

STATE TRANSITIONS FOR THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA REGION: A STRUCTURAL ASSESSMENT USING THE COUNTRY INDICATORS FOR FOREIGN POLICY FRAMEWORK*

1. INTRODUCTION

Using the methodology developed by the Country Indicators for Foreign Policy (CIFP) project, this article provides a structural assessment of state transitions for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. The article builds on insights from Carment *et al.* (2009b) and subsequent studies that concluded that as a whole the MENA region suffers from poor governance and legitimacy. In particular, Carment *et al.* (2009b) found that poor legitimacy was a better predictor of increasing instability for the MENA countries rather than political or economic problems. They argued that while countries such as Saudi Arabia, Tunisia and Egypt are fragile in their own unique ways, they perform disappointingly in the basket of legitimacy standards, which includes measures of gender equity, political representation, human rights and rule of law among others. The underlying fault line was thus, according to their analysis, not in economic performance but in measures of legitimacy.

In retrospect, one could argue that it is these human rights issues that drove citizens of the Arab World to the streets in 2011 to challenge the authority of their political regimes. For this study, our working assumption is that we should expect to see improvement in legitimacy scores among those countries that underwent reforms post Arab Spring and are more stable as a result. Likewise, those countries in the region that have failed to adopt significant reforms, either because they are mired in conflict or remain fragile, are likely to exhibit deteriorating or poor legitimacy scores. We are particularly interested in finding out what if any progress has been made in the

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region, which countries remain fragile, and which ones are essentially stuck in a fragility trap. Yemen, for example, has consistently ranked among the most fragile countries in the world in the last decade.

This study relies on updated and current time series data drawn from the CIFP project (www.carleton.ca/cifp) which has, since 1997, collected and analyzed statistical information on the political, economic, social and cultural environments of countries around the world, conducted research on early warning, and produced an annual ranking of countries based on state fragility. CIFP's fragility dataset spans the period 1980-2013, allowing for in-depth comparisons of structural characteristics of states both over time and across countries, and making it one of the most comprehensive databases on state fragility. A structural assessment¹ of state transitions for the MENA region is particularly timely given the wave of protests and demonstrations (the so-called 'Arab Spring' or 'Arab Awakening') that has swept the region since December 2010, starting with Tunisia, and then spreading to several other countries. Despite the overthrow of long-established but non-democratic political regimes in countries such as Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Yemen, the promises of a new dawn in the Arab world have quickly given way to ongoing turmoil in, for example, Egypt and Libya, while the conflict in Syria rages on with the rise of the Islamic State threatening to destabilize the region further. On the other hand, countries such as Algeria, Jordan and Morocco, have emerged relatively unscathed from the Arab Spring, though promises of economic and political reform have yet to fully materialize.

These varied country experiences in the last few years point to a need to not only resist overgeneralizations that examine regional trends, but to also focus on the sequencing of structural factors at the country level. Indeed, while much attention has been devoted to understanding the causes and consequences of state fragility, no consensus has emerged as to why some countries emerge from fragility and become stable, functional and effective, while others remain trapped in fragility for long periods of time. Our main interest in this article is thus in examining state transitions, which

¹ By definition, structural analysis is necessary for responding strategically to long-term structural problems (such as those related to development, institution building or infrastructure). We recognize that this is insufficient for short term response to crises, which require a different kind of analysis of events, stakeholder interests and triggers.

are a function of the sequencing of changes in key structural characteristics of ‘stateness’. By examining the sequencing of changes, we are better positioned to understand which countries are at risk of further deterioration. If the previous finding by Carment *et al.* (2009b) is to be taken at face value, then we would expect that countries exhibiting poor legitimacy scores could well experience greater turmoil in the near future.

Accordingly, this article focuses on both regional- and country-level analysis to better understand the specific characteristics of countries in the MENA region. In the next section, we briefly summarize CIFP’s methodology to examine state transitions, focusing in particular on structural assessments. The third section examines structural indicators for the MENA region, and its constituting countries, with a particular focus on what has happened since the beginning of the Arab Spring in late 2010. The fourth section of the paper profiles and discusses the structural transitions that have taken place in three countries (Algeria, Libya, and Yemen). The fifth and final section concludes.

2. THE CIFP NET ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

The full CIFP net assessment methodology combines multiple levels of information (structural comparative risk assessments, event monitoring/dynamic data analysis, expert and field surveys) to profile countries according to state fragility, as well as examine their potential for failure along several dimensions of ‘stateness’ (Carment *et al.*, 2009a). The net assessment involves examining intended and unintended consequences of policy impacts in fragile states, focusing on where these efforts are directed. One of its goals is to provide strategic and operational guidance for policy makers through data analysis and country monitoring. As such, it combines both elements of quantitative and qualitative analyses – necessary for effective engagement – at both the cross-country and country-specific levels. For practical reasons, we focus only on the sequencing of structural factors at the country level.

According to CIFP’s conceptualization, state fragility is the result of the interrelated aspects of development, conflict and stability; it is the product or convergence of three interconnected policy-inspired research streams (Carment *et al.*, 2009a). The development-oriented stream, which drew its support from the World Bank and the OECD, has been largely motivated by the

poor track-record of structural adjustment and market-friendly reforms conducted in several countries. An example of this is the low-income countries under stress (LICUS) initiative spearheaded by the World Bank since 2001 to examine the challenges faced by low-income countries with weak policies, institutions and governance, and in order to improve development aid effectiveness in these countries. The conflict-oriented stream resulted from the development of early warning and conflict prevention tools in the 1990s, leading to rankings such as the Failed States Index of the Fund for Peace². The stability-oriented stream came about as a result of the threats that weak and failed states posed to their neighbors and the international system.

An example of this third stream is the Political Instability Task Force (PITF), formerly known as the State Failure Task Force (Marshall and Cole, 2014).

