THE BRITISH UNIVERSITY IN EGYPT
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Message from the President

Dear Readers,
Dear Students,

It is my privilege to launch this electronic Magazine edited and prepared by the Centre for Egypt and ME Studies (CEMES). This endeavor will add to, and strengthen BUE's excellent international stature by offering an academic platform for renown world figures and leaders to address our student body with articles, topics vibrant on the International agenda. The articles dealing with a plethora of global challenges will help explain salient world problems, our author's view points and their prescriptive analysis to find solutions. Undoubtedly this magazine will serve as a research tool and an up to date fountain of knowledge.

Prof. Ahmed Hamad

The BUE is a landmark of UK/Egyptian cooperation resulting from a 1998 Memorandum of Cooperation between the UK and the Egyptian government. The BUE was formally inaugurated by the HRH Prince of Wales and our Board of Trustees is comprised of distinguished leaders and key International figures from the UK and Egypt. The University is also working closely with two key UK partner universities: London South Bank and Queen Margaret University, providing the academic direction, teaching and quality management process thereby ensuring the "British" quality of the education. BUE graduates who meet the relevant requirements for their subjects receive two-degree certificates one from Egypt accredited by the Supreme Council of Universities and a UK Degree from our partner Universities within the framework of the UK Quality Assurance for Higher Education.

According to QS Arab Region Ranking and the US news, the BUE has been ranked the First among Accredited Private Universities in Egypt.

One final point. A short period ago the University lost its Mentor and transformational leader, Mr. Mohamed Farid Khamis, BUE's Founder and Chairman of its Board of Trustees. Mr. Khamis is an Egyptian Industrialist, who believed that people are the basis for the emergence of any nation and the advancement of societies through the commitment to distinguished sciences and advanced scientific research. He strongly believed in philanthropy; the importance of the social responsibilities and impacts of investment capitals.

Mr. Khamis was described by many as "Talaat Harb of Egypt," and the Pioneer of the Egyptian Industries. He was the Founder of (Orientals) Group, an integrated group working in the field of textiles and Petrochemicals. Moreover, he was the chairman of the Board of the Directors of the Egyptian Federation of Investors Association and Institutions; Former President of the Federation of Egyptian Industries. Mr. Khamis was also the founder of some NGO's such as Mohamed Farid Khamis Foundation for Community Development and Khamis Foundation for Community Development.

Mr. Khamis received an Honorary Doctorate from Loughborough University, UK 2008 and he was awarded the Highest Belgian Medal in May 2008, by the Crown Prince of Belgium at the time (currently the king of Belgians).

We mourn Mr. Khamis by working even harder to fulfil his visions and academic aspirations. This electronic Magazine has been one of his ideas and we launch it today in his memory.

Prof Ahmed Hamad
President of the British University in Egypt

Message from the Dean

I would like to congratulate Dr. Mahmoud Karem for taking the initiative of producing an electronic magazine which brings together prominent experts and practitioners, with long years of experience, to enhance our understanding of numerous global, regional and local issues. This initiative is also quite unique since it not only provides us with the analysis and critical contributions of experts, but it also gives young students the opportunity to submit their critical analysis of the world around us. Thus, this magazine provides our students with a window to the world. A window through which the outside world can appreciate the contribution of our graduates who are the leaders of tomorrow.

Prof. Wadouda Badran

Business, Economics and Political Science students at the Faculty of Business Administration, Economics and Political Science at the British University in Egypt (BUE) study rigorous excellent programs and develop over their four years of study outstanding research capabilities.

The paper by Rita Youssef published in this issue of the magazine will be followed, in forthcoming issues, by other papers submitted by political science students. The students' contributions are a reflection of an excellent Political Science program. A program which includes a well-rounded focus on the different fields of political science and its closely related disciplines. A program where all modules have at least one third of their assessment attributed to a research paper. A program which includes several modules which tackle research skills. A program which includes a final dissertation where students examine and research a topic of their choice in the fields of Comparative Politics, Political Theory or International Relations. It is a program taught by qualified and dedicated staff members who also take the extra step of organizing extracurricular activities such as simulations, competitions, guest lectures.......which further contribute to an excellent student learning experience.

Mr. Mohamed Farid Khamis, the late BUE Chairman of the Board of Trustees, would have been very proud to see that our students are publishing in a magazine with such prominent figures. We are all proud of our students. They are actually exemplifying the fulfilment of Mr. Khamis's aim of providing students with an excellent education. Many thanks are due to the Political Science staff members who have through their dedication and hard work contributed to turning Mr. Khamis's dream into an ongoing reality.

Prof. Wadouda Badran

Dean of the Faculty of Business Administration, Economics & Political Science

Message from the Director

Dear Reader,

A few weeks ago, the British University in Egypt (BUE), lost its founder and mentor. Mr. Mohamed Farid Khamis proposed the initiation of this electronic journal to allow distinguished world leaders and thinkers a platform to address our student community. In respect to his wish and in applying what we all promised to do; "to mourn by working harder", I am proud to launch the first edition of CEMES electronic journal.

Ambassador Dr. Mahmoud Karem

I thank BUE President Dr Ahmed Hamad, Dean Wadouda Badran for their support. To all who contributed from their valuable time in an article published here, a very special thank you. We also initiated a tradition which is to publish in each journal a contribution by one of our students and place it among those lofty names as an encouragement to our student body. As you will see the topics are diverse, challenging and pressing on the international agenda. I consider therefore this magazine as a primary source of knowledge placed to the benefit of students and researchers searching for academic excellence.

Thank you

Ambassador Dr. Mahmoud Karem
Special Advisor to the BUE President for Foreign Affairs and Director of Centre of Egypt and ME Studies (CEMES)

Tearing our Societies Apart

In a perfectly normal world, I would have devoted my first article in this first edition of CEMES e-magazine, to a picture-perfect global community that has just celebrated the 75th anniversary of an Organization that they helped in and supported its creation seventy-five years ago. The United Nations rose from the ashes of the Second World War with the purpose of saving successive generations from the scourge of war. A pandemic and a world-wide depression had preceded this devastating war.

Mr. Miguel Angel

Only events of such global consequence could and should generate the solidarity, resolve and vision necessary to create those governing structures.

However, we are going through unprecedented times and the world as we now know it is far from being perfect, let alone in turmoil. The COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare the world's vulnerabilities, divisions, falsehoods and brutal inequalities. The ugly truth is that there is no such thing as "we are in this together". Theoretically, or virtually, maybe we are. But in real life this is a myth.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic unraveled, there was a strong push-back on multilateralism, cultural diversity, religious pluralism and human rights.

"The spirit of solidarity, unity and collective action *that was a driving force behind the establishment of the United Nations is absent today"*—Mr. Miguel Angel Moratinos

As a global human crisis, this pandemic has exposed the fragility and the fissures within our societies. It laid bare deep-rooted inequalities and fractures. Societies are divided across cultural, ethnic and religious lines. We see it in the resurgence of Neo-Nazis organizations and anti-Semitism. Manifestations of hate speech, racism, xenophobia, Islamophobia, Christianophobia as well as all forms of discrimination against vulnerable communities continue, leading to a vicious circle of toxic hate and deadly violence. Youth and women were further marginalized despite their indispensable potential and valuable contribution to peace and development. Even old people and those with disabilities were not spared.

