

## Southern Regional Model United Nations, Charlotte 2013

*Establishing Global Partnerships: Investing in the Present to Prepare for a Sustainable Future*

April 11-13, 2013 – Charlotte, NC

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Dear Delegates,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the inaugural Southern Regional Model United Nations (SRMUN) Conference in Charlotte, NC, and to the League of Arab States committee (LAS). My name is Matt Smither and I will serve as your director during the conference and as a native of the city of Charlotte – welcome! The assistant director for the committee will be Devon Preston. I have been a part of SRMUN for many years in addition to competing in MUN conferences regionally, nationally and internationally. I am very excited about this committee as we are starting a brand new conference with many new delegates. We have the pleasure of being the first spring conference that SRMUN has undertaken and I am sure that it will be an incredible success with all of your hard work and energy.

The League of Arab States has been in existence since 1945 and throughout the years it has seen mass transformation in the scope of its mission and core values. Originally designed to purely politically focused, the League today is involved in not only political questions but also issues of social and economic importance. Today the Arab League has its permanent headquarters in Cairo, and is comprised of 22 Member States and 4 Observer States. Without rigid geographic borders, the League of Arab States is open to Member States that share a sense of common ‘Arabness’ in terms of language, cultural unity, economic interdependence, historical and traditional ties, as well as ethnic and religious similarities. Together these Member States are at the center of some of the world’s most dynamic and contentious issues ranging from the Arab Spring and the issue of Palestinian sovereignty to alternative energy growth and manufacturing and the growing importance of Islam in governance. While all of these and many others are intrinsically important to the League, two topics have been selected as both pertinent and pivotal as we look to the League in 2013. The topics for SRMUN Charlotte 2013 for the League of Arab States are:

Topic I: Examining the Conflict in Syria: Developing an Arab Proposal for the Cessation of Violence in the Middle East;

Topic II: Coordinating a Unified Arab Response to Humanitarian Crises.

The theme for SRMUN Charlotte 2013 is: “Establishing Global Partnerships: Investing in the Present to Prepare for a Sustainable Future.” Our committee topics fall perfectly in line with this notion. The Arab World is on the cusp of a new world order, one that may be dominant for many decades to come. It is important that you, as both delegates of the League at the conference, but also as citizens of globe, understand the importance of these issues in building a future in which dignity and democracy, hope and equity, prosperity and justice may all thrive.

Every delegation must submit a position paper which addresses each of the topics listed above and only those listed above. These papers should adhere to SRMUN’s guidelines on position paper format and style. The objective of the position paper is to concisely lay out your delegation’s plan for approaching the topics that focuses on your strategy of action for within the committee. Your position papers should provide a brief insight into your Member State’s history on the topic, its goals and actions desired to be taken. This will be the first work that Devon and I will see from you, we expect that each delegation to have well developed and researched papers that will serve as the foundation for our discussions. For specific details of formatting or if you need help in crafting a position paper, please visit the SRMUN website ([www.srmun.org](http://www.srmun.org)). **Position papers are due by 11:59 PM on Friday March 29, 2013 via the website.**

Devon and I are very excited about the possibilities that this committee has in structuring the Arab World. We are also equally anxious to see your ideas, energy and research set into motion during our time in Charlotte. Should you have any questions about the topics, structure or position paper, please do not hesitate to contact me. I am truly looking forward to a great conference and some incredible work out of what I am sure will be the best committee at SRMUN Charlotte 2013!

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## Committee History of the League of Arab States

In 1945 a historic meeting occurred between heads of state and respective representatives of the Arab World in Cairo, Egypt. Dignitaries and diplomats from the Kingdom of Egypt, Transjordan, the Kingdom of Iraq, the Kingdom of Yemen, the Lebanese Republic, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Syrian Republic signed into effect the Pact of the League of Arab States (also called the Charter of the Arab League), outlining the duties and responsibilities of each Member State. The League of Arab States was effectively born on 22 March 1945 with the ratification of the Pact.<sup>1</sup>

The idea of a regional Arab body came out of the Second World War in which the British supported a pan-Arab movement to oppose the active Axis forces in the region.<sup>2</sup> It would not be until 1944, however, that Arab states began to move towards a true regional structure with the Alexandria Protocol, a document that would become the basis for the creation and realization of the League of Arab States. The Alexandria Protocol states that the *Council of the League of Arab States* shall be charged to, "strengthen the relations between those states; to coordinate their political plans so as to insure their cooperation, and protect their independence and sovereignty against every aggression by suitable means..."<sup>3</sup> This statement remains the League's mission to this day.

Arab leaders ratified the Pact of the League of Arab States in 1945, ushering in a new era of pan-Arab cooperation and regional unity. Yet, the League was born out of a turbulent time in regional and international relations. European colonial powers were unable to continue an effective rule, as the Second World War had devastated their economies and hampered security activities. At the same time Arab peoples began an organized push for independence and free rule.<sup>4</sup> It was not until the conclusion of the war that the League came into being, at which time the issues of freeing Arab Member States still under colonial rule and non-intervention of foreign powers; preventing the Jewish minority in Palestine from creating a Jewish state; and Arab social, economic and cultural unity dominated the league's agenda. The League was also careful to constantly reassure its members that sovereignty and political free will would never be taken from individual Member States as the League would progress in the future.<sup>5</sup>

The League, since its inception has played a critical role in backing Palestinian statehood, and as such the League regards Palestine as an independent state with full authority in Arab League matters.<sup>6</sup> The issue of Palestine has been central to the League of Arab States since the Alexandria Protocol and has retained a unique status within the League discussions. Member States have been active in uniting, at times, for the common interest of the Palestinian Diaspora, anti-settlement projects in the Occupied Territories, Palestinian nation building, and security concerns in the Gaza Strip and West Bank. Notably, the League produced the *Arab League Declaration on the Invasion of Palestine* on 15 May 1948, outlining League and Member States efforts to halt the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine and initiated an economic boycott of Israel which lasted over 40 years.<sup>7</sup>

The Arab League is a voluntary association consisting of Member States in the Arab world and observer states as those states with particular interests in Arab affairs. Today the Arab League has its permanent headquarters in Cairo, Egypt and consists of 22 Member States covering the Middle East and North Africa and 4 Observer States: India, Venezuela, Eritrea and Brazil. Without rigid geographic borders, the League of Arab States is open to Member States that share a sense of common 'Arabness' in terms of language, cultural unity, economic interdependence, historical and traditional ties, as well as ethnic and religious similarities. However, identifying the members of the League of Arab States as a single homogeneous society is to essentialize the rich diversity that exists within the Arab World and among its people. The League encompasses approximately 5.25 million square miles and represents over 300 million people.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *The Pact of the League of Arab States*. League of Arab States. 22 March 1945.

<sup>2</sup> "Profile: Arab League." Overview Section. *BBC Worldwide*. 9 March 2011.  
[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle\\_east/country\\_profiles/1550797.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/country_profiles/1550797.stm)

<sup>3</sup> *The Alexandria Protocol*. Pan-Arab Preliminary Conference. 8 October 1944.

