

# Conflict Resolution In The 21st Century: A Study Of Libya And Syria Crises

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## ABSTRACT

The Arab region faced a wave of massive public demonstrations in 2011. People across the region demanded freedom, justice and equality. The movement overwhelmed some of the region's dictatorship regimes that had been in power since decades, including Libya where the regime collapsed due to the massive uprising that emanated there from. However, public demonstrations and oppositions could not overcome the Al-Assad regime in Syria. This paper takes a look at turn of events in both countries with a view to establishing the potency and type of conflict resolution mechanism adopted in resolving the conflicts; using the both traditional and modern methods of conflict resolution. The paper adopted the historical approach and thus relying on secondary method of gauging information which has to do with the reliance on already existing information from academic journals, books, newspaper publications and internet sourced materials to mention but a few. The paper found that the adoption of modern diplomatic instrumentalities with a mix of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms were instrumental to the resolution of the conflicts in both countries. The paper recommend, among other things that, the two countries should adopt a system of government such as democracy that would guarantee periodic elections and a system that will promote equality that is anchored on the rule of law and not the rule of men. It is only then that lasting peace can be achieved and sustained.

**Key words:** Conflict, Management, Resolution, Libya, Syria, Africa.

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## Introduction

The Middle East and North African Countries have been crisis since 2011 occasioned by what has become known as "The Arab Uprising". As massive demonstration swept across many Arab cities and towns with the masses demanding freedom, justice, equality and regime change. It started as a result of oppressive/suppressive regimes, authoritarian leadership and low standard of living and unemployment in Tunisia (Nouehid, 2011). The event of the Arab Uprising has huge influence on the other surrounding countries of the Arab world and Africa as it has contributed to the securitization of the regions and indeed Africa, (Efebeh, 2022). The Uprising started in Tunisia in December 2010, as result of Mohamed Bouazizi's self-immolation which inspired larger demonstrations in other Middle East countries such as Egypt, Yemen, Libya and Syria; as well as Jordan, and Morocco. Masses in the Middle East and North African Countries gathered together to seek political goals, and reforms after decades under authoritarian regime. In most Arab Countries, dictators have a tradition of ruling in an authoritarian manner for many decades, until the people rose up against their rulers. The Uprising / Demonstration was a breaking point in the relationship between the rulers and the ruled. The people realized what they could do and what power they had, and would not be subjected to corrupt rulers. As the Uprising of 2011 spread like wide fire from Tunisia through the Arab region, leaders (Authoritarians) that were unanswerable to the people began to cede to massive protest. The people trooped out in their hundreds, thousands, and millions into the streets of Tunis, Cairo, Sanaa, Tripoli, and Damascus among others demanding freedom, justice, equality or for the regimes to leave power and for reforms. Change was the fixed desire and only change would satisfy them. By early 2012, many regimes in the Arab region; Tunisia, Egypt and Libya had been changed by the people as many dictators were forced to give up their authority. However, not all of these Arab protests ended well; some countries such as Egypt

succeeded in ending authoritative rules, and for some others, the protests turned into chaos and civil war which were evident in both Libya and Syria. The State of Syria has become a war zone. Six years after, the uprising has not been able to oust Al-Assad's regime from power and the uprising has become a civil war that is far bloodier than that of Libya. The situation in Syria has caused serious humanitarian crisis for not only the Arab region but also for Africa and Western Europe. This article is intended to research on how to apply conflict resolution mechanisms to resolve the crises in Libya and Syria.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The Frustration-Aggression theory and Deprivation theory is used. The frustration-aggression theory also known as frustration aggression - displacement theory came through a monograph published by Yale University Institute of Human Relations proposed by John Dollard, Neal Miller, Leonard Doob, Orval Mowrer and Robert Sears (1939) Psychologists, and further developed by Neal Miller in 1941 and Leonard Berkowitz in 1969. This theory argues that aggression results from blocking, or frustrating a person's efforts to attain a goal. At first the theory stated that frustration always precedes aggression, and aggression is the sure consequence of frustration. Two years later, Miller and Sears (1941) re-formulated the theory to imply that as long as anger causes the need to react, some form of hostility is the feasible consequence. Therefore, the theory established that although anger leads to a behavior that may or may not lead to hostility, any hostile or destructive behavior is the result of anger, making anger/annoyance not equal to the end proposed but only a needed cause for attacks. Deprivation theory from another point of view, states that those who are dispossessed of possessions very estimable in society; wealth, violation of rights, privilege, unite together with the view of addressing their grievances. Relative deprivation as it is also called is the incapability to maintain a controlled regimen of food and influence in the society that a person or group is used to in the society they belong. Relative deprivation theory was propounded by Samuel Stouffer (1900-1960). Relative deprivation permits an observed evaluation of one or more things relative to some other individual or group compared to the rest of society. It also emphasis the individual activity which one has performed and become dissatisfied when deprived of something which one knows oneself to be rightful ownership of. Used in the humanities to depict or evince economic, political, social deprivation that are relative rather than absolute, the concept has important consequences for both behaviour and attitudes, including feelings of stress, political attitudes and involvement in group action. Political Scientists and Sociologists opined that 'relative deprivation' as a possible cause of loosely organized efforts by a large group of people to achieve a particular goal socially or politically, which can lead in most cases to political violence; rioting, terrorism and crime, (Ikenga & Agah, 2020) According to Dollard, et al (1939) frustration is the "condition which occurs as the result one is attempting to achieve is interfered with", and aggression is said to be something done whose aim or achievement is the violation or damage to a person's right". The theory postulates that frustration causes aggression, but when the source of the frustration cannot be challenged, the aggression gets displaced into an innocent target. For example, if a man is disrespected and humiliated at his work place, but cannot respond (react) to this for fear of losing his job, he may go home and take his anger and frustration out on his family. This theory can also be used to explain riots and political upheaval, both of which are assumed to be set off by poorer and more deprived members of the society who in return express their suppressed annoyance and anger through violence. Though some scholars criticized the theory suggesting moderation of factors connecting frustration and aggression, different scientific methods were able to strengthen it. Berkowitz (1989) argued that suggesting that negative effect and individual acknowledgement of ownership play an important role in whether frustration provokes aggressive behaviour.

