

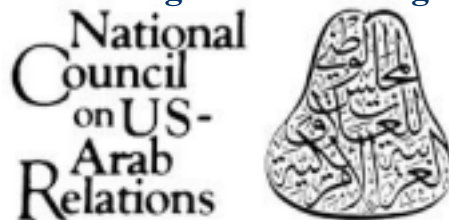


2026-2027

Model Arab League BACKGROUND GUIDE

Arab Court of Justice

ncusar.org/modelarableague



Original draft by Nancy Smith, Chief Justice of the Arab Court of Justice at the 2027 National University Model Arab League, with contributions from the dedicated staff and volunteers at the National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations

Honorable Justices,

My name is Nancy Smith, and I am very excited to serve as your Chief Justice for this year's Arab Court of Justice! I am originally from San Francisco, CA, and I am currently a fourth year at Northeastern University majoring in psychology with minors in human communication and in ethics. This will be my third time at NUMAL and my third time participating in the Arab Court of Justice, and I cannot wait to return to what I may be biased in calling the best committee in Model Arab League.

The Arab Court of Justice is a very unique committee, and will not follow the same procedures of traditional debate. This committee simulates a moot international court, and you will be presenting and adjudicating on prepared cases rather than debating and writing resolutions; the majority of your work will be complete before the conference. For your case you will represent advocates of your assigned country, and for the other four cases you will not represent a specific country but instead serve as an impartial justice.

The most important part of each case will be your memorials, written in advance of the conference. Your memorial or counter-memorial serves as the backbone of your arguments, and as such your success relies on your memorial's strong research base, clear logical structure, and persuasive application of international law to facts. In order to adequately prepare for the conference, your opponents and you will need to access each others' memorials, so please note that deadlines matter. Late submissions mean less time for your opponents to prepare, so to ensure a positive and equitable conference experience memorials and evidence binders must be submitted on time and cannot be edited thereafter.

Finally, it is important to understand that while this is a moot court, the cases you will be working with reflect real legal and political conflicts in the Arab League. It is my hope that you will approach your cases with the care and consideration they require.

I understand that this can be an intimidating committee to enter for the first time, and I am here as a resource to support you. Feel free to contact me with any questions at smith.nan@northeastern.edu. I truly adore this committee, and I genuinely hope it will be as enjoyable an experience for you as it has been for me. I look forward to seeing you all at the bench!

Sincerely,
Nancy Smith

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Case I. League of Arab States (represented by the Kingdom of Bahrain) v. Islamic Republic of Iran (represented by the Sultanate of Oman)

Regarding the unauthorized closure of the Strait of Hormuz.

The League of Arab States, represented by the Kingdom of Bahrain, has filed a lawsuit against the Islamic Republic of Iran, represented by the Sultanate of Oman, concerning Iranian restrictions on navigation through the Strait of Hormuz. The closure was initiated in response to joint US-Israeli strikes on Iran beginning in February of 2026, with Iran attributing the decision to regional insecurity from foreign intervention.

The Arab League argues that Iran's actions violate international navigation rights and threaten regional economic security. In April of 2026, the League adopted resolution 9245, demanding unimpeded freedom of navigation as international law requires and asserting that Iran bears full international responsibility for compensation of all economic damages resulting from the closure. The Arab League emphasizes that Gulf security is integral to stabilization efforts in the region, and highlights the need for any future arrangements to actively safeguard the sovereign rights of all affected states.

Iran responded to this in a letter to the UN, saying the Arab League falsely attributes responsibility to them instead of the true perpetrators; Iranian officials framed the closure as a proportional response to illegal attacks against them. They reiterated their right to self defense under international law, which they argue includes their actions in the Strait of Hormuz. Iran also argues that Arab League states allowing their territory to be used to launch military attacks against them violates several principles of international law, and Iran's actions to prevent these attacks are proportional and defensive.

The League requests that the Court determine whether Iran's closure of the Strait of Hormuz is a violation of international navigation law and whether Iran is legally responsible for compensating economic losses from the closure.