<sup>4</sup> "Profile: Arab League." Introduction Section. *BBC Worldwide*. 9 March 2011.  
[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle\\_east/country\\_profiles/1550797.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/country_profiles/1550797.stm)

<sup>5</sup> "League of Arab States." International Democracy Watch. 2009.  
<http://idw.csfederalismo.it/index.php/arab-league->

<sup>6</sup> *The Pact of the League of Arab States*. League of Arab States. 22 March 1945.

<sup>7</sup> *Arab League Declaration on the Invasion of Palestine*. League of Arab States. 15 May 1948.

<sup>8</sup> "Profile: Arab League." Facts Section. *BBC Worldwide*. 9 March 2011.

The Pact of the League of Arab States testifies that “strengthening the close relations and numerous ties which bind the Arab States...concern for the cementing and reinforcing of these bonds on the basis of respect for the independence and sovereignty...[a]nd in order to direct their efforts toward[s] the goal of the welfare of all the Arab States, their common wealth, the guarantee of their future and the realization of their aspirations” should be the central foci of the League.<sup>9</sup> In a more general sense, the League has worked for more than sixty years to strengthen ties among Member States and coordinate policies that would better Arab life and the region as a whole.

The principal institutions of the Arab League are the Council of the League, the Joint Defense Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Committees and the Secretariat General. The Council, composed of representatives of Member States, is the highest body of the Arab League. Each Member State has one vote within the Council, irrespective of its size in population or geographical land mass, similar to that of the United Nations General Assembly. The council meets formally twice a year, but convenes special sessions at the request of two Member States. The Council also has the task of directing all external activities of the League, including the cooperation with relevant international bodies.<sup>10</sup> It is this body that the committee at SRMUN Charlotte will replicate.

The Joint Defense and Economic Cooperation Treaty (JDECT) in 1950 established the Joint Defense Council. It is composed of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defense from all Member States, and remains active in matters of League security and military affairs.<sup>11</sup>

The Economic and Social Council is the current body charged to promote the means for the economic and social development of the Arab world and coordinate the activities of specialized agencies of the League of Arab States. Among the most important of the agencies are the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, the Arab Fund for Assistance to Arab and African Countries, the Arab Monetary Fund, the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development, the Industrial Development Centre for Arab States, the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa, the Arab Council for Civil Aviation, the Arab Postal Union, the Arab Telecommunication Union, the Arab Labour Council, and the Council for Arab Unity.<sup>12</sup>

The Pact of the League of Arab States also outlines the many subsidiary bodies or committees in Article IV of the Charter of the Arab League that may also be created.<sup>13</sup> These small bodies have the ability to affect a particular area of concern amongst Member States and in the Arab World. These subsidiary groups have been able to effectively tackle specific issues of concern such as curriculum; youth sports programs and drug abuse.

The Secretariat General is the institution of the League of Arab States responsible for implementing decisions, headed by the Secretary General. The current Secretary General is Nabil Elaraby, elected in May 2011, and was formerly Egypt’s foreign minister. Secretary General Elaraby’s role is key as it is he who represents the Arab world at the international level.<sup>14</sup>

Important and seminal documents of the Arab League include the Cultural Treaty of the Arab League (1946), The Arab Charter on Human Rights (1994), and the Arab Convention for the Suppression of Terrorism (1998). The Cultural Treaty promotes the cooperation of Arab States in various cultural aspects such as arts, sports, sciences, and academia. The treaty also encouraged the advancement of literacy rates, cultural preservation, joint sporting events, keeping pace with global intellectual movements, and cultural development.<sup>15</sup> The Arab Charter on Human Rights ratified in 1994, is the foundational building block for human rights within Arab States recognizing “the close link between human rights and world peace” as well as the “principles established by the Islamic Shari’a and other

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[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle\\_east/country\\_profiles/1550797.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/country_profiles/1550797.stm)

<sup>9</sup> *The Pact of the League of Arab States*. League of Arab States. 22 March 1945.

<sup>10</sup> *The Pact of the League of Arab States*. Article 3. League of Arab States. 22 March 1945.

<sup>11</sup> *Joint Defense and Economic Cooperation Treaty*. League of Arab States. 17 June 1950.

<sup>12</sup> “League of Arab States.” International Democracy Watch. 2009.

<http://idw.csfederalismo.it/index.php/arab-league->

<sup>13</sup> *The Pact of the League of Arab States*. Article 4. League of Arab States. 22 March 1945.

<sup>14</sup> Sarah El Deeb. “Arab League selects Egyptian as secretary-general.” Associated Press. 15 May 2011.

<http://www.cnsnews.com/news/article/arab-league-selects-egyptian-secretary-g>

<sup>15</sup> *Cultural Treaty of the Arab League*. League of Arab States. 20 November 1946.

religions...” by promoting brotherhood and equality amongst human beings.<sup>16</sup> The Arab Charter follows similar preexisting models in identifying the innate right to life, liberty, and security of person and the ability to freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural development under protection of law.<sup>17</sup> The Arab Convention for the Suppression of Terrorism dedicated Member States to the eradication and global fight against terrorism in all forms. The document also outlined the League’s political and judicial commitment to combat international terrorism.<sup>18</sup>

Today the League is active in matters that range from security issues to cultural activities, economic development to educational access and beyond, yet the League’s effectiveness has been severely tested by divisions among Member States both politically and socially.<sup>19</sup> While the League has little direct contact with the citizens of the member states, the League’s activities are felt by nearly all within its respective Member States. In particular the League has been successful in promoting the Common Market (1965) and moving towards a Greater Arab Free Trade Zone (GAFTA) in which nearly all of the Arab World would be able to trade without barriers. GAFTA is extremely important in evaluating the League’s effectiveness in economic matters, as the agreement relies on political institutions to reshape Arab trade policies. The agreement keys in on the issues of trade liberalization; reduction of agricultural subsidies; removal of tariff, monetary, administrative quotas; and intellectual property rights as central points in the Arab effort to move forward into the global economy.<sup>20</sup>

In addition to the League’s economic activities, the peace initiatives that have come out of the Arab League have had particular significance globally. The Arab Peace Initiative, a Saudi designed resolution to the Question of Palestine and road map for a just peace with Israel, has seen much international spotlight. The comprehensive peace initiative was first put forward in 2002 at the Beirut Summit and then reaffirmed in 2007 at the Riyadh Summit. The initiative calls for a delicate normalization of relations between Arab States and Israel, just settlement to the Palestinian refugee situation, and an end to the occupation of the Palestinian Territories by Israel.<sup>21</sup>

The Arab League remains a body in motion. Since its beginning, the issues of Israel and Palestine, colonization and economic development have haunted its diplomats, yet as the League has began new work in the twenty-first century, opportunities present themselves at every turn. Projects initiated by the Arab League have been successful in raising literacy rates, reducing crime and drug usage, and enacting a regional telecommunications union. The Arab World is experiencing some of the greatest economic and social growth of our time, cultural and political awareness are at the forefront of Arab citizens’ conscience, and the ability of the Arab League to effectively represent the aspirations of all Arab peoples has never been greater.

