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"CONTEMPLATING DIPLOMATIC FRACTURES WHILE BREAKING THE CYCLE OF SOCIOPOLITICAL INJUSTICE AND APATHY''

Addressing the Diplomatic Fragmentation in Responding to Human Rights Crises in the Middle East

Elvan Kahveci

Deputy Chair

Committee: Social and Humanitarian Committee (SOCHUM)

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Student Officer: Elvan Kahveci

Position: Deputy Chair

Introduction

The Middle East has remained one of the most politically unstable regions internationally, with its ongoing conflicts, authoritarian government systems, prolonged foreign intervention and repeated human rights violations. Mass displacement, civilian targeting in armed conflict, suppression of political oppositions, restrictions on basic human liberties like freedom of expression, and violations of internationally acclaimed humanitarian principles have repeatedly occurred, causing severe human rights crises across the region. Despite the gravity of the situation, international responses have been inconsistent, delayed and often unsuccessful, with no real evidence of sustainability or accountability.

Diplomatic fragmentation is renounced as a major obstacle in addressing human rights crises in the Middle East. Instead of forming a unified international front to face the issue, global and regional political factors cause governments to adopt different and fluctuating stances on the matter. Said fragmentation is most crucial and particularly evident in international organizations like various UN organs, specifically the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), in which the use of veto power (utilized permanently by France, China, USA, UK, Russia) has prevented collective decisionmaking.

Since regional organizations tend to lack the cohesion, enforcement capacity or political neutrality to properly respond to human rights crises, international assistance is required, however, it is rarely found in dire situations. Complex regional dynamics prolong human suffering, and also undermine the credibility of institutions aiming to maintain human safety.

Definition of Key Terms

Human Rights: Universally recognized moral principles or norms that establish standards of human behavior. These rights are considered inherent and inalienable, meaning they belong to every individual simply by virtue of being human, regardless of characteristics like nationality, ethnicity, religion, or socio-economic status.

Diplomatic Fragmentation: The absence of unity, coordination, or consensus among states and international actors in diplomatic efforts, leading to inconsistent, competing, or ineffective responses to a shared international issue.

State Sovereignty: A term that refers to the supreme legal authority and responsibility of a state to govern and regulate within its territory.

Non-Intervention: The abstention by a state from intervening in the affairs of other states or in its own internal disputes.

Responsibility to Protect (R2P): An international norm that seeks to ensure that the international community never again fails to halt the mass atrocity crimes of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

International Humanitarian Law (IHL): A set of rules that seek to limit the effects of armed conflict. It lays out the responsibilities of states and non-state armed groups during an armed conflict.

International Human Rights Law (IHRL): A framework of treaties and customary law establishing obligations on states to respect, protect, and fulfill human rights both in times of peace and, in certain respects, during armed conflict.

Selective Enforcement: The inconsistent application of international legal norms and accountability mechanisms based on political interests rather than objective legal standards.

Proxy Conflict: Conflicts in which a third party intervenes indirectly in a pre-existing war in order to influence the strategic outcome in favour of its preferred faction.

Universal Jurisdiction: A legal principle that allows states or international organizations to claim criminal jurisdiction over an accused person, regardless of where the alleged crime was committed and irrespective of the accused's nationality, country of residence, or any other connection to the prosecuting entity.

Multilateral Deadlock: A situation in which international institutions are unable to take action due to political divisions or procedural obstacles among member states.

General Overview

HISTORICAL FOUNDATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS CHALLENGES IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Modern human rights challenges in the Middle East are tied to the emerging political realities of the region in the 20th century and the manner in which states were formed in the Middle East. The fall of the Ottoman Empire and the imposition of new boundaries through European mandate systems established new states with external borders that were not representative of social and cultural structures. This lack of representation resulted in the destabilisation of existing populations and their national identities, which led to continued internal instability. Countries such as Iraq and Syria were therefore established as centralised governments overseeing their multicultural populations without the social consent of their people.

Governments in response to the resulting structural weaknesses have typically focused on strengthening their regime, territorial integrity and internal security over the political participation and accountability of their institutions. To further explain, in many of the newly independent states, their constitutions have provided the executive branch with a great deal of power, while parliamentary and judicial institutions were effectively subservient to political authority. In addition, large security and intelligence agencies were created to track opposition activities and to manage how the public conduct themselves. Hence, these states adopted a model of governance which emphasised control over representation.

