Human Rights at Arab Summits Closing Statements after September 11, 2001

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to show the degree of interest shown by Arab leaders in promoting the issue of Arab human rights, as evidenced by their closing statements at Arab League summits. This paper also intends to illustrate the impact of international events, mainly those of September 11 attacks, on the issue of Arab human rights as reflected in the closing statements of Arab League summit conferences. The Results of the study show that Arab political address make no reference to human rights as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. September 11 attacks were found to be a pivotal point in the transformation of Arab political address of human rights in that the frequency of mentioning of the human rights issues increased as a result of international transformations and American pressure on the Arab states.

Keywords: Human Rights, Arab League Summits, Closing Statements, September 11 Attacks, International Transformations.

Introduction

The issue of human rights has been considered as a domestic affair over decades. Therefore, the promotion of Human Rights and the concept of state sovereignty have been fundamentally opposed. The idea of International Human Rights and the protection of an individual within a state would be seen as “eroding state sovereignty”, and any promotion of international Human Rights is a restraint on a states’ sovereignty. For example in 1919 the Treaty of Versailles, established a commission to investigate any persons liable for war crimes. The allies opposed such an idea under the protest that any trial of a national head of state in an international court was contrary to the concept of the national sovereignty.

After the Second World War, the international community began to reject the state centered tradition of protection and held individuals directly accountable for their actions under International law. Consequently, the acknowledgment of international duties led to the acknowledgement of international rights. This recognition of accountability and rights of an individual was accordingly codified. The fundamental Universal Declaration of Human Rights agreed upon in December 1948 by the general assembly of the United Nations.

In recent years since the Cold War, the protection of Human Rights seems to have played a significantly greater role. The role of the United Nations in Human Rights protection has been significantly increased, and has been considered by the United Nations Security Council as threats to peace. It is obvious that the increased importance placed on Human Rights has coincided with the greater increase, post cold war, in Humanitarian Intervention.

In the contemporary post-Cold War, the human rights issue has become not only the super powers’ modern ideological weapon of choice in adversarial crisis management, but also one of the most important political manifestations of the globalization age whereby a ruling regime’s legitimacy is qualified by its implementation of human rights.

On the other hand, Arab countries are still very defensive of their sovereignty and the human rights paradigm has cut into that sovereignty, and the priority was given to the security factors at the expense of

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democracy and human rights. International Organization for Human Rights pointed clearly to the marginal role of human rights in Arab countries where basic rights and freedoms of the Arab citizen are denied.

In this context, the event of September 11 attacks represented a pivotal point whereupon the American administration exerted pressure on the Arab States to adopt the human rights issue and openness to democracy, albeit for purely political rather than altruistic motives. It built on the premise of political suppression and was the first step in the creation and support of terrorism.

According to this research, Arab Summit Conferences, and particularly the Arab leaders' closing statements, were significant indicators of the extent of concern for human rights shown by Arab political leaders at these summits; especially since the human rights issue represents an important gateway to understanding the popular revolutions that erupted in most Arab countries in 2011.

The Purpose and Significance of the Study

The study aims to discover the degree of progress and development of the human rights issue through Arab political speeches at the summit level, since it is a mainstay of every democratic system.

The significance of this study originates from the studied issue itself whereby the human rights issue has become the most prominent manifestation of the globalization phenomenon today. Human rights studies also include a humanitarian dimension behind which many political motives and considerations are hidden; therefore an objective scientific study of this issue may uncover the existence of double standards in the handling of human rights issues. If 'the ear of history' only hears the voice of the powerful the human rights issue does justice by voices of the weak. Additional importance of this study is in the examination of statements issued at Arab summit conferences representing the collective Arab stance.

Research Hypothesis

The study assumed that current international transformations, specifically the event of September 11 attacks, contributed greatly to the inclusion of human rights concepts at Arab summits.

Scope of the Study

1. **Objective definition**

   The study based on two variables, the international environment represented in the event of September 11 attacks as well as the subject of human rights at Arab summit conferences.

2. **Time definition:** The study timeline spanned the period from the first Arab summit conference in Cairo 1964 up to and including the Baghdad conference in 2012, while concentrating on the events of September 11 attacks as a pivotal point in the study of the human rights issue.

3. The scope of the human rights issue was limited to the definition of human rights as stated in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights of 1966. Third generation human rights will also be addressed (rights demanded by third world countries), in addition to the issue of terrorism as a pivotal variable in order to monitor its fallout on human rights related texts at Arab summit conferences.

4. The study was limited to the analysis of human rights mentioned in closing statements at Arab summit conferences, excluding addressing Palestinian rights under Israeli occupation, or those of any other Arab state under occupation, in order to show the extent of interest shown by Arab political leaders towards human rights within the Arab states themselves.

Study's Methodology

Content Analysis method was used to show the degree of interest shown by Arab leaders in promoting the issue of Arab human rights, as evidenced by their closing statements at Arab League summits. This method based on the clarification of the number of lines devoted to human rights issues in the closing statements. In addition, comparative and historical methods were used in studying Arab summit conferences held prior to and after September 11 attacks. Also, the analytical method was used to show the extent to which both international and regional environments affected the development of human rights concepts at the Arab summits.
Human Rights and International Treaties

1. Background

Historically speaking, people acquired rights and responsibilities through their membership in a group – a family, indigenous nation, religion, class, community, or state. Most societies have had traditions similar to the "golden rule" of "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." (Shiman, 1993:6)

The first king of ancient Persia, Cyrus the Great, (539 B.C.) conquered the city of Babylon. He freed the slaves, declared that all people had the right to choose their own religion, and established racial equality. This ancient record has been recognized as the world's first charter of human rights. (Olwan, 1989). In addition, The Hindu Vedas, the Babylonian Code of Hammurabi, the Analects of Confucius, the Bible and the Quran are five of the oldest written sources which address questions of people's duties, rights, and responsibilities. All societies, whether in oral or written tradition, have had systems of propriety and justice as well as ways of tending to the health and welfare of their members. (Shiman, 1993:7)

By the end of World War II, the world climate was ready for a great leap forward in the recognition and observance of human rights. The extermination by Nazi Germany, Sinti, Romani (gypsies), and persons with disabilities horrified the world. Trials were held in Nuremberg and Tokyo after World War II, and officials from the defeated countries were punished for committing war crimes "crimes against humanity". The Countries then committed themselves to establishing the United Nations, with the primary goal of enhancing international peace and preventing conflict. They wanted to ensure that never again would anyone be unjustly denied life, freedom, food, shelter, and nationality. The essence of these emerging human rights principles was adopted in President Franklin Roosevelt’s 1941 State of the Union Address when he spoke of a world founded on four essential freedoms: freedom of speech and religion and freedom from want and fear. The calls came from across the globe for human rights standards to protect citizens from abuses by their governments, standards against which nations could be held accountable for the treatment of those living within their borders. These voices played a critical role in the San Francisco meeting that drafted the United Nations Charter in 1945. (Shiman, 1993: 7)

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) adopted as a United Nations General Assembly Resolution in 1948. It restricted the world of human rights to just 30 provisions. Its drafters felt compelled to keep the list short and punchy. Out of those, 18 were considered rights, provisions that impose immediate obligations on states at the level of the individual; the 12 social, economic, and cultural provisions were considered aspirational. In 1966, to address these issues, the rights were correctly divided up into separate binding treaties that impose obligations on the state through oversight bodies: the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).

