

THE ARAB SPRING: IMPLICATIONS FOR AFRICA

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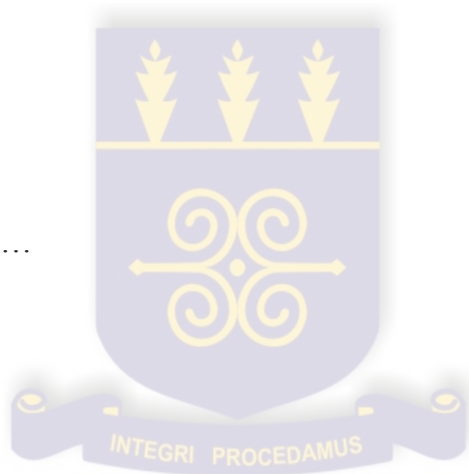
LEGON

JULY 2014

DECLARATION

I, Korbieh Felix, here-by do declare that except for the references to other people's work which has been duly acknowledged, this work is the result of my own research and it has not been presented either in part or in whole for the award of a degree or a professional qualification in Ghana or elsewhere.

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DEDICATION

To God, for the strength, wisdom and grace for a successful completion.

To my wife, Flora, who gave me contentment of life and hope.

To my children, Jayden and Nicole who gave me joy and meaning to life.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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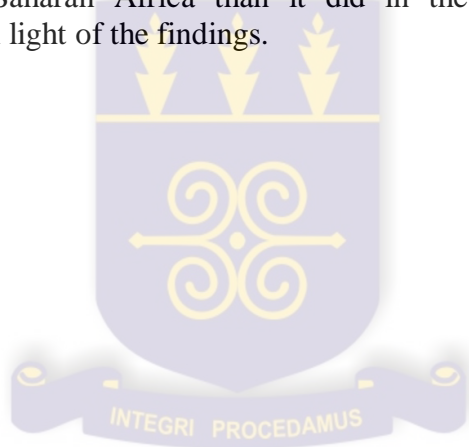
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ABSTRACT

The Arab Spring is an ongoing wave of demonstrations and protests in the Arab world, which began in December 2010. Popular protests have led to the overthrow of regimes in Tunisia and Egypt; a civil war in Libya; civil uprisings in Bahrain, Syria and Yemen; major protests in Algeria, Jordan, Morocco and Oman; and minor protests in a number of other countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. This study examined the political, economic, social and security aspects of the African continent with respect to the implications of the Arab Spring that recently plagued the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Region. Exploratory research design was used to examine the implications of the Arab Spring for Africa. The needed data and information for this study was primarily gathered through secondary sources. The exploratory nature of this study was a factor with regards to primary data sources. In-depth readings were done and vital lessons from them were inculcated into this study. Thematic data analysis indicated among other things that, indeed the Arab Spring has a greater influence on the political dynamics of Africa than on the social sphere. Again, the existing weakness in the economies, coupled with the rippling effect of weapon proliferation due to the Arab Spring has grave socio – political implications for Africa. Furthermore, social media plays a less likely role in democratization in sub Saharan Africa than it did in the Arab spring. A number of recommendations are made in light of the findings.



CHAPTER ONE

RESEARCH DESIGN

1.1 Background to the Study

There is no doubt that the new threats to peace and security on the African continent are real. Already, Africa's dynamic security environment is characterized by great diversity – from conventional challenges such as insurgencies, resource and identity conflicts, and post-conflict stabilization to growing threats from piracy, narcotics trafficking, violent extremism, and organized crime taking root in Africa's urban slums, among others.

The experience from North Africa tells us that Africa faces a serious threat of becoming a conflict-prone continent again. This presents a danger to the peace, security and development of the African continent. If the continent's leadership does not go beyond communiqués and unimplemented resolutions roll up their sleeves and face these issues, social unrest has the potential to spill over to other countries and undermine the wellbeing of citizens.¹

Since an obscure young fruit vendor named Muhammad Bouazizi set himself on fire in the dusty Tunisian town of Sidi Bouzid in December 2010, the flames that ended his life have spread across the entire Middle East, both figuratively and literally. The protests, demonstrations, and upheavals originally inspired by his action have acquired a variety of terms – Arab spring, Arab awakening, and Arab uprising – and they have ousted, threatened, or at least frightened almost every ruling regime in the Arab world. The terms used to describe this phenomenon clearly connote a sharp break from the decades of political stagnation and quietism that preceded

Bouazizi's desperate act and imply that some momentous region-wide transformation has been set in motion.²

According to Karbo (2011), the Arab Spring emerged from confrontations between citizens demanding new and better governance and positive changes in their lives and those benefiting from the status quo. It started on December 17, 2010, when Mohammed Bouazizi, a computer science graduate who struggled to find work and had taken to fruit selling in Sidi Bouzid, Tunisia, set himself on fire in protest at the confiscation of his wares and the humiliation inflicted upon him by the municipal agents. This act of self-immolation created uproar among Tunisians that forced its president, Zine al-Abedin Ben Ali, to flee the country. Then, like a wildfire, it moved from one country to the next until it engulfed almost the entire Arab region.³

On January 14, 2011, protests took place in Jordan's capital and other major cities that were triggered by deteriorating economic conditions and inspired by events in Tunisia. On 17 January, one day after Ben Ali's departure, another young man set himself on fire near the Egyptian parliament. Within a week, coordinated mass protests began in Tahrir Square in Egypt, and on January 25, 2011, a computer-savvy Egyptian reached out to youths on Facebook to organize a protest rally in his country against police brutality, the state of emergency laws, lack of free elections and freedom of speech, and corruption in high places, forcing the resignation of long-serving Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, who handed over power to the military on 11 February 2011⁴.

