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League of Arab States



Topic A: Migration within the Arab World

Topic B: Revival of an Arab Currency

Miriam Arimond

Ofek Sapir

Simone Mostratisi

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LETTER FROM THE CHAIRS

Honorable Delegates,

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the 2019 TLVMUN MODEL UN Conference!

The following pages intend to guide you in the research of the topics that will be debated in your committee: The League of Arab States. Please note that this guide only provides the basis for your investigation. It is your responsibility to find as much information necessary on the topics and how they relate to the party you represent. Such information should help you write your Position Paper and to stay in character at all times. As your chairs, we will be with you every step of the way since we are very excited to be part of your MUN experience and we will try our best to make this conference a fun, educational, memorable and a challenging event for you!

We are waiting for you and your brilliant ideas in the vibrant city of Tel Aviv. Several days of inspiring debates, intense negotiations and amazing social events are ahead of you.

Good luck for your work!

See you in August,

Miriam, Ofek & Simon



INTRODUCTION TO THE CHAIRS



Miriam Arimond is a second year PhD student at the University of Mannheim and while she spends most of her time with the intriguing issues of capital markets law, she also spends her free time cooking and dancing ballet. Whenever she can, she flees from German weather and spends her time on beaches – surfing and enjoying the sun. That and TLVMUN 2018 are also where she discovered the beauty of Tel Aviv last year which is why she is extremely excited to come back this year.

Ofek Sapir is about to graduate his bachelor's degree in Political Science and International relations with Media studies at the Open University of Israel. This is his second year in MUN and last year he was chosen to be head of his society, OPENMUN. When he is not studying, you can find him playing the XBOX (no Fortnite). After participating TLVMUN 2018 it was clear to him that he will do it again!



Simone Mostratisi is currently majoring in international relations in the University of Turin, in northern Italy and working on his thesis which is going to be about the implication of linguistic strategies concerning terrorism in both French and English structured international resolutions. His passion for MUNs started when he was only 17 and he continued ever since. When he's not charging or studying, he loves reading poetry and playing basketball.



INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMITTEE: LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES

(جامعة الدول العربية)

| | |
|---|---------------------------|
| Secretary General: Ahmed Aboul Gheit (Egypt), since 2016 | Actual members: 22 |
| Headquarters: Cairo, Egypt | Observers: 4 |
| Initial members: 6 | Official language: Arabic |

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Arab League (Arabic: الجامعة العربية al-Jāmi'a al-'Arabiyya, formally the League of Arab States (Arabic Jāmi'at ad-Duwal al-'Arabiyya) is an intergovernmental organization (IGO), also classified as a voluntary association of independent African and Middle East countries whose peoples are mainly Arabic speaking. The stated purposes of the Arab League are to strengthen ties among the member states, coordinate their policies, and promote their common interests.¹

According to its *Fundamental Chart*, the main purpose of the League consists on the strengthening of the relations between the member-states, underlining the importance of the coordination of their policies in order to achieve cooperation between them and to safeguard their independence and sovereignty. Referring to *Article II*, the Arab League has the purpose to foster cooperation on the following matters:

A. Economic and financial affairs (including commercial relations, customs, currency and questions of agriculture and industry); B. Communications (this includes railroads, roads, aviation, navigation, telegraphs and posts); C. Cultural affairs; D. Nationality, passports, visas, execution of judgments and extradition of criminals; E. Social affairs; F. Health affairs².

Although these aspirations had been present for some time in the region, the idea of establishing a formal organization was realized only after the Second World War, in 1944, when Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Transjordan (which would later become

¹ The Cambridge Dictionary, Cambridge University Press, 2019.

² Charter of the Arab league, Arab League, 1945.

the present Jordan) and Syria signed the so-called Alexandria Protocol in Alexandria, Egypt. This document laid the foundations for the establishment of what, in March 1945, would become the Arab League, which was joined in May of the same year by the then Northern Yemen (which today, reunited with the South, forms current Yemen)³.

To act as a glue between the founding countries of the League, in addition to the common belonging to the "Arab homeland", there was the condemnation of the experience of colonialism to which they had been subjected. To the ideology of pan-Arabism, which just between the two world wars getting old within the Arab world, the common aspiration to independence was added, also adopted by other countries who did not figure among the founders of the League, such as Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria, but who would have joined it later.⁴

During the life of the Organization there were several disputes that led, in two cases, to the expulsion of a member state. The first major breach between the League and one of its members occurred in 1979 with Egypt. The latter was temporarily expelled from the organization as a sign of protest for his policy towards Israel, since the Egyptian government that year had signed the peace agreements, thus breaking the unity of the Arab front. Following the expulsion of Egypt, the headquarters of the League was also moved to Tunis and was re-established in Cairo only in 1989, following the reinstatement of Egypt. During the 2011 uprisings, Libya also suffered a temporary suspension from the Arab League, as a punitive measure against the Gaddafi regime, accused of having used violence against the population. The same measure was recently taken against Syria due to the brutal repression perpetrated by the Bashar al-Assad regime against the rebels. (BBC, 2017). The League of the Arab States has 22 members including Palestine, which the League regards as an independent state⁵.