This was a political compromise borne out of the ideological fight between the United States and USSR, which advocated for social, economic, and cultural rights at the expense of civil and political ones. (Pizano, 2014) Till now, The two U.N. Covenants still lack U.S. ratification. (Vogelgesang, 1978).

The current study monitoring the reality of human rights as cited at Arab summit conferences based on the rights defined in those documents. Human rights may be charted as follows:
2. Civil and political rights

Table (1): Civil and Political Rights

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Right to equality.</th>
<th>(Article 1/Article 7 of the International Bill of Human Rights: UDHR)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protection of minorities, no discrimination based on race, colour, gender etc..</td>
<td>(Article 2/ International Bill of Human Rights)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right to life, freedom and personal safety, prohibition of slavery and servitude,</td>
<td>(Article 3 International Bill of Human Rights and A6 of the International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights/ICCPR: these branches appeared in (Article12/ UDHR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>torture and brutality, arbitrary detention and deportation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom of movement</td>
<td>(Article 13/ UDHR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognition of legal personality.</td>
<td>(Article 15/ UDHR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The right to a fair trial.</td>
<td>(Article 10/ UDHR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom of opinion, expression, thought, religion and sentiment</td>
<td>(Article 19 UDHR) (Article 18/ UDHR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom to organize.</td>
<td>Includes the freedom to peaceful congregation and formation of peaceful societies and groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The right to public participation in management of the country's affairs,</td>
<td>(Article 21/ UDHR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additionally to the right to vote and to hold public office.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The right of ownership.</td>
<td>(Article 17/ UDHR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right to self determination.</td>
<td>Articles 1 in both international charters (A1/ ICCPR and (A1/ ICSEC)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table was prepared by the researchers based on: UDHR equal to Universal Declaration of Human Rights, ICCPR equal to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and ICSEC equal to the International Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights.

3. Economic, Cultural, and Social Rights

Table (2): Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The right to work and protection from unemployment. The right to fair wages.</th>
<th>(Article 23/ UDHR)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The right to form unions.</td>
<td>(Article 23/ UDHR) (Article 8/ ICSEC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The right to social security.</td>
<td>(Article 22/ UDHR) (Article 9/ ICSEC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The right to a standard of living.</td>
<td>(Article 25/ UDHR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection of family and children.</td>
<td>(Article 16/ UDHR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental and physical health.</td>
<td>(Article 25/ UDHR) (Article 12/ ICSEC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right to education.</td>
<td>(Article 26/ UDHR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right to participation in cultural life</td>
<td>(Article 27/ UDHR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right to ownership and individual ownership.</td>
<td>(Article 17/ UDHR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right to a good environment.</td>
<td>This was stated in Article 12 of the ICSEC but not in UDHR.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table was prepared by the researchers based on UDHR, ICCPR, and ICSEC.
4. Third generation human rights: rights demanded by developing countries including the right to development, an appropriate healthy environment, the common heritage of humanity, the right to humanitarian aid and the right to peace (Barakat, 2010:6). Although they are general in nature, neither addressing human rights issues directly nor entailing international commitments, they may be used as an adequate general indicator.

International Transformation and the Human Rights Issue

In the mid-1970s, during President Jimmy Carter regime, the United States established a formal “human rights” policy with a dedicated State Department bureau headed by Patricia Derien. Carter made human rights a central theme, suggesting the United States had an “inordinate fear of Communism,” while exposing abuses by U.S. allies. Among other shifts, Carter backed away from a repressive Shah of Iran in large part due to that regime’s human rights abuses (Lagon, 2011). On the other hand, Ronald Reagan began his presidency with the converse tilt. He appointed Jeane Kirkpatrick as ambassador to the United Nations (UN), drawn to her critique of Carter policy in Iran and elsewhere. Kirkpatrick argued that traditional autocracies were more likely to evolve and liberalize than totalitarian regimes, which seek greater social control. This led her to reject a policy of pressing more strongly for reform in the autocracies, which were often U.S. Cold War allies, than in the totalitarian states. But Reagan ultimately recognized that U.S. interests were bound up in pushing Cold War allies to reform and democratize, from El Salvador and Chile to South Korea, the Philippines, and Taiwan (Lagon, 2011).

At the beginning of the nineties of the last century, there were clear and explicit calls by the United States of America for the use of human rights in crisis management with adversaries, and dissemination of the western vision of human rights. Joshuah Muravchik, a professor of international relations, a right wing conservative and one of the most prominent neoconservative theorists, is famous for his book "The Imperative of American Leadership: A Challenge to Neo-Isolationism" in which he promotes the necessity for the United States to play a leading role worldwide in spreading the western human rights culture whether through diplomacy, aid, or the use of force. According to him, American power could play a decisive and vital role in the building of democracy and spread of peace throughout the world. According to Professor Muravchik, "the world needs this leadership to face crises, foil aggression and settle differences" (Muravchik, 1996:10). This view is in stark contradiction to the view of many authors who advocate a return to isolationism (Schlesesinger 1995:7).

President Clinton used institutions effectively to advance human rights prioritizing the enlargement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), he accelerated European Union (EU) steps to offer Eastern European countries membership too. That there were human rights standards for joining NATO and the EU created a potent incentive for those countries to improve their records. But like other U.S. presidents, Clinton picked his fights. He flipped his position and delinked trade and human rights with China in his first year, and Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright later observed, “We do not have a cookie-cutter approach to policy” when asked why China and Cuba were treated differently (Lagon, 2011).

Since the demise of the Soviet Union and end of the Cold War human rights have come to be viewed as an integral component of American national interest where the objective is to spread the American value system. Intellectual freedom is a prelude to a free market economy and target countries’ economies will be open to American business corporations; this in fact increases international interdependency where no country can remain isolated or depend solely on its natural resources, thus reflecting purely American interests (Basyuni, 1997:117). For instance, President Clinton (who served from 1993 to 2001 as the 42nd President of the United States) used the American institutions effectively to advance human rights, prioritizing the enlargement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), he accelerated European Union (EU) steps to offer Eastern European countries membership too. That there were human rights standards for joining NATO and the EU created a potent incentive for those countries to improve their records. But like other U.S. presidents, Clinton picked his fights. He flipped his position and delinked trade and human rights with China in his first year, and Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright later observed,
“We do not have a cookie-cutter approach to policy” when asked why China and Cuba were treated differently. (Lagon, 2011)

According to Al Jabiri, the human rights issue swings between internationalism, in that it is an aspiration to upgrade individualism to an international level. It is globalization as representing the will to dominate and cancel individualism (Al Jabiri, 2009:141-142), and without doubt that the proposals by Fukuyama and Samuel Huntington have helped in the reinforcement of the second orientation, Fukuyama having declared the end of history and stating that the western value system in democracy, human rights and market economics will prevail over all without exception (Fukuyama, 1992). In Huntington's case, he warned the West that the demise of the Soviet Union did not mean the end of the birth of enemies and that the future would carry potential enemies. He stated his conviction of an inevitable conflict with both the Chinese and Islamic cultures and that an alliance between the two cultures must be prevented (Huntington, 1993). Neo-conservatives requested that the American and Western cultural model of democracy and human rights be popularized.

