



ARAB LEAGUE

TOPICA: RECOGNITION OF ISRAEL BY THE ARAB STATES

TOPIC B: FREEDOM OF PRESS IN THE ARAB
WORLD

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Honourable participants,

ZABMUN has been the crown jewel of SZABIST since the past ten years, and being the President of ZABMUN X, the honor of meeting the standards falls upon me.

ZABMUN has always been a conference par excellence and within this year's theme: Resolving Disputes | Reaching Milestones, we intend to go further than we ever have.

Our aim is to promote the art of diplomacy and creating dialogue about the important world issues.

This year, ZABMUN not only promises to provide you an exhilarating conference but it even promises you to provide extensive training sessions which would provide you the best quality debate.

It would be an immense pleasure to host your brilliant minds at the 10th conference.

Kind regards,



Syed Ahmer Hussain Qadri,
President
ZABMUN



LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL



Greetings everyone!

My name is Syeda Romaiza Ibad and I am currently in my Junior Year, pursuing BSc in International Relations and Political Science. Being an advocate of debate, diplomacy and discourse, I am honoured to welcome the leaders of tomorrow to the 10th Edition of Szabist Model United Nations. ZABMUN is a conference built on proud traditions and a legacy of MUNs at SZABIST. This conference is a timely reminder of the succeeding generations that have dedicated their hard work, blood and sweat in making this conference exceptional.

This year, we will be celebrating a Decade of Diplomacy with committees serving as 10 pillars, created with a blend of ambition, comprehensive concepts and internationally diverse topics, affirming high hopes of all. ZABMUN is modelled on open minds and fresh ideas where delegates are challenged and asked to represent national agendas or stands that they may personally disagree with. They will do so fairly and forcefully. This open-mindedness is the essence of successful diplomacy -- the ability to understand and analyse all positions, including those that they oppose.

As the Secretary-General of the conference, I recognize the value of having accomplished Committee Directors on board and how it contributes to making the conference a success and so, I have handpicked for you a mixture of ZABMUN Alumni and renowned Chairpersons from within the debating coterie, who have a profound knowledge and knack for Parliamentary discussions and debates.

I want this acceptance of differing viewpoints to clearly distinguish this conference from the rest. I believe it will prove crucial as delegates assume leadership roles in the twenty-first century. This year, the theme is quite simple: Resolving Disputes & Reaching Milestones. We want to harbour diversity and inculcate in our delegates the art of conflict resolution. I can assure all the delegates that by participating in this simulation and using this platform, these students can surely become better speakers. ZABMUN encourages each individual to trigger their analytical thinking skills, by stepping into the world of daily crisis and policy changes and enable their minds to interpret situations and suggest solutions.

Good luck to all those participating! Can't wait to see you all in December!

Kind regards,

Syeda Romaiza Ibad,

Secretary General ZABMUN



ABOUT ARAB LEAGUE:

The League of Arab States also Arab League, was established in Cairo March 22, 1945, to draw closer the relations between member States and co-ordinate their political activities with the aim of realizing a close collaboration between them, to safeguard their independence and sovereignty, and to consider in a general way the affairs and interests of the Arab countries.[1] It was based on collaboration in the following important categories:

- · Economic and financial matters, including trade, customs, currency, agriculture and industry;
- · Communications, including railways, roads, aviation, navigation, and posts and telegraphs; · Cultural matters;
- · Matters connected with nationality, passports, visas, execution of judgments and extradition; · Social welfare matters;
- Health matters;[2]

In its initial years, the Arab League focused on monetary and social projects. In 1959, it held the first oil congress and, in 1964, built up the Arab League Educational, Social, and Scientific Organization.[3] Numerous Arab Citizens see themselves as one individual separated among various states with history, geography, language, culture, and socio-economic interests impelling them to create one great Arab Nation. The League meets intermittently, with its primary basic leadership board, gathering twice per year. However, extraordinary sessions can be called by two member states whenever need arises.[4]Even though consistent choices of the chamber should be binding on all individuals, singular states have regularly gone their very own way.[5]The 30thArab league Summit will be held in Tunisia in march 2019.[6]

