



Arab League

ATIDMUN 2021

Creating frameworks to mediate disputes between League members with the goal of limiting inter-League conflict

Chair Letters

Dear Delegates,

It is with great pleasure and excitement that I welcome you to the Arab League Committee, and I hope I'll be able to make your MUN experience as enjoyable as possible.

My name is Maya and I'm almost 18. I was born in Israel and I'm a senior in high school. This is my fourth and final year doing MUN, and my third time chairing. MUN has been a big part of my life during high school and I greatly enjoy public speaking and debating.

Aside from MUN, I enjoy reading and writing, and I have a keen interest in neuroscience, psychology, and language-learning. I love learning about different cultures and meeting new people, and I'm so excited to meet all of you.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me: maya.hamovic@gmail.com Sincerely,
Maya Hamovich



Honorable delegates,

Welcome to the Arab League committee of AtidMUN2021. My name is Ronald Rakov, and I will be your chair along with Maya Haimovic.

I'm a sophomore studying at Hakfar Hayarok High school, and I live in Petah Tiqva. Apart from doing Model UN, I also participate in debate activities, which are super fun. I both study and mentor juniors as a member of Atid Lod Mun & Debate Club and have been doing MUN for about three years now, having chaired 4 times so far(having been a delegate many, many times)

Some of my hobbies include traveling, biking, swimming and just hanging out with my friends. In school, I major in medicine, chemistry, and physics, as I find these subjects absolutely fascinating.

Back to our MUN "business". Speaking up can be super stressful, and you may be afraid to do it, but in Model UN, saying "embarrassing" things or asking a "foolish" question is completely fine, and we encourage you all to step out of your comfort zone. When you speak once or twice, you will already get used to it, and you will realize that it's your cup of tea.

My only advice for you is to take this experience lightly and to try your best to have fun, making friends your voice heard because ultimately, fun is vital in Model UN.

I'm super excited and I look forward to seeing you all in AtidMUN 2021!

Try your best to prepare, learn about the committee and to play by the book, and... grow as leaders of the future!If you have any questions regarding anything or you just want to talk, feel free to send me an email: (ronaldrakov@gmail.com) or text me on WhatsApp: (0503408080).

Sincerely, Ronald Rakov



Table of Contents

Chair Letters	2
Table of Contents	4
Introduction to the Committee	5
The History of the Arab League	5
The Different Political Camps of the Middle East	6
Background	7
The Ottoman Empire and its Collapse	7
Former involvement of the Arab League in Conflicts	7
Current Situation	9
The Arab Spring	9
Case Study 1: The Arab League's actions regarding Libya	10
Case Study 2: The Arab League's actions regarding Syria	11
Israel and the Arab League: A New Middle East?	12
Questions to Consider	14
Familiarizing Questions	14
Clash-Oriented Questions	15
Bibliography	15

Introduction to the Committee

The History of the Arab League

The League of Arab States, or the Arab League, is an alliance that was formed in Cairo, Egypt, in 1945, and initially had only six members. The aim of the Arab League is to improve the relations, coordination and cooperation between member states, especially on topics of mutual interest.

The Charter of the Arab League, or the Pact of the League of Arab states, is the founding treaty of the Arab League. A state can join the Arab League by ratifying the charter. According to the charter, every state in the Arab League has a single vote, no matter its number of representatives. Any resort to force, or violence, in order to solve a dispute between two states in the league, is prohibited. If at any point a member state is threatened with violence by another state, it can demand an immediate assembly of the league.

Unanimous decisions made by the Arab League are binding to all member states, however, majority decisions are only binding to the member states that have accepted them.

Nevertheless, in case of a conflict brought to the Arab League, its decisions regarding the conflict are legally binding.

Finally, the charter can be amended with the consent of two-thirds of the Arab League's states.

Today, the Arab League is composed of twenty-two member states: Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen. The Arab League also has four "observer" states, who can participate in the Arab League's activities but are denied the right to vote: Brazil, Eritrea, India and Venezuela.

In 2001, the Arab States decided to introduce a legislative body for the Arab League: "The Arab Parliament", which was officially founded in 2002. The Arab Parliament was established in

order to give Arab citizens another voice alongside the Arab governments, which will in turn strengthen democracy in the Arab world.

Members of the Arab Parliament are not considered representatives of their countries of origin, and represent the Arab world as a whole, which provides them with more freedom to voice their opinions on the issues discussed in the parliament. However, the Arab Parliament hasn't yet played a profound role in Arab politics.

The Different Political Camps of the Middle East

It is possible to claim that the Muslim countries in the Arab world are divided into three major camps:

1. The Shiite countries, which are Iran and its allies – Lebanon and Syria. These are totalitarian regimes with problematic leaders, which hold strong anti-Saudi, anti-American and anti-Israel views, as well as a great disregard to the west and western values.
2. The Muslim Brothers Sunni Countries such as Turkey and Qatar, which demonstrate extreme views regarding the west and western values.
3. The moderate Sunni countries, such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt and the UAE, which strongly oppose Iran and its allies and are relatively open and accepting towards the west and western values.

