

**Introduction:**

The conflicts that are ongoing in Syria today are devastating to all involved. From innocent civilians to radical terrorist groups to the many foreign countries receiving refugees, countless people are involved and heavily impacted by the many repercussions that are associated with the lack of peace. Our nation, Egypt, has been experiencing high volumes of Syrians who are fleeing from the instability that is currently present in their country. These refugees have contributed to many problems within our own society.

We believe that it is critical to eliminate the conflicts that are ongoing in Syria, for the benefit of everyone involved. In order to do so, there needs to be significant change. The power of the government depends strictly on the willingness of the governed, so it is critical that the people of Syria accept their government. Meanwhile, there should also be changes within the government in order to satisfy all.

By establishing peace within Syria, the entire world will benefit. No longer will significant numbers of Syrians have to flee from their native land. No longer will countries around the world have to deal with the pressure to accept refugees, who are not in compliance with legal immigration policies. And no longer will Syrians feel the need to flee their native land.

**Key Points:**

- The conflicts in Syria should be brought to a stop as soon as possible, in order to minimize the impact on the global community.
- The existing government should remain in place within Syria in order to maintain general peace and stability, as well as to provide necessary services to the general population.
- Reforms to the government are necessary in order to ensure long-term peace and stability within Syria.
- Disarming the terrorist groups will be of great importance in the effort to recreate peace and stability within Syria.
- In order to facilitate peace at the local level, both within Egypt and Syria, it is necessary for the Syrian government to regain control.
- More cease-fires should be established that exclude terrorist groups, so that the future of Syria can be discussed between the rebel groups and the Syrian government.
- A significant amount of work is necessary to ensure that Syria's society returns to a normal situation, since there has been many disruptions.
- The conflict has disrupted the economic system within Syria beyond repair, since much infrastructure has been damaged. The restoration of peace will be the only method to stabilize Syria's economy.

- The group(s) that will ultimately bear responsibility for the conflicts is still unclear. However, this should be decided at a meeting where all stakeholders are present, in order to minimize the potential risk of further violence and instability.
- Syria was a diverse nation, and since its borders are weak, there must be some regulation of the flow of people after the conflicts.

### **Background:**

We, Egypt have one of the largest histories in the world, first beginning in the tenth millennium BC. We developed some of the first writings, agriculture, technological developments, religions, and governmental organizations in the world. The Nile Valley allowed for Egypt to develop in the first place and is responsible for its success of today as it provides fertile ground for planting. Strong floods allowed for the renewed prosperity during the Middle Kingdom in 2040 BC, under the leadership of pharaoh Amenemhat III. Invaders have also been a longstanding part of Egypt's history when the Hyksos people started to first invade in 1650 BC and had to be driven out by Northern Egyptian forces. Egypt finally rose to an international power when they extended as far down as Libya during the New Kingdom where most well known pharaohs reigned. Invaders once again came through, namely the Libyans, Nubians and the Assyrians who were still driven out by the Egyptians. During this time monotheism and atheism began to challenge the common polytheistic nature of the Egyptian religion.

Hellenism began to sweep over Egypt with the development of the Ptolemaic Kingdom under King Ptolemy where Greek culture had a strong influence over the Egyptians and Alexandria was the capital city. There were many Roman connections due to the strong Roman influence as well as the ruling of Cleopatra VII who is the lover of Marc Antony. The Hellenistic culture still prevailed throughout Egypt even after the Roman empire fell.

During the Middle Ages Egypt was conquered by the Islamic Empire by the Muslim Arabs soon after the Byzantine armies invaded Egypt. Once again proving that invasion has been a large part of Egyptian history as the fertile soil and prime location next to the Red Sea has been sought after by many peoples for many centuries. The Arabs when taking over Egypt began to spread Islam in Egypt and set the precedent for many Sufi organizations and followers that exist even today. This history concerning Egypt's religious influences has been vital in shaping Egypt today especially its strong Muslim population and how it interacts with the Middle East and Africa as a whole. Muslim leaders ruled in as a Caliphate in Egypt for the six centuries following the fifth century and castes ruled Egypt for much of this time. The Black Death wiped about 40% of Egypt's population during the 14th century proving to be a great detriment like it was with other nations in Europe and elsewhere.

After the Black Death the Ottomans swept into Egypt where in 1517 they conquered Egypt, in turn actually weakening their society and economy. The plague was also sweeping over Europe during this time and made its way to northern Africa and the Middle East where Egypt did not escape from its grip. There were actually six famines in Egypt during this time and it killed off about twenty percent of its population, absolutely devastating Egypt for times to come.

The Ottomans actually had a tough time controlling the Egyptians as the Egyptian military elite, the Mamluks held tight control and actually allowed Egypt to rule almost autonomously until the French, under Napoleon swept into Egypt in the late 18th century after the French Revolution. But due to Napoleon's short reign Egypt became a very contested place as the French were expelled and the Ottomans, Mamluks, and Albanian mercenaries fought for power in Egypt for centuries to come.

In 1805, Muhammad Ali Pasha, known as Muhammad Ali, seized power in 1805, an Albanian military commander of the Ottoman army in Egypt, a mix of two contesting parties vying for power. Muhammad Ali established a dynasty until 1952, the length of about one hundred and fifty years under the title viceroy. What really brought up Egypt's economy during this time was the cotton crop, turning Egypt into a cash crop society using monoculture. The cotton industry also helped Egypt reach global markets and be known for Egyptian cotton, still famous today as expensive, soft material that is used most commonly for sheets for those who can afford it. Muhammad Ali actually made great conquests during this time in the mid 19th century as he annexed Syria, North Sudan and parts of Anatolia and Arabia. Soon after Muhammad Ali got these territories the Ottoman empire reconquered them.