The current members of the League of Arab States:

ALGERIA, BAHRAIN, COMOROS, DJIBUTI, EGYPT, IRAQ, JORDAN, KUWAIT, LEBANON, LIBYA, MAURITANIA, MOROCCO, OMAN, PALESTINE, QATAR, SAUDI ARABIA, SOMALIA, SUDAN, SYRIA\*\*\*, TUNISIA, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, YEMEN

\*\*\*Syria is currently suspended from the League of Arab States following a vote on 12 November 2011 with 18 of the League’s Member States affirming the suspension, Yemen and Lebanon opposing, Iraq abstaining and Syria not voting at all.

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<sup>16</sup> *Arab Charter on Human Rights*. The League of Arab States. 15 September 1994.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>18</sup> *Arab Convention for the Suppression of Terrorism*. League of Arab States. 22 April 1998.

<sup>19</sup> “Profile: Arab League.” Issues Section. *BBC Worldwide*. 9 March 2011.

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle\\_east/country\\_profiles/1550797.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/country_profiles/1550797.stm)

<sup>20</sup> Javad Abedini and Nicolas Péridy. “The Greater Arab Free Trade Area (GAFTA): An Estimation of the Trade Effects.” University of Nantes, France.

<http://economics.ca/2007/papers/0300.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> *The Arab Peace Initiative*. League of Arab States. Adopted by the Arab summit in Beirut, 2002.

## Topic I: Examining the Conflict in Syria: Developing an Arab Proposal for the Cessation of Violence in the Middle East

*"Either unite to secure your common interests or divide and surely fail in your own individual way. Without your unity, your common resolve and your action now ... nobody can win and everyone will lose in some way."*  
- Kofi Annan, speaking in Geneva to formulate a peace plan for Syria<sup>22</sup>

### Introduction

In 2010, mass protests spread across most of the Arab World after Mohamed Bouazizi set himself on fire in Sidi Bouzid, Tunisia to protest the government of Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali.<sup>23</sup> By October 2011, Tunisia and Egypt had overthrown their respective governments through protest and nonviolent action; the government in Yemen was ousted and a revolution in Libya ended the 42-year rule of Muammar Gaddafi.<sup>24</sup> Other Arab states also faced protests within their civilian population, with governments attempting to calm the masses by making concessions and governmental changes while others used force to quell the uprisings. The Arab World had come alive with protest, demanding an end to authoritarian regimes, less corruption in the economy and a push for more democratic governments.<sup>25</sup> The movement would become known as the Arab Spring. Few members of the Arab League have not been touched by the uprisings with different governments choosing divergent strategies on how to deal with mass political protest.

In the early months of the Arab Spring, dissident voices within Syria were quiet. Much of this was due to the strict security measures and tight control of media and public space by the government of President Bashar al-Assad and his ruling Ba'ath Party. In fact, al-Jazeera dubbed Syria a "kingdom of silence" in the early stages of the movement due to the lack of mass protest.<sup>26</sup> The government of Assad was effective in keeping protest and dissent under careful guard while Member States such as Tunisia, Egypt and Libya were embroiled in political strife. However, Syria was not to remain a kingdom of silence and in March 2011, mass protests broke out in Damascus and Deraa. The protestors' main objections were the holding and detainment of political prisoners and the continuing 48-year-old state of emergency law. Initially, Assad and his government seemed to comply. The released dozens of prisoners and ended the emergency laws.<sup>27</sup> However, as protests began to spread across the country, Assad's regime employed violent means to crush the dissidents. By using violence the Assad regime ignited a firestorm and the Member State soon found itself embroiled in civil war. Several attempts have been made by international groups, including the Arab League, to end the violence, however none have been successful. As the Syrian Civil War comes close to two years of continued fighting and estimated tens of thousands dead, many of whom are civilians, action must be taken to end the violence and bring about peace. Yet, this peace cannot be without justice, stability and a means to ensure the rights and dignity of all of Syria's citizens. It is the task of the Arab League to ensure that these qualifications are met, and it is the duty of the League's delegates to use whatever means at their disposal to ensure a cessation of hostilities.

### On Syria and a Brief Outline of Its Ongoing Civil War

The currently suspended Member State of Syria, like all states within the Arab League is particularly nuanced in its structure and governance. Many of these factors led to both the slow start of mass protests as well as the overwhelming dissent that has faced the regime in the past 21-month uprising. The Syrian Arab republic is currently

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<sup>22</sup> Nick Meo and agencies in Geneva, "Geneva meeting agrees 'transition plan' to Syria unity government," The Telegraph, June 30, 2012, Middle East: Syria Section. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/syria/9367330/Geneva-meeting-agrees-transition-plan-to-Syria-unity-government.html>

<sup>23</sup> Lin Noueihed, "Peddler's martyrdom launched Tunisia's revolution," Reuters, January 19, 2011. <http://web.archive.org/web/20110209104243/http://uk.reuters.com/article/2011/01/19/uk-tunisia-protests-bouazizi-idUKTRE7017TV20110119>

<sup>24</sup> "NTC declares 'Liberation of Libya'," Al Jazeera, October 24, 2011. <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2011/10/201110235316778897.html>

<sup>25</sup> Al Jazeera staff, "Interactive: Timeline of Syria unrest," Al Jazeera, July 15, 2012, In Depth Section, Interactive. <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/interactive/2012/02/201225111654512841.html>

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> "Syria Profile: a chronology of key events," BBC World News, December 12, 2012, Timeline. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-14703995>

under the control of the authoritarian regime of President Bashar al-Assad who has been in power since 2000 at which time he succeeded his father, Hafez al-Assad, the former president. Syria, while dominated in terms of population by Sunni Muslims, is much more diverse than many of the other Member States in the region with other Muslim groups, most notably the Alawites consisting of 16% of the population, various Christian denominations at 10%, and some pockets of Jewish residents.<sup>28</sup> Though the population is vastly Sunni, the minority Muslim sect of the Alawites controls most of the Member State's resources, finances and are strongly entrenched within the armed forces, especially commanding officers and career soldiers. Assad comes from the Alawite group and thus much of the group's power has come about as a result of the policies of the regime.<sup>29</sup>

Protests in Syria were much slower to gain momentum than in many other Member States in the immediate region. However, in early 2011 events began to quickly pick up pace that would lead Syria first to mass protest and eventually full civil war. Hasan Ali Akleh, a Syrian man, self-immolated in protest of the regime of Assad similar to the way in which Tunisian Mohamed Bouazizi had ignited the Arab Spring.<sup>30</sup> In early March many political prisoners within Syria went on a hunger strike demanding political and civil liberties, soon joined by Syrian Kurds throughout the country in an act of solidarity.<sup>31</sup> Following these events, Ribal al-Assad, a government critic, said in early March that it was almost time for Syria to be the next domino in the burgeoning Arab Spring.<sup>32</sup>

15 March 2011, is recognized as the date in which the protests began to reach a critical mass in the southern city of Daraa as well as mass protests in the suburbs of Damascus. Quickly the government announces measures aimed to alleviate the concerns of these protests including the release of some political prisoners and an immediate end to the state of emergency law which had been in effect for some 48 years. Additionally, Assad, in order to save face, states that the reforms are part of a government plan, but not due to the protests as he accuses the protestors of being Israeli agents.<sup>33</sup>

