Kobi Michael and Yoel Guzansky

The Arab World on the Road to State Failure



INSS
המכון למחקרי ביטחון לאומי
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TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY
אוניברסיטת תל אביב

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Institute for National Security Studies

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Preface

This book is the outcome of a long-term research project that began at the peak of the upheaval being experienced in the Arab world and ended in November 2015. In this edition, we have chosen to add only a few details, with the approval of our dedicated and professional editor, Yoav Tadmor. This research attempts to expand and deepen our understanding of the turmoil being experienced in the Arab world since late 2010. One of its predominant and most serious manifestations is the acceleration of processes of state failure and the disintegration of the Arab nation-states. This phenomenon is ongoing and still taking shape, and therefore the findings of this study should be viewed as an analysis of the reality as developed by the time of writing this book. This is clearly not the endpoint of the process, and many more books are likely to be written on this subject in coming years. We made use of numerous sources for this research: the internet and social networks, articles, and books as well as insights gathered at conferences in Israel and abroad and in various INSS forums of researchers, policy makers, and decision makers from Israel and abroad. We chose to transliterate Arabic terms and names into a form that would be more comfortable for the reader and therefore have not always strictly adhered to the rules of transliteration.

The efforts that went into this book were made possible by Major General (res.) Amos Yadlin, director of INSS, and Brigadier General (res.) Udi Dekel, managing director of INSS, who saw the need to advance the theoretical and empirical research on this issue. A special thanks goes to Dr. Anat Kurz, Brigadier General (ret.) Shlomo Brom, and Dr. Gallia Lindenstrauss, who are responsible for INSS's research program, for their constant support and guidance, and to Nikki Littman and Dr. Ela Greenberg for the editing and production of the book. We are also indebted to INSS researchers Dr. Ofir Winter and Dr. Carmit Valensi, whose comments on a previous draft were immensely helpful, and to Ben Abarbanel, our research assistant, who helped us deal with the mountain of books, articles, and newspaper reports. Finally, despite the many good people who helped us in this research both directly and indirectly, any remaining errors are solely our own.

Introduction

This book examines the phenomenon of the failed state in the Arab world. In order to understand the systemic and regional implications of this phenomenon, which has spread throughout the Arab world and intensified as a result of the past six years of regional upheaval, we make use of the theoretical and empirical infrastructures in the relevant professional literature as well as a conceptual infrastructure constructed specifically for this study. Using this infrastructure, we describe the various possible trends in the future development of the phenomenon and analyze its effect on the region as a whole and on Israel in particular.

The phenomenon of the failed state is not a new one. It existed in the Arab world even before the current upheaval in the region. However, now, as a result of the upheaval, the situation of those states that were already in various stages of failure has deteriorated yet further. The Arab upheaval has undermined the geopolitical logic that structures the Arab world which rests on the organization of states according to the territorial nation-state model comprising an authoritative central government and clear borders. Several of these states, such as Yemen, Libya, and Syria, no longer exist in the format of coherent states with a central government capable of imposing its authority over most parts of its territory. These states have become arenas of violent and bloody conflict. The weakness of their central governments has led to the expansion of ungoverned peripheries and the blurring of borders, a development that has enabled jihadi organizations and foreign elements to penetrate their territory and create military and political bases of operation. These organizations are challenging central governments and systematically undermining state structures.

These changes are having a global impact: they are damaging global security and deepening the rifts between the superpowers (such as between the United States and Russia as a result of NATO's intervention in Libya and the Russian intervention in Syria) and between the superpowers and their allies in the region (the crises in US-Egyptian and US-Saudi Arabian relations are good examples) and have social, economic, and political repercussions

as a result of the millions of refugees who have fled the areas of conflict and sought asylum in Europe. The failed states are therefore not simply a local problem but constitute a regional and international challenge due to the instability they export to other regions, both near and far, and the fact that they have become a setting for regional and international confrontation.

Following the agreements signed by the superpowers in 1916, arbitrary borders were drawn for the Middle East which grouped together various ethnic groups, rival religions, and, in some cases, speakers of different languages. The resulting frameworks had only weak national identities, and their territories were often not suited to their populations. These new states were also characterized by weak governance and regimes that lacked legitimacy. Most of the Arab countries in the region did not manage to shape a solid and consensual national ethos during their years of existence and were therefore also unable to reduce religious, national, and ethnic tensions.

The tension and rifts in each state fed the feelings of frustration and provided fertile ground for social protest, which in 2011 became a regional phenomenon. This upheaval reinforced the existing tensions and in some cases led to the toppling of a regime or undermined its legitimacy. Under these conditions, several of the states in the Arab world became caught up in bloody civil wars, some of which led to the total disintegration of state structures. In contrast to the Arab republics, the eight monarchies in the region—Jordan, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, and the Gulf States—managed to maintain their stability, although most are also artificial creations that suffer from structural deficiencies and are in danger of collapse.

There are those who believe that the upheaval in the Arab world is a transitional stage that will lead to the reform and redesign of state institutions. According to this optimistic viewpoint, it is the beginning of a cyclical process—alternating stages of progress and retreat—which will result in the establishment of democratic institutions. This process of development will, they believe, include an examination of fundamental constitutional and human rights issues and lead to the dissolution of the previous regimes' heritage and the beginning of a new era for these nations.

The organization of the region into states at the beginning of the twentieth century was a new experience for the Arab world, which until then had been organized according to clans, tribes, and ethnic and religious groups. Each of these groups generally sought to live in its own defined territory, particularly in the case of minority groups (such as the Druze in the Druze

Mountains, the Christians in the mountains of Lebanon, and the Yazidis in the Sinjar Mountains).

The new nation-states, and in particular the Arab republics, remained relatively stable because their dictators ruled with an iron hand. They tried to achieve legitimacy by establishing social ideologies (such as Nasserite socialism whose central component was the redistribution of wealth in Egypt) and national ideologies (such as pan-Arabism) alongside the reinforcement of national sentiment. One of the methods used to strengthen national sentiment was the attempt to contrive historical roots. Thus, for example, Saddam Hussein, the ruler of Iraq, created a myth that the Iraqi people were the descendants of the Babylonians. However, the sources of legitimacy and mechanisms of control that developed over the years were not enough to withstand the mass protests and the regional upheaval, and many "national creations" have now fragmented into their basic components. The trends of rapid globalization, the collapse of the Soviet Union (which had been a stabilizing global force), the widening of the Sunni-Shiite rift in the Arab world, and the rise of the Salafi-jihadi organizations, including al-Qaeda and the Islamic State (ISIS), accelerated the disintegration of the Arab nation-states.

The mass terrorist attacks that took place in the United States on September 11, 2001—following a series of smaller-scale attacks against American targets in the Middle East and Africa—led to the realization in the West, and in the US in particular, that a failed state is, in most cases, also an international problem, since it becomes an exporter of unrestrained terror. As a result of these terrorist attacks, President George Bush Jr. declared war on global terror. In the first stage, the United States invaded Afghanistan where al-Qaeda had found refuge. About two years later, in 2003, the United States invaded Iraq, believing that the Iraqi regime supported global terror and possessed weapons of mass destruction. The invasion of Iraq, the disbanding of its army, the overthrow of Saddam Hussein's government, and the US military and civilian presence in Iraq (which lasted eight years) turned Iraq into a failed state. The disintegration of Iraq reached a peak when ISIS took control of the northwestern part of the country and declared the establishment of a state in June 2014. While Iraq gradually collapsed, the rift widened between the Sunnis and Shiites and the Kurds achieved increased autonomy, creating for all intents and purposes an independent state.

The rifts exposed in Iraq after the overthrow of Saddam Hussein's regime had existed previously, but Saddam Hussein had managed to suppress them and to maintain a more or less cohesive state. Furthermore, during his rule, Iraq was considered a regional power and served as a counterweight to Iran's efforts to expand its influence. As a result of Saddam Hussein's demise, Iraq lost whatever cohesiveness it had as well as its status as a regional power, thus paving the way for Iran to gain prominence in the region. The overthrow of Saddam Hussein by external means can thus be seen as the catalyst for the Arab upheaval; the defeat of a leader who had been considered all-powerful and who had instilled fear in the people of Iraq encouraged many in the Arab countries to organize against their oppressive rulers. The indifference of the Arab regimes to social and economic conditions, the endemic corruption in these countries, and the loss of strategic support from the Soviet Union all weighed against these regimes on the day that the masses took to the streets.

Thanks to the grassroots movements that had developed over the years and the widespread use of social networks, which made it possible to quickly and efficiently organize large numbers of people, a local demonstration in the capital of Tunis became a torch that ignited the flames of protest throughout Tunisia and then the rest of the Arab world. At first, the spreading protests were accompanied by high hopes. This was reflected in the term "Arab Spring," the name given to the wave of protests, and its repercussions. It expressed the expectation of social and political change and the adoption of values such as freedom, democracy, and equal rights in the Arab countries.

Thus, the Arab Spring became a regional upheaval whose end is still not in sight with repercussions that go well beyond the borders of the Middle East: Europe, for example, has been flooded with millions of refugees, a crisis that has tested its resilience; the confrontation between Russia and the United States has intensified; and terror, which originates in the Middle East, has become a serious threat to Western nations from Australia to America.

It would be no exaggeration to assume that over the next five years, instability will increase in the Middle East and that countries currently functioning at a reasonable level will also deteriorate to the stage of state failure and become areas of intensifying conflict. This, of course, has far-reaching consequences for the economy of the region; civil wars, terror, and ongoing civil unrest are not a recipe for economic growth and prosperity. This is reflected in the International Monetary Fund (IMF) forecast for the Middle East and in the International Labor Organization (ILO) report, which

documented the high levels of unemployment in the region— already twice the global average. Another blow to the regional economy was the dramatic drop in the price of oil from more than $100 per barrel to about $35. Although in late May 2016 oil prices bounced back to $50 per barrel, the reasons for the increase are, according to experts, localized and temporary, including the giant wildfire in Canada, the collapse of the Venezuelan economy, and the strikes in Nigeria. In other words, the period of cheap oil is not over yet.

As the nation-states in the Middle East continue to disintegrate, the power of non-state actors, in particular ISIS and other radical Sunni movements, has increased. These non-state actors are exploiting the vacuum created by the weakness of the central governments in many countries to establish their influence. Some of them have even become semi-states that rule territory and provide inhabitants with at least some of the services that a state provides. Non-state actors are undermining the logic of the Arab territorial nation-state and are seeking to reshape the Arab world. They are erasing existing borders and establishing new entities such as the Sunni Islamic Caliphate (the Islamic State) and the independent Shiite enclaves (Hezbollah in Syria and Lebanon and the Houthis in Yemen) which are loyal to Iran and benefit from Iranian support. The expected improvement in Iran's economy as a result of the nuclear agreement signed in July 2015 is likely to be exploited by Iran and used to undermine the stability of Sunni regimes in the region, particularly Saudi Arabia and Egypt, which is expected to destabilize the region even further.

In recent decades, the West has tried to deal with the failed state phenomenon by means of humanitarian intervention and reconstruction missions; however, in most cases, these efforts failed to accomplish their goal. A prime example is the huge international effort invested in the reconstruction of Somalia, which turned into a fiasco resulting in bloody battles between the aid forces who had come to save the people of Somalia from starvation and the recipients of their assistance. Indeed, the complexity of the reconstruction process requires a rethinking of the logic and methods of intervention. Currently, and partially as a result of the painful lessons learnt in Somalia, the international community is finding it difficult to reach a consensus allowing for the implementation of determined and committed interventions that will have the support of the superpowers and the UN Security Council and also be based on a broad coalition. The failure of the international community is being exploited by entities such as the Salafi-jihadi organizations, which have no mechanisms

of restraint and are not subject to diplomatic considerations. The result is war and human tragedy on a scale not seen in the Middle East for centuries.

The phenomenon of the failed state in the Middle East has a direct effect on the characteristics of the regional threats that Israel must deal with. The goal of this book is to present a picture of the Middle East reality through the lens of the failed state phenomenon, to examine its causes and characteristics and its spread throughout the region, and to evaluate its significance and implications in regional and international contexts, particularly in the context of Israel. The book attempts to describe the thinking and actions required to better deal with the challenge presented by failed states.

In order to understand how the Arab upheaval has accelerated the deterioration of functioning Arab states into failed states and the impact of these processes on regional and international systems, we begin with a presentation of the failed state phenomenon and a review of the relevant theoretical literature. We then examine the nature of the failed state and the rise of non-state entities and the interconnections between them in order to understand why failed states endanger both neighboring and distant states. Subsequently, we investigate the academic and information-gathering challenges encountered in the study of failed states and regional upheaval, focusing on methodological and conceptual problems and recommending ways of improving information-gathering and research capabilities in these contexts.

A central chapter is devoted to the process by which Arab states have, one after the other, become failed states. We analyze the causes of this phenomenon whose roots lie in the chronic structural instability that characterized most of the Arab world even before the Arab Spring and the success of the fundamentalist organizations in having established a broad organizational infrastructure during the period when the Arab nationalist parties were still in control. This chapter is divided into three main sections, which divide the Arab states in the Middle East into three groups according to their proximity to Israel. Within each section we concentrate on each of the states and the events in that state since the beginning of the Arab upheaval. Each case is described and analyzed according to its own unique parameters, and an attempt is made to evaluate future trends based on the conceptual and theoretical infrastructure of the failed state phenomenon. Greater attention is paid to the Palestinian Authority in this chapter than other chapters due to the importance we attribute to identifying its potential for state failure

at this point, even before a comprehensive peace agreement is signed with Israel. At this stage, it is still possible to take steps to reduce the risk that a state established next to Israel—if this occurs—will be a failed state.

In the penultimate chapter of the book, we deal with the strategic implications of the spread of failed states in Israel's neighborhood. We characterize the risks and opportunities that have been created by the Arab upheaval and the accelerated process that turns functioning Arab states into failed states. In addition, we sketch out in general terms the policy that will help Israel deal with the challenges of living in proximity to failed states.

Chapter 1

The Phenomenon of the Failed State: Theoretical Aspects and an Overview

What is a Failed State?

The phenomenon of the failed state has received increasing attention in the professional literature in recent decades. Alongside the specialized journals that focus on issues relating to the failed state, numerous books and research studies have been published on the subject, and designated research units have been created within intelligence organizations, such as the CIA, and leading international organizations, such as the World Bank. As the amount of knowledge on the subject has grown, so has the number of terms to describe the phenomenon; the current terms being used to describe the situation of a failed state reflect to some extent the nature of the debate among researchers in the field. Alongside the commonly used term of failed state,[1] there are other terms in use such as "fragile state,"[2] "collapsed state," "state failing," and "crisis state."[3] A similar term, "fragile and conflict-affected state"[4] is used by the British government.

The use of various terms is not the only difficulty encountered. There are also analytical and methodological difficulties in the way that the characteristics of state failure can and should be measured and the reasons for state failure and its results should be determined. According to David Reilly, there are various levels of state failure and it is customary to classify failed states according to their level of failure. He nonetheless emphasized that the theoretical and methodological problems encountered in distinguishing between the reasons for state failure and its results cannot be ignored.[5] Charles Call went even further than Reilly in his reservations regarding the term "failed state." He saw it as too general, used as a catch-all phrase for a wide variety of states that differ significantly and are at different levels of failure. In order to illustrate the absurdity of this situation, Call pointed

out that both Columbia and Somalia are defined as failed states despite their varying levels of failure. According to Call, the term suffers from overuse in US foreign policy and by various important members of the international community. Due to the term's lack of precision and in view of the attempt to give it universal meaning (a somewhat ethnocentric and patronizing tendency), the international community has found it difficult to come up with an appropriate response. The use of such a general term blurs the uniqueness of each case and leads to the standardization of solutions, even though it has been demonstrated again and again that standardized solutions are irrelevant.[6]

Nonetheless, we have chosen to use the term "failed state" in this book for two main reasons. The first relates to the magnitude of the problem and its geopolitical consequences in the context of states in the Arab world following the regional upheaval. The second is out of recognition that the alternative term "fragile states" is too broad and covers a wide variety of states, including those at a very low level of failure. The category of "fragile states" also includes developed and functioning states, since it reflects an approach that emphasizes political functioning and can thus obscure the nature of the problem.

The term "failed state" provides, in our opinion, the broadest definition, which also includes the other designations mentioned above. According to the UN, a state is defined as failed when it demonstrates little or no ability to provide its citizens with human security.[7] A failed state is characterized by a weak central government that is unable to govern, whose legitimacy is limited or non-existent, and which does not enjoy a monopoly on the means of enforcement. According to Call, a state becomes a failed state when its institutions and authority have collapsed both internally and externally.[8]

The various definitions recognized in the literature are based on the logic derived from functioning states and therefore, in order for it to serve as the reference point for the discussion of the failed state phenomenon, it is important to also clarify the definition of a functioning state. A functioning state operates on the basis of "stateness"[9] and exhibits the ability to govern. "Governance" reflects the quality of the functioning of state institutions and the degree to which they enforce laws and regulations so as to enable the state to exercise its sovereignty, enforce its authority, provide security (both internal and external), law and order, healthcare, and education, and maintain an efficient economy. A failed state is unable to provide these basic services.

A necessary condition for governance in democratic societies is legitimacy. In the absence of legitimacy, which is based on the confidence of the people in the state's institutions and leadership, governance cannot be attained, since it often requires that goals be defined and achieved in a way that limits the rights, freedom, and quality of life of the state's citizens; all of these require the prior consent of the citizens. In totalitarian countries, a government can rule without the consent of the public by means of coercion, oppression, and tyranny. A dictatorial regime leads to feelings of frustration and alienation, which are subsequently translated into protest, opposition, and violence among sectors that feel excluded from the centers of power and influence. The leaders of failed states tend to be authoritarian and can therefore ignore the demands of their citizens for basic freedoms such as the freedom of expression and the freedom to organize. Instead, they attempt to base their legitimacy on the provision of basic services to their citizens, seeking, in some cases, to improve the country's standard of living. As long as they do not face external threats or challenges, the structure of their regime remains stable.

When a state that is composed of numerous groups is unable to create a single national identity, a dictatorial regime is often the glue that prevents the disintegration of the state and ensures effective rule all of its territory. Most of the resources and efforts of such regimes are invested in survival and the management of internal opposition. They tend ultimately to fail, since they are usually corrupt and collaborate with terror and criminal organizations in order to improve their chances of survival. The regime exploits the ability of these organizations to intimidate the population by means of unrestrained violence, while the organizations reap economic benefits from their collaboration with the regime.[10]

William Zartman viewed failed states as a risk and a challenge to the international community. According to him, the phenomenon is two-fold, comprising both a social and an institutional-governmental dimension that are intertwined; in the social dimension the regime loses its legitimacy, while in the institutional-governmental dimension it loses its ability to function and govern. As a result, law and order collapse, and other entities (usually competitors and rivals) attempt to take over.[11] A state in the process of collapse is characterized by the paralysis of decision making and the disintegration of social cohesion. The state is unable to maintain sovereignty or security within its territory and thus ceases to be socioeconomically relevant in the

eyes of the citizens who no longer expect to receive basic services from the state which can no longer provide them. Therefore, in a failed state, both governance and the civil infrastructure collapse simultaneously.

One of the important distinctions made by Zartman relates to the state failure process. He claimed that in most cases the process is gradual and prolonged and not a sudden event like a coup d'état or revolt. States that suffer from internal disintegration (primarily because of identity politics—religious, ethnic, etc.) and that are also characterized by weak and sometimes non-functioning institutions are, in his opinion, at risk of becoming failed states. In such states, the failure intensifies in a kind of vicious cycle and the weakness of the state's institutions reinforces the fragmentation, which further weakens the institutions and their legitimacy. Paradoxically, such a vicious cycle is liable to contribute to the strength of authoritarian regimes, even if they suffer from chronic failure. Michael Hudson examined the stability and strength of states on a spectrum ranging from fragile to stable and dynamic states on the basis of two variables: the degree of political fragmentation (reflected in identity politics) and the degree of governmental effectiveness. Like Zartman, he too concluded that when there is a low level of effectiveness and a high level of fragmentation, the stability of the state is in substantial danger.[12]

Table 1: Hudson's Model for the Classification of Fragile States[13]

	Low political fragmentation	High political fragmentation
High governmental effectiveness	Stable and non-fragile states. Examples: China and Chile	Fragile but stable states. Examples: Saudi Arabia and **Syria** (prior to 2011)
Low governmental effectiveness	Fragile states at low risk. Examples: Armenia, Bangladesh, and Tanzania	Fragile and unstable states. Examples: Nigeria, Somalia, **the Palestinian Authority, Libya, Iraq**, and **Syria** (the last three since 2011)

Yoel Guzansky and Amir Kulick wrote that state failure can be measured on a spectrum between two basic situations: crisis state/failing states and collapsed/failed states. The former are states in which government institutions are unable to prevent a domestic crisis and even exacerbate it through policies that create extreme social, economic, and political inequality. Such states are characterized by low levels of human and social development, low governance ability, and internal conflicts that reduce the ability of the

central government to provide basic services and security to its citizens; for example, Iraq, Lebanon, and the Palestinian Authority. Collapse is a more extreme situation of state failure and is the final outcome of the crisis. In such situations, the institutions of central government are unable to ensure the necessary conditions for the existence of the state; i.e., to maintain a monopoly over the use of force and to enforce even minimal law and order. Syria, Libya, and Yemen are examples of countries where the government is unable to provide security and basic services to its citizens or to impose its rule effectively over the state's territory.

Every failed state has three prominent characteristics: weak governance and a lack of legitimacy, extreme poverty, and prolonged domestic conflict. According to one of the most important indexes of failed states, thirty-three states are defined as "fragile" or "in an advanced process of collapse."[14] Most of these states are Muslim and are located in Africa (sub-Sahara) and the Middle East. This index is based on 2014 data; the index for 2015 includes even more Arab states at higher levels of state failure.[15] According to the index for 2016, Syria, Yemen, and Iraq are at their highest levels ever.[16]

There are currently about 200 countries in the world, and many of them can be found on the spectrum representing various levels of state failure. The degree of failure is determined by the intensity of the threats and challenges they face, both domestic and foreign, and by the level of governmental functioning or "state quality."[17] The lower the level of functioning of state institutions and the level of legitimacy conferred by the public on these institutions and on the regime, the closer the state is to the negative end of the failure spectrum and the greater the intensity of domestic and foreign conflicts and the potential for the growth and expansion of non-state and other entities looking to replace the regime. In most cases, these entities are militant groups with revolutionary, religious, and extreme ideologies, which will try to topple the regime or at least direct its course and influence its policy by violent means. In some cases, these entities are assisted by foreign benefactors. Such foreign involvement usually accelerates the deterioration of the state on the spectrum toward total collapse.[18] Table 2 presents a synthesis between the distinctions made by Francis Fukuyama and Guzansky and Kulick's analysis.

Table 2: The link between state quality and internal conflict intensity and foreign intervention

Intensity of internal conflicts	Level of functioning of state institutions and level of legitimacy	
	High	**Low**
High	Situation under control: low potential for foreign intervention. Examples: Egypt and Turkey	Severe state failure: very high potential for takeover by non-state actors. Examples: Syria, Libya, Yemen, Iraq, Somalia, South Sudan, Afghanistan, and the Palestinian Authority (although the last with a lower level of intensity than the others)
Low	Stable governance that is able to maintain sovereignty: no intervention by foreign entities. Example: Saudi Arabia	State at low level of functioning: low potential for foreign intervention. Example: East Timor

Other prominent characteristics of failed states are ethnic and religious divisions and the lack of a unifying national ethos. A clear example is Afghanistan, which is a culturally diverse state with numerous ethnic groups. The fact that these groups have been forced to live together in a single state framework has created unending friction and conflicts, making the state a killing field of armed militias continually fighting one another despite the existence of a common denominator, i.e., the Islamic religion. Syria, Iraq, Libya, and Lebanon are similar examples; each country is divided along ethnic or religious lines, and they lack a unifying national ethos. The Palestinians are also divided—between the West Bank and Gaza Strip—but here, the division is neither ethnic nor religious but rather political against a background of differing religious ideologies. Thus, the Hamas movement, which took over the Gaza Strip, also sought at first to take control of the West Bank.

States that fail as a result of ethnic and religious divisions are not unique to the Middle East and Africa. A prime example is Ukraine where the Soviets had imposed a union between the eastern region of the country, which has a Russian majority, and the western region, which has a Ukrainian majority.[19] During the decades when the country was united as part of the Soviet bloc, a joint national ethos did not develop and the various ethnic components maintained their uniqueness. The disintegration of the Soviet Union initiated

the breakup of the Ukraine, which culminated in the ongoing civil war. Currently, as the result of a fragile ceasefire, Ukraine is divided between the eastern region, which seeks annexation to Russia, and the western region, which is looking to become part of the EU. As things appear now, the chances are slim that Ukraine will ever return to being a unified state.

Does a multicultural state necessarily have a greater tendency to become a failed state? There are researchers who indeed make this claim. For example, Benjamin Miller claimed that the lack of correlation between nation and state (what he called the "state-to-nation imbalance") is a major cause of regional instability and domestic and regional conflicts.[20] This is particularly true if the various nations or ethnic groups aspire to independence or view themselves as belonging to a neighboring state. In contrast, a country characterized by a correlation between nation and territory is from the start more stable; all the more so if its borders are not under dispute, its governmental institutions are stable, and it possesses a monopoly over the use of force. A domestic conflict within a multicultural state—for example Syria, Iraq, Libya, and Yemen— usually "invites" foreign intervention, whether by neighboring countries or by the superpowers. Furthermore, state failure tends to spill from one country to another due to lax border control or the existence of identical ethnic or religious groups on both sides of the border. This is the case today in Iraq and Syria where the Kurds and ISIS, among others, are operating on both sides of the border.

Bosnia is another example of a multicultural state that has become a failed state as a result of a bloody civil war between the various ethnic groups in the country. Even after foreign intervention (by the United States and Europe) forced a ceasefire, the ethnic split continues to be a source of conflict. According to Loannis Armakolas, the process of integration and reconciliation, which was imposed from the outside, remains fragile, and the shadow of past events has hindered the process of reconstruction and the strengthening of political institutions.[21] There are those who feel that the inclusion of Bosnia in the EU (it submitted its candidacy in February 2016) will blur the divisions between the ethnic groups in the country. In the case of Ukraine, however, it did not work out that way, and the Russian minority viewed the application for membership in the EU (in 2013) as a threat rather than an opportunity and intensified its opposition. Likewise, in Bosnia, the European "blanket" seems unlikely to cover deeply ingrained

disputes between the three groups that make up the country's population (the Serbian Orthodox Christians, Croatian Catholics, and Bosniak Muslims).

The hope that structural reforms would be able to improve and stabilize Bosnian politics was not borne out. The Dayton Agreement, which put an end to the civil war in Bosnia, created a complex mechanism for providing all of the ethnic groups with representation, but it resulted in the creation of three separate entities that did not really mesh to form a single country. Recently, the ethnic dispute between the Croatian minority and the Muslim majority has flared up once again. The Croatian minority is looking to imitate the Serbian minority (who live in a separate state framework called the Republika Srpska) by establishing broad autonomy and cutting off from Bosnia. The example of Bosnia, like the examples of Ukraine and even Iraq, shows that attempts at political reform, whose purpose is to divide resources and representation more fairly in order to strengthen the legitimacy of the regime, are doomed to failure in the absence of the necessary cultural and normative infrastructure. Such attempts are even liable to exacerbate instability and violence.[22]

Failed states are not unique to a particular geographic region or culture, although they are more common in some (such as Africa and the Middle East) than in others. The map of failed states is continually expanding, due to the regional upheaval among other things. The Fragile States Index (FFI) published by the Fund for Peace (FFP) measures the vulnerability of each country and its risk of becoming a failed state on the basis of economic, social, and political criteria.[23] According to the authors of the index, failed states are dangerous not only to themselves but also to their immediate environment and, in some cases, to more distant countries as well. Therefore, every failed state should, in their opinion, be a global concern. The criteria used to determine each country's ranking in the FFI are a kind of warning light for the early detection of state failure. In his book on collapsed states, Zartman emphasized the importance of these warning lights, claiming that they can be used to provide "preventative medicine"—international aid that can return the country to a stable trajectory. For Zartman one of the most important warning lights is the weakening of the central government and the rise of groups that chip away at its authority. Another stage in the deterioration is when state agents—entities that operate on the state's behalf—start to take the law into their own hands and behave as they please.[24]

One of the main indicators of the weakening of central government is the inability to impose authority on its peripheral regions and borders. Terror groups that are fighting among themselves and against the central government enter the governmental vacuum, and the result is often hardship for the civilian population and mass migration to safer locations. A failed state thus becomes a global problem; terror never remains within the borders of the failed state and the masses of fleeing refugees are eventually dispersed around a large number of countries. In other words, every failed state is, to one extent or another, a threat to the world order.[25]

According to Reilly, globalization, particularly during the last two decades, has been a major factor in the deterioration of developing countries to the lowest rankings on the functionality index. He explained that due to globalization, the populations of developing countries are familiar with the lifestyles of developed countries and are demanding their governments provide them with what they see on their smartphones, laptops, and televisions; namely, human rights, security, a prosperous economy, education, an advanced infrastructure, and more. Regimes that cannot provide this lose legitimacy and encounter growing unrest. In order to survive, these regimes increase their measures of oppression, and from there it is a short distance to becoming a failed state.[26]

Failed states are also noted for their high level of corruption. The dictators and their associates become wealthier, while the citizens become progressively poorer and more exploited. Personal security is non-existent, and little value is attributed to the lives of citizens. The other organizations and bodies that step in to fill the gap created by the state have their own interests, be they economic, political, or religious, and while they do provide services to the state's citizens, they are primarily concerned with advancing their own agenda.[27]

The criteria for identifying a failed state can be divided into two categories: internal and external. The former can be further classified into three subcategories: demographic, economic, and structural. After six years of upheaval in the Middle East, which saw the breakup of several nation-states, a dramatic decline in the ability of states to provide their citizens with security, the expansion of peripheral regions, and the penetration of those regions by radical jihadi elements, the weight of external factors can be seen to exceed internal factors. It should be noted that several of the criteria defined as internal actually have external repercussions; for example, in the case of the flight of millions of Syrian refugees to neighboring countries, the

reasons for their flight were mainly internal, but they became an external factor undermining the stability of the destination countries.[28]

The criteria include various feedback effects that accelerate the processes of disintegration and collapse of failed states. Iraq is a current example of these processes. The deep historical rifts between Sunnis and Shiites affect the central government's legitimacy and its level of functioning. The weakness of the central government is reflected in, inter alia, the poor quality of the army whose personnel demonstrate low levels of discipline and commitment. This results in the weakening of the state's hold on peripheral areas located far from the capital, a situation that has facilitated the establishment of the Islamic State in large areas of northwestern Iraq. The Islamic State is strengthening its hold on this territory by using the threat of violence against the local population and by exploiting the hostility of the Sunni population towards the Shiite-controlled central government. The establishment of the Islamic State and its terrorist regime has led to the massive exodus of the civilian population. Not all of the refugees leave Iraq for other countries; many of them move to other regions of the country and become an enormous burden on the central government, thus weakening it even further and accelerating the processes of fragmentation and collapse.[29] This situation is exploited by other ethnic groups, such as the Kurds, who had established an autonomous region even prior to the regional upheaval. They took advantage of the upheaval to expand their territory and gain control of essential economic resources, thus, once again, weakening the central government and the state institutions; and so it goes on. This is essentially a vicious cycle of destruction that feeds off itself.