³ Nations online. From "League of the Arab States":
https://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/arab_league.htm, (accessed: May 15th).

⁴ Aljazeera, from <https://www.aljazeera.com/>, (accessed: May 15th)

⁵ Charter of the Arab league, Arab League, 1945.

The 22 Member States of the Arab League

* Founder States

| Member State | Admission | Member State | Admission |
|---|------------|---|------------|
|  Algeria | 16-08-1962 |  Bahrain | 11-09-1971 |
|  Comoros | 20-11-1993 |  Djibouti | 04-09-1977 |
|  Egypt * | 22-03-1945 |  Iraq * | 22-03-1945 |
|  Jordan * | 22-03-1945 |  Kuwait | 20-07-1961 |
|  Lebanon * | 22-03-1945 |  Libya | 28-03-1953 |
|  Mauritania | 26-11-1973 |  Morocco | 01-10-1958 |
|  Oman | 29-09-1971 |  Palestine | 09-09-1976 |
|  Qatar | 11-09-1971 |  Saudi Arabia * | 22-03-1945 |
|  Somalia | 14-02-1974 |  Sudan | 19-01-1956 |
|  Syria * | 22-03-1945 |  Tunisia | 01-10-1958 |
|  United Arab Emirates | 06-12-1971 |  Yemen * | 05-05-1945 |
|  Eritrea joined the Arab League as an observer in January 2003. | | | |

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INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE

Unlike other regional organizations such as the Organization of American States (OAS), the Council of Europe or the African Union, the Arab League has a membership that is determined by common cultural and non-geographical belonging. Its institutional structure represents a mixture of supranational bodies and the sovereign institutions of individual countries. The Summit of the Arab League Council, in which all the heads of state and government of the member countries meet, meets twice a year, in March and September, and may convene a special session at the request of two members⁷. Day-to-day, the league is run by the general secretariat, which is headed by a secretary-general. It serves as the administrative body of the league, whereas the executive body is represented by the council and the specialized ministerial councils.⁸

There is no real autonomous political institution within the organization, which in fact, as such, does not directly affect the lives of the populations of the member countries. The Council of the League adopts decisions by a majority vote and these resolutions are binding only for the countries that vote for them and not for all members⁹.

Next to the Council Summit are the Defence and Economy Council, composed of the respective ministers of the member countries, as well as the permanent specialized

⁶ bbc.com, Profile: the Arab League. From: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-15747941>, (accessed May 15th).

⁷ Charter of the Arab league, Arab League, 1945.

⁸ Bbc.com, 2017, August 24). *BBC News: Middle East*. From <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-15747941>

⁹ Charter of the Arab league, Arab League, 1945.

committees. In 2001, at the Amman Summit, the Council decided to establish the Arab Parliament which, meeting provisionally in Cairo in 2004, should have its final seat in Damascus.

The General Secretariat has the task of dealing with the ordinary administration of the League and its secretary is the legal representative of the organization ¹⁰. Moreover, according to Article III, The League shall possess a Council composed of the representatives of the member-states of the League; each state shall have a single vote. Additionally, this article specifies that it likewise shall be the Council's task to decide upon the means by which the League is to cooperate with the international bodies to be created in the future in order to guarantee security, peace and regulate economic and social relations ¹¹.

RECENT ACTIONS

The first major joint action of the Arab League, whose headquarters was established in Cairo, was the intervention in the Arab-Israeli conflict of 1948, following the proclamation of the State of Israel. On that occasion, at the invitation of the Arab League, Egypt sent its troops to defend the Palestinian community. Following the defeat in that war, in 1950 the Arab League signed the Agreement for the Common Defence and Economic Cooperation, in which there were also the principles of membership of the United Nations Organization, of which the League in fact became an observer member in 1953. Over the years the membership of the Arab League has expanded more and more, reaching the current 22 members, as well as four observers.¹²

The Arab League intends to act as a privileged place of dialogue between the Arab actors of the Middle East and beyond, with the aim of coordinating the joint efforts of all member countries in resolving the disputes that some of them face. Furthermore, the League is a discussion forum aimed at defining shared political positions in the Arab world in the face of the frequent political, institutional and social crises, of which the area has been - and continues to be - a witness. The recurring Arab-Israeli crisis, the

¹⁰ Charter of the Arab league, Arab League, 1945.

¹¹ IDEM

¹²World affairs, the Journal of international issues, From <http://worldaffairsjournal.com/index.php>, (accessed: May 15th).

