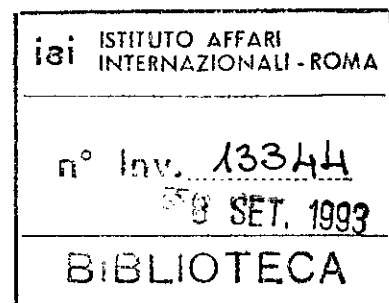


**REGIONAL CONFERENCE OF RESEARCH INSTITUTES  
IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research  
Institute for Diplomatic Studies  
Cairo, 18-20/IV/1993

- a. Programme
- 1. "Regional disarmament"/ Mounir Zahran
- 2. "The Middle East: the system and power configuration"/ Ali Fuat Borovali
- 3. "Introuvable sécurité, indéfinissable région"/ Ghassan Salamé
- 4. "A realistic approach to arms control: an Israeli perspective"/ Gerald M. Steinberg
- 5. "Conventional weapons and arms transfers in the Middle East"/ Saleh A. Al-Mani
- 6. "Strengthening and creation of institutional mechanisms for Middle Eastern security and disarmament"/ Abdullah Toukan
- 7. "Confidence and security building measures in the Middle East"/ Ariel E. Levite
- 8. "Enhancing information exchange between research institutes in the Middle East"/ Péricles Gasparini Alves



## **2 HOME NEWS**

# **'Egypt keen to endow disarmament initiatives with practical form'**

FOREIGN minister Amr Moussa asserted that Egypt believes that regional disarmament is one of the main pillars on which the efforts exerted by the international community to maintain international peace depend. Egypt thus supports fully the idea of maintaining and sustaining all regional efforts towards disarmament.

This came in the speech delivered on behalf of Mr. Moussa in the opening session of the Regional Conference for Security and Disarmament in the Middle East.

Mr. Moussa pointed out that Egypt had played a great role in supporting regional disarmament efforts, represented in its initiatives and stands. He mentioned President Mubarak's initiative in 1990 for transforming the Middle East into a zone free

from all types of mass destruction weapons, as well as the initiative made earlier in 1974 to establish a zone free from nuclear weapons in the Middle East.

The minister asserted that Egypt seeks to maintain a safe and stable Middle East within the framework of international efforts currently exerted to prepare for "The Conference on Reviewing and Re-adopting Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty", which will be held in 1995. He pointed out that some Middle East countries refuse to join this Treaty at the present time.

Mr. Moussa asserted Egypt's keenness to endow disarmament initiatives with a practical form, represented in: Firstly, enhancing ME safety through establishing peaceful relations with other countries. Secondly, realising

quantitative and qualitative equivalence of military abilities among all ME countries. Thirdly, concluding agreements on disarmament that would be applied to all ME countries. Fourthly, giving top priority to free the ME region from mass destruction weapons, especially nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, in addition to decreasing environmental weapons after having maintained peace in the region.

Forty Middle East scientists and experts, several experts from other countries are participating in the two-day conference. Discussions will focus on the military and non military aspects of ME safety, proliferation of mass destruction weapons, weapons trafficking and its adverse effects on ME peace.

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ALI IBRAHIM

MONDAY, APRIL 19, 1993

# to April 27



Mubarak names new  
interior chief, state minister

# Regional Conference of Research Institutes in the Middle East

18 - 19 April 1993

## A. PROGRAMME

SUNDAY, 18 APRIL 1993

09h30-10h00

- Opening of the Conference  
Ambassador Dr. Ihab SOROUR, Director, Institute of Diplomatic Studies  
Sverre LODGAARD, Director, UNIDIR
- Keynote address  
His Excellency The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Egypt, Dr. Amre MOUSSA

FIRST SESSION

10h00-13h00

- Security and Disarmament in the Middle East: The Parameters

①

Chairperson: Mounir ZAHRAN, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations, Geneva, Switzerland

*Reports:*

①

- \* Geopolitics of the region

Ali Fuat BOROVALI, Associate Professor, Dept. of International Relations, Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey

*(How can the region be defined, should the region be defined in subregions, what consequences for security?, what are the power configurations in the region, what is the role of the extra-regional Powers)*

②

- \* Aspects of security in the region

Ghassan SALAMÉ, Director of Research, CNRS, University of Paris I, Paris, France  
*(The different military threats and threat perceptions (eg. the peace talks, Iraq, etc..) and the different non-military threats and threat perceptions (eg. the oil and water situations, populations movements, refugees, immigration, etc..))*

*Discussants:*

③

- Karim ATASSI, Head of Field Office, UN HCR, Rafha, Saudi Arabia
- Jasim ABDULGHANI, Deputy Director, Legal Dept., Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
- Gerald STEINBERG, Research Director, Dept. of Political Science, Bar Ilan University, Tel Aviv, Israel

*General discussion*

.../...

SECOND SESSION  
15h00-18h00

- Security and Disarmament in the Middle East: The Main Issues

Chairperson: Houda KANOUN, Member of Parliament, Tunis, Tunisia

*Reports:*

- \* Proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and of ballistic missiles: what are the dangers and what are the possible regional and global solutions?

Mahmoud KAREM, Director, Dept. of Disarmament Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Cairo, Egypt

*(Zone free of weapons of mass destruction, CW convention, involvement of UN Security Council, Special Commission, etc..)*

- \* Conventional weapons and arms transfers

Saleh AL-MANI, Chairman, Dept. of Political Science, King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

*Discussants:*

- Shafeeq GHABRA, College of Commerce, Economics & Political Science, Department of Political Science, Kuwait University, Kuwait City, Kuwait
- Hassan GHARVECHI MASSHADI, Counsellor-in-charge of Disarmament, Permanent Mission of Iran to the United Nations, Geneva, Switzerland

*General Discussion*

MONDAY, 19 APRIL 1993  
THIRD SESSION  
10h00-13h00

- Security and Disarmament in the Middle East: Regional Responses

Chairperson: Ihab SOROUR, Director, Institute for Diplomatic Studies, Cairo, Egypt

*Reports:*

- \* Strengthening, and creation of, institutional mechanisms for Middle Eastern Security and Disarmament

Abdallah TOUKAN, Director, The Higher Council for Science and Technology and Jordan's chief delegate to the multilateral negotiations on disarmament, Amman, Jordan

- \* Confidence and Security Building Measures

Ariel LEVITE, Senior Research Associate, The Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, Tel Aviv, Israel

*Discussants*

- Saif BIN HASHIL AL-MASKERY, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Gulf Co-operation Council, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
- Nabil FAHMY, Political Adviser of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Egypt's Chief Delegate to the Multilateral Negotiations on Disarmament, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Cairo, Egypt
- Suha UMAR, Minister Plenipotentiary, Deputy Director General for Mutual Security and Disarmament Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ankara, Turkey

*General Discussion*

.../...

FOURTH SESSION  
15h00-18h00

- Roundtable: (a) Research Priorities, (b) Academic Co-operation

Chairperson: Sverre LODGAARD, Director, UNIDIR

## B. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Saleh ABDEL-JAWAD, Professor of Political Science, Dept. of History, Geography and Political Science, Birzeit University, Birzeit, Westbank  
Jasim ABDULGHANI, Deputy Director, Legal Dept., Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates  
Mohammed AL-HASSAN, Second Secretary, Permanent Mission of the Sultanate of Oman to the United Nations, Geneva, Switzerland  
Roberto ALIBONI, Director of Studies, Istituto Affari Internazionali, Rome, Italy  
Saleh AL-MANI, Chairman, Dept. of Political Science, King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia  
Karim ATASSI, Head of Field Office, UN HCR, Rafha, Saudi Arabia  
Saif BIN HASHIL AL-MASKERY, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, The Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia  
Ali Fuat BOROVALI, Associate Professor, Dept. of International Relations, Bilkent University,, Ankara, Turkey  
Léon BOUVIER, Ambassadeur de France, Paris, France\*  
Ali E. Hillal DESSOUKI, Director, Center for Political Research and Studies, Cairo University (CPRS), Cairo, Egypt  
Omran EL-SHAFEI, Ambassador, National Center for Middle East Studies, Cairo, Egypt  
Nabil FAHMY, Political Adviser of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Egypt's Chief Delegate to the Multilateral Negotiations on Disarmament, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Cairo, Egypt  
Shafeeq GHABRA, College of Commerce, Economics & Political Science, Department of Political Science, Kuwait University, Kuwait City, Kuwait  
Hassan GHAHVECHI MASSHADI, Counsellor-in-charge of Disarmament, Permanent Mission of Iran to the United Nations, Geneva, Switzerland  
Ibrahim HADDAD, Director General, Atomic Energy Commission (AECS), Damascus, Syria  
Josef HOLIK, Ambassador, Federal Government Commissioner for Disarmament & Arms Control, Foreign Office of the Federal Republic of Germany, Bonn, Germany\*  
Houda KANOUN, Member of Parliament, Tunis, Tunisia  
Mahmoud KAREM, Director, Dept. of Disarmament Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Cairo, Egypt  
Ariel LEVITE, Senior Research Associate, Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, Tel Aviv University, Tel Aviv, Israel  
Salim NASR, Program Officer, The Ford Foundation, Cairo, Egypt  
Alan PLATT, Senior Fellow, The Rand Corporation, Washington DC, USA  
Ghassan SALAMÉ, Director of Studies, CNRS, and Professor at University of Paris I, Paris, France  
Paul SALEM, Director, The Lebanese Center for Policy Studies, Beirut, Lebanon  
Yezid SAYIGH, St. Anthony College, University of Oxford, Oxford, United Kingdom  
Mohamed SHAKER, Ambassador, Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt, London, United Kingdom  
John SIMPSON, Director, Mounbatten Centre for International Studies, Southampton, UK\*  
Nikolai V. SOFINSKY, Deputy Director, Analysis and Forecasting Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Moscow, Russian Federation  
Gerald STEINBERG, Research Director, Center for Strategic Studies, Dept. of Political Science, Bar Ilan University, Tel Aviv, Israel  
Col. (Retd.) Abdul Rahaman SULTAN, Chairman, The Arabian Establishment for Strategic Affairs (AESAs), Saana, Yemen

.../...

Abdullah TOUKAN, Science Advisor to His Majesty King Hussein and Jordan's chief delegate to the multilateral negotiations on disarmament, Amman, Jordan

Suha UMAR, Minister Plenipotentiary, Deputy Director General for Mutual Security and Disarmament Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ankara, Turkey

Mounir ZAHRAN, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Arab Republic of Egypt to the United Nations, Geneva, Switzerland

\*= Member of UNIDIR Board of Trustees

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Serge SUR, Deputy Director

Chantal DE JONGE OUDRAAT, Senior Research Associate

Péricles GASPARINI ALVES, Research Associate

Sophie DANIEL, Conference Secretary

#### IDS

Ihab SOROUR, Director

Laila ELEISH, Counsellor



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STATEMENT BY  
  
DR. MOUNIR ZAHRAH  
  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF EGYPT  
  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE  
  
AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS  
  
IN GENEVA

ON

REGIONAL DISARMAMENT

BEFORE THE  
  
REGIONAL CONFERENCE OF RESEARCH INSTITUTES  
  
IN THE MIDDLE EAST  
  
CAIRO, 18-20 APRIL 1993.

## Regional Disarmament

By Dr. Mounir ZAHRAN<sup>1\</sup>

The discussions on regional approaches to disarmament cannot be taken in isolation of the global approaches; they are not mutually exclusive but are indeed mutually reinforcing. There is certainly an interrelationship between regional disarmament and global security, arms limitations and disarmament. Regional and global approaches to disarmament complement each other. Both should be pursued in order to promote regional peace and security. It has been recognized that the regional approach to disarmament is considered to be one of the essential elements in the global efforts to strengthen international peace and security. On the other hand, the effective disarmament measures taken at the global level, particularly in the field of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, would have a positive impact on regional disarmament efforts. By the same token, any regional measures should take into account the relationship between security in the region in question and international security as a whole. It is understood that any regional arrangement or measure of disarmament should respect and take into account the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. It should be made in conformity with international law including the principle of sovereign equality of all states, non use or threat of

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<sup>1\</sup> Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva.

use of force against the sovereignty, territorial integrity or political independence of any State, non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of other States; the inviolability of international frontiers, the inherent right of States to individual and collective self-defence and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

It has been recognized that earmarking resources for potentially destructive purposes is in contrast to the need for the sustainable social and economic development. Thus reduction in military expenditure following the conclusion of global, regional and bilateral disarmament agreements could yield resources to serve social and economic development particularly in developing countries. Such disarmament agreements, including regional measures, should aim at the establishment of military balance at the lowest level of armament without diminishing the security of each State belonging to the same region. Such measures should also aim at averting the capability for large-scale offensive and preemptive military attacks. Disarmament measures in one region should not lead to increasing arms transfers to other regions or to the displacement of military imbalance or tension from one region to the other. It has been universally agreed that the implementation of regional disarmament arrangements require the adoption, at the international level as well as at the regional

level, of confidence-building and transparency measures. It is the understanding of experts in the subject matter that to ensure compliance with disarmament agreements, including regional measures, depends on the adoption and the implementation of verification measures.

The United Nations Disarmament Commission adopted in 1980 "Guidelines for confidence-building measures at the global and regional levels". These guidelines have to be inspired by States in their endeavors to conclude regional arrangements for arms limitation and disarmament. Confidence-building measures comprise notification of large-scale military maneuvers, exchange of military data, reduction of military capabilities, open skies arrangements, dialogue and regular consultations, cooperation including in non-military fields encompassing political, economic, social and cultural fields. Such measures adopted within the context of any particular region could reduce the risk of misinterpretation and miscalculation, thus foster transparency and openness ensure mutual confidence and enhance friendly relations between states belonging to same region. Such measures contribute to the maintenance of regional and international peace and security. This is the "raison d'être" behind General Assembly's invitation and encouragement comprised in its resolution 47/52G in its operative paragraph 10; " which invited "... all States to

conclude, whenever possible, agreements on arms limitation and confidence-building measures at the regional level, including those conducive to avoiding the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction".

In addition, General Assembly Resolution 47/54J in its operative paragraph 5 "Supports and encourages efforts aimed at promoting confidence-building measures at regional and subregional levels in order to ease regional tensions and to further disarmament and nuclear-non-proliferation measures at regional and subregional levels".

The negotiation and implementation of disarmament measures in the Middle East has strategic significance because of its conflicts and potentialities and their direct relationship to international peace and security. This is why Egypt stresses the importance of the follow up of paragraph 63 (d) of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament of 1978 concerning the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, as a means to enhance international peace and security in the region.

In his report entitled "Agenda For Peace"<sup>2</sup> pursuant to the

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<sup>2</sup> Boutros Boutros Ghali, Secretary General of the United Nations, "Agenda for Peace", United Nations, New York, 1992, pp.13-19.

statement adopted by the Summit Meeting of the Security Council on 31 January 1993, the Secretary General of the United Nations dealt with the challenges of the post cold war period in areas of conflict resolution, preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping, and post-conflict peace-building. Under chapter III of the "Agenda For Peace", entitled "Preventive Diplomacy", the Secretary General recommended the adoption of measures which would ease tension and/or create confidence. Among these measures he referred without elaboration to the establishment of demilitarized zones. The establishment of such zones is one of the means for the concretization of " regional disarmament".

Later in October 1992, at the occasion of Disarmament Week, the Secretary General introduced another report to address the complex issues of disarmament and international security. The new report is entitled "New Dimensions of Arms Regulation and Disarmament in the Post-Cold War Era"<sup>3</sup>. The said report which, in my view, completes the first report "Agenda for Peace", did not consider in direct terms "regional disarmament" as one of the challenges of the new era in the field of " disarmament and international security". The focus of the above mentioned report was on:

1- The integration of disarmament in the new international environment;

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<sup>3</sup> Document A/C.1/47/7.

2- the globalization, by enhancing the multilateralism; and  
3- the revitalization of the United Nation's role in the fields of disarmament and international security referring to the U.N. efforts to deal with weapons of mass destruction, the proliferation of weapons, the arms transfers and, last but not least, the transparency in arms and other confidence-building measures.

While speaking about the multilateral approach to disarmament in the framework of globalization, the Secretary General said: "one can imagine numerous ways in which regional approaches could enhance the process of global arms reduction." He added that "regional and sub-regional organizations can further the globalization of disarmament, both in cooperation with each other and with the United Nations"<sup>4</sup>. He also recommended to build upon and revitalize the past achievements in arms regulation and arms reduction referring briefly to the realization multilaterally of the experience of Africa, Asia and Latin America<sup>5</sup>, reminding of the existence of 11 global multilateral agreements, 4 regional multilateral agreements and 16 bilateral agreements<sup>6</sup>. These now reach 17 bilateral agreements following the signature in Moscow in January of 1993 of START II.

On its part, the Conference on Disarmament was more elaborate.

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid. p.6 para. 16.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. p.3 para. 6.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. p. 7 para. 20.



It highlighted the crucial role of regional disarmament in the course of expressing its views on the above mentioned report of the Secretary General entitled " New Dimensions..." pursuant to General Assembly Resolution 47/422 <sup>7</sup>. In the views of the Conference on Disarmament " there is also a clear complementarity between regional and global approaches to arms limitation and disarmament. In this respect, the regional approach to disarmament is one of the essential elements in the global efforts to strengthen international peace and security, arms limitation and disarmament". The Conference added that " the objective of regional security should encourage universal adherence to global multilaterally negotiated disarmament agreements. In negotiating multilateral agreements, in particular in the field of confidence-building measures, the Conference should take into account all the security concerns of States in their regional context"<sup>8</sup> .

In this context, Egypt has a firm conviction of the importance of eliminating the hazards of the proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction from the Middle East in order to avert the temptation of the States of the region to acquire such weapons, leading to the squandering of resources and opportunities for achieving prosperity for their peoples. This constitutes a grave

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<sup>7</sup> Cf. CD/WP/441 dated 18 February 1993.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. p.3 para 13.

threat to peace and security, both in the region and internationally. Against this background Egypt together with Iran has put forward the initiative since 1974 for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East . Later on President Mubarak launched an initiative in April 1990 for eliminating all weapons of mass destruction from the Middle East. The latter initiative received wide international support inter\_alia Security Council Resolution 687 (1991) in its paragraph 14 . This initiative constitutes the most appropriate framework for a balanced treatment of all weapons of mass destruction on a reciprocal and even-handed basis. In the views transmitted to the Secretary General of the United Nations regarding his report entitled "New dimensions of arms regulations and disarmament in the post-cold war era"<sup>9</sup>\, Egypt expressed its belief that "... the Security Council must assume its responsibilities under the Charter with a view to developing the appropriate framework to ensure the implementation of the two initiatives, for the consolidation of international peace and security <sup>10</sup>\. This is one of the responsibilities of the Security Council in conformity with article 26 of the Charter; a role which has been highlighted by the Report of the Secretary General of the United Nations entitled An

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<sup>9</sup>\ Doc. A/C. 1/47/7.

<sup>10</sup>\ Doc. A/47/887/Add.I.

Agenda for Peace<sup>11\</sup>. This is an overview of some of the problems which will be dealt with during this important UNIDIR Conference which I had the pleasure to work closely with Dr. Sverre LODGAARD Director of UNIDIR and Ambassador Ihab SOROUR Director of the Egyptian Institute for Diplomatic Studies to ensure its good preparation and success.

Our speakers inscribed in the program of work for this first Working Session of the Conference are:

Mr. Ali Fuat BORAVALI, Associate Professor, Dept. of International Relations, Bilkent University, Ankara, who is going to present a report on the "Geopolitics of the Region." and

Mr. Ghassan SALAME, Director of Research at the CNRS, University of Paris No.1, who is going to present a report on the "Aspects of Security in the Region".

Following the presentation of the two reports three participants in the Conference will be discussants of the reports, and then we will proceed to the general discussion.

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<sup>11\</sup> Cf. Boutros Boutros Ghali, Agenda for Peace; United Nations, New York, 1992.

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## REGIONAL CONFERENCE OF RESEARCH INSTITUTES IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Cairo, 18-20 April 1993

FIRST SESSION

*Geopolitics of the region*  
by  
***Ali Fuat Borovali***

PREMIÈRE SÉANCE

CONFERENCE REGIONALE DES  
INSTITUTS DE RECHERCHE AU PROCHE ET MOYEN ORIENT

Le Caire, 18-20 avril 1993

THE MIDDLE EAST: THE SYSTEM AND POWER CONFIGURATIONS

A. FUAT BOROVALI, PH.D

DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
BILKENT UNIVERSITY  
ANKARA, TURKIYE

A REPORT PREPARED FOR UNIDIR MIDDLE EAST CONFERENCE  
TO BE PRESENTED AT  
THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE OF RESEARCH INSTITUTES  
IN THE MIDDLE EAST,

CAIRO, 18-20 APRIL 1993.

## DEFINITION OF THE REGION

The definition of the region has never been a straightforward matter, but controversial or even problematic.<sup>1</sup> The system that constitutes the Middle East has been defined in various ways but one can assume that it has its core in the Arabian Peninsula -- with the Gulf, the Red Sea and Eastern Mediterranean making up its boundaries in a loose sense. The system's peripheral limits can be said to extend from Morocco in the west to Afghanistan in the east. For instance, during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979, Afghanistan clearly had a major impact on the system. Similarly, the Iranian Revolution, starting in 1978, created major repercussions and disturbances all across the system. Later, the Iran-Iraq war became the main security concern during the years 1980-88. And, all this time, the disturbances in Lebanon, involving regional as well as extra-regional powers, were in full swing, not to mention the longstanding Arab-Israeli dispute over the status of Palestine. Therefore, in defining and redefining the various boundaries and the inner / outer limits of the system, we might have to

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<sup>1</sup> The question "Where is the Middle East?" has been the focus of an 1960 article by Roderic Davison (Foreign Affairs, July 1960). Davison raises the question: "Given the hopeless disunity among specialists and governments as to where the Middle East is, how can the term be intelligently employed?". Among the solutions he envisages: "To admit frankly that there is no particular Middle East, but that there are as many Middle Easts as there are problems touching this fuzzy region in any way." If that is the case, the Middle East must, on each occasion, be redefined.

identify how and to what extent disturbances from within the system are carried across toward the outer limits -- as with the epicenter of an earthquake or ripples in a lake.

In defining the Middle East as a region, we generally identify the Arabic, Iranian, Jewish, Turkish and Kurdish elements. When we talk of the Maghreb as part of the Middle Eastern system we see the Arabic (and Islamic ) factor at work. We can, therefore, say that Libya, Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco are part of the system in varying degrees, in a somewhat issue- dependent fashion. Similarly, recent developments in Somalia, a Muslim country in the horn of Africa right along the Bab-el Mandeb, has made that country peripherally part of the system, also considering the involvement of extra-regional powers. One could also say that developments in the Caucasus, (with particular reference to Azerbaijan and how it relates to Iran, Turkey and the reported involvement of Israel), have also involved that part of the region within the dynamics of the system, albeit in a peripheral manner.

#### SYSTEMIC DYNAMICS IN RECENT TIMES

If we take a retrospective look at the modern history of the region and the various fluctuations within the system for the past 45 years, we see that different issues and/or conflicts have constituted the fulcrum of the system at different times, starting with the establishment of Israel in 1948. Since then, the various tensions within the Arab World, under the overarching idea of Pan-Arabism, have created various faultlines along ideological lines and/or regime-type -



- among "radical" Arab regimes, the moderates and conservative monarchies.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps, Syria was the first to radicalize, to be followed by Nasser's Egypt, and then Iraq (1958) and Libya (1969). Egypt was to turn "moderate" later on, while the two Yemens were radicalized.

Algeria, starting out with a milder version of a Third World ideology, has retained a certain moderation in its external dealings. Therefore, Iraq, Syria and Libya (perhaps also the PLO) can be seen as constituting the centers of Arab radicalism in recent times. With the increased involvement of the Soviet Union, particularly during the 1970s, with radical Arab regimes, the potential for intra-Arab conflict increased. While Syria has obviously been preoccupied with Israel, developments in Iraq and Libya (both OPEC members, bolstered by petrodollars ) gained momentum towards confrontation with regional and extra-regional powers.

Within the Arab World, a retrospective look at the two decades since the Yom Kippur War in 1973 would indicate that, apart from the relatively localized Israeli-Palestinian issue and the civil war in Lebanon, the major tensions have developed mainly around issues associated with the two radical Arab regimes: Iraq and Libya. Therefore, one cannot remain indifferent to the observed relationship between radicalization of a regime and external confrontationist stance. The same holds for Iran.

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<sup>2</sup> Radicalism according to Chamber's Dictionary denotes "wishing for great changes in the method of government. " Its emerging meaning has been "to look for solutions from the very roots of the problem. " After the Second World War, the term took on an anti-colonialist/ liberationist connotation (mainly anti-British and anti-French as the remaining colonial powers ). While the anti-Western component stanged on the radicalist anger in the Middle East, later was refocused on the United States with particular emphasis deriving from the latter's benefaction of the State of Israel. While espousing the Pan-Arabist cause, Arab radicalism gradually incorporated socialistic elements, as documented in the Baathist program, coupled with criticisms of varying severity directed at "moderate " and "conservative " Arab regimes as well as Pahlavite Iran. More recently , radicalism has assumed an Islamist/ fundamentalist character, finding various expressions in Libya, Iran, Sudan, Lebanon and Algeria.

One could also suggest that, at the fundamental level, most of the conflicts carry the leitmotif of Arab unification, which, given the ideological/ regime diversity, has encountered expected resistances from non-radical Arab governments. Whether it was Nasser, the Iraqi Baath regime or Khaddafi's Libya, they have included Pan-Arabism in their declaratory policies against the background of skepticism and resistance in the rest of the Arab world.

That the Middle Eastern system was shaken at its foundations by the Islamicist revolution in Iran needs no reiteration here. The revolution and the strategic transformation it brought to bear on the entire regional power configuration (particularly considering its almost simultaneous occurrence with the invasion of Afghanistan) still reverberates across the system. The Iranian threat, perceived and/or actual, was instrumental in defining the parameters of strategic assessments made across the Gulf and the region as a whole, before and during the Iran-Iraq war. So much so that, not only Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and other GCC countries bankrolled the Iraqi war effort in tens of billions of dollars but the West also devised its Gulf policies with the primacy of Iranian threat in mind. It may be ironic to note that the Iranian threat, which preoccupied the GCC countries throughout the 1980s, might have had the positive effect of constraining Iraq from attacking Kuwait and Saudi Arabia during more favorable times (while the Soviet Union was still a regional actor to contend with ). What is said here is that Iraq's protracted struggle with Iran, though explainable in terms of its own logic, constituted something of a diversion from the ideological/ regime confrontation with its Arab neighbors. Indeed, the delayed action came barely two years after the cessation of hostilities with Iran.

At this point, it may be useful to refer to certain attempts by scholars and journalists to come up with new definitions of the region while trying to work out the implications of the

break-up of the Soviet Empire with regard to the systemic redefinition of the Middle East. In his recent article " Rethinking the Middle East ", Bernard Lewis argues that with the ending of the Cold War and the formal independence of the six Central Asian Republics, the previous artificial frontiers have been overcome and now the Middle Eastern system can be said to extend as far eastward as Tashkent and Alma Ata.<sup>3</sup> As an instance of why Central Asia should be regarded as part of the system, Lewis cites the activities undertaken by Saudi Arabia, Iran, Pakistan and even Israel in Central Asia as well as Turkey's close involvement with its Turkic brethren. Lewis makes the point that the newly-independent Central Asians would have to make a stark choice between an elaborated CIS structure, Khomeinism and Kemalism.

Notwithstanding Lewis' historical perspective, one could raise the question whether it is analytically convenient at this stage to conceive Central Asia as part of the Middle Eastern system. Therefore, one could say that though the Central Asian factor should receive consideration in an overall redefinition of the system but not to the extent of conceiving it as significantly impacting the core dynamics of Middle Eastern power configurations.

#### SUBREGIONAL DYNAMICS: CONFLICT SITUATIONS

A convenient way of defining and/or identifying subregions in the area would be to focus on conflict situations which exhibit varying degrees of intensity. Naturally, the immediate vicinity of the Arab-Israeli dispute would constitute such a subregion -- involving as it does Israel, Palestinian areas, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Egypt. Regarding this chronic conflict

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<sup>3</sup> Bernard Lewis, "Rethinking the Middle East " Foreign Affairs, Vol. 71, No.4.

situation a relatively recent development has been the initiation of the Mideast Peace Talks. Now that several rounds have been completed, the very fact of the parties coming together has produced certain expectations, currently suspended by the Palestinian expulsion crisis. One could note with some emphasis that since 1979, the Arab-Israeli dispute has conceded its central place to other momentous developments in the region.

