

Topic I: Reassessing inter-Arab defense and security relationships as outlined in the Joint Defense and Economic Cooperation Treaty, particularly as it relates to regional instability and external interference.

I. Introduction to the Topic

A. General Background

The Treaty of Joint Defense and Economic Cooperation between the States of the Arab League (JDEC)¹ was created in 1950 by Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Yemen in 1950. The JDEC was created as a cooperation pact to maintain security, defense, and peace in the region according to the Arab League Pact and the United Nations Charter. The Joint Defense Council (JDC) and the Economic Council were created as a result of the articles that were included in this pact. The articles included in this pact also laid out guideline for the JDC to follow. A military annex which established a Permanent Military Commission were also included in the treaty. As the regional instability wavered, the inter-Arab security relationships continued to be of increasing importance. It is essential to analyze not only instability in the region as a whole, but also the state of bilateral collaborations between individual member states.

Within the text of the JDEC treaty are a number of critical aspects that are of particular note. First, Article II states that all parties to the agreement “consider any [act of] armed aggression made against any one or more of them or their armed forces, to be directed against them all.”² This stipulation of collective defense – not unlike the Article V assurances laid out in NATO’s Washington Treaty – commits League members to inter-Arab security not only in spirit, but in practice. States are compelled “to go without delay to the aid of the State or States against which such an act of aggression is made, and immediately to take, individually and collectively, all steps available, including the use of armed force, to repel the aggression and restore security and peace.”³ That is to say, the League is intended to act as a single entity when it comes under attack.

It goes to say that collective response necessitates unified capabilities, as Articles III through VI all imply. Consensus parties agree to hold regular meetings. The agreed upon meetings laid out in Article VI led to the creation of the Joint Defense Council (JDC). Terms of the agreed upon meetings were also used to coordinate their strategies in an effort to prepare themselves to check any aggression. This has also served as the basis for multiple attempts at a unified Arab military force, which has yet to come to fruition, the latest attempt to assemble such a force was agreed to in March 2015, largely in response to the conflicts in Yemen and Libya.⁴ Still, efforts to

¹ “Treaty of Joint Defense and Economic Cooperation Between the States of the Arab League, June 17, 1950.” *The Avalon Project : Treaty of Joint Defense and Economic Cooperation Between the States of the Arab League, June 17, 1950*, Yale Law School, 2008, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/arabjoin.asp

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Mahmoud Mourad and Yara Bayoumy, “Arab Summit Agrees on Unified Military Force for Crises,” *Reuters*, 29 March 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-arabs-communique-idUSKBN0MP06120150329>.

recognize this goal are ongoing, with smaller-scale joint military alliances, such as the proposed alliance between Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE⁵.

B. History of the Topic

The practical efficacy of the pact remains in question even 70 years later even though the JDEC lays out its expectations clearly. In times of military crisis, there is rarely unity within the League on how to respond, never mind a cohesive counter-offensive. Historically, there are some examples of success, though they are typically in terms of cooperation, rather than military victory. The war of June 1967 saw almost every member of the League rally in support for Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon in their campaign to counter Israeli offensives in the Sinai Peninsula and Golan Heights. Saudi Arabia and Yemen, both of whom were engaged at the time in a civil war in North Yemen, were the only two League states who didn't rally in support given the crisis occurring in their home states. Additionally, in what represents the only League military action taken against a member state, the foreign ministers of 21 League members called for the imposition of a no-fly zone in Libya in March 2011, a request that was indulged by the international community.⁶

The reality of the situation is that there is often a lack of response among League members when armed conflicts arise. In 1980, the Iran-Iraq war was taking place. During the war there were only five states in the Arab League that provided material support to Iraq, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. It is important to point out that both Libya and Syria supported Iran during the war, supplying it with weapons and artillery. While this may be due in part to the initial Iraqi aggression in western Iran that ignited the conflict, it bears noting that Iran had led its own incursions in Iraq before the invasion, including calls for the overthrow of Saddam.⁷ Additionally, while the League condemned the 1982 invasion of Lebanon by Israel, it did very little to come to the country's aid, instead establishing a Syrian-dominated Arab Deterrent Force – many of which had been in Lebanon from the early days of the Lebanese Civil War.⁸