On February 15, 2011, thousands of Libyans protested after the Libyan government arrested human rights attorney Fathi Terbi in Benghazi, Libya, leading to armed rebellion against Colonel Gadhafi, who was eventually captured and killed. On January 16, 2011, two days after the fall of Tunisian president Ben Ali, a 32-year-old mother of three in Yemen posted a message on Facebook, calling on the people to celebrate the Tunisian uprising. On February 14, 2011, inspired by the upheavals in Tunisia and Egypt, an anti-government rally was organized in Bahrain during which a protester was killed; and on March 13, 2011, Syrian security forces opened fire on people who had gathered in Deraa's main mosque in southern Syria to deliberate on how to respond to the arrests of a few students who wrote anti – regime slogans on their school walls.⁵

Even though sub-Saharan Africa is not being swept by any such wave of revolutions, there are some real consequences for Africa. For Africa, the implications are many. Economically, we would be hit by the chaos in the Arab world as oil prices shoot up. Security wise, we are uncertain how the transformation taking place would end. If the intra – state chaos continues, the possibility of its spread to sub-Saharan Africa is real. According to Antwi – Danso, already, Al-Qaeda in Africa is linking up fast with the Boko Haram and Al Shabab of Nigeria and Somalia respectively. The possibility of gun-running within the sub-region is real.⁶

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Several propositions and views have been expressed since the Arab Spring begun and even during this post – recovery period for some of the North African countries. Its implications on the MENA region, Europe, America and Asia have also been examined. Yet, very few have

critically considered the political, economic, and social implications of the Arab Spring for the African continent. This study therefore sought to place the Arab Spring into perspective and interrogate its possible effects on the rest of Africa.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to examine the Arab Spring and its political, economic, and social implications for Africa. Specific objectives include:

- To assess the geo – political, strategic and security implications for sub – Saharan Africa
- To determine the economic and social implications of the Arab Spring

1.4 Research Rationale

This research will add to the body of knowledge on the Arab Spring and serve as a source of material for future research.

Findings from this study would provide insight into some of the root causes of what came to be known as the Arab Spring and to analyze the consequences that the uprisings have had on the political dynamic in Africa, with particular focus on the political dynamic within continental body – the African Union (AU).

This study would also help to discern the broader relevance of the pre- and post events of the Arab Spring and their implications for Africa’s democratic trajectory. In particular, the

sustainability of these democratic advances as well as the seriousness in the prospects for further democratic transitions across the continent.

Again, this study would help explore fresh options to manage Africa's seeming fragility and the implications of the uprisings in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

1.5 Scope of the Study

This study is designed to examine the Arab Spring and its economic, social and political implications for Africa. The MENA Region comprises 22 Arab nations. However, only 12 of these nations have witnessed uprisings (with Libya and Syria experiencing more violent conflicts). In view of this, the study was limited to those nations in the MENA Region where the Arab Spring begun and have had a much greater involvement.

1.6 Hypothesis

The Arab Spring has a greater influence on the politico-security dynamics of Africa than on the social-economic sphere.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

Securitization Theory attempts an appreciable explanation of the Arab Spring, despite the diverse commonalities between Arab states' authoritative patterns.

Securitization is rooted in the basic idea that the existence and management of certain issues as security problems does not necessarily depend upon objective, or purely material conditions. Another way to cash in on the same formula is to say that something acquires a security status as a result of an inter-subjective process involving a securitizing actor and an audience. In this sense, ‘security has a particular discursive and political force and is a concept that does something – securitize – rather than an objective (or subjective) condition’⁷.

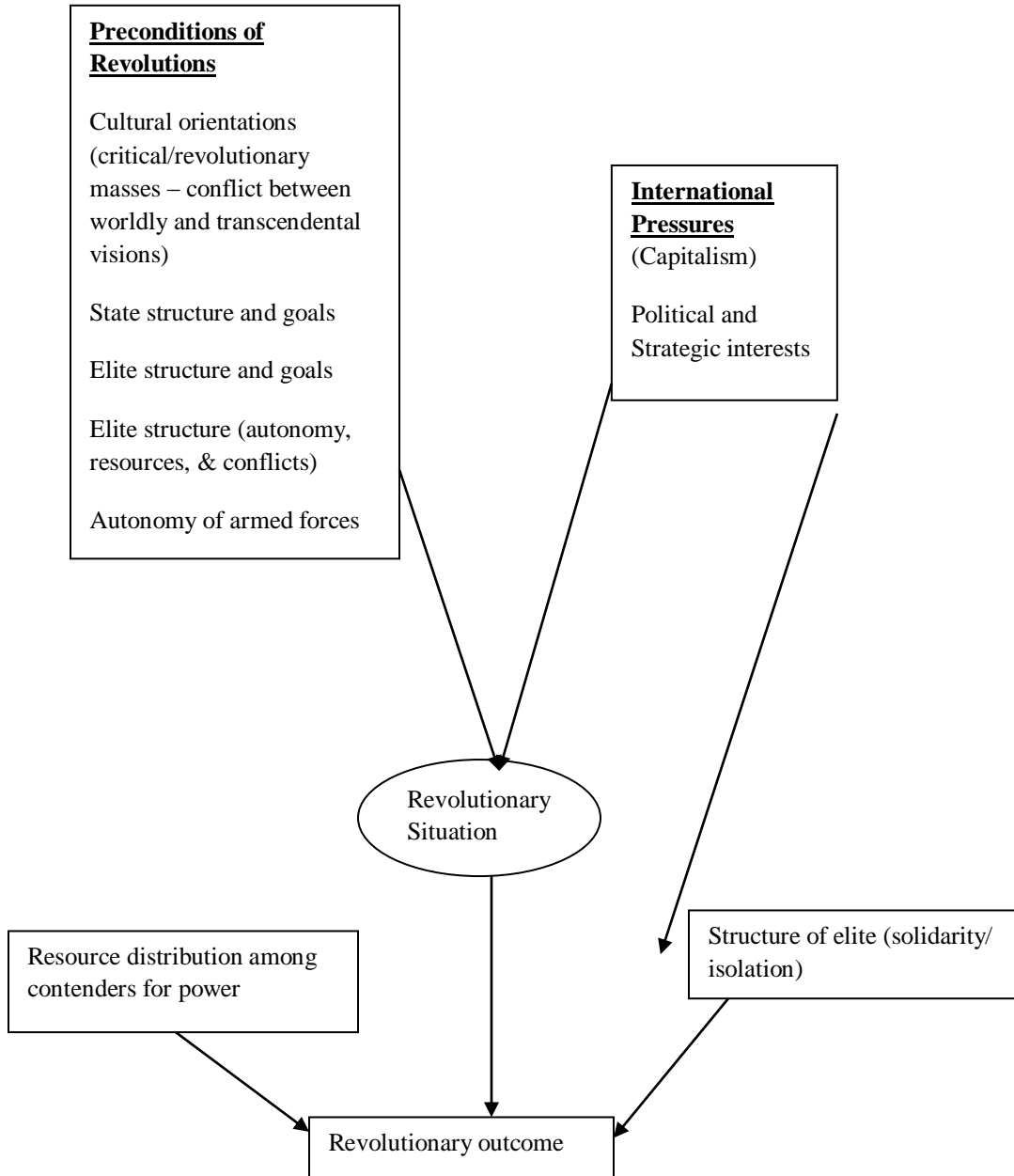
According to Hayes,⁸ the basic state-centrist nature of securitization theory means that it can neither account for nor provide any basis for understanding the exceptional measures that comprise security when securitizing moves are mounted by non-state actors. This is especially the case in weak or mismanaged states, where the state is either unable or unwilling (because it is the source of threat) to undertake the extraordinary measures that accompany securitization.