The main subregion - if one can call it that- for the last fourteen years has been the Gulf. Whether it was the Iranian Revolution, the Iran-Iraq war, the Gulf war (up to the present and beyond ), and with its parallel coastlines ominously facing each other, the Gulf has been the most contentious subregion in all these years. The recent US missile attacks into Iraq in the dying days of the Bush administration has, once again, demonstrated the Gulf's status as the pivotal subregion. It should be noted that, after the Gulf war, the Saudi airfields have become hosts to American warplanes and other military personnel. Kuwait has recently asked Britain and France to send troops to bolster the 1500-strong American military contingent already there. Kuwait also asked for and received US Patriot missile batteries.<sup>4</sup> Thus, after more than a decade of almost continual strife and instability, this subregion has attracted an apparently permanent extra-regional military presence.

It should not come as a surprise that the Gulf has been the most unstable subregion since it has been the object of threats, on a rotative basis, from arguably the most militant regional powers in the Middle East. However, it would be wrong to assume that all is well within the intra-Arab framework of the GCC even at a time when Iran has reasserted claims to three islands in the Gulf. Qatar and Saudi Arabia are known to have engaged in a dispute over a border

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<sup>4</sup> International Herald Tribune, January 20, 1993.

outpost in September 1992. An old territorial dispute between Qatar and Bahrain remains unsettled. Considering that the GCC is composed of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman and United Arab Emirates, several of the dyads are seen to be potentially at odds with one another.

Even a cursory look into the cartography of the Gulf (or Khalij-e-Fars in Iranian terms) would indicate the extent of the threat that would be perceived from the southern coastline as the northern landmass seem to be poised almost to descend upon it. Therefore, it is not difficult to explain the uneasiness felt by the GCC emirates in the face of recent indicators of Iranian rearmament. Given the ongoing trialectical interaction between Iran, Iraq and the GCC countries, it should be no wonder that the subregion would continue to be problematic.

The internal developments in Algeria has put the spotlight on that area after a long spell of relative obscurity. Given the level of political radicalization in Algeria (as well as in Sudan, Egypt and even Tunisia ), the North African component of the Middle East system seems to have reinforced its systemic connections. The move the radicalization takes on an Islamicist character - whether Shiite or Sunni- anxious speculation about possible Iranian involvement goes on the rise. While a conflict situation has intermittently existed between Egypt and Libya (leading Egypt to declare the common border as a potential war zone, and establish two air fields and keep up to four divisions in the area), the recent visit of Colonel Khaddafi to Cairo would seem to indicate that things are currently quiet on Egypt's western front.

Yet another subregion could be identified as the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula: Yemen, Bab-el Mandeb (connecting the Red Sea with the Indian Ocean) and, in view of the recent developments in Somalia, the Horn of Africa. It may be premature to elaborate upon the

implications of conceiving this area as a subregion of the Middle Eastern system but indications are there: What happens in this contiguous zone may create repercussions to be felt in the rest of the system. Another point about identifying subregions is the previously referred point about whether to view the southern Caucasus and Central Asia as an extension of the system.

Last but not least, one could dwell on whether to regard the southern contiguous zone of Turkey, with the transnational ethnic activity and the presence of a rather unique multinational force (referred as Poised Hammer or Provide Comfort), also as a subregion. It is quite obvious that the Poised Hammer, with its main base at Incirlik, owes its *raison d'être* to developments emanating from the dynamics of the Middle Eastern system, the Gulf subregion in particular. It is important to note that the containment of the Baghdad regime has been premised upon the twin pillars of Incirlik in the north and Dhahran airbase in the south. And, this structure is supported by the presence of US naval/air forces stationed in eastern Mediterranean and the northern Gulf. The strategic dilemma concerning the partition vs. preserving the unity of Iraq (with Kurds in the north and Shiite Arabs in the south) is very much part and parcel of the *problematique* pertaining to this subregion.

## SECURITY CONCERNS AND POWER CONFIGURATIONS

Given the often-quoted complexity of the region, compounded by the interdynamics among the subregions, it may not be an easy task to depict the security concerns and power configurations with adequate precision. However, one can refer to certain issue areas such as the proliferation of weapons (both conventional and

nonconventional), the search for disarmament and/or other security arrangements, the increasing prevalence of transnational ethnic and religiously-inspired political movements, the complexities of intra-Arab disputes, the gathering chorus of identifying towards Iran as the main security threat (the correctness of which is open to debate) and the increasing involvement of extra-regional actors in the regional/subsystem dynamics.

Particularly worrying to some analysts is the growing Russian and Chinese involvement in the supplying of arms to the region.<sup>5</sup> As one instance, one could cite the Syrian case. Conventional wisdom would have indicated that after the collapse of the Soviet Union (and because the Soviets had been the main suppliers of arms to Syria ) Syria's military position would weaken. But, because of the extensive dumping of Soviet/Eastern European armaments at very favorable ruble exchange rates, the paradoxical result has been the strengthening of the Syrian arsenal in various categories.

Similarly, Iran is reported to be on an extensive defense procurement/purchasing spree from Russian, Chinese and North Korean sources, including submarines, thus provoking anxious speculations in various Western capitals. At this point, one might well pose the question and consider whether Iran's purchasing of arms, reported to exceed two billion dollars last year (with a reported commitment of \$ 10 billion for the next few years) should be viewed as legitimate defense expenditure, and perhaps as a somewhat opportunistic initiative to try and benefit from the buyer's market of arms so long as the good times last. It should be a veritable research question whether it is strictly necessary to read expansionist intentions into Iran's restoration

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<sup>5</sup> John C. Gault and John K. Cooley, "The Gulf States Needs Arms Control ", International Herald Tribune, January 21, 1993.

of its military capability back to pre-1980 levels. In view of the increasingly prevalent regional and world analytic opinion that Iran is likely to constitute the main strategic threat to the security of the region, it is legitimate to ponder whether that is indeed the case.

The point is crucial and needs a certain elaboration. In terms of historical experience, one might well remember the consequences of previous faulty identifications of main security threats in the region, particularly during the Iran-Iraq war. There are resurfaced notions of setting up a "reformed" Iraq to offset Iran.<sup>6</sup> The controversy seems to be premised on the notion that, for Iraq to balance off Tehran it would have to regain its control over Kurdish and Shiite areas. And, given Iran's manpower advantages and potentially greater military arsenal, Baghdad could hope to compete only by developing nuclear and chemical weapons.<sup>7</sup>

All this shows how important it is to make clear and correct identifications as to the nature of potential military/strategic threats in the area. Referring to Turkish President Turgut Ozal's assessment of the strategic situation in the region and his track record over the issue, Leslie Gelb notes the potential pitfalls once again.<sup>8</sup> President Ozal has been on record saying that "though the Iranian regime will try to extend its control to other countries its efforts would

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<sup>6</sup> See Leslie H. Gelb, "A Reformed Iraq to Offset Iran, Forget It", International Herald Tribune, January 18, 1993. Gelb points out that the idea of building up Baghdad into its formerly conceived role as a bulwark against potential Iranian expansionism is once again heard among "some Arabists" in the State Department, in West European foreign ministries and among political leaders in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and elsewhere. According to Gelb, "what binds them in thinking the unthinkable is gathering dread of Iran and their belief that only Baghdad can keep the more dangerous Tehran at bay." Gelb, concedes, however, that "it is scary to contemplate Iran's growing military might and support of Islamic fundamentalists seeking to convert more moderate Arab regimes."

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Jim Hoagland, "Turkey, Not Iran or Iraq, Is the Important Near Eastern Player", International Herald Tribune, February 4, 1993.



not be very convincing. " In 1992, Iran had received only \$ 12-16 billion in oil revenue to support a devastated economy. In terms of Ozal's analysis, while there has been ground for legitimate concern on the part of the regional countries and perhaps the rest of the world, one should not overestimate Iran. Gelb speaks of "George Bush's disastrous decision to give Iraq's Saddam Hussein the benefit of every doubt until the invasion of Kuwait. "9 As noted on earlier occasions, though it is not too difficult to emphasize with the security concerns of the Gulf countries, faced as they are with the growing military power of a resurgent Iran, this time without the benefit of the former Iraqi bulwark, one could also heed Ozal's call for a more circumspect and less impulsive assessment of any security threat emanating from Iran. But, that should not constrain the research/ analytic community from seriously questioning the implications of an apparent Iranian military restoration, with particular reference to the possibility of Iranian links with radical groups elsewhere in the region.

A further qualification might be introduced here. Firstly, Saudi Arabia and other GCC Countries are engaged in an extensive armament program of their own (amounting to several billion dollars in 1992). While this may legitimately be viewed as a post-Kuwait traumatic syndrome (never to be caught unprepared again ), the GCC rearmament can also be viewed as becoming an increasingly credible deterrent force on its own. Adding to this the extended presence of Western military power (in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the Gulf, Oman ), one could excused if one suspend judgement over labelling Iran as a net strategic threat. It may be an irony to consider that the present accumulation of the military hardware in and around the Gulf,

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid. Hoagland notes that "many of the same voices that urged Mr. Bush to go easy on Saddam... are again trying that the top priority in the region must be confronting Iran."

dispatched for the express purpose of dealing with and containing Iraq, may now serve for keeping any latent Iranian expansionism in check.

To say a few things with regard to Turkey over this point, one senses a growing systemic pressure to engage Turkey with the confrontational front against Iran. This was clearly evidenced during Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel's visit in late January to five GCC Countries (Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain and UAE). The Turkish delegation has been entreated with demands for Turkish vigilance against a probable Iranian threat. Coming at a time of widespread rumors concerning Iranian-linked terrorist activity inside Turkey itself, there may be a temptation for the Turkish government to involve itself in the formation taking shape against Iran. But, as Ozal has noted, the temptation should be resisted at this stage, barring a notable rise in hard evidence that Iran seriously intends to engage in an NBC program, disregarding all manner of nonproliferation rules.

Given this definition of the situation, what kind of security arrangements, if at all, might be envisaged? To begin with, there are efforts to introduce non-proliferation measures into the area, as indicated by the chemical weapons convention that opened for signature in Paris in January 1993. In Peter Herby's book, The Chemical Weapons Convention and Arms Control in the Middle East, it is argued that the chemical weapons treaty gives the Middle East an opportunity to begin confidence building in the field of arms control.<sup>10</sup> It should be mentioned that Iran has announced its willingness to sign the convention. Apart from the confidence building measures, is there room for a formal or more explicitly structured security

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<sup>10</sup> Further elaboration on these points can be found in Gault and Cooley, International Herald Tribune, January 21, 1993.

arrangement? Would it be possible or indeed necessary to envisage a Middle Eastern NATO? Currently, there is an implicit US guarantee to protect the GCC countries from potential Iranian or Iraqi encroachments. Whether, and/or to what extent, to formalize and institutionalize the current arrangements is a moot point. It seems permissible to suggest that any security arrangements that might conceivably take shape in the region is likely to continue to be on an ad hoc basis -- possibly along the lines of a Poised Hammer structure.

### THE ROLE OF EXTRA-REGIONAL POWERS

Mention of the Poised Hammer may be a convenient point to focus and elaborate upon the role of the extra-regional powers in the region. It would almost be a cliché to say that with the collapse of the Soviet Union, the traditional superpower rivalry in the region no longer holds, and the parameters of extra-regional involvement would have to be extensively revised. Since the Gulf region has been declared a vital strategic zone for the US ever since the Carter Doctrine, and as the US readiness to intervene, in one capacity or another, in the affairs of the region has been confirmed over and over again since the early 1980s, it is safe to assume that any developments in the area would have to contend with US-designated parameters. However, to engage in a brief analytical exercise, would the US be able to muster the sort of support as it did during the Gulf War, this time against a possible Iranian hegemonic threat?

The readiness of Syria and Egypt to join yet another coalition is highly questionable as evidenced by their ongoing reluctance to engage in regional security arrangements as

envisaged by the Damascus Declaration of 6 March 1991.<sup>11</sup> Turkey, on the other hand, is already saturated with all kinds of demands and obligations emanating from the Balkans, the Caucasus and northern Iraq. There are perceptions, however, that structural forces exist which may propel Turkey into a so-called "regional superpower " role in the Middle East, reluctantly or not. In a recent commentary, an observer notes: "Whether Turkey is strengthened or weakened by the enormous pressures and opportunities it confronts -- from its actual or potential involvement in Bosnia, the Central Asian Republics... is one of the two three most important geostrategic questions on the global agenda for the next five years. "<sup>12</sup>

While the Western European involvement in the region should be expected to follow along the US footpath in general terms, Britain and France may be expected to conceive and implement slightly different policies and modalities with regard to issues like northern Iraq and the status of the Kurds there. All of this, of course, presumes that Russia is unlikely to be resurgent enough to devote diplomatic resources to the area in any significant way.

The one concrete issue that would confront Western powers would be to deal with, on an ongoing basis, the legal, strategic and political wrangle concerning the status of Iraq. Whether it is the suspected presence of NBC development programs, currently monitored by UN inspection teams, and whether or not to lift the embargo, however partially, so long as Saddam Hussein remains in governmental authority will continue to be a main preoccupation of Western diplomacy for months, if not years, to come. The decision on the status of Iraq would

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<sup>11</sup> These and related issues are extensively treated in Roland Dannreuther, "The Gulf Conflict: A Political and Strategic Analysis ", Adelphi Papers 264, Winter 1991-92.

<sup>12</sup> Hoagland, International Herald Tribune, February 4, 1993.

presumably be put within the larger context of regional stability, involving Iran, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf in general. What is clear is that the Iraqi question, when taken in conjunction with the presumed Iranian threat and the religious (Shiite) dimension of the issue, will demand the best analytic, diplomatic and strategic skills of extra-regional powers.

## OVERALL ASSESSMENT AND PROSPECTS

In his comprehensive analysis of the political and strategic aspects of the Gulf conflict, Roland Dannreuther, critically points out that during the first half of 1990, as the peoples of Europe were celebrating the reunification and liberation of their continent, and were metaphorically and literally dancing in the streets, the analytic focus failed to shift gears in tune with the dramatically altered strategic context or paradigm. As such, the Eurocentric focus in 1989 at the end of the Cold War, "tended to obscure the reality that in certain parts of the Third World the Cold War had long ceased to exert any substantial influence."<sup>13</sup> And, this was nowhere true than in the Gulf region and with regard to the two predominant powers in the area -- Iran and Iraq.

During the Iran-Iraq war, the two superpowers had separately concluded that the Iranian fundamentalist threat was the more serious and that Iraq would have to be implicitly (and explicitly) supported. From 1982 onwards, Iraq carried in the favor of both superpowers and their allies, as well as the majority of the Arab World. Military and economic aid entered the country from every corner of the world, deliberately encouraging the growth of Iraq's armed

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<sup>13</sup> Dannreuther, p.71.

forces. The subsequent redirection of Iraq's military power away from Iran towards expansionism elsewhere was the direct consequence of the disproportionate military might developed under the very eyes of the world. For this, Dannreuther concludes, the West as well as the Soviet Union and the Arab world must share most of the blame. The failure revealed the inherent danger of uncoordinated international diplomatic and military support directed toward containing one threat, resulting in the creation of other equally destabilizing threats. Iraq's invasion of Kuwait symbolized the ultimate failure of multinational efforts to secure regional stability, and thus constituted, "for the emerging post-Cold War international system...an object lesson in the wrong approach to collective security."<sup>14</sup>

Aside from putting the blame on this or that regional / global actor, the present issue is whether we are in a better position to make the pertinent strategic assessments, in light of past mistakes and/or object lessons. Since, in so many ways, many of the world's trouble spots indicate a tendency to go back into a time tunnel (e.g. Sarajevo 1914 ), are we going to be capable of placing the issues in their proper historical/ strategic perspective?

In the case of the Gulf, there is no doubt that the destruction of the Iraqi bulwark has created a power vacuum, in terms of classical balance of power analysis. However, does this necessarily mean that Iran is both willing and able (or capable ) of embarking upon a full scale military adventure barely five years after a colossally costly war which it did not initiate? It is true that its accumulation of arms might lead to the creation of an Iranian diplomatic hegemony in the area (a sort of Pax Iranica) without having to fire single shot, if it manages to cow the southern/western shore of the Gulf into uneasy submission. It is quite possible that for such an

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., pp. 71-72.

eventuality an adequate deterrent capability and/or related security arrangements would have to be contrived. But, before that, an intensive and substantive analysis of Iranian foreign policy/strategic objectives would have to be undertaken. Otherwise, constant reiteration of an Iranian strategic threat in every possible forum might simply take on a momentum of its own.

Looking at recent developments, Iran has shown a willingness to engage in diplomatic exchanges over developments in northern Iraq. Foreign ministers of Turkey, Syria and Iran have conducted two trilateral meetings so far -- Ankara in November and Damascus in February -- with a third planned in Tehran in a couple of months. Tehran and Ankara, long viewed as rivals for the hearts and minds (and the economies ) of the newly- emergent Central Asian republics have not clashed over the issue in any significant way so far. Iran clearly has a "southern Azerbaijan " problem but that could be handled within the accepted political norms and diplomatic framework.

For those who feel the metallic chill of Iranian rearmament (and the possibility that it may also contain an NBC program ) it is entirely legitimate to engage in painstaking analysis and debate over the correct strategic evaluation of the developing situation -- especially while the trauma of 1990-91 is still fresh in so many minds. Perhaps this conference will be helpful in sorting out the precise nature of the threats involved, and working out innovative and productive ways for dealing with them.

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**Le Caire, 18-20 avril 1993**

**PREMIÈRE SÉANCE**

*Aspects de la sécurité dans la région  
par  
Ghassan Salamé*

**FIRST SESSION**

**REGIONAL CONFERENCE OF  
RESEARCH INSTITUTES IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

**Cairo, 18-20 April 1993**

Ghassan Salamé\*

## Introuvable sécurité, Indéfinissable région

Une révision fondamentale de notre approche de la sécurité au Moyen-Orient est encore à faire. Nous poserons ici que ceux parmi "les experts" en analyse stratégique qui seraient ignorants de la chose politique, peu renseignés sur la culture de la région, indifférents aux évolutions sociales, trop confiants dans la pertinence scientifique du concept "Moyen-Orient" ont jusqu'ici produit un corps de littérature qui, dans son ensemble, paraît ennuyeux à la lecture, rarement imaginatif et difficile à traduire en choix politiques. Les appels au désarmement sont, concernant le Moyen-Orient, marqués d'une telle hypocrisie (au vu de la place centrale de la région sur le marché des armes) qu'ils en deviennent, le plus souvent ridicules. Les trois réunions consacrées à l'*arms control* régional dans le cadre des négociations multilatérales du processus de paix n'ont encore laissé émerger aucune idée originale. Les écrits disponibles sont trop souvent répétitifs, dépassés, au mieux un décompte plus ou moins alarmiste (suivant le parti pris), plus ou moins exact (en fonction de la qualité de l'information) des avions, des missiles et des chars déployés dans la zone.

Ces "experts", forts de leurs calculs, nous ont dépeint l'armée irakienne comme "la quatrième du monde" sans nous expliquer encore d'une manière convaincante ce qui lui est vraiment arrivé dès que les hostilités à Koweït ont commencé. Ils sont généralement trop obsédés par l'évolution du matériel pour nous renseigner sur le profil réel et le comportement possible de celui qui le manie. Insensibles aux contraintes économiques et sociales, ils chiffrent l'effort militaire des parties, indépendamment des choix plus globaux en matière budgétaire. Obnubilés par les Etats, par les gouvernements en place et par les armées dites "nationales", ils ont tendance à oublier que la raison de régime l'emporte trop souvent sur la raison d'Etat et que les armées sont plus souvent prétoriennes que nationales. et à valoriser plus que de raison le discours officiel en matière de sécurité. Leurs militaires paraissent réifiés, détachés des sociétés dont ils sont issus, chiffrés mais guère déchiffrés. Une réflexion sur l'instance

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militaire au Moyen-Orient est encore à faire, moins dans son prolongement politique, (déjà défriché par Finer, Perlmutter, Abd el-Malek et d'autres) que dans sa fonction exacte en tant qu'appareil de pouvoir et machine de guerre. Entre la politisation des militaires (discipline devenue classique depuis plus de trois décennies, et notamment depuis la publication de *Men on Horseback* de Finer), et le chiffrage du matériel (du type *Military balance*), il y a une zone intermédiaire encore peu interrogée, celle de la décision en matière militaire, indissociable, bien entendu, de la décision politique tout court, et au-delà celle-ci, celle de la fonction exacte du militaire dans la société en fonction de la perception exacte de la menace par ceux qui détiennent le pouvoir.

### raison d'Etat et raison de régime

D'où la pertinence de plusieurs questions épistémologiques préalables, la première étant celle du cadre géographique de l'investigation. Nous ne reprendrons pas ici les polémiques rituelles sur les différentes définitions possibles du "Moyen-Orient", et qui s'inscrivent sur une fourchette assez large pour que certains réduisent le Moyen-Orient au seul conflit israélo-arabe alors que d'autres l'étendent "de Marrackech au Bangla Desh" pour reprendre une formule célèbre à Foggy Bottom\*. Cette question est loin d'être une interrogation scolastique : Parler de sécurité, c'est définir une menace et partant expliciter sa source supposée dans l'espace; définir un rapport de forces, c'est déterminer les acteurs, gouvernementaux ou non, qui doivent être inclus dans son équation. Or le Moyen-Orient est une zone dont il est pratiquement impossible de dessiner les frontières et partant, de déterminer les acteurs qu'il faut prendre en considération lorsque des équations de sécurité ou des causes d'insécurité sont à y repérer. Faut-il par exemple y inclure le Maghreb? L'Iran constitue-t-il une menace militaire pour Israël, pour l'Égypte? La Corne de l'Afrique est-elle une véritable source de soucis pour le Caire? Faut-il dorénavant comptabiliser la Turquie dans le rapport de forces régional? L'effondrement de l'empire soviétique a-t-il vraiment poussé l'Asie centrale dans les équations de l'Orient moyen? Ces questions suscitent des réponses très variables d'un dirigeant à l'autre, d'un analyste à l'autre, couvrant la zone dans un brouillard géo-épistémologique qui rend et la définition du théâtre et le *listing* des

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\* voir, entre autres, l'essai connu de Nikki Keddie "Where is the Middle East?" dans *International Journal of Middle East Studies*.

acteurs deux missions sinon impossibles, du moins toujours contestables.

Sur une zone aux contours indéfinissables, et en l'absence d'un rapport de forces central et partant organisateur de l'ensemble régional, on pourrait penser à une vision sécuritaire en trainée de poudre. L'URSS ayant développé une capacité nucléaire, la Chine ne pouvait faire moins, ce qui poussa l'Inde à développer ses propres capacités, encourageant ainsi le Pakistan à en faire autant. Iran et Irak ne pouvaient que songer à se doter de cette arme maintenant que le Pakistan d'un côté, Israël de l'autre en étaient détenteurs. Egypte et Syrie ne pouvaient être du reste, ni d'ailleurs la Libye, ce qui étendit la quête du nucléaire vers l'Ouest, vers l'Algérie et inévitablement le Maroc. C'est là un scénario mi-historique, mi-imaginaire, l'essentiel étant bien entendu qu'il est aisément imaginable. Il trahit la réalité, toujours vérifiée, mais peut-être nullement aussi vivement que dans cette région, de la fluidité des cadres d'analyse, de la mobilité permanente de la menace, de la nature organiquement diffuse du sentiment d'insécurité. Cette diffusion géographique de la menace, dans un système régional aux frontières incertaines et à l'existence douteuse, pousse évidemment certains acteurs à multiplier dans leur discours, sinon dans leur esprit, les sources potentielles de danger : l'ancien ministre israélien de la défense se définissait pour zone de menace et partant d'intervention potentielle un théâtre qui va du Maroc au Pakistan et son pays a développé dans les années 1980 des capacités ballistiques qui couvraient une bonne partie du territoire soviétique. L'URSS, par contre, avait souvent mis en avant l'idée que sa proximité avec la zone lui donnait des droits que des puissances lointaines, notamment atlantiques, ne pouvaient revendiquer. (1)

Deuxième préalable épistémologique : l'achat d'armements n'est pas, comme une hypothèse aussi courante que fausse le laisse supposer, nécessairement lié à leur usage éventuel, effectif ou même, à titre de dissuasion. La corrélation classique entre l'acuité d'une menace perçue et le niveau d'acquisition de nouvelles armes est donc difficilement vérifiable. L'est encore moins la corrélation entre un système d'armes particulier et l'identification de l'acteur hostile. De nombreux facteurs entrent en jeu qui ne relèvent guère d'une véritable stratégie militaire d'acquisition. Certes, un effort de rationalisation, d'origine technocratique, peut toujours intervenir avant ou après qu'une décision ait été prise, pour justifier l'acquisition d'armes ou le choix d'un système d'armes plutôt qu'un autre. Mais il serait naïf de se contenter de ces justifications, de les prendre pour argent comptant. (2)

ou d'imaginer qu'ils ont été les facteurs nécessairement cruciaux de la décision. Des considérations de prestige, de diplomatie ou le désir, pour un dirigeant plus ou moins haut placé, d'empocher des commissions juteuses sur un marché, jouent un rôle souvent central. C'est pourquoi la corrélation, pourtant courante partout dans le monde, entre l'acquisition d'un armement donné et une stratégie militaire de long terme reste toujours à faire. En termes clairs, il serait tout à fait périlleux d'induire d'une série d'acquisitions militaires, la menace supposée par l'acquéreur ou la réalité de sa vision sécuritaire.

(3) Autre préalable épistémologique : la menace contre qui exactement? Une des faiblesses fondamentales de l'expertise dominante, c'est son orientation légale-rationnelle, pour reprendre l'expression de Max Weber. On parle des Etats comme si ceux qui les dirigeaient agissaient dans le cadre "d'intérêts nationaux" afférant à des entités étatiques dont ils auraient la charge. Sans aller jusqu'à dire que l'Etat est une structure "importée" (pour reprendre le titre du dernier ouvrage de Bertrand Badie\*) et sans lendemain, force est de constater que la définition des soi-disant "intérêts nationaux" est une espèce d'exercice surréaliste dans la majorité des cas concernés. Car c'est en principe la raison d'Etat qui préside à la raison de s'armer. Or l'Etat, dans de nombreux cas moyen-orientaux, n'est que l'ossature formelle externe, et la limite géographique d'un pouvoir, d'un régime dont la logique est d'autant plus difficile à cerner qu'elle avance précisément masquée en raison d'Etat. Nous posons ici que les régimes sont identifiés plus souvent que les Etats comme sources de menace, ce qui fait qu'un Etat peut subitement passer de la case "ami" à celle d'"ennemi", du seul fait d'un coup d'Etat ou d'un changement de son élite dirigeante. L'Etat étant mal enraciné, perçu comme un cadre passager, ou du moins réversible dans la majorité des cas, ce qui menace, c'est la politique *hic et nunc* d'un régime voisin plus souvent que les ambitions supposées "éternelles" d'un Etat proche.

La nature superficielle des Etats fait que l'interaction entre eux est (à quelques exceptions près) fortement marquée par le présent immédiat ou l'avenir très proche, non par les considérations stratégiques des vieilles nations. C'est que les inimitiés historiques se conjuguent en termes non-étatiques: sunnite/chiite; dar al-Islam/dar al-harb; arabe/persan; turc/ arabe/ persan. Ces catégories sont, sans aucun doute des repères émotionnellement effectifs dans

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\* Bertrand Badie, *L'Etat importé*, Fayard, Paris, 1993

la mémoire collective et c'est pourquoi elles peuvent effectivement être manipulées un jour ou l'autre par tel ou tel régime de la zone. Le problème cependant c'est que ce sont des catégories inadéquates avec la réalité des Etats actuels. Les mythes politiquement les plus efficaces se retrouvent ainsi sans appareils politiques étatiques pour s'y incarner et les Etats se retrouvent privés de mythes puissants qui leur soient propres.

La fragilité des frontières étatiques, l'absence, ou du moins la faiblesse, des modes de légitimation démocratique et la persistance de profondes nostalgies pour des structures politiques supra-étatiques (pan-arabisme par exemple ou *l'umma* islamique) poussent les régimes en place à rechercher des bases de légitimation au-delà de leurs frontières par l'ingérence, l'intervention militaire, la corruption, le soutien multiforme à des forces d'opposition dans les pays voisins, les appels explicites au renversement de régimes donnés etc. Or la légitimation par l'expansion exige d'emblée de se mesurer militairement, si possible de manière spectaculaire, au voisin, proche et rival. En aucune manière, l'effort militaire ne sera explicitement lié à cette rivalité entre pays et entre régimes. Mais cette rivalité habitera fortement les esprits. Les conflits entre régimes arabes et islamiques, endémiques depuis l'indépendance de ces pays, est, aussi, une lutte permanente pour l'appropriation des mythes porteurs dans un environnement où les Etats n'ont pas vraiment réussi à se muer en nations et à se doter, ce faisant, de mythes internes utiles à leur cohésion sociale. La domination de structures de pouvoir peu ou prou autoritaires sur l'ensemble de la zone aggrave cette recherche de mythes transfrontaliers : il est toujours moins coûteux pour un régime autoritaire de prétendre être le porteur de quelque mythe fondateur que de représenter démocratiquement un peuple donné.

