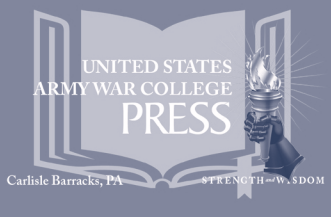
The Letort Papers



AN ARAB NATO IN THE MAKING? MIDDLE EASTERN MILITARY COOPERATION SINCE 2011

Florence Gaub

Strategic Studies Institute
U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA

U.S. ARMY WAR COLLEGE
SSI
STRATEGIC STUDIES INSTITUTE

The United States Army War College

The United States Army War College educates and develops leaders for service at the strategic level while advancing knowledge in the global application of Landpower.

The purpose of the United States Army War College is to produce graduates who are skilled critical thinkers and complex problem solvers. Concurrently, it is our duty to the U.S. Army to also act as a "think factory" for commanders and civilian leaders at the strategic level worldwide and routinely engage in discourse and debate concerning the role of ground forces in achieving national security objectives.

The Strategic Studies Institute publishes national security and strategic research and analysis to influence policy debate and bridge the gap between military and academia.

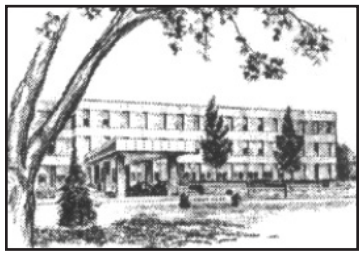
The Center for Strategic Leadership contributes to the education of world class senior leaders, develops expert knowledge, and provides solutions to strategic Army issues affecting the national security community.

The Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute provides subject matter expertise, technical review, and writing expertise to agencies that develop stability operations concepts and doctrines.

The School of Strategic Landpower develops strategic leaders by providing a strong foundation of wisdom grounded in mastery of the profession of arms, and by serving as a crucible for educating future leaders in the analysis, evaluation, and refinement of professional expertise in war, strategy, operations, national security, resource management, and responsible command.

The U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center acquires, conserves, and exhibits historical materials for use to support the U.S. Army, educate an international audience, and honor Soldiers—past and present.

STRATEGIC STUDIES INSTITUTE



The Strategic Studies Institute (SSI) is part of the U.S. Army War College and is the strategic-level study agent for issues related to national security and military strategy with emphasis on geostrategic analysis.

The mission of SSI is to use independent analysis to conduct strategic studies that develop policy recommendations on:

- Strategy, planning, and policy for joint and combined employment of military forces;
- Regional strategic appraisals;
- The nature of land warfare;
- Matters affecting the Army's future;
- The concepts, philosophy, and theory of strategy; and,
- Other issues of importance to the leadership of the Army.

Studies produced by civilian and military analysts concern topics having strategic implications for the Army, the Department of Defense, and the larger national security community.

In addition to its studies, SSI publishes special reports on topics of special or immediate interest. These include edited proceedings of conferences and topically oriented roundtables, expanded trip reports, and quick-reaction responses to senior Army leaders.

The Institute provides a valuable analytical capability within the Army to address strategic and other issues in support of Army participation in national security policy formulation.

Strategic Studies Institute
and
U.S. Army War College Press

AN ARAB NATO IN THE MAKING? MIDDLE EASTERN MILITARY COOPERATION SINCE 2011

Florence Gaub

September 2016

*****

Comments pertaining to this report are invited and should be forwarded to: Director, Strategic Studies Institute and U.S. Army War College Press, U.S. Army War College, 47 Ashburn Drive, Carlisle, PA 17013-5010.

*****

This manuscript was funded by the U.S. Army War College External Research Associates Program. Information on this program is available on our website, *www.StrategicStudies Institute.army.mil*, at the Opportunities tab.

*****

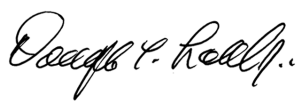
*****

The Strategic Studies Institute and U.S. Army War College Press publishes a monthly email newsletter to update the national security community on the research of our analysts, recent and forthcoming publications, and upcoming conferences sponsored by the Institute. Each newsletter also provides a strategic commentary by one of our research analysts. If you are interested in receiving this newsletter, please subscribe on the SSI website at *www.StrategicStudiesInstitute.army.mil/newsletter.*

ISBN 1-58487-736-7

FOREWORD

The Middle East and North Africa region has been one of the world's most unstable areas since World War II, and yet, the nations of the region have failed to develop any form of security architecture. The Arab Spring and its aftermath seemed to have opened a window of opportunity for certain Arab states to cooperate more—but how and to what extent remain to be seen. This Letort Paper explains why the region has struggled so far to establish cooperative security, and what obstacles need to be overcome on the way to a system akin to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Unless they are addressed, every new announcement of an alliance—be it of Arab, Islamic, Gulf, or other nature—will remain a pie in the sky. Just as the international community is yet again considering such an architecture—perhaps even including Iran—this idea and its implementation are more important than ever.



DOUGLAS C. LOVELACE, JR.
Director
Strategic Studies Institute and
U.S. Army War College Press

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

DR. FLORENCE GAUB is a Senior Analyst at the European Union Institute for Security Studies, where she heads the Middle East/Mediterranean program. She studies the Arab world, with a focus on strategy and security. In addition to monitoring post-conflict developments in Iraq, Lebanon, and Libya, she researches Arab military forces, conflict structures, geostrategic dimensions of the Arab region, and intercultural communication. She was previously assigned to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Defence College and the German Parliament. Dr. Gaub has published several articles and two books on these topics, and has lectured widely with European governments, the NATO school at Oberammergau, Joint Forces Command Naples, and several think tanks and universities in the Middle East, Europe, and the United States. Dr. Gaub holds degrees from Sciences Po Paris, Sorbonne, and Munich universities. She holds a Ph.D. from Humboldt University Berlin, where she wrote her thesis on the Lebanese army.

SUMMARY

Two features have been consistent in the Middle East and North Africa since the era of independence: ongoing violence of all sorts—and the absence of a collective security structure, which could tackle this violence. Since the end of World War II, the region has seen multiple attempts to organize collective and cooperative security, all of which failed.

Since the so-called Arab Spring, movement has come again into regional security. From joint exercises and combat operations to an attempt to create a joint Arab force, the trend seems to be going toward more collective action in the region. As this study shows, however, challenges remain on the way to a true collective defense or security body; issues of sovereignty and distrust will have to be overcome before Arab states can truly move beyond mere alliances and integrate their forces.

A successful Arab security system needs to address security in a comprehensive manner. First, it would have to cover security challenges that are not only regional and of interstate nature, but also domestic (such as civil wars). Second, it would have to be able to manage aggression not only from outsiders (e.g., the attack on Egypt in 1956), but also among member states (such as Iraq and Kuwait). "Internal" here, therefore, has two meanings—internal to the member states, and internal to the alliance. These are both dimensions that a classical alliance (e.g., the North Atlantic Treaty Organization [NATO]) is not concerned with—although any security system seeks the reduction of the possibility of organized violence both within and between states, but preconditions differ. Alliances, or even collective defense systems,

will not be enough for the Arab world, because they focus solely on the regional aspect of security. Instead, a more holistic system is necessary that could reduce the likelihood of violence altogether—such as a collective security system, which later could become a security community.

The system would have to decide on provisions pertaining to domestic security issues such as unrest or civil war without openly infringing on Arab state sovereignty. When the League's Arab Deterrent Force was sent to Lebanon in 1976, and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Peninsula Shield was sent to Bahrain in 2011, these missions were possible only because both states had allegedly invited them in full sovereignty.

There are two main challenges for any type of Arab security architecture to overcome: the first is a high-level degree of distrust amongst states; the second is that conventional collective security is chiefly concerned with interstate wars—when most Arab conflicts have been either of intrastate or at least asymmetric nature. Taken together, circumstances for collective security are infinitely more complex than, for instance, those in Western Europe after World War II.

Security cooperation requires first and foremost a certain level of trust amongst states participating in any such scheme. After all, suspecting one's ally to threaten one's security defies the idea of any form of cooperation in this field. In the Arab world, however, trust has been porous because regimes have struggled with issues of legitimacy and sovereignty from the outset. States were born with weak institutions, poor popular legitimacy, and a divided polity.

Not only states were questioning each other's sovereignty; citizens were questioning regime legitimacy as well. Only in 1964 did the Arab League member states formally put an end to Arab unification efforts and called on Arab states to cease their propaganda wars and to recognize the principle of non-interference—in practice, many Arab states continued to meddle with the politics in other states.