The Arab Spring provides a good referent for understanding the extraordinary measures issue. If the nation-state is set up as a political duality—the state and the society—then when non-state actors are making security claims, they are actually doing so as part of the socio-political governance system, just on the society end rather than on the government end. For normal politics to function, both sides must participate. Thus, when looking for extraordinary measures in situations where non-state actors are the primary securitizing actors, the behavior of society rather than the state is ideal.

The Arab Spring might therefore be understood as the result of a successful securitizing move, executed by non-state actors, in which the extraordinary measures are undertaken by large

elements of society against the state. In the activities of revolution—occupying public spaces, mass protests, civil disobedience—society breaks free of the rules that govern normal politics within weak or poor states.⁹

Arab Uprisings: A Framework of Analysis



Adopted from Mustapha's (2011) Arab Spring Uprisings: Revolutionary Patterns and Theoretical Explanations

1.8 Review of Literature

The whole of Middle East and majority of North Africa has been under a pro-democratic wave since December 2010, trebling at high decibels and taking the form- the Arab Spring. Indeed, not only has modern world has not witnessed such a huge cry of common man in recent times but Arab regimes have not been transformed or challenged to a similar extent ever since the 'socialist revolutions of the 1950s and 60s that brought down the monarchies of Egypt and Iraq alongside the parliamentary republic in Syria¹⁰.

Being fed up with the autocratic regimes, the people have been on the streets fighting hard and in the process have succeeded in overthrowing some of the "toughest" political establishments in the MENA region. This has certainly emerged as a critical movement in the political and social development of the entire region.

The reactions of the uprising are mixed, while some have compared it to the downfall of the Ottoman Empire, a few others have drawn parallel to the Iranian revolution of 1979. Political historians feel that this uprising will completely end the old colonial state order of the British and French umpires carved out in 1916¹¹.

The MENA region, for the first time has witnessed such large scale pro-democratic campaigning with millions of suppressed souls from varied demographic background, including tribal identities have come to the fore. Dynastic and republican regimes have been challenged in the wake of national security in Libya, Syria and Bahrain¹².

One school of thought holds that, the world has been ruled by a system of smaller numbers than the larger ones. A small group of leaders have always provided better guidance in matters concerning socio-political and economic decisions. As more number of countries in a region resort to similar tactics of addressing their issues, a bigger problem get created in doing so. Experts of international politics, especially those who advocate peace as inferential to democratic setting strongly support the Arab democratic spring. They firmly believe that the ongoing liberalization and democratization of states will unravel a golden age of peace in this region. Subsequently, the Arab Spring was greeted with a strong sense of optimism from western officials.¹³

Another school of thought states that under the current circumstance the events have unfolded in a rather disappointing fashion. There has been unrest, insecurity and instability to a large extent. The internal and external factors are gloomy and points to a bigger war taking cues from the remains of Arab Spring. It is a political fact that countries going through democratic transitions are more war-prone than mature democracies or stable autocracies.¹⁴ But these are matters of future study and deliberations when we live ahead by a decade from the end of Arab Spring.

As a matter of today, the challenges engulfing the countries in swell of the Arab uprising is momentous. Rubbishing common theories of western world, the real winner in this Arab democratic spring is not the liberal democracy, but religious or Islamic ideology.¹⁵ The events of Egypt are clear proof of this thinking, whilst the whole uprising in Egypt promises to be one of democratic attainment.

Indeed scholars are still unsure if what is being witnessed in many Arab countries is a real revolution or not. Most writings and newspapers' releases describe current escalation as popular uprisings. Bayet calls new changes in Tunisia and Egypt a Refolution rather than a Revolution. By the former he means changes are taking place within the old incumbent institutions, without institutional radical change, and still fears from a counter movement in the horizon.¹⁶

Bayet's analysis of 'Refolution' rather than Revolution is for instance, valid in the Egyptian case, especially after violent confrontation with the military and protestors, and the go-slow approach, in responding to protestors' demands and transferring power to civil elected authority. Goldstone classifies scholarly work on revolution into three generations. The first generation is from 1900 to 1940 characterized by the lack of solid theoretical explanations and more focused on psychological factors. The second generation, continued from 1940s till the Iranian revolution, dominated mainly by modernization theories.

