



**2018-2019**

**Model Arab League  
BACKGROUND GUIDE**

**Summit of Arab Heads of State**

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National  
Council  
on US-  
Arab  
Relations



**Original draft by Errin Baylis, Chair of the Summit of Arab Heads of State at the 2019 National University Model Arab League, with contributions from the dedicated staff and volunteers at the National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations**

Honorable Delegates,

Welcome to the 2018-2019 Summit of Arab Heads of State! My name is Errin Baylis and I will be this year's Heads of State chair for the 2019 National University Model Arab League. I am currently a junior at Converse College majoring in Musical Theatre and Politics and minoring in Marketing. This is my third year participating in Model Arab League. I am so honored to be your chair and I cannot wait to witness all of the great diplomatic work that all of you do.

As delegates of the Heads of State council, you will be discussing some of the most pressing matters in the Arab League. It is your responsibility to make informed, considered decisions that will be in both the interest of your country and the Arab League as a whole.

I hope that this background guide will serve you well as a starting point for your research. It is important that you stay true to your country's policy in both your research and debate. Remember: diplomacy is important, but accuracy is better. Each country has their own policies and beliefs and it is important that you stay true to it.

Sincerely,

Errin Baylis

## **Topic I: Creating methods for the redevelopment of areas within member states damaged by conflict.**

### **I. Introduction to the Topic**

#### **A. General Background**

With several Arab states currently dealing with the aftermath of conflict, including Palestine, Iraq, Somalia and Sudan, it is time that we as a League turn our attention to rebuilding damaged areas within member states. This redevelopment can and should focus on the political, infrastructural and social sectors to ensure that these areas are fully redeveloped into sustainable communities.

This may prove to be difficult, as many of these areas are still experiencing conflict. However, this is exactly what should be taken into account in resolutions that are created. The leaders of the Arab states should also consider the wellbeing of citizens and consider both long-term and short-term solutions.

#### **B. History in the Arab World**

One of the most important rebuilding needs in post-conflict areas is infrastructure. Infrastructure should include road, water, communication systems and other services as deemed necessary. Delegations should consider how they will ensure the safe travel of materials and personnel as well as begin recruiting any organizations they may be able to effectively partner with.

Social redevelopment will be another important segment of this solution. The damage to infrastructure has caused tremendous distress to the civilians of these conflict areas. The redevelopment of these damaged areas should also include the rehabilitation of its people. A solution should consider the mental and physical rebuilding of civilians in addition to the infrastructural rebuilding.

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

In September of 2014, the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism was created following an agreement between the Palestinian government and the Israeli government. The purpose of this agreement was to allow for the movement of materials into the Gaza Strip, allowing for the rebuilding of private homes as well as civic buildings. However, this agreement has a major flaw as it gives Israel veto power over the use of the resources as well as the ability to direct resources into

Israeli projects.<sup>1</sup> While this program is not currently working as intended, it could serve as an interesting model for a League backed rebuilding initiative.

## II. Questions to Consider in Your Research

- What, if any, redevelopment issues does my country need to address?
- How can we ensure the safe delivery of materials that may be needed for rebuilding?
- What roles should refugees and internally displaced persons play in rebuilding?

## III. Questions a Resolution Might Answer

- To what extent should military action be utilized for protection of materials and personnel?
- What are the innovations that can be utilized to maximise the efficiency and ease of infrastructure rebuilding, such as new ways to clean water?
- What care and rights should host countries be required or willing to give refugees or internally displaced persons?

## IV. Additional Resources

- [Natural Resources, Conflict and Conflict Resolution](#)  
*This document by the United States Institute of Peace gives information about the effect of conflict on natural resources.*
- [Infrastructure and Employment Creation in the Middle East and North Africa](#)  
*This document discusses the rebuilding of infrastructure following conflict and how this need for rebuilding can be used to jumpstart an economy following the end of a conflict.*

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<sup>1</sup> “Factsheet on Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism.” *Relief Web*, Maan Development Center, [reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Factsheet%20on%20Gaza%20Reconstruction%20Mechanism.pdf](http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Factsheet%20on%20Gaza%20Reconstruction%20Mechanism.pdf).

## **Topic II: Developing strategies for cooperation between refugees and internally displaced persons with host countries.**

### **I. Introduction to the Topic**

#### **A. General Background**

In recent years the Arab League has seen an increase in both the numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons. Arab states face a problem of balancing the needs of their citizens with those of the refugees that reside in their countries. Solutions for this topic should seek to balance both of these important objectives.

