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Model Arab League BACKGROUND GUIDE

Joint Defense Council

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**National
Council
on US-
Arab
Relations**



Original draft by Jack Stokes, Chair of the Joint Defense Council at the 2025 National University Model Arab League, with contributions from the dedicated staff and volunteers at the National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations

Honorable Delegates,

I am so happy to welcome you to the 2025 National Model Arab League season and, most importantly, to the Joint Defense Council (JDC). My name is Jack Stokes, and I have the privilege of serving as your chair. This is my second year chairing the JDC and I am so excited to return. I graduated from Converse University with a BA in Politics in May and currently, I am a Masters of Public Service, Candidate at the University of Arkansas Clinton School of Public Service. This year, in my move west, I have joined a new team and am so excited to represent the University of Arkansas Little Rock!

During my time at Converse, I was involved in various model conferences, including both the Model Arab League and Model NATO. Most recently, I had the opportunity to chair the JDC at the 2024 Southeastern and National Arab League conferences and also act as Assistant Secretary-General/Chair of the North Atlantic Council at the 2024 International Model NATO Conference.

As we navigate these possibly contentious topics, I have two direct expectations: a steadfast commitment to diplomacy and a deep respect for your fellow delegates. The issues we will tackle are complex and diverse, affecting numerous regions and cultures under the League's purview and we must approach these discussions with a focus on collaborative problem-solving, always considering the broader implications rather than the interests of any single country or delegate.

For those who may find this conference daunting, I encourage you to view it as a valuable educational and personal opportunity. Our goal is to foster a supportive environment where experienced debaters can mentor and guide newcomers, ensuring that everyone has the chance to contribute meaningfully and grow. Always feel free to contact or approach me while at a conference or prepping. I am so eager to engage with the ideas and perspectives you will bring to the table and to witness the collective experience and story that each of you will contribute, both in debate and outside of it.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions at jstokes@ualr.edu. Remember, you own the finish line!

Best of luck,

Jack Stokes
Chair, Joint Defense Council

Topic 1: Defining objectives for enhancing the Arab League’s modernization efforts, with a specific focus on addressing the requirements of remote warfare.

I. Introduction

A. General Background

In the past two decades, there has been a significant rise in the deployment and advancement of unmanned and virtually controlled military assets. This shift reflects the broader trends of rapid technological advancement and modernization that have particularly characterized Western and Eastern influence in areas of conflict worldwide. Nations in these regions have aggressively integrated cutting-edge technologies such as drones, automated missile systems, private 5G infrastructures, hypersonic and biotechnologies, robust cyber capabilities, and Artificial Intelligence or A.I. into their defense strategies, enhancing their operational effectiveness and strategic reach globally. In stark contrast, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region has faced challenges in keeping pace with these advancements.¹ A myriad of reasons are responsible for this limited expansion of technological infrastructure, but there are key reasons. Aside from the expected geopolitical instability, varying levels of investment in military modernization and a limited technological infrastructure contribute heavily to the disparity.

It is important to note that military modernization is not about the *quantity* of assets acquired, but rather the *implementation* of assets that aid in the enhancement of operational effectiveness and flexibility. Recognizing that the MENA region’s importation of arms is already at an extremely high level, the armament of some countries within the region is heavily defined by a surplus of weaponry. In 2017, 7 of the 10 countries in the world with the highest military burden were in the MENA region.²

The advancement of capabilities characterizes military modernization— this means there are numerous things to consider in any effort to modernize: the weapons used, the end goal of those weapons, the casualties of those weapons, and the environmental and ecological effects of those weapons. That is not all, the limit is near infinite in considerations given to new weaponry.

As a result of the aforementioned disparities, the MENA region has struggled to close the technological and strategic gap between itself and the leading global powers that may

¹Jean-Loup Samaan, “A New Chapter in the Drone Race in the Middle East,” *Institut de Méditerranée*, <https://www.iemed.org/publication/a-new-chapter-in-the-drone-race-in-the-middle-east>

²Pieter D. Wezeman, “Saudi Arabia: Armaments and Conflict in the Middle East,” *Stockholm International Peace Research Institute*, December 5, 2018, <https://www.sipri.org/commentary/topical-backgrounder/2018/saudi-arabia-armaments-and-conflict-middle-east>

levy bilateral relations within the region to flex control. A basic foundation of national security is key to asserting any influence on the global stage. Powers focused on solely investing in and adopting new technologies have failed in their modernization efforts, fostering partnerships on an international forum is crucial.³ The infrastructure within the region is not equipped to generate these advanced systems and expertise skillfully, rather they are equipped with a more complex route towards modernization: diplomacy. Investment in international partnerships expands opportunities to gain access to already established systems and expertise.

B. History in the Arab World

Remote warfare's prominence within the region began in the early 2000s during the Iraq War when unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) were first deployed for reconnaissance and targeted strikes. The 2010s saw an expansion in drone warfare, with the U.S. using drones extensively in counterterrorism operations in countries like Yemen and Pakistan.⁴ The Syrian Civil War, which began in 2011, marked a significant increase in drone usage by various actors, including the Syrian government, the U.S.-led coalition, and ISIS. This conflict also saw the proliferation of drone technology to different factions. By the late 2010s and early 2020s, regional powers like Turkey and Iran developed their advanced drone technologies.⁵ Turkey's Bayraktar drones became notable for their effectiveness in various conflicts, and Iran used drones to extend its influence across the region.