Palestinian issue, the three Gulf conflicts, the crises that involved Lebanon, both in the 1950s and during the years of the civil war (1975-90) and in 2008, the protests in the Middle East of 2011-12, are just some of the themes that dominated the political debate of the organization. The creation of some institutions, such as the Organization for Education, Culture and Sciences of the Arab League and the Council for Arab Economic Unity, facilitates the development of political, economic, social, cultural and scientific programs aimed at promoting the interests of the Arab world. The latter is perceived within the League as a single cultural entity and the organization supports the principle of a single Arab homeland, while respecting the principle of sovereignty of each individual member country.

TOPIC A: MIGRATION WITHIN THE ARAB WORLD

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Environmental Migrant

A person who, for compelling reason of sudden or progressive change in the environment that adversely affects their lives or living conditions, is obliged to leave their habitual homes, or choose to do so, either temporarily or permanently, and who move either within their country or abroad.

Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC States)

Member states are Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.

Migrant Worker

"A person who is to be engaged, is engaged or has been engaged in a remunerated activity in a State of which he or she is not a national".¹³

MIGRATION WITHIN THE ARAB WORLD

In 2017, according to statistics released by the UN's department for Economic and Social Affairs, the percentage of immigrants including refugees in proportion to the total population reached extremely high levels in the United Arab Emirates (more than 88 %),

¹³ Art. 2 of the International Convention on the Protection of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, 1990.

followed by Kuwait (75.5 %) and Qatar (68 %). In terms of emigration, Syria was the Arab League country with the highest level in 2017 (around 20 %), followed by Lebanon (13%) and Morocco (11%). While the majority of Algerian, Moroccan and Tunisian international migrants live in EU Member States, Egyptian international migrants (more than 6 million) live mainly in Arab countries which also applies to Palestinian and Jordanian citizens. A major share of Syrian emigrants lives in Jordan and Lebanon, another in Turkey, then to a lesser extent in Europe, mainly in Sweden and Germany. And while the Tunisian, Libyan, and Egyptian uprisings have triggered new migratory tendencies, by far the most acute post-Arab Spring migrant crisis is the Syrian one. With 4.2 million nationals forcibly displaced outside Syrian borders and about eight million internally displaced, the international system is grappling with the most shattering mass forced migration episode since World War II.¹⁴

As a result, international migrants represent much higher percentages of the total population in the Gulf countries than those in the EU's main countries of immigration. Having said this, in the Gulf countries migrants from the Arab countries only represent around 10% of all immigrants, against 70% who come from South and East Asia. And while in Europe, there is much more permanent migration with significant family migration flows and the possibility in the mid-term of obtaining nationality for those who wish it from the host country, in the Arab League countries, the predominant migration system is based on temporary migration, mainly for employment.¹⁵ The possibility for migrants to bring their family or to be granted the nationality of destination country is extremely limited. In construction and domestic work in Gulf States, migrant workers make up over 95 % of the work force while it is estimated that some 600,000 migrants are victims of forced labour in the region. On the other hand, studies show that more than 50 % of reputed Arab medical physicians, 23% of Arab engineers and 15% of Arab scientists work outside of the Arab region.¹⁶

¹⁴ Tamirace Fakhoury, *Migration, Conflict and Security in the Post-2011 Landscape*, http://education.mei.edu/content/migration-conflict-and-security-post-2011-landscape#_ftn2.

¹⁵ Anisur Rahman, *Migration and Human Rights in the Gulf*, <http://education.mei.edu/content/migration-and-human-rights-gulf>.

¹⁶ Mohamed Buheji, *Exploring Migration Economy – Understanding the Loss of the Arab World*, *International Business Research* (2018) Vol. 11 Nr. 6, 41 (44).

FROM TRANSIT COUNTRY TO COUNTRY OF IMMIGRATION

For the longest time, western democracies had accustomed Arab Mediterranean countries to regard themselves as sources rather than as hosts of international migration. Due to widening gaps in well-being and security, however, their southern and eastern neighbours started to look at these countries in a different way. They appear to be richer and safer places than their own and a possible stopover on the way to the West. Gradually, Arab Mediterranean countries became magnets for migrant workers and asylum seekers from countries struggling with development and often torn by civil and military conflicts. In contrast with their long practice of dealing with their own expatriate citizens, governments were not prepared for large-scale immigration of non-citizens. For lack of specific tools and, often, in the absence of will to accept and integrate newcomers, unregulated migration grew in parallel with immigration in general. Unregulated migration does not only occur when migrants violate regulations on the movement, settlement, and access to labour of their host countries, but also when a change in regulations affects the migrants' situation. In Jordan, between one third and one half of the more than 200,000 Egyptian workers employed mostly in agriculture were made irregular by new legislation on labour in 2007. Among the estimated 4.5 million immigrants that Arab Mediterranean countries host at present, 2.8 million or more (63%) are actually or potentially irregular migrants.¹⁷

