increase in sandstorms in the region, an ecological phenomenon that has increased in Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Syria in the last two decades.¹⁸¹ LAS Member States, corporations, and multilateral organizations have initiatives to curb increased desertification, such as reforestation and agricultural projects.¹⁸² However, certain afforestation initiatives – the act of establishing forest in previously non-forest lands – has caused skepticism from scholars who consider the initiative counterproductive and ecologically damaging.¹⁸³

Actions Taken by LAS and the United Nations

In 2015, the UN released the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in which Member States resolve to “ensure the lasting protection of the planet and its natural resources.”¹⁸⁴ In turn, the Agenda determines all Member States to cooperate on solutions to prevent and mitigate desertification.¹⁸⁵ The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the Agenda are a call to action for Member States, separating the targets of the Agenda into 17 categories.¹⁸⁶ Goal 15

¹⁶⁹ Youness, Mohamed Abdallah. “How Climate Change Contributed to the Conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa.” World Bank, December 10, 2015. <https://blogs.worldbank.org/arabvoices/climate-change-conflict-mena>, (accessed May 27, 2022).

¹⁷⁰ Youness, Mohamed Abdallah. “How Climate Change Contributed to the Conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa.”

¹⁷¹ Mounir, Eman. “Desertification and war impacting farmers in Syria and Iraq.” Climatetracker, December 13, 2021. <https://climatetracker.org/desertification-and-war-impacting-farmers-in-syria-and-iraq/>, (accessed August 14, 2022).

¹⁷² Mounir, Eman. “Desertification and war impacting farmers in Syria and Iraq.”

¹⁷³ Mounir, Eman. “Desertification and war impacting farmers in Syria and Iraq.”

¹⁷⁴ Youness, Mohamed Abdallah. “How Climate Change Contributed to the Conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa.”

¹⁷⁵ Youness, Mohamed Abdallah. “How Climate Change Contributed to the Conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa.”

¹⁷⁶ Youness, Mohamed Abdallah. “How Climate Change Contributed to the Conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa.”

¹⁷⁷ Youness, Mohamed Abdallah. “How Climate Change Contributed to the Conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa.”

¹⁷⁸ Wehrey, Frederic, and Ninar Fawal. “Cascading Climate Effects in the Middle East and North Africa: Adapting Through Inclusive Governance.” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. <https://carnegieendowment.org/2022/02/24/cascading-climate-effects-in-middle-east-and-north-africa-adapting-through-inclusive-governance-pub-86510>, (accessed August 10, 2022).

¹⁷⁹ Wehrey, and Fawal. “Cascading Climate Effects in the Middle East and North Africa.”

¹⁸⁰ Wehrey, and Fawal. “Cascading Climate Effects in the Middle East and North Africa.”

¹⁸¹ Wehrey, and Fawal. “Cascading Climate Effects in the Middle East and North Africa.”

¹⁸² Wehrey, and Fawal. “Cascading Climate Effects in the Middle East and North Africa.”

¹⁸³ Wehrey, and Fawal. “Cascading Climate Effects in the Middle East and North Africa.”

¹⁸⁴ United Nations General Assembly resolution 70, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, A/RES/70/1, (October 21, 2015), https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E.

¹⁸⁵ United Nations General Assembly resolution 70, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.

¹⁸⁶ United Nations. “The 17 Goals: Sustainable Development.” UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2022. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals> (accessed May 25, 2022).

focuses on sustainably managing forests, combating desertification, halting and reversing land degradation, and halting biodiversity loss.¹⁸⁷

In 1994, the UN passed the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the only legally binding framework on desertification and drought.¹⁸⁸ The UNCCD is a multilateral commitment by the 197 parties, scientists, policymakers, the private sectors, and communities around the world to mitigate and prevent desertification for the humanitarian and economic benefit of all people.¹⁸⁹ In May 2022, the UNCCD held its 15th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP15), themed “Land. Life. Legacy: From Scarcity to Prosperity.”¹⁹⁰ COP15 adopted 38 decisions during the Conference, including robust monitoring of land restoration commitments, increasing political motivation to combat the socioeconomic effects of drought, and launching regional initiatives to support the Africa-led Great Green Wall.¹⁹¹ The UNCCD aims to restore one billion hectares of deforested and degraded land by 2030.¹⁹²

The Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD) is a subdivision of LAS.¹⁹³ At the 2019 Conference of Parties 14, AOAD released *The Arab States’ Efforts to Combat Desertification and Achieve Land Degradation Neutrality*.¹⁹⁴ The report, provided as a panel of AOAD representatives, is an overview of the LAS Member States’ progress on implementing the UN SDGs and the UNCCD 2018-2030 strategy on land neutrality.¹⁹⁵ AOAD reports desertification and related poor land management are major reasons behind the increasing poverty in the MENA region, which occurred as global poverty declined.¹⁹⁶ AOAD participated in the online Desertification and Drought Day 2021 alongside the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Africa and Office of Information and Communications Technology.¹⁹⁷ The event launched the Desertification and Drought Day 2021 Youth Challenge: Restoring Degraded Land in the Arab Region.¹⁹⁸ The challenge was to make a video raising awareness of land degradation and potential solutions to be presented during the Desertification and Drought Day 2021 events.¹⁹⁹

Case Study

Algeria

The People’s Democratic Republic of Algeria (Algeria), located in northern Africa, is almost 84 percent covered by the Sahara Desert, characterized by dryness and pronounced salinity.²⁰⁰ Algeria has seen this desert coverage

¹⁸⁷ United Nations Statistics Division. “Sustainable Development Goal 15.” United Nations Statistics Division, 2022. <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2021/Goal-15/>, (accessed May 25, 2022).

¹⁸⁸ United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. “Convention.” UNCCD, 2022. <https://www.unccd.int/convention/overview>, (accessed May 27, 2022).

¹⁸⁹ UNCCD. “Convention.”

¹⁹⁰ United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. “United Global Call to Act on Land Degradation and Drought Concludes Major UN Meeting in Côte d’Ivoire.” UNCCD, May 20, 2022. <https://www.unccd.int/news-stories/press-releases/united-global-call-act-land-degradation-and-drought-concludes-major-un>, (accessed May 27, 2022).

¹⁹¹ UNCCD. “United Global Call to Act on Land Degradation and Drought Concludes Major UN Meeting in Côte d’Ivoire.”

¹⁹² UNCCD. “United Global Call to Act on Land Degradation and Drought Concludes Major UN Meeting in Côte d’Ivoire.”

¹⁹³ Jitendra. “Poverty, Desertification Loom Large over Arab World: Report.” Down To Earth, September 12, 2019. <https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/climate-change/poverty-desertification-loom-large-over-arab-world-report-66696>, (accessed May 25, 2022).

¹⁹⁴ Jitendra. “Poverty, Desertification Loom Large over Arab World: Report.”

¹⁹⁵ Jitendra. “Poverty, Desertification Loom Large over Arab World: Report.”

¹⁹⁶ Jitendra. “Poverty, Desertification Loom Large over Arab World: Report.”

¹⁹⁷ UN Convention to Combat Desertification. “2021 Events around the World | UNCCD.” United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, 2021. <https://www2.unccd.int/actions/17-june-desertification-and-drought-day2021-desertification-and-drought-day/2021-events>, (accessed May 25, 2022).

¹⁹⁸ UN Office of Information and Communication Technology. “Restoring Degraded Land in the Arab Region: A Youth Challenge.” United Nations Office of Information and Communications Technology, 2021. <https://ideas.unite.un.org/restoredegradedland/Page/Home>, (accessed May 25, 2022).

¹⁹⁹ UN Office of Information and Communication Technology. “Restoring Degraded Land in the Arab Region: A Youth Challenge.”

²⁰⁰ Ali, Ghazi. “Desertification in Algeria: Policies and Measures for the Protection of Natural Resources.” In *Facing Global Environmental Change*, 4:159–73. Hexagon Series on Human and Environmental Security and Peace. Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer Berlin Heidelberg, 2009. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-540-68488-6_10.

increase as the region is overexploited in unsuitable land use practice, intense wind erosion, and cyclic drought.²⁰¹ The population of the northern Sahara live in pastoral societies, which did not preserve the viable steppes of Algeria as livestock exceeds the capacity of the ecosystem.²⁰² Existing land management systems by the government do not impose legal restrictions on damaging land use practices.²⁰³ More than 50 percent of the land in Algeria has degraded, and over three percent of Algeria has been found to suffer from desertification specifically.²⁰⁴