The second generation focused on cognitive psychology and frustration aggression, structural functionalist theory, and equilibrium of the system and had many limitations, including focusing on vague causes that exist in many contexts and not necessarily resulting in revolutionary outcomes. It also omitted a set of important variables that opened the way for new theoretical framework of analysis. The third generation paid attention to those variables: the goals and structure of the state. Different structures, goals, and programs applied by the state affect revolutionary outcomes. The contradiction between state's goals and society would result in a revolution.¹⁷

Eisenstadt¹⁸ on the other hand, asserts that revolution happens in feudal imperial society when the state is not only making use of society resources but also change its value and symbolic system. This can be applied to the Arab countries where incompatibility between regime's interest and people exist.

It must be noted however, that symbolic and value changes are not only limited to imperial cases as Eisenstadt concluded but also a core dimension of authoritarianism. Apathetic citizens are a reflection of this soft character of despotism, and some Arab systems, like Tunisia, managed to impose more liberal policies on its people. International political and economic pressures would result in revolution through imposing capitalist systems, and increasing military competition that would put the state in confrontation with the society. The coherence and structure of the military is another crucial variable for revolution. The structure of peasantry and its autonomy would also push for a revolution. Finally, in Eisenstadt's view, elite behavior may determine revolutionary outcomes. More open revolutionary elite collation would create more open societies compared to marginalized closed elites that tend to use coercion.

Further, Piven & Cloward argue that the emergence of protest entails a transformation of both consciousness and behavior. People need to develop a frame of indignation, a shared perceived identity with contenders as well as the sentiment that they could bring about social and political changes. Many grievances were out there: poor living conditions, high levels of unemployment, police brutality, limited freedom of speech, state arbitrariness, among others.

It is worth noting that the whole of the Arab world shares a strong bond of cultural and social heritage, as is evident from the region-wide spread of demonstrations and protests that originated in Tunisia. All the people belonging to the countries from Atlantic Ocean to Indian Ocean have revealed stark similarity in perception and behaviour towards the policies of their respective governments. The apathy of Arab world was strongly felt due to unresponsive governments and unaccountable rulers who had continued with their crony capitalist policies. Even the upwardly mobile beneficiaries were excluded from participating in political decisions and invest in other lucrative markets¹⁹.

In the past 40 years that have gone by, hundreds and thousands of underprivileged people have moved to bigger cities and towns in search of a better living. Unsurprisingly, these people are now part of some of the most thickly populated cities of the world. In spite of this shift in population density, the real challenges were never addressed. In many circles, there was widespread optimism with respect to the nature and course of the Arab Spring, and some observers held to the domino theory that, if one revolution took hold, others would follow. Of a truth, these expectations and interpretations have been proven true to some degree²⁰.

First, the Arab uprisings were able to put an end to dictators and quasi-dictators in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Yemen, such that the deposed presidents and parts of their cliques were arrested (e.g., Egypt), accused of state crimes and corruption (e.g., Tunisia), or caught and murdered (Libya). Second, these events put these countries on a path toward political transformation. In this way, we have seen in the major Spring-nations the establishment of new political parties and elections²¹.

Due to the modification of whole regimes, these states have completed successful transitions; a significant first step toward democratization. Moreover, this new revolutionary context promoted regionally the public sphere and public participation, which put pressure on many Arab monarchies, fearing a domino effect, to reconsider their governance policies. As a result, states like Jordan and Morocco are trying to boost political liberties and promote the national economy.²²

Indeed, the on-going Arab Spring movement, which began in late 2010, could be acknowledged as one of the most imperative regional events since the end of the WWII. Despite these achievements, I argue that the degree of the political transformation during the Arab Spring movement has been modest according to both quantitative and qualitative measures. The Arab Spring, as a term, refers to the political phenomenon sweeping over the Arab World à la Eastern Europe in 1989²³.

1.8.1 Country-Wise Analysis

The entire MENA region was awakened to the wind of revolution that blew from December 2010. For the purpose of this study however, the focus of the country analysis would be those countries that had a greater impact hence Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Syria; and especially for Tunisia given that, that is where it all begun.

- **Tunisia**

Tunisia's "Jasmine Revolution" is the first popular uprising to topple an established government in the Middle East and North Africa since the Iranian revolution of 1979; it is also the spark that ignited and inspired other Revolutions in the region²⁴. It unfolded in three phases:

First, on December 17, 2010, a young Tunisian street vendor, Mohamed Bouazizi, set himself on fire in hopelessness and to protest his treatment at the hands of the authorities. Demonstrations broke out in his rural hometown followed by protests in other areas of the country. A brutal security crackdown followed, reported in shocking details by online social media.

Second, when protests reached the capital, Tunis, the government responded with even more brutality, arresting demonstrators, activists, and shutting down the Internet.

Lastly, the President, Zine el-Abedin Ben Ali, shuffled his cabinet and promised to create 300,000 jobs, but it was too late; protesters now just wanted the regime to fall and its President stripped of any power²⁵. On January 14, Ben Ali and his family fled the country taking refuge in Saudi Arabia. This act marked the end of one of the Arab world's most repressive regimes. It was a victory for people power and perhaps the first time ever in history that an Arab dictator has been removed by a revolution rather than a coup d'Etat.

- **Egypt**

In Egypt, the prospect of a dynastic transfer of power from the octogenarian president Hosni Mubarak, who had held power for nearly three decades, to his son Gamal stirred deep disillusionment among the Egyptian population and stimulated greater engagement by civil society and independent media, particularly via online social-media platforms. The regime responded with a fierce crackdown on dissent²⁶.

The Mubarak government's "determination to maintain control of the political system led to the unjustified imprisonment of thousands of people, including for the expression of political ideas in the media." The combination of this crackdown with venality among the country's ruling elite, lack of opportunity for ordinary Egyptians, and an increasing number of high-profile cases of severe police brutality proved to be highly combustible²⁷.

Esraa Abdel Fattah, the social media savvy organized the major protest in Tahrir Square on January 25 2011; the protest that paved way for a "new Egypt".