### **The Relevance of the Theory to the Study**

The frustration-aggression/deprivation theories will best analyze the Arab Spring revolution which started on 27 December 2010 in Tunisia. Numerous factors led to the protest, including issues such as self-immolation, oppression and some demographic factors such as a large percentage of educated but dissatisfied youths within the entire population and inability of government to meet her responsibility of providing for her citizens, which is one of the major duties of good governance to the people. The self-immolation of 26 years old Mohamed Bouazizi, the breadwinner for his widowed mother and six siblings, in the rural town of Sidi Bouzid, Tunisia, who was angered and frustrated after a policewoman openly degraded and slapped him for refusing to hand over his wooden cart, set himself ablaze (aggression) due to frustration and deprivation. The government's failure to create employment opportunity for the citizens, led to Mohamed Bouazizi taking to the sales of fruits, as the government could not create the enabling environment for him to be gainfully employed, rather than remain idle or even taking to crime. This act impacted instantly with others in the town, leading to protests which were captured and went viral on the social media. Within days, protest erupted across the country, with chants calling on the President Abidine Ben Ali to relinquish power. This course of event in Tunisia caused an upheaval across the Arab Region which was termed the Arab Spring. The feeling of outrage and frustration releases long pent-up indignation around the country due to years of oppression, deprivation, humiliation and fear, imposed by the agents of a police state.

Demonstrations often become chaotic due to the manner of police intervention with the people seeking the ousting of the dictator. The Tunisian example created an exciting moment in other Middle East and North African countries under dictatorial leadership. Tunisian immediate neighbour, Algeria erupted on 19 December. As the excitement spread, demonstrations began in January in Jordan, Egypt and Yemen. Others, Bahrain, Kuwait, Libya, Morocco and Lebanon followed suit in February and Syria in March. In all of these countries, Tunisia, Egypt, Morocco, Libya, Syria and so on, the Arab populations had faced repression of free speech, human rights abuses, economic mismanagement, corruptions and stifling of political dissent, unemployment, extreme poverty, justice and human dignity were not priorities. A crucial step to the mass appeal of the Arab Spring was its universal message which attracted the people. It beacons on the Arabs to take back their country from the corrupt elite, a perfect mixture of patriotism and social message, instead of a distinctive phrase, the protesters handled and waved the national flag, an image for rallying call that became the symbol of the uprising across the Middle East and North African region. "The masses want the collapse of the regime". The Arab Spring united, for a short time, both worldly and Islamist, more left-wing groups and supporters of liberal economic reforms, middle class and the poor. The protests were initially largely spontaneous, not linked to a particular political party or an ideological current which made it difficult for regime to decapitate the movement by simply arresting a few perceived troublemakers.

The protests could not have changed into a mass occurrence or event had it not being for prevalent dissatisfaction over unemployment and low standard of living. The Arab population have been frustrated and deprived for long and this has resulted in aggression and widespread violence. The frustration-aggression theory has been criticized by several Scientists. Among them Seward (1945) who suggested that aggression may also be caused by dominance struggles, which for him were different from frustration. But Berkowitz (1989) addressed the criticism suggesting that the controversy around frustration-aggression theory has its roots in the lack of a common definition for frustration. According to Dollard (1939), the frequency of violent revolutionary activities continuously presumes the presence of frustration and, in reverse, the presence of frustration leads to some form of violent behavior. Within the Arab societies that faced the waves of the uprising, people have been under the oppression of their regimes for many decades and generations started to develop Gurr's (1970) three sources of human aggression and violence.

### **The Effects/Influence of the Arab Spring on the State of Libya**

Libya experienced a period of calm briefly before the Arab Spring, and then plunged again into conflict as fighting erupted between rival militia groups in Tripoli, shattering a period of calm that lasted briefly (8 months). The United Nations-backed government (Government of National Accord) lost more than fifty (50) fighters. While the Egyptian Air Force planes continued to strike camps near Derna, in east Libya as a response to deadly attacks against Christians in Egypt. The uprising has thrown up three different groups vying for the control of Libya: (The Government of National Accord (GNA), The Libyan Dawn Coalition (LDC) and The Islamic State of Iran and Syria (ISIS)). The United Nations backed Government of National Accord have not been able to exert authority following the 2015 deal; this is as a result of the authorities controlling eastern Libya refusal to recognize the GNA as Libya's official government. Libya's economy was heavily dependent on crude oil, producing 1.6 million barrel per day in 2010 before the uprising. After the uprising oil production fell dramatically and rose again after the conclusion of the first election. However, when the clash between opposing groups flared up again in 2014, due to rival militias fighting over control of key facilities, oil production fell. The country's GDP was solely reliant on the oil industry which fell drastically after the uprising (Adbessadok, 2017). Libyans soon became frustrated with the interim government's failure to act. The National Transition Committee (NTC) could not fulfill the promise of a long list of the people's needs: such as a working legal system, reestablishment of friendly relations with officials who served the old administration, regulating arms and ammunition of militias, creating a working national security, reconstruction of destroyed areas and creating environment for delivery of basic services such as health care.