In CIFP's conceptualization, the state is the primary unit of analysis and needs to exhibit three fundamental properties of authority, legitimacy and capacity (ALC) to function properly. The state is constrained by internal and external forces that are constantly changing over time and fragility measures the extent to which the actual characteristics of a state differ from their ideal situation. In this relative sense, all states are thus, to some extent, fragile. Authority refers to the ability of the state to enact binding legislation over its population, to exercise coercive force over its sovereign territory, and to provide core public goods, and a stable and secure environment to its population.

Typical measures found under authority include conflict intensity, military expenditure as a percentage of GDP, the level of corruption and political stability. Legitimacy refers to the extent to which government commands public loyalty to the governing regime, and its ability to generate support – local and international – for its legislation and policy. It includes measures such as regime type, level of democracy and human rights. Capacity refers to the ability of the state to mobilize and employ resources towards productive ends. Capacity includes measures such as income *per capita*, foreign aid and various social indicators.

Decisions about the categorization of indicators were arrived at

² The Fund for Peace (www.fundforpeace.org) 'Failed States Index' was recently renamed 'Fragile States Index'.

based on consensus by a panel of experts and a deliberate attempt was made to classify each indicator in only one of A, L and C³.

In effect, this ALC approach synthesizes the different theoretical foundations and streams described above. The development stream is captured by indicators of capacity, the conflict stream by indicators of authority and the stability stream by indicators of legitimacy. In order to arrive at a composite index for authority, legitimacy and capacity for a particular country, different indicators are converted to a nine-point score based on the performance of that country relative to a global sample of countries. In general, a *higher* score is an indication that a country is performing *poorly* relative to other countries. In order to avoid wide fluctuations in yearly data for country performance, averages over a five-year time frame are calculated for global rank scores.

CIFP's overall state fragility index follows a similar approach to the ALC components by converting different indicators to a nine-point score, again based on the relative performance of each country to a global sample of countries. The resulting index is made up of more than 80 indicators that are aggregated together to produce an annual ranking. A fragility score above 6.5 is considered serious and in our latest ranking for 2013, Somalia topped the list, followed by the Central African Republic (both with scores above 7.5); these two countries are considered very serious cases approximating failed states. The worst performer in the MENA region according to CIFP's state fragility index is Yemen with a score of 6.9 and in 11th place⁴. In addition to the ALC components and the state fragility index, six clusters or dimensions of state performance (governance, economics, security and crime, human development, demography, environment) and gender as a cross-cutting theme are also available for each country. We are thus able to compare states according to a range of identical performance measures in the next section.

³ For a description of the full methodology, please see Carment *et al.*, 2009b.

⁴ Both the CIFP State Fragility Index and the Fragile States Index of the Fund for Peace rank Yemen among the worst performing countries in the world. In fact, fragility indices tend to be highly correlated with one another. The advantage of using CIFP's index is its extensive temporal coverage and the fact that its methodology is fully transparent. On the other hand, it is difficult to know which aspects of fragility are emphasized by the Fund for Peace Fragile States Index.

3. A STRUCTURAL ASSESSMENT OF THE MENA REGION

Different organizations tend to define the MENA region differently and there is no standard list of countries that belong to the region. For the purposes of this article, we use the World Bank classification of countries which lists the following twenty-one countries (thirteen developing countries and eight high-income countries) as part of the region: Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Malta, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, West Bank and Gaza, and Yemen.

As a result, we have a fairly diverse group made up of oil-rich economies such as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, and resource-scarce ones such as Egypt and Yemen. A few such as Iraq and Syria are currently affected by large-scale conflicts and most, if not all, have been unstable in recent years, especially as a result of the Arab Spring.

Table 1 shows how the MENA countries performed in 2013⁵ compared to other country groups. In particular, we compare their average performance with all 200+ countries in our dataset, with a sample that excludes all OECD countries, and with a small sample of the 5 Mediterranean African (MEDAFR) countries (Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia – all highlighted). For each country, the table includes the fragility score, ALC scores, cluster scores and the score for the crosscutting theme of gender. Three of the MENA countries (Yemen, Syria and Iraq) were among the top 40 fragile states in the world in 2013, and all of them had fragility scores higher than 6.0.

The best performers were Malta, Israel and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). As a group, the MENA region performs very close to the average and the median of the CIPF fragility index for all countries, and even slightly better when OECD countries are excluded.

Together, the performance of the MEDAFR countries is not significantly different from that of the other MENA countries.

⁵ The data for 2013 is preliminary as not all underlying indicators are yet available. However, we have enough underlying indicators to report these results.

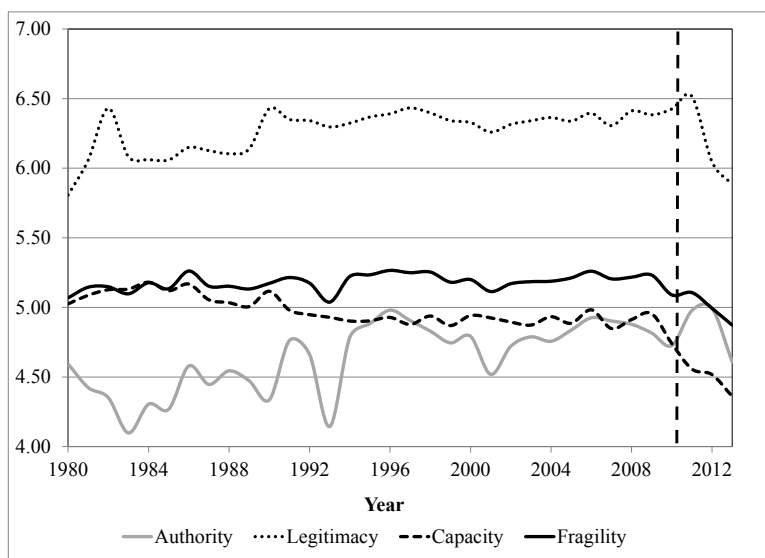
TABLE 1 - *Fragility, ALC and Cluster Performance:
MENA Countries, 2013*