History is a great teacher. But the human mind does not always have the capacity to retain similar experiences and use it as lessons learned. The human mind is often oblivious intentionally or unintentionally. The 1918 Flu which took the lives of almost fifty million people worldwide, was globally labelled as the "Spanish Flu" although it originated in Kansas City in the United States. The political

context underlying the stigma should be taken into account. Similarly, since the outbreak of COVID19, we

have also witnessed nations sparring trying to bestow a nationality on the pandemic.

Paradoxically, communities have been vilified for their sheer color, ethnicity or religion. These patterns of behavior, not uncommon prior to the pandemic, often lead to fragmentation and violence. Allowing the pandemic to tear apart the fabric of our societies, would be one of the most serious upheavals COVID19 inflicts on our world.

"The microscopic pandemic attacked people indiscriminately regardless of their race, religion, ethnicity or gender.*"*— Mr. Miguel Angel Moratinos

The central notion here is that this global crisis is a human crisis with the human being at the epicenter of it. Crises as such, demands coordinated, inclusive and results-oriented responses based on unity and solidarity. It is a time when leaderships are tested and citizens demonstrate their empathy and resilience. The pandemic hit at a time when the world was already turning inward instead of outward. There was a reversal towards individualism and nationalism. The retreat from multilateralism was magnified under the lens of the pandemic.

Given the aforementioned global context, one would ask in what way is the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations relevant? How would the modus vivendi look like? Can intercultural and inter religious dialogue play a constructive role in cementing our societies again? How can pluralistic and increasingly complex societies live together peacefully and respectfully? Is it enough to save the planet, which is utterly crucial, if we do not know how to share it and live together peacefully respecting the equal rights of individuals and communities around the world to participate in their societies?

These are some of the fundamental questions that the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) has been addressing since its inception almost fifteen years ago. The complex, demanding dialogue of civilizations, cultures, and religions is necessary, possible, and fruitful. Intercultural and inter religious dialogue is a critical tool against isolation, mistrust, and confrontation. It is also the most powerful vector for conflict prevention and conflict resolution. I must say, a viable tool that has been often overlooked. History has shown that dialogue is not a simple process, but that if we fail to teach and cultivate it, the situation can give way to a monologue or to mutism, which is conducive to conflict and violent extremism.

I firmly believe that cultural diversity and the invocation of spirituality are crucial components that should be included in our future diplomatic toolbox to complement the political dimension in conflict resolution.

"Let us always remember that the first words of the United Nations Charter are "We the peoples", and it is we the peoples of today's world who are called upon to find ways to address our differences peacefully and respectfully and to find opportunities to live and thrive on the planet that we are rightly striving to save"— Mr. Miguel Angel Moratinos

UNAOC was created to serve as a coalition against extremist forces, a movement of collective will to advance mutual respect for cultures, traditions, and religious beliefs, and a platform to bridge divides and overcome prejudice, stigmatization, misperceptions, and polarization. The Alliance promotes collective action in society as a means of addressing the threats that emerge from the hostile perceptions that incite violence, overcoming cultural and social barriers, reducing tensions and improving relations between societies and communities with diverse cultural and religious backgrounds, and combating violent extremism.

"Racism and all forms of discrimination based on religion, ethnicity, colour or gender is a front to the Universal Human Rights"— Mr. Miguel Angel Moratinos

Today's human crisis has proven beyond doubt that an All-Of-Society approach is imperative to overcome the challenges posed by COVID19. Civil Society, women and grassroots organizations, community-based organizations, religious leaders and faith-based organizations play a vital role. In assisting the most vulnerable populations, these networks are active in bringing economic and livelihood opportunities and adapting responses to the community context. We have long recognized that active engagement and partnership with these stakeholders is key to achieving the objectives of UNAOC. So we strengthened and expanded our network of youth-led organizations, faith actors across the faith spectrum, women leaders and civil society organizations.

Optimists like myself, always see a light even in the darkest tunnels. This crisis provides an opportunity to renew our commitment to fulfilling Goal 16 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to "Promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies". Showing compassion and kindness to the most vulnerable nations and people is what makes us all human belonging to "One Humanity" despite our many cultures and identities. It is the raison d'être of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations.

The League of Arab States promoting SDG's in the Arab Region

Since the adoption of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 2030) in September 2015 during the General Assembly of the United Nations, the League of Arab States has been actively engaged in implementing these Goals in the Arab regions. A region affected by high rates of poverty, conflict, displacement and social vulnerability.

Dr. Nada Al Agizy

Arab Heads of States met at the summit level in 2016 in Nouakchott, Mauritania and took the decision to establish a high-level Arab committee for Sustainable Development with a view to follow up the implementation of the sustainable development goals in the Arab region.

This committee brings together high-level officials responsible for implementing the sustainable development goals in their countries, along with representatives of specialized Arab organizations and representatives of civil society organizations, youth, and international organizations, the meetings are held twice every year.

Moreover, a special department for Sustainable Development and International Cooperation (SDIC), was established within the General Secretariat of the Arab League to act as the technical Secretariat of this Committee.

A guiding framework for Arab countries has been also drafted to identify Arab priorities, challenges and means of implementation paving the way to the process of implementation in each country according to its national plan and internal dynamics.

In late 2019 the Arab committee found it inevitable to update the Arab guiding framework given the turmoil that affected a number of countries and to keep pace with the international development policies to achieve SDGs, focusing more on coherence, harmony and comprehensiveness of all SDGs.

Another initiative is the SDG-Climate Change Nexus initiative which aims to reduce climate risks and build resilience of marginalized communities against the effects of climate change.

This initiative is being implemented at a number of Arab countries in partnership with international and regional organizations over a period of four years. The Committee have also launched an initiative related to sustainable financing for SDGs. It is currently working on a baseline study and a number of national and regional workshops for the banking and non-banking sectors.

An Arab Network for Science and Technology for Sustainable Development is about to be launched with the objective of raising the role of science, technology and knowledge when implementing SDGs. Current discussions are being held for establishing a network of civil society organizations. The Committee believes in the vital role of youth in promoting SDGs throughout the Arab region, the "Arab Youth Platform for Sustainable Development" has been created with of view of spreading the values of Sustainable development among youth across the Arab region.

The Arab Sustainable Development Week (ASDW) is the largest and most important event for sustainable development in the Arab region. It took place for three consecutive years from 2016 to 2019 in Egypt, under the patronage of His Excellency President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt.

It was held in partnership with the World Bank, European Union and the United Nations; as well as the Egyptian Ministry of Planning and Economic Development and with high level participation form high level decision makers from the Arab region and regional and international experts

The ASDW became an inclusive platform for exchanging success stories, and best practices among all stakeholders, it also adopts new ideas that serve the main slogan of the Sustainable Development Agenda that" no one is left behind"

- Finally, the League of Arab States spares no effort to support any purposeful initiative from the private sector
- or the civil society that serve the implementation of SDGs in the Arab region.