Cette inadéquation de l'étatique et du mythique est loin d'être le propre des pays arabes et musulmans. Elle est encore plus aigue en Israël où les considérations de sécurité glissent inmanquablement de l'analyse rationnelle de la menace effective posée à l'Etat d'Israël par ses voisins à l'incantation d'un passé récent extrêmement douloureux. Que ce passé concerne plus les juifs que les Israéliens, que son théâtre ait été l'Europe et non le Moyen-Orient, que les Arabes aient été étrangers au second conflit mondial et encore plus à l'Holocauste sont des vérités difficilement intégrables avec le sentiment d'insécurité en Israël. Un malentendu profond compliqué de ce fait l'accommodation des besoins de sécurité des uns et des autres : le souvenir de l'Holocauste pousse à la recherche d'une sécurité absolue

que les Arabes, fondamentalement étrangers à l'histoire européenne, peuvent difficilement fournir, à supposer qu'ils en aient pris la décision. Mais de l'autre côté, les Arabes sont trop conscients de la suprématie militaire et technologique d'Israël et de son expansionnisme territorial assumé pour pouvoir admettre une légitimation de cette suprématie et de cet expansionnisme, légitimation qui serait enracinée dans d'autres lieux, dans d'autres temps et en fonction d'une mythologie biblique à laquelle ils ne sauraient accéder, et encore moins souscrire. La position israélienne de baco (il n'y aura pas de second Holocauste) est pratiquement incompréhensible à leurs ennemis; les Israéliens, de leur côté, paraissent insensibles au fait qu'ils sont fondamentalement perçus comme des spoliateurs étrangers à la zone qui se réclame de tragédies passées pour imposer une domination présente et comme insatiable.

Cette inadéquation du mytique et de l'étatique place le régime au centre des calculs, et sa raison au centre de toute analyse, car c'est bien le régime (et non l'Etat) qui peut se saisir d'un mythe donné (arabisme, islamisme, histoire du peuple juif, persianisme, touranisme etc.) et l'utiliser à son profit dans une opération de légitimation ou un régime (et souvent un individu particulier à la tête de ce régime) cherche à se présenter comme le porteur d'un mythe donné qui est de nature à justifier des opérations régionales, ailleurs aisément condamnables au nom du principe de la non-ingérence. Derrière les actions de la Syrie, de l'Irak, de l'Arabie saoudite, il faudra toujours rechercher les calculs des régimes autant sinon plus que les raisons d'Etat et la politique se conjugue au quotidien autour de décisions individuelles, celles de Nasser, de Saddam, de Khomeïni ou encore de Hassan II. Du coup, des décisions militaires essentielles peuvent rester inexplicables si la raison du régime n'était pas invoquée au moins concurremment avec la raison d'Etat. Comment expliquer autrement la manière pour le moins sureprenante dont les Irakiens se sont retirés du Koweït, les attermoissements de la présence syrienne au Liban ou les retards à appliquer un service militaire obligatoire dans le royaume saoudien et dans les autres pétromonarchies? Ce sont là des choix de régimes soucieux de survie plus que des orientations d'Etats préoccupés de sécurité.

Si la raison de régime l'emporte souvent sur la raison d'Etat, la prétorianisation de l'armée devient monnaie courante. Dans la plupart des cas ici considérés, la fonction essentielle de l'armée est interne. Le doublement du personnel de l'armée syrienne entre 1978 et 1984 a

été présenté par l'expertise dominante comme lié aux Accords de Camp David et à la volonté syrienne d'établir "une parité stratégique" avec Israël après que l'Égypte se soit soustraite à l'équation militaire israélo-arabe. Cette motivation officielle, prise pour argent comptant par les adversaires de la Syrie, a pu effectivement motiver certaines décisions de l'époque (notamment en matière aérienne et ballistique), mais il serait naïf de ne pas relier cet effort de l'époque aux troubles internes du régime, et notamment le défi alors posé par le mouvement des Frères musulmans, et qui avaient failli aboutir à son renversement. La loyauté du corps d'officiers au régime en place est partant posée en critère prédominant, ce qui n'est pas sans effet sur la représentation toujours biaisée de la société au sein des forces armées, aboutissant à l'impossibilité de constitution d'une armée vraiment nationale du type Valmy.

Car si la raison d'Etat n'est souvent qu'un masque à la raison de régime, la localisation de la menace devient fondamentalement interne alors que la menace externe est créditée d'un niveau de gravité proportionnel à ses effets internes potentiels plus qu'à sa gravité propre. Une bonne partie du surréalisme qui entoure le conflit israélo-arabe et une des raisons fondamentales du succès médiatique d'Israël, réside précisément dans le sérieux avec lequel la redoutable machine de propagande israélienne fait semblant de prendre les menaces arabes. Israël a intelligemment pris l'habitude de survaloriser le discours arabe d'hostilité à son égard, non pas tant parce que les Israéliens ignoreraient les fonctions internes de cette légitimation de l'armement arabe par la menace externe, mais plutôt parce que ce discours utile aux régimes arabes à l'intérieur, était également utile à Israël à l'extérieur. Les régimes arabes masquaient une logique au moins partiellement prétorienne en agitant la menace israélienne, Israël agitait le discours hostile des régimes arabes pour de nouvelles acquisitions militaires et de nouveaux succès diplomatiques à l'étranger. Le même discours pouvait ainsi servir ceux qui le proféraient autant que leurs adversaires, dans un jeu de miroirs déformés que les "experts" tardent à dénoncer, quand ils n'en sont pas entièrement dupes.

Du coup la vision sécuritaire est bien moins territorialisée qu'ailleurs. On n'insistera jamais assez sur le fait que le droit international public, celui de Grotius, de Vitoria, et de la CIJ, est fortement déterminé par le concept de territoire national, de frontière, de souveraineté. Mais il s'agit là, bien entendu, d'une tradition culturelle (européenne) bien particulière au départ quel



qu'ait été par la suite son rayonnement universel. Là où la tradition nomadique (avec un attachement au territoire nécessairement moins marqué que dans les zones plus anciennement sédentarisées) a été dominante, là où l'identification politique était plus déterminée par le lignage que par la résidence effective, là où la foi religieuse déterminait souvent le lieu de résidence plutôt que l'inverse, la territorialité est une catégorie récente et encore peu enracinée. Du coup, la perception de sécurité n'est pas aisément projetable sur des configurations géographiques : il n'y a ni Pyrénées protectrices, ni ligne des Vosges, mais fondamentalement une espèce de compétition permanente entre *'asabiyyas*, chacune visant à dominer l'autre ou du moins à la rendre dépendante. Une bonne partie de l'histoire de la région est ainsi explicable par la rivalité (notamment la rivalité saoudo-hachémite) non pas tant entre pays territorialisés qu'entre dynasties dont le domaine territorial n'était pas seulement indéfini mais même mobile : les Hachémites, par exemple, ont pu non seulement étendre, mais effectivement déplacer leurs aspirations dynastiques de la Mecque à Damas, de Bagdad à Amman, de Basrah à Jérusalem au cours de deux ou trois décennies à peine. Ils pouvaient difficilement maintenir un quelconque ennemi héréditaire (national sinon dynastique) alors qu'ils ont été tantôt installés par les Britanniques tantôt éliminés par eux, que leur relation avec Israël est faite à la fois de collusions (pour reprendre le mot de Avi Shlaim pour 1948) et de collisions (comme en 1967).

### un pétro-dinar belligère

Au-delà de ces interrogations épistémologiques, le climat d'insécurité régional semble causé, ou du moins aggravé, par une série de facteurs propres à la région qui se superposent à d'autres observés ailleurs (et que l'on ne rappellera pas ici). Nous en choisissons, à titre illustratif plutôt qu'exhaustif, quelques uns.

Le premier de ces facteurs c'est la réalité des enjeux stratégiques dans cette partie du monde, et notamment celui du pétrole. Une corrélation sécuritaire essentielle (quoique fort peu explicitée) est à chercher entre la découverte des fabuleux gisements pétroliers du Moyen-Orient, et la naissance, à la même époque, de la plupart des États de la région. Ces deux phénomènes ne sont pas uniquement contemporains (ce que l'on ne note déjà pas assez) mais aussi fort imbriqués l'un dans l'autre. Les frontières septentrionales de l'Irak ont été délimitées avec le pétrole de Mossoul à l'esprit. Les frontières actuelles de l'Algérie sont explicables par les réserves sahariennes.

Plus important encore, le système étatique du Golfe, largement fixé par la conférence (convoquée par Londres) de 'Uqayr en 1922, est largement déterminé par les calculs pétroliers. Il en ressort que le pétrole est garant de la survie même des Etats producteurs en tant qu'Etats, que ses réserves en la matière, expliquent par exemple l'existence d'un Etat comme le Qatar et l'inexistence parallèle d'un Etat souverain au profit de la grande tribu des Qawassim. La tragédie kurde est peu ou prou liée aux réserves de Kirkouk, l'existence unitaire de la Libye à des calculs du même ordre.

Il en ressort d'abord que le pétrole étant un produit finissable, il est difficile de garantir la survie de nombreux Etats au-delà de leurs réserves en ressources énergétiques. C'est là un thème-tabou, notamment pour les premiers concernés. Mais ce que les dirigeants ne peuvent pas dire, l'analyste se doit d'interroger. Le monde a certes connu depuis le début de ce siècle une multiplication quasi cancéreuse des "Etats souverains", un phénomène qui s'est encore accentué depuis la fin de la guerre froide et l'effondrement de l'URSS. Mais le phénomène paraît tout à fait réversible si on se rappelle que le siècle précédent avait été témoin d'une tendance inverse, à l'amoindrissement du nombre d'entités étatiques du fait de l'unification allemande et italienne et de l'expansion coloniale. Or, au-delà des questions de cohésion interne et de chances de survie, une telle corrélation entre l'existence de certains Etats et leur fonction de producteurs d'une matière finissable pose problème, et se trouve en fait au centre même du non-dit sécuritaire qui est le leur.

Il en ressort ensuite, sur un terme plus court, que tant que le pétrole coule, et tant qu'il constitue une matière stratégique, toute révision du statu quo territorial ne pourra se faire impunément. Saddam Hussein l'aura appris à ses dépens (ou plutôt à ceux de l'Irak) et avant lui Nasser lors de sa (més-)aventure yéménite, mais Peter Odell l'avait déjà noté il y a plus de 30 ans: les puissances occidentales sont partisans du statu quo dans les zones productrices de matières premières stratégiques\*. La dépendance sur le pétrole pour la naissance de certains Etats (péché originel) se double ainsi d'une relation clientélaire avec ces mêmes puissances occidentales invitées à défendre, si nécessaire par la force, un statu quo en permanence menacé. On peut chercher d'innombrables raisons à l'engagement spectaculaire de Washington et de ses alliés dans l'affaire du Koweït, la plus banale mais non pas la moins

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\* Peter Odell, *Oil Power*, Penguin, nombreuses rééditions

convaincante, reste les 10% de réserves pétrolières enfouies sous les sables chauds de cet émirat. Nous ne nierons pas l'existence d'autres facteurs, mais la raison pétrolière est de loin, la moins incontestable, la plus déterminante et... la moins exprimée.

Car le pétrole étant, par les lois de la nature, si inégalement distribué, il constituera toujours une source belligène de la première catégorie. Nous avons ailleurs développé la thèse selon laquelle l'économie politique de la région est fortement marquée par la logique du racket, selon laquelle un protecteur-spoliateur est toujours présent auprès des pays pétroliers pour les obliger à payer la facture de la protection qu'il leur assure, ou pour les spoler de force s'ils se montraient trop récalcitrants\*. L'exemple qui vient immédiatement à l'esprit est bien entendu celui, vivace, de l'Irak de Saddam Husséin, qui avait réussi à faire largement contribuer les pétromonarchies du Golfe à son effort militaire pour freiner l'exportation de la révolution khoméyniste (1980-1988) avant de troquer sa fonction de grand frère protecteur contre celle de voisin spoliateur le jour où la menace iranienne ne se faisait plus vraiment ressentir. Mais cet arbre ne doit pas cacher la forêt : ce glissement du rôle de protecteur à celui de menace n'est en rien propre à l'Irak et encore moins à Saddam Husséin. Des décennies plus tôt, Nasser avait protégé le Koweït contre les visées déjà annexionnistes du général Qassem non sans avoir lui-même, pendant ce temps, constitué une menace immédiate sur l'Arabie saoudite par Yémen interposé (1962-1967). La réticence des pays membres du Conseil de Coopération du Golfe à appliquer la fameuse "Déclaration de Damas", qui leur avait été arrachée à chaud dans les semaines qui suivirent la guerre du Golfe, est un autre symptôme de cette conscience profondément enracinée dans les pays pétroliers que leurs protecteurs d'aujourd'hui risquent de leur coûter très cher pour ne pas devenir leurs spoliators de demain.

Il en ressort enfin que les pays importateurs qui, pour de nombreux parmi eux, se trouvent disposer de moyens militaires plus que respectables, conserveront à moyen terme un intérêt particulier pour la zone et une prédisposition permanente à y intervenir. Une corrélation est, là aussi, intéressante à observer entre le passage des Etats-unis d'un Etat exportateur net à celui d'Etat importateur net et la montée de l'interventionnisme militaire américain dans la région du Moyen-Orient. Longtemps en effet, Washington avait évité de conduire

\* Ghassan Salamé, "Le Golfe un an après : un pétro-dinar belligène", *Maghreb-Machrek*, n° 133, juillet 1991

des interventions militaires dans cette partie du monde et ce pour des raisons complexes qui tiennent à la sensibilité de la zone, à sa proximité avec l'URSS, ou à la disponibilité de clients locaux capables de défendre leurs intérêts propres et ceux de l'Occident. A l'exception d'une opération extrêmement limitée en 1958, les Etats-unis, pourtant militairement présents en Europe et actifs ailleurs dans le monde, ont traversé la guerre froide sans vraiment user de leur puissance militaire dans cette partie du monde. En 1980, une nouvelle donne commençait avec une tentative bâclée pour libérer les otages de Téhéran par la force, suivie du bombardement de positions syriennes au Liban (1983), de bombardements personnellement ciblés contre la Libye de Kadhafi (1986), des attaques directes contre la marine iranienne (1988), une guerre spectaculaire contre l'Irak (1991) et, enfin, un déploiement massif en Somalie (1992). Les objectifs, les dimensions, les effets de ces interventions sont bien évidemment différents. Il reste qu'en dépit de leurs différences, elles démontrent également une préparation relativement récente des Etats-unis à intervenir militairement au Moyen-Orient, ce qui est historiquement une nouveauté et pourrait difficilement être dissocié du passage des Etats-unis au statut d'importateur net de pétrole dès le début des années 1980.

Conséquence du facteur pétrolier, un second : la disponibilité, sur place ou auprès de puissances amies, de financements généreux pour les dépenser sur des programmes militaires, qui sont à leur tour, des facteurs aggravants pour l'effet "traînée de poudre" suggérée plus haut. Car ces fonds présentent des traits bien spécifiques :

a) il s'agit d'abord de fonds relativement importants, sinon franchement exceptionnels: aucune région du tiers-monde n'a pu être le témoin d'un flux de plus de 2 milliers de milliards de dollars en une décennie à peine (1973-1982). C'est bien cela qui est arrivé à moins d'une dizaine de pays pétroliers de la région. Avec les deux tiers des réserves mondiales prouvées de pétrole concentrées dans cette zone, ces recettes, tout en ayant sérieusement diminué depuis 1982 du fait de la baisse de la production et des prix, restent absolument enviables.

Au-delà des recettes pétrolières, d'autres formes de flux financiers, non moins considérables, marquent cette région. On ne fera pas ici l'addition des centaines de milliards de dollars dont Israël a pu bénéficier depuis sa création auprès de ses amis et protecteurs, gouvernementaux et privés, dans le monde, en faisant sans doute le

pays le plus généreusement assisté. Rappelons seulement à titre d'exemple, que l'aide américaine multiforme à l'Etat hébreu au cours des années récentes équivalait à cinq fois l'ensemble de l'aide américaine à près de cinquante pays d'Afrique noire réunis. Depuis les Accords de Camp David, Israël et l'Egypte monopolisent à eux deux plus de 40% de l'aide extérieure des Etats-unis. Certains pays, comme l'Egypte, bénéficient aussi, de ce qu'on peut appeler une "rente stratégique", du fait de leur alignement sur les positions diplomatiques de leurs créditeurs (conduisant, entre autres, à l'annulation de 17 milliards de dollars en dettes extérieures à la suite de la guerre du Golfe).

b) il s'agit ensuite de fonds placés dans les mains de pouvoirs autoritaires qui ont des capacités de déterminer les priorités budgétaires avec une indépendance très large par rapport aux besoins et aux aspirations de leurs sociétés. ~~On ne rappellera ici que pour mémoire que dans certains cas, les recettes pétrolières entrent dans le budget propre du gouvernant qui ensuite, en déduit une partie pour faire fonctionner l'appareil d'Etat. Mais au-delà de ce cas extrême, la réalité est bien là, celle de budgets sur lesquels les représentants de la société n'ont guère de prise, que le régime soit patrimonial-traditionnaliste ou autoritaire-militarisé. Cette donnée laisse aux gouvernants une marge de manoeuvre très large, qui, pour des raisons complexes, favorise les dépenses militaires aux dépens des civiles.~~

c) il s'agit enfin de fonds que les pays industrialisés, importateurs de pétrole, ont tout fait pour recycler à leur profit en favorisant notamment d'importantes livraisons d'armes, plus ou moins nécessaires à la défense des pays pétroliers.

L'effet le plus évident de la disponibilité de ces fonds, c'est que le Moyen-Orient est effectivement un marché essentiel pour les fournisseurs d'armements. Pour l'année 1988, par exemple, les dépenses militaires au Moyen-Orient constituaient 30,1% des dépenses publiques (8,8% du PNB), contre 17,2% en Europe (3,8% du PNB), 13,6% en Afrique (4,2 % du PNB) et 6,9% (soit 4,3 fois moins) en Amérique latine (1,3 % du PNB). Pour la même année, les dépenses militaires *per capita* ont été de 344 dollars pour le Moyen-Orient contre 11 dollars pour l'Europe (31 fois moins), 25 dollars pour l'Afrique, et 27 dollars pour l'Amérique latine (13 fois moins). Le Moyen-Orient connaît aussi le taux mondial le plus élevé de militaires dans sa population avec 18,3 militaires pour 1000, contre 9,1 aux Etats-unis, 11,1 en Europe, 3,7 en Amérique latine et 2,9 en Afrique\*.

Le Moyen-Orient dépasse toutes les zones du monde en matière de militarisation de ses économies et de ses sociétés et a largement dominé les autres régions du monde non-industrialisé comme marché des armes.

Au-delà de cette évidence, force est de constater que la combinaison entre des facteurs comme la présence de ces fonds, l'ignorance technologique et militaire des élites dirigeantes, la rapidité du recyclage des pétro-dollars au profit des pays industrialisés et la permanence de conflits mettant en cause l'existence même des Etats a pour effet d'aggraver l'inadéquation entre programmes militaires et besoins effectifs en matière de défense. Le char Leclerc n'a nullement la même fonction, ni la même signification quand il est intégré dans les forces françaises ou dans celles des Emirats arabes unis, les Mirage Israéliens ont été bien plus souvent utilisés que leurs semblables français. La décision d'acquisition a en pratique été faite dans des circonstances fondamentalement différentes, même quand l'armement est absolument le même. D'où l'aspect très superficiel des compilations du type *military balance*

Or la question de l'utilité de ces armements reste légitime. On peut notamment poser la question de savoir dans quelle mesure les armes vendues au Koweït ou à l'Arabie saoudite ont effectivement joué un rôle dans la libération du premier de ces Etats lorsque l'Irak l'avait envahi et annexé. Au-delà de ce cas emblématique, légitime est la question de savoir s'il ne vaudrait pas mieux doter certaines zones menacées de l'infrastructure nécessaire à un éventuel déploiement externe de forces protectrices, plutôt qu'en armes trop sophistiquées. C'est d'ailleurs, semble-t-il une question âprement discutée dans les Etats-majors sur place autant que dans les capitales occidentales. Reste que les contrats d'armements sont des choses trop sérieuses pour être laissées aux seuls Etats-majors et que les considérations de balance externe et de stratégie d'entreprises l'emportent souvent sur les raisons des militaires.

Un troisième facteur est évident : la multiplication endémique et la nature particulière des conflits civils et régionaux, avec une interpénétration de plus en plus troublante du civil et du régional, deux instances d'autant plus imbriquées ici que l'Etat est faible et ses frontières largement formelles. Les conflits de la zone ne sont en effet pas vraiment de nature territoriale. La lingua franca de la revendication étant territoriale dans le monde contemporain, les acteurs des conflits de la zone ont tendance à traduire leurs

revendications, leurs ambitions, leurs récriminations en termes territoriaux. Après tout, c'est ce que le monde a le plus de facilité à comprendre : le conflit algéro-marocain est présenté comme un conflit sur l'avenir du Sahara occidental, celui qui oppose le Tchad à la Libye, comme suscité par la souveraineté sur la bande d'Aouzou. Le conflit en cours entre l'Egypte et le Soudan, se cristallise sur la région contestée de Halayeb. Entre le Yémen et l'Arabie saoudite, la délimitation des frontières poserait problème, de même qu'entre le royaume saoudien et le Qatar (incident frontalier de décembre 1992), ou les Emirats arabes unis ou même le Koweït. La guerre du Golfe a formellement été un conflit sur un territoire : celui du Koweït, revendiqué par l'Irak et libéré par la coalition. Plus que tout autre, la question des territoires arabes occupés en 1967 est au centre du conflit dit israélo-arabe.

On aurait pourtant tort de croire que les disputes territoriales soient aussi cruciales dans la définition de la conflictualité régionale que les dirigeants de cette région voudraient nous le faire croire. Ici, comme c'est d'ailleurs parfois le cas ailleurs dans le monde, le conflit territorial est plus un abcès de fixation, un point de cristallisation pour une conflictualité plus immatérielle et qui n'oserait avancer à visage découvert. A qui Le Caire et Khartoum pourraient-ils faire croire que c'est bien la zone de Halayeb qui est à l'origine de leur discorde? Quel enjeu territorial pourrait-il donc expliquer une conflictualité, aussi aigue que permanente entre l'Irak et la Syrie pourtant également gouvernés au nom du parti Ba'ath? Qui donc Arabes et Israéliens pourraient-ils convaincre que leur conflit est primordialement territorial? Sans vouloir nier le fait, force est de constater que ces adversaires parlent en termes territoriaux pour se faire comprendre du monde, parce que l'enjeu territorial paraît rationnel, ou du moins palpable, et de toutes manières délimitable, une qualité essentielle pour ceux qui ont fait de la résolution des conflits une espèce de métier sinon de religion. Mais souvent, trop souvent, le conflit sur un bourg, une bande, un col ne sont que le reflet localisé, réduit, d'une conflictualité politique (tribale) (voire religieuse) qui ne ferait cependant pas sens dans le monde d'aujourd'hui.

Or, sans qu'ils ne soient parfaitement singuliers, les conflits de la région peuvent très difficilement être réduits à leur dimension spatiale. C'est pourquoi il est toujours difficile de s'en remettre aux compromis territoriaux comme garants d'une paix durable. Ces compromis servent grandement à la baisse des tensions, au

rétablissement d'une confiance inexistante, à l'introduction d'un esprit de tolérance mutuelle. Ils sont donc fort utiles et on ne peut imaginer par exemple comment des progrès pourraient un jour être faits dans la solution du conflit israélo-arabe si Israël persistait à ne pas rendre les territoires occupés en 1967 et singulièrement la Cisjordanie et la bande de Gaza. Mais la paix froide qui s'est établie entre l'Egypte et Israël, est restée froide en dépit de la restitution à l'Egypte de la totalité du Sinaï, la zone de Taba incluse. C'est que les deux parties reconnaissent qu'une paix durable ne saurait éviter de prendre en considération des facteurs autres, et notamment le fait que l'Egypte ne saurait vraiment normaliser ses relations avec Israël alors que ce dernier maintient son hostilité au principe même de l'auto-détermination des Palestiniens. En Israël, certains avaient cru cela possible et il s'est trouvé en Egypte des analystes pour penser que l'affaire palestinienne n'était après tout qu'une affaire étrangère à l'Egypte, mais les années récentes ont bien démontré que tel n'était pas le cas.

C'est que le citoyen de chacun de ces Etats, même l'Egyptien, ne saurait se contenter de son identité étatique. Un éminent ministre européen des Affaires étrangères exprimait sa surprise de voir que les Maghrébins pouvaient être si bruyamment émus par la guerre du Golfe. "4000 kms les en séparent", se plaisait-il à observer. Oui, mais d'autres facteurs, d'histoire commune, de langue, de religion, les en rapprochent encore plus clairement. La conflictualité moyen-orientale se nourrit donc non seulement de menaces diffuses mais aussi de solidarités souterraines. Si ces solidarités sont manipulables par tel ou tel régime, c'est qu'elles existent d'abord dans la culture politique. Avant même que nassérisme et ba'thisme fassent du pan-arabisme une espèce de religion d'Etat, des générations de jeunes écoliers avaient chanté que leur patrie s'étendait "de Bagdad à Tétouan". Et si un ministre khoméyniste avait cru pouvoir affirmer que "l'Islam ne connaissait pas de frontières", c'est qu'à raison, il pouvait penser que certains de ces auditeurs partageaient ses vues. Trop de faire-parts sur la mort du nationalisme arabe ou du panislamisme ont été écrits au cours des années récentes pour que l'on puisse aujourd'hui penser qu'un système "à la manière du Traité de Westphalie" a définitivement pris racine dans la région.

D'où l'extrême gravité de l'érosion récente dont le phénomène étatique est la principale victime. Après des décennies où la souveraineté étatique semblait aller de soi, un nouveau droit international post-guerre froide est en formation sous nos yeux qui au nom de missions



humanitaires, de la défense des droits de l'homme et de ceux des minorités ou du principe de l'urgence est en train de miner explicitement la souveraineté des Etats. On n'aurait eu qu'à se féliciter de ce développement s'il n'était accompagné d'une érosion avancée du pouvoir d'Etat à l'intérieur des frontières. L'Etat social des décennies passées ploie à présent sous le poids d'une démographie lourde, d'une urbanisation cahotique et d'un *mismanagement* économique dans certains cas irrémédiable. C'est donc à des Etats aux pieds d'argile que ce nouveau droit international de l'ingérence est en train de s'attaquer. Il lamine l'influence d'appareils étatiques qui sont déjà en cours d'affaissement dans leurs propres sociétés.

C'est pourquoi ces ingérences sont en train de donner naissance à une nouvelle conflictualité. Face à ces ingérences, les pays de la région connaissent une véritable resurgence d'un discours populiste et xénophobe, assez souvent drapé dans des contours religieux. En fait, la donne nouvelle est assez paradoxale, comme si la fin de la guerre froide et le développement de l'interventionnisme occidental multiforme avaient eu jusqu'ici pour effet d'introduire un clivage nouveau entre des parties qui appellent à plus d'interventionnisme encore et d'autres qui s'accrochent aux concepts classiques de la souveraineté. Les alliances et les organisations régionales perdent en impact; l'idéal hier encore sacré de la communauté dans le non-alignement s'émousse à vue d'oeil; le clivage socio-économique Nord-Sud et celui, plus culturel, entre Orient et Occident sont contestés. Et, suite à cet effacement, moins spectaculaire mais non moins réel que celui qui s'est passé en Europe orientale, pays arabes et islamiques sont de plus en plus divisés entre ceux qui appellent l'Occident à la rescousse face à un dictateur sanguinaire, à un voisin indélicat, une révolution qui se propose d'exporter ses clichés et d'autres qui dénoncent tout cela au nom de l'indépendance nationale, de l'anti-impérialisme ou, plus communément, de l'Islam. Appel d'empires d'un côté, glissement dans le chauvinisme xénophobe de l'autre, le mélange de fascination et de répulsion que l'Occident exerçait sur les peuples de cette région se dissout en un SOS angoissé chez ceux qui dépendent de l'Occident pour leur survie et un haro sur le retour de l'homme blanc chez leurs adversaires. Une chrysalide culturelle et idéologique se casse sous nos yeux, qui laisse l'Occident perplexe, quand il n'est pas tout simplement indifférent.