Political use of the human rights issue is regarded as one of the most important tools of American foreign policy. Henry Kissinger and George Kennan both defended the importance of political use and employment of human rights throughout the Cold War period whereby violations of human rights within Soviet Union satellite countries were condemned while other violations occurring in countries allied to the United States were ignored (Al Hariri, 2004:28).

We can summarize a number of international transformations that helped in the internationalization of the human rights issue throughout the last few decades of the twentieth century and the beginning of the 21st century as follows:

1. The collapse of the Socialist system and the rise of a new world order led by the USA, whereby the issue of human rights became a pressure card used by the United States and European countries. The independence of East Timor and the NATO intervention in Kosovo were amongst the issues where the internationalization of human rights was prominent (Najem, 2002:298).


3. The globalization of conflicts and issues faced by humanity, for example human rights, poverty, backwardness, environmental pollution, population explosion etc, whereby results of these problems do not affect solely a specific country or even a number of countries, rather they transcend to affect countries farther away geographically (Delors, 1990:14).

4. Ruling régimes began fortifying their legitimacy through recognizing democracy and denying the character of tyranny and domination. Most great revolutions have resulted in a treaty or declaration of sought-after rights and liberties (Al Rashdan, 1994:31-32).

5. The 'humanitarian' intervention in Somalia in 1991, without the request or approval of the concerned state, supporting the use of force 'for the benefit of the civilian population'.

6. The role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) has also expanded in the defense of human rights issues, aided by modern technological advances in communication via the media and internet (Najem, 2002:299).

As a result of the above-mentioned international transformations the annual report on UN works issued by the UN General Secretary on September 16 1991 was a landmark; for the first time in the history of these reports the issue of the right of intervention was addressed, being referred to in Chapter Six as follows: "... the protection of human rights is now the main pillar... and that this protection entails that influence and pressure are jointly exercised on an international level through calls for, reproach, protest, or condemnation and as a last resort a United Nations presence in more situations than was permissible according to traditional international law" (Mohammad, 2000:123).

As for the closing statement issued by the Security Council summit held on January 31st. 1992 the human rights issue was deemed part of international peace and security, thus allowing the Security Council to exercise its authority according to chapter seven of the United Nations Charter (Mohammad, 2000:123).

These developments pointed to the fact that any
violations of human rights had become categorized as jeopardizing international peace and security thus requiring international intervention, and indicating in turn a broadening of United Nations and Security Council authority to intervene in a state's internal affairs to prevent such violations in a step towards undermining non-intervention in a country's internal affairs stipulated in item two of chapter seven: "Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state or shall require the Members to submit such matters to settlement under the present Charter; but this principle shall not prejudice the application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII." (UN Charter, Article 2 Item 7).

These developments helped to justify the behavior of super powers dominating the world order when intervening in the affairs of other countries to achieve their own aims under the pretext of humanitarian necessities and the rights of minorities. In view of the fact that not only most Arab peoples do suffer from a variety of systematic violations of human rights, but also the existence of many different religious, ethnic and linguistic minorities provides an internal environment ripe for the arousal of tensions and therefore a fertile environment for external intervention. This is confirmed by a number of transformations occurring throughout the Arab world in what has been called "The Arab Spring" whereby NATO intervened to overthrow the Libyan regime and the United States supported changes in Egypt, Tunisia and Yemen. There are also repeated calls for intervention in the Syrian situation to accelerate the fall of the Syrian regime.

**1. Human rights after the events of September 11 attacks**

Many analysts have characterized American foreign policy throughout the last 50 years as ignoring democratic considerations and human rights particularly in allied countries in the Middle East, until the events of September 11 attacks. This was a result of many considerations:

1. US interest concentrated mainly on fighting communism and even enlisted the help of Islamists against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan.

2. Fear of Islamists being elected into power as happened in Algeria.

3. The US preferred to deal with countries ruled by non-democratic regimes, preferably by one person with wide, unrestrained and absolute authority as opposed to a democratic system requiring any decision to go through legal channels and be referred to the elected representatives of the people.

The events of 9-11 were a great shock to the US, as the attacks occurred at the very heart of the country. This led to a fundamental change in US foreign policy. The American administration became convinced of the necessity to change the non-democratic regimes in the Middle East because the events of September 11 2001 were interpreted as resulting from the absence of democracy, rights and liberties in the Middle East, the cradle of those accused of executing the attacks on September 11. Many studies have referred to considering the Arab World as one of the sources of 'terrorism'. The Middle East was placed in the number one position internationally with an average of 44.7% of all worldwide 'terrorism' operations throughout the period 1989-2006, whereas for the period 1970-1997 it accounted for approximately 13.46%. The list of 'terrorist' organizations certified by the American State Department up to 2010 indicated the existence of 46 international 'terrorist' organizations, 21 of which were in Arab countries, constituting 45.7% of the overall number of 'terrorist' organizations (Abdul Hay, 2011:64-65).

As a result the US saw the necessity to intervene and impose democracy on these countries, albeit by force, whereby the introduction of the American model would create subjugation to the US. This conviction was due to several factors:

1. Reinforcement of the American administration's conviction that its support of non-democratic regimes in turn reinforces feelings of hatred towards the United States.

2. Most of those accused in the September 11 2001 events were from the Middle East area where democracy was only present in a few countries.

3. The arrival of the neo-conservatives into power in the US, whose proposals were characterized as right wing Christian extremism with the belief that the US had a sacred role to spread American democracy and the
replacement of current models with the American one.

Within this new American policy the US proposed many initiatives to create change in Arab countries, mainly:

1. An American national security document issued in September of 2002 indicated that poverty, corruption, weak institutions and the absence of democracy all provided a strong base and fertile soil for the propagation of terrorism; subsequently it was the right of the US after being targeted in the events of September 11 attacks to carry out its international responsibility to intervene in political and democratic reform, not least in Arab and Islamic countries, and to protect its security even if this meant military intervention.

The document began the preamble by affirming human rights issues, pointing out that: "The great struggles of the twentieth century between liberty and totalitarianism ended with a decisive victory for the forces of freedom—and a single sustainable model for national success: freedom, democracy, and free enterprise. In the twenty-first century, only nations that share a commitment to protecting basic human rights and guaranteeing political and economic freedom will be able to unleash the potential of their people and assure their future prosperity. People everywhere want to be able to speak freely; choose who will govern them" (The National Security Strategy of the USA September 17/2002).

2. The partnership initiative proposed with Middle Eastern countries by the former American Secretary of State Colin Powell in December 2002, was the main Middle East reform initiative proposed by the American State Department. This initiative was based on the following sectors: Economic reform, Political reform and educational reform.