Considering that modernization efforts have been underway within the League in every decade since the 1970s, it can be assumed that the notion of military force and power being the forge for political agendas is true. Historically, Saudi Arabia has been the leading force of power in terms of military capabilities. In 2017 a report conducted by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute or SIPRI concluded that Saudi Arabia was the third largest military spender in the world, far surpassing every country within the region. That year, an estimated \$69.4 billion (USD)⁶ was spent on undisclosed assets. This is a near 70% increase in military spending over the '08- '17 decade.

³Anthony H. Cordesman, "National Security Economics in the Middle East: Comparative Spending, Burden Sharing, and Modernization," *Center for Strategic and International Studies*, March 23, 2017,

<https://www.csis.org/analysis/national-security-economics-middle-east-comparative-spending-burden-sharing-and>

⁴Ed Stoddard and Sorina Toltica, "Practising Remote Warfare: Analysing the Remote Character of the Saudi/UAE Intervention in Yemen," *Defence Studies* 21, no. 4 (2021): 447–67, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14702436.2021.1994395>

⁵Tabatabai, Ariane "Decades in the making: The Iranian drone program." *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, 12 October 2017. <https://thebulletin.org/2017/10/decades-in-the-making-the-iranian-drone-program/>

⁶Nan Tian, Aude Fleurant, Alexandra Kuimova, Pieter D. Wezeman, and Siemon T. Wezeman, "SIPRI Military Expenditure Database: 2017 Data," *Stockholm International Peace Research Institute*, April 2018, https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2018-04/sipri_fs_1805_milex_2017.pdf

Today, remote warfare continues to evolve with sophisticated drone technology, cyber warfare, and electronic warfare capabilities, shaping military strategies and geopolitical dynamics in the MENA region. Cyber attacks have become the modern standard, certain attacks cost up to six million USD each.⁷ Devastating to a recovering economy in the Middle East these attacks have mostly been targeted at states pumping money into research and development in cybersecurity, such as Saudi Arabia and Oman.

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

Enhancing the League's capabilities in remote warfare requires a unified vision to be established among member states. Seminars or a joint strategic framework outlining common goals and specifically tactical protocols that would combine technological capabilities would address the topic. Technological capabilities would also need to be upgraded by investing in research and development of the establishment of technology-sharing agreements is another consideration that must be taken.

Specialized joint exercises should be developed to equip military personnel with the necessary skills for these operations. Intelligence capabilities need to be strengthened by enhancing data analytics tools, and interoperability among member states should be fostered.⁸ This could be done by standardizing protocols and creating joint operational centers.

Cybersecurity measures should be focused on too. A unified framework and targeted training could address shortcomings within League-established systems. Legal and ethical guidelines for remote warfare should be established to ensure compliance with international benchmarks. Strategic partnerships with global powers and participation in international forums further enhance capabilities too.⁹ By proactively addressing the technological gap, the League could demonstrate a capacity to remain relevant in combating remote warfare, relying less on international aid. Successfully closing the technological gap will enable these countries to leverage their strategic position within the current multi-polar world.

⁷Gavin Gibbon, "Middle East Data Breaches Cost \$6M Each, Says New Report," *Arabian Business*, October 27, 2019, <https://www.arabianbusiness.com/middle-east/431560-middle-east-data-breaches-cost-6m-each-says-new-report>

⁸"Algeria, Morocco, Saudi Arabia: Response to Terrorism," *Law Library of Congress, Global Legal Research Directorate*, 2015, <https://tile.loc.gov/storage-services/service/l1/llglrd/2016295702/2016295702.pdf>

⁹James Paul and Joe Stork, "Arms Sales and the Militarization of the Middle East," *Middle East Research and Information Project (MERIP)*, February 1983, <https://merip.org/1983/02/arms-sales-and-the-militarization-of-the-middle-east>

II. Questions to Consider in Your Research

- What are the current technological and strategic capabilities of the Arab League member states regarding remote warfare?
- What technologies are essential for effective remote warfare (e.g., drones, cyber capabilities, electronic warfare systems)?
- How can the Arab League ensure that its modernization efforts comply with international laws and norms?
- How do regional security dynamics and conflicts influence the need for remote warfare capabilities within the Arab League?
- How can the Arab League leverage relationships with other nations or organizations to support its modernization efforts?

III. Questions a Resolution Might Answer

- How can these objectives align with the broader strategic goals and security interests of the Arab League member states?
- What mechanisms will be put in place to ensure efficient and effective use of financial resources?
- What strategies will the Arab League implement to minimize the impact of remote warfare on civilian populations?
- How should the Arab League enhance its crisis management and response capabilities using remote warfare technologies?

IV. Additional Resources

- [“Defining Remote Warfare: The Rise of the Private Military and Security Industry”](#)
Oxford Research Group: Remote Warfare Programme - Dr. Andreas Krieg - March 2018

This 15-page report is a collection of analyses that focus on the changing state of remote weaponry technology as well as the engagement of those technologies. I recommend spending time reading this as it could be supplemented as an additional source for other topics. It offers a good understanding and comparative analysis of conventional and non-conventional military tactics and focuses too on the economic impact of this industry. Key sections in the report are the following: “Introduction” (pg. 2), “Supplementary Sources” (pg. 3), “Motivations for Commercializing Supplementary Services” (pg. 6), and “The Non-Western Model: Direct Warfighting” and the following subsections (pg. 9-14).