Friends with Enemies: Neutrality and Non-alignment Then and Now

When you google 'neutrality' and the UN, you mostly find entries on carbon neutrality but not those focusing on a geopolitical definition. Neutrality is normally defined as the legal status arising from the abstention of a state from all participation in a war between other states, the maintenance of an attitude of impartiality toward the belligerents, and the recognition by the belligerents of this abstention and impartiality.

Dr. Angela Kane

Neutrality is a concept that was at its prime in the 19th century, in an era in which absolute sovereignty and the ensuing unconditional right to go to war set their mark on international relations. While going to war constituted a sovereign right, there was a deeply felt desire for peace. The same desire prevailed after World War II when the United Nations was founded. Looking at the UN Charter, Article 2 obligates member states to settle their international disputes by peaceful means and to refrain from the threat, or the use of force in their relations.

However, I did find some articles from the Neutrality did not figure in the Charter, 1950s discussing the concept of neutrality in the United Nations and this conference makes it timely to look at the issue again.

Austria was elected as a non-permanent member of the Security Council in 1972, which was the first time that a permanently neutral State was elected to the Council. That development was certainly not foreseen by the drafters of the UN Charter, as Herbert Franz Koeck concluded based on an analysis of the preparatory documents of the UN Charter1 that permanent neutrality was incompatible even with simple membership in the Organization. Switzerland, for example, was refused admission to the San Francisco conference, even as an observer.

The view that permanent neutrality was incompatible with the notion of collective security contained in the Charter became, however, eroded by decades of practice. Some twenty years after the founding of the UN, the attitude had undergone a fundamental change.

To mention Austria again: Parliament passed a law in 1965 which empowered the Government to send military and other personnel abroad for the purpose of participating in international actions taken under

the responsibility of an international organization. Being elected to the Security Council in 1972 could be considered a recognition of Austria's growing engagement with the Organization.

And while participation in enforcement actions under Chapter VII were considered problematic, "peacekeeping operations" of the United Nations are not directed against any state; they take place only in answer to a specific request of the countries concerned and with the express consent of the state on whose territory the peacekeeping force will be stationed. Thus, they are not "enforcement measures" but rather a surrogate for such actions.

Where are we today?

Today, as we face increasing political tensions and an escalating crisis, it is critically important to uphold the principles of sovereign equality of States, of territorial integrity, of non-intervention in the internal affairs of States and to encourage the settlement of international disputes by peaceful means.

According to Wikipedia there are 21 countries that call themselves "neutral", yet the interpretation of neutrality is not the same in all cases. Costa Rica, for example, has demilitarized; Switzerland has declared "armed neutrality" which means that it deters aggression with a sizable military while barring itself from foreign deployment.

Finland, in 2017, described herself as "militarily non-aligned" and declared that it should remain so. Ireland, which sought guarantees for its neutrality in EU treaties, argues that its neutrality does not mean that Ireland should avoid engagement in international affairs such as peacekeeping operations.

And here we come to the concept where neutrality and the UN come into play. In the UN, "foreign deployment" means participation in peacekeeping forces – and traditionally, Austria, Finland, Ireland and Sweden have contributed to UN peacekeeping missions, so for them, neutrality does not mean the absence of any foreign interventionism. In 1994, Switzerland rejected a proposal to join UN peacekeeping operations. Despite this, 23 Swiss military observers and police have been deployed around the world in UN operations.

UN United Nations peacekeeping operations have traditionally followed three core principles;

1. the consent among the parties to the conflict,

2. the neutrality and impartiality of the UN forces deployed and

3. the use of force by UN personnel only in cases of self- defense.

These principles of neutrality and impartiality have traditionally been regarded as essential for UN peacekeeping operations.

As you may be aware, the concept of peacekeeping missions was not foreseen in the UN Charter. The idea of a peacekeeping force intervening (into a country) in order to stabilize a conflict area, was developed in the Security Council in response to the Suez crisis in 1956. It was considered crucial that the UN act impartially since some of the permanent members of the Security Council were involved in the conflict.

Chapter VII, Article 40 of the UN Charter is considered to be the legal basis of peacekeeping operations and its principles (res A/55/305). It states that:

> "*In order to prevent an aggravation of the situation, the Security Council may... call upon the parties concerned to comply with such provisional measures as it deems necessary or desirable. Such provisional measures shall be without prejudice to the rights, claims or position of the parties*

This expression of a non-prejudicial attitude has been interpreted into the ideas of neutrality and impartiality.

The principles of neutrality and impartiality have often been interlinked but they do have different meanings and significance. Neutrality usually means not taking sides with warring parties and impartiality refers to non-discrimination and proportionality. Neutrality is often associated with passivity and inaction.

Both principles (neutrality and impartiality) are also linked to the principle of consent, and this has become an issue in peacekeeping operations in recent years.

In cases where the peacekeeping operation has retained absolute consent from the conflicting parties, they can more easily claim to act according to the principles of neutrality and impartiality toward the parties. However, in conflicts involving ethnic- based issues, political struggles or the collapse of State Institutions, the UN has lacked a clear consent from the parties to the conflict. When there is no consent, the principles of neutrality and impartiality become more problematic. Let me add that this is the situation in several conflict areas today (Afghanistan, Libya).

The idea that the UN should be neutral and impartial, was strongly emphasized during the Cold War, when tension between the two superpowers, the U.S. and Russia, created conflicts regarding

peacekeeping operations around the world. Neutrality was then regarded as important in order to maintain cooperation between the superpowers in the Security Council.

In the post- cold war period, the changing international environment, as well as expanded roles and tasks of UN peacekeeping operations have affected the principles of neutrality and impartiality. The dilemmas of these principles were increasingly debated and questioned.

Preventive Diplomacy

It is worth noting that the policy of neutrality — a key factor for providing conditions and building a platform for peaceful negotiations — is also closely interconnected with and based on the tools of preventive diplomacy, such as early warning and prevention of conflict, mediation, good offices, fact-finding missions, negotiation, the use of special envoys, informal consultations, peace building and targeted development activities.

The United Nations has shown its commitment to moving from a culture of "reaction" to one of "prevention". The term "preventive diplomacy" refers to diplomatic action taken to prevent disputes from escalating into conflicts and to limit the spread of conflicts when they occur. While it is conducted in different forms and fora, both public and private, the most common expression of preventive diplomacy is found in the work of envoys dispatched to crisis areas to encourage dialogue, compromise and the peaceful resolution of tensions.

International Day for Neutrality

Recognizing that such national policies of neutrality are aimed at promoting the use of preventive diplomacy - a core function of the UN which occupies a central place among the functions of the Secretary-General - the General Assembly decided in 2017 to declare 12 December the International Day of Neutrality, and called for marking the day by holding events aimed at enhancing public awareness of the value of neutrality in international relations (res 71/275).

The resolution was introduced by Turkmenistan which is recognized by the UN as a permanently neutral state since 12 December 1995. On the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of Turkmenistan's recognition as a permanently neutral State, a high-level conference was held in Ashgabat on the theme of "Policy of neutrality: international cooperation for peace, security and development". The outcome document of this conference formed the basis of the proposal for the International Day of Neutrality.