Un silence troublant, entrecoupé de nouveaux rappels à la fermeté, s'est ainsi imposé sur le cas irakien, placé sous une tutelle de fait de l'Occident et des Etats-unis en particulier. L'acharnement contre ce

nouvelles tendances lourdes apparaissent sous nos yeux qui permettent de penser que les changements radicaux qui se déroulent dans le monde entier ne sauraient laisser cette région en l'état. Rappelons rapidement quelques uns de ces facteurs nouveaux et spéculons sur leurs effets:

a) la baisse des recettes pétrolières depuis une dizaine d'années, combinée avec l'alourdissement massif des charges des Etats du fait notamment d'une croissance démographique très élevée, ne pourrait qu'affecter les capacités à la dépense militaire. C'est la thèse centrale d'une excellente monographie récemment publiée.\* Effectivement, entre 1980 et 1990, les recettes pétrolières ont diminué de 37 % au Qatar, de 45 % au Koweït, de 62 % en Arabie Saoudite. De plus, la dette extréme de la plupart des pays de la région n'a fait que s'aggraver : elle était, en 1990, de 16,6 milliards de dollars en Syrie, 23,5 milliards pour le Maroc, 26,8 pour l'Algérie et plus de 40 milliards pour l'Egypte. A cela il faut ajouter un taux de croissance démographique de l'ordre de 3% en moyenne pour la zone. L'ensemble de ces facteurs est de nature à peser sur les gouvernements pour freiner leurs dépenses militaires. Par ailleurs des voix s'élèvent aux Etats-unis pour que l'aide externe ne soit plus dominée par le Moyen-Orient et que la stabilité de la Russie par exemple est au moins aussi importante pour les intérêts américains que le bien-être des Israéliens. Qui plus est, la guerre du Golfe, avec une facture globale estimée à 170 milliards de dollars pour les parties régionales pèsera encore longtemps de son poids. Nul enfin ne prévoit pour les années proches à venir une remontée spectaculaire des prix du pétrole.

Sadowski fait bien d'énumérer ces facteurs d'optimisme, et le fait d'une manière convaincante. Reste que cela même a aussi son prix. Notons d'abord que la guerre du Golfe a été suivie par de spectaculaires dépenses en armements plutôt que l'inverse. Notons ensuite que la proposition jordanienne, pourtant fort sensible, de troquer (*swap*) une élimination des dettes externes des pays de la région contre la baisse substantielle de leurs dépenses militaires, est restée, de même que les réunions à Cinq, les promesses de George Bush ou les négociations au sein des multilatérales, lettre morte. On observera aussi que la nouvelle administration Clinton, fidèle en cela (une fois n'est pas coutume) à ses promesses électorales s'est

\* Yahya M Sadowski, *Scuds or Butter? The political economy of arms control in the Middle East*, The Brookings Institution, Washington, 1993

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engagée à maintenir, voire à renforcer la suprématie militaire d'Israël, ce qui fut loin de rassurer les Arabes. Sans compter que les recettes externes (pétrole, aide etc.) restent importantes. Et puis, pour autant d'argent on peut acheter plus d'armes, notamment dans les pays de l'ex-pacte de Varsovie dont les armes sont actuellement proposées à des prix très compétitifs.

Plus profondément, cette baisse des recettes est elle-même génératrice d'une nouvelle conflictualité, qui ne s'exprimera pas nécessairement en gros contrats, devenus difficiles à financer, mais en un populisme agressif, qui a été souvent le propre de régimes financièrement exsangues dans le monde. Il ne faut pas oublier que c'est bien la difficulté à trouver des financements qui a poussé l'Irak, et de nombreux pays avant lui, à l'expansionnisme externe. L'incapacité de nombreux pays à faire admettre de nouveaux sacrifices à leur population, hier phénomène marginal dans cette région repue, pourrait devenir un souci permanent, d'autant que la zone a déjà connu une phase d'Eldorado que les gouvernements pourraient être incapables de dire à leurs gouvernés que ce n'est plus qu'un souvenir du passé.

b) la fin de la guerre froide a particulièrement dévalué l'importance stratégique de la région, mais elle a aussi permis aux Occidentaux et notamment aux Américains d'avoir un contrôle plus ferme sur les livraisons militaires à la région. Mais les contraintes sur le *supply* a fait preuve de son échec par le passé : il faut que la demande baisse, les fournisseurs ne font pas le marché quoiqu'en dise l'école de Chicago, surtout en matière militaire. On peut se sentir soulagé que la bipolarisation mondiale étant disparue, le rapport clientélaire entre certains pays de la région avec les grandes puissances se soit émoussé, sinon complètement fini.

Mais les conflits de la région n'étaient pas le simple reflet de la guerre froide : le conflit israélo-arabe par exemple a été antérieur à la guerre froide, l'a accompagné en s'imbriquant à elle et lui a évidemment survécu. Il faut donc éviter les extrapolations hâtives. On l'a bien vu ailleurs et notamment en Europe : la fin de la guerre froide a été plus souvent un véhicule de déstabilisation qu'un moyen de résoudre les conflits. Il en est de même ici, d'autant plus que les fournisseurs en armements ne sont plus tenus par des considérations politiques ou stratégiques; le mercantilisme, à la chinoise ou à la coréenne, pourrait devenir russe ou polonais ou même tchécoslovaque.

c) des efforts sont faits pour la résolution des conflits et en tout premier lieu, celui sur la Palestine. Le processus de paix, lancé à Madrid est une grande promesse. Mais dans l'expression, les initiateurs de cette aventure insistent moins sur "la paix" que sur "le processus". Or, la bonne volonté, les mesures d'établissement de la confiance et d'autres adjuvants diplomatiques peuvent difficilement résoudre l'essentiel, à savoir le droit des Palestiniens à une patrie. Seule une reconnaissance de ce fait par leurs adversaires et occupants me permet de nature à accélérer ce processus sinon à en obtenir des fruits.

d) sans que l'on puisse vraiment parler de démocratisation, notons que l'instance militaire est en train de perdre sa nature tabou. Lorsqu'un minimum de participation politique est permis, l'interrogation populaire sur l'utilité, l'efficacité, la limpidité des dépenses militaires devient inévitable. Même dans un pays comme l'Arabie saoudite, notable fut le fait que les auteurs d'un récent pamphlet oppositionnel aient consacré un chapitre entier à la question militaire et à l'usage des froces armées. au Liban, un débat public s'est engagé sur la taille optimale et la fonction exacte d'une armée enfin réunifiée après des années de guerre civile. Certes, le domaine militaire, drappé dans les voiles épais de la sécurité nationale posée en dogme est le dernier à subir la loi de la limpidité de l'information publique. Mais force est de constater qu'il n'est plus aussi immunisé qu'auparavant à l'interrogation des citoyens et des leaders d'opinion.

Ce sont des facteurs qui permettent un minimum d'optimisme certes. Mais ce sont des facteurs ambigus en ce qu'ils peuvent se retourner, voire générer une nouvelle conflictualité. Un appauvrissement généralisé des gouvernements, un processus de paix qui ne produit pas des résultats tangibles, une surenchère publique en matière de sécurité et d'armements, un passage au mercantilisme pur et dur des fabricants d'armements, un fossé grandissant entre riches et pauvres dans la région, une revitalisation substantielle de l'engagement américain auprès d'Israël sont autant de facteurs d'inquiétude à l'heure actuelle. Mais le temps est l'essence même : si des actes ambitieux et volontaristes de résolution des conflits ne sont pas engagés dans l'immédiat, la stabilité des dirigeants, une des grandes données des vingt dernières années sera remise en cause alors que le monde pourrait avoir à faire face à de nouveaux dirigeants mûs par une expérience limitée des affaires et sans doute par des idéaux, populistes sinon religieux, difficilement accomodables.

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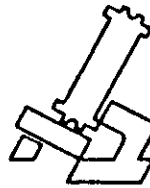
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A REALISTIC APPROACH TO ARMS CONTROL:  
AN ISRAELI PERSPECTIVE

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Policy Paper of the Arms Control Project, Center for Strategic Studies, Bar Ilan University, Ramat Gan, Israel. (Draft)

The views expressed in this paper are those of the author alone, and should not be taken to reflect the position of the Israeli government.

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Summary

In the wake of the creation of the multilateral working group on arms control, and other activities in this area, Israeli defense analysts and policy makers are increasingly examining the potential impact of arms limitations. The evolving Israeli policy is based on a realistic assessment of the impact of various forms of mutual restraints on regional stability and Israeli national security.

In developing this policy, four essential requirements can be identified: 1) Arms limitations are seen to be inextricably linked to peace agreements encompassing all the major states in the region, including Syria, Libya, Iran and Iraq; 2) as long as a threat to national survival exists, restraints that diminish Israeli deterrence capabilities will be rejected; 3) limitations must be verified through mutual inspection (without international organizations as intermediaries); and 4) Israel will maintain an appropriate response in the event of unilateral abrogation and "breakout".

This framework has produced an Israeli policy based on a number of stages, beginning with conventional arms limitations, including the arsenals and standing armies of Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Egypt. Israeli policy views Arab acceptance and implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention as essential for progress, including the development of a framework for mutual verification and inspection.

Beyond this, the Israeli policy emphasizes the need to link restraints on strategic systems, including ballistic missiles and nuclear weapons, with an end to threats to national survival. In addition, given the failure of the NPT and the IAEA with respect to the Iraqi nuclear program, Israeli spokesmen and policy makers emphasize regional frameworks for mutual inspection and verification.

External pressures for unilateral concessions, particularly in the nuclear realm, will be strongly resisted. If Israeli policy is to change, Arab leaders must act clearly and unambiguously to demonstrate that the threat to Israeli survival has disappeared. Since this process will take years or even decades to accomplish, changes in Israeli cannot be expected in the short term. From this perspective, arms control in the Middle East must begin with conventional and chemical weapons, and be inextricably linked to the development of confidence and security.

Policy Paper of the Arms Control Project, Center for Strategic Studies, Bar Ilan University, Ramat Gan, Israel. The views expressed in this paper are those of the author alone, and should not be taken to reflect the position of the Israeli government.

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Historically, Israeli political and military leaders have viewed efforts to reach arms limitation agreements in the Middle East with great skepticism. The Tripartite Declaration of the 1950s, involving the US, France, and Britain, made it difficult for Israel to purchase weapons, while the major powers found ways to provide weapons to the Arabs.<sup>1</sup> The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the international conventions have failed in the Middle East, particularly in the case of Iraq. At best, arms control was seen as an idealistic irrelevance to the Middle East; at worst, it was a means of weakening Israel militarily and isolating the government politically.

However, the growing importance of arms control in the international system in recent years has led to an cautious Israeli reappraisal. Policy makers have begun to examine and compare the potential impacts of specific proposals with respect to political and military requirements.

From the Israeli perspective, the Middle East continues to be highly unstable, and the Jewish state remains vulnerable. A significant reduction in the Israeli deterrent could quickly lead to an increase in the military threat and in the probability of a major war in the region. Israel is very small, lacks strategic depth, and there are many potential enemies, from Algeria to Iran<sup>2</sup>. In the Middle East, war is still seen as primary instrument of policy, and for many states, such as Iraq or Libya, limitations and global regimes are marginal obstacles to be overcome, or are simply ignored.

Furthermore, arms control in the region is highly complex, with over 20 states involved, and numerous and overlapping conflict zones. With the exception of demilitarized regions and



some other minor measures, bilateral agreements between Israel and Egypt or Syria do not provide Israel with very much security. For example, if Israel were to give up its missile capability in exchange for similar limits on Egypt, other states, such as Iraq, Iran, Syria or even Algeria would quickly gain an advantage. Arms control must therefore be multilateral, with restraints involving all the relevant players.

Given these constraints, as Israeli policy has developed, four requirements have been defined. First, arms control is seen as directly dependent on the peace process. Progress is closely linked to the negotiations, and major limitations on Israel's nuclear capability will require all the states in the region to explicitly accept the legitimacy of the Jewish state, and formal peace agreements will have to be signed. Second, before limitations are accepted, they will have to demonstrate a tangible reduction in the military threat, conventional and unconventional, to Israel. Third, limitation agreements must include realistic provisions for verification, in contrast to the case of the NPT/IAEA system. Fourth, agreements must be structured so that if any country were to suddenly abrogate the terms, such actions would not endanger Israeli security or survival.

#### 1. Arms Control and the Peace Process

Israel has developed all of its military capabilities in response to continuous efforts to destroy the Jewish state, beginning in 1948, and discussion of arms control agreements can only be implemented when all of these states accept the right of Israeli to exist and end the state of war. As Israeli leaders note, the Arab-Israeli conflict is not about territory (occupied, or not) but is based on the fact that large segments of the Arab and Islamic worlds still deny the legitimacy of the 3000 year-old Jewish presence in Israel.

In laying out the Israeli government's program for arms control in the Middle East, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres stated

"No nation in the region will enjoy genuine security unless all nations feel secure. Accordingly, we have formulated our policy on regional security and arms control, once peace has been attained. We seek to live in a region in which full and lasting peace prevails, based on reconciliation, good neighborliness, open borders, trust and respect among nations."<sup>3</sup> In other words, the implementation of major arms limitations will wait until formal peace treaties are signed, and the legitimacy of the Jewish state is no longer in question.

Ambiguous and easily reversible measures, such as an end to the state of belligerency, are insufficient to allay Israeli security concerns. Shalheveth Freier, who served as Israel's representative in international arms control conferences and has had a major role in formulating policy, noted that proposals that call for military restraints by Israel, particularly in the nuclear realm, "can only be credible once war against Israel has been renounced as a way of settling differences with it."<sup>4</sup>

Effective arms control in the Middle East must include over 20 states, from North Africa to Iran<sup>5</sup>. A number of states remain entirely outside and are active opponents of the current peace negotiations, including Iran and Libya. It is clear that in many areas, including missiles and nuclear weapons, significant limitations are not possible as long as the leaders of states such as Iran declare themselves to be committed to the destruction of Israel. Before serious substantive negotiations can begin, Iran and Libya must be brought into the negotiation process, and this process must produce revolutionary agreements that bring the Arab-Israeli conflict to an end.

## 2. The Impact of Arms Control on Israeli Deterrence

At the same time, even under the most optimistic scenarios, it is hard to imagine a peace agreement that will completely remove the military threat to Israel in the foreseeable future. As in other ethno-national conflicts, the potential for revanchism and renewed efforts to destroy the Jewish state can remain for years and generations. In the absence of democratic

regimes throughout the region, the role of the military will continued to be dominant, and arms acquisition is likely to continue. Governments that sign peace agreements will be vulnerable to radical groups calling for renunciation of the treaties. Therefore, Israeli policy makers will seek arms control arrangements that are consistent with these conditions.

Indeed, any peace agreements that involve territorial withdrawal, whether on the Golan Heights or the West Bank, could increase the dangers of military attack, requiring expanded Israeli deterrence and defensive capabilities.<sup>6</sup> The geographic and demographic asymmetries that have characterized the Arab-Israeli conflict and encouraged continued Arab attacks on Israel will become even more pronounced. Israel will always be a micro-state without strategic depth, and a very small population. If there are changes in the boundaries, Israel will again appear be highly vulnerable to large-scale surprise attack. Thus, even with peace treaties, arms limitations measures must allow Israel to maintain sufficient military capability to deter against and defend all attacks that threaten national survival.

Although some measures, such as early warning, buffer zones, and increased emphasis on defense can reduce the dependence on deterrence, the effectiveness of these measures are questioned. Syrian divisions stationed near Damascus, a short distance from the Golan Heights, will continue to threaten Israeli positions below, with clear access to Tel Aviv. Thousands of the most modern Iraqi tanks and artillery (equipped with chemical shells) survived the Gulf War, and will be able to move through Jordan and within range of Israel in a period of a few days, with or without buffer zones in between. Israel is too small to effectively defend against such large scale conventional attacks, and the need for deterrence and pre-emption will remain long after any peace agreements are reached.

Defense against non-conventional weapons, and missiles in particular, is even more problematic. As long as Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Libya maintain the capability to launch offensive

missiles, such as the extended range Scud-B and North Korean (or Chinese) equivalents, Israel will need an effective military response. Despite the large investments in ballistic missile defense (BMD) and programs such as the advanced Patriot and Arrow, these will not end the threat.<sup>7</sup> Israelis military planners will need a capability to preempt as well as active suppression to destroy launch sites. Small numbers of chemical, biological and nuclear warheads will still pose a major threat to Israel. From this perspective, arms control measures will be examined to insure that the minimal deterrence capability deemed necessary for national security is maintained.

### 3. Compliance

Verification of compliance is essential to any realistic arms control regime, and the Middle East has a poor track record in this area. Iraq blatantly violated the 1925 Geneva Convention banning the use of chemical weapons, and ignored its commitments under the NPT. IAEA inspections and safeguards were a complete travesty in Iraq, both during the 1980s, and even after the 1991 war when IAEA inspectors were sent to destroy the Iraqi program. (The IAEA employs only 200 inspectors, and most of their time is spent on inspections in countries such as Canada and Sweden.) As long as this situation continues, such loose international regimes that present the illusion, but not the substance of verification, will be rejected by Israel.

The IAEA and NPT have clearly failed to prevent the proliferation of materials and technology to Iraq (which was a member of the Board of Governors of the IAEA), Algeria, Iran, and other states. As a result, Israel has little trust in verification by international organizations, and insist on Israeli inspectors and direct Israeli involvement at every stage of the process. Shalheveth Freier notes that Israeli concerns with the Iraqi nuclear weapons program "were brushed aside" by the IAEA and the supplier states "on the grounds that Iraq was a signatory to the NPT." International organizations such as the UN and IAEA, the Arabs "dispose of majorities" and "majority

resolutions take the place of negotiations, envisaged in the multilateral talks." Freier concludes that "that Israel should not allow this item to be either arrogated by international organizations ..."<sup>8</sup>

Instead, Israeli policy is based on the requirement for the creation of region institutions, with mutual verification and inspection regimes (including challenge inspections).<sup>9</sup> In outlining Israeli arms control policy at the ceremony upon signing the Chemical Weapons Convention, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres stated that "'Arms control negotiations and arrangements should be mutually agreed upon and include all the states of the region. The implementation and verification mechanisms, the establishment of comprehensive and durable peace, should be region-wide in their application."<sup>10</sup> In their present form, global institutions and regimes are not acceptable to Israel.

#### 4. The Problem of "Breakout"

No international agreement is guaranteed, and unilateral renunciation of arms limitations is always possible. After World War I, Germany circumvented the restrictions that it had accepted under the peace agreement, giving it a sudden major military advantage. American analysts worried about "breakout" scenarios, in which the Soviet Union would suddenly announce that it had succeeded in developing a capability that had been subject to mutual restraints, (such as ballistic missile defense) or had produced a large number of delivery systems and warheads. In 1993, North Korea suddenly announced it was withdrawing from the NPT, rather than accept the inspections demanded by the IAEA.

In the Middle East, the problem of "breakout" is particularly acute. The sudden acquisition of a "primitive" nuclear capability by Iraq, Iran, Libya, or Syria would change the balance of power in a fundamental way. If intermediate-range ballistic missiles were banned, but one of these states managed to develop, acquire or upgrade shorter range missiles (as Iraq did with its Scud-Bs) this would immediately threaten Israeli security. The IAEA claims that its verification system provides

"timely warning" of a potential breakout, to allow for political and military responses before the state in question succeeded in going nuclear. However, it is now clear that the IAEA's small and timid inspection regime cannot, in fact, provide timely warning.

In response to the threat of "breakout", Israel cannot be expected to place any confidence in the UN or other international agencies. The US might seek to provide explicit guarantees of action, but these would be treated with some skepticism. Following the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, the US prepared for six months before going to war. Six months would allow more than enough time for a well-prepared state that had developed its infrastructure carefully to finish work on a nuclear device, and if Iraq had succeeded in developing nuclear weapons, many analysts argue that the US would not have attacked Saddam Hussein. Israeli policy is based on the conclusion that arms control agreements must allow for the maintenance of an independent capability to respond to unilateral abrogations.

#### SPECIFIC POLICY OPTIONS

Israeli arms control policy, based on the four requirements discussed above, places controls on conventional weapons as the first step, followed by implementation of limits on agreed chemical and biological weapons, missiles, and then, as the final step, and after all the other steps have been accomplished and proven successful, limits on nuclear weapons can be considered.

##### Conventional Limitations

The massive conventional forces in the region continue to present a major threat to Israeli security. Combined Arab attacks in 1948 and 1973 (and the preparations for attack in 1967) posed threats to the survival of the state, and this scenario continues to be a major factor in military planning. The peace treaty with Egypt, the disintegration of the Soviet Union, and the 1991 Gulf war, which reduced the Iraqi military capability by almost 50%, have reduced this threat. However, the

possibility of an attack on the Eastern front, involving Syria, with potential support from Iraq, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia remains.<sup>11</sup> With the limited participation of Iraq and Saudi Arabia, Israel would face a disadvantage of 1:2 in tanks, 1:3 in guns and mortars, and 1:2 in combat aircraft.<sup>12</sup> A surprise attack before Israel could mobilize its reserves would greatly increase the Arab advantage.<sup>13</sup>

Despite the political changes in the region and the world, in the past two years, Saudi Arabia and Iran have purchased billions of dollars of advanced weapons. Syria has used the \$2 billion it received from Saudi Arabia during the Gulf War to purchase hundreds of T-72 tanks, combat aircraft, and other systems.<sup>14</sup> Advanced weapons technology sold to Saudi Arabia diffuses quickly throughout the Arab world, leading to an erosion of Israel's technological advantage which has been used to offset the quantitative advantage of the Arabs.<sup>15</sup> Israeli military planning for "worst case scenarios" includes the offensive potential role of these forces.

Israeli policy therefore is based on reductions in this area as the necessary first step in the regional arms control process.<sup>16</sup> Conventional arms control, with respect to both weapons and manpower, comes closest to meeting the four requirements listed above. Such measures could be incorporated within the peace process, can be readily verified, and the risks of sudden abrogation are minimal. Addressing the United States and the other major arms suppliers, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres called on the major suppliers to "cease their counterproductive policies of indiscriminate arms sales."<sup>17</sup>

Limits on manpower in standing forces provide a complementary measure. Some Israeli analysts have proposed that Arab states (particularly Syria) move to a force structure similar to the Israeli system, based largely on reserve forces.<sup>18</sup> Such a structure is inherently less threatening and its offensive potential is greatly reduced. If Syria and Iraq require 24 to 72 hours for mobilization, Israel would have the equivalent time to

call-up its reserve forces, thereby reducing the fear of surprise attack. (The threat of surprise attack from Egypt is reduced by existence of the demilitarized buffer zone in the Sinai Peninsula. Unless Syrian troops are withdrawn far to the north of Damascus, such a buffer zone will be difficult to reproduce on this front.) In addition, major limits on Iraqi military manpower would be necessary, but these may be plausible in a post-Saddam era, in the context of other measures to limit Iraq's military power.

#### Chemical and Biological Weapons

In January 1993, Israel became one of the charter signatories of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). From the Israeli perspective, this decision was problematic, and the CWC contains both potential risks and benefits. The major test of the CWC is whether it can verify the destruction of the chemical stockpiles and production facilities of Iraq, Libya, Syria and other Arab states. Foreign Minister Peres stated that "The Chemical Weapons Convention must refer itself to our region, and the region at large must adhere to its principles and comply with its provisions."<sup>19</sup> The efforts by some Arab representatives to link acceptance of the CWC with Israeli adherence to the NPT, or other steps to reduce the nuclear deterrent capability are unacceptable to Israel.

From the Israeli perspective, the enforcement of the terms of the CWC states will be an important test of the effectiveness of arms control in the region. The role of the CWC in assuring compliance, and of the international community in taking significant action in the event of suspected non-compliance, are key factors. The international community stood impotently in the face of Iraqi use of chemical weapons, in total violation of the 1925 Geneva Convention, to which Iraq was a signatory. In addition, the operation of the CWC regime will provide a test of the ability of the international community to end the anti-Israel bias that has characterized the United Nations, IAEA, and other bodies. As Foreign Minister Peres has stated, "We cherish the



principles of universality and equality among nations.

Naturally, we expect equal rights of geographic membership in the institutions established by the convention."<sup>20</sup> The CWC is thus a test case, by which the degree with which arms control can be applied to other areas, including nuclear weapons, will be measured.

### Missiles

Many proposals for "confidence and security-building measures" for the Middle East are based on limits on the acquisition, deployment, and testing of ballistic missiles. From the Israeli perspective, such proposals are problematic. Mutual restraints could increase Israeli security, particularly after the experience of the 1991 Gulf War, in which Israeli cities were vulnerable to Iraqi missiles. Many analysts, including General (Res.) Aharon Levran and General (Res.) Israel Tal, have expressed concern about the threat posed by these missile forces.

At the same time, the Jericho long-range missile is an important component of the Israeli strategic deterrent and retaliatory capability, which is seen as necessary to guarantee the survival of the state. As the offensive threat has extended as far as Iran and Algeria, the Jericho has provided an assured second strike capability in the event of "a worst case attack". Limits on Israeli missile capabilities would therefore have a major impact on the Israeli deterrent, and the tradeoff between costs and benefits will be difficult.

However, given the centrality of this area to Israeli national security, unilateral and informal restraints, in the form of CSBMs, are not likely to prove attractive to decision makers. In this area, as in others, effective compliance and verification is necessary. The Arab and Iranian missile forces are based on imports of major components (as in the case of Syria, Saudi Arabia, and Libya), or on a combination of technology imports and local production and upgrading (as in the case of Iraq, Iran, and Egypt).

Supplier agreements in this area, as in others, have failed in the past, and Israel will also demand much greater evidence that any missile restraints will be implemented. The Missile Technology Control Regime, that was established under American leadership in 1987, included the participation of all Western European states, and other suppliers, including the Soviet Union and China agreed to accept the export limitations established in the MTCR. The performance of this regime in the Middle East has been problematic. As a result of US pressure, China has not delivered the M-9 missile to Syria to date, and the Condor project, (involving Argentina, Egypt, and Iraq) seems to have been stopped (although questions remain). However, the MTCR did not prevent Iraq from upgrading its Scud-B missiles, with technology and assistance provided by signatories such as Germany, Britain, and the US.<sup>21</sup> Syrian and Iranian missile programs are growing constantly, and the major suppliers are either powerless or unwilling to intervene. In March 1992, North Korean ships carrying Scud-C missiles, launchers, and equipment to manufacture these missiles, reached Iran and Syria.

The "cat and mouse" game between Saddam Hussein and the UN inspectors after the 1991 Gulf War has also not provided much assurance to Israel in this area. Prior to and during the war, the US asked for Israeli "restraint" in response to the Scud missile attacks. The Bush administration pledged to destroy Iraqi missiles, as well as the chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons programs. United Nations Security Council Resolution 687 of April 1991 specified a period of 120 days in which all of Iraq's non-conventional weapons, related materials, and production facilities would be destroyed under the verification of the United Nations. However, the speed with which the American troops withdrew from the area removed the incentives for Saddam Hussein to comply. Over two years have passed, and the Iraqi capability, including hundreds of Scud missiles, an unknown number of launchers, and large-scale production facilities continue to exist.

As a result, Israel will treat proposals to restrain missile development and deployment with great caution and skepticism. The possibilities for mutual limitations exist, but probably not in the context of CSBMs or informal agreements.

#### Nuclear Weapons

From the Israeli perspective, limitations on nuclear weapons are likely to be the last issue to be addressed. The Israeli nuclear capability was developed to deter conventional attacks that threatened national survival, and as long as this threat continues, and the legitimacy and permanence of Israel is questioned, nuclear weapons will continue to be seen as the ultimate guarantor of security. As long as the Arab-Israeli conflict continues, even if the Israeli nuclear monopoly is ended, and other states in the region develop nuclear forces, Israel is likely to prefer a policy of nuclear deterrence.<sup>22</sup> Indeed, public opinion polls show major support for maintenance of a nuclear deterrent. In 1991, just after the Gulf War and Iraqi threats to "incinerate half of Israel" with chemical weapons, 88% of Israelis agreed that the use of nuclear weapons was justified in principle.<sup>23</sup>

Shalheveth Freier, who has served as Israel's representative in international arms control discussions, and has played a major role in policy making for many years, has noted that all of Israel's major wars were about the existence of Israel. He views the nuclear deterrent as providing "a sense of reassurance to Israelis in times of gloom" and "to serve as possible caution to states contemplating obliterating Israel by dint of their preponderance of men and material."<sup>24</sup>

Furthermore, the Israeli position is that effective nuclear arms control in the Middle East will require the development of regional institutions and procedures. In this region, in particular, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the inspection and safeguards procedures of the International Atomic Energy Agency, and the various export control efforts have been a complete failure. Iraq provides the clearest case; Saddam

Hussein was able to maintain an advanced and large-scale weapons program without the knowledge of the IAEA, and in violation of its NPT treaty obligations, and Iraq purchased components despite the formal (but unenforced) limitations of the supplier states. Similarly, Iran and Algeria are acquiring nuclear materials and technology despite the limitations of the existing international regime.

Although there have been some efforts to strengthen the IAEA system, the failure of this international agency to act resolutely in dismantling the Iraqi nuclear program after the 1991 Gulf War demonstrates its inability to detect and respond quickly to a unilateral "breakout".<sup>25</sup> As Freier notes, the NPT, IAEA and other elements of the existing international regime are also politically unacceptable to Israel. "The Arab states urged resolutions [condemning Israeli nuclear activity]... in every conceivable international forum, and these fora went willingly along with these urgings, singling out Israel and disregarding any other country, similarly presumed to have nuclear capabilities."