This was pointed out explicitly by Colin Powell in his initiative in which he refuses the condescending view that freedom will not grow in the Middle East (Moqatel encyclopedia, 2012).

3. The popular diplomacy document issued by the American State Department on October 3, 2003 was designed to face the tide of hatred and animosity directed towards American policies in the Middle East; it included interactive communication with Arab and Islamic societies to improve the United States' image through targeted media and the offering of scholarships and aid to Arab and Muslim students to study in the United States (Arab Organization for Human Rights, 2012).

2. The reality of human rights throughout the Arab world

Arab countries' response to the human rights dossier has been slow. When Arab intellectuals advocated the establishment of an Arab organization concerned with human rights, meetings were held in Cyprus, specifically in Limassol due to the fact that such meetings could not be held in any of the Arab countries at that time. After the establishment of this Arab Organization for Human Rights it succeeded in gaining recognition as a consultative body on the UN Economic and Social Council in 1989 (2012).

Reports issued by the Arab Organization for Human Rights point to the marginal role of human rights in Arab countries where the Arab citizen is denied basic rights and freedoms. The latest annual reports published on its website pointed to the existence of two prominent phenomena in the Arab world: the accumulation of crises and the regression of reform, both reflecting extremely negatively on the reality of human rights in Arab states (2012). There is no free Press and other media outlets are restricted. Freedom of opinion and expression is suppressed with continued human rights violations against those voicing opinions critical of various Arab situations.

Only 12 Arab countries ratified the International Covenant on Social Economic Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966. As for the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (United Nations Convention against Torture) this was signed by only seven states (Al Rashdan, 1994:36).

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia refused to ratify the World Declaration on Human Rights of 1948 because the declaration included a number of rights opposed to Islamic values, for example, article 18 which addresses the freedom to change one's religion or belief (Elwan, 1989:118).

In reference to the Pact of the League of Arab States, it is very evident that neither human rights nor any other humanitarian issue is mentioned in the text, and all the resolutions on human rights issued by the Arab League
were controversial and sparked conflict between member states, or forced them to talk about undermined Palestinian human rights in Israel (Thaher, 1993:133). The Pact is the founding treaty of the Arab League. Concluded in 1945, the agreement endorses exactly the sovereignty principle of the individual member states. Since then, the principle of the Arab League has been based on the duality of supra-national institutions and the sovereignty of the member states, which is confirmed by Article VII “Unanimous decisions of the Council shall be binding upon all member-states of the League; majority decisions shall be binding only upon those states which have accepted them”. (Pact of the League of Arab States, 1945).

The Arab Charter on Human Rights (ACOHR) was ratified at the Tunisia summit in 2004, and entered into force on 15 March 2008, two months after receiving seven ratifications, in accordance with Article 45 of the Charter. The 2004 Charter is composed of 53 Articles which cover individual rights, State parties' obligations, the supervisory mechanism and State reports, as well as procedural Articles on ratification and entry into force (ACOHR, 2008).

The fourteen Arab countries that ratified the Charter (Until 5/9/2013) were: Algeria, Bahrain, Jordan, Palestine, Syria, Libya, Yemen, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Sudan, Iraq, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates (League of Arab states website).

There are some problematic provisions in the Charter. For instance, Article 8 prohibits torture or cruel, degrading, humiliating or inhuman treatment, but not punishment. Some economic and social rights, such as the right to work (Article 34), the right to free basic health care (Article 39(1), and the right to free education at the primary and basic levels (Article 41(2)) are only granted to citizens, and not to all persons under the jurisdiction of the State. Furthermore, Article 7 permits the imposition of the death penalty against children aged below 18 years if national law so provides. This is in clear violation of Articles 37(a) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 and Article 6(5) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 1966 (ICCPR). (Rishmawi, 2010:69)

The reports that filed by the Arab states (Jordan, Emirate, Algeria, Qatar and Bahrain) to the Arab Human Rights Committee still represent the official view of governments. According to these reports the Arab governments committed to the standards of human rights by virtue of the Arab Charter on Human Rights. (Arab Human Rights Committee, 2014)

**Arab League Summits, the Beginnings**

During the 67 years since its establishment (1945-2012), Arab heads of state or their representatives convened 34 Arab League summits, comprising 24 of which were normal summits, 9 extraordinary or emergency and one economic conference. Leaders met for many top-level conferences prior to the first official Arab League summit in Cairo in 1964. A meeting held in Anshas in 1946 at the invitation of King Farouq, called for the halt of Jewish emigration to Palestine, the realization of independence for Palestine and the formation of a government that guaranteed the rights of Palestine's legal residents without discrimination. They also met in Beirut in 1956 in the wake of the Tripartite Aggression on Egypt, calling for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Israeli, British and French forces, as well as supporting the Algerian people's struggle for independence. The official opening of the first Arab League summit however is linked to the Cairo Summit Conference of 1964.

1. **Arab Summit Conferences’ stance on human rights throughout the Cold War period 1964 – 1990**

During the Cold War period 18 Arab summits were convened, although the Rabat meetings in 1969 were not completed. The first of these summits held in Cairo in 1964, while the last was the extraordinary summit held August 9, 1990 also in Cairo.

Analysis of the content of Arab summit conference closing statements during the period 1964 -1990 showed the following:

1. No mention of human rights issues was found in the first 18 Arab summit conferences, Cairo 1964 to the extraordinary summit in Cairo 1990.

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1 Pursuant to this Charter, an "Arab Human Rights Committee", hereinafter referred to as "the Committee" shall be established. This Committee shall consist of seven members who shall be elected by secret ballot by the states parties to this Charter.
Table(3): Summit Conferences held during the Cold War Period