May 2011: Assad's regime begins to use tanks and heavy weaponry to quell protests in Deraa, Homs, Banyas and the suburbs of Damascus as the reforms did little to stop dissent and protest. In response to the use of these weapons the European Union and the United States tighten sanctions on the government and members of the Syrian regime. In the same month, June 2011, Assad publicly pledges to commit to a national dialogue on the status of Syria and its peoples' wishes and begins a siege of the town of Jisr al-Shughour. The siege is in complete contradiction to his statements on dialogue and results in over 10,000 people fleeing to Turkey as refugees.<sup>34</sup>

In the next month, July, President Assad relieves the governor of Hama from his post in yet another attempt to placate the growing protests. And again, his government sends in the army and heavy armor to crush the rebellion. During July 2011, opposition groups, fragmented and without any cohesion meet in Istanbul, Turkey to discuss unifying their efforts against Assad's regime.<sup>35</sup>

Out of the meeting in Istanbul, the Syrian National Council is formed after months of talks. At the same time, October 2011, Russia and China veto a UN Security Council Resolution condemning the regime of Assad on fears that the resolution would work in a similar fashion that allowed NATO intervention in Libya.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> CIA World Factbook, Syria Profile, Population, January 7, 2013.

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/sy.html>

<sup>29</sup> CIA World Factbook, Syria Profile, Government, January 7, 2013.

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/sy.html>

<sup>30</sup> "Syria Profile: a chronology of key events," BBC World News, December 12, 2012, Timeline.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-14703995>

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> Ribal al-Assad, "Is Syria the next domino?," Al Jazeera, March 6, 2011, Opinion Section.

<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2011/03/20113482455647372.html>

<sup>33</sup> "Syria Profile: a chronology of key events," BBC World News, December 12, 2012, Timeline.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-14703995>

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> Ja'anai Delaney, "Timeline: Syria's Bloody Conflict," PBS Newshour, August 2, 2012, World Section.

<http://www.pbs.org/newshour/rundown/2012/08/syria-timeline.html>

<sup>36</sup> Al Jazeera staff, "Interactive: Timeline of Syria unrest," Al Jazeera, July 15, 2012, In Depth Section, Interactive.

<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/interactive/2012/02/201225111654512841.html>

In November 2011, the Arab League votes to suspend the membership of Syria within the League. The League moves to do this as a response to the failure of Assad to commit to the agreed upon peace plan structured by the League. Additionally, the Arab League votes to impose sanction on the suspended Member State, truly a notable action. Also in November, high profile attacks begin on government forces and installations by the Free Syrian Army. This group is made up of primarily defectors from the Syrian army and some volunteers from the population.<sup>37</sup>

December 2011 is seen as a breakthrough moment when Assad allows Arab League monitors to gain access to the Member State. Thousands of protesters meet the monitors in Homs, one of the centers of protest. However, the optimism is short lived as the Arab League suspends the monitoring mission due to worsening violence in January 2012.

China and Russia again veto a UN Security Council Resolution that would take action against Assad's regime. Syrian forces conversely begin a true crackdown on the protests as the protests reach nearly a year of ongoing dissent. They enact a bombing campaign on Homs which target areas of the city regardless of civilian occupation. The United Nations estimates that nearly 7,500 have been killed in the fighting in just under a year.<sup>38</sup>

The UN Security Council finally endorses a plan in March of 2012. Kofi Annan, former Secretary General of the United Nations, has drafted a Six Point Peace Plan. China and Russia agree to a non-binding weaker version that falls short of actually being a resolution, instead issuing the plan as a Security Council communiqué. In May the peace plan is still underway, yet Assad continues to use heavy weapons, bombing campaigns and militias against civilian populations. The UN Security Council condemns the actions taken by the Syrian forces in Houla which result in hundreds of dead civilians. In a further response by the international community, France, the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, Germany, Canada and Australia all expel the senior Syrian diplomats in protest to the government's actions.<sup>39</sup>

June 2012 is an immensely important month in the ongoing civil war as Assad informs his newly reshuffled cabinet that the government faces a "true war" implying that the war will be long lasting and possibly devastating to the country. Additionally, a Turkish jet is shot down after it strayed into Syrian airspace which would have not normally been contentious. Turkey issues new protocols for its military, stating that any advance on the border by Syrian troops will be seen as a threat to the Turkish state. In July, the Free Syrian Army completes its occupation of Aleppo, succeeds in killing three security heads in Damascus and thwarts an attempt by Assad's forces to retake Aleppo.<sup>40</sup>

The foundation of Assad's regime continues to crumble as the United Nations General Assembly demands Assad resign in a resolution in August 2012.<sup>41</sup> High-profile defections from the regime continue, culminating with the defection of Prime Minister Riad Hijab. International action also reaches a frenzy as US President Barack Obama warns Assad that the use of chemical or biological weapons as a last attempt of the regime to secure itself will result in US military intervention.<sup>42</sup> Additionally, the United Nations appoints Lakdar Brahimi to fill the position of UN-Arab League envoy following the resignation of Kofi Annan.<sup>43</sup> By October 2012, Turkey and Syria have exchanged fire across the border, threatening the stability of the entire region after Syrian forces shelled a Turkish village, killing five civilians. Syrian forces continue breaking promises as a UN brokered ceasefire on the holy day of Eid al-Adha fails due to continuing attacks by government forces.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> "Syria Profile: a chronology of key events," BBC World News, December 12, 2012, Timeline.  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-14703995>

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> Al Jazeera staff, "Interactive: Timeline of Syria unrest," Al Jazeera, July 15, 2012, In Depth Section, Interactive.  
<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/interactive/2012/02/201225111654512841.html>

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> "Syria Profile: a chronology of key events," BBC World News, December 12, 2012, Timeline.  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-14703995>

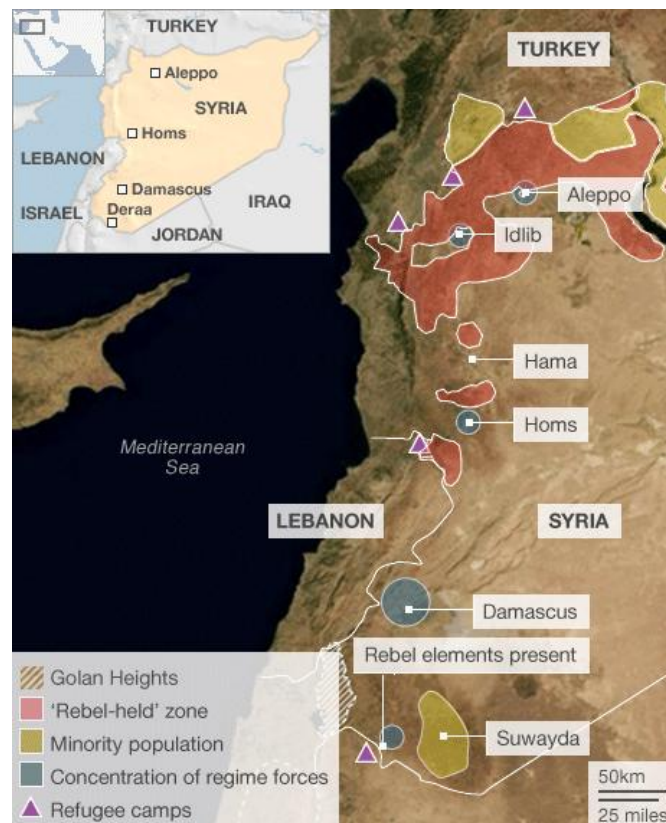
<sup>43</sup> UN Department of Political Affairs, "Special Representative for Syria."  
[http://www.un.org/wcm/content/site/undpa/main/activities\\_by\\_region/middle\\_east/syria](http://www.un.org/wcm/content/site/undpa/main/activities_by_region/middle_east/syria)