The Algerian government has taken efforts to mitigate desertification in its Saharan ecosystem for decades²⁰⁵ One such initiative is the Green Dam project²⁰⁶ Started in the 1960s, the Green Dam project is a reforestation program, aimed at safeguarding current forested areas of Algeria and developing arid areas.²⁰⁷ The Green Dam project was implemented in the early 1970s, covering an area of three million hectares in northern Algeria.²⁰⁸ By 2015, the Green Dam project had rehabilitated 300,000 hectares of the Saharan region, creating desertification monitoring networks over 5,000 kilometers in distance, and protecting populations and infrastructure from silting in over 5,000 hectares.²⁰⁹ Rural development programs on protecting local populations and natural resources aid in the Green Dam project's objectives.²¹⁰ In 2021, the Algerian announced a new rural forest renewal policy, in which more than 1.2 million hectares will be reforested.²¹¹ However, the Green Dam project covers a small portion of Algeria's 238 million hectares total land area, nor the 20 million hectares threatened by desertification.²¹² A study of the Green Dam project's progress from 1972 to 2019 reported while the project showed moderate success, the reforested areas degraded significantly.²¹³ Overharvesting, overpopulation of livestock, and invasive species have destroyed vast amounts of reforestation.²¹⁴

Conclusion

As a mostly arid terrain, Member States of LAS are particularly threatened by increasing desertification.²¹⁵ The ramifications of not mitigating and preventing further desertification are devastating, as the loss of arable land is an economic, environmental, and security risk.²¹⁶ While the domestic effects of desertification are devastating, the degradation of land extends beyond state territorial lines.²¹⁷ The erosion of the Sahel and deserts across the Arab states will continue to be a threat-multiplier to conflict, economic downturn, and agriculture production.²¹⁸ A

²⁰¹ Ali, Ghazi. "Desertification in Algeria: Policies and Measures for the Protection of Natural Resources." In *Facing Global Environmental Change*, 4:159–73. Hexagon Series on Human and Environmental Security and Peace. Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer Berlin Heidelberg, 2009. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-540-68488-6_10.

²⁰² Ali, Ghazi. "Desertification in Algeria: Policies and Measures for the Protection of Natural Resources."

²⁰³ Ali, Ghazi. "Desertification in Algeria: Policies and Measures for the Protection of Natural Resources."

²⁰⁴ Ali, Ghazi. "Desertification in Algeria: Policies and Measures for the Protection of Natural Resources."

²⁰⁵ European Committee of the Regions. "Algeria - Environment and Fight against Climate Change." European Committee of the Regions, 2022. <https://portal.cor.europa.eu/divisionpowers/Pages/Algeria-Environment-and-fight-against-climate-change.aspx>, (accessed May 25, 2022).

²⁰⁶ European Committee of the Regions. "Algeria - Environment and Fight against Climate Change."

²⁰⁷ Saifi, Merdas, Nouar Boulghobra, and Fattoum Lakhdari. "The Green Dam in Algeria as a Tool to Combat Desertification." *Global Risk Forum Davos: Planet@Risk* 3, no. 1 (March 2015): 68–71, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/273322582_The_Green_Dam_in_Algeria_as_a_tool_to_combat_desertification (accessed May 25, 2022).

²⁰⁸ Saifi, Merdas, et. al. "The Green Dam in Algeria as a Tool to Combat Desertification."

²⁰⁹ Saifi, Merdas, et. al. "The Green Dam in Algeria as a Tool to Combat Desertification."

²¹⁰ Saifi, Merdas, et. al. "The Green Dam in Algeria as a Tool to Combat Desertification."

²¹¹ Benhizi, Ramzi, Yacine Kouba, György Szabó, Gábor Négyesi, and Behnam Ata. "Monitoring the Spatiotemporal Evolution of the Green Dam in Djelfa Province, Algeria." *Sustainability* 13, no. 14 (January 2021): 7953. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13147953>.

²¹² Saifi, Merdas, et. al. "The Green Dam in Algeria as a Tool to Combat Desertification."

²¹³ Benhizi, Ramzi, et. al. "Monitoring the Spatiotemporal Evolution of the Green Dam in Djelfa Province, Algeria."