Emergency laws were widely used by governments in these countries during the Arab Spring as a way to suspend the country's constitutional protections and to enable the enforcement of limits on the freedoms to assemble, speak freely via the press, or be arrested without the benefit of standard due-process protections. In some cases like Egypt and Syria, the government consistently justified these types of emergency laws as necessary for national security, combating terrorism, or preserving social order. Over time, however, the use of these emergency laws became so normalised that they began to be viewed as more than just short-term solutions to a temporary crisis situation, and were instead seen by many as fundamental tools of governance.

Throughout the 20th century, various kinds of restrictions upon people's basic human rights like the right to free expression, form associations and take part in politics were primarily justified with appeals to creating a more stable, cohesive society. The creation of new political parties, the restriction of union activity within certain industries, and the restriction of the ability for citizens to take part in civil society effectively eliminated the possibility that independent groups could hold the government accountable to the citizenry. As such, pluralism and judicial independence were viewed by many as a potential danger to the survival of the existing political system, rather than as an important source of citizen accountability and social stability.

The patterns of governance in the Middle East throughout history have been necessary for understanding why many times in the region political instability exists as well as many instances

of human rights violations. The way states have historically instituted their security-based governing structures prevented the evolution of the means by which an individual could express their grievances politically; therefore, the chances that social or economic dissatisfaction leads to unrest, riot, or war are significant.

COLD WAR LEGACIES AND SELECTIVE INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

During the Cold War, the ideological rivalry between the Western bloc and the Soviet Union had a significant effect on the international response to human rights abuses in the Middle East. Rather than acting as an independent point of reference for countries' involvement with each other, the issue of human rights generally took second place (after political and military issues) to issues associated with geopolitical, strategic, and economic interests. Specifically, the majority of outside entities that partnered with a nation's regime did so when those partnerships served either to expand or to enhance the political, military, or economic interests of the partnership, such as by providing access to military resources, raw materials, or avenues for strategic positioning. Consequently, the issue of systemic human rights violations was often ignored or framed as internal matters in order to protect the political ties that developed from such alliances and to maintain the influence of the political systems involved.

Multiple Cold War era alliances give evidence to this phenomenon; diplomatic protections and material support were afforded to regimes that imposed restrictions (to greater or lesser degrees) upon civil liberties, political participation and et cetera. The selective nature of international responses to Human Rights Violations supported a fixed idea within much of the international community regarding the inconsistent application of Human Rights Advocacy. This resulted in a perception that some states didn't honour their Human Rights commitments when it did not serve their national interest. Therefore, for many Middle Eastern states, this selective engagement has weakened the legitimacy of external criticism and further increased distrust of International Monitoring Mechanisms.

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAWS AND IMPLEMENTATION GAPS

The United Nations General Assembly approved the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 and subsequently established a core legal framework to create an internationally recognized set of rules known as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Each treaty provides an extensive list of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, which obligates states to take measures to respect, protect and provide these rights to all individuals on their territory.

Most countries in the Middle East are signatories to these major human rights treaties, but in reality implementation has been very limited. Many countries place reservations on certain articles that impact the implementation of some articles on domestic law in relation to political participation, expression, and equality before the law. Furthermore, there are limited domestic mechanisms available to support the enforcement of these treaties and, as a result, reduced compliance. Many countries do not have the legal ability or the motivation to contest the actions

of the executive, making it difficult for courts to implement treaty obligations within those countries.

DIPLOMATIC FRAGMENTATION: Global, Regional and Institutional Perspectives

Diplomatic fragmentation is fundamentally a failure of international and regional parties to create and implement consistent and coherent responses to common humanitarian crises and human rights abuses. This fragmentation takes place as each party pursues individualised or conflicting responses based upon their political priorities and strategic interests and does not have a unified approach grounded in international law and collective responsibility. The current diplomatic fragmentation surrounding the Middle East has become a defining characteristic of international policies and has severely limited the ability to maintain humanitarian services.