The second challenge is that collective security is generally concerned with interstate conflict and its prevention. To date, there is no comprehensive international system to prevent and settle violent internal conflicts. The principle of sovereignty considers this a domain of the state, which forbids external interference. This means that engaging in internal conflicts elsewhere requires either an invitation from the government or a resolution by the United Nations Security Council. Where neither is the case, states have to act outside international law. But more importantly, internal conflicts are difficult to settle generally, and by outsiders in particular. The case of Libya in 2011 was the first instance in which the United Nations mandated an international operation into an ongoing civil war—highlighting the fact that the respect of sovereignty remains a crucial pillar of the international system, but particularly so in the Arab world. Any security system aimed at the management of internal conflicts, ranging from civil war to terrorism, will have to address the somewhat contested issue of sovereignty.

Policy recommendations:

1. Past attempts to build a cooperative or collective Arab security system have excluded one or several key countries, which in turn then actively worked against it. A successful sys-

tem would have to include all regional players, in one way or the other. The League of Arab States, as the most comprehensive of the mentioned organizations, would be a suitable starting point if it offered partnership provisions to non-Arab states such as Iran, Turkey, or post-conflict Israel. Announced at the 2010 Sirte Summit, the League's Arab Neighborhood Policy has failed to take hold so far, but would go beyond the existing observer status non-Arab states currently can obtain. Turkey and Iran, albeit neither members nor observers, have already participated in League summits. Regional sub-groupings (such as the Maghreb, the Levant, or the Gulf) could work within the system without jeopardizing the whole's comprehensive approach.

2. A successful Arab security system needs to address security in a comprehensive manner. First, it would have to cover security challenges that are not only regional and of interstate nature, but also domestic (such as civil wars). Second, it would have to be able to manage aggression not only from outsiders but also among member states (such as Iraq and Kuwait). "Internal," therefore, has two meanings here—internal to the member state, and internal to the alliance. These are both dimensions that a classical alliance (e.g., NATO) is not concerned with—although any security system seeks the reduction of the possibility of organized violence both within and between states, but preconditions differ. Alliances, or even collective defense systems, will not be enough for the Arab world, because they focus solely on the regional aspect of security. Instead, a more holistic system is

necessary that could reduce the likelihood of violence altogether—such as a collective security system, which later could become a security community.

The system would have to decide on provisions pertaining to domestic security issues such as unrest or civil war without openly infringing on Arab state sovereignty—when the League's Arab Deterrent Force was sent to Lebanon in 1976, and the GCC Peninsula Shield was sent to Bahrain in 2011, this was possible only because both states had allegedly invited these missions in full sovereignty. Any new system needs to establish clear criteria as well as limitations for military intervention, such as in the shape of a United Nations Security Council resolution.

3. Any collective security system needs to be able to enforce its punitive measures; this includes by political as well as military means. The Arab countries' military forces are in an acceptable state; the room for improvement consists mostly in the establishment of common standards for interoperability, as Arab forces have adopted by and large Soviet or Western standards, which are not interoperable. Most importantly, the forces need to match the ambition of the threats and risks identified, which poses a much greater challenge. Finding consensus on a strategic vision is what the region needs most. This is complicated by the fact that only a few Arab states possess national defense strategies. In addition, the armed forces' military purpose is often blurred with social and economic considerations such as employment provision.

An integrated military structure, such as the one NATO has, would be advisable, since its benefits go beyond its defense purpose. No other alliance or collective defense organization has established a similar system that promotes cooperation, builds trust, and projects power.

4. The absence of a power center has often been cited as one of the failures in establishing a collective security system in the Arab world. This need not be an insurmountable obstacle; stable clusters of states, such as the Arab world's subregions, can replace a single strong state acting as a centrifuge for collective security. To date, there is no stability in either, but initiatives such as the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Arab Maghreb Union point into that direction. Besides, the Arab world does not suffer from the absence of one strong state; rather, it has too many contenders for the center of power. There are positive indications, however, that the desire to move from individual to collective security in the Arab world is clearly there.

Arab collective security seems far away in light of the still unsettled Israeli-Palestinian conflict, ongoing internal conflicts, and the rise of the tone in the Gulf. In a chicken-and-egg logic, peace is a precondition for cooperation in the security area—but then again, cooperation might be a precondition for peace.

AN ARAB NATO IN THE MAKING? MIDDLE EASTERN MILITARY COOPERATION SINCE 2011

Two features have been consistent in the Middle East and North Africa since the era of independence: ongoing violence of all sorts—and the absence of a collective security structure, which could tackle this violence.

Since 1945, the region has seen seven interstate wars, eight intrastate conflicts, and numerous disruptive military coups, revolutions, and waves of terrorism, which have cost at least 1.3 million human lives; one study estimates the total cost of conflict in the Arab world (including military expenditures and lost economic opportunities as a result of these conflicts) at $12 trillion dollars.[1] Not surprisingly, it is also the world region with the consistently highest amount of military per capita spending (6% of the GDP on average).[2] At the same time, the region lacks a security architecture that could prevent or tackle conflicts, although there have been numerous attempts to create one. In spite of their failures, calls for such a system never ended. Former U.S. Secretary of State James Baker called for "a regional security structure that is able to contain the aggressive tendencies of a leader like Saddam Hussein,"[3] a call reiterated by Egypt's former President Morsi in January 2013. The idea is a popular one—72% of Arab citizens support the creation of a joint Arab force.[4]

Since the so-called Arab Spring, movement has begun again toward regional security; from joint exercises and combat operations to an attempt to create a joint Arab force, the trend seems to be moving toward

more collective action in the region. As this Letort Paper shows, however, challenges remain on the way to a true collective defense or security body; issues of sovereignty and distrust will have to be overcome before Arab states can truly move beyond mere alliances and integrate their forces.

Try Again, Fail Again: Previous Attempts for Arab Collective Security.

The idea for Arab collective security is not new; it emerged, along with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and other such systems, after World War II. In 1950, the League of Arab States signed the Treaty of Joint Defense and Economic Cooperation, which resembles, in Article 2, NATO's Article 5:

> The contracting States consider any [act of] armed aggression made against any one or more of them or their armed forces, to be directed against them all. Therefore, in accordance with the right of self-defense, individually and collectively, they undertake to go without delay to the aid of the State or States against which such an act of aggression is made, and immediately to take, individually and collectively, all steps available, including the use of armed force, to repel the aggression and restore security and peace.[5]

In the context of the treaty, only one mission was ever deployed: in 1961, 33,000 troops from mostly Egypt (and a few from Syria, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Sudan, and Tunisia) were sent to Kuwait to protect it from a potential Iraqi annexation attempt.[6]

In 1964, the first Arab summit promised the establishment of a joint Arab military command. During the war of 1967, in which Egypt, Syria, and Jordan

fought Israel, Jordan placed its troops under Egyptian command accordingly; however, the experience was a painful one, as communication was as unclear as the overall strategy. The command applied lessons learned as well. After the war, it instructed Lebanon to upgrade its air defense system, funded jointly by the Joint Arab Military Command and the state of Lebanon—but overall, the war's defeating experience let the command wither away.[7]

Although there was another mission in 1976 to civil-war-torn Lebanon, this one did not fall under the treaty, as it did not concern an external aggression but peacekeeping for an internal conflict. Its 30,000 troops, the Arab Deterrent Force, had the mission to supervise a cease-fire and were supposed to be under the control of the Lebanese president (which they never were). The force was mostly staffed with Syrian nationals, although it originally had contingents from Saudi Arabia, Libya, South Yemen, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Sudan as well. The mission was discredited not only by its failure to put an end to the war, but mostly by Syria's forces staying in country beyond Lebanon's 1982 request to terminate the operation—until 2005.[8] The peacekeeping force had therefore served as a fig leaf for occupation.

But not only Arab states sought the establishment of a regional security architecture. Believing that the Arab states lacked the necessary military capacity to repel a potential Soviet attack, Great Britain and the United States attempted the creation of a regional collective defense system in 1950, which would have included not only regional states such as Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Israel, but also the United States, Great Britain, France, and Turkey, as well as three Commonwealth states. The Middle East Com-

mand (MEC), as it was to be named, was supposed to have a direct link to NATO as its commander; Supreme Allied Commander Middle East (SACME) would have shared authority with a Middle East Standing Group made up of NATO officials. The MEC, therefore, would have effectively constituted a Middle Eastern extension of NATO. Middle Eastern governments were to sit on an advisory board.[9]

However, the MEC never materialized, like its successor attempt, the slightly altered Middle East Defence Organisation (MEDO), because the newly independent Arab states, Egypt in particular, saw it as another Western attempt to control Arab security and did in large part not share NATO's threat perception with regard to the Soviet Union.[10] In a last attempt to link Middle Eastern to Western defense, Turkey and Iraq launched the Baghdad Pact in 1955, later joined by Great Britain, Iran, and Pakistan. In theory it was a launching pad for Arab collective defense (in Article 5, the pact was explicitly open to Arab League member states[11]), but Egypt as well as Saudi Arabia's opposition to it prevented other Arab states from joining. The Pact's only Arab member, Iraq, withdrew in 1958 following its coup d'état, which removed the monarchy.[12]

Other regional attempts to organize collective defense include the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), created in 1981, which, however, was not explicitly founded as a defense organization; only in 1986 did it create the very modest Peninsula Shield Force (then consisting of 5,000 troops), and in 2000, it signed the Joint Defense Agreement. Nevertheless, in spite of repeated proclamations for more Gulf military cooperation or indeed integration, at virtually every summit, progress has been slow—although common exercises and maneuvers have become more common.[13]

The short-lived Arab Cooperation Council (ACC), created in 1989 by Iraq, Jordan, North Yemen, and Egypt (largely as a reaction to their exclusion from the GCC), aimed originally chiefly at economic integration, but added security cooperation later on; it fell apart in the wake of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990. The Arab Maghreb Union, founded the same year as the ACC, works solely toward the economic integration of North Africa and has no security dimension to it.