- [“A New Chapter in the Drone Race in the Middle East”](#)
Middle East Institute of the National University of Singapore - Jean-Loup Samaan - 2022

This succinct article discusses the new technology being moved within the region since 2021, specifically focusing on Unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). The article is a short historical dive, as well as a focus on current events, notably considering the current state of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the utilization of UAVs within the war effort. Samaan also focuses on the investments made by countries into the military complex by individual member states. The key takeaway from this article is the conclusion in which he determines that the affordability of UAVs outweighs other uncertainties with other military weapons. This is an essential read to craft well-rounded solutions that consider both the required defense considerations, but also the economic implications of these technologies.

- **[“Artificial intelligence and arms races in the Middle East: the evolution of technology and its implications for regional and international security”](#)**

Defense and Security Analysis Volume 40 - Jeremy Julian Sarkin - January 2024

This is an essay entry in the Defense & Security Analysis journal which is a tedious read but addresses the modernizing landscape of the arms race in the Middle East. It is structured to address artificial intelligence mainly, focusing on three bilateral arms races within the region: The Iran-Saudi arms race, the Iran-Israel arms race, and the Arab-Israeli arms race. It also considers external actors like Russia, China, and the United States, but in the later half of the paper, it discusses the emergence of AI. Sections I recommend focusing on are the three arms races listed above as well as section five, “The Emergence of AI and its Significance,” (pg. 107), and section six, “The Dynamics of Technological Arms Races,” (pg. 109). Another key reason I included this source is the special recognition Sarkin gives to the profitability of the “AI-driven” arms race(s) happening within the region.

- **[“The Changing Military Dynamics of the MENA Region”](#)**

Center for Strategic & International Studies - Cordesman and Hwang - March 23, 2021

This is a fantastic resource for both returners and newcomers to the Model Arab League programs. This compiles detailed reports and summaries of regional security concerns and activities deemed as threats to the MENA region. A walkthrough of this document is needed to navigate the 119 pages of reporting. Follow the table of contents– “The Changing Dynamics of MENA Security by Subregion and Country” offers a figure and report for nearly every member state or region of each member state. The section on “Forcing Improvements in Joint and Multi-Domain Warfare C4I, IS&R, and Battle Management Systems” (pg. 76) is extremely helpful in determining the regional goal of

security. The subsections listed under “The Changing Military Dynamics of Regional Military Forces and Role of Outside States” are a resource that can be utilized to understand the weight of the JDC at its core. Every entry/report within that section covers a topic that will appear in research, debate, or resolution crafting, so if you read any source linked in this guide, I recommend this be the one.

Topic 2: Analyzing measures to develop counter-terrorist operations within the region, particularly in territories with high-density populations.

I. Introduction

A. General Background

The Middle East and North African (MENA) region, with its complex geopolitical landscape and history of near-endless conflict, faces significant challenges in counterterrorism operations. The region faces the most terrorist attacks than any other region in the world. From 2007 to 2022 nearly 24,000 separate events labeled as terrorist activities occurred.¹⁰ Recent years have seen a rise in terrorist activities within high-density areas, exacerbating the challenges faced by security forces, both global and regional. These zones that are targeted also often house critical infrastructure, dense populations, and vital economic hubs, making them key strategic points for terrorists aiming to maximize their effect. High-density populations, for example, cities such as Cairo, Beirut, and Baghdad present unique obstacles for counterterrorism operations to be implemented due to the risk of civilian and infrastructure restructuring costs.

Generally, counter-terrorist operations are strategic actions designed to prevent and respond to terrorist activities. These operations are put in place by security forces seeking to preserve national security, and public safety and, most importantly, prevent the use of violence by terrorist groups.¹¹ Operations could encompass a range of activities including, but not limited to intelligence gathering and analysis, law enforcement efforts, military engagements, diplomatic actions, and cyber operations. However, counter-terrorist operations have faced scrutiny in the past. Balancing security with civil liberties, ensuring effective coordination among agencies and international partners, and adapting to the evolving tactics and technologies of terrorists have proven to be difficult to combat as weaponry has modernized. Despite the complexities involved in navigating the implications of infringement on rights, the majority of the region seems to back some level of reform, receiving initiatives from other global organizations such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the United Nations (UN). The media coverage of high-casualty attacks also emboldens other groups to attempt such atrocities.

As terrorist organizations adapt to modern technologies and tactics, counter-terrorist strategies must evolve to address the specific dynamics of these densely packed and rapidly expanding urban environments. “High-density” areas, such as urban centers and

¹⁰Statista Research Department, “Number of Terrorist Attacks Worldwide by Region from 2014 to 2023,” *Statista*, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/489581/terrorist-attacks-by-region/>

¹¹Alex P. Schmid, *Handbook of Terrorism Prevention and Preparedness* (International Centre for Counter-Terrorism [ICCT], January 2023), https://www.icct.nl/sites/default/files/2023-01/Handbook_Schmid_2020.pdf

crowded public spaces, are prime targets for terrorist activities because the potential for mass casualties and widespread disruption is greater.¹²

B. History in the Arab World

Counter-terrorism policies in the Middle East have struggled to significantly reduce terrorism despite the efforts to implement democratic reforms. This paradox highlights the complexities of addressing terrorism in a region fraught with historical, political, and social challenges. While democracy is often seen as a panacea for many issues, including terrorism, its application in the Middle East has not consistently led to improved security. Conversely, a focus on protecting human rights might offer a more promising approach to mitigating terrorism.