Country	Fragility Index	ALC Scores			Cross-Cutting Theme	Indicator Clusters					
		A	L	C		Governance	Economics	Security and Crime	Human Development	Demography	Environment
Algeria	5.35	6.05	5.49	4.25	3.80	5.57	5.76	7.19	5.12	3.79	4.22
Bahrain	4.61	3.83	6.91	3.80	5.36	7.23	3.35	3.61	3.99	5.45	2.33
Djibouti	5.80	4.55	6.83	6.58	6.60	6.50	6.19	3.21	8.27	4.57	6.81
Egypt	5.42	5.22	6.37	5.06	7.48	6.59	6.34	3.65	6.95	4.31	1.91
Iran	5.64	5.67	7.12	4.39	7.31	7.54	6.35	2.93	5.99	4.37	3.17
Iraq	6.25	6.70	6.74	5.50	5.81	6.80	5.12	8.40	6.79	6.04	5.02
Israel	3.52	3.94	3.04	3.39	3.07	3.18	2.98	4.43	2.59	5.77	1.77
Jordan	4.60	4.17	5.75	4.28	5.40	5.71	4.81	3.74	4.26	4.44	2.79
Kuwait	4.42	3.96	5.40	4.03	5.27	5.79	3.42	1.69	3.65	6.56	2.19
Lebanon	4.77	4.83	6.08	3.63	6.88	6.45	3.86	4.59	4.49	5.00	3.32
Libya	4.67	4.44	6.04	3.83	4.93	6.71	4.99	3.49	4.58	2.81	3.49
Malta	3.03	2.43	3.03	3.70	4.62	3.10	3.33	1.77	2.88	4.06	1.51
Morocco	4.84	4.18	5.32	5.26	6.33	5.33	4.82	3.43	6.95	3.87	4.69
Oman	4.56	3.87	6.41	3.91	6.51	6.47	3.51	3.24	5.03	5.35	2.77
Qatar	4.16	3.62	6.28	3.16	6.59	6.12	2.76	1.60	4.19	6.41	1.65
S. Arabia	4.19	4.08	5.66	3.27	4.65	6.05	3.69	3.81	4.12	4.21	1.56
Syria	6.43	6.12	7.61	5.52	7.08	8.19	5.20	8.11	6.67	5.65	3.06
Tunisia	4.45	4.32	4.53	4.54	4.47	4.86	5.40	3.32	5.50	3.23	2.90
UAE	3.81	3.04	5.56	2.81	4.26	5.87	2.15	1.47	2.95	5.08	1.49
Yemen	6.95	7.16	7.52	6.30	8.62	7.40	6.11	8.32	8.08	6.27	6.05
Average MENA	4.87	4.61	5.88	4.36	5.75	6.07	4.51	4.10	5.15	4.86	3.13
Average MEDAFR	4.95	4.84	5.55	4.59	5.40	5.81	5.46	4.22	5.82	3.60	3.44
Average ALL	4.81	4.52	4.88	4.95	5.01	4.98	4.98	3.13	4.88	5.01	4.79
Average ALL (EXCL OECD)	5.24	4.80	5.44	5.42	5.49	5.52	5.35	3.30	5.48	5.25	5.34

Note: West Bank and Gaza had to be excluded as we did not have enough information to report on the various characteristics of 'stateness' (ALC) and clusters.

Looking at the ALC scores, it is clear that the biggest challenge for the MENA region has to do with legitimacy; more than half of the countries in Table 1 have legitimacy scores of 6.0 and above. In fact, when compared to the global sample for 2013, legitimacy is where many of the MENA countries tend to do worse, followed by authority. None of them show up among the worst performers in capacity, which tends to be dominated by countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. Although Yemen is an outlier (it does poorly across A, L, and C) and so is Syria to a certain extent, most of the MENA countries face challenges to legitimacy while their capacity scores are more than reasonable. The poor legitimacy scores are also reflected in poor scores in the clusters of governance and gender when compared to the rest of the world.

FIGURE 1 - *Fragility and ALC, MENA Region, 1980-2013*



Legitimacy problems in the context of the MENA region have a long history as seen in Figure 1, which tracks the evolution of (average) fragility and ALC scores over time since 1980 for the same list of MENA countries as in Table 1. When compared to authority and capacity, legitimacy is the characteristic of ‘stateness’ that has always been worst in magnitude and it has deteriorated over the long-term. Authority structures have also deteriorated over the full period and tend to be more volatile, while capacity scores have improved. Statistically, pairwise Granger causality tests on these averages show that Granger causality runs from capacity to legitimacy

but not the other way, confirming that improved capacity in the region exacerbated legitimacy problems. In effect, improved capacity created a situation whereby institutions could no longer keep pace with the demands placed on them or as argued by Rodrik (2011):

“One lesson of the Arab annus mirabilis, then, is that good economics need not always mean good politics; the two can part ways for quite some time... rapid economic growth does not buy political stability on its own, unless political institutions are also allowed to develop and mature. In fact, economic growth itself generates social and economic mobilisation, a fundamental source of political instability”.

Granger causality tests could not, however, establish clear unidirectional linkages between authority and legitimacy as they tend to reinforce each other⁶.

Interestingly, since the beginning of the Arab Spring towards the end of 2010 (shown by the vertical dotted line in Figure 1), average ALC scores have all improved but the biggest improvement has been in legitimacy by 8.5%. Looking at the country-by-country variations, we observe that it has improved in a few cases and deteriorated in others⁷. It is precisely this variation at the country level, a few years before, and after, the Arab Spring that we explore further in the next section. In particular we will use our fragility and ALC framework to examine what has happened in Algeria, Libya and Yemen. As we can see in Table 1 above, the fragility scores of these three countries are different and ranged from 4.7 to 7.0 in 2013.