Muhammad Ali saw the need to modernize his country as he was fighting against the Ottomans so he built canals for both transportation but also irrigation, industries, and he reformed civil service. He greatly improved the army as he wanted to be able to compete with the great army of the Ottomans and in fact showed great similarities to the Soviet Union's forces. He introduced conscription among the peasantry and at first many resented the army as it was a tough life but then many felt nationalism and pride for their army as a new wave of nationalism similarly began in Europe. This strengthening of military, economy, and leadership allowed Muhammad Ali to keep control of Egypt for so long. In 1848 Muhammad Ali was succeeded by his son Ibrahim, then by Abbas I his grandson, then by Said and Ismail, all in a few years throughout the mid 1800s.

Even though Egypt was ruled over by Muhammad Ali during this time it was still an Ottoman province and it was granted vassalship as an autonomous vassal state in 1867 until the 1914, World War I. The next large infrastructure that was built was the Suez Canal, where Egypt partnered with the French and was finally completed in 1869. This was the beginning of a time where Egypt began to be heavily influenced by the Europeans whether they wanted to or not. The Suez Canal proved to initially to not be profitable for Europe or Egypt as the building of the canal brought great debt to many European banks as well as discontent among Europeans because there were high taxes put in place for it to be built. Also, the Egyptians under Ismail in 1875 were forced to sell their share of the canal to the Brits, leading to an era of great control of Egypt under the British and French.

The British and French now had positions in the Egyptian cabinet proving that they had more and more influence in Egypt. Egypt was actually forced to be more and more dependent on European money during this time period as diseases striking cattle, floods, wars, and a bad economy forced Egypt to borrow from the British and other European countries.

Nationalist grouping began in the late 19th century under the leadership of Ahmad Urabi. These new groups caused Britain and France to come into Egypt to crush their army and began a British protectorate under Ismail's son Tewfik in 1914, whom they named as sultan a sort of job at the Ottomans. The British did this in part in reaction to the Young Turks movement of the Ottoman Empire in Turkey that joined the Central Powers during World War I.

After World War I a nationalist movement led by Saad Zaghlul and the Wafd Party became the majority at the Legislative Assembly. Revolution erupted after Zaghlul was exiled by the British in 1919 and this revolution led the British to declare Egypt's independence in 1922. Soon after in 1923 the new government drafted a constitution with a parliament and Saad Zaghlul was elected as the Prime Minister of Egypt one year later in 1924. There was still much instability in the region as British influence still remained and there was still much political turmoil. This led to a coup d'état that dissolved the parliament in 1952, known as the 1952 Revolution.

Along with the 1952 Revolution there began a Free Officers Movement where the Egyptian government was made to be more militaristic, and in 1953 the Egyptian Republic was declared under General Muhammad Naguib. However in 1954 Naguib resigned leaving the real leader of the movement, Gamal Abdel Nasser to be put in the position of president in 1956. In the same year British forces complied and removed themselves from the Suez Canal. Egypt and Syria created a union in 1958 called the United Arab Republic but this was soon ended in 1961 when Syria seceded. In 1967 the Soviet Union told Nasser that the Israelis were going to attack Syria and Nasser took quick steps to deploy his troops, expelled UN peacekeepers and issued a statement that he was going to destroy Israel. Israel during this war occupied the Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip, territory previously held by the Egyptians. The Emergency Law was enacted during this time suspending constitutional rights and allowing censorship, until 2012. Despite higher schooling rates during this time, the economy went downhill.

In 1970 Nasser died and he was succeeded by Anwar Sadat where he switched Egypt's allegiance from the Soviet Union to the United States during the Cold War. The October War in 1973 was when Sadat regained the Sinai territory, a great victory. Sadat also encouraged foreign investment during this time, mostly benefitting the higher class and leading to the 1977 Egyptian Bread Riots where he eliminated subsidies on food. Egypt was expelled from the Arab League during this time and Sadat was killed by an extremist soon after.

Hosni Mubarak came to power in 1981 and reaffirmed their Israeli relationship during a time of mass poverty. Terrorist attacks were very common during this time as Christians were targeted, leading to massive hits to their tourism industry. The National Democratic party was dominating during this time and passed laws that restricted freedoms. There were more constitutional changes after much uproar in the early 2000s about torture where the emphasis was still put on the military.

Widespread protests erupted in 2011 against Mubarak's government and he resigned and fled. The military assumed power and dissolved the parliament and suspended the constitution. A parliamentary election was held in 2011 and Mohamed Morsi was elected president with some

members of the Muslim Brotherhood in his cabinet. After public discontent the military removed Morsi in a coup d'état. The military then cracked down on the Muslim Brotherhood and imprisoned many of them. In 2014 Abdel Fattah el-Sisi the head of the Egyptian Armed forces where he won in a landslide and became the president of Egypt.