Political instability, corruption, inefficiency, and sectarian divides, are all to fault for a lack of international support within the region since the 1980s. During the Cold War, Arab states faced various regional and global threats, including political extremism and insurgencies. One example is the rise of Palestinian militant groups, such as the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organization), which led to heightened counterterrorism measures within surrounding countries. Countries like Jordan and Lebanon experienced significant violence and instability, prompting military and intelligence responses, but until the early 1990s, neither country had put substantial or sustained operations in place.¹³

Consider that the repression of certain states has become pivotal in the mounting of counterterrorism campaigns and the region itself has been riddled with internal conflict—the Yemen Crisis, Syrian civil war, Arab-Israeli conflict, and many other disputes plague the League’s ability to create a unified countermeasure to combat extremism within its borders.

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

In this regard, it can never be overemphasized that robust counter-terrorist operations in high-density areas help avert a potential calamity by safeguarding the lives of many people and dispelling public doubt in the preparedness of authorities to handle threats

¹²Richard Lorch, “Tall Buildings, High Density and Terrorism,” *Building Research & Information* 29, no. 6 (2001): 415–16, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09613210152620804>

¹³Naomi A. Morris, Gary LaFree, and Eylem Karlidag, “Counter-Terrorism Policies in the Middle East: Why Democracy Has Failed to Reduce Terrorism in the Middle East and Why Protecting Human Rights Might Be More Successful,” *Criminology & Public Policy* 20 (2021): 153–75, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1745-9133.12532>

effectively.¹⁴ There should be a well-planned and dynamic approach toward such challenges, securing the defense of these areas of high density against probable attacks with the least disturbance to ordinary life and infringement on the rights and liberties of the people living within.

Modern counter-terrorism is a combination of military action, intelligence sharing, and counter-radicalization programs. Notably, very expensive counter-radicalization programs. Today, international cooperation is imperative, with most MENA countries collaborating with regional and global partners in containing the complex nature of terrorism. It involves the targeted killing of terrorist leaders and community engagement and empowerment to prevent radicalization and destroy the financial networks that sustain terror. The struggle against terror needs desperate innovation and modernization, more so as terrorist organizations expand their technology.

As previously mentioned, counter-terrorist operations have been under hard scrutiny due to the complexity of adversities they pose. Balancing national security protection with civil liberties is ever-hoped to be done, seeing that measures devised to defeat terrorism are sometimes at odds with individual rights. Another critical obstacle posed pertains to how efforts by different agencies and with international partners can be dovetailed in the best possible manner given terrorist ways and means of conducting operations are also becoming diversified and modernized. The ever-escalating pace of weaponry and methodologies adopted by terrorists makes it difficult to frame effective counterterrorist strategies.

II. Questions to Consider in Your Research

- What counterterrorism strategies are currently in place in high-density areas of the MENA region?
- How is intelligence gathered, analyzed, and utilized to prevent terrorism in high-density areas?
- How do current counterterrorism practices impact human rights in high-density areas?
- What role do advanced technologies (e.g., surveillance, data analytics, artificial intelligence) play in modern counterterrorism operations?

III. Questions a Resolution Might Answer

¹⁴Daniel Schwartz, “Countering Terrorism in Yemen: Perceptions of Regional Powers,” *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, February 28, 2023, <https://carnegieendowment.org/sada/2023/02/countering-terrorism-in-yemen-perceptions-of-regional-powers?lang=en>

- What guidelines should the resolution establish to ensure that counterterrorism measures respect human rights and civil liberties?
- How can the resolution draw on successful counterterrorism practices from other regions to inform strategies in the MENA area?
- How can the resolution address issues related to the deployment and use of technology in high-density areas?
- How can international partnerships and support be leveraged to bolster counterterrorism efforts?

IV. Additional Resources

- [International Crisis Group: Middle East and North Africa](#)

International Crisis Group - 2024 Crisis Group

The International Crisis Group is a non-partisan, non-governmental organization that actively works to prevent conflicts around the globe and create public policy that hopes to continue peace across the world. The specific link that I have provided will travel to the homepage for the International Crisis Group's Middle East and North Africa reporting. On this page, you can read up-to-date articles and reports. The most important resource on this page is the CrisisWatch Conflict Tracker (July 2024). CrisisWatch is a unique conflict tracker that is designed to aid in the prevention of war and violence. It provides access to developments in numerous ongoing and concluded conflicts. With entries dating from 2003 to 2024, this resource will allow anyone to navigate the trends and risks of escalation within the MENA region.

- ["The Economics of Counterterrorism"](#)

Journal of Economic Surveys - Schneider, Brück, and Meierrieks - February 2015

In this journal entry, the authors present a thorough examination of theoretical and empirical literature on the economics of terrorism and counterterrorism. They argue that terrorism is better understood using simplified rational choice models, notably cost-benefit analysis. However, they observe that such models do not capture the dynamic interactions between terrorism and counter-terrorism processes thus leading to some unintended second-order effects as well as costs involved in countering such practices globally. Given these findings, the authors relook at past proposed policy stances and identify new areas needing research work. This is a nuanced examination that does not only accept given paradigms of generalized counterterrorist tactics but reconsiders earlier measures recommended concerning new ideas.