It is important to establish the differences between the above terms. Refugees are described as "people who have fled their country because of violence, conflict or fear of persecution." Internally displaced persons may leave home for the same reasons, but they "are displaced within their own country and have not crossed an internationally recognized country border." However, the most important difference between the two is the fact that refugees have recognized legal rights within their host countries, but internally displaced persons do not.<sup>2</sup>

#### **B. History in the Arab World**

As of 2018, there are over 5 million refugees from Syria alone that have been registered through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).<sup>3</sup> Nearly five million of these refugees have fled to neighboring countries such as Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan Iraq and Egypt.<sup>4</sup> In Iraq, more than 3.2 million people have been displaced since the Islamic State began large scale operations in 2014.<sup>5</sup> This unprecedented number of displaced people has created cause for the countries of the Arab League to consider the situation of these refugees and internally displaced persons.

There are about 7 million registered Palestinian refugees, and over 1 million more that are not registered with the U.N.<sup>6</sup> Cooperation with Palestinian refugees will pose special issues because of the effects of the ongoing Arab-Israeli conflict. Any resolutions presented should keep in mind the separate issues that refugees from different areas are facing.

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<sup>2</sup>Myers, Kristin. "Refugee, Migrant, IDP: What's the Difference?" *Concern*, 2 Feb. 2017, [www.concernusa.org/story/refugee-migrant-idp-whats-the-difference/](http://www.concernusa.org/story/refugee-migrant-idp-whats-the-difference/).

<sup>3</sup>"Operational Portal." *Situation Syria Regional Refugee Response*, 5 July 2018, data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria.

<sup>4</sup> *2017 Planning Summary*. UNHCR, 2017, reporting.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/pdfsummaries/GA2017-MiddleEast-eng.pdf.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> "FAQs about Palestinian Refugees." *Al-Awda: The Palestine Right to Return Coalition*, Al-Awda, al-awda.org/learn-more/faqs-about-palestinian-refugees/.

### C. Finding a Solution: Past, Present and Future

The leaders of the Arab states should look to initiatives that have already proven effective. In Jordan, the world's largest Syrian refugee camp at Zaatari has begun to develop its own economy. The camp provides free water and electricity and the United Nations hires a limited number of refugees to do work around the camp. Additionally, Jordanian citizens offer credit to the Syrian refugees which allows them to start their own businesses and make money within the camp.<sup>7</sup> Programs like these could not only further develop opportunities for refugees, but also contribute to the economies of host countries, creating new opportunities for the integration of refugees and internally displaced persons. At the same time it is important to find ways for refugees to return to their countries so that short-term refugee camps do not transform into long-term cities. Refugee camps are often hastily built and make poor environments for long-term habitation.

In Gaza and the West Bank, The Middle East Children's Institute (MECI) works to educate young refugee children who have been brought out of school by their respective disasters. Their programs include a number of initiatives that go above and beyond the education needs of refugee children. Other services provided include basic healthcare and psychological monitoring in the West Bank, and shelter and cash assistance in Jordan. While these programs focus primarily on children, they also have programs for women's economic empowerment.<sup>8</sup> Possible League developed solutions could further develop the programs created by the MECI to work on rehabilitation of refugee groups.

## II. Questions to Consider in Your Research

- What is my country's stance on accepting refugees? Does my country have internally displaced persons whose needs should be further addressed?
- What programs, if any, have been created in my country that help integrate and rehabilitate refugees?
- What are the important issues surrounding the migration of refugees and how can they best be addressed?

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<sup>7</sup> NewsHour, PBS. "World's Largest Syrian Refugee Camp Has Developed Its Own Economy." *PBS*, Public Broadcasting Service, 18 June 2016, [www.pbs.org/newshour/show/worlds-largest-syrian-refugee-camp-has-developed-its-own-economy](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/worlds-largest-syrian-refugee-camp-has-developed-its-own-economy).

<sup>8</sup> "The Middle East Children's Institute - Programs." *The Middle East Children's Institute - Home*, [www.mecinstitute.org/programs](http://www.mecinstitute.org/programs).

### III. Questions a Resolution Might Answer

- How can communication between refugees and internally displaced persons and their host countries be strengthened?
- What are the specific rehabilitation needs of refugees? Of internally displaced persons?
- How can effective past initiatives be best elaborated on?

