

Berkeley Model Arab League
Joint Defence Council
Yemen

Topic I:

Assessing the current state of areas of conflict and formulating plans to mitigate risks of conflict escalation

Past and Current International Action

In 1950, five years after the formation of the Arab League, seven nations from the Arab league created the Treaty of Joint Defense and Economic Cooperation (Langbehn, 2019). The treaty called for the creation of a military commission and for cooperation during military conflicts. The agreement was generally successful. However, the Arab League's pledge to agreements like these is constantly being questioned in regards to actual follow through.

Some initiatives are based on collaboration between the League and other outside organizations. For example, in 2004, a framework, the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI), was launched at the NATO summit to increase cooperation between Arab states and NATO (NATO, 2014). The ICI framework, "Is open to all countries in the region which subscribe to its aims, particularly the fight against terrorism and countering the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction" (NATO, 2014). This framework has strengthened ties between NATO and Gulf states in collaborating on military efforts (NATO, 2014).

While the league's unity is often disputed, there are times when the league does actually succeed in the task of cooperation. In June of 1967, while the third Arab-Israel war waged on, every member of the league joined in supporting Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon in their efforts to repel the Israeli incursions in the Sinai Peninsula and Golan Heights (Langbehn, 2019). In 2011, during the Libyan war, the League, with the help of the UN, imposed a no-fly zone in

Berkeley Model Arab League
Joint Defence Council
Yemen

Libya (Langbehn, 2019). This action in Libya is deemed to be one of the league's high points because of its peaceful resolution.

More often than not, success stories are scarce and are replaced with stories of division. In 1976, one year after the Lebanese civil war started, the Arab League legitimized the use of the Arab Deterrent Force in hopes of bringing stability to the region. What the Arab League did not recognise was the use of a largely Syrian military force which oppressed the Lebanese society by imposing Syrian ideals (Rabil, 2005). Additionally, while the League condemned the actions of the Israeli invasion into Lebanon, the league did little in actually aiding Lebanon (Rabil, 2005). False promises ultimately led to chaos in Lebanon. The Iran-Iraq war led to more division within the League. Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the UAE supported providing military materiel to Iraq, while Libya and Syria supported the opposing force, Iran (Langbehn, 2019). In 1990, the biggest violation of the defense treaty occurred following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. Soon after the invasion, the League held a summit to condemn the actions of Iraq. While the condemnation of Iraq was supported by a majority, a third voted against it (Kifner, 1990). Disputes such as these are caused by a failure to agree on one decision, making them the main contributing factors to increasing the tension within the Arab League and the Middle East.

More recently, a whole wave of humanitarian crises have plagued the Middle East, mainly in Syria and Yemen. In 2015, the UN security council met and created resolution 2216 for resolving the Yemeni crisis ("Adopting Resolution 2216", 2015). Resolution 2216 called for the immediate disarmament of the Houthi rebels and threatened to impose sanctions on key military figures supporting the armament of the rebels ("Adopting Resolution 2216", 2015). In

Berkeley Model Arab League
Joint Defence Council
Yemen

2012, to monitor peace efforts in Syria, the UN security council agreed on resolution 2042 allowing for the implementation of the special envoy's plan ("Special Envoys Plan", 2012). The special envoy's plan consisted of six steps, emphasizing that there must be an immediate cessation of the flow of military goods and troops into the region, while also recognizing the pressing need for the reconstruction of the nation for the Syrian people ("Special Envoy's Plan", 2012). Our goal is to look at past successful and unsuccessful actions by the Arab League to formulate a plan for mitigating conflicts during present and future crises.

Country's Position

Yemen has always strived for peaceful negotiations between communities and nations. While other Arab states believe tribal peace agreements are informal, Yemen has had a history of them. Two NGOs in particular, the House of Peace and the Yemen Organisation for Development and Social Peace (YODSP), are attempting to bridge the gap between two completely different parties to create policies that both sides can agree on (Safa, 2007). Not only are these NGOs working with the tribes for developing peace policies, but are also shattering the stereotypes around tribal policy (Safa, 2007). By utilizing tribal customs, Yemen has arrived at peaceful agreements between both parties, alleviating the chances of large scale conflict.