- **United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime - E4J University Module Series: Counter-Terrorism**

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime - University Modules - July 2018

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime or UNODC is an international program established in 1997. It is not only the UN's program to combat illicit drugs and international crime, but it is also the lead implementer of the Programme on Terrorism.

The website provides information and educational resources on crime prevention and criminal justice. It also offers different causes of terrorism in the MENA region about historical, political, economic, and social dimensions. Secondly, it reflects the need for regional efforts with international cooperation on counter-terrorism; hence, it forms a good source of information. It provides authentic information sponsored by an extremely reputable global organization. The unique structure of this webpage also provides a new lens through which to frame the educational aspect of this simulation. I highly recommend this source for anyone who feels they are not briefed enough on counter-terrorism efforts within the region.

- **“Counterterrorism policies in the Middle East and North Africa: A regional perspective”**

International Review of the Red Cross - Dina Mansour-Ille - February 2022

This report analyzes the subsequent “War on Terror” following 9/11. The research presented within this article concluded that both nationally and internationally, terrorism remains the greatest threat to the security of any nation within the region. While terrorism and its countermeasures have come to occupy an increasingly central place in scholarly and policy circles, surprisingly, there is a relative dearth of comprehensive scholarship on counterterrorism policies and strategies concerning the Middle East, particularly at both local and regional levels. Some valuable experiences were added by the regional experience of political terrorism and violence throughout the 1980s and 1990s, which led to securitization and measures of counterterrorism quite early.

The report starts with the complex definitions of "terrorism" and "(national) security" in a Middle Eastern context. Drawing from several countries' experiences in the region, this paper attempts to understand how such a securitization process has evolved as a response to terrorism. Several counter-

terrorism approaches are discussed to argue that many strategies employed in the Middle East have turned out to be ineffective and sometimes even counter-productive.

Topic 3: Developing preventative frameworks for conflict and reconstruction monitoring within the League to prevent internal conflicts and regional disputes.

I. Introduction

A. General Background

Preventative frameworks are crucial for managing regional disputes and managing the aftermath and reconstruction of conflict. These “frameworks” are designed to identify and mitigate potential sources of conflict before they escalate, as well as to guide the recovery process.¹⁵ States represented in the League span from moderately stable monarchies to states grappling with ongoing political unrest, which proves difficult to tailor these operations to the specific political, social, economic, and geopolitical needs of each state.

In the context of developing frameworks for these operations, a particular background and definition is required. Monitoring is the systematic process of observing and analyzing all indicators related to conflict within the region. This also brings us to the need for preparedness and processes exceptionally well suited for reconstruction efforts. This requires many things to do: collecting data, analyzing assessment results, evaluating responses, and facilitating the League's efforts among others.¹⁶ Essentially, it is a steady process that leads to effective decision-making on the part of those involved in eliminating conflict before it starts, settles disputes within the League, and can be said at best to help reconstruction proceed appropriately.

Effective prevention takes several steps as well. Sustained and tangible conflict monitoring facilities are indispensable for the early detection of tensions in the making and likely flashpoints at home. Getting and studying information about political, wind political, economic, and social parameters is thus important -- resulting from bad policy when one knows nothing more than what has allowed us somehow to eat our lunch in the past instead of starving to death earlier on some page. Any established framework should incorporate mechanisms for swift intervention, namely diplomatic actions including, mediation, and multilateral peacebuilding initiatives. A remembrance of long-term solutions is vital. A focus on reconstruction to address the long-term impacts of conflict, with efforts directed at rebuilding institutions, restoring services, and promoting economic development will define sustainable efforts.

¹⁵R. Vayrynen, “From Conflict Resolution to Conflict Prevention: The Role of Conflict Prevention in the Post-Cold War World,” *International Journal of Peace Studies* 2, no. 1 (1997): 1–17,

https://www3.gmu.edu/programs/icar/ijps/vol2_1/vayrynen.htm

¹⁶American Arab Institute, “A Framework for Middle East Peace and Stability,” by Dr. James J. Zogby, May 6, 2024, <https://www.aaiusa.org/library/a-framework-for-middle-east-peace-and-stability>

Developing and implementing comprehensive preventative frameworks for conflict and reconstruction monitoring within any region represents a challenge. This topic requires a unique and strategic approach to maintaining regional stability and promoting sustainable peace.

The goal of establishing preventative frameworks is to address the roots and outcomes of conflict in advance. That way, the Arab League can play a greater role in making the Emerging from its invention, the great cloud of science has taken on a life of its own. Preventive frameworks must be adaptable to the diverse political landscape of an Arab League member state. Solutions must include a variety of localized answers that correspond to the particular problems in specific member states. This requires coordination among member states and with international partners to exchange best practices and resources, shaping a unified response to conflicts. In addition, capacity-building is crucial. Projects for conflict prevention and reconstruction must become rooted in local communities or they will fail. In these areas, the Arab League can promote a superior strategic orientation. By doing so it can make not only this but a long-term regional stability take his Also, building up local capacities and encouraging community involvement are indispensable to make conflict prevention and reconstruction projects succeed. In these areas, the Arab League can improve its strategic antiton of conflict. To promote long-term regional stability is thus a vitally important task.¹⁷

This topic proves to be somewhat abstract, leaving the floor of discussion to journey anywhere.

