



UoBDMUN

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Background guide
Arab league
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Welcome Letter

Dear delegates,

It is our pleasure to welcome you to the Arab League committee in the first MUN conference held by University of Birmingham Dubai. We are more than excited to meet each one of you and give you a chance to show your potential through the analytical position papers and heated debates during the committee sessions. As your moderators, it is our duty to put all the efforts into making this conference as memorable and enjoyable as possible. We hope that this conference will allow each one of you to gain new skills, such as critical thinking, research and debate skills while also meeting new friends and giving yourself the opportunity to socialize with people from different backgrounds. To ensure that you, as delegates, are guided in the right direction, we have created this background guide. It includes an introduction to the Arab League committee, the topic's history and analysis, and starter sources to help you gain a deeper understanding of the subject. It is crucial that each delegate reads this guide to understand what exactly is asked from you.

The first UoBDMUN conference is a perfect opportunity for you delegates to shine with your skills that will never be forgotten by us, your moderators, as well as the other delegates. We hope that this conference plays a significant role in each of the delegates lives, whether its improving your debate skills or defeating your shyness. However, it is important that you, as delegates, make the best out of this conference while we, as your moderators, will be here to support and guide you in each and every step. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the conference, please do not hesitate to contact us at any time.

Best Regards,

Arab League Moderators, Yasmin Al Dababsekh and Mohammed Layth

Introduction to the committee

The League of Arab States is an intergovernmental organization made up of all Arab states, currently gathering 22 Arab countries, in the Middle East and North Africa. This regional organization of Arab states was founded in response to the growing need for unity among Arab nations post World War 2, in Cairo on March 22, 1945, with Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Transjordan (now Jordan), Saudi Arabia and Yemen being the founding member states. Aside from being all Arab countries, these governments were also united by their shared goal of improving coordination on issues of common interest. The governments have agreed to seek “close cooperation” in every aspect: economics, communication, culture, social welfare, and health. Moreover, the signatories work together in military affairs, recognizing the importance of settling the conflicts among member states, under control of the empowered league parties. In 1950 pact, the Arab League members have agreed to treat acts of aggression against any member state as an act against the whole organization. The League of Arab States has no mechanism to pressure members into following the resolutions, since the charter states that decisions reached by the majority of the member states “shall bind only those that accept them,” which plays in favor of each country's sovereignty.

Since one of the missions of the Council of the League of Arab States is coordinating the political plans of its members to ensure cooperation among the members, the topic “Examining the Influence of the Arab League on International Relations” plays a crucial role. The Secretary-general of the League of Arab states, H.E. Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit, has emphasized the importance of cooperation between the member and non-member states, as well as other organizations like the United Nations, to stabilize the political situation in the Middle East region.

Topic: Examining the Influence of the Arab League on International Relations

Introduction to the topic

Arab League, a committee that unites all the Arab states in the Middle East and North Africa, was founded in order to improve the relationship among the states which will help the members develop together. Since in recent years the Middle East became a land caught in the crossfire of many nations, Arab League's existence gained a pivotal role. One of the most significant contributions of the committee is its efforts made in order to mediate conflicts and stabilize the political situation among the members and nonmembers in the region. The Arab league members treat acts of aggression against any member state as an act against the whole organization, which pushes the countries to communicate and provide an international forum for dialogue to the involved nations. This committee has always stepped in to help resolve conflicts which involved any of its members, like Lebanon, Yemen or Libya. While initially the committee was created to shape how the countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) communicate with each other, the efforts, which were made by the members, to solve conflicts and the overall political influence have significantly affected the non-members as well as the global organizations. Therefore, these efforts are important not just for the 22 Arab League members but also to the whole world. Since the Middle East is a key region because of its resources, especially oil, and its strategic location, many countries jeopardize regional stability for their own interests. These issues push the nations to bring their efforts together and stabilize the region through international relations. However, there are challenges faced by the committee throughout their way to achieving the main goal, which is improving coordination on issues of common interest. The most significant issue appears to be the outside influence on the MENA region. Over the years, powerful countries, like the U.S and Russia, have showed interest in the region's conflicts, making it harder for the Arab League to manage these situations independently. Despite these challenges, the League of Arab states remains a significant player in global diplomacy and especially in the MENA region.