Below the threshold of the NPT and the elimination of the Israeli nuclear option, analysts, some US government officials, as well as Egyptian representatives, have suggested that Israel announce a unilateral freeze on production of nuclear materials and a halt to operations at the Dimona reactor.<sup>26</sup> Supporters of this policy argue that Israel already has sufficient nuclear weapons to deter any conceivable threat.<sup>27</sup> Thus the cost would be low, and if necessary, these steps are reversible. The benefits, proponents claim, would flow from the ability to use this Israeli concession in increasing pressure on the other states in the region, including Iran and Egypt, to abstain from obtaining nuclear weapons.

However, Israeli policy makers view efforts to include any measures regarding nuclear capabilities in the context of CSBMs as divorced from Middle East realities.<sup>28</sup> Unilateral Israeli restraint are unlikely to effect Iran, for example, and Teheran

is likely to continue to pursue nuclear weapons regardless of the status of the Israeli program. In addition, the US and the other major supplier states and powers may be able to delay the Iranian nuclear program for a few years, but, as the Iraqi case demonstrates, supplier limitations are of limited effectiveness.

Some critics argue that an Israeli "freeze" could spur to the efforts of the other states, who might see an opportunity to obtain a position of nuclear superiority. In addition, instead of responding with limits on their own programs, in response to Israel concessions, the Arab states and Iran may demand more limitations, including an end to the Israeli deterrent capability.

It is unlikely that Israel will accept limitations that are not based on a broader regime, such as a Middle East Nuclear Weapons Free Zone. Shalheveth Freier has suggested the precedent of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which "had its beginnings in the initiative of the states in the region, had been negotiated by them directly and freely, and included the possibility of mutual inspection." He goes on to call for "the establishment of a NWFZ, freely negotiated between the parties and including, for firm reassurance, the mutual verification of the agreed safeguards by the parties themselves....."

In the presentation of the Israeli government's position, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres outlined a broader regime, based on "a mutually verifiable zone, free of surface-to-surface missiles and of chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons."<sup>29</sup> Given the interdependence between these different weapons and technologies, such a multi-dimensional approach to arms control in Middle East may provide the most realistic path to progress.

#### Conclusions

To be effective, arms control must meet the security requirements of all the states involved. The Israeli nuclear program, which is the major target of most Middle East arms control proposals, was developed to meet specific security requirements, and the threat to the survival of the state. The

only way to gain Israeli restraints in this area is to reduce the threat which has made the nuclear capability seem necessary in the first place. This threat is based primarily on the massive acquisition of conventional weapons, with increasing technological sophistication, as well as chemical and biological weapons, and long-range missiles.

Many Israelis, including Prime Minister Rabin, remain skeptical about the degree to which arms control can contribute to Israeli national security in the foreseeable future. As Freier has noted, "The continued insistence that Israel be internationally controlled in the nuclear realm, [conveys] to Israel [the message that] the Arab states wish to retain the option of waging wars against Israel, with nothing to worry about." Israelis reject external pressures for unilateral concessions in the nuclear realm, and Freier warns that "As we approach the 1995 NPT Review Conference, ... the Arab states will make their support for an indefinite extension of the NPT dependent on Israel's accession. Under present circumstances, I cannot conceive that Israel can yield to pressure. It continues to be sole guarantor of its security. If the Arab states will hold the extension of the treaty or Israel to ransom, they should not, in my view, be permitted to do so." If Israeli policy is to change, Arab leaders must act clearly and unambiguously to demonstrate that this conclusion is false.

If the Arab states are seriously interested in bringing an end to Israel's nuclear option, they must be prepared to end the threat to Israeli national survival. Formal peace treaties involving all the states in the region (including Iran and Libya), exchange of embassies, tourism, and the full package of normalization is indispensable. As long as states and national leaders call for the destruction of the Jewish State, and deny its legitimacy, Israeli leaders, as well as the population at large, will feel a need to maintain a nuclear deterrent.

Biographical note:

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17. Address by the Foreign Minister of Israel, Mr. Shimon Peres at the Signing Ceremony of the Chemical Weapons Convention Treaty, Paris, January 13 1993

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19. Address by the Foreign Minister of Israel, Mr. Shimon Peres at the Signing Ceremony of the Chemical Weapons Convention Treaty, Paris, January 13 1993

20. Address by the Foreign Minister of Israel, Mr. Shimon Peres at the Signing Ceremony of the Chemical Weapons Convention Treaty, Paris, January 13 1993

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22. Some analysts claim that, as the case of the superpowers, the development of a regional "balance of terror" can be stabilizing, and Kenneth Waltz argues that the proliferation of nuclear weapons would inhibit conventional as well as nuclear war. According to this view, by greatly increasing deterrence and the risk of total destruction, the spread of weapons of mass destruction will decrease the proclivity towards war in the Third World. Shai Feldman has also argued that a nuclear Middle East would be stabilizing, and Geoffrey Kemp has claimed that "On some occasions, weapons proliferation has led to greater caution between adversaries, and may have strengthened deterrence." He cites the specific example of Saddam Hussein's failure to use chemical weapons against Israel, attributing this caution to the fear of massive retaliation promised by Israel. This view is rejected by Mandelbaum and Evron, among others. See Kenneth Waltz, The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: More May be Better, Adelphi Paper No. 171, (London, IISS, 1981); Stephen Van Evra, "Primed for Peace", International Security Vol.15. No.3 Winter 1990/1; Shai Feldman, Israeli Nuclear Deterrence, Columbia University Press, 1981; Geoffrey Kemp, The Control of the Middle East Arms Race, Carnegie Endowment, Washington DC, 1992; Michael Mandelbaum "International Stability and Nuclear Order", in Nuclear Weapons and World Politics: Alternatives for the Future edited by David Gompert, New York, McGraw Hill, 1977; Yair Evron, The Israeli Nuclear Dilemma (Hebrew)

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27. In his book, The Samson Option, Seymour Hersh makes an unsubstantiated claim that Israel has from 100 to 200 nuclear weapons. Other estimates, including those of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) place the number of warheads at closer to 50, based on assumptions and calculations regarding the rate of plutonium production of the Dimona reactor.

28. See Freier

29. Address by the Foreign Minister of Israel, Mr. Shimon Peres at the Signing Ceremony of the Chemical Weapons Convention Treaty, Paris, January 13 1993

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# **CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS AND ARMS TRANSFERS IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

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# **CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS AND ARMS TRANSFERS IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

**BY SALEH AL-MANI, PH.D.**

## **INTRODUCTION:**

This paper seeks to study the structures of conventional Arms imports in the Middle East during the past decade. The paper is divided in three parts; the first outlines military expenditures and arms flow into the region from 1979 to the present, it studies the attributes of such imports in bilateral and multilateral regression framework, identifying possible immediate and lagged arms races in the region. We rely on statistic provided by the Stockholm Institute for Strategic Studies (SIPRI) and on statistics published by the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (USACDA). Prior to analyzing regression equations for each state, the figures are standardized into constant \$ US million prices and transformed into Log10 scores for easier comparisons and correlation.

The second part of the paper attempts to analyze the outcome of the correlation and regression across time of nine major importers and their impact on other potential competitors. The nine selected states are Egypt, Israel, Syria, Jordan, Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, The United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Turkey. The introduction of the UAE is because of its islands dispute with Iran, and because it is a new comer to the field. Turkey's inclusion is due to its renewed strategic interest in the region particularly after the Gulf War.

We also wanted to see if there is any relationship between its military expenditures during the past decade and the expenditures of neighboring states. It is hoped that we will be able to identify major Arms race leaders in the region and the immediate and the lagged impact of those leaders' expenditures and / or arms acquisition on competing dyads. We will also examine such relationship and whether it is one-way or reciprocal. Results of the statistical analysis will be compared with qualitative survey of available literature to confirm or deny or results. The third part of the paper will question some of the prevailing wisdom of regional arms control and see if the

available evidence augur well with this wisdom, and whether we should revise our view of regional disarmament in light of the available evidence from studying this epoch and perhaps of other studies examining the same phenomenon in earlier periods.

It is the thesis of this researcher that imposed arms control regimes tend discredit most civilian elites which may help in the long run to bring to fore new military leaders more responsive to the idea of directing a larger portion of the state revenues towards military spending and arms acquisition, at the expense of the civilian sectors of the economy. Thus obliterating the original goal of regional disarmament. Secondly, Middle East instability and wars are not the result of arms races, but paradoxically are the result of unilateral freezing of arms purchases, and / or declining military expenditures by one state while the competing state tends to continue its previous arms build-up.

Thirdly, militarization by demonstration effect has been the most salient factor in middle eastern armament policies. And unlike other regions where arms races tend to lead to war, wars in this region tend to exacerbate and renew existing arms races.

#### **ARMS EXPENDITURES IN THE MIDDLE EAST:**

In the 1970's, the Middle East witnessed a huge increase in defense spending to the point that military budgets became the largest of its kind in the third world. Such increases were due to internal push as well as external pull by selling companies and states to rectify imbalances in the balance of payments, and help to recycle excess Arab petrodollars. By the middle of the 1980's, and despite enormous funds earmarked for sustaining the conflict between Iran and Iraq, a new group of countries began to replace the Arab states. South East Asian states were experiencing a similar phenomenon of excess trade balances, and were pulled once again by arms manufacturers to buy new weapons systems. Today, South East Asia, and South Asia account for one-third of the values of imports of major conventional weapons in the world. While the middle east accounts for one-fifth of total world imports. On the other hand, military expenditures of the Middle Eastern states in 1991 surpassed those of South East Asia by US \$ 50 billion; a third Middle Eastern and Gulf outlays was earmarked for the 1991 war effort.

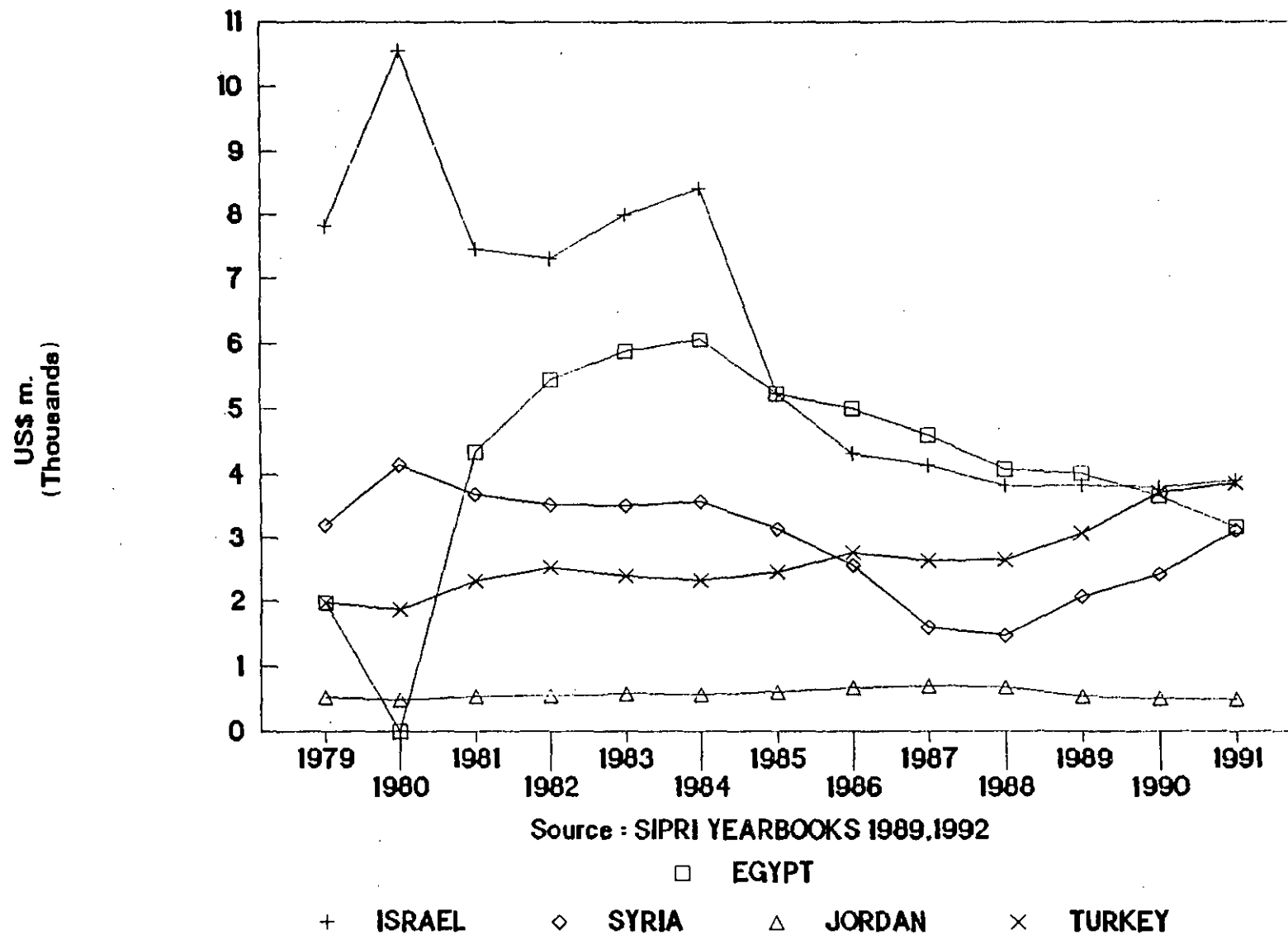
**ARMS EXPENDITURE IN THE MIDDLE EAST & GULF REGION ( 1979 – 1991 )**  
**IN US \$m at 1988 PRICES AND EXCHANGE RATES**

| COUNTRY   | 1979  | 1980  | 1981  | 1982  | 1983  | 1984  | 1985  | 1986  | 1987  | 1988  | 1989  | 1990  | 1991  |
|-----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| EGYPT     | 1981  | 0     | 4341  | 5442  | 5889  | 6070  | 5252  | 5013  | 4607  | 4089  | 4023  | 3672  | 3183  |
| ISRAEL    | 7831  | 10551 | 7466  | 7314  | 8000  | 8420  | 5249  | 4318  | 4134  | 3811  | 3830  | 3801  | 3909  |
| SYRIA     | 3199  | 4142  | 3676  | 3526  | 3511  | 3582  | 3152  | 2573  | 1601  | 1482  | 2070  | 2427  | 3134  |
| JORDAN    | 531   | 487   | 534   | 557   | 581   | 562   | 607   | 673   | 703   | 689   | 539   | 516   | 502   |
| IRAN      | 18239 | 14731 | 11818 | 10230 | 8523  | 8082  | 9705  | 9339  | 7679  | 7353  | 5747  | 5306  | 6125  |
| IRAQ      | 13822 | 14126 | 15318 | 21952 | 28596 | 31590 | 23506 | 16531 | 17073 | 12868 | 10720 | 9268  | 7414  |
| S. ARABIA | 13605 | 16078 | 18531 | 21614 | 20899 | 19513 | 18666 | 16684 | 16384 | 14887 | 14522 | 14798 | 26227 |
| UAE       | 1445  | 2059  | 2407  | 1955  | 1966  | 2091  | 2211  | 2004  | 1587  | 1580  | 1464  | 1586  | 1634  |
| TURKEY    | 1976  | 1871  | 2315  | 2528  | 2393  | 2325  | 2467  | 2772  | 2647  | 2664  | 3082  | 3725  | 3870  |

Source : SIPRI YEARBOOKS ( 1989 , 1992 )

# ARMS EXPENDITURE IN MIDDLE EAST

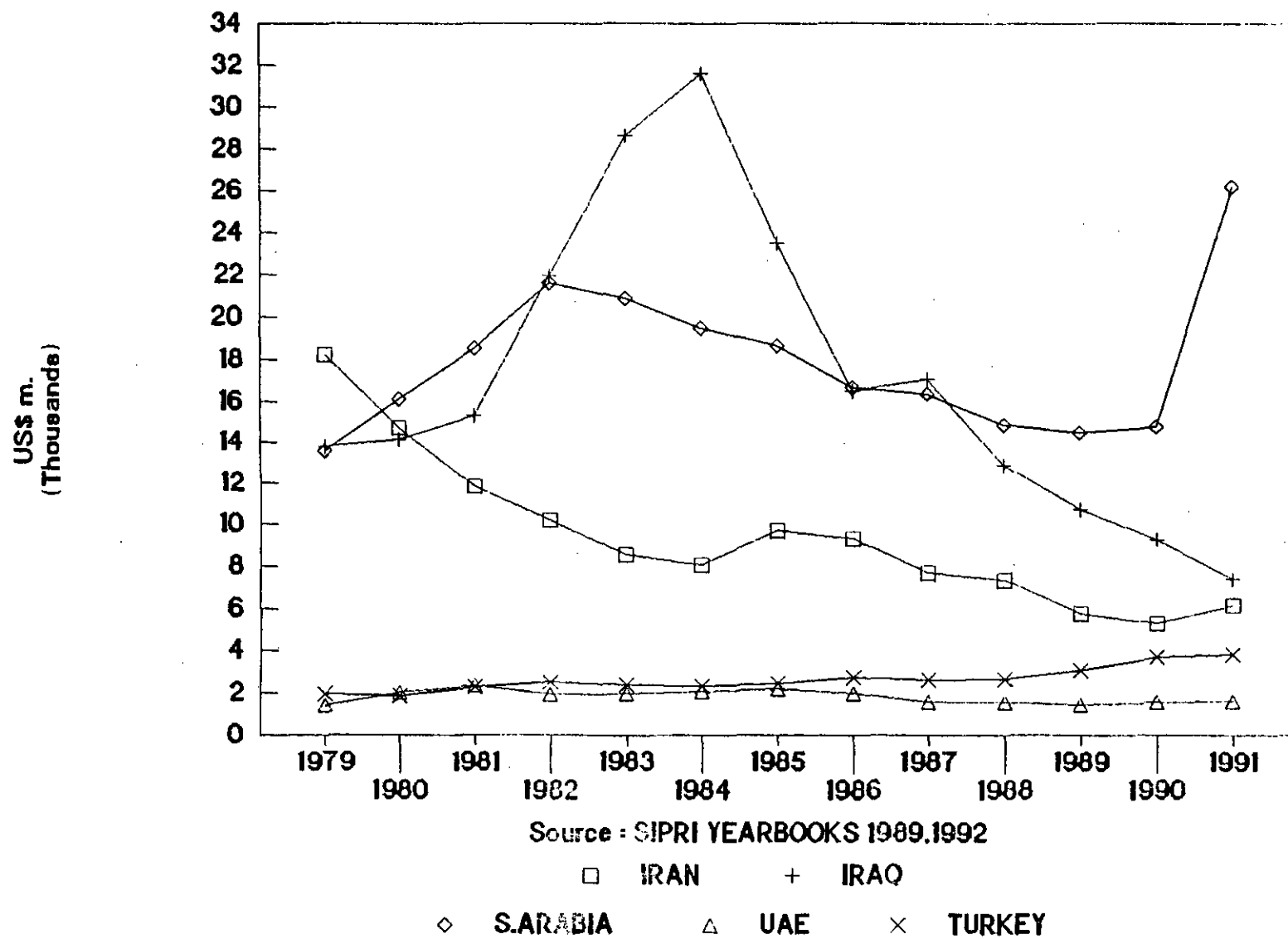
IN US \$ m at 1988 PRICES & EXCH. RATES





# ARMS EXPENDITURE IN GULF REGION

IN US \$ m at 1988 PRICES & EXCH. RATES



At US\$ 99 billion in expenditures for 1991, Middle Eastern and Gulf States were spending less money on defense than they did in 1983; a level of which reached US\$ 109 billion. If we exclude Turkey, which was spending in the 1980's some US\$ 2 billion on defense, and today spends US\$ 4 billion a year, we see a real declining rate of defense spending in the region.

Saudi arms expenditures declined through the period of 1982 to the present by an average of 3 to 4% per annum. Egypt's defense outlays declined through the same period by an average of 40%. Israel by 40% (which in both countries did not account for US\$ 2.6 billion a year in US foreign military assistance (FMA) for Israel, and US\$ 1.3 billion for Egypt in annual (FMA). Syria's expenditures fell by 11% annually, Iran by 40% (which did not in account also for Iran's tendency to engage in counter-trade with other countries), and Iraq by two-thirds.

When one looks at Middle Eastern defense budgets, one recognizes a system wide tendency to lower those expenditures, with the sole exception of the Gulf war effort. This decline is due to weakening of the market for oil, cessation of hostilities between Iraq and Iran, and to the debt burden. Most Gulf states which in the past enjoyed surplus and growth of revenues are currently experiencing budget deficits on the order of six to seven billion dollars a year. A similar phenomenon is affecting also Iran and Israel.

Despite reliance on capital intensive armies and shortages of manpower, the Gulf states are not too far down the line where it may become more expensive to substitute a single unit of capital in armament hardware for a single unit of soldier's power.

Other countries in the region are relying more on internal manufacturing and / or assembly of weapons systems, as well as on sharing training and maintenance and upgrading and rectifying existing systems to minimize costs and to save on external inputs.

Throughout the studied period and as shown in figure , we see that 1991 was the most prominent year for arms expenditures for each of Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Turkey. This reflects the burden of the second Gulf War. For Iraq, 1984 recorded the highest level in its annual defense spending. This when its war with Iran was at a stalemate, and Iraq was eager to halt the Iranian offensive against Basrah. Iran's

expenditures for 1979 was the highest in the recent past. It may, perhaps, shows a carryover from the Shah's era of big defense budgets. For Israel, 1980 was the most prominent. This was due largely to increasing offensive posture on the Lebanese front, and to a military preparation for its major invasion of 1982. The increasing tenacity of the Israeli offensives may have alerted the Syrians to increase their defense budgets, particularly when about ten per cent of the Syrian army was on a peace keeping duties in Lebanon; 1980 was also the most important year for Syria's arms expenditures accounting for 10.9% of its eleven-year expenditures.

Egypt in the early Eighties were moving-away from President Sadat's unilateral disarmament policies which he adopted after 1977, to a more active role following the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon. Additional factors related to a change of weapons systems away from the cheaper Soviet and Eastern European systems to a more expensive US and French hardware; 1984 was therefore the most prominent year, for Egypt's expenditures, throughout the thirteen-year period.

#### **ANALYZING BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL ARMS EXPENDITURES IN THE REGION:**

When we attempt to correlate and regress the arms expenditures of the nine states of the region, namely Egypt, Israel, Syria, Jordan, Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Turkey, for the period of 1979 - 1991, we found very little immediate relationship (in the same year) between their expenditures. Only the dyads of Israel - Syria, Israel-Iraq and Saudi Arabia had moderate to strong relationship. In fact, when we attempted to regress Israeli arms expenditures multilaterally to those of the Arab states, we confirmed Israel's defense budgets to be responsive immediately to any changes in the budgets of the surrounding Arab states. Even Egypt's annual military spending after it had signed a peace treaty with Israel in 1980 affected the defense budget of Israel. Egypt, on the other hand was not immediately responsive to changes in Israel's defense budgets. Two year however, lapses (as shown in Table 2A) before Egypt's defense budget began to reflect earlier changes in Israel's arms expenditures.

Such lagged impact was seen for most Arab states and also for Iran vis-a-vis Israel. This perhaps suggests an Israeli lead in any possible arms races in the region. There was also a lag in the Iran-Iraq dyad. Iran feeling the impact of Iraq's expenditures

four years later, while Iraq has a two-year lapse of impact. A study of this period as well as earlier periods, by this author, and studies by other public scientists suggest that Iraq may have led Iran in the past in an apparent regional arms race.<sup>(1)</sup>

Saudi Arabia on the other hand was in a league by itself. The only other state that had a strong sensitivity to changes in its defense budgets was Iraq, which at the time was an ally of, and major recipient of Saudi aid. It is interesting that, Turkey, despite its proximity did not influence the expenditures of its Arab neighbours except Syria and Iraq, and both negatively (see Table 1.A).

Turkey's expenditures remained stable throughout the period of 1979 - 1985. After 1985, however, it began to increase by one to two per cent per year. By 1991, Turkey's new role in the Gulf region, and in the caucasus, as well as its internal ethnic strife, indicated a possible increase in its annual defense spending.

Since 1985, Iran and Iraq decreased their defense outlays. Syria reduced its annual military budget by US\$ 1 billion, Israel, apparently by US\$ 1.4 billion, Egypt by US\$ 1.5 billion.

Most Arab forces in the Mashreq region, with the exception of Iraq, seem to have retained the same number of troops since 1985. Iran seems to have increased its standing army 200,000 soldiers, since 1990. Its forces increased from 305,000 in 1990 to 504,000 in 1992. Other paramilitary troops (Pasadran Inqilab) were cut in size, but the quality, training and organization of these troops have been enhanced to the point that those Revolutionary Guards have now their own naval and marine forces. Other Arab countries (while they largely remain outside the scope of this paper) tend to decrease their military budgets e.g. (Algeria, Morocco, and Yemen), and to cut the level of their troops, after 1991 (e.g. Yemen cut its troop size by 20,000 soldiers, Algeria cut its troops by 50,000 soldiers). Military budgets in the region still, however, accounted for a major percentage of those countries Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In 1990 they accounted for 2.6% of each of Turkey and Iran, 5.6% for Egypt and Morocco, 9% for Syria, 13% for Israel, 12.5% for the Yemen, 15% for Oman, 29% for Iraq, and 36% for Saudi Arabia.<sup>(2)</sup>

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(1) See: Saleh Al-Mani "The Correlates of Arab Military Expenditure and the Onset of the Arms Race: 1971 - 198," *Journal of the Social Sciences* (Kuwait), Vol 16, No. 4, Winter 1988 pp - 17 - 46 (in Arabic), also S. Majeski and D. Jones "Arms Race Modeling," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol 25, No 2, 1981, pp. 259 - 288.

(2) IISS, *The Military Balance*, 1991 - 1992, London, Autumn, 1992.

## ARMS IMPORTS OF MIDDLE EASTERN STATES:

Just like arms expenditures, arms imports in the region have declined more sharply over the past few years. According to US Arms control and Disarmament Agency, total values of military imports in 1979 reached US\$ 15,127 billion for the region, including Turkey. Total values of imports for the region (including Turkey, reached in 1989, US\$ 11,865, a decline of four billion dollars over an eleven years period.<sup>(3)</sup>

Statistics published by SIPRI in 1992, for the period of 1982 - 1991 (at constant US\$ 1990 prices and excluding Turkey) show a decline of nine billion dollars over a ten-years period. This lay decrease reflects changes in economic condition in the region that lower the military imports, despite the 1991 Gulf War.<sup>(4)</sup>

If we examine the period between 1980 and 1983, we see an increasing trend reflecting Israeli invasions of Lebanon, and the heightend tensions in the Gulf region. Other factors which contributed to this increase in the flow of arms was the so-called peace-dividened, creating more weapons transfer for Israel and Egypt. While Syria's arms imports seems higher then those of Israel in 1980, its imports have declined ever since by an average of 8.8% per annum. Israeli imports of arms tend to decrease from its height of 1981 through 1986; it had decreased since then by an average of 1.37% per annum. Jordan's arms imports increased slightly between 1979 and 1981; it had declined at the end of the period (1989) to almost the same level it had in 1979. Turkey's arms imports tend to increase slightly since 1979 by 2% to 3% a year, up until 1987, when it began to experience sharp growth of 4% per year, reaching its height in 1989. Turkey's imports since 1989 continued to grow as a result its major participation in the 1991 Gulf war. Turkey was also the benefactor of armaments transfers from the US, Germany and the Natherlands, due to the ceilings imposed on conventional weapons in Europe, by the 1990 Conventional Arms Reduction Agreement (CFE).

In the Gulf region, Iraq was the major importer of arms until 1986. Saudi procurements since then may have surpassed monetarly those of Iraq. Saudi Arabia accounted for 35% of the total arms flow to the region, while Iraq accounted for 16%. Most Saudi purchases are not necessarily in military hardware, in as much as paying

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(3) US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. *World Militry Expenditures and Arms Transfers (1990)*, Wash : USGPO, Nov. 1991.