<sup>44</sup> "Syria Profile: a chronology of key events," BBC World News, December 12, 2012, Timeline.  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-14703995>

Another breakthrough for the opposition comes in November 2012 as a meeting of opposition groups in Qatar announces the formation of the National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces. The group includes many new and fragmented groups of opposition as well as the Syrian National Council. The Arab League stops short of giving the group full recognition within the body. Also notable is that several jihadist groups refuse to join the Coalition.<sup>45</sup>

During the time the Syrian Red Crescent estimates some 2.5 million Syrians have been displaced due to the conflict. While this is an important figure the United Nations speculate that the figure given is “conservative.”<sup>46</sup> Additionally, the most recent estimate of deaths is in the range of 60,000 from the United Nations in the 21 month uprising.<sup>47</sup> A seminal moment in the opposition occurs as the United States joins the United Kingdom, France, Turkey and the Gulf States in recognizing the National Coalition as the true representative of the Syrian people.<sup>48</sup>

As of November 2012, this map shows much of the activity within Syria.<sup>49</sup>



### ***Peace Proposals and International Actors***

The greatest attempt at peace in Syria has been the plan drafted by Kofi Annan, former Secretary General to the UN, in conjunction with support of the Arab League. Annan’s Six Point Plan was put forth to both the UN and the Arab

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> Bassem Mroue and Frank Jordans, “U.N. estimates Syria death toll more than 60,000,” *The Washington Times*, January 2, 2013, World News Section. <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2013/jan/2/un-analysis-suggests-60000-plus-killed-syria/?page=all>

<sup>48</sup> “US recognizes Syria opposition coalition say Obama,” *BBC World News*, December 12, 2012, Mid-East Section. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-20690148>

<sup>49</sup> “Syria: Mapping the insurgency,” *BBC News*, December 4, 2012, Middle East Section. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-19285076>



League as it would require both to be in full participation for the plan to be effectively implemented. A meeting in Geneva in the summer of 2012 followed the plan, yet notably Annan was already voicing concern over the failure of Assad's regime to commit to the plan. Additionally, the meeting was hamstrung by the lack of representation of Assad's government or the opposition as well as Iran and Saudi Arabia, respectively the greatest friend and foe in the region to Assad's regime.<sup>50</sup>

The Six Point Plan was succinct and required the commitment of both the regime and opposition. (1) There must be a Syrian-led dialogue on the aspirations of the people in order to gauge the true desires of the populace in terms of rule and governance. (2) Assad's regime must commit to an immediate end to violence, particularly troop movements within civilian areas and must cease the use of heavy weapons against civilian targets. Annan also noted that he would work to gain the assurances of the opposition that they too would halt any offensive. (3) There would be a 2-hour daily pause for the disbursement of humanitarian aid and relief. (4) Syria must commit to release all persons arbitrarily held, including political prisoners, and publish lists of all who had been arbitrarily arrested. (5) Journalists and media must be allowed free movement throughout the Member State and non-discriminatory passes must be issued to persons of the media. And (6) Syria must guarantee freedom of assembly and demonstration of its citizens.<sup>51</sup>

The plan quickly showed signs of weakness as the international community and particularly the Security Council failed to give it full support. By August of 2012, Kofi Annan had announced he would not renew his mandate and would be stepping down from the position of Joint Special Envoy in the mission to halt the violence. In a press statement Annan stated, "It is impossible for me or anyone to compel the Syrian government, and also the opposition, to take the steps to bring about the political process... Syria can still be saved from the worst calamity - if the international community can show the courage and leadership necessary to compromise on their partial interests for the sake of the Syrian people - for the men, women and children who have already suffered far too much."<sup>52</sup> When Annan announced his resignation, it was a critical blow to the diplomatic efforts to the peace plan. In October his successor was announced, Lakdar Brahimi, a veteran diplomat and negotiator, however few believe his effort will succeed where Annan's failed without greater support from the international community and the Security Council and thus the guarantees of the Syrian regime and opposition.<sup>53</sup> However, Brahimi has expressed much needed frankness and assertion in diplomatic circles. He even went as far to say that in regard to a transitional government, "surely he [Assad] would not be a member of that government," in a press interview in early 2013.<sup>54</sup>

Among the most prominent international actors stand the P-5 of the Security Council (United States, France, the United Kingdom, Russian Federation and China) as it is their power within the Security Council to provide for binding resolutions on Syria. So far the Council has been stalled due to vetoes of China and Russia. In addition Brazil and India have stifled much action against Syria out of the concept of non-intervention and sovereignty. The Islamic Republic of Iran has also been a staunch supporter of the Assad regime, as there are strong military ties and anti-Sunni links in both governments. While the Arab League is not dependent on UN support, it would be prudent for the auspices of these governments to be used in any plan and is crucial for the Arab League to consider the power and influence of these Member States of the United Nations in detailing a plan for the cessation of violence in Syria.

Furthermore, the Gulf States have been especially vocal, and in some cases stepping outside the Arab League, in condoning the regime of Assad. The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) in late December met on the situation in Syria and reaffirmed their commitment to the National Coalition as the sole legitimate representative of the Syrian people.<sup>55</sup> Additionally, the statement from the meeting concluded that the people of the GCC felt, "deep sadness

<sup>50</sup> Kofi Annan, "Joint Special Envoy on Syrian crisis," UN News Centre, August 2, 2012.

<https://www.un.org/apps/news/infocus/Syria/press.asp?sID=41>

<sup>51</sup> Associated Press, "Kofi Annan's six-point peace proposal for Syria," The National, March 22, 2012, World Section.

<http://www.thenational.ae/news/world/middle-east/kofi-annans-six-point-peace-proposal-for-syria>

<sup>52</sup> "Syria crisis: Kofi Annan quits as UN-Arab League envoy," BBC World News, August 2, 2012, Mid-East Section.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-19099676>

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> Emad Omar, "Syria envoy says Assad can't be part of new government," Reuters News, January 9, 2013.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/01/09/us-syria-crisis-brahimi-idUSBRE90819Q20130109>

<sup>55</sup> The Gulf Cooperation Council is an alliance of Sunni dominated states in the Arabian Peninsula. It consists of Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman and the United Arab Emirates. The GCC is a powerful brokering group which controls

over the continued shedding of blood by the regime and the destruction of cities and infrastructure, making political transition a demand which must be rapidly implemented.”<sup>56</sup> The Gulf States may act as a powerful block to push the Arab League towards a full recognition of the National Coalition as well as using their resources to pave the way for a transition of power and end to violence.

