

**AN ANALYSIS OF THE GLOBAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE
ARAB UPRISINGS ON THE POLITICS OF DEMOCRACY
AND SECURITY. A CASE STUDY OF SYRIA (2010-2017)**

BY

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS OF THE MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE IN INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS**

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE STUDIES

FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES

UNIVERSITY OF ZIMBABWE

MAY 2017

Abstract

The study analyses the global implications of the Arab uprisings on the politics of democracy and security. The key objectives being the assessment of the impact of the Syrian crisis on global security and an evaluation of the appropriateness of democracy as a governance model on the Middle East and North Africa. Other objectives addressed by this study include an exploration of the causes of the uprising and challenges faced states in transitioning to democracy. It also provides an evaluation of the complexities of promotion of democracy and foreign intervention in the region. In exploration of the above objectives, the study qualitatively made use of documentary research that was underpinned by in-depth interviews, with neo-realism and chaos theories being some of the underlying theories made use of in a phenomenon that included a complex interaction of concepts and theories. The research revealed that the crisis in Syria has exacerbated global security challenges by allowing militant groups like ISIS to develop and mutate into powerful non-state actors through their ability to internationalise terror thus affecting collective security. The study also showed that foreign intervention in Syria is part of power-seeking acts by states interested in furthering their geo-political interests. This position has therefore complicated the prospect of speedy resolution of the crisis in Syria, relegating the role of the UNSC to the individual interests of powerful states. Further to that, the crisis has led to the displacement of millions of Syrians creating a refugee crisis that has had an impact on global security. On democracy, the study discovered that the region has primordial governance models premised in political Islam which makes it harder for democracy to be proposed as the universal answer to security and stability. Lastly, the wave of uprisings coupled with globalisation and the ubiquitous use of technology has had a psychological influence on global protests leading to the heightening of states' dilemma to balance citizens' security and right to limitless freedoms. To limit further gains by ISIS and restrict its operating capacity in Syria, it is recommended that the major powers under the auspices of the UNSC must use their overwhelming military assets to drive ISIS out whilst pursuing peace and a coalition government that is politically and economically supported by developmental partners to create a sustainable economy that allows societal reintegration. Whilst the UNSC needs to be revamped to become representative of the new emerging global powers like South Africa and Brazil, it is also important for states to pursue their geo-political interests with the recognition of worsening security challenges if collective security is not made the primary motivation of international relations.

Dedication

Dedicated to my wife, for the love, care and kind words that motivated me to chase the elusive goal of knowing everything; من صنع العديد من الكتب ليس هناك نهاية، والكثير من الدراسة يلبس الجسم (of making many books there is no end, and much study wearies the body).

Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the insightful input of my supervisor, Mr A. Murwira. I am indebted to his patience, knowledge and valuable guidance that made this study possible. I also wish to thank Dr Chimanikire, the department chairman, for the immense support he rendered in the past two years.

Special thanks to my wife, whom despite her own gruelling work and research, made my studies easier by supporting me emotionally and allowing me to have as much time as possible dedicated to this work.

I would also want to extend my sincere gratitude to my family, my mom especially, for taking the responsibility of looking after my young daughter and having to prepare supper for us whilst I was in the heat of this dissertation. Lastly, I would like to thank all those who rendered any form of assistance that went into this work and all those who spoke words of kindness.

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List of Abbreviations

BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CNN	Cable News Network
CWC	Chemical Weapons Convention
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
EU	European Union
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FSA	Free Syrian Army
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISIS	Islamic State in Iraq and Syria
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
NATO	Northern Atlantic Treaty Organisation
OPCW	Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons
R2P	Responsibility to Protect
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
WHO	World Health Organisation
WW1	World War 1
WW2	World War 2

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background to the Study

The Arab uprisings also known by other terms like Arab Spring, Arab Awakening or “Facebook Revolution” (Guzansky and Heller 2012) are a series of protests targeted against the authoritarian leadership of Middle East and North African (MENA) countries that included Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Syria and to a lesser extent, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia. Non-democratisation, autocratic leadership, deteriorating economic conditions exacerbated by the 2008 global financial crisis are some of the similarly shared political realities with the MENA states that gave rise to the Arab uprisings. According to Rosiny (2012), the uprisings were triggered on by the shooting and killing of protestors who were protesting in sympathy and solidarity of Mohammed Bouazizi who burnt himself in an act of public self-immolation whilst protesting the systemic corruption and harassment by municipal police who had confiscated his vending cart. The video of Mohammed Bouazizi was then circulated largely via Al Jazeera on the same day, the 17th of December 2010, triggering outrage within Tunisia and the region in general, leading to a domino effect of sudden protests led by young Arabs from Tunisia to the rest of the countries in the MENA that included Egypt, Libya, Syria, Yemen, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia (Abdullah 2012). Whilst regimes were toppled in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Yemen, the effects of the protests have been varied from relative success in Tunisia to total failure in Libya, Syria and Yemen judging by the current humanitarian crisis induced by civil wars in all the three countries. Overall, 6 countries out of the 22 Arab League members were directly hard hit by the uprisings whilst the majority had varying degrees of demonstrations (Yadlin 2012).

The repressive nature in which protests were clamped down saw tens of thousands of protestors being killed by states’ security in all the countries concerned thus giving them unprecedented internal support from the general population (Rosiny 2012). The clamp down was the easiest response the stable authoritarian regimes in the region could use to try and maintain the status-quo. Due to the similarity in religion and language within the MENA, the region has a political climate framed by similar social, media and economic narratives making the region open to transnational political influences (Brynen et. al. 2013). Strand et. al. (2011) posit that the political make up of a state is to a large extent affected by the general political setting of its neighbours, thus changes usually move on the same spectrum and direction. Although there had been different structural political conditions in each country, the region has shared similar authoritarian governance styles and thus there has been a failure to democratise the region.

Up until the time of the uprising, no country in the MENA was considered an electoral democracy as the region's regimes had strongly rejected the Third Wave of democracy that was embraced by parts of Sub Saharan Africa, Europe, Asia and Latin America (Brynen et. al. 2013). However, scholars like Howard and Hussain (2013) saw the Arab Uprisings presenting an opportunity for a Fourth Wave of democracy in a series of waves that began in 1828 to 1926. According to Huntington (1991), the First Wave had its roots in the French and American Revolutions with the Second Wave starting around 1943 – 1962 whilst the Third Wave started around 1974 to the 1990's. The periods in between the three waves largely signified Reverse Waves which were set in motion by several global events like the Great Depression (1929-1939), the rise of Communism, Fascism and Nazism. The Second Reverse Wave in the late 1950's saw military coups and the Cold War dragging a lot of states back to authoritarianism. There are several definitions, types and indexes of democracies which vary from full to flawed democracies and using the spectrum of full and flawed democracies, in 2013, only 63% states were classified as some form or type of democracy (Borgen Magazine 2013). The fact that by 1990 the fluctuation of democratic states had never risen to above 50% (Huntington 1991) makes for reason why this study should analyse whether promotion of democracy in the MENA region should be the only way of creating a secure and developing region as reflected by such examples as the United Arab Emirates (Al Harthi 2014) who have not used democratic governance norms.

The study evaluates how the complex Islamic region has responded to calls for democratisation and the ramifications of Western-style democracy when juxtaposed to failed transitions in Libya, Yemen and Syria (where protests out rightly failed to depose of Bashar Al Assad). The study analyses the stable security make-up of the region under authoritarian leaders in relation to effectiveness in curbing Islamic extremism and the deterioration of security after the failed transitions, as expressed in the rise of terror attacks in Europe and the exacerbation of the migrant crisis caused by the destruction of the once effective Libyan borders under the Muammar Gadhafi regime. Overall, the study examines the effects of the uprisings on the security issues and how they reconfigure regional and international alliances and whether democracy should be promoted at all costs regardless of the differences and experiences that different states and regions have.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The Arab uprisings were triggered by the desire for liberal democracy and better living conditions resulting in the overthrowing of governments, leaving some states like Libya in a state of failed transition or total anarchy in Syria and Yemen thus creating breeding grounds for extremist Muslims and terror groups like Islamic State in Iraq and Syria or al-Sham (ISIS). Much of the chaos that ensued is attributed to lack of internal cohesion due primordial loyalties and ideological differences amongst either the militant groups or the various tribes. This scenario has then led multiple global security problems, failure to transition to democracy, resurgence of authoritarianism and an unprecedented migrant crisis. The myriad of issues has a direct bearing on global security and governance and calling into question the methods and feasibility of promotion of democracy not only in MENA but also in other heterogeneous societies that have thus far been undemocratic yet peaceful and stable. Thiel (2015) proffers a notion about the reshaped role of citizenry revolt in the modern state and cites the Arab uprisings as providing the future framework that supports the overthrowing of governments unconstitutionally, presenting new challenges for democracy as regional effects can be exported on the international dimension. This view is bolstered by Smilov (2015) who explains the elevated risk, potency and disruptive nature of citizens' protests and how they can easily present a crisis of legitimacy in government whenever citizens have grievances. Barnes (2013) advances the notion of the failure of U.S. foreign policy which on the one hand supports the political elites in MENA in exchange for stability and an uninterrupted supply of oil and gas to global markets like Europe and Asia whilst on the other hand, grudgingly funding civil society for democratisation in the region under George Bush's 'Freedom Agenda' Hasan (n.d.). This contradictory and complex relationship with the region is attributed not only to the failure of democratisation but also intrinsically linked to the foundations of post-uprising global problems, a position supported by Hamid (2015).

1.3 Objectives

- To explore the causes of the uprisings and analyse the transitional challenges faced by states affected by the uprisings.
- To evaluate the complexities of democracy promotion and foreign intervention in the region.
- To examine the impact the Syrian uprising has had on global security.
- To establish the appropriateness of democracy on the MENA and the global significance of protests as a new strategy of citizen empowerment.
- To proffer recommendations on how security in the region can be improved.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is significant because whilst there has been research done on the Arab uprisings, much of the research has concentrated on the region whilst ignoring the global impact of the uprisings. The other studies done have also focused on either the internal socio-political and economic issues leading to the uprisings, with the ones on democracy focusing largely on prescriptive Western-style democracy and failing to proffer other forms of governance. This is because most scholars frame their work within certain intellectual traditions. The study is also important because most of the studies done on the uprisings were made during the early years (2011-2012) therefore researchers' conclusions were based on some optimisms and exaggerated views about the likely outcome of the uprisings. This study offers an analysis and give a more informed analysis due to further developments that have happened since then. In essence, the study advances research in this particular area. The likely beneficiaries of this research are politicians, research institutes, scholars, think tanks and policy makers.

1.5 Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

1.5.1 Literature Review

The Arab uprisings have left a trail of effects on the regional and global security structure whilst also bringing various narratives about the democratisation prospects for the region and their bearing on other states unwilling to democratise. Ahmed and Capoccia (2014) observe that, where prospects for democratic opening have existed, there has been a tendency of a quick roll-back to some type of "competitive authoritarianism", where elections are a cosmetic cover for the security sector that continues to wield tutelary power over elected officials leading to further power entrenchment through manipulated electoral competition. Simms (2015) concurs with this notion and alludes to the fact that, with the exception of South Korea, there has not been a successful revolution since the American Revolution that was succeeded in the short term by a stable democratic order, a position further bolstered by Yadlin (2012). This proposition provides for the observation that there is an authoritarian resurgence in various forms in the MENA and other countries like Russia, China and Ethiopia where the regimes have been cautious of the possibility of mass uprising that are inspired by the Arab Uprisings. Geertz (1963) advances the view that ancient social loyalties established on the basis of culture, kinship or religion mitigate the establishment of durable contemporary democratic systems as these loyalties will conflict with some modern values giving rise to tribalism presenting a threat to internal cohesion and transition to democracy. This brings about a debate on the ramifications

of how domestic revolts encouraged by local socio-economic and political set up affect the international dimensions which mimic the domestic set up.

The historical regional involvement of the U.S. in supporting oil-rich authoritarian regimes, the need to protect Israel (Lust-Okar 2003) and their subsequent support of protestors in places like Syria (a Russian geopolitical ally) has ultimately drawn the two major nuclear powers into a proxy war, creating an escalation of ideological clashes and a deterioration of global security. The ensuing instability brought about by the uprisings have given Russia a pretext to involve itself in the region as an alternative to the U.S. by forging new alliances with Iran and Egypt becoming a leading weapons supplier to several Arab states. In support of stability in the region at the expense of democracy, Hashemi (2012) highlights that the contradictory U.S. policy in the MENA post the uprising, covertly still favours authoritarians since democratisation poses a huge threat to U.S. strategic interests as democratic forces are likely to reject being subordinate to U.S. foreign policy interests. He states that it is currently easier for the U.S. to deal with Arab elite families to advance U.S. interests than dealing with a cocktail of democratic players who are subject to the Arab's public opinion which is largely anti-foreign influence.

On the security front, Kirkova and Milosevska (2014) noted how foreign intervention in Libya fronted by Western powers, contributed to the destruction of the cohesive central authority of Gadhafi, creating conditions of a civil war that has since brought chaos and has made Libya the illegal gateway into Europe for migrants. Cole (2012) bolsters this assertion by noting how the failure to patrol borders has posed problems not just for Europe but for its neighbours in the greater Maghreb where there has been considerable trafficking of arms and people through organised crime syndicates. This has led to extremists taking working in partnership with the existing rebels structurers of the Tuareg to take over northern Mali using weapons smuggled from Libya. Kirkova and Milosevska (2014), however make a counter argument against terrorists' capabilities having been bolstered by the uprisings as the key premise for recruiting fighters was based on usage of violence to remove governments by force, a view that has been changed by the peaceful demonstration that ousted Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, robbing terror organisations like Al Qaeda their reasons of fighting regimes in the MENA. This is a contestable view in light of how terrorism has flourished in the region and across the globe as ISIS has used the same power of social networks to recruit thousands of foreign fighters to join the extremist Islamic group in Syria and Iraq or to carry out terror attacks in their home countries.

The literature gap identified for this study is largely due the fact that much of scholarly studies were done during the course of the uprising leading to analytic imperfections based on partly

exaggerated optimistic predictions about the extent of the reach of democratisation in the MENA or inconclusive analysis. This position is elucidated in the work of scholars like Howard and Hussain (2013) who viewed the uprisings presenting an opportunity for a Fourth Wave of democracy. The focus of most studies has also mainly been either domestic or regional implications of the uprising leaving room for studies to be done on the global implications of the uprisings. The study also intends bring a synthesis to the area of democracy and the new role of protests as reflected by protests in Ukraine, Russia and other states post the Arab uprisings. Smilov (2015) identifies protests as a democratic requirement which however, have acquired a new risk and potency as a tool of citizen's control, presenting a crisis of legitimacy whenever the numbers are large enough to turn public opinion. The ubiquitous flourishing of technology globally and its effective use in the MENA, particularly in the case of Tunisia, Egypt and Libya, is a phenomenon which has encouraged its further use and bringing debates about the structuring of security whilst trying to balance between curbing freedom of expression in democratic spaces, allowing individuals rights to gather and free assembly, a pillar of democratic liberties and monitoring of subversive communications.

1.5.2 Theoretical Framework

The effects of the Arab uprisings have had global implications on security, democracy and the ever-rising prospect of citizens' revolt ending up unseating governments unconstitutionally. The international system is not framed on one particular world view and due to the nature of the multiple fronts of this research, several theories and concepts are therefore advanced.

1.5.2.1 Neorealism Theory

This theory is premised on the assumptions that states want to maintain their survival by either offensive or defence capabilities in an anarchical international system and the proponents of this theory like Kenneth Waltz, Robert Art and John Mearsheimer state structural constraints as determining behaviour in international relations (Jakobsen 2013). In analysing the effects of the uprising on international relations, Keck (2012) states that NATO's intervention in Libya has given impetus to North Korean and Iranian narrative that the overthrow of Gadhaffi is justification for their acquiring of nuclear weapon capabilities that give them the right to self-defence against U.S. aggression. The Russia-China alliance that come out the later opposition of NATO intervention in Libya and Russia's new alliances in the Middle East due to its intervention in Syria and its share in arms sales to repressive regimes due to the redefined role

of the U.S. in the region are all power-seeking, power balancing and alliance formation are all premised on neorealism.

1.5.2.2 Chaos Theory

Chaos theory with its proponents like Sanjoy Banerjee and Nilhan Açıkalın is premised on the idea that small domestic perturbations have a domino effect that subsequently end up causing large disturbances elsewhere and commonly referred to as the “butterfly effect” (Windsor 2013). The events of the MENA, triggered by the self-immolation of Muhammed Bouazizi ended up having global security consequences.

1.5.2.3 Dependency Theory

Dependency theory of development is largely propagated by Kurt Rothschild, Walden Bello and François Perroux as a notion that there is an imbalance of relations and an exploitation of resources from the Global South states (periphery) to the Global North states (core). This imbalance favours the core states and subordinate the periphery making the periphery dependent on the core whilst the core is able to chatter global affairs to the exclusion of the periphery in decision making. In class analytical terms it refers to the subordination of workers through exploitation by capitalists, the bourgeoisie (International Relations n.d.). According to Barnes (2013), the region’s main resources of gas and oil which are a strategic interest of the U.S. and Europe have created the region’s subordination to the core leaving the region vulnerable to the contradictory policies of the West like the skewed promotion of democracy which partly triggered the uprisings.

1.5.2.4 Constructivism

Proponents like Nicholas Onuf (1989), Alexander Wendt (1992) and Friedrich Kratochwil (1989) of this concept state that international relations are historically and socially constructed meaning that anarchy is what states make of it and that anarchy informs the construction of rules and norms that govern international relations (Hurd 2008). The condition of self-help applied by states is a product of the construction of such norms and rules. Constructivists have also noted the role of international institutions as actors in their own right (Slaughter 2011). With the passage of UNSC Resolution 1970 being such a role.

1.5.2.5 Complex Interdependency

This theory was propagated by Joseph Nye and Robert Keohane who define it as “reciprocal effects among actors resulting from international transactions - flows of money, goods, people and messages across international boundaries” (Rogerson 2010). Information interdependency of the societies within the region through the use of social media by the youthful generations, compounded by the media portrayal of the uprising in Tunisia and later in Egypt, made the events of Tunisia to quickly spill-over in Egypt and the rest of the region.

1.5.2.6 Concept of Democracy

This concept is defined in simple terms as government by the people expressed through regular free and fair elections. It is also underpinned by human rights, fundamental freedoms guaranteed by law and equality of opportunity for all people who are deemed equal at law (Bassiouni 1998). The underlying conditions for democracy and its promotion in the MENA by the West seems to be elusive bringing a need to revisit the West understanding and foreign policy in the region.

1.5.2.7 Concept of Terrorism

The conceptualisations of terrorism are generally deployed through politicised analysis resulting in many subjective meanings. Schinkel (2014) frames terrorism to be acts of violence meant to bring maximum fear and destruction against a state or individuals of a state (who are typically ideal as soft-targets) by non-state actors who have competing political or socio-economic ideologies or grievances in some cases. Schinkel (2014) further clarifies that states can also use terrorism in their service by either covertly financing terror groups or directly involving themselves in acts of terror. The failed uprising in Syria which has turned out into a civil war has resulted in a refugee crisis that has led ISIS to have its fighters blend in with migrants going to mainland Europe leading to terror attacks linked to these fighters (Brown 2015).