LEGAL STATUS OF WORK MIGRANTS

In a new global economy, international trade involves not only the movement of goods and services among countries but also the movement of people. Just as countries compete in a worldwide market in which goods and services are exchanged, they also compete in an immigrant market. The growing category of irregular immigrants points to a deficit in international law. As non-citizens, migrants usually enjoy fewer rights than citizens. But irregular migrants are denied even the right to reside, so they are in fact not allowed to live where they actually live. They must hide and live in limbo, with limited freedom of movement, no legal protection, poor access to basic rights, and high exposure to exploitation, destitution, and deportation. Whether they had arrived as

¹⁷ Fargues, *Irregular Migration in the Arab Mediterranean Countries*, <https://www.mei.edu/publications/irregular-migration-arab-mediterranean-countries>.

undocumented workers, unrecognized refugees, or migrants in transit, they merge into one single, disadvantaged, and unorganized group.

In the developing economies of Arab Mediterranean countries, they form the cheapest and most tractable workforce to take on jobs which national workers are no longer willing to accept. Migrant workers in the Arab States, with a small number of exceptions, are regulated by a sponsorship system often referred to as *kafala*. Under this system a migrant worker's status and legal residency status is tied to an individual sponsor (*kafeel*) throughout his or her contract period in such a way that the migrant worker cannot typically resign from a job, transfer employment, and in some countries may not leave the country without first obtaining explicit permission from his or her employer. Especially domestic workers, which constitute a large part of the migration inflow, are explicitly excluded from the labour law of almost all countries in the Arab States region, with the exception of partial coverage in Iraq and Bahrain respectively where domestic workers are granted a subset of rights under the labour law. While some countries, including Jordan, Kuwait, the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic and Qatar, have separate legislation or regulations for domestic workers, the standards set are commonly lower than those in the general labour law.

In 2016, 94% of Lebanese employers stated that they confiscated their worker's passport. Reasons for these extreme measures were the fear that the worker would leave the workplace, would commit a crime which the employer, as a *kafeel*, is deemed responsible for, would steal from the house and use the opportunity of leaving the premises to hide the stolen goods or, in case of a female worker, would develop an intimate relationship and may become pregnant which would then lead to the need to hire a new worker.

Employers take these extremely restrictive measures even though these acts such as preventing the worker from leaving or confiscating the passport are commonly prohibited both by national and international law. In Lebanon, passport confiscation is not prohibited by legislation, however court decisions in 2014 and 2016 found that employers who retain the passports of domestic workers are violating basic rights guaranteed in the international agreements that Lebanon has ratified, particularly their right to freedom of movement within a country and the right to leave the country.

ENVIRONMENTAL MIGRATION

While migration is very often related to a search for better economic opportunities, it is worth remembering that it can also result from political, religious as well as environmental conflicts. Often referred to as “climate change refugees” once unheard of, environmental migrants are quickly becoming a phenomenon. The Asian Development Bank warned that there could have been as many as 42 million environmental migrants over the last two years in Asia – as a result of extreme weather events.¹⁸ Current estimates also predict that by the middle of the century, the world could see anywhere between 25 million and 1 billion climate related migrants.¹⁹

One of the regions heavily troubled by environmental changes is the **Sahel** region bordering to several Arab states in its north. Since 1970, countries in that region have experienced huge variations in expected rainfall, with some countries as Burkina Faso, having seen around 50 mm less rainfall on average and others such as Nigeria have seen an increase of around 250 mm on average. With many areas in the Sahel experiencing as high as a 2°C average rise in temperatures, in the same period, the Sahel has also become prone to drought and desertification.²⁰

Drought not only triggered the first mass movements and urbanization of the Sahara, but also had a part in generating the conditions for international migration, particularly by breaking up communities and forcing their resettlement in other areas, and through unplanned, excessive urbanization. One important issue here was that towns started to become centres of migration, partly because of urban overcrowding resulting from drought.

Water is an essential factor in desertification and migration processes because of water erosion, water stress, drought, pollution, salinity, etc. It is the main constraint to agricultural development and food security in Africa.

1. **Pessimistic scenario (UN):** 7,000 million people in 60 countries will face water shortages by 2050.

2. **Optimistic scenario (UN):** 2,000 million people in 48 countries will face water shortages by 2050.