Diverse political interests at the international settings can create competing interpretations of some of the most basic concepts related to state sovereignty, non-intervention, accountability and international responsibility among the world's major powers. These varying interpretations are seen in multinational forums where there is a polarization of votes, conflicting diplomatic initiatives and a lack of agreement to support the establishment of a common set of mechanisms to monitor human rights violations. As a result, human rights violations that are similar in nature may receive very different levels of international response, based on the alignment of the state that is involved, therefore undermining the universality and consistency of international human rights standards.

Looking at a Middle Eastern perspective; ideological, sectarian, and other strategic rivalries intensify the existing fractures in diplomacy. In most cases, regional powers support opposing groups within domestic conflicts, turning these crises within their respective borders into a type of proxy conflict that extends across borders into their neighbouring countries. In this context, human rights issues tend to take a backseat to security concerns and power competition, making it less likely for regional actors to cooperate and to effectively mediate the humanitarian situations occurring in their respective countries. Additionally, the presence of these dynamics continues to aggravate polarisation and the lack of an opportunity for consensus based solutions.

At the institutional level, fragmentation can be seen as a result of overlapping bureaucracies and limited coordination of UN organs. Political pressure on monitoring and reporting mechanisms also adds to institutional fragmentation. Many different elements within the UN are responsible for protecting human rights (i.e. the UN General Assembly, the Human Rights Council and the various agencies and funds) using their different approaches to protection; however, lack of effective collaboration and coordination reduces overall effectiveness, as do lack of follow-up mechanisms for implementing decisions made by UN bodies through reports and resolutions. Reports and resolutions do raise awareness, but often fail to achieve long-term action or policy changes.

THE ARAB SPRING AS AN INCITEMENT FOR DIPLOMATIC DIVISION

The Arab Spring protests that took place in 2011 have profoundly changed the Middle East in terms of the understanding of human rights and how the Middle East is portrayed globally. The protests were largely inspired by a desire for dignity and the right to politically participate, hold leaders accountable and to earn social justice. This has received much support from international actors and multilateral institutions and it was seen by them to be in line with many of the internationally accepted norms regarding human rights. There was an early emphasis by the international community on the need to support peaceful protesting, political reformation and respecting fundamental freedoms.

As uprisings became international, consensus began to break down, and thus many protest movements evolved into protracted violent armed conflict, while other regimes escalated to authoritarianism and the militarisation of their police force in response to civil unrest. As these violent uprisings became increasingly more common, it became clear that international responses were primarily determined by the need to address the issues outlined above, while human rights advocates were increasingly subordinated to the need to secure perceived short term political stability or protect strategic interests of states.

The difference between how states approached the Arab Spring's outcome can be seen primarily in the UN General Assembly, where countries responded diversely based on their level of enthusiasm and concern for human rights violations. While on some occasions countries expressed their outrage with strong verbal condemnation and ratified resolutions reaffirming international law governing the treatment of people, other times countries were hesitant about taking action, even though human rights abuses were present. Countries were influenced more by political and strategic concerns, rather than by an unbiased determination regarding the existence of violations.

IMPACT ON CIVIL SOCIETY AND VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

Women, children, refugees, indigenous peoples, disabled people, and humanitarian aid bringers are prone to experiencing the effects of increasing political fragmentation. The lack of a coordinated and sustained international response to a vicious cycle of continuous violations of human rights, and little accountability for violations threatening vulnerable groups. Political and security priorities associated with fragmented diplomatic responses have diminished the visibility of social and humanitarian concerns.

This unrestfulness has a very negative impact on civil society organizations and human rights defenders. Governments often use security concerns or public order as an excuse to implement restrictions on civic space (i.e. limitations on the freedom of association, excessive registration requirements, surveillance and retaliation against activists). If governments receive inconsistent or conflicting international responses to these types of measures, they have less external incentive to retract these types of restrictions. Consequently, civil society actors operate under increased risk, diminished resources, and limited access to international protective mechanisms.

Armed conflict and forced displacement are challenges for many vulnerable groups, some of which are affected by armed conflict and others by displacement. Refugees, internally displaced persons, and migrant populations rely heavily on effective international advocacy and humanitarian aid in order to protect themselves. Political fragmentation can slow or completely block access to humanitarian assistance, add politics to aid distribution, and weaken support for long-term education, healthcare, and social inclusion. Women and children are the most vulnerable to the above-mentioned challenges, as the interruption of social services and the breakdown of support systems create further steps to already existing inequality and risk.