In addition to such formal arrangements, the region has of course also seen ad-hoc alliances; for example, in the war of 1948, Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq joined forces against Israel (Saudi Arabia's troops were under Egyptian command). In 1973, Egypt and Syria joined forces once more to retake lost territory. In this, they had some support from a number of Arab countries, such as Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Algeria, Libya, Kuwait, Morocco, and Tunisia. However, these units (when they made it to the front lines) were bare of logistical plan or support, and in general, coordination amongst the Arab forces was so poor that friendly fire incidences occurred frequently.[14] In 1991, several Arab states joined the international coalition against Iraq to varying degrees: Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Kuwait, Oman, UAE, Qatar, and Bahrain—some of which were fighting under the Saudi Prince, former General Khaled bin Sultan, in a parallel command to the former American commander, General Norman Schwarzkopf. In the 1980s, Jordan had realigned with Iraq and therefore did not join the alliance.

Largely, these security provisions have been inadequate in preventing or putting an end to conflicts. When Egypt was attacked by Israel, France, and the United Kingdom in 1956, none of its fellow Arab states

came to its assistance—although there were rumors that Egypt's President himself requested Syria and Jordan to stay out of the conflict.[15] The Arab League failed to find a unified response to Iraq's war with Iran (1980–1988) or its invasion of Kuwait, and the GCC's Peninsula Shield was unable to defend Kuwait against Iraq's aggression—instead, an international coalition led by the United States liberated the emirate. When Lebanon was attacked in 1982 and 2006 by Israel, the League's members did not come to its help either. While nominally united when it comes to the conflicts with Israel, none of the three purely Arab wars against Israel (1948, 1967, and 1973) have been under a League banner, and only some of its member states have actually been at war with Israel. Technically, Palestine became a League member in 1974 and was recognized by the League in 1988 as an independent state—hence, the collective defense Article 2 would apply to it. Equally, Arab states neither joined the American-led coalition against Iraq in 2003, nor openly fought it.

In addition, Arab states are often fueled rather than resolved by internal conflicts; for example, during the North Yemen War (1962-1970), Egypt militarily supported the republicans, whereas Saudi Arabia backed the royalists; during the Lebanese Civil War, only the last one of the 12 peace attempts was mediated by another Arab state, Saudi Arabia. Instead, several of the Lebanese militias received support from a variety of Middle Eastern states. During Iraq's security implosion in the years following the invasion of 2003, Saudi Arabia was strongly suspected of funneling money to the Sunni insurgents—or at least turning a blind eye toward private citizens doing so.[16] In the same vein, states granted asylum to individuals who were wanted for terrorism or other charges in other Arab

countries.Saudi Arabia, for instance, hosted Muslim Brotherhood leaders following the Egyptian regimes crackdown on them in the 1950s and 1960s.

In the absence of regional structures to manage insecurity, Arab states have relied increasingly on outside powers to solve regional security issues. In 2011, both the GCC and the League of Arab States called on the United Nations to establish a no-fly zone over Libya, leading to NATO's Operation UNIFIED PROTECTOR. In 2013, calls for an external military intervention to end the Syrian civil war highlighted one thing in particular: there is no Arab regional regime capable or willing to manage conflict.[17]

Main Challenges to Arab Collective Security.

A successful Arab security system needs to address security in a comprehensive manner. First, it would have to cover security challenges that are not only regional and of an interstate nature, but also domestic (such as civil wars). Second, it would have to be able to manage aggression not only from outsiders (e.g., the attack on Egypt in 1956) but also **among** member states (such as Iraq and Kuwait). "Internal" here, therefore, has two meanings—internal to the member state, and internal to the alliance. These are both dimensions that a classical alliance (e.g., NATO) is not concerned with—although any security system seeks the reduction of the possibility of organized violence both **within** and **between** states, but preconditions differ. Alliances, or even collective defense systems, will not be enough for the Arab world, because they focus solely on the regional aspect of security. Instead, a more holistic system is necessary that could reduce the likelihood of violence altogether—such as a col-

lective security system, which later could become a security community.

The system would have to decide on provisions pertaining to domestic security issues, such as unrest or civil war, without openly infringing on Arab state sovereignty. For example, when the League's Arab Deterrent Force was sent to Lebanon in 1976, and the GCC Peninsula Shield was sent to Bahrain in 2011, this was possible only because both states had allegedly invited these missions in full sovereignty.[18]

There are two main challenges for any type of Arab security architecture to overcome: the first is a high-level degree of distrust amongst states; and the second is that conventional collective security is chiefly concerned with interstate wars, when most Arab conflicts have been either of intrastate or least asymmetric nature. Taken together, circumstances for collective security are infinitely more complex than, for instance, those in Western Europe after World War II.

Security cooperation requires first and foremost a certain level of trust amongst states participating in any such process. After all, suspecting one's ally of threatening one's security defies the idea of any form of cooperation in this field. In the Arab world, however, trust has been porous, because regimes have struggled with issues of legitimacy and sovereignty from the outset. States were born with weak institutions, poor popular legitimacy, and a divided polity.

Not only states were questioning each other's sovereignty; citizens were questioning regime legitimacy as well. Only in 1964 did the Arab League member states **formally** put an end to Arab unification efforts and called on Arab states to cease their propaganda wars and to recognize the principle of noninterference; in practice, many Arab states continued to meddle with politics in other states.

Jordan and Saudi Arabia in particular insisted that Arab states had to put an end to jeopardizing each other's existence. State nationalism has always had powerful rivals in transnational ideologies such as Arabism, Islamism, pan-Shiism, pan-Sunniism, communism, or Baathism. Arab states use these transnational trends regularly to interfere in each other's affairs, sometimes even militarily: Syria threatened Jordan and occupied Lebanon; Iraq invaded Kuwait and had border clashes with Saudi Arabia; Egypt and Saudi Arabia supported different sides in the Yemeni war of the 1960s; and all states have funded anti-regime entities in other states. "It is difficult to imagine any other region of the world in which the smaller and less powerful states live in genuine fear of their existence should the regional order be challenged."[19] As a direct consequence, Arab states have pursued a competitive zero-sum approach to security, which was reinforced by the zero-sum logic of the Cold War and has carried over until today.[20] In essence, Arab leaders were always under threat from other states, either openly questioning their right to exist, or transnational ideologies jeopardizing their regime from the inside.

This crisis of sovereignty has had a direct impact on regional security at both the domestic and the regional level.

> Only an autonomous entity that enjoys the finality of political authority over its territories and constituents can join that exclusive club known as the society of states, and begin to nurture the formation of a security community with its peers.[21]

In this context, the newly independent Arab states, although theoretically subscribing to the principles of

collective security and defense, had other strategic priorities: securing sovereignty and independence first to the inside and only later to the outside. This is the main reason collective defense and security have so far not been able to gain ground in the Arab world—they simply ignore the very internal dimension security has in this region, where regional security patterns are often the outcome of domestic security concerns. During the war of 1948 against Israel, "several Arab leaders committed only a fraction of their armed forces to the 'common struggle' against Israel" because they feared for their internal stability. In addition, "it was not that Arab Chiefs-of-Staff failed to coordinate their battle plans; rather they refused outright to place their own troops under another state's command."[22] The Gulf states' rhetoric against Iran as well as Syria and Lebanon's Hezbollah is, among other things, the result of real security concerns over their Shia minority (an Iran-affiliated group attempted a coup in 1981 against the Bahraini government). Lebanon and Iraq attempt neutrality when it comes to the Syrian crisis out of concern that it might polarize their already agitated multi-confessional populations. Jordan and Lebanon's strategies toward Israel are very much influenced by the large Palestinian refugee presence on their soil. The separation of internal and external security seems particularly artificial in the Arab world because the agents of both dimensions are often intertwined, if not identical.[23]

The second challenge is that collective security is generally concerned with interstate conflict and its prevention. To this date, there is no comprehensive international system to prevent and settle violent internal conflicts. The principle of sovereignty considers this a domain of the state, which forbids external

interference. This means that engaging in internal conflict elsewhere requires either an invitation from the government, or a resolution by the United Nations Security Council. When neither is the case, the states have to act outside international law. However, more importantly, internal conflicts are difficult to settle generally, and by outsiders in particular.[24] The case of Libya in 2011 was the first instance in which the United Nations mandated an international operation into an ongoing civil war—highlighting the fact that the respect of sovereignty remains a crucial pillar of the international system, but particularly so in the Arab world. Any security system aimed at the management of internal conflicts, ranging from civil war to terrorism, will have to address the somewhat contested issue of sovereignty.