It is important to note that while Iran was never a part of the Arab League, its influence on League members both from the 1st group of countries and on countries from the 2nd group is obvious and undeniable.

These 3 camps create a great divide that fractures the unity of the league and makes cooperation and agreement within the league extremely hard.

Background

The Ottoman Empire and its Collapse

From the 13th century, the Ottoman Empire ruled vast parts of the Arab world, spanning all the way from Eastern Europe to the Middle East and North Africa, reaching the entirety of the Arabian Peninsula. The Ottoman Empire may have been run by a centralized rule, but the Arabs living under its rules lived in tribes, and not in countries.

The tribal structure of the Arab society lasted well into the 20th century but by that time it became very unsuitable and problematic.

The Ottoman Empire has begun dwindling long before WWI, however it was during WWI when it ultimately collapsed. Following the collapse, in some places a power vacuum was formed, but in others the victors of the war divided the territories won from the Ottoman Empire between them in an arbitrary manner.

Eventually, all of the countries that were controlled by European countries were given independence due to decolonization policies, thus removing all of the foreign regimes from the region. When the different countries won their independence, they were highly politically unstable, and the regimes that were formed in those countries were sometimes problematic and failed to represent their people.

This reality has formed the Arab nations that we know today and has created many of the conflict's regions, which last to this day.

Former involvement of the Arab League in Conflicts

The following table contains some of the most notable events that occurred in the Middle East and North Africa and the steps taken by the Arab League to address them.

Year	Occasion	Form of Involvement
1961	Iraq made claims regarding certain territories within Kuwait after it received its independence	The League sent forces to the battle scene, over 2000 troops.
1976	The Lebanese Civil War	The League has created the Arab Deterrent Force, which was composed of soldiers belonging to 6 member states. The troops were sent to Lebanon in order to achieve stability and a ceasefire, goals that they quickly obtained.
1990-1991	Iraq has invaded Kuwait	After several peaceful mediation attempts, in which the Arab league members tried to convince Saddam Hussein to withdraw, the league has taken a major decision to liberate Kuwait using a US-led coalition that contained many Arab League members. This led to the creation of the Gulf War.
2004-2008	The Genocide in Darfur	While the Arab League expressed its concerns over the situation in Sudan, it did not take practical measures, and in some cases backed the Sudanese tyrant Omar Al-Bashir, for example: when he refused the deployment of UN peacekeeping forces. It is also claimed that the Arab League members have failed to provide the UNAMIR peacekeeping forces the financial support that they pledged to provide.

It is possible to claim that the aforementioned case studies can demonstrate that the Arab League acts upon political interest and is much less committed to preserving Human Rights. It completely failed to properly address one of the worst humanitarian crises that have occurred in the world in the 20th century.

Current Situation

The Arab Spring

The Arab Spring can be best described as a series of uprisings, demonstrations and violent events that have occurred in many different Arab countries in the beginning of the 2010s. The Arab Spring began in December of 2010, with a series of pro-democracy protests in Tunisia, which have spread to five other countries over the next two years: Morocco, Syria, Libya, Egypt and Bahrain. The protests were meant to challenge the authoritarian regimes in the Middle East and North Africa. Although the goal of the protests was similar throughout the region – to overthrow the current regime, the outcomes and consequences were significantly different from country to country.

A total of 4 countries experienced revolutions following the Arab Spring – the first being in Tunisia in 2011. Later followed Egypt, Yemen, and Libya. Another common outcome of the Arab Spring were civil wars. The most notable one is obviously the Syrian Civil War, which began in 2011.

In retrospective, Tunisia is the only country that has obtained a meaningful Arab democratic regime, while the rest of the situation in most other countries has deteriorated and became unstable and problematic. In these most desperate of times, the Arab League could have been far more active regarding these events and could have provided further support to its members while they were struggling.

Even before the Arab Spring, during which human rights were continuously violated, the Arab League was reluctant to take concrete actions to ensure and protect them. The Arab League's motivation to hold sessions within the league during the Arab Spring were mostly political rather than with respect to human rights, and the sessions didn't include discussions about the situation in every country that had an uprising. While the situations in Libya and Syria were discussed thoroughly, the situation in Bahrain was not included in the discussions as much.

Case Study 1: The Arab League's actions regarding Libya

The Arab Spring in Libya was very violent and developed into a very deadly civil war that lasted for 8 months and resulted in over 9000 casualties, according to considerably conservative estimates, when some evaluate that as much as 25000 people lost their lives during this war.