²¹⁴ Benhizi, Ramzi, et. al. "Monitoring the Spatiotemporal Evolution of the Green Dam in Djelfa Province, Algeria."

²¹⁵ Al-Zu'bi, Maha Ali. "Desertification in MENA - Causes and Solutions." *Echoing Sustainability in MENA*, February 17, 2022. <https://www.ecomena.org/desertification-mena/>, (accessed May 27, 2022).

²¹⁶ Al-Zu'bi, Maha Ali. "Desertification in MENA - Causes and Solutions."

²¹⁷ United Nations Environmental Programme. "From Chile to China: The Global Battle against Desertification." UNEP, February 10, 2022. <http://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/chile-china-global-battle-against-desertification>, (accessed May 27, 2022).

²¹⁸ United Nations Environmental Programme. "From Chile to China: The Global Battle against Desertification."

multilateral approach by LAS is needed in creating and implementing solutions to increasing desertification within Member States and the MENA region as a whole.

Committee Directive

During committee, delegates should look at how the Member State is experiencing desertification, whether directly within its territory or indirectly through socioeconomic implications of other Member States desertification experiences. Delegates should research the national, regional, and global practices on how their Member State plays a role in mitigating and preventing desertification and its effects. Delegates should also seek information on what their Member State is doing nationally to address the issue and how those actions may affect other Member States in the MENA region. In doing so, delegates should ask themselves: What can LAS do to incentivize Member States to proactively become involved in desertification solutions? What are the consequences of ignoring desertification, such as economic, security, and humanitarian effects? Overall, delegates should address these questions with realistic solutions for implementing their goals. Delegates should focus on building upon established LAS and other multilateral programs and initiatives rather than creating new bodies within LAS. Delegates should also focus on the issue as a whole and not specific situations. All angles should be considered, from environmental degradation to security concerns.

Annotated Bibliography

I. Strengthening Multilateral Security Measures to Mitigate the Diffusion of Intrastate Conflict

Aksu, Eşref. *The United Nations, Intra-State Peacekeeping and Normative Change*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003. <https://library.oapen.org/bitstream/id/78045611-7228-4ac6-b07f-796e35477c85/341402.pdf>.

The United Nations, Intra-State Peacekeeping and Normative Change is an academic publication on conflict models describing how the United Nations (UN) undertakes intrastate peacekeeping. The publication explains the UN's increasing relations in intrastate conflict resolution post-Cold War, including redefining normative theory standards for international intervention in intrastate affairs. The publication provides an overview of intervention and civil conflict theory, while also providing historical example of outside involvement in intrastate conflict.

Dobkowski, Michael, and Isidor Wallimann. "Ch. 12: Intrastate Conflict and Sustainable Development: Lessons from Bosnia, Somalia, and Haiti." In *The Coming Age of Scarcity: Preventing Mass Death and Genocide in the Twenty-First Century*, 245–68. Syracuse University Press, 1998. <https://surface.syr.edu/books/23>.

The Coming Age of Scarcity is an analysis of modern challenges society faces that have led to the mass deaths and genocides of the late 20th and 21st centuries. The chapter "Intrastate Conflict and Sustainable Development" provides applicable theoretical frameworks on intrastate conflict has been escalated and handled by the international community. The chapter examines previous solutions to intrastate conflict outside the MENA region, giving examples to how the international community has collaborated to tackle some of the larger humanitarian crises of the post-Cold War world.

Kelling, Claire, and YiJyun Lin. "Analysis of Conflict Diffusion Over Continuous Space." In *Computational Conflict Research*, 201–23. Computational Social Sciences. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2020. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-29333-8_10.

Computational Conflict Research is a compilation of original studies using computational methods to research conflict at varying scales and intensities around the globe. The chapter "Analysis of conflict Diffusion over Continuous Space" focuses defining civil war as a phenomenon and its place in the global south, using spatial statistics to study the characteristics of conflict events. The study found individual battle with territorial gain tend to diffuse farther than battles with no territorial gains. Additionally, the longer the conflict lasts, the stronger spatial dependence will be. The study provides a data-centered model for conflict study and solutions, based more broadly in the study of actors within intrastate conflict rather than traditional state-based approach.