### *Conclusions*

The 21-month uprising and ensuing civil war in Syria is one of the most pressing items that the Arab League may consider. It is imperative for the League to continue to remain in action over the unfolding crisis in Syria as well as continue its work with the Joint Special Envoy in securing an end to violence. However, steps must be taken to formulate an alternative plan as it seems the failure of the Six Point Plan is imminent and Lakdar Brahimi’s efforts may be futile. Though the international community has been fractured, the resolve and leadership of the Arab League must shine to the contrary. Member States of the Arab League have taken initial steps, but have left the majority of the responsibility to the United Nations Security Council and its auspices which have resulted in few tangible results. The time is now for the Arab League to promote a true and unified Arab response to the violence that is occurring within Syria. It is clear that the Syrian Civil War is a raging conflict that will cost the lives of countless more if the Arab League and international community do not act in concert to halt the violence.

### *Committee Directive*

It is the task of this committee to developing an Arab proposal for the cessation of violence in Syria. This is no small task and many attempts at peace have either failed or stalled due to various measures both as a result of the Syrian regime and the international community. In order to complete this task the Arab League must look to its international partners, but also not just strictly in the political sense as the involvement of humanitarian and social groups may prove vital to the end of hostilities and protection of civilian life. Additionally, there must be immediate action – too much time has passed without firm commitment and resolve on such a pressing issue.

In considering the framing of such a plan for peace in Syria, it is vital that the Arab League look to solve several aspects of the continuing crisis. A foundation may be found in the Six Point Plan as several of the action that would be taken within it are of crucial importance, not limited to the release of political prisoners, journalist access to the Member State and guarantees of the right to assembly and free speech. However, the Arab plan cannot stop there. An important human factor cannot be overlooked as millions of people remain displaced in the region due to the conflict and the issue of refugees and internally displaced persons must be an elemental part of any plan. The Arab League must also give voice to the question of the use of chemical weapons by Assad should such an event occur. A cessation of violence will only occur if the violence can be stopped and the localizing of peace can be instituted through the incorporation of Arab values, religious traditions and cultural norms. Said and Jafari postulate that, “religion and culture are increasingly taken seriously as both scholars and practitioners consider how people can tap into their most essential spiritual values, humanistic traditions and local cultures in response to peace.”<sup>57</sup> The Arab League must ignite this fire within individuals for any plan to succeed.

*Peace is a Word Spoken by a Merciful God.*  
Quran 36:58

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both wealth and prestige in the international arena.

<sup>56</sup> AFP, “Gulf states call for rapid Syrian political transition,” December 25, 2012.

[http://www.yourmiddleeast.com/news/gulf-states-call-for-rapid-syrian-political-transition\\_11894](http://www.yourmiddleeast.com/news/gulf-states-call-for-rapid-syrian-political-transition_11894)

<sup>57</sup> Sheherazade Jafari and Abdul Aziz Said, “Islam and Peacemaking,” in *Peacemaking: from Practice to Theory*, ed Susan Allen Nan, Zachariah Chierian Mampilly and Andrea Bartoli (Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO, LLC, 2012), 229-243.

## Topic II: Coordinating a Unified Arab Response to Humanitarian Crises

### *Introduction*

When crises strike in many regions of the world, there is a unified humanitarian response. For example, groups such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in the United States are quick to document and assess damages after a crisis or natural disaster. Such crises as the throng of storms and tornadoes that terrorized the southern region of the US in April of 2011, as well as the much more recent super-storm Sandy that wreaked havoc on the Northeast U.S. Currently, there is no unified Arab response in place for humanitarian crises, and many Arab countries do not emphasize humanitarian aid as a key part of their political agendas. Often, humanitarian responses fail as governments and non-governmental actors fail to maintain cooperation and agreements. While there have been efforts made to address the lack of cooperation, none have truly alleviated the strain of these crises on those most affected. However, the League of Arab States (LAS) now must make strides toward instituting a unified response as the need for aid steadily increases not only in the region but throughout the world.

History illustrates to Member States the many successes and failures in humanitarian aid. The response to the 2011 Libya crisis by the Government of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) the Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan Humanitarian Foundation, Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Humanitarian and Charity Establishment, Red Crescent Authority, and Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan Charitable and Humanitarian Foundation resulted in 676.5 million USD.<sup>58</sup> The coordinated approach of these organizations, operating under the banner of the “UAE Unified Relief Team,” marked a major turning point in the UAE’s method of responding to emergencies.<sup>59</sup> Participants in the review discussed the key phases of the humanitarian operation, including the preparation and mobilization of the team, the way in which the needs were assessed, and how the team functioned and coordinated with other actors on the ground.<sup>60</sup> Brigadier General Abdel Rahman Ibrahim bin Abdel Aziz said, “The importance of cooperation between donor organisations [sic] cannot be emphasized enough. As our experience in Libya showed, a unified humanitarian response can help to ensure that those in need receive the best possible assistance...”<sup>61</sup>

The UAE’s response to the Libya crisis included setting up camps on the borders with both Tunisia and Egypt, providing health care, distributing food and non-food items and supplying ambulances and medical equipment to hospitals.<sup>62</sup> According to the UAE Office for the Coordination of Foreign Aid’s monthly newsletter for April 2011, 950 tons of humanitarian aid was sent by the UAE, represented by the Red Crescent, to assist the Libyan people. Another cargo ship traveled from Turkey to Benghazi carrying 750 tons of aid, which included medical supplies, food, and tents.<sup>63</sup>

Another convoy carrying humanitarian supplies on April 15, 2011 was also highlighted as successfully to helping civilians affected by the conflict in Libya. The convoy included over 735 tons of food, medicines, and medical equipment in addition to several ambulances.<sup>64</sup> Rashid Khalikov, the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator for Libya, visited the UAE Red Crescent Authority camp in the Ras Jedir after the convoy arrived and praised the important work performed by the UAE. The camp provided food, shelter, and medical attention to nearly 9,000 displaced persons. “The UAE camp is a good example of the growing importance of the United Arab Emirates

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<sup>58</sup>“Humanitarian actors review lessons learned from the UAE Relief Team response to Libya crisis.” OCFANews. 27 May, 2012.

<http://www.ocfa.gov.ae/En/MediaCenter/OCFANews/Pages/Humanitarianactorsreviewlessonslearnedfromthe.aspx>

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>63</sup> UAE Aid News. *Musa’adat*. Issue 1, April 2011.

[http://www.humanitarianforum.org/data/files/ocfa\\_newsletter\\_english.pdf](http://www.humanitarianforum.org/data/files/ocfa_newsletter_english.pdf)

<sup>64</sup> UAE Aid News. *Musa’adat*. Issue 2, May 2011.