The Arab League's response was perhaps the strongest compared to all the other occurrences that the Arab Spring created throughout the region. Here is an outline of the Arab League's actions regarding the war in Libya throughout the first month:

1. The Arab League's Secretary General, Amr Moussa, expressed deep concerns and called upon Libya to stop the violence.
2. On February 22nd, 2011, only a week after the war had begun, an emergency meeting was held. In this meeting, the League had decided to condemn Libya's actions and to prevent it from participating in the League's meetings.
3. On March 7th, Mousa called upon Libya to seek reconciliation.
4. On March 12th, the League met again and decided to ask the UNSC to declare Libya a no-fly zone. Only 3 countries voted against this decision.

Given these circumstances and given that in many other Arab League members there were many violent actions for example: Egypt and Syria, it is presumably hard to explain why specifically Libya was such a deep concern to the Arab League.

Some may claim that Ghaddafi's hostility towards the Arab League has played an immense role in the treatment that Libya received throughout the Arab Spring, and if this is the case, it is very reasonable to claim that the League currently functions on a base of political interests rather than pure concern for human rights.

While it is worrying that the League may act upon political interests only, it is possible to claim that its actions have contributed to calm down the violence in Libya. However, it did come with a high toll – the demonization of the Arab League by Ghaddafi. Had the League reacted in the

same way towards all the Arab Spring countries, it would have been far harder for Libya to feel as if they were targeted.

Case Study 2: The Arab League's actions regarding Syria

Syria was perhaps the country that had paid the heaviest toll due to the uprisings of the Arab Spring, with a full-on civil war that began in March 2011, lasted for years and in many ways is still ongoing. The death toll of this enormous war ranges from 387 thousand to 593 thousand people, a number far greater compared to Libya.

However, it is possible to see that the Arab League was far more reluctant to properly respond and only intensified its approach towards Syria months after the war had begun. Here are the main actions taken by the Arab League in the first year following its beginning:

1. The first action taken by the Arab League was in August 2011, 5 months after the beginning of the demonstrations and 5 months after the first time when the UN condemned Syria. It was when the League's Secretary General, Nabil Elaraby, said that Syria "should stop all acts of violence".
2. Later that month, the Arab League decided to send Elaraby to Syria on a special mission. After visiting Syria and meeting Assad, Elaraby was convinced that the Syrian government is "focused on a national dialogue".
3. The Arab League had prepared a peace plan, which Syria committed to in November 2011. When Syria failed to comply with the plan, the League threatened to suspend Syria's membership, and followed through with these threats. It also added more pressure on Syria by levying economic sanctions on Syria.
4. The League had created another peace plan to which Syria agreed, which included admitting 50 Arab League monitors in Syria to whose task was to ensure that the peace plan is executed properly. Unsurprisingly, Syria violated the peace plan, and nonetheless, the monitors were not only stale, but were essentially legitimizing the violence from the Syrian regime with their presence. Eventually, after several weeks, the

monitors' mission was cancelled, due to the significant deterioration of the situation in Syria.

5. Tired from all the failures of the Arab League, some countries such as Saudi Arabia began acting independently on the political level in coordination with other countries such as China, Russia and the USA.
6. After numerous threats in 2011 and 2012, only in September 2013 the Arab League called upon the UNSC to take action regarding the Syrian civil war.

The main lesson that can be learned from this case study is that the Arab League's response was "too little, too late". The League failed to respond promptly, when the violence was far less severe, and its monitors plan backfired to a great extent, and showed a lack of preparation and thought from the League's side.

[Israel and the Arab League: A New Middle East?](#)

In the past, one issue that was within the League's consensus was the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It was so taboo to the extent that Egypt after signing the peace treaty with Israel in 1979, was kicked out of the Arab League, and was only admitted back to the League only 10 years later. Additionally, the Arab League went as far as to impose an economic boycott on Israel in 1945, although since then the majority of the league's members have either seized to impose the boycott or signed agreements with Israel that ended the boycott.

However, history was made in September 2020, when Israel, for the first time in over 25 years, had signed a peace treaty with the UAE. Next in line were Bahrain, Sudan and finally Morocco. These agreements are no fluke, they are the realization of a great turning point in the history of the Middle East.

For years the Middle East revolved around the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, when all Arab countries joined forces against Israel, however, the middle eastern cold war fought between Iran and Saudi Arabia has become far more substantial in the eyes of most Middle Eastern countries, and thus Israel was no longer isolated, but rather strongly affiliated with one political

camp within the Arab League – the camp of moderate Sunni countries such as the UAE, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia.

These developments have advantages and disadvantages, but one thing is clear – these events tear down one of the basic areas of agreement and consensus of the Arab League, and further deepen the divide of an already fractured and torn body.