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summit Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Reason for Convening</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Arab Summit</td>
<td>12-1-1964</td>
<td>Cairo</td>
<td>Arab- Israeli Conflict: the diversion of the river Jordan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Arab Summit Conference</td>
<td>5-9-1964</td>
<td>Alexandria</td>
<td>Arab- Israeli conflict: Exploitation of Arab tributaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Arab Summit Conference</td>
<td>13-9-1965</td>
<td>Casablanca/ Morocco</td>
<td>Put in place an Arab solidarity treaty due to increase in Arab disputes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Arab Summit Conference</td>
<td>29-8-1967</td>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>1967 defeat: the three (no)s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth Arab Summit Conference</td>
<td>23-12-1970</td>
<td>Rabat/ Morocco</td>
<td>The failure of peace efforts related to the Palestine issue: this conference's work wasn't completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exceptional Arab Summit Conference</td>
<td>21-27-1970</td>
<td>Cairo</td>
<td>An exceptional summit not recorded in the Arab summit chronology. It was to discuss the fighting between the resistance movement and Jordanian forces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth Arab Summit Conference</td>
<td>26-11-1973</td>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>After the Ramadan war</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventh Arab Summit Conference</td>
<td>26-10-1974</td>
<td>Morocco</td>
<td>Recognition of the Palestinian Liberation Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eighth Arab Summit Conference</td>
<td>25-10-1976</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Completion of discussions on the Lebanon crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ninth Arab Summit Conference</td>
<td>2-11-1978</td>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>The signing of the Camp David Treaty between Egypt and Israel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenth Arab Summit Conference</td>
<td>20-11-1979</td>
<td>Tunisia</td>
<td>The discussion of the Lebanese crisis and pressure on Israel because of its aggression on Lebanon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eleventh Arab Summit Conference</td>
<td>(25-27) - 11-1980</td>
<td>Amman/ Jordan</td>
<td>Placement of a political and economic Arab strategy: Although it addressed some Arab issues it wasn't an economic summit dedicated to discuss joint Arab economic work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraordinary Arab Summit</td>
<td>25-11-1981</td>
<td>Fez/ Morocco</td>
<td>Discussion of a peaceful settlement with Israel: This failed because of Syria and other countries objecting to King Fahad's plan to find a solution to the Middle East crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraordinary Arab Summit</td>
<td>7-8-1985</td>
<td>Casablanca/ Morocco</td>
<td>Finding a peaceful solution to the Palestinian issue through a joint Palestinian Jordanian delegation Israel and the US would agree to negotiate with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraordinary Arab Summit</td>
<td>8-11-1987</td>
<td>Amman/ Jordan</td>
<td>Iraq - Iran war developments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraordinary Arab Summit</td>
<td>7-6-1988</td>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>The Intifada and the support of the Palestinian people in their right to self-determination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraordinary Arab Summit</td>
<td>23-5-1989</td>
<td>Casablanca/ Morocco</td>
<td>Support of peace based on UN resolutions 242 &amp; 383 And Land in exchange for peace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraordinary Arab Summit</td>
<td>28-5-1990</td>
<td>Baghdad/ Iraq</td>
<td>Arab national security and the support of Iraq's right to ownership of modern technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraordinary Arab Summit</td>
<td>9-8-1990</td>
<td>Cairo/ Egypt</td>
<td>The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and the demand for withdrawal of Iraqi forces</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table was prepared by the researchers, based on the following sources: publications available on the Arab League website, Al 'Udwan, Abdul Halim, The Palestinian Issue in Arab.
2. The term 'human rights' was mentioned in only two cases: the extraordinary Arab summit of 1985 in Casablanca and the extraordinary Arab summit of 1990 in Baghdad. It was in the context of discussions on Palestinian rights, not rights of citizens of Arab countries.

3. Condemnation of racist practices and policies of racial discrimination were related to support of African liberation movements and Arab states were not broached on the subject.

4. As for third generation human rights issues, no mention of any related terminology (the right to development, the right to an appropriate healthy environment, the right to humanitarian aid, the right to peace and the common human heritage) was seen in Arab summit conferences throughout this period.

5. Texts whether explicit or implicit, regarding contemporary or future human rights in Arab countries was absent. Arab leaders appeared oblivious of human rights issues in the Arab world with the exception of Palestinian rights to regain their land and establish a state on its soil, and condemnation of Israeli practices.

6. Arab summit conference resolutions reflected the reality of the region especially in relation to the Arab-Israeli conflict, in that the Palestinian issue was the most prominent in both presence and continuity.

Even in 1968 when the Arab Committee for Human Rights was formed and resulted in the Beirut conference, summit resolutions addressed human rights in territories occupied by Israel in 1967 without mentioning the protection of human rights within Arab countries (Thaher,1993: 133).

7. No specific Arab direction or methodological strategy was discernible in the Summit conferences in dealing with central issues, but rather displayed a purely reactive response to developments in the Arab arena.

8. The term 'terrorist' first appeared in the extraordinary Arab summit in Casablanca in 1985, in 15 out of 115 lines, equal to 13%. This term then began to register an almost permanent presence at Arab summit conferences and particularly at the extraordinary summit in 1987 in Amman, when a whole article was entitled "international terrorism" reaching 22 out of 295 lines, equal to 7.4%, in the context of international terrorism in general, as well as Israeli terrorism and terrorism practiced by South Africa.

9. Additionally, condemnation of Iranian interference in Gulf affairs and Iran's resort to violence was present in two lines reaching 8%. At the extraordinary Arab summit conference in Casablanca, 1989 an entire paragraph was set aside to address terrorism in 4 out of 171 lines equal to 2.3%. At the extraordinary Arab summit conference in Baghdad 1990, terrorism was addressed in the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict at a rate of 5 out of 309 lines equal to 6.1%.

2. Human rights at Arab summit conferences after the Cold War

Three Arab summits were convened after the Cold War, between 1991 and the events of September 11 attacks, including two extraordinary Arab summit conferences in Cairo on 21-23 June, 1996 and October, 2000. The third was held in Amman in 2001 (See Table 4).

These summits were convened under the exceptional circumstances faced by the Arab countries. It began with the demise of the Soviet Union which left the US the single super power and world leader, and was followed by the American invasion of Iraq, then the dismantling of the Arab order, and finally, the start of the Peace Process in Madrid in 1991. All these events had a negative effect on Arab countries which were consequently able to convene only three conferences at the summit level: a clear affirmation that international and regional environments played a major role in the convening of Arab summits.

Table (4): Arab Summit Conferences after the Cold War

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summit Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Reason for Convening</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tenth Extraordinary Arab summit conference</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Cairo</td>
<td>International transformations and the Middle East peace process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eleventh Extraordinary Arab summit conference</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Cairo</td>
<td>The Palestinian Intifadha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amman Arab summit conference</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Amman/Jordan</td>
<td>The first periodic regular Arab summit conference</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results of content analysis in closing statements at these conferences are illustrated as follows: (Table 5).

1. No mention whatsoever was made of human rights in Arab countries at the extraordinary Arab summit in Cairo 1996 while international terrorism rated one paragraph of around five lines equal to 3.9%. It should be pointed out however that for the first time, terrorism was referred to as a threat to Arab countries without linking it to the Arab-Israeli conflict. As for third generation of human rights, the Environmental Issues was mentioned at a rate of five lines equal to 3.9%.

2. The extraordinary Arab summit held in Cairo in 2000 was in response to the Aqsa Intifadha which ignited when the Aqsa mosque compound was violated by Ariel Sharon, the Israeli Prime Minister at the time. Although the term 'human rights' was mentioned four times in the context of the Palestinian issue, there was no mention of terrorism. The summit approved the adoption of a new regular periodical convening mechanism for Arab summits as approved by the Arab League Council during its last cycle (no. 114).

3. The Amman conference of 2001 was the first regular periodical Arab conference and the term 'human rights' was mentioned once only, again in the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict. This conference was distinguished however, by the fact that for the first time, third generation rights were mentioned in reference to the Economic Development Issues (Article 12 of the International Covenant for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights), whereas the civil, political, economic or social rights of Arab citizens were not broached at all. This conference also addressed economic issues on a qualitative level whereby economic issues, particularly sustainable development and economic ties between Arab states, was featured in 32 lines equal to 14.9%. Paradoxically, the conference paid special attention to Arabs living overseas and the necessity to look out for their interests and strengthen their ties with their respective homelands (paragraph 47equal to 3 lines), as if Arab citizens living in Arab countries enjoyed respect of their rights and the only remaining issue was to care for those living abroad. This conference was not concerned with terrorism showing only one mention of the term, in the context of Israeli practices against Palestinians.