Failed States and Their Effect on Other Countries

Beyond the immediate effect on their citizens, in particular on their personal security, failed states provide fertile ground for terrorist and criminal organizations that operate unhindered within their borders. In the absence of an effective central government that is able to maintain a monopoly over the use of force, these organizations are able to successfully hold the territory they have seized. The country's borders become penetrable and meaningless, allowing the terrorist organizations to expand their areas of control. Failed states become safe havens for terrorists, attracting organizations of all shapes and sizes. The failed state also provides them with a pool of

potential members, as its citizens are far more likely than citizens of stable countries to join such organizations.

Reilly asserted that the phenomenon of the failed state is not likely to disappear from the international scene anytime in the near future and that a confrontation between functioning wealthier nations and failed states is inevitable;[30] one of the reasons being the threat to security, which derives from the failed states. Terrorist organizations are able to "export" terror to functioning wealthier nations even when there is no common border. Globalization, technology, and access to arsenals of state weapons, including weapons of mass destruction, enable terrorist organizations to engage in international terror and to spread chaos at very little cost and with relative ease. As a result, "weak states, like Afghanistan, can pose as great a danger to our national interests as strong states";[31] likewise Syria and Iraq, where the Islamic State has established itself and has become both a regional and international threat.

If a failed Palestinian state is created in Judea and Samaria, its territory similarly could become a base of operations for local groups affiliated with the Islamic State. In the Gaza Strip, such groups already exist and operate openly, and while they do exist in Judea and Samaria, their activity is still low-key due to the presence of the IDF. A Palestinian failed state like Syria or Iraq will endanger its neighbors. These include Israel, due to the proximity between Judea and Samaria and Israel's main population centers and the presence of a large Palestinian minority within the Green Line who are already, around the margins, exhibiting support for the Islamic State; Jordan, whose majority Palestinian population is already demonstrating increasing support for ISIS; and Egypt, which is already dealing with Hamas-supported terror organizations in Sinai.

The lack of governance in the failed states is exploited by non-state actors to establish a state within a state. This is reflected in the creation of not only armed militias but also of alternatives to the regime, which provide education and social services. Examples include the Taliban's network of madrassas in Afghanistan, which replace state educational services, and the network of charitable institutions run by the Islamist organizations, which replace state social services. The Islamic State in northwest Iraq and northeast Syria, Hezbollah in Lebanon, and Hamas in the Gaza Strip are notable examples of failed states or entities where non-state terror organizations have become institutionalized by taking control of territory and its population. As a result

of this process,[32] the non-state actor becomes a pseudo-state and is able to exploit its new status to spread its ideology by means of, for example, its education system and control the population by means of welfare services, thus deepening the population's dependency. This process strengthens the terrorist organizations within the territory under their control and allows them to operate outside of their territory as well. In other words, they are able to export terror to their immediate environment and thereby undermine regional stability and security. For example, the Islamic State and Hamas are assisting jihadi organizations in the Sinai Peninsula and collaborating with them against the regime in Egypt.[33]

This phenomenon also affects countries that are hundreds and sometimes thousands of kilometers away from a failed state. The best example is the Islamic State, which is operating in the Sinai Peninsula, Libya, the Gaza Strip, Yemen, Nigeria, and many other locations by means of its affiliates, namely, local organizations that have joined it and sworn allegiance to its leader, who is known as Caliph. Other examples include the pirates in Somalia, who have disrupted international shipping off the coast of Africa, and the terror exported from Yemen to its neighbors and even to Europe and North America.

In contrast to the al-Qaeda organization, which emphasizes the obligation of all Muslims first to fight the "Zionist-Crusader alliance" and the Arab regimes, which cooperate with the infidels, and only later to work toward the creation of the caliphate, the Islamic State asserts that the caliphate should be established first and then used to fight the "deviant" Muslim movements; that is, the Shiites and all the other non-Sunni movements in accordance to the strict definition of who is a Muslim by the caliphate's leaders, as well as the rest of the non-Muslim infidels. Even though the Islamic State also operates as a global jihadi organization and has already carried out several mass terrorist attacks in the West, most of its resources are devoted to the war against "internal" targets. Despite directing its activity primarily against "deviant" Muslims, ISIS is highly attractive in the Islamic world and among Muslims living in the West, as can be seen by the thousands of Muslim volunteers from all over the world who have joined its ranks.[34]

Like terrorist organizations, criminal organizations also take advantage of the weak regimes in a failed state in order to further their interests. In many cases, criminal organizations use a failed state as their base of operations from where they export drugs, weapons, and even body parts harvested from

refugees and sold to the highest bidder.[35] Shared interests often bring terrorist and criminal organizations together. For example, the terrorists take advantage of the criminal smuggling routes, while the criminal organizations benefit from the terrorists' protection. In some cases, the terrorist organizations themselves, or parts of them, become criminal organizations and combine both terrorist and criminal activity in their operations.

As mentioned above, failed states are usually unable to provide their citizens with human security and other basic needs, and this has an adverse effect on the standard of living.[36] The lack of human security is a consequence of the continual fighting between various armed groups and is one of the main reasons for the massive wave of refugees. There are refugees who flee to safer parts of their own country (where they are defined as "displaced"), but there are many more who flee to other countries. The displaced refugees increase the burden on their country's infrastructures, already barely functioning or in a state of collapse. They also, of course, create pressure on the infrastructures of the destination countries, even if they are placed in crowded refugee camps near the border.[37] Refugee camps provide the setting for humanitarian crises. Occupants suffer from poor nutrition, disease, violence, and unemployment, and therefore the refugee camps become centers of unrest that import instability to the host country. In Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey, there are large refugee camps comprising hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees who, particularly in the cases of Jordan and Lebanon, increase the host state's risk of failure.

This imported instability threatens not only countries in the Middle East, fragile even before the onset of the civil war in Syria,[38] but also stable functioning states in the EU. The EU is, at present, struggling to deal with this reality, which may even eventually lead to its dissolution. There are those who claim that if the EU acts to alleviate the poverty in the regions of instability on its eastern and southern borders, this will reduce the phenomenon of failed states and the number of refugees. However, this ignores the reality that the hundreds of thousands of refugees from Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan are not fleeing poverty.[39]

The waves of refugees are just one aspect of the export of instability from the failed states. Another aspect, and of no less concern, is the export of terror, particularly chemical, biological, and nuclear terror. The main concern is that countries with arsenals of unconventional weapons will become failed states, thus allowing terrorist organizations to take control

of these arsenals. Pakistan is a good example: it is a large Muslim country that possesses nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles and whose stability has been recently undermined by the intensive activities of Jihadi organizations. There will be almost unimaginable harm to humanity if the situation in Pakistan enables jihadi organizations to get their hands on stockpiles of unconventional weapons. Another example concerns the worrying claims that the Islamic State took control of stockpiles of low-grade uranium in Iraq in July 2014.[40]

The threat from the disintegration of Syria would have been far worse if the regime had had the nuclear capabilities that it had been trying to develop. Egypt has a civilian research nuclear infrastructure and is seeking to accelerate its nuclear development despite the severe security problems with which it is dealing in the Sinai Peninsula and in Egypt proper. It should be mentioned that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) reported that during riots at the Egyptian nuclear plant at El Dabaa concerning its relocation, radioactive material was stolen from one of the laboratories, which illustrates the strategic security challenges that exist in fragile states.[41]

Terror, guerilla warfare, and civil wars have become major security challenges since the end of the Cold War. Furthermore, since 1945 more people have died in such conflicts than in wars fought by conventional armies.[42] Similarly, since the Cold War, we have witnessed the growing power of non-state armed groups at the expense of state power as a result of, for example, globalization, and the dispersion of state authority and functions among primarily non-state actors.[43]

The Growing Power of Non-State Actors

The word actor in the expression "non-state actor" is, according to Gustaaf Geeraerts, any entity, and not necessarily a state, that fulfils a particular function in international relations.[44] Dan Miodownik and Oren Barak gave a more precise definition of non-state actors, claiming that non-state actors are not sovereign states or anyone operating in their name. Nor are they part of formal state institutions such as military and security forces and bureaucracies; rather they operate outside of these institutions.[45]Armed non-state actors, they wrote, are a specific category of entities with the ability and desire to achieve their objectives by violent means. These entities have a command structure, and their fighters and weapons are outside the effective control of the state and include rebels, guerilla fighters, militias,

tribes, ethnic forces, local or international terrorists, criminal organizations, mercenaries, private security organizations, etc. The authors classified non-state actors according to:

1. The interests of the actors, such as national liberation, crime, environmental quality, human rights, and so forth;
2. The values and philosophies of the organization's members;
3. The character of the organization (non-governmental organization, social movement, national liberation movement, mafia, terror network, and so forth).

Geeraerts presented three different categories for distinguishing non-state actors:

1. Level of autonomy in the state where they operate and the nature of their ties to central government (dependency, separation, and so forth);
2. Rationale, be it ideological, ethnic, tribal or religious;
3. Degree of influence.

Iman Rejev suggested two additional criteria: 1) political objective, for example, a change in the status quo or its preservation; and 2) type of activity, for example, violent or non-violent. She likewise developed her own system for classifying non-state actors:

1. Local entities whose activity is concentrated in one country;
2. Trans-state entities whose activities are based in several countries, such as Hezbollah and Hamas;
3. Global entities whose activities span continents. These entities can also provide patronage to affiliated entities that operate in more specific regions in order to achieve more localized objectives. Al-Qaeda is an example of such an organization.[46]

As mentioned, non-state organizations can be classified according to the nature of their activity, namely, violent or non-violent. Violent organizations attempt to achieve their goals by armed force and defy the state's demand for a monopoly on the use of force. Researchers usually differentiate between several types of violent organizations:

1. **Militias**: According to the dictionary definition, a militia is an armed civilian force that does not operate within a formal military framework. There are militias made up of citizens who wish to defend themselves in times of crisis and militias set up by a government in order to carry out various tasks that the conventional army is unable or unwilling to carry out. For example, the Shabiba is a militia that was used by the Assad

regime to oppress the rebellious civilian population using methods such as the execution of prisoners, severe torture, rape, and starvation. There are also ethnic, religious, and tribal militias operating in the Middle East which are usually an indication of non-governance on the part of the central government.

2. **Paramilitary forces**: These are structured like a conventional army (platoons, companies, battalions, etc.) but are not usually part of one. Paramilitary forces can be found on both sides, namely, on the side of the central government and on the side of the rebel organizations.
3. **Subversive forces**: These generally use force to replace the existing regime.
4. **Terror organizations**: By means of indiscriminate killing of civilians, these organizations use terror to achieve their goals, which usually involve overthrowing the regime (whether foreign or local), although it sometimes involves changing lifestyles according to their religious or ideological views.
5. **Guerilla organizations**: In contrast to terrorists, these organizations usually operate against military targets using guerilla warfare. Their goals are often similar to those of terrorist organizations. There is not always a clear distinction between terror organizations and guerilla organizations, and many of them adopt both types of warfare.
6. **National liberation movements**: In some cases, these movements fight against a foreign invader (for example, the Algerian underground which fought against France), and in others they are Spartan movements seeking independence from the mother country (for example, the Tamils in Sri Lanka) or looking to break away from a particular country and become part of a neighboring country (for example, the Ossetians and Abkhazians who seceded from Georgia to become part of Russia).[47]

Although these are all defined as violent organizations, in many cases, including Hamas, Hezbollah, and the Islamic State, they are hybrid organizations involved not only in warfare but also in the civil administration of territories they have seized.[48]

There are, of course, also non-violent non-state actors. While all achieve influence on the national and sometimes international level by non-military means, such as media or economic activity, the National Intelligence Council has divided them into three distinct types: [49]

1. Multinational corporations—large economic organizations that produce and market goods and/or services in most countries around the world;
2. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)—usually private, voluntary non-profit organizations that work to advance specific issues. These tend to be independent entities that are not dependent on governments or multinational corporations;
3. Powerful individuals—people who possess political, economic, intellectual, or cultural influence on both national and international levels including very wealthy individuals, prominent statesmen, media figures, high-profile celebrities, and religious leaders.

Rejev suggested a further classification of non-state actors as either traditional or new. She sees traditional actors as so closely connected to the state that they operate as agents carrying out the government's foreign and domestic policies, thus preserving the status quo and supporting the ruling elite. New actors, on the other hand, benefit from almost complete autonomy. They have an entirely separate identity from the state and adopt an independent policy that differs from the state's foreign and domestic policies. They are, likewise, not dependent on government financing. Some of these new non-state actors have a dissident nature, are armed, and use violence to generate change both inside and outside the state. In some cases, new actors become semi-state actors by fulfilling some of the functions of the state including the preservation of public order and the provision of welfare, health, and educational services. For Rejev, Hezbollah and Hamas are examples of new players that are violent and dissident and have become the unofficial authorities in their strongholds.[50]

Similarly, Shamima Ahmed and David Potter divided non-state actors into those that cooperate with the state in which they are located and those that oppose it. Actors that cooperate with the state receive legitimacy and financing and, in exchange, fulfill public functions that the state is either unable or unwilling to perform. Actors that oppose the state, on the other hand, do so for many diverse reasons: human rights, environmental protection, and various humanitarian issues,[51] in addition, of course, to political and ideological conflicts, religious conflicts, and ethnic conflicts, whose rationale is based on the desire to change the power structure (the regime) and the allocation of resources. Non-state actors do not represent a sovereign entity and usually lack state resources; however, this does not mean that they cannot achieve influence on the international level, and in some cases, they are able

to generate significant processes of change.[52] In the case of NGOs, their power is based on the ability to achieve their goals through persuasion; in the case of terrorists, guerillas, and criminals through coercion or violence.

Crime has always accompanied violent conflicts, and this link has tightened with globalization. Criminal organizations view a failed state as a market that enables them to widen their scope of activity and diversify.[53] Therefore, even if a failed state does not play a significant role in the world economy, its potential involvement in illegal commerce is likely to be significant on the international level.[54]

The influence of non-state actors has increased in recent decades due to several simultaneous processes: the weakening of the nation-state; accelerated globalization; the expansion of privatization into areas previously considered an integral part of a state's commitment to its citizens; and the prevailing zeitgeist, which is characterized by the growing dominance of ideas such as human rights, environmental protection, and civil empowerment.[55] Violent non-state actors, such as terrorist organizations and guerillas, are having a major impact in the military domain; their methods of warfare are challenging state armies and forcing them to develop hybrid fighting methods that can deal with both conventional armies on the one hand and terrorists and guerillas on the other. Transforming a conventional army into a hybrid army is not an easy task and involves significant investment.[56]

The weakening of states and the growing importance of non-state actors described here have not bypassed the Arab world in recent years, and they reached a climax with the regional upheaval. They have exposed the structural weakness of most of the Arab nation-states, which were artificially created 100 years ago.

The Intervention of Foreign Players and the Wars Fought by Agents

The process of a state's collapse is also observed by neighboring states or by more distant states who may have some interest in it and who are therefore liable to increase their level of intervention. This is another case in which the collapse of a state has ramifications far beyond its borders.[57]

Failed states also attract non-state actors whose activity undermines the stability of the state even further, exacerbates the chaos, and supports the export of violence and instability to neighboring countries. Non-state actors first take control of a failed state's peripheral regions from where they can expand their operations and penetrate other regions. They then move on to

a process of consolidation in order to improve their mechanisms of control and become semi-state actors; the area they control takes on the appearance of a state. The emerging political entity does, in fact, eventually become a state entity; for example, the takeover of Gaza by Hamas, South Lebanon by Hezbollah, and, of course, large parts of Iraq and Syria by ISIS.[58]

The reality in the Middle East following the regional upheaval has enabled global jihadi elements, among them al-Qaeda and later on ISIS, to exploit the weakness of regimes and to create and then expand bases of operation.[59] These entities are constantly absorbing new volunteers, also from Western countries, into their ranks, who are characterized by revolutionary zeal and a lack of any restraint. They are responsible for destruction and war crimes on a scale not witnessed since World War II, including the systematic murder of thousands of civilians, the execution of prisoners, sadistic torture, ethnic cleansing, rape, and theft. The prime example of this phenomenon is, of course, the takeover by ISIS of northwestern Iraq and eastern Syria and the establishment of the Islamic State in June 2014.

The consolidation of the Islamic State not only affected Iraq and Syria, which had long ceased being states and merely had become names on a map, but it also endangered the stability of other countries, Jordan among them. It has also had an impact on events in more remote locations. The success of the Islamic State lies in its encouragement of other jihadi terrorist groups who share their philosophy and methods of operation, for example, in the territory of the Palestinian Authority, the Sinai Peninsula, Africa, Western Europe, North America, and recently even Southeast Asia.

State failure tends to spread from one country to another. Thus, non-state actors that become entrenched in one country seek to expand their influence to neighboring countries by exploiting conflicts between ethnic and religious groups. For example, after the fall of Gaddafi, groups of extremists from the Tuareg tribes, who had fought on the side of the regime, fled to Mali (via Algeria and Niger) and reinforced the local Tuaregs, thus increasing secessionist violence against the regime in Mali. This led to a military coup and the splitting of the country into two, with the north currently controlled by the Tuaregs who are seeking control of the entire country. From a fragile African democracy, Mali became a failed state within a few months, leading the French army to intervene in order to defeat the extremists and restore stability.

Miller analyzed the spread of state failure from one country to another using images from the world of computers. Failed states that are unable to provide basic services or maintain a monopoly on the use of violence were compared to hardware; the lack of a cohesive and coherent national identity was compared to software. The combination of hardware and software, he claimed, leads to developments on the following four levels:

1. Local—a civil war takes place;
2. Regional—the neighbors of a failed state undergoing civil war are faced with the dilemma of whether to intervene in order to prevent the spread of fighting or, alternatively, whether to exploit an opportunity;
3. Trans-regional—countries in the second and third circles of the failed state must also deal with the effects of its disintegration;
4. International—the international community suffers from the byproducts of the state's failure (terror, refugees, etc.) and is forced to take defensive and preventative measures.[60]

The growing strength of the Islamic State, for example, is felt on all four levels due to its decentralized network structure through which it activates its allies (jihadi organizations that operate in various regions such as Libya, the Sinai Peninsula, the Gaza Strip, and Nigeria) and its infrastructure of volunteers throughout Europe and North America, among others. This decentralized network structure largely rests on the social networks which have become so popular throughout the Middle East; about 40 percent of the population currently have access to the internet, most of them young people who can be influenced more easily.[61]

As mentioned, a failed state "invites" the intervention of other states that have identified either a risk or an opportunity. For example, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf emirates have intervened in the civil war in Yemen, since they view the growing strength of the Shiite Houthis as a serious threat to their interests. Iran, on the other hand, sees the war as a strategic opportunity to strengthen its ally, the Houthis, and to realize its aspirations for regional hegemony by expanding its presence and control of Yemen and the Bab el Mandeb Strait. These two examples will be discussed in more detail in the section on Yemen (Chapter 5). Further examples include Syrian intervention in the Lebanese Civil War (1976), the use by Jordan and the Gulf emirates of their air forces against ISIS, and the military intervention by Egypt and the Gulf emirates in Libya following the collapse of the Gaddafi regime and the disintegration of the state.

Failed States—A Regional and Global Threat

The fact that the Arab unrest was not predicted by either researchers or policy makers is not surprising in view of the difficulty of forecasting the instability of a regime. In contrast, it was possible to fairly accurately predict that the period following the Arab Spring would be characterized by the deepening of existing rifts, the weakening of central governments, and the spread of the failed state phenomenon. Due to its direct and indirect effects on the stability of regional and international systems, the international community cannot ignore this phenomenon.[62] The conventional response has been to send missions to failed states in order to prevent the export of chaos; however, these have never been sufficient to accomplish the goal. In order to get to the root of the problem, failed states need to be reconstructed, which usually requires a complex effort.[63]

The reality of the last two decades has shown that most of today's active conflicts, including international terror, are the result of intrastate conflicts.[64] These tend to develop in failed states, leading to a deterioration in the states' situations and undermining regional stability and security. In other words, the crises that start in failed states have a kind of viral effect on their surroundings. The Arab upheaval, for example, spread from country to country and from east to west, until it encompassed large parts of the Arab world. This phenomenon is not unique to the Arab world and has also been observed in the cases of Eastern European countries that were liberated from Soviet domination after the breakup of the Soviet Union and in the disintegration of Yugoslavia.

The ability of a state to control its population and its territory usually determines the level of violence that it directs at its citizens and its neighbors. There is an inverse relationship between the level of control and the level of violence; the lower the level of control, the higher the level of violence.[65] In many cases, failed states use violence against their neighbors to export their internal crises and thus reduce the threat at home (the theory of diversion),[66] and they react aggressively to international censure of this pattern of behavior. In some cases, however, the opposite pattern is observed: growing international pressure on a failed state pushes it to use greater violence against its population. This pattern of behavior can be seen in Syria and, to a much lesser extent, in Egypt after the demise of the Muslim Brotherhood. The deterioration of many Arab states toward the status of a failed state as a result of the regional upheaval proves that the most serious threats were never external but rather

internal. Thus, for example, in Libya, Iraq, Yemen, the Palestinian Authority, and—to some extent—Egypt, the opposition to the new regimes that tried to establish their legitimacy was mainly from within.

The odds of the new regimes establishing themselves despite their many opponents were and still are influenced by a number of factors, including national unity (also in the sense of a shared ethos), the political and functional stability of the state's institutions, the state's economic resources, and its military power, which, when combined, determine how the new regimes respond and consolidate their rule. In all the known cases in the Middle East, this combination of factors led to greater violence and the intensification of intrastate conflicts, which threatened the stability of the new regimes and served as catalysts of regional instability. It was against this backdrop, and supported by a number of studies dealing with major intrastate conflicts around the world, that Reilly posited the growing influence of intrastate conflicts on the stability of the international community and on the processes of conflict resolution.[67] And, indeed, the reality taking shape in the Middle East after six years of regional upheaval reinforces Reilly's critique of two main assumptions: first, that decision makers in failed states share common goals, expectations, and concerns; and second, that they exercise restraint in their patterns of behavior. Reilly claimed that both these assumptions are unrealistic; each ruler perceives personal threats differently and responds accordingly.[68]

The regional upheaval accelerated processes and trends that already existed in North Africa and the Middle East. Almost all the countries in these regions were weak states to one extent or another even before 2010. Rulers in these regions lacked legitimacy due, on the whole, to their autocratic natures, the incompatibility between their borders—which had been determined by the colonial powers—and local religious and ethnic identities. The same state-to-nation imbalance detailed by Miller existed in many of the Arab countries.[69]

According to the structural failures and defects described here, it is reasonable to assume that there will be no major or rapid improvement in the situation of the weak and failed states in the Middle East and North Africa; rather, in the short and medium term, instability can be expected to spread to additional states and deepen in states that are already unstable today.[70] This prediction does not bode well for the region's security. As more countries are drawn into the circle of instability, it will be easier for terrorist organizations to organize and arm themselves. Thus, for example,

as a result of the breakup of Libya, weapons from the Libyan army's arsenal flowed to the jihadi organizations in Sinai and to Hamas in Gaza, and as a result of the collapse of the Iraqi army, ISIS was able to take control of its numerous stockpiles of weapons.

It can also be expected that as the failure of states in the Middle East and North Africa deepens so too will the intervention of external actors, be they state or non-state actors. This involvement is reflected in the provision of support to one side or another in intrastate conflicts, which varies in its scope but can extend as far as sending in military forces. Iran and Russia, for example, did not just send weapons to the Syrian army but also deployed military forces to join the fighting. And alongside foreign military intervention in the failed states, there are also non-state actors from neighboring countries, such as Hezbollah in Syria, ISIS in Lebanon and the Sinai Peninsula, and the terrorist activities of Somalia's al-Shabab organization, which operates from neighboring Kenya.

This state of affairs can develop in one of three directions, all of which lead to an unstable outcome:

1. Non-state actors will continue to operate in their conventional format, and instability will deepen in countries where they operate and in other countries as well;
2. Non-state actors will undergo processes of institutionalization and become semi-state actors (like Hamas, Hezbollah, and ISIS) or even bona fide states. Such a geostrategic environment is characterized by a lack of clarity and a lack of stability, which makes it difficult to use the familiar means of managing conflicts between states to create order in the system;
3. In order to deal with armed non-state actors, a failed state will adopt their methods of operation; a strategy adopted by the Assad regime in Syria, for example.

Since failed states endanger stability and security well beyond their borders and since almost all the superpowers' past efforts to reconstruct failed states have failed (the relative success in the Balkans is an exception), the time has come to develop new and efficient strategies through the adoption of more relevant solutions. For example, instead of clinging to the paradigm of united nation-states, a new paradigm of federated states should be adopted that will facilitate the expression of religious, tribal, and ethnic identities. In Bosnia, this strategy was implemented through the creation of a federation of two autonomous regions: the Serbian region (the Republika Srpska) and

the federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina whose population is primarily Bosnian (Muslims) and Croatians (Catholics). These two autonomous entities have only weak ties with one another, which do not require shared and consensual national ethos. Similar ideas have been put forward to establish three autonomous regions in Iraq: Kurdish (which, in effect, already exists), Sunni, and Shiite.

Chapter 2

International Efforts to Assist Failed States — An Empirical Evaluation

Background

The issue of international intervention in failed states is the focus of ongoing discourse and disagreement in the international community. International intervention in the affairs of a sovereign state can occur as the result of a decision by the UN Security Council, an international coalition or alliance (such as NATO), or a single state with a clear interest in influencing events in the failed state (such as the decision by Russia to intervene in the fighting in Syria). External intervention in the affairs of failed states violates the idea that every country has absolute sovereignty over its territory and occurs when a regime is considered brutal and lacking enough internal legitimacy to protect the civilian population. Using this justification, NATO forces intervened in Bosnia and Serbia (the Kosovo conflict) and in Libya, and so forth.[71]

We know from experience that interventions that aim to reconstruct failed states generally fail and seldom achieve any of their objectives. The scale of peacekeeping missions is nonetheless constantly expanding. UN data as of May 2014 indicated that the UN has 120 thousand soldiers and administrative personnel operating in seventeen conflict centers with an annual budget of more than $8 billion.[72]

The reconstruction of a failed state requires the external players' legitimacy at home and long-term commitment to support the transitional government.[73] These same external players must assist in building up a legitimate leadership and state institutions, such as the police, the judicial system, the health system, as well as the national economy. Only in this way is it possible to ensure that the state will function at a level that is sufficient to provide for the needs of the local population and to create security. It is usually

also necessary to draw up a constitution and to forge a broad social and political consensus to back up the constitution and the state institutions. The international community generally seeks to create a regime based on a western democratic-liberal model. For most failed states, however, this model is not relevant, since it is foreign to their local political culture and power structures. Iraq and Afghanistan are good examples of states where the Western model of government is inappropriate.

The US reaction to the Muslim Brotherhood's removal from power in Egypt (which is defined as a fragile and not a failed state) in June 2013 reflects its misunderstanding of Egypt and its political culture. The American government was vehemently critical of el-Sisi for overthrowing a democratically elected ruler, even if he represented the Muslim Brotherhood. The US position led to hostile reactions from Egypt and damaged the status of the United States in the region, particularly among its allies who felt that the American reaction represented disloyal behavior and a poor understanding of the Middle East's political culture.[74] Even the renewal of the security dialogue between the United States and Egypt following the visit of Secretary of State John Kerry in July 2015 did not manage to fully restore relations between the two nations.[75]

The understanding among leading figures in the international community that failed states are a regional and even global threat was reflected in the international intervention in Somalia in 1993 and became even clearer following 9/11. The United States reached the conclusion that failed states endanger their vital interests. Evidence of this can be seen in the massive effort invested by the Americans in the reconstruction of Iraq and Afghanistan. The French reached a similar conclusion, which was manifest in their endeavors in the Ivory Coast (2011) and in Mali (2013) to prevent a collapse of the regimes as a result of attacks by Islamist extremists.