[http://www.humanitarianforum.org/data/files/ocfa\\_newsletter\\_may\\_2011\\_issue\\_2\\_english.pdf](http://www.humanitarianforum.org/data/files/ocfa_newsletter_may_2011_issue_2_english.pdf)

within the international humanitarian response community,” Khalikov wrote in a letter to the OCFA.<sup>65</sup> The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), however, faced a critical shortage of funds for their operations in Libya and neighboring Member States as the conflict intensified.

According to OFCA Director General Qahtani during the meeting of the UAE unified relief team, “This review will enrich the benefit from this experience, support the planning and preparation process for UAE donor organizations, and maximize their ability to work under one unified team enhancing the presence of the UAE during the response to any humanitarian crisis.”<sup>66</sup> Through an in-depth analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the response, the Arab community can evaluate the efforts of the unified relief team to explore the possibility to replicate this approach in the future.

### *NGO and IGO Involvement*

Some have emphasized the importance of regional and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), as well as Arab civil society organizations (CSOs), to support or foster the growth of humanitarian aid policies.<sup>67</sup> The growth of Arab national and regional civil society groups, including networks, organizations, and platforms, highlight the importance of efforts to respond to political, economic, social, and cultural challenges at the national and regional level.<sup>68</sup> Consequently, new dynamics for facing the negative impacts of globalization and for enhancing the adequate integration in the global system are emerging in the Arab countries.<sup>69</sup>

While there have been cases of effective responses from Arab CSOs, the circumstances, contexts, and legal frameworks under which they operate vary among Member States. CSOs have played a significant role during times of conflict, specifically when governmental services were partially or completely absent. Lebanese CSOs were especially influential during throughout the 15 year civil war, and Palestinian CSOs have been critical in the West Bank, Gaza, and surrounding refugee camps in the absence of a unified Palestinian state able to provide services.<sup>70</sup>

Whether they are struggling for adequate or quality health care or education; affordable housing; food; transportation; employment; or legal rights—Palestinians, Egyptians, Jordanians, and Lebanese face poverty, inadequate resources, and often lack the basic social services typically provided by governments. As a result, people often rely upon NGOs and other community-based organizations for assistance.<sup>71</sup> CSOs have proven to be essential in sustaining the daily needs of citizens and had essential roles in providing humanitarian aid and medical services. They show specialization in several areas, such as health, education, rural development, social and human development, and human rights. Both Palestinian and Lebanese NGOs provide service delivery, networking, mobilization, and “support systems” which include day-care centers to income-generating projects.<sup>72</sup>

NGOs, however, still face significant problems and obstacles. NGOs in Palestine, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and many other countries are limited by inadequate resources, lack of governmental financial support, duplication of functions, weak organizational set-up, lack of routine external audits, absence of strict internal rules and regulations,

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<sup>65</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>66</sup> “Humanitarian actors review lessons learned from the UAE Relief Team response to Libya crisis.” OCFA News. 27 May, 2012.

<http://www.ocfa.gov.ae/En/MediaCenter/OCFANews/Pages/Humanitarianactorsreviewlessonslearnedfromthe.aspx>

<sup>67</sup> NGO may apply to any non-profit organization, while a CSO designation applies only to those NGOs that are accredited by the United Nations and hold "consultative status" through The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

<sup>68</sup> Ziad Abdel Samad: Executive Director of the Arab NGO Network for Development. “Arab NGOs; Role and Challenges” <http://www.csr-dar.org/sites/default/files/DIHAD%20final.pdf>

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>70</sup> Marie-Noelle AbiYaghi. *Civil mobilization and peace in Lebanon: Beyond the Arab Spring?*

Accord: Issue 24. [http://www.c-r.org/sites/c-r.org/files/Accord24\\_CivilMobilisation.pdf](http://www.c-r.org/sites/c-r.org/files/Accord24_CivilMobilisation.pdf)

<sup>71</sup> Denis J. Sullivan. “NGOs and Development in the Arab World: The Critical Importance of a Strong Partnership Between Government and Civil Society” *Civil Society and Democratization in the Arab World*. Cairo Egypt. June 2000, vol. 9, no. 102. <http://www.mideastinfo.com/arabngo.htm>

<sup>72</sup> Ziad Abdel Samad: Executive Director of the Arab NGO Network for Development. “Arab NGOs; Role and Challenges” <http://www.csr-dar.org/sites/default/files/DIHAD%20final.pdf>

or administrative inefficiency.<sup>73</sup> Among the most fundamental obstacles to successful NGO operations, however, is governmental policy and regulations on their citizens. Often, NGOs must also regulate themselves.<sup>74</sup> One important way of doing this would be to develop a national “code of conduct” written by NGOs. With such a code, NGO leaders will demonstrate to state leaders the professionalism required to form public-private partnerships to advance both the political and social agenda advocated by both the government and actors in civil society. This would provide greater access to education, health care, employment opportunities, environmental protection, among other services.<sup>75</sup> Barriers, however, remain as some Member States maintain their sovereign rule over their citizens. NGOs and CSOs have an opportunity here to promote greater access to human rights such as freedom of assembly, speech, free enterprise, and association.<sup>76</sup> Although a number of Member States are becoming increasingly more free, NGOs and CSOs must work closely with the relevant actors to illustrate the importance of their role in humanitarian crises.

Arab CSOs also face a number of shortcomings. Often, in the absence of political freedom, some CSOs operate as service providers rather than advocates. Although this assuages concerns against political undermining, their in capacity building and in raising awareness is very limited. As a result, many Arab CSOs lack the organization necessary to wage grassroots campaigns to influence the political and social decision-making mechanisms in many Arab countries. The lack of freedom of association in many Member States undermines the ability of some CSOs to function effectively as legitimate partners for social change and progress.<sup>77</sup>

Although NGOs and CSOs have many strengths, their shortcomings severely undermine their effectiveness in partnering with members of the Arab community to respond to humanitarian crises. By appealing to Member States as a professional and neutral actors, Arab NGOs and CSOs have the ability to more effectively respond to regional or national humanitarian crises. Currently, individual NGOs are approaching this problem by launching appeals to support their international responses to the Syrian crisis. Save the Children, International Rescue Committee, Islamic Relief, Malteser International, Muslim Hands and Human Relief Foundation are currently assisting Syrian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and Turkey. The national movements of the Red Cross and Red Crescent are also running appeals to support the Syrian Arab Red Crescent’s work in the country.<sup>78</sup>

### ***Successful Coordination: The Arab NGOs Network for Development***

The Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND) is an emerging civil society group that is committed to opening communication between local, regional, and international civil societies. Founded in 1997 with the membership of 35 national networks and nongovernmental organizations, this regional network focuses on responding to the challenges on the regional and global levels and aims to establish a special presence and effective active positions in decision-making processes.<sup>79</sup> ANND also focuses on strengthening and supporting Arab NGOs and CSOs to mobilize human and social development, democratic social structures and governance, respect of human rights, the rights of minorities, the rights of women, and the environment.<sup>80</sup>