### **Cross-Border Issues:**

The violent civil war broke-out in Syria in 2011 leads the country into a stage of crisis, facing problems humanitarian issues to political crisis. Syria's relation with neighboring countries and other global powers is significantly critical in this conflict in terms of maintaining secure borders, aiding in the Syrian refugee crisis, and handling terrorist threats. The neighboring countries of Syria are Islamic States, including Turkey, Iraq, Israel, Lebanon, and Jordan. Prior to the Arab Spring and the Syrian Civil War, Syria enjoyed an improved and a relative engagement with its geographically culturally neighboring countries, but there are still rising tension and conflict among the power struggle of the independent states. In relation with Iraq, these two countries favored a strong and united Arab nation over 50 years starting in the 1950s. Since both entities disapproved and were hostile toward western intrusions, the Baath Party, a socialist pan-Arab political group, was established in response to the foreign threat. After Saddam Hussein assumed power in 1979, transactions between Iraq and Syria dissolved as they were splitted in the invasion of Iran in 1980. The Syrian-Iraqi border was closed and their relationship severed for nearly the next decade. On a similar circumstance, Turkey experienced both peaceful coexistence and military tension specifically regarding to the border problems over the Euphrates. Syria supported the Kurdish Workers' Party(PKK), which aimed to fight for a home in southern Turkey. This Turkish suspected that the PKK was crossing the Syrian-Turkish border to enter internal Turkey, and they pressured Syria to ban the PKK's bilateral travel with military forces. In Lebanon, after the assassination of its Prime Minister Rafik al-Hariri, Syria took on the blame and was addressed to withdraw any political and military forces from Lebanon. Although Syria claimed that they did not commit the act, the misunderstanding deepened between these two countries. Jordan and Syria share different worldviews: Jordan aligned itself with American and British influence, while Syria, on the other hand, strongly objected to the integration of western powers. Finally, Syria heavily refused to recognize the existence of Israel and its entry to the Arab nation after Syria suffered a huge loss of territories from the hands of the British and French in World War I. Since the ongoing war, Syria has been increasingly isolated from its regional neighbors and widely from the larger global diplomatic community.

Before the war, Syria housed over a million refugees, three times as many as Europe is hosting now. The open border policy of Syria attracted most refugees from Iraq to seek asylum and the migrants, unlike for other neighboring countries, did not require a visa to enter Syria. With the intervention of the United States in Iraq since 2003, the rate of violence, crimes, restlessness, and abduction increased dramatically, forcing many Iraqis to flee from the terror. According to a data collected by the United Nations Refugee Agency, in 2014, one million out of

1.3 million refugees in Syria came from Iraq. Migrants seeking asylum were not kept in camp, but their living conditions were not pleasant either. However, compared to refugee camps and reception centers throughout Europe, Syria provided its permanent residents better public service, such as easy access to schools and healthcare. As a developing country, the fluctuation of asylum-seekers into the country caused massive unemployment and gradually the Syrian government suffered financial crisis in funding the housing and food services for their internal refugees. Syria's civil war now forced nearly half the country's population from their homes and displaced about one third of its citizens; most fled to nearby countries, such as Lebanon and Turkey. The outflow of Syrian refugees is a crisis that heavily impacts the shift of demographics around the world today.

Prior to the civil war of Syria, the borders were heavily under regulated and the civilians took benefits from this. The Syrian borders were drawn out and built centuries ago, and the durability of the borders has been weakened very badly. The borders have been accessible without any regulation and civilians would cross the borders in an extremely easy manner. Due to the war, Syrians have been migrating to the neighboring countries — Iraq, Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan, Israel. As for Syria, civil war is only one of the major issues out of many they are currently faced with. Past problems, such as, the environmental weather problems are only playing domino effect towards the other issues, such as lack of food production and water sources for the civilians. One of the concurrent problems that Syria has been dealing with are the extreme drought, one critical example being the 2007 mega drought, which put millions of farmers into unemployment due to the harsh heat and non arable land. These kind of changes to the environment are only becoming worse due to the man made changes. Many research has pointed out the relation between the civil war and the environmental drought. Study published by the Proceedings of the National Academy of Science, the scientist blames the issue of drought to the fact that the temperature has been increasing for a century on the eastern Mediterranean, rather than the natural climate variability. Research also suggest that the drought has played a big role in the humanitarian crisis of Syria. The environmental problems “had a catalytic effect”, the drought causing land arable, and farmers are unable to adapt, thus millions are migrating from rural areas to the urban cities. The the civil war has turned into a multifaceted conflict, causing deaths of 200,000. For the past four decades, the Syrian Shia Alawite minority, and after the Bashar Hafez al-Assad took control of the power, they were unable to hold on to the countries faiths. The Assad regime was in charge of controlling the borders of Syria. But due to the amateur preparations and inexperienced military, they were not able to control the borders, thus leading to the current Syrian civil war.

In the recent conflict, terrorism have posed a threat to Syria. There has been many terrorists acts that was launch upon Syria. With Syria having been a victim of terrorism, there have been daily attacks leading to terror all throughout. As ISIS, one of the many terrorists from outside the country, forces Syria to worsen the conflict. On the contrary, Syria uses terrorism as an advantage and sees it as a strategy of “indirect involvement” to achieving its aim both

internationally and within their country. They seek to use this as to end the exploitation of terrorists groups organization. While spread of terrorists have impacted Syria, there will be consequences of deep implications for the future boundaries.

Terrorists are both homegrown and from outside the country. The Al-Qaeda group fighting in Syria called Al-Nusrah has been labeled by the US a foreign terrorist organization, but is critical in rebel offenses. Likewise, many terrorists are formed from refugees and organizations such as ISIS. As time goes by, those groups were led to such large scale terrorists. Not to mention the debate whether Syria supports terrorists activities or not despite the widespread accusations.