Lessons to be Learned from International Interventions to Reconstruct Failed States

The reconstruction of a failed state is a complicated, prolonged, and expensive process in terms of both lives and money. Rich nations that wish to succeed in the reconstruction of a failed state must persevere in their efforts even as the price soars. The greatest risk of failure lies in a premature exit by international forces, as in the cases of Haiti and Somalia.[76]

The reconstruction of a state must, in addition, be a coordinated and combined international effort, since it is beyond the capability of one single nation, even a large and wealthy superpower such as the United States. It must be a joint effort from the early preparation stage, prior to active intervention, with all parties first learning the main problems of the failed state through in-depth and patient research and developing an infrastructure of relevant knowledge.[77] It is essential to try and avoid ethnocentric biases that lead to a distorted interpretation of the state's reality and hamper the efforts to adapt assistance to its unique characteristics. This need for good and thorough planning is one of the main lessons learned from the analysis of previous aid missions which were dispatched hastily at the onset of a crisis without sufficient preparation and were therefore not effective.[78]

Likewise, the relevant power centers in the failed state need to be identified and analyzed in order to determine with which to collaborate and under what conditions. Collaboration is often entered into with inappropriate players. Accumulated experience has shown that the ethnic, religious, and social structure of the country is too often ignored, which results in the local population's alienation from the aid effort. The path from there to failure of the entire intervention is a short one.[79] In other words, aid planners often overlook fundamental problems that caused the state to fail from the outset, focusing instead on technical political processes, such as elections, whose results are easier to measure and quantify.[80] In some cases, the correct behavior is to collaborate with existing influential power groups, even if they do not operate in accordance with Western liberal and democratic logic. Such collaboration makes it possible to stabilize the situation and reshape the local political culture. In the case of Zimbabwe, for example, the EU and the United States understood that it was preferable to work with Robert Mugabe rather than against him, even though he was a corrupt dictator who oppressed the opposition in his country with force and rigged the elections time after time. It may be that if the Americans had refrained from disbanding the Iraqi army, it would have been possible to shape a more stable and secure reality in Iraq after Saddam Hussein and to prevent the rapid collapse of the state, which ultimately led to the rapid takeover of northwestern Iraq and northeastern Syria by ISIS.[81]

Afghanistan is another example of a failed attempt to apply Western political logic to a state and society with a completely different culture and political logic. The numerous ethnic and tribal units in Afghanistan never

became a single unit with a shared consciousness and loyalty to a common framework and leadership. When political logic is forced on rival groups who have nothing in common and do not operate under a single state framework, it results in the collapse of the system. Mordechai Kedar stated that while the Americans and their allies did the right thing by invading Afghanistan in order to remove the Taliban from power and destroy al-Qaeda's bases, they failed to understand the need to break up Afghanistan into separate ethnic units and therefore did not do the one thing that could have stabilized the country.[82]

There is a claim that the international system cannot reconstruct failed states due to the basic inclination to avoid intervening in the internal affairs of sovereign countries. However, this claim is contradicted by the fact that many countries have adopted the R2P (Responsibility to Protect) principle according to which the obligation to protect all endangered populations overrides the sanctity of sovereignty.[83] NATO members used this principle to justify their actions against the Gaddafi regime in Libya. While the superpowers may therefore now recognize, at least in principal, their authority to intervene in the affairs of failed states in order to reconstruct them, they are not actually prepared to persevere in such missions if the human and economic costs rise too high. Thus, for example, the attempt to reconstruct Somalia was quickly abandoned after it became clear that it would involve intense fighting against the local militias. Likewise, in Afghanistan, where much greater reconstruction efforts were invested than in Somalia, the mission was eventually abandoned since the Western nations, particularly the United States, were not prepared to continue paying the high price of the reconstruction effort. As a result, the efforts at reconstruction and peacemaking in Somalia, Afghanistan, and other countries did not achieve their objectives.[84]

Having studied the international efforts to reconstruct failed states, Zartman concluded that it is not sufficient to rebuild the government and its institutions; the society must also be restored. Moreover, this reconstruction must be from the bottom up; the society first and then the government. Only thus, he claimed, is it possible to get at the root of the problem that led to state failure in the first place—i.e., the dissatisfaction of social groups with the old division of power—and enable the new regime to achieve legitimacy and function more efficiently.[85] Zartman examined the case of African states that tried to sell regime change and reconstruction to their citizens

but ended up shaping a new regime that was identical to the old corrupt one with just a few cosmetic changes. All of these countries became caught up in a prolonged process of intense state failure.[86]

Experience has taught that any international efforts to reconstruct a failed state require intervention on a significant scale and that the support of the international community for reform carried out by the failed state on its own is insufficient. In cases where the leadership does not enjoy legitimacy, the chances of a failed state rehabilitating itself without international assistance are slim.[87]

International Assistance Prolongs Crises in Failed States and Regions of Confrontation

Regions of humanitarian disaster, which are very often failed states, are the preferred areas of operation for NGOs and international aid organizations. Although these organizations do indeed seek to bring relief to populations in distress, they also view these aid activities as the justification for their existence, their organizational development, and their international status. The large number of organizations that operate in these locations often hampers the activities of official state aid missions that are usually part of some international framework. In some cases, actual rivalry develops between the many groups operating in the disaster areas. According to the Dutch reporter Linda Polman, one of the reasons for these rivalries is that "wars and disasters generally attract a garish array of individual organizations, each with its own agenda, its own business imperatives, and its own institutional survival tactics."[88] In some cases, it appears that areas of conflict and humanitarian distress become an actual industry, which Polman termed the "humanitarian aid industry."[89]

In her book, Polman surveyed a long series of interventions in disaster areas within failed states and listed the reasons for their frequent failure: a lack of determination on the part of the international community and the UN; a large number of organizations and competing agendas; a lack of coordination and overall leadership; foreign interests; a lack of professionalism; corruption; and a lack of willingness to use force against non-state actors that thwart the aid and reconstruction efforts, such as terrorist and criminal organizations. In some cases, the aid organizations even give in to terrorist and criminal organizations, and in other cases, they collaborate with them. The extensive documentation in Polman's book paints a chilling and disturbing picture,

which indicates just how complicated and difficult international intervention efforts are and how slim their chances of success:

> The United Nations eventually took President Mobutu of Zaire's offer to send his presidential guard to the camps, at the United Nation's expense. What the United Nations feared would happen happened: Mobutu's guards arrived in Goma with carte blanche to supplement their UN salaries by means of theft and extortion.[90]

Polman likewise presented estimates of the massive scope of theft by militias in the various regions of conflict and the reluctance of the UN to publish findings for fear of a reduction in financial support from the donor countries. She also exposed the tendency to exaggerate the number of refugees in order to obtain greater financial assistance.[91] The option of stealing aid money fed the conflicts, according to Polman, and she reached a particularly disturbing conclusion: "Without humanitarian aid, the Hutus' war [in Rwanda in 1994] would almost certainly have ground to a halt fairly quickly."[92]

In order to cover the costs of their activity in disaster areas and areas of conflict, aid organizations need to prove their necessity, which they do in two main ways: by exaggerating the scope of the crisis and by emphasizing their contribution to its resolution. They achieve their desired media coverage through public relations activities, which can prolong crises and delay their resolution, thus ensuring the aid organizations' own existence. One of the best examples explored by Steven Rosen, a former head of AIPAC, the American Jewish lobby, is the activity of UNRWA, the UN Relief and Works Agency operating in the territory of the Palestinian Authority and the Gaza Strip. During its sixty-six years of activity, UNRWA has, according to Rosen, contributed to the perpetuation of the Palestinian refugee problem and nurtured the ethos of resistance and return to the homeland. The organization has become an integral part of the refugee problem rather than an instrument for its resolution. One of the ways that it preserves its existence is by defining the descendants of refugees as refugees themselves; a practice not applied to any other group of refugees in the world, which ends up "perpetuating and multiplying the refugee problem rather than resolving it."[93]

The "humanitarian aid industry" is growing and, as it does, its level of efficiency declines. However, "failures go unreported, because criticism of MONGOS [My Own NGO] reflects on the aid industry in general, which

comes under fire often enough as it is."[94] In the absence of any controls, corruption and inefficiency become widespread. Polman presented a long list of cases in which non-state actors—primarily terrorist and criminal organizations and militia leaders—have expropriated a significant proportion of aid money through blackmail and threats. There are even cases of powerful local leaders allowing the entry of aid organizations only on condition that they do not provide any aid to their enemies. Humanitarian aid becomes non-humanitarian aid that fuels the various militias, including militias that harm the civilian population:

> The growing number of aid organizations and the rising value of the aid supplies and services they deliver to warring countries make humanitarian aid an increasingly important supplement to war chests. The number of organizations and the amount of money they come to spend in countries with no other sources of income turn the aid industry, supposedly neutral and unbiased, into a potentially lethal force the belligerents need to enlist.[95]

In missions to reconstruct states, which are more complicated and more expensive than aid missions, there are known cases of large amounts of money, allocated by the international community to the building of the failed state's institutions and the improvement of its economy and infrastructure, being managed by the local government, even when it lacked the ability to do so effectively. In Sudan in 2005, for example, after the government had signed a peace agreement with the rebels in the South, an enormous $4 billion, one half of the total amount spent on humanitarian aid, was allocated to rebuilding. The donation program stipulated fifty NGOs to work in the region, but the scope and range of their activities were determined by the regime.[96] This is fairly similar to what happened with the Palestinians following the first Oslo accords in 1993, when huge amounts of allocated aid went to the corrupt and inefficient Palestinian Authority (for a comprehensive survey, see the section on the Palestinian Authority).

Recommendations for Dealing with International Intervention Failures in Failed States

Call listed several conceptual failures that hinder the efforts of the international community to reconstruct failed states.

1. The concept of a "failed state" is too broad and relates to a wide spectrum of states, each of which has a different situation and suffers from different problems. Each case requires its own solution and must thus be treated separately. There is no one universal solution to the diverse cases of state failure.
2. The international community is unable to free itself from the Western concept of a state, and therefore the emphasis is always on the effort to restore order; that is, to impose the rule of law and to improve the functioning of the state's institutions. In some cases, progress in this direction comes at the expense of other essential efforts. For example, the ability to effectively impose law and order does not necessarily ensure economic improvement as reflected in the growth of GNP. Furthermore, law and order is sometimes achieved by preserving the power of the corrupt political elite.
3. The focus on imposing order in the failed state also interferes with the ability to identify the specific characteristics of a given state and to design a solution that fits its unique situation.
4. Aid sources tend to combine efforts to reconstruct a failed state with efforts to achieve and maintain peace, a combination that hampers both. Despite the links between reconstruction and peace, the two objectives have different characters and should be kept separate, with the focus on what is more relevant to the unique characteristics of each state.
5. The reconstruction and aid programs of Western nations are based on their values and patterns of thinking. This is known as "Western paternalism" and constitutes a major barrier to the reconstruction of failed states.
6. Many failed states are such as a result of their colonialist past. The actions of the colonial powers (such as the drawing of borders) created a reality that did not give the colonies much chance of success. Now these former colonial powers are returning in order to reconstruct their former colonies. This charged encounter itself reduces the chances for successful reconstruction. The former colonies are apprehensive about the return of the foreigners who once ruled the country, while the former

colonialists have preconceptions about the ability of those who were their subjects until not so long ago.[97]

According to Call, the failures of the international community—both governments and aid organizations—in disaster areas and areas of conflict demand a rethinking of their intervention practices. The following parameters need to be determined: what are the humanitarian principles they are looking to implement? What is the correct break-even point between the desire to help and the need to use force against spoilers? At what point should authority be transferred to local power groups? Most importantly, how should the reconstruction process best be implemented to suit the local political culture?

Adam Roberts likewise called on the international community to learn the lessons of the many failed reconstruction attempts and criticized the overreliance on Western liberal models. These models, he asserted, should be abandoned and replaced by more up-to-date and relevant models that are in line with the unique characteristics of the states chosen for intervention.[98]

Special attention should be paid to dealing with crime in the failed states; first and foremost, recognizing the contribution of crime to the state's failure and allocating the resources necessary for its elimination. There is a need for improved international cooperation in the gathering and distribution of information on criminal organizations in order to prevent criminal elements from entering into the areas of conflict and establishing a base of operations. therefore, crime should be treated as an integral part of the problems of the failed state,[99] and rehabilitation process of a failed state must include efforts in this regard.

The first step in rehabilitating a failed state, according to Miller, is the solidification of its national identity and restoration of the state's monopoly over the use of violence. The armed militias operating on the state's territory must therefore be disbanded. In addition, Miller recommended strengthening the institutions of law and creating a stable ruling establishment; once there is a process of state and nation-building, the chances of reconstruction and peace are, he believes, much higher.[100] Miller's recommendation is based on international experience, which has shown that a coherent state tends to act in a calculated and responsible manner and to avoid regional confrontations. His conclusions and recommendations can, in fact, be seen as a kind of recipe for the nation-building process. However, the regional reality after six years of upheaval in the Middle East indicates the difficulty of implementing his proposed model; in many of the Arab countries, which

are in an accelerated process of state failure, including Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Libya, and even the Palestinian Authority (although not yet a real state), there is no foundation for creating coherency according to Miller's formula. For the last 100 years, major efforts have been made to create a national identity for the Arab countries, but the regional upheaval proves that they have not succeeded. While it is fair to assume that it will be possible to reconstruct the Arab world at some point in the future, this will have to be based on religious, ethnic, and tribal identities rather than national ones.

Zartman emphasized the importance of the democratic process in the reconstruction of a failed state.[101] According to him, only if the entire population is part of the state's reconstruction process is there a chance for it to succeed. Zartman emphasized that it is particularly important to include the opposition in the government and that distancing the opposition from the focus of power should be avoided.[102]

In summary, the reconstruction of a failed state by means of international aid is a complicated and prolonged process with low chances of success. Until now, only a few countries have been successfully reconstructed, even though the international community has invested billions in the reconstruction of numerous countries. Many of the reconstruction operations have led to dependency on sources of international aid but have failed to rescue these countries from their prevailing situation.

In most cases, the failed states suffer from ethnic, religious, regional, or socio-economic divisions and are therefore unable to unite under a consensual national identity.[103] Not only is there no correlation between the identity of the inhabitants and the state's territory but often between the political power structure and the social structure as well. Despite the recurring failures of external aid efforts to help divided nations build a national identity for themselves (generally termed "nation-building"), there are those who have not given up hope and still see this as a worthwhile goal.[104]

Each state is a special case and its characteristics must be studied and understood in an in-depth manner. The intervention model that has succeeded in one country will not necessarily succeed in another, and any attempt to copy a model without modification is doomed to failure.[105] Significantly, failed states can be divided into those where the failure is chronic—i.e., countries that have never been functional—and those where it is temporary—i.e., countries that functioned normally for many years and only deteriorated

at a certain point in time. Planners of an intervention should differentiate between these two types.

It should also be remembered that even when an international intervention has been successful, its success is often short-lived; for example, the reconstruction of East Timor after it gained independence from Indonesian in 2002. Shortly after an international force led by Australia had left the "reconstructed" country, it quickly deteriorated into a failed state and is still considered among the weakest states in East Asia alongside Myanmar, North Korea, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka.[106]

In any state-building effort, there is tension between the need for prolonged international intervention in order to reconstruct the regime, the society, and the state and the need to shift responsibility to the reconstructed state. Despite the understanding that international aid and intervention are temporary, the main consideration in ending the process must be a high level of certainty regarding the ability of the local population to successfully manage the state on their own.[107] As Cooke and Downie stated, intervention and aid missions to failed states are complex and prolonged processes and therefore the aid (resources and attention) should be initiated on a small scale and gradually ramped up. The provision of large-scale aid during the initial stages of international intervention should, they claimed, be avoided in order that the citizens and leaders of the failed state, even as they are pressing for speedy restoration of their independence, internalize that reconstruction is a complicated and lengthy process. In addition, they emphasized the importance of integrating the stabilization and rehabilitation efforts and identifying and including the informal centers of power in the rehabilitation process.[108]

Chapter 3

The Failure of Intelligence Agencies and Academic Research

Why Did Intelligence Agencies and Academia Fail to Predict the Upheaval in the Middle East?

The regional upheaval in the Middle East did not come from nowhere, and its early indicators were visible to all. Academic research and intelligence reports published prior to the upheaval often related to the sense of frustration and despair among the populations of the Arab countries as a result of the corruption and tyranny of their rulers and their inability to bring about economic change. These feelings were the fuel for the opposition and protest movements, particularly among the young and in more liberal circles, whose existence, according to Zartman, should have constituted a warning light.[109]

There were other indications as well. About half of the members of the Arab League, even before the upheaval, were defined as "sensitive states" in light of the many problems and pressures created by demography, underdevelopment, unequal division of resources, political regimes and institutions that lacked legitimacy and violated human rights, a lack of internal and external security, and foreign interventions. The basic weakness of the Arab countries (ranging from failed states such as Yemen to weak states such as Lebanon) was covered up by the region's wealth in natural resources, primarily oil and gas. However, once the upheaval started, even the wealth of the oil and gas producers could not hide the numerous failures in the Arab world.

Intelligence research focused primarily on the military and political elites and pushed civilian society to the margins. The common assumption was that the dictatorial regimes were resilient and secure due to their total control of a passive, indifferent, unorganized, and submissive population. It

was felt that the population had come to terms with their difficult conditions and had lost any hope for change.

Researchers followed with interest the democratic wave that swept over Eastern Europe and Latin America, and when the upheaval began in the Middle East, many of them were quick to explain it using concepts and paradigms that had been developed in those contexts without taking into account the differences in culture and politics and the specific developing trends. The use of the term "Arab Spring" was a direct result of this perception.

Lack of awareness of the phenomenon of failed states can be found in the case of the American intervention in Somalia and the failure to understand the early warning signs a year later from another failed state, Rwanda. In 1993, the United States headed an international mission to end the civil war in Somalia and to save the population from starvation. The mission focused mainly on military aspects and therefore aborted after the battle in Mogadishu in which the international force—including American troops—suffered casualties in skirmishes with a local Somali militia. As a result, the Americans refrained from intervening in other regions of crisis, such as the civil war in Rwanda, since US public opinion would not tolerate American soldiers being killed while fulfilling humanitarian missions. They ignored the depth of the problem and did not internalize the destructive potential of the intrastate conflict of a failed state like Rwanda. The phenomenon of failed states has not been an issue in the American international and security agenda. Only a decade later, as a result of the September 11 terrorist attack, did the United States come to realize that failed states are a direct threat to its essential interests, and its policy of non-intervention in these countries came to an end.

As a result of 9/11, all of the intelligence agencies turned their attention to failed states. The fact that they were surprised by the upheaval in the Middle East indicates, however, that they lacked the data-gathering tools and analysts needed to identify early indicators. One of the main reasons for this failure, as mentioned above, was their focus on the leadership and intelligence organizations of Arab countries. While these are indeed important markers, "the modern era is also characterized by the increasing importance of the crowds in the streets and the squares."[110] It thus became clear that intelligence services must develop and adopt the approach of "cultural intelligence,"[111] which has recently been developed in the US military and termed the "Human Terrain."[112]

In order to predict events such as the regional upheaval, it is necessary to understand deeper currents in the given societies. The various discourses (also on social networks) must be monitored and analyzed, and an in-depth understanding of the culture, history, and religion of the countries and the mechanisms used by their leaders to maintain their legitimacy is required. In addition, it is important to become familiar with their economy and demography by collecting a wide range of data: GNP, rate of economic growth, level of imports and exports, rate of unemployment, structure of employment (division of employment between agriculture, manufacturing, and services), rate of population growth, rate of infant mortality, rate of illiteracy, rate of higher education, composition of the population, and extent of ethnic, national, and religious divisions among others. Familiarity with this data allows for the early identification of fragile states that are liable to slide into state failure. Such data is also critical for designing a strategy for their reconstruction[113] and thus preventing, or at least limiting, the outflow of refugees and criminal and terrorist elements from these states.[114]

Intelligence agencies have so far failed to predict processes of state failure. The signs indicating the collapse of order in the Arab world were already evident several years earlier; they were, in fact, described quite explicitly in the Arab Human Development Report, which is published regularly by Arab researchers and experts. These reports pointed to deep systemic failure within the Arab countries, lags in development, and oppression, which together constituted a charge that exploded with the onset of the regional upheaval.

The Arab Human Development Report—The Current State of Affairs and Unheeded Warnings

The Arab Human Development Report is a series of independent reports that were written during the period 2002–2009 by a number of leading researchers and thinkers, mostly from the Arab world, and sponsored by the United Nations Development Program.[115] The reports were highly critical of the Arab regimes and emphasized the fundamental problems of the Arab world. A good definition of the reality described in the reports was given by Shimon Shamir: "it appears that the Arab countries, to differing degrees, were empty entities. Their conceptual framework was unstable."[116] The reports presented a dismal picture of an Arab world characterized by systematic violations of human rights, a series of major structural and institutional failures, and neglected social gaps. They concluded that almost all of the Arab countries

were unstable due to their levels of social inequality, structural defects in their regimes, and their internal conflicts.

Despite this important message and the wealth of information included in the reports, they did not receive much attention in the West or in the Arab world. They did not induce any action or discussion on the state level to solve these problems, nor did they prompt any public debate or significant academic or intelligence agency research. The Arab media provided some exposure but focused mainly on the criticism inherent in the reports,[117] while intelligence agencies and researchers did not expend any significant intellectual, organizational, or operative efforts in studying the reports or monitoring the presented trends and phenomena. In fact, their analysis and warnings, according to which the Arab world was ripe for revolution, were a wakeup call that went unheeded.[118] The authors of the reports warned that lacking proper treatment, the problems of the Arab world would only deteriorate further, leading to growing instability.

Some of the reports were devoted to the major demographic changes that the Arab world was facing, such as rapid population growth and accelerated urbanization. They indicated the high proportion of young people (about 60 percent) and predicted further growth. The combination of a sharp rise in population and deterioration in environmental conditions (global warming, growing shortage of water, the desertification process, and pollution) were emphasized as a grave threat to security in the region. The reports predicted that environmental problems would lead to a growing wave of ecological refugees and to a rise in the number of internal and regional conflicts due to the shortage of resources, as happened in Darfur where the conflict was, to a large extent, the result of a struggle for control of water resources. This is liable to be repeated in Yemen where water resources are running low as a result of massive and unsupervised cultivation of the water-thirsty khat plant.

The reports also attested to the undermining of personal security as a result of policies that discriminate against the most vulnerable sectors of society: women, children, refugees, and the displaced. The treatment of women is a clear example of this. In addition to physical violence (circumcision, rape, and sexual abuse), women in Arab countries also suffer from social discrimination, which is often encouraged by official channels. This phenomenon is reflected, for example, in the forced marriages of minors and the legitimatization or leniency toward family honor killings. In other words, the law does not actually protect women's most basic rights. Many women are, likewise,

denied a formal education and the right to work outside the home. This social discrimination limits the growth opportunities of Arab countries, since half of the population is unable to realize its potential.

As referred to in the reports, refugees and the displaced, primarily from Sudan, Syria, and Iraq, suffer from discrimination and neglect. Thus, for example, even though 70 percent of the Iraqi refugees in Jordan are of working age, less than 30 percent are actually employed. Most of these populations do not have access to health services, and only a small proportion of the children attend school. Proper attention to the millions of Syrian refugees—many of whom are concentrated in Jordan, Turkey, and Lebanon—would, however, constitute a huge economic burden, which even much richer nations would struggle to manage.[119]

The Arab Human Development Report classified the Arab countries into four groups based on level of income:

1. High income: Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates.
2. Medium to high income: Lebanon, Libya, and Oman.
3. Low to medium income: Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Morocco, Algeria, Djibouti, and Tunisia.
4. Low income: Sudan, Yemen, Comoro Islands, and Mauritania.

Not only the poor Arab countries but also the rich ones suffer from major economic problems. For decades, they have depended exclusively on oil to fill their coffers and neglected other productive sectors. The oil-producing countries have used their wealth to buy themselves calm and stability within their borders and beyond. As a result, there is a high correlation between the level of political stability in these countries and the global price of oil.[120]

In the first half of the last century, oil profits transformed fishing villages in the Persian Gulf into some of the richest places in the world. On average, more than 40 percent of the GDP of the Gulf states and more than 80 percent of their income come from the sale of oil and gas. This income allows them to heavily subsidize their citizens; for example, the citizens of Saudi Arabia do not pay taxes and receive healthcare and education (including higher education) at no cost. They also benefit from heavy subsidies on housing and basic food products. While they may lack political rights, the citizens of Saudi Arabia enjoy a very high level of economic prosperity.[121]

Economic benefits vary, of course, from country to country according to level of income. Bahrain (which relies on income from a Saudi Arabian

oilfield) and Oman (which exports only a modest quantity of oil and is not an OPEC member) provide their citizens with less than the other richer nations, such as Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar, and Kuwait. Since the upheaval in the Middle East, the governments in the Gulf have been resorting to their large foreign currency reserves to defuse social and political tensions. However, the sharp drop in the price of oil in 2015 has made it difficult for the regimes to meet their budget targets while at the same time maintain the subsidization policy necessary for political stability. Global energy developments are likely to become a major problem for the countries in the region and in particular the monarchies in the Gulf.[122]

The high rate of unemployment among young people is of particular concern in the Arab countries and has far-reaching implications for their stability. The creation of jobs is, therefore, one of the most important challenges facing the new regimes that emerged after the regional upheaval as well as those that survived the upheaval (primarily the monarchies). More problematic than the rate of employment, however, is the rate of poverty in Arab countries, since even work and a salary do not ensure economic stability for many citizens of these countries. There is a dire need for comprehensive reforms, including the reform of wage policy, but it is doubtful that the Arab countries are capable of implementing them.

The reports also discussed the level of social services and their efficiency, highlighting in particular serious deficiencies in the area of healthcare as result of a neglect of preventative medicine, low investment in the health system and medical technology, and the lack of health insurance. A similar lack of investment and modernization can also be seen in the public education system.

Much attention was also paid to the problematic link between the political regimes in the Arab countries and the populations under their rule. The regimes tend to be weak in terms of popularity and legitimacy not only because of their limited effectiveness but also because they generally rely on a particular ethnic group for support and operate primarily for its benefit. As a result, whole sectors of the population remain without appropriate representation and influence in the political arena. Bahrain is a good example of a regime that prioritizes a particular group and denies equal rights to all of its various ethnic and religious groups (the majority of Bahrain's residents are work immigrants who lack political rights).[123] This discrimination creates friction between the various communities, thus weakening the state's unity and the

legitimacy of its regime. When the regime loses legitimacy in the eyes of certain groups, it becomes caught up in what Reilly has called the "insecurity dilemma."[124] The regime must accordingly decide between two options that both result in undermining its status and increasing insecurity: first, to further oppress the disenfranchised groups; and second, to enfranchise these groups. The regimes in the Middle East have tended toward the former option, which further undermines their legitimacy. The use of oppressive measures is possible because the Arab regimes in the region do not yet subscribe to international standards of fundamental human rights and the guarantee of basic social and political rights. The adoption of these standards would likely improve the legitimacy of the regimes or bring about their downfall. This is the core of Reilly's "insecurity dilemma."

In order to overcome their lack of popularity and legitimacy and the problems involved in building a national identity, Arab regimes maintain their status by means of large security mechanisms and violent means of enforcement meant to serve as deterrence. While they may not actually contribute to the security of the regime, these means act as a substitute for political and democratic processes and prevent the development of a sense of unity among the country's citizens. This is a reality which tramples not only on democracy but also on values such as human rights, the freedom to organize, freedom of expression, and personal security. The regime's main aim is to survive, and it therefore invests all resources in developing the enforcement mechanisms necessary to deal with domestic threats.

The findings of the reports led researchers to the conclusion that wide-ranging reforms are needed in the Arab world; reforms whose main purpose is to realize the regime's responsibility to its citizens and to strengthen the rule of law. These reforms thus need to include: a formal separation of powers; a reduction in emergency decrees used to provide the regime with almost unlimited power in the face of opposition; and supervision of the security mechanisms by the justice system. In addition, the reports recommended reforms that would strengthen civil society and provide equal rights to all citizens, particularly women and minority groups. According to the researchers, these reforms—alongside essential economic reforms—would help to stabilize the economies of the Arab countries and improve the Pan-Arab cooperation needed to improve the functioning of regional organizations and to achieve general regional development. The strengthening of civil society requires civilian supervision of the security mechanisms, which is

also essential to processes of democratization. Political involvement in the army as well as military involvement in politics result in a second-rate and less unified military and government. Although the military is an important player in any Arab country experiencing instability and uprisings, such as Egypt and Syria, the level of civilian supervision is insufficient and the boundary between the two sectors almost non-existent.[125]

The Main Lessons for Intelligence Agencies and Research

The Arab Human Development Report presented a complex and challenging picture of the Middle East and highlighted the fundamental problems of the Arab world. The reports showed quite clearly that the current wave of social and political protest in the region was not the result of a sudden outburst; rather, it was the result of a deep current of dissatisfaction, a lack of hope, and the increasing alienation between the ruling elites and the public. This is the reason that the protest movement in the Arab countries focused not only on economic problems but also demanded wide-ranging social, economic, and political reforms.