Right now, Yemen is in the midst of an all out civil war. More than 15 thousand people have been killed and 22 million are in need of medical assistance ("Global Conflict Tracker", 2019). What began as a civil war in 2014 has turned into a proxy war with the Saudi-led coalition trying to push out Houthi rebels influenced by Iran. Right now, Yemen is attempting at

Berkeley Model Arab League
Joint Defence Council
Yemen

creating long lasting peace negotiations with the Houthis in the region. In 2018, the new special envoy, Martin Griffiths, was appointed by the UN in hopes of achieving Yemen's goals of reconstruction. In December of 2018, Griffiths succeeded in convincing the Houthis to discuss de-escalation protocols with the UN in Sweden (Johnson, 2019). The Houthis agreed to the Stockholm Agreement that created a ceasefire in Hudaydah, redeployment of forces outside of Hudaydah, and the formation of a committee to discuss the situation in Taiz (Congress, 2019). The Stockholm Agreement was the first real peace process since 2016 that both sides agreed on (Congress, 2019). Yemen is taking the necessary steps for eventually resolving the conflict.

In November 2019, the government of Yemen and southern separatists (supported by the UAE) signed the Riyadh deal to end a dispute within the overarching war. This agreement would solve the conflict over the UAE recapturing a war base in Aden, a place Saudi Arabia had just reclaimed from the Houthis (Kalin, 2019). The signing of the Riyadh deal allows for the equal representation of separatists in the Yemeni government, thereby contributing to a sense of unity in this time of war and preventing “a war inside a war” (“Peace Deal”, 2019).

While these actions may only affect the conflict in Yemen, they symbolize what the Yemeni government strives for in resolving conflicts. If the solution lies in compromise and peace negotiations or deploying military force, Yemen will choose the former.

Berkeley Model Arab League
Joint Defence Council
Yemen

Solutions

Seeing that Yemen is at the center of a military conflict, the Arab world must unite to end the humanitarian crisis. Solutions must aim to unite the Arab League and promote peace throughout the region.

The first solution Yemen proposes is an updated version of the JDEC treaty and creation of an independent committee in order to promote cooperation between the Arab countries. By upholding the integrity of this treaty, countries will have a better framework for working with each other. Yemen also proposes the creation of an independent committee consisting of a member from each state overseeing the actions of other Arab Nations under the JDEC treaty. A country's failure to abide by the JDEC treaty will result in sanctions lasting up to three months. Specific sanctions, length of time, and if a sanction will actually help will be left to the discrepancy of the committee. By updating and editing the treaty through a collaboration of efforts, Yemen hopes to clarify ambiguous wording while also increasing cooperation between Arab states and encouraging collaborative efforts within the Arab League.

Peace agreements must be a priority in solving all conflicts. Countries should not look to escalate the conflict, but rather to de-escalate the conflict. The Arab League should cooperate with the attacking nation in search for a peaceful solution so that a treaty can be negotiated on which both sides can agree. An excellent example of this type of process has already taken place, when Yemen and the Houthis agreed on a ceasefire located in Hudaydah.

The second solution Yemen proposes is the creation of a unified force from the Arab League to assist member states during large international conflicts. The unified force will be

Berkeley Model Arab League
Joint Defence Council
Yemen

called the Arab League Treaty Organisation or ALTO, and will consist of a NATO-like deployment force. Yemen emphasizes the importance of strong defensive measures during military crises as well as the significant amount of support needed for achieving a settlement between both sides. For the construction of ALTO, Arab countries will need to pledge 3-5% of their trained troops to the force. While this may be challenging for some members, it will ultimately help the stability of all Arab nations. With the creation of ALTO comes a promise of preventing further disputes between Arab nations. For example, ALTO could have prevented the clash between the Saudi-led coalition and the UAE in Aden during the Yemen war because rather than two forces, they would be one. ALTO would also achieve what the JDEC treaty was striving for: “to go without delay to the aid of the State or States... including the use of armed forces, to repel the aggression and restore security and peace”(Lengbehn, 2018). Through the use of ALTO, the Arab League will hopefully prevent any other external involvement that inevitably contributes to escalation. This force will only be used at times when the Arab League votes to deploy it.

Solutions must also aim to mitigate rising conflicts between tribes and civil society. While tribes working together with governments is not considered legitimate in some states, creating peace agreements will help develop harmonic relationships between tribes and society. The House of Peace and Yemen Organisation for Development and Social Peace are two NGO's accomplishing this task. Countries should take advantage of the opportunity for creating peace within their own region by using NGO's such as these.

