

The Kingdom of Morocco

Positions for League of Arab States

I. Examining the Conflict in Syria: Developing an Arab Proposal for the Cessation of Violence in the Middle East.

Morocco has been a leading force in Arab world for political, economic and the human rights modernization. The BBC describes us as a “Cautious Modernizer”¹ displaying a genuine concern for our Arab ties and foresight for the need to develop ourselves as a world power. In regards to the Syrian Civil War Morocco has been a supporter of the group *Friends of Syria* going so far as to host them in Makarrech, Morocco for the fourth international meeting held in honor of Syrian people’s desire for freedom². At this meeting over 100 countries officially recognized the opposition to the Syrian government as the representative of the Syrian people³. The Arab League also recognized the National Coalition in Syria as the official representative in its general council.

Morocco’s wishes to see all Arab people share in freedom and democratic principles, two ideals that President Assad’s government failed to give to its people. As a current member of the Security Council, Morocco has urged the passage of a resolution regarding the escalating violence in the country.

If the Arab League is ready to accept the National Coalition as the officially representative of the Syrian people then it must be prepared to assist them in removing the violent threat to their governance. Before such action can be taken this governing body must decide the legality of its actions or amend its charter to expand its power. The Charter of the Arab League states, “*The Council shall mediate in all differences which threaten to lead to war between two member-states, or a member-state and a third state, with a view to bringing about their reconciliation.*”⁴ The Arab League has failed to do so and has violated article 8 of its charter, “*Each member-state shall respect the systems of government established in the other member-states and regard them as exclusive concerns of those states. Each shall pledge to abstain from any action calculated to change established systems of government.*”⁵

In order to cement the League’s actions as legitimate, Morocco recommends amending the charter to allow multilateral involvement by the league to intervene in crises where a majority of the members deem a state to be unstable or unable to function. The international community has already expressed the need to become involved in the Syrian crisis and the many, including the Arab League, have expressed their support of the opposition in Syria. Amending the League’s Charter would legitimize an Arab intervention in Syria for the purposes of political stabilization and governmental development.

Whether or not the League chooses to amend its charter, a plan has to be made for the Arab response to the massive violence in the state. Morocco recommends that the Arab League come up with a plan of action similar to the 6 point plan created by Kofi Annan. Aspects of the plan should include; provisions and protection provided for refugees and affected civilians, a Syrian led dialogue between the opposing forces, the release of political prisoners, freedom of the media, and freedom of assembly and demonstration by citizens. Although these are taken from the 6 point plan presented by Kofi Annan, the League should be able to come up with its own plan that the League is ready to implement whether or not the Security Council votes in favor of it. The Arab League cannot be an arbitrary judge in the issue, rather a mediator for the protection of the people’s will of Syria. Diplomatic attempts will only work if the League is prepared to protect President Assad and his family after they are removed from power.

¹ BBC News Africa, Morocco Profile

² <http://www.nation.co.ke/News/-/1056/1642398/-/x9260vz/-/index.html>

³ <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2012/12/201212124541767116.html>

⁴ <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/publisher,LAS,,,3ae6b3ab18,0.html/>

⁵ Ibid.

II. Coordinating a United Arab Response to Humanitarian Crises.

According to the International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect, the crisis in Libya seized the attention of the international community and has been labeled a clear example for when a timely and decisive humanitarian response is needed of the Arab people. The February 2011 political protests called for the seizing of power from Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi's 41-year reign. Libyan civilians were the target of deathly attacks at the hands of government armed forces. The international community, regional and sub-regional bodies acted to protect the populations through a range of economic, political and later military measures. The struggles of the Libyan people were achieved with the unified response of the International community. The League of Arab States, The African Union, the Organization of Islamic Conference, the African Court on Human and People's rights, NGO's, the UN and individual states calls for action help stimulate a international response⁶.

When crisis strikes in regions around the world, there becomes a need for a unified humanitarian response. The UAE's response to the Libya crisis included setting up camps on the borders with both Tunisia and Egypt, providing health care, distributing food and non-food items and supplying ambulances and medical equipment to hospitals⁷. Similarly, over the past decade, Morocco has extended a hand to neighboring countries and people in the region to provide humanitarian aid in times of crisis. Whether due to violence or natural disaster, Morocco has assisted in disaster-prevention measures.

In the past Morocco has reached out through humanitarian assistance of tragic events and turmoil in the Middle East, North Africa, and the Sahel. Political and economical in assistance, Morocco has advocated for democracy and human rights in Libya and Syria; Moroccan Field Hospital/Other aid for Syrian Refugees in Jordan and Turkey to help dislocated refugees due to violence; Moroccan Field Hospital in Gaza to help Palestinians injured in air strikes; Praise from International Red Cross for Palestinian people; Humanitarian aid for Gazans and reconstruction of hospitals; Crisis in Mali and the Sahel dispatch foodstuffs to assist with refugees in Niger; and Floods in Niger natural disaster assistance⁸.

With Morocco's stance on determined assistance on humanitarian needs, coordinating a Unified Arab response to humanitarian crisis is a must. The Arab community can learn to assist those neighboring countries and regional people against poverty, occupation, or civil war. The Arab Member State would need to work with *NGOs*, *CSOs*, and other organizations to make humanitarian relief successful. Coordinating a unified Arab response to humanitarian crisis would result in greater development, poverty alleviation, and progress⁹. According the United Nations the Arab community will need to begin forming partnerships between Member States and *NGOs* and *CSOs* to determine a course of action. Despite debate and areas for negotiations over what the course of action will be, it is necessary the unified response tackle civil unrest and uncertainty throughout the region.

⁶ <http://www.responsibilitytoprotect.org/index.php/crises-in-libya>

⁷ UAEAidNews. Musa'adat Issue 1, April 2011. http://humanitarianforum.org/data/files/ocfa_newsletter_english.pdf

⁸ <http://moroccoonthemove.wordpress.com/2012/2014/morocco-reaches-out-with-humanitarian-aid-to-neighbors-in-need-in-2012/>

⁹ Denis J. Sullivan. "NGOs and Development in the Arab World: The Critical Importance of a Strong Partnership Between Government and Civil Society" *Civil Society and Democratization in the Arab World*. Cairo, Egypt. June 2000, vol. 9, no. 102. <http://www.mideastinfo.com/arabngo.htm>