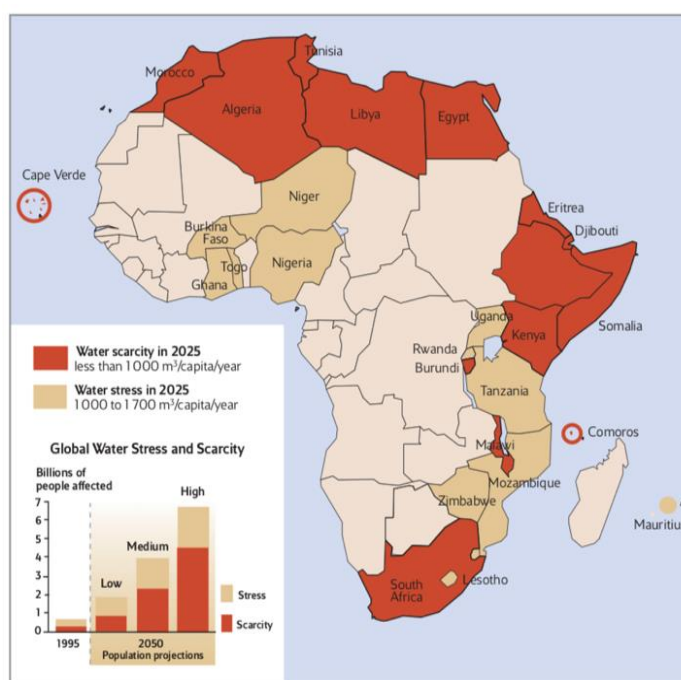
According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), by 2025, more than half the world's population will face water shortages.

¹⁸ Asian Development Bank, *Addressing Climate Change and Migration in Asia and the Pacific*, <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/29662/addressing-climate-change-migration.pdf>.

¹⁹ Smith, *Climate change, desertification and migration: Connecting the dots*, <https://www.climatechangenews.com/2012/04/27/climate-change-desertification-and-migration-connecting-the-dots/>.

²⁰ Tschakert/Sagoe/Ofori-Darko/Codjo, *Floods in the Sahel: an analysis of anomalies, memory, and anticipatory learning*, Springer Science+Business (2009), 471 (479).

In the Sahara, drought and urban growth are correlated, especially in the cities that have become migration hubs. This kind of migration affected mainly the Saharan region, where it still has a strong impact, before expanding into the coastal cities of the northern Maghreb, where migrants contribute to local economies and leave their imprint on the cities. Migration was one of the drivers of the urban explosion in such Saharan towns as Agadiz, Sebha and Tamanrasset that have a large population of migrants from the Sahel region. On the other hand, numbers from the 1980s and 1990s show, that drought had less of an impact on Algerian and Libyan communities than on those in the Sahel.²¹ It can therefore be inferred that drought – like any natural disaster – is an indicator of social malfunction. The impacts of drought and desertification include the decline in agricultural incomes, ecosystem changes, especially a switch from economically valuable species that protect environments to less valuable ones, and the resulting impoverishment of communities.



PAST ACTIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

In 2006, the Social-Economic Council of the League of Arab Nations adopted the Arab Declaration on International Migration with the goal of activating the role of migration in national development and Arab regional integration. The Declaration also included the urge to “all labour-receiving States to enhance human rights and fundamental freedoms of all immigrants, to protect migrants’ rights against illegitimate actions or acts of violence, particularly those of racial discrimination and crimes committed by

²¹ Tschakert/Sagoe/Ofori-Darko/Codjo, *Floods in the Sahel: an analysis of anomalies, memory, and anticipatory learning*, Springer Science+Business (2009), 471 (482).

individuals and groups motivated by racism or xenophobia”²². Nevertheless, as the overwhelming presence of migrant workers in the Gulf region is still publicly perceived as a national security issue, GCC countries have instituted tougher recruitment policies, deported surplus expatriate workers, and made the renewal of residence permits more difficult. Moreover, the GCC labour ministers have proposed a quota system to limit the number of foreign workers which was ultimately defeated by powerful business communities that claimed that they would put on hold several major development projects that would cause the collapse of the economy.²³

Majid Al-Alawi, Minister of Labour and Social Affairs of Bahrain, has stated that non-Arab foreign workers constitute a strategic threat to the region’s future. Similarly, Abdul Rahman Al Attiya, the GCC Secretary-General, warned about the possible security risks incurred by the massive presence of expatriates in the region.²⁴ Furthermore, the Arab Observatory for International Migration was launched by the Population Policies and Migration Department of the League of Arab States in order to fill in the gap in data, sustain the technical capabilities in the Arab countries, contribute in knowledge transfer and adaptation in the international migration field and find mechanisms to magnify the benefit of migration and the expatriates' experiences to promote the development and the Arab-Regional integration. The Observatory stopped publishing reports in 2008 and the website is no longer available.

²² Population Policies and Migration Department, *Arab Declaration on International Migration*, http://www.poplas.org/uploads/publication/pdf/mig_dec_en.pdf.

²³ Martin Baldwin-Edwards, *Labour immigration and labour markets in the GCC countries: national patterns and trends*, <https://apmigration.ilo.org/resources/labour...labour...gcc.../file1>.