1.6 Methodology

1.6.1 Research Design

Research design is the method of effectively addressing the research problem using a systematic plan of action chosen to bring coherence and logic to the different parts of the study (Stake 1995). For this study, the research design that was deployed is a case study focusing on Syria since it provided for an in-depth analysis of events and relationships that have some

commonalities between them. Over and above the ability of this design being able to help to narrow down a broad area of study to a smaller research area, it also fortifies what has been researched on (Yin 2009).

1.6.2 Methodology

The research methodology used in this study was qualitative methodology which enabled the study of complex and in-depth data thus making it possible for a detailed evaluation and analysis by gaining understanding of underlying reasons and helping in generating ideas. Qualitative methodology involves the use of non-mathematical and non-statistical measurements (Denzin and Lincoln 2000).

1.6.3 Data Collection Methods

The study used document analysis and in-depth interviews.

1.6.3.1 Document Analysis

Documents that were analysed included the print media like peer-reviewed journals, newspapers, books and electronic media sources like web pages, blogs and electronic books. The libraries that were made use of included the University of Zimbabwe Library, SAPES Trust Library, Harare City Council Library and the U.S. Information Centre.

1.6.3.2 Interviews

An interview guide was used as an instrument in data gathering, making use of semi-structured questions that gave opportunity for both the interviewer and interviewee to discuss some topics in more detail. The interview participants who work in the academic, military, diplomatic, foreign affairs and journalistic sectors were sampled using judgement sampling with the diversity of their sectors allowing multiple and knowledgeable views from these experts. Snowball sampling as a secondary sampling tool, was used to access one of the interviewees in the diplomatic field leading to access of an expert not previously known to the researcher.

1.6.4 Data Analysis

The data that was collected was analysed through content analysis using a latent level of analysis which gave a more interpretive analysis that was concerned with the response as well as what may have been inferred or implied. Content analysis is a technique used to making valid and replicable inferences concerning the content of recorded text (Miles and Huberman 1994). Thematic content analysis, a technique of finding and grouping common and recurring themes

in a data set (Miles and Huberman 1994), was used to extrapolate five major themes from the interviews together with documentary research. The identified recurring themes are as follows; i) Challenges and opportunities of foreign intervention in sovereign states, ii) Difficulty in promoting democracy as an ideal for the MENA, iii) Collective security, a responsibility of every state, iv) The politics of the refugee crisis, v) The new significance of protests in a globalised world.

1.6.5 Validity and Reliability

Validity is defined as the extent to which a research study measures what it intends to measure (Research Methodology 2016) whilst triangulation means a “technique that facilitates validation of data through cross verification from two or more sources” (Carter 2014). In this study, validity of data was ensured by triangulation of data collection methods by using both interviews and documentary search. This was done in search for common ground for the various sources of information. Reliability, defined as the repeatability and consistency of results when measuring certain parameters (Trochim 2006), was established by testing the interview guide on a small sample of people before they were used on the actual participants. This therefore ensured that all errors and possible oversights were rectified before the actual interviews were conducted in the field.

1.7 Delimitation

The scope of the study covers the Middle East and North African region as the primary objective and with the spill over effects of this region focusing on various regions of the world that include North America, Europe and Asia. The time frame of the study was 2010- 2017.

1.8 Limitations

There is an existence of bias in self-reported data gathered through interviews. It was therefore anticipated that respondents were likely to frame their responses based on their proclivities of world views and the possible bias amongst those in foreign services, of possibly framing responses around one’s desire to support their state’s foreign and domestic policies. This limitation was overcome by referring to a wide array of literature which in this case will view issues from multiple perspectives. Data provided by interviewees was also verified from other sources to establish congruency thus managing the bias.

The other limitation that was faced had to do with the inherent bias that came with the use of snowball sampling in selecting a participant. Not with-standing the benefits of this sampling

method, the act of one participant having to suggest another participant is fraught with the risk of having the participant suggesting other participants in their network group which brings a possible over representation of similar views. To overcome this risk, this sampling method was relegated to being a secondary method of sampling interview participants.

1.9 Dissertation Outline

Chapter 1	Introduction
Chapter 2	Literature Review and Theoretical framework
Chapter 3	Case Study
Chapter 4	Implications and Findings
Chapter 5	Conclusions and Recommendations

Chapter 2

The Arab Uprising Triggers, Democracy, Security Dynamics and the Underlying Themes

2.1 Introduction

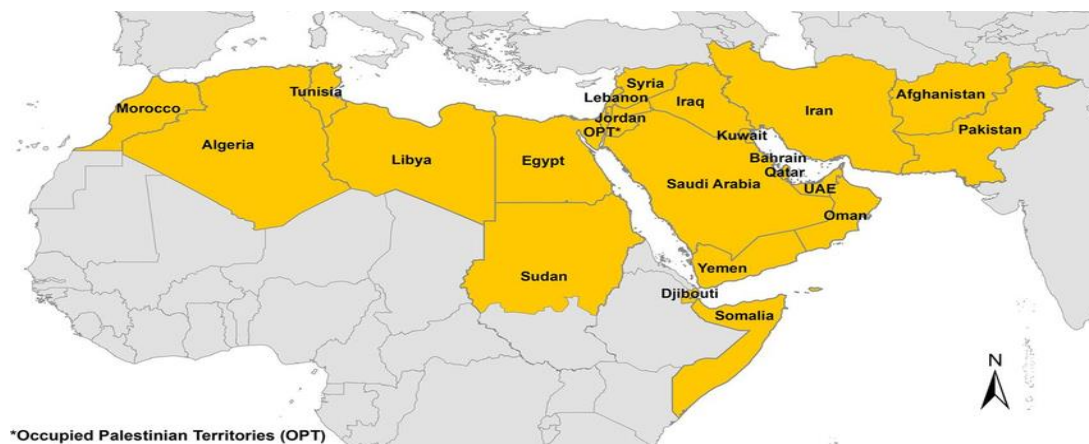
The Arab Uprising is a series of anti-government demonstrations that happened in various MENA countries as a response to dictatorship and poverty in some cases. The political, social and cultural make-up of the region, interacting through forces of globalisation and complex interdependency, resulted in a spill-over of Tunisian domestic disturbances into the greater MENA region (Guzansky and Heller 2012). At a state level, these demonstrations led to varied political, socio-economic and security outcomes whilst on the global stage, the uprisings have had ramifications on the politics of democracy and security. With the region being important to the energy requirements of the world, it then follows that the region houses strategic interests of major global players like the European Union (E.U.), U.S., Russia and China. To that extent, the upheavals in the region have affected the promotion of democracy in the region and opened space for radical militant groups to use the absence of central authority, tribal cleavages and in some cases, popular discontent against foreign interference as means to consolidate their influence on states and project violence to various states. A case in point being the civil war induced by the security break-down of the Syrian state which has become a base for ISIS training and coordination of attacks on Western states and interests (Gilsinan 2015).

The same chaos has brought a displacement of Syrians who have become refugees in Europe with many stationed in neighbouring countries like Jordan, Iraq, Turkey and Lebanon with 4.9 million people displaced out of Syria whilst 6.1 million are internally displaced (World Vision 2017). ISIS militants have used this movement of refugees as a cover to blend in with the refugees to carry out attacks in the West (Brown 2015), compromising the existing security establishment in the target states.

The objectives of this literature review and theoretical framework are therefore to analyse and synthesise the relevant literature in-order to achieve an integrative review whilst using existing theories and concepts to frame the impact of the uprisings on the global stage. This review also serves to reveal a gap in literature which justifies the importance of the study as it centres around the ability to offer a clear analysis and better-informed views of the effects of the uprisings as

many studies were done during the early years of the unfolding of events, leading to researchers making conclusions that were based on some optimisms, exaggerated views and incomplete information about the likely outcome of the uprisings. This was due to the need of analysts and scholars having to provide analysis in real-time for policy makers to formulate policies in a fluid situation. The chapter will therefore address the research's objectives of analysing the transitional challenges faced by countries affected by the Arab Uprisings and compare how previous regimes managed to keep the region stable and evaluate the effects West's foreign policy of democracy promotion in the region.

Figure 1: Map of the Middle East and North Africa according to United Nation Agencies



Source: *Research Gate* https://www.researchgate.net/figure/259294603_fig1_Figure1-Map-of-the-Middle-East-and-North-Africa-region-as-defined-in-in-this-supplement

2.2 Factors Leading to the Uprisings

There is a myriad of factors that led to the uprisings. These factors like most social phenomenon, are complexly inter-related but chief amongst the reasons is the oppressive and autocratic leadership that was ubiquitous in the region. Smith (2011) posits that oppression breeds resistance and rebellion, although it might take a considerable time for a revolt to occur. The long-stretched period of autocracy coupled with high levels of poverty, unequal wealth distribution and deteriorating economic conditions which were exacerbated by the 2008 global financial crisis, became the major trigger points of the uprising. These shared socio-economic and political challenges in the region became the spring board of uprisings which found their trigger in the sympathy and solidarity protests for Mohammed Bouazizi who had burnt himself in an act of public self-immolation whilst protesting the systemic corruption and harassment by municipal police who had confiscated his vending cart (Rosiny 2012). This eventually led to the overthrow of Ben Ali's regime from Tunisian government. This event that happened on 17

December 2010, was captured on video and largely circulated on social media and Aljazeera news leading to widespread protests within Tunisia then later spreading to the greater region (Abdullah 2012). Rosiny (2012) cites the 1978-79 Islamic Revolution in Iran, the Lebanon 2005 Cedar Revolution and the stalled 2009 Iranian Green Revolution as the key role models for the Arab uprising mobilisation of the opposition forces in the region. However, the spontaneous nature of the uprisings makes it difficult to ascribe much credit to formal opposition groups as the movement was largely influenced largely by loose association of apolitical, unemployed and poor young people.

2.2.1 Economic Factors

Inflationary pressures over the struggling economies of the MENA region led to a wide spread of shortages of food. The region heavily depends on food imports with and imports wheat which in most cases is financed through donor aid. With the global recession of 2008 it meant that the chief donors like U.S., E.U. and Japan could not commit to enough donor resources to bail out the region (Moore 2012, Habibi 2009), a factor underpinned by dependency theory and the power the “centre” holds over the “periphery”. Inflation in Yemen reached 12.2% (Khawaja 2011) making food more expensive for the low and middle classes. By the time of the uprising, only Egypt and Syria had not experience wide spread bread shortages (Cambanis 2015) but had experienced a 37% increase in bread price. As was the case with Anwar Sadat in 1977 when he cancelled the expensive wheat subsidies under the guidance of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) resulting in riots in all major Egyptian cities, it is the very principle of bread pricing that held the same potency just before the Arab uprisings (Zurayk 2011, Khawaja 2011). Importantly, in Egypt bread is known as *aish*, meaning “life” bringing it to the centre of politics where 40% of the population (as well as in Yemen) live below the poverty line and suffer some form of malnutrition in the absence of social safety nets (Zurayk 2011). The sensitivities of the “bread politics” were still in existence by the time of the uprising where the military controls the crucial bakeries to control pricing and supply. However, the financial crisis affected an already inefficient and unstable bread economy in Egypt (Cambanis 2015). In principle, inflation erodes buying power and shifts the socio-economic status of a state. Whilst governments are not always able to control fundamental economic activities that trigger inflation, it is however inevitable that the economic models they employ in the long and short term, are invariably responsible for inflation affecting public confidence in the authorities (Khawaja 2011).

Another important economic indicator that led to the uprising was high youth unemployment levels in the region which averaged 23.4% in 2010 (International Labour Organisation 2011) with Libya with a high of 30% whilst Yemen was at 35% (Khawaja 2011). The general Arab region is affected by low investment and weak economic growth which results in low job creation resulting in weak labour markets. Where employment exists, working conditions are not favourable with weak or no labour unions to effectively represent workers (International Labour Organisation 2011). To that extent, the region has not managed to create a stable and sustainable economic growth, leaving youths and their guardians angry as a significant number of them are excluded from the labour markets, thus an exclusion to a fair life. The case of Mohammed Bouazizi who became the rallying point of the uprisings after his act of self-immolation is a case in point of how the issue of unemployment was a major factor as he had failed to secure employment anywhere resulting in him selling from a cart (Rosiny 2012).

2.2.2 Political and Social Factors

The repressive nature of authoritarian governments of the MENA made it possible for citizens from different countries to respond in protest, all with the goal of over throwing the regimes. Whilst Ali Abdullah Saleh (Yemen), Ben Ali (Tunisia), Hosni Mubarak (Egypt), Muamar Gadaffi (Libya) were all overthrown, their elaborate ways of staying in power against the majority's wishes, looting of state resources, nepotism and cronyism, excessive censorship and quelling dissent which saw the killing, abduction and jailing of activists made them hated by most citizens of the countries. These reasons coupled with the use of the secret police who employed stern measures to deal with any dissent or opposition, made a compelling scenario for uprisings (Brynen et. al. 2013). In Libya, it was the arrest of a human rights activist and lawyer, Fathi Terbil, who was representing families of 1200 prisoners who were massacred by the government in 1996 at Abu Salim prison (Global Security 2011). The protests that followed his arrest saw the regime that had stayed in power for 41 years respond with disproportionate force, triggering a wave of protests throughout Libya. Lust-Okar (2013) however suggests that the factors leading to the uprising were interrelated and gradual changes that created enabling conditions for a trigger event to engulf several regional states.

2.3 Perspectives on The Transitional Challenges Faced by States

The Arab uprisings have had varied outcomes in different states with those that have had failed transitions either falling into chaos as is the case in Syria, Yemen and Libya whilst Egypt had a mixture of regression to authoritarianism mixed with little gains in democracy. Only Tunisia

has moderately managed to democratise (Al-Anani 2015). Failure to transition has been tied to lack of internal cohesion due primordial loyalties and ideological differences amongst militant groups, various tribes and opposition democratic forces whilst foreign intervention can be said to exacerbate these differences. Significantly, Geertz (1963) bolsters the same view by stating that ancient social loyalties established based on culture, kinship or religion, mitigate the establishment of durable contemporary democratic systems as these loyalties will conflict with some modern values giving rise to tribalism presenting a threat to internal cohesion and transition to democracy.

Ahmed and Capoccia (2014) observe that, where prospects for democratic opening have existed, there has been a tendency of a quick roll-back to some type of “competitive authoritarianism”, where elections are a cosmetic cover for the security sector that continues to wield tutelary power over elected officials leading to further power entrenchment through manipulated electoral competition, a proposition proven correct by events in Egypt where the newly elected government of Mohammed Morsi was overthrown by the military.

In principle, transitioning to democracy has not been successful in the short term, an observation that Simms (2015) concurs with, when he alludes to the fact that, except for South Korea, there has not been a successful revolution since the American Revolution that was succeeded in the short term by a stable democratic order. Similarly, Yadlin (2012) confirms that no amount of technological development can accelerate change within a short time as proven by modern history and cautions about making conclusive views in a fluid regional upheaval. This stall towards democracy becomes defining, on the impact of the uprisings have had on both democracy and security issues of the globe. These assertions by the various scholars seem to concur with the political positions taken by the region’s new strategic partners like Russia and China who undermine any prospects of democracy within their own states. They are more likely to have stronger cooperation with autocratic regimes as they fear the possibility of Arab style uprisings within their own states. Russia and China have had political systems that are antithetical to democracy and their rising influence in geopolitical affairs puts the global democratic agenda at risk as these two global players are supportive of the roll-back to authoritarianism. Russian and Chinese use of the veto power in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) against any progressive resolution in Syria and the subsequent military involvement of Russia in support of Bashir Al-Assad’s government (Miller 2016) fortifies a global interaction with the uprisings in a war that has involved various states and their

surrogates in a war that has become a global ideological clash. In the cases above, it then can be concluded that the new security challenges emanate from the stalled transitions which have given rise to chaos which was not predicted by many scholars. Therefore, there is a need to analyse the degree to which how a stall in transition reflects in the politics of both security and democracy.

2.4 The Promotion of Democracy and the Role of Foreign Powers

Democracy as an alternative governance system and political regime, lies at the heart of the protestors' demands and in analysing the effects of the stalled transition to democracy it is important to reflect on the meaning of democracy. Touraine (1998) defines democracy as the "ability of political institutions to articulate the diversity of interests or opinions with the unity of the law and of the government". Bassiouni (1998) expounds it as government by the people expressed through regular free and fair elections with human rights and fundamental freedoms guaranteed by law and equality of opportunity for all people who are deemed equal at law. Notably, Sudarsono (1998) highlights five dimensions of democracy that must be balanced and inter-connected namely cultural, economic, political social and civil. The multiplicity of working definitions therefore makes democracy a subjective ideology applied in each state based on history, culture and preference.

In recent history, however, democracy as an ideal has been promoted throughout the world by the U.S. and later by its allies in the E.U. It fast gained ground soon after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War. The concept of democracy is located in various definitions and models that range from full to flawed democracies. By 2013, 63% of states were classified as one form or the other on the democracy index (Borgen Magazine 2013). After the 9/11 attacks on the U.S., the Bush and Obama administrations, redefined their foreign policies in order to promote democracy in the MENA (Hassan n.d.). However, Alessendri et.al. (2015) see the Arab uprising as a failure of the policy of promotion of democratisation. According to Sudarsono (1998), the policy failure was hinged on how Western academics constructed a model of democracy promotion that largely ignored crucial democracy building factors like, the socio-economic context and cultural underpinnings of the region. Mannermaa (2006) cites this underestimation by academics as an over confidence in the democratic norms by the same academics and policy makers to the disregard of equally powerful social and cultural trends that have been driving other alternative governance models. The U.S. has therefore followed a flawed and contradicted policy in the region which Hassan (n.d.) expressly cites as a preservation of long standing relations with authoritarian regimes like Saudi Arabia and Egypt,

key allies to the region's political balance and stability whilst at the same time trying to support democracy imposing western liberal standards incompatible to the complex dynamics of region. In support of stability in the region at the expense of democracy, Hashemi (2012) highlights that the contradictory U.S. policy in the MENA post the uprising, covertly still favours authoritarians since democratisation poses a huge threat to U.S. strategic interests as democratic forces are likely to reject being subordinate to U.S. foreign policy interests. He states that it is currently easier for the U.S. to deal with Arab elite families to advance U.S. interests than dealing with a cocktail of democratic players who are subject to the Arab's public opinion which is largely anti-foreign influence. Apart from highlighting the contradicting policies of both administration in promotion of democracy, the literature does not adequately address how these policies have affected democracy as a concept and only make recommendations to how the West can adjust its policies to advance democracy.