Looking at the resolution, it ticks all the appropriate boxes in the preambular paragraphs:

> – Upholding the sovereign equality of States, territorial integrity, self-determination, non-intervention in the internal affairs of States and the settlement of internal disputes by peaceful means (...)
>
> – Recognizing that such national policies of neutrality are aimed at promoting the use of preventive diplomacy, including through the prevention of conflict, mediation, good offices, fact-finding missions, negotiation, the use of special envoys, informal consultations, peace building and targeted development activities

In the four operative paragraphs, in addition to declaring the International Day, the resolution invites all to mark the Day by means of education and the holding of events, and proposes that the Secretary-General should continue to cooperate closely with neutral States, with a view to implementing the principles of preventive diplomacy and using those principles in their mediation activities.

Lastly, the resolution stresses that all activities should be met from voluntary contributions.

I tried to google information on how the International Day was observed during the last three years since its adoption. Other than a note that it existed as a "Day" in the international calendar, I was unable to find any mention of activities or events to mark the Day or any educational activities.

The European Integration Project: Under Pressure, but Resilient

The European Coal and Steel Community – the path-breaking initiative that developed into the European Union – was established in the belief that mutual dependence between old enemies, Germany and France in particular, could prevent wars between them. From this starting point, an integration project took shape, coordinating national policies and ceding state sovereignty to common institutions. In this respect, the Union remains one of a kind.

When the Cold War was over, the European Union expanded to include Central and East European states on the condition that they would settle their bilateral conflicts. Keen to place their civilizational anchor in the West, they largely succeeded in doing so. In retrospect, the European Union has been a formidable peace project, for which it was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2011.

Dr. Sverre Logdaard

When the Cold War was over, the sky seemed blue for democracy, market economy, human rights and the rule of law. Francis Fukuyama declared "the end of history", claiming that the economic and political organization of the West represented the end station of a long historical development[1]. The West had come to the end of history while rest was still in it, having longer or shorter distances to go. Ideological struggles had gone and NATO – unrivalled after the fall of the Soviet Union – offered a safe and secure umbrella for a prosperous future.

In the past, enlargement of the European Union had been preceded by deepening of the integration. Integrative measures were deemed necessary to manage a larger community of nations. Not so after the Cold War. The newly independent East European states wanted to place their civilizational anchor in the West as soon as possible. The pressure was compelling. There was no time or will for deeper integration in preparation of it. In a world where the ideological confrontation was transcended and globalization opened new horizons for a prosperous future, enlargement boiled down to economic streamlining. The sense of community that had permeated the enterprise from its early days – at this point in time, the name of the Union was still the European Communities (EC) – was neglected in favor of market economics. In an interview with the Economist, French President Emmanuel Macron said that "Europe...lost track of its history. Europe...forgot that it is a community, by increasingly thinking of itself as a market, with expansion as its end purpose"[2].

Other regions have created institutional arrangements to facilitate cooperation between sovereign states, but without aiming at political integration. After the Cold War, growing interdependence has been a world-wide trend, but this is no guarantee against armed conflict. History is replete with examples. In the beginning of the 20th century, trade between European states was comprehensive and growing – right up to World War I. A century later, trade between India and China has been skyrocketing, but their security problems persist. Much the same applies to the relationship between China and Japan. Recently, the closely intertwined US and Chinese economies have been fast de-connecting under the pressure of mounting political conflicts and security concerns. National security interests trump economic considerations.

Two classical questions in integration theory came to the fore. First, was there a point at which the European integration process could stop and stay, or did standstill mean regression? The question was pertinent, for the problems were mounting. Above all, it took a long time to accommodate the new members and to overcome the effects of the 2008 financial crisis. On top of that, in 2015 the migration pressures became acute. These and other burdens left little scope and energy for new integration initiatives. For the most part, Union politics boiled down to management of current problems and consolidation of what had been achieved. Much was left to the market.

Standstill, Regression or deeper integration

The liberal values on which the Union is based were challenged both from within and without. From within, notably by Poland and Hungary, but also by authoritarian parties and movements in other

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[1] Francis Fukuyama, The End of History and the Last Man, Free Press, 1992. https://www.amazon.co.uk/**End-History-Last-Man**/dp/024196024X

[2] "Emmanuel Macron in his own words", the Economist, November 7, 2019.
https://**www.economist.com**/europe/2019/11/07/emmanuel-**macron**-in-his-own...

member states including some of the founding members. From without by Russia and Turkey, and by the United States which abandoned its principled advocacy of liberal values. Trump's "America first" was also thumbs down for multilateral cooperation. He showed an open dislike for the EU and questioned the future of NATO in fundamental ways. In 2015, the Union failed to develop a common stance on mass migration and a little later the UK left the Union as the first country to do so. When the corona pandemic struck, the member states cared for themselves as best they could. There was a glaring lack of solidarity. Integration came to a halt, and there was no lack of fragmentation prophecies.

However, standstill did not lead to regression. The UK's departure was a blow to the Union, but it also brought increased awareness in member states of the benefits of the integration project. Arrangements that had stood the test of time had been taken for granted; now they were visualized and re-appreciated. Public support for the Union grew. The UK had, moreover, been a brake on integration all the time so when it left, integrationists were freer to pursue new initiatives.

In July 2020, four months after the corona pandemic surfaced, the Union agreed on a crisis package of Euro 750 billion to members in need, partly in the form of loans on very attractive terms and partly as direct support. On military defense, there has been renewed political will and institutional changes to facilitate common initiatives. The establishment of an EU Defense Fund and the inclusion of defense expenditures in the EU budget since 2017 signals a new role for the Commission. It has created a European Defense Technological and Industrial Basis (EDTIB); formulated a road map for the defense sector; and promotes common research projects in this area[3]. At the level of heads of state, Macron is the main driver. He argues that in order to play an independent role in the rapidly changing geopolitical landscape, the Union has to define its own strategy and develop its own autonomous military capabilities, which would be complementary to those of the US and other NATO countries. The interoperability of NATO forces functions well.

The other classical question is whether external pressures will lead to deeper integration in response or be more than the Union is able to cope with, subduing integration and opening new cracks in the project. The biggest challenge has come from the other side of the Atlantic. With Obama's pivot to Asia and Trump's preoccupation with China, US foreign policy has shifted from Europe and the Middle East toward Asia and it can be expected to stay that way for the long term, irrespective of president. When Trump refers to conflicts in the Union's vicinity as "your neighborhood, not mine", he is merely stating a fact, calling on the Union to take charge. To which Macron says that "...we need to re-appropriate our neighborhood policy, we cannot let it be managed by third parties who do not share the same interests"[4].

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[3] https://www.europarl.europa.eu/legislative-train/theme-europe-as-a-stronger-globalactor/file european-defense-action-plan.

[4] Macron in the Economist, op.cit.

The neighborhood comprises countries East and South the EU, including the Middle East[5]. In his analysis, this is a geopolitical and military priority issue that also necessitates a reopening of the strategic dialogue with Russia.