Berkeley Model Arab League
Joint Defence Council
Yemen

Funding is necessary for any of these solutions to work. While Saudi-Arabia and the UAE have pledged \$930 million in Yemeni support, more stable and consistent financial solutions are needed. Yemen proposes that NGO's be used in smaller, less dire situations while large monetary funds from the Arab nations be made available for larger scale crises. The creation of an Arab League Fund could be used for current and future situations, consisting of monetary funds from wealthier states. The Arab League Fund would consist of a small committee, perhaps one person from each nation, to enforce the donation of monetary funds. These monetary funds would go directly towards peace striving NGO's the committee agrees on for a specific region. Yemen also encourages the use of already created frameworks such as the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative to bring the Arabs League's ties closer to NATO. If the country were to fail in the preparation of ALTO, the Arab League could appeal to NATO during disputes.

Works Cited

- "Global Conflict Tracker: War in Yemen." *Council on Foreign Relations*, Nov. 2019,
www.cfr.org/interactive/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/war-yemen. Accessed 14 Nov.
2019.
- "The Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI)." *NATO*, NATO , Apr. 2014,
www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_2014_04/20140331_140401-factsheet-ICI_en.pdf
f. Accessed 14 Nov. 2019.

Berkeley Model Arab League
Joint Defence Council
Yemen

Johnson, Gregory. "A Roadmap for Yemen Peace Talks." *The Century Foundation*, 2019,
[tcf.org/content/report/roadmap-yemen-peace-talks/?session=1#easy-footnote-bottom-14](https://www.centuryfoundation.org/content/report/roadmap-yemen-peace-talks/?session=1#easy-footnote-bottom-14).
Accessed 14 Nov. 2019.

Kalin, Stephen. "Explainer: Separatist Takeover of Yemen's Aden Leaves Saudi Arabia in a
Bind." *Reuters*, Aug. 2019,
[uk.reuters.com/article/uk-yemen-security-explainer/explainer-separatist-takeover-of-yem
ens-aden-leaves-saudi-arabia-in-a-bind-idUKKCN1V10AT?il=0](https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-yemen-security-explainer/explainer-separatist-takeover-of-yemens-aden-leaves-saudi-arabia-in-a-bind-idUKKCN1V10AT?il=0). Accessed 14 Nov.
2019.

Kifner, John. "The Iraqi Invasion; Arabs to Convene on Iraqi Invasion." *The New York Times*,
Aug. 1990, sec. 1, p. 5.

Langbehn, Kathleen. *Model Arab League Joint Defense Council. National Council on US-Arab
Relations*,
[ncusar.org/modelarableague/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/JDC-Langbehn-Fina
l.pdf](https://ncusar.org/modelarableague/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/JDC-Langbehn-Final.pdf). Accessed 12 Nov. 2019.

"Peace Deal Announced between Yemeni Government." *Aljazeera*, Nov. 2019,
[www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/11/peace-deal-announced-yemeni-government-separatists
-191105145143441.html](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/11/peace-deal-announced-yemeni-government-separatists-191105145143441.html). Accessed 14 Nov. 2019.

Rabil, Robert. "From Beirut to Algiers: The Arab League's Role in the Lebanon Crisis." *The
Washington Institute*, Mar. 2005,
[www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/from-beirut-to-algiers-the-arab-league
s-role-in-the-lebanon-crisis](https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/from-beirut-to-algiers-the-arab-league-s-role-in-the-lebanon-crisis). Accessed 14 Nov. 2019.

Berkeley Model Arab League
Joint Defence Council
Yemen

Safa, Oussama. *Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation in the Arab World: The Work of Civil*

Society Organizations in Lebanon and Morocco. Berghof Research Center, 2007,

www.berghof-foundation.org/fileadmin/redaktion/Publications/Handbook/Articles/safa_handbook.pdf. Accessed 13 Nov. 2019.

"Security Council Demands End to Yemen Violence, Adopting Resolution 2216 (2015), with Russian Federation Abstaining." *Security Council*, UN, Apr. 2015,

www.un.org/press/en/2015/sc11859.doc.htm. Accessed 14 Nov. 2019.

"Security Council Establishes UN Supervision Mission in Syria, with 300 Observers to Monitor Cessation of Violence, Implementation of Special Envoy's Plan." *Security Council*, UN,

Apr. 2012, www.un.org/press/en/2012/sc10618.doc.htm. Accessed 14 Nov. 2019.

United States, Congress, House, Congress. *Yemen: Civil War and Regional Intervention*. US

Congress, Sept. 2019, fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/R43960.pdf. Accessed 14 Nov. 2019.

"Yemen at 'Crucial Moment', Says Special Envoy, Stressing Need for Political Approach to Ending Conflict." *Security Council*, UN, Nov. 2018,

www.un.org/press/en/2018/sc13586.doc.htm. Accessed 13 Nov. 2019.