In analysing the Russian-Arab relations in view of the stalled transition of the Arab uprisings, Malashenko (2013) identified how the uprisings confirmed political Islamism to be a permanent feature in the MENA and states how Russia's position in the Middle East had diminished. Whilst assertively stating the permanency of political Islamism in the region, his study does not in full capture how pitfalls in the U.S. policy position of the use of the doctrine of "strategic patience" and "gradualism" in dealing with the region have not only opened geo-strategic space for Russia in the region but has allowed it to redefine the anti-democracy political agenda of the region (Alessandri et. al. 2015), the key indicator being Russia's military involvement in Syria in support of the Assad regime. This strategic opening is being used to push back the U.S. traditional regional dominance. It is then important to assess the effects of the uprisings as the region has new interactions with the East and evaluate the feasibility of promotion of democracy not only in MENA but also in other heterogeneous societies that have thus far been undemocratic yet peaceful and stable.

2.5 The Emerging Global Security Challenges

The historical regional involvement of the U.S. and Russia's need to create new allies in the Middle East has had an effect of a proxy war between two nuclear states, escalating ideological clashes and a failure to reach a solution to the Syrian war resulting in deteriorated global security (Lust-Okar 2003). In redefining its new strategic role, Russia has become the lead supplier of weapons to several Arab states creating a new chasm between the East and the West. In essence, the uprisings have created a complex security dynamics not only for the region but

for the globe. ISIS, the major benefactor of the Arab uprising has capitalised on the failure to transition to democracy and the general ensuing chaos in-order to break modern states and establish a worldwide caliphate Gambhir (2015). In using the chaos in Syria and Iraq, the group has managed to have a stronghold of operations that have had significant brute force. Gambhir (2015) states that the group has the most significant force, resources and influence that make their global strategy difficult to contain as they have created recruited affiliates and sympathisers like Boko Haram in Nigeria whom they encourage to carry out attacks in the world giving rise to the phenomenon of home grown terrorism. Notably, she highlights the asymmetric advantage that ISIS has, through its ability to project violence from different regions and cause different states' issue publics to hold different opinions, potentially causing a rift between the U.S. and E.U. allies who have had significantly divergent security approaches. ISIS global grand strategy is thus seen as causing national security threats for states. The U.S.-Russia differences in the region and the failure to transition by states have therefore become inhibiting to the strategy of dealing with terrorism by containing regional chaos as opposed to directly fighting terrorists.

Foreign intervention in Libya, according to Kirkova and Milosevska (2014), led to the destruction of the stable regime of Muamar Gadhafi, creating conditions of a civil war that has since brought chaos and made Libya the illegal gateway into Europe for illegal migrants. Cole (2012) bolsters this assertion by noting how the failure to patrol borders has posed problems not just for Europe but for its neighbours in the greater Maghreb where there has been considerable trafficking of arms and people through organised crime syndicates. This has led to extremists working in partnership with the existing rebels' structurers of the Tuareg to take over northern Mali using weapons smuggled from Libya. By way of contrast, Kirkova and Milosevska (2014) present a counter argument refuting a generalised view that the terrorists' capabilities have been bolstered by the uprisings. They argue that the view that rebels' key recruitment driver was the usage of violence to remove governments by force has been refuted by the peaceful demonstration that ousted Hosni Mubarak of Egypt and the successful holding of elections in Tunisia, robbing terror organisations like Al-Qaeda their reasons of fighting regimes in the MENA. However, this is a contestable view considering how terrorism has flourished in the region and across the globe (Gambhir 2015) as ISIS has used the same power of social networks to recruit thousands of foreign fighters to join the extremist Islamic group in Syria and Iraq or to carry out terror attacks in their home countries.

The uprisings triggered largely by domestic factors have had other international effects in the domain of protests triggered by political and socio-economic issues. Thiel (2015) proffers a notion about the reshaped role of citizenry revolt in the modern state and cites the Arab uprisings as providing the future framework that supports the overthrowing of governments unconstitutionally, presenting new challenges for democracy as regional effects can be exported on the international dimension. This view is bolstered by Smilov (2015) who explains the elevated risk, potency and disruptive nature of citizens' protests and how they can easily present a crisis of legitimacy in government whenever citizens have grievances. Barnes (2013) advances the notion of the failure of U.S. foreign policy which on the one hand supports the political elites in MENA in exchange for stability and an uninterrupted supply of oil and gas to global markets like Europe and Asia (which are critical to the U.S.'s economic stability) whilst on the other hand, grudgingly funding civil society for democratisation in the region under George Bush's 'Freedom Agenda' Hasan (n.d.). This contradictory and complex relationship with the region is attributed not only to the failure of democratisation, but also intrinsically linked to the foundations of post-uprising global problems, a position supported by Hamid (2015).

2.6 Conceptualisation of the Arab Uprisings

2.6.1 Neorealism Theory

This theory is premised on the assumptions that states want to maintain their survival by either offensive or defence capabilities in an anarchical international system and the proponents of this theory like Kenneth Waltz, Robert Art and John Mearsheimer state structural constraints as determining behaviour in international relations (Jakobsen 2013). In analysing the effects of the uprising on international relations, Keck (2012) states that NATO's intervention in Libya has given impetus to North Korean and Iranian narrative that the overthrow of Gadhafi is justification for their acquiring of nuclear weapon capabilities that give them the right to self-defence against U.S. aggression. The Russia-China alliance that come out the later opposition of NATO intervention in Libya and Russia's new alliances in the Middle East due to its intervention in Syria and its share in arms sales to repressive regimes due to the redefined role of the U.S. in the region are all power-seeking, power balancing and alliance formation are all premised on neorealism.

2.6.2 Chaos Theory

Chaos theory with its proponents like Sanjoy Banerjee and Nilhan Açıkalın is premised on the idea that small domestic perturbations have a domino effect that subsequently end up causing large disturbances elsewhere and commonly referred to as the “butterfly effect” (Windsor 2013). This research not only shows how the self-immolation of Muhammed Bouazizi in Tunisia triggered wide spread regional events but ended up with effects on a global scale as is the case of protests in Syria, Libya and Yemen that have resulted in those states in chaotic civil wars that involve more than a dozen states fighting due to various ideological and differences and varied geopolitical interests (Miller 2016). The civil war in Syria has led to a complex and chaotic interaction of various forces fighting each other leading to an almost impossible cease-fire and political resolution as there has been a stale-mate between the more than a dozen countries directly and indirectly fighting in the war. Russia which viewed Syria as a regional ally, politically sides with China in voting in support of Syria, whilst on the battle field it partners with the Syrian regime, Iran and various groups like Hezbollah. Saudi Arabia supports the moderate rebels along with the U.S. and its Western allies in order to curtail Iranian influence in Syria. ISIS, Al-Qaeda affiliates and many new groups find themselves fighting the Syrian government, the moderate rebels, the U.S. and its allies and fighting amongst themselves to gain relevance as global “jihadi” groups (BBC 2017).

Such a complex mix-up of interests and allegiances amongst the various players becomes the bedrock of the chaos theory engulfing not only the region but global power matrix. This theory becomes central to the research as it becomes intertwined with other theories and concepts like complex interdependency, constructivism, terrorism, democracy (as the West fights to support and install a democratic order) and neo-realism through the power seeking behaviour of a resurgent Russia and China against the U.S. and its European allies who want to project their power and dominance of the existing global order.

2.6.3 Dependency Theory

Dependency theory of development is largely propagated by Kurt Rothschild, Walden Bello and François Perroux as a notion that there is an imbalance of relations and an exploitation of resources from the Global South states (periphery) to the Global North states (core). This imbalance favours the core states and subordinate the periphery making the periphery dependent on the core whilst the core is able to chatter global affairs to the exclusion of the periphery in decision making. In class analytical terms it refers to the subordination of workers

through exploitation by capitalists, the bourgeoisie (International Relations n.d.). According to Barnes (2013), the region's main resources of gas and oil which are a strategic interest of the U.S. and Europe have created the region's subordination to the core leaving the region vulnerable to the contradictory policies of the West like the skewed promotion of democracy which partly triggered the uprisings. The importance of dependency theory is to analyse the role the core plays in trying to chatter the destiny of the region by trying to enforce foreign norms like democracy where culture and religion organised through political Islamism is at odds with some of the liberal democratic principle.

2.6.4 Constructivism

Proponents of this concept like Nicholas Onuf, Alexander Wendt and Friedrich Kratochwil state that international relations are historically and socially constructed meaning that anarchy is what states make of it and that anarchy informs the construction of rules and norms that govern international relations. The condition of self-help applied by states is a product of the construction of such norms and rules. Constructivists have also noted the role of international institutions as actors in their own right (Slaughter 2011). With the passage of UNSC Resolution 1973 authorising the use of military force to protect civilians being such a role.

2.6.5 Complex Interdependency

This theory was propagated by Joseph Nye and Robert Keohane who define it as “reciprocal effects among actors resulting from international transactions - flows of money, goods, people and messages across international boundaries” (Rogerson 2010). Information interdependency of the societies within the region through the use of social media by the youthful generations, compounded by the media portrayal of the uprising in Tunisia and later in Egypt, made the events of Tunisia to quickly spill-over in Egypt and the rest of the region. This theory is also critical in analysing the complex interdependency that exist between the U.S. and other global players and Arab states. The Arab states are key suppliers of global energy requirements which is a critical factor to the stability and growth of the global economy in which the U.S. is the largest player (Harbert 2008). Stability in the region provides less room for extreme Muslim militants to pose a threat to U.S. interests at home and abroad. The regional partners of the U.S. are also key to the supply of intelligence to U.S. intelligence services which is key in fighting terrorism. A stable Middle East is also key for the security of Israel as a war against Israel has the propensity of cascading into a global war. On the other hand, the Arab states are complexly

dependent on various world powers for the purchase of their crude oil and gas for their economies to function.

The emergence of concepts such as democracy are a response of the anarchy and global disorder that resulted in both World Wars. Weart (1998) argues that there has not been a war amongst democracies in recent history, an idea that Immanuel Kant developed in 1785 but has been proven true in the 20th Century. It is on the premise of this view that the U.S. has desired to promote democracy as a governance norm of achieving global peace whilst trying to move away from anarchy. Whilst the role of the U.S. has been controversial in the Arab world, post the uprisings there has been the growth of norms like the concept of collective security in terms of intelligence sharing between Arab states and the U.S. (Index of US Military Strength 2016) and the global fight against terror. The emergence of ISIS has raised the security stakes, leading to a quick evolution of global terror especially after ISIS has been able to capture territory in Iraq, Syria and Libya. This has led to security cooperation even amongst the leading ideological and geopolitical foes, Russia and the U.S. The growth of these norms is in response to the multifaceted security challenges post the Cold-War, prior to which, security was narrowly framed as states competing for power as displayed in both World Wars (Stone 2009).

2.6.6 Concept of Democracy

This concept is defined in simple terms as government by the people expressed through regular free and fair elections. It is also underpinned by human rights, fundamental freedoms guaranteed by law and equality of opportunity for all people who are deemed equal at law (Bassiouni 1998). The underlying conditions for democracy and its promotion in the MENA by the West seems to be elusive bringing a need to analyse the merits of promotion of democracy and the West has had a duplicitous policy of support for democracy when in fact they have long held an interest of strategic cooperation with authoritarian regimes like Egypt and Saudi Arabia that have been used to keep Israel secure and as political counter balances to enemies of the U.S. like Iran. This concept is important to the research as it is key indicator of analysing how the region general failure to transition will have a bearing on future policy making for both the East and the West who are traditionally opposed around the norms of democracy.

2.6.7 Concept of Terrorism

The conceptualisations of terrorism are generally deployed through politicised analysis resulting in many subjective meanings. Schinkel (2014) frames terrorism to be acts of violence meant to bring maximum fear and destruction against a state or individuals of a state (who are

typically ideal as soft-targets) by non-state actors who have competing political or socio-economic ideologies or grievances in some cases. Schinkel (2014) further clarifies that states can also use terrorism in their service by either covertly financing terror groups or directly involving themselves in acts of terror. The failed uprising in Syria which has turned out into a civil war has resulted in a refugee crisis that has led ISIS to have its fighters blend in with migrants going to mainland Europe leading to terror attacks linked to these fighters (Brown 2015). The break-down of central authority in both Yemen and Libya and the lengthy civil war in Syria have led to groups like Al-Qaeda and ISIS to fight to gain territory and be able to project violence into Europe and beyond. The importance of this concept is to frame the rising security challenge post the Arab uprisings, to analyse the impact that terrorism has had on global security.

2.7 Conclusion

In conclusion, the literature gap identified for this study is largely due the fact that much of scholarly studies were done during the uprising leading to analytic imperfections based on partly exaggerated optimistic predictions about the extent of the reach of democratisation in the MENA or inconclusive analysis. This position is elucidated in the work of scholars like Howard and Hussain (2013) who viewed the uprisings presenting an opportunity for a Fourth Wave of democracy. The focus of most studies has also mainly been either domestic or regional implications of the uprising leaving room for studies to be done on the global implications. The study also intends bring a synthesis to the area of democracy and the new role of protests as reflected by protests in Ukraine, Russia and other states post the Arab uprisings. Smilov (2015) identifies protests as a democratic requirement which however, have acquired a new risk and potency as a tool of citizen's control, presenting a crisis of legitimacy whenever the numbers are large enough to turn public opinion. The ubiquitous flourishing of technology globally and its effective use in the MENA, particularly in the case of Tunisia, Egypt and Libya, is a phenomenon which has encouraged its further use and bringing debates about the structuring of security whilst trying to balance between curbing freedom of expression in democratic spaces, allowing individuals rights to gather and free assembly, a pillar of democratic liberties and monitoring of subversive communications.

Chapter 3

Perspectives on the Syrian Uprising

3.1 Introduction

The Syrian Arab Republic, currently in a civil war, is governed by the regime of Bashar al Assad, and is located in the Middle East with its direct neighbours being Israel, Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon and Turkey. Its littoral city of Latakia provides access to the strategically important Mediterranean Sea, a gateway to Europe, North Africa and the Atlantic Ocean. Whilst it was not the first country to be affected by the uprisings, the complexity of its conflict has had much more potency in spreading chaos than any of the other affected states. Its geographical location is therefore critical to the ‘butterfly effect’ (Cordesman 2015) when it comes to instability, with the gravity and magnitude of the conflict having redefining effects on regional and global security, and geopolitical structure. This conflict has therefore become the deadliest conflict of the 21st century with over 386 000 people killed and more than 12 million people displaced from their homes (World Vision 2017) in what started off as peaceful protests in March 2011, later mutating into an ongoing civil war. The events in Syria, its proximity to Europe and its strategic importance to the fore-most super-powers, Russia and U.S., provides a convergence of the theoretical underpinnings of this research and therefore this chapter seeks to use the Syrian case in examining the impact the uprising has had on global security and democracy.

3.2 Background of The Conflict

From its 1946 independence from France, Syria has experienced several coups and extended periods of political instability. Its defeat in 1967 by Israel, being part of the coalition of Arab states that fought against Israel in the Arab-Israeli war, became the bed-rock of ultra-nationalism and a new consolidation of military power (Wiersema 2013) under the new leadership of Hafez al-Assad starting from 1970, after he toppled Salah Jadid from the Ba’ath Party leadership and government. As a high ranking military officer, Hafez himself participated in the coups of 1963 and 1966 (Shauol and Marsden 2000). When Hafez-al Assad seized power, he moved to create an all-powerful presidency, leading to a one-man rule which was then bolstered by the politics of personality cult built around him. This meant that he structured his regime under a sectarian and patronage system which gave preference to the minority Alawites (where he hailed from) over the majority Sunni (Yassin-Kassab and Al-Shami 2016). For instance, all the security apparatus including the secret police, were all led by Alawites that included his immediate family members (Huber 1992). To that end, he established an autocratic

and repressive governance system that weakened both the state and the party whilst elevating a new abrasively corrupt and oppressive political class. The patronage system became intrinsically linked to state bureaucracy leading to high levels of corruption which increased negative perceptions of the dominant minority Alawite government (Erllich 2014). This further entrenched resentment, creating permanent political cleavages within Syria and in Sunni led regional states like Saudi Arabia, leading to the re-emergence of opposition found in the name of The Muslim Brotherhood of Syria (Carnegie Middle East Centre 2012).

The increase in opposition and growth of insurgency by the Muslim Brotherhood saw the killing of 50 Alawite cadets in Aleppo in 1979 (McFarquhar 2000). In 1980, Rifaat Assad the head of the security forces and brother to the president, massacred 250 religious political prisoners after a failed grenade attack on Hafez Assad (Kenner 2011, McFarquhar 2000). The growing resistance led to the 1982 revolt by the Muslim Brotherhood in Hama, which led to the Assad's military killing an estimated 20 000 people in the same city (Kenner 2011) with another estimated 10 000 executed in the following decade (Shaoul and Marsden 2000). This background of political instability and brutality incensed the Syrian population creating deep-seated resentment against the regime. The succession of Hafez by his younger son, Bashar al-Assad, did nothing to change any negative perceptions towards the regime whilst undemocratic elections that bar any other candidate from contesting except the sole candidate, Assad (Black, 2007), are another point animosity toward the regime.

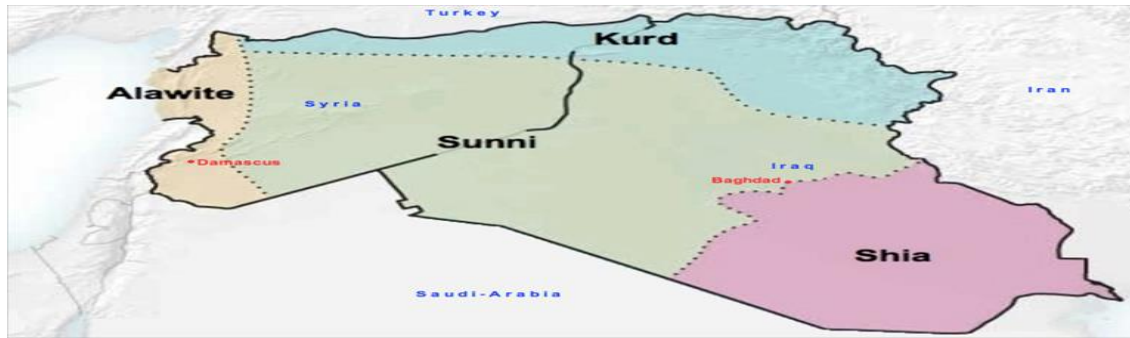
Syria as a country with a weak industrial base was also exposed to high inflation and unemployment, weak economic growth, low oil production and increased levels of poverty in almost the same manner as its regional peers. The country, also caught up in the jaws of dependency to the West, was adversely affected by 2008 economic down turn. The economic events of the dominant centre restructured global economic affairs with the subordinated periphery bearing the brunt of the recession. In this case, it is the systemic inability of the periphery to structurally develop and grow their economies (Marcus 2013) that keeps its socio-economic status highly dependent on the exploitative operations of the centre. To further compound the socio-economic challenges and structural economic weaknesses, the country faced a crippling drought from 2006 to 2011, with 75% of those dependent on crops experiencing total crop failure, 85% losing their entire livestock whilst the UN reported more than 3 million people having become exposed to extreme poverty (Femia and Werrell 2012). The drought created a huge surge in rural to urban migration leading to new challenges and significant discontentment. Huber (1992) identifies another source of resentment of Alawites

being the Sunni centuries' old classification of the Alawite sect as heretic. This classification is based on the Sunni interpretation of the Muslim faith and teachings; thus, a pariah status is ascribed to the Alawites. The hatred for Alawites is also compounded by how they worked in cahoots with the colonial French prior to Syria's independence (Erlich 2014). Whilst all the above factors were the underlying causes of the uprising, the trigger event was the illegal detention and torture of 15 young boys who had used graffiti on walls in support of the Arab uprisings in the region. Hamza al-Khateeb, a 13year old boy later died from the torture leading to peaceful protests that were eventually met with brute force that killed hundreds of demonstrators in March of 2011 (Yassin-Kassab and Al-Shami 2016). During the following 4 months, Syrian military defectors eventually formed the Free Syrian Army (FSA) leading to the current impasse (White 2011).