²⁴ Kapiszewski, *Arab Versus Asian Migrant Workers in the GCC Countries*, <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/6512/6c08bb15b1dfbd7c0951fc09e6f0bb8a50a3.pdf>.

FURTHER READING

Global Mechanism of the UNCCD, *Desertification, Migration & Local Development*, http://www.migration4development.org/sites/default/files/migration_desertification.pdf.

International Labour Organization, *Domestic Workers and Employers in the Arab States*, https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arabstates/---ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms_619661.pdf.

International Organization for Migration, *Arab Migration in a Globalized World*, https://publications.iom.int/fr/system/files/pdf/arab_migration_globalized_world.pdf.

UNCCD, *Migration and Desertification*, http://catalogue.unccd.int/22_loose_leaf_Desertification_migration.pdf.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

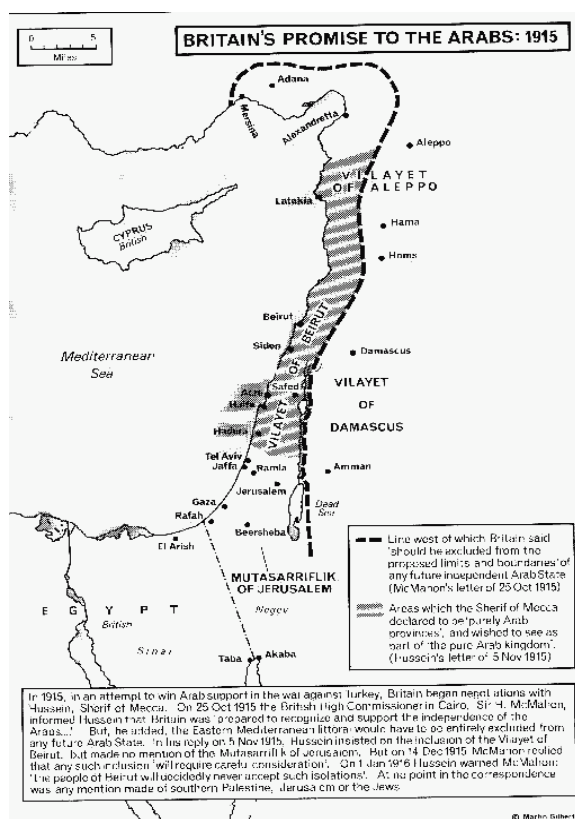
1. How can migrants' positive effects on a country's economic state be emphasized?
2. Should local employees be responsible for migrants to work? How can we enforce international laws to defend against exploitation of immigrants' socio-economic dependencies? Do they know enough about their rights to stand their ground?
3. Could concerted efforts promote justice and help enforce laws to reduce the amount of unauthorised migrations?
4. Can immigration lead to a negative impact on a country's economic state?
5. How can countries assure the fulfilment of migrants' rights?
6. How do countries deal with climate migration in terms of national security or in terms of human security and risk? Is there a need for a new legal framework to deal with the issue of 'climate refugees'?

TOPIC B: REVIVAL OF AN ARAB CURRENCY

The creation of a single Arab currency lies at the heart of an ongoing discussion that last until present days, a discussion that shaped the history of the Arab world and can still influence their future as well, for better and for worse. The establishment of a single Arab currency started as a small idea that was part of a comprehensive ideology that suggested to change the geo-political structure of the Arab world, the **Pan Arabism**. The ideology originated by the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century by several Arab intellectuals that emphasized and shared their national consciousness as they were pointing out the existence of one Arab-speaking people that live in the region that stretch from the Maghreb (Morocco) all the way to the Arab peninsula and Persian Gulf.

THE ORIGINS OF THE TOPIC

The first political practice of the new ideology was by the Sharif of Mecca, Husain bin Ali who sought independence from the Ottoman Empire authorities to create a united Arab state. When refused, Bin Ali contacted the British high commissioner in Egypt Sir Henry McMahon and in what was known as The Hussein-McMahon letters²⁵, this correspondence established the terms for the Anglo-Arab agreement in which Bin Ali will lead an Arab uprising against the Ottoman Empire and when the British will defeat them, Bin Ali will get his lands to establish an Arab State. The cooperation didn't last for long as Great Britain signed the Sykes-Picot Agreement in 1916 in which they divided the lands that were promised to Husain bin Ali between themselves and France. Bin Ali



²⁵ <http://www.mideastweb.org/mcmahon.htm>

returned to his kingdom, present day Saudi Arabia, without his dream of a united Arab state.