3. Arab summit conferences convened after the events of the September 11 attacks.

The first Arab summit after September 11 attacks was held in Beirut in 2002 and the last in Baghdad in 2012 (table 6).

Beginning with analysis of closing statements at the Beirut summit conference the following changes were noted in particular:

1. A whole paragraph (the second longest) was dedicated to the subject of terrorism and condemnation of the attacks of September 11 attacks on America, with 17 out of 311 lines equal to 5.4%. The longest, (paragraph 36) concerned the strengthening of Arab economic integration.

2. Third generation human rights registered a unique presence, particularly with regard to economic, investment, environmental and poverty issues, with 106 out of 311 lines equal to 34%. This issue was given the largest text area of all summit subjects discussed.

3. The Arab Israeli conflict and peace in the Middle East came in second place for the first time in the
history of Arab summit conferences at a rate of 81 out of 311 lines, equal to 26%, marking a core and important transformation reflecting the volume of regional and international transformations and their impact on Arab summit conferences.

Table(6): Arab summit conferences held after the events of the September 11th 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conference name</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Unit Line/ word</th>
<th>Percentage %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beirut Ordinary Summit (14)</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Terrorism</td>
<td>17/311</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Third generation</td>
<td>106/311</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Arab Israeli conflict</td>
<td>81/311</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The right to self determination</td>
<td>6/311</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharm Al Sheikh Ordinary Summit (15)</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>The right to self determination</td>
<td>7/191</td>
<td>3.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tunis Ordinary Summit (16)</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Human rights</td>
<td>17/222</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The right to self determination</td>
<td>Once as a term</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Terrorism</td>
<td>8/222</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Third generation</td>
<td>39/222</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Palestinian issue</td>
<td>83/222</td>
<td>37.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algiers Ordinary Summit (17)</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Third generation</td>
<td>75/321</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Palestinian issue</td>
<td>68/321</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Human rights</td>
<td>5/321</td>
<td>1.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Terrorism</td>
<td>6/321</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khartoum Summit (18)</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Third generation</td>
<td>30/133</td>
<td>22.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Human rights</td>
<td>20/133</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Palestinian issue</td>
<td>20/133</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Terrorism</td>
<td>3/133</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riyadh Summit (19)</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Human rights</td>
<td>16/37</td>
<td>43.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Palestinian issue</td>
<td>2/37</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damascus Summit (20)</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Human rights</td>
<td>3/77</td>
<td>3.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Third generation</td>
<td>9/77</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Palestinian issue</td>
<td>19/77</td>
<td>24.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Terrorism</td>
<td>3/77</td>
<td>3.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doha Summit (21)</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Human rights</td>
<td>11/85</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Third generation</td>
<td>18/85</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Palestinian issue</td>
<td>21/85</td>
<td>24.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Terrorism</td>
<td>2/85</td>
<td>2.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sert Summit (22)</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Human rights</td>
<td>20/161</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Third generation</td>
<td>27/161</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Palestinian issue</td>
<td>33/161</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Terrorism</td>
<td>3/161</td>
<td>1.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baghdad Summit (23)</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Human rights</td>
<td>46/272</td>
<td>16.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Third generation</td>
<td>35/272</td>
<td>12.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Palestinian issue</td>
<td>41/272</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Terrorism</td>
<td>7/272</td>
<td>2.57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
At Sharm Al Sheikh in 2003, the Arab League Council met to discuss threats to Iraq as its central issue comprising 51 out of 191 lines, equal to 26.7% of the total number of lines in the closing statement. The most frequently mentioned term was 'security' (15 times) reflecting the seriousness of the threats which the area was facing at that time. Since this summit was overwhelmingly concerned with the threat to Iraq and regional security, no mention was made of human rights issues or terrorism. The term "the right to self determination" in the context of the Palestinian issue was used in 7 lines of a paragraph out of 191 lines, equal to 3.66%.

For the first time in Arab summit conference history, direct explicit text concerning human rights was seen at the Tunisia summit in 2004. The Arab charter for Human Rights was ratified (2 lines in paragraph 27) and also 10 lines in paragraph 28. In addition, democracy, 'shoura', political partnership and economic reform aimed at building a better future for Arab peoples were all stated clearly and explicitly in an unprecedented fashion. Article 28 represented a quantum leap in Arab human rights speech affirming "continued and concentrated efforts in the ongoing march forward in development in educational, economic, social and political areas... achieving the advancement of Arab societies stemming from their own free will...through the realization of principles of democracy, shoura', expansion of partnership in the political area and public affairs, the respect of human rights in a way that supports non-governmental organizations and civil society's roles, while also strengthening efforts in caring for children and youth, and continuing the enhancement of women's role in Arab society and the support of her rights and place in society...".

Articles 45, 46, and 47 affirmed the new orientation of Arab summit conferences to give more attention to human rights. In article 45, it is stated that "an Arab contract is issued for people with special needs that guarantee the handicapped person's rights to treatment and integration into society..." Article 46 affirmed leader's concerns for "the Arab child and his rights and the necessity to follow the Arab childhood action plan..." These articles were unprecedented. Based on the text line as a unit, 17 out of 222 lines directly addressed human rights issues featured in the International Human Rights Declaration and the two international covenants, totaling an unprecedented 7.6% for human rights issues. Another precedent at this conference was the appearance of the term 'human rights' four times in relation to the Arab citizen. As regards the right to self-determination, this was mentioned only once in the context of the Palestinian issue.

Terrorism was addressed at the rate of 8 lines equal to 3%, lines: Three lines spoke of Israeli terrorism while 5 lines were concerned with: international terrorism, the necessity of researching the international terrorism issue, arrival at an acceptable definition for 'terrorism', and distinguishing terrorism from the legitimate right of peoples to resist foreign occupation.

At the Tunisia summit, again 39 out of 222 lines equal to 17.5% was dedicated to third generation human rights related to the realization of economic development and combating poverty, in addition to the development of dialogue relations and cooperation with other states and international organizations. On the other hand, the Arab Israeli conflict and the Palestinian issue occupied the majority of the summit address with 83 out of 222 lines equal to 37.4%.

The 17th Arab summit was convened in Algiers on March 23rd 2005. For the second time in Arab summit conference history, the primary focus of the summit was related to third generation human rights, thus preceding the Palestinian issue. With a rate of 75 out of 321 lines equal to 23.3% the mention of third generation human rights included economic and technological development, investment encouragement and the right to humanitarian aid. These were generalized and non-specific rights which would not necessarily affect Arab citizens. The Palestinian issue which was the second focus of the summit, at a rate of 68 lines equal to 21%. As for direct human rights, they were mentioned at a rate of 5 lines not exceeding 1.55% and were in relation to the Arab strategy for the preservation of the family. The term 'human rights' was mentioned once in the context of addressing Arab citizens. Terrorism was mentioned in 6 lines dedicated to this issue and the necessity to avoid confusion regarding the right of peoples to defend themselves, equal to 1.8%.