3.3 The Rise of Anarchy in Syria

The strong handed tactics used by Assad's security forces were met with an equal resolve by protestors to defy the government in the quest of demanding democracy, freedom and the stepping down of Assad (Heydemann 2013). Public anger was then stoked due to the use of brute force used by the Assad regime whilst protestors got energised by the immediate successes in Tunisia and Egypt (Yassin-Kassab and Al-Shami 2016). However, the longer it took protestors to make anticipated progress in toppling Assad, the more the regime adjusted to the new reality and the more the opposition transformed retrogressively. The opposition became an armed force of professionals, military defectors and Islamists, who later became fractious due to the absence of an effective leadership and the influence of ideological and sectarian differences (Heydemann 2013). These differences also played out at state level where other states, chiefly the two regional powers, Saudi Arabia (dominantly Sunni) and Iran (dominantly Shia), fought a proxy war in Syria as they supported various actors (Schanzer 2016). Heydemann (2013) cites the initial disengagement of the US from Syria as elevating local sectarian conflicts to a zero-sum game, thus eroding future democracy prospects. Figure 2 below shows the sectarian spread in Iran and Iraq and how it interacts with the neighbouring countries.

Figure 2: Sectarian Map of Syria and Iraq

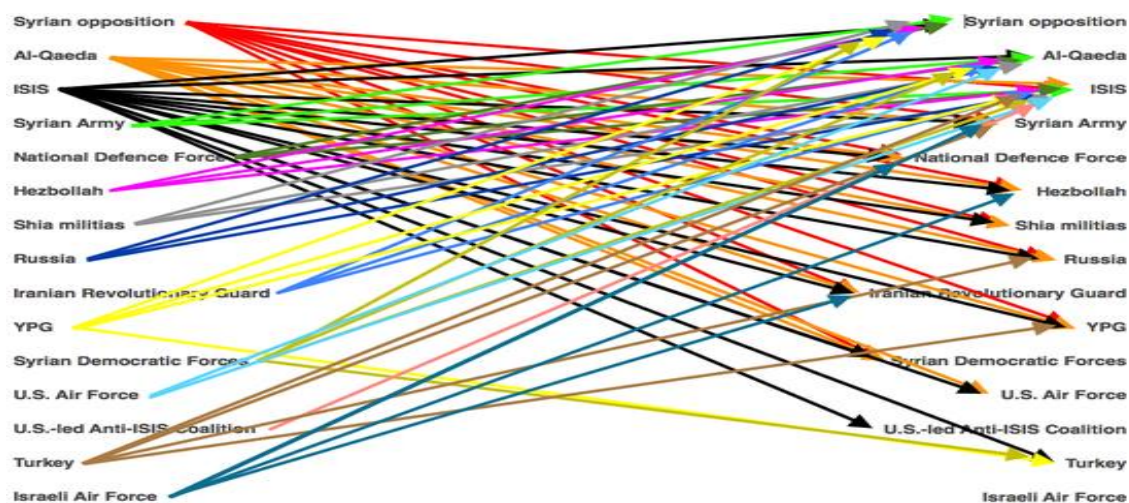


Source: Rob Webstek <http://www.robswebstek.com/2014/01/redrawn-map-of-syria-iraq.html>

**The map shows the distribution of the dominant sect of Sunnis in both Iran and Iraq. Their connection with neighbouring Saudi Arabia which is dominantly Sunni makes Saudi Arabia an interested partner whilst its rival Shia Iran supports both the Shiites in Iraq and the minority Alawite in Syria.*

In fighting the fractured opposition, the regime managed to create a narrative of fighting terrorists, a narrative that would eventually be used by Russia, Iran and Hezbollah to support and get involved militarily in Syria. The regime's strategy of relentless demonisation of the opposition as terrorists, creating disorder in opposition held territories and using disproportionate force, created a propaganda narrative for armed insurgency to thrive as that narrative ignored the legitimate demands of democratisation by the protestors turned insurgents (Heydemann 2013). Whilst the FSA was the overall coordinator of around 80 000 fighters by 2013, the group was a precarious network of several hundreds of armed groups with some of the groups having affiliation with groups that have political ideologies antithetical to the premise of liberal democracy like the Salafist-jihadists, Liwa al-Mujahideen, Jabhat al-Nusra and Ahrar al-Sham (Hoff 2015, Heydemann 2013). The Assad regime managed to exploit the weak legitimacy of the FSA and its leadership, causing other minority groups to keep their allegiance to Assad and casting doubt on the credibility of the FSA to be able to establish a civil and democratic regime post Assad. The result of the schism in the opposition, led to them being distracted from fighting a common enemy, the regime, and resulted in chaos where Kurdish forces fought Salafists whilst the Iranian Revolutionary Guard and Hezbollah helped the regime. This scenario led to the disintegration of the security situation in Syria, leading to a very complex web of engagement of the various actors involved (Dorell 2016) as reflected in figure 3 below, giving ISIS room to expand from Iraq into Syria.

Figure 3: The Web of Fighters in Syria



Source: Charles Lister <http://www.vox.com/2016/2/16/11024056/syria-war-chart>

This diagram shows a complex web of relations and alliances and how these actors are targeting and fighting within Syria.

3.4 Attempts to Peace and Resolution of the Conflict

The constructivism point of view of Wendt and Kratochwil see the emerging of international relations norms being defined by how states construct meaning from developments in the international arena. To this end the involvement of the UNSC in attempts to bring peace to Syria fits into constructivism emergent norms where international organisations are actors in their own right who are able to shape international relations (Slaughter 2011). With that view, the United Nations (UN) retains the right and power to be involved in international affairs with Article 39 of Chapter 7 of the United Nations Charter stating that;

The Security Council shall determine the existence of any threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression and shall make recommendations, or decide what measures shall be taken in accordance with Articles 41 and 42, to maintain or restore international peace and security (United Nations n.d.).

In pursuit of the above norm, there have been efforts to bring peace in Syria with more than 13 initiatives since 2011, most of them inorganic, half of which took place in 2012, adding to other shuttle diplomatic initiatives. Whilst the initiatives involved both the regional and international powers, they were largely characterised by the pursuit of individual states' interests, thus failing to find lasting solutions (Al-Fattal 2016). Despite the external pressure to establish the two ceasefires of 2012 and 2016, both initiatives failed to hold up, notably due to absence of commitment, the cleavages in opposition which were flamed by sectarian differences and

international disunity especially in the UNSC (Lundgren 2016), leaving the conflict in a state of continual escalation.

One of the impediments to conflict resolution is the belief that both sides will eventually achieve total victory (Wallenstein 2012, Lundgren 2015), a factor that the U.S. miscalculated in 2012 when they were convinced that Assad would be overthrown by a combination of rebels' advances towards Damascus and internal pressure. Borger and Inzaurrealde (2015) cite this miscalculation on the part of the U.S. as stated by Martti Ahtisaari, former Finnish President who mediated talks between envoys from the Permanent 5 (P5) members of the UNSC in February 2012. In these talks, he claims Britain, U.S. and France had turned down a proposal by the Russian Foreign Minister to have Assad step down. During the same time as the mediation, Koffi Annan was appointed as the joint Arab league-UN Envoy on Syria. By June of 2012, when the death toll was at 7 000 (Borger and Inzaurrealde 2015), he chaired international talks in Geneva where a peace plan through a transitional government would govern Syria. However, following the collapse of the ceasefire agreement weeks later, Annan resigned a month later and got succeeded by another UN Envoy, senior Algerian diplomat, Lakhdar Brahimi, after there was no agreement on whether Assad should step down (Borger and Inzaurrealde 2015, Lundgren 2015).

Regardless of the Russia-Turkey brokered ceasefire of December 2016 and resumption of the UN peace initiative, China and Russia have jointly vetoed 6 UNSC resolutions on Syria including one that would have invoked sanctions in response to the use of chemical weapons by the regime (Global Centre for R2P 2017). These resolutions were part of the effort to maintain stable global security and peaceful world order using the constructivist emerging norms found in the Right to Protect (R2P) doctrine which in a sense mandates influential states bear the burden of that desired order. However, China and Russia are constantly opposed to any kind of intervention in Syria by the other P3 members as they are of the view that they will abuse the R2P doctrine as they did in Libya under UNSC Resolution 1970 and 1973 (United Nations 2011), a state which has been engulfed in chaos after Gadhafi was toppled. The regime has continued to violate several resolutions with Russia's collusion as their joint forces have continued targeting civilians and civilian infrastructure and humanitarian convoys in a bid to tilt the war momentum in favour of the Assad regime as revealed by the UN Human Rights Commission of Enquiry. This has been in violation of the UNSC Resolution 2139, which prohibits attacks on civilians and the use of indiscriminate weapons (Global Centre for R2P 2017).

3.5 The Rise of ISIS, Global Terror and the Deterioration of Global Security

ISIS as a non-state actor has managed to assert itself on the global scene as one of the most potent terror organisation in modern history. It has managed to expand itself on the back of internal fissures and the breakdown of unitary states in both Syria and Iraq. To this end, the biggest legacy of the uprising is the emergence of a new level of global insecurity due to potential terror attacks. The disintegration of security, triggered by the brutal response to demonstrations in Syria gave ISIS an advantage of easy territorial expansion from the neighbouring Iraq. It is this regional expansion that has helped the group to sophisticatedly project force globally due to the enormous funding that the group was getting from captured oil fields in Iraq and Syria (Solomon, Kwong and Bernard 2016). ISIS, led by a former university professor, now turned jihadist, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi (Foster 2016), has become an extremely brutal non-state actor seeking to break modern states and establish a worldwide caliphate. The group has therefore used Syria and Iraq to effectively expand into Libya, Afghanistan and other Arab parts (Gambhir 2015), including making affiliates of other terror groups like Boko Haram in Nigeria. The expansion strategy, premised on its goal of “to remain and expand”, is being used as a preservation strategy for the group as the U.S. coalition has concentrated its force within Iraq and Syria, leaving ISIS to consolidate its operations elsewhere. Figure 4 below shows the areas that ISIS envisions to capture and convert into a regional caliphate.

Figure 4: ISIS Envsioned Regional Caliphate



Source: Daily Mail <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2674736/ISIS-militants-declare-formation-caliphate-Syria-Iraq-demand-Muslims-world-swear-allegiance.html>

In its quest for a global caliphate, the group has created an effective media strategy that effectively uses social media to radicalise fighters in foreign lands like Australia, Canada, US, Europe and Asia to conduct “lone-wolf” attacks in their countries whilst encouraging thousands

of fighters to travel and join the group in Syria (Taylor 2016). The group is also using poverty, unemployment and general hatred for Western imperialism as a recruitment tool (Black 2016).

Whilst the coalition has currently managed to reduce the group's operational capabilities within Syria and Iraq by degrading their financial capabilities through bombing oil wells and a general degradation of its military force, it is least likely that the coalition will be able to stop radicalisation of their citizens through social media and deter the rising of other smaller groups as the coalition seem to have targeted ISIS in Syria and Iraq to the near exclusion of focusing on other terror groups. ISIS affiliates and sympathisers who are spread across the globe may make it substantially difficult for the U.S. and the coalition to fight terror on many geographically separated fronts (Gambhir 2015). In 2016 alone, Islamic terror killed 11 774 people and injured 14 303 in 1 274 attacks conducted in 50 countries with ISIS conducting attacks in close to half of those countries (The Religion of Peace 2016, Prince 2016). In this regard, the group holds an asymmetric advantage in terms of variety of open fronts it can operate from, using multiple modes of delivering terror. Already, its various attacks in Europe have already exploited existing fissures within Europe's various security agencies' approaches to terror threats assessments and combating of the same. Of particular interest is the way Belgian and French authorities missed crucial links to ISIS terror plots that were effected in both countries in 2016 (Lynch 2016). The reach of ISIS in Europe has fed into an already existing problem with marginalised Muslim communities, especially the youth who feel excluded from the main-stream European economy (Benali 2015, Yardim and Tecim 2016). These marginalised communities have become the recruitment bedrock for ISIS resulting in a creation of terror cells in Belgium, Germany and France, whilst using the ease of movement between European states to coordinate plots. Due to Europe's proximity to Syria and the size of its Muslim population, ISIS sees it as an easier target (Gambhir 2015).

In identifying the fast evolution and internationalisation of terror since the emergence of ISIS, the UNSC passed resolution 2178 in 2014 that condemns extremist violence and the need for co-operation of states, in keeping with international law to prevent "...the recruiting, organizing, transporting or equipping of individuals who travel to a State other than their States of residence or nationality for the purpose of the perpetration, planning of, or participation in terrorist acts" (United Nations 2014). The resolution particularly identifies ISIS, Al-Nusra Front, Al-Qaeda and their affiliates and urges states to strengthen their legal systems to prosecute as serious offenses any acts related to and the support of terrorism. The evolution of international law and

consensus on issues of fighting terrorism are important for the maintenance of global peace, but the covert support of some of these groups especially in the Middle East, undermines those efforts and provides the continual existence of terror organisations. Rogin (2014) states that Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Qatar were instrumental in the funding and establishment of ISIS, in the quest to protect Sunni population in Syria from the Assad regime. He cites Kuwait as the key link to the channelling of the funds to militant organisations due to its flawed banking regulations that are used as conduit for money laundering. Iran support of Hamas in Syria escalates the low-key Shia-Sunni regional war, which up to now has been kept as a proxy war between the regional powers.

3.5.1 The Media, Terrorism and Security

The killing of 27 tourists in Tunisia in 2014 by terrorists (Barnett 2014) resulted in sensationalised reporting that put fear in Western citizens who normally take holidays in the Middle East. Whilst there existed the reality of possible indiscriminate attacks on Western nationals in countries like Turkey, this level of reporting and the grim reality of ISIS capabilities, have made it difficult for states to adequately offer security to their nationals, especially those who visit other countries which are at high risk of terror attacks. The proximity of Turkey to Syria made the British Foreign Ministry in 2014, in fear of indiscriminate attacks on foreign nationals, to issue the most severe travel warnings to its nationals who visit the Middle East for holidays, with those visiting Turkey being numbered 2.5 million annually. This level of security threats fortifies the terror narrative that seeks to maximise fear and curtail basic liberties of people, becoming a psychological tool that is heavily dependent on broadcasting. However, in as much as there has been an increase in global terrorism, there seems to also be a multidimensional relationship between terrorism, the media and governments (Fourie 2008) that has, to some extent, over-ratcheted the terror-security situation during and after the course of the uprisings. As media outlets exist to make profit, terror attacks are viewed as news worthy, thus reporting on these attacks becomes an indirect win-win scenario for both the news outlets, terror organisations (Martin 2006) and governments who then use such publicity to bolster their foreign policy positions in fighting terror. Thus, the gravity of the global terror-security situation might be prone to over-stating due to these intangible multidimensional interactions of interests.

In reporting terror acts, the media has played an important social role, particularly when reporting on ISIS and Syria. However, Doward (2015) reports on a study done that proves that

sensational media coverage of terrorism increases the possibility of future terror acts by 11 to 15% due to the “copy-cat” effect of violence acts. The uprising in Syria which became the point of ISIS regional expansion, has fed into a new level of media reporting on terror as the group resorted to brute force within and without Syria leading to beheadings, crucifixions, mutilations, suicide bombings, kidnappings and mass abductions as was the case in January 2016 where they kidnapped 400 people in the Syrian city of Deir ez-Zor and 230 in Al-Qaryatain in July of 2015 (Lewis 2016, Moore 2015). Most of these acts have been copied by affiliate groups and sympathisers due to the sensationalised manner the main-stream global media like CNN and BBC have reported, inadvertently emboldening further attacks. In most cases, democratic governments are unable to censure such agenda-setting by the media resulting in security challenges where the media becomes does a job of “tipping-off” and sometimes passing strategic information to terrorists through the manner and content of reporting, affecting security forces operations in some cases (Martin 2006).

3.5.2 Chemical Weapons in Syria

The announcement by the Syrian Foreign Ministry spokesperson, Jihad Makdissi, on the 23rd of July 2012 that Syria had chemical weapons stockpile composing of nerve agents and mustard gas made Barack Obama announce a ‘red-line’ that would be crossed if the Assad regime ever used the weapons in combat or against civilians (Kawashima 2017). Whilst the first allegations of the use of chemical weapons started in December of 2013 in Homs where 7 people were alleged to have died from a poisonous gas, it was only in March of 2013 that the UN through the Secretary General Ban Ki Moon, announced that it would investigate after new attacks were reported on March 19 in the suburb of Khan al-Assel Aleppo and al-Atebeh neighbourhood in Damascus (Kawashima 2017). The investigations which were to be conducted through World Health Organization (WHO) and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) were frustrated by the Syrian regime and Russia after refusing to agree on the scope of the inquiry (Kawashima 2017). The Assad regime eventually agreed to allow investigators from WHO and OPCW in August of 2013 and again were accused of using chemical weapons in the biggest attack in suburbs of the Ghouta region of Damascus where thousands were reported to have died (Calamur 2017).

After the British parliament voted against taking military action in Syria in response to the use of chemical weapons by Assad, the US Senate was asked to delay a vote on military intervention by the Obama administration, to give a chance to diplomatic initiatives by Russia which

eventually resulted in Syria agreeing to place its chemical weapons stockpile under international control and the agreement of Syria to join the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) (Kawashima 2017, OPCW 2013). Whilst the regime has managed to use disproportionate force against the rebels and breaking many international norms, it is the perspective of neo-realists like Waltz who argue that the offensive or defensive capability of a state are always informed by the need to survive the anarchical international system thus (Jakobsen 2013), Assad's regime even uses chemical weapons to repel aggression by proxies of the West to ensure the survival of the Syrian state. This perspective is void of superior central authority in international relations hence no state is under obligation to obey another state.