A major part of their failure was the stagnation of Libya's economy, and investors' reluctance to return to a political and social setting where the government will not enter long term agreement, might not guarantee security. In July 2012, a general election was held in which 2.7 million people participated and National Transition Council (NTC) was replaced by the General National Congress after the elections. The attack on September 2012 on the United States Special Mission in Benghazi by a heavily armed group which killed the US Ambassador Christopher J. Stevens and three other Americans, led to the withdrawal of some diplomatic staff by US and Britain over flare up in political unrest. Annoyance against the GNC was aggravated by its refusal to cede power after their mandate expired. Thousands of Libyans took to the streets in Tripoli and Benghazi in protest demanding the interim government cede power as promised. The GNC members had extended their mandate to write a new constitution, which they claim was essential to a stable Libya. Libya could have stabilized after the revolt if the government had not split into rivaling factions. In May 2014, General Khalifa Haftar, a military defector from Gaddafi's era, launched his campaign, Operation Karama (Operation Dignity), claiming to protect Libya from "terrorists". Gen. Haftar accumulated support from the local tribes, businessmen and soldiers formerly loyal to the Libyan army to beef up his armed forces as he

appealed for external support projecting him as being crucial to Libya's stability, according to the International Center for Counter-Terrorism (ICCT). An operation which was viewed as an attempted coup similar to the one Abdel Fattah el-Sisi staged in Egypt in July 2013 (Manfreda, 2019). The violence spread to Tripoli, where the Libya Dawn Coalition (LDC), led by armed groups in Misrata and their helpers, fought against Haftar's Libyan National Army (LNA) at the Capital's International Airport. Militia groups from Zintan, that were in control of the airport since 2011 also took part in the clashes over control of the airport. Libyan Dawn Coalition overcame the opposition and gained control of the airport and Tripoli, which set the tone for two opposing governments in Libya. The GNC was reinstated in Tripoli while the elected House of Representative (HoR) moved to Tobruk.

In November 2014, the Libyan apex court, the Supreme Court ruled that HoR was unconstitutional after ruling that the committee that conducted the election violated Libya's Provisional Constitution. The Skhirat Agreement, a United Nations peace deal, was signed in December 2015, which tried to broker peace by suggesting a unified government in support of a six-point intended actions to end the conflict, a process of change that will take one year during which they can decide on such issues as: reduction of military forces and armaments, control of the country's airport and the writing of a Constitution. A unified government was also viewed as the only means of ending the continuous threat of the Islamic States Group ISIS in Libya. A few months after Libya's gradual attainment of peace, General Haftar's troops made a second attack and took control of important oil ports in mid-September, 2016. Haftar's authority over the oil ports is widely seen as a trump card for political negotiations. The recent conflict around the terminals brings up the prospect of a new increase in violence, putting at risk the sharp boost to Libya's oil production. Oil is Libya's major valuable asset and income from crude exports is very important if Government of National Accord (GNA) is to rebuild the economy and infrastructure of the Libyan State. Presently, there are two National Oil Councils, (NOC), one created by the government in eastern Libya and based in Benghazi and the other in Tripoli.

### **The Political and Economic Consequences of Arab Spring on the State of Libya and Syria**

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) has continually allured important powers owing to its important location, as bearing important waterways, and in addition accommodating divine places of the three major religious bodies (Christianity, Islam and Judaism). The Middle East and North African region controls 54% of the World's oil and natural gas resources. Natural gas is moved from North African Countries like Egypt and Libya to Europe by means of pipelines and ship. Many nations have important national interest in the MENA region (Roberto, 2012). European Union (EU) States have a tendency to lessen their dependence on Russian gas by transferring the resources from the Middle East and North African region into Europe. Also being old colonies of European States, the Middle East and African countries yet rely on European hi-tech and industrial products. Also, migrants from African countries, go through Libya into Europe which compelled Italy and other European States to take actions. To this regard, happenings in the region are of great concern to European countries and the world at large. USA's advance to MENA countries is conditioned by security concerns and energy needs. With 9/11 terrorist attacks, the relations between the West and the MENA region have turned more troublesome and since then they have been considered to be a haven for terrorist movements (Joffe, 2011). (Hermida et al, 2012) opines that Russia has a great amount of investments in Syria and Syria receives more than half of its arms from Russia, which is her very important friend. Russia's recent military investments in Syria have reached up to 26 billion dollars (Hermida et al, 2012). In 2010 alone, 15 billion dollars' arms deals were made between both countries (Colombo, 2012). Moreover, Syria gains prominence from Russia, whom has sustained a desire to penetrate warm seas all through its history. Russia's intention of raising its strategically relevant Tartus Naval Base in Syria, suitable for bigger warships to strengthen Russian efforts and serve the national interest and thus further parade more influence in the Arab region and its presence in the Eastern Mediterranean relies on the maintenance and improvement of the Tartus Naval Base (Salt, 2012).

In this regard, Russia remains as an important defender of the Syrian regime (Mirkin, 2013). Because International Organizations such as the United Nations, North Atlantic Treaty Organization and Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) cannot reach an agreement and the attitude of two regional powers, Turkey and Iran differ; Russia is likely to sustain its current Syrian policy. China supports the Syrian government against the opposition movements that might constitute imminent danger for its energy, security and raw materials supply which looks at situation in the region as a menace, backs autocratic system as a measure taken before hand to ward off opposition. Iran objected to NATO interference in Libya on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2011, mainly for fear Syria will receive such action too (Mirkin, 2013). Iran is interested in the events in Syria, its ally, so the continuity of the Syrian regime is viewed to be very important for its own existence. (Hermida et al, 2012). There has been historical and cultural links between Turkey and MENA countries from the Ottoman Empire, as a number of citizens on the south-eastern border maintain their family ties with people from Syria and Iraq. The Arab region holds a relevant place for its economy and security (Wester & Goldstein, 2011). Especially due to the result of the 2008 world-wide economic down turn, Turkey, whom export rates nosedived significantly to the U S A and E U Countries, influenced its exporters to look for new markets, as a

result, MENA Countries happens to be important alternatives.

### **Economic Impacts of the Arab Uprising on Both countries (Libya and Syria).**

To analyze the economic implication of the fighting and explore the effects of this vicious and harsh civil war on both countries economy, we will focus on its main indicators; Export, Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Unemployment, and Foreign Investment. This evaluation will begin by examining data from the World Bank database, in addition to other databases like that of the Syrian Centre for Policy Research (SCPR), THE Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) and the Economic Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). Such a study dealing with a current issue has a preexisting limitation as a consequence of the fact that fighting in these countries has not yet ended and is becoming even more complex with the addition of Russian and Iranian forces (and, indirectly, also French and American forces).