4. STATE TRANSITIONS: ALGERIA, LIBYA AND YEMEN

Algeria

At first glance, Algeria would seem to have been a perfect candidate for an Arab Spring uprising. Like Libya and Egypt, Algeria had long been ruled by an authoritarian regime which used the well-equipped and powerful military and internal security services to crack down on opposition and pro-democracy elements in Algerian society. Although nominally a democracy, Algeria is in

⁶ Granger causality tests were conducted after making sure that the variables were stationary using augmented Dickey-Fuller tests and necessary transformations.

⁷ In terms of clusters, there has been a long-term decline in gender, governance, and security and crime but a long-term improvement in demography, environment and human development.

reality a 'facade democracy' that is ruled by Abdelaziz Bouteflika and his circle of powerful military and business officials (nicknamed 'Le Pouvoir' within Algeria), and where the political opposition is more or less a rubber stamp in the legislature.

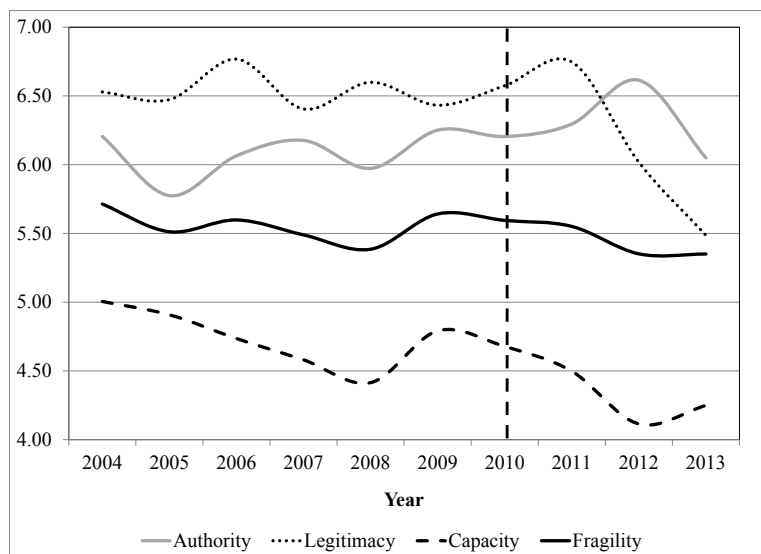
In addition, its economic prospects were, and have remained, rather poor. Unemployment has consistently been at or above 10% over the past 10 years, while youth unemployment has been double or more (22% in 2011). Particularly troubling is that the vast majority of unemployment is long-term (71% of total unemployment in 2011). It would seem that the combination of a repressive authoritarian regime with poor economic prospects – especially for youth – would have made it ripe for an uprising. Indeed, it initially appeared that there would be one.

De-regulation efforts by the Algerian government produced price hikes and goods shortages at the beginning of 2011, just as the unrest in Tunisia was reaching a tipping point. Riots were reported in twenty regions throughout the country, including 5 days of rioting in Algiers in January (Batty, 2011).

As many as 150 Algerians self-immolated at public service buildings in protest (Khan and Mezran, 2014). Opposition and civil society groups coalesced into the National Coordination for Change and Democracy (NCCD) and issued a call for protests on February 12 which, as it turned out, would be the day after Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak resigned.

Thousands turned out, forcing the regime to deploy 30,000 riot police in Algiers; despite the large presence, around 3,000 protesters managed to break through the police lines to briefly occupy the central May First Square. Social unrest continued into March, with 75 strikes reported throughout the country.

The protests were certainly worrying to the regime. Only a few days into the protests in January, the government reversed price increases and enacted policies to further lower food import costs. Unemployment reduction schemes were unveiled. By February, President Bouteflika was even prompted to revoke the country's state of emergency laws that had been in place since the beginning of the civil war in 1992, in a bid to quell the protests (Al Jazeera, 2011). In April, he announced further political reforms, including greater access to national media for opposition parties. To finance these new promises, the government was forced to increase its public sector spending by 25% in May 2011. Other targeted deals were made as well: police and military personnel received pay increases over three years, of 50% and 40% respectively.

FIGURE 2 - *Fragility and ALC, Algeria, 2004-2013*

These measures appear to have worked. Three years on, Bouteflika remains solidly in power, and Algeria continues to maintain relative political and economic stability. Protests and strikes continued, but were relatively uncoordinated and detached from one another, never posing a significant threat to the regime. This impression is matched by CIFP's ALC data for Algeria. Overall fragility scores (see Figure 2) remained generally stagnant from 2004 through 2013, with the 2011 protests having no noticeable impact. Capacity scores continued their trend of improvement over the 10 year period, from 5.0 in 2004 to 4.2 in 2013 (although there was a slight deterioration from 2012 to 2013). Legitimacy scores, while stagnant before 2011, actually witness a sharp improvement from 6.7 in 2011 to 5.5 in 2013. Only authority scores deteriorated, rising briefly to 6.6 in 2012 before declining again to 6.1 in 2013.

Why does, in the words of Khan and Mezran (2014),

“Algeria [appear] to be the proverbial ‘dog that did not bark’”?

The answer can be seen in Algeria's ALC indicators. While authority scores did deteriorate briefly, the Algerian government was generally able to keep a lid on unrest within the country. Protests and riots occurred, but they were quickly broken up by police and security personnel. Furthermore, these forces were proactive in their repression, and sought to prevent protesters from converging into

major cities in the first place, rather than fighting them once they had arrived. This prevented critical masses of protesters and rioters from arising. Security personnel were also somewhat restrained. While mass arrests and beatings of protesters occurred, personnel did not fire live rounds into crowds unlike in Libya and Syria. Protest groups, thus, were denied any real opportunity to converge with each other.