The Europeans are increasingly torn between China and the United States. To the East, relations with China are growing more substantial as the Silk Road enters Europe. China is Germany's number one source of commodity imports. Both are wedded to multilateral cooperation and see great potential in future cooperation. At the same time, the Union is struggling hard to develop common interests and policies toward China not to be drawn into its magnetic field one by one and overrun by the Asian colossus. To the West, the bonds across the Atlantic are stronger than those to China, but increasingly questioned. US and European political cultures have been diverging for decades, and the Trump presidency has brought them further apart by the day. When the security guarantor of last resort expresses doubts about the validity of Art V, the solidarity article of the Atlantic Treaty, the Union can no longer pretend that transatlantic relations are business as usual in reference to previous crises that have been overcome. The current predicament is different from all the previous ones.

"What we are currently experiencing is the brain death of NATO"

In his interview with the Economist, Macron sounded a wake-up call:

There is no common strategy and no coordination. Chancellor Merkel disagreed, emphasizing that "from a German perspective, NATO is in our interest. It is our security alliance"[6]. She acknowledged that there were problems but did not want to rock the boat.

What role for NATO?

What role can we expect NATO to play?

The Alliance was established to contain and defend against the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact. They disappeared by the end of the Cold War along with communism, yet there was no fundamental reassessment of the role of NATO. By and large, its continued existence was taken for granted. Some member states said they did not perceive Russia as a threat; others emphasized that NATO was important as a hedge against the uncertainties of a world in transition; and when going east to fill the vacuum that the Soviets left behind, it was important to keep NATO intact.

All along, the underlying assumption seems to have been that Russia might reemerge as a security problem. This founding threat perception was latent well into this century, when a stabilized Russia raised its head and made no secret of its big power ambitions. There was an element of elementary organization theory in it all: big organizations fight for their continued existence even if the original rationale has gone. The national security bureaucracies had cooperated for forty years and were well

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[5] The countries covered include Algeria, Morocco, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia I n the South and Armenia The countries covered include Algeria, Morocco, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Palestine, Syria, Tunisian the South and Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine in the East.

[6] https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1201742

entrenched. These communities remain strong and can be expected to stand up for the Alliance in the face of an unstable USA and a restive Europe.

The US sees NATO as a security umbrella over an economy where it enjoys commercial exclusivity. This has been the perception and reality ever since the days of the Marshall plan, which was realized on the premise that the Europeans would buy American. Europe became the junior partner and has remained heavily dependent on the US till this day. In all other sectors than commodity trade, the economic bonds across the Atlantic outweigh the bonds with China by far. As long as the US controls the international financial system and 60 percent of world trade is made up in dollars, there might seem to be no need for the umbrella: the US would have the upper hand in any case. The fate of the Iran deal shows it. The Europeans invested a lot in this agreement, which was seen as a crowning success for EU diplomacy, but US secondary sanctions brought them to their knees. However, threats of secondary sanctions to make the Europeans line up with the US against China is another matter. To draw the Union into the US fold against China, both economic and security leverage may be needed.

In the midst of world order transitions, the European Union may go in different directions. Three scenarios deserve special attention.

What way ahead for the EU?

In one of them, the Union conducts business as usual, adapting step by step to changing environments as best it can, but without embarking on fundamentally new departures. The Union was always known for its slow and cumbersome decision-making and in a group of 28, compromises are obviously hard to achieve. Voting rules may be refined and efficiency improved, but only incrementally and slowly. All the time, there is also the possibility of European integration at different speeds – for instance, a eurozone for defense like the eurozone for common currency – to bypass differences of national interests.

There is a steady move toward more coordinated security and defense policies. In this field, the time for nationally oriented policies is over, but the slow pace of it does not square with the pace of geopolitical change. Compared to the total defense expenditures in member states, what is available for common action at the EU level is almost symbolic - but there is now a new role for the Commission on matters of defense[7].

The EU–China Strategic Outlook of 2019 says that "China is, simultaneously, in different policy areas, a cooperation partner with whom the EU has closely aligned objectives, a negotiating partner with whom the EU needs to find a balance of interests, an economic competitor in the pursuit of technological

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[7] Herbert Wulf, "The European Union's Security and Defense Policy: Struggling to find its Role in the Big Power Game", Policy Brief from the Toda Peace Institute, Tokyo, August 2020.

leadership, a systemic rival promoting alternative models of governance. This requires a flexible and pragmatic whole-of EU approach enabling a principled defense of interests and values"[8].

The whole-of-EU approach is difficult to achieve, however. The group of 17+1 – of Eastern and Southern members of the EU and China - has already entered economic cooperation with China tailored to each country's needs. Greece and Italy have welcomed big Chinese investments. The Union struggles to define common interests and rules of the road to protect them. Instigated by the US, Europeans take an increasingly critical view of the challenges posed by the

> Macron's analysis is comprehensive and coherent and makes a forceful argument for radical integration departures, but German cooperation is a minimum requirement for implementation of them and so far, Berlin has been more status quo oriented. A shift from reliance on NATO to autonomous European capabilities, however complementary to NATO forces, is likely to meet strong opposition.

Chinese powerhouse. Under US pressure, their interest in China as a cooperation and negotiation partner may be compromised.

In the business as usual scenario, the risk is therefore that in the mounting US-China rivalry, European interests will have to yield in relation to both. The Union will fail in its desire to gain greater freedom of action in relation to the US, and It will be unduly constrained in relations to China. Like Russia in relation to China, it does not want to be engulfed in the confrontation between the powerhouses. Therefore, the EU and Russia have a little noticed common interest in normalizing relations and improving cooperation with each other.

In another scenario, Europe responds to Macron's call for autonomous military capabilities, using existing initiatives as a springboard for quantum jumps in this direction. France and Germany will be at the core and others will join in. Traditionally weary of militarizing its foreign policy, this would be a new path for Germany. However, it needs not be seen in such terms because at the end, the essence of it would be a political regrouping of military capabilities under Union auspices.

For common capabilities to emerge, major industrial challenges must be overcome. At the end of his term, Commission President Jean-Claude Junker underlined these problems in a factsheet: "There are 178 different weapon systems in the EU, compared to 30 in the US"[9]. Incompatible military structures and waste of resources have been standard complaints for decades, and this may be the time to do something significant about it. In macro-economic terms the task is quite manageable: together, the defense budgets

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[8] EU-China Strategic Outlook, Brussels, March 2019. https://ec-europa-eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/communication-eu-china-a-strategic-outlook.pdf.

[9] Here, as quoted in Herbert Wulf, op.cit.

of the member states are more than four times that of Russia, which remains the country of primary security concern. Russia's GNP is of the size of Spain's.

China is situated on the other side of the globe. For the foreseeable future it does not pose any direct military threat. As emphasized by Macron, the essence of Europe's geopolitical ambition is regional.

In this scenario, a eurozone for defense and alleviation of tensions with Russia would take place more or less simultaneously. NATO would still exist in some form and Union forces would remain complementary and compatible with the American ones. To respond to the wishes of Poland, the Baltic states, Rumania and Nordic countries, and in line with American concerns about resurgent Russia, the US could remain the key guarantor of the security of frontline states through bilateral agreements or sub-regional arrangements. In this scenario, arms control has an important role to play on the way to a new security structure in Europe. A third scenario is predicated on the assumption that a new US Government would reinvigorate support for liberal values, more or less the way it used to do before the Trump presidency.