History of the topic

One of the first tasks assigned to the Arab League in terms of its external relations was when the idea of state of Israel came into existence. The Arab League's main task initially was to oppose and retaliate against the formation of the state of Israel, as the formation of such a state breach one of the policies of the league which is "to safeguard their independence and sovereignty, and to consider in a general way the affairs and interests of the Arab countries." Hence, the first challenge ever faced by the league was navigating its way through such a dilemma, as the state of Israel was heavily supported by the west. Numerous conflicts have resulted from this long lasting conflict, one of which, was the Oil Embargo, which lead to a worldwide Oil Crisis, where nations economies took a hit. The Oil Embargo was basically to halt all Oil trade to countries that have supported Isarel at any point prior. As time progressed, Israel with the support of its western allies, had already formed a nation on Palestinian soil. The United States of America ,being one of Israel's direct allies, has a very complex relationship with the league due to several overlapping political interests. Regardless, the League does still benefit from its relationship with the USA in the technology and medicine department. To elaborate more on the external relations from a non-political aspect, the Arab League has maintained a strategic economic relationship with the EU, moreover, countries such as France and The United Kingdom have also offered aid and support to its previous colonies in the Arab world. Geopolitical relationships also exist between the Arab League and the African Union due to the common members found in both masses, hence facilitating the communication between them. However, all these relationships remain fairly diplomatic and as of now has not served much purpose, the league does plan on strengthening its ties to improve its political involvement in the world

Analysis

It is crucial to acknowledge the fact that external relations are heavily influenced by internal events. Moreover, the Arab League strictly favors its own members interests as any other organization would, and that is what mainly dictates external relationships. An example of such relations would be the Arab-Chinese relation, Where formal dialogue initiative between China and the league established in 2004. Firstly, China supports the Palestinian cause and therefore could act as an ally when needed. Furthermore, China is an economic superpower with its countless industries and factories, China could supply the Arab world with whatever they need, acting as a very beneficial trade partner. Another global superpower would be Russia, However Russia's relations aren't as strong due to one main reason, the support of the now old Syrian regime, which was kicked out for several years out of the league due to numerous violations against their own people. Russia had supplied the old regime with arms and advanced missiles. Russia was funding Syria's regime in order to gain presence in the region as Russian bases were being set up in Syria, which meant getting closer to Israel, the western presence in the Middle East region. Following the revolution of the old regime, a new Syrian government is being assembled and its foreign relations are yet to be established. Another key country in the region is Iran, although not a member of the Arab League, Iran is still a relevant country in the events that occur in the MENA region. Overall, Iran has conflicting relations with Arab states, maintaining positive political influence over Iraq, Lebanon and Yemen. Iran has always meddled in Arab politics, where Iran keeps threatening the stability of the region by boasting about its nuclear plan. Iran has also showed strong aspirations to wipe out Israel from the region, which shows their support for the state of Palestine and it has engaged in missile attacks on Israel, which provokes the west to retaliate. To emphasize more on Western relations with the Arab nations, United Kingdom and the United States are close allies and most of their interests align. Mainly, Political and Economical ties are held between the West and the Middle East, where the West seeks out oil and the Middle East seeks out technological advancements to improve infrastructure. All of the previous nations have interests in the Middle East, ranging from the strategic geopolitical location of the MENA region to the natural resources that are found within. It is a duty of the Arab League to choose what ties to pursue in order to safeguard the interest of the Arabs from being exploited by foreign states and this is why external relations must be approached with delicacy.

Suggested Questions:

1. Would relations with the West or East benefit the Arab League the most?
2. Are wars on members really being treated as wars on the whole organization?
3. How would the league navigate through external relations without being exploited?
4. How can the Arab League assert its political presence?
5. Will relations with the East severe or affect relations with the West and vice versa?
6. What do foreign states get in return for funding groups in the Middle East?
7. How can the Arab League deal with civil wars funded by foreign states?

Starter resources:

(No date) *(PDF) the successes and failures of the Arab League*. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/215828154_The_Successes_and_Failures_of_the_Arab_League (Accessed: 09 January 2025).

About the partnership (no date) League of Arab States (LAS) partnership with Museum With No Frontiers (MWNF). Available at: <https://www.museumwnf.org/league-of-arab-states/?page=LAS-history.php#:~:text=It%20has%20been%20instrumental%20in,countries%2C%20such%20as%20drug%20trafficking.> (Accessed: 09 January 2025).

Arab League... Rich Record of achievements in its long history (no date) وكالة الأنباء السعودية. Available at: <https://www.spa.gov.sa/en/7348e70ff8y> (Accessed: 09 January 2025).

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The Arab League (no date) *Council on Foreign Relations*. Available at: <https://www.cfr.org/background/arab-league> (Accessed: 09 January 2025).

Readout of the secretary-general's meeting with H.E. mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit secretary-general of the League of Arab States secretary-general (no date) *United Nations*. Available at: <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/readout/2024-05-16/readout-of-the-secretary-general%E2%80%99s-meeting-he-mr-ahmed-aboul-gheit-secretary-general-of-the-league-of-arab-states> (Accessed: 09 January 2025).