Nonetheless, the research seems to contribute to the prevalent literature on the effect of conflicts (including civil wars) on a country's economy and in addition on the connection between outside economic-political factors and the country's economic post-war recovery. The research stuffed with publications that indicate an association between war and changes in domestic economic indicators, presenting and exploring the various factors that affect this association. Some studies claim that war has a direct and immediate detrimental effect on these indicators, as fighting paralyzes or at least moderates overall consumer activity since citizens are in state of anxiety and tension and are reluctant to venture out to shopping centers and entertainment venues. This drop in consumer activity has a direct effect on the economy's productive activity and leads to its decline. The reduced scope of production increases unemployment while also slowing down foreign trade and domestic exports. Furthermore, an economy at war is less attractive to foreign investors and hence foreign investments in the economy diminish. A situation in which indicators of personal consumption, exports, and foreign investment are affected might naturally lead to a drop in the gross domestic product composed of these indicators. Furthermore, a protracted civil war is to a greater extent calamitous to the indigenous economy and has a deleterious effect on the country's retained earnings owing to the ruin of all things, the reluctance of investors to invest in a country that is in a condition of being threatened and unstable and in addition capital flight beyond the borders (Collier, 1999). Then again, other studies claim that war requires an expansion of the government budget for military aims and for defense disbursement and consequently brings to an increase in the general expense index and by chance make up for the drop or fall in other GDP indexes, producing a real effect on the country's sum GDP, (Yang and Lester, 1994). However, in those nations two obvious influences were the primary source of these events of civil uprising: one was economic and the other was political.

The economic influence played a real conspicuous part in the general demonstration in the Arab countries, since for a considerable number of years, they had suffered severe economic hardships that encompassed the different industries and were evident chiefly in increasing unemployment, especially amidst the younger generation. These nations were controlled by tyrants who managed to arrange a life of abundance and freedom for themselves and their families while their citizens strived to earn a living (Anbarani, 2013). Consequently, the bad economic condition arising from the rising global crisis (Sub-Prim) incited people's anger against their leaders and instigated the uprising objecting, the severe financial and subsistence problems and the sociopolitical problems that spread and took root among the top leaders. Moreover, the years that preceded the waves of revolt witnessed an increase in global prices of grains and sugar due to severe drought in the region, making it even harder for the citizens of Arab countries to survive financially. But these adversities the government showed no readiness to tackle (De Chatel, 2014). Even though, some countries in Middle East and North Africa (Libya and Syria) saw an increase of economic growth despite the global crisis, this growth had no effect on the common citizens as the economy in these countries was controlled by the economic and political elite (Feiler, 2013).

Additionally, the economic growth did not proceed at the same rate as the rise in the labour force during the year, and this created rising unemployment, primarily among young intellectuals, and contributed to their frustration and animosity towards the authorities. Insurgences throughout the region brought about failures in macroeconomic balances (Khandelwal and Roitman, 2013). Changes in countries' (Libya and Syria) economic growth rates are seen in Table 1.

**Table 1: Economic Growth Rate (%)**

	2000	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Libya	3.7	6.4	2.7	-0.8	5.0	-6.2	104.5
Syria	2.3	5.7	4.5	5.9	3.4	NA	NA

**Source:** IMF World Economic Outlook Database, April 2013.

According to the information on Table 1, these states' economic increment evaluation has been influenced in damaging manner during the unrest. Although in 2011 Libyan economy fell by 62%, it rose by 104% in 2012,

the base year. Because of the civil war, up-to-date data for Syrian economy has not been published; nevertheless, it is presumed that the situation is not different from that of the Libyan economy. Modified export rates for these countries are stated in Table 2.

**Table 2:** Percentage Change in Volume of Exports of Goods and Services.

	2000	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Libya	8.7	3.5	-6.4	-7.0	-0.7	-69.1	225.3
Syria	9.7	53.0	6.4	-6.5	15.3	NA	NA

**Source:** IMF World Economic Outlook Database, April 2013.

According to the data in Table 2, Arab Spring revolutions which took place in the wake of Global Economic Crisis considerably decreased these countries' exports. Libyan export declined to 69% in 2011, which is a total disaster. In 2012, overall exports of the countries tended to rise. Data regarding current accounts are stated in Table 3.

**Table 3:** Current Account Balance (Percentage of GDP)

	2000	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Libya	31.6	44.1	42.5	14.5	19.5	9.1	35.9
Syria	5.4	-0.2	-1.3	-2.9	-2.9	NA	NA

**Source:** IMF World Economic Outlook Database, April 2013

According to data in Table 3, it is obvious that significant impairments took place in the current account balances of these countries in the process. Changes in the countries' tourism revenues are given in Table 4.

**Table 4:** Tourism Revenues (Percentage Change)

	2000	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Libya	115.4	-59.4	0.0	60.6	6.9	-	-
Syria	4.9	40.7	6.9	19.0	66.8	NA	NA

**Source:** World Bank, International Tourism Receipts (2013).

According to the data in Table 4, the tourism revenue of these countries declined considerably during the unrest. The loss reached up to approximately 30%. The Syrian Centre for Policy Research (SCPR) examined the sharp decline in Syrian GDP in 2012, though not stated on the table above, which displayed its undesirable effects on the diverse internal industries and determined that in this year Syria's wholesale and retail trade sector, including restaurants and hotels, had suffered the most from contraction of the GDP. This resulted in a heavy deficit to the tourism industry, the decline in demands for services and commodities, problems with the supply chain, rising inflation, devaluation of the Syrian pound, travel restrictions on people and commodities and the general feeling of economic insecurity with its negative impact on aggregate consumption. Even though the Arab Spring protests also spread to other MENA Countries, the following comparative review shall focus on Libya and Syria. Unlike the protests in the former countries (Tunisia and Egypt) which were manifested in large stormy demonstrations but did manage to topple the government, the protests in both Libya and Syria developed into civil wars characterized by savage fighting and complex political situations, and therefore served as a basis for comparison as presented below. The GDP and unemployment figures for Libya and Syria during 2007- 2014 are presented in Tables 5 and 6.