Trump has been sowing uncertainty about its commitment to NATO, a new administration would re-confirm the partnership. Like its predecessors it would lean on the Europeans to take a greater responsibility for its own defense, but in the framework of NATO. If US politics were to stabilize and become more predictable in its commitment to the Alliance, European incentives for defense capabilities at Union level would diminish. Predictability is a long shot in US politics, but a return to basic pre-Trump tenets of foreign policy would make it less urgent and more difficult to pursue radical integrationist ideas in the field of security and defense. For a while, at least, the transatlantic waters would calm down.

In this scenario, too, the aggressive US line against China will continue. There is a new consensus in Washington that China has embarked on a decades-long campaign for global hegemony, and there is competition between the factions on who is toughest in opposing it. Washington will concentrate on the geopolitical struggle with the Asian behemoth and do its best to enroll Europe in the struggle. Either by "working with the Europeans" – a euphemism for positive incentives and persuasion – or, if that is deemed insufficient, by using its economic and security leverage to keep Europe in the fold. Not to backlash, American pressure would have to be measured, in which case the Europeans can be expected to react cautiously, relieved by the administration's return to transatlantic cooperation. Surrounded by a world in transition, these are critical times also for the European Union.

Autonomous military capabilities are needed to sustain an effective neighborhood policy. Clearly, normalization of relations with Russia is an important part of this scenario. In a sense it is long overdue. The annexation of Crimea happened in 2014. Normalization depends on Russia as much as on the EU. In the formative years after the Cold War, the country failed to build a strong independent middle class which would have been a force for European cooperation. Structural reforms, essential to facilitate European cooperation, was not prioritized. Today, as much as 70% of its industry is directly or indirectly controlled by the state and based on raw materials. In large part, Russian society is nevertheless oriented toward Europe, but the state is playing a different power game. Under the circumstances, the first steps toward normalization may therefore be for the Europeans to initiate. Putin seems confident to live with frozen conflicts.

Internal Distrust and External Intervention: Main Challenges for the Arab League in Conflict Resolution

Since 1945, the Middle East has been a zone of instability and conflicts, many of which have a large social burden and civil casualties (Youssef, 2013). This high number of deadly conflicts highlights the importance of a well-functioning organism that has the ability to mediate between opponents, manage conflicts and introduce peaceful settlements to disputes; thus, it raises the necessity of studying the efforts of the League of Arab States (LAS) in the conflict resolution field. In fact, this organization is located in a dynamic area with conflicting interests of different states, and the effectiveness of its efforts in managing and moderating the conflicts has been questioned. Thus, the purpose of this paper is to evaluate the effectiveness of the LAS in conflict resolution in the region and to analyze its main internal and external challenges. Hence, the paper argues that the LAS had been ineffective in the field of conflict resolution for several reasons including the lack of political trust and cohesion among the members which affect the credibility of the organization to enforce its rules; and the inability to face the external challenges being the interference of the global powers in the region for their own interests.

Accordingly, the paper is divided into four sections: the first section tackles the conceptual framework of conflict resolution and the theoretical framework of the role of international and regional organizations in conflict resolution. The second

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section evaluates the outcome of conflict resolution efforts of the LAS. The third section focuses on the importance of political trust and credibility of a regional organization to enhance its effectiveness in the field of conflict resolution; and accordingly, LAS lacks this cohesion and trust which hinders its effectiveness. In fact, in this section the paper explains that the state members lack political trust in each other but also in the ability of the organization to effectively resolve conflicts; this idea makes the organization lose its credibility to meet the interests of all the state members. Thus, the perceptions of states, their mutual trust and political cohesion are crucial for them to accept mediation and concessions. Finally, the last section shows that the regional organization is limited by external interference of the global powers. This interference goes beyond the power of the regional organization that lacks resources
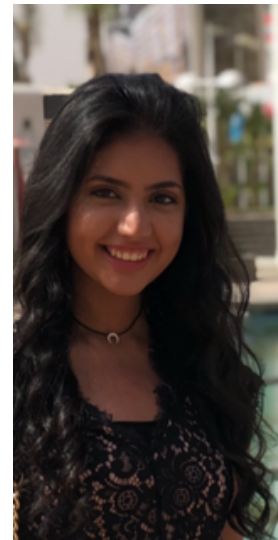
and influence to pressure those global and regional powers to follow a certain course of action. Examples will be used throughout the paper in order to further illustrate the ideas mentioned.

Conceptual framework of conflict resolution

For better analysis of the performance of the LAS in the conflict resolution field, it is important to start by defining the concept. Conflicts are a dynamic process that shape the world's politics and history; thus, conflict resolution has been a widely studied field by political scientists (Steele, 1976). In order to understand conflict resolution, it is first important to define the nature of conflicts; in fact, conflicts can be resource-based, or value-based (Ramsbotham, Woodhouse, & Miall, 2011). However, some become more complex in nature for their self-sustaining violence and hatred, these are referred to as "intractable" or "protracted conflicts" (Babbitt & Hampson, 2011). Conflict resolution focuses on turning struggle and brutality into an absence of violence, also called a "state of negative peace" (Sousa, 2018). In fact, conflict resolution differs from conflict transformation for the latter's goal is to solve the root-causes of the dispute. Thus, the goal of conflict resolution is to decrease the level of violence and to reach a consensus or a mutually acceptable agreement on future interactions (Bercovitch & Jackson, 2012).

Furthermore, there are different mechanisms used in conflict resolution. In fact, conflict resolution procedures include negotiations, binding arbitration and adjudication, and institutional solutions which do not address a certain conflict but establish a series of regulations in order to prevent a future dispute or to easily resolve future conflicts (Mostert, 1998). However, gradually, states put more emphasis on the sanctity of its sovereignty and hence, prefer bargaining and negotiations as tools for conflict resolution instead of binding arbitration (Babbitt & Hampson, 2011).

In continuation, since the end of the Cold War, different non-state actors started playing an important role in the field of conflict resolution. These non-state actors can be international or regional organizations such as the United Nations and the European Union, or it can be non-governmental organizations such as Amnesty International or International Crisis Group (Bercovitch & Jackson, 2012).
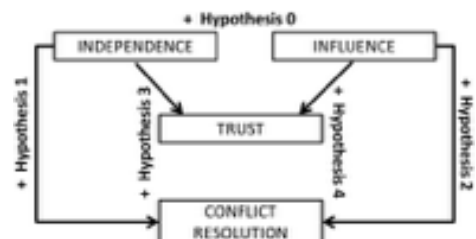
Theoretical framework of the role of international regional organization in conflict resolution

On the theoretical level, there had been a debate between realists and instrumentalists regarding the role of international organizations in conflict resolution; for realists argue that international organizations are effective only in soft-security issues; however, instrumentalists approve the efficiency of international organizations to maintain peace among the state and to resolve disputes (Grigorescu & Melin, 2017). In fact, international organizations should be more successful in mediating among states and reach binding and sustainable settlements (Grigorescu & Melin, 2017). When it comes to regional organizations, they undertake several measures to maintain peace such as representing the interests of all states and convince them that they do not need to resort to violence in

order to achieve their interests. Moreover, they can take diplomatic actions in order to mediate between two opponents, but also push the disputants into negotiations through political pressures (Enuka & Nwagbo, 2016). In addition, they should be able to identify the stance of each party and to give incentive, aids for example, for the states to compromise (Enuka & Nwagbo, 2016).