The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait exhibits the most glaring abdication of the purported obligations of the JDEC treaty. Despite clear, unprovoked aggression by Iraq, the League did not manage to muster a military response to counter it. On the contrary, it could only produce a divided statement of condemnation two days after the invasion, supported by 14 of the 20 voting

⁵ Ahmed Fouad, "Is an 'Arab NATO' in the Works?" *Al-Monitor*, 8 March 2017.

⁶ Richard Leiby and Muhammad Mansour, "Arab League asks U.N. for no-fly zone over Libya," *The Washington Post*, 12 March 2011, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/arab-league-asks-un-for-no-fly-zone-over-libya/2011/03/12/ABoie0R_story.html?utm_term=.1f4cd42820ed.

⁷ Roger Hardy, "The Iran-Iraq War: 25 Years On," *BBC News*, 22 September 2005, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/4260420.stm.

⁸ Robert Rabil, "From Beirut to Algiers: The Arab League's Role in the Lebanon Crisis," *The Washington Institute for Near East Policy*, 21 March 2005, <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/from-beirut-to-algiers-the-arab-leagues-role-in-the-lebanon-crisis>.

members.⁹ A month after the statement, twelve Arab states had agreed to enter into an alliance opposing Iraq, Kuwait was one of the member states that agreed to the alliance.¹⁰ Some League members, including the Palestinian Liberation Organization, Jordan, and Yemen, opted to align with Saddam, opposing external intervention.¹¹ Arab nations that provided personnel or material support to the military coalition included Morocco, Egypt, Syria, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, the UAE, and Oman.

C. Finding a Solution to the Problem: Past, Present, and Future

Clearly, employment of the JDEC treaty as the language suggests it should be is a rarity, though it seems that there will be no shortage of opportunities to do so in the future. In recent years, the Middle East has experienced a number of internal and external disturbances or threats, including civil wars in Libya, Syria, and Yemen, the rise of extremist groups such as Al Qaeda and Da'esh, and the looming presence of Iran. All of these pose a hazard to stability and security across the Middle East, and states will need to prepare themselves to combat them. The JDEC treaty was established to guarantee collective security, if the League continues to only loosely adhere to its tenets, perhaps it is time to review and revise it.

Next, the League should research the successes and failures of external defensive organizations and defense treaties so that they can use their findings as a model for building their own policies. Based on this research, the League should find and analyze feasible principles and guidelines which may be incorporated to increase its defensive security. Some key organizations to research include NATO, the EU, the UN, the African Union, the GCC, and potential alliances such as the Baltic States' joint acquisitions.¹² It may also be beneficial to analyze frameworks and cooperation that member states are not directly a part of but are observer states to. From this on-the-edges perspective, there may be more subjective information to be obtained and possibly incorporated into the League's security strategy.

II. Questions to Consider in your Research

- Historically, in matters of security threats, how has my country upheld the JDEC treaty? Has it typically been a proponent of collective defense? In instances where it has not, why?
- How has external influence impacted the security of the region, specifically in my country?

⁹ John Kifner, "The Iraqi Invasion; Arabs to Convene on Iraqi Invasion," *The New York Times*, 4 August 1990, <http://www.nytimes.com/1990/08/04/world/the-iraqi-invasion-arabs-to-convene-on-iraqi-invasion.html>.

¹⁰ John Kifner, "League Votes to Return Headquarters to Cairo," *The New York Times*, 11 September 1990, <http://www.nytimes.com/1990/09/11/world/confrontation-gulf-badly-divided-arab-league-votes-return-headquarters-cairo.html>.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² "Baltics Discuss Value of Joint Acquisitions." *Defense News*, 9 Aug. 2015, www.defensenews.com/2015/08/09/baltics-discuss-value-of-joint-acquisitions/.