STRUCTURE :

The League's founding members were Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Transjordan (Jordan) and Yemen.[1]Other countries that joined later are: Libya (1953), Sudan (1956), Morocco (1958), Tunisia (1958), Kuwait (1961), Algeria (1962), Bahrain (1971), Qatar (1971), Oman (1971), United Arab Emirates (1971), Mauritania (1973), Somalia (1974), State of Palestine (1976), Djibouti (1977) and Comoros (1993). According to Arab league Charter "Each State

shall have one vote, regardless of the number of its representatives".[1]Apart from the 22-member body there are 5 observer states-- a status that entitles them to express their opinion and give advice but denies them voting rights. These 5 countries are Armenia, Brazil, Eritrea, India and Venezuela.



¹ The Avalon Project, Pact of the League of Arab States, March 22, 1945, Accessed: 21st November 2018.

² Ibid.

³ CNN, <u>Arab League Fast Facts</u>, Accessed: 21st November 2018.

⁴ The Avalon Project, Pact of the League of Arab States, March 22, 1945, Accessed: 21st November 2018

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ EgyptToday, <u>Tunisia to host next Arab summit</u>, Accessed: 21st November 2018.

⁷ The Avalon Project, <u>Pact of the League of Arab States</u>, <u>March 22</u>, <u>1945</u>, Accessed: 21st November 2018.

FRAMEWORK AND MANDATE:

The Arab League's goal is to take care of member's economic, political, cultural and religious interests. The Arab League has played an important in helping the Arab world develop economically and culturally, while looking for resolutions of conflicts. A notable feature of the Arab League is that they have passed their own Arab Charter on Human Rights and have applied the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in line with Arab Countries' beliefs.[1]This has allowed the Arab League to deal with not only disarmament and security issues, but also matters relating to human rights. The agreements made ideally are sought to be passed unanimously. However, if there is a majority the resolution becomes legally binding for all countries that have signed the agreement.[2]

[1 Ibid.

² Humanrights, <u>ARAB CHARTER ON HUMAN RIGHTS</u>, Accessed: 21st November 2018.

³ The Avalon Project, <u>Pact of the League of Arab States</u>, <u>March 22</u>, <u>1945</u>, Accessed: 21st November 2018.

RECOGNITION OF ISRAEL BY ARAB STATES

HISTORICAL REVIEW:

After having been under Ottoman rule for many years, the land of Palestine came under British rule during the 1st World War[1], as stated in the Sykes-Pikot Agreement between Britain and France in 1916.[2]The British planned to divide the territory into a made two parts —the Arab state Transjordan (as promised in the McMahon — Hussein

Correspondence in 1915) and the Jewish Palestinian state (as promised in the Balfour Declaration of (1917).

Although several attempts were made to reconcile both sides to implement this decision such as the Paris Peace Conference in 1919[3], the London Conference in 1920[4] and finally the San Remo Conference in 1920[5], no agreement was ever lastingly achieved. The Faisal-Weizmann Agreement [6], which established the British Mandate and called for a demarcation of the borders for these areas by a special commission therefore was signed by all parties in 1919 but never implemented. Under arising conflicts and in the aftermath of World War II, the British government decided to terminate their mandate in 1947 and referred to United Nations for all matters regarding the future of Palestine.[7]

Since its formation back in 1945, Arab league sided with Palestinian side in Palestine-Israel conflict. To weaken the Jewish industry in Palestine and to deter Jewish immigration to the region, Arab League introduced the new strategy called "Arab League Boycott of Israel".[8]It called its member states to boycott any economic relations or other relations with Israel and stopping all trades which adds to the country's economy and its military.[9]A secondary boycott was later announced against any non-Israeli company that does business with Israel followed by tertiary boycott which called for blacklisting any firm that works with companies doing business with Israel.[10]

The Arab League opposed the 1947 United Nations Partition Plan for Palestine. In 1948, the British did leave, and the Jews in Palestine declared the independence of the new State of Israel which was followed by invasion of Israel by Arab League states to aid the Palestinian Arabs who were fighting to create their own nation. This war was also known as the first Arab-Israeli War.[11]. The Arabs lost that war, and the Palestinian diaspora began, as hundreds of thousands of Arabs fled the new nation of Israel and moved to neighboring Arab nations to live as refugees, awaiting the day when they could return to their homeland.[12]



¹ Aljazeera, <u>Timeline of Palestine's History</u>, Accessed: 21st November 2018.