Furthermore, regional organizations may also have relative advantages in successful conflict resolution outcomes in comparison to the international ones for the geographical proximity makes the organization able to organize different patterns of negotiations being back- or front-channel ones (Ibrahim, 2016). Also, the fear of a spill-over gives the regional organization higher incentives to reach successful settlements to conflicts (Ibrahim, 2016). Although scholars argued that regional organizations are efficient in conflict resolution, the case of the LAS proved otherwise according to the literature (Ibrahim, 2016).

Literature Review

The literature analyzed the performance of the Arab League in the field of conflict resolution; however, there had been a general consensus among the literature on the ineffective role of the LAS in resolving regional conflicts (Ibrahim, 2016; Ulger & Hammoura, 2018; Rodriguez, 2011).

The literature associates the failure of the LAS in conflict resolution for several reasons: Fawcett and Gandoise (2010, as cited in Ibrahim, 2016) emphasized on several variables including authoritarianism and Arab nationalism. Lustick (1997) elaborated on the intervention of the West in weakening the region and preventing the rise of a hegemony in justifying the inefficient conflict resolution and lack of hegemony in the Middle East. In addition, Chen and Zhao (2009 as cited in Ulger & Hammoura, 2018) added the problem of the organization's mechanism in implementing and executing the decisions taken. Finally, Rodriguez (2011) argued that the fact that the decisions should be unanimous in order to be binding is a factor that impedes the success of the organization.

Although these internal and systemic elements are important in analyzing the performance of the organization; the elements of trust among the members and the organization's credibility had been rarely analyzed in the literature. Thus, the paper analyses and combines internal and external factors, which are the internal distrust among the state members and the constant external interventions that go beyond the control of the LAS. However, in order to analyze these two variables and the ways they impact the effectiveness of the LAS in conflict resolution, it is important to start by an evaluation of the general pattern of success and failures of the LAS.

General evaluation of the LAS's efforts in the field of conflict resolution

The Arab League is one of the oldest regional organizations which had been established in 1945 by six Arab States: Syria, Lebanon, Transjordan, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), Egypt, and Iraq (Pinfari, 2009). Its primary role is to enhance the peaceful relationship between Arab members, manage and resolve disputes, and had been at that time a reflection of the Arab dream being the creation of a single state for all the Arab people (Pinfari, 2009). However, the dream of the Arab state had never been accomplished, but also the ability of the organization to settle regional conflicts had been questioned.

Although article V of the League's Charter prohibits the use of force and emphasizes on the important role of the organization in managing and resolving any disputes; its success had been limited

in that field (Youssef, 2013). In fact, it had succeeded in ending the conflict between Iraq and Kuwait in 1961, and the conflict between Algeria and Morocco in 1963 (Zacher, 1979 as cited in Ibrahim, 2016). The regional organization have also had an important role in ending the civil war in Lebanon through the Taif accord (Ibrahim, 2016).

However, the rate of the League's failure in conflict resolution had been higher. There are several cases in which the organization had failed to re-establish peace as it failed in stopping the American invasion of Iraq in 2003. In addition, it failed to end the second Lebanese civil war (1975-1990) and the on-going Israeli-Palestinian conflict which started in 1948 (Pinfari, 2009). Furthermore, the LAS also had been unable to prevent the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 (Pinfari, 2009). Furthermore, the role of the LAS in the Arab Spring had been problematic. In fact, the organization remained indifferent regarding all the uprisings which, in Syria, Libya and Yemen, had resulted in deadly conflicts (Ulger & Hammoura, 2018). The organization could not solve the conflict in Libya by itself, and thus, supported an international intervention (Ibrahim, 2016). Moreover, it failed to solve the Syrian conflict which quickly became a sphere of power competition between Great powers causing thousands of casualties (Ibrahim, 2016).

Along with these aforementioned examples, statistics show that this regional organization had been able to resolve only six from a total of 77 inter-Arab conflicts from 1945-1981 (Awad, 1994 as cited in Ibrahim, 2016). In more recent statistical analysis, LAS had succeeded entirely in only five conflicts which represent 9% of the totality of disputes and only participated in the resolution of 21% of the total number of conflicts that took place from 1945-2008 (Pinfari, 2009). Furthermore, LAS has had a mediating role in only 34% of all regional conflicts that took place from 1945-2008 (Pinfari, 2009). Thus, all of the statistics mentioned are low, which means that the organization had proven ineffective in resolving regional conflicts

Internal distrust as an internal challenge to the LAS

The LAS faces different types of challenges that hinder its ability to successfully solve regional. disputes; and one of these important challenges is the lack of internal trust among the members of the organization. In fact, Nathan (2010) highlights the importance of this element for he explained that two main variables play as preconditions for an effective regional organization in the field of conflict resolution: a mutual trust among the members of the organization in its mechanism and ability to solve conflicts, and a harmony among the member states for them to be able to cooperate and reach a consensus.

Firstly, the member states lack harmony among each other which leads to weak cooperation and trust. In fact, Allaf (2008, as cited in Rodriguez, 2011, p.6) criticized the significant lack of unity among Arabs: "Arab agree to disagree in everything". This lack of consensus and cooperation had impeded the progress of the LAS in conflict resolution; since Article VII of the Charter emphasizes the importance of unanimity of the decisions for them to be binding; and this unanimity is rarely reached for every state's priorities within its own interests (Rodriguez, 2011; Ulger & Hammoura, 2018). Thus, as a result of the disunity, the agreements are weak in terms of value and enforcement (Saleh, 2005 as cited in Rodriguez, 2011). Moreover, according to the functional integration theory, cooperation on soft-security issues is crucial for building trust among the states and reaching effective agreements and concessions on hard-security matters such as dispute settlements; however, according to Mencütek (2014), cooperation between Arab states in terms of trade, economy and capital flow is lacking. Thus, even cooperation on soft-security

issues is insufficient for the member states to build mutual trust and cohesion in order to be able to give concessions on hard-security matters.

Furthermore, El-Gaddafi, in one of the Arab Summits in 2008, stated that "we all have problems with each other. There is nothing common between us except this room" (Ulger & Hammoura, 2018, p.46). Accordingly, this statement does not only highlight the disunity among the organization's state members but their conflicting interests which can lead to a lack of trust. In fact, this lack of confidence among the members had been an important factor that impeded the efforts of the LAS in successfully mediate and reach a peaceful settlement in the Syrian crisis, which started in 2011, since there had been a distrust between Syria and other important members such as KSA and Qatar (Ibrahim, 2016). Moreover, Kuwait had been invaded by Iraq in 1990-1991 (Rodriguez, 2011); this invasion illustrates the extent of fragmentation among the members.

Secondly, the distrust is not only among the member states; however, there is a lack of trust in the mechanisms of the organization and its ability in solving important conflicts while taking into consideration the states' interests (Ibrahim, 2016). In fact, some groups in the Arab region perceive the organization to be biased in favor of Muslim Sunni over other sects; this idea made the Shiia and Kurds question the credibility of the LAS as a fair mediator in conflicts (Mencütek, 2014).