Repression was not enough, as demonstrated by the regime's multiple concessions throughout the unrest. The January riots were brought on by the price hikes and goods shortages, and consequently, were largely dispersed by the government's reversal of those hikes and attempts to reduce shortages. This created a lull between the January riots and the more organized protests in February that allowed the regime breathing space and took much of the steam out of the wider protest movement. Volpi (2013) writes that the Algerian political system is based on an unwritten social contract whereby the population acquiesces to authoritarian rule in return for government redistribution of wealth and services; the government may placate the population by expanding these, but faces the public's wrath if it contracts them.

This resulted in a situation whereby specific groups (such as particular workers' groups or unions) organized local protests to gain concessions from the government in return, rather than to specifically change the regime itself (Volpi, 2013). The legacy of the brutal Algerian Civil War – which was brought about in part by a significant regime change – still hangs over many Algerians today, and analysts have noted that this has in part fueled a desire to push the government for incremental concessions rather than for total regime change (see, for example, Achy, 2012). The concessions provided would appear to have worked. Legitimacy scores improved rapidly between 2011 and 2013, while the ageing and very ill Bouteflika retained his hold on power. The concessions, however, needed to be financed, and thus the government was dependent on hydrocarbon (oil and gas) revenues to enact them. Fortunately, such revenues remained forthcoming, something which is indicated by the improving capacity scores over the period.

In summary, Algeria was able to 'dodge' the Arab Spring with a combination of effective targeted repression and sufficient concessions to deflate reform fervour. These actions can be seen in the authority and legitimacy scores for Algeria over the period. Such actions were underwritten by stable revenues from hydrocarbons, which are reflected in the improving capacity scores.

Libya

Of the three case studies examined in this article, the transition that occurred in Libya – beginning in 2011 and resulting in a complete regime change via international intervention – represents the most extreme case resulting from the Arab Spring. In order to understand how and why Libya underwent such a dramatic transition it is important to look at the recent history of the country and its leadership alongside the economic, political, and social policies which led to the eventual revolution. Muammar Gaddafi had been in political control of Libya since 1969 after his revolutionary group, the ‘Free Officers’, deposed the Western-aligned leader, King Idris, in a bloodless coup.

Gaddafi’s witness to the pre-emptive 2003 US invasion of Iraq caused his regime to vow to end its chemical and nuclear weapons programs. Normalization of diplomatic relations with Western powers became a goal for him, and economically the country opened itself up, liberalizing trade activities and allowing for greater private investment and ownership within the country. While there was some domestic backlash in response to the reforms, liberalization continued, albeit at a slower pace for the remainder of the decade. Political liberalization, however, did not follow. Although Gaddafi technically held only a ‘ceremonial position’ it has been noted by observers that he was extremely adept at retaining power; he achieved this throughout his tenure namely by keeping those most loyal to him in critical positions in both the government and military apparatuses.

In the late 2000s things seemed to be in equilibrium for Gaddafi, with economic reforms progressing and a seemingly docile populace at his behest, and the 2011 Arab spring took him wholly by surprise. The general population of Libya also did not foresee the changes that were to occur. Indeed, with the economy picking up and the country reintegrating into the international community, Gaddafi looked as entrenched in power as ever before. The fall of President Mubarak in Egypt on February 11th 2011 invigorated the Eastern tribes and imbued them with a sense of hope; the resulting uprisings that began on the 15th of February exemplified the deep-seated resentment toward the regime. The initial revolt itself was triggered by the arrest of Fathi Tarbil, who was a human rights lawyer representing prisoners killed in custody by Gaddafi forces (Vandewalle, 2012). Prior to Tarbil’s arrest there had also been smaller demonstrations over the provision of affordable housing in January, so tensions were already running high in the eastern provinces. Benghazi, along with

the vast majority of the country's East, had been essentially ignored by the government for many decades resulting in high unemployment and widespread underdevelopment, despite the state's high level of nationalized oil revenues – in the end it was this neglect which fostered the uprisings.

A national day of protest was orchestrated for the 17th of February and these protests rapidly escalated into conflict. The suppression of the protests began with tear gas and batons, and steadily greater force was used, from small arms to heavy weapons such as machine guns and anti-tank guns. However, the severity of the actions of Gaddafi's security forces have been debated, with some claiming that only armed militants were being targeted while others claiming that attack helicopters were used to shoot protestors (Kuperman, 2013).

Evidence from groups such as Human Rights Watch (2011a; 2011b) and International Crisis Group (2011) indicates that Gaddafi forces were measured in their response to the protests, shooting to injure rather than to kill, and targeting only armed factions of the demonstrations. Regardless of the initial conditions of the unrest, armed rebel factions quickly took up arms against the government forces. On the 2nd of March the 'National Transitional Council' (NTC) made up of rebel group leaders emerged and declared itself the 'sole representative of all Libya'. During this time coastal towns in the east were taken by anti-government forces that easily cleared Gaddafi loyalists out due to their small numbers in these areas.

In the early weeks of March, Gaddafi was able to muster his armed forces and push back the poorly trained rebels, reversing many of their earlier gains. However, it was not his actions so much as his words that caught the attention of the international community. Gaddafi pledged to chase down and eliminate the "cockroaches" and "rats" who had taken up arms against him

"inch by inch, room by room, home by home, alleyway by alleyway, person by person" (Human Rights Watch, 2012).

It was predominantly these statements, with their use of language reminiscent of the 1994 Rwanda genocide, which prompted the UN Security Council (UNSC) to act in favour of the rebels.