The accountability of the military and security forces is also a pivotal issue in Egypt. Egypt had to reconcile the popular desire for change with military leadership more comfortable with the status quo. Indeed, Egypt's Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) is wielding power in a manner that suggests it will only reluctantly relinquish it.

- **Libya and Syria**

Libya and Syria received even poorer governance scores than Egypt and Tunisia. Both regimes' exceptionally oppressive internal security policies and egregious failure to deliver public goods to their citizens presaged their markedly more savage responses to the protests of 2011, and explains the Libyan and Syrian peoples' determination to continue their struggle in the face of ferocious violence²⁸.

In the case of Libya, a civil war broke out and has removed its dictator from power but now confronts the challenge of building national institutions from scratch. Of the abundance of

negative legacies left by al-Qadhafi is not only the complete absence of any meaningful institutions capable of delivering political goods, but a decades-long campaign to alienate Libyan citizens from the idea of working within an institutional system²⁹.

Meanwhile, Syrians will be forced to reconcile a country whose leadership has resorted to indiscriminate violence to retain power. This will magnify the burden of building a democratic system, particularly as the situation in Syria is still on-going.

1.9 Research Methodology

Exploratory research design was used to examine the implications of the Arab Spring for Africa. An exploratory design is conducted about a research problem when there are few or no earlier studies to refer to. The focus is on gaining insights and familiarity for later investigation or undertaken when problems are in a preliminary stage of investigation.³⁰

This type of research helped to identify the boundaries of the environment in which the problems, opportunities or situations of interest are likely to reside and to identify the salient factors or variables that might be found there and be of relevance to the research. Even though the Arab Spring phenomenon is not a new issue, the trajectory of this research project is thus necessitating the use of this type of research design. It is usually characterized by a high degree of flexibility (in approaching a problem) and can address research questions of all types (what, why, how).

Exploratory research design optimizes qualitative approach which is inductive in nature, that is to say that exploratory research relies on secondary data. The purpose of exploratory research is to gain familiarity with a phenomenon in order to acquire new insight into it. As in the case of the Arab Spring, the issue is still unfolding and primary data is difficult to collect, this explains the appropriateness of exploratory research design for the study.

1.9.1 Sources of Data

The needed data and information for this study was primarily gathered through secondary sources: reliable text books, journals/magazine articles, news, magazines, commentaries and internet. The exploratory nature of this study was a factor with regards to primary data sources. A thorough search for relevant materials in this subject area was carried out and where most common literature about the subject matter was noted, they were incorporated into this study.

1.10 Arrangement of Chapters

This research has four main chapters and the content of each chapter is illustrated below:

Chapter 1 – Research Design: This comprises introduction to the study, background, Statement of Problem and Scope of Research, Objectives, Research Rationale, Literature Review, Methodology, among others.

Chapter 2 – Consists of an overview of the Arab Spring. The chapter also traces the causes of the Arab Spring and describes its trend and nature.

Chapter 3 – This Chapter critically reviews each implication (political, economic, social and security) of the Arab Spring on Africa. The chapter also compares and contrasts the conditions in North Africa and Sub – Saharan Africa.

Chapter 4 – This Chapter comprises a Summary of the findings, Conclusion and Recommendations.

Endnotes

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CHAPTER TWO

OVERVIEW AND CAUSES OF THE ARAB SPRING

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of the Arab Spring and traces the causes of the Arab Spring. The trend and nature of the Arab Spring is also described.

2.1 Overview of the Arab Spring

Beginning in early 2011, mass public protests swept much of the Arab world, bringing a mix of hope, sadness, and foreboding for the future. While the demonstrations sent several long-serving presidents out of their countries, other rulers mobilized their security forces and inflicted high civilian casualties to retain their grip on central power. Decades of political stagnation and top-down control across a wide swath of Arab countries fueled the anger of activists, who took to the streets and to social media, determined to oust the occupants of the presidential palaces. From Tunisia and Egypt, revolutionary zeal spread to Oman, Jordan, Yemen, Syria, Bahrain, and Libya. However, these movements and their targeted regimes took different trajectories.

Developments are on-going and the future is open-ended and uncertain. Nevertheless, it can already be discerned how the uprisings are beginning to transform the political landscape and, in particular, how they may affect the prospects for democratization in the Arab world and perhaps sub Saharan Africa. Each one of the 2011 Arab uprisings must be treated on its own merits but, for the purposes of exploring the prospects for democratization, they can be divided into three

broad types or categories. In the first, mass civic revolts led to the peaceful overthrow of powerful dictators; this was the case of Tunisia's Zine el Abidine Ben Ali and Egypt's Hosni Mubarak. In the second category, uprisings led to internal fracture, violence and even civil war. In the case of Libya, revolt invited foreign military intervention and ultimately led to the overthrow of Muammar Gadhafi. In Bahrain, the uprising was brutally suppressed. In Yemen, there has been political confrontation and a simmering crisis. In Syria a popular revolt is continuing but the regime is attempting to suppress it. The third category comprises Arab states which did not experience major upheavals. The partial exceptions are Morocco and Jordan where ruling monarchs, faced with a degree of popular challenge, tried to forestall an even bigger one by offering political concessions. The reasons behind the uprisings and the factors which determined their success or failure are closely linked to making judgments about political change.¹

2.2 Causes of the Arab Spring

2.2.1 The Role of the Army

The army is usually well treated in Africa and not only in dictatorships. It successfully quashes any revolt that threatens the regime. It is usually well represented in governments. Yet in the case of Egypt and Tunisia, it joined the protests.