Starting with the 18th Arab summit in Khartoum on
March 28 2006, closing statements summarizing the summit were no longer issued, but replaced by declarations such as the Khartoum declaration. Third generation human rights constituted a main pillar of this conference, with 30 out of 133 lines, equal to 22.55%. Topics mentioned included joint Arab effort and development and dialogue between different cultures and peoples. The Arab-Israeli conflict was in second place with 20 lines equal to 15%, which was a percentage equal to that of direct human rights as mentioned in the International Declaration of Human Rights and the two international covenants, including the consolidation of democratic practices and expansion of partnership with civil society institutions. Also addressed were the right to education and equality between women and men. These rights were mentioned at a rate of 20 lines and 15%. Terrorism was represented in 3 lines at 2.2%.

At the Riyadh summit in 2007, the subjects broached were the fortification of the Arab nation and the strengthening of Arab identity in face of threats of fragmentation and racial and sectarian division. These were the main subjects tackled by the summit. This summit was held after events at Samerra in 2006 and the explosions in Iraq attributed to sectarian civil war between the Sunnis and Shiites. Human rights issues acquired quite an area of interest at this summit with a rate of 16 lines dedicated to human rights equal to 43.2%. Throughout the history of Arab summit conferences, no other has been dominated by the human rights issues. This summit included child, youth and family protection, the right to education, the rejection of sectarianism and racism, the rejection of all forms of extremism and racism, warning against the dangers of sectarianism and of the necessity to strengthen the culture of dialogue and openness.

The summit statement clearly warned of political aims of fragmentation of the nation and the trigger of disorder and civil conflicts through the utilization of sectarian pluralism. The Palestinian issue and the Arab-Israeli conflict rated two out of 37 lines, equal to 5.4%. A quick mention of the Arab-Israeli settlement was made with no mention of Palestine or the West Bank, a significant indicator that affirmed the regression of the Palestinian issue at Arab summit conferences. Terrorism was not addressed although the term was mentioned once in the context of human rights issues in regard to spreading moderation and tolerance.

At the Damascus summit held in 2008 a modest area was set aside for human rights, just 3 lines of 77 equal to 3.89%. Third generation human rights rated 9 lines at 11.6%, while terrorism rated three lines equal to 3.89%. The Palestinian issue however came back into the forefront at a rate of 19 lines equal to 24.6%.

In 2009 the Doha summit convened in Qatar. The summit dedicated 11 out of 85 lines to human rights, equal to 12.9%. Human rights issues addressed child and youth rights, political reform and the realization of transparency. For the first time there was direct and clear mention of the application of transparency principles and the continuation of political and social reforms. The summit addressed third generation rights in 18 lines equal to 21%. The Palestinian issue came in at first place with a rate of 21 lines equal to 24.7%. Terrorism was given two lines equal to 2.35%. Paradoxically, the former Tunisian president Zain Al Abideen was the one to propose an initiative designating the year 2010 as an International Youth Year, a proposal that was received very well by the conference and subsequently adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. At a later point in time, the so-called 'Arab Spring' ignited in Tunisia after a young man was dishonored.

At the summit entitled "In Support of Jerusalem's Resistance" held in the city of Sert in Libya in 2010, mention of human rights as recorded in the International Declaration of Human Rights and the two international covenants rated 20 out of 161 lines, equal to 12.4%. They included the necessity to direct more attention to nurturing youth in the Arab world, the empowerment of women and non-discrimination against women, the nurturing of human rights culture throughout the Arab world, development of education and educational institutions and the rights of Arabs and Muslims living in western countries in the wake of arbitrary practices against them, particularly in Sweden where mosque minarets had been banned. The term 'human rights' was repeated five times at this summit. Third generation human rights were awarded 27 out of 161 lines, equal to 16.7%. These rights included environmental issues as well as development in Arab countries, the strengthening of collective Arab relations with regional and
international groups and last but not least, the achievement of world peace. Whereas the Palestinian issue and Arab-Israeli conflict was the main focus of the conference at a rate of 33 lines equal to 20.4%, terrorism however was allotted only 3 lines equal to 1.86%.

The Baghdad summit convened on March 27, 2012 and committed 46 out of 272 lines to human rights as defined in the International Declaration of Human Rights and the two international covenants, equal to 16.9%. 'Human rights' was repeated 6 times, once in the context of the Palestinian issue. Third generation human rights took up 35 lines equal to 12.86%. A matter worth noting was that paragraph 23 clearly and explicitly referred to the International Declaration of Human Rights, a unique occurrence. The Palestinian issue occupied 41 lines equal to 15%. Terrorism took up 7 out of 272 lines equal to 2.57%.

The Analysis of the content of the Arab summit conference closing statements after the September 11 attacks showed the following:

1. In ten summit conferences, human rights defined in the International Declaration of Human Rights and the two international covenants were addressed directly 8 times equal to 80%. When calculating the mathematical mean for direct human rights as stated in the International Declaration for Human Rights and the two international covenants in each conference after the events of September 11, attacks it reached 11.25%. However, in the summit convened in Tunisia in 2004 the Arab Covenant for Human Rights was endorsed and in an unprecedented move, human rights issues in Arab countries were discussed and the necessity to activate democracy and 'shoura', political partnership, the support of civil society institutions and childcare, care for youth and the handicapped, all of which were original rights stated in the International Declaration of Human Rights and the two international covenants. Based on the line as a unit, human rights registered a total of 7.6%, a previously unprecedented percentage in the history of Arab summit conferences. This percentage doubled in the Khartoum conference in 2006 reaching 15% and peaked in Baghdad in 2012 at 16.9%.

2. Third generation human rights began registering a distinctive presence at Arab summit conferences after international transformations, specifically the demise of the Soviet Union and the increase in the role of economic factors. Of three conferences convened after the Cold War, two addressed third generation human rights, beginning with the extraordinary Arab summit in Cairo in 1996. The mathematical mean of third generation human rights at each conference after the collapse of the Soviet Union was 10.88%. Again, of the 10 conferences after September 11 attacks, eight addressed third generation human rights with a rate of 80%. The mathematical mean for third generation human rights in each conference following the events of September 11 was 15.94%.

Furthermore, at the Beirut summit in 2002 third generation human rights took precedence over the Palestinian issue, dominating the issues discussed. The reasons for Arab political leaders giving special attention to these rights, particularly sustainable development, could include:

- No international commitments from Arab countries result from these rights.
- The advantages reaped from these rights will benefit the political regimes in the first degree and not the citizen, whereby these rights help in maintaining regime stability beginning with economic development, the right to aid and ending with the achievement of peace.
- None of these rights represent a burden on Arab political regimes since they include nothing that will detract from Arab political leadership authority and equally will not strengthen citizens in the face of political regimes.

- These rights are generally vague and non-specific, are not related to any particular group at the expense of another and may be interpreted in several ways.