Conclusion and Considerations for the Future

There have been many ongoing conflicts in the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) region that prompted the Arab League to intervene as a mediator.

Subsequently, its impact and mandate became limited and questions regarding its influence and efficiency arose. Consequently, intervention and mediation inherited other forms, for instance, intervention on a national level with decision making done by individual states rather than the inclusive Arab League.

One of the Arab League's missions is to improve and ensure the stability and security of its member states, all of which are part of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, an area that is incredibly conflict prone. However, the Arab League currently has no effective mechanism that ensures that its members comply with its resolutions. This problem arises from the Arab League's charter. This limits the effectiveness of the Arab League and its ability to lead and coordinate meaningful collective actions. While this allows each state to protect its own sovereignty, it also gives states the option to revoke certain agreements as its decisions are not legally binding.

The current voting mechanism, which allows each country to avoid implementing decisions that it did not support, unless it is within a conflict, creates discoordination, as well as prevents and

delays important decisions from being implemented. This is especially true about decisions regarding mediation, conflict resolutions and managing crisis situations.

In an era when many countries experienced many failed intervention attempts made by the Arab League and when the different political camps within the League became more polarized and shared less points of consensus, the Arab League must take rapid action in order to empower and unify its members in times of crisis. This would help provide better military and humanitarian responses to the different conflicts, wars, and crises.

It is your job – the delegates of Arab League 2021, to decide how the Arab League could reform itself and become a regional leader that possesses considerable power, is trusted to manage difficult situations, and provides adequate responses to every situation.

We wish you the best of luck!

Maya, Ronald and

Questions to Consider

Familiarizing Questions

- What is your country's political camp within the League?
- Is your country involved in conflicts? What is the probability of your country being involved in such a conflict?
- Did the Arab League intervene in a conflict within your country?
 - If So, what lessons can be learned from this intervention?
- What are your country's relations with the Arab League? How devoted is your country to the Arab League?
- Does your country believe that the Arab League acts based on political interests? Does it benefit your country?

Clash-Oriented Questions

- Can and should the Arab League formulate a mechanism that can bind certain decisions upon all or some of its members?
- Can and should the Arab League draft universal guidelines around intervention in conflicts?
 - If so:
 - What are the criteria for enabling intervention within a given conflict?
 - Should the form of intervention be restricted? How?
 - How should violation of the guidelines be treated?
 - If not:
 - What should otherwise be done, if at all?
- How can the Arab League ensure that all conflicts are addressed properly without political considerations?
- How can the Arab League act more swiftly regarding conflicts? Should non-state actors be eligible to ask the League to address conflicts if all its members fail to ask for an emergency meeting?
- How can the Arab League ensure that its plans and decisions are effectively implemented?

Bibliography

“A Question of Arab Unity.” Israel | Al Jazeera, 15 May 2016,

<https://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/questionofarabunity/2008/02/20085251852858221.html/>

“Arab Disunity.” CQ Researcher by CQ Press,

<https://library.cqpress.com/cqresearcher/document.php?id=cqresrre197610290>

Benni, Enrico. *Digital Middle East: Transforming the Region into a Leading Digital Economy*, Digital Mckinsey, Oct. 2016,
[https://www.mckinsey.com/~media/mckinsey/featured_insights/middle east and africa/digital middle east transforming the region into a leading digital economy/digital-middle-east-finalupdated.ashx](https://www.mckinsey.com/~media/mckinsey/featured_insights/middle_east_and_africa/digital_middle_east_transforming_the_region_into_a_leading_digital_economy/digital-middle-east-finalupdated.ashx).

Council of Arab Economic Unity. "The Council of Arab Economic Unity Announces 'A Common Vision for Arab Digital Economy'." PR Newswire: Press Release Distribution, Targeting, Monitoring and Marketing, 30 Nov. 2018,
<https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/the-council-of-arab-economic-unityannounces-a-common-vision-for-arab-digital-economy--800262184.html>.

"Disunity: A Grave Threat to the Arab World." Al Arabiya English, Khalaf Ahmad Al Habtoor, 13 Oct. 2016,
<http://english.alarabiya.net/en/views/news/middleeast/2016/10/13/Disunity-A-grave-threat-to-the-Arab-world.html>

"International Democracy Watch." Arab League,
<http://www.internationaldemocracywatch.org/index.php/arab-league->

Kenton, Will. "Arab League." Investopedia, Investopedia, 14 Sept. 2019,
<https://www.investopedia.com/terms/a/arab-league.asp>.

"Saudi Posts Big Decline in Fiscal Deficit in Third-Quarter as Oil Revenues Rise." Reuters, Thomson Reuters, 31 Oct. 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-saudi-economyrevenue/saudi-posts-big-decline-in-fiscal-deficit-in-third-quarter-as-oil-revenues-rise-idUSKCN1N51TL>.