ISIS, a terrorist group, has been a target by eastern Syria of large air strikes. The rise of ISIS brought the transformation of stateless territories in eastern Syria into their control. ISIS inspired many more of terrorist attacks that increases pressure upon Syria. By 2014, ISIS have overrun much of Eastern Syria. When the US began to target airstrikes against ISIS, it forces Syria to attempt to destroy the terrorist group. Ever since then, ISIS have been expanding its territories with Northern and Eastern parts of Syria. It continuously grows by feeding off of Syria. ISIS was such a direct threat to Syria, violence escalate to the point where they've been fighting proxy wars with Syria for several years.

### **Economic Reconstruction:**

Although Syria's economy, heavily based on industry, oil, agriculture, etc, experienced a slight growth during the end of the twentieth century, most recently has been dramatically declining. The initial growth was followed by an economic depression, followed by a short period of minor recovery. The Syrian economy was already facing a gradual decline before the war due to climate change, which led to increasingly severe droughts, thus affecting their agricultural production. Their agriculture industry, which plays a large role in employing their labor force, has dropped in value in the world economy. The value of crude oil prices in the economy have increased due to dwindling oil production and increase export tariffs.

The economy in Syria is decentralized with the government allowing some investors to use foreign currency loans from local private banks in order to promote capital investments. There are two exchange rate in Syria one set by Central Bank of Syria and the other based on the value of imports and a budget. However black market foreign currency transactions persist. There are six centralized state banks which control the foreign commerce, however their interests lean more towards the public sector, this pushing private investors to bank abroad, in places such as Lebanon.

Syria's main export are essential materials like crude oil, refined products, raw cotton, clothing, fruits and grain. Rebels control this natural resource extraction as well as other industry sectors in Syria. Not only do the Rebels control some of this natural resource extraction, but also

the government controls these transactions. The government controls the energy and mineral resources and handle the Industry and Manufacturing sectors in the government. Banking and finance are owned by the private sectors of Syria, along with most business sectors are run by the private industry.

The country's main exports as previously stated are essential for agriculture and industry so Syria exports oils, raw cotton, fruits and cars. One of their top export location is into Egypt which rakes in about \$112M. Their most imported industry is cars and leading behind that is raw sugar imports into Syria.

Syria has been plagued with economic inequality where the majority of the nation is ravaged by poverty and the select few who are rich only continue to grow their wealth. The economic situation in Syria has created a new elite class only solidifying the fact that rich are the ones to benefit from the inequalities in the economy. Banks have greatly contributed to the heavily capitalist elite, which has subsequently led to impacts in the social sphere. After Bashar al-Assad rose to power the privatization of industries, thus leading to great socioeconomic stratification. The state controls the majority of the most powerful banks in Syria and they have created a structure where elites are highly dependent on the state because they limit foreign investment and create legislation where they would jointly hold companies and infrastructural projects. Elites continued to accumulate wealth and this coupled with the fact that the government's decrease in property rights and migration of capital to other countries aided in the creation of a economically deficient and unequal society.

The conflict in Syria has had a deep influence on the economy because of the rise and fall of the elite and lower class. The community and business also get disrupted by the Syrian conflict and because of this Syria's economy has taken a plunge. The economy also has divided the social structure and the conflict have left many unable to pay for necessities. The conflict in Syria also contracted many of the sectors in Syria causing them to lose power in different parts of the country.

The war has severely limited state funding, thus limiting their ability to deal with the destruction of large parts of their infrastructure. Stock markets and bank deposits are rapidly reducing as capital is flowing quickly to foreign banks and currencies. The regime remains uncompromising, which results in a diminishing ability to keep up with production, most evident in the decreasing number of barrels and quality of oil that they are able to procure. We share the same national grid as Syria and their inability to maintain them has been costly. Constant warfare has led to the large scale damages to basic infrastructure around the country and this compounded by the emigration of capitalist elites have led to an almost complete halt in government services that maintain water and electricity, causing week long power outages.



Conflict has seriously affected Syria's oil production, which according to the world bank used to be about 330,000 barrels per day but now is only 70,000 barrels. Production and exports has dropped by 20% of the gross domestic product (U.S. Energy Information Administration). The national income of the labor force, especially those working in the industry sector, has dropped and the quality of the oil that Syria produces has declined and crude refining of petroleum products are utilized for local use and smuggling.

According to the Syrian Economic Forum, the unemployment rate, prior to the conflict, was around 8% and recently has risen to about 14%. In 2008, prior to the conflict, 67% of people worked in service centers, which included the government and 33% in agriculture and industry. Public sectors make up about 30% of the entire labor force, but are paid very low salaries.

Syria's population before the war boasted over 20 million people, which was majority male population who ranged from 30 to 64 years of age. The median age prior to the conflict was an estimated 30-40 years of age, which in recent years has decreased. Death rates and net migration rates have also increased significantly due to the conflict.

#### **Governance:**

Before the conflict, Syria was a republic, and when President Hafez al-Assad died in 2000, the power was assumed by his son, Bashar al-Assad. He has assumed a long term control of power and has not been removed since. He has run for re-election twice and both times he has won with over ninety percent of the popular vote. He has served his two terms of seven years each, and may have over served his stay. This does not mean that he should be removed necessarily, but it must be noticed that the single removal has already been applied.

We were actually at one point merged with them as the United Arab Republic. However that ended in early 1961, which is about when the Ba'ath party came to power. We had strong ties with Syria ever since then, even though they did leave our republic. Before our president Sisi came into power. The leader Mohamed Morsi had strongly supported the Syrian revolt, however we do not stand with those views any longer. Recently President Abdel Fattah el-Sissi has said that he supports the Syrian military. Before the Arab Spring, Syria had a strong government with their easily supportable president. Our governments were supportive of each other, as they should still be. In November of 2016, el-Sisi said that he supports the national armies, not rebel groups. He gave Libya as an example, and then once the reporter asked, he clarified that we support the Syrian national armies, even though we previously supported the rebel groups. Many other countries, however, do not openly support the Syrian army, which is the wrong choice.