Notwithstanding the above, it is the presence of chemical weapons in Syria and their use against international law that poses a threat to global security. The inability of the Assad regime to control all its stock pile made these feared chemical weapons to be at the risk of getting into the hands of militant groups like ISIS or Al-Qaeda, raising the ghastly possibility of chemical weapons terrorism, which would have far more destructive potency than the current conventional weapons and bombs. The availability of chemical weapons to hostile non-state actors also poses a challenge as they can be used to hold states at ransom thus making it easy for ISIS to quickly realise its goal of a regional caliphate. Despite the assurance by the OPCW of the safe shipping out of various chemical agents from Syria as per UN agreement and Security Council Resolution 2235 of 7 August 2017 that authorised an investigation of the use of chemical weapons in Syria, the regime has on recent occasion been accused of continuing to use chemical weapons in Aleppo (August and September 2016), Hama and Idlib (December 2016 and April 2017 respectively). The allegations of chemical weapons use in Hama in December 2016 were reported in the ISIS controlled neighbourhoods causing concern for the security of many states (Calamur 2017). Israel is particularly vulnerable as it depends of the stability of its strategic environment and benefitted much from the pre-uprising stability in Syria (Scheinmann 2013). In 2011 and 2012, Islamists managed to make the once peaceful Sinai Peninsula an effective operational base and managed to launch attacks in both Egypt and Israel (Kawashima 2017). This arrangement makes a chemical attack on Israel possible that can result in drawing Israel into the Syrian conflict, a possibility that can further destabilise global security.

The U.S. has been a controversial actor in the Middle East, but the uprising and its effects have made the region rise to a new level of strategic significance for the U.S. This has led to the

growth of norms such as the concept of collective security in terms of intelligence sharing between Arab states and the U.S. (Index of US Military Strength 2016) and the global fight against terror especially after ISIS has been able to capture territory in Iraq, Syria and Libya. Such unprecedented levels of projection of terror power by a non-state actor in modern history has led to security cooperation even amongst the leading ideological and geopolitical foes, Russia and the U.S. These norms are in response to the multifaceted security challenges post the Cold-War, prior to which, security was narrowly framed as states competing for power as displayed in both World Wars (Stone 2009).

3.6 Displacement of Syrians and the Refugee Crisis

By far, the Syrian crisis is considered as the largest humanitarian crisis of the 21st century, by deaths and by the number of people displaced from one country in such a short space of time. The displacement has caused 4.9 million Syrians to be externally displaced as refugees whilst 6.1 million people are internally displaced. Refugees have settled in Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and Europe (World Vision 2017). Lebanon carries a disproportionate burden in catering for Syrian refugees is also a cause for concern as it has accommodated 1 069 111 Syrians and another 450 000 Palestinians in a country with a population of 4.7 million people (NRC ICLA 2016). Under the international law principle of *non-refoulement*, the 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees states that no refugee shall be denied entry into any country and returned to any other country “where his life or freedom would be threatened on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion ” (Dugard 2012) As a generally accepted principle of international law, other states have adopted a realist approach in dealing with Syrian refugees as they view them as threats to their nation security or being used by terror syndicates. Hall (2017) citing Lebanon’s new proposal to return all Syrian refugees back to their homeland where they can be housed in safe zones.

ISIS militants have used the movement of refugees to blend in with the refugees in order to carry out attacks in the West, compromising the existing security establishment in the target states (Brown 2015). This of concern to some of the lawmakers in both the U.S. and E.U. who feel that accepting refugees will ultimately compromise their immediate and long term security as it is not possible to thoroughly screen refugees in an attempt to have them get satisfactory security clearance. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) have testified in the U.S. senate stating the difficulty experienced in vetting refugees as their systems and procedures are centred on electronic checks which makes it

difficult to find information on refugees (Krikorian 2015). In Germany where Angela Merkel was more welcoming to the refugees, current terror attacks have turned public opinion against her government (Deutsche Welle 2016) whilst in other European countries, nationalist sentiments have created a perception of economic inability in shouldering the burden of the refugees to the detriment of the locals (Spiegel Online 2015). The fear in this case is partly based on the fear of more ISIS attacks and partly on the unwillingness to have more potential Muslims in European lands with the potential to force their religion on the West. Forster (2016) reports that amongst states polled by Pew Research Centre in 2016, Hungary 76% with 10 European states having a median of 59% of unfavourable views of Muslims coming into their country as refugees' due to the fear of ISIS attacks. These ultra-nationalist sentiments fronted by far-right politicians have also gone to stoke Islamophobic attacks of Muslim communities in Europe (Allen 2017), creating resentment in some young Muslims who can then become resentful towards Europe.

3.7 The Prospects of Democracy and Realignment of Political Alliances

The authoritarian rule of the Assad's had managed to maintain internal cohesion of Syria, albeit using brute force. The initial objective of the uprising was then framed as a demand for democracy and political reform amongst other things. The prospect of democracy has however become elusive in Syria as the country has become fragmented due to the ongoing civil war, eroding any premise on which democracy can be found on. The existence of chaos in Syria is the evidence of the absence of peaceful competition, accountability, persuasion, accommodation and compromise (Maoz and Russett 1993), factors which are key to democratic peace within democracies. The existence of unfavourable socio-economic and political conditions in Syria makes it difficult for the initiation of democracy (Lust-Okar 2003). Whilst the U.S. has not had a consistent policy in the MENA, their promotion of global democratisation of states is premised on the view that there have not been wars amongst democracies in the 20th Century (Weart 1998) as an ideal developed by Immanuel Kant in 1785. The multiplicity of players in the Syrian civil war make the prospects of democratisation small as more than half of all countries that experience sectarian civil wars "relapse into conflict after a period of interim peace" (Heydemann 2013). The gloomy democratic prospects in Syria have an impact in the shaping of the debate about democracy and its promotion in other regions of the world like Africa (Siegel 2011). The resultant chaos in Syria has also meant that autocratic regimes elsewhere are increasing their grip on state institutions and security to avoid non-state actors to take over their countries. Government surveillance on its citizens and their private

communication has also greatly increased due to the need of keeping states secure, presenting a dilemma for government and democracy creating trade-offs security and freedom. This has however been running against the liberal democratic norms of securing citizens' privacy, thus allowing the notion that there is no government that lives up to the full standards of pluralist democracy (Janda, Berry and Goldman 2008).

The concept of globalisation attributes the increase in interaction of states, non-state actors and individuals to technological advances in all spheres of human existence (Scholte 2008). To that end, in international relations this web of complex interdependence has shaped how various states and non-state actors have aligned themselves in various alliances that have emerged in Syria. Russia, Iran, and China have been the major supporters of the Assad regime with Russia, Iran plus the Lebanon based Hezbollah, providing material support to the regime (White 2011). Regional support has been from majority Shia governments whilst opposing Sunni majority governments like Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey have supported the FSA (Alsharif 2012). The U.S. has also helped to train and equip the FSA, a position which later changed after some of the fighters turned out to be part of Al-Nusra Front (Plesser, Omar and McClam 2014).

Turkey, through its operation "Euphrates Shield", launched in August of 2016 ending March 2017, has tried to drive out ISIS from Jarablus in Northern Syria. This operation was being conducted to stall any Kurdish advances that might create a psychological push on Syrian Kurds to push for much autonomy (Osborne 2017). Whilst Turkey and Russia were on different sides of the war, there has been détente between the two states after Russia pardoned the downing of its jet by Turkey. Turkey being a NATO ally, has therefore in recent months tended to subtly favour Russian position Assad (Bekdil 2016). On the other hand, Russia and Iran got involved in the conflict to push back the U.S. influence in the region. Russia has the intention of asserting regional dominance, maximising the region's preference to new alliances. In doing so, Russia has announced plans to build a permanent military air base in the littoral city of Latakia, a dominant Alawite city and a port in Tartus near the Lebanese border (Nordland 2017), giving Russia a permanent military access to the Mediterranean Sea, thus giving it a counter balance to U.S. military bases in the region. This is one of the major reasons why Russia is pushing for Assad to stay on as the leader of Syria in any possible future peace initiative. Saudi Arabia on the other, has involved itself to support the majority Sunni population in Syria and to push back on Iranian regional influence in the outcome of any future Syrian settlement. The U.S. and the coalition forces have invoked article 51 of the UN Charter (Dugard 2012) which permits the

use of force in circumstances where those attacks are mechanisms of self defence against terrorism. These competing interests between and amongst state actors and the complexly fragmented non-state actors, makes the prospect of peace and democracy ever elusive in a war that is driven by self-interest of all parties involved.

3.8 Conclusion

In conclusion, the Syrian conflict has become an incubator of competing interests amongst all actors involved. For the time being, the political outlook is characterised by cleavages, antagonism and a breakdown in regional and global security, with no clear hope for peace and a future democratised Syria. The UNSC has not been of much relevance in fulfilling its mandate of maintaining world peace as it has been polarised by the ideological differences and the strategic interests of all the P5 members. ISIS on the other hand, has managed to manipulate these differences and has effectively used the further continuance of the war to “remain and expand”. If global powers fail to bring closure to the civil war, the human cost continues to increase, further putting strain on states that have opened their borders to the Syrian refugees whilst global security continues to be redefined retrogressively. The next chapter focuses on the findings and implications of this study. It shows the critical analysis of emerging themes as offered by interviewees and document research.

Chapter 4

Presentation of Findings and Analysis

4.1 Introduction

The Arab uprisings were a result of the interaction of varied citizens' needs and demands, with the demand for democracy, freedom and better living conditions as the anchor for the uprisings. However, these uprisings left some key states like Libya in a state of failed transition, with Syria and Yemen experiencing anarchy of varying degrees. ISIS and other terror groups have therefore managed to exploit these scenarios in advancement of their regional and global interests. Lack of internal cohesion due primordial loyalties and ideological differences amongst either the militant groups, or the various tribes within these states have been crucial to the existence of chaos and the dimming prospects for democratisation. Coupled with the intransigency of global powers like Russia, China and the U.S. who are all ideologically polarised on how to assist these fractured states, the uprisings have therefore led to multiple global security problems and questions on the feasibility of a generic promotion of democracy in the MENA. The U.S. as the biggest political and economic player in the region (Barnes 2013), has promoted a contradicting foreign policy in the region which on the one hand supports the political elites in MENA in exchange for stability and an uninterrupted supply of oil and gas to global markets like Europe and Asia, key economic markets for the stability of the U.S. economy, whilst on the other hand, grudgingly funding civil society for democratisation in the region. This complex relationship with the region is partly attributed not only to the failure of democratisation, but also intrinsically linked to the foundations of post-uprising global problems (Hamid 2015). The uprisings, in and of themselves have also provided a psychological support for a future framework where citizens are encouraged to overthrow governments unconstitutionally thus presenting new challenges for democracy. The uprisings have therefore had ramifications on the politics of democracy and security. The objective of this chapter is therefore to present the findings from documentary research and in-depth interviews whilst providing an analysis and synthesis of the two.

This study was a qualitative study whose findings are grounded in documentary research with a reinforcement of in-depth interviews. These interviews made use of interview guides designed around five semi-structured questions as shown in Appendix A. To buttress diversity and induce robust views and meanings, the interviewees were then selected from various segments within the international relations field. With the goal of keeping anonymity and privacy to the identity

of the selected interviewees who work in the academic, diplomatic, foreign affairs, military and journalistic fields, codes were assigned to their professions to mask their identity as indicated in Table 1 below;

Table 1: Codes Assigned to Interviewees

Code	Field of Work
Respondent A	Academic
Respondent B	Diplomat
Respondent C	Military Personnel
Respondent D	Government Foreign Affairs Official
Respondent E	Journalist

Their responses became a critical cog of analysis and inference when coupled with documentary research. Follow-up questions capitalised on emerging ideas from the responses given, making the most of semi-structured interviews, thus facilitating part of filling the knowledge gap through investigation of complex phenomenon. This analysis has therefore led to the emergence of many themes of which, five are deemed to be critically important to the analysis. The major themes that emerged are as follows;

- a) Challenges and opportunities of foreign intervention in sovereign states
- b) Difficulty in Promoting Democracy as an Ideal for the MENA
- c) Collective security, a responsibility of every state
- d) The politics of the refugee crisis
- e) The new significance of protests in a globalised world

4.2 The Challenges and Opportunities of Foreign Intervention in Sovereign States

The concept of state sovereignty and sovereign equality of states is etched into the UN Charter in order to preserve state sanctity from aggressors (United Nations n.d.). However, this concept has been under sustained attack by major powers like the U.S., Russia, France and China, all in different circumstances, intents and varying degrees. Through the use of hard power and soft power like economic leverage and cultural influence, major powers have been able to influence the course of political events in other states. Marcus (2013) cites the structuring of world affairs around a dominant centre which subordinates the periphery through an exploitative imbalance in trade and finance, thus the periphery remains subordinated to the centre even on matters regarding their domestic affairs. This is a form of foreign intervention based on the structure of

global affairs. For instance, the region's dependency on foreign aid for its vast food imports left it exposed to the effects of the 2008 recession due to the cutting on donor aid (Khawaja 2011, Moore 2012, Habibi 2009), thus food shortages fed into the underlying causes of the uprisings. Dependency on donor aid is therefore a structural support for this type of foreign intervention. Several respondents cited the influence of the skewed U.S. foreign policy in the region as a major contributing factor of the uprisings, that is, the exploitation of oil and gas in exchange for supporting a few ruling families at the expense of the oppressed majority (Barnes 2013, Hamid 2015). Respondent E indicated the view that "a foreign power that covertly or overtly supports the structural oppression and disenfranchisement of the majority by the ruling elite is still guilty of foreign intervention". Whilst this view holds true normatively, the fact that the Global North charts and frames global affairs means that there is a disregard of norms like non-interference as the same states are influential even in the resolution of the crises.

Respondents A, D and E indicated that the current foreign interventions in the war in Syria are interventions operating on a continuum that dates back to the pre-uprising period where the U.S. point of influence is premised to alter the political, security and economic outcome of the region to further its geopolitical interests of securing Israel and its own interests. On the other hand, respondents' B and C indicated Russia's resurgence, China's need for global relevance, Turkey's need to security and internal cohesion with the minority Kurds and the Saudi-Iran regional power tussle as informing external involvement played out directly or through proxy involvement in Syria. In this case, whilst all states frame their reasons for intervention as either humanitarian or defending the territorial and sovereign integrity of the state of Syria, it can be understood from a neo-realist stand point that, the conflicting interests of the intervening states are all crafted with the self-interest drive in power-seeking, power-projection and power-balancing (Roskin 1994). Russia is particularly interested in pushing back the influence of the U.S. from the region as evidenced by the plan to establish its only permanent airbase in Syria, its desire to access the Mediterranean Sea as a strategic military water way to Europe and to counter U.S. permanent army bases in the region (Nordland 2017). By establishing military bases in the region, Russia will have a better global reach, thus putting a power balance against the U.S. and Europe. Russia's existing naval base in Tartus near Lebanon's border also places it within short distance of the shores of U.S.'s important Middle East's ally, Israel, although this base has been of less significance to Russia prior to the uprising (Chance 2016).

In 2015, the main protagonists in the Syrian conflict were reaching a mutually hurting stalemate, ripening the conflict for some form of de-escalation of hostilities as Assad announced the war fatigue his military was going through and shortages they were facing (Lister 2015). Russia's direct intervention in the war has taken away any incentives for the Assad regime to negotiate as they have now been bolstered militarily and seeking the capitulation of the rebel forces by using strong asymmetric battle-field force. Russia's realpolitik strategy in the conflict has therefore strengthened its hand against the U.S. in shaping the future of Syria. Gelvin (2015) cited the Iran nuclear deal as an opportunity for Western states to use Iran to leverage Assad towards a political solution, but such optimism has been removed as the complexity of foreign intervention keeps the self-interests of individual states and groups at war. However, in view of the following two facts, respondents' B and C viewed Russia's interventionist role in Syria as pragmatic due to; the inability of the West to have a decisive policy on Syria as shown by Obama's shifting of his previously set "red-line" and the failure of the West's policies in the Libyan intervention and violation of Iraq's sovereignty which led to war, leaving both states in a far worse state that they were before the intervention. The failure of the Libyan intervention and the Iraq invasion cast reflections on the anarchical nature of the international system, bolstering the desire for states like North Korea and Iran to develop nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles to be able to create effective deterrence of any similar future attacks by the U.S. (Keck 2012, Morris 2017). Russia is therefore less concerned by success or lack thereof, of the U.S foreign policy in the Middle East. It shows that Russia is concerned with becoming the alternative ally of the region and is using Syria to define the future political alliances of the region as shown by the increased volumes of Russian made weapons in the region (Salacanian 2017). Peacetime arms sales are meant to acquire influence over friendly states whilst the domestic objective of Russia is to boost its economy through arms exports, expansion of its defence industry and employment creation (Rivlin 2005).

Notwithstanding the self-serving nature of foreign intervention, respondent A highlighted the importance of foreign intervention in maintaining international peace and security and the removal of threats to peace as provided for by the UN Charter and the emerging norm of R2P. However, the use of this norm in Libya as provided for by UNSC Resolutions 1970 and 1973 (United Nations 2011), proved chaotic post the intervention, leading to an ongoing civil war. In opposition to this doctrine and pursuit of their geopolitical interests, Russia and China have jointly vetoed 6 UNSC resolutions on Syria including one that would have invoked sanctions in response to the use of chemical weapons by the regime (Global Centre for R2P 2017). Whilst

the use of the R2P norm can be viewed as a preventative measure of human suffering, the Syrian conflict shows how difficult it is to create a mutual course of action amongst geopolitically opposed powers in the UNSC, as revealed by the UN Human Rights Commission of Enquiry who reported Russia's collusion in the targeting of civilian population, infrastructure and humanitarian convoy inside Syria, in violation of UNSC Resolution 2139, which prohibits attacks on civilians and the use of indiscriminate weapons (Global Centre for R2P 2017).

Overall, the role of the UN as an effective body that can maintain peace, develop harmonised friendly relations amongst states through international co-operation (United Nations n.d.) is under sustained questioning as several respondents indicated the continual use of the veto in the UNSC by China and Russia as a sign of the ineffectiveness of the UN to fulfil its obligations stated in its charter. They stated that military foreign intervention in Syria is abated by the ineffectiveness of the UN hence the UN is only a 'tool' used by major powers to advance their geopolitical interests. When the Syrian war is juxtaposed to the war in Yemen, it shows that the international community has not paid much attention to Yemen where 18.8 million people are relying on humanitarian aid as a direct result of the conflict (Amnesty International 2015). This is reflective of Yemen's low strategic importance to the major powers; hence foreign intervention can be said to be selective and purely a power-seeking tool used by states in growth and consolidation of their power. Another issue is the inability of the security council to refer individuals in the Syrian conflict to the International Criminal Court (ICC) for war crimes investigations due to the UNSC disagreements although the council has previously approved investigations in Darfur and Libya (Lynch 2014, Kersten 2011), making it plausible that the failure of the UNSC is an extension of international power-politics. The power conflagration between the East and the West has further polarised international relations and pushing the world towards a possible new Cold War. It is then the understanding of this dynamic of foreign intervention that can inform broader changes which might be necessary for states in the periphery in combating threats to foreign meddling.