- What specific factors in my country are either causing or being affected by the instability in the region?
- How can my country's status as an observer in various treaties, frameworks, and collaborations among different nations be utilized to increase stability in the region and improve Inter-Arab relations?

III. Questions a Resolution Might Answer

- How committed to collective defense should the League be? Is it compulsory or voluntary?
- What measures does the League need to take to reach collective defense?
- With shifting diplomatic dynamics in the region, what precautions should the Arab League take to continue this treaty, if any?
- How can external interference in inter-Arab defense and security be mitigated? What types of threats would illicit a JDEC response?
- What are broad principles which may be adopted within the League to minimize instability between member states?

IV. Additional Resources

- [*Treaty of Joint Defense and Economic Cooperation Between the States of the Arab League \(1950\)*](#)
- [*On Turkey's Strategic partnership with Azerbaijan \(2010\)*](#)
- [*Mutual Defense Treaty between Philippines & USA \(1951\)*](#)
- [*Mutual Defense Treaty between China & USA \(1954\)*](#)

Topic II: Outlining goals for Arab military modernization with particular consideration for the requirements of modern and asymmetric warfare.

I. Introduction to the Topic

A. General Background

Asymmetric warfare is defined as “conflicts between nations or groups that have disparate military capabilities and strategies.”¹³ The term is often used when referring to conflicts between an established, professional army and an insurgency group. Military modernization is not only a necessity for the League, but also a logical advancement. Asymmetric warfare is on the rise, including insurgent groups, terrorists, and non-state actors, it is required that the League update its military capabilities. Often times, increasing military options are limited for the League based on a lack of trust between member states, so the promotion of diplomatic interactions to encourage and facilitate bi-lateral and multi-lateral operations may serve well. Encouragement of diplomatic relations between nations facing similar homeland threats would facilitate the exchange of intelligence and help to undercut the issue of lacking intelligence regarding different militant threats. Additionally, the League as a whole may focus on wider operations, but coordination of more specific measures could be implemented on an individual basis.

B. History of the Topic

Asymmetric warfare and the level of accompanying threats have evolved over time. Some of the first “asymmetric” warfare seen, was the guerilla warfare during the Vietnam War.¹⁴ Over the years, there has been asymmetric war in Kashmir, Pakistan, Palestine, and numerous other locations in the MENA region and beyond. This warfare is exceptionally dangerous and unpredictable because it is constantly evolving. As traditional warfare continues to counterattack, the insurgent groups, militants, terrorists, etc. who are utilizing asymmetrical tactics will continue to adapt and refine their strategies.¹⁵

Modern warfare tactics have evolved since the uprising of asymmetric warfare. Weapons are now able to be mass produced at higher rates with less manpower required than ever before. As modern conflicts become increasingly political and religious in motivation, there must be increased collaboration between the military and political realms for significant change to be plausible.

¹³ “Asymmetric Warfare”. RAND Corporation, 2017, www.rand.org/topics/asymmetric-warfare.html.

¹⁴ “Terrorism and Asymmetrical Warfare International and Regional Implications.” *Terrorism and Asymmetrical Warfare International and Regional Implications*, Defense Journal, 2002, www.defencejournal.com/2002/february/terrorism.htm.

¹⁵ “Bad Guys Know What Works: Asymmetric Warfare and the Third Offset.” *War on the Rocks*, Texas National Security Network, 9 Aug. 2015, <http://warontherocks.com/2015/06/bad-guys-know-what-works-asymmetric-warfare-and-the-third-offset/>.

C. Finding a Solution to the Problem: Past, Present, and Future

In order to combat the issue of asymmetric warfare, delegates will need to understand the impact that it has on their specific country. Next, delegates should analyze their nation's resources and create a plan to use those resources to the nation's strategic advantage. Delegates should not limit their research to only Arab League solutions; it will be beneficial to analyze other international organizations and defensive measures against asymmetric warfare that have been used in the past.