Lastly, the situation is further complicated by the fact that the region is polynodal in nature and has unclear borders, whereby states like Israel, Turkey, and Iran, but also adjacent Europe, play a role in regional security without being Arab. As a result, competing security paradigms such as Mediterranean, Islamic, Middle Eastern, and Gulf emerged in the shape of exclusionary forums such as NATO's Mediterranean Dialogue, the Organization of Islamic Conference, the GCC, and the ill-fated Arms Control and Regional Security Working Group (ACRS), which collapsed as a result of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.[25] In addition, the absence of a power center that could have a centrifugal effect on the rest of the region does not facilitate the creation of a collective security system. Although Egypt tends to be considered by many to be the epicenter of the Arab world, due to its size, history, and geostrategic location, Iraq and Saudi Arabia have been contenders for the same role, flanked by

active middle powers (Syria, Algeria) vying for influence in the kingmaker's role. This stable/unstable Arab regional order collapsed with Egypt's signing of a separate peace treaty with Israel in 1979, choosing state sovereignty over pan-Arabism and leading to Egypt's expulsion from the League of Arab States. "Arab regional order had mutated from a regime, to an alliance structure, to anarchy."[26] Since then, the Arab world has navigated regional security in an anarchical self-help system of changing axes.[27]

First Steps Toward Military Cooperation.

Then, the so-called Arab Spring happened. First, Tunisia's former President Ben Ali, and then Egypt's former President Mubarak, were ousted by street protests. Two years later, Mubarak's elected successor, then-President Morsi, was removed by the armed forces. In the wake of the regional sea change, security began to implode on several fronts: Syria and Libya descended further and further into civil war, with the latter turning into a marketplace for weapons and a training ground for terrorist organizations; meanwhile, Iraq and Yemen's security implosion gave way to armed groups conquering whole cities. Two threat elements then converged for the Arab Allies: the threat of democracy in the shape of the Muslim Brotherhood's progressive Islamism, and the threat of revolutionary change in the shape of Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant's (ISIL) terrorist Islamism. In the minds of the Allies, they were nearly identical.

As regimes first felt a collective threat of revolutionary or progressive regime change, and later were emboldened by Egypt's return to the reactionary camp, they began to close ranks on security matters.

Part of this new alliance was first the monarchies: as early as 2011, the GCC had reached out to Jordan and Morocco and offered assistance to protect them from the regional upheaval. Although originally the idea of membership was floated at the GCC summit in May 2011, this somewhat ambitious proposal was later transformed into a "strategic partnership."[28] Once the Egyptian military had removed former President Morsi, it became clear that it shared the monarchy's perception of regime change generally and the Muslim Brotherhood in particular. Morsi and his democratically elected Islamist agenda had constituted a threat not only to regimes but also to the region at large. His calls for Muslim unity and his historic visit to Iran were seen as threats to regimes as they appealed to a transnational ideology (there hadn't been any diplomatic contacts between Cairo and Teheran since 1979, when relations were broken off because of Egypt's peace treaty with Israel).[29] Already jumpy regarding Iran's suspected nuclear program and suspecting Shia unrest in Bahrain to be the result of Iranian meddling, the Gulf States (with the exception of Qatar) saw Egyptian developments with great concern. Existing and shared threat perceptions grew by 2014 when ISIL conquered vast territories in Iraq and Syria and threatened all states in the region by its self-proclamation as the caliphate—a state uniting all Muslim citizens.

In the years following the ouster of Morsi, a vague military alliance began to form, with typical alliance features: there were no integrated command structures or mutual defense agreements, just a shared threat perception and low-level military cooperation. This did not occur in a vacuum; the Gulf States had tripled their defense spending over the preceding decade. For example, Saudi Arabia had increased its air

force to 305 fighter jets—and currently has a de facto monopoly on Airborne Warning and Control Systems (AWACS) over Iran and other Arab states, which provide an important advantage in aerial combat. It has also more than doubled its manpower; the number of troops increased from 100,000 in 1990 to 227,000 in 2015.[30] The Arab Spring only reinforced this trend, as Saudi Arabia increased its spending by 19% yearly. Similarly, the UAE has increased its combat-capable aircraft from 66 in 2001 to 201 in 2015.[31] Qatar as well as the UAE has introduced conscription—in the Emirati case, conscripts appear to have been sent to Yemen as well.[32] In an increasingly militarized atmosphere, security cooperation seemed the next logical step for the Gulf.

Most of these initial steps took place at the bilateral and occasionally trilateral level. Egypt and the UAE conducted several joint exercises in both states, occasionally involving Saudi Arabia. Kuwait and Egypt signed an agreement on joint training and exercises. Jordan and the UAE conducted a military drill together, as did Saudi Arabia and Jordan. Bahrain and Egypt discussed the possibility of deepening cooperation and later conducted a joint exercise for the first time in their history.[33] Crucially, long-time rivals Egypt and Saudi Arabia signed an agreement in which they decided to develop military cooperation; they intend to conduct large-scale maneuvers together—and to finally demarcate their maritime borders.[34]

In addition to these, recurring international exercises took place. In early-2015, the U.S.-led multinational exercise Eagle Resolve, this time located in Kuwait, attracted for the first time all member states of the GCC.[35] A similar exercise, Eager Lion, took place in Jordan and was attended by Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq,

Kuwait, Lebanon, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE (in addition to several Western nations).[36] Egypt's main exercise Badr, although regularly conducted, exceeded previous ones in 2014 by far, as it doubled the amounts of participants. By November of that year, rumors of a potentially more formal alliance emerged, to include Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Kuwait. The main objectives of this alliance, so the rumors went, would be to counter terrorism in Libya and Yemen. However, levels of integration remained a stumbling block in the discussions, because the countries disagreed over the size of such a force, funding and headquarters, and over whether to seek Arab League or United Nations political cover for operations.[37]

Around the same time, an international coalition had formed to fight ISIL with an extensive air campaign. The Arab League's foreign ministers issued a resolution calling for the fight against ISIL with "all the necessary political, security, legal and ideological measures." The League also began to ponder whether such military action could take place under the umbrella of an Arab League joint defense pact, as the League's former Secretary General Nabil al-Araby suggested.[38] Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the UAE, Jordan, and Morocco all fielded several aircraft, some of which were involved in air strikes.[39] This was unprecedented in several ways; Arab states had not fought together to that extent since the 1991 Gulf War. They did not shy away from the use of force and, most notably, from employing air power against another Arab state. For Saudi Arabia, it was the first time in decades to deploy its air force outside its own territory (Qatar and the UAE had participated in the 2011 Libya campaign of NATO). Egypt and Qatar, although nominally part of the coalition, did not send aircraft.

In the following months, movement began again toward Arab collective security. While the Gulf States had already agreed 2 years earlier, in late-2012, to move their 30,000 strong joint Peninsula Shield Force under a united command, implementation had been stalled. In late-2014, the idea received renewed emphasis. At the GCC's 35th summit, the council agreed to accelerate the creation of the Peninsula Shield's united command, and also created an additional joint counter-terrorist body consisting of land, air, and naval units from all six member states.[40]

Meanwhile, ISIL's offensive continued: Egypt's Sinai insurgency, in full swing since 2011, swore allegiance to the organization; in early-2015, a Jordanian pilot, shot down over Syria, was executed by ISIL, and 21 Egyptians working in Libya were beheaded by the organization's Libyan outlet—Egypt responded by bombing ISIL positions in Libya.[41]

The Joint Arab Force: From Dream to Implementation.