The main groups present in the Syrian conflict include ISIS, which is an extremist group that we do not support. There are other rebel groups too. In addition to that there is the Syrian

government, headed by President Bashar al-Assad, which also has troops. We stand with President al-Assad and against the rebel and extremist groups, for we realize that with the victory of extremist groups, comes political instability, something that does not need to be increased at this moment in time. ISIS, the extremist terrorist group that we do not align with or support, is headed by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. His Iraqi deputy leader was Abu Muslim al-Turkmani and his deputy leader for Syria was Abu Ali Anbari. We would like to make it clear that though we have supported rebellious groups, we now realize that a takeover of power would mean a loss of power. It would also mean a rise in terrorism due to an entire radicalized state. A takeover in Syria would mean a loss of security on a local scale. We therefore believe that, no matter how unjust it may be, Assad should remain in power while the conflict is raging.

On February first, **1958** Egypt and Syria merged to form the United Arab Republic. We united for a few reasons, one of them being that we are both in the middle east and very close to each other. However this did not last long, on September 28, **1961** Syria declared itself independent following a military coup. Due to rising conflict and the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood we severed all relations with them in 2011. In June 2015, President Mohammed Morsi decided it would be best to close the Syrian embassy in Cairo and to have a no fly zone over Syria. However now it is better, and we have reopened the embassy.

Syria will need to adjust its constitution when the conflict is over. We do not believe that it should be entirely rewritten, but it should be greatly rewritten, and bypassing article one hundred-fifty may be required, with a special committee selected to rewrite. We support the direct democracy outlined by the current conflict, however we believe that the term limits that have been put into place be observed by the president and other elected officials. Also, we believe that rights should be observed in terms of gender, while maintaining protection in terms of the prohibition of forming political parties on the basis of discriminatory beliefs, whether gender or race. We advocate for a semi-presidential republic with more frequent elections and a movement away from a dynasty. We support the current republic, but believe that they should leave the office before they die. This would therefore mean that the term limit of two terms is observed, and the term length of seven years either be observed or shortened. Socially we do we recommend that they stay similar. We both have Muslim roots and are socially conservative. We believe that all people should be allowed a political voice as long as they are loyal to their country and do not have the intention of causing rebellion.

Syria is a unitary republic. In practice, however the president has most of the power. In 2014, they had an election between Al-Assad and Hassan al-Nouri. al-Assad won with eighty eight percent of the votes, and al-Nouri only got four percent of the votes. al-Assad is part of the

Ba'ath party which has helped power since the 1960s. However, we agree with their policies on voting rights for women. However, many refugees that have not crossed the Syrian border were not allowed to vote. Civilians can vote for whoever they chose. We, and also the USA, Canada, and more, do not allow Syrians to vote in our embassy anymore. Due to the civil war we have closed voting in our capital embassy, which Syria has replied saying they want citizens to fly home.

We believe that Syria will need help after the conflict in establishing a new government. We believe that a weakened and corrupted government will not be able to easily see straight after a time of pure conflict. They are in need of support and it must be provided. We believe that an extremist group would be able to take control without aid provided to Syria. The last thing that should happen to a country is a loss of power, and we want Syria to remain Syria.

#### **Justice Peace and Reconciliation:**

We believe that the military conflicts ongoing in Syria have been detrimental to the wellbeing of the people of Syria. We believe that Syria should protect its people from extremist groups as they see fit. If the government is attacked by the citizens, Syria has the responsibility to step up and protect themselves for the overarching safety of everyone involved. Nevertheless, the government of Syria should know that opposition can contribute to a better country for them. By taking action, we believe that Syria can make things right and promote and foster a safer environment for all the people within its borders.

Syria's use of incendiary weapons and cluster munitions (ground rockets, air-dropped bombs, etc.) against citizens is unnecessary and a gross violation of human rights. Along with this, rumored dropping of chlorine in Northern Syria is illegal and should not be tolerated. As these acts are banned by the Chemical Weapons Convention of 1997, which we have not signed, but Syria has, more should be investigated regarding the rumored reappearance and use of these weapons. Syrian sieges in populated places has been confirmed and this is a violation according to Security Council Resolution 2139, which calls Syria "to immediately lift the sieges of populated places... and demands that all parties allow the delivery of humanitarian assistance." We strongly encourage the Syrian government to take responsibility for the harm that has been inflicted upon the people there. Syrian dictator, Bashar al-Assad should work more to uphold his previous agreements under such resolutions.

The Amnesty law in Chile, has been overruled by the decisions of the Chilean Supreme Court's. Recently the court has sentenced many of Pinochet's former secret police for their involvement in crimes committed throughout the Pinochet era. The Nuremberg Trials predominantly given accountability towards government officials and leaders throughout the Holocaust and World War II. In the Bosnia trials, Serbian officials were active figures of the

genocide were held accountable for the atrocities committed . In the Rwanda trials, accountability was placed on individuals in charge throughout the genocide, Jean-Paul Akayesu who was mayor at the time was tried and convicted for his crimes. Jean Kambanda, prime minister of Rwanda, was convicted and sentenced to life for his participation during the genocide. In the truth and reconciliation commissions in South Africa, perpetrators were given the ability to seek amnesty but only 849 out of 7112 applications were accepted. Amnesty was only granted to crimes that were politically motivated, proportionate, and applicants had full disclosure. Many programs have been implemented in Rwanda to promote Rwandan values, fight discrimination, and educate Rwandan citizens about the genocide.