4.3 Difficulty in Promoting Democracy as an Ideal for the MENA

Added within the concept of foreign intervention has been the issue of promotion of democracy within the region. Strand et. al. (2011) state that the young protestors in the MENA placed democratisation and freedom as one of the top priorities in the replacement to authoritarianism a position which was later publicly supported by Western states. However, the contradictory policy of the West saw attempts to democratise the region on one hand, and a support of the

status-quo on the other (Hamid 2015). The internal structure of the MENA built around variations of competing Islamic ideologies and the existence of political Islam (Malashenko 2013) dissuades a comprehensive adaptation of democracy with the region. This complexity has made the promotion of democracy difficult even in the post-uprising period as primordial loyalties have fuelled the breach of internal cohesion of various tribes (Geertz 1963), leading to armed struggles thus destroying state institutions necessary for the establishment of democracy. Respondent B identified the reality of the existence of a diversity of ancient governance methods which are antithetical to democracy as the reason why the region might not be able to transition to democracy in the short term, despite the younger generation demand for it. The Islamic Republic of Iran's theocracy where the Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei who is tasked with the delineation and supervision of the general policies of the republic (Public Broadcasting Service n.d.) and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) hybrid system of federal-presidential elected monarchy (Helen Ziegler and Associates 2017). The UAE system has been undergoing some adjustments in line with its changing demographics and a need informed by trying to evade contentious issues surrounding elections and democracy (UAE Interact n.d.). Whilst democracy has been touted as remedy against authoritarianism, the social and economic success of the UAE (Al Harthi 2014) and countries like China (Heady, Kanbur and Zhang 2008), creates pragmatic and alternative governance models that are adaptive to the challenges and aspirations of individual countries rather than an imposition of universal democratic norms.

With focus on Libya and Syria, respondent C shared the view that strong-arm governance had managed to keep the region secure thus the failed attempt to transition to democracy and the subsequent chaos in those states is reason why some states should remain as authoritarian, a reasonable trade-off with stability. This view is contradicted by Smith (2011) who shows that, in principle, oppression breeds resistance and rebellion, although it might take a considerable time for a revolt to occur. The function of authoritarianism coupled with high levels of poverty, unequal wealth distribution and deteriorating economic conditions eventually lead to such revolts. There is therefore least plausibility that authoritarianism can endure in the long term as evidenced by the revolts in the region. In view of the above, the U.S. policy position of the use of the doctrine of "strategic patience" and "gradualism" in dealing with the region can be construed to acknowledge the existence of governance variables that are likely to take time to align for a conducive democratisation environment to exist. It is however this policy hesitation by the U.S. which has allowed Russia to reshape its geo-political interests in Syria and the

region in general in supporting politics that is antithetical to liberal Western democracy (Alessandri et. al. 2015). The model of governance that will best suit the region is one that will deliver economic stability and prosperity as the uprisings were largely triggered by economic factors. The UAE, again proving to offer a better governance model than having democratisation as the goal of the U.S. However, with different states having diverse degrees of secularist-Islamist splits, a key tool used by the authoritarian regimes to keep the opposition unsustainably weak, each state should be modelled around its own peculiarities as has been the case in Tunisia which has managed to transition to become a young democracy whilst Egypt has become a guided democracy led by General Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, with a top-heavy military influence on state structures and processes (Hessler 2017).

Levitsky and Way (2010), Siegel (2011) and Ahmed and Capoccia (2014) state that Syria has a near inability to have any democratisation prospect in the near future as the country's fragility, tribal cleavages and future security might necessitate a roll-back to competitive-authoritarianism. This view is supported by respondents' A, C, D and E, who view Syria as too polarised and fragmented to harbour any meaningful chances for democracy to work. Huntington's (1997) view of the incompatibility of Islam and democracy is therefore a useful proposition with a broad relevance to the region. Related to this has been the case in Egypt where there has been a roll-back to camouflaged military-civilian type of rule was after the newly democratically elected Muslim Brotherhood led by Mahomed Morsi had tried to experiment with Islamisation of Egypt constitution leading to 14 million people demonstrating against the government, eventually leading to the overthrow of Morsi by the then defence minister, El-Sisi, with the new government enjoying support of the Western government (Hessler 2017). The case of guided democracies can be of paramount importance in cases where there are many armed non-state actors who might not be willing to be integrated in peace building and rebuilding of state institutions. Some level of military intervention in civilian rule are therefore of paramount importance as the losing non-state actors like ISIS are potentially to remain frustrated, thus creating a potential of new cycles of armed conflicts. The case of Algeria which spent much of the 90's decade fighting insurgents who wanted to establish Islamic law upon their return from fighting in Afghanistan only for the army to use brute force to crush them (Gall 2017). The need to keep the state in a position to defend itself from aggressors can only be guaranteed when a state is assured of its internal security hence the neo-realist view of creation of offensive and defensive capabilities should be premised on an enabling internal environment. As such, it can be extrapolated that democracy and its

promotion in the MENA, might be mismatched instruments to achieve broad-based regional security and stability, leaving realpolitik to influence the regional outcomes.

4.4 Collective Security, a Responsibility for All States

The emergence of collective security as the constructivist norm in international law has been informed by the need to share responsibility in containing the contagion effect of small domestic perturbations as explained by the chaos theorists (Windsor 2013). The recent expansion and internationalisation of terror has led to the codification within international law, the foundation of global fight against terror through the passage of UNSC resolution 2178 (United Nations 2014). The complex interaction of local chaos within Syria and the greater part of the globe (Miller 2016) are matters that require states to cooperate on security matters. Collective security therefore helps states to close and secure most areas that are easily manipulated by non-state actors like ISIS. For instance, the bombing campaign by the U.S. coalition and Russia of oil fields that were captured by ISIS in Iraq and Syria has greatly degraded ISIS financial flow which reached an excess of \$1 million in daily oil sales (Thompson 2015). This has been necessary to achieve the receding of ISIS operations within both countries and the funding of recruitment of foreign fighters (Thompson 2015, Gordon and Schmitt 2015, Shaheen 2015).

However, the power-seeking behaviour of regional states like Saudi Arabia and Iran, and global powers like the U.S. and Russia, have made escalation of ideological differences impact collective security as they are all fuelling the Syrian crisis, making it difficult to have one single comprehensive plan that can effectively degrade and eliminate ISIS along with similar groups. The regional U.S. allies, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Qatar, in their bid to protect Sunni population Syria and Iraq, were the key funders of the formation of ISIS with Kuwait further accused of allowing its banks to be used for channelling finances to militant groups Rogin (2014). To this end, respondents A, B, C and E concurred that the loose alliance nature of collective security is an unrealistic ideal if there exist ideological differences amongst states. For instance, the U.S.-Russia differences are more likely to inhibit a quick resolution of the Syrian crisis, further giving terrorist groups new strategies to adapt and cause an impact on global security. The asymmetric advantage that ISIS has, allows it to project violence from different regions and cause different states' issue publics to hold different opinions, potentially causing a rift between the U.S. and E.U. allies resulting in divergent security approaches meant to satisfy domestic appeal (Gambhir 2015). Added to the tactical advantage of terror groups is the existence of commercial interests and extreme privacy laws by firms like Twitter Inc.

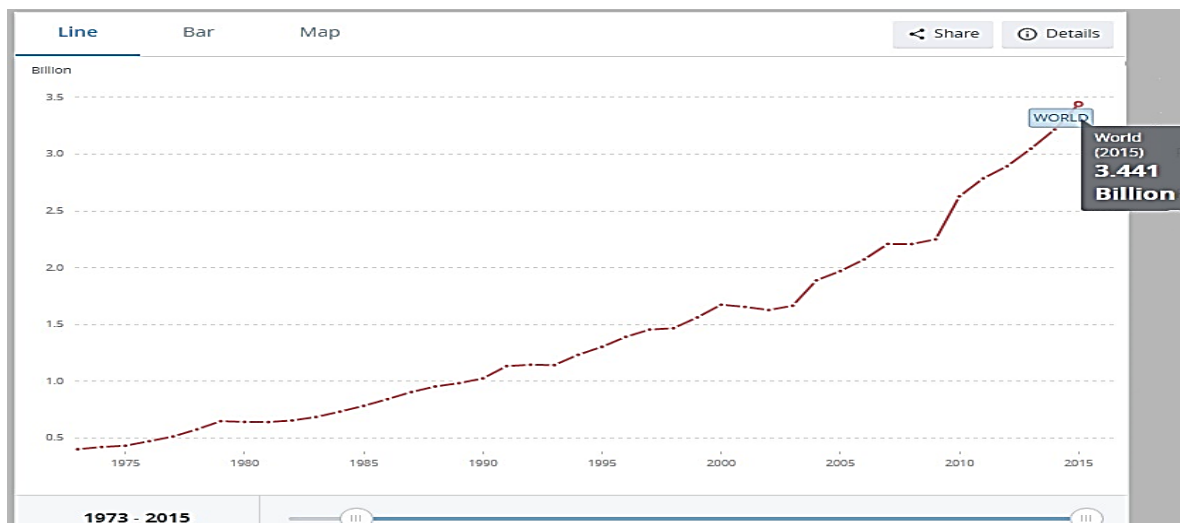
Facebook Inc. and WhatsApp Inc., allowing terror networks to continue operating unabated on these highly secured and encrypted messaging systems that operate with no desire for government censorship or compromise of freedom speech (Ryner 2017). Consequently, respondent B pointed out that unless global powers realise that an intransigency on their ideological and policy positions will result in a lose-lose scenario for them as terrorists are likely to thrive amid the global discord. Although this insight of co-operation can prove useful when construed from an ideological stand-point, states are more inclined to alliance creation as a mechanism of power-balancing in the provision of collective security from both external and internal threats, with NATO being a good illustration of the alliance mechanism in provision of collective security.

Considering the preceding view, respondents C and D cited the exclusion of the African Union (AU) alliance in matters relating to robust security cooperation and the side-lining of the structural socio-economic challenges of the continent, making it easy for radical non-state groups to recruit fighters from the continent. Respondent D further deplored Western neo-imperialism as the tool that subjugates Africa to dependency, resulting in the inability of African states to be institutionally stable to be able to also contribute to their own security. The above views demonstrate the challenges that the major powers should address, beyond the immediate security matters of their homeland. For instance, the ability of ISIS to recruit fighters in Tunisia and some parts of East and West Africa has been on the ability to manipulate the endemic poverty and lack of economic inclusion of young people (Gall 2017). ISIS social media reach in spreading global jihadism that encourages citizens of Western states to carry out attacks in their own countries. The inability of states to fully monitor online activities puts strain collective security.

As important as the challenges that face collective security are, it is also important to note that there has been less open confrontation on the battle field amongst major powers due to the way collective security has been used to avoid or end some conflicts when compared to the periods of the Napoleonic Wars, World War 1 (WW1), and World War 2 (WW2) (Ulusoy n.d.). To this end, the emergence of international organisations like the UN (69 peace-keeping and observer missions plus many preventative diplomatic initiatives), NATO, Collective Security Treaty Organisation (Hayrapetyan 2016, United Nations 2015) and many others, have fostered a relative détente in international affairs. Also, considering terrorist threats to aviation, there have been major global efforts to disrupt the high-jacking or bombing of planes post 9/11. The

uncovering of plots to concurrently bomb as many as 10 US airliners using liquid explosives smuggled in cabin carry-on luggage by British Muslims, led to a global ban on liquids that can be carried onboard (Anderson and DeYoung 2006). Recently, the US banned the carrying of electronic devices on U.S. inbound planes flying from specific Middle East countries after intelligence sharing, of plans to use discreet bombs in electronic devices after U.S. intelligence services have become increasingly worried about the bombmaker Ibrahim Hassan al-Asiri helping terror organisations to build sophisticated non-detectable bombs (Noack, Lazo and Barrett 2017). Overall, this level of intelligence cooperation has made safe the aviation industry which carried 3.441 billion passengers in 2015 alone and \$6.4 trillion worth of goods (35% of value of goods traded internationally, annually) on an average of 100 000 daily flights (The World Bank 2016, International Air Transport Association 2013). The global economic value of the aviation industry is enormous, hence a disturbance caused by terror attacks can affect revenue due to decreased number of passengers in an industry that supports 57 million jobs and generating \$2.2 trillion in global economic activity (International Air Transport Association 2013). The figure below shows the growth in numbers of passengers carried by air transport.

Figure 5: Air Transport Passengers Carried



Source: The World Bank

<http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/IS.AIR.PSGR?end=2015&start=1973&view=chart>

This graph shows the growth in number of airline passengers since 1973 with 2015 recording an annual total of 3.441 billion passengers.

4.5 The Politics of the Refugee Crisis

In the broader definition of security, other non-military security threats like socio-economic, political and environmental (Katzenstein 1996) are matters that have impact on collective security. To that extent, the threat perception posed hard and soft security issues by the flooding

of refugees who have been displaced from Syria, has somewhat been negative from the wider Western world. Granados et. al. (2016) state that whilst Greece, Italy and Germany had their borders open to Syrian migrants, countries like Macedonia, Hungary, Slovenia, Austria, Serbia and Croatia became very hostile and began to close their borders and erecting fences, barring entry to migrants putting the Schengen Treaty and the European Union at risk of collapse (Elliott and Treanor 2016). The barring of refugees is undoubtedly against the principle of non-refoulment which gives refugees right of stay or passage through any country (Dugard 2012). However, coupled with perceived financial and social impact of refugees moving into Europe, the inability to properly vet refugees presented a security challenge as ISIS militants also blended with the movement of these refugees to carry out attacks in Europe (Brown 2015).

Respondents A, B and E cited the dilemma that Europe is faced with in dealing with refugees. On one hand, opening up their relatively peaceful societies to potential terror attacks and on the other, respecting international law regardless of the consequences to their own security. Neo-realism thought esteems the ability of a state to be able to defend its territory and interests thus security becomes a matter of state preservation. To underscore this perspective, the implication of a previously open border system that allowed refugees to move to Europe in their hundreds of thousands has therefore triggered an ultra-nationalist sentiment in the region, which is partly attributed to the Brexit. Due to fear of terrorist attacks, a significant number of European citizens have re-ignited massive support for political parties that are accused of being Xenophobic (Foster 2016). Radical nationalism rhetoric by the Dutch candidate Geert Wilders, Norbert Hofer of Austria, Frauke Petry of Germany, Jimmie Akesson of Sweden, Marine Le Pen of France, Beppe Grillo of Italy and few others including Donald Trump of the U.S., have led anti-Europe and anti-immigrant political campaigns whose views have led to the largest support for such parties that once existed latently on the fringe of contemporary Europe (Forster 2016). The implications of this rise of the far-right politics coupled with discontentment in the intrusiveness of globalisation (Haass and Litan 1998), can be viewed as a precursor of the possibility return of potential political antagonism in the region and beyond as ultra-nationalism and political extremism was one of the causes of both world wars.

The regional effect of refugees in host countries is a factor that one respondent cited to be likely strenuous on the socio-economic aspects of neighbouring countries. This view is bolstered by a report of the UNHCR (1997) which cited Least Developed Countries (LDCs) to be the major hosts of refugees, exacerbating the already fragile political and socio-economic environments

in those countries. For instance, Lebanon is host 1 069 111 Syrians and another 450 000 Palestinians, a considerable percentage to its own population which numbers 4.7 million people (NRC ICLA 2016). The negative impact may lead to the competition for resources between the locals and refugees, resulting in inflationary pressures in the long run as increased construction is matched by increased local rentals whilst increased demand for food induces price hikes (UNHCR 1997). However, in the event of international partners funding the hosting of refugees, the financial inflows can help the economies of local communities.

Literature reveals another challenge relating to the future return, resettlement and reintegration of refugees. Based on the more than 10 million internally and externally displaced Syrians (World Vision 2017), the cost of rehabilitation is going to be extremely high considering the epic level of destruction of homes and infrastructure. Outside the challenges of post-war nation building, a respondent stated the need of the international community having to fully fund reconstruction and integration as the country will risk slipping back into turmoil if the returnees are not properly resettled and economically reintegrated. The implications of this dynamic are that, the longer it takes to reach a resolution of the crisis, the more challenges the country will face in future reintegration as those who were displaced whilst at 12 years old are already 18 years old, creating a new demography of youths who will again live with unfulfilled ambitions. This will then create a vicious circle of revolts as indicated by the large numbers of youths who participated in the uprisings on the premise unfulfilled ambitions.

4.6 The New Significance of Protests in a Globalised World Order

Violent protests are a threat to any government since stability is founded upon the moral obligation of citizens not contravening the legitimacy of the authority of the state as argued by the philosopher Hobbes. He postulates that the violation of the rule of law leads to chaos and anarchy (Carmmaerts 2013). However, illegitimate or oppressive power tend to be resisted non-violently, with the possibility of the use of violent confrontation as a means of attempting to change unjust circumstances (Honderich 1989). Protests, whether peaceful or violent, are not a new phenomenon, but the new nature of a globalised world order coupled with fast technological advances in fast and affordable communication methods of the social media, have given protests a new level of relevance and security challenges. The ubiquitous availability of smart-phones and the internet made the Tunisian protests reach to every state in the world whilst triggering a chain of similar responses in several countries. Outside the immediate regional influence, the uprisings resonated with different publics, especially the youth in many countries

including developed states. Occupy Wall Street was a mass movement targeted against banks and financial houses along with the governments that support them. This movement was inspired and encouraged by the Arab uprisings against dictatorship leading to a series of protests in the major cities around the globe (Carothers and Youngs 2015, Elman and Brudzińska 2013). Demonstrations were held in the U.S., Spain, Greece, Italy, Brazil, Ukraine, Turkey, Russia, China, Britain, Canada and several other countries (NPR 2011, Kimball 2014). Whilst some of the countries had demonstrations simultaneously, some had them at different timelines and for various social, economic or political reasons as shown in Appendix B which shows list of global protests for the period May 2010 to August 2015.

Respondents B, C and D alluded the new threats posed by ‘copy-cat’ demonstrations inspired by the Arab uprisings and the existence of global injustices in both developed and developing states as posing universal threats to governments. However, respondent C added a contradictory remark to the effect that;

Judging by the number of demonstrations in the West, it is safe to say that capitalism is beginning to fail and the citizens of these developed countries are also feeling the heat, hence the demand for reform and the rise of anti-establishment wave that has gone to elect political novices like Donald J. Trump

The above perspectives by the respondents partially concurs with the view of Thiel (2015) who proffers the notion that the Arab uprisings have provided the framework that supports the overthrowing of governments unconstitutionally. Exacerbating this risk is the concept of globalisation which has made it easy for local and regional events to have a bearing on the international level. Underscoring the same is Smilov (2015) who explains the elevated risk, potency and disruptive nature of citizens’ protests and how they can easily present a crisis of legitimacy in government whenever citizens have grievances. The changing aspirations of young people whom with increased ability of freedom of speech and expression, are finding it easy to communicate via social networks, thus making more people aware of issues and how others are dealing with them. The advancement in these technologies makes it easier for organising protests, sending updates the broader world about events on the ground through video and picture messages with these visuals normally finding secondary sources of outlets like the internet and television (Carothers and Youngs 2015). For example, the global online awareness of the kidnapped Nigerian Chibok girls saw people from various countries demonstrating against the Nigerian government to do more to find the girls by using an online identifier ‘hash-tag’ #BringBackOurGirls (Shaban 2017). This kind of technological activism has helped to bring global issues to a wider audience with the ability to formulate or alter

opinions about certain issues. Whilst these technologies have helped the cause and ease of protests, governments are also investing in technological tools in order to adapt to counter balance the effects of activism aided by technology. It is therefore undoubted that increased nature of demonstrations aided by technology can also bring threats to the stability of governments especially in democracies as their spontaneity can leave demonstrators at the risk of terror attacks especially where terrorism is evolving in its methods of trying to deliver maximum damage at the maximum publicity, as has been the case in Europe's various cities like Nice, Berlin, London and Stockholm where terrorists driven through crowds leaving 103 people dead and 285 injured (Rothwell and Foster 2017, Kuzj 2016, Erickson and Stanley-Becker 2017). The above factors confirm the emergence of changed global circumstances and realignment of governance on the basis of a new generation of young people. In Africa where 892 million people out of a total population of 1.2 billion are under the age of 34 years (U.N. Department of Economic and Social Affairs n.d.), it is imperative that states formulate policies that do not alienate this demography as it is the generation that is driven by desire of new opportunities yet most of them are excluded economically (Corrigan 2016).