The initial policy decisions taken by the UNSC were three-fold and specifically targeted Gaddafi, his family, and his government. These measures included 1) sanctions, 2) arms embargos and 3) travel bans (Vandewalle, 2012). After the inflammatory remarks made by Gaddafi, the UNSC along with other major international alliances including the EU, the Arab league, the AU, and numerous

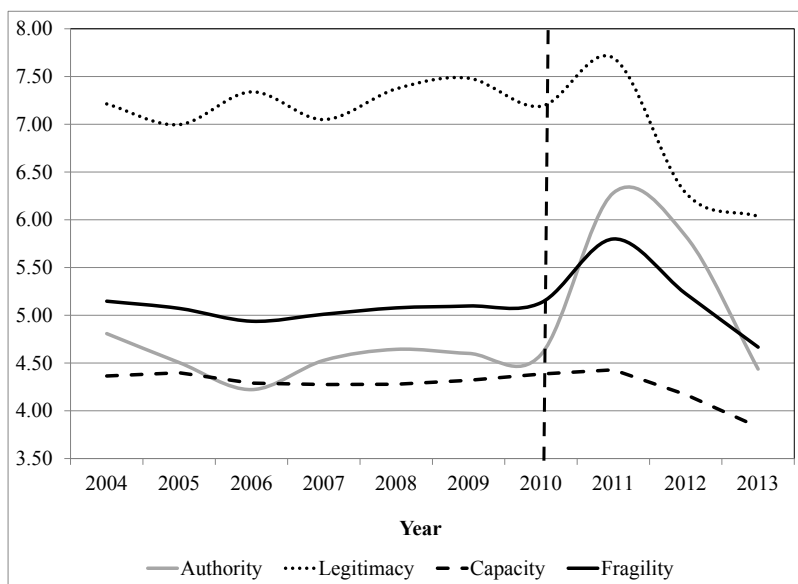
individual countries rallied in support of the NTC. Shortly thereafter, on March 17th, Resolution 1973 was adopted by the UNSC amid a “perfect storm” of circumstances which included Libyan government forces pushing back the rebels and being poised to retake Benghazi, the nearly universal recognition of the NTC as the legitimate representatives of Libya, and a strong case for a humanitarian intervention operation, often referred to under the doctrine of ‘The Responsibility to Protect’ (R2P).

Following the passing of the resolution, NATO airstrikes had a profound destabilizing effect on Gaddafi’s military.

But the poorly organized rebels were still unable to make and hold significant gains against the better trained government forces. Over the course of the next few months, although NATO stepped up its military campaign, and countries such as Qatar had group troops (illegally) in the country, training and arming rebels as well as fighting alongside them, a military solution was looking more and more unlikely. NATO was surprised by this stalemate and none of its members had budgeted for the war to last well into the summer. By July 2011 some NATO allies were beginning to waver in their support for the mission.

The most sensitive issue in implementing a ceasefire agreement was centred on the ultimate fate of Gaddafi and his inner circle. During this time, Gaddafi and members of his family had also been indicted by the International Criminal Court for crimes against humanity, making a deal between Tripoli and Benghazi ever more problematic. Gaddafi and his sons had both publicly voiced their intentions to fight to the bitter end, further compounding the difficulty of a ceasefire and power-sharing agreement being made. Speculations about such a scenario were finally brought to an end on August 21st when rebels launched a massive assault on Tripoli with the support of NATO.

It is clear that this final decision was driven partly by the rebels’ desire to make this their last war and take advantage of the presence of NATO support, and partly by the frustration of the allied forces at the length of time the conflict had dragged on. It seemed that policy number one, disposal of the dictator by force, had won out. It only took the rebels a few days to conquer Tripoli with the support of NATO’s coastal weaponry, and the city officially fell on August 28th. Gaddafi and his convoy stayed in Tripoli until the end, fleeing on the 28th of August with hope for greener pastures in his hometown of Sirte, however he was captured and killed not long after.

FIGURE 3 - *Fragility and ALC, Libya, 2004-2013*

CIFP's ALC data for Libya follows the narrative outlined above. The country remained at a moderate level of overall fragility throughout the 2000s, with a sudden sharp spike in 2011 to 5.8 corresponding with the civil war and international intervention. That spike was driven by the authority dimension primarily (see Figure 3), as Gaddafi's power began to wane and the rebellion picked up. Authority scores went from 4.6 to 6.3 from 2010 to 2011, a substantial jump for one year.

Legitimacy also played an important role in Libya's transition, with the spread of the Arab Spring leading to challenges to the government's power and influence. Legitimacy rose from 7.2 to 7.7 from 2010 to 2011, and then improved to finish at 6.0 in 2013, the best score over the past two decades. Since 2011 and into 2013 all three dimensions of Libya's fragility have improved. Even though there are a number of remaining challenges due to the power vacuum that was left after Gaddafi's disposal, it appears that the country has improved in both authority and legitimacy scores significantly. Overall it remains to be seen as to what the effects on Libya and the broader MENA region will be, although some early results can be teased out.

After Gaddafi's capture and death, many atrocities were committed by the various rebel militias.

Indeed, many have reported that human rights in Libya are

now worse off than they were under the Gaddafi regime. Since the revolution, political life in Libya has been marred by instability and upheaval, and free and fair elections have not yet been conducted. Radical Islamist parties have come to the forefront, and threaten to return Libya to a Sharia-run state. Western countries have seemingly turned their backs on the country, and there has been no talk of a UN peacekeeping mission being established in Libya. It seems that despite the initial interest in taking part in the more kinetic aspects of the intervention, the political will for Western involvement in a comprehensive state building exercise is non-existent. The negative repercussions of the war have also been acutely felt beyond the borders of Libya. The most serious case can be found in Mali, where small arms and seasoned fighters have made their way through porous borders to influence the events in the north of the country (Shaw, 2013). It is still too early to determine the long term effects of this crisis on economic and social development in Mali and the greater Sahel. On the whole, it is clear that the civil war in Libya and the NATO intervention itself contributed to the eruption of the subsequent conflict in Mali, which precipitated the 2013 French intervention in that country.