In January 2015, the Arab League secretariat went beyond the previous idea of a limited alliance and proposed a joint rapid intervention force to combat terrorism, which would fall under the 1950 defense pact.[42] Egypt's President Sisi picked up on this proposal and declared that "the need for a unified Arab force is growing and becoming more pressing every day."[43] King Hamad of Bahrain shortly thereafter backed this call, whereas Tunisia's foreign minister called it "neither realistic nor achievable," and Algeria rejected it categorically.[44] The Arab League's secretary general reiterated his view that the growing terrorism threat of the region could only be met by (re)activating

the Arab defense agreement, and called for "collective Arab action" in the shape of a "military multinational force."[45]

His call was galvanized in March 2015, when the GCC announced it would intervene militarily in neighboring Yemen to fight an insurgency led by the militant Houthis. The country had been undergoing turmoil since 2011, when then-President Ali Abdullah Saleh faced significant protests against his rule. In the following transition, security imploded and the Houthis moved into the vacuum. By spring 2015, they controlled Sana'a, the capital of Yemen, including the presidential palace and key infrastructure nodes. The operation, which was still ongoing at the time of this writing, was led by Saudi Arabia and supported by not only its Gulf Allies—Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, and the UAE—but also by Egyptian naval forces, as well as air forces from Morocco and Jordan.[46]

It was against this backdrop that the Arab League summit took place in Sharm el-Sheikh. In what the secretary general called a "historic development,"[47] the League decided to establish a joint Arab force tasked with:

> rapid military intervention missions and other tasks to confront the challenges to the security and safety of any member state that would pose a direct threat to Arab national security, including terrorist organizations.[48]

Membership in this force was going to be on a voluntary basis; all Arab states agreed in principle with the exception of Iraq, which expressed reservations.

In addition, the League amended the statute of its Peace and Security Council in order to enable its twice-yearly meeting at the ministerial level. Until

then, the 2006 created body had no executive power and had a rotating membership of five countries.[49] The League also assigned the council the task of preparing strategies to maintain regional peace and security, and to improve Arab security capabilities. It was also envisioned to establish an Arab peacekeeping force made up of military and civilian elements deployed by their countries of origin and ready for rapid deployment when necessary. The resolution tasked the secretary general to coordinate with the Arab Chiefs-of-Staff regarding the actual implementation of these new provisions. Details about the force were still vague, but first figures mentioned a force of up to 40,000 troops (35,000 land forces, 5,000 naval forces, and 500 to 1,000 air forces) headquartered in Egypt and commanded by a Saudi general. It was to have an integrated and permanent command structure much like NATO's, with specified warfighting components (air, sea, land, and special forces). As in NATO, costs for troops would be covered by the respective member states, whereas the command structure was to be financed by the GCC.[50]

There were to be four levels of command, two of which would be permanent (the Supreme Defense Council and the Council of Chiefs-of-Staff), whereas the Joint General Command and the Field Command would be appointed on a case-by-case basis. The Supreme Defense Council was already in place, but its function needed to be enhanced. A general, appointed by the Supreme Council for a 2-year term, would head the Joint General Command. A Chief-of-Staff Council consisting of all of the member states would assist this general. The Chief-of-Staff Council would form the Field Command and appoint the field commander. The field commander appointment would occur in consultation with the country in question and the

commander general. States could request assistance from this force by submitting a request to the Arab League. If the state was unable to make that request, the secretary general could make it on its behalf—this would have applied for cases like Syria and Libya. Issues such as a Status of Forces Agreement still need to be finalized.[51] In a series of meetings that followed the announcements, the Arab states tried to work through the remaining questions, aiming at a final protocol to be handed to the Arab League Council by the end of the summer of 2015. But by the end of August, the force was suddenly postponed indefinitely:

> Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, the UAE, and Iraq had supported Saudi Arabia's initiative to abstain from signing the decision to establish a force because they do not agree with the Egyptian vision, which believes in the necessity of establishing this force as soon as possible in order to perform some military missions in Libya but not Lebanon contrary to some beliefs. Saudi Arabia sees no need to form this force at this time without learning the real reasons behind such action. It also fears that this force might be used by any regional country against another.[52]

The Arab NATO: Obstacles to its Implementation.

As with several of its predecessors, the joint Arab force faces a series of obstacles that have historically remained broadly the same: a conflation of different security issues, lack of trust, vulnerable sovereignty, and consequently diverging threat perceptions.

The legal as well as conceptual issues of the latest attempt to build collective Arab security became strikingly apparent at the first meeting of the Chiefs-of-Staff tasked to prepare the groundwork. Apparent-

ly, in defiance of rumors and concerns, the League's secretary general pointed out that "the proposed joint Arab force will not be a new military alliance or an army that is targeting any country." Rather, "the new force is aimed at fighting terrorism and maintaining Arab national security along with regional stability," and that it "should be able to deter any foreign enemy and prevent the eruption of internal disputes."[53]

However, his statement summarizes succinctly the issue this force has: is it a collective defense pact along the lines of NATO and therefore protects states inside the alliance from those outside? Or is it a collective security system along the lines of the United Nations with provisions in place to tackle interstate conflict—and, if necessary, even intrastate conflict? Moreover, how does the fight against terrorism fit either of these structures if Arab states have trouble agreeing on what constitutes terrorism?

As the current proposal of a joint Arab force seeks to kill three birds with one stone—deterrence against an outside aggression, interstate aggression within the Arab security space, and internal security concerns such as terrorism—it is reaching higher than any other regional security structure ever has. Although this is the logical consequence of the region's conflation of internal as well as regional security, it nevertheless means going further, in terms of sovereignty, than other world regions.

According to international law, the use of force is sanctioned under very specific conditions. States are entitled to self-defense when they are attacked, and they are allowed to form collective defense pacts (such as NATO or indeed the Arab Treaty of Joint Defense). Beyond this, the use of force is not legitimate unless explicitly mandated by the United Nations Security Council in order to re-establish peace. One such

example involved Iraq in 1990: it had invaded Kuwait and refused to withdraw. The Council therefore mandated United Nations member states to use all necessary means to restore Kuwait's sovereignty.

Alternatively, forces can be called on in a situation of conflict as a peacekeeping or peace-enforcement force. Israel and Egypt, for instance, created a third force, the Multi-national Force and Observers, to supervise the implementation of their peace agreement. There is also the possibility of a peacekeeping force for internal conflicts, such as in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In this case, all parties to the conflict have to give their consent to the deployment of non-national troops. A third option is an emerging norm rather than a firmly prescribed condition: the responsibility to protect. It posits that states have the responsibility to protect their citizens, and failure to do so (manifested, for instance, by large-scale killing, ethnic cleansing, or serious violations of humanitarian law) moves this responsibility to the international level and therefore authorizes the use of force. So far, the only example of this has been the 2011 Libya operation.

Lastly, there is no comprehensive system in place that could act against states violating international law regarding the use of force. Syria, for instance, stayed in Lebanon for 13 years without a mandate, effectively occupying it. This highlights that not just at the regional level but also at the international level there there are complications when it comes to the legal aspects of the use of force.

When it comes to Arab collective defense, there already is a relevant treaty in place: the 1950 Treaty of Joint Defense, which considers an aggression made against any of the member states an aggression against all. Here the issue is not one of legal absence of clarity,

but indeed of trust. Several Arab states have been attacked in the past by powers outside the treaty without triggering any military reaction from their supposed allies. However, the strength of any defense pact lies in the trust allies place in each other to act according to the treaty. In addition, the threat perception of an external aggressor is not shared amongst the member states. While some states perceive Iran to be the main enemy, others believe it to be Israel, or indeed a third power.

Collective security in the region has a similar track record. Interstate aggression within the system, be it Iraq against Kuwait or the Syrian occupation of Lebanon, has been condemned in words but not met with military action. Things are not facilitated by the legal idiosyncrasies the Charter of the League of Arab States provides. Its Article 5 stipulates that, should differences arise amongst member states that do not concern a state's independence, sovereignty, or territorial integrity, and if the parties to the dispute have recourse to the Council for the settlement of this difference, the decision of the Council shall then be "effective and obligatory." Crucially, "in this case, the States among whom the dispute has arisen shall not participate in the deliberations and decisions of the Council." Article 5 decisions are taken by majority vote. Article 6, however, indicates that, should a state be attacked by another member state and convokes the League's council, the attacking state has no vote, whereas the attacked state does, and votes are taken unanimously. Crucially, Article 7 states that unanimous decisions of the Council "shall be binding upon all member-states of the League; those that are reached by a majority vote shall bind only those that accept them."[54]

When differences arose between Lebanon and Syria in 1958, Lebanon complained to the council and argued the issue to be one concerning Article 6; Syria, however, argued it to be one concerning Article 5. In the end, Lebanon decided to move the issue to the United Nations, which then ended with a deployment of U.S. Marines to Beirut.

For collective security to be effective, not only is legal clarity necessary, but so are the mechanisms to sanction an offender:

> Collective self-regulation: a group of states attempts to reduce security threats by agreeing to collectively punish any member state that violates the system's norms. This internal focus distinguishes it from a typical alliance system which has a goal of collectively reducing threats that originate outside its membership.[55]

Whereas the arguably flawed United Nations has a security council to issue binding resolutions, the League of Arab States only makes decisions in plenary sessions, and those decisions are binding only for the states that accept them. Neither NATO nor the United Nations have such an opt-out provision. Therefore, collective Arab security always trips over the rule of consensus and/or the absence of penalty measures, be they of economic or military nature.