At this stage, there are still many unanswered questions: Why did the protests start when they did? Will the changes affect all the Arab states, or are some of them immune? Will models of liberal democracy put down roots in the "new" Middle East? What long-term effect will the regional upheaval have on the Islamic extremists? Although the Arab Human Development Report does not contain sufficient information to answer these essential questions, it can serve as a basis for academic and intelligence research on the failed state phenomenon. The United States identified the importance of this research as early as 2002 in an official memorandum, which stated that "America is now threatened less by conquering states than we are by failing ones."[126]

One of the most important questions facing researchers relates to the ability of a grassroots protest to generate real change. Is regime change enough to solve the structural problems in the region and to bring about a new stability? The findings so far, after six years of regional upheaval, have indicated that while in many cases the protests in the Arab countries managed to replace the existing regimes, they have not managed to generate significant change in the nature of the regimes, which are similar in character to their predecessors. There was no real structural change and the hoped-for reforms remain unimplemented for the most part. In the short-to-medium

term, the protests and lack of stability are therefore predicted to continue and perhaps even spread to the Arab monarchies, which have so far largely managed to avoid the wave of protests.

The success of these monarchies—including Bahrain which is split between a ruling Sunni minority and a Shiite majority—in maintaining stability is generally attributed to their wealth and the fact that a significant proportion of their oil revenues are passed on to their citizens in the form of massive subsidies of goods and services. Thus, although the populations have tried to influence the behavior of their governments, they have not tried to replace them. The recent sharp drop in oil prices, which makes it difficult for the Gulf emirates to maintain their generous subsidization policy, may, however, signal an end to their stability. It should be noted that the very same factors that set off the protests—i.e., corruption, high rates of unemployment among the young, and alienation from the government—are also present in the Gulf monarchies. Likewise, the protests in the Arab world have a viral nature, which increases the risk of them spreading to the Gulf emirates.

There is an additional factor that deserves attention, namely, the establishment of the Islamic State in large areas of Iraq and Syria, which is liable to constitute a major security problem at least for some of the Gulf states. Although it appears that the Islamic State is, to some extent, currently in a state of withdrawal due to the heavy bombing by the Americans and the Russians, its ideology has more than a few supporters in the Gulf emirates, who believe the Islamic State to be the authentic Islamic caliphate which must undermine the existing political order. The monarchist regimes in the Gulf are seen as infidels who have veered from the path of Islam and who must, therefore, be overthrown. The Islamic State presents a challenge first and foremost to the puritan sect of Sunni Islam, the Wahhabis, who are represented by the Saudi royalty. As was the case with Bin Laden a decade earlier, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of the Islamic State, is calling for the overthrow of the Saudi kingdom, which sees itself as the "custodian of the Islamic holy places."

The Islamic State first publicly threatened Saudi Arabia in November 2014 in an audio recording in which al-Baghdadi called for attacks on Shiites and foreigners in Saudi Arabia and also on the royal house. He also called for the expansion of the Islamic State to the Arabian Peninsula (the Najd region).[127] In the tape, al-Baghdadi refrained from mentioning the name Saudi Arabia as this could have been interpreted as tacit recognition

of the legitimacy of the House of Saud. Around the same time, in *Dabiq*, the periodical published by the Islamic State, he called on the Islamic State "to fly the flag of the caliphate over Mecca and Medina . . . against the will of the infidels and the hypocrites" and instructed the Saudi people to stay in their kingdom and fight for the establishment of the caliphate rather than leaving for distant regions of conflict.[128] The challenge to Saudi Arabia is therefore mainly internal. Close to two-thirds of the country's residents are under the age of thirty, and many of them are unemployed. Until now, they have released their frustration primarily in the virtual domain of social networks where they can express their support for the ideas put forward by the Islamic State.[129] The royal house has, in response, increased its monitoring of the Internet and of preachers as well as the funds allocated to housing, employment, and education for this age group. The challenge for researchers is to assess whether these efforts to maintain the stability of Saudi Arabia are sufficient or whether they are too little too late. A deserter from the Islamic State who was interviewed by the Lebanese newspaper *al-Safir*[130] revealed that many Saudis had joined the Islamic State's army and that there were already Islamic State cells in several main cities in Saudi Arabia. Recent video clips have shown Saudi fighters of the Islamic State ripping up their passports and swearing to liberate Mecca and Medina from the hands of the Saud family.[131]

The Islamic State has identified the soft underbelly of the Arab regimes against which they are fighting: the ethnic diversity of their citizens. It has managed to thrive in areas where the Sunni-Shiite rift is most apparent. A not insignificant percentage of the populations of the oil emirates are Shiites: 15 percent in Saudi Arabia, 30 percent in Kuwait, and 70 percent in Bahrain. In November 2014, during the Ashura ceremonies, members of the Islamic State began carrying out suicide attacks against Shiite targets in the eastern part of Saudi Arabia where most of the Shiite population is concentrated. Nine Shiite worshippers were killed in the first attack. According to the Saudi Ministry of the Interior, the members of the cell responsible for the attack were either killed or arrested.[132] However, in May 2015, a much larger terrorist attack took place against Shiites in Saudi Arabia, for which the Najd Province of the Islamic State organization took responsibility. In the attack, two Shiite mosques were attacked in the space of a week. Twenty-five people were killed in the two attacks and dozens injured.[133]A month later, prior to the first anniversary of the declaration of the caliphate, a terrorist of Saudi

origin blew himself up in a Shiite mosque in the capital of Kuwait, killing twenty-six worshippers.

While the main threat to Saudi Arabia may be internal, it is not, however, the only one. For example, on January 5, 2015, Islamic State fighters attacked a Saudi border guard patrol in the area of the Al Sawif border crossing near the city of Arrar in northern Saudi Arabia, killing the commander of the Border Guard, an officer with the rank of brigadier-general, and an additional solider. Islamic State fighters have also fired rockets into the Saudi territory.[134] The return of young Saudi recruits to Saudi Arabia may also endanger the kingdom's relative stability. The Saudi Ministry of the Interior reported that more than two thousand Saudis have joined the ranks of the Islamic State despite the royal decree imposing heavy punishment on anyone joining the Islamic State army, helping it with finance or any other type of support, or identifying with its ideas. These young Saudi recruits should be an object of academic and intelligence research.

Jordan appears to be the most vulnerable monarchy in the Middle East, partially because of the hundreds of thousands of Iraqi and Syrian refugees it has absorbed and who weigh heavily on its economy and its social structure and, in part, due to the large number of citizens who identify with the Muslim Brotherhood, which opposes the monarchy. Political and social protests already took place in Jordan in 2011 at an early stage of the regional upheaval. They came to an end as a result of partial political and economic reforms and thanks to a large inflow of funds from the Gulf states and from the international community in general. This aid did not, of course, solve Jordan's economic and political problems, and the ongoing violence in Syria and Iraq continues to feed the instability of the Hashemite Kingdom.

It is reasonable to assume that the kings and emirs of the Arab monarchies will not manage to maintain the status quo in the long term. At some point, cosmetic changes will no longer be enough, and they will have to react to the pressures, both internal and external, with real reforms. According to Itai Brun, former head of the IDF military intelligence research division, "there is no doubt that the regional upheaval has been the main formative factor in the region in recent years."[135] Brun identified those characteristics of the upheaval that were the most significant in changing the region: major sectors of the population taking to the streets, which led to the downfall of Arab Sunni leaders; the Islamic wave led by the Muslim Brotherhood, which has flooded the Middle East; and the spread of radical Islam.[136]

The intensity of the regional upheaval and its far-reaching effect on the Arab world represent a real challenge to academic and intelligence research, stressing the need to analyze the economic, environmental, political, and social changes that have occurred and to draw conclusions regarding future developments. Is the Arab world indeed about to part with the model of the Arab nation-state? And if so, which models will replace it and can they restore stability to the region? After about six years of regional upheaval, only one thing can be said for certain: the process being witnessed is not letting up, and it will be a long time before it ends one way or another. The intelligence community and academic researchers can expect many years of complex research challenges requiring methodological, organizational, and operative innovations. Since "intelligence research is the main learning engine with regard to the enemy and the environment,"[137] it must meet the challenge in the best way possible.

Chapter 4

The Arab World Following the Regional Upheaval

Structural Instability from a Historical Perspective

The regional upheaval undermined the logic of the geopolitical order in the Arab World, which rested on states with a strong central government and clear borders. These borders no longer exist in the format set down in the agreements between the superpowers at the height of World War I,[138] which were essentially arbitrary and brought together various rival ethnic and religious groups—sometimes even speakers of different languages—within one state. These new states consequently often had weak national identities and lacked a national ethos and shared history, and the regimes, suffering from such structural weakness, were either toppled or lost any possible remaining legitimacy in the upheaval; except for the Arab monarchies and Egypt. While the latter still suffers from serious economic problems, terrorist threats from Jihadi organizations, and recent violence organized by the Muslim Brotherhood, Egypt has, in general, recovered from the regime of the Muslim Brotherhood following the overthrow of President Mubarak and its failure to run the country or improve the economy and the government. The current Egyptian regime headed by President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi is fighting Islamic terror and, at the same time, investing huge efforts in developing the economy through, among other things, the expansion of its infrastructure, aided financially by Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states.

The post-World War I organization of the Arab world into nation-states was new to a region that had previously been structured according to clans, tribes, and ethnic and religious groups and where there was usually a correlation between identity and territory.[139] At that time, the region was populated mainly by traditional societies with high rates of illiteracy and little modern infrastructure or industrialization.

From a historical perspective, four revolutions in the region can be discerned over the last five hundred years. While each of these led to the shaping of a new structure of power, none were appropriate to the social and cultural structures characteristic of the region. This inconsistency led time and again to social unrest, which, in turn, prompted the creation of sociopolitical movements that opposed the new order, whether implicitly or explicitly.

The first revolution was the conquest by the Ottoman Empire in 1517. The Ottomans divided the region into administrative districts that were ruled by governors. These districts were not organized according to ethnic or religious identity, but rather by an attempt to achieve efficient administrative control over the territory. Thus, for example, the territory that is today Israel was divided into several *sanjaks* (districts): the Nablus sanjak, the Acre sanjak, and the Jerusalem sanjak. Ottoman control of the region, which lasted exactly four hundred years, enjoyed a large degree of legitimacy because the Ottomans were Muslims and the Ottoman Empire was an Islamic caliphate with which the local Muslims could identify.

The second major revolution was the fall of the Ottoman Empire in the final stages of World War I and the division of the spoils between Britain and France according to the 1915 Sykes-Picot Agreement. This agreement included an unprecedented reorganization of the Middle East into regions of influence, creating artificial political units. The new borders ignored ethnic, tribal, and religious-sectarian affiliations and framed the regions into political entities on the basis of the nation-state model, which was widely accepted in Europe at the time. This model was foreign to the inhabitants of the Middle East and the invasive presence of the superpowers aroused feelings of alienation, frustration, and hostility toward the conquerors. Apart from Egypt, Iraq, Turkey and, at a later stage, Israel, which had authentic and coherent ethnic, historical, and national identities, most of the new states were artificial creations, fragile from the moment they came into existence. A greater degree of stability was enjoyed by countries that had succeeded in preserving their monarchic rule, in particular Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Morocco, thanks to the religious lineage of the royal families. (Saudi Arabia and the rest of the Gulf states were able to preserve their stability due to their prosperity.[140]) The reality in other countries, however, was one of internal conflict due to the lack of acceptance of the new power structure and the demands by various population groups for a greater share of power. This

artificial division of territory into nation-states with no real national basis was the foundation on which political Islam (the Muslim Brotherhood) developed. The Muslim Brotherhood began in Egypt in the 1920s and reached its height of power when it managed to overthrow President Mubarak in 2011 and replace him with one of its leaders, Mohamed Morsi, in 2012.

The third revolution in the region was the overthrow of the monarchic regimes in Egypt (1952) and Iraq (1958) in coup d'états by army officers, which reflected the dissatisfaction with the monarchies who were considered aloof, extravagant, corrupt, and foreign to the local tradition. These coups were responsible for the introduction of Pan-Arabism as a conceptual and political alternative to the nation-state and Pan-Islamism. Pan-Arabism reached its peak with the creation of the United Arab Republic (UAR) under the leadership of Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser. However, Pan-Arabism, which was meant to breathe new life into the Arab states and to unite the Arab world, turned out to be a failure. It suffered a serious blow as a result of the failed union between Egypt and Syria and the breakup of the UAR in 1961 and yet another when Nasser died in 1970. The fatal blow to Pan-Arabism was the separate peace agreement made between Egypt and Israel in 1979. The Baath regimes in Iraq and Syria continued to pay lip service to the idea of Arab unity, but rather than managing to achieve unity, the two Baath parties were, in fact, openly hostile to one another. Dictatorial regimes had taken root in both Iraq and Syria as well as in other states such as Libya, which maintained a multiethnic, multi-tribal, and multi-religious framework by force and severe oppression (including the use of chemical weapons in Iraq). In all three examples, the countries' rulers belonged to a minority group and favored their supporters and members of their own ethnic group, religion, or tribe over all others. The power structure created in these countries was distorted and oppressive and lacked any real public legitimacy.

The Arab nations are currently in the midst of a political and socioeconomic crisis whose end is not yet in sight. The twentieth century was the century of Pan-Arabism and the formation of the Arab states. The beginning of the twenty-first century is a new era in the history of the Middle East; Pan-Arabism no longer exists, and many of the Arab states—Libya, Sudan, Yemen, Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon—are fighting to survive as united sovereign entities.[141] The oppression and frustration along with the major changes in the international system—the disintegration of the Soviet Union, which provided strategic

support to many of the regimes in the region; growing globalization; the dominance of mass media and the social networks; and the massive terrorist attack by al-Qaeda in 2001—provided fertile ground for a fourth revolution. This revolution began in late 2010 in a market in Tunis, when a frustrated Tunisian merchant, who had had enough of the government, set himself on fire. And, like the butterfly effect, the merchant's small flame became a massive conflagration that spread through the Arab world.

The wave of protest—at first given the romantic name of the Arab Spring after the People's Spring of 1848—became a regional upheaval that led to the breakup of Arab nation-states and the impressive rise of political Islam in the Middle East led by Salafi-jihadi Islam. The peak of its meteoric rise was reached when ISIS split off from al-Qaeda, took over large amounts of territory in northwestern Iraq and northeastern Syria; erased the recognized international borders between Iraq and Syria; and in June 2014, established the Islamic State, which, in the eyes of the organization's leaders and supporters, is the foundation for the Islamic caliphate.

This fourth revolution, much more than its predecessors, was accompanied by a deepening of the rift between Sunnis and Shiites, exemplified politically by Saudi Arabia, which views itself as the leader of the Sunni world, and Iran, the leader of the Shiite world. As part of this ethnic conflict, each side uses proxies that fight in their stead: Iran uses Hezbollah in Lebanon and Syria; the Houthis in Yemen; and the Shiite militia in Iraq, while Saudi Arabia supports the Sunni organizations fighting against the Iranian-Shiite axis that is supporting Assad's army. When the civil war began in Syria, Saudi Arabia even supported ISIS; at some point, that strategy backfired and ISIS (and later the Islamic State) began operating against Saudi Arabia as well. A similar process occurred in the relations between the Islamic State and Turkey with Sunni Turkey viewing ISIS as an ally in the fight against Assad the Alawite and his Shiite allies until ISIS began its terrorist attacks on Turkish territory.

In this context, one cannot ignore the influence of Qatar, which is disproportionate to the size of its territory and population (11.5 thousand square kilometers and about two million inhabitants of whom only about 300 thousand are citizens).[142] Qatar has for years been operating systematically to undermine the regimes of pragmatic Arab states by means of the *Al Jazeera* television network and active support for the Muslim Brotherhood and Jihadi terrorist organizations. Its vast wealth and control of *Al Jazeera*

allows Qatar major influence in the region and buys it immunity from the subversive forces that it nurtures.[143]

As has been seen, the power structures in the various Middle East nation-states were never stable and none provided fair or agreed-upon representation of the various population groups (in Hudson's model this is called "political culture fragmentation"—see chapter 1). As a result, the regimes never enjoyed broad legitimacy, and the impact of the Arab upheaval put these countries (in particular, Syria, Iraq, Libya, Lebanon, Yemen, and the Palestinian Authority) on the downward path to state failure, according to which the central government loses its authority, its ability to govern, and, most importantly, its monopoly over the use of force. This rapid transition to the status of failed states created the necessary conditions for the rise of non-state actors, such as the radical Sunni movements (i.e., the Islamic State, al-Qaeda, and Hamas) and the radical Shiite movements (i.e., Hezbollah). These movements exploit the political vacuum, seize control over territory and populations, carry out state functions, and present alternative ideologies that assert and boost their legitimacy, thus weakening even further the "hosting" states.

Hezbollah has found it convenient to remain in its semi-state status and is not, at least at this stage, interested in running all of Lebanon. On the other hand, the Islamic State and its allies (the organizations in the region that have sworn allegiance to al-Baghdadi) are seeking to reshape the region as a whole. In other words, they wish to erase borders, dismantle existing state structures, and create the Islamic caliphate. Similarly, Hamas is looking to dismantle the Palestinian Authority, take control of Judea and Samaria and use it as a base for the liberation of all of Palestine, and create a Palestinian state under Islamic law from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean. According to Hamas, such a state will become part of the future Islamic caliphate.

There is, of course, a close link between the spread of the failed states and the rise of entities such as the Islamic State and Hamas. The failed states are not just a local event or a human tragedy limited to one country or one people; rather, they have become a regional and international challenge due to the instability they "export" to their vicinity and the fact that they become an arena for conflict between regional and international players.[144] The Islamic State, which also has a decentralized network structure, is already more than a local phenomenon whose effect is limited to the specific regions of Iraq and Syria. It is present in every region of the Middle East, including the Arab monarchies,[145] and branches are gradually growing throughout Western

Europe and North America as part of its attempt to change the world order and challenge the established system of values of the free non-Muslim world.

The Process of Collapse: From Nation-State to Failed State

Failed or fragile states are not new to the Middle East but have become more problematic since the regional upheaval. Pessimistic observers, such as former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, have warned that "Blank spaces denoting lawlessness may come to dominate the map" of the Middle East and North Africa.[146] According to these observers, states such as Yemen, Somalia, Libya, Iraq, Mali, Syria, and Egypt (the Sinai Peninsula) are clear examples of failed states. The ongoing regional upheaval originally held the promise of the economic and political change so badly needed in the Middle East. However, thus far, its main results have been the undermining of the model of the Arab nation-state (in the case of most Arab countries in the region); the weakening of the ability of the Arab regimes to enforce their authority over their territory; and the growing phenomenon of failed states. The result of all this is the accelerated growth of peripheral areas where there is no functioning central authority. These areas become bases of operation for terrorist and criminal organizations, which often collaborate with one another. One of the clearest manifestations of this phenomenon is ISIS' success in taking control of large areas of Iraq and Syria and creating the Islamic State, seen as the basis for the future Islamic caliphate.

Iraq and Syria are not, however, the only examples. Most of Libya's territory is now controlled by Salafi-jihadi organizations, some of which are affiliated with the Islamic State; likewise, the Sinai Peninsula and, to some extent, the Gaza Strip. From these peripheral bases of operation, the jihadi organizations are managing to challenge the security forces of the states in which they operate by means of mass terrorist attacks and the like. These are documented primarily on social networks, which serve to recruit manpower and money from sympathizers and to deter rivals.

The breakup of the Arab nation-states was due to the lack of any unifying factors, a clear result of the post-World War I arbitrary division of the region into artificial states. This caused an identity vacuum in the Arab world, a vacuum that leaders tried to fill by glorifying various ideologies. Early on, there was a real effort to construct national identities for these artificial states; Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and many other countries invented national identities that were allegedly based on national history. This was

not particularly successful, and two competing ideologies subsequently arose—Pan-Arabism and Pan-Islamism—and challenged the imperialist division imposed on the region and the legitimacy of the state structures and purported to provide a solution to the regional disunity.[147]

But these efforts did not succeed either, and the Arab countries returned to their artificial state identities. In the absence of any internal adhesion to prevent disintegration, they were forced to rely on external forces such as the use of an iron hand by their rulers and the intensive intervention of the superpowers. However, in 2010 these external forces weakened and therefore when the upheaval started, the centrifugal forces (tribal loyalties, ethnic and religion affiliation, etc.) overcame the external forces that were meant to prevent the disintegration of the nation-states.[148] One of the main outcomes of this process was the appearance of non-state actors who achieved a greater degree of legitimacy and whose influence thus increased.[149]

The weakness of nationalism in most of the Arab countries that were created as a result of the Sykes-Picot agreement was highlighted by Assaf Malach in an interesting examination of the criteria for the right to self-determination. Malach identified two relevant criteria: the longevity of the national movement and the existence of a state tradition, which can be seen in political institutions or in the longing for their establishment.[150] Tribal Arab societies had existed for hundreds of years; each was centered on a shared culture, folklore, set of customs, or religion that was unique to them—not a shared national history—and they lacked any experience in managing a state or state institutions. The idea of the nation-state was new and most certainly foreign to them. Moreover, the newly instituted state frameworks did not manage over the years to create a shared national ethos that would be sufficiently meaningful to unite the various groups. Basic allegiance, in most cases, remained local; to the tribe or the ethnic or sectarian group but not to the state. In addition, the main justifications for creating a nation-state were not sufficient to convince the unwilling tribes and ethnic groups to become subjects of the new states. In his article, Malach presented five main justifications for the existence of a nation-state: national, republican, utilitarian-internal, utilitarian-universal, and democratic.[151] He claimed that none of these justifications were relevant to the tribal and political culture that characterized most of the Arab nation-states created by the Sykes-Picot agreement.

However, Malach's two criteria for the right to national self-determination are not necessarily the only conditions. There are cases in which these two criteria are not fulfilled and yet the formation of a nation is possible. But their absence from the political and cultural heritages of most of the new nation-states weakened their state frameworks. And when social and economic problems and the lack of political representation were added to this fundamental weakness, the state frameworks disintegrated entirely and lost the power to maintain the nation-states.

The upheaval in the Arab states did not provide a solution to the problems that precipitated it, such as growing economic adversity, increasing unemployment (particularly among young university graduates), demographic pressures, government corruption, and social and political oppression. These factors still threaten the stability of the Arab world and continue to feed the protests and the violence. In the absence of a solution they are liable to intensify and accelerate the collapse of the existing order. The protest and opposition movements in the various Arab states did not manage to unite populations or encourage collaboration that could stabilize an opposition front. The spontaneous protests did at some stage become an organized mass protest which seemed at first to have the potential to forge relatively broad common ground among its participants, but it quickly lost its effectiveness. The protest movements quickly split up due to political-ideological, cultural, tribal, and ethnic divisions. These divisions along with the unsolved problems became a barrier to processes of political change and a catalyst for increasing chaos and violence and the disintegration of the state system.[152]

The best examples of the process and its results can be found in Libya, Yemen, Iraq, and Syria. Although Egypt managed to preserve the framework of a nation-state, it also paid a heavy price for the protest movements' inability to work together. And although the Palestinian Authority is not a state and its political reality is perhaps not as chaotic as in the aforementioned countries, it also suffers from deep divisions, a lack of unity, and poorly functioning institutions, which are reflected in widespread corruption and the absence of broad public legitimacy. In other words, six years of regional upheaval did not move the region any closer to resolving its basic problems but only led to additional countries becoming failed states, the strengthening of non-state actors—especially violent terrorist organizations—and the undermining of order and regional security.

The official policy of the superpowers is to preserve the state frameworks created by the Sykes-Picot Agreement, and all of them pay lip service to the unity of Iraq, Syria, Libya, etc. Many in the international community are convinced that the formula for preserving these states is to carry out broad reforms, most importantly, the strengthening of the rule of law and the improvement of human security, followed by the strengthening of civil society and the inclusion of all the various groups in the government. Only in this way, according to Western claims, can the regimes expand their base of legitimacy and rescue their countries from state failure. Alongside the efforts that are required within each of the Arab countries, there is also a need for regional and inter-Arab cooperation. The assistance of the international community is also necessary to encourage regional development and coordinate actions against players who are undermining stability and working to destroy the nation-states and convert them into a regional Islamic state based on Sharia law.

The immense challenges facing the Arab states require prolonged and intense efforts. In the meantime, the region is sinking into a swamp of instability which is characterized by failed states, the expansion of peripheral regions, and the strengthening of radical and militant Islamic organizations. These organizations include a growing number of jihadi fighters who are not citizens of the states where they are located but who are attracted to the killing fields in the name of the Islamic revolution and global jihad or simply for the sake of adventure. It is, therefore, feasible that far-reaching structural reforms cannot—certainly not in the short-to- medium term—bring an end to the fragmentation of many of the Arab countries in the region. This fragmentation reflects a lack of national unity, the absence of a shared ethos, and deep differences of opinion about the image of the state and the division of resources and political power.

In view of developments over recent years and the historical background, the validity of the externally imposed territorial nation-state model is extremely questionable. It should be challenged using alternative paradigms to the nation-state model that would facilitate the creation of new, more coherent entities based on ethnic unity. It is possible that other regime models, such as federal structures, will provide more relevant solutions to the cultural, social, and political aspirations of diverse ethnic, religious, and nationalist groups, which may lead to a more stable and secure reality for the populations of the region. But until a more relevant model takes shape, these countries—

as well as their threatened neighbors and the superpowers operating in the region—will have to deal with an increasing number of non-state actors (usually armed) who are operating in the growing peripheral areas of the failed states and who have differing goals. Some aspire to preserve the existing political, social, and economic order, while others seek to change or destroy it. Some use violence, while others wage psychological warfare. There are those who seek to capture a certain territory and force their exclusive rule on its inhabitants, while there are others who wish to create some sort of partnership with local forces in a given territorial unit. Likewise, some of the parties are motivated by political considerations and others by economic incentives. Whatever their goals, it is clear that in a reality where state institutions are weak or non-existent, armed non-state actors can thrive and exert decisive influence over the security of the population. In failed states, the non-state actors have total freedom of action which they can exploit to organize grassroots uprisings or export terror to other countries. And thus, failed states become bases for international terror.[153]

Moreover, the inability of failed states to ensure the reliable provision of basic services to their citizens is one of the factors that may encourage them to join the terrorist organizations and the uprising. The conflicts that occur within failed states do not, however, remain an issue only for their own populations. Armed activists are quickly drawn to these countries in order to join the struggle, a phenomenon particularly evident among Muslims and converts to Islam who join jihadi organizations.[154] Many of the terrorists who are attracted to the Arab failed states are motivated by the power of a universal or supranational ideology. Unlike nationalist ideologies that are linked to a certain territory, universalism seeks to generate a global transformation. The failed states should therefore not be left to their fate, but rather should be the objects of long-term reconstruction efforts.[155]

Non-state actors are accelerating the ongoing disintegration processes of Arab nation-states while, at the same, challenging the regional and international system. Dealing wisely with their influence—which is usually negative—requires a deeper understanding of the phenomenon and an informed comparison between the failed states and the states, primarily the Arab monarchies, that have managed to survive the regional upheaval and preserve their territorial integrity and a reasonable level of functioning.

Monarchies in the Middle East—Islands of Stability?

The survey thus far has indicated that the Arab states experienced a deep crisis even prior to the Arab Spring. The Arab monarchies in the Persian Gulf, characterized by greater resilience and survival ability, have so far withstood the storm, thanks primarily to their wealth, which allows them to buy off opponents at home and gain supporters abroad. The political stability of Saudi Arabia—the largest and most important monarchy in the Arab world, which views itself as the leader of the Sunni world—affects the entire Arab world. Profits from oil and gas have been used by Saudi Arabia and the Gulf monarchies to shape the political landscape in the Middle East by supporting some regimes and undermining the stability of others in accordance with both geopolitical and ethnic considerations. However, if oil prices remain at their current level for an extended period, the Saudi reserves (estimated at $550 billion at the time of writing) will gradually be eroded and with them the ability to provide economic support not only to various beneficiaries, such as Egypt and Jordan, but also to the Saudi citizens themselves.[156]

The royal houses in Jordan and Morocco, neither wealthy countries, enjoy a fairly high level of legitimacy due to historical claims—their lineage allegedly goes back to Mohammed—and to their wisdom in dealing with their citizens. For example, in the face of domestic protests, they made use of mechanisms for letting off steam alongside strict enforcement of public order and internal security. As the revolutions in the other Arab countries have not met people's expectations by improving their standard of living and increasing political participation, this has slowed their momentum and removed, at least for now, the threat in most of the Gulf monarchies.[157] Nonetheless, with the regional upheaval still ongoing, the question of their resilience remains relevant. While difficult or perhaps impossible to predict their stability, the greatest threat to the stability of the Gulf monarchies would appear to be the vulnerability of their allocation programs as a result of the sharp drop in the price of oil. While they have accumulated significant reserves, if the price of oil remains low (due to the increased flow of American and Iranian oil into the market), the monarchies will have trouble maintaining the allocations and massive subsidization of services to the population, which, in turn, will make it difficult to maintain their existing political structures over time.

The ongoing survival of the Arab monarchies may, at first glance, be surprising. In the not too distant past, commentators on the Arab world and

the Middle East declared the monarchies an anachronism, with the republics (which had experienced revolutions and tried to adopt attractive ideologies) representing the future of the Arab world due to their modern, more relevant forms of government.[158] Why then have the "outdated" monarchies survived? The puzzle of their resilience and survivability in an era of turbulent regional change is a point that demands greater examination and that can perhaps shed light on continuing political development in the Arab world in general.