(4) *SPIRI Yearbook*, 1992, Table 8B. 1

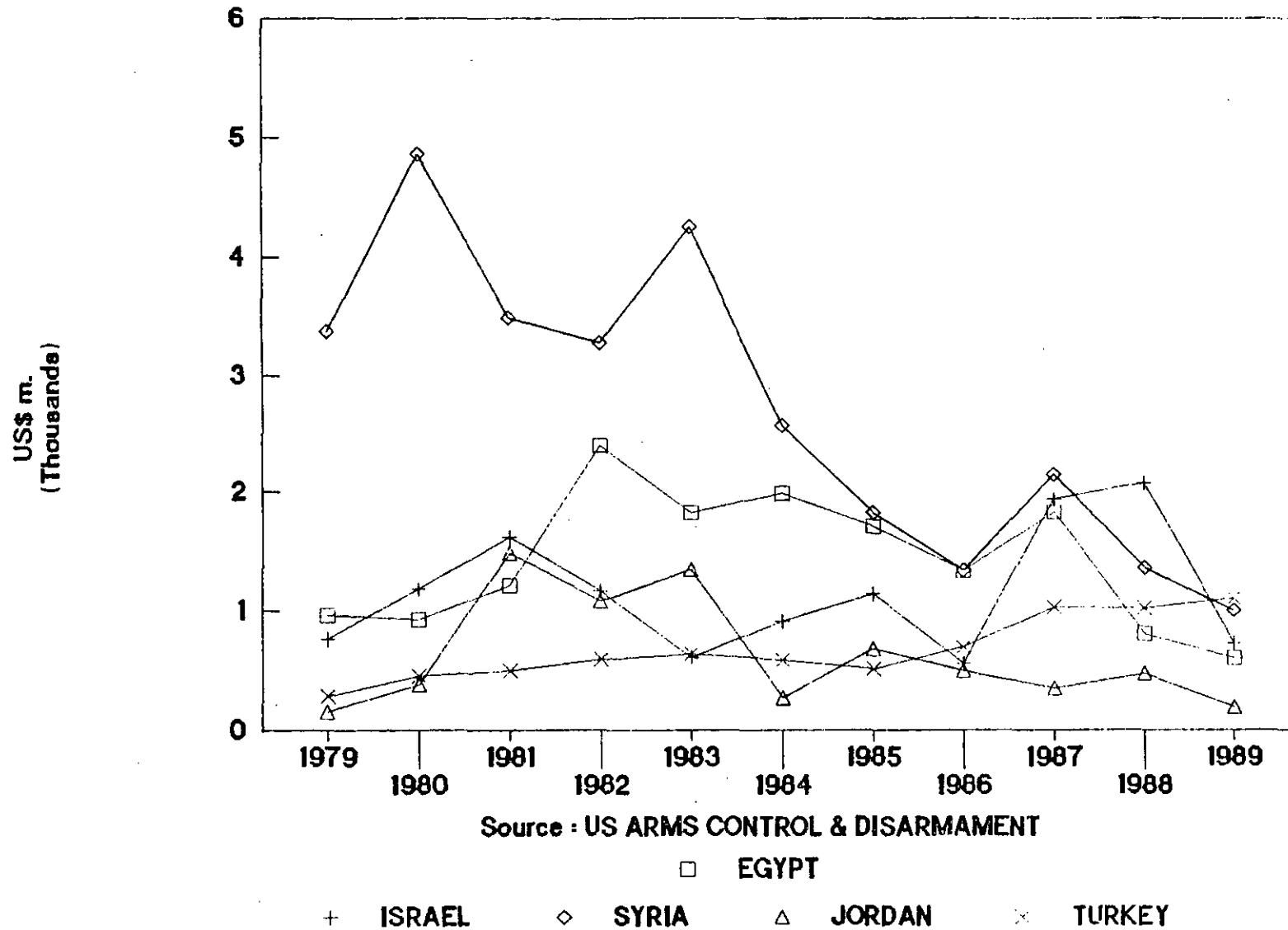
**ARMS TRANSFER IN THE MIDDLE EAST & GULF REGION ( 1979 - 1989 )**  
**IN US \$m at 1988 PRICES AND EXCHANGE RATES**

| COUNTRY   | 1979 | 1980 | 1981 | 1982 | 1983 | 1984  | 1985 | 1986 | 1987 | 1988 | 1989 |
|-----------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|
| EGYPT     | 965  | 921  | 1210 | 2400 | 1824 | 1993  | 1708 | 1332 | 1828 | 807  | 600  |
| ISRAEL    | 772  | 1179 | 1613 | 1168 | 608  | 909   | 1138 | 555  | 1936 | 2082 | 725  |
| SYRIA     | 3376 | 4862 | 3495 | 3284 | 4256 | 2579  | 1821 | 1332 | 2151 | 1353 | 1000 |
| JORDAN    | 161  | 383  | 1479 | 1074 | 1338 | 270   | 683  | 499  | 355  | 468  | 190  |
| IRAN      | 2411 | 619  | 1243 | 2021 | 1003 | 3165  | 2163 | 2885 | 2151 | 2394 | 1300 |
| IRAQ      | 4983 | 3536 | 5646 | 8841 | 8269 | 10670 | 5237 | 6325 | 5808 | 5101 | 1900 |
| S. ARABIA | 1929 | 2357 | 3629 | 3536 | 4621 | 3869  | 4326 | 6103 | 7529 | 2811 | 4200 |
| UAE       | 241  | 250  | 325  | 63   | 49   | 223   | 216  | 166  | 207  | 62   | 850  |
| TURKEY    | 289  | 457  | 497  | 594  | 638  | 586   | 512  | 694  | 1022 | 1015 | 1100 |

Source: US ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT AGENCY , WORLD MILITARY EXPENDITURES  
AND ARMSTRANSFER (1990) , WASH.D.C : USGPO , NOV. 1991

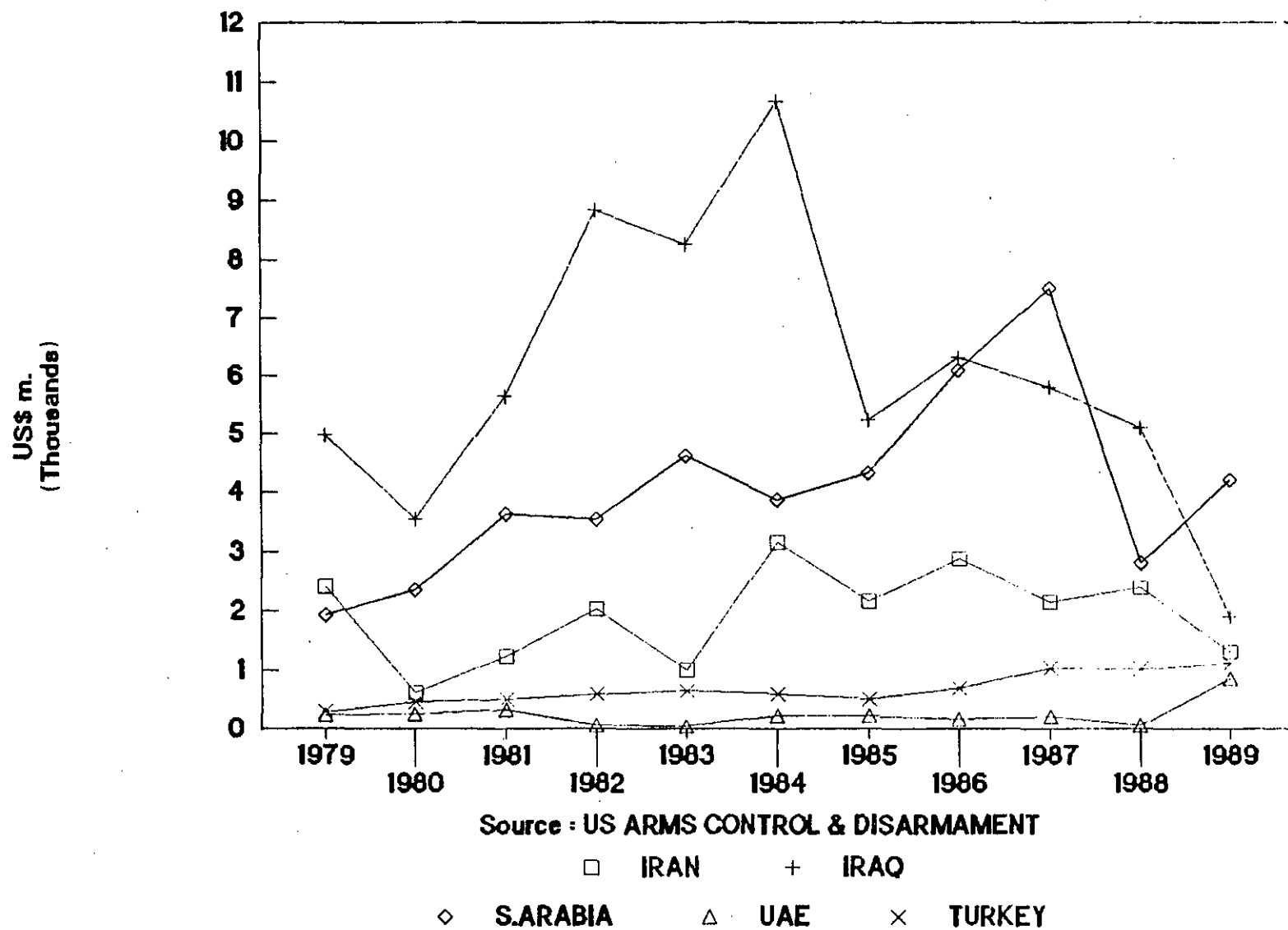
# ARMS TRANSFER IN THE MIDDLE EAST

IN US \$ m at 1988 PRICES & EXCH. RATES



# ARMS TRANSFER IN THE GULF REGION

IN US \$ m at 1988 PRICES & EXCH. RATES





for training and other services associated with the procurement of high technology conventional systems.

Iran's imports tended to have been largely stable throughout the period, averaging around US\$ 2 billion per year. It is, however, clear from the accompanying table, that Iran was forced by the Iran-Iraq war to abandon the revolution's earlier pledge to forsake the military build-up of the Shah. The cessation of hostilities with Iraq in 1988 dampened arms acquisitions temporarily. After the second Gulf war Iran seems to have returned once again to its traditional posturing in the Gulf region, buying more and better quality weapons, building a submarine force, enhancing its missile technology and moving into Research and Development for a non-conventional military capability. Arms imports and military expenditures bottomed out in 1989, and began to increase ever since. Expenditures in Iran tend to increase by an average of one billion dollars a year, since 1989.

#### **ANALYZING BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL ARMS IMPORTS IN THE REGION:**

When we analyze the time series of arms imports of the Middle Eastern states between 1979 and 1989, we tend to see a correlation of immediate (same year) imports among the countries receiving weapons from the same source. This suggests, perhaps, the effects of offset arms deliveries to Israel, when Saudi Arabia buys weapons systems from the US (of course to placate Israel's supporters in the US congress). We see similar trend in Israel-Egypt dyad.

We found small positive correlation between Syria's arms imports and those of Turkey. A moderate negative correlation characterizes the relationship of Syrian and Iraqi arms imports.

Unlike the strong relationship between military expenditures between Syria and Israel, we found almost no correlation between Syrian immediate military imports and those of Israel. Allied Middle Eastern states during the period of 1979 - 1989 tended to exhibit a strong lagged positive relationship (e.g. Saudi Arabia and Iraq). The same phenomena was evident in competitive dyads (e.g. Iran-Iraq). It took one year for Egyptian arms imports to affect those of Israel, and two years of Israeli imports to influence those of Egypt. Lagged Israeli imports also affected those of

Syria (one year lag), however no discernable influence of Syrian imports was seen to affect those of Israel. Once again, the earlier conclusion of military expenditures regression was validated by arms imports correlations - namely that Israel appeared as an arms import leader in the region. Those imports affected (with lag) those of Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Iran, Iraq and Saudi Arabia. Saudi lagged imports had almost no relationship to those other military importers, with the exception of Iraq, an ally at the time and recipient of Saudi aid. Lagged Iranian imports did have an impact on other regional states - Israel, Syria, Iraq and Saudi Arabia and also on Turkey. Yet the impact of Iraqi imports on those of Iran was faster by one year, to those of Iranian imports impact on Iraq, suggesting once again that during the period under study Iraq was the arms race leader in the Iran-Iraq dyad. Lagged Turkish imports did affect positively those of Israel, suggesting perhaps that military imports are affected by similarity of origins of those imports.

#### **FACTORS AFFECTING ARMS EXPENDITURE AND ARMS IMPORTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE GULF REGION.**

When we examine the ebb and flow of arms expenditure and arms imports charts in the Middle East and the Gulf region, we notice that there is definitely a discernable and identical trend affecting both curves. While expenditures are almost always higher in monetary value than those of military imports or transfers, they tend to follow the same trend. Military spending and arms imports experienced a marked growth in the early 1980's in the region. As alluded to earlier, this indicated the posturing of Israeli military might in Lebanon. Syria and Egypt responded to this challenge. The first almost immediately responded in 1980 by increasing its military budget and its arms acquisition, Egypt did not react until 1984. The country was tied to President Sadat's policy of unilateral freeze on defence spending and it took some time for President Mubarak to reverse those policies. Other structural factors were also in place, affecting the change-over from purchasing Soviet weapons to those of acquiring US weapon systems. In the period of the shift-over, Egypt was forced to buy Chinese systems comparable with, and perhaps of an inferior quality to those of the USSR. Even the earlier shipments of US weapons were not modern equipments, and included those F-4 phantom fighters, which were already becoming obsolete by that time. Later on, Egypt would use those Chinese systems like the F-7 fighters after assembly in Egypt, and sell them to Iraq during its war with Iran. By the middle of the eighties, Israel on its part was getting rid of some

old F-4 fighters and selling them to a multitude of countries which included Argentina, Chile and Singapore. South Africa was also buying Israeli built fast attack crafts (Reshef Class) equipped Scorpion and Gabriel ship to ship missiles. The latter and other Israeli air missiles such as Shafrir-2 were also popular, due to their cheaper price, among arms purchasers in Taiwan, Singapore, Chile and Argentina. Later on the decade, Israel began to export its Kfir C-7 fighter aircraft to those countries.

Despite declined defense expenditures towards the end of the decade, Egypt was finding some success in exporting some of its own licensed-produced weapons such as the Brazilian designed Tucano trainer, France's Alpha Jets and the Gazelle helicopters, as well as its own designed and produced ACP, the Fahd. Egyptian factories were also licensed to produce other advanced systems, like the Abrams tank, the swing fire anti tank missile and the AN/TPS-63 US surveillance radar. But these systems were mainly manufactured for Egypt's own requirements, and have not yet been available for export.

For the Gulf region, both expenditures and arms imports were experiencing a phenomenal growth in the middle of the decade. This was due to the stalemate developed between the two combatants Iran and Iraq. The two countries, later were frenzied with the so-called war of cities, in which each side bombarded the cities of the other side with ballistic missiles. While such bombardment had little effect on the battle-field, it reinforced each side's eagerness to build its own long-range missile systems. Other powers in the region, like Saudi Arabia, acquired its own conventional surface-to-surface missiles (SSM). Later on during the second Gulf war Saudi Arabia, and some of the Arab Gulf states acquired the patriot ABTM, to stem incoming Iraqi long-range Scud missiles.

In addition to those factors which includes the need to upgrade old models, export the obsolete ones and offset the costs of those imports, Middle Eastern nations were attempting to follow a regional arms imports leader. When Iran began to use surface-to-surface missiles on the front with Iraq, the latter followed suit. When Israeli planes were fitted with the latest air to air missiles, the Arab states followed suit. The use of electronic jamming and warfare by Israeli invasion of Lebanon and by its strikes against Syrian SAMS, forced the latter and other regional power to upgrade their early-warning systems. This attempt to find an equilibrium with Israel, was

largely motivated by Israel's onslaught on its neighbours. Other countries in the region were fearing a similar fate, they therefore rushed to find similar systems. Israeli weapons systems, however, remained of higher quality and fire power, Arab weapons were largely defensive and of lower quality. A fourth factor, affected Arab armament is that Arab systems except those of the Gulf, were largely labor-intensive land based weapons. Israel emphasized Air and Naval superiority, with more capital and technological inputs than those of Syria, Egypt and Jordan. Missiles and missile technology has always been the hallmark of Israel's acquisition and / or manufacturing capabilities. Those missiles served also Israel's doctrine of taking over the battle to its enemies land. Along with advanced modern aircrafts, they were also vital as a possible delivery vehicles for nuclear and non-conventional arsenals (e.g. Jericho-2 and Lance missiles).<sup>(5)</sup>

At present Israel is moving forward from a ballistic-missile and nuclear power - state, to that of acquiring also a home-grown anti-ballistic system. Despite enormous costs, the Ofeq-2 satellite system and the arrow anti-ballistic system would provide Israel with the capability of using conventional and non-conventional arsenals to strike surroundings states, without fearing any retaliation. If those space technologies are linked to an emerging growth of naval and submarine force, the impact of Israel's force structure would not only be felt in adjoining Arab lands, but may also jeopardize the strategic stability of Southern Europe as well.

As far as the Gulf region is concerned, shortage of manpower has forced those states to choose capital intensive hardware. Despite its high cost, the second gulf war proved that those systems were cost effective. Gulf armies remain however small to cope with future strategic challenges and there is an attempt to increase the number of those troops, their training and balance between the services. The Gulf states also have attempted to link their arms acquisition with an economic offset program. Some of the major arms manufacturers here committed themselves to invest up to 30% of the purchasing value of their contracts into other civilian sectors with these countries. The process of using part of the arms sales to reinvest into the civilian sector is a long and tedious process. One also should mention that an important facet of defense expenditures in the Gulf region is not necessarily targeted towards weapons acquisition but earmarked for building military cities that largely serve entire

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(5) For Israeli delivery systems, see: Mahmoud Karem, *A Nuclear - Weapon - Free Zone in the Middle East*, Westport, Conn: 1988, pp. 81 -85.

civilian populations adjoining them by providing schools, electricity and water to those regions. Another portion of those outlays pays for salaries, services and other non-military external costs.

### ARMS TRANSFERS AND ARM CONTROL:

Almost every single book on Arms Control and disarmament begins by analyzing the three goals of arms control, namely to minimize the likelihood of the occurrence of war, to make it less destructive, and thirdly to lower the economic burdens of arms manufacturing and procurement. Others tend to reify the notions of arms control and disarmament to the point approaching a pacifist ideology. <sup>(6)</sup>

If we would like to study the likelihood that arms expenditures may lead to arms races that in turn make war more likely to occur, we should distinguish between two possible postures by a state's military policy, one of deterrence, and the other of lateral expansion. Each one of these policies sets forth a certain procurement approach, the first stressing defensive weapons systems, and the second seeking delivery vehicles, electronic warfare and non-conventional arsenals.

The second point, one would like to raise is that not every arms race leads to regional wars, only arms races in which one of the dyads opts to halt his procurement approach, while the second partner of the race continues to proceed with his earlier demarcated path may bring about the eruption of a regional war.

In this study, this had almost always led to direct war, or the onset of war between one of the dyads and a former ally or proxy of the second dyad. This was the case in 1979, when Iran decided to lower its defense budget, while Iraq chose to increase it. The same thing happened in 1977 when Egypt decided to freeze its arms purchases and lower its defense budget while Israel decided to continue its arms-race path. The tragic result was three invasions by Israel to Lebanon, a former ally of Egypt. Such invasion occurred consecutively in 1978, 1980 and 1982.

Another point one should be on guard against is the mechanical conception that each round of arms race would have the so-called "multiplier-effect" making the political

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6. For literature on Arms Control see: John Barton and Lawrence Weiler, eds. *International Arms Control*. Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1976, and Paul Jubber. *Not By War Alone, Security and Arms Control in the Middle East*, Berkeley University of California Press, 1981, 1981, and Carl Jacobsen, ed. *The Uncertain Course, New Weapons, Strategies, and Mind-sets*. Stockholm: SIPRI and Oxford University Press, 1987.

viable options open to a decision maker so-wide as to include the use of force to solve an existing or potential conflict.

I think this mechanical approach is not necessarily appropriate. If we would like to bring about a real reduction of tensions in a certain geographic area, we must have the courage to address the real political problems that lag beneath the surface and cry out for political solutions. By neglecting these problems and directing our attention merely towards arms control issues, we tend to put the cart before the horse. We cope out, and merely postpone the tedious and needed work to find solutions for outstanding problems.

### **ARMS IMPORTS AND WAR:**

If we examine the historical evolution of arms procurement in the Arab Mashreq region, we see it arising as a direct consequence of regional wars and conflicts, not the other way around. Nadav Safran has shown that the earliest round of armaments occurred in 1949 as a result of the Arab loss in the Palestine War of 1948. The Arab states may have been eager on one hand to build their small armies as the case of Syria. Building an army was tenement to building a state institution particularly for a newly independent states.

For other states such as Egypt and Jordan and perhaps Iraq there was an attempt to modernize their forces and introduce some weapon systems, such as combat air crafts, as the other side was clearly enjoying from the inception of more advance capabilities compared to their own backward armaments. Attempts by the western powers to deny the Arab states the hardware required to modernize their armies in the early fifties did not stop those states from acquiring the needed weaponry; it merely delayed its acquisition. And such denial was one-sided, and it gave a strong feeling throughout the Arab World, that the West was bent on aiding their enemy and preventing them from acquiring the needed system to deter future Israeli aggression. The natural outcome of the Western Arms Embargo of the 1950's, was the disillusionment of the masses and the armed forces in the abilities of their national leaders to fulfill, a state vocation, namely deterrence and defense. This disillusionment led to popular uprisings and military coups, that undermined the old regimes and brought about new military rulers. The first duties of those new rulers was to respond to the growing demands of their lieutenants, and rebuild their armies. Thus, arms embar-

goes disguised under an arms control regime, paradoxically brought for the opposite of its original intention-namely regional military build-up. As with other forms of arms acquisition the Arab states sought to acquire weapons that would match the weapons of their foes, quantitatively and qualitatively. As under developed states and for a long time in the fifties and sixties, with limited military budgets, they opted for quantity rather than quality. Given the limited expertise of its acquisition personnel, those armies relied on the seller's recommendation for the appropriate defense systems. These were largely fourth or fifth generation systems, stripped of most of its original sophisticated gear. Unlike the Israeli lieutenants who may have served in Western armies and who had been more familiar with those systems, Arab military personnel lacked the expertise and technological knowhow to upgrade and perhaps even maintain those system. Thus while succeeding in increasing their hardwares, Arab military planners faltered in matching the quality of their foes weapon systems. This phenomenon remained the rule in most Arab states; intervening powers in the region saw it fit to maintain this qualitative gap.

If we view the military acquisition of most Arab states we can distinguish between three main cycles. The first started in 1955 and continued until 1967. It emphasized organizing the armies and equipping them with basic arsenals. The second phase started in 1968, and stressed the need to provide the armies with tanks, air crafts, and drafted a new generation of literate soldiers into active service. The quality of training at this stage, particularly in Egypt, Syria, and Jordan was improved. The planning and conduct of the 1973 war testified to the success of this approach. A third phase began after the 1973 cease fire, Arab military planners were confused. They had the money to buy new systems, but they lacked a military doctrine to fulfill. Post-war negotiations with Israel served to give those states a false sense of security. Such was the case with Egypt's decision to freeze her armament. Military policy became subordinant to diplomatic policy. This process was also evident in Syria, as well. Only the invasion of Lebanon in 1982 alarmed those states to the gravity of adopting a form of unilateral disarmament. This linkages between military policy and diplomatic approach in the Arab confrontation states continued to effect those states during periods of diplomatic negotiations with Israel. Israel, on the other hand had succeeded in divorcing diplomatic negotiations from its military policy. It continued its acquire weapons systems and build advanced weapons, while still negotiating peace with the Arab states. It succeeded in obtaining more weapons from

its patrons for any small apparent diplomatic concession. Even after signing a peace treaty with Egypt, its defense expenditures were sensitive to any changes in Egypt's defense outlays. In short peace with the Arab states brought Israel more weapons, negotiation with Israel lulled the Arab states into a false sense of security and resulted sometimes in a freezing of military spending .

A fourth cycle began after the second Gulf war, and it emphasizes naval and submarine power, as well as anti-ballistic systems. In this regard Israel was buying missiles and submarines from Germany, Apache helicopters, F-15 fighter planes from the US, and continuing its star-war related cooperation with the US, which will avail Israel, with a satellite-based Anti-tactical ballistic missile (ATBM) Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are trying to enhance their early warning-systems. Egypt is buying Apache helicopters and F-16 fighters, and enhancing its surveillance radars. Syria is trying to supplant Russian weapons, with those from North Korea and China. Iran, on the other hand, has taken the opportunity to engage in a massive re-armament effort. In 1991, it received 300 battle tanks from Czechoslovakia, 100 T-72 tanks from Russia. Additional Mig-29 fighters, and Kilo-3 submarines were ordered from Russia. The missile development cooperation with China and North Korea is also continuing with a strong pace. Press reports coming from Iran in 1993 reported that Iran is developing its own miniature submarines, which is difficult to track, and it would operate them in the shallow waters of the Arabian Gulf.

Other Arab states almost ceased to purchase any new weapons systems in 1991 and 1992. Iran was also spending some two billion dollars to upgrade her four nuclear test sites, and to build a major nuclear power station in Bandar Abbas.

The interaction of the Middle East and other regions also affected the armament picture in the Middle East. In the past it was fashionable to say that bipolar competition in the cold war induced more competition and arms acquisition at the regional level. Unfortunately, with the end of the cold war we find arms control regimes' applied only to the Arab states while Israel continues to be privileged with more conventional and unconventional weapons systems. Furthermore, conventional arms reduction in Europe, under the 1990 CFE treaty did not result in less weapons in the Middle East. Two states in the region Israel and Turkey, received large numbers of tanks and missiles, almost free of charge from Germany, the Netherlands, and the USA, as those states strove to comply with levels of the



European theatres's arms reduction treaty. German intelligence was shipping illegally former East German weapons to Israel. Thus, while some Arab states were not allowed to buy defensive weapons on the international market, Israel was saturated with excess weapons that Israel can use to destabilize this region and other regions as well. In the final analysis, any meaningful regional disarmament policy must address the legitimate defense needs of the Arab states and not be biased or selective. Such policies must not also divorce conventional weapons from other nuclear and non-conventional arsenals in the region. It also must address solving existing political problems through bargaining and negotiation. Posturing by a regional power will only lead to a similar policy by the competing states, and a relaxation of tensions in the area will have a system-wide effect on the political and strategic milieu.