3. Nine out of 10 conferences (with a rate of 90%) addressed the issue of terrorism. After the event of September 11 attacks. Except for one conference when terrorism was referred to in the context of Israeli practices against the Palestinians, the rest spoke of the necessity to arrive at a clear definition of terrorism and that it should not be confused with the right of a people to resist occupation. The terrorism issue in Arab summit conferences was not linked exclusively to the events of September 11 attacks since it had been mentioned before then, albeit less frequently. Beginning with the extraordinary Arab summit conference in Casablanca in
1985 when the term 'terrorism' was used for the first time in the history of Arab summit conferences, it consequently appeared in the Amman conference in 1987, Casablanca in 1989 and Cairo in 1996, however the common denominator was that the terrorism issue was spoken about in the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict describing Israeli practices against Palestinians. Statistically, since the first Arab summit conference, terrorism was addressed at 5 out of 21 conferences prior to the events of the 11th September attacks with a rate of 23.8%.

Reasons behind the Deterioration of Human Rights in Arab States

It is very obvious that the issue of human rights were not a priority for the Arab States, or Arab political leaders, due to several reasons:

1. There are a large number of major issues related to the crisis of building Arab state that has not been resolved since the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. At the forefront of these matters are identity, authority and equality.

2. The Arab state remains weak and frail. Although some states appear strong through monopolizing power they are in reality weak in areas of economic, political and social achievements: They lack the main element of legitimacy which is the real acceptance of those being governed. As a result, concepts of true belonging and allegiance have suffered.

3. Arab states were not established as states with laws and institutions. The will of the Arab ruler was formulated above the law and institution producing a variation on democracy. Therefore, the crises of legitimacy was one of the prominent problems that faces Arab states, where the country was faltering in areas of political and economic development and the realization of social, economic justice and political democracy (Mohammad, 2000:115-117).

4. In the Arab states, the issue of human rights is vested in the ruling regime. The regime can ratify human rights and either allow these rights to be exercised or prevent and criminalize avocation and exercise of these rights (Al Feilali,1997:80). Many excuses are cited by Arab regimes as alleged reasons for obstructing progress in human rights issues:

   a. The majority of Arab citizens lack the necessary level of political maturity which is a pre-requisite for the practice of democracy.

   b. The pretext of preserving national unity which is likely to be threatened by democratic freedoms which may contribute to disintegration and social divisions in Arab societies characterized by diversified cultures and ethnicities.

   c. The pretext of economic and social development as an inevitable necessity; freedom is meaningless while poverty exits (Al Feilali,1997:90-94).

5. Social and political upbringing: Research, including field studies in the Arab world has found that many upbringing practices may have an opposite even negative effect, where the child is not instilled with a sense of belonging or citizenship and in adulthood is therefore unequipped and unable to participate or contribute to nation or state building (Thaher,1985:13). The upbringing does not provide the citizen with basic political values related to his rights and freedoms.

6. The weak role of civil community institutions throughout the Arab world. There exists a strong relationship between civil society and democracy especially in the right to hold and voice differing opinions, and material and non-material interests. Democracy is even regarded as the political aspect of civil society, which in turn represents channels of political nurturing for democracy: training its members in the skills and arts required for democracy. It is the best of channels for popular partnership in governance.

7. The unsettled political and military situation in the region caused by super power competition for dominance and the resulting wars. The human rights issue has therefore been linked to various interventions in the area and used as an excuse to strike against anti-western regimes, as evidenced in Iraq, Syria and Libya.

Conclusion

This research tried to monitor the degree of interest showed by the Arab leaders in promoting the issue of Arab human rights, as evidenced by their closing statements at Arab League summits. The research reached many findings that can be summarized as follow:

1. Arab summit conferences do not reflect the presence of systematic collective Arab efforts based on a
specific strategy with a fixed long-term direction towards human rights, rather reactive responses to whatever events were emerging on the Arab, regional or international scene, or as a result of international pressures. Actually, human rights issues were one of the least discussed topics at Arab summit conferences. Throughout the first 18 conferences to be held (1964 - 1990) human rights in Arab countries, as identified in the international human rights declaration and the two international covenants, were not addressed; even third generation human rights were not broached. The Palestinian issue was the central focus of summit conferences with the term 'human rights' mentioned once only in the context of the Palestinian issue.

2. Arab countries’ response to the human rights dossier has been slow. Reports issued by the International and Arab Organizations for Human Rights pointed to the marginal role of human rights in Arab countries, where the basic rights and freedoms of the Arab citizens are denied. There is no free Press and other media outlets are restricted. Freedom of opinion and expression is suppressed with continued human rights violations against those voicing opinions critical of various Arab situations.

3. The human rights culture in Arab countries is an imported one, with the circumstances of the international environment and global transformations contributing to this culture becoming part of the Arab political discourse. A noticeable development occurred in the speech on the Arab citizen’s rights at summit conferences after the events of the September 11 attacks. In ten summit conferences, human rights defined in the International Declaration of Human Rights and the two international covenants were addressed directly eight times equal to 80%. In addition, After the event of September 11 attacks the frequency with which terrorism was mentioned notably increased.

4. As a result of subsequent developments represented in the collapse of the Soviet Union and the beginning of the spread of democracy worldwide, weak signs of democratic values began to appear on the horizon at later conferences. No mention was seen of direct civil, political, economic or cultural rights of the Arab citizen; however, what was new in this conference was the beginning of the presence of third generation rights.

5. The method of the establishment of the Arab states away from the institutions and the laws, and the will of the Arab ruler was formulated above these laws and institutions are the dilemmas that face the development of human rights in the Arab world. The issue of human rights is still a grant from the ruling regimes.

REFERENCES


 حقوق الإنسان في البيانات الختامية لمؤتمرات القمم العربية بعد الحادي عشر من سبتمبر 2001

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ملخص

تستهدف هذه الدراسة رصد حجم المساحة المخصصة لحقوق الإنسان في البيانات الختامية لمؤتمرات القمم العربية، وذلك لبيان مدى اهتمام القيادة السياسية العربية بهذه الحقوق وواحية تأثير البيئة الدولية وتحديداً أحداث الحادي عشر من سبتمبر 2001 في حضور هذه الحقوق في هذه البيانات، وتستخدم هذه الدراسة منهج تحليل المضمون لبيان حجم المساحة المخصصة لموضوع حقوق الإنسان في مؤتمرات القمم العربية اعتمادًا على وحدة Analysis السطر، بالإضافة إلى استخدام المنهج التاريخي والمنهج المقارن والمنهج التحليلي. وقد توصلت الدراسة إلى مجموعة من النتائج أبرزها: أن الخطاب السياسي العربي على مستوى القمة خلا من أية إشارة لحقوق الإنسان كما وردت في الإعلام العالمي الإنسان خلال الفترة الممتدة من أول مؤتمر قمة عربي عام 1964 ولغاية عام 1990، كما شكلت أحداث الحادي عشر من سبتمبر نقطة مفصلية في تحول الخطاب السياسي العربي على مستوى حقوق الإنسان، إذ رأت وفترة الحديث عن قضايا حقوق الإنسان كنتيجة للتحولات الدولية والضغوط الأمريكية على الدول العربية.

الكلمات الدالة: حقوق الإنسان، مؤتمرات القمم العربية، البيانات الختامية، هجمات الحادي عشر من سبتمبر، التحولات الدولية.