**Table 5** Total GDP of Libya and Syria 2007-2014 (Annual %)

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Libya	2.7	6.4	0.8-	5	62.1-	104.5	13.6-	24-
Syria	5.7	4	6.2	3.6	3.7-	18.8-	NA	NA

**Source:** GDP figures are from the World Bank website, aside from data on Syria's GDP for 2013-2014, which is from the SCPR website.

The data presented in Table 5 show that the two Countries experienced periods of growth in the years before uprising. After the riots Libya and Syria entered a state of economic turmoil side by side with the political chaos, although the decline in the Libyan GDP in 2011 was more conspicuous than that of the Syrian GDP for that year. Then again, once the riots in Libya died down in 2012, its GDP grew at a very impressive rate. Syria, however, is still in a condition of civil war with a destructive effect on its economy, which its unable to recover from, showing worrying levels of recession. The figures in Table 6 show unemployment rates in both Countries (Libya and Syria) in the period preceding the riots and subsequently, indicating similar trends to those in the previous table. Unemployment in Libya was relatively high before the riots broke out (about 20%). In 2010 and 2011, there was a positive shift in this indicator and it began to drop slightly and reached about 18 percent in 2011. However, the security deterioration in this year left its mark on the local job market

and in 2012 unemployment rose once again, reaching about 20 percent and even more the following year (30 percent). In contrast, the Syrian economy enjoyed relatively low unemployment rates prior to the fighting (during 2009 - 2010). However, just three years afterward it has degenerated quickly and sharply to unbelievable rates of more than 50% (during 2013-2014: 53% and 57%, respectively).

**Table 6: Unemployment Rate**

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Libya	19.4	19.1	18.9	18.8	18.2	19.6	19.6	30.0
Syria	8.4	10.9	8.1	8.4	14.9	34.9	53.0	57.0

**Source:** Unemployment figures are from the World Bank website, aside from data on Syria's unemployment for 2011-2014, which is from the SCPR website, the data for Libya's unemployment, is from the Central Intelligence Agency website: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-facebook/geos/ly.html>

### **Political Impacts of Arab Spring on the State of Libya and Syria**

As the riot progressed, although no riot occurred in Israel, Turkey and Iran, whose leaders are thought to be lawful by their peoples, serious popular movements took place in countries like Egypt, Libya Syria and Yemen whose government was without legitimacy. The protest in Libya, which was supported by NATO intervention led by France, started on 17th February 2011 and ended when Gaddafi was killed on 20th October 2011. On 23rd October, National Transition Council was established, on 7th July 2012, democratic elections were held. However, conflicts between tribes are still ongoing and the unity of the state is at risk (Masseti and Korner, 2013). Within Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Yemen anti-democratic governments were overthrown because of the protests though some economic and social rights were granted in Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Bahrain and Oman (Stepan and Linz, 2013) In Syria the loss of life exceeded one hundred thousand within the beginning of the revolt till July, 2013 (Carpenter, 2013) and about 384,000 to 586,100 from 15 March 2011 to 14, March 2019 (Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR), 2019). Arab Spring affected Turkey-Iran relations negatively owing to the conflict in Syria. Turkey positioned itself beside democratic opposition movements, Iran has been supporting Assad regime with both military and political means. There is no doubt that Arab Spring has been affecting Turkey's "zero problem policy with neighbouring countries", which was conducted by Turkey in its relations with Iran, Syria and Iraq before the conflicts broke out, is not applicable anymore. However, it aided relations between Turkey and Arab Union gain new dimensions and become stronger (Masseti & Korner, 2013).

The sensible and responsible warnings made by Turkish politicians to their Syrian, Egyptian and Libyan counter-parts from the commencement of the popular protests enhanced the sympathy and interest among those peoples towards Turkey (Salt, 2012). Because of its liberal, Islamic, democratic and secular views, Turkey has become a role model for these countries (Haynes & Ben- Porat, 2013). The Arab Spring reduced the supremacy of the USA in the region. USA thought of reviewing its policies in the region to give its undeniable backing to Israel and enhance relations with regional powers like Turkey. As in Libya, USA shared leadership and responsibility in humanitarian intervention with its allies in Europe. Its weakening leadership enabled other actors such as Russia and China behave more confidently in the region. China set up better relations with Syria and Saudi Arabia while EU adopted its former policies to new circumstances (Khandelwal & Roitman, 2013).

### **Attempts to Resolve the Crisis in Libya and Syria**

The crises in Libya and Syria captured the attention of the International Community and have been tagged a distinct case for when quickly and conducive response to uphold Responsibility to Protect (RtoP) in the face of about to happen threat of mass cruelty should occur. In witnessing massive violence in Libya, the International Community, regional and sub-regional bodies acted to protect the populations through a range of economic, political and military measures (sanctions, arms embargo, asset freeze and travel ban). Leaders from 35 governments and NGOs met in London on 29 March 2011 to discuss the deteriorating situation in the Arab region. The Conference participants, agreed that Gaddafi's government have lost legitimacy and needed to be held responsible for its ruthless use of force, established a political communication group to provide leadership and all-encompassing political guidance to the International efforts in open work together with the UN, AU, Arab League, OIC and EU to support Libya. On 25 February 2011, the Human Rights Council (HRC) adopted Resolution S-15/2 calling on the Libyan government to uphold its responsibility to protect and cease all human rights violations; for an International Commission of Enquiry to be established; and for Libya to be suspended by the General Assembly from the Council. The General Assembly unanimously suspended Libya from the membership of the council on 1 March 2011. The report sent to the Human Rights Council from the International Commission of Enquiry stated that the Libyan Government and Opposition forces committed crimes against humanity and war crimes since the start of the crisis. The United Nations Security Council responded to a concern from the Arab League (AL), African Union (AU), Organization of the Islamic Conference (IOC), and the Human Rights Council (HRC), and approved Resolution 1970