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter identified five distinct themes pertaining to the effects of the Syrian uprising on the politics of democracy and security. The analysis of documentary evidence and responses from interviews show that foreign intervention is largely problematic as it is mainly a tool for power-seeking behaviour of states. The absence of a resolution of the crisis in Syria is largely premised on the pursuance of conflicting geo-political interests between the Western states and the Eastern powers like Russia and China who are involved in the conflict directly and indirectly resulting in the inability of the UN to effectively maintain global peace. The second point of analysis focused on the difficulty faced with the promotion of democracy in the MENA where the peculiarities of both Syria and the region are antithetical to establishment of democracy as an ideal governance norm. Rather, an adoption of hybrid governance systems which are unique to the region are more likely to yield peace and prosperity as is the case with the UAE. Thirdly, collective security is difficult to establish when states are ideologically opposed and are competing for influence. The fact that opposing powers have formed loose alliances around the fight against ISIS in Syria and Iraq does not guarantee total security as the complications over resolution of the war in Syria continues to elongate the period of instability resulting in terror groups using the interim period to further adapt to new terror strategies and manipulation of the rift in international relations. Fourthly, the refugee crisis has caused an emergence of new norms

where European states have ignored international law of barring entrance to refugees as a mechanism of protecting their states from possible pressures brought by the significant numbers of refugees. This has also led to the resurgence of support extreme nationalism, a condition identified to be synonymous to the causes of both world wars. Lastly, the Arab uprisings and the existence new global realities in technological advancement, have emboldened and reshaped citizenry revolt as there has been a significant surge of global demonstrations. The next chapter will therefore be centred around proffering of recommendations and the conclusion of the research.

Chapter 5

Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to analyse the global impact of the Arab Uprisings on the politics of security and democracy with focus on the Syrian uprising. This final chapter will therefore give a summary of the findings juxtaposed to the five objectives of the study, offer recommendations in line with the fifth objective and then give the implications for future studies.

5.2 Objectives of the Study

- To explore the causes of the uprisings and analyse the transitional challenges faced by states affected by the uprisings.
- To evaluate the complexities of democracy promotion and foreign intervention in the region.
- To examine the impact the Syrian uprising has had on global security.
- To establish the appropriateness of democracy on the MENA and the global significance of protests as a new strategy of citizen empowerment.
- To proffer recommendations on how security in the region can be improved.

5.3 Summary of Findings Qualified against the Objectives of the Study

The analysis of literature and interviews reflected the role of foreign intervention by states and their non-state cohorts as part of a bigger geo-political tool used to advance a state's power interests. Russia has gone to be directly and militarily involved in Syria to deter the U.S. from intervening militarily in advancing of its own geo-political interests that puts Israel at the centre. These opposing interests have stalled any form of resolution of the Syrian crisis and relegated the UN's function as a peace-making body to the power-seeking behaviour of geo-political foes. Foreign intervention in the form of the structural make-up of global relations was also identified as a key cause of the uprisings.

Supporters of the concept of democracy have touted it as the only solution to development and the problem of authoritarianism. However, analysis has shown that the MENA has its own unique traits that are supported by political Islam, which gives religion an almost permanent seat in governance issues in most of the regional states. These peculiarities operate in opposition to the prerequisites of establishing sustainable democracies hence there should be support for

pragmatism when assisting states to establish governance systems. To that end, the model of governance a state or region has, should be modelled around working and winning formulas that are crafted with cognisance of realistic possibilities, which in this case might be reflected in the successful governance model of the UAE. It is only the recognition of these realities not the imposition of a universal democratic ideology, that will be likely to secure peace even if it means the existence of some form of hybrid model between military and civilian government, provided such an arrangement is progressive and capable of bringing social cohesion, economic growth and stability.

With the Syrian crisis being central to the rise and internationalisation of terror, an analysis of collective security showed that such an emerging norm is a difficult proposition in light of competing ideologies by most states, even amongst allies. The relative successes recorded on account of collective security have been eroded by the continual instability in Syria, which is a direct result of the intransigency of global powers in finding a lasting solution. These powers all have significant influence over most groups that are fighting in Syria. For example, the U.S. is allied to Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Kuwait, states which in turn are in shadow alliance with some terror groups fighting in Syria as they are covert and indirect founders of ISIS and continue to covertly support other militant terror groups in Syria. It is therefore these complex alliances that are drafted to achieve multiple ends that tend to make elusive the goal of collective security despite some positives achieved post WW2.

The refugee crisis, another aspect that has been securitised, was identified to have become problematic for Europe as the high numbers of refugees are now being seen as the source of terror attacks and bringing pressure to the social services within the various states within Europe. This position has then led to the re-emergence of the political ideology of the far-right, political thoughts that are motivated by extremism and ultra-nationalism. This was analysed to be the condition of European politics preceding both world wars. Such findings therefore give a negative outlook of the extent to which the Syrian problems have changed European politics.

The findings also focused on how the role of globalisation in interacting with the Arab uprisings, has led to an emboldening and reshaping of citizenry revolt as the period post the Arab uprising has been characterised by global demonstrations which were directly/indirectly influenced by the Tunisian uprisings. It is therefore the ubiquitous use and availability of technology that has made it easy for citizens to organise protests, communicate events in real-

time and learn from other environments how to organise and what demonstrations can achieve. However, it is the ability of technology in assisting spontaneous violent or non-violent demonstrations, that the state has come under the threat of unconstitutional overthrowing of government and the inability to protect other citizens from these disruptive trends that can also get high-jacked by terrorists.

Drawing upon the summation of these findings as outlined above, and the broader analysis of this topic, this study therefore disproves the early assertions of several researchers that were premised on the inflated optimism of the MENA getting into a period of democratisation hence their classification of the uprising as “The Arab Spring”. The use of the word “spring” in reference to the uprisings, as analysed by this research, was avoided as its use in literature revealed not only an identical reference with an idea of an awakening of the region’s citizens, but it is also used to define an amplified optimism of the awakening turning into a democratic wave for the entire region, a case that has only materialised for Tunisia. This overstated optimism can partly be attributed to researchers having to make assessments for policy purposes in a highly fluid and ongoing state of events, thereby making analyses that lack conclusive information pertaining to ongoing events. Whereas this study was premised on analysis that used current and retrospective literature on the events of the region, most of which have come to conclusion for now, thus a better view was obtained.

5.4 Recommendations

The Syrian crisis, the biggest contributor to regional crisis needs an urgent resolution that starts with major powers agreeing through the UNSC mechanisms to have a two-pronged approach to the crisis. Firstly, the use of overwhelming military power to fight and defeat ISIS using the military and intelligence assets of Russia and the West through UN coordinated operations. Secondly, to have all states influence their proxy groups that are fighting within Syria to come to a cease fire while eliminating any clandestine support to any group in the crisis. After such a de-escalation, there could be the signing of peace accords coupled with urgent disarmament of all parties with the political focus of establishment of a coalition government or transitional authority. The coalition government can then be accorded a reasonable tenure of office to allow society to get accustomed to new cooperation, rebuilding of state institutions and achieve better social cohesion underpinned by peace. A coalition government therefore needs to be extensively representative to give reasonable social and political space for all groups based on proportional representation.

To foster mutual trust, it is best for an internationally backed peace plan and coalition government to eliminate the internal security dilemma whilst coup-proofing the government by having an interim UN Peace-keeping army with an expanded role, replacing the function of the country's army for the duration of transition. The benefit that arises from such an arrangement is the dual purpose the army serves by being a peace-keeping and enforcement mission and being the regular army for the country. Lengthening the duration of coalition government allows the mending of societal splits caused by civil wars and gives room for cultivation of mutual trust that extends to become a new societal norm. Reduction of the possibility of a return to rivalry can be created by ensuring the physical security of parties. Added to this, the international community through international organisations like the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), should be ready to fund reconstruction and supporting of economic growth through extending economic packages similar to the Marshall Plan, thereby reducing dire economic conditions that are normally associated with triggers of violent demonstrations. Sustaining any form of positive governance model is premised on the creation of strong institutions and the eventual building of infrastructure.

In improving security against terror attacks, the international community also need to improve the fight against home grown terrorism which is normally a direct response to states' foreign policies of intervention especially in the Middle East. Identifying and rehabilitation of young people who have been radicalised is also important as the risk of sporadic attacks shall increase in Western states as ISIS cells in Syria and Iraq are being dismantled by a sustained air campaign, leaving hordes of foreign fighters going back to their homelands where they will pose new threats to authorities and citizens. This means that states need to invest more in intelligence and social programs that can be able to effectively identify and de-radicalise these fighters.

At an international level, states also need to recalibrate their policies when dealing with terror groups and be open to look for new strategies that can involve getting to negotiate with some of the terror groups. Conceptually, most non-state groups are groups of people fighting for specific causes that are mostly related to foreign policy matters of intervention or invasion by Western states. It is for this purpose that states should consider engaging with most of these groups as violence and terror are often a tool employed by these groups to either highlight or bargain for certain conditions and demands. The one-dimensional approach by states of giving the terrorist identifier tag to any group using violence coupled with refusal to directly engage

with such groups, can be part of the problem in failure to resolve sporadic acts of violence by non-state actors. For instance, most liberation groups in Africa were at some point classified as terror groups by colonial governments, only for them to be politically legitimised due to various pressures. Such groups are found in most African states, the current ruling parties like ZANU-PF in Zimbabwe and ANC in South Africa as a case in point.

Additionally, the UNSC needs to be reformed to represent the new multilateral international system whilst removing the divisive veto of the permanent five members who are reflective of the old global power set-up. Emerging global powers like India, Brazil, Japan, Nigeria and South Africa should be considered to become permanent council members who hold veto powers. These states represent expanded interests not currently catered for by the current unequal representation among the P5. Another recommendation is centred around the removal or amendment of the use of the veto power to reduce the current paralysis that faces the council when faced with issues that reflect on the east-west rivalry. Therefore, any reform of the UNSC should be premised on ending the bi-polar control of the council as reflected between the U.S. and its cohorts of Britain and France on one side, with Russia and China on the other. Their discordant geo-political interests have inhibited a quick resolution to the Syrian crisis. A clash of these two sides in any future attempts to resolve any conflict will evidently increase the human suffering as conflicts can persist at the expense of global power-play by the very same council entrusted in bringing peace.

The interaction of globalisation and local phenomenon is the new reality in international relations. Consequently, it is imperative that developed states pay urgent attention to the developmental deficit, colonial and imperial distortions faced by states in the periphery to assist them to integrate in the contemporary world economic affairs. Such legacy problems are in most cases the economic growth inhibitors that leave weak states in perpetual dependency to the developed states. The post 2008 recession funding challenges that affected all developed states' ability to fulfil some of their donor commitments, left some ever dependent Arab states with huge funding gaps for wheat imports, leading to uprisings that have had negative blow-back effects on the developed states in the form of multi-faceted security challenges. The cost of rolling back such security and related challenges run into billions of dollars which could be used in restructuring the periphery.

5.5 Implications on Further Studies

Furthering studies on the effects globalisation on foreign policy formulation with emphasis on how major powers need to de-escalate and recede from their power-seeking behaviour in exchange for balanced global development. This is in view of how foreign policies of these major powers have fallen short of acknowledging the need for lessening economic imbalances between the Global North and Global South as accelerated globalisation continues to export the challenges of the Global South to the Global North as is the case with the large flow of migrants from economically weak and troubled states into Europe and other Western countries.

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Appendix A: Interview Guide

Interview Guide

My name is Alois Mutizira and I am currently studying for a Master of Science degree in International Relations at the University of Zimbabwe. In partial fulfillment of this degree, I am doing a dissertation research focusing on the “*Analysis of the global implications of the Arab uprising on the politics of democracy and security: Case study of Syria*”. Along with an attached letter from the university, kindly assist me with your views on the focus areas below. All the information you provide shall be regarded as highly confidential to the extent of not linking you as an individual to the views and points that will be used in analysing and discussing the findings of this research. All your input shall only be referenced to, as coming from “respondents” without providing names, occupation or any other information that lead to you being identified as the source.

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| Objective 1. | Understanding the causes of the uprising |
| Question: | <i>In your view, what do you understand to be the most important causes of the Arab uprising and what are the transitional challenges faced by states of the uprisings</i> |
| Objective 2. | Evaluating democracy promotion and the role of foreign intervention |
| Question: | <i>What is the role of foreign intervention in the region and what are the challenges faced in attempts to democratization of the region?</i> |
| Objective 3. | Assessment of the impact of the Syrian crisis on security |
| Question: | <i>How do you view the impact of the Syrian crisis to regional and global security and what can be the role of the international community in resolving the crisis and its effects?</i> |
| Objective 4. | Establishing the appropriateness of democracy to the region |
| Question: | <i>Do you think that MENA states are an exceptional case in resisting democracy</i> |
| Objective 5. | Analysing the new significance of protests as influenced by the uprisings |
| Question: | <i>In your opinion, how have the uprisings shaped the psychology of protests globally?</i> |

Appendix B: Significant National Protests

Significant National Protests, May 2010 - August 2015

Start Date	Country	Country Status	Trigger	Motivation	Participants
May 2010	Greece	Free	Series of public spending cuts and tax increases	Austerity measures, unemployment, poverty, corruption, cronyism	Youth, students, low- and middle-income citizens, general public
December 2010	Belarus	Not free	Alleged election fraud	Dissatisfaction with government, lack of freedoms, corruption, lack of transparency and government accountability, economic mismanagement	Opposition, general public, youth
December 2010	Tunisia	Free	Self-immolation of Tunisian street vendor Mohamed Bouazizi in protest of the confiscation of his wares and the harassment and humiliation that he reported was inflicted on him by a municipal official	Corruption, lack of freedoms, poor living standards, police violence, unemployment, lack of human rights	General public including students, teachers, lawyers, journalists, human rights activists, trade unionists, opposition politicians, and police officers
January 2011	Albania	Partly free	Revelation of corruption scandal involving incumbent deputy prime minister	Corruption, dissatisfaction with government, lack of freedoms, political deadlock	Opposition, general public
January 2011	Algeria	Not free	Protests in Tunisia and Egypt, and a copycat suicide of Tunisian street vendor Mohamed Bouazizi	Rising cost of living, high unemployment, lack of government accountability, lack of political freedoms	General public, youth
January 2011	Azerbaijan	Not free	Protest in Tunisia and an antigovernment campaign organized on social media platforms	Dissatisfaction with government, corruption, lack of freedoms, unemployment	Students, opposition
January 2011	Egypt	Not free	Protest in Tunisia and anger over police brutality; on January 25, a national holiday to commemorate the police forces, Egyptians took to the streets, calling it a day of rage	Dissatisfaction with government, unemployment, poverty, corruption, demand for end to long-standing rule of then president Hosni Mubarak	Opposition, general public, Mubarak supporters
January 2011	Jordan	Not free	Sweeping victory of parliamentary elections by pro-government candidates	Corruption, inflation, unemployment, lack of public accountability	Opposition, youth, general public
January 2011	Tanzania	Partly free	Protest in Tunisia, and the detainment of chairman of opposition Chadema, Freeman Mbowe, ahead of a rally against government corruption	Corruption, systemic mistrust, dissatisfaction with government	Opposition
January 2011	Yemen	Not free	Protest in Tunisia and the arrest of a prominent female activist who had called for an end to the thirty-three-year rule of former president Ali Abdullah Saleh	Demand for democracy, dissatisfaction with government, demand for constitutional and electoral reform, abuse of power, lack of freedoms, corruption, scarcity of natural resources and reserves	Human rights activists, journalists, opposition, youth, students, government supporters
February 2011	Armenia	Partly free	Protests in Tunisia and Egypt, and the anniversary of the 2008 protests, when ten people died protesting the presidential election result	Dissatisfaction with government, democratic deficit, poor economic conditions, corruption	Opposition
February 2011	Bahrain	Not free	Protests in Tunisia and Egypt, and the anniversary of the country's 2002 constitution	Dissatisfaction with government, demand for changes to constitution, demand for the end of monarchy, demand for democracy, demand for release of political prisoners, demand for end to use of torture	Shias, Shia activists, young members of both Shia and Sunni communities, youth
February 2011	Croatia	Free	Antigovernment campaign organized on online social media platforms	Dissatisfaction with government, corruption, economic mismanagement, poor living standards	Opposition, students, senior citizens, general public
February 2011	Libya	Not free	Protests in Tunisia and Egypt, and the arrest of a human rights activist in Benghazi	Dissatisfaction with government, demand for regime change to bring an end to strongman leader Muammar Qaddafi's forty-one-year rule	Opposition, regime loyalists
February 2011	Morocco	Partly free	Protests in Tunisia and Egypt, and simmering discontent with slowing pace of political reform and worsening quality of democracy	Dissatisfaction with government, poor democratic quality, corruption, lack of freedoms, demand for constitutional reform	Youth, general public
March 2011	Syria	Not free	Protests in Tunisia and Egypt, and the arrests of at least fifteen children for painting antigovernment graffiti on the walls of a school in Daraa	Demand for release of arrested and tortured children, dissatisfaction with government (and President Bashar al-Assad's predecessor and father, Hafez), lack of freedoms, poor economic situation, government repression	General public, youth, opposition, government supporters
March 2011	United Kingdom	Free	Coalition government announcement of public spending cuts	Austerity measures, unemployment, economic mismanagement, poverty	Public- and private-sector workers, students, pensioners, general public
April 2011	Chile	Free	A growing divide in quality of education on the basis of social class	Demand for changes to education system, dissatisfaction with government response to environmental issues, unemployment	Students, youth, general public
April 2011	India	Free	Anna Hazare's declaration of a hunger strike against corruption	Corruption, dissatisfaction with government, lack of transparency of political processes	Activist Anna Hazare and supporters, general public
April 2011	Uganda	Not free	Arrest of opposition leader Kizza Besigye, who called for peaceful Walk to Work campaign after losing third attempt at the Ugandan presidency	Financial mismanagement, high cost of living, lack of freedoms	Opposition, activist groups
May 2011	Czech Republic	Free	Government measures taken to increase healthcare costs and raise the retirement age	Austerity measures, corruption, dissatisfaction with government, economic mismanagement	Students, trade and workers' unions, general public
May 2011	Mexico	Partly free	Killings resulting from drug war in Mexico	Dissatisfaction with government strategy in the war on drugs, lack of freedoms, corruption	Indigenous communities, general public from cities surrounding Mexico City
May 2011	Spain	Free	Frustration with rising unemployment rate, cost of living, and incompetent politicians unable to deal with effects of economic crisis	Austerity measures, corruption, dissatisfaction with government, economic mismanagement	Several anti-austerity and anti-government movements catalyzed by social networks, mobile networks, and the Internet; youth; the unemployed and impoverished; students
June 2011	Belarus	Not free	Simmering unrest from the December 2010 violent protest against alleged election fraud	Dissatisfaction with government, change of government, economic mismanagement	Youth, outside the established opposition mainstream
June 2011	Greece	Free	Greek parliament's backing of midterm austerity bill, further increasing taxes and public spending cuts	Austerity measures, unemployment, poverty, corruption, cronyism, dissatisfaction with government, political failure, systemic mistrust	General public, low- and middle-income citizens, youth