² Ibid.

³ Ehne.fr, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919, Accessed: 21st November 2018.

⁴ Revolvy, <u>Conference of London</u>, 1920, Accessed: 21st November 2018.

⁵ Britannica, Conference of San Remo, 1920, Accessed: 21st November 2018.

⁶ The Syrian Times, <u>Faisal-Weizmann Agreement</u>, Accessed: 21st November 2018.

⁷ UN General Assembly, Special Committee on Palestine (<u>A/RES/106</u>), 1947, Accessed: 21st November 2018.

⁸ Lawin, <u>Arab Boycott</u>, Accessed: 21st November 2018.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Aljazeera, <u>The Arab-Israeli Wars</u>, Accessed: 21st November 2018.

¹² Ibid.

HISTORICAL REVIEW:

In 1964, the first summit of Arab League was held in Cairo, Egypt. This summit initiated the creation of Palestinian Liberation Organization to operate within the territories of Israel.[1]Following the breakout of Six-Day war in 1967, Arab League imposed Oil Embargo to weaken Israel. However, later in the summit held in Khartoum, Sudan, the embargo was lifted and called for continuing the state of belligerency with Israel with its famous 3 No's which were:

- no to peace with Israel;
- no recognition of Israel;
- no negotiations with Israel.[2]

The Six-Day war led to the occupation of Sinai Peninsula, West Bank and Golan Heights by Israel. Later in 1973, Egypt and Syria led the Arab coalition into a war against Israel which was also termed as Yom Kippur War which was from October 6 to 25. Except for isolated attacks on Israeli territory on 6 and 9 October, the military combat actions during the war took place on Arab territory, mostly in the Sinai and the Golan Heights. Egypt's stated goal for the war was the expelling of the Israeli forces occupying Sinai in 1974.[3]

DAWN OF THE NEW CHANGES:

Following the deadly wars between Arab Nations and Israel, some countries began to review their policies and moved towards friendlier relationships.

EGYPT

In 1977, then new Elected U.S. President Jimmy Carter, tired to pursue a Multi-Lateral approach to the conflict between Arab states and Israel. He visited the heads of state on whom he would have to rely to make any peace agreement feasible. By the end of his first year in office, he had already met with Anwar El Sadat of Egypt, King Hussein of Jordan, Hafez al-Assad of Syria, and Yitzhak Rabin of Israel. Despite the fact that he supported Sadat's peace initiative, King Hussein refused to take part in the peace talks. Begin offered Jordan little to gain and Hussein also feared he would isolate Jordan from the Arab world and provoke Syria and the PLO if he engaged in the peace talks as well.[1]Hafez al-Assad, who had no particular interest in negotiating peace with Israel,[2]also refused to come to the United States and only agreed to meet with Carter in Geneva.

Anwar Sadat initiated the Camp David talks with then foreign minister of Israel in Camp Davids. The talks led to two frameworks:

- · The Framework for Peace in Middle east;
- · A Framework for the Conclusion of a Peace Treaty between Egypt and Israel.



¹ Muftah, The PLO and the Crisis of Representation, Accessed: 21st November 2018.

² The Jerusalem Post, THIS WEEK IN HISTORY: THE ARAB LEAGUE'S THREE NO'S. Accessed: 21st November 2018.

³ UN Security Council, Resolution 338 (<u>S/RES/338</u>), 1973, Accessed: 21st November 2018.