Yemen

Yemen's experience with the Arab Spring was rather unique. Peaceful, youth-led protests led to a negotiated exit of Yemen's long-time autocratic leader Ali Abdullah Saleh, who had been in power since the unification of the country in 1990.

Three years on, however, Yemen has avoided the extreme violence of Syria and Libya, but has still grown perilously more fragile since Saleh's departure. Protests erupted in earnest in Yemen following the announcement that Hosni Mubarak had stepped down in Egypt.

They continued in the capital of Sanaa and other major cities in Yemen through February and into March. In these early days, opposition to the regime was loosely coordinated amongst youth, civil society organizations, and disaffected northerners and southerners in the countryside.

On March 18, however, 52 protesters were killed by government snipers, and many within the regime, the wider political establishment, and the military began to abandon Saleh (Juneau, 2013).

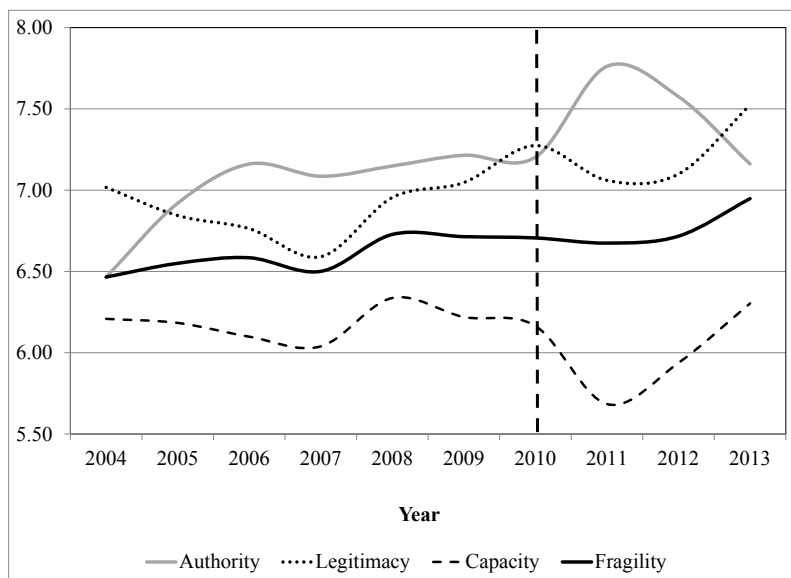
To pre-empt a growing crisis, the Gulf Cooperation Council (consisting of six of Yemen's Persian Gulf neighbours), with the backing of the United States, arranged a negotiated settlement in

April which would see the departure of Saleh and the transfer of power to the then-vice-president, Abd Rabbu Mansur al-Hadi. In exchange, Saleh and his family were given immunity from prosecution. However, Saleh repeatedly refused to sign the agreement (Juneau, 2013). In June, he was seriously wounded in a bomb attack in his presidential compound and was forced to leave for medical treatment in Saudi Arabia (The Telegraph, 2011).

By November, pressure from Saudi Arabia and the United States had pushed Saleh to finally sign the agreement. Hadi, as per the agreement, stood as the only candidate in the February 2012 elections and was 'elected' to a two-year transitional term (Juneau, 2013). While Saleh's formal resignation dampened some of the reformist fervour, the security situation continued to deteriorate. In May 2012, a suicide attack killed approximately 100 Yemeni soldiers as they were rehearsing for the National Unity Day parade.

Assassinations and attacks on military leaders became commonplace; indeed, 85 middle and high-ranking officers in the Yemeni military were killed in such attacks in the first half of 2013 alone. Over the same period, 115 attacks on the country's energy infrastructure were reported (Fattah, 2014). Taking advantage of the deteriorating security situation, northern and southern secessionist/insurgent groups expanded their control. In particular, the al-Houthi rebellion, which began in 2004, has increased to the point where Houthi rebels now occupy significant portions of Sanaa, and have taken control of other key cities in central Yemen (BBC, 2014). Although Hadi technically remains in charge, the Houthi advance risks exacerbating tribal and sectarian tensions and pushing the country further into instability (Al Jazeera, 2011).

What is perhaps the most interesting facet of Yemen's fragility indicators is that the 2011 unrest seems to barely register. The fragility index (see Figure 4) inches up from 2011 to 2012, which is roughly where it was in 2010 (at 6.7). Legitimacy and capacity deteriorate slightly, while authority, which spiked significantly to 7.8 in 2011 from 7.3 in 2010 actually improves somewhat from 2011 to 2012 (to 7.2). All three, however, experience more significant changes from 2012 to 2013 than they did from 2011 to 2012. Indeed, the overall fragility score also worsens more significantly, from 6.7 in 2012 to 6.9 in 2013. The deterioration in capacity can mainly be explained by two factors: the impact of the unrest on the wider economy and the expulsion of Yemeni migrant workers by the Saudi government. As previously mentioned, in the midst of the unrest, oil infrastructure – critical to the Yemeni economy – has been a favourite

FIGURE 4 - *Fragility and ALC, Yemen, 2004-2013*

target of groups opposed to the regime. There is even evidence that the government's preoccupation with preventing sabotage may have the opposite effect by encouraging attacks so that groups can then be rewarded for 'stopping' them. Yemeni migrant workers in Saudi Arabia are also critical to the economy, accounting for roughly USD \$3 billion in remittances per year; estimates are that between 200,000 and 600,000 have been deported (Fattah, 2014). Over the 10 year period (2004-2013), authority has been a consistent problem, almost always having the highest score among the ALC clusters; since 2006, it has consistently been above 7.0. This differentiates Yemen from most MENA countries, including Algeria and Libya, where legitimacy has traditionally been the biggest problem. The peak in authority in 2011 was the result of the convergence of three major conflicts in Yemen: between the centre and the periphery, between the regime and the wider society, and within the regime itself. The centre-periphery conflict dates to the unification of the country in 1990 and has been fought by the regime and its internal allies against groups who believe they have been unfairly cut out of power. The Houthis are a prime example of this, but there are also southern secessionist groups and Islamist groups, most notably Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) (see Fattah, 2014).