Major Parties Involved

When determining how to respond diplomatically to human rights violations occurring in the Middle East, one must look at how a variety of international, regional, and non-state actors affect diplomatic responses to human rights emergencies. Their positions on human rights and the way they vote or interact with human rights systems are all ways in which these actors can have an impact on the diplomatic response. By analysing these actors' motives, the delegate can more accurately identify the source of the fragmentation and barriers to the development of a unified response.

UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND SOCHUM

The United Nations General Assembly serves as the principal deliberative body of the UN, providing a forum for political dialogue and normative development on international issues, including human rights. Within the General Assembly, the Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee (SOCHUM) is responsible for addressing human rights violations, humanitarian crises, and social development challenges.

SOCHUM's work includes drafting resolutions condemning violations, reaffirming international legal standards, and urging cooperation with UN mechanisms such as special rapporteurs and treaty bodies. However, because General Assembly resolutions are non-binding, their effectiveness relies heavily on political consensus and moral authority. Diplomatic fragmentation among member states often results in diluted language, abstentions, or selective focus on certain crises while others receive limited attention. This dynamic has been particularly visible in debates related to Middle Eastern human rights situations following the Arab Spring.

UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL

Though primarily responsible for preserving global stability, peace, and security, the UN Security Council (UNSC) has legal authority under both international law and UN Charter to enforce

measures through sanctions and authorizations of military peacekeeping operations. It also has a large influence over how the UN deals with violations of individual human rights through conflict situations because of its ability to pass resolutions about future actions.

For many years, throughout the Middle East, the veto power of the UNSC's five permanent members has resulted in extensive criticisms of the Council's paralysis. Multiple instances of vetoing, or mutually threatening to veto, resolutions aimed at establishing ceasefires or implementing due-process procedures have prevented passage of such resolutions. This delay has increased perceptions of politicization of justice and greatly exasperated the erosion of trust in the multilateral resolutions produced by the UNSC, assigning significantly more authority with respect to civil society's response ability to the General Assembly and Third Committee (SOCHUM).

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The USA was an important external force in the Middle East starting in the mid-1900s with a presence in the area that was founded on America's interest in security and strategic services as well as economic concerns in the region. During the Cold War, US interests in the region were to contain the Soviet's power over the countries within it and to help develop and support governments that were friendly to them through political and military means despite the fact that these same governments were known to violate some values of respect for one's human rights. This created a process where the method of selective engagement of nations normalized human rights violations, and as a result, this process was the basis for American foreign policy in the Middle East.

After the Cold War ended, the US started to incorporate human rights into its foreign policies. In practice though, the reinforcement of said policies was selective and inconsistent. Following 2001, US engagement in the Middle East became majorly centralized on counterterrorism. Regional alliances were formed and maintained despite numerous documented restrictions on civil liberties, justified for the sake of regional stability and security cooperation.

In the case of the UN, the USA has accepted and rejected certain resolutions related to human rights abuses based on their own and their allies' political interests; therefore, this so-called "selective engagement" has resulted in widespread global outcry and accusations of hypocrisy, and diminished the ability for credible international human rights advocacy efforts to occur.

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Over the last decade and a half, Russia has become much more active and influential in the Middle East through diplomatic channels, starting in the early 2010s. Historically, Russian involvement in the region stems from Soviet support of ally governments during the Cold War and a commitment to supporting the idea of state sovereignty and non-interference by other nations. These two principles are still incorporated into Russia's contemporary foreign policy and its handling of human rights issues.

Regarding the UN system, Russia has consistently objected to any international actions considered to facilitate foreign interference or regime change. Russia has consistently exercised its right to veto in the UN Security Council to block any international resolutions aiming at ending hostilities in the region; implementing economic sanctions, and establishing accountability for those committing atrocities against humanity in the region. Russian officials contend that these types of UN resolution are overly politicised and therefore reduce the chances of successful political solutions.