⁴ CountryStudies, <u>The Camp Davids Accord</u>, Accessed: 21st November 2018.

⁵ Ibid.

On November 20, 1977, Sadat became the first — and so far only — Arab leader to visit Israel and address the Knesset with a call for peace.[1] 1979 was a key year for Arab-Israeli relations. The Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty was signed by Egypt and Israel.[2]The main features of the treaty were mutual recognition, cessation of the state of war that had existed since the 1948 Arab—Israeli War, normalization of relations and the complete withdrawal by Israel of its armed forces and civilians from the Sinai Peninsula which Israel had captured during the Six-Day

War in 1967. Egypt agreed to leave the area demilitarized. The agreement also provided for the free passage of Israeli ships through the Suez Canal, and recognition of the Strait of Tiran and the Gulf of Agaba as international waterways.[3]

This treaty was seen as stab in the back by Arab World. Camp David accords visit to Jerusalem and the peace treaty were all condemned by Arab World. Following the official recognition of Israel by Egypt, Egypt was suspended from the Arab league and the league's head quarter was moved to Cairo.[4]However, a decade later

Egypt was readmitted into the Arab League; the league's headquarters were moved back to Cairo.[5]

JORDON:

After seeing the readmission of Egypt into Arab league, discussions began in 1994. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres informed King Hussein that after the Oslo Accords with the PLO, Jordan might be "left out of the big game". Hussein consulted with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Syrian

President Hafez al-Assad. Mubarak encouraged him, but Assad told him only to "talk" and not sign any accord. U.S. President Bill Clinton pressured Hussein to start peace negotiations and to sign a peace treaty with Israel and promised him that Jordan's debts would be forgiven. The efforts succeeded, and Jordan signed a nonbelligerency agreement with Israel. Rabin, Hussein and Clinton signed the Washington Declaration in Washington, DC, on 25 July 1994.[6]The Declaration says that Israel and Jordan ended the official state of enmity and would start negotiations in order to achieve an "end to bloodshed and sorrow" and a just and lasting peace.

The treaty included following main principles:

- 1. Borders: The international boundary between Israel and Jordan follows the Jordan and Yarmouk Rivers, the Dead Sea, the Emek Ha'Arava/Wadi Araba, and the Gulf of Aqaba. The section of the line that separated Jordan from the West Bank was stipulated as "without prejudice to the status of [that] territory."[7]
- 2. Diplomatic relation and cooperation: The Parties agreed to establish full diplomatic and consular relations and to exchange resident embassies, grant tourists visas, open air travel and seaports, establish a free trade zone and an 1. industrial park in the Arava. The agreement prohibits hostile propaganda.
- 3. Security and Defense: Each country promised respect for the sovereignty and territory of each side, to not enter the other's territory without permission, and to cooperate against terrorism. This included thwarting border attacks, smuggling, preventing any hostile attack against the other and not cooperating with any terrorist organization against the other.

¹ Times of Israel, When Anwar Sadat came to Jerusalem 40 years ago., Accessed: 21st November 2018.

² History, <u>Israel-Egyptian Peace Agreement Signed</u>, Accessed: 21st November 2018.

³ Ibid.

⁴ BBC, <u>Timeline</u>: <u>Arab league</u>, Accessed: 21st November 2018.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Avalon, <u>The Washington Decleration</u>, Accessed: 21st November 2018.

⁷ JewishVirtualLibrary, <u>Israel-Jordan Peace Treaty—Annex I</u>, Accessed: 21st November 2018.

- 4. Jerusalem: Article 9 links the Peace Treaty to the Israeli–Palestinian peace process. Israel recognized the special role of Jordan in Muslim Holy shrines in Jerusalem and committed itself to give high priority to the Jordanian historic role in these shrines in negotiations on the permanent status.
- 5 Israel agreed to give Jordan 50,000,000 cubic meters (1.8×109 cu ft) of water each year and for Jordan to own 75% of the water from the Yarmouk River. Both countries could develop other water resources and reservoirs and agreed to help each other survive droughts. Israel also agreed to help Jordan use desalination technology in order to find additional water.[1]
- 6. Palestinian Refugees: Israel and Jordan agreed to cooperate to help the refugees, including a four-way committee (Israel, Jordan, Egypt and the Palestinians) to try to work towards solutions. After this treaty, Jordan was not ostracized by the league as compared to Egypt.

GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL:

After the seeing the peace treaties signed by Egypt and Jordan with Israel, in 1994, following the Oslo Peace Accords, the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC) states, ended their participation in the Arab boycott against Israel. The move prompted a surge of investment in Israel and resulted in the initiation of joint cooperation projects between Israel and Arab countries. In 1996, the GCC states recognized that total elimination of the boycott is a necessary step for peace and economic development in the region.[2]

OMAN:

In October 27, 2018, Oman described Israel as an accepted Middle East state on Saturday, a day after hosting a surprise visit by its prime minister that Washington said could help regional peace efforts.[1]

¹ Science & Diplomacy, Water Diplomacy, Accessed: 21st November 2018.

² TuftsDigitalLibrary, <u>Arab Boycott Against Israel and Its Unintended Impact on Arab Economic Welfares</u>, Accessed: 21st November 2018.

³ Reauters, Oman says time to accept Israel in region, offers help for peace, Accessed: 21st November 2018.

PATH TO FUTURE AND BLOCS:

As of now only Egypt, Jordan and Oman are in official diplomatic relation and recognized the Israel and the rest of Arab league permanent members still refuse to recognize Israel. 4 out of 5 observers states recognized Israel and only Venezuela severed its diplomatic relation in 2009. This could potentially divide the committee into two distinct blocs with one side recognizing and advocating Israel to resolve the conflicts and the other side refusing to accept the existence of Israel.

QUESTIONS A RESOLUTION MUST ANSWER:

- · What is the general stance of Arab League on Israel?
- · What are the roles of local and regional capacities in resolving the Israel-Palestine conflict?
- What could be the role of Arab League in formulating peace between Israel & Palestine?
- · How effective was "Arab League Boycott of Israel" and what should be its future?
- · What is the importance of Israel's recognition in resolving Israel-Palestine conflict.
- · What should be the stand and policies of Arab league on Israel?

FREEDOMOF PRESS IN ARAB STATES

INTRODUCTION:

The right to freedom of expression, particularly in all available forms of communication media, is considered a fundamental human right of the greatest importance. It is a key component of a healthy and well-functioning democratic society and fundamental to human dignity. In an age of increased connectivity and rapid flow of information through the internet and relevant format which has significantly reduced the importance of national boundaries, the freedom to express and to access information has become more apparent than ever before in today's age. While this is universally recognized by almost all UN member states, national governments are still within their rights to exercise some form of limitations on freedom of expression in the media. In many cases, these limitations have been severe and often with dire consequences toward those who are involved in the media, especially if information and views infringe upon the existing authority of respective national governments. This has become more apparent in the age of rising populist sentiment in much of the Western world, which is justifying the distortion of media and information to suit political needs, along with continued and heightened suppression of media liberty in other parts of the world, where transparent and accountable institutions for this right to be respected remain fragile.

The right to freedom of expression has been safeguarded in Universal Declaration of Human Rights article 19 where it mentions "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers." [1] In 2004, Arab League adopted Arab Charter on Human Rights which affirms the principles contained in UN Charter, The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Human Rights and the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam. [2] The article 26 of this charter says: "Everyone has a guaranteed right to freedom of belief, thought and opinion." [3]

BREAKING DOWN THE PROBLEM:

Although the constitution of the majority of Middle Eastern countries provide for freedom of expression, in reality conventional and international (including radio, satellite TV and the Internet) media remain under a restricted and intimidatory legal, political and security environment. national press and publication laws are frequently changed and vaguely worded, opening them to wide interpretation and potential abuse." The media – old and new, local and international has paid a heavy price for its sustained and courageous efforts to inform local and international populations about the political upheavals in the Middle East." These comments from Fateh Azzam, Head of the UN Human Rights regional office in the Middle East, on World Press Freedom Day, acknowledge the vital role played by the media in covering events as they have unfolded in the Middle East.