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5. United Nations Security Council. *Letter Dated 23 April 2026 from the Permanent Representative of Bahrain to the United Nations Addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council*. S/2026/361, 23 Apr. 2026, *United Nations Digital Library*, <https://docs.un.org/en/S/2026/361>.

Case II. The Arab Republic of Egypt v. The State of Qatar

Regarding Qatar's alleged failure to implement the Al Ula Declaration and post-blockade obligations.

The Arab Republic of Egypt is filing suit against the State of Qatar concerning Qatar's implementation of the Al Ula Declaration. During the 2017-2021 blockade by Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Bahrain against Qatar, Qatar allegedly stopped accepting applications for family residency and work visas from nationals of the blockading countries. The 2021 Al Ula Declaration is a normalization agreement that restored diplomatic, trade, and travel relations and ended the blockade. Over a year after the declaration, Egyptian nationals continued to report residency applications being rejected without explanation.

June 2022 reports allege that residency visa rejections appear directed primarily at Egyptians working in the private sector, with those working in the governmental sector and other nationalities being able to obtain IDs normally. Testimonies in online forums up to 2026 claim visas for Egyptians are still not being granted. Egypt argues that these application decisions are discriminatory, violating international law, and Qatar has failed to uphold its obligations under the Al Ula Declaration.

In May of 2019, the secretary-general of Qatar's National Tourism Council stated that visas would be closed to Egyptians, but Qatar has rejected these comments and denied issuing visa bans against Egyptian nationals. The Government Communications Office said that the National Tourism Council does not have authority over visas, and these statements do not reflect Qatar's working policies. Qatar maintains that discretion over visa issuances is its sovereign right, and rejects the claim that these decisions are discriminatory.

The Court will examine these residency decisions and consider if they violate the Al Ula Declaration or international law, or if they are justified within Qatar's immigration authority.

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2. Al Jazeera. "Qatar Denies Issuing Visa Ban for Blockading Nations." *Al Jazeera*, 6 May 2019, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/5/6/qatar-denies-issuing-visa-ban-for-blockading-nations>.

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Case III. The State of Libya v. The United Arab Emirates

Regarding claims of the UAE's support for rival Eastern Libyan authorities and alleged violations of Libya's sovereignty.

The State of Libya is filing a lawsuit against the United Arab Emirates regarding the UAE's alleged financial and weapons support for rival Eastern Libyan authorities.

The current Government of National Unity (GNU) and its predecessor, the Government of National Accord (GNA), based in western Libya, have long competed with the Libyan National Army (LNA), associated with military commander Khalifa Haftar's administration in Eastern Libya. While the GNU is internationally recognized as the legitimate government of Libya, the United Arab Emirates has repeatedly voiced and enacted their support for Haftar's administration, calling his actions against the GNU "anti-terrorist operations." Since a failed 2019/2020 Tripoli offensive, the UAE has reduced its overt military interventions and has more recently been accused of covertly supplying Haftar with arms and financial backing.

Libya asserts that the UAE's intervention and support for Haftar undermines their political independence and territorial sovereignty. They argue that the UAE has violated the arms embargo on Libya by supplying Haftar with weaponry, and by allegedly utilizing Haftar's forces to channel arms, fuel, and supplies to the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in Sudan. The UAE has consistently denied these allegations, officially maintaining that they support de-escalation of the conflicts in Libya and Sudan through political negotiation.

To issue a ruling, the Court will have to first consider whether there is sufficient evidence of intervention, and then evaluate the degree to which any actions by the UAE were unlawful.

