The Arab Spring was a series of anti-government protests, uprisings and armed rebellions that spread across the Middle East in early 2011 as a result of severance from social contracts. The term “Arab Spring” was popularized by western media following the expulsion of Tunisian President Zin El Abidine Ben Ali. With a new means for people to mobilize political opposition, it can be seen that social media acted as a complementary asset to the Arab Spring.

The stakeholders within the Arab Spring were the government regimes in each respective country, citizens, passive/active protesters, and in Syria the religious groups and the SEA were stakeholders.

In Tunisia and Egypt, digital technology, such as the internet and social media, were tools civic leaders used in order to organize protests and demonstrations. The expansion of private news channels prevented governments from censoring, mobile phones were used to take videos of protest, online networks – formed by crucial groups of activists – helped galvanize protests through effective coordination, and satellites shined a light on many horrors in the region. Images, videos, events, and networks were shared through social media, and ultimately social media acted as a catalyst for civic involvement, as a platform for Arabs to exercise freedom of speech, brought the eyes of the international community upon Arab leaders and their regimes’ human rights violations, and mobilized the people to revolt. Social media pushed the ball, and satellite channels such as Al Jazeera kept it rolling. Social media shifted the communicative infrastructure. Protesters used social media to arrange demonstrations, yet when the government took it down the people adjusted their communicative methods.

While in Tunisia and Egypt social media galvanized political opposition successfully, in Syria the regime took note of what happen and learned from them. The Syrian government used social media in the same way the people did, but to shut down demonstrations before they occurred. Furthermore, they learned from the French to set people of different beliefs against each other to create a self-destructive environment. Social media aided in pitting people against each other, and was used to exploit sectarian and political fissures.