Future Trends in the Wake of the Regional Upheaval

Seven years of regional upheaval have led to significant changes in the Arab world. Most have so far occurred within recognized borders, but this may change in the future. There are at least three possible scenarios: first, the breakup of a state into new state units or its transformation into a loose federation with varying degrees of autonomy; second, the creation of independent states without the recognition of the government from which they are seceding or from the international community; and third, the survival of the existing state frameworks due to external pressure. For example, Yemen and Syria may remain single state entities as a result of the massive military intervention by Saudi Arabia and Russia respectively; however, it is hard to see how internal forces will manage to unite the various factions operating in Syria, Yemen, or Iraq. As a rule, the international community does not condone changes in borders and the dismantling of existing countries for fear that changes in the status quo will undermine regional and international stability. However, the different Arab publics are now seeking not just the freedom to vote and be elected, as well as freedom from corruption and exploitation, but also the freedom to live in a political framework with which they can identify.[159]

Although the failed states in the region differ from one another in their historical, political, and geostrategic characteristics, they nonetheless share several important features: a weak political establishment that lacks legitimacy; deep ethnic and religious divisions alongside a lack of equality in the allocation of political and social rights; a weak monopoly on the use of force within the state or none at all; widespread violence; and vast peripheries controlled by various groups such as jihadi extremists. It not always easy to distinguish between the reasons for state failure and the results.[160] For example, state institutions that lack legitimacy are unable to provide their citizens with personal security. Their deficient functioning contributes to

the creation of a vacuum that is filled by non-state actors, originating either within or without the state. They fill the shoes of the government institutions and take on the responsibility for providing services while at the same time seek to solidify their political and military power in order to undermine and eventually replace the regime.

The Arab upheaval, which began in Tunisia in 2010, quickly spread to other countries in the region, and in most of them it continues unabated.[161] The changes created by the regional upheaval within the system (the Arab world) are likely to also produce changes of the system, but it is still too early to predict how the reshaping of the region will end. Nonetheless, the results after six years of upheaval indicate that the familiar model of the Arab nation-state is on its way out in some of the states and undergoing drastic change in others. In some of the states, the geopolitical framework is being reorganized along ethnic and religious lines. New entities, such as the expanding Kurdish autonomy in Iraq and Syria, are in a process of secession from their mother countries. Nation-states such as Libya are breaking up into independent tribal regions, and it is yet to be seen whether they are heading toward a weak federal model or independence. Nation-states such as Iraq and Syria are losing control over much of their territory, which is falling into the hands of global jihadi organizations. These organizations aim to establish a base for the new Islamic caliphate and do not conceal their intention to expand into Saudi Arabia and the Gulf emirates. Lebanon and the Palestinian Authority, like Yemen and Libya, are in a process of disintegration, and the outcome is unclear. In contrast, Egypt and Tunisia, both characterized by a relatively high degree of unity and relatively strong and well-established state institutions, have a higher chance of surviving the upheavals of the Arab Spring.

Alongside the failed states in the region, there are three examples of stable states (aside from the Arab monarchies discussed above): Israel, Turkey, and Iran. Although Iran has dozens of ethnic minority groups, many of which are hostile to the regime, such as Kurds, Azeris, Balochis, and Arabs, the current regime appears stable enough to suppress any expression of opposition. Likewise, in Turkey despite a large Kurdish minority that is demanding independence, the regime seems strong enough to block their aspirations.

The Middle East is thus unlikely to return to its previous condition. It is hard to imagine a situation in which the regimes in failed states such as Iraq, Syria, and Libya manage to reestablish strong and centralized states

where they can preserve their stability by means of force, as, for example, during the days of Saddam Hussein in Iraq or Muammar Gaddafi in Libya. As mentioned, one of the possible options—though it seems improbable at this point—is the adoption of a model of local autonomies in each of these states. These autonomies would be based mainly on ethnic or religious homogeneity and would maintain some type of federal framework between them for the sake of cooperation and power-sharing. They would necessitate a prolonged and complex process of reconstruction that takes into account the structural failures of the existing political institutions and makes available the huge amount of resources needed to reconstruct the failed societies and states in the region. This reconstruction would require the creation of mechanisms for cooperation and power-sharing.

As suggested above, it is quite possible that today's Middle East requires the adoption of an alternative paradigm that may provide a more appropriate and stable solution for states that are characterized by deep tribal, ethnic, and sectarian divisions, such as Libya, Syria, Iraq, Yemen, and the Palestinian Authority.



The Levels of Failure in the Arab World

Chapter 5

The Circles of State Failure

The Outer Circle

Iraq

Even countries that were not at the center of the Arab Spring have weakened in recent years. Iraq, for example, fell to twelfth place in the Fragile States Index for 2015 alongside Yemen, Pakistan, and Afghanistan,[162] and the central government is trying, so far in vain, to impose its authority over all of the state's territory. In the Kurdish territory in the north, Kurdistan, there is a de facto independent state and an army of more than 200 thousand troops. The Kurds have refrained from declaring independence, since they fear the reaction of both Turkey and the sizable Arab minority within their borders. They are also concerned that such a declaration would exacerbate the dispute with the government in Baghdad over the ownership of the oil fields in northern Iraq.[163] It should be noted that the Kurdish autonomy model in Iraq serves as inspiration for the Kurds in Syria. Although the Kurds in Iraq continue to participate actively in the political process, Kurdistan enjoys independence in almost every domain; it is administered by an independent parliament and its security is maintained by a Kurdish military force that is not part of Iraq's army. In 2014, Kurdistan even began signing its own contracts for oil and gas exploration with foreign energy companies, much to the chagrin of Baghdad.[164] The Kurdish region enjoys the highest level of security and economic growth of any of Iraq's regions and provides assistance—training and weapons—to the Kurds in Syria. The collapse of the Arab nation-states is likely to enable the Kurds to realize their long-held aspiration for an independent Kurdish nation-state.

There is much uncertainty regarding the rest of Iraq. Since the withdrawal of the American forces, the violent interethnic fighting has intensified. The enduring frustration of the Sunnis who were removed from power is manifested in mass terrorist attacks that shock the cities of Iraq again and again. The

Sunnis complain of discrimination and tyranny and are fighting the central government in Baghdad. Nouri al-Maliki, the former prime minister of Iraq, was viewed by many Sunnis as a foreign agent who excluded them from the decision-making process.[165] This frustration has driven many Iraqi Sunnis into the arms of ISIS. Thanks to this influx of personnel, which also comprises former members of Saddam Hussein's army, ISIS managed to take control of northwestern Iraq. The capture of Mosul in June 2014 was its first major victory and was followed by its declaration of the establishment of the Islamic State as the basis for the new Islamic caliphate led by al-Baghdadi. All of the Arab regimes and their religious leaders immediately felt threatened. Through their barbaric acts—public beheadings, drownings, burnings, and blowing up of "infidels"—ISIS achieved an unprecedented status. Many in the Sunni world began to view it as the most daring, most orthodox, and most important Salafi entity. According to Middle East expert Amatzia Baram, this led to an influx of thousands of volunteers who viewed ISIS as a way of generating dramatic change in their lives, actively expressing their identity, achieving international fame, and participating in an adventure that included murder and rape for a higher cause: the defense of Islam and the Sunnah.[166]

The success of the ISIS fighters in capturing Mosul and the fear that they would exploit this achievement in order to capture Kurdistan and large cities in central Iraq caused the desertion of several of Prime Minister al-Maliki's most important supporters, most prominently the Shiite preacher Ali al-Sistani. Iran and the United States asserted that al-Maliki's insistence on serving a third term and the continuing alienation of the Sunni factions would prove devastating for Iraq. In his stead, Shiite political leader Haider al-Abadi, a compromise candidate who was acceptable to both the Saudis and the Turks, was designated.[167] Al-Abadi has the support of the Iraqi National Alliance, a coalition of Shiite parties which includes al-Maliki's State of Law Coalition. Some of al-Maliki's critics claimed that he contributed to the creation of the current regime by adopting a policy that discriminated against minorities including the Sunnis and Kurds.[168]

The Iranian influence in Iraq

Since the US withdrawal from Iraq, Iran has become the most influential external force in the country, with the Shiite militias that it recruited and trained accumulating power and playing a major role in the fighting against the Islamic State. Former Iranian military personnel are also participating

in the fighting, which is why Iran is currently viewed as a stabilizing force by the West; no longer part of the problem but rather part of the solution. Nonetheless, the Shiite militias are in many ways a mirror image of ISIS, doing to the Sunnis exactly what ISIS is doing to the Shiites. There have been reports of massacres of the Sunni population—essentially ethnic cleansing—in territory captured from ISIS by the Shiite militias.[169]

Iran has multiple interests in Iraq. It is, first and foremost, concerned with preventing a situation in which Iraq can attack Iran, as occurred in 1980, and nurturing relations with the Shiite population, which is concentrated in the strategic Shatt al-Arab region. This region contains about half of Iraq's oil reserves. The Iranians also seek control of Iraq in order to maintain a close relationship with the Assad regime and with Hezbollah (The Iran-Iraq-Syria-Lebanon continuum is known as the Shiite Crescent and is the worst fear not only of Israel but also of the Sunni states).

Turkey and Saudi Arabia—the two most important Sunni powers—are making every effort to restrict Iran's influence in Iraq and are thus providing tacit support to the strongest Sunni force operating in Iraq against Iran and the Shiites: the Islamic State. There is an obvious contradiction here: the Islamic State is carrying out terrorist attacks against Turkey and Saudi Arabia and has not concealed its intention of taking over the holy Muslim cities of Mecca and Medina; nonetheless, it receives assistance from Turkey and Saudi Arabia. These Sunni powers clearly consider the Iranian threat to be more serious than the threat posed by ISIS.

While there is a broad consensus in the West that the Islamic State must be defeated, it is unclear whether absolute Iranian dominance in Iraq will, in fact, lead to the desired stability. A victory by the Shiite militias is liable to intensify the ethnic tension and make it more difficult to achieve a political consensus in this divided country. And it is not just the Sunnis, both inside and outside Iraq, who oppose Shiite domination under the auspices of Iran. The United States has stressed time and again its preference for a new regime in Iraq, which will be a partnership between all of the different ethnic groups and factions. A decisive American contribution to the defeat of the Islamic State will increase its leverage regarding the character of a future Iraq. But this is a far-off scenario. In the meantime, despite the severe setbacks it has recently experienced, the Islamic State is still far from defeated, and the possibility of the Shiites being overthrown cannot be ruled out.

The accelerated path to state failure

Iraq is, in practice, already divided into three semi-states—Kurdish, Sunni (the Islamic State), and Shiite—and the factors dividing them are stronger than those uniting them. As a result of the civil war and the de facto division of the state, some Sunni and Shiite politicians in Iraq have called for the state to be split along ethnic lines, as in the Kurdish model. Despite several decades of joint existence within a single state, the various ethnic groups in Iraq have not, as previously mentioned, managed to create a resilient Iraqi nationalism that is capable of withstanding the hostile religious and ethnic challenge. The continuing interethnic violence may eventually bring about the division of Iraq. It is doubtful, however, that a federal structure, no matter how loose, could enable three such hostile entities to live under one roof, and it is more reasonable to assume that Iraq will split into three separate states: a Kurdish state in northern Iraq, a Sunni state in northwestern Iraq, and a Shiite state under the hegemony of Iran in southern Iraq.

After Saddam Hussein's regime was toppled in 2003, the autonomous Iraqi region of Kurdistan became an island of tranquility. In contrast to the rest of Iraq, it enjoyed economic prosperity and security and even maintained a measure of political pluralism. However, it has recently been suffering from an economic crisis brought on by the drop in the price of oil; the unremitting fighting against the Islamic State; the flow of refugees from less stable parts of Iraq and Syria as well as a political crisis due to the inability of the different parties to agree on a presidential candidate. The economic decline has been so dramatic that large areas of Kurdistan have reported a lack of basic services such as a reliable supply of water, electricity, and gas. As a result, many Kurds are trying to illegally immigrate to Europe—sometimes taking dangerous sea routes—in the hope of finding a better life far away from Kurdistan.[170]

The Americans had a dream of transforming Iraq into the first Arab democracy in the Middle East. Their idea was to establish a multi-party state with a modern constitution that would resolve the deep divisions and bitter historical rivalries. This did not pan out, but not because the Americans did not try hard enough. On the contrary, close to 4,500 American soldiers were killed in Iraq, and the adventure in Iraq cost the American taxpayer more than a trillion dollars. Instead of establishing a united and democratic Iraq on the ruins of Saddam Hussein's dictatorship, the Americans simply created another failed state in the Middle East, composed of a mosaic of

tribal, ethnic, and sectarian groups who are unable to live together, at least at this stage. The instability in Iraq is so serious that it also endangers the security and stability of its neighbors, first and foremost its Arab neighbors.[171]

Table 3: Current status of Iraq. Ranking of state failure based on the main criteria of the Fund for Peace (FFP) Index

Criterion	Status of the country
Fragility Index[172]	104.5
Intensity of conflict[173]	High Number of casualties in 2014: 26,500
Security Apparatus • A group or organization of fighters who are loyal to the leadership and usually to one leader. • Persecution of individuals who are not supporters of the regime or do not belong to the same group. • A secret service that imposes terror and fear on the population. • The presence of guerilla forces which, in some cases, oppose the central government and challenge the regime's monopoly on the use of force.	**FFP Index 10.0** • A deeply divided state that is unable to maintain a monopoly on the use of force. Armed militias operate in its sovereign territory and maintain autonomy (the Islamic State and Kurdistan) and are not subject to the authority of the central government. In the case of the Islamic State and Sunni militias, they are also fighting against the regime and its army. • Extreme persecution by the Shiite security mechanisms of the Sunni population and the exclusion of Sunni tribes in the north from positions of influence and from the country's resources. • Iraq is crowded with terrorist organizations, guerilla forces, and armed militias that are opposed to the regime, challenge the monopoly on the use of force, and attack civilians and symbols of the regime.

Criterion	Status of the country
State legitimacy • Political corruption. • Control of the elites. The ruling elite is immune to criticism in the press and to criminal investigation. • Loss of faith among the public in the government's leadership and institutions. • Inability of the state to manage its affairs and to collect taxes. • Increase in the number of armed groups and crime with mafias and organizations connected to the ruling elite.	**FFP Index 9.2** • High level of political corruption dominated by Shiites. • Shiite domination that excludes the Sunni minority and discriminates against. • Entire populations in Iraq are not subject to the authority of the regime and do not show it any loyalty. This is particularly the case among the Sunni tribes that have joined ISIS and the autonomous Kurdish state in northern Iraq. • State functioning is limited to Baghdad and its environs and to southern Iraq. • Apart from limited areas in which the Iraqi regime is able to impose its sovereignty, most of northern Iraq is not subject to the state's authority or sovereignty; part is controlled by the Islamic State part by the Kurds, and the rest has become a no-man's-land.
External intervention • Involvement of the UN or military forces from other countries in internal conflicts and in national affairs. • External intervention in the state's economy. Humanitarian intervention: external organizations provide for the basic needs of the population. • Economic support by means of financial aid or loans. Assistance from the outside to opponents of the government. • Citizens become dependent on external support. • Attacks by bordering countries. • External forces are training the security forces. • Peacekeeping forces are present in the country.	**FFP Index 9.4** • There is no intervention by the UN, but there is extensive intervention by Iran as well as other countries in and out of the region, which are operating against the Islamic State. • The Americans are helping to produce oil in locations that are still under the control of the Iraqi government. Humanitarian intervention to aid Iraqi refugees takes place outside the borders of Iraq—in refugee camps in neighboring countries. • Iran is assisting the Shiite militias, but there is no major economic assistance given to Iraq. • Turkey is attacking the Islamic State and the Kurds in the northern part of the country. • American advisors are assisting in training and rebuilding the Iraqi army. There are also Iranian forces helping the Shiite militias. • There are no peacekeeping forces in Iraq.

Criterion	Status of the country
Refugees and the displaced • Many residents become refugees or displaced due to civil war, takeover of territory by enemy and extremist forces, shortage of food, water, and appropriate sanitary conditions, natural disasters, etc. Refugees create a crisis both in their country of origin and in their destination.	**FFP index 8.9** • Hundreds of thousands of Iraqi refugees already fled to Jordan and other Arab countries in the previous decade. Millions in the north of Iraq have become displaced since the Islamic State took control of vast territories and persecuted the civilian population, particularly religious minorities.
Economic decline • Economic decline of the society as a whole has resulted in the spread of poverty and ensuing rise in death rate, inflation, shortage of goods and an increase in their prices, loss of property and foreign investments, the spread of crime—including drug and human trafficking—and an increase in corruption and exploitation.	**FFP value 6.9** • Iraq's economy is in a deep crisis due to deterioration of the security situation and the breakup of the state. Iraq has also been hurt by the sharp drop in oil prices and the loss of numerous oil wells in the northwestern part of the country, which are now in the hands of the Kurds.

Yemen

Background and state failure processes

Yemen is a prominent example of a vulnerable and weak state whose failure was accelerated by the regional upheaval.[174] According to the Fragile States Index for 2015, Yemen was ranked in seventh place, just ahead of Syria and Afghanistan who were jointly in eighth place.[175] The poorest and most heavily populated Arab state in the Arabian Peninsula, Yemen's main institutions are not able to govern all the country's territory nor to maintain a monopoly on the use of force. The regime cannot provide its citizens with either security or basic services. Even at the best of times, the provision of essential services is a major challenge in a poor country like Yemen which has scant natural resources and is seriously underdeveloped. The central government—at one point forced into exile in Saudi Arabia—invests all its energy in ensuring its own survival, thus validating Reilly's conclusions about the survival efforts made by illegitimate autocratic rulers in failed states.[176]

A process of national dialogue took place in Yemen from 2013 to 2014 in an effort to set up a federative structure; however, this met with failure since the sectors that make up Yemeni society do not share a common vision for the design of the state. Each group wants to improve its position

in relation to the others, and none are interested in cooperation. To this end, they recruited outside players, who injected their own interests into the local conflicts and thus exacerbated the situation. External intervention, it should be recalled, is one of the main characteristics of failed states.[177] The foreign players were quick to accept an invitation to intervene in Yemen in view of its strategic importance: it is not only located near the major oil producers in the Arab Peninsula but also lies on Bab el Mandeb, one of the most important straits in the world.

At the time of writing, the elected government was to be found in Aden and not in the capital of Sana'a. From its place of exile, it is forced to deal with three major opposition forces operating in Yemen: Zaidi Shiite forces that began a rebellion in the northern provinces and essentially took over the government; a separatist movement in South Yemen; and al-Qaeda and the Islamic State, which have set up bases in Yemen that are used for training and organizing terrorist attacks against the West and other targets. The Sunni-Shiite fault, which divides the Arab world and overshadows all others, also divides Yemen. The Shiites in Yemen—the Zaidis—do not, in fact, belong to the Twelvers, the main Shiite denomination, but have, nonetheless, benefited from significant Iranian aid.

Since 1994, the government of Yemen has chosen not to enforce its sovereignty over all the country's territory and instead has ruled by forging alliances with tribal leaders. The opponents of the government have adopted the same strategy. In general, Yemeni politics is characterized by the forging of alliances and counter-alliances of this type. Al-Qaeda was also added to the mix and quickly integrated within the politics of alliances. Ultimately, this political system has led to a strengthening of the rebel movements and a weakening of the state framework; a sure recipe for a failed state.[178]

In the sixth year of the regional upheaval, Yemen is on the edge of an abyss. Struggles between the elites, ethnic rebellions, tribal conflicts, and fundamentalist Islamic terror are only part of the country's chaotic reality. In September 2014, the Houthis—a militarist Zaidi organization—captured the capital of Sana'a and by February 2015 had managed to take control of most of the country's territory and to topple the Sunni regime. A short time later, in March 2015, Saudi Arabia began to intervene in the fighting in an attempt to remove the Houthis and restore the Sunnis to power. As things look right now, Yemen is on the brink of disintegration.

Characteristics of Yemen's state failure

The Houthi rebellion is the most pressing challenge facing the Sunni regime in Yemen. Perhaps, the most trained ground forces standing in the way of the Houthis are, paradoxically, the Salafi-jihadi organizations such as al-Qaeda, which, paradoxically, profit from the destructive air strikes by Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states and are also using special forces within the city of Aden in South Yemen.

The Houthis, also known as Ansar Allah, are a Zaidi Shiite group from the Saada province in northwestern Yemen. They went from being an ideological religious movement to a classic guerrilla movement and began working toward the establishment of an autonomous Shiite regime in the northern provinces. By exploiting the political chaos and the weakness of the army, they have been very successful on the battlefield, capturing Salafi and tribal strongholds, and gradually enlarging the territory under their control. The Houthis are opposed to the federation agreement that was signed under the auspices of the UN in February 2014, according to which Yemen is to become a federal republic composed of six provinces. Each of the provinces is to have a local parliament with broad autonomous powers. The Houthis claim that their home region—Saada—was included in a province that has no significant natural resources or access to the sea, and they see this as a deliberate attempt by the central government to limit their potential for economic development and weaken them. In response to the plan, they initiated, with the support of Iran, a large-scale attack and began to advance towards Sana'a. Their forces cleared out northern Yemen, sending both the army and the tribal militias southward.

In the resulting chaos, the Salafi-jihadi organizations strengthened their hold on Yemen. Despite the continuing pressure of the security forces and the numerous assassinations carried out by American drones, the power and influence of al-Qaeda in South Yemen pose a serious challenge to the ability to stabilize the southern provinces and to the US strategy of fighting terror without boots on the ground. American policy is now caught up in an almost insoluble contradiction: on the one hand, the Americans are using air power to fight the Salafi-jihadi forces, including al-Qaeda and ISIS, but, on the other hand, they are currently the most effective force confronting the Houthis whose campaign of conquest they oppose.

The Saudis are pinning their hopes on the new leader of Yemen, Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi, but, as yet, he has not met expectations. His forces have not

even managed to control the present location of the exiled government in Aden or prevent murders by the jihadists and terrorist attacks on the city's infrastructure. The appointed governor of the region, Jaafar Mohammed Saad, was murdered by ISIS loyalists in December 2015, while the security chief in Aden survived an assassination attempt by means of a car bomb near his home.

In an attempt to gain support, President Hadi tried appointing his opponents to senior positions; the murdered governor of Aden, Saad, previously a popular army commander, was, in fact, one of his appointments. However, this attempt has not proved successful, and Hadi still has little support. His main supporters are the Muslim Brotherhood, who are the enemies of the Houthis, the Salafis, and the population of South Yemen. He is also supported by local civilian leaders who believe in his ability to restore the rule of law in Yemen and implement the decisions coming out of the National Dialogue Conference regarding national reconciliation. However, even Hadi's supporters are divided and not all support him wholeheartedly. Thus, for example, South Yemen support Hadi, due to a lack of any alternative, but oppose the federation plan he initiated.

The momentum of the Houthis and the weakening of the central government are positive developments for the supporters of southern independence. Although the southern representatives have agreed to the idea of a federation, they demanded that Yemen be divided into only two parts: North Yemen and South Yemen. North Yemen did not agree to this demand. According to the plan that was finally adopted, the South was divided into two provinces, a division that southern representatives claim was meant to weaken them and artificially separate the population from the economic centers located in the western province and the oil fields and quarries in the eastern province. Protests by southern separatists, who are demanding the reestablishment of the People's Republic of South Yemen which was disbanded in 1990, are becoming more frequent, and South Yemen, according to current forecasts, might declare independence in the near future.

Although the Houthis and the forces of the former president of Yemen, Ali Abdullah Salah, are managing to maintain their control of the populated western mountainous region of Yemen, their harsh rule is not attracting supporters. Without the export of oil (as a result of the heavy fighting), the Houthi government has had to impose new taxes and has forced the population to contribute to the war effort. The Yemeni economy went into

a downward spiral after a decline of more than 50 percent in its foreign exchange reserves, and many businesses have left the country. Despite the initial optimism when the Houthis captured the capital of Sana'a in September 2014 that a more efficient government would be created, the Houthis were quick to disappoint, and the public has since given up hope in their ability to stabilize the country.

The danger facing every failed state—the massive intervention of foreign elements in its domestic affairs—has been realized in Yemen. This is not surprising in light of its strategic location near the Gulf oil producers and on the main shipping routes.[179] Already at the beginning of this decade, the Saudis joined the long-running conflict between the Yemeni government and the Houthis, whom they view as a significant threat due to their connections with Iran. The Houthis' territorial expansion can, in fact, be credited, first and foremost, to Iran for providing them with weapons and financing in recent years. And, indeed, the Houthis are fulfilling all of Iran's expectations. In May 2015, during the Saudi-led Decisive Storm Operation in Yemen, the Houthi forces attacked the Saudi city of Najran (with more than a quarter of a million residents) which is located near the border with Yemen. The attack started with a rocket and mortar barrage and was followed with an attack by infantry forces who opened fire indiscriminately on civilians. A month later, the Houthis shot the first of many rockets and missiles aimed at southern Saudi Arabia. The Iranian strategy is clear: Saudi Arabia, which is distracted by the defense of Sunni interests in Iraq and Syria in the north, now faces an equally serious problem in the south.

The Yemeni government does not have the means to stabilize the country. In the midst of the chaos, the government initiated a reorganization plan of the security forces in order to eliminate the phenomenon of units identifying with various groups and serving their interests rather than those of the central government. As part of this reorganization, elite units of the Yemeni army were dismantled and rebuilt, leaving the government with no effective forces with which to enforce its authority. In such circumstances, stability cannot be achieved, and there is no possibility of implementing the federation plan that was viewed by the international community as Yemen's only chance for stability.

The weakness of the Yemeni army has also allowed al-Qaeda to gain strength in broad expanses of the southeast. The al-Qaeda branch in Yemen is considered the most dangerous in the Arab world due to its ongoing efforts

to carry out mass terrorist attacks against Western airlines. It is for this reason that the Americans are investing major efforts in an aerial campaign against al-Qaeda leaders in Yemen. The Islamic State is also exploiting the chaos in order to increase its influence in Yemen. It began its activity in Yemen in March 2015 with a mass terrorist attack against two Shiite mosques in Sana'a (137 dead and 357 wounded).[180] Ironically, it was the US assassination campaign against al-Qaeda leaders in Yemen that facilitated the Islamic State's penetration into the country. These assassinations, particularly of Nasir al-Wuhayshi, the leader of al-Qaeda, in Yemen in July 2015 weakened the organization and led many of its members to desert to ISIS, the rival organization. Despite their fierce competition for supporters and territory, al-Qaeda and ISIS are, at this point, both concentrating their efforts on defeating the Houthis. It is not, however, inconceivable that in the future the organizations will turn to fighting each other, as is happening in Syria. And there is also the possibility that both organizations will try to carry out terror attacks against targets in Saudi Arabia.

To end the fighting in Yemen will require at least an interim agreement that includes security arrangements acceptable to all sides. Such an arrangement is currently being discussed in negotiations taking place in Kuwait, but reaching an agreement will need more time. Meanwhile, the situation in the field is urgent, and therefore efforts are currently being made to begin the flow of humanitarian aid to the areas of fighting and to besieged towns. If no agreement can be reached, the outlook for Yemen is bleak. The war has destroyed infrastructure, enabled radical Islamic forces (al-Qaeda and ISIS) to spread throughout the country, and fragmented the country's territory and population. If the fighting continues, it will likely lead to a massive exodus of Yemenis, including operatives of the Islamic organizations, to the Gulf countries.

Characteristics of the Iranian involvement in Yemen and responses to it

For many years, Iran has been investing efforts in creating a stronghold in Yemen through its links with the Zaidi Shiites and their armed contingent, the Houthis. Having established two centers of influences in the Mediterranean region (in Lebanon by means of Hezbollah and in the Gaza Strip by means of Hamas), it was important for Iran to create a similar center of influence in the Red Sea region. This would enable them to put pressure on Saudi

Arabia not only from the northeast (i.e., Iraq) but also from the southwest (i.e., Yemen).

Iran's pattern of involvement in Yemen is similar to its involvement in Iraq, where assistance (although in lesser extent) in the form of money, weapons, and military training given to local armed militias transformed the latter into major players who were dependent on Iran (patron-client pattern). The military operation being led by Saudi Arabia with the participation of the United Arab Emirates and other Arab countries against the Houthis is, therefore, not to Iran's liking, since it is largely directed against Iranian involvement in Yemen and is liable to lead to additional collective actions, not just military, against the other Iranian centers of influence in the Arab world. Early in the regional upheaval, Saudi Arabia's foreign policy was surprisingly proactive after many years of relative passivity. This was reflected in, among other things, the intervention of Saudi forces in Bahrain in 2011 in order to put an end to the unrest among the Shiite population against the Sunni royal house. Furthermore, the Saudi king, Salman bin Abdulaziz, has, despite his advanced years, been even more energetic than his predecessor and is working to halt the expansion of Iran's influence in the Arab world. He already has achieved some important successes; for example, convincing two rival Sunni powers—Egypt and Turkey—to support his moves in Yemen.

From a political and economic perspective, Yemen is not a particularly important Arab country. Its importance lies in its location: it is a neighbor of Saudi Arabia, with a common border of 1800 kilometers, and it lies on the Bal el Mandeb Strait, the southern approach to the Suez Canal and to Israel. Yemen is also one of several arenas in which Iran and its satellites are fighting for control against the Sunni bloc. The Saudis are afraid that if Iran achieves hegemony in Yemen, they will be surrounded on both sides by Iran, which will use its position to stir up the Zaidi Shiites in Saudi Arabia itself. Yemen is also one of the most important locations for the West's fight against radical Sunni terror due to the establishment of bases by al-Qaeda and the Islamic State.

Table 4: Current status of Yemen. Ranking of state failure based on the main criteria of the Fund for Peace (FFP) Index

Criterion	Status of the country
Fragility Index[181]	108.1
Intensity of conflict [182]	High Number of casualties in 2014: 5000
Security Apparatus • A group or organization of fighters who are loyal to the leadership and usually to one leader. • Persecution of individuals who are not supporters of the regime or do not belong to the same group. • A secret service that imposes terror and fear in the population. • The presence of guerilla forces which, in some cases, oppose the central government and challenge the regime's monopoly on the use of force.	**FFP Index 10.0** • Yemen hardly exists at this point. The government and security mechanisms have no presence and function only in limited areas. • The Houthi militia, supported by Iran, has taken control of the capital, Sana'a. • There is no monopoly on the use of force; the state is embroiled in a violent civil war.
State legitimacy • Political corruption. • Control of the elites. The ruling elite is immune to criticism in the press and to criminal investigation. • Loss of faith among the public in the government's leadership and institutions. • Inability of the state to manage its affairs and to collect taxes. • Increase in the number of armed groups and in crime with mafias and organizations connected to the ruling elite.	**FFP Index 9.3** • There is no political corruption, since there is no formal political system. The state has disintegrated as has the central government. • The issue of loyalty is not relevant since the central government has disintegrated and has no significant presence. • The reality in the country is one of a total lack of functioning. • There is no up-to-date data on crime.