The amnesty law has been ridiculed and the Chilean courts have fought to bring many accused accountable members to justice. The trials of Nuremberg, Bosnia, and Rwanda have been very effective as they have punished all officials who were accountable. The truth and reconciliation commissions of South Africa have been effective to a degree as they have given fair trials to victims and perpetrators during apartheid. The Rwandan reconciliation efforts have been very effective as they have strengthened the cultural and historical impact of the genocide.

The country of Egypt has not ratified the documents that would incorporate us into the International Criminal Court system. The former Freedom and Justice Party in Egypt had initially, in 2013, asked to join the Court, but they did not actually have the jurisdiction and authority to do so. We believe that the International Criminal Court is not very effective, as it assigns very harsh punishments that are not always necessary. By assigning unfair verdicts, the International Criminal Court is completely hypocritical of itself, since it does not seem to reinforce justice. Because of this hypocrisy, the International Criminal Court has completely undermined the very little authority that it had before. Our government generally does not accept the rulings of the Court.

The Middle East is home to some of the oldest civilizations in the world. With its rich history, Syria has traditionally been a crossroads for thousands of years. With many traders passing through the area as part of the Silk Road commerce, Syria has attracted a diverse variety of people, in addition to the local people. Ever since the spread of Islam following the death of the Prophet Muhammad, the general region has been predominantly Muslim. Syria itself has an overwhelmingly Sunni Muslim population.

Despite this dominance by Muslims, other religions have also been allowed by the government. There is a strong Christian minority (about 8%), although there are very few Jewish people in the country. Similarly, while the majority of Syria's population speaks Arabic, there is a considerable amount of people who speak Kurdish. Overall, due to the diversity that can be seen in Syria's population, Syria was a generally mixed society prior to the conflict. While it certainly was not a country that hosted a very diverse range of religions, it was still quite mixed.

Syrian law does not discriminate based on religion. This means that under law, people are free to practice the religions that they prefer, without any penalty. Even though the official religion of Syria is Islam, and the government is also based on Islam, Syrian law specifically states that the state does not discriminate based on religion. In addition, people practicing various religions are permitted to perform any rituals necessary, as long as such rituals do not negatively affect the maintenance of public order.

Also, Syrians of any religion are able to hold positions in the Islamic government, with the exception of the office of the President of Syria. For instance, there have been many Christian and Jewish holders of high office positions. Also, the current president, Assad, is not part of the Sunni majority, but part of a minority Muslim sect, so there are many opportunities for minority communities.

Specific groups have been brutally targeted all during the conflicts in Syria, by both sides. For example, opposing groups have been targeted, which unfortunately makes sense since it is a war. However, innocent people have been killed by both sides. For example, young children, especially boys, have been killed during the war. Furthermore, there are many Christians who have been targeted, presumably because they do not follow the religion of Islam. Nevertheless, there has also been mass killings, as well as brutal tactics used, in places such as hospitals, military checkpoints, as well as within densely populated areas.

### **Local Security:**

Our security before the conflict was already in shambles due to the multiple revolts and overthrowing of leaders, which meant that we had to stabilize. Currently there are 170,000 to 200,000 people fighting apart of the syrian arab armed forces with Al-Assad against the 1000 armed opposition groups who command 100,000 armed rebels. Syria is in complete turmoil right now with so many different rebel groups all participating with different goals in mind. That is why the western countries have to be careful who they give supplies to because the Americans have already given supplies to ISIS on accident mistaking them for rebel forces. Although we are allies with the U.S we support the decision of Russia to help our brother Al-Assad fight against the rebel forces in his country. If Assad doesn't get control of his country this leads to more terrorists in our country so we fully support the government in their effort to abolish all rebel armed forces.

Our local security environment today is terrifying. We are constantly bombed by terrorists who are aiming to cripple our local security forces such as Police and military forces. Our cities are distraught with terrorist attacks bombarding our civilians on buses and city squares. The issue is there has been a steady rise of terrorism within our country against foreigners and tourists. Our civilians are relatively have more than enough resources due to our imports from the U.S and our large deposits of coal mines across the country.

We get supplies for local security from other countries like the U.S. . Most of the imports for local security are bomb detection scanners, because of our fear of terrorism. Our government gets most of our water from the Nile river and the Egyptian General Petroleum Corporation secures most of our oil. We are very worried about our water supply though because the Ethiopians are threatening to put up a dam and they would control the flow of the Nile which would in turn make electricity for them and take water away from us Egyptians.

Approximately Syria already had two million small arms before the conflict, and 7 hundred thousand of it was in the hands of civilians. When the conflict began, small arms began to flood into Syria to rebel groups from nations like the U.S., Qatar, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan. We are upset at these countries, because the countries supplying rebels are assuming what's best for the citizens in Syria.

Our relationships with the U.S., Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan are relatively warm. However we have a bad relationship with Qatar, because of their involvement with the Muslim brotherhood, threatening our local security. Although our relationships are warm with those countries, we do not agree with their decision to give weapons and fund rebel groups in Syria, in hopes to overthrow Assad, because this funding of rebel groups led to the rising of ISIS, which harshly damages our local security, because we are neighbors with Syria, so terrorist groups have easier access to us. Not only does this harm our local security, but it also damages our relationship with these countries. We don't have a particular side, but since 2016, we have started supporting Assad, even though we have been against his rule in the past. Our support for Assad is caused by the threat and danger of ISIS, and we see ISIS as a bigger problem than the ethics of Assad's rule. We also don't support the Kurdish rebel group, because their victory would lead to the splitting up of Syria, which would lead to further instability. This instability would lead to the rise of more rebel groups, gangs, and more radical groups, and all these factors would damage our local security.