The protests (and in particular the violent crackdown) undermined the regime and provided an opportunity for other elites within the

regime to displace the Saleh clan from its most powerful positions. The main reason the authority situation peaked in 2011 rather than deteriorate further is that the three conflicts generally remained separate. The elites wished to simply replace the top positions of the regime, rather than the regime itself, and so have tended to avoid stoking the popular protests. The protesters for their part are also distrustful of the so-called opposition forces within the regime (Juneau, 2013). Unlike authority, legitimacy does not peak in 2011; rather, it continues to deteriorate, reaching 7.5 in 2013. This would seem to indicate that Saleh himself was merely the tip of the iceberg in terms of legitimacy problems in Yemen. Indeed, as much as the peaceful and negotiated settlement was hailed as a positive development, it turned out to instead merely be a reshuffling of the top positions, with little real change further down. Hadi's transitional government attempted to facilitate a political reconciliation process via the National Dialogue Conference (NDC), without much success. Saleh's return to Yemen with full immunity in particular has remained a sore spot with the protesters (Juneau, 2013). The al-Houthi movement has seized upon this resentment and rebranded itself as 'Ansar Allah' in order to broaden its political appeal and has rapidly been emerging as a 'real' opposition to the regime. In August 2014, the Houthi leadership called for the reinstatement of subsidies and for the current government to be dismissed, mobilizing thousands of supporters in Sanaa for the occasion. Hadi, in turn, was forced to concede to the Houthi demands, and dialed back the subsidies and dismissed his cabinet⁸. In summary, then, Yemen has so far been able to avoid extreme levels of violence, largely because the three conflicts taking place within it have been kept rather separate from one another. The unrest and conflicts have, however, taken their toll on the country's economy, and have not been able to resolve Yemen's significant legitimacy problems, both of which continue to edge the country closer to chaos.

5. CONCLUSION

The analysis of state fragility for the MENA region indicates that legitimacy remains a key problem when compared with authority and capacity. However, even if legitimacy has improved since the Arab Spring in late 2010/early 2011, several countries rank among the worst performers in the global sample in that category. With

⁸ BBC (2014), "Yemen Crisis: Who are the Houthis?"

the exception of Iraq, Syria and Yemen, none of the countries in the MENA region are in the top 40 fragile countries in the world because they tend to do much better in terms of capacity, and in some cases, authority structures. However, the examination of the three cases – Algeria, Libya and Yemen – shows that Algeria was able to deal with the Arab Spring as a result of significant improvements in legitimacy, while Libya saw the most improvement in authority structures, followed by legitimacy. Yemen on the other hand, is somewhat of an odd case because authority challenges have been most severe in the past few years, despite an improvement during the Arab Spring, while legitimacy has deteriorated.

Perhaps one of the most important conclusions to take away from this examination of state transition in the MENA region is that this region defies generalization. All three countries – Algeria, Libya, Yemen – would have seemed ‘ripe’ for an Arab Spring - all were hydrocarbon-based economies run by autocrats who were long past their best-before date and who had dismal economic prospects for their growing youth populations – yet all experienced it differently. Algeria emerged relatively unscathed, while Libya erupted into civil war. Yemen avoided a civil war, but is far from unscathed, and incrementally growing more fragile. Legitimacy problems in the three countries – and the responses to them – are essential in explaining the divergent outcomes outlined above, but as the analysis in this paper has shown, A, L, and C also interacted differently in each case. Detailed analysis on a case-by-case basis remains essential to determining how the interactions have played out and where effective intervention might occur.

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ABSTRACT

Using the framework developed by the Country Indicators for Foreign Policy (CIFP) project (www.carleton.ca/cifp), this paper examines state transitions in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. While previous studies have found legitimacy to be a particular concern across the region, our most recent data confirms that legitimacy remains a key issue, even if it has improved since the Arab Spring which began in late 2010. We complement this regional analysis by examining the structural characteristics of three countries – Algeria, Libya, Yemen – using CIFP's ALC framework to understand the evolution of state transitions pre- and post-Arab Spring. This examination reveals significant differences in the evolution of the characteristics of 'stateness' across the various cases.

Keywords: Algeria, Arab Spring, CIFP, Fragile States, Libya, Middle East and North Africa, State Fragility, State Transitions, Yemen.

JEL Classification: C82, F50, O53, O57

RIASSUNTO

Le transizioni delle regioni medio-orientali e del Nord Africa: una valutazione strutturale con l'utilizzo degli indicatori paese per la politica estera

Applicando il modello sviluppato dal progetto CIFP (Country Indicators for Foreign Policy), questo lavoro esamina i cambiamenti negli stati delle regioni medio-orientali e del Nord Africa. Studi precedenti riscontravano che la legittimazione era un problema cruciale nella regione: i nostri dati più aggiornati confermano che essa rimane un questione chiave, anche se ci sono stati miglioramenti da quando la Primavera Araba è cominciata, cioè a fine 2010. Questa indagine regionale è completata dall'esame delle caratteristiche strutturali di tre paesi – Algeria, Libia, Yemen – attraverso il modello ALC del Country Indicators for Foreign Policy, al fine di capire l'evoluzione dei cambiamenti in atto in questi paesi prima e dopo la Primavera Araba. Da questo esame emergono differenze significative nell'evoluzione delle caratteristiche della "statualità" tra i diversi paesi.