Lastly, the new joint Arab force is supposed to tackle aspects of internal security as well, such as terrorism. This is one of the security areas Arab states broadly agree on, as most states are threatened by jihadi terrorism, especially since 2011. However, they do not agree on who exactly can be considered a terrorist: the Muslim Brotherhood, for instance, has been designated a terrorist organization by Syria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE—but not by the other Arab

states. In Tunisia, the Muslim Brotherhood offshoot, An Nahda, is even part of the government.

However, this is not the only issue with approaching international cooperation regarding terrorism in a military way. Most international cooperation on the matter so far has been non-military, focusing on the exchange of intelligence and information and the harmonization of laws pertaining to terrorism and the fight against it. Perhaps the region that goes furthest in this is the European Union, as its member states cooperate on border management, have a joint arrest warrant, exchange information, and allow punctual incursions of internal security forces from other states under the provisions of hot pursuit (i.e. the urgent and direct pursuit of a suspect). However, there are no provisions for the deployment of forces into other European countries. While this is in part because of the nature of European terrorism, it also has to do with still existing boundaries of sovereignty, even in a region as integrated as Europe.

The joint Arab force, however, seeks to tackle terrorism first and foremost as a military phenomenon. This is the outcome of a rather broad regional understanding of terrorism: the implosion of security in Libya, the insurgency in Yemen, and, of course, the seizure of territory by the ISIL are all considered terrorism by certain Arab states. For Syria's regime, the ongoing civil war is an extended act of terrorism, too. Nevertheless, issues of definition aside, Arab states so far do not cooperate on terrorism even at a minimal level—mainly because there are issues of national sovereignty as well as distrust.

Even when it comes to the harmonization of legal provisions, Arab states have gone it generally alone in spite of continuous rhetoric saying otherwise.

Although there is a 1998 Arab Convention for the Suppression of Terrorism that defines terrorism as:

> any act or threat of violence, whatever its motives or purposes, that occurs in the advancement of an individual or collective criminal agenda and seeking to sow panic among people, causing fear by harming them, or placing their lives, liberty or security in danger, or seeking to cause damage to the environment or to public or private installations or property or to occupying or seizing them, or seeking to jeopardize national resources.[56]

Arab states have confronted the current turmoil with separate laws.

Jordan's law of 2014 defines terrorism as "any act meant to create sedition, harm property or jeopardise international relations, or to use the internet or media outlets to promote terrorist thinking."[57] Egypt's new law of 2015 defines terrorism as the attempt to harm individuals, the spread of terror, or the endangering of the lives, freedoms, rights, or security of the people. The law also prohibits the harming of the environment, natural materials, antiquities, communications, and land, air, or sea transportation, as well as the harming and seizure of public or private funds, buildings or properties. The law also forbids the obstruction of public authorities, judicial agencies or bodies, government interests, local units, places of worship, hospitals, institutions, science institutes, or other public facilities.[58] In Iraq, the relevant law states that anyone who instigated, planned or financed, and all those who enabled the terrorists in carrying out the crimes mentioned in this law, shall be punishable by death.[59] Saudi Arabia's 2013 terrorism law defines it as "any act harming the reputation or standing of the

state, or attempting to coerce authorities into doing or refraining from doing something."[60] In the light of such limited cooperation, aiming for the deployment of troops into another Arab country to fight terrorism certainly constitutes a very big step. It also raises issues of legality: Under which circumstances could this force be deployed?

As first drafts of the force showed, this was to happen upon request by a member state. However, concerns arise when the legitimacy of this state's government is not clear. In Libya, for instance, one of the two rival governments called on international as well as joint Arab military action in the country in the summer of 2015—but while it had international legitimacy to do so, it was lacking national legitimacy after a ruling of the Libyan Supreme Court; its rival government rejected such an international intervention.[61] A military intervention into Libya would therefore require a mandate by the United Nations Security Council. Similar questions would arise in the case of Syria, or indeed any other state where the government's legitimacy is openly contested.

In addition to such legal issues, certain Arab states, such as Iraq, Tunisia, Oman, Lebanon, and Algeria, see the force as a potential tool to invade other Arab countries for expansionist rather than peacekeeping purposes.[62] Morocco, for instance, has declared to view the force to be a "preventive rather than defensive"[63] one. Nevertheless, even supporters of the force, such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Jordan, the UAE, and Bahrain, are not sure about the deployment of ground troops. Sovereignty and territorial integrity are sensitive issues, particularly in the Middle East and North Africa—in part, it is this sensitivity that explains a recent preference for air warfare, as it does not involve territorial occupation of any type.

Lastly, the war against Yemen has shown that ad-hoc coalitions might be just as effective without the costly and cumbersome integration of forces—although issues of interoperability are rampant and will have to be addressed in the long term.

Conclusion: Four Areas of Improvement Toward a Joint Arab Force.

The Middle East and North Africa would certainly benefit from any type of collective system managing security, be it a collective defense system or a collective security system, or indeed a security community in which war becomes unimaginable. However, crucial issues of sovereignty, trust, and security keep preventing the region from establishing such a system. Four questions need to be settled before this can occur:

1. In or Out? The Question of Membership.

Past attempts to build a cooperative or collective Arab security system have excluded one or several key countries, which in turn then actively worked against the system. A successful system would have to include all regional players one way or the other. The League of Arab States, as the most comprehensive of the mentioned organizations, would be a suitable starting point if it offered partnership provisions to non-Arab states such as Iran, Turkey, or post-conflict Israel. As announced at the 2010 Sirte Summit, the League's Arab Neighborhood Policy has failed to take hold so far but would go beyond the existing observer status non-Arab states currently can obtain. Turkey and Iran, albeit neither member nor observer, have already participated in League summits. Regional subgroupings (such as the Maghreb, the Levant, or the

Gulf) could work within the system without jeopardizing the comprehensive approach of the whole.

2. Securing What? The Question of Scope.

A successful Arab security system needs to address security in a comprehensive manner. First, it would have to cover security challenges that are not only regional and of interstate nature, but also domestic (such as civil wars). Second, it would have to be able to manage aggression not only from outsiders but also **among** member states (e.g., Iraq and Kuwait). "Internal" here, therefore, has two meanings—internal to the member state, and internal to the alliance. These are both dimensions that a classical alliance (e.g., NATO) is not concerned with—although any security system seeks the reduction of the possibility of organized violence both **within** and **between** states, but preconditions differ. Alliances, or even collective defense systems, will not be enough for the Arab world, because they focus solely on the regional aspect of security. Instead, a more holistic system is necessary, one that could reduce the likelihood of violence altogether—such as a collective security system, which later could become a security community.

The system would have to decide on provisions pertaining to domestic security issues, such as unrest or civil war, without openly infringing on Arab state sovereignty; when the League's Arab Deterrent Force was sent to Lebanon in 1976, and the GCC Peninsula Shield was sent to Bahrain in 2011, this was possible only because both states had allegedly invited these missions in full sovereignty.[64] Any new system needs to establish clear criteria as well as limitations for military intervention, such as in the shape of a United Nations Security Council resolution.

3. A Means to an End: Arab Security Forces.

Any collective security system needs to be able to enforce its punitive measures; this includes both political as well as military means. The Arab countries' military forces are in an acceptable state; the room for improvement mostly consists of the establishment of common standards for interoperability, as Arab forces have adopted by and large Soviet or Western standards that are not interoperable. Most importantly, the forces need to match the ambition of the threats and risks identified, which pose a much greater challenge. Finding consensus on a strategic vision is what the region needs most. This is further complicated by the fact that only a few Arab states possess national defense strategies. In addition, the armed forces' military purpose is often blurred with social and economic considerations such as employment provision.

An integrated military structure, such as NATO has, would be advisable, since its benefits go beyond its defense purpose. No other alliance or collective defense organization has established a similar system that promotes cooperation, builds trust, and projects power.

4. From Polynodal to Centrifugal: Looking for the Power Center.

The absence of a power center has often been cited as one of the failures to establish a collective security system in the Arab world. This need not be an insurmountable obstacle; stable clusters of states, such as the Arab world's sub-regions, can replace a single strong state acting as a centrifuge for collective security. There is to date no stability in either, but initiatives

such as the GCC or the Arab Maghreb Union point in that direction. Besides, the Arab world does not suffer from the absence of one strong state; rather, it has too many contenders for the center of power. There are positive indications, however, that the desire to move from individual to collective security in the Arab world is clearly there.

Arab collective security seems far away in light of the still unsettled Israeli-Palestinian conflict, ongoing internal conflicts, and the rise of the tension in the Gulf. In a chicken-and-egg logic, peace is a precondition for cooperation in the security area—but then again, cooperation might be a precondition for peace.