Continued violation of the freedom of expression is not an insulated issue, but more so question of ideology. It can be seen that one of the determining factors of whether a country has full freedom of the press is the maturity of the democracy. For countries like USA and UK which were under the democratic government for extended period of time, state actors are allowed to for free press, as the influence of the media will not drastically change the accepted means of governance even with the presence of media bias.

³ Ibid.



¹ United Nations, <u>Universal Declaration of Human Rights</u>,

² HumanRights.se, <u>Arab Charter On Human Rights</u>,

On the other hand, in less mature democracies, may face a challenge in regards to full freedom of press. In case of Arab League, at the start of Arab Spring, the role of news, social media have been heralded as the driving force behind the swift spread of revolution throughout the world, as new protests appear in response to success stories shared from those taking place in other countries.

If we review the situation from a political stand point, we can see many obstacles to freedom of press. The main argument against freedom of press is Sovereignty. Most of the countries where heavy censorship exists rely on the argument for the protection of sovereignty of the state and the protection of their political agendas.

Another political obstacle is the political climate of the country. For instance, back in 2011, the hashtag #Jan25 was used to mobilize the protestors in Egypt revolution which in turn lead to government blocking social medias including facebook, twitter, Hotmail etc..

Another obstacle would be the religious argument in justifying media and press censorship, particularly in countries in the Middle East, including Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar. Any information that is deemed as violating the social and religious norms is often censored. This is especially in the case when the Qur'an, the Islamic religious text, acts as the Basic Laws of the country in place or in addition to a national constitution.

SILENCING THE PRESS:

For years, some Arab states, were busy suppressing and silencing the press to prevent them from publishing anything against the state. The case of Khashoggi is the most recent case, where the Saudi Gov't resorted to heinous acts to silence the voice of journalists.

Jamal Khashoggi was a prominent journalist, he covered major stories including the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the rise of Osama Bin Laden for various Saudi news organizations. For decades, he was close to the Saudi royal family and served as an adviser to the government.[1]But he fell out of favor and went into selfimposed exile in the US last year. From there, he wrote a monthly column in the Washington Post in which he criticized the policies of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.[2]

On 2 October 2018, Khashoggi entered Saudi Consulate in Istanbul but he was not seen exiting the consulate. For more than two weeks Saudi Arabia consistently denied any knowledge of Khashoggi's fate. Prince Mohammed told Bloomberg News that the journalist had left the consulate "after a few minutes or one hour". "We have nothing to hide," he added.

And even later, Prince Mohammed's brother and the Saudi ambassador to the US, Prince Khaled bin Salman, claimed all reports about his disappearance or death were "completely false and baseless".[1]

However, on 20thOctober, state televisions reported the death of journalist in consulate and in fact he was murdered in a 'rogue operation'. On 31 October, Turkey gave its first official statement on how it believes Khashoggi was killed, saying he was immediately strangled, and his body was dismembered. Unnamed Turkish officials previously told the media he had been tortured first. The reports said Turkey had audio and video recordings of the killing, without saying how they had been obtained. President Erdogan has not mentioned them. [2]



¹ BBC, Jamal Khashoggi: All you need to know about Saudi journalist's death, accessed: 22 November 2018.

² Ibid.

QUESTIONS THE RESOLUTION MUST ANSWER:

- · To what extent is censorship justified?
- · To what extent does the State have the right to control the information and the social narrative?
- · How much influence should the league have on domestic laws concerning media censorship?
- · What should the ideal policy be against Media Censorship in countries that are currently going through political transition?
- · Is there a need to set up a new council to address the issue?
- · What role should NGOs play in facilitating Press Freedom throughout the world?
- · How should the safety of journalists be ensured?
- · Who is included under the umbrella term of "journalists"?