(TABLE 1.A)

## CORRELATES OF MILITARY EXPENDITURE IN THE M.E. (1979 - 1991) - LOG 10

|           | EGYPT                              | ISRAEL                           | SYRIA                              | JORDAN                        | IRAN                              | IRAQ                              | S. ARABIA                     | UAE            | TURKEY                           |
|-----------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|----------------------------------|
| EGYPT     |                                    | NO<br>RELATION                   | NO<br>RELATION                     |                               | VERY<br>SMALL<br>NEG.REL          | VERY<br>SMALL<br>POS.REL          | VERY<br>SMALL<br>POS.REL      |                | NO<br>RELATION                   |
| ISRAEL    | NO<br>RELATION                     |                                  | MODERATE<br>POSITIVE<br>RELATION   | NO<br>RELATION                | MODERATE<br>NEGATIVE<br>RELATION  | STRONG<br>POSITIVE<br>RELATION    | NO<br>RELATION                |                | MODERATE<br>NEGATIVE<br>RELATION |
| SYRIA     | NO<br>RELATION                     | MODERATE<br>POSITIVE<br>RELATION |                                    | SMALL<br>NEGATIVE<br>RELATION | SMALL<br>POSITIVE<br>RELATION     | NO<br>RELATION                    | SMALL<br>POSITIVE<br>RELATION |                |                                  |
| JORDAN    | SMALL<br>POSITIVE<br>RELATION      | NEGATIVE<br>RELATION             | SMALL<br>NEGATIVE<br>RELATION      |                               | NO<br>RELATION                    | SMALL<br>POSITIVE<br>RELATION     | NO<br>RELATION                | NO<br>RELATION | NO<br>RELATION                   |
| IRAN      | VERY SMALL<br>NEGATIVE<br>RELATION | MODERATE<br>POSITIVE<br>RELATION | SMALL<br>POSITIVE<br>RELATION      |                               |                                   | MODERATE<br>NEGATIVE<br>IMMED REL | NO<br>RELATION                | NO<br>RELATION | STRONG<br>NEGATIVE<br>RELATION   |
| IRAQ      | SMALL<br>POSITIVE<br>RELATION      | STRONG<br>POSITIVE<br>RELATION   | SMALL<br>POSITIVE<br>RELATION      |                               | NEGATIVE<br>IMMEDIATE<br>RELATION |                                   | NO<br>RELATION                |                | SMALL<br>NEGATIVE<br>RELATION    |
| S.A.RABIA | VERY<br>SMALL<br>NEG.REL           | NO<br>RELATION                   | SMALL<br>POSITIVE<br>RELATION      | NO<br>RELATION                | STRONG<br>POSITIVE<br>RELATION    | NO<br>RELATION                    |                               |                |                                  |
| U.A.E     |                                    |                                  |                                    |                               | NO<br>RELATION                    | MODERATE<br>POSITIVE<br>RELATION  |                               |                |                                  |
| TURKEY    | NO<br>RELATION                     | MODERATE<br>NEGATIVE<br>RELATION | VERY SMALL<br>NEGATIVE<br>RELATION |                               | STRONG<br>NEGATIVE<br>RELATION    | MODERATE<br>NEGATIVE<br>RELATION  | NO<br>RELATION                |                |                                  |

(TABLE 1.B)

## CORRELATES OF ARMS IMPORTS IN THE M.E. (1979 - 1989) - LOG 10

|           | EGYPT                            | ISRAEL                           | SYRIA                            | JORDAN                         | IRAN                             | IRAQ                             | S. ARABIA                        | UAE            | TURKEY                         |
|-----------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|
| EGYPT     |                                  | MODERATE<br>POSITIVE<br>RELATION |                                  |                                |                                  | NO<br>RELATION                   |                                  |                | NO<br>RELATION                 |
| ISRAEL    | MODERATE<br>POSITIVE<br>RELATION |                                  | VERY<br>SMALL<br>NEG. REL        | VERY<br>SMALL<br>RELATION      | NO<br>RELATION                   | NO<br>RELATION                   | MODERATE<br>POSITIVE<br>RELATION | NO<br>RELATION | NO<br>RELATION                 |
| SYRIA     | SMALL<br>NEGATIVE<br>RELATION    | VERY<br>SMALL<br>NEG. REL        |                                  | NO<br>RELATION                 | VERY<br>SMALL<br>RELATION        | MODERATE<br>NEGATIVE<br>RELATION | SMALL<br>POSITIVE<br>RELATION    |                | WEAK<br>BUT<br>POS. REL        |
| JORDAN    |                                  | NO<br>RELATION                   | NO<br>RELATION                   |                                | NO<br>RELATION                   | STRONG<br>NEGATIVE<br>RELATION   | SMALL<br>POSITIVE<br>RELATION    |                | STRONG<br>POSITIVE<br>RELATION |
| IRAN      | NO<br>RELATION                   | NO<br>RELATION                   | SMALL<br>NEGATIVE<br>RELATION    |                                |                                  | MODERATE<br>POSITIVE<br>RELATION | STRONG<br>NEGATIVE<br>RELATION   | NO<br>RELATION | NO<br>RELATION                 |
| IRAQ      | NO<br>RELATION                   | NO<br>RELATION                   | MODERATE<br>NEGATIVE<br>RELATION | STRONG<br>NEGATIVE<br>RELATION | MODERATE<br>POSITIVE<br>RELATION |                                  |                                  |                |                                |
| S. ARABIA | SMALL<br>POSITIVE<br>RELATION    | MODERATE<br>POSITIVE<br>RELATION | SMALL<br>POSITIVE<br>RELATION    | SMALL<br>POSITIVE<br>RELATION  | STRONG<br>NEGATIVE<br>RELATION   | SMALL<br>NEGATIVE<br>RELATION    |                                  |                |                                |
| U.A.E     |                                  |                                  |                                  |                                | NO<br>RELATION                   |                                  | SMALL<br>POSITIVE<br>RELATION    |                |                                |
| TURKEY    | NO<br>RELATION                   |                                  | MODERATE<br>POSITIVE<br>RELATION |                                | NO<br>RELATION                   | STRONG<br>NEGATIVE<br>RELATION   | SMALL<br>POSITIVE<br>RELATION    |                |                                |

(TABLE 2.A)

## CORRELATES OF LAGGED MILITARY EXPENDITURE IN THE M.E. (1979 - 1991) - LOG 10

|               | EGYPT                           | ISRAEL                          | SYRIA                          | JORDAN                           | IRAN                            | IRAQ                           | S. ARABIA                      | UAE                            | TURKEY                        |
|---------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| LAG EGYPT     |                                 | NO<br>RELATION                  | NO<br>RELATION                 | 1 YEAR<br>SMALL POS.<br>RELATION | NO<br>RELATIVE                  | 1 YEAR<br>WEAK<br>POS. REL     | NO<br>RELATION                 | NO<br>RELATION                 | NO<br>RELATION                |
| LAG ISRAEL    | 2 YEARS<br>POSITIVE<br>RELATION |                                 | 1 YEAR<br>POSITIVE<br>RELATION | 3 YEARS<br>POSITIVE<br>RELATION  | 2 YEARS<br>STRONG<br>RELATION   | 3 YEARS<br>STRONG<br>RELATION  | 1 YEAR<br>SMALL<br>RELATION    | 1 YEAR<br>STRONG<br>RELATION   | 2 YEARS<br>STRONG<br>RELATION |
| LAG SYRIA     | NO<br>RELATION                  | 1 YEAR<br>MODERATE<br>RELATION  |                                | NO<br>RELATION                   | 1 YEAR<br>MODERATE<br>RELATION  | 1 YEAR<br>MODERATE<br>RELATION | 1 YEAR<br>SMALL<br>RELATION    | 1 YEAR<br>MODERATE<br>RELATION | 1 YEAR<br>SMALL<br>NEG. REL   |
| LAG JORDAN    | NO<br>RELATION                  | 1 YEAR<br>MOD. NEG<br>RELATION  | 1 YEAR<br>STRONG<br>NEG. REL   |                                  | NO<br>RELATION                  | NO<br>RELATION                 | 1 YEAR<br>MOD. NEG<br>RELATION |                                | NO<br>RELATION                |
| LAG IRAN      | 4 YEARS<br>STRONG<br>RELATION   | 3 YEARS<br>MODERATE<br>POS. REL | 1 YEAR<br>SMALL<br>POS. REL    | NO<br>RELATION                   |                                 | 4 YEARS<br>STRONG<br>POS. REL  | 3 YEARS<br>SMALL<br>RELATION   | 1 YEAR<br>SMALL<br>POS. REL    | 1 YEAR<br>STRONG<br>POS. REL  |
| LAG IRAQ      | 1 YEAR<br>MODERATE<br>POS. REL  | NO<br>RELATION                  | NO<br>RELATION                 | 1 YEAR<br>SMALL<br>POS. REL      | 2 YEARS<br>POSITIVE<br>RELATION |                                | NO<br>RELATION                 |                                | 1 YEAR<br>SMALL<br>NEG. REL   |
| LAG S. ARABIA | 1 YEAR<br>STRONG<br>POS. REL    | 1 YEAR<br>SMALL<br>POS. REL     | NO<br>RELATION                 | SMALL<br>POSITIVE<br>RELATION    | NO<br>RELATION                  | 1 YEAR<br>STRONG<br>POS. REL   |                                | VERY<br>SMALL<br>POS. REL      | NO<br>RELATION                |
| LAG U.A.E     |                                 |                                 |                                |                                  |                                 |                                |                                |                                |                               |
| LAG TURKEY    | NO<br>RELATION                  | 1 YEAR<br>SMALL<br>NEG. REL     | 1 YEAR<br>SMALL<br>NEG. REL    | NO<br>RELATION                   | 1 YEAR<br>STRONG<br>NEG. REL    | SMALL<br>NEGATIVE<br>RELATION  | NO<br>RELATION                 |                                |                               |

(TABLE 2.B)

CORRELATES OF LAGGED ARMS IMPORTS IN THE M.E. (1979 - 1989) - LOG 10

|               | EGYPT                        | ISRAEL                         | SYRIA                         | JORDAN                        | IRAN                           | IRAQ                          | S. ARABIA                   | UAE                        | TURKEY                         |
|---------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| LAG EGYPT     |                              | 1 YEAR<br>STRONG<br>POS.REL    | 1 YEAR<br>MODERATE<br>NEG.REL | 1 YEAR<br>MODERATE<br>NEG.REL | NO<br>RELATION                 | 1 YEAR<br>MODERATE<br>POS.REL | NO<br>RELATION              | 1 YEAR<br>SMALL<br>POS.REL | 1 YEAR<br>STRONG<br>NEG.REL    |
| LAG ISRAEL    | 2 YEARS<br>STRONG<br>POS.REL |                                | 1 YEAR<br>STRONG<br>NEG.REL   | 2 YEARS<br>STRONG<br>NEG.REL  | 2 YEARS<br>MODERATE<br>POS.REL | 1 YEAR<br>STRONG<br>POS.REL   | 2 YEARS<br>SMALL<br>POS.REL | 1 YEAR<br>SMALL<br>POS.REL | 1 YEAR<br>NEG. MOD<br>RELATION |
| LAG SYRIA     | 1 YEAR<br>STRONG<br>NEG.REL  | NO<br>RELATIO-<br>NSHIP        |                               | 1 YEAR<br>MODERATE<br>POS.REL | NO<br>RELATION                 | NO<br>RELATION                | NO<br>RELATION              |                            | 1 YEAR<br>POSITIVE<br>MOD.REL  |
| LAG JORDAN    | NO<br>RELATION               | 1 YEAR<br>MODERATE<br>POS.REL  | NO<br>RELATION                |                               | 1 YEAR<br>NEGATIVE<br>MOD.REL  | NO<br>RELATION                | 1 YEAR<br>SMALL<br>POS.REL  | NO<br>RELATION             | NO<br>RELATION                 |
| LAG IRAN      | NO<br>RELATION               | 2 YEARS<br>MODERATE<br>POS.REL | 1 YEAR<br>STRONG<br>POS.REL   | 2 YEARS<br>SMALL<br>POS.REL   |                                | 2 YEARS<br>SMALL<br>NEG.REL   | 1 YEAR<br>STRONG<br>POS.REL | NO<br>RELATION             | 2 YEARS<br>MODERATE<br>POS.REL |
| LAG IRAQ      | NO<br>RELATION               | 1 YEAR<br>NEG. MOD<br>RELATION | NO<br>RELATION                | NO<br>RELATION                | 1 YEAR<br>MODERATE<br>POS.REL  |                               | NO<br>RELATION              | NO<br>RELATION             | NO<br>RELATION                 |
| LAG S.A.RABIA | NO<br>RELATION               | NO<br>RELATION                 | 1 YEAR<br>SMALL<br>NEG.REL    | NO<br>RELATION                | NO<br>RELATION                 | 1 YEAR<br>MODERATE<br>POS.REL |                             | VERY<br>SMALL<br>NEG.REL   | NO<br>RELATION                 |
| LAG U.A.E     |                              |                                |                               |                               | NO<br>RELATION<br>POS.REL      | 1 YEAR<br>SMALL<br>POS.REL    | NO<br>RELATION              |                            |                                |
| LAG TURKEY    |                              | 1 YEAR<br>STRONG<br>POS.REL    | NO<br>RELATION                | NO<br>RELATION                | 1 YEAR<br>STRONG<br>NEG.REL    | NO<br>RELATION                | 1 YEAR<br>SMALL<br>POS.REL  | NO<br>RELATION             |                                |

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STRENGTHENING AND CREATION OF INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS  
FOR MIDDLE EASTERN SECURITY AND DISARMAMENT

PREPARED FOR THE UNIDIR REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON  
RESEARCH INSTITUTES IN THE MIDDLE EAST  
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CAIRO

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The end of the Cold War can be said to have freed superpower energies towards international peace, nuclear disarmament, elimination of weapons of mass destruction, and the settlement of regional conflicts. It has also allowed the United Nations to overcome its paralysis and gain the authority necessary to maintain international peace and security as envisaged by its charter. For over four decades the Arab-Israeli conflict has been perceived as part of the global U.S.-Soviet superpower struggle. Today the U.S. and Russia can cooperate with other regional countries towards promoting peace and security in the Middle East.

There is no logical rationale for anything other than the final achievement of a regional peace in the Middle East. It is a political, economic and sociological necessity for any contemplation of the future. The prospects for preserving peace and reducing the dangers of war, thus rest equally on political, military and economic stability. As was stated in the first Middle East Peace Negotiations held in Moscow in January 28, 1992, the multilateral negotiations are complementary and support the Palestinian - Israeli and Arab - Israeli bilateral tracks. Clearly it is the Bilateral negotiations that will determine the political settlement of the



basic issues of conflict based on UNSCR 242 and 338 will provide us with the reduction of any motivations for the initiation of war.

Arms transfer to the Middle East are not the sole cause of regional problems. In fact the acquisition of arms has been the product of the unresolved political settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict as well as other regional conflicts. Over the past four decades there have been a number of arms control proposals and attempts for the Middle East. Starting with the Tripartite (U.S., France and U.K.) declaration in 1950 to limit arms to the region, to the Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (NWFZ) first put forward in 1974 to the U.N. General Assembly by Egypt and Iran, ending with the U.S. arms control initiative of 1991.

One main weakness of these proposals was that they were not integrated into a political process. The continued Arab-Israeli conflict made it practically impossible to formulate and implement formal arms control agreements, resulting in a failure from the beginning. Therefore, in any move towards arms control and regional security in the Middle East, the linkage between multi-issue negotiations in both conventional

and unconventional weapons and the ongoing peace process must be made. A peaceful political solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict should proceed alongside any arms control negotiations, specially in the establishment of a WMD Free Zone in the region. It is quite evident that peace cannot be achieved while still being threatened by a weapons of mass destruction capability of a neighboring country, nor can a WMDFZ be achieved without the context of a comprehensive peace settlement. The ongoing M.E. peace process should provide us with the opportunity of achieving these objectives. It should be further emphasized that political issues must precede arms control measures, both structural and operational. The political component is highly significant for it will provide us with a broad structural security framework for the various steps and measures towards regional arms control.

Arms Control and Non-Proliferation is at the heart of the new strategic security environment that we need. Weapons of Mass Destruction (Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical) must be dealt with as a major item on the agenda for non-proliferation in the '90s.

Within the present asymmetrical balance, Israel possesses a nuclear

capability while on the other side some Arab states possess chemical weapons. The fact of the matter remains in that most countries in the Middle East will not accept any form of an arms control agreement or even a freeze on their own force structure, until some form of a regional peace process is well under way thereby removing any fears of military aggression. Any massive rearmament will surely create an unrestricted arms race in the M.E. which will automatically be accompanied by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Unless controlled this arms race will, in the near future, give rise to another military conflict with catastrophic human and environmental consequences, contrary to some arguments based on the U.S.-Soviet model that this could lead to a relatively safe environment of mutual deterrence between states or group of states in the region.

The fear is that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction could give rise to states announcing a so-called "in-kind" deterrence or "the right to retaliate in kind", which in effect could cause an arms race in the region. With the long range capability of delivery systems, these weapons can also be used as a first strike against centers of mobilization,

airbases, cities and other civilian centers.

During the ten year period between 1980 and 1990, before the start of the 1991 Gulf War, the Middle East underwent a boom in military weapons procurement which is reflected in the amounts of money spent. According to the SIPRI 1991 annual book, the total military expenditure of the GCC states amounted to around \$224 Billion (Saudi-Arabia accounted for \$177 billion, Kuwait \$13.6 billion, UAE \$18 billion and Oman for \$13.1 billion). Iraq's military expenditure amounted to about \$186 billion and Iran to \$84 billion. Israeli military expenditure was \$56 billion, Egypt \$49 billion, Syria \$25 billion and Jordan \$6 billion.

Between 1989 and 1991 the world arms deliveries dropped from \$48.7 billion to \$28.8 billion, the M.E. accounted for \$12 billion by end of 1990. Between 1990 and 1991 there was a general 30% reduction in the exports of the five big arms exporters (U.S., Russia, U.K., France and China). However only the U.S. had a 40% increase in its sales from \$9.6 billion in 1990 to \$13.5 billion in 1991.

Today's Middle East accounts for about 3% of the world's population, contains about 60% of the world's oil reserves, and accounts for about 30% of the world's arms imports. This trend has certainly not changed in the past decade as a matter of fact it could very well be said to be increasing in the 90s, especially after the recent Gulf War of 1991 against Iraq, where the U.S. and the coalition forces have proven the success of their advanced technology weapons systems under combat conditions and has provided all potential international customers (in particular the Middle East) with real time product demonstrations.

The economic structure of the region has been fundamentally altered as the states began to dissipate national resources into weapons procurement and arms industry, thereby depriving other sectors of the economy from such needed resources. This had a correspondingly powerful impact on the underlying causes of instability in the region as short term security considerations gave way before long term basic requirements, such as economic growth and the political stability needed for such growth. By their very nature these factors can either help or undermine peace and stability in the region.

The rapid advances in new weapons technology developments have become an intrinsic part of military weapons procurement and operations planning in the Middle East. These developments have given states greater strategic depth in the region, and at the same time has highlighted and reinforced the linkages among states, or subregions. The current danger is that most countries in the region will not

accept any form of arms control until some form of a regional peace is fully established. This stems from the perception that nations in the region still consider military forces as the only viable source to achieve their policy goals. For this very reason and due to the complexity of sources of conflict, the growing number of participants inside the region, as well as the involvement of peripheral countries and extra-regional countries, a Conference on Security and Cooperation in the Middle East (CSCME) forum could provide the required platform for the discussion of various security requirements and arrangements.

Some might argue that it is too early to discuss a CSCE approach such as the European model due to the following geopolitical factors:

\* In Europe there exists a general consensus as to where geographical boundaries of the region are and where the territorial borders of states within the region should be.

Whereas the Middle East region is ill-defined geographically.

- \* In Europe it was generally agreed that the use of military force is an illegitimate instrument of policy when utilized as means to changing borders among states. Whereas in the Middle East, military force is still considered as an acceptable means of changing territorial borders, and as an instrument for achieving policy goals.

- \* In Europe the approach to security is less dependent on military strategies and arms procurement but more linked to political and economic cooperation.

- \* In Europe the Institutional Infrastructure is far more stable which makes it easier for the various parties to have faith in bilateral and multilateral agreements and treaties.

- \* The Middle East region has diplomatic, economic and military instruments to prevent and resolve potential crises



and disputes; such as The Arab League, The Gulf Cooperation Council, The Organization Of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries, to name a few. However, as events in the region have recently demonstrated the effectiveness of these available Institutional instruments have been rather limited. Hence the requirement to strengthen and establish an "inter-locking network" between them.

The above geopolitcal factors are certainly valid, however the argument is not that of trying to establish a CSCE kind of a process as a starting point, but the importance of Institutional building to start in parallel with the on-going peace negotiations, in preparation for the stage when bilateral and multi-lateral agreements and treaties are signed. We should be asking ourselves what would be the final nature of the M.E. peace process, and what security arrangements will partially or completely meet the agreements reached. What level of guarantees are possible to maintain these agreements, for whom and by whom? These basic factors should initially

guide us in starting to think about a third track for the creation of Institutions and Mechanisms for Security and Cooperation in the Middle East i.e. a CSCME.

The Peace Process basically will encompass: negotiations; agreements; implementation and verifications. The final phase for example can be envisaged as a major confidence building measure with implications for the entire region, in addition to the reduction of the arms race and possible future conflicts. The main objective of confidence and security building measures (CSBMs) is to provide transparency and thereby predictability which could prevent hostilities due to misunderstanding or miscalculation. CSBMs also serve to prevent surprise attacks and even, if possible, to prevent the use of military force for political intimidation.

During the implementation period, there will be a gradual phasing and implementation of a political, economic and security regime, within the Bilateral negotiations framework. Linking this to the regional Arms Control and Regional Security

framework, typical steps that could lead to Institutional building, not merely for the enhancement of ones own national interest, but also for establishing a stable environment in the region, could be:

- \* exchange of military information
- \* a communications network system
- \* an official register of all arms transfers to the region
- \* agreements on all quality and quantity of the acquisition of certain types of weapons, and banning the re-export of certain types of weapons
- \* regulating domestic arms production
- \* regional agreement to freeze and eventually ban the acquisition, production, and testing of ballistic missiles
- \* a comprehensive approach to signing and ratifying all conventions and treaties pertaining to weapons of mass destruction (nuclear, chemical and biological), as well as accepting all IAEA safeguards.
- \* a ban on the production and acquisition of enriched uranium,

separated plutonium, and other elements used in nuclear weapons production

- \* establishment of a Weapons Of Mass Destruction Free Zone (WMDFZ)

- \* Establishing a Conflict Prevention/Resolution Center to assist in defusing tension between states to reduce the possibility of escalation into conflict, and the early resolution of an actual conflict.

Coupled to structural arms control measures such as: a freeze on military arms build-up with a partial change to the military structure; could certainly lead to deep reductions in armed forces and thereby reducing the possibility of armed conflict in the region.

The second part of CSBMs is the verification process, as defined by the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA) " the process of determining the degree to which parties to an agreement are complying with the provisions of

the agreement". Verification agreements are an essential condition for any arms control agreements. Verification and On-Site inspection are complex issues, and will require an intra-regional organization in the Middle East. This Institute could assist states within the region in matters pertaining to the gathering, processing/collation and dissemination of information, from national technical means, on military activities and structural arms control agreements.

In conclusion we should emphasize that arms control is only one dimension in the ultimate aim of establishing strategic stability and a "collective security" regime in the region. Other elements such as democratization, human rights, demography, economic and political cooperation play an equally important role. Multi-Lateral Institutions can reinforce a collective security arrangement, which in general should defend the strategic stability status quo against any violent changes.

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Confidence and Security Building Measures in the Middle East

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## INTRODUCTION

At the outset of the Multilateral Negotiations on the Middle East in Moscow (January 28, 1992), U.S. Secretary of State James Baker set forth the outline for the Working Group on Arms Control and Regional Security (ACRS). He defined it be as follows:

In the first instance, we envision offering the regional parties our thinking about potential approaches to arms control, drawing upon a vast reservoir of experience stemming from attempts to regulate military competition in Europe and other regions.

From this base, the group might move forward to considering a set of confidence building or transparency measures covering notifications of selected military activities and crisis prevention communications. The purpose would be to lessen the prospects for incidents and miscalculation that could lead to heightened competition or even conflict.

In our view, and again, based upon our experience with arms control, we believe such an approach offers the best chance for success.

This paper seeks to explore the basis for an approach to the Middle East ACRS process that is so heavily inspired by the European experience, and puts such strong emphasis on Confidence and Security Building Measures (CSBMs) as the principal vehicle for progress at the early stages of the process. In so doing, the paper will address, albeit briefly, five basic questions. First, how we ought to define CSBMs for purposes of the Middle East ACRS process?; Second, what, if any, are the universal pre-conditions for CSBMs implementation?; Third, how relevant can CSBMs be outside the European context in which they have originally emerged?; Fourth, What role could and should CSBMs play in the Arab-Israeli context?; and Fifth, what role might CSBMs play in the Middle East beyond the Arab-Israeli context?.

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The author bears sole responsibility for the analysis contained in this paper.



## DEFINING CSBMs

Definitions of CBMs and CSBMs abound in the professional literature. Moreover, in many cases the two concepts are (mistakenly) used interchangeably. For purposes of this paper it is essential to draw a clear distinction between CSBMs and CBMs. The exclusive focus of this paper will be on CSBMs, by which we refer strictly to the confidence and security measures of the type that has been recognized and institutionalized in the CSCE process, most explicitly in and after the Stockholm accords.

Adopting such definition obviously does not mean to deny the relevance of confidence building experience in other regions or contexts; in fact quite the opposite is true. Much pertinent experience, both bilateral and multilateral in nature, has accumulated outside the European context, most notably between the US and the former USSR as well as between India and its neighbors. Yet, for the purposes of this paper it is expedient to consider only the cumulative experience with measures of the type that has, since the Stockholm accords, come to be labeled CSBMs.

Leaving aside the issue of a precise definition, it does seem useful to highlight some of the key defining characteristics of CSBMs modeled after the European type. First, CSBMs pertain to the security, principally military, domain. Second, they must involve at least a modest degree of cooperative behavior between the concerned parties themselves. As such they can not be imposed from the outside, and require a measure of understanding and coordination between the concerned parties, facilitated by some direct contacts among them. Third, they are based, at the minimum, on a measure of reciprocal conduct, and where and when possible on joint activity as well. Unilateral gestures simply do not qualify as CSBMs. Fourth, CSBMs neither jeopardize nor fundamentally affect the key security assets of any of the parties. Nor, for that matter, do CSBMs harm in

any way the national dignity of any of the parties involved. Fifth, CSBMs do not prejudice any of the parties' position on the broader political issues. Finally, CSBMs are designed to have some (however small) direct positive contribution to the situation at hand, in addition to their long term potential for building trust between the parties.

#### PRE-CONDITIONS FOR CSBMs

What pre-conditions, if any, exist for concluding and implementing CSBMs agreements? Judging from the cumulative experience, there appear to be only two important conditions that must be met for CSBMs to become an acceptable tool of inter-state statecraft. First, there ought to be some common interest between the parties directly concerned. It could be minimal and pertain exclusively to the short term (i.e. not to see the present degree of stability, however imperfect, further undermined) or could be somewhat broader, more ambitious, and longer term in perspective (e.g. to see relations between the parties transformed to reconciliation and peace). Second, there has to be at least some direct contact between the parties, but it could be shallow and narrowly circumscribed.

Contrary to widespread beliefs, there are no additional pre-conditions for CSBMs. An agreement on a territorial status quo, and/or even a willingness to forego the use of force against the other party (or parties) clearly are fertile breeding grounds for CSBMs. But as the Indo-Pakistani and the European experience teach us, neither is necessary to facilitate CSBMs. Thus, CSBMs do not presuppose peace, nor even require a mutual commitment to see peace and reconciliation emerge as the ultimate result of the confidence building process.

## THE TRANSFERABILITY OF THE EUROPEAN CSBMs EXPERIENCE

Even if the cumulative experience suggests that no additional pre-conditions have to be met for CSBMs to become viable, it could still be argued that CSBMs are somehow uniquely tailored to the European context in which emerged. According to this line of reasoning, conditions prevailing in other regions, most notably those presently existing in the Middle East, are inherently different. It is further asserted that current conditions in the Middle East are also much less hospitable or desirable grounds for establishing CSBMs than those prevailing in Europe in the 1970s or even the early 1980s. The principal case here rests on the argument that the contemporary Middle East, contrary to Europe of the 1970s, is still beset by a "complex mosaic of active and recently buried political disputes", complicated and unstable military balances, and active territorial disputes.

The skeptics would have us believe that the above picture of the present situation in the Middle East is both exhaustive and valid. If this is indeed the case, then the basis for the entire U.S. approach to the Middle East ACRS process would seem to be flawed, and should be abandoned. But is such a conclusion warranted?

Upon closer examination, it becomes apparent that such skeptics' arguments do not stand up to a thorough analysis of either the European experience or the current Middle Eastern conditions, let alone to a systematic comparison of the two. To begin with, there is no evidence to sustain the proposition that CSBMs are an inherently European construct. After all, they have been applied elsewhere as well, not in the least between the superpowers as well as between India and Pakistan or the PRC, Turkey and Bulgaria, Argentina and Brazil, South and North Korea, etc. The Middle East itself has also had some relevant experience in this area.

Furthermore, if there is one thing that stands out when we try to analyze the cumulative global experience with CSBMs, it is that they have always emerged in rather similar circumstances to those presently prevailing in the Middle East. For one thing, CSBMs have always been initially implemented in periods and contexts in which profound distrust prevailed between the parties. They have generally preceded a genuine political transformation of their relationship. In fact, they have usually come about in the aftermath of a traumatic or unnerving experience, vividly illustrating some of the risks inherent in the situation existing at the time in the region.

When originally introduced, CSBMs have been the forerunners of peace and arms control accords, not their product. Moreover, relations between the parties to the CSBMs have been typically characterized by critical symmetries and structural imbalances. These commonly ranged from asymmetries in resources, to vast differences and disparities in military force structures and other security assets, territory, population, and natural resources, and sharp disparities in levels of education and technology.

In fact, an objective study of conditions that currently characterize the Middle East is bound to lead to the conclusions that at least some significant parts of the Middle East are ripe for CSBMs, none more so than the Arab-Israeli context. The costs of war and risks of escalation are widely apparent in the region, especially in the aftermath of the second Gulf War. Exhaustion from war and common interest in arresting the arms race and diverting resources to deal with some of the region's most acute problems (economic development, shortage of water, settlement of refugees, polluted environment) are widespread. Sufficiency in defense capabilities also seems to exist among all of the prospective key players to a Middle East security regime. Moreover, the relevant extra regional players, (which in the European case have been negligible but in the Middle East are of

considerable importance), are for the first time in more than a generation, committed to a joint effort to foster peace and cooperation in the Middle East.

Finally, not only a broad (though not, unfortunately, universal) desire exists in the region to reorient itself toward peace and stability, but the guiding principles for doing so (UN Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 have apparently been accepted by all the parties to the process. Even the institutional mechanisms to negotiate and implement CSBMs are already in place, in the form of the both the bilateral and multilateral peace processes initiated in Madrid (October 1991) and Moscow (January 1992) respectively.

Thus, the Middle East presently seems to be in a situation that in some truly important respects is reminiscent of the onset of detente in Europe, and the initiation of the CSCE process. Many important and dangerous problems do exist. But for the first time there is also a ray of hope that something useful can be done to address them, and at least a general sense of direction on how to go about doing so.

#### WHAT ROLE FOR CSBMs IN THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONTEXT

Generally speaking, CSBMs can be said to have four complementary roles. First, they can serve as a litmus test for intentions over time. Second, they can serve an educational role, familiarizing the parties with each other, both in the immediate area of concern and far beyond it. In addition, they can make a uniquely important contribution in disseminating a cooperative mentality (non-zero sum way of thinking) on security within among the relevant constituencies in each of the participating states. These include the involved bureaucracies and interest groups, and in the case of democracies the general public as well. Third, CSBMs can be ends in themselves, rather than merely means to

a higher end, by helping in crises management, conflict prevention, and in some cases provision of humanitarian assistance as well.

Finally, if and when desired, CSBMs could also serve as a symbol of cooperation, sending a broad political message of willingness to move beyond confrontation and competition to cooperation and reconciliation. This last function does not automatically accompany CSBMs. But such arrangements, like other forms of cooperative behavior, do lend themselves to this type of use. They are, in some respects, especially appropriate for such application, given the special public appeal of security cooperation.