The diplomatic effect of this strategy has been significant. Critics point out that while Russia contends that it acts to protect both international law and the principle of sovereign equality, its continual blocking of collective responses to confirmed violations of international law hinders effective multilateralism . Consequently, there has been an increase in reliance upon non-binding mechanisms like resolutions in the General Assembly and SOCHUM. This in turn contributes to the fragmentation of the diplomatic order. Both the historical and current actions of Russia illustrate how differing views regarding sovereignty and accountability may lead to complete insights in international human rights diplomacy.

SYRIA

The Syrian Arab Republic is one the most well documented examples of a human rights crisis within the modern Middle East and an example of diplomatic fragmentation. When protests erupted in Syria in 2011, the movement began as a demand for political reform and greater civil rights, however, within months, protests had transformed into an ongoing civil war. A number of UN bodies, including multiple commissions of inquiry established by the Human Rights Council, have provided evidence of recurring patterns of the violation of both international human rights law as well as humanitarian law.

Despite ongoing international interest, different nations have responded to the situation in Syria through differing methods within multilateral forums. Due to repeated vetoes by some members of the UN Security Council, binding resolutions addressing accountability and enforcement have been denied adoption. Instead, reliance on General Assembly resolutions and investigative efforts with limited power of coercion have become the means of addressing situations involving Syria's government and its military. The Syrian government has persistently rejected any form of external criticism of its actions, viewing both investigations and monitoring as violations of its sovereignty. Through the case of Syria, one can clearly see how the geopolitical interests and veto power exercised by certain representatives within the UN Security Council had a direct impact on the length of diplomatic stalemate and diminished the power of a collective response to human rights violations.

EGYPT

Egypt has been an important player in the region and has had a lot of influence on Arab and African diplomacy for a long time. After the 2011 uprising, Egypt went through a small window of time where it was able to create a more pluralistic political system, but then quickly shifted back to a

more centralized governing structure combined with an expanding body of legislative authority over security. Since then, Egypt has introduced or expanded a number of security-related legislative measures, as well as emergency measures, that restrict public assembly and limit civil society organizations, all of which have been framed as measures taken under the banner of national security.

Internationally, responses to Egypt's human rights situation have traditionally been tepid; in large part, this is because Egypt is viewed as a key player in regional security, peace mediation, and migration management. Although concerns have been raised about Egypt's human rights abuses through UN mechanisms, as well as during periodic reviews, sustained international pressure on Egypt has generally been very limited. This historical pattern indicates that geopolitical and security interests have shaped international involvement and led to selective advocacy within SOCHUM and the General Assembly.

KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

Saudi Arabia is one of the most influential countries in the world, not only because of its economic strength but also due to its strong partnerships with other nations. For many years, the country has operated under a system that restricts the amount of political participation and the way citizens can express themselves. There have been some positive changes in Saudi Society since the 1980s, especially with regards to women's rights and education, but there has always been a lack of the ability to freely express political views.

As a result of several high-profile events that have raised questions about the way in which the Saudi Government operates, there has been an increase in the scrutiny of how Saudi Arabia conducts its government business. Instead of addressing these concerns directly, Saudi Arabia has taken an approach of focusing on its sovereignty and gradual reforms while continuously rejecting the accusations of politicized international criticism as unfounded. Saudi Arabia has continued to use its influence on the diplomatic front to create voting patterns among nations when it comes to voting on resolutions during multilateral negotiations, and in doing so, has contributed to the production of the cautious or consensus-type language used in those resolutions.

ISRAEL AND OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY

The situation in the context of the State of Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories is among the longest-standing, most politically sensitive topics in the history of the United Nations. The issue continues to be addressed by the General Assembly and Council on Human Rights, contributing to ongoing dispositions by member states regarding occupation/legitimacy of statehood and the rights and obligations of occupying military and other civilian governments with regard and availability to civilians located under their responsibility in these situations.

Following the war in 1967, Israel occupied the territories of West Bank and East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip, creating an international outcry about the legal status of the occupied territories. Resolutions passed in the General Assembly affirmed that international humanitarian law (specifically the Fourth Geneva Convention) would apply to occupied territories. In the years that have passed since then, there has been much discussion of various aspects of the Israeli occupation,

including the construction of settlements, restrictions on freedom of movement, access to natural resources and the protection of civilians during times of intensifying global and regional conflict.