(unanimously) on 26 February 2011. As soon as the non-military measures allowed in Resolution 1970 failed to persuade Gaddafi from explicit intent to apply violent force against the population in Benghazi and stop mass destruction of protesters, the Council adopted Resolution 1973 on 17 March 2011. The Resolution 1973 mandated a no-fly zone over Libya. Following the death of Gaddafi and his son Mutassim on 20 October 2011, the crisis quickly deteriorated to a civil war between rebel forces and pro-Gaddafi military.

The military operation in Libya spurred debate amongst civil society, sovereign states listed the protection of civilians from mass crimes as a priority, pondered the historic embrace of the Responsibility to Protect (RtoP) tenets agreed to during the 2005 World Summit. The no-fly zone in Resolution 1973, sparked controversy over whether NATO went beyond the mandate; this concern spurred questions such as: what backlash has the NATO operation had on the RtoP norm and future possible cases of military intervention to protect civilians, such as in Syria? The above question triggered a debate over NATO mission in Libya and what it meant for the entire RtoP rule. Some implied that it has messed up the future of RtoP, making it improbable that the Security Council will act in the crisis in Syria. Pointing to the concerns expressed by some UN member states, like Russia and Brazil, that NATO went beyond its mandate of protecting civilians by effecting regime change. These facts, nevertheless, prepare small reason to believe that the time ahead for RtoP has been compromised. Alex Bellamy's analysis of the United Nation Security Council remark and voting patterns, suggests that the Council's failure to perform in Syria is to an extent probably caused by geopolitical reasons and not its mission's outcome in Libya. Positing that Nations questioning NATO mission in Libya, for example, Brazil and India, at times advocated draft resolutions on Syria which were then vetoed by Russia and China. The state of affairs in Syria revealed the need to distinguish the normative aspirations of RtoP from the way in which it is implemented by any State or group of States acting within the command of the Security Council Resolution. Looking at the response to the Libyan crisis through an RtoP lens, the International Community responded to the Libyan government's failure to prevent mass atrocities against their people by employing a broad range of non-military measures like: Diplomatic efforts, economic sanctions, assets freeze, travel ban, arms embargo and the referral of the case to the International Organization entrusted with overseeing the global atrocities by monitoring brutal actions the International Criminal Court (ICC). Obviously, these tools to halt the menace of mass cruelty failed. As for Syria, every crisis situation is unique and requires a different approach/response according to the threat of violence and the needs of the populations. There cannot be silence but deal with mass atrocity crimes, just as the controversy over the response to crisis in Libya resulted in a prolonged silence when mass atrocities was being committed in Syria, which appears worse than that of Libya, like applying chemical weapons against the citizens by the regime of Al Assad. NATO assignment in Libya must not deter the International Community from responding to the mass atrocities happening in Syria.

### Events in Moscow

On Monday January 2012, Russian government officials hosted Libya's two rival leaders (Fayez al Sarraj and General Khalifa Haftar), whose respective military forces have been at war for nine months, in a bid to usher them towards a ceasefire agreement. Fayez Sarraj, who heads the internationally recognized Government of National Accord (GNA in Tripoli); and Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar, who leads a coalition called the Arab Libyan Armed Forces (ALAF), previously known as the Libyan National Army (LNA). Haftar's coalition does not recognize the Sarraj administration, and in April launched an attack to assume control of the Libyan capital. Fighting has wasted 2,000 lives, set Tripoli under prolonged military assault caused by Haftar's troops and drawn in different foreign powers. The Russian approach began on the heels of a gradual combined Turkish-Russian summoning for an end to hostilities that Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Turkish counterpart, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, issued on the margins of their 8 January meeting in Istanbul. Both leaders requested the Libyan factions to cease military operations on 12 January and come to political negotiations. They did not deliberate upon this with the factions they respectively support-Ankara backs Sarraj, while Moscow backs Haftar, the major factions ALAF and the Tripoli-based authorities openly expressed support, the time they meet again to observe the *de facto* agreement to end hostilities, this lifted the expectations that they would also yield to official ceasefire agreement in Moscow. Events did not go as planned, on the government side, Sarraj, as well as his political ally Khaled Mishri, head of the Tripoli-based High Council of state, signed the seven-point ceasefire agreement Turkish and Russian officials had prepared. But Haftar and Aghili Saleh his political ally, that heads the Tobruk-based parliament which supports Haftar's armed forces series of operations, declined. Both factions from Libya left Moscow Monday evening not meeting each other, so that effort to broker a ceasefire understanding did not succeed. Yet coherence ceasefire in Tripoli looks mainly to be holding. Each side have stopped from aerial strikes but merely exchanged little artillery fire.



## Reason for the Moscow Event/Meeting

### Libya

It is not certain, what caused this hasty move, Turkey and Moscow might have created an equally profitable deal, restraining them (as well as their proxies) the desire to fight, and strongly giving them edge in resolving a conflict from which Europe and the US increasingly are absent. The unexpected request for their presence following two important events in the beginning of January which instead of revealing favourable circumstances for harmony, implied more deliberate violence. The preceding was Turkey's formal notification it will dispatch forces to Libya, and following immediately after that was Haftar's takeover of a coastal city (Sirte) in the center of the country. On 2 January, Turkey's parliament authorized the deployment of troops as well as naval personnel to prevent the collapse of the beleaguered Sarraj government in the hands of Haftar-led forces. The latter had made gradual advances in Tripoli's periphery in previous months, in large parts thanks to Russian armed private contractors and aerial support from United Arab Emirates (UAE). Till date, Turkey according to reports has dispatched an indefinite number of allied Syrian fighters to Libya, and noticeably efficient military personnel from its own armed forces, and the numbers is anticipated to multiply. Turkish officials stated that these developments intend to initiate moves for an end to hostilities by stabilizing power on the ground. A collective mass of people's anxiety, however, was that direct Turkey's involvement will spark more increase especially one to counteract a perceived discrepancy. In fact, different pro-GNA official implied that Turkish backing will enable them to propel a counter-attack as well as equally hit Haftar's troops in their hindermost bases in eastern Libya. While on the opponents' view, various Arab ethnic groups around Libya opted for a holy war to fight against what they perceived as Turkey's "colonial ambitions".