Goals should be outlined in multi-step increments that can be adopted on a rolling basis depending on the member states' individual military advancement. A starting point would be analysis of military capabilities of various member states to align countries based upon similar capabilities. Additionally, the JDC may look to collaborate on legislation against terrorism and asymmetric warfare. A way to avoid the obvious issues the committee will run into in developing any measures may be to focus on a means of engineering these measures as needed, as opposed to outlining a specific solution to the issues of modern and asymmetric warfare.

II. Questions to Consider in your Research

- How are other international organizations and countries combating asymmetric warfare?
- What are the asymmetrical threats to my country and what can my country do to help mitigate these threats?
- How does asymmetric warfare affected the current political and economic situation in my country?
- Are there training guidelines for combating asymmetric warfare used by other international organizations that may be beneficial to my country or other member states?
- What are requirements of modern and asymmetric warfare compared to warfare for my country in the past?

III. Questions a Resolution Might Answer

- What are steps for a program that can be implemented League-wide depending on the number of attainable intermediate steps to reach the League's end goal for universal modernization?
- How can bilateral and multilateral relations be utilized between member states and the League as a whole to increase information sharing about military modernization?
- How can the League analyze asymmetric and modern warfare threats in the region and delegate the most efficient use of resources?
- What steps can the League take in order to establish malleable goals that can be adapted to each member states' military as it currently stands, and then expands?
- What resources does the League need to achieve their goal for universal modernization? Does this differ from the resources each member state needs to achieve this goal?

IV. Additional Resources to View:

- [*Intelligence Support to Asymmetric Warfare Course*](#)
- [*9 Weapons that are Banned from Modern Warfare*](#)
- [*Improving Strategic Competence: Lessons from 13 Years of War*](#)
- [*Military Cooperation in MENA: Uncertainty in the Face of Changing Threats*](#)
- [*The Changing Nature of War in MENA*](#)
- [*BBC Analysis: Asymmetric Warfare*](#)

Topic III: Examining League emergency preparedness and natural disaster response protocols, with a focus on defense sector contributions and national security implications.

I. Introduction to the Topic

A. General Background

There have been many humanitarian efforts that have taken place to increase disaster preparedness on the national, regional, and international levels. Currently there is not much language focusing on increasing defense capabilities in agreements and frameworks, such as the Sendai Framework. Although the social and economic impacts of natural disasters are undoubtedly an important factor to the League, increasing defensive measures will increase national security in times of emergency.

Ongoing conflicts in the region continue to cause problem across borders. Arab nationals are individually impacted by regional instability. Many times, specifically in Yemen and Syria, bombings have been aimed towards healthcare facilities and healthcare workers. In an emergency situation, the safety of those providing assistance needs to be a top priority. The World Health Organization has ongoing efforts to improve access to healthcare in areas of conflict and crisis; however, defense of these areas still remains problematic.¹⁶

B. History of the Topic

Over 70 million people have been affected by disasters in the MENA region over the last 30 years. Compared to other international organizations, The Arab League has less unified emergency preparedness. Yet, there are some existing steps that member states may take in times of crisis. To begin, the ability of a member state to call an emergency meeting is the first step in building a plan for emergency preparedness.

Calling emergency meetings of the Arab League in times of conflict is nothing new. Article VI of the Charter of the Arab League states “in the case of aggression or threat... against a member states, the state which has been attacked or threatened with aggression may demand the immediate convocation of the Council”¹⁷. Additionally, Article 11 of the Charter states that the council will meet outside of the regular biannual scheduled meetings at the request of two-member states. In January of 2016, there was an emergency meeting of the League in Cairo to discuss cutting ties with Iran.¹⁸ In December of 2016, Qatar called for an emergency meeting of

¹⁶ “League of Arab States Support to Yemen’s Emergency Health Care System.” *Yemen-News / Yemen*, WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean, www.emro.who.int/yem/yemen-news/league-of-arab-states-support-to-yemens-emergency-health-care-system.html.

¹⁷ “Charter of Arab League.” *Refworld*, UNHCR, 2017, www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b3ab18.html.