### IV. Additional Resources

- [Resettling Syrian Refugees: The Intersection of Rehabilitation and Protection](#)  
*This source discusses the needs of Syrian refugees for rehabilitation and resettlement. It also touches briefly on the struggles faced by women traveling alone within refugee camps in terms of educational and economic opportunities, which could be an interesting angle for representatives to think about.*
- [Refugees and Displacement in the Middle East](#)  
*This source from the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace asks important questions about the status and needs of refugees in Middle Eastern countries. These questions could prove important for developing other resolutions.*
- [International Islamic Relief Organization](#)  
*The International Islamic Relief Organization was founded in 1978 by the Muslim World League. This organization focuses on providing emergency relief and development assistance in war-torn areas such as orphan care, construction of buildings and healthcare.*

### **Topic III: Identifying resources needed and proposing methods to ensure its safe and effective delivery to current and post-conflict areas.**

#### **I. Introduction to the Topic**

##### **A. General Background**

During conflict, civilians often suffer greatly because of the scarcity of resources such as food, water and healthcare. Often these resources are unable to reach their intended destinations because of destroyed infrastructure and instability in the region. In order to ensure the survival of civilians in current and post-conflict areas, the leaders of the Arab states will need to discuss ways to ensure that these resources are delivered and distributed effectively.

The most important resources for conflict areas will be food, water and healthcare. It will be important to consider how to provide safe and effective transport of materials, while ensuring the safety of healthcare personnel. Finding ways to cut waste or develop innovative solutions, such as novel ways to provide clean drinking water, would be great topics for the League to consider.

##### **B. History in the Arab World**

The neighborhood of Daraya in Syria was sieged in 2012. It was not until 2016 that the World Food Program and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent were able to deliver food to this area.<sup>9</sup> This four year delay in food delivery has caused significant physical and psychological deterioration among those who are confined to this area. It is important that the League find ways to be sure that the necessary resources make it safely and efficiently to their destinations.

Important information for the League to keep in mind is the difference between food aid and food assistance programs. Food aid programs offer more food-based aid, while food assistance programs offer cash assistance and other help in allowing civilians to obtain food on their own.<sup>10</sup> Delegations should consider which of these programs works best for specific conflict areas they are monitoring.

##### **C. Finding a Solution: Past, Present and Future**

Providing resources to conflict areas has proven to be extremely difficult, leaving very little in

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<sup>9</sup>"Food Aid Finally Reaches Syria's Daraya | DW | 10.06.2016." *DW.COM*, 10 June 2016, [www.dw.com/en/food-aid-finally-reaches-syrias-daraya/a-19320235](http://www.dw.com/en/food-aid-finally-reaches-syrias-daraya/a-19320235).

<sup>10</sup> Swartz, Haley. "Food Aid vs. Food Assistance in Conflict Areas: The Case of the 2017 Famine in South Sudan." *SAIS Perspectives*, 2 May 2017, [www.saisperspectives.com/2017issue/2017/5/2/food-aid-vs-food-assistance](http://www.saisperspectives.com/2017issue/2017/5/2/food-aid-vs-food-assistance).



the way of existing resource delivery initiatives. Members of the League will need to consider many different avenues toward delivering materials and keeping personnel safe. Some considerations might be directed toward creating caravans for delivery, starting programs similar to the food assistance programs previously mentioned, or possibly utilizing military to ensure that supplies and personnel are kept safe en route to and from conflict areas.

## **II. Questions to Consider in Your Research**

- What has my country done to fight food insecurity?
- To what extent should military power be used to solve this problem?
- Which organizations have effectively contributed to a solution to this problem?

## **III. Questions a Resolution Might Answer**

- How can we ensure the safety of personnel and supplies?
- What aid should the Arab League itself be providing?
- Should the Arab League partner with existing organizations that work on fighting food insecurity in the Arab World?