In Tunisia and Egypt, it is only when armed forces backed the people that the dictators left. In Côte d'Ivoire, in 2000 the army disobeyed its leader and stopped shooting, reversing the balance of power. There is a critical point when the army feels that things have done too far: the rioters are too many and repressing them would result in a bloodbath, and/or the revolution is

irreversible; or the army is in danger itself, especially if some of its forces have joined the rioters. This was the case in Madagascar in 2009 or in Côte d'Ivoire after the controversial October 2000 elections.²

According to Lassere, in Tunisia, on 12 January, General Rachid Ammar stepped down rather than shooting rioters, unlike the police that continued to support Ben Ali, and became a hero. He told Ben Ali: “the army does not shoot the people”. In Egypt, after 17 days of expanding unrest, the army – which has been holding power since the Egyptian Revolution of 1952 – also felt that the time had come for Mubarak to go and told him so probably because they were afraid of going down with Mubarak.³

2.2.2 The Role of Religion

The Arab spring caught most, if not all, observers by surprise. There is great religious diversity in the region, much more than is often recognized, so it is difficult to generalize, but one could say that religion has had a lesser role than might have been anticipated. It's been there, but largely helping rather than leading, and even sometimes racing to keep up. It appeared in Tahrir Square with the public prayers. There were also the unusual scenes of co fraternization between Christian and Muslim demonstrators in Cairo.

In the case of Bahrain, the sectarian divide has been central, with a rebellion by a Shia majority against a minority Sunni monarchy, which was eventually crushed with the help of the Saudi army. In Libya, there were some attempts by the Gaddafi regime to conjure up the spectre of a country split into Islamist emirates if the rebels were allowed to prevail. More recently, religion

has come more into the foreground again. In Tunisia, Egypt and Morocco, election results have revealed a similar pattern with Islamist parties coming out on top. And not only have they come on top, they have done so with a wide margin. In Tunisia, the Ennahda Movement took 41% of the seats; in Morocco, the Justice and Development Party more than doubled its number of seats in the Assembly of Representatives to 27%; and in Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood and the Salafi Al Nour Party won 69% of the seats and the Muslim Brotherhood have eventually won the presidential elections.⁴

There are several reasons behind the electoral success of the various Islamic political parties in the above-mentioned countries. These are all long established parties with a strong history of opposition to the dictators in their respective countries (apart from the Egyptian Al Nour Party). They have strong membership bases and a presence in local communities and neighbourhoods, and leaders that are well known to the general public. They have been active in providing social services to the masses where their governments were lacking. The Islamic parties thus had the right formula: brand awareness (long established parties and well known leaders), legitimacy and popularity (history of opposition to dictators and providing social services to the masses), and finally resources (both financial and human resources that could be mobilized). Yet some commentators have become alarmed by the dominance of Islamic political parties in the elections, going as far as to claim that the Arab Spring has been hijacked by Islamists.

Countless articles and editorials have been written as to how the hard won victories of the secular-minded revolutionaries are being usurped by the freeloading Islamists (FP, The Hindu, Europe's World, The Economist). When people took to the streets against the regimes across

North Africa and the Middle East, the demonstrations were attended by people regardless of sex, race, age, or religious affiliation. They all had a stake in the outcome of the uprisings, as the issues that brought them out on to the streets affected them all. Unemployment, poverty, corruption, restrictions on freedoms, all these were reasons why people revolted against their governments. Groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood and Ennahda have a long history of opposition to the regimes in their countries; it would be unwise to think that they did not have a strong presence in the anti-government protests. It is not a case that they stayed at home during the protests and only came out afterwards to reap the rewards.⁵

For decades, leaders from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) controlled the religious sphere in their countries, either by influencing religious leaders, as in the case of al-Azhar in Egypt and the Muftis in Saudi Arabia and Syria, or by direct interference, as in Iraq under Saddam Hussein, as well as in Jordan, Algeria, Morocco and Libya. But efforts to eradicate religious-based political parties and the instrumentalization of religion did not diminish religion's popular appeal. In the public imagination, religion became the trademark of movements that challenged authoritarian rulers, who persecuted them out of fear. These religious groups' defiant stance brought them a popularity that was further augmented by their charity and social work. Islamists presented their charity activities as filling the gaps left by the government's neglect. For them, this was evidence that religious movements were best able to provide relief for social and economic ills, as expressed in the Brotherhood slogan 'Al- Islam Houa al-Hall', 'Islam is the Solution'. So, when the Arab Spring began to sweep through the region, Islamist parties could make a case that they were the only credible alternatives to

authoritarian power. This image, combined with access to foreign funds mostly from Qatar and Saudi Arabia, gave the Islamists an advantage in the ensuing elections. ⁶

There is a potentially important religious element in all this, but it was less central initially than one might have expected. In the long run, of course, it is entirely normal that when profoundly religious countries start to democratize, there will be considerable religious activity in the burgeoning political life. It is also entirely normal for religious parties to arise. And there is no evidence, globally speaking, that religious parties per se are less democratic than secular ones in the same context.⁷

The Clash of Civilizations, a Samuel Huntington prediction of a Post-Cold War global clash between Judeo-Christian ethic, represented by Western liberalism, and Islamic traditions has always been cited as one of the causes of the Arab Spring. The imposition of alien norms and values on states of the Arab world exerted much pressure on socio-political as well as economic structures of the latter. The misalignment caused the latter to cave in, hence the Arab Spring. Indeed, many have alluded to the Bush Doctrine and the pressure it exerted on governance in the Arab world as one of the main causes of the Arab Spring.