ENDNOTES

1. Sundeep Waslekar and Ilmas Futehally, *Cost of Conflict in the Middle East*, Mumbai, IN: Strategic Foresight Group, 2009.

2. The International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 2015,* London, UK: Routledge, 2015, p. 309.

3. Yezid Sayigh, "Arab Regional Security: Between Mechanics and Politics," *RUSI Journal*, Summer 1991, p. 38.

4. Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, "The Arab Opinion Project: The Arab Opinion Index," March 2012, p. 79.

5. Yale Law School Lillian Goldman Law Library, "Treaty of Joint Defense and Economic Cooperation Between the States of the Arab League, June 17, 1950," Archived in The Avalon Project: Documents in Law, History and Diplomacy, available from *avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/arabjoin.asp*.

6. Helene von Bismarck, *British Policy in the Persian Gulf, 1961-1968: Conceptions of Informal Empire*, Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013; Richard A. Mobley, "Gauging the Iraqi Threat to Kuwait in the 1960s," *Studies in Intelligence*, No. 11,

Fall-Winter 2001, Center for the Study of Intelligence, Central Intelligence Agency, available from *https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/fall_winter_2001/article03.html*; Istvan Pogany, *The Arab League and Peacekeeping in Lebanon,* Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 1987; Hussein A. Hassouna, *The League of Arab States and Regional Disputes*, New York: Oceana Publications, 1975.

7. Abdo I. Baaklini, "Civilian Control of the Military in Lebanon: A Legislative Perspective," in Claude Welch, ed., *Civilian Control of the Military: Theory and Cases from Developing Countries*, Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1976, p. 271.

8. Terry M. Mays, *Historical Dictionary of International Organizations in Africa and the Middle East*, Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2015, pp. 71-78.

9. Peter Hahn, *The United States, Great Britain, and Egypt, 1945-1956: Strategy and Diplomacy in the Early Cold War,* Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991, p. 115.

10. Behçet K. Yeşılbursa, "Turkey's Participation in the Middle East Command and its Admission to NATO, 1950-52," *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 4, 2005.

11. Yale Law School Lillian Goldman Law Library, "Baghdad Pact; February 4, 1955," available from *avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/baghdad.asp*.

12. Ara Sanjian, "The Formulation of the Baghdad Pact," *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 2, April 1997.

13. Christian Koch, "The GCC as a Regional Security Organization," *International Reports of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung,* November 2010, p. 29 available from *www.kas.de/wf/en/33.21076/*.

14. Hamid Hussain, "The Fourth Round—A Critical Review of 1973 Arab-Israeli War," *Defence Journal*, November 2002, available from *www.defencejournal.com/2002/nov/4th-round.htm*.

15. Kennett Love, *Suez: The Twice-Fought War*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1969.

16. Salah Nasrawi, The Associated Press, "Saudis Reportedly Funding Iraqi Sunnis," *The Washington Post*, December 8, 2006, available from *www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/12/07/AR2006120701070.html*.

17. "Syria opposition chief appeals in Munich for action," *Deutsche Welle*, February 2, 2013, available from *www.dw.de/syria-opposition-chief-appeals-in-munich-for-action/a-16571114*; "Qatari foreign minister says we 'cannot wait indefinitely' on Syria," *Al-Jazeera,* January 11, 2013.

18. Jean Pierre Isselé, "The Arab Deterrent Force in Lebanon, 1976-1983," in Antonio Cassese, ed., *The Current Legal Regulation of the Use of Force*, Dordrecht, NL: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1986, p.184; Manama, Al Arabiya Agencies, "GCC troops dispatched to Bahrain to maintain order," *Al-Arabiya News*, March 14, 2011, available from *www.alarabiya.net/articles/2011/03/14/141445.html*.

19. Peter Jones, "Towards a Regional Security Regime for the Middle East: Issues and Options," SIPRI Report, Solna, SE: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, December 1998, p. 5.

20. Paul Salem, "Building Cooperation in the Eastern Middle East," *Carnegie Papers*, No. 24, June 2010, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Carnegie Middle East Center, p. 4.

21. Farah Dakhlallah, "The League of Arab States and Regional Security: Towards an Arab Security Community?" *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 39, No. 3, December 2012, p. 411.

22. Eugene L. Rogan and Avi Shlaim, *The War for Palestine: Rewriting the History of 1948*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001, p. 5.

23. Keith Krause, "State-Making and Region-Building: The Interplay of Domestic and Regional Security in the Middle East," in Zeev Maoz, Emily B. Landau, and Tamar Malz, eds., *Building Regional Security in the Middle East*, London, UK: Frank Cass Publishers, 2004, pp. 101-103.

24. Patrick M. Regan, "Third-party Interventions and the Duration of Intrastate Conflicts," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 46, No. 55, 2002.

25. Peter Jones, "Negotiating Regional Security and Arms Control in the Middle East: The ACRS Experience and Beyond," in Maoz, Landau, and Malz, eds., pp. 137-154.

26. Dakhlallah, p. 405.

27. Abdel Monem Said Aly, "The Shattered Consensus: Arab Perceptions of Security," *The International Spectator*, Vol. 31, No. 4, October-December 1996.

28. Guido Steinberg, "Leading the Counter-Revolution: Saudi Arabia and the Arab Spring," Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP) Research Paper, June 2014, available from *www.swp-berlin.org/en/publications/swp-research-papers/swp-research-paper-detail/article/saudi_arabien_und_der_arabische_fruehling.html*.

29. Madawi Al-Rasheed, trans. by Sibel Utku Bila, "Saudi Arabia Pleased With Morsi's Fall," Al-Monitor, Gulf Pulse, July 4, 2013, available from *www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2013/07/saudi-arabia-glad-to-see-morsi-go.html*.

30. International Institute for Strategic Studies, p. 349; Anthony Cordesman, "The Gulf Military Balance in 2010: An Overview," Center for International and Strategic Studies (CSIS) Report, April 2010, p. 15.

31. Florence Gaub, "The Rise of Arab Air Power," The International Relations and Security Network, November 26, 2014, available from *www.isn.ethz.ch/Digital-Library/Articles/Detail/?id=185684*; Shlomo Brom and Yiftah Shapir, *The Middle East Military Balance 2001-2002*, Cambridge, MA: The Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 2002, p. 361.

32. See the military expenditures databases from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, available from *https://www.sipri.org/databases/milex*; International Institute for Strategic Studies, p. 349; Cordesman, p. 15.

33. Middle East News Agency, "Egypt, UAE conduct joint training," BBC Monitoring, December 11, 2014; Kuwait News Agency, "Kuwait, Egypt sign military cooperation deal," BBC Monitoring, September 25, 2014; Ammun News website, "King Abdullah attends joint Jordanian-Emirati military drill," BBC Monitoring, November 25, 2014; SPA website, "Saudi, Jordanian military exercise concludes in Tabuk," BBC Monitoring, November 22, 2013; Bahrain News Agency, "Bahrain Chief of Staff, Egyptian military delegation discuss cooperation," BBC Monitoring, March 22, 2015; MENA News Agency, "Egypt warships arrive in Bahrain for military drill," BBC Monitoring, April 22, 2015.

34. Taimur Khan, "New pact brings Saudi Arabia and Egypt closer," *The National*, August 1, 2015, available from *www.thenational.ae/world/middle-east/new-pact-brings-saudi-arabia-and-egypt-closer*; Jamal al-Jabiri, Agence France Presse, "Egypt and Saudi Arabia are considering holding 'large-scale' military maneuvers over Yemen," *Business Insider*, April 15, 2015, available from *uk.businessinsider.com/afp-egypt-saudi-mull-exercises-as-pressure-builds-on-yemen-rebels-2015-4?r=US&IR=T*.

35. United States Central Command, "Exercise Eagle Resolve 2015 carries on multinational tradition," March 17, 2015, available from *www.centcom.mil/news/news-article/exercise-eagle-resolve-2015-carries-on-multinational-tradition*.

36. United States Central Command, "Exercise Eager Lion 2015: a demonstration of Navy-Marine Corps integration," May 19, 2015, available from *www.centcom.mil/news/news-article/exercise-eager-lion-2015-a-demonstration-of-navy-marine-corps-integration*.

37. Ahmad Jamaleddine, "The emergent Egyptian-Gulf alliance: Libya and Yemen in the crosshairs (ed. trans. from Arabic)," *Al-Akhbar*, November 8, 2014, available from *english.al-akhbar.com/node/22384*; "Egypt, Gulf Arab Allies Eye Anti-Militant Alliance," *The New York Times*, November 3, 2014.

38. Lin Noueihed and Omar Fahmy, "Arabs vow to confront Islamic State, cooperate with international efforts," Reuters, September 7, 2014, available from *www.reuters.com/article/2014/09/07/us-iraq-crisis-arabs-idUSKBN0H20D220140907*.