International attention has often been centered around Israeli settlements being illegally established and expanding in occupied territories. UN General Assembly resolutions and UN Human Rights Council resolutions have regularly described settlement building as inconsistent with international law. In response to these resolutions, Israel has disputed the characterisation of its settlement construction activities based on security concerns and alternative legal interpretations.

These competing views of the legality of settlement construction and illegal occupation have caused diplomatic rifts and hindered consensus-based actions to remediate the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

Escalating violence, including periodic crises in Gaza and the West Bank, has continued to increase divisions within multilateral bodies governing this issue. In response to episodes of violence, the UN has issued resolutions calling for restraint and accountability, as well as the protection of civilians from acts of violence. Nevertheless, member states' voting patterns on UN Resolutions calling for these actions have demonstrated that members of these organisations are deeply divided. Many states support continuing to engage with the UN to uphold International Law and to protect civilian populations from acts of violence, while others dispute the legitimacy of UN's focus on Israel's actions and see these events as demonstrating the further institutional bias and politicization of UN activities.

Timeline of Key Events

1916	Sykes–Picot Agreement
1920	San Remo Conference
1948	Arab–Israeli War and Palestinian Displacement
1967	Six-Day War
1993	Oslo Accords
2003	US-Led Invasion of Iraq
2011	Arab Spring Protests
2021	Israel-Gaza Escalation

Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

Numerous institutional, legal, and political approaches have been employed to combat splintered global responses to the human rights abuses occurring in the Middle East. These initiatives have aided in definitions of norms, documentation, and providing aid for humanitarian assistance. However, the effectiveness of these initiatives has frequently been limited by political differences in borders, concerns about sovereignty, and varying levels of support from nations.

Development of the International Human Rights Framework

"The United Nations set a common standard on human rights with the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. Although the Declaration is not part of binding international law, its acceptance by all countries around the world gives great moral weight to the fundamental principle that all human beings, whatever our nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, language, or any other status, are to be treated equally and with respect."

European Mandate System

After World War I ended with the Ottoman Empire being defeated, the League of Nations created a new legal system. This system allowed for the former areas that belonged to the Ottoman Empire, and who had been classified as not yet capable of running themselves fully independent, to have their governments set up in a similar manner as was done by most Western countries. These territories were mainly assigned to the United Kingdom and France, with United Kingdom administering Iraq, Palestine, and Jordan and France administering Syria and Lebanon. These territories were considered "class A mandates" and were areas that could become independent in a short period of time.

While the mandated territories were supposed to have autonomy over their own governance, many times they continued to govern the territories as they did when they were part of a colony. Many times the governing authorities exercised complete authority over all aspects of the mandated countries, be it political, administrative, or military. The Colonial Powers often placed their political aspirations and economic interests above the political aspirations and rights of the people living in these territories and as such retained all decision-making authority within their colonial governments and limited insights from the local populations in their democratic processes. As such, the promised transition to self-government was often delayed or directed toward the interests of foreign powers.

Sykes-Picot Agreement

"Sykes-Picot Agreement, (May 1916), secret convention made during World War I between Great Britain and France, with the assent of imperial Russia, for the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire. The agreement led to the division of Turkish-held Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, and Palestine into various French- and British-administered areas. Negotiations were begun in November 1915, and the final agreement took its name from the chief negotiators from Britain and France, Sir Mark Sykes and François Georges-Picot. Sergey Dimitriyevich Sazonov was also present to represent Russia, the third member of the Triple Entente."

Pan-Arabism

Pan-Arabism is defined as the establishment of the view that all Arab peoples belong to the same culture, language, and history, thus rejecting the legitimacy of artificial borders imposed by colonial powers on Arab states. In the early to mid-1940s, Pan-Arab Nationalism became prominent as Arab states pursued independence to develop legitimacy as new sovereign states and build internal national cohesion. Arab leaders used Pan-Arabist political discourse as a vehicle to both oppose the influence of Western nations on Arab countries and to antagonize popular sentiment among their citizenry while simultaneously working toward achieving regional autonomy. The Pan-Arabist political discourse focused on securing sovereign independence for Arab states, establishing a unified resistance to foreign threats and interventions, and establishing a unified, coordinated political and military strength among all Arab nations. However, the actualisation of Pan-Arabism frequently existed alongside strong concentrations of political power and traditional, strong centralised state authority, using Arab Nationalism and other forms of nationalist political ideology as justification to limit democratic political pluralism, as well as to oppress political dissenters, for the purposes of the creation of political stability and unity in their nations.