Our main concern on Syria is that peace come and let the people elect freely through a democratic process. Yet, we understand that the government must be stable for this to happen so we fully support Assad until the rebel forces are disbanded but following that we believe the people have the right to choose their leader. Also, we believe that if all regional and international powers stay out of the Syrian conflict then peace could be reached faster and in a more stable way for the future generations of Syria. The Syrian conflict is the new cold war for the United States and Russia because they have made it their playground to see who is stronger. It is like Vietnam and the Afghanistan wars all over again when these two massive powers decide to join in. We should leave this to the Syrian people to solve their own issues without the supply of weapons from these large super powers meddling in this region.

Our general stance in this civil war is peace and stability. We believe that if we support Assad in his efforts against ISIS, we could reach stability, and eventually peace in the Middle East. However once the rebel groups are taken care of, we would most likely help Syria transfer peacefully to another leader, because Assad ran for president of Syria three times, which is breaking their rule of only being able to run for president twice. We think that if the civilians in Syria get what they want, the existence of terrorist, radical, and rebel groups would be made obsolete, leading to peace.

### **Social Reconstruction:**

The social structure in Syria before the conflict was a very diverse one. Many different religions and ethnicities lived amongst each other in relative order. Because of the many different empires that took control of the country, the social landscape led to internal conflict between the great majority Muslim population and lesser religions, including many denominations of Christianity. Syria's constitution guarantees freedom of religion, however Sunni Islam is the greatest religion practiced with 74 percent of the country practicing Sunni Islam. The government also strongly discouraged public proselytizing. Under the constitution, the president must still be a Muslim, and Islamic law is still a major source of legislation.

Human rights in the country are not a priority of the government, and has been known to have some of the worst human rights records in the world. The humans rights of Syria's citizens were ignored, the press was censored, women's rights were ignored, and people were known to be tortured even, by the government. Ethnic minorities, including the Kurdish and Assyrian populations, have faced discrimination and their participation in politics repressed. Many members of the press have been arrested and tried, and Syria's Ba'ath party retained control of the media. The government has closely monitored the online activities of citizens, censored many websites for political reasons, and detained internet users who have apparently violated the country's vague and broadly worded laws. Authorities have been highly critical of those who criticize the government, and Syria has been accused of harassing and imprisoning human rights activists. The country's emergency, enacted in 1963 due to a war with Israel and only recently lifted by President Bashar al-Assad, had suspended most constitutional protections and given security forces broad powers of arrest and detention. Many citizens who were legally living in places near rebel strongholds in Aleppo and other places have been viciously bombed and attacked by the Syrian government. Syria has also been receiving assistance from Russia, who not only have lost their standing in the Human Rights Council recently, but who have also not been paying any attention to civilian lives.

Syria is a party to a number of human rights declarations and treaties. Syria is a party to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) a declaration adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948 listing the rights to which all human beings are entitled, and

to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, a treaty calling on the signees to respect the civil and political rights of individuals, among others. Especially prominent in current times as Syria undergoes a civil war is Common Article 3 to the Geneva Conventions of 1949, which underlines standards for the proper treatment of people within the warring state.

Regarding property rights, the Syrian Civil Code of 1949 played a role in helping to develop the country's current land tenure system. Prior to the war, over half of Syria's population lived in urban and peri-urban areas, and about one-third lived in informal settlements. Basic services such as electricity and running water were provided, but these informal settlements received little government recognition and official registration. Most of the tenants of the urban population lacked protection from the government against forceful evictions. Private property is weakly protected by an inept and corrupt court system and preservation of private property rights is made difficult by less than transparent bureaucratic processes and widespread government corruption. President Bashar al-Assad has issued policies and regulations that attempt to address the issues surrounding the management and use of land. Some of the most important laws include those that put an end to manipulation of rent and other problems between landlord and tenant, and regulate the activities of the General Housing Establishment, which serves to meet the needs of the general population through social housing.

Before the war, Syria was a popular destination for refugees due to its open-borders policy and at the end of 2010 Syria housed more than 1,300,000 refugees and asylum seekers. Syrian citizens had been able to travel between cities by way of roads and motorways though travel was comparatively easier in the eastern half of the country due to the fact that major cities were located in the western part of Syria. Airports and a national railway system connected the major cities of Syria, also connecting it to Turkey and thus Europe, but the road system remained inadequate in meeting the increasing economic demands of the country. However, travel has been highly discouraged by the government and rebel groups, and restrictions and bans have been placed on the Syrian people. Women, in particular, are heavily restricted in movement contrary to their male counterparts.

Before the war almost all Syrian children were enrolled in primary school and the literacy rate was very high at 95 percent. However, the war has led to education being scarce and 2.8 million children being out of school. Syria has now plummeted to the second worst school rate of attendance, going from an almost 100 percent enrollment rate before the war.

Although Health care was improving gradually before the war, with the average life expectancy being 56 years in 1970 up to 73 years in 2009, and infant mortality rates also dropping over that period, there was an uneven spread of healthcare across Syria leading up to the conflict which caused less consistent distribution of doctors and medicine. However, before



the war conflict mental healthcare was very scarce, with only 70 psychiatrists being distributed among 21 million Syrians. In total there were only two public psychiatric hospitals, one in Damascus which is now being used with limited capacity due to security concerns and one in Aleppo which was closed down.