2.2.3 Social Media and Technology

Modern technology penetration is deeper in North Africa than in Sub – Saharan Africa. Average Internet penetration is 11.5 percent, with a high 30 percent in Nigeria, West Africa's economic powerhouse to a low 3.7 percent in Cameroon. Who owns a computer in Sub – Saharan Africa? Educated people from the small African middle class, either with the ruling party or in the opposition can afford a computer. Young people, who account for about 40 percent of the

population in Sub – Saharan Africa go to Internet cafes rather than surfing from home, making it more difficult for them to organize around a cause.⁸

Could mobile phones be the “Facebook” of Sub – Saharan Africa? According to a recent study published in Moroccan paper Assabah, Egypt is the number one Arab country in terms of Facebook users (quantitative), but Tunisia (with 20 percent of the population using Facebook) is the Arab country “that has made the best use of the social network to spark the revolution (AFP, 2011). It also notes that countries that are still struggling to topple their leaders are those where the use of information technologies is under 5 percent (Libya, Yemen, and Syria), while Egypt and Tunisia are the top users in the Arab world. Tunisia also has a 90 percent mobile penetration rate, while Egypt's is 72 percent.⁹

The events that happened between December and January in Tunisia started when people posted graphic photographs and videos from their mobile phones on Facebook. Even though the uprising started in Sidi Bouzid, the centre of online action was Facebook. The coordinated mass protests which began in Tahrir Square in Egypt also commenced when a computer-savvy Egyptian reached out to youths on Facebook to organize a protest rally against police brutality, the state of emergency laws, lack of free elections and freedom of speech, and corruption in high places, forcing the resignation of long-serving Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. Two days after the fall of Tunisian president Ben Ali, a 32-year-old mother of three in Yemen posted a message on Facebook, calling on the people to celebrate the Tunisian uprising. The Facebook-page “We are all Khalid Said” is a case in point. Originally founded by the Egyptian Google-employee Wael Ghonim, the page was established in memory of Khalid Said, a 26-year old

Egyptian who died while in the custody of Egyptian police. The group was an important news-outlet during the Egyptian Revolution of 2011. By August that year 1.6 million people were following the Arabic page, while the English version gave over 140 000 people news about revolutionary activities during the Arab Spring.

It is worth noting that, mobile phone penetration in Africa is growing at the fastest rate in the world, jumping from 54 million in 2003 to 350 million users in 2008. Today, one African out of two has a mobile and, between 2002 and 2007, subscriptions have grown by 49 percent per year against 17 percent in Europe. This is a great opportunity for democracy.

As seen during the September 2010 food riots in Mozambique, mobile phones can be powerful tools. The government quickly realized it and moved to suspend communications to quell the revolt. Mozambique has a low 2.6 percent Internet penetration rate (CIA, 2009) but a reasonably high 25 percent mobile phone penetration rate. Taking mobiles as the equivalent of Facebook in Sub – Saharan Africa, one could imagine the impact in repressive countries with even higher mobile penetration rates. Togo, with a low Internet penetration rate of 5.26 percent, has a 32 percent mobile penetration rate, while Zimbabwe, with 11 percent Internet use, has 24.8 percent mobile use. The impact in Angola, where freedom of expression is even more limited, would be even more dramatic, with 60 percent using mobiles while Internet use is at only 4.5 percent.¹⁰

Arab revolutions have also made activists in Sub – Saharan Africa aware of the power of instant image transmission. During Côte d'Ivoire's post-electoral crisis, some protesters used their mobiles to film brutal armed forces cracking down on them and immediately beamed images to

the world, putting pressure on the Gbagbo administration.¹¹ In Togo, the opposition also routinely uses camera-equipped mobiles during protests, and as a result, armed forces may have become slightly less violent, knowing that Western countries could slap sanctions on them. That is, of course, if the repressive regime has not cut all instant transmission. But even so, the mere thought that a few images may be sneaked out of the country acts as deterrent and repressive regimes would probably become more careful. Activists feel stronger and have become bolder thanks to their new tool that plays the crucial role of keeping them alive in dictatorships. Removing fear is key and changes things in Africa. As simple as it sounds, by connecting Sub-Saharan Africa to the world, mobile technology reminds dictators that they cannot continue to kill opponents quietly in a dark corner.¹²

Technology is not a cure-all though and the role of mobile phones in Sub – Saharan Africa may seem more logistical than strategic. While Facebook allowed activists in North Africa to exchange views for months, the mobile phone in Sub – Saharan Africa serves more to agree on a place and date for the rally. Its role is more “immediate”, people in Sub – Saharan Africa first need to organize around a common cause. This enables them to rise up “spontaneously” at the merest incident. Only homogeneous groups such as students, unions or corporations can get organized and discuss issues without being spotted too early by the regime. When the army joins in, the revolution is a success. Technology removes fear and changes Africa.

2.2.4 The Governance System in Algeria and Egypt

In both Egypt and Algeria, the governance system was one that suppressed opposition. In Algeria for instance, riots broke out in October 1988, marked by a series of street-level disturbances and

riotous demonstrations by Algerian youth, which indirectly led to the fall of the country's single-party system and the introduction of democratic reform, but also to a spiral of instability and increasingly vicious political conflict, ultimately fostering the Algerian Civil War. After the riots of 1988, the Algerian government had moved towards democracy, holding free elections. However, when the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) won the best war first free parliamentary election in 1991, the military staged a coup d'état, voided the election results, declared a state of emergency which remained in force until 2011, and arrested the FIS leadership. This led to the founding of the Armed Islamic Groups (GIA) and the ten-year Algerian Civil War, in which an estimated 150,000 people were killed.¹³

With the unchallenged election of Abdelaziz Bouteflika as president in 1999, civilian government was nominally restored. Violence died down as both guerrillas and soldiers were given immunity for their previous acts under the controversial Charter for Peace and National Reconciliation. Towards the end of his second term, Bouteflika amended the constitution to allow himself to run for a third term in 2009; to no one's surprise, he won the ensuing election, with, according to the opposition and the US Embassy, a very low turnout.¹⁴

Seventy percent of Algeria's population is less than 30 years old. Consequent high levels of youth unemployment, coupled with corruption and widespread poverty, are seen as reasons for dissatisfaction. The leader of the Rally for Culture and Democracy, Saïd Sadi, claimed that during 2010, there were "9,700 riots and unrests" in Algeria¹⁵. Protests were about issues such as education and health care, as well as rampant corruption.¹⁶

Similarly, in Egypt the Muslim Brotherhood was constitutionally banned. When they re-organized themselves into different political parties and were almost winning an election, they were equally banned. Both situations conform to the political opportunity theory, which emphasizes the importance of political factors that constrain or facilitate the emergence and the development of protest.