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1. Assad, Abdulkader. "UN Confidential Report Details UAE Support to Haftar in Libya." *The Libya Observer*, 17 May 2020, <https://libyaobserver.ly/news/un-confidential-report-details-uae-support-haftar-libya.a>
2. Suliman, Mohamed. "On the UAE Mercenary Operations in Africa." *Middle East Monitor*, 1 Nov. 2025, <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20251101-on-the-uae-mercenary-operations-in-africa/>.
3. "UAE Calls on All Libyan Parties to Commit to Political Process, Renews Support to UN Mission." *Reuters*, 30 Apr. 2020, <https://www.reuters.com/article/world/uae-calls-on-all-libyan-parties-to-commit-to-political-process-renews-support-t-idUSKBN22C1L0/>.

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5. The Sentry. *Inside Job: Libya's Fuel Smuggling Escalation*. Nov. 2025, <https://thesentry.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/InsideJob-TheSentry-Nov2025.pdf>. p. 28.

Case IV. The State of Kuwait v. The Republic of Iraq

Regarding maritime boundaries and navigation rights in the Khor Abdullah waterway.

Kuwait and Iraq have made competing claims over their maritime border in the Khor Abdullah waterway, and this dispute was reignited in early 2026 when Iraq submitted maps to the United Nations delineating its territory, some of which Kuwait claims as its own.

Kuwait says these new submissions violate its sovereignty by claiming Kuwaiti areas as Iraqi territory, and regulations agreed upon in a bilateral 2012 agreement, known as the Khor Abdullah Agreement or treaty no. 51594. The agreement regulates navigation along the borders established by the UN in 1993, which Iraq's new maps do not reflect. Kuwait upholds that it is a legitimate international treaty that Iraq is obligated to abide by regardless of its domestic status, and by submitting coordinates unilaterally, Iraq bypassed joint diplomacy.

Iraq's Federal Supreme Court annulled the 2012 agreement domestically in 2023 after concluding that it had not followed proper parliamentary procedures. Iraq argues that its new coordinates are in line with its maritime rights and comply with its obligations under international law, which do not include the terms of the annulled Khor Abdullah Agreement. Iraq argues that Kuwait's legal complaints are based on an agreement that is not binding and thus their submissions are not unlawful. In response to Kuwait's claim that Iraq bypassed joint diplomacy, Iraq has pointed out that Kuwait previously submitted its own maps without consulting Baghdad.

The Court will consider the status of the 2012 agreement as it stands domestically compared to internationally in order to make a decision on whether Iraq's submissions were legal. The Court will have to address whether annulling an international agreement domestically frees Iraq from its international obligations, rather than ruling on the disputed territorial boundaries.

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Case V. League of Arab States (represented by The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan) v. The Lebanese Republic

Regarding alleged grand corruption in the administration of public funds and failure to recover illicit assets.

Following Lebanon's financial collapse, allegations have emerged that senior officials, most publicly former Central Bank governor Riad Salameh, diverted public funds abroad. The Central Bank, led by Salameh, engaged in systematic embezzlement, money laundering, forgery, and fraudulent financial engineering, which contributed to the country's economic collapse. Salameh, who has denied all allegations against him, faces trial in Lebanon's top court. However, domestic judicial prosecutions have stalled, allegedly due partly to political obstruction, and Lebanon's government has received criticism for not sufficiently investigating or delivering accountability for the corruption.

The Arab League argues that Lebanon has failed to uphold several of its anti-corruption obligations under international law, including insufficient asset recovery, failure to safeguard public accountability and transparency, and a lack of anti-money laundering regulatory frameworks; they assert that Lebanon's lack of reasonable steps to secure or recover embezzled public funds and implement preventative measures is a failure of their due diligence. The League has additionally expressed concerns about potential executive interference in Lebanon's judicial proceedings, which would violate its legal obligation to ensure judicial independence.

Lebanon responds that they are doing everything in their capacity to address the grand corruption, but this is limited by their current crises. The state points to legislative reforms and institutional frameworks like the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) as examples of their action against corruption.

The Court must decide whether Lebanon has failed to uphold its international anti-corruption commitments, evaluating whether Lebanon's response has been proportional to their capacity.

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3. "Lebanon's Central Bank Governor Riad Salameh Faces Arrest Warrant." BBC News, 22 Feb. 2023, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-64746658>.