B. History in the Arab World

From the late 1950s to the early 1970s the Arab League's focus was on collective political action and solidarity in response to regional challenges, such as the Palestinian issue and conflicts with Israel. The League's role was largely limited to diplomatic efforts and attempts at mediation, with limited success in preventing or resolving internal conflicts within member states due to both local social and cultural beliefs. This tracked through the 1990s when an increase in internal strife motivated more aggressive disputes. The Iran-Iraq War, the Gulf War, and the rise of political instability in various countries showcased the glaring failures of the League's peacekeeping efforts.

¹⁷Sanam Vakil and Neil Quilliam, *Steps to Enable a Middle East Regional Security Process: Reviving the JCPOA, De-Escalating Conflicts and Building Trust* (Chatham House, April 2021), <https://www.chathamhouse.org/2021/04/steps-enable-middle-east-regional-security-process/10-recommendations-way-forward>

In the early 2000s, the League began to recognize the need for more structured approaches to conflict prevention and management. One major example of these attempts was the original Arab Peace Initiative,¹⁸ although it had relatively mediocre success. The Iraq War and the Arab Spring exposed the limitations of the League's conflict management frameworks. The Arab Spring, in particular, underscored the urgent need for effective monitoring and prevention mechanisms as several member states experienced historical turmoil. In response, the League started exploring early warning systems and conflict resolution strategies in a new Arab Peace Initiative, however, the League has seen an even more aggressive increase in extremism¹⁹ and political tensions in the past decade.

The history of the frameworks that were researched reflects a gradual shift from reactive diplomacy to more preventative approaches aimed at maintaining regional stability, but following the increase in Arab-Israeli tensions and the ongoing conflict between Palestine and Israel, internal predilections have been increased.

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

As previously noted, effective monitoring systems must integrate both qualitative and quantitative data to provide an accurate view of emerging threats and ongoing recovery efforts. Looking ahead, developing effective preventative frameworks within the League will require an approach anchored in regional diplomacy. Future strategies should focus on integrating developed technologies for data collection and analysis. Possible uses of artificial intelligence and satellite monitoring could aid in improving early detection and response capabilities. Strengthening regional cooperation and coordination among member states will be crucial for implementing these frameworks effectively.

Additionally, as expected, fostering alliances with international organizations both governmental and non-governmental, and leveraging their expertise and resources can enhance the League's capacity for conflict prevention and aid in reconstruction efforts in areas that are currently experiencing conflict. Emphasizing community engagement and local capacities will also be essential for successful conflict and reconstruction management. Adopting these forward-looking and long-term strategies could position the League to improve its ability to prevent and manage regional disputes. Historical implications and efforts will be key to establishing modern and sustainable solutions.

¹⁸David E. Thaler, "Lessons Learned in the Middle East," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, March 1, 2018, <https://carnegieendowment.org/posts/2018/03/lessons-learned-in-the-middle-east?lang=en>

¹⁹"Post-ISIS Iraq: The Gathering Storm," *International Crisis Group*, March 25, 2021, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/gulf-and-arabian-peninsula/iraq/post-isis-iraq-gathering-storm>

II. Questions to Consider in Your Research

- How have past conflicts and regional disputes within the Arab League shaped the need for preventative frameworks?
- What historical efforts has the Arab League made towards conflict prevention and reconstruction, and how effective have they been?
- What are the main challenges faced by the Arab League in developing and implementing preventative frameworks for conflict and reconstruction?
- How are the effectiveness and impact of current conflict prevention and reconstruction frameworks assessed?

III. Questions a Resolution Might Answer

- How will these objectives align with the broader mission and goals of the Arab League?
- How will these frameworks be designed to address both internal conflicts and regional disputes?
- What strategies will be included to overcome current challenges such as political fragmentation, limited resources, or lack of coordination among member states?
- What specific technologies will be utilized, and how will they be integrated into the existing frameworks?
- What methods will the resolution outline for monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of the proposed frameworks?

IV. Additional Resources

- [“The Arab Peace Initiative Returns - Will it supplant the Abraham Accords?”](#)

Middle East Institute - Feierstein and Guzansky - October 27, 2022

The article linked above from the Middle East Institute (MEI) is useful in the case study this topic requires as it discusses the interplay between influential frameworks of diplomacy and conflict prevention. This piece looks at the re-emergence of the Arab Peace Initiative (API), which conditions normalization with the Arab World on a resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In contrast, the API approach to the Abraham Accords is the normalization of Israel with several Arab nations without the resolution of the Palestinian issue.

- [“Expand the Arab Peace Initiative to Increase Its Chances of Success”](#)

Arab Center Washington DC - Rami G. Khouri - December 7, 2023

The Arab Center Washington DC is a nonprofit institution designed to provide deep analysis and informed perspectives on issues related to the Arab world and relations between the United States and the Arabs. This source is an article published by the Arab Center Washington DC that focuses on the presentation of the Arab Peace Initiative (API). It was specifically chosen because it provides a collective opinion that is for the expansion of the API. As noted in the topic guide, the expansion of the API has been considered relatively controversial, but in researching some possible adaptations could be made to create a more unified coalition looking to expand it. This piece also provides valuable insight into the possible limitations of the initiative, and it provides certain practical recommendations for making the initiative more effective.