ANND highlights the importance of Arab participation in the global social movement through its participation in international events and forums, such as the World Social Forum (WSF).<sup>81</sup> ANND is a member of the international council of the WSF, and of the international coordination committee of Social Watch; a global network of citizens’ local organizations aiming at monitoring national public policies at the local level and international institutions and

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<sup>73</sup> Denis J. Sullivan. “NGOs and Development in the Arab World: The Critical Importance of a Strong Partnership Between Government and Civil Society” *Civil Society and Democratization in the Arab World*. Cairo Egypt. June 2000, vol. 9, no. 102. <http://www.mideastinfo.com/arabngo.htm>

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> Ziad Abdel Samad: Executive Director of the Arab NGO Network for Development. “Arab NGOs; Role and Challenges” <http://www.csr-dar.org/sites/default/files/DIHAD%20final.pdf>

<sup>78</sup> Laura Jump and Lydia Poole. “Funding to the Syrian Crisis.” Global Humanitarian Assistance: A Development Initiative. 9 July 2012. <http://www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org/funding-to-the-syrian-crisis-3782.html>

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*

bodies at the global level. ANND is also a member of Our World is not for Sale, a global network of NGOs and social movements that played a major role in the organization of the protests of the World Trade Organization (WTO) meetings in Seattle, Doha, and Cancun.<sup>82</sup>

Currently, ANND is leading the efforts to establish the Arab Social Forum (ArSF), which is expected to result from constructive and inclusive debate between various Arab civil society groups, as well as regional and international involved networks.<sup>83</sup> The ArSF illustrates the potential strengths of coordination and cooperation of all Arab CSOs. The ArSF is modeled after that of the WSF and will address the concerns specific to the Arab community by coordinating with national, regional, and international stakeholders.

### ***Successful Responses to Humanitarian Crises***

While looking forward to a future where unified humanitarian responses are possible in the Arab world, it is helpful to look to the successes had elsewhere on the globe. In Bangladesh, the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department (ECHO) has been working in Bangladesh for many years, both in disaster preparedness and emergency response activities. Humanitarian aid to Bangladesh has totaled over \$142 million since 2000.<sup>84</sup> Additionally, between 2008 and 2010, over \$6.6 million of humanitarian aid was used to support the victims of Rodent Crisis in the Chittagong Hill Tracts; supporting indigenous communities with food, basic health care and income generating activities.<sup>85</sup> In Eastern Europe, there are many organizations that provide a number of services for citizens; the Humanitarian Aid Response Teams (HART) foundation alone has under its umbrella Senior Care project, Orphan Care Project, Soup Kitchens, Orphanage Support, and Humanitarian Aid Centers.<sup>86</sup> The Philippines are among the world's most disaster prone countries due to their location both on the typhoon belt and the Pacific earthquake rim, and this fact leaves them in need for aid. Groups constantly provide aid within the Philippines; since 1985 AmeriCares has delivered more than \$172 million worth of medicines, medical supplies, and other humanitarian aid to the region.<sup>87</sup> South Africa is an especially intriguing case, as not only do they receive humanitarian aid, but they also give it. In 2010, South Africa was the 80<sup>th</sup> largest recipient of humanitarian aid, and received the equivalent of 0.3% of its Gross National Income (GNI) as aid while giving 0.03% of its GNI as foreign assistance.<sup>88</sup>

### ***Conclusion***

The Arab community can learn from the struggles of those who have struggled against poverty, occupation, or civil war. There are lessons to be learned from those humanitarian responses in South Africa, Bangladesh, Eastern Europe, the Philippines. Only when the Member State works *with* NGOs, CSOs, and other organizations is humanitarian relief successful. Cooperation and coordination will result in greater development, poverty alleviation, and progress.<sup>89</sup> The Arab community should begin by working together to form partnerships between Member States and NGOs and CSOs. The final decision between government actions, CSOs involvement and/or NGOs involvement is an important debate, as there is no widely accepted course of action for cooperation. The only certainty is that some form of a unified response within the Arab community is necessary as civil unrest and uncertainty throughout the region.

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<sup>82</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>84</sup> "Bangladesh" European Commission: Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection.  
[http://ec.europa.eu/echo/aid/asia/bangladesh\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/aid/asia/bangladesh_en.htm)

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>86</sup> "Relief Aid" Humanitarian Aid Response Teams: International Relief.  
<http://www.hart.ca/what-we-do/relief-aid.html>

<sup>87</sup> "Philippines: AmeriCare Disaster Response and Medical Aid" AmeriCares  
<http://www.americares.org/wherewework/asia/philippines.html>

<sup>88</sup> "South Africa" Global Humanitarian Assistance: A Development Initiative.  
<http://www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org/countryprofile/south-africa>

<sup>89</sup> Denis J. Sullivan. "NGOs and Development in the Arab World: The Critical Importance of a Strong Partnership Between Government and Civil Society" *Civil Society and Democratization in the Arab World*. Cairo Egypt. June 2000, vol. 9, no. 102. <http://www.mideastinfo.com/arabngo.htm>

### *Committee Directive*

Legislation that regulates NGOs in Egypt and Palestine is still evolving. Even though both countries recently have passed new NGO laws, the real test of these laws is how they are put into practice. As the Arab league transitions from a purely political to a more social and economic force, the league should re-conceptualize its response to humanitarian disasters throughout the Arab world. In times of crises and disaster the league may be a powerful force for swift and determined action to save the lives of citizens. The league should look to centralizing and implementing a coordinated plan of action in such times. Delegates should look to the role of international partners including civil service organizations and NGOs in the stabilization and logistical demands of humanitarian action. Additionally the recommendation of updating and standardizing legal processes to facilitate broad and swift action may be necessary on the part of Member States. By looking to past action and drafting innovative, creative ideas on how to build a coordinated plan that could act throughout the Arab world will be necessary to ensuring the safety and security of all Arab citizens. Among the considerations should be action teams, quick response units, medical and health programs, nutrition and food/water safety and access to housing for those in need.

### **Technical Appendix Guide (TAG)**

“Syria: The War Within” *Aljazeera*. <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/spotlight/syria/>

The war in Syria has drawn a lot of media attention all over the world. Aljazeera has been covering the conflict since the beginning and this source is a compilation of news articles, video clips and sources that detail all major happenings in the conflict. This is a great resource for delegates to get updated information on the fighting and major news in the region.

“News Focus: Middle East” UN News Centre. <http://www.un.org/apps/news/infocusRel.asp?infocusID=70>

The UN News Centre is dedicated to providing updated details on any UN action that pertains to the Middle East. Delegates should keep this resource in mind when preparing position papers and for committee sessions during the conference. Latest developments and key resources are included and provide a wealth of information for your prep work leading up to the conference.

SC/10583. *In Presidential Statement, Security Council Gives Full Support to Efforts of Joint Special Envoy of United Nations, Arab League to End Violence in Syria*. The Security Council. 21 March 2012.  
<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2012/sc10583.doc.htm>

This is the presidential statement that addresses the support of the Security Council in the efforts to end violence in Syria. Delegates that need it can get clarity on the response from the Security Council and obtain pertinent information on the conflict. This is a useful resource that delegates can use to start the research process on the topic.