Notably, Ankara's choice to come between, on Serraj's interest was preceded by, and to an extent dependent on, the Tripoli government's informal contract to enter into a controversial maritime transaction which Turkey has for long looked for. Ankara sees the transaction as crucial to impeding the development of an eastern Mediterranean gas hub which it was barred from. The "delimitation of maritime jurisdiction areas" agreement between Erdogan and Sarraj which Turkish parliament ratified on 5 December established an 18.6 nautical miles (35 kilometre) line between Turkey and Libya that would form the outer boundary of an Exclusive Economic Zone. By transecting an area claimed by Greece and Cyprus, this line could jeopardize plans to build a gas pipeline from the eastern Mediterranean to Europe, Governments within the Middle East and North African region disputed the deal's regality. The second event, Haftar's sudden takeover of Sirte on 7 January-his first significant military advance in months-suggests he may want to use the town's airbase to launch an offensive against Misrata, a key city whose fighters form the backbone of Sarraj's military coalition. Overall, the feat that Russia and Turkey chose this fresh approach draws attention to what has been obviously true for months-that harmony in Libya depends as much on international actors' readiness to apply influence on their Libyan allies actual backing for a political choice than war. Though Haftar truly has declined to give a legal consent to a ceasefire pact, one of his principal foreign backers put on table suggests that he does not feel dependent on Russia alone, and that his other backers-the UAE most prominently-give him room for maneuver.

The impetus begat by the Berlin Conference of January 2019 came up with the following actions:

- Seeking a UNSC statement of intent for an instant ceasefire and resuming of UN-led agreement through discussion along three tracks (military, financial and economic);
- Reinforcing the UN arms embargo on Libya by insisting the Security Council request more orderly monitoring of reports from the United Nations Panel of Experts, to put into action the EU Maritime Operation in the Mediterranean as well as perfectly equipping it;
- Insisting both Haftar and the Tripoli government take part in the Geneva ceasefire talks as well as any subsequent UN-backed discussions; and encourage the two sides' external supporters, notably Russia and Turkey, who ahead of Berlin had tried to capture their wary allies into an armistice, to strongly support the Geneva series of events;
- If the two sides reach agreement on a ceasefire and the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) is called upon to monitor that ceasefire, being ready to commit greater resources to that mission;
- Urging Haftar to restart production at oil facilities his forces have shut down and calling on the authorities in Tripoli to take concrete steps to resolve bank disputes with their rival in the east.

The EU, along with the US, UK, France, Russia, China, Italy, Germany, Turkey, Egypt, UAE, Algeria and Congo-Brazzaville, as well as the UN, Arab League and African Union, committed in 55-point declaration to pursue three objectives: "to redouble their efforts for a sustained suspension of hostilities, de-escalation and a permanent ceasefire" to "unequivocally and fully respect and implement" the UN arms embargo; and to make easier the renewal of UN-backed discussions with military, political and financial tracks. Both Serraj and Haftar were present though neither of them signed the statement, however, both according to reports agreed to send representatives to a joint military commission planned to meet in Geneva to seek for a ceasefire.

## Syria.

The most serious attempts at making the Syrian government as well as representatives of the opposition come together to propose for discussions occurred at the Geneva II peace talks in 2014. The discussion based on the Geneva Communiqué which had been signed in 2012 at a meeting that included representatives of the United Nations, the Arab League, the European Union, and other governments such as the United States and Russia. The Communiqué outlined steps to be taken to establish a transitional government “formed on basis of mutual consent”. Unsurprisingly, Geneva II was a non-starter. Much of the opposition boycotted it; the two sides refused to talk face-to-face; there was endless wrangling over procedural issues, grandstanding; and, perhaps most importantly, no clear consensus on the meaning of the Geneva Communiqué. The USA together with the oppositions asserted that any transitional government could not include President Bashar al-Assad; the regime and its Russian ally asserted that there was no such stipulation in the communiqué (they were, in fact, correct, although the communiqué did stipulate that both sides had to agree on the transitional government's members). In the end, the talks failed because the government was not interested and the opposition would not have been able to deliver even if it had been. Because the inner part of the Syrian regime is strongly connected together by religious beliefs and kinship, it is not likely to break apart. And because it as well as its powerful interest group come from the minority Alawite community, it genuinely accepts the only options is to fight to the hostile end or face extinction. Since the opposition is so belligerent, it is not likely that the government will be able to eradicate it completely from its rural and exterior strongholds (fortress).

And for the reason that the International Community favors unsuccessful states to split ones, the much appropriate result for the Syrian civil war is that which UN and Arab League special representative to Syria, Lakhdar Brahimi referred to as Somalization of Syria. That is to say, Syria will yet keep possession of a member at the United Nations, only its territory will be divided and distributed among the government and its proponents, various armed militias (such as the Islamic State), and Syrian Kurds, each of which will enviously guard its sphere of influence and jealously eye the sphere of influence of others. The Syrian war has spawned many arguments about humanitarian interventions. The United Nations reports that 270,000 refugees left their homes in order to flee attacks in the neighbouring province of Daraa and United Nations officials called Aleppo a 'total meltdown of humanity'. The present circumstance is yet another additional humanitarian catastrophe in Syria-in addition Syrians are beckoning on the international community to interpose. Though the United States failed to meet humanitarian objective, as it intends to finish the ground war with the Islamic State terrorists although diminishing its activities in the Syrian civil war-and at the same time trying to constrain Assad to give up chemical weapons.