- **“Sustainable Reconstruction and Recovery Framework”**

World Green Building Council - 2022

This is a link to a World Green Building Council webpage detailing the "Sustainable Reconstruction and Recovery Framework," reported on in 2022 in the SRRF Report [linked here](#). The framework, as endorsed by the WorldGBC, serves as a strategic base for rebuilding and recovering from crises—may it be natural disasters or conflicts—with considerations of sustainability, resilience, and social equity. It is an extremely useful resource in understanding how the use of sustainable principles in post-crisis situations can rebuild and not only create new infrastructures but also communities that are resilient and more equitable.

- **“Civil War, Economic Governance & State Reconstruction in the Arab Middle East”**

Dædalus: - Steven Heydemann - Winter 2018

Dædalus is an academic journal published by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. This will be valuable for reconstruction monitoring purposes since such critical insight into the nature of patterns of economic governance in civil wars—Libya, Syria, and Yemen—very often represents a continuity of pre-war practices. This source is important for understanding the difficulties of reconstruction within post-conflict environments, particularly in deeply entrenched norms and practices that limit the effectiveness of interventions in overcoming state fragility.

Topic 4: Coordinating security and access for Non-Governmental Organizations, Aid Organizations, and relief workers in conflict zones.

I. Introduction

A. General Background

Historically, helping during war is fraught with trouble and a danger to everybody's good health. To make all of this happen while coping in such a volatile and highly dangerous context requires a level of security risk that is far beyond normal. And access to the affected populations is systematically denied. Negotiating safe routes and obtaining agreement on key points from all parties concerned is vital in such environments. However, it can often be easier said than done: groups like UNHCR already manage to meet with field commanders and residents to arrange this kind of work in practice. The critical issues under discussion concern whether aid routes will stay open and safe in the face of frequent outbreaks of violence and unrest. Expensive fallout. There's the risk that foreign operators or militiamen will take distorted advantage of aid or lose it to them entirely, with the loss which needs corresponding new supplies even if the old ones remain undamaged.

The stakes are extraordinarily high in Gaza: the humanitarian fallout from the conflict is extensive. Widespread displacement, destruction of infrastructure, severe shortages of essential services and supplies, and an increase in casualties daily have created one of the most aggressive humanitarian crises in the past five decades.²⁰ Effective coordination means aid organizations can work with minimal distractions, moving essential supplies like food, water, medical care, and transportation in and out of tires among other places to populations in need. Efficiencies include also abiding by the principles respected by international forums within the region.²¹

In addition to the security concerns, the coordination of humanitarian measures in conflict zones like Gaza or any area of contention must address the broader implications of the conflict on aid delivery. This includes dealing with the restrictions imposed by blockades, the destruction of infrastructure, the fractured political landscape, and especially considering the implications of multilateral relations within the region of aid implementation. All of these factors could complicate efforts to provide timely and effective assistance. Humanitarian organizations often face the challenge of operating within a context where the local infrastructure may be damaged or non-functional, complicating the distribution of aid and the delivery of essential services.

²⁰ Tania Hary and Kevin Huggard, "The Gaza Strip's Deepening Humanitarian Crisis," *Brookings Institution*, February 22, 2024, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/the-gaza-strips-deepening-humanitarian-crisis/>

²¹ "Crisis in Gaza: What You Need to Know," *International Rescue Committee*, <https://www.rescue.org/article/crisis-gaza-what-you-need-know>

Similarly, utilizing the example of the ongoing war, navigating the political, social, cultural, and military dynamics within Gaza requires adaptability. Aid efforts must be conducted in a way that respects local customs and addresses the specific needs of the affected population.²² Efforts to coordinate aid must also include strategies for engaging with local communities to ensure that it is equitably distributed and that the support provided is culturally appropriate and relevant to the needs of the populations. This act of public service is defined by the knowledge of the regions in which humanitarian aid distributors are entering. Addressing these challenges requires a network of frameworks that inspire communication between local actors and international agencies, to ensure that humanitarian assistance is both effective and responsive.

B. History in the Arab World

The Gazan front acts as a current median of knowledge and also a barometer for how international agencies are willing to engage within the context of conflict. Noting historical successes and failures in aid implementation will be pivotal to establishing successful resolutions.²³ This history emphasizes the need for adaptive and mobile strategies that address the unique volatile state posed by ongoing conflicts within the region.

Security and access for NGOs and aid efforts are shaped by decades of conflict and political instability. From the early interventions of aid in Lebanon during the civil war to the more recent crises, noted early in this guide, in Syria and Yemen, the region has faced significant challenges in ensuring the effectiveness of aid operations. In current Gaza, the ongoing war has intensified these challenges, exacerbated by the territory's blockade, frequent military escalations, and a fragmented political environment. Humanitarian operations in Gaza, historically, have been constrained by restrictions imposed by both local authorities and conflict parties, complicating efforts to deliver aid.

Efforts to coordinate aid often involve complex negotiations and the establishment of temporary ceasefires to allow for the transportation of relief supplies.