According to Dr. Eyad Yanes, "Most of the people who were in treatment for mental health conditions before the conflict are trying to continue their treatment by consulting their doctors by phone and buying what medicines are available on the market, but many have had to stop the treatment altogether." The war has caused healthcare distribution to plummet due to the little resources the Assad regime allocates for it now.

### **Strategic Security:**

Syria has been involved in local armed conflicts since civil war erupted in early 2011. Currently, many rebel groups and terrorist organizations threaten stability and safety in Syria. Russia, Iran, Venezuela, North Korea, Algeria, Iraq, Lebanon, Belarus, and Hezbollah have supported President Bashar al-Assad's armed engagements with the rebel groups on Syrian territory, which include the Free Syrian Army, the Kurdish militia and the extremist Islamic State group. Syria is also engaged in international armed conflicts with Turkey and members of the US-led international coalition, due to the US singling out and fighting the Islamic State group on Syrian territory without Syria's consent, as well as training and equipping Syrian rebel groups whom President Bashar al-Assad opposes.

President Bashar al-Assad has even gone as far as to call the US forces "invaders". Along with the US, other members of the US-led coalition, including Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Jordan, Morocco, Netherlands, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates and the United Kingdom are also making efforts against the Islamic State group, but are relying on Turkey to implement their incendiary and destructive projects. Turkey became involved with the conflict in 2015 when it sent airstrikes aimed at the Islamic State group, and established military occupation in parts of northern Syria. Although we were once vocal opponents to Syria's president Bashar al-Assad, we have changed our stance and our support now goes out to the Syrian Army, and we hope changes of leadership in countries like the US will prompt changes of support in more countries in the upcoming months.

We have sent pilots to an airbase in the western Syrian city Hama in order to support President Bashar al-Assad's army in their fight against extremist terrorist organizations. Along with the recent military support, we are finalizing alliances with Assad and Russia, and we will strive to respect the will of the Syrian people and support its national armies while coming to a political solution. Currently, about 30,000 to 40,000 foreign troops in total have been sent to Syria from all members of the US-led coalition, Bahrain, Iran, Qatar, Russia, and Saudi Arabia

combined. We aim to protect the sovereignty of the citizens, President Bashar al-Assad and his army. However, we also know the only solution to create a safe and stable environment is to disarm the terrorist organizations, and in our opinion aiding President Bashar al-Assad's national army is the best way to do so. We also hope that we can reach political agreements with Syria that will encourage a more stable environment for Syria's citizens, which is our top priority.

In the current scheme of the Syrian conflict, we welcome nationwide ceasefire efforts between rebel groups and President Bashar al-Assad's army, as long as many organizations except those that we regard as terrorist groups are involved in the truce, and the duration of the ceasefire is used as an opportunity to discuss Syria's future. This is of critical importance in the fight against the Islamic State group, because all Syrian forces will need to develop a common vision to disarm extremist organizations. We have actually gone out of our way to support Assad and his regime, going so far as to send troops into Syria to fight rebels. Syria itself has had some tensions with its neighboring countries in the past, including conflicts with Lebanon, Palestine, and Israel.

Besides these skirmishes, Syria's borders were relatively secure, with only some minor conflicts occurring along the peripheries over the years. Syria had conflicts with some of its neighboring countries, but again, these conflicts did not affect their borders besides the partial occupation of Lebanon. These countries that the Syrian government declared war on included Lebanon, Palestine, Israel, Iraq, and Jordan. Syria was a part of the Gulf War, supplying troops and equipment to fight against Saddam Hussein's regime. This was only considered a minor help, with much of the credit going to the United States and the other members of the Western coalition that tried to overthrow the Iraqi government. Our government did not consider Syria much of a threat before the outbreak of the civil war, which has proven to be a leech on resources. The Egyptian government is willing to support efforts to reestablish the Syrian government, but the capacity of our government's ability to help Assad's regime is limited because of our financial and military limitations. Overall we oppose the efforts of Syrian rebels and believe that they are not only a detriment to their society, but to the health, well-being, and stability of their peers. Only when these rebels either surrender or are destroyed will peace truly come to the Middle East, a region that we closely associate ourselves with because our shared majority faith. The destruction of both these Syrian rebels and the Islamic State will allow the Syrian government to reestablish itself.

The syrian army started as a group of local military forces that were formed by France after the civil war. Syria gained its independence in 1946 and since then the military has been a big part of governance by mounting five military coups--two in 1949, 1954,1963, 1966, and 1970-- that have fought four wars with Israel and one with Jordan. The army played a big role in the Syrian occupation of lebanon (1976 to 2005), and a major part in suppressing the islamist uprising in Syria (1979-1982). ISIS poses a huge threat to Syria because at least 19,000 civilians

have died due to Syrian Government air attacks and 181 have died in US-led airstrikes against the Islamic State group since 2014. Approximately 2,000 civilians have been killed due to Iraqi military strikes. Many Syrians have tried to flee Syria and seek refuge in other countries like Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Germany, Sweden, France and the UK. Syrians have not been able to flee to the US due to their policies, and their new president, Donald Trump. We have accepted approximately 120,000 Syrians into our own country. The Islamic State group threatens the safety of the Syrian civilians. If the Islamic State group remains in Syria, then the country will never recover, and will ultimately fall apart. The Islamic State group must be eliminated from Syria in order for the country to recover, and become safe for its civilians.