On the other hand, the distrust in the organization's capability comes from the historical experience in which the organization had proven ineffective in dealing with regional conflicts, but also because of the inability of the organization to control or pressure other regional or international actors to take a particular course of action in a specific conflict (Mencütek, 2014). This idea highlights the external challenge, being the international intervention, as an important factor hindering the ability of the organization in solving conflicts but also in decreasing its credibility in the eyes of state members.

The external challenge: foreign interventions.

Some scholars such as Nye (1971 as cited in Ulger & Hammoura, 2018) have compared the success of the LAS, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Organization of American States (OAS) in the field of conflict resolution and proved that the LAS is the least efficient; however, the problems of the Middle East tend to be complicated protracted conflicts. One of the factors that complicate the situation is the intervention of regional and international powers in the conflicts, which goes beyond the scope of control of the organization. In fact, according to the analysis of Pinfari (2009), in some specific cases, the League had proven more effective in handling conflicts that do not involve the intervention of international actors. Thus, the Syrian conflict is an example that illustrates this idea; the LAS had failed to resolve the Syrian conflict which started with the Arab Spring in 2011 mainly because of the different military and political interventions that took place (Ibrahim, 2016; Liu, 2013). These interventions transformed the conflict into a power competition between the Great Powers, and more specifically the USA and Russia; but also, Turkey and Iran were main players (Zulfaqar, 2018). Accordingly, to meet their own interests and political goals, these external actors had managed to increase the regional divisions (Zulfaqar, 2018). Thus, the Syrian conflict became internationalized and the League remained politically weak and unable to control or influence any of the actors, whether regional or international, to take a certain course of action (Ibrahim, 2016). However, the Syrian conflict is not the only conflict in which international powers were involved; the Middle East is a strategic location in the world for it is a region rich in oil and natural resources and is located at the intersection of three continents (Zulfaqar, 2018). Hence, it always had been

a center of external attraction. This idea can be illustrated by the 2003 invasion of Iraq when the USA and Britain occupied Iraq. Although the Arab League strongly condemned the actions of the USA, it had been unable to prevent the invasion, to influence the American behavior, or to pressure the Great power to withdraw (Mencütek, 2014). Hence, the inability of the Arab League to take an action weakened its credibility and legitimacy in the eyes of the state members and further polarized the Arab world (Mencütek, 2014). In conclusion, since 1945, the LAS had remained weak in the field of conflict resolution for according to statistics and a series of examples, it had failed to resolve important regional disputes. The paper chose to combine both internal and external variables in order to further analyze the reasons behind this failure. Firstly, the internal challenge had been the lack of harmony and trust among the state members as showed the examples of the Syrian state vis-à-vis other members of the LAS and the fragmentation of the organization shown by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. There is also a distrust in the organization's ability and mechanisms to resolve conflicts while taking into consideration the interests of all its members (as the examples of the Kurds and the Shiia). Secondly, the organization Page also faces external challenges for the region is constantly attracting foreign interventions for its natural resources and its geo-strategic location. Thus, the constant foreign interventions from great powers make it hard for the organization to operate mainly because it has no influence or control over these external powers as it had been proven by the examples of the Syrian conflict and the American invasion of Iraq.

Short Bios of our Contributors

H.E. Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos is the United Nations Under Secretary-General holding the post of High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) since January 2019. Mr. Moratinos has committed his professional and political career to international relations and development cooperation and peace and security notably as Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Spain (2004-2010) and the European Union Special Representative for the Middle East Peace Process (1996-2003). During his tenure as Foreign Minister, Spain presided over the UN Security Council in 2004, held the chairmanships-in-office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Council of Europe and the Council of the European Union. Mr. Moratinos has received numerous recognitions, including the League of Arab States Award in March 2019 from the Secretary General of the organization, Mr. Ahmed Abulgheit, in recognition for his role in strengthening Arab-Spanish relations.

Minister Plenipotentiary Nada El Agizy is the Director of Sustainable Development and International Cooperation Department at the League of Arab States, where she is working on integrating the concept of sustainability and implementation of Sustainable Development Goals, through policy advice, regional programming, coordination, advocacy, technical support, and resource mobilization. She joined the Arab League in 1992 and has more than 20 years of experience in economic and social development at the regional and international levels. Ms. Nada El Agizy has a Bachelor's degree in Economics from the American University in Cairo and an MBA from University of Cumbria in the UK where her studies were focused on sustainable management. Before her most recent appointment; Nada was Deputy Chief of Cabinet and adviser for economic, social affairs and communication to H.E. the Secretary General, she

was responsible for setting recommendations and preparation of policy notes on key issues like economic integration, reform and development. In her recent capacity she launched "The Arab Sustainable Development Week as the largest regional multi-stakeholder dialogue platform in the Arab region; bringing together representatives from Arab countries, experts, civil society, private sector, youth, parliamentarians, media institutions and philanthropy.

Dr Angela Kane had a long and distinguished career at the United Nations; her functions included High Representative for Disarmament Affairs (2012–2015), Under-Secretary-General for Management (2008–2012), Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs (2005–2008) and Assistant Secretary-General for General Assembly and Conference Management. She served as Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), and had postings in the Democratic Republic in the Congo, Indonesia, and Thailand.

Previously, she held UN positions as director in the Department of Political Affairs and director in the Department of Public Information. She served as principal political officer with former Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali and worked with the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General for the Central American Peace Process, which resulted in the signing of the El Salvador Peace Accords.

Before she joined the UN Secretariat, she worked for the World Bank. Ms. Kane went to Bryn Mawr College and studied at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. She received an honorary doctorate from the Middlebury Institute of International Studies (Monterey, California).

Dr Sverre Lodgaard (b. 1945) is a Senior Research Fellow and former Director (1997-2007) of the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI). Before joining NUPI he directed the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR, 1992-1996). Public service: Member of the UN Secretary General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters (1992-1999); Member of the Norwegian Government's Advisory Council for Arms Control and Disarmament (1972–1985; 1989–1992; 1998–2009; Advisor/member of Norwegian delegations to international conferences on arms control and disarmament matters; Chairman of the Board of the Oslo Center for Peace, Democracy and Human Rights. Latest books: Nuclear disarmament and Non-Proliferation. Routledge (2011). In the Wake of the Arab Spring, Scandinavian Academic Press (2013); Stable Nuclear Zero (Routledge 2016).

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About BUE

The formation of a British University in Egypt arose from a 1998 Memorandum of Cooperation between the UK and the Egyptian Governments. It was envisaged that such an institution would produce graduates of UK standards for key sectors of the Egyptian economy, particularly in the areas of engineering, computer science and business studies. The BUE is a major University delivering Higher Education with Students graduating with both Egyptian and UK degrees. It is the largest face-to-face provision of British Transnational Higher Education in the Middle East, leading in Educational Quality, Student Experience, high research and focused enterprise. We have started since September 2005 and now our student population has reached 11058 thousand with 11 faculties. BUE is the first accredited Private University in QS Ranking. For more information, please visit our Website: https://www.bue.edu.eg/

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 https://www.bue.edu.eg/community-services/

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