After the fail attempt of Bin Ali to create a united Arab state, it seemed that the idea was abandoned as British and French mandates took control on the lands. In 1930's the ideology revived when new ideologies, mainly from Syria and Iraq, were able to pass on to the young Arab generation the values of Arab culture. One of the main key speakers was the Iraqi educator Sati' al-Husri (1880–1968) that in his essays he based the Arab nationalism on the glorious history of the Arab people and on the Arabic language that was spread together with the Arab people²⁶. His deep influence on the new generation of Pan-Arabism was reflected in the creation of the Syrian-Arab Ba'ath party by Michel Aflaq and Zaki Al-Arsuzi. The Ba'ath party, meaning "renaissance", believed in the unification of all the Arab people under one great nation based on the Pan-Arabism principles that was written by Al-Husri and their slogan emphasized their dream: "one Arab nation with an eternal mission".

Even with the awakening of the Pan-Arabism in Syria, which later on spread to both Iraq and Jordan, all eyes were pointed towards Egypt that was at that time the most populated Arab-speaking in the region and some might say it was also the most important and influential Arab-speaking country. At that time, Egypt rejected the ideology of one great Arab state and developed its own nationalism and view on the area. In the 1940's, during the second world war, even with the blessing it got from Great Britain to establish a one united Arab state, Egypt still refused and called for the construction of a number of independent Arab states instead of one great state, which led eventually to the creation of the Arab League in 1945.

Only with the rise of Jamal Abd al-Nasser in 1952, after a group of officers in the Egyptian army, calling themselves the Free Officers Movement, took power in a bloodless coup, Egypt changed its policy regarding the Pan-Arabism but now the reality already changed. The idea became relevant once again after Nasser lost his power over the Suez Canal in 1956 to forces that included Israel, Great Britain and France. Nasser introduced the need of unity as a way to "freeing all colonized and occupied Arab lands", and immediate started to gain popularity among the Arab people. The first attempt of unity was in 1958

²⁶ <https://www.encyclopedia.com/social-sciences-and-law/political-science-and-government/international-organizations/pan-arabism>

when Nasser proclaimed political unity between Egypt and Syria and established The United Arab Republic, unity that survive for only 3 years, when it dissolved in 1961²⁷. Another fail unification was established between Jordan and Iraq and least for only 6 months. However, some later on unifications were declared as a success such as the unity of seven Arab emirates under today's United Arab Emirates (UAE), and the unification of North Yemen with South Yemen.

After the Six-Day War, in which Egypt, Jordan and Syria's armies were defeated by the Israeli Defence Forces in six days of fighting, causing them severe loses, the support of Pan-Arabism got severe blow, as the Arab world started to question the Arab politics that were leading them to nowhere. After the death of Nasser in 1970, his successor Anwar Sadat returned to the Egyptian doctrine that was dominant before the Second World War: Egyptian nationalism. Sadat was the symbol of the end of Pan-Arabism when he signed a peace treaty with Israel in 1977, which was the start of a new era called **Pan-Islamism**.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

At 1980's, it seemed that Arab countries abandoned the Pan-Arabism ideology and were more focused on strengthening their own independence and establish their own relations with the countries of the world. However, some of the principles of the Pan-Arabism did come into practice at that time, especially the economic principles. In 1981, two important events took place in regard to the regional economic development:

1. The process that eventually created the "**Greater Arab Free Trade Area**" or **GAFTA**, starting on February 4th with the adoption of the "**Agreement to Facilitate and Develop Trade Among Arab Countries**"²⁸ by the Arab League's Economic and Social Council (ESC). The agreement from 1981 included: Free Trade Exchange among Arab countries (Chapter 1, Article 2), the creation of criteria for Arab goods that include the growth of trade leading to Arab economic integration (Chapter 2, Article 4), and giving the power to supervise this agreement to the joint committee of the ESC (Chapter 3,

²⁷ <https://www.encyclopedia.com/social-sciences-and-law/political-science-and-government/international-organizations/pan-arabism>

²⁸ <https://www.economy.gov.lb/en/services/trade/international-agreements/gafta>

Article 11). Nevertheless, the approval of the GAFTA agreement²⁹ by the Arab League's ESC took 16 years, being approved on February 19th 1997 by seventeen Arab League member-states at a summit in Amman, Jordan.

2. The establishment of the **Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf** was formally created when the Charter was signed by its member states on May 25th 1981. One of the main Objectives of the newly formed institution, also known as **Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)**, is mentioned in Article 4 of the Charter³⁰: "To effect integration and inter-connection between Member States in all fields in order to achieve unity between them". The GCC is composed from Arab World's richest economies, led by Saudi Arabia, UAE and Qatar which giving it to have the potential to become the catalyst for further Arab integration.

In 2003, all members have pegged their own currencies to the US dollar as a step towards the creation of single currency. In addition, the GCC supreme council decided to set long-term goals for the organization that include the form of a single currency by the end of 2010. To this day, the currency named Khaleeji still remains as a goal. Another subject that raise serious concerns in regard of forming single currency within the GCC is the disagreement between Saudi Arabia and UAE on the location of the central bank of the monetary union, a disagreement that cause the UAE to redraw from the project. Although it seems that this regional intergovernmental political and economic union is not able to fulfil its goals so far, the GCC is still the only example in the Arab world of first real attempt to achieve full economic integration among the Arab states.