Topic II:

Developing Strategies for League-wide cyber security guidelines and protocols

Past and current international action:

Right now, the Arab League faces an entirely new threat: one introduced by advancements in technology come the 21st century. The threat concerns not just the individual or the state, but the whole world.

In 1980, the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) was created for the purpose of researching disarmament and security (“Security and Technology”). While cyber security measures were not that big of a concern back then, the UNIDIR now holds annual Cyber Stability Conferences and provides resources for nations developing their own cyber security rules (“Security and Technology”).

The first real steps were taken by the Arab League in 2006 to address the prevalent problem of cyber attacks with Cyber Crime Law No. 2 promulgated by the UAE (“Resolution”, 2006). This document “set forth definitions of relevant terms and described what sorts of attacks on cyber assets would elicit repercussions from the UAE government” (Alimin, 2016). Since then, many Gulf nations have also adopted cybercrime laws in legislation in the hopes of

Berkeley Model Arab League
Joint Defence Council
Yemen

addressing this enormous threat to stability. Yemen encourages the adoption of these definitions in the broader cybersecurity framework.

The Arab league has held many meetings concerning risks associated with technology. One important meeting in 2001 resulted in the creation of AICTO to help research, develop, and monitor technological strategies for the sake of protecting the ICT (As of right now, the AICTO encompasses all Arab countries besides Bahrain, Qatar, Saudi-Arabia, and the UAE) (“The Role of the Organization”, 2001). While the Arab League is taking initiatives in reinforcing cyber security, research has shown that some League members’ security measures are limiting freedom of expression and ideas (Hakme, 2018).

The detrimental effects of cyber-attacks are already affecting Arab nations. Dubai’s experiences reveal just how common these attacks can be: in 2013, cyber-attacks in Dubai rose 88% compared to the previous year (Hasbini, 2014). One of the worst cyber attacks to date was visited on a member nation, Saudi Arabia, taking out a petrochemical plant in 2018 (Perlroth, 2018). While the large-scale attack on Saudi Arabia is a call to action for the Arab League, cyber security attacks on the league nations are not uncommon. According to Cybersecurity ventures, Saudi Arabia is ranked 17th world-wide for the largest number of security attacks while the UAE is ranked 18th (Abbas, 2018). However, UAE has said that they have curbed 615 of these breaches due to their Telecommunications Regulations Authority, a possible solution for nations to look into (Abbas, 2018).

Berkeley Model Arab League
Joint Defence Council
Yemen

With recent technological advancements, cyber attacks are going to hit harder and faster. The Arab League must develop a set of unified objectives in their creation of an effective strategy for dealing with cyber security breaches.

Countries Position:

As part of being in the midst of a civil war, Yemen believes that cyber security measures are necessary for maintaining and creating stability around the region and within the Arab League. Yemen recognizes the important role cyber security plays in maintaining a functioning society given that many of the Arab states are already being attacked aggressively and frequently. While Yemen only has seven million internet users as of 2018, the country is still concerned for the people's and nation's cyber security ("Yemen", 2018). Yemen also acknowledges that cyber-warfare can be used to manipulate entire countries seeing that Yemen has had multiple attacks on its internet. While the civil war has created military conflict, it has also led to battles being waged online.

In 2018, Houthi rebels seized control of the main Yemen internet, YemenNet, allowing them to manipulate government sites, generate cryptocurrency for funding their plans, and cutting 80% of internet services (Uchill, 2018). Houthi rebels are also using social media bots on campaign boards to influence the next actions of the Yemeni government (Uchill, 2018). While the Houthi rebels have derailed the efforts of Yemen, Yemen is eager to create secure cyber-spaces for the safety of civilians. Yemen also notes that the internet must be protected during the ever increasing attempts at its manipulation. Since Yemen has experienced large cyber

Berkeley Model Arab League
Joint Defence Council
Yemen

attacks, Yemen knows the harm and chaos it does to the region and acknowledges that maintaining a secure internet is of the utmost importance.

Yemen supports the creation of a single unified cyber security force within the Arab League as part of the AICTO. Yemen will continue to advocate for the use of internet across the Arab League. Even after the Houthi take-down of YemenNet, Yemen created AdenNet to support the continual presence of internet for the people in the region.

Solutions

Yemen endorses the existing ITU definitions related to cybersecurity and encourages the adoption of these definitions by the broader Arab nations. While Yemen understands the importance of cyber security, the country has been in the midst of civil war, which has led to a collapse of the economic sector. Consequently, Yemen has few resources to address this problem.