CSBMs thus are modest steps and flexible arrangements. They are relatively easy to negotiate and entail few, if any, risks in implementation. Yet they have considerable utility and potential in several complementary areas. At the present state of Arab-Israeli relations, CSBMs have an especially important role to play in virtually all of the above mentioned areas. They could help defuse some of the present tensions and risks. They could lay the ground, psychologically and physically, for more ambitious undertakings in the area of regional security cooperation and arms control in the future. Just as importantly, they may serve as one building block toward overall peace and historical reconciliation between the Arabs and Israel.

The last point does warrant some elaboration here. Virtually all of the Arab parties to the peace process demand from Israel far reaching territorial concessions. In addition, Israel is simultaneously being called upon by its Arab rapporteurs to make additional concessions in the areas of arms, doctrine, military posture, and defense-industrial base. Yet the Arab demands are made at a time in which Israel's acceptance into the region is still being challenged, and even openly rejected by some forces in the Arab and Moslem world. Worse still, some of these forces are

actively engaged in a brutal, often indiscriminate, struggle against Israel and Israelis wherever they may be.

The peace process coupled with the day to day security realities with which Israel lives thus confront Israel with rather painful choices. Making the necessary choices on how to deal with them obviously is an internal Israeli affair. Yet, the Arabs clearly have a vested interest in these choices systematically going in one direction rather than the other. It follows, therefore, that they must assist Israel to reach the "right" conclusions and make the desired fateful choices. To do so, it is in the Arab self-interest to engage Israel in a variety of CSBMs directed at all of the above functions.

Cooperation of Arab states with Israel in the area of CSBMs would surely serve as a litmus test for Israel regarding Arab intentions. Over Time they could help Israel alter its traditional security calculus. Furthermore, they would solidify the Israeli public's confidence in and active support for its government's choices in favor of peace. The latter is of utmost importance since Israel is a vibrant democracy and the required choices would inevitably involve sacrifices of tangible security assets. These do not come lightly to a nation whose very existence has been repeatedly threatened, and to a state that is locked into structurally inferior, highly vulnerable, geo-strategic position. Arab cooperation with Israel in the area of CSBMs and beyond, therefore, logically seems to be a sine qua non for Israel for it to be able to take such painful decisions responsibly. The peace process with Egypt in the post Yom Kippur War bears witness to both sides of the equation. The "political price" of CSBMs to the Arabs thus seems well worth paying.

Here it must be emphasized that the Arab and Israeli vested interest in establishing CSBMs actually goes even further. It clearly extends to the need to avoid, to the extent possible, misunderstandings and miscalculations, and to economize

wherever possible, on defense expenditures. CSBMs are of critical importance precisely during the precarious transition time from a state of war to relations of peace, since such periods are typically characterized by real, graver than before, threats, but initially few, if any, dividends of peace. It is essential that these risks be jointly dealt with swiftly and effectively, lest they set back the entire peace process. Furthermore, the gravest contemporary challenges to the security of the region do not discriminate well between Arabs and Israelis. Confronting them necessitates joint or at the very least coordinated Arab Israeli responses, and CSBMs can go along way toward facilitating them.

#### CSBMs IN THE MIDDLE EAST BEYOND THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONTEXT

CSBMs have an important rôles to play in the Middle East also beyond the Arab-Israeli context, and for several complementary reasons. First, the region does not easily lend itself to a straightforward geographical delineation. In security terms it stretches all the way from the Horn of Africa and Persian Gulf (and perhaps even beyond it), to the Maghreb, to southern Europe, and to some of the Asian republics of the former Soviet Union. Second, this vast area is afflicted by numerous cross-cutting rivalries, some within within the Arab or Islamic worlds, others that involve extra-regional parties as well. Third, many extra-regional powers have a vested interest in the security situation in the region. At times they also a significant presence in, and/or influence on developments in the region. Fourth, the states of the Middle East could surely benefit from the experience, the good services, and the resources of some of the extra-regional states in dealing with the regions, diverse problems.



For all of the above reasons, one should consider devising and implementing CSBMs in the region above and beyond the Arab-Israeli context. Some of these could be region wide, others sub-regional, then others having extra-regional participation as well, whether by additional Mediterranean states or others. Some of these arrangements may also start more modestly and be expanded or transformed thereafter.

CSBMs, unlike other tools of diplomacy and arms control, do have this wonderful quality to them of being both flexible and modular. The CSCE process which has dramatically grown, greatly expanded, diversified, and modified its original CSBMs inventory has so vividly demonstrated this quality. There is a sole criterion that must be adhered to at all times for all of these arrangements to succeed. This criterion is that all CSBMs be directly negotiated, and consensually agreed upon, by all the regional states taking part in the process.

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FOURTH SESSION

*Enhancing Information Exchange Between  
Research Institutes in the Middle East*

*by*

*Péricles Gasparini Alves*

QUATRIÈME SÉANCE

CONFERENCE REGIONALE DES  
INSTITUTS DE RECHERCHE AU PROCHE ET MOYEN ORIENT

Le Caire, 18-20 avril 1993

# Enhancing Information Exchange Between Research Institutes in the Middle East

*Péricles Gasparini Alves*

## Introduction

In this age of computer sciences, the application of database techniques has been developed to assist with organizing an ever increasing documentation and with gaining a clear view of the numerous and diverse activities of modern society. UNIDIR has dedicated itself to co-ordinate the growing documentation in the field of disarmament and international security, and is fully aware of the fact that in order to facilitate this tremendous task, both today and in the future, it is necessary to have recourse to advanced computer technology. It is with this in mind that UNIDIR has developed a flexible and user-friendly database management application system which regroups, *inter alia*, information on research institutes and their activities for the former's internal use. The experience gained with the UNIDIR Database on Research Institutes (DATARIs) is most positive and encouraging, and fully confirms our conviction that modern and thorough research efforts would greatly benefit from computer assistance. At present, UNIDIR is envisaging the possibilities of enlarging the scope of its in-house DATARIs, as well as the ways and means to make this data more readily available. It follows, therefore, that co-operation among research institutes would gain substantially from some kind of computerized information and interactive documentation system.

The timing of the present Conference is therefore quite suitable to ponder the question of how database techniques could assist us all with integrating the joint efforts of research institutes, having particularly in mind the interests of the Middle East region. A comprehensive answer to this question would of course require more than the time allocated to this *exposé*, because this is a very wide ranging issue, and also because it encompasses highly technical aspects. I shall therefore not dwell on technical implications but focus on the fundamental topics related to the establishment of a database.

## Benefits

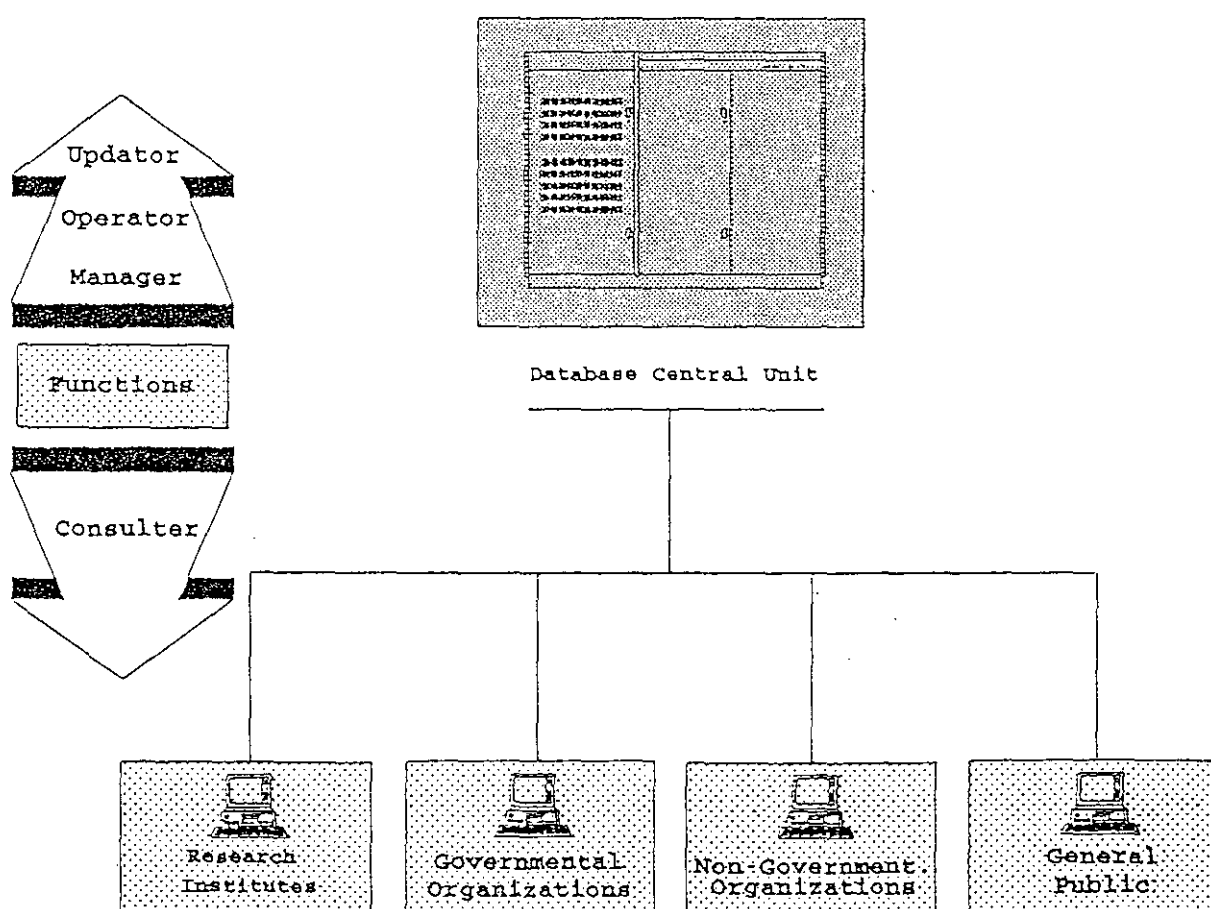
In the first place one should clearly identify the benefits a database system has to offer. In a time of budgetary restraints, where the relationship between productivity, man hours and work load are of utmost importance, the use of a database system becomes essential for two major reasons. A database system enables the creation of a new form of communication among research institutes: that of an electronic non-verbal communication for both direct communication and the exchange of machine language data. It furthermore permits a quantitative as well as a qualitative expansion and intensification of existing links between research institutes. From the management standpoint, *real time* or *almost real time* communication among institutes is useful in the co-ordination of special data of utmost interest to all. For such an electronic linkage is efficient not only as a tool to exchange data, but also as a means of avoiding overlapping of research project themes, conference timetables, and other activities which should be complementary but not repetitious. This type of communication is, in other words, much more than a simple working tool for quick reference access.

The second point that needs to be addressed is the aspect of system control: *who* would manage this type of database? In fact, there exist several approaches to operating a database system on research institutes. However, we will explore only a few of these avenues since our perspective should consider a regional database system relating to research institutes in the Middle East.

One could, for instance, think in terms of a database network run by a single manager who would centralize the system and distribute the data throughout the Middle East as demonstrated in Diagram A. Due to its nature and character, a United Nations regional centre is one of the organizations which readily come to one's mind for carrying out such a task. However, depending on the needs expressed by potential users, one could also envisage the development of a system (as a network or an internal database system) operated by private institutes or other organizations.

Diagram A

Single Manager Approach



In such a case, any effort made to create a database should conceive the system (both as regards the choice of the hardware equipment and software application) with a view to expanding its utilization and data transfers to other systems. This is necessary to avoid creating a handicap for future collaboration with other institutions in the region.

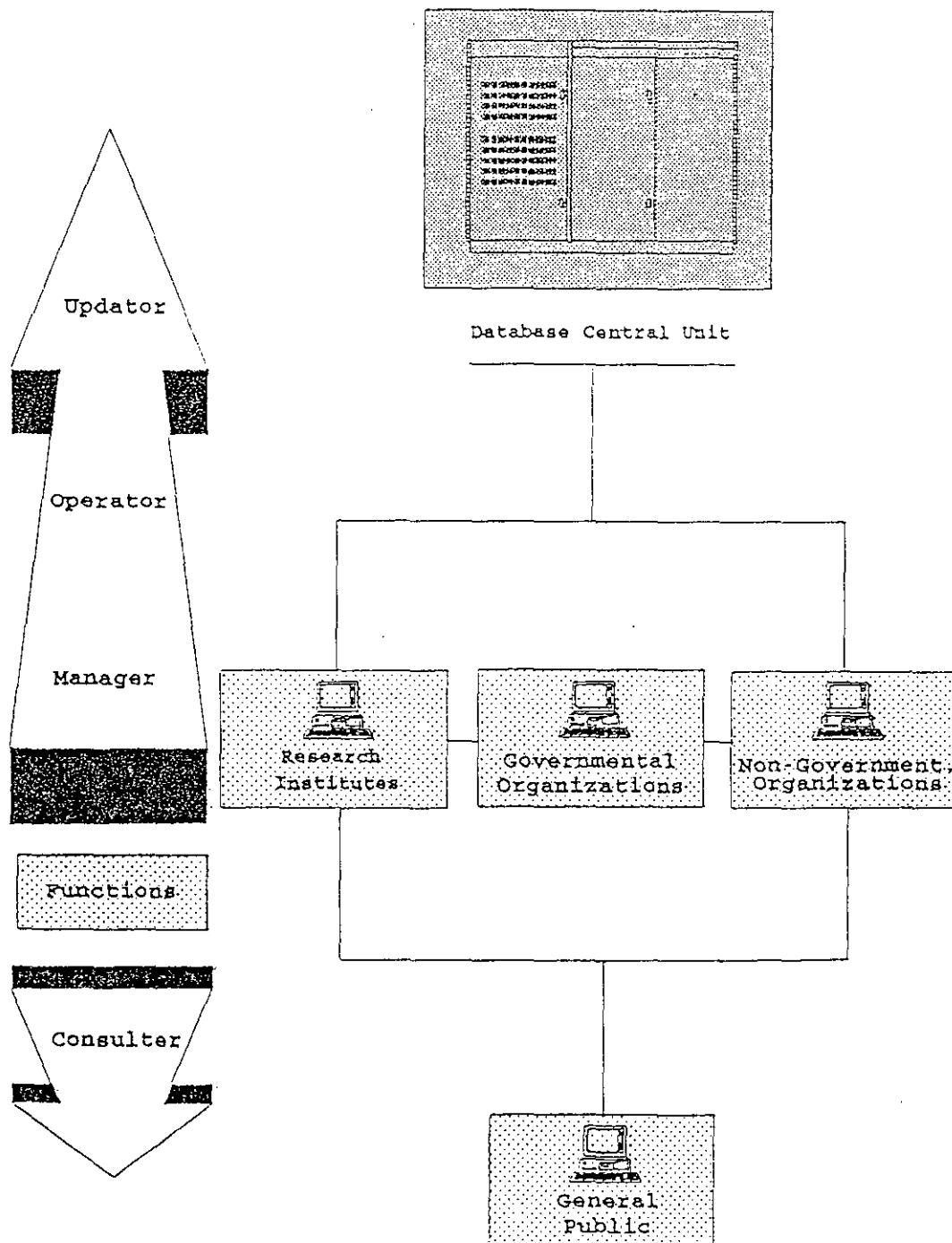
Finally, a combination of the above approaches could also be a plausible configuration as it can be seen in Diagram B. In this instance, early co-operation among potential users

would be essential to ensure system compatibility both in terms of the purchase of hardware equipment and software. Collective efforts leading to a division of the tasks envisaged could yield the following advantages:

- Decreasing the cost of the design and development phases.
- Decreasing the cost of hardware equipment.
- Diminishing the overall time needed to develop the system.
- Avoiding useless repetition of software applications.
- Creating a particular regional network, where cultural, political, and other concerns are generally quite similar.

Diagram B

*Multiple Manager Approach*



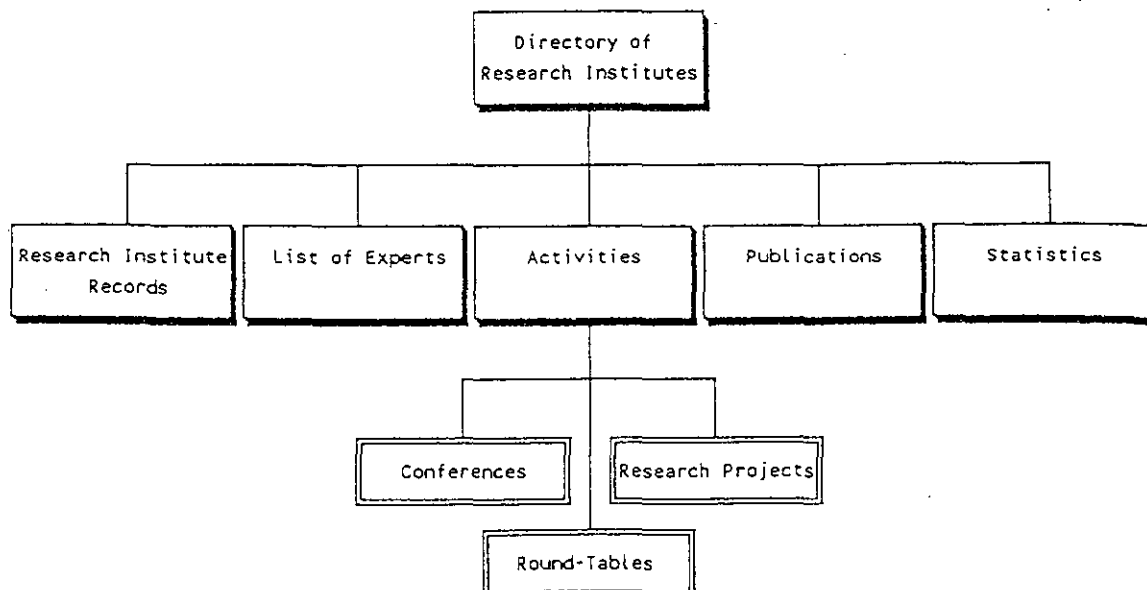
This option appears therefore as the most plausible strategy to be pursued. It is important to keep in mind that the credibility and efficiency of efforts geared towards a regional database system would depend, to some extent, on the degree of the exchange of information which could flow from and to the institutes. If full collective operation is not technically or otherwise possible, some kind of co-operation in terms of consultations should be contemplated. In this regard, UNIDIR is prepared to assist, with the co-ordination, the conception and the development phases of a regional database in the Middle East. In fact, an analogous network system was proposed by UNIDIR in the occasion of similar conferences on regional research institutes in Africa (1990), Latin America and the Caribbean (1991), and Asia (1992). Initial discussions have already begun with some institutions and UNIDIR, is considering to conduct a feasibility study on how best to approach the creation of a computer-aided database in these different regions.

## Conception Phase

The conception of a database system basically encompasses the definition of the objectives to be attained by the system, adequate hardware equipment, and the possibilities of access to the system. At an initial stage, a Middle East database system could have as its objective the design of an application which would permit, for example, the development of a directory of all research institutes and other organizations working in the area of disarmament and international security related to the region as seen in Diagram C. Subdivisions of this directory could, for example, list a detailed index of all experts working in Middle East institutes and/or on Middle East security matters, their field of specialization and contacts. A complementary subdivision could contain an index of research projects, publications, and conferences or meetings dealing with security in the Middle East. Analytical studies delineating the status of research and the areas in which research would need to be more emphasized would certainly result from the collection of data.

Diagram C

Middle East Institutes Database Basic Structure



A regional database application would therefore allow for a quick reference to know *who* is doing *what* on Middle East affairs, and *when*. In addition, it would have an academic value in the sense that it would not merely store information in a purely statistical or numerical form, but it would also lay the grounds for analytical considerations and decision making as regards both the conception and orientation of research in the field of regional and international security.

The choice of hardware equipment would largely depend on the complexity and type of the tasks to be performed by the software application and the overall objectives of the network itself. One fundamental element to be studied, however, is that any computer configuration to be developed for such a purpose should be technically capable of allowing the interaction of different desktop devices, operating environments and systems. Diagram D is a rather simplified but quite descriptive illustration of an integrated system to be considered, where a central database unit is linked to multiple hardware and software environments and systems. It would be useless to advance any figures on the cost of such a system. The financing required for a single management system may differ greatly from that of a multiple management network. Whatever the solution opted for may be, a feasibility study should be undertaken.

Access to the information in a single or multiple management network could be obtained via requests sent through the postal system, or via direct electronic communication supported by modem and fax-card. Or yet, via a direct link using the X-25 liaison principle. The variety of means to access the system, as well as the possible roles to be played by different institutions, is better illustrated in Diagram E. Depending on the objectives of the database and the resources available, access could be free of charge or payable either on a case-by-case basis or through a membership fee. In addition, the use of the database application in the electronic communications mode could be protected by restricting access through a password system.

## Reflections

There lies ahead a new and challenging opportunity for research institutes in the Middle East to enhance exchange of information and co-operation among them. This new opportunity entails the creation of a unique collection of data with the aid of database techniques which could be undertaken either individually or collectively.

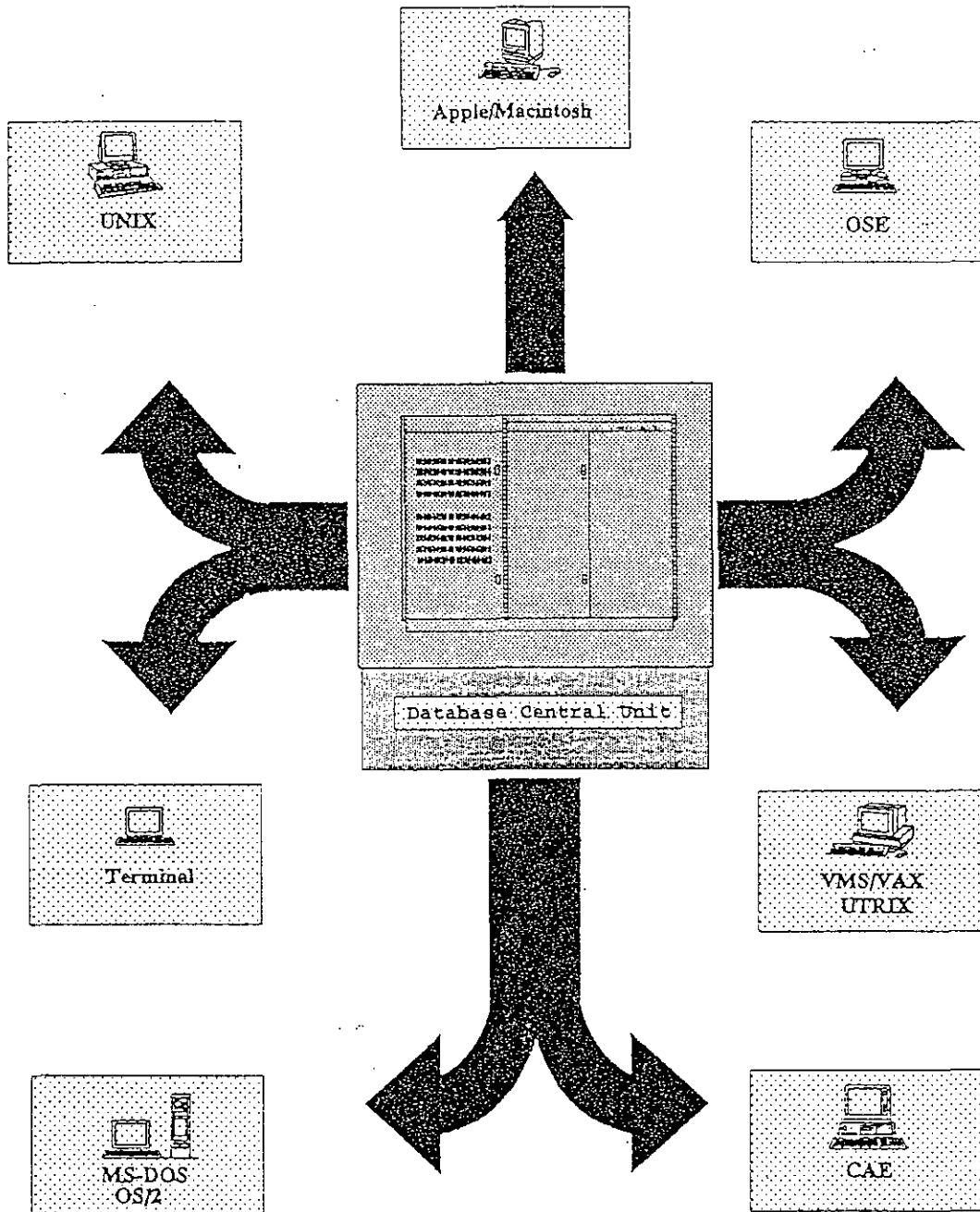
The benefits offered by a database system should be evaluated in terms of its inter-institute communication (including the exchange of data) advantages, which will thus serve to improve the current co-ordination of the various activities performed by and among the institutes themselves.

To sum up, the establishment of a regional Middle East database system would be a valuable and unique contribution to research in the field of disarmament and international security. Furthermore, the pursuit of this idea is also stimulated by R&D on the creation of analogous systems in other areas of the world.



Diagram D

*Multiple Hardware/Software Environment Integrated System*



# Participation in and Access to Data Bases on International Security

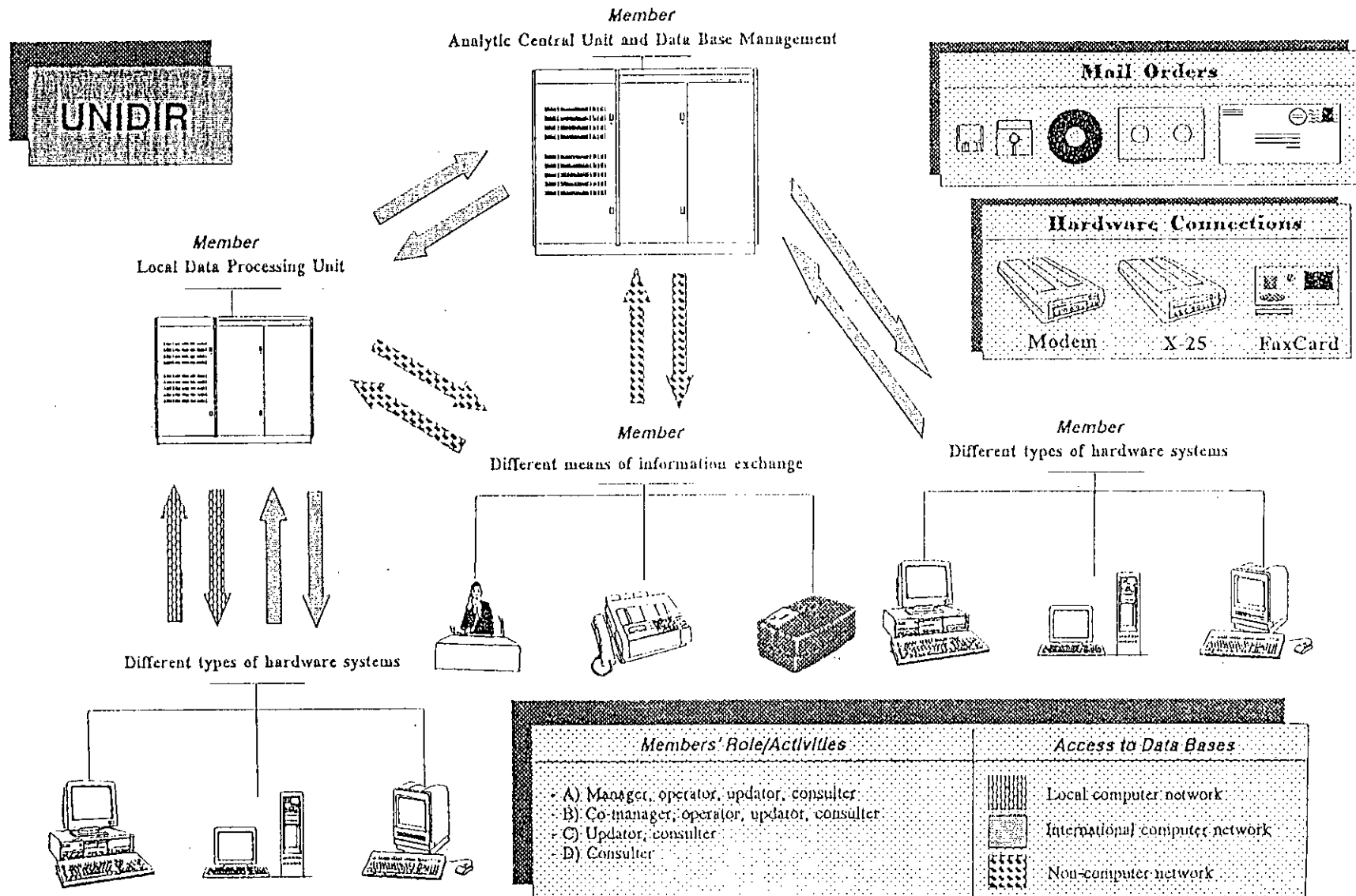


Diagram E

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