Criterion	Status of the country
External intervention • Involvement of the UN or military forces from other countries in internal conflicts and in national affairs. • External intervention in the state's economy. Humanitarian intervention: external organizations provide for the basic needs of the population. • Economic support by means of financial aid or loans. Assistance from the outside to opponents of the government. • Citizens become dependent on external support. • Attacks by bordering countries. • External forces are training the security forces. • Peacekeeping forces are present in the country.	**FFP Index 9.5** • There is no UN intervention, but there is major intervention by Iran, which supports the Houthi militia. Other Arab armies, led by Saudi Arabia, are active against the Houthi rebels. • There is no external intervention in the economy, since there is no functioning national economy. • There is no external economic support. There is support by Iran for the Houthi militia; the government mechanisms are limited to those created by the Houthis. • The urban population is in severe distress. Most of the population is concentrated in villages and desert areas and maintains small autarkic economies. • Yemen is being attacked by the Saudi and other Arab armies, who are operating against the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels. There is a limited presence of American special forces who are operating against the al-Qaeda affiliate in Yemen. • Foreign forces are training the security forces in Yemen. • There are no peacekeeping forces.
Refugees and the displaced • Many have become refugees or displaced due to civil war, takeover of territory by enemy and extremist forces, shortage of food, water and appropriate sanitary conditions, natural disasters, etc. Refugees create a crisis both in their country of origin and in their destination.	**FFP Index 9.1** • There are displaced individuals in Yemen who have fled the areas of fighting.

Criterion	Status of the country
Economic decline • Economic decline of the society as a whole has resulted in the spread of poverty and ensuing rise in mortality rate, inflation, shortage of goods and an increase in their prices, loss of property and foreign investments, the spread of crime—including drug and human trafficking—and an increase in corruption and exploitation.	**FFP Index 9.3** • Even before the regional upheavals, Yemen was labeled the poorest Arab Country. Its situation has deteriorated further as a result of the civil war.

Libya

At the time of writing, Libya was in twenty-fifth place in the Fragile States Index.[183] With the fall of Gaddafi, the image of a Libyan people, which had been nurtured by Gaddafi for decades, was shown to be an illusion. It became clear that Libyan society is divided into armed and violent interest groups with no common denominator. Created by the Italians after they had captured two Ottoman provinces prior to World War I, Libya is facing major hurdles in restoring order after Gaddafi's demise.

The National Transitional Council (NTC) initiated efforts to stabilize the country in October 2011, after declaring an end to the eight-month war to overthrow Gaddafi. The NTC subsequently moved from Benghazi, where the uprising had started, to the capital of Tripoli. Despite NTC attempts to introduce political and security reforms, the country remained fragile, and the situation showed no improvement even after the NTC completed its work in August 2012 and was replaced by a new government. The large number of armed Islamic militias operating in the country provides a motive for external, primarily regional, forces to increase their involvement in Libya. Air strikes, allegedly carried out by Egypt and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), have been reported on the facilities and sites of these militias, which are supported by Qatar and Turkey.[184] As recently as June 2016, it was revealed that the Libyan government forces and supporting militia are receiving logistic and intelligence support from American and British forces as part of their battle against ISIS forces in Libya.

Libya, like Syria and Iraq, suffers from a lack of national adhesion to unite its many different tribes. Libya is currently divided among numerous autonomous and armed tribal groups, and its political culture is closer to a tribal system than a modern state. The Libyan army is loyal to the government

but is one of the weakest power centers in the country and is therefore not able to disarm the various militias and thus achieve an exclusive government monopoly on the use of force.[185] One of the reasons why the militias are so powerful is that after the overthrow of Gaddafi they were able to take control of some of the oil instillations and army's weapons arsenals and are thus well armed with advanced weaponry. These weapons are known to have also found their way to Sinai and the Gaza Strip. The armed militias in Libya—such as the Zintan Military Council, the Misrata Brigades, the February 17 Martyrs Brigade, and extreme Islamic groups, the most prominent being affiliated with the Islamic State and al-Qaeda—also operate against Western targets and interests; the most famous example being the murder of Chris Stevens, the US ambassador, in the 2012 Benghazi attack.

The uprising in Libya was directed primarily against the Gaddafi regime but also reflected the aspiration of the opposition forces in Benghazi to be rid of domination by the central government in Tripoli. From a historical perspective, there were always three "peoples" in Libya: the Tripolitans in the west, the Cyrenaican people—whose capital is Benghazi—in the east (where most of the large oil fields are located), and the Fezzan people in the south. The Cyrenaican people felt discrimination during Gaddafi's regime, as most of the country's oil was produced in their territory but the revenues were channeled mainly to Tripolitania and the capital of Tripoli.

95 percent of Libya's income comes from oil. Oil revenues provided Gaddafi with his power and status in the Middle East and elsewhere, and those same revenues are now feeding the bloody conflict between the various factions. Libya's oil revenues are currently only around a quarter of what they were during Gaddafi's rule due to the sharp drop in oil prices and disruptions in the production facilities as a result of the revolution. The oil fields are currently controlled by various militias, which deters investment by some of the international oil companies. In the absence of proper maintenance of the existing fields and investment in the development of new fields, Libya's revenues are expected to decline even further. Since oil prices are expected to remain low in coming years due to the surplus in global supply and given that the militias' control is expected to continue, the Libyan economy is unlikely to recover in the near future.[186]

Cyrenaica has already started to secede from Libya. In June 2013, the region declared independence and set up an independent working parliament. In October 2013, it established an independent army that numbers, at least on

paper, twenty-thousand fighters, yet is unable to recapture the oil fields or the ports, which have been taken over by the various militias. In September 2013, the southern region of Fezzan also declared independence. The government in Tripoli does not recognize the independence of either Cyrenaica or Fezzan but cannot impose its sovereignty on them.

The breakup of Libya is also having an effect on its neighbors, as is usually the case with failed states. Europe, in particular, is paying a heavy price for the chaos in Libya. While Gaddafi prevented African refugees from passing through Libya on their way to Europe, the various militias in Libya not only grant them passage but even encourage them. Among other things, they collect large sums from anyone trying to get to Europe. Ironically, it was NATO's bombings that helped bring down Gaddafi, the only one who was able to maintain the stability of Libya and who signed agreements with Europe to prevent the passage of refuges through his country. According to reports from the International Organization for Migration, by September 2015 more than one hundred thousand refugees had arrived in Europe (primarily Italy) by way of Libya.[187]

Another neighboring country that is suffering from the chaos in Libya is Mali. Following the fall of Gaddafi in 2011, militias from the Tuareg tribes, who fought for Gaddafi, ended up in Mali and reinforced the separatist movement operating in northern Mali. With the help of these reinforcements, the rebels (the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad) managed to capture northern Mali. Islamists who are loyal to al-Qaeda exploited the situation and took control of the territory captured by the rebels (who are secular and not Islamists), instituted Sharia law, and initiated a campaign to capture Bamako, the capital of Mali. Only French intervention, which began in January 2013 and ended in July 2014, removed the Islamists and restored government sovereignty over northern Mali.

The disorder in Libya has also been exploited by the Islamic State, which has established a stronghold in the port city of Misrata. The city is essentially being run as a city-state and has gradually become the regional capital of the ISIS in North Africa. The Islamic State has also taken complete, or almost complete control, of Derna, Sirat, and parts of Benghazi.[188] During the innumerable battles for control between the various militias, tens of thousands of people have been forced to leave their homes.[189]

As of now, there are two governments in Libya, each supported by local militias. There are, in addition, dozens of independent local militias, most

tribal, that operate on the basis of their own interests alone. Within this chaos, the Islamic State is becoming increasingly powerful and expanding its areas of control. A senior UN official located in Libya recently concluded that Libya is almost as chaotic as Somalia.[190] It is doubtful whether any Western governments or international aid organizations would be willing to send aid and reconstruction personnel to such a dangerous place.

Libya will continue to export chaos to its neighbors unless one or more of them decide to put a stop to it. It is feasible that Egypt will decide to stop the never-ending flow of terrorists and advanced weaponry from Libya to Sinai and to the Gaza Strip. Likewise, NATO may refuse to accept a situation in which the Islamic State is becoming increasing powerful on its southern flank. Nonetheless, without determined external military intervention, Libya can be expected to remain a fragmented and chaotic state that casts a long shadow over its neighbors.[191]

Table 5: Current Status of Libya. Ranking of state failure based on the main criteria of the Fund for Peace (FFP) Index.

Criterion	Status of the country
Fragility Index[192]	108.1
Intensity of conflict[193]	Increasing-medium during 2013; high in 2014 Number of casualties in 2014: 3250
Security Apparatus • A group or organization of fighters who are loyal to the leadership and usually to one leader. • Persecution of individuals who are not supporters of the regime or do not belong to the same group. • A secret service that imposes terror and fear on the population. • The presence of guerilla forces, which in some cases oppose the central government and challenge the regime's monopoly on the use of force.	**FFP Index 9.3** • Libya is no longer a state in the political sense of the word. It is split into three independent and rival regions, each with its own loyal militia. There are, in addition, dozens of independent militias. • The country does not have an effective secret service. • There are numerous armed militias operating in the country—some are local while others are part of much larger movements, such as al-Qaeda and the Islamic State.

Criterion	Status of the country
State legitimacy • Political corruption. • Control of the elites. The ruling elite is immune to criticism in the press and to criminal investigation. • Loss of faith among the public in the government's leadership and institutions. • Inability of the state to manage its affairs and to collect taxes. • Increase in the number of armed groups and crime with mafias and organizations connected to the ruling elite.	**FFP Index 9.8** • Since there is currently no political entity called Libya, but rather a large number of independent power groups, the idea of a Libyan elite or Libyan regime is not relevant. • The Libyan public has lost its faith in the state, because there is no state. Loyalty exists on the local level to a tribal leader, clan leader, militia leader, etc. • The state institutions are functioning in a limited capacity only in the capital city and its environs.
External intervention • Involvement of the UN or military forces from other countries in internal conflicts and in national affairs. • External intervention in the state's economy. Humanitarian intervention: external organizations provide for the basic needs of the population. • Economic support by means of financial aid or loans. Assistance from the outside to opponents of the government. • Citizens become dependent on external support. • Attacks by bordering countries. • External forces are training the security forces. • Peacekeeping forces are present in the country.	**FFP Index 9.5** • There is Egyptian intervention by means of air strikes against the jihadi organizations, primarily in the border area with Libya and sometimes deeper within Libya. The Egyptian air force is sometimes joined by the air forces of the Gulf states. • There is involvement of other countries, especially the United States, in the oil industry. There is no intervention in the supply of the local population's basic needs. • There is no external economic support. • There are sometimes attacks by the Egyptian army against Islamist militias on the border between the two countries. • There are no foreign forces training the security forces. • There are no peacekeeping forces in the country.
Refugees and the displaced • Many residents become refugees or displaced due to civil war, takeover of territory by enemy and extremist forces, shortage of food, water, and appropriate sanitary conditions, natural disasters, etc. Refugees create a crisis both in their country of origin and in their destination.	**FFP Index 7.4** • In Libya there is no major problem of refugees, but it has become a preferred jumping-off point for African refugees trying to reach Europe.

Criterion	Status of the country
Economic decline	**FFP Index 8.0**
• Economic decline of the society as a whole has resulted in the spread of poverty and ensuing rise in mortality rate, inflation, shortage of goods and an increase in their prices, loss of property and foreign investments, the spread of crime—including drug and human trafficking—and an increase in corruption and exploitation.	• The Libyan economy relies on the oil industry, which was hurt by the toppling of the Gaddafi regime. Recently, there has been some recovery and reconstruction of the infrastructure and an increase in oil exports but only in the few areas controlled by the central government.

The Neighboring Circle

Syria

Syria is a good example of the effects of prolonged instability. After the initial skirmishes between Assad's forces and the opposition forces in March 2011, the conflict increased in intensity until it became a bloody civil war.[194] Such a rapid escalation, even prior to the outbreak of fighting, can be attributed to the minority Alawite government's serious lack of internal legitimacy. According to the Fragile States Index for 2015, Syria was ranked eighth, one below Yemen and tied with Afghanistan.[195]

Syria is currently divided into several entities, each with its own military forces. Assad controls a corridor that includes Damascus, Homs, and Hama, as well as Syria's coast with Latakia at its center. The various Sunni opposition forces, which are not united, control the north of the country and major cities such as Idlib and Deir al-Zour. The battles over other major cities, including Aleppo and Damascus, had not yet been decided at the time of writing. The Syrian regime is concentrating its efforts on holding the heart of the country: from Damascus and the strip that stretches from Damascus northward including the cities of Homs and Hama to the Alawite coastal area and Aleppo.

The regime in Syria has not entirely collapsed despite the blows it has taken and has even managed to preserve the unity of the civilian government systems, the military, and the security mechanisms. In addition, it still has the support of various sectors of the population. Even in its most dire moments and even before the massive Russian intervention on its behalf, the regime maintained control over the parts of the country most essential for retaining a functioning Syrian state entity: the capital of Damascus, the large cities (Homs, Hama, and parts of Aleppo), the border area between

Syria and Lebanon, and the coast.[196] It is fortunate for the Syrian army that the Sunni opposition forces are divided into numerous groups with opposing ideologies—some seeking to establish a liberal democracy, and others, particularly ISIS, an Islamic caliphate—and that the fighting between them is no less intense than their fighting with Assad's forces.

The Kurds in Syria are also looking to establish an independent state entity in the areas under their control. In contrast to other minorities in Syria, the Kurds (who number 2.5 million and whose territory includes most of Syria's oil reserves) have suffered persecution and oppression; they are not even permitted to speak their own language. The Kurdish militias have exploited the chaos in Syria and already control wide expanses of northeastern Syria from which the Syrian army withdrew on its own initiative. A senior member of the Kurdish opposition declared in 2012 that the Kurds are interested in creating an independent region. In addition, the Kurdish National Council (a representative body composed of most of the Kurdish parties) signed an agreement in 2015 with the Syrian National Council, guaranteeing Kurdish autonomy in a future united Syrian state. However, by the time Syria becomes united again—if ever—Kurdish autonomy may well be a fait accompli. This possibility is exacerbating the arguments and divisions between the Kurdish organizations, some of which are supported by benefactors outside of Syria. While all of the Kurdish organizations agree on the goal, they are divided on the means of achieving it. It should be mentioned that despite the divisions and tension between the various Kurdish organizations, the Kurds showed complete unity against ISIS in the battle for Kobani and successfully liberated what was left of the city after several months of fierce fighting.[197]

The deep divisions between the rebel forces in Syria—the Free Syrian Army and the Islamist organizations, which are divided into numerous sub-organizations—have proved a real barrier in attempts to reach a political resolution of the crisis. The rebels are not able to agree on a common leadership, although they all reject any compromise with Assad and insist on his removal. Assad, for his part, refuses any arrangement in which he does not retain leadership of the country.

The conflict in Syria ceased being a domestic conflict between local forces a long time ago. There is to date open confrontation between the so-called "moderate" camp led by Saudi Arabia—with the quiet cooperation of Jordan and several of the Gulf states—and the radical axis led by Iran. The Saudis are providing financial and material support to the Sunni rebel

groups, such as Jaish al-Fatah, while Qatar is financing more extreme Sunni groups.[198]At the outset of the fighting, the United States supported the Free Syrian Army, but this did not translate into any real assistance; Russia, on the other hand, provided strong support for Assad, first with arms and later with military intervention. The Russian strategy was to focus its power against the moderate organizations in order to leave only Assad and the extreme Islamist organizations in the arena, thus also forcing the West to support Assad. And indeed, in terms of increasing the strength of the Islamic State at the expense of the more moderate organizations, there are signs of a change in the US position, and it is already less insistent on removing Assad from power. This is in spite of his numerous war crimes against the civilian population.

Iran is not the only regional power directly involved in the fighting in Syria. Turkey targets Syria from the air, allegedly as part of its campaign against the Islamic State, but in practice focuses on Kurdish targets. Although the Islamic State has carried out several large terrorist attacks against Turkey, Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is far more worried by the possible creation of an independent Kurdish state on his southern border that will want to unite with the Kurdish areas in southeast Turkey.[199] ISIS fighters actually receive assistance from private sources in Turkey (with official sources at least turning a blind eye) in order to sell oil and buy essential supplies. These supplies, as well as numerous volunteers, arrive in the Islamic State through the open border between Turkey and Syria, which has displeased the United States. Turkish involvement in Syria is another example of the intervention of external players in failed states in order to exploit the power vacuum and advance their own interests; in Turkey's case, stopping the Kurds rather than the Islamic State. In fact, Turkey's attacks on the Kurds indirectly help the Islamic State.[200]

The deterioration of the security situation in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, and Libya is resulting in huge waves of refugees. It is estimated that more than 4.8 million refugees have left Syria so far.[201] Most have reached refugee camps located primarily in Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey, and many have continued on to Europe from there, thus creating the worst refugee crisis in Europe since World War II. Another eight million Syrians are internally displaced (of a population of about 22 million), which has resulted in a major humanitarian crisis.[202] The vast number of refugees is undermining economic and political stability in Jordan and Lebanon as well as threatening

the security situation, since jihadi operatives who smuggled themselves into Jordan and Lebanon as part of the flow of refugees are creating a terror infrastructure and awaiting orders.[203]

Jihadi organizations operating in eastern Syria have joined up with their counterparts in northwestern Iraq and are seeking to undermine the security and political situation in Iraq as well. The achievements of ISIS, which has managed to take control of Anbar province in Iraq and to expel the Iraqi army from Mosul and its environs, have been translated into a declaration of the establishment of the new Islamic caliphate led by al-Baghdadi with its capital in Raqqah in Syria. These achievements have breathed new life into the jihadi organizations in other regions of the Middle East. This is another good example of the adverse effect of a failed state on the stability and security of its neighbors.

It is doubtful whether Syria will ever return to what it once was. Its territory, whose artificial borders were drawn by the Sykes-Picot and San Remo agreements, is currently divided among various groups supported by rival benefactors outside the country. There have been signs that the balance is tipping in favor of the Assad regime thanks to the massive air support received, which enabled his forces to recapture Palmyra and its ancient ruins from the hands of the Islamic State. Nonetheless, the Salafi-jihadi groups in Syria are far from defeated, and on other fronts, such as southern Syria, they have managed to expand their area of influence. These groups are motivated by a religious vision, and their goal is to erase the states and borders that were imposed on the region after the World War I and to enforce an extreme Islamic regime on the Muslim and non-Muslim communities.[204]

Table 6: Current status of Syria. Ranking of state failure based on the main criteria of the Fund for Peace (FFP) Index.

Criterion	Status of the country
Fragility Index[205]	107.9
Intensity of conflict[206]	High Number of casualties in 2014: 119,000
Security Apparatus • A group or organization of fighters who are loyal to the leadership and usually to one leader. • Persecution of individuals who are not supporters of the regime or do not belong to the same group. • A secret service that imposes terror and fear on the population. • The presence of guerilla forces, which in some cases oppose the central government and challenge the regime's monopoly on the use of force.	**FFP Index 10.0** • Existence of many groups of fighters with many allegiances. • High level of violence, including the use of weapons of mass destruction. • The regime uses several secret services that make individuals who are suspected of disloyalty "disappear"; in some cases, they are murdered, and in others they are put in prison and tortured. • The existence of guerilla forces and terrorist organizations that constitute a challenge to the central government through their widespread use of violence.
State legitimacy • Political corruption. • Control of the elites. The ruling elite is immune to criticism in the press and to criminal investigation. • Loss of faith among the public in the government's leadership and institutions. • Inability of the state to manage its affairs and to collect taxes. • Increase in the number of armed groups and in crime with mafias and organizations connected to the ruling elite.	**FFP Index 9.9** • High level of corruption. • Tyrannical regime of the Alawite minority, which does not tolerate criticism. • Complete loss of confidence in state institutions among most of the Sunnis and among the Kurdish minority. • The state institutions are almost non-functional. The economy is in a state of collapse. • Increase in the level of crime, a breakdown of law and order, and poorly functioning enforcement systems.

Criterion	Status of the country
External intervention • Involvement of the UN or military forces from other countries in internal conflicts and in national affairs. • External intervention in the state's economy. Humanitarian intervention: external organizations provide for the basic needs of the population. • Economic support by means of financial aid or loans. Assistance from the outside to opponents of the government. • Citizens become dependent on external support. • Attacks by bordering countries. • External forces are training the security forces. • Peacekeeping forces are present in the country.	**FFP Index 9.9** • High level of involvement by Iran, Hezbollah, and Russia. • Economic collapse. In areas not under the control of the regime, the local economy operates in isolation from the state economy. • Uncoordinated activity of humanitarian organizations, primarily in accessible areas that are not under the control of the Islamic State. The government is virtually unable to provide for the needs of the population. • Various opposition groups receive support from other countries. • Much of the population is dependent on outside support and aid.
Refugees and the displaced • Many residents become refugees or displaced due to civil war, takeover of territory by enemy and extremist forces, shortage of food, water, and appropriate sanitary conditions, natural disasters, etc. Refugees create a crisis both in their country of origin and in their destination.	**FFP Index 10.0** • The problem of refugees and displaced persons is one of the most serious outcomes of the crisis. The fierce fighting has led to the flight of millions of refugees from Syria to Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey, and other countries. There are also millions of displaced persons remaining in Syria, which has created a large-scale humanitarian crisis. There is also a major crisis in Europe, which is having to absorb hundreds of thousands of refugees, many from Syria.

Criterion	Status of the country
Economic decline • Economic decline of the society as a whole has resulted in the spread of poverty and ensuing rise in mortality rate, inflation, shortage of goods and an increase in their prices, loss of property and foreign investments, the spread of crime—including drug and human trafficking—and an increase in corruption and exploitation.	**FFP Index 7.5** • Syria's economy is in compete collapse. There is widespread poverty and humanitarian distress. There is no foreign investment; crime and corruption are on the increase; and there is human trafficking, particularly by smugglers who exploit the distress of the refugees seeking safer shores. • The Islamic State has taken over eastern Syria, which includes the country's oil wells. Oil was the country's most important source of income, and this is a serious blow to the Syrian economy.

Egypt and the Sinai Peninsula

According to the Fragile States Index for 2015, Egypt was in thirty-eighth place after Rwanda and Nepal.[207] At the peak of the Arab Spring, the attention of the Arab world, and of the rest of the world, was focused on Tahrir Square in Cairo. The mass demonstrations—the largest numbering six million demonstrators and claimed by some to have been the largest in Arab history[208]—were viewed as the first stage of a revolution that would spread to the entire Arab world and free it from backwardness and oppression. It seemed that the economic crisis in which Egypt had been mired for years would be resolved by the onset of change. However, the process of change did not proceed as planned by the mostly young, secular, and liberal revolutionaries. Lacking the necessary organizational infrastructure, the political experience, and the ability to nurture leadership that would inspire and unite, the initiators of the revolution failed to leverage their achievements. They were replaced by the Muslim Brotherhood, who, having developed an organizational infrastructure over several decades, were able to exploit the winds of change and take power using the platform of free elections.

The organizational infrastructure of the Muslim Brotherhood was instrumental in taking control of the political system but was not successful at governing the country. Soon after taking power, the Muslim Brotherhood began imposing Sharia law on Egypt, a move that awoke the Egyptian street and the army to the dangers inherent in their government. Their hold on power was thus short-lived—from the end of June 2012 until the beginning

of July 2013. The Egyptian army exploited the grassroots protests against the Muslim Brotherhood, accusing it of hijacking the revolution of January 2011, in order to remove them from power and restore the military regime. The new government led by President el-Sisi placed severe limits on the Muslim Brotherhood and is taking every opportunity to persecute them.

However, the restoration of order and the removal of the Muslim Brotherhood from power are not sufficient to resolve Egypt's difficult structural problems. Egypt's economy is operating at a low level of efficiency; the rate of unemployment is particularly high, especially among educated young people; the apparatus for maintaining law and order is still in the process of reconstruction; and jihadi terror in the Sinai Peninsula has yet to be decisively dealt with. Beyond the damage in terms of lives and property, terror also causes inestimable damage to tourism in Egypt. For example, the crash of the Russian passenger plane in October 2015 that was caused by a bomb placed on board by a jihadi operative at Sharm El Sheikh Airport killed more than 220 passengers and crew and put an end to Russian tourism in Sinai. The only ray of hope in the Egyptian economy is the digging of the new Suez Canal, a project that was completed in August 2015.[209] If things go as planned, major centers of industry and logistics will be built along the new and improved canal and will employ hundreds of thousands of workers.

If terrorism is not eliminated, however, even the new canal cannot save the Egyptian economy. Under the cover of the chaos that accompanied the revolution in Egypt, the Jihadi terror organization called Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis (Supporters of Jerusalem) established itself in Sinai. Its original goal was to attack Israel, and it announced its allegiance to al-Qaeda. After the fall of the Muslim Brotherhood in July 2013, the organization directed its energy against the new military regime in Cairo. In November 2014, it swore allegiance to al-Baghdadi and declared the territories they had seized in Sinai the "Sinai Province of the Islamic State." Even before its rebranding, Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis was a terror organization whose members were trained and armed by operatives of al-Qaeda, ISIS, and other terror organizations operating in Syria and received assistance from armed organizations in Gaza, including Hamas. Since joining the Islamic State, its capabilities have improved, as demonstrated by frequent attacks on the Egyptian army in Sinai.[210]

The Bedouin population in the Sinai Peninsula also constitutes a difficult challenge. Without Bedouin assistance, the jihadi fighters would not be able to operate, at least not in the current format. The Bedouin protest against

the Egyptian regime has gone on for about a decade and is the basis for the growth of the terror organizations in Sinai. The Egyptian regime has thus far refused to respond to their demands regarding employment, improvement in infrastructure, and self-rule.

Two additional factors have contributed to the strengthening of the Salafi groups in Sinai: jihadists who escaped from Egyptian prisons during the revolution and found asylum in Sinai and the revolution in Libya, which, as a result, advanced weaponry found its way to Sinai (and, to some extent, Gaza). In addition, there are reports that Hamas is assisting the organizations in Sinai with weapons, training, and refuge for their members.

The Obama administration was cool toward el-Sisi because he deposed the democratically elected Muslim Brotherhood and he is paying little attention to the rules in his engagements with the jihadists in Sinai. US military assistance to Egypt was partially and temporarily suspended, and this hampered Egypt's ability to deal with the jihadi terror in Sinai and on the Libyan border. The Obama administration position was resented by Egypt and its friends in the region, in particular Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. They view the US position as an act of disloyalty by an important ally, reflecting American weakness and total lack of understanding of the region. The United States has not ignored the resentment of its allies and the 2015 visit of US Secretary of State John Kerry to Egypt was an effort to improve relations.[211]

El-Sisi's regime receives generous aid, primarily financial, from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, which is critical for the ailing Egyptian economy. The UAE's air force has been collaborating with Egypt for a while now against the Islamist organizations in Libya, which are threatening Egypt's security, much to the displeasure of its neighbor, Qatar that supports some of those Islamist organizations.[212] The Gulf states in general and Saudi Arabia in particular expect that in exchange for their financial assistance Egypt will make use of its military resources and its general status in the Arab world to support their interests, even if this is not expressed publicly.

The el-Sisi regime does not yet view the Islamic State in Sinai as a direct threat to its stability, since it does not view Sinai as an integral part of Egypt. There are other items higher up the agenda, in particular Egypt's fragile security situation, the threats to the Suez Canal, and the incidents on the border with Libya. It should be noted that the means used by the regime to deal with the terror in Sinai are not sufficiently effective and

sometimes harm the local population more than the terrorists; for example, a night curfew is imposed on the local population, which is ignored by the terrorists but makes life difficult for everyone else. The population of Sinai suffers from a lack of any proper health services and an insufficient supply of electricity and telephone and internet services, which leads to feelings of alienation from the state and the government.

The events of July 1, 2015—large-scale simultaneous attacks by the forces of the Islamic State on a number of Egyptian military posts[213]—as well as the downing of a Russian passenger plane on October 31, 2015, are evidence of the continued failure of the Egyptian army to get a firm grip on the situation in Sinai.[214] Although they have increased the scope of their operations and are demonstrating greater perseverance, the Egyptian forces are still not effective enough and are too few in number to initiate offensive activities; they mostly just respond to events. When things are quiet, the Egyptian soldiers man the roadblocks and are a convenient target for the terror organizations. Since October 2014, severe restrictions have been imposed on the movements of the population in Sinai, but these do not deter the terrorists and the local populations is less safe today than before the restrictions were put in place. Despite the introduction of major military forces in Sinai—which include tanks, armored personnel carriers, artillery, and planes, with Israel's consent—and the reports of large-scale military operations against terror organizations and the killing of hundreds of terrorists, the Egyptian army has not dealt a decisive blow to the strongholds of the Sinai Province of the Islamic State. It appears that the organization has suffered heavy losses but has nonetheless managed to recover from them and even to increase the pace of its attacks. Furthermore, the roadblocks at the entry points into Sinai (from the Gaza Strip, Egypt, and the sea) notwithstanding, the Islamic State has received an uninterrupted supply of advanced weaponry and volunteers.[215]

Although Egypt is not a failed state according to the strictest definition of the term (although it does have classic peripheral regions, for example, the Sinai Peninsula and near the border with Libya), there are elements that, according to Reilly and others, are characteristic of the behavior of regimes in failed states, i.e., the focus on threats from within and the use of massive force to put them down.