The first solution Yemen proposes for addressing cybersecurity is aimed towards newly connected nations setting up internet security. After the complete loss of YemenNet during the Houthi cyber attack, Yemen switched to more secure HuaWei routers to build AdenNet, the new usable internet (Uchill, 2018). In partnership with China's Belt and Road Initiative, Yemen hopes to rebuild its technological infrastructure while also making strong allies (Uchill, 2018). Poorer countries such as Yemen can potentially make use of China's initiative and the access to HuaWei equipment offered through the initiative to strengthen the ICT sector. Fellow Arab countries should also join the AICTO. By joining the AICTO, these nations can begin to develop

Berkeley Model Arab League
Joint Defence Council
Yemen

the tools necessary for constructing a stronger ICT sector. A strong ICT sector can not only help people become connected across the world but also increase resilience in society. Similarly AICTO can work to develop a coordinated cybersecurity strategy for its member states.

The hacking of a nation's technology is a grave threat as it represents the hacking of a nation's private information. Yemen recognizes the importance of strong anti-hacking initiatives, and proposes a clearing house of enterprise level anti-hacking software, and the development of strong firewalls to prevent take-downs such as the one Yemen experienced with the Houthi cyber attack. Yemen endorses the development of a central organisation providing free and robust software both for individual computers and at the enterprise level. The organisation should also provide guidance on selecting hardened hardware for internet infrastructure. This approach will allow poorer states to access best-in-class cyber protection while also building a strong infrastructure. Yemen also suggests that AICTO and UNIDIR conduct ongoing research on this topic, and provide constant updates to the tools, policies and recommendations available through the central repository.

Works Cited

Abbas, Nermeen. "Arab Countries Facing the Highest Number of Cyber Attacks." *Forbes*, Mar. 2018, forbesmiddleeast.com/arab-countries-facing-the-highest-number-of-cyber-attacks. Accessed 15 Nov. 2019.

Alimin, Arief. *Model Arab League Background Guide*. National University Model Arab League, 2016,

Berkeley Model Arab League
Joint Defence Council
Yemen

ncusar.org/modelarableague/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/JDC-Arief-bin-Johan-Alimin-FINAL.pdf. Accessed 15 Nov. 2019.

Hakmeh, Joyce. *Cybercrime Legislation in the GCC Countries Fit for Purpose?* International Security Department, July 2018,
www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/publications/research/2018-07-04-cybercrime-legislation-gcc-hakmeh-final.pdf. Accessed 15 Nov. 2019.

Hasbini, Mohamad. "The Rise of Cybercrime in Dubai and UAE." *Secure List*, AO Kaspersky Lab, June 2014, securelist.com/the-rise-of-cybercrime-in-dubai-and-uae/63682/. Accessed 15 Nov. 2019.

Perloth, Nicole. "A Cyberattack in Saudi Arabia Had a Deadly Goal. Experts Fear Another Try." *The New York Times*, Mar. 2018. *Technology*,
www.nytimes.com/2018/03/15/technology/saudi-arabia-hacks-cyberattacks.html. Accessed 15 Nov. 2019.

"Resolution." 2006, National University Model Arab League,
www.qcert.org/sites/default/files/public/documents/uae-ecrime-the_prevention_of_information_technology_crimes-eng-2006.pdf. Accessed 15 Nov. 2019.

"The Role of the Organization ." *Arab Organization for Information and Communication Technologies*, 2001,
www.aicto.org/%d8%a7%d9%84%d9%85%d9%86%d8%b8%d9%85%d8%a9/%d8%af%d9%88%d8%b1-%d8%a7%d9%84%d9%85%d9%86%d8%b8%d9%85%d8%a9-%d9

Berkeley Model Arab League
Joint Defence Council
Yemen

%81%d9%8a-%d8%a7%d9%84%d9%85%d9%86%d8%b7%d9%82%d8%a9/. Accessed
15 Nov. 2019.

"Security and Technology." *UNIDIR*, www.unidir.org/programmes/security-and-technology.

Uchill, Joe. "How Yemen's Civil War Went Cyber." *Axios*, Nov. 2018,

[www.axios.com/yemen-civil-war-cyber-cyberwarcon-7556c328-3e29-47b0-921f-16dd1c
b2ef08.html](http://www.axios.com/yemen-civil-war-cyber-cyberwarcon-7556c328-3e29-47b0-921f-16dd1cb2ef08.html). Accessed 15 Nov. 2019.

"Yemen." *Internet World Stats*, Miniwatts Marketing Group, 2018,

www.internetworldstats.com/me/ye.htm. Accessed 15 Nov. 2019.