Oslo Accords

"Oslo Accords, set of agreements between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) that established a peace process for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through a mutually negotiated two-state solution. The agreements resulted in limited self-governance for Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip through the creation of the Palestinian Authority (PA). Although the goal of the accords was to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by May 1999, the complexities that underlay decades of hostilities ultimately derailed the process and left the most challenging issues to smolder in the 21st century."

Possible Solutions

1. Consistent and Non-selective Promotion of Human Rights Standards

One of the principal causes of division in the Middle East is how the application of Human Rights Standards are perceived to be selective and therefore based upon geopolitical advantage or strategic partnership. Therefore, SOCHUM and all UN Member States can provide a consistent framework for resolution language, reporting processes, and thematic focus across countries, rather than providing a specific level of special treatment to individual cases. In addition, resolutions should cite the relevant Universal Standards on Human Rights as derived from the major bodies of International Human Rights Law in order to create a universal approach.

2. Enhancing Regional Dialogue and Ownership Through Inclusive Platforms

Geographical isolation from the Middle East caused by fragmentation between ideologies and rivalries continues to plague the region. Acknowledging this fragmentation, promoting a regionally based dialogue mechanism to unite all three countries, including support from United Nations

organisations for social and humanitarian issues, will allow stronger links between neighbouring countries within the Middle East.

3. Strengthening Protection and Participation of Civil Society and Vulnerable Groups

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Human Rights Defenders have a central part to play in gathering evidence of human rights abuses and advocating on behalf of socially disadvantaged people. However, fragmented diplomatic relations diminishing the overall strength of international protection for these individuals. As such, SOCHUM may help to provide avenues for increasing the level of interaction and collaboration with CSOs in a way respectful of national legal structures.

4. Improving Coordination Between United Nations Bodies Addressing the Middle East

The fragmented nature of diplomacy in the Middle East partially stems from a lack of coherence among UN workers that are responsible for human rights or humanitarian development issues. Each agency (the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council, etc.) plays a vital role in its own right; however, the activities of the various agencies can be seen to be operating independently of one another, without any coordinated effort to enable these agencies to act cooperatively and in a manner that maximizes their political and credibility capacity to engage with the region.

5. Rebuilding Trust Through Long Term and Context Sensitive Engagement

A major barrier for overcoming Middle East Diplomatic Fragmentation is the lack of trust between states and International Human Rights Mechanisms resulting from their History of Colonialism, Externally Imposed Governance, the Cold War, and selective enforcement of International Norms. Many governments view their engagement with International Human Rights Mechanisms as intrusive, politicized, and destabilizing rather than neutral and supportive due to this distrust.

SOCHUM can assist by focusing on long term, predictable, and contextualized engagement rather than short term crisis driven responses. This type of sustained dialogue enables states to see International Human Rights Mechanisms as partners in developing their institutions, rather than as tools imposing external pressure.

Conclusion

The Middle East faces significant diplomatic fragmentation in responding to human rights crises. This is a key issue for the international community because it is historically and geopolitically complicated and rooted in the contested perceptions of sovereignty and institutions working within a multilateral framework. SOCHUM has to strike a balance between its commitment to universal human rights in principle and the need to work within the norms and realities of domestic politics in practice.

Delegates should be familiar with both the historical and present-day views of the issues. In addition, effective debate in SOCHUM will be determined not by confrontation or opposition, but by establishing a basis of dialogue, consistent analysis, and credible argumentation. The committee

provides an excellent opportunity to develop coherence between existing normative human rights tenets and the issues faced by the international community, as well as the existing institutional frameworks for cooperation where previously there has been extensive division. Authentic, practical, and progressive negotiation will create the conditions for delegates to make positive contributions to the development and implementation of a unified international human rights framework and, ultimately, provide better assistance to the human rights crises of the Middle East.

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