Rüegger, Seraina. "Refugees, ethnic power relations, and civil conflict in the country of asylum." *Journal of Peace Research* 56, no. 1 (2018), 42-57. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343318812935>.

The *Journal of Peace Research* is a peer-reviewed academic journal for scholarly articles in the field of peace and conflict studies, conflict resolution, and international security. The article, "Refugees, ethnic power relations, and civil conflict in the country of asylum," analyzes the link between forced migrants, transnational connections, and ethnic civil conflict in the Member States hosting asylum. Many Member States facing refugee inflows admit refugees with the presumption that refugees of conflict will increase instability within the host state through means such as disturbing the ethnic makeup. The article argues instability caused by refugee intake is triggered by the exclusion of ethnic refugees from political participation, resulting in rising ethnic tensions and clashes. The article provides theoretical analysis of one aspect of the diffusion of conflict – migration and refugees – along with analysis of how host states can minimize the instability trigger of forced migrants within their Member State.

II. Developing Solutions to Increasing Desertification

Vigil, Sara. “Addressing the Land Degradation-Migration Nexus: The Role of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.” *Stockholm Environmental Institute: Asia*, September 9, 2019. <https://policycommons.net/artifacts/1358659/addressing-the-land-degradation-migration-nexus/1971897/>.

Stockholm Environmental Institute: Asia is a non-profit research and policy organization focused on environmental and development challenges within Asia. The article “Addressing the Land Degradation-Migration Nexus...” looks into the role of the UN’s Convention to Combat Desertification plays in the migration crisis. Migration is both a cause and consequence of land degradation. When land become overused, it is no longer arable, forcing local population to migrate to arable land. This arable land, in turn, becomes overused to keep up with the needs of its previous and new populations. The report explains what Member States of the Convention can do to help mitigate and reverse the migration effects of desertification.

Ahsan, Md. “Desertification in the OIC Member Countries: Factors, Challenges and the Way Forward.” *Journal of Bartın Faculty of Forestry* 22, no. 2 (August 15, 2020): 642–53. <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/barofd/article/731741>.

The *Journal of Bartın Faculty of Forestry* is an international scientific periodical published by Bartın University, Turkey. The Journal focused on topics of forestry, such as biodiversity, wood science and technology, and sustainable environmental policy as related to forestry. The article “Desertification in the OIC Member Countries” look at the land use patterns and climate change processes that particularly effect Member States of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), an organization with many LAS Member States as well. Beyond natural causes, the article looks at human activity factors that have caused land degradation to OIC Member States, such as unsustainable land use by local population and globalization caused by neoliberal agriculture policies.

Eskandari Dameneh, Hadi, Hamid Gholami, Matt W. Telfer, Jesús Rodrigo Comino, Adrian L. Collins, and John D. Jansen. “Desertification of Iran in the Early Twenty-First Century: Assessment Using Climate and Vegetation Indices.” *Scientific Reports* 11, no. 1 (December 2021): 20548. <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-021-99636-8.pdf>.

Scientific Reports is an open-source publishing journal focused on scientific research from a wide variety of disciplines. The article “Desertification of Iran in the early twenty-first century...” provides a case study of desertification research regarding Iran’s biodiversity changes. Using remote sensing of climatic and biogeographical features, researchers were able to identify and map areas of Iran that were susceptible and already experiencing desertification. This article provides an advanced scientific approach to the topic of desertification, with real-world technological evaluations and implications.

Hossain, Akbar, et. al. “Agricultural Land Degradation: Processes and Problems Undermining Future Food Security.” In *Environment, Climate, Plant and Vegetation Growth*, 17–61. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2020. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-49732-3_2.

Environment, Climate, Plant and Vegetation Growth provides a current account of climate change and global warming, focusing on their effects on plant and vegetation growth, and what the international community can do to develop clear, sustainable solutions to these problems. The chapter “Agricultural and Land Degradation...” explains the particularly harsh affect that climate change has on developing Member States. Developing Member States often have dense population and diverse ecosystems in need of conservation, meaning that expanding land use practices to increase production is not a sustainable option. The chapter goes in-depth on land degradation as it relates to agricultural production, ways Member States can reverse the deterioration of soil quality, and the economic and ecological management of land use.