The activity of the Sinai Province of the Islamic State over the last two years has been limited to the Sinai Peninsula, apart from some isolated

incidents in the Cairo area. The Egyptian army has not managed to solve the problem posed by the Islamic State, though it has managed to isolate it. However, as of 2015, a new and disturbing phenomenon emerged: grassroots terror in the heart of Egypt. This occurred against the background of the deep and unprecedented rift in Egyptian society following the coup which removed Mohamed Morsi of the Muslim Brotherhood from power and the persecution of the Muslim Brotherhood. These domestic terrorists have carried out assassinations of military personnel and senior government and judicial figures as well as attacks against electricity, transportation and communication infrastructures, and tourist sites.[216]

Table 7: Current status of Egypt. Ranking of state failure based on the main criteria of the Fund for Peace (FFP) Index.

Criterion	Status of the country
Fragility Index[217]	90
Intensity of conflict[218]	Medium Number of casualties in 2014: 1075
Security Apparatus • A group or organization of fighters who are loyal to the leadership and usually to one leader. • Persecution of individuals who are not supporters of the regime or do not belong to the same group. • A secret service that imposes terror and fear on the population. • The presence of guerilla forces, which in some cases oppose the central government and challenge the regime's monopoly on the use of force.	**FFP Index 8.2** • Not relevant. • Hardline stance against the Muslim Brotherhood and all-out war against the jihadi organizations—primarily in the Sinai Peninsula. • The state's security apparatus, which the Muslim Brotherhood government had dissolved, was reestablished and its main efforts are now directed against the Muslim Brotherhood and the jihadi organizations. • Widespread presence and extreme violence of the Salafi-jihadi organizations in the Sinai Peninsula, primarily Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis, which is affiliated with the Islamic State.

Criterion	Status of the country
State legitimacy • Political corruption. • Control of the elites. The ruling elite is immune to criticism in the press and to criminal investigation. • Loss of faith among the public in the government's leadership and institutions. • Inability of the state to manage its affairs and to collect taxes. • Increase in the number of armed groups and crime with mafias and organizations connected to the ruling elite.	**FFP Index 8.7** • Control is in the hands of the military elite, although it permits a certain amount of criticism and demonstrates greater openness than during Mubarak's rule. • Increasing public confidence in the regime following a long period of instability in both security and the economy. • A significant improvement in the functioning of the state institutions. • A significant drop in crime and the activity of armed criminal organizations.
External intervention • Involvement of the UN or military forces from other countries in internal conflicts and in national affairs. • External intervention in the state's economy. Humanitarian intervention: external organizations provide for the basic needs of the population. • Economic support by means of financial aid or loans. Assistance from the outside to opponents of the government. • Citizens become dependent on external support. • Attacks by bordering countries. • External forces are training the security forces. • Peacekeeping forces are present in the country.	**FFP Index 7.1** • There is no external military intervention. • There is no external intervention in the Egyptian economy apart from the generous assistance from Saudi Arabia. An Italian company recently made a significant investment in the development of the large gas reservoir off the coast of Egypt. • There is no humanitarian intervention. • There is massive financial support by the Gulf States and American assistance. • The Islamic State provides assistance to Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis, which operates primarily in the Sinai Peninsula. • The population is not dependent on any external support.
Refugees and the displaced • Many residents become refugees or displaced due to civil war, takeover of territory by enemy and extremist forces, shortage of food, water, and appropriate sanitary conditions, natural disasters, etc. Refugees create a crisis both in their country of origin and in their destination.	**FFP Index 6.7** • There is no real refugee problem in Egypt, apart from about 140,000 Syrian refugees[219] and a few tens of thousands of refugees and migrant workers from African countries.

Criterion	Status of the country
Economic decline • Economic decline of the society as a whole has resulted in the spread of poverty and ensuing rise in mortality rate, inflation, shortage of goods and an increase in their prices, loss of property and foreign investments, the spread of crime—including drug and human trafficking—and an increase in corruption and exploitation.	**FFP Index 8.1** • The Egyptian economy, which suffers from major structural problems, was further affected by the turmoil in the country; however, since el-Sisi came to power, there has been gradual improvement in the economy and even some major successes, such as the project to expand the Suez Canal and the discovery of the large gas reservoir off the coast of Egypt. • Egypt was one of the poorest countries even before the upheaval, a situation that worsened in its wake; however, over the last two years there have been signs of stabilization and progress. • There are no accessible data on changes in the death rate as a result of poverty. • The main problem is not the flight of capital but rather the lack of capital inflow. There is very little foreign investment in Egypt. Nonetheless, there have been signs of a small positive change in this respect over the past year (2015). • The current regime is making efforts to eliminate corruption.

Lebanon

Although Lebanon fulfills many of the criteria for state failure (ranked forty-first in the Fragile States Index for 2015),[220] it is, nonetheless, not a failed state in the fullest sense. Lebanese society constitutes a fragile ethnic and religious mosaic. In the absence of a solid foundation, the country suffers from reoccurring outbreaks of religious and ethnic violence, thus characterizing it as an "unstable" or "vulnerable" state.[221] This vulnerability is exacerbated by the influx of refugees from Syria—1.1 million so far;[222] a huge burden on the Lebanese economy and infrastructure, which is changing its ethnic demographic balance and increasing internal tension. Many of the refugees are Sunnis who are hostile to the Shiite Hezbollah, and this has already led to outbreaks of violence.[223] In such a divided and split society, the Lebanese government and institutions are finding it difficult to achieve

broad legitimacy and popularity, and as a result the central government has difficulty enforcing its sovereignty over the entire population and territory.

Since Lebanese-based Hezbollah joined Assad's forces in Syria, Assad's rivals, and primarily the jihadi organizations, have been trying to bring the fighting to Lebanon. In August 2014, the forces of the Islamic State and the al-Nusra Front managed to capture the Sunni town of Arsal on the Lebanese border, which is the location of a Syrian refugee camp. For five days, the jihadists controlled the city, until they were driven off by the Lebanese army.[224] On withdrawing, the jihadists took a large number of Lebanese soldiers and residents of the town with them as prisoners. The situation in the city still remains tense, and jihadi organizations are deployed near the border from where they continue to carry out terrorist attacks in the town and hold residents as prisoners.[225] The danger that the civil war in Syria will spill over into Lebanon is not just external but also internal. For example, in the city of Tripoli in northern Lebanon, there have recently been violent confrontations between the Alawite supporters of Assad and his Sunni opponents. In Lebanon, there is vocal criticism of Hezbollah as being responsible for this spillover.

As a result of massive Russian intervention in the civil war, the situation has been reversed. There is now heavy military pressure on the organizations fighting Assad, including the jihadi organizations, and this severely limits their ability to carry out attacks in Lebanon. However, the danger to Lebanon has not passed, and there is certainly a possibility of further developments in the war that might favor the jihadists, who will then want to take revenge on Hezbollah in their bases within Lebanon. This external pressure could prove a difficult test for the ethnically-mixed Lebanese army, which is likely to split along ethnic lines.

Since Shiites comprise the majority in both the Lebanese army and the internal security services, which are now highly sympathetic to Hezbollah, Saudi Arabia has reneged on its promise to provide $4 billion for its modernization. This is a major blow to the Lebanese army and will severely limit its fighting capability. It should be recalled that the Lebanese army has very little combat experience. In the last few decades, the only conflict in which it has taken part was against rebels in the Palestinian refugee camps, primarily in Tripoli. This lack of experience is likely to hamper its ability to withstand a frontal attack by the jihadists who are well-organized and experienced as a result of fighting in Syria and Iraq.[226]

Table 8: Current status of Lebanon. Ranking of state failure based on the main criteria of the Fund for Peace (FFP) Index.

Criterion	Status of the country
Fragility Index[227]	88.1
Intensity of conflict[228]	Low Number of casualties in 2014: 700
Security Apparatus • A group or organization of fighters who are loyal to the leadership and usually to one leader. • Persecution of individuals who are not supporters of the regime or do not belong to the same group. • A secret service that imposes terror and fear on the population. • The presence of guerilla forces, which in some cases oppose the central government and challenge the regime's monopoly on the use of force.	**FFP Index 8.8** • Lebanon traditionally suffers from deep fragmentation, which is reflected in the existence of armed militias alongside the Lebanese army. The most prominent is Hezbollah, which is stronger than the Lebanese army and is loyal to the leader of the organization and not to the state. • The secret service is not able to operate against groups such as Hezbollah, which challenge the state. • The most powerful guerilla group is Hezbollah, although there is also some penetration of non-Lebanese organizations, primarily from Syria.
State legitimacy • Political corruption. • Control of the elites. The ruling elite is immune to criticism in the press and to criminal investigation. • Loss of faith among the public in the government's leadership and institutions. • Inability of the state to manage its affairs and to collect taxes. • Increase in the number of armed groups and crime with mafias and organizations connected to the ruling elite.	**FFP Index 7.8** • Lebanon is in a situation of under-functioning. There was no elected president for two years, which left the political and state institutions paralyzed. • Almost complete loss of public confidence in the leadership. This was evident in the 2015-2016 "trash crisis." • The Lebanese government is almost non-functioning; the political system is paralyzed; and the state has difficulty providing for the basic needs of the population. • There are numerous criminal organizations in the country, most of which are involved in the production and smuggling of drugs.

Criterion	Status of the country
External intervention • Involvement of the UN or military forces from other countries in internal conflicts and in national affairs. • External intervention in the state's economy. Humanitarian intervention: external organizations provide for the basic needs of the population. • Economic support by means of financial aid or loans. Assistance from the outside to opponents of the government. • Citizens become dependent on external support. • Attacks by bordering countries. • External forces are training the security forces. • Peacekeeping forces are present in the country.	**FFP Index 9.2** • There is a UN peacekeeping force operating on the border between Israel and Lebanon. • There is no significant external intervention in the country's economy. • Humanitarian organizations operate in the refugee camps (Palestinian and Syrian). • There is no significant support for the economy, which relies on, among other things, tourism. • In the absence of an elected government, there are no opponents to the government. • The population is not dependent on external support. • Iranian operatives are training and equipping Hezbollah.
Refugees and the displaced • Many residents become refugees or displaced due to civil war, takeover of territory by enemy and extremist forces, shortage of food, water, and appropriate sanitary conditions, natural disasters, etc. Refugees create a crisis both in their country of origin and in their destination.	**FFP Index 9.1** • Hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees have been living in Lebanon for decades. They do not have citizenship and live in closed refugee camps. Since the outbreak of the civil war in Syria, Lebanon has been flooded with over a million Syrian refugees. Their presence in Lebanon is a burden on the economy and the infrastructure and changes the delicate demographic balance in the country.
Economic decline • Economic decline of the society as a whole has resulted in the spread of poverty and ensuing rise in mortality rate, inflation, shortage of goods and an increase in their prices, loss of property and foreign investments, the spread of crime—including drug and human trafficking—and an increase in corruption and exploitation.	**FFP Index 5.9** • The economy of Lebanon is in decline due to domestic political problems and the demographic and economic pressure created by the massive wave of refugees from Syria.

Jordan

Since 2011, Jordan has faced increasing political, security, and economic pressures, mainly due to the massive influx of refugees from Syria and the growing power of the Islamic State both on its borders and inside the country. Jordan's difficult economic situation intensifies the Salafi-jihadi threat, since unemployed youths turn to radical Islam as an outlet for their frustration. On the other hand, there are also factors that strengthen the kingdom's stability; most significantly, generous international aid, the sharp drop in the price of oil, and an increase in patriotic feelings and aversion to terror following the execution of Muath al-Kasasbeh, the Jordanian pilot who was captured by ISIS.[229]

Jordan, ranked eighty-first in the Fragile States Index for 2015,[230]is struggling to cope with the wave of refugees from Syria and Iraq, and its public services—health and education, an uninterrupted water supply, and the maintenance of public order—are in danger of collapse. According to the figures of the UN Refugee Agency, there are close to 650,000 Syrian refugees registered in Jordan[231] as well as an unaccountable number of refugees from Iraq.[232] This large number of refugees endangers Jordanian stability, not only because they are a burden on the economy and infrastructure and increase unemployment and poverty (for example, they take jobs away from the Palestinians which may lead to frustration and radicalism), but also because they include more than a few supporters of the Islamic State. The refugee camps may become pockets without state control from which terror organizations can operate. Jordan already experienced such situations in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and Israel was also affected by this.[233]

Events in Jordan since the beginning of the Arab Spring have revealed lacunae in the legitimacy of the regime. No one questioned the authority or legitimacy of King Hussein, father of current King Abdullah II, and certainly not after Black September in 1970 when he quashed the attempted coup by PLO forces. In contrast, there have been demands on Abdullah II to carry out governmental reforms, which are essentially equivalent to a demand that he give up some of his power. The royal house has been criticized for its ostentatiousness, which is also part of the questioning of his legitimacy. Calls for reform and criticism of the royal house are also coming from the Bedouin-Hashemite population, which is the current regime's principal base of support. Those supporting governmental reform are not actually challenging the authority of the royal house. Rather, they are proposing

the adoption of the British model, i.e., a constitutional monarchy in which the king is not the source of authority but a figurehead. This demand is not acceptable from the king's perspective, since this would, in essence, mean an end to Hashemite rule in Jordan. As Oded Eran wrote:

> The King is right to be disturbed by the charges of corruption among the ruling elite in the royal family, and he will likely have to take steps that are perceived by the Jordanian public as a serious, ongoing campaign against corruption, not mere lip service. The fact that some of the demonstrations on this issue occurred in cities in southern Jordan, where the Palestinian population is extremely small and where the King's power base is located, will require the allocation of greater financial resources to the region, which suffers from unemployment and poverty rates far above the national average.[234]

Eran claimed that the vulnerability of the Jordanian regime is most apparent from a macroeconomic perspective and in the difficulties that the regime is facing while trying to solve the problems arising from the huge numbers of immigrants relative to the size of the host population. The existence of a permanent refugee population, which accounts for 25 to 35 percent of the total population and does not have the rights of citizenship, is liable in the medium term (five to fifteen years) to endanger the survivability of the Hashemite regime. The opinion polls conducted in Jordan over the last three years all have indicated a serious drop in support for the regime due, first and foremost, to the increased cost of living. However, this is a problem that can be solved relatively easily by means of foreign aid. It is easier to organize humanitarian aid than military assistance which is accompanied by physical presence.[235]

Table 9: Current status of Jordan. Ranking of state failure based on the main criteria of the Fund for Peace (FFP) Index.

Criterion	Status of the country
Fragility Index[236]	76.9
Intensity of conflict	No data
Security Apparatus • A group or organization of fighters who are loyal to the leadership and usually to one leader. • Persecution of individuals who are not supporters of the regime or do not belong to the same group. • A secret service that imposes terror and fear on the population. • The presence of guerilla forces, which in some cases oppose the central government and challenge the regime's monopoly on the use of force.	**FFP Index 5.5** • There are no state bodies operating in the form of militias. • There is no widespread persecution. • The intelligence service is professional and efficient. It does not use terror or intimidation and is respected by most of the civilian population. • There are no guerrilla forces. • The security situation is generally stable, and the intelligence and security forces are efficient and disciplined.
State legitimacy • Political corruption. • Control of the elites. The ruling elite is immune to criticism in the press and to criminal investigation. • Loss of faith among the public in the government's leadership and institutions. • Inability of the state to manage its affairs and to collect taxes. • Increase in the number of armed groups and crime with mafias and organizations connected to the ruling elite.	**FFP Index 6.1** • There is no major problem of corruption. The more serious problem is the feeling of alienation among certain groups in the population. • There are two major elites: the political and security elite, which originates from among the Bedouin tribes and the economic elite, which is mostly made up of Palestinians (who are citizens). • There is tension between the Bedouin tribes, which are the base of the royal house's support and of political power, and the regime due, primarily, to economic issues. • The state institutions function at a reasonable level. • There are no unusual reports of armed criminal groups.

Criterion	Status of the country
External intervention • Involvement of the UN or military forces from other countries in internal conflicts and in national affairs. • External intervention in the state's economy. Humanitarian intervention: external organizations provide for the basic needs of the population. • Economic support by means of financial aid or loans. Assistance from the outside to opponents of the government. • Citizens become dependent on external support. • Attacks by bordering countries. • External forces are training the security forces. • Peacekeeping forces are present in the country.	**FFP Index 6.8** • There is no intervention by the UN or any foreign military forces. • There is aid from the United States and Saudi Arabia and international aid for the Syrian and Iraqi refugees. • There is no external aid to elements that oppose the regime, and there is almost no one operating against the regime outside the boundaries of civil society. • The citizens of Jordan are not dependent on the intervention of external players. • There are no external forces training the security forces. • There are no peacekeeping forces in Jordan.
Refugees and the displaced • Many residents become refugees or displaced due to civil war, takeover of territory by enemy and extremist forces, shortage of food, water, and appropriate sanitary conditions, natural disasters, etc. Refugees create a crisis both in their country of origin and in their destination.	**FFP Index 8.8** • There is a heavy economic and political burden as a result of the refugee crisis. Hundreds of thousands Iraqi refugees fled to Jordan in the middle of the last decade, closely followed by more than one million Syrian refugees due to the civil war in Syria. These two refugee populations have joined the Palestinian refugees who have been living in refugee camps in Jordan for decades. • The burden of the refugees on Jordan's economy and infrastructure is already unsustainable, and Jordan cannot cope with this situation without significant external aid. Furthermore, the refugees have significantly altered Jordan's demographic balance, which is liable to undermine the stability of the Hashemite royal house and change the face of Jordanian politics and society.

Criterion	Status of the country
Economic decline • Economic decline of the society as a whole has resulted in the spread of poverty and ensuing rise in mortality rate, inflation, shortage of goods and an increase in their prices, loss of property and foreign investments, the spread of crime—including drug and human trafficking—and an increase in corruption and exploitation.	**FFP Index 6.3** • Jordan is a poor country without any significant natural resources. It lacks energy independence and suffers from a severe shortage of water for drinking and agriculture. • Jordan's economy relies on American foreign aid and on generous aid from the Gulf states, primarily Saudi Arabia. • There is no large-scale organized crime or trafficking in drugs or human beings.

The Inner Circle

The Palestinian Authority

Background

The Palestinian Authority is not a state but rather a semi-state entity that was created by the Oslo agreement, an interim agreement that was meant to be replaced by a final permanent status agreement to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The agreement defines the territory of the Palestinian Authority, its areas of responsibility, and also its political and organizational structure. The Palestinian Authority has, however, largely functioned as a de facto state since its creation in 1994 despite its lack of certain key attributes of sovereignty.[237]

A discussion of the characteristics of the Palestinian Authority's state failure is a necessary part of this study due to its importance to Israel's strategic interests and its effect on regional stability, particularly the stability of Egypt and Jordan. Israel has, of course, a strong interest in the stability of these two countries, since the peace agreements with them are its strategic anchor in the region. Even though the Palestinian Authority is not formally a state, it functions as one in many respects, and we have therefore chosen to relate to it using the same tools and methodology as the other Arab states in the region.

The risk in the creation of a failed Palestinian state is not only relevant to Israel since, as previously seen, a failed state affects not only its neighbors but also more distant states. Aaron Miller, former advisor to several US administrations on the issue of relations between Israel and the Palestinians, wrote an article asking, "Does the World Need a Weak or Failed Palestinian

State?" a question already presented by Henry Kissinger, the former US Secretary of State. Kissinger questioned the logic of creating a failed state in Palestine which would join other failed states in the region; a dangerous step, he claimed, in view of the growing strength of Iran and the Islamic State, which are exploiting every failed Arab state in order to expand their spheres of influence.[238]

The characteristics of Palestinian state failure should be assessed in order to identify its causes. This assessment must include not only the players that were involved in the creation of the Palestinian Authority but also the characteristics of Palestinian society that blocked the attainment of an independent state; for example, the political culture, social structure, economic system, and quality of governance. A deeper understanding of the failures will also allow for a better understanding of the geostrategic implications of the creation of a failed Palestinian state and the policy changes required of Israel, the Arab world, and the international community and improve the chances of achieving a functioning and responsible Palestinian state.

The characteristics of the Palestinian Authority's state failure

From the beginning, it was clear to the two parties in the Oslo agreement, Israel and the PLO, that the Palestinian Authority would not be able to develop without international assistance. Indeed, since the establishment of the Palestinian Authority in May 1994, the international community has provided massive assistance in various forms and formats. Most of the aid was provided as direct financial assistance to the Palestinian Authority, while some was earmarked for specific projects that were, for the most part, managed by the Palestinian Authority. Assistance was also provided, both inside and outside the territory of the Palestinian Authority, for the training of government officials and members of the security forces.

During Arafat's rule, the international community found it difficult to monitor the use of its funds, since Arafat stuck to a revolutionary political culture and refused to make the transition from revolution to state management. He made it a policy to maintain many competing mechanisms, especially security mechanisms, in order to prevent any one body from becoming strong enough to threaten his status. As in the earlier days of his dictatorial leadership of the PLO's armed struggle and revolutionary resistance, he was careful to compartmentalize the various apparatuses and mechanisms he had created. By nurturing their rivalry, he was able to guarantee complete

control over them and their resources.[239] The logic of this policy conflicts with the organizing logic of a state. It obstructs the ability of the state to maintain a monopoly on the use of force and disrupts any effort to build functioning and responsible state institutions. Ararat's policy resulted in endemic corruption, inefficiency, a lack of transparency, and feelings of alienation among the population from the Palestinian Authority and its senior officials. During the ten years of Arafat's absolute rule (even after he was forced to appoint Abu Mazen as head of the government), the international community did not manage to channel its generous aid toward constructive uses, and most of the aid money was wasted as a result of inefficiency and corruption. Arafat and the senior officials of the Palestinian Authority were known to have pocketed huge sums.[240]

Abu Mazen's replacement as chairman of the Palestinian Authority after the death of Arafat did not lead to any significant change in the management of the Palestinian Authority. The choice of Salam Fayyad as minister of finance was a sign of change, which became a real possibility when he became the prime minister. However, the takeover of the Gaza Strip by Hamas in June 2007 led to a split between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank and left the Palestinian Authority with no influence over what goes on in the Gaza Strip. As a result, the Palestinian Authority now bore the huge expense of paying the salaries of its former employees living in the Gaza Strip but receiving no services in return, which placed a huge burden on its budget.

In December 2007, Michael Eisenstadt of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy published a comprehensive document in which he analyzed the process of the establishment of the Palestinian Authority and defined it a failed state, even though it is not formally a state:

> Almost from the outset, however, the process of Palestinian state formation was accompanied by a parallel process of economic decline and institutional, territorial, and political fragmentation. The latter process was greatly accelerated by the second intifada (2000–2004), the formation of a Hamas government following January 2006 legislative elections (leading to international sanctions on the PA) and then a short-lived national-unity government, and the June 2007 Hamas takeover of Gaza. Today, the PA—hovering between survival and collapse—displays many of the traits of a failed state.[241]

The international community, understanding at a certain point that much of its financial assistance was being wasted, decided to adopt a more efficient mechanism to monitor the use of the funds. It viewed Fayyad as a reliable partner in this endeavor, and indeed during Fayyad's term as prime minister a real effort was made to build up the institutions of the state-in-the-making, train the security forces, improve the mechanism for enforcing law and order, and improve the collection of taxes. These efforts were reflected in a fundamental document written by the Palestinian administration under the direction of Fayyad in August 2009.[242] However, Fayyad's efforts threatened to exclude senior members of Fatah and the PLO from access to government funds and from the centers of influence, and he thus became a hated figure among them and their bitter enemy. They did not rest until he was destroyed politically and resigned.

It has been repeatedly claimed that Israel and the lack of progress in the peace process are responsible for the Palestinian Authority's low level of functioning. Although these claims cannot be completely refuted, they also cannot constitute the main explanation. While undoubtedly easier within the context of a peace agreement or process, the Palestinian Authority could nonetheless have built up its capabilities and improved its functioning in almost all its governmental activities. Likewise, the low level of functioning cannot be primarily attributed to the erosion of public legitimacy as a result of the stalled peace process. Lack of progress in the peace process is undeniably eroding the legitimacy of the Palestinian Authority and those who support a negotiated solution; however, the fundamental causes for this erosion are intrinsically related to Palestinian political culture.

After twenty years of generous international economic support for the Palestinian Authority (the highest level of assistance per capita ever given to a state or particular population group),[243] the Palestinian Authority has still not managed to build the infrastructure necessary for a functioning and sustainable state entity. Corruption is rampant; the functioning of the state institutions is deficient; the legal system is ineffective; the mechanism for tax collection is inefficient; the physical infrastructure is inferior; the economy is underdeveloped, not sustainable, and still dependent on external donations; unemployment is high (particularly among those with higher education—about 24 percent);[244] the provision of social services is inadequate without foreign aid; and the Palestinian Authority is not able to fully enforce a monopoly on the use of force.[245]

> In order to maintain quiet among the population, the government has reduced its investments and channeled most of its resources to salaries and transfer payments . . . Everyone is seeking a position in the Palestinian police, in a government office, in places where you work very little and earn a lot.
>
> This policy has made the Palestinian Authority a world record holder in expenditures on salaries and transfer payments . . . However, in practice, of the four billion dollars that the Palestinian Authority has received in recent years for investment purposes, only about one billion has been used for the construction of infrastructure . . . As a result, the foreign donors have begun to understand that their donations are not reaching their objective… and to withhold those donations. This has led to a budget crisis . . . the Palestinian Authority will soon reach a debt ceiling that will not allow it to pay salaries.[246]

Similar findings were presented in a 2013 audit report by the EU which relates to the use made of the EU's financial assistance. The report points to blatant structural weaknesses in the Palestinian economy and the state institutions and calls for major structural reforms, while at the same time calls on Israel to ease the restrictions on the movement of people and goods. The report stated that the Palestinian Authority is behind on salary payments to its employees and attributed this to the inflated state mechanisms and the decision by the Palestinian Authority to pay tens of thousands of salaries to its former employees in the Gaza Strip, who essentially receive a wage without having to work for it.[247]

The mechanisms for collecting taxes in the Palestinian Authority are not sufficiently developed, and the main source of revenue (based on the Paris Protocol) is the State of Israel, which transfers VAT and tariff payments that it collects on behalf of the Palestinian Authority.[248] Corruption in the Palestinian Authority—reflected in, for example, nepotism and the awarding of concessions to the well-connected—has existed from the moment it was established, and while somewhat moderated by the activities of Fayyad as minister of finance and later as prime minister, it is still widespread and adversely affects the Palestinian Authority's economic development.

A report published by the Middle East Monitor (MEMO) in December 2013 painted a similarly dismal picture. The report was based on the findings

of a EU report on corruption in the Palestinian Authority and claimed that between 2008 and 2012 €2 billion of financial assistance provided to the Palestinian Authority had vanished.[249] The report pointed to corrupt practices since the moment the Palestinian Authority was founded, claiming, for example, that senior officials in the Palestinian Authority and in Fatah had siphoned off large amounts of money that was meant to benefit the Palestinian people. According to MEMO, such corruption became a fixture after Fatah took control of the government and made it a source of income for senior officials and the well-connected.[250]

Aside from the substantial assistance provided by the international community, the Palestinian Authority has also received assistance from the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), which operates hundreds of schools and employs—thanks to the huge budget at its disposal—more than thirty thousand Palestinians in jobs such as teaching and food distribution. However, despite the massive assistance, the two semi-state Palestinian entities—in the Gaza Strip and in the West Bank—are facing a dangerous process of state failure.

MEMO report also included harsh criticism of the Palestinian security mechanisms and especially the intelligence mechanisms whose members have been using the financial assistance for their own private business enterprises.[251] It also quoted a recommendation made by the Coalition for Accountability and Integrity (AMAN) to reconsider the Palestinian Authority's institutions and to change its fiscal policy.[252] The concluding chapter warned that:

> The corruption filling the PA is not a simple or limited matter and has become a burden suffered by the citizens; corruption will continue to overwork and exhaust the people, as well as weaken the position of the PA in the sight of aid donors.[253]

While the Palestinian security mechanisms in the West Bank have developed and improved in recent years, they are still not able to enforce sovereignty over the Palestinian Authority's territory. As a result, some of the Palestinian refugee camps are used as bases of operation by Hamas and other armed organizations; the Palestinian security services, in the meanwhile, are afraid to operate there and avoid doing so.

A comprehensive comparative study was published in 2015 examining public opinion in the Palestinian Authority, Tunisia, Iraq, and Yemen about

security mechanisms and the feeling of security. The findings of the survey paint a disturbing picture in all the countries but particularly in the Palestinian Authority. Among other things, the respondents were asked to what extent they have confidence in the security mechanisms. While the average score was 0.53 (on a scale of 0-1), the Palestinian respondents scored only 0.50. In the eyes of the Palestinian public, the security mechanisms are corrupt organizations that mainly serve the political elite.[254]

The takeover of the Gaza Strip by Hamas and the splitting of the Palestinian Authority

In June 2007, Hamas completed its takeover of the Gaza Strip and split the Palestinian Authority into two separate and rival entities. Hamas is challenging the Palestinian Authority not only on the political and conceptual level but also on the military level.[255] In August 2014, the Israeli security service uncovered a coup plot by Hamas in the West Bank that had been planned while the two sides were implementing a reconciliation agreement and creating a national unity government. The head of the Palestinian Authority, Mahmoud Abbas, was enraged by the Hamas plan to take over the territory of Judea and Samaria, despite the fact that neither he nor the Palestinian Authority enjoys broad legitimacy. They no longer operate on the basis of having been elected, since the general elections that were scheduled for 2010 did not, in fact, take place and are unlikely to take place anytime in the near future.