39. Angus McDowall, rpt., Mark Heinrich and Howard Goller, eds., "Saudi Arabia confirms role in strikes against Islamic State in Syria," Reuters, September 23, 2014, available from *www.reuters.com/article/2014/09/23/us-syria-crisis-saudi-idUSKCN0HI1Y120140923*; Christopher Harress, "Saudi Arabia's Advanced, Powerful Military Faces ISIS Threat In Wake Of King Abdullah's Death," *International Business Times*, January 23, 2015, available from *www.ibtimes.com/saudi-arabias-advanced-powerful-military-faces-isis-threat-wake-king-abdullahs-death-1792962*.

40. Zafer Muhammad Alajmi, "Gulf Military Cooperation: Tangible Gains or Limited Results?" March 31, 2015, Aljazeera Center for Studies Dossier, available from *studies.aljazeera.net/en/dossiers/2015/03/201533164429153675.html*; Florence Gaub, "An Arab Army—coming at last?" ISSUE Alert, No. 52, December 12, 2014, European Union Institute for Security Studies, available from *www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/Alert_52_Arab_army.pdf*; Al-Quds Al-Arabi, "GCC to form Arabia military alliance similar to NATO," BBC Monitoring, December 9, 2014.

41. Frank Gardner, "Islamic State sets sights on Saudi Arabia," *BBC News*, November 14, 2014, available from *www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-30061109*; David D. Kirkpatrick, "Militant Group in Egypt Vows Loyalty to ISIS," *The New York Times*, November 10, 2014, available from *www.nytimes.com/2014/11/11/world/middleeast/egyptian-militant-group-pledges-loyalty-to-isis.html?_r=3*; "ISIS video shows Jordanian hostage being burned to death," *The Guardian*, February 4, 2014, available from *www.theguardian.com/world/2015/feb/03/isis-video-jordanian-hostage-burdning-death-muadh-al-kasabeh*.

42. MENA News Agency, "Arab League suggests rapid intervention force to combat 'terrorism'," BBC Monitoring, January 15, 2015.

43. Raghida Dergham, "Egypt joins the military effort against ISIS," *Al-Arabiya*, February 22, 2015, available from *english.alarabiya.net/en/views/news/middle-east/2015/02/22/Egypt-joins-the-military-effort-against-ISIS.html*; Holly Yan, "Egypt's President: It's time for an Arab coalition against ISIS," *CNN*, February 23, 2015, available from *edition.cnn.com/2015/02/23/middleeast/isis-crisis/*.

44. Gulf Daily News, "Bahraini King backs call for Arab military force," BBC Monitoring, March 14, 2015; Aljazeera TV, "Egypt proposal for anti-terror Arab force 'unrealistic'—Tunisian Minister," BBC Monitoring, March 13, 2015; El-Khabar, "Algeria rejects request to joint Arab military force," BBC Monitoring, February 25, 2015.

45. MENA News Agency, "Arab League chief says activating joint Arab defence agreement 'crucial'," BBC Monitoring, March 2, 2015; Nile News TV, "Arab League chief says 'collective' action force needed to defeat 'terrorism','' BBC Monitoring, March 9, 2015.

46. Suleiman Al-Khalidi, Tom Heneghan, ed., "Jordan participates in Saudi-led operation in Yemen: official," Reuters, March 26, 2015, available from *www.reuters.com/article/2015/03/26/us-yemen-strikes-jordan-idUSKBN0MM0JT20150326*; Staff Writer, Al-Arabiya News, "UAE, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Jordan deploy warplanes against Houthis," *Al-Arabiya*, March 26, 2015, available from *english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2015/03/26/Saudi-Arabia-30-UAE-fighter-jets-deployed-for-Yemen-campaign-.html*.

47. Nile News TV, "Establishment of joint Arab force 'historic development'—Arab League chief," BBC Monitoring, March 28, 2015.

48. State Information Service of Egypt, "Arab summit concludes activities in Sharm," March 30, 2015, available from *www.sis.gov.eg/En/Templates/Articles/tmpArticles.aspx?CatID=4144.*

49. Reuters, "Arab ministers approve peace and security council," OneIndiaNews, March 26, 2006, available from *news.oneindia.in/2006/03/26/arab-ministers-approve-peace-and-security-council-1143320596.html*; Dakhlallah, p. 410.

50. James Stavridis, "The Arab NATO," *Foreign Policy*, April 9, 2015, available from *foreignpolicy.com/2015/04/09/the-arab-nato-saudi-arabia-iraq-yemen-iran/.*

51. Ahmed Eleiba, "Joint Arab Force towards implementation," Ahram Online, May 31, 2015, available from *english.ahram.*

org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/131584/Egypt/Politics-/Joint-Arab-Force-towards-implementation.aspx.

52. Ad-Diyar, "SA, Egypt at odds regarding joint Arab force," Mideast Wire, September 17, 2015; Middle East Eye Staff, "Meeting on Arab joint force 'postponed indefinitely'," Middle East Eye, August 26, 2015, available from *www.middleeasteye.net/news/meeting-arab-joint-force-postponed-indefinitely-1054743930#sthash.dwrVy2xi.dpuf*.

53. MENA News Agency, "Joint Arab Force aims at fighting terrorism—Arab League chief," BBC Monitoring, April 22, 2015.

54. Yale Law School Lillian Goldman Law Library, "Pact of the League of Arab States, March 22, 1945," available from *avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/arableag.asp*.

55. George W. Downs, "Beyond the Debate on Collective Security," in Downs, ed., *Collective Security Beyond the Cold War*, Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1994, p. 18.

56. Florence Gaub and Patryk Pawlak, "The Arab War(s) on Terror," EUISS Brief No.20, June 2014, p. 2, available from *www.iss.europa.eu/publications/detail/article/the-arab-wars-on-terror/*.

57. *Ibid*., p. 3.

58. See the English translation prepared by Industry Arabic for EgyptSource, Arab Republic of Egypt, Presidency of the Republic, *Official Gazette*, No. 33, August 15, 2015, available from *www.atlanticcouncil.org/images/EgyptSource/Egypt_Anti-Terror_Law_Translation.pdf*.

59. For an English translation of the law, see Beth K. Dougherty and Edmund A. Ghareeb, *Historical Dictionary of Iraq*, Second Ed., Plymouth, UK: Scarecrow Press Incorporated, 2013, p. 267.

60. Gaub and Pawlak, p. 3.

61. Ian Black and Chris Stephen, "Libya urges Arab allies to launch air strikes against Isis," *The Guardian*, August 21, 2015, available from *www.theguardian.com/world/2015/aug/21/libya-arab-allies-air-strikes-isis*.

62. Antoine Ghattas Saab, "Government faces new test over joint Arab force," The Daily Star, June 24, 2015, available from *www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2015/Jun-24/303516-government-faces-new-test-over-joint-arab-force.ashx*; "Oman will not participate in Joint Arab Force," MEMO, Middle East Monitor, July 28, 2015, available from *https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/news/middle-east/20071-oman-will-not-participate-in-joint-arab-force*.

63. MAP News Agency, "Morocco to participate in study of joint Arab force project," BBC Monitoring, April 2, 2015; MENA News Agency, "Arab chiefs of staff wrap up 2nd meeting under Egypt chairmanship," BBC Monitoring, May 24, 2015; Echourouk El Youmi, "Algeria skips joint Arab force meeting, reflects political stance—paper," BBC Monitoring, May 24, 2015.

64. Jean Pierre Isselé, "The Arab Deterrent Force in Lebanon, 1976-1983," in Cassese, ed., p. 184; Manama, (Al Arabiya Agencies), "GCC troops dispatched to Bahrain to maintain order," Al-Arabiya News, March 14, 2011, available from *www.alarabiya.net/articles/2011/03/14/141445.html*.

U.S. ARMY WAR COLLEGE

Major General William E. Rapp
Commandant

*****

STRATEGIC STUDIES INSTITUTE
and
U.S. ARMY WAR COLLEGE PRESS

Director
Professor Douglas C. Lovelace, Jr.

Director of Research
Dr. Steven K. Metz

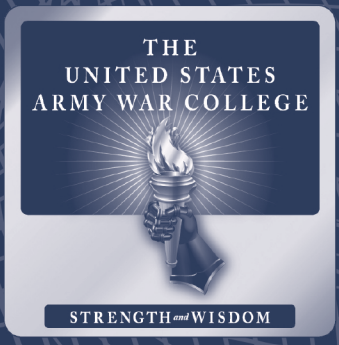
Author
Dr. Florence Gaub

Editor for Production
Dr. James G. Pierce

Publications Assistant
Ms. Denise J. Kersting

*****

Composition
Mrs. Jennifer E. Nevil



FOR THIS AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS, VISIT US AT
http://www.carlisle.army.mil/

ISBN 1-58487-736-7

This Publication

SSI Website

USAWC Website