POLITICAL ISSUES

Political struggles seem to be the main issue that prevent economic integration and the transition to a single currency. The Arab Spring that struck the Arab world changed the political balance dramatically between the Arab League member states, making the Gulf States such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the UAE much more influential. Egypt, once the most influential political power in the Arab world, suffered from a number of bloody transitions of power and is still struggling with economic difficulties and terror which

²⁹ <https://www.bilaterals.org/?arab-free-trade-area-agreement&lang=en>

³⁰ https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/125347/1426_GCC.pdf

weaken its status. Egypt is not alone, the Arab Spring succeeded in changing the regime in Libya, Tunisia and more recently also in Algeria and Sudan. In the situation created by the Arab Spring, the political struggle between Saudi Arabia and Egypt on the title of regional power^{31,32} escalated as they competed between them on the leadership of the Arab world. But some of the political struggles escalated to something more than just competition: the war in Yemen and in Syria highlighted the political interest of countries outside the Arab world to be key players and to achieve regional dominance, such as Iran and Turkey.

Saudi Arabia, with the support of most of the Gulf states, established an armed coalition to fight in the Yemen civil war, and in the political field they lead the aggressive attitude towards Iran. Another more recent political struggle was between Saudi Arabia and Egypt vs. Qatar. On June 2017, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Bahrain and the UAE had officially cut their diplomatic ties with Qatar after accusing them of supporting terror³³. As for today, the diplomatic relations between Qatar and the others are still non-existent.

The Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies published an important research on May 2012 in regard to The Monetary Union of the GCC and in its conclusion, the research highlight the need of a political commitment as the main factor for the success of the union, which means forming a single currency in the Arab world³⁴, and for that there is a need to achieve political agreements between one another.

CLARIFICATION OF KEY TERMS

Pan-Arabism

An Ideology originated by the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century by several Arab intellectuals that emphasized and shared their national consciousness as they were pointing out the existence of one Arab-speaking people that live in the region that stretch from the Maghreb (Morocco) all the way to the Arab peninsula and Persian Gulf.

³¹ <https://www.sipri.org/commentary/topical-backgrounder/2018/saudi-arabia-armaments-and-conflict-middle-east>

³² <http://mediterraneanaffairs.com/egypt-a-rising-regional-power-in-quest-of-new-strategic-alliances/>

³³ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jun/05/saudi-arabia-and-bahrain-break-diplomatic-ties-with-qatar-over-terrorism>

³⁴ [https://www.dohainstitute.org/en/lists/ACRPS-](https://www.dohainstitute.org/en/lists/ACRPS-PDFDocumentLibrary/The_Monetary_Union_of_the_Gulf_Cooperation_Council_and_Structural_Changes_in_the_Global_Economy_Aspirations_Challenges_and.pdf)

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Arab League Economic and Social Council (ESC)

Established under the terms of the Joint Defence and Economic Cooperation Treaty in 1950 as a council to coordinate close cooperation of member-states in economic affairs. The council administers GAFTA and supervises the CAEU.

Council of Arab Economic Unity (CAEU)

Founded by Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, Mauritania, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Tunisia, Syria, United Arab Emirates and Yemen on May 30, 1964. The Council of Arab Economic Unity desires to "organize and consolidate economic relations among the States of the Arab League on bases that are consistent with the natural and historical links among them; and to provide the best conditions for flourishing their economies, developing their resources and ensuring the prosperity of their countries."

The Monetary Union of the GCC (GMCO)

Based in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, the Gulf Monetary Council (GMCO) was founded in 2010 as a regional economic organization. Membership is open to countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) only. The current membership of GMCO includes the Kingdom of Bahrain, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the State of Qatar, and the State of Kuwait. GMCO's Statute has gained the status of international treaty, which carries with it the primary objectives and tasks to achieve monetary union among Member States and issuance of a single currency. It also stipulated that GMCO has legal personality, financial and administrative independence. Moreover, it entrusted GMCO to commence its mandate, which involves a number of tasks covering economic research and statistics, laying out the legal and institutional framework of the Central Bank, coordinating the economic policies between the Member States, and other tasks set forth in its Statute.

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About GMCO. Gulf Monetary Council. <https://www.gmco.int/English/About-Us/Pages/Foundation-and-Establishment.aspx>

GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. Does your country policy advocate the Pan-Arabism ideology?
2. What is your country's current economic status? Does forming a single currency would affect your economy?
3. What is the extent of your trade? Does economy integration will affect it?
4. What is your country's current political situation?
5. In which ways countries can insure their independence in full economic integration?