No single cause is largely attributable for the Arab Spring. A combination of religion, technology, poor governance systems and a history of deep – cited issues lies beneath the Arab revolutions, although it is worth mentioning that each cause took a somewhat different turn on all the countries that experienced the revolutions.

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CHAPTER THREE

IMPLICATIONS OF THE ARAB SPRING

3.0 Introduction

The Arab Spring has launched a set of changes in motion that will fundamentally alter not only the region's course, but that of Africa at large. This chapter examines the political, economic and social implications of the Arab Spring for Africa.

3.1 Political Implications

2011 saw dramatic changes in Africa's governance landscape. Unprecedented popular demonstrations in Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya led to the overturning of a half-century of autocratic rule in North Africa. These protests, demanding greater political freedom, economic opportunity, and an end to systemic corruption, have resonated deeply across Africa, sparking calls for change throughout the continent. Already home to more of the world's democratizing states than any other region, even modest reverberations from the Arab Spring on Africa's democratic trajectory seemingly have implications for governance norms, stability, and development.

Since the launch of the Arab Spring in January 2011, the effects of these popular protests on democracy in the rest of Africa are unquestionable. It is worth noting that Sub-Saharan Africa has been experiencing its own democratic surge during this time with important advances in Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, Niger, Nigeria, and Zambia, among other countries. This progress builds on nearly two decades of democratic institution building on the continent. Even so, the legacy of

“big-man” politics continues to cast a long shadow over Africa’s governance norms. Regime models on the continent, moreover, remain highly varied, ranging from hard core autocrats, to semi-authoritarians, ‘democratizers’, and a select number of democracies.¹ The Arab Spring is thus serving as a trigger, rather than a driver, for further democratic reforms in the region.

There have been protests in more than a dozen African capitals demanding greater political pluralism, transparency, and accountability following the launch of the Arab Spring. Some have even explicitly referenced North Africa as a model. Likewise, a number of African governments are so fearful of the Arab Spring’s influence that they have banned mention of the term on the Internet or public media.²

Three years on, sub-Saharan Africa is still home to some of the world's longest-serving and oldest leaders. Nineteen of them have been in power for a decade or more. So while the events in North Africa inspired protests in the South, the impact hasn’t been much as anticipated. What is not in doubt, however, is that the Arab Spring is contributing to changed expectations citizens have of their governments, and has prompted several African leaders to put in place some ‘safeguards’.³ In this way, the Arab Spring is serving as a catalyst to political reform in Africa.

The curtain on 2012 has been drawn to a close, yet the political impact of the Arab Spring on sub-Saharan Africa appears mixed. In some countries, state repression blocked protest movements from acquiring momentum. In many others, the revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt produced almost no echoes in local politics. Even where upheavals occurred, the connection to the Arab Spring was often thin. The most dramatic political transitions in sub-Saharan Africa

over the past few years have come about not via grassroots revolutions inspired from abroad, but through elections and referenda (Senegal, Somalia, and the secession of South Sudan from Sudan), violence (Mali), and the unexpected deaths of heads of state (Ethiopia, Ghana, and Malawi). Where the Arab uprisings have had an impact, they sometimes gave sub-Saharan African activists new hope and a new language of dissent. Yet elsewhere, the fallout of war, turmoil, and revolution has contributed to instability and tragedy.⁴

Following the Arab Spring is the fact that al-Qaeda is expanding its reach and clearly sees Africa as fertile ground for this expansion. Groups such as Boko Haram (BH), the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJWA), Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and other splinter terrorist organizations have made substantial progress in either heavily influencing or controlling significant swathes of territory in some countries in West Africa. The west of Libya, northern Nigeria and northern Mali are all experiencing extreme levels of violence at the hands of BH and like-minded Islamic militant groups. Northern Mali fell to al-Qaeda-linked militants earlier this year, and their influence soon spread to Niger and Nigeria.⁵

West Africa is experiencing so much violence and upheaval from so many Islamist militant groups because the area is so expansive, and local governments are incapable of exerting control outside of major population areas. As with the Taliban, Al Qaeda, FARC and the LTTE, BH, AQIM and MUJWA are not willing to negotiate. Even if they were, their end goals are not compatible with those of the national governments which they are battling, or the international community. The number of splinter groups are too numerous, and the swathes of territory they operate in too large to be effectively countered. In addition, the region's military forces are

stretched thin, and much of the developed world has neither the inclination nor money to do much about it.⁶

More specifically, the Arab Spring has generated possibilities for Boko Haram to operate in Nigeria. Although BH's stated objectives to date have been relatively obscure — a stricter application of Sharia law and greater equality for Muslims in the region — more radical elements ultimately seek secession in Nigeria. If the government cannot turn things around in a meaningful way, the tide may turn against the government, which is in the end probably incapable of providing for the basic needs of the majority of its citizens. While the world's attention remains focused on other places, there is little reason to believe that West Africa's growing movement of radical Islamists will be less successful in achieving their objectives.⁷

Another issue, especially in the case of the Libyan revolt is the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons not only in the region but in sub Saharan Africa. Of prominent concern is the quantum of arms and weapons left over from the civil unrest. The United Nations Security Council expressed concern over the proliferation of weapons from Gaddafi's stockpiles, worrying they could fall into the hands of al-Qaeda and other militant groups in the West African sub region and/ or other parts of the Middle East. A report by the United Nations Support Mission in Libya said that Gaddafi's government had accumulated a large stockpile of MANPADs, and that although thousands were destroyed during the 2011 military intervention in Libya, there were "increasing concerns over the looting and likely proliferation of these portable defence systems, as well as munitions and mines, highlighting the potential risk to local and regional stability."⁸ This is further heightened by the allegations that some mercenaries who were

recruited to help in the Libyan crisis have left Libya with these weapons and may trade them for money with non-state actors – pirates, terrorists, arms smugglers, and drug traffickers, among others.⁹

These small arms