¹⁸ Reuters. “Arab Foreign Ministers to Iran: You Are Undermining Mideast Security.” *The Jerusalem Post / JPost.com*, 10 Jan. 2016, www.jpost.com/Middle-East/Arab-League-against-Iran-Emergency-meeting-held-to-discuss-Tehrans-threat-to-security-441006.

the Arab League to discuss the situation in Aleppo.¹⁹ In July 2017, Jordan called an emergency meeting of the League to discuss the conflict in Jerusalem.²⁰

Following in the footsteps of other international organizations, in the spring of 2017 the League of Arab States hosted an Arab Preparatory Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in order to “...strengthen our joint cooperation to reduce disaster losses and to build resilience to disasters across the Arab region”²¹. This conference was hosted by Qatar in order to adopt the Doha Declaration, which contained “a series of comprehensive recommendations towards building resilience to disasters”. There are milestones within the Sendai Framework quickly approaching, and a strategic work program was outlined as part of the Doha Declaration.²²

C. Finding a Solution to the Problem: Past, Present, and Future

No amount of disaster or emergency preparedness will ever prevent a country from being shaken by a natural disaster. It is up to each individual member state to create and implement a plan that will mitigate the negative effects of the crisis. Looking to current successes and failures of major disaster initiatives from around the world could be used as a guideline, and a think tank, to get ideas on building disaster preparedness guidelines. In instances where disaster relief efforts were foiled, particularly by a security threat, policymakers need to rethink initiatives. Create a specific plan to manage disasters and address potential threats or derailments which are likely to arise.

Next, consider the things that each member state can contribute to relief efforts, and find ways to incorporate other countries and organizations into your disaster plan. One potential aspect to consider when researching solutions may be how other international organizations strategize to mitigate natural disasters and pandemics. Humanitarian aid is a likely candidate; however, I urge you all to think deeper than just the surface. You may consider branches of defense such as the military’s role in medical responses, how a collaboration of militaries may be beneficial to assisting local militaries in times of crisis, or even how the military may be utilized to neutralize or prevent potential conflict in the wake of a disaster.

II. Questions to Consider in your Research

- What natural disasters or emergencies has my country dealt with in the past, and what was effective or ineffective about the responses?

¹⁹ “Qatar Calls for an Emergency Arab League Meeting on Aleppo: Al Jazeera.” *Reuters*, Thomson Reuters, 13 Dec. 2016, www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-qatar-idUSKBN1421JD?il=0.

²⁰ *Arab League Calls Emergency Meeting on Al-Aqsa Mosque*. Anadolu Agency, 23 July 2017, <https://aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/arab-league-calls-emergency-meeting-on-al-aqsa-mosque/867724>.

²¹ “Arab Region Sets Stance for Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction.” *UNISDR News*, UNISDR, 4 May 2017, www.unisdr.org/archive/52956.

²² “Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.” *UNISDR News*, UNISDR, www.unisdr.org/we/coordinate/sendai-framework.

- Does my country currently have protocols prepared to respond to emergencies and natural disasters?
- What defensive protocol milestones about natural disasters and emergencies are plausible to reach as a member state and the League as a whole within the next year? Five years? Ten years?
- How can my country contribute to a regional natural disaster or state of emergency?
- What resources is my country willing and able to offer to other member states in order to ensure the stability of the League in a time of crisis?

III. Questions a Resolution Might Answer

- What are specific steps that the League can take to increase regional interoperability in times of emergencies and natural disasters?
- How can the League and JDC follow-up on protocols and research their efficacy?
- How can the League incorporate ideas from other national, regional, international, and global disaster reduction organizations?
- How can member states work bilaterally and multi-laterally to optimize defense sector contributions? For example, how can states with similar resources collaborate in times of emergency and natural disasters?
- What could policymakers have done differently to prevent the threats that are being faced in your country?

IV. Additional Resources to View:

- [*United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction: What is the International Strategy?*](#)
- [*Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030*](#)
- [*FEMA – National Disaster Recovery Framework*](#)
- [*USAID Disaster Relief Fact Sheet – Includes a list of secondary impacts of national disasters on a country's economy & infrastructure*](#)