## Findings

In the course of this study, we discovered the following findings; Macroeconomic and political instability spiked inflation, investment plummeted unemployment and poverty increased and state abilities to finance public services were severely restricted as government increased defense spending. The direct effect of the uprising in other Arab countries was relatively small and positive in the medium term as the inflow of refugees has boosted the consumption of goods, services and labour supply, and therefore the size of these economies (Turkey and Yemen). The effect on investment has been mixed; private investment has increased as some Syrian and Libyan businesses relocated to neighbouring countries. However, as political violence escalated, risk premiums increased and discouraged investment, particularly in sectors affected negatively by the wars like tourism and hospitality industries.

Land business owners have benefited because the arrival of displaced persons into foreign lands has shot up local demands for goods and services, raised prices and rent and has augmented the labour supply, lowering wages and leaving unskilled workers worse off. The civil war indirectly led to many nonviolent deaths that could have been prevented in times of peace. Preventable deaths associated with a combination of war-related circumstances, including shortages of medical personnel, medications, other essential goods and basic services, destroyed infrastructure and transport interruption amongst others. The civil war in both Libya and Syria have reversed years of development and progress in these countries, undermining the health, wealth and skills of the Arab population and workforce as millions of people require welfare assistance in these nations and the cost associated with meeting these needs have grown considerably as the wars have intensified. Since many refugees have not been able to obtain work permits, they have either remained unemployed and depend on aid or have been working in the not organized section with no protection and on an irregular basis at low wages.

The wars forced millions of children from school as many schools were destroyed, others closed their doors and some turned into shelters for the internally displaced. An indefinite large number of these children have lost many years of schooling, while children in the territories occupied by terrorist groups (ISIS) have been scarred for life by harsh military training, exposure to violence and ideological indoctrination. In neighbouring

countries, many young refugees have not been able to attend school or make academic progress due to overcrowded classrooms, persistent economic hardship or language barrier e. g. in Turkey. Starvation, disease and war-related disability have also affected the well-being of children and their potential to contribute to economic activity in the future, the economic damage associated with these unfortunate developments will be fully evident in the long term when today's children become active labour-market participants. Finally, in the short to medium term, the failure to educate young Arabs in both Libya and Syria will translate into frustration and alienation and may have negative consequences for general stability.

### **Conclusion**

The wisdom that armed conflict should be pursued only as a last resort and that fighting, if inevitable, should be as quick as possible appears to have been forgotten in recent decades. Since the termination of the World War II, the incidence of civil wars has been more than four times that of interstate conflicts and civil wars have lasted on average three years longer than interstate wars, which has lasted slightly more than a year (Brandt et al, 2008). Within the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), political violence escalated during the last decade and a half, when more than 40% of all civil wars started in the region after the Arab Uprising. Political violence intensified particularly after the revolutions of 2011. Since then, MENA countries including Libya and Syria have been torn by civil wars and there have been a surge in terrorist activities. So far, the economic cost of the post-Arab-Spring upheaval have been borne primarily by the MENA Countries, but other parts of the world, especially Europe, have started feeling the impact of the wars (refugee influx and terrorist attacks). Both civil wars (Libyan and Syria) have become a substitute conflict with Russia, Turkey, United State and Iran engaged in shadow skirmishes with global implication. In a world fractured into camps, a diverse coalition of democratic countries encounters two authoritarian regimes- China and Russia. These two countries will collaborate with autocracies like Syria and Libya (under Gaddafi) whenever it is to their advantage to do so.

### **Recommendations**

External attempts to decrease in intensity the civil war was slow, however the foreigners with a legitimate interest in these countries took an important action, meeting in Berlin to try to reach an agreement on tactics to decrease in intensity the conflict. Based on the summary, findings and conclusion drawn thereof, the following recommendations are outlined: The European Union as well as its member-states should help monitor and enforce formally agreed ceasefire by all sides, ensuring that United Nations Security Mission in Libya and Syria (UNSMILS) is appropriately resourced and staffed to follow up military talks in Geneva. The EU could also review the mandate and resource of its Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) Missions that are deployed, so that they are able to support ceasefire in cooperation with the United Nation if requested by the different factions in Libya and Syria. European leaders should step up diplomatic efforts to ensure that talks (peaceful negotiation) takes place, using their ties to these factions to encourage them to compromise as both sides have remained attached to maximalist demands, including concerning prerequisites for a ceasefire.

The United States should support the United Nations decision-making, international Law and diplomacy instead of military force, and acknowledge that there is no military answer to the problem of conflict in Libya and Syria. That means no US military strikes or threats of strikes, and an end to all other military involvement, including arms shipments because even if efforts for a ceasefire, arms embargo and diplomacy do not succeed immediately we know that US military involvement would further make things worse. Washington must insist that any agreement reached, provide protection for all communities in both Libya and Syria, and also guarantee the right to safe return for all refugees and IDPs, the settlement must not deny rights to whole categories of people, including those who have served in the government, the army or opposition militias and once the ceasefire takes hold, the United States should also support efforts to hold accountable individuals on all sides responsible for war crimes. The Organization responsible for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons must continue to oversee the conveying of chemical weapons from the war zone to international control so that they may be safely removed or destroyed and Washington ought to back this as well as support disarmament efforts by supporting calls for the creation of a weapons of mass destruction-free area in every part of the Middle East, with no exceptions. Indeed, its only through a negotiated agreement that ends the conflict can the United States achieve its core objectives in MENA region which is eliminating ISIS and al Qaeda safe havens, and protecting its Middle Eastern and European partners from destabilizing dangers posed by foreign fighters and refugees' inflow.

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