Since taking over the Gaza Strip, Hamas has transformed it into a semi-state entity. It has taken over the institutions of the Palestinian Authority in the Gaza Strip and is managing the day-to-day life of the population while also developing the infrastructure and various military capabilities. In his comprehensive study published in December 2007, Eisenstadt stated that even before the Hamas takeover of the Gaza Strip, the Palestinian Authority was not able to fulfill the basic functions of a state including the provision of security to its citizens. Eisenstadt gave nine reasons for the state failure of the Palestinian Authority, some of which are connected to Israel and its policy toward the Palestinians. The four primary reasons (all starting with the letter "f" in Arabic) are related exclusively to the behavior of the Palestinians: *fawda* (chaos), *fitna* (internal strife), *falatan* (lawlessness), and *fassad* (corruption). According to Eisenstadt, these failures existed in

Judea and Samaria under the rule of the Palestinian Authority even during 2007 and are also prevalent in the Gaza Strip under the rule of Hamas.[256]

Hamas views itself as the replacement of the Palestinian Authority and is leading the armed struggle against Israel. It is opposed to the Oslo agreement and denies Israel's right to exist on both ideological and military grounds. The intensity of the conflict with Israel has increased over the years, culminating in three major IDF operations to restrain Hamas violence: Cast Lead (2008-9), Pillar of Defense (2012), and Protective Edge (2014).

Operation Protective Edge, taking place in the Gaza Strip during July and August 2014, deepened the division between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank and between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority led by Abbas. In the ceasefire negotiations in Egypt, the Palestinian delegation included representatives of Hamas and the Palestinian Authority whose disagreements and mutual hatred were apparent. Hamas, with the support of Qatar and Turkey, maintained a hard-line relative to the more moderate stance of Abbas, who was supported by Egypt and Saudi Arabia. Around the same time, Abbas was also drawn into a confrontation with Hamas leader, Khaled Mashal, in the palace of the Emir of Qatar.[257]

The Palestinian Authority, Israel, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia sought to exploit the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip after Operation Protective Edge in order to weaken Hamas and return control of the Gaza Strip to the Palestinian Authority. This initially seemed possible with Hamas and the Palestinian Authority agreeing on the return of responsibility for the border crossings (between the Gaza Strip and Egypt and between the Gaza Strip and Israel) to the Palestinian Authority's security forces. However, the agreement subsequently collapsed and with it the talks about the Palestinian Authority's participation in the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip. Hamas clearly has no intention of giving up control of the Gaza Strip, which it sees as its most important strategic asset and a springboard for the future takeover of the Palestinian Authority.

The Palestinian camp is deeply divided. While the Palestinian Authority is seeking to establish an independent Palestinian state, Hamas maintains a religious vision: the creation of an Islamic caliphate that will include all the territories in which Muslims reside. In other words, there are two leading Palestinian movements: secular national on the one hand, and religious-messianic on the other, with a huge chasm between them. The Palestinians thus have very little chance of reaching a consensus or any measure of

social unity and will find it difficult to create a functioning state entity also in the future.

Scenarios for the possible disintegration of the Palestinian Authority

A rather dismal assessment of the Palestinian Authority's stability and an analysis of the various scenarios for its possible collapse are presented in detail in a comprehensive report published in February 2014 by Khalil Shikaki, the head of the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research. The report emphasized that even though most Palestinians view the establishment of the Palestinian Authority as a national achievement, they question whether it is fulfilling its two main objectives: the achievement of independence and the building of state institutions.[258] The report also raised deep concern regarding the ability of the Palestinian Authority to achieve the legitimacy it needs to exist, to provide services to the Palestinian population, and to deal with crisis situations, particularly the split between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank and between Fatah and Hamas.[259] Journalist Khaled Abu Toameh presented an even more extreme appraisal and called on the international community to abandon the illusion of an independent Palestinian state:

> It is time for the international community to wake up and realize that the whole idea of establishing an independent Palestinian state is nothing but a joke. The last thing the Palestinians and the international community want is another Syria or Libya or Yemen in the Middle East.[260]

Shikaki's report emphasized the grave danger that threatens the citizens of the Palestinian Authority in the event of its collapse. The immediate result will be the collapse of law and order and the loss of about $3 billion in revenue that is used to pay the salaries of tens of thousands of Palestinian Authority employees. Another fear is the collapse of the private sector, the water and electricity infrastructures, the judicial system, and the health and education systems. The collapse of these systems will lead to a dramatic rise in poverty and crime; in such a reality, armed militias will take the law into their own hands. The likelihood of a violent clash between Israel and the Palestinians will increase significantly.[261] The report also claimed, as have many of the aforementioned reports, that many Palestinians view the Palestinian Authority as a body that serves the interests of several powerful elites who benefit politically and financially at the expense of the Palestinian

people.[262] This is a well-known characteristic of other failed states—both in the Arab world and in general—according to which the political power structure and the social structure are disconnected, and most of the public feel alienated from the centers of power and influence.

Shikaki also warned that the corruption and economic problems, primarily the difficulty in paying the salaries of Palestinian Authority employees, may lead to a crisis that results in the loss of legitimacy. He believes that if this loss of legitimacy and the process of disintegration are accompanied by internal violence, the Palestinian Authority will collapse.[263]

Is the Palestinian Authority liable to become a failed Palestinian state?
In the literature on the phenomenon of failed states, there is a clear tendency to emphasize the importance of building institutions, creating strong governance, and, in particular, ensuring the maintenance of law and order. To this end, a state must ensure that the monopoly on the use of force remains solely in its hands. The theoretical literature also attributes great importance to processes of democratization (to enable all of the population to participate in the political process) and the formulation of a constitution that lays the foundations for free elections.

The international community has abundant experience in missions to reconstruct failed states, which are characterized by violent internal conflict accompanied by a severe humanitarian crisis. It has less experience in assisting the establishment of new state entities, such as Kosovo and East Timor. The case of the Palestinian Authority is even more complex than these latter two examples. There have, in essence, been two separate Palestinian entities since 2007: the Gaza Strip, which is an independent and armed entity that does not accept the sovereignty of the Palestinian Authority and seeks to overthrow and replace it, and the West Bank, where there are armed organizations challenging the Palestinian Authority and in control of large areas where the Palestinian security forces are unable to enter. Without the ongoing counterterrorism activities of the IDF, the West Bank is likely to have become a base of operations for frequent terrorist attacks against Israel with the Palestinian Authority capitulating as it did in the Gaza Strip. As Eisenstadt stated, "the PA has consistently proven unwilling or unable to establish a monopoly over the legitimate use of force in the territories—a key defining feature of a successful state."[264]

Without a monopoly on the use of force, there is no functioning state. Making use of this monopoly requires a show of determination by the state's security forces and an ability to impose a high price on any organization or individual that refuses to put down their arms. The Palestinian Authority has thus far refrained from demonstrating such determination and shows no sign of doing so in the foreseeable future.

The international community has not managed to initiate a process to build a Palestinian state nor has the Palestinian leadership demonstrated such a capability. It is doubtful that it even wants or intends to do so. In practice, the Gaza Strip is an entity at a high and dangerous level of state failure, while the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank is a weak and non-sustainable entity with a low level of functioning. Without a prolonged, organized, and responsible process of state-building, there is no real chance of these entities developing—whether separately or together—into functioning states.

It is questionable whether a model of international trusteeship is appropriate to the Palestinian situation as it now stands after more than twenty years of semi-independent existence. The Palestinians are likely to view such a model as a kind of neo-colonialism that distances them from their vision of an independent state and neutralizes their direct effect on the process, the population, the territory, and the resources. However, past experience has shown that if the state-building process is placed exclusively in the hands of the Palestinian Authority, there is no real chance of establishing a functioning state but rather a greater likelihood of a failed state that will become a focus of regional instability and a security risk to Israel, Jordan, and probably Egypt to some extent. There are those who cast doubt on the possibility of the Palestinians managing to build a modern and functioning nation-state even with international assistance:

> the expectations that the Palestinians will build a modern state in the near future, even with Western assistance, are naïve. It took centuries to build nation states in Europe. With the exception of Egypt, an historical entity possessing a level of cultural coherence, attempts at state-building in the Middle East have met only partial success. Lebanon, Iraq and Somalia are all examples of political entities grappling with the problem of establishing central authority and with modernity.[265]

Israel's disengagement from the Gaza Strip in 2005 was another test that the Palestinian Authority failed. Although the disengagement was a unilateral move, there was, in practice, coordination between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. The Gaza Strip was handed over to the Palestinian Authority with its agricultural infrastructure intact and could have served as the basis for developing Palestinian agriculture and creating numerous jobs; however, the Palestinian Authority did not manage to leverage the process nor the infrastructure to accelerate the process of state-building in the Gaza Strip, and two years after the withdrawal it even lost control of the territory.

More than twenty years of a peace process and of international aid have not resulted in the capability to build a functioning state entity. The unavoidable conclusion is that without Palestinian commitment to initiate political reform, combat terror, disarm the militias, and defeat the extremists, "the rest of the world can do little to spare the Palestinians from a future that looks much like their recent past and that is characterized by more chaos, strife and lawlessness, economic hardship, and conflict with Israel."[266]

Conclusions should also be drawn from the experience gained from numerous international missions for the peacekeeping and reconstruction of failed states, particularly due to the current regional upheaval. Israel, the Palestinians, the states in the region, and the international community cannot continue doing more of the same. They must address the various factors responsible for the current situation in the Palestinian territories "so that this process could be halted, if not reversed."[267] The Palestinians need to demonstrate responsibility, commitment, and perseverance. The international community needs to provide resources, a sober perspective, and creativity. Only then, after reaching an agreement with Israel, can a functioning Palestinian state emerge, which is unlikely to become a failed Palestinian state that endangers not only Israel but also its Arab neighbors.

Chapter 6

The Strategic Implications for Israel

The regional upheaval accelerated the trends of disintegration and instability in most of the Arab nation-states. These trends are manifested in such things as the rapid expansion of non-state actors operating in those countries—primarily terrorist organizations and criminal organizations[268]—and increased external intervention in their affairs. Thus, for example, the following countries are currently involved in the civil war in Syria, whether directly or indirectly: Iran, Russia, the United States, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and the Gulf emirates. There is intensive external intervention also in Iraq, Yemen, and Libya.

The disintegration of the Arab states reduces the conventional military threats to Israel. The Syrian army, for example, is worn out after five years of constant fighting and is thus not currently a threat to Israel. Likewise, the Iraqi army, previously part of the eastern front threatening Israel, is in a weakened condition and is preoccupied with the endless civil war. Moreover, the military-strategic alliance between Egypt, Jordan, and Israel is only getting stronger as a result of common strategic interests. However, the disintegration of the Arab states poses different threats to Israel, including instability, which, as already emphasized, tends to spread from one country to another in various forms, such as terror, crime, refugees, and the smuggling of advanced weaponry.[269] An up-to-date analysis of the threat facing Israel from the failed states and the sub-state organizations (which are a by-product of the failed states) was published in August 2015 in a document called "The IDF Strategy":

> The threats to the State of Israel are as follows: distant states (Iran) and close states (Lebanon), failed states in the process of disintegration (Syria), sub-state organizations (Hezbollah and Hamas) or terrorist organizations without ties to a state or particular community (global jihad, the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, ISIS, and others).[270]

There have been claims that the situation also involves opportunities for Israel, such as the chance to establish relations with minorities who may one day win independence or autonomy.[271] Thus, for example, it has been suggested that Israel should examine the possibility of establishing ties with the Druze in Syria (even though at this point they tend to cooperate with Hezbollah and with Assad) or the Kurds in Iraq and Syria (although such a move would most definitely sabotage efforts to restore relations with Turkey).[272] Israel is currently adopting a policy of complete non-intervention in the civil war east of its borders, unless its vital interests are threatened. Israel's Prime Minister Netanyahu has publicly admitted that:

> We operate in Syria from time to time in order to prevent it from becoming a front against Israel. We also operate on the terrorist front which Iran is trying to create in the Golan and in order to prevent the transfer of particularly dangerous weapons from Syria to Lebanon. And this we will continue to do.[273]

The foreign media has claimed that this primarily involves bombing convoys carrying advanced weaponry from the Syrian army to Hezbollah.[274]

The failed states in the Middle East are also endangering Israel's international political status. As mentioned, a failed state exports instability—terror, crime, and refugees—to both its immediate and more distant neighbors.[275] There are thus many examples of Muslim citizens of Europe, the United States, or Canada joining extremist jihadi organizations that are fighting in Syria, Iraq, and Libya and returning as trained terrorists with a deep hatred for the West. Evidence of the threat they represent can be found in, for example, the recent terrorist attacks in Brussels (2016) and Paris (2015).[276] The increase in jihadi terror in Europe has led at least some European state leaders to take a hard line on Israel due to the (mistaken) belief that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is one of the reasons for the chaos in the Middle East and that an agreement would result in greater calm, fewer refugees, and a reduction in security risks. The mood created in these European countries is fertile ground for those looking to delegitimize and boycott Israel. Israeli claims that there is no connection between the Palestinian issue and the problems in the region fall on deaf ears.

So what should Israel be doing in view of the new reality in its environment? There is no doubt that the state failure experienced by many countries in the region has become a serious strategic threat that requires Israel to redefine

its strategic interests on every regional front and upgrade its toolbox with strategies that will provide appropriate responses.[277] This means challenging the existing paradigms and examining alternative ones that include a broad regional perspective, the creation of areas of common interest with pragmatic Arab countries, and the examination of possibilities for cooperation with non-state actors in the region.

The strategic challenge may become more complex if the Palestinian Authority turns into a failed state. Unlike weak or failed states in the second and third circles, a Palestinian state will be in close proximity to Israel and dangerously close to Israel's population centers and infrastructures. A lack of stability within the Palestinian state and the absence of a monopoly on the use of force are likely to spread eastward and influence the behavior of the Palestinian population in Jordan or at least part of that population (primarily the part that identifies with Hamas). This will thus threaten Jordan's stability, which is an important strategic asset for Israel.

The Gaza Strip is a prime example of the potential harm that can by caused by the existence of a failed entity on Israel's borders. Not only is Israel forced to restrain Hamas every two to three years with a major military operation, but it must also deal with the instability caused by its collaboration with jihadi organizations in the Sinai Peninsula. The damage that would be caused to Israel if a Gazan entity were to gain a foothold in the West Bank is inestimable.[278] Therefore, Israel must ensure that any Palestinian state that is created will be a functioning and responsible state. Any agreement on a Palestinian state must also include the disarming of the Gaza Strip and its rehabilitation within the framework of a Palestinian state.[279] Recently, organizations that identify with the Islamic State have started operating in the Gaza Strip. They seek to challenge Hamas' sovereignty by, for example, launching rockets at Israel in order to draw it into another military confrontation. This, they believe, will further undermine Hamas' hold on the Gaza Strip and make it easier for them to take over. Israel needs to upgrade its operational and response capability and to successfully maneuver between its desire to normalize the security situation and enable the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip—with some form of coordination with Hamas—and the necessity to preserve its deterrent ability.

From Israel's point of view, the regional upheaval and processes of state failure that are spreading through the region have undermined the regional order, changed the rules of the game, and shifted the balance of power.

Instead of sovereign states with political responsibility, Israel now faces numerous entities, none of whom can be deterred or punished or can be a potential partner for dialogue. And when there is no one to deter, Israel loses its deterrent ability, which is one of the foundations of its national security policy.

After six years of regional upheaval, Israel finds itself surrounded by three circles of states and entities that are in various stages of state failure:

1. The inner circle is composed of the Gaza Strip and the Palestinian Authority.
2. The second circle includes the Sinai Peninsula, the Golan Heights and South Lebanon, and Israel's neighboring states—Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan.
3. The third circle comprises more distant countries such as Libya, Iraq, and Yemen.

The three circles overlap with each other and abound with non-state actors—most of whom are extreme terrorist organizations, which, in some cases, operate as a network[280]—alongside foreign state entities. The latter exploit state failure in order to promote their interests, including their desire to attack and weaken Israel. Thus, for example, Iran operates in Syria, Lebanon, the Gaza Strip, and even Yemen. Qatar, on the other hand, openly supports Hamas (and other jihadi organizations) and forces Hamas to take a hard line in order to improve Qatar's own status and prestige in the region and to guarantee an "insurance policy" that will distance these proxies' threats and their motivation to undermine the regime, thus feeding Hamas militarism and the ongoing violent confrontation.[281]

The international entities that are active in some parts of the region are, on the one hand, not making any contribution to their stability and, on the other hand, limiting Israel's freedom to act against terror. This can be illustrated by UNRWA activities in the Gaza Strip: during Operation Protective Edge Hamas was found to be using UNRWA facilities for the storage of weapons, including missiles. Hamas exploited Israel's attack on these warehouses in order to wage a campaign of delegitimization.[282] It was evident throughout this operation that even though Israel was facing a semi-state entity, which is not obligated by any accepted norms of warfare, international coverage of the fighting was biased, one-sided, and hostile toward Israel.[283]

Alongside the numerous threats that result from having failed states as neighbors, opportunities also arise primarily due to the convergence of interests between Israel and some of the key states in the region who are

facing similar threats. Israel may also benefit from the rise of non-state actors who do not identify with radical Sunni or Shiite Islam and with whom it is possible to establish strategic ties. It is not impossible that a reorganization of the failed states in the region into weak federal frameworks or, alternatively, the fragmentation of some of the failed states into smaller yet more coherent states will enable new opportunities for cooperation and integration within the region. These new entities could benefit from Israeli assistance in order to grow and develop and to become functioning state entities.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

The regional upheaval, which began six years ago, has left its mark on the Middle East and entirely changed the logic underlying its structure. The Arab world today is in no way the same as it was before. Many Arab nation-states—which survived and functioned for years only because they were ruled by autocratic regimes that relied on brutal security apparatuses, oppression and intimidation—are in an accelerated process of state failure. Several are in a process of disintegration, a process which is likely to precipitate their disappearance. They will be replaced by states or other entities that function at various levels of stability and responsibility, which will inevitably influence the stability of the region as a whole.

The escalation of intrastate conflicts into regional confrontations exposes the neighbors of weak and failed states to numerous dangers that can undermine their stability and their security. Thus, as we have seen, Saudi Arabia has been affected by the spread of internal conflicts from Yemen; Mali has suffered from the spillover of the civil war in Libya; Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon have had to absorb millions of refugees from Syria; and Israel is forced to deal with terror based in the Sinai Peninsula because Egypt no longer controls most of that territory. Syria is a prime example of the adverse and large-scale effects of a failed state on the region as a whole. The disastrous humanitarian situation in Syria (as of 2015 and since then the numbers have changed) has led to a mass exodus of refugees to neighboring countries: Turkey has absorbed 1.8 million refugees, Lebanon 1.1 million, Jordan almost one million, Egypt more than 100,000 refugees, and Iraq about 230,000.[284] The millions of refugees are not only a huge economic burden but also a complex demographic problem, particularly in countries that are built on a delicate balance between ethnic groups.[285]

Alongside the spillover of intrastate conflicts from failed states, we are also witnessing the intervention of external entities within the failed states

in order to protect their interests. This includes, for example, Saudi Arabia's war in Yemen against the Iranian-backed Houthis and the dispatch of Iranian forces to Syria in order to assist Assad. This external intervention creates a vicious circle: it escalates the intrastate confrontation, causing the failed state to become even weaker, thus inviting additional foreign intervention, and so it goes on. As a result of this process, the intrastate conflict becomes a regional, perhaps even international, conflict and should therefore be defined as an "interlocked conflict."[286]

The superpowers that intervene to support one of the sides in an intra-national conflict are usually convinced that they are entering into a client-patron relationship in which they are in full control of the client. However, in some cases, this is no more than an illusion, and we often witness cases of clients who bite the hand feeding them by ignoring or defying the interests or instructions of their patron and adopting an independent course of action. This was seen in the case of Saudi Arabia and Qatar, which supported ISIS in Syria and Iraq but eventually lost control of the organization and even subsequently became the targets of terrorist attacks.[287]

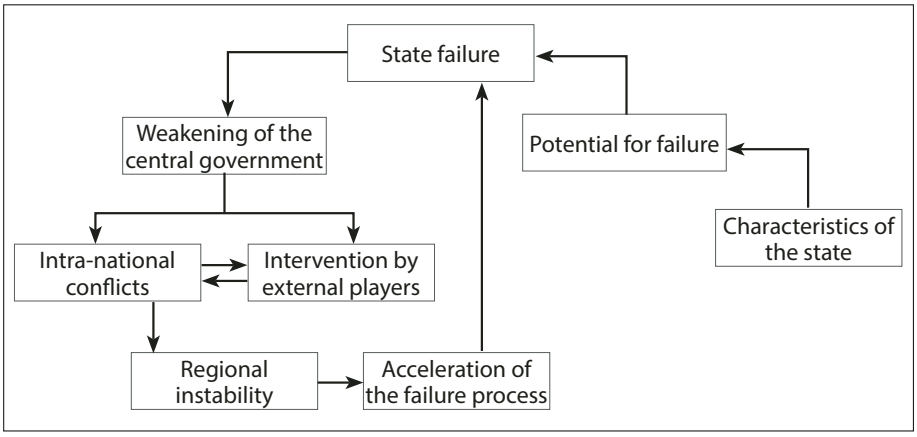
According to Hudson's model,[288] presented in Chapter 1, the degree of state failure can be gauged using two variables: the intensity of fragmentation of its national identity and the effectiveness of its central government. If applied in the Middle East, it can be concluded that Syria, Yemen, Libya, Iraq, and ostensibly the Palestinian Authority are failed states (or a failed entity in the case of the latter) due to the combination of low effectiveness of the central government and a highly fragmented national/political identity. Egypt, Lebanon, and Jordan are in a more stable situation, but each has a series of unique problems that place them on the axis of state failure, if not technically failed states.

The twelve CAST (Conflict Assessment System Tool) indexes, which can be used to measure the degree of state failure,[289]attribute greater importance to internal indexes (economic, political, and public legitimacy), than external ones (intervention by foreign entities), but it appears that the failure of countries in the Middle East is the result of a complex and problematic combination of both internal and external indexes.

The failed states and those in the process of failing become the setting for intervention by state entities, such as Iran, and non-state entities, such as terrorist and guerilla organizations. The expansion in the activity of external entities is made possible by the weakness of the central government and the

rapid expansion of the ungoverned periphery in those countries. At the same time, the expansion in the activity of external entities accelerates processes of state failure. These two interwoven processes eventually lead to the rapid undermining of regional stability, a growing number of refugees, the collapse of the economic system, and stronger ties between terror and crime. The reconstruction missions usually ignore the link between terror and crime and as a result reduce the chances of their own success.[290] The tragic outcome of this reality is reduced security for millions of people in the region.

Figure 3: Reciprocal relations between internal factors and external factors in the state failure process



The state failure process in the region and the total collapse of some countries into chaos have led to the expansion of ungoverned peripheries. These regions become an incubator for terrorist organizations and non-state actors of various types and serve as their launching pads to the rest of the region. This expansion is accomplished by establishing a territorial continuum or by creating a network structure without a geographic continuum. ISIS, for example, has created a combination of territorial continuum (such as in Syria and Iraq) and network expansion without territorial continuum (such as in Sinai and Libya) by means of organizations such as Ansar Bayit al-Maqdis in Sinai, which has sworn allegiance to the Islamic State and its leader.

New state entities have arisen on the ruins of failed states in the Middle East. On the one hand, these are no longer just organizations but neither are they states; rather, they can be seen as hybrid non-state actors who develop supranational identity characteristics and operate in the name of a universal

ideology.[291] All of these organizations reject the Arab nation-state model and do not recognize borders. They undermine regional and global stability, and their political goal is to fundamentally change the existing situation and to create an Islamic caliphate in the entire region and even beyond it. They use violence extensively in order to intimidate their opponents and make efficient use of the social networks. Nonetheless, it should be noted that despite their universalist ideology, these organizations are, at least at this stage, territorially based: ISIS in Syria and Iraq, Hamas in the Gaza Strip, and Hezbollah in South Lebanon and the Beqaa Valley all control extensive territories and large populations whose day-to-day needs must be provided for.

The international community has only limited ability to intervene in failed states, suppress the violent rebel forces, and support the stabilization of the nation-states and the regional system. These limitations result from a lack of the political will needed to intervene in areas of conflict, the conceptual and operational weakness of peacekeeping and state-building missions, and the understanding of the finite lifespan for intervention in these areas. To these should be added the problems resulting from competition between the aid organizations and the difficulties in coordinating between the various missions operating in regions of conflict, which reduce even further the chances of success and, in many cases, may even exacerbate or escalate the situation.[292]

The international community's lack of interest in reconstructing failed states is also the result of experience—most of it negative—that has accumulated over the years from such reconstruction missions. These missions are always very expensive and usually involve combat and causalities that are not acceptable to public opinion in the West; such as the case in Somalia in 1993 when Western public opinion would not tolerate terrorist acts against military forces that had been sent to save lives and provide assistance. The chaos in the Middle East can thus be expected to continue for many more years, and the stable countries in the region, such as Israel, can expect to face many additional tests.

All these aforementioned challenges are part of the strategic environment in which Israel must act to protect its vital interests. Israel is clearly a status-quo state that wishes to prevent destabilizing changes and to minimize threats. The map of threats facing Israel has changed as a result of the regional upheaval. Even before that, Israel had to deal with semi-sovereign entities and found it difficult to effectively deter them or to achieve decisive

victory—in the classic sense—in military confrontations. As a result of the regional upheaval, the number of non-state adversaries confronting Israel is likely to grow, and Israel needs to formulate a new security approach to meet this type of threat.

Despite the geostrategic changes resulting from the regional upheaval, it would be premature to write off the nation-state. Relatively stable nation-states, such as Egypt, will probably continue to exist in the familiar format, and new and stable nation-states will perhaps emerge, such as a Kurdish state. It is even too early to eulogize Syria and Iraq, since the superpowers may manage to impose arrangements that will preserve their existing frameworks; however, they are unlikely to return to their former situations, primarily because neither an Iraqi nor Syrian people ever existed. Their only chance of surviving is in the format of a loose federation in which ethnic and religious minorities enjoy broad autonomy. This kind of setup is working well in Bosnia, but in order to impose such a model in the Middle East two conditions need to be fulfilled: massive intervention by the superpowers and the destruction of the Islamic State. As things currently stand, this seems unlikely.

An alternative option is to create a large number of states along ethnic and religious lines on the ruins of today's failed states. While relatively small, these states would be more coherent and stable. Thus, for example, Iraq could be split into three states—Shiite, Sunni, and Kurdish—and Syria into Alawite, Sunni, and Kurdish states.

Although the results of the regional upheaval present Israel with new and complex threats, they also present strategic opportunities, such as cooperation with pragmatic Arab states facing the same threats as Israel, i.e., jihadi organizations and Iran. Furthermore, Israel now has an opportunity for cooperation with non-state actors, such as the Kurds, who are not identified with any of its adversaries and are characterized by governance and state responsibility. The benefits that Israel derives from the current situation should not be ignored: the Syrian and Iraqi armies are no longer a threat, and Hezbollah is occupied in Syria and worn down, undoubtedly gaining important combat experience but paying a heavy price. By the end of 2015, between 1300 and 1500 Hezbollah fighters had been killed and about 5000 wounded; casualties accounting for more than one-third of the its strength.[293] Israel's situation with respect to Iran is also ambiguous. On the one hand, the regional upheaval has enabled Iran to intervene more extensively in a large number of countries and to approach the border with Israel on the Golan

Heights; on the other hand, Iran's resources are spread thin, thus weakening it. This is a heavy price to pay even when acknowledging the significant benefits it is enjoying following the signing of the nuclear agreement.

The regional instability and its geostrategic ramifications dictate that Israel, the pragmatic Arab countries, and the international community must take a cautious approach to the process of establishing a Palestinian state. They need to ensure that this process will be responsible and prudent in order to prevent it from becoming yet another failed state in the region. A failed Palestinian state is a real threat to the security of the region—first and foremost to Israel but also to Jordan and Egypt. Therefore, Israel and the pragmatic Arab countries have common interests and the time would appear ripe for an Israeli initiative to renew the peace process, based on the idea of a responsible process to build an independent Palestinian state which will take into account the structural weaknesses of the divided Palestinian Authority as it exists today. It should nonetheless be kept in mind that the continuation of the status quo may have severe consequences on the existing peace agreements and on the feasibility of achieving additional agreements with our neighbors.

The weakening of Egypt and Jordan as a result of the deteriorating economic situation, the refugee problem (in Jordan), and the increasing threat from ISIS and radical jihad may lead to the collapse of the state apparatus in these two key countries, thus bringing the threat closer to Israel. However, such a scenario involves not only the threat of jihadi terror but also a much larger and more complex threat that includes alternative political entities, which would replace the responsible nation-states currently in place. These entities would contribute state-like military capabilities to the threat against Israel.

Whatever the case, Israel must continue to upgrade its intelligence capabilities in order to monitor and analyze the evolving trends. There is therefore a need to develop additional capabilities for the gathering of social, economic, political, and cultural information that will facilitate the forecasting and assessment of trends in the region.

The Arab world is facing one of its most difficult periods. Up until this point, almost all the countries that have experienced regime change suffer from one level or another of instability. According to the scholar Mamoun Fandy:

> The good news, however, is that if Israel wants to strike a grand deal with the Arabs, now is the time to do it. Arab states are in their weakest political positions for a long time, and given their internal political upheavals they are ready to sign a comprehensive deal.[294]

But can the weakened Arab states achieve public support for an agreement that will be more than just a piece of paper? The answer remains unclear.

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