June 2011	Panama	Free	Passing of a new law that opened up native lands to foreign mining and hydroelectric companies	Discrimination of indigenous peoples, avoiding the displacement of tens of thousands of indigenous people, protecting the environment and agriculture of native region	Indigenous communities, environmental activists
July 2011	Malawi	Partly free	Worsening fuel shortages, rising prices, and growing unemployment rate	Dissatisfaction with government, financial mismanagement, increasing autocracy, fuel and foreign currency shortages, poor human rights record	Activist groups, youth, students, general public
August 2011	United Kingdom	Free	Death of Mark Duggan, a twenty-nine-year-old man who was killed by officers from the Trident unit of the Metropolitan Police that investigates gun crime, according to the Independent Police Complaints Commission, an external government body that regulates the police	Economic hardship, police brutality, racism, classism	Youth, poor, unemployed
September 2011	Israel	Free	Economic slump and rising cost of living	Demand for political change, economic mismanagement	General public, youth
September 2011	United States	Free	Anger over a financial system seen as favoring the rich and powerful at the expense of ordinary citizens	Economic and social injustice	Urban educated youth, low- and middle-income citizens, general public
October 2011	Colombia	Partly free	Proposal by the government of President Juan Manuel Santos to reform higher education	Defense of public education system against privatization of higher-education institutions	Students, student groups, teachers
December 2011	Russia	Not free	Alleged election fraud	Corruption, cronyism, demand for regime change	Middle-income citizens, youth, opposition
December 2011	Slovakia	Free	Leaked documents showing top politicians dividing kickbacks, lucrative jobs, and spheres of influence with powerful oligarchs	Corruption, dissatisfaction with government, cronyism, economic mismanagement, lack of transparency	General public
January 2012	Nigeria	Partly free	Fuel subsidy removal	Financial mismanagement, corruption, systemic mistrust	General public, labor unions
January 2012	Romania	Free	Resignation of former deputy health minister Raed Arafat, who had criticized the draft healthcare reform bill that would have added private firms to the state health sector	Austerity measures, corruption, dissatisfaction with government, economic mismanagement, demand for resignation of then president Traian Băsescu and the centrist government of then prime minister Emil Boc	Opposition, youth, general public
January 2012	Senegal	Free	Then president Abdoulaye Wade's announcement of his candidacy to stand for a third term in the 2012 election, proposing an extraconstitutional presidential term	Long-standing ruler, perceived authoritarian drift	Opposition
January 2012	South Africa	Free	General government neglect of the poor, lack of public services	Lack of affordable housing, dissatisfaction with government's general neglect of the poor, widening income gap, economic mismanagement	Poor, black South Africans
March 2012	Colombia	Partly free	Bad performance and increasing cost of Bogotá's public transport system TransMilenio	Poor economic situation, poor public services, dissatisfaction with government failure to address local concerns	Students, general public
May 2012	Azerbaijan	Not free	Two days before the country hosted Eurovision, human rights activists and opposition protesters seized on the song contest to highlight the lack of freedoms in Azerbaijan	Dissatisfaction with government, poor human rights record, lack of democratic standards	Opposition, human rights activists
June 2012	Bulgaria	Free	New forestry act lifting restrictions on the development of a ski resort	Corruption, dissatisfaction with government, abuse of power	Youth, environmental activists, opposition
June 2012	Togo	Partly free	Electoral reforms made in favor of the ruling party ahead of a poll later that year	Dissatisfaction with government, demand for end to system allowing unlimited presidential terms, poor democratic quality	Opposition
July 2012	Mexico	Partly free	Alleged election fraud, media bias	Dissatisfaction with government, corruption, media bias, lack of transparency, demand for educational reform	Opposition
August 2012	Tajikistan	Not free	Killing of rebel leader Imomnazar Imomnazarov, one of several former opposition field commanders who were granted amnesty for crimes they allegedly committed during the Tajik Civil War, and given state posts	Civil unrest, dissatisfaction with government, poverty, economic mismanagement, systemic mistrust, cronyism, police brutality	Opposition, youth, general public
November 2012	Argentina	Free	Antigovernment campaign organized on online social media platforms	Dissatisfaction with government, corruption, crime, insecurity, inflation, economic mismanagement	Opposition, middle-income citizens, general public
December 2012	India	Free	Rape of a twenty-three-year-old woman and severe beating of her friend by six men in New Delhi	Dissatisfaction with government's handling of increasing sexual violence cases against women	Urban, educated youth
December 2012	Iraq	Not free	Detention of the bodyguards of a Sunni minister in Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's coalition government, which reinforced widespread Sunni perceptions that the premier is intent on eliminating his Sunni political rivals	Dissatisfaction with government, grievances left unresolved when U.S. forces withdrew one year earlier, demand for discontinuation of democracy-hampering sectarian and ethnic quota system	Sunnis, youth, students, Iraqi civil society, trade unionists
December 2012	Slovenia	Free	Government announcement of budget cuts in already financially troubled state	Austerity measures, corruption, dissatisfaction with government, economic mismanagement, poor democratic standards	Labor unions, public- and private-sector workers, students, general public
January 2013	Azerbaijan	Not free	Car accident involving the owner of the Chirag motel, the site of an alleged brothel, which authorities ignored repeated calls by local residents to shut down	Dissatisfaction with government, corruption, abuse of power, lack of freedoms, unemployment	Opposition, residents of Ismayilli
January 2013	Pakistan	Partly free	Revelation of a series of big corruption scandals across the political system, a few months before the country's general election	Dissatisfaction with government, corruption, demand for dissolution of parliament, demand for electoral system reform	Canadian-Pakistani cleric Muhammad Tahir-ul-Qadri and supporters, general public
February 2013	Bulgaria	Free	Hike in electricity prices	Dissatisfaction with government, political failure, systemic mistrust, poverty, corruption, organized crime, conflict of interests between politics and business	Low- and middle-income citizens, general public
February 2013	Guinea	Partly free	Alleged election fraud	Dissatisfaction with government, corruption, systemic mistrust, political deadlock, electoral reform, ethnic rivalry and violence	Opposition, government supporters, youth
February 2013	Ireland	Free	Bank debts being passed on to Irish taxpayers	Austerity measures, dissatisfaction with government, economic mismanagement, worsening economic conditions, unemployment	Opposition, public- and private-sector workers, trade and workers' unions, unemployed

February 2013	Singapore	Partly free	Government announcement to increase the population through immigration	Dissatisfaction with government's immigration policies, poor economic conditions, poor living standards, rising property prices and living costs	Youth, general public
March 2013	Cyprus	Free	Bailout deal with EU that closed banks and seized large deposits	Corruption, economic mismanagement and collapse, abuse of power, lack of transparency, dissatisfaction with government	Bank workers, bondholders, general public
April 2013	Argentina	Free	General anger over a deteriorating economy and President Cristina Fernandez's efforts to reform the media and courts	Dissatisfaction with government, corruption, economic mismanagement, abuse of power, poor democratic quality	Opposition, middle-income citizens, general public
April 2013	Armenia	Partly free	Alleged election fraud	Dissatisfaction with government, poor democratic quality, economic mismanagement, corruption	Opposition
May 2013	Italy	Free	Austerity policies and high unemployment	Austerity measures, corruption, dissatisfaction with government, economic mismanagement	Labor unions, students, general public
May 2013	Malaysia	Partly free	Alleged election fraud	Dissatisfaction with government, demand for electoral reform	Opposition, general public
June 2013	Brazil	Free	Increase in bus fares	Dissatisfaction with government, corruption, economic mismanagement, police brutality, poor public services, excess spending on the World Cup	Youth, middle-income citizens, workers, opposition
June 2013	Bulgaria	Free	Appointment of media magnate Delyan Peevski as security chief, and disappointment in Bulgaria's subjecting of state institutions to private interests	Dissatisfaction with government, systemic mistrust, persistent poverty, corruption, organized crime, economic mismanagement	Opposition, students, celebrities, general public
June 2013	Egypt	Not free	One-year anniversary of Mohamed Morsi's inauguration as Egypt's president	Lack of freedoms, police brutality, unemployment, economic mismanagement, emergency laws, demand for electoral reform	Opposition, Tamarod (rebellion) campaign, general public, Morsi supporters
June 2013	Turkey	Partly free	Police use of force to subdue otherwise peaceful protests about the redevelopment of Gezi Park in Istanbul	Dissatisfaction with government, perceived authoritarian drift, lack of freedoms	Environmental activists, human rights activists, students, youth, general public
July 2013	Cambodia	Not free	Alleged election fraud	Dissatisfaction with government, long-standing ruler, demand for political change, demand for resignation of Prime Minister Hun Sen, demand for increased wages for garment workers	Opposition, garment workers
August 2013	Colombia	Partly free	Lack of government subsidies, low wages, low prices on exports, poor labor conditions	Dissatisfaction with government, economic mismanagement, widening income gap	Truckers, coal miners, coffee farmers, other laborers
September 2013	Poland	Free	Large-scale layoffs triggered by economic slump	Austerity measures, dissatisfaction with government, change in labor and social policies, unemployment, economic mismanagement	Labor union members, low- and middle-income citizens, general public
October 2013	Portugal	Free	Government unveiling of austerity plans	Austerity measures, corruption, dissatisfaction with government, economic mismanagement	Labor unions, public- and private-sector workers, students, general public
November 2013	Moldova	Partly free	Moldova's plan to sign a partnership agreement with the EU at a forthcoming EU summit in Vilnius	Demand for democracy, demand for closer economic and cultural ties to the EU	Government supporters, general public
November 2013	Moldova	Partly free	A week before an EU summit in Vilnius at which Moldova was to sign a partnership agreement with the EU, opposition reacted to the recent pro-EU rally	Dissatisfaction with government, dissolution of parliament, opposition to EU integration	Opposition, general public
November 2013	Ukraine	Partly free	Government refusal to sign a political and economic Association Agreement with the EU	Corruption, economic mismanagement, poor democratic standards	Middle-income citizens, students, general public
December 2013	Ukraine	Partly free	Students beaten by police in Kiev's Independence Square	Corruption, economic mismanagement, police brutality, poor democratic standards	General public, students
January 2014	Bangladesh	Partly free	Ruling party's refusal to establish a neutral caretaker administration to oversee the general election, and the opposition party's boycott of the election	Poor democratic standards, dissatisfaction with government, demand for election reform	Opposition
February 2014	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Partly free	A rise in unemployment and a lack of stable employment conditions	Dissatisfaction with government, economic mismanagement, poverty, unemployment, systemic mistrust, conflict of interests between politics and business	Low- to middle-income citizens, primarily workers laid off when state-owned companies that were sold off to private ownership collapsed
February 2014	Venezuela	Partly free	Alleged attempted rape of a student	Corruption, high crime rate, primary goods shortage	Students, youth, middle-income citizens, general public
May 2014	Brazil	Free	One month before the opening of the football World Cup, a mega-event budgeted at over \$11 billion	Dissatisfaction with government, corruption, economic mismanagement, excessive spending on the football World Cup, poor public services	Youth, middle-income citizens, workers, opposition
July 2014	Ghana	Free	High cost of living, recurring energy blackouts	Dissatisfaction with government, economic mismanagement, corruption	NGOs, trade unions, workers, opposition
July 2014	China (Hong Kong)	Partly free	Seventeenth anniversary of Hong Kong's handover to China	Dissatisfaction with government, demand for democracy and self-rule, universal suffrage	Occupy Central campaign and supporters, youth, general public
August 2014	Pakistan	Partly free	Alleged election fraud	Dissatisfaction with government, corruption, demand for removal of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, demand for snap elections, demand for electoral system reform	Opposition candidate and supporters, general public
August 2014	United States	Free	Grand jury decisions involving the deaths of Michael Brown, Eric Garner, and Freddie Gray, among others, black men killed by white police officers	Police brutality, racial injustice, poverty, dissatisfaction with government	Youth, students, general public
September 2014	Armenia	Partly free	Specific societal and economic policy issues such as trade tariff regulations, public transportation tariffs, and a contested pension reform plan	Dissatisfaction with government, demand for change of government, demand for economic reform	Opposition
September 2014	China (Hong Kong)	Partly free	Chinese national legislature's announced plan for Hong Kong that would give residents a direct vote for the city's chief executive, starting in 2017, but only from a list of two or three candidates pre-approved by a committee of which most members are loyal to Beijing	Dissatisfaction with government, demand for democracy and self-rule, universal suffrage	Occupy Central campaign and supporters, general public, youth, students
October 2014	Azerbaijan	Not free	Criminal charges against journalists and civil society activists	Corruption, lack of freedoms, unemployment	Students, opposition
October 2014	Burkina Faso	Partly free	A proposed constitutional change to the electoral law and extension of the presidential term limit	Poor democratic standards, dissatisfaction with government, perceived authoritarian drift	Opposition
October 2014	Hungary	Free	Government announcement of plans to enforce Internet tax from 2015	Dissatisfaction with government, poor democratic standards, perceived drift toward authoritarianism and away from the EU, systemic mistrust	Youth, students, low- and middle-income citizens, general public, opposition

October 2014	Ireland	Free	Government introduction of water charges	Austerity measures, economic mismanagement, worsening economic conditions, dissatisfaction with government, tax rises and public spending cutbacks	General public, opposition
November 2014	Albania	Partly free	Increase in taxes and energy prices	Dissatisfaction with government, economic mismanagement, unemployment, poor living standards	Opposition, general public
November 2014	Thailand	Not free	Amnesty bill for politically related offenses allowing former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra to avoid criminal charges	Corruption, dissatisfaction with government, abuse of power	Opposition
November 2014	Togo	Partly free	Opposition reaction to a march in support of President Faure Gnassingbé	Dissatisfaction with government, demand for change of constitution to impose presidential term limit, poor democratic quality	Opposition
January 2015	Democratic Republic of the Congo	Not free	A proposed extension of the presidential term limit	Long-standing ruler, poor democratic standards, perceived authoritarian drift	Opposition, students, general public
January 2015	France	Free	The attack and killing of twelve people in the offices of French satirical newspaper Charlie Hebdo in Paris	Support for freedom of expression, religious and social tolerance, solidarity in values of liberty, equality, and democracy	Over 40 world leaders, general public
March 2015	Azerbaijan	Not free	Eighty-seven days before hosting the inaugural European Games, a mega-event budgeted at over €7 billion (\$8 billion)	Dissatisfaction with government, economic mismanagement, devaluation of the currency, corruption, excessive spending on the European Games, poor living standards, poor human rights record	Opposition, youth, general public
March 2015	Brazil	Free	Thirtieth anniversary of Brazil's end to military rule and establishment of democracy in 1985	Dissatisfaction with government, economic mismanagement, corruption, systemic mistrust	Middle-income citizens, youth, workers, opposition
March 2015	Hungary	Free	On Hungary's National Day, a march held over allegations of corruption and a secretive nuclear deal with Russia	Dissatisfaction with government, perceived authoritarian drift, cronyism, corruption, lack of transparency	Opposition, general public
April 2015	Burundi	Not free	Burundian constitutional court's declaration of President Pierre Nkurunziza's third-term candidacy as valid, despite claims of unconstitutionality	Violation of constitution, long-standing ruler, perceived authoritarian drift, dissatisfaction with government	Opposition, youth
May 2015	Guatemala	Partly free	A UN anticorruption agency report that implicated several high-profile politicians including then vice president Roxana Baldetti and then president Otto Pérez Molina	Corruption, organized crime, dissatisfaction with government, demand for resignation of then vice president Roxana Baldetti and then president Otto Pérez Molina	General public, youth, urban, low- and middle-income citizens
May 2015	Macedonia	Partly free	Revelations of wiretapping scandal involving Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski and his ministers, contained in taped conversations that appear to expose tight government control over journalists, judges, and the conduct of elections	Dissatisfaction with government, corruption, poor democratic standards, perceived authoritarian drift, demand for resignation of Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski	Opposition, Gruevski supporters
May 2015	Moldova	Partly free	Revelation of the theft of \$1.5 billion from the state-owned Savings Bank and private banks Unibank and Social Bank	Corruption, dissatisfaction with government's failure to implement reforms oriented toward the EU	General public, activist groups
June 2015	Armenia	Partly free	Hike in electricity tariffs	Economic mismanagement, corruption, mismanagement of the country's power monopoly, the Russian-owned Armenian Electricity Network	Youth, students
July 2015	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Partly free	The passing of a new labor law seen by some as violating workers' rights	Dissatisfaction with government, economic mismanagement, unemployment	Opposition, workers' unions, workers
July 2015	Iraq	Not free	Power cuts during heat wave	Corruption, poor public services, dissatisfaction with government's failure to improve basic services, poor economic conditions, dissatisfaction with role of religion in politics, demand for judiciary reform	General public, opposition, youth, mainly secular
August 2015	Brazil	Free	A rise in unemployment and inflation, and an ongoing bribery and money-laundering investigation potentially linked to President Dilma Rousseff	Demand for impeachment of President Dilma Rousseff, corruption, dissatisfaction with government, systemic mistrust	Opposition, poor, unemployed
August 2015	Japan	Free	Government's proposal to expand Japan's military role beyond self-defense under a reinterpretation of the country's war-renouncing constitution	Dissatisfaction with government, opposition to security policy reform	Students Emergency Action for Liberal Democracy coalition members and supporters, students, opposition
August 2015	Lebanon	Partly free	Government's inability to deal with garbage collection in Beirut	Dissatisfaction with government, political dysfunction, erosion of political institutions, corruption, lack of public services, conflict of interests between politics and business, lack of transparency, unemployment	Low- to middle-income citizens, youth, unemployed, You Stink campaign and supporters
August 2015	Malaysia	Partly free	A <i>Wall Street Journal</i> report alleging that payments of nearly \$700 million had entered Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak's bank accounts in 2013	Corruption, dissatisfaction with government, lack of freedoms, demand for democracy	General public, members and supporters of the electoral reform group Bersih (clean), opposition

Source: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

<http://carnegieendowment.org/2015/10/08/complexities-of-global-protests-pub-61537>