Nevertheless, humanitarian organizations frequently encountered obstacles in this regard: there were targeted attacks against aid stations and employees, governmental and tactical

²²“Cultural Sensitivity in Humanitarian Aid: Best Practices,” *Palestine Children's Relief Fund*, <https://www.pcrf.net/information-you-should-know>

²³Eleanor Davey and Eva Svoboda, eds., *Histories of Humanitarian Action in the Middle East and North Africa* (Humanitarian Policy Group, September 2014), <https://media.odi.org/documents/9141.pdf>

restrictions on relief supplies' movement, the risk aid would be misappropriated following a re-coordination in transportation systems as well as other difficulties.

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

In the context of the ongoing war in Gaza, coordinating security and access has become increasingly complex. Presently, humanitarian organizations face numerous hurdles, namely navigating the control of various factions. As noted above, efforts to navigate these challenges have included establishing temporary ceasefires to facilitate aid delivery, employing advanced technologies for real-time monitoring, working closely with local and international partners to coordinate logistics, and restructuring aid drops and packages to the region depending on intelligence gathered by national agencies.

Resolutions will need to integrate advanced technological solutions, such as the aforementioned improved satellite imagery and drone monitoring, to improve real-time situational awareness and secure logistics. This will be crucial to the implementation of aid campaigns moving forward from Gaza, but the humanitarian consequences must be considered. ²⁴The impact of technological weaponry used for any purpose carries a burden. Societies have been traumatized and destroyed by these technologies, so a consideration of cultural impact is crucial.

Additionally, as resolutions are crafted they must consider that the current conflict in Gaza is not the model. Future conflicts will be layered with different facets of war and conflict and it will be crucial to craft malleable solutions.

II. Questions to Consider in Your Research:

- What are the primary security threats faced by NGOs and aid organizations in conflict zones?
- What mechanisms exist for coordinating security and access among multiple organizations working in the same conflict zone?
- What risk assessment and management strategies are employed to protect humanitarian workers in volatile areas?
- What are the legal frameworks governing the safety and protection of humanitarian workers in conflict zones?
- What are the emerging trends and future challenges in coordinating security and access for humanitarian operations?

²⁴ Women's International League for Peace and Freedom; International Disarmament Institute, *Humanitarian Impact of Drones*, ed. Ray Acheson, Matthew Bolton, Elizabeth Minor, and Allison Pytlak (October 2017), 85–93, <https://article36.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Humanitarian-impact-of-drones.pdf>

III. Questions a Resolution Might Answer:

- How can international, national, and local stakeholders effectively collaborate to create a unified security strategy?
- What measures should be put in place to regularly review and update security plans based on evolving threats?
- How can adherence to humanitarian principles (e.g., neutrality, impartiality) be maintained while implementing security measures?
- What training programs should be developed to enhance the skills of humanitarian workers in managing security risks and navigating conflict zones?

IV. Additional Resources

- [“How Iraq is Managing the Israel-Gaza Crisis”](#)

The Brookings Institution - Alshamary and Huggard - December 21, 2023

The Brookings Institution article discusses Iraq's response to the Israel-Gaza crisis, it also outlines regional dynamics more broadly and how to manage security and humanitarian efforts in hostile environments. This article considers the Iraqi diplomatic and strategic calculus, from which lessons can be drawn about how states navigate the pressures of conflict while ensuring that aid gets to those who need it. The source provides an apt case study on the effectiveness of humanitarian operations in conflict areas for researchers and policymakers. It raises the issue of the fine balancing act between coordination in ensuring the security of relief workers and the effective delivery of relief material, hence adding to the debate on how NGOs and aid organizations can best optimize their role in such complex conflict environments.

- [“Humanitarian Aid And Reconstruction: Analyzing And Rethinking Humanitarian Aid And Reconstruction Efforts Throughout The Region”](#)

Center for Strategic and International Studies - Middle East Program

This source describes all the barriers and strategies in the process of delivering humanitarian aid and conducting reconstruction in the Middle Eastern region, marked by continuous conflict and instability. This source is particularly helpful in reading as it helps outline the challenges of coordinating response activities under highly insecure environments. The CSIS analysis maps out the numbers and scope of challenges NGOs and aid providers go through in conducting or accessing conflict situations, negotiating security risks, and acting in the middle of complex political and social settings.

- **[“The Health Problems Faced By Refugees”](#)**

Palestine Children’s Relief Fund - Information You Should Know

This link, from the Palestine Children's Relief Fund, offers insights related to the coordination of security and access issues for NGOs, aid organizations, and relief workers within a war zone. This source refers directly to the health problems of refugees. It details the medical and especially logistic complications associated with healthcare delivery to the displaced person.

- **[Humanitarian Action for Children - Middle East and North Africa](#)**

United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund - 2022

This report provides an overview of UNICEF's humanitarian priorities, strategies, and funding needs to support vulnerable children and families in areas affected by conflict across the MENA region. The operational strategies in the report outline how UNICEF delivers needed services—such as education, health care, nutrition, and protection—in the face of acute security risks and immense logistical challenges in these areas. The report offers valuable insights for researchers or actors working in humanitarian contexts desiring to know how large-scale operations are planned and executed in one of the most challenging regions of the world. It draws attention to the fact that access and safety of relief workers are paramount, flexible and responsive strategies are necessary in these volatile environments, and international cooperation and funding sustain these efforts.