## **IV. Additional Resources**

- [Food and Water Security in the Arab World](#)

*This document was written following the First Arab Development Symposium. It gives a unique view into the specific challenges facing the Arab World in regards to food security.*

- [Syrian Arab Red Crescent](#)

*The Syrian Arab Red Crescent is one organization that has made some effort toward ending food insecurity for Syrian refugees. This could be a great resource for further developing existing initiatives.*

## **Topic IV: Identifying the paths to radicalization and establishing ways in which the League can counteract extremist recruitment.**

### **I. Introduction to the Topic**

#### **A. General Background**

In recent years, violent extremism has become more and more prevalent as unrest continues to break out in the Middle East. There are many preconceived ideas about what situations play a part in radicalization, such as poverty or lack of education. While poverty and lack of education can be contributing factors, due to the nature of refugee camps as breeding grounds for radicalization, there is also data suggesting that many who join radicalized causes are often well educated and fairly wealthy.<sup>11</sup> This has made it somewhat difficult for the causes of radicalization to be determined. However, there are some factors that have been identified. These factors can be both "secular" and religious reasons such as; a desire for revenge against an oppressive government or the Western world, or a desire for religious purity.<sup>12</sup>

#### **B. History in the Arab World**

In Saudi Arabia, deradicalization programs have existed for a number of years. The current program aims to reteach religious doctrine in a way that eliminates many of the violent extremist ideals taught during recruitment.<sup>13</sup> In 2007, the program claimed that 90% of its participants had denounced their views and only 10% were considered too dangerous to rehabilitate. Education and empowerment programs are other methods of de-radicalization.

#### **C. Finding a Solution: Past, Present and Future**

One of the most important steps in finding ways to counteract extremist recruitment is to establish a League-backed examination of extremist recruitment which can look into the reasons why extremist recruitment has been so successful. This examination should determine which social groups are most at risk for extremist recruitment, and develop strategies for educating and de-radicalizing those groups.

A solution should also consider creating or elaborating on existing deradicalization programs. Emphasis should be placed on the successes and failures of existing programs, and aim to improve the outcomes of such programs. Some experts advocate weakening extremist propaganda by "empowering local voices,

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<sup>11</sup> Burke, Jason. "Islamic Militant Groups' Recruits Likely to Be Well Educated, Study Finds." *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 5 Oct. 2016, [www.theguardian.com/world/2016/oct/05/islamic-state-recruits-world-bank-study-education-boko-haram](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/oct/05/islamic-state-recruits-world-bank-study-education-boko-haram).

<sup>12</sup> Hamid, Shadi. "Radicalization after the Arab Spring: Lessons from Tunisia and Egypt." *Brookings*, Brookings, 28 July 2016, [www.brookings.edu/research/radicalization-after-the-arab-spring-lessons-from-tunisia-and-egypt/](http://www.brookings.edu/research/radicalization-after-the-arab-spring-lessons-from-tunisia-and-egypt/).

<sup>13</sup> Capstack, Andreas. "Deradicalization Programs in Saudi Arabia: A Case Study." *Middle East Institute*, 10 June 2015, [www.mei.edu/content/deradicalization-programs-saudi-arabia-case-study](http://www.mei.edu/content/deradicalization-programs-saudi-arabia-case-study).

including disillusioned returnees, religious leaders, women and young people."<sup>14</sup> These types of programs have been successful in the Arab World, especially when they begin with young children.

## II. Questions to Consider in Your Research

- What, if anything, can or should be done about terrorists considered too dangerous to rehabilitate?
- How effective is the religious reprogramming of the existing Saudi Arabian rehabilitation program?

## III. Questions a Resolution Might Answer

- What are the most common causes of radicalization?
- What can be done to empower at risk groups in the Arab World so that they do not turn to terrorist groups?
- What are the most effective programs already in existence and how can they be improved upon?

## IV. Additional Resources

- [Islamic Radicalism and Terrorism in the Middle East and Sub-Saharan Africa](#)  
*This source gives some background information on extremist groups in the region. It also discusses some of the reasons for the resurgence of Islamic radicalism in the MENA region.*
- [Terrorism](#)  
*This source includes statistics and data on terrorist attacks as well as common terrorist tactics. It could be useful in establishing information on the patterns and habits of extremists.*
- [Radicalisation and violent extremism - focus on women](#)  
*This source focuses specifically on the risk of radicalization for Islamic women. This could help delegates to establish information on groups that are vulnerable to radicalization.*

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<sup>14</sup> Hadra, Dana. "A How-to on Countering Violent Extremism." *Brookings*, Brookings, 29 July 2016, [www.brookings.edu/blog/markaz/2016/03/21/a-how-to-on-countering-violent-extremism/](http://www.brookings.edu/blog/markaz/2016/03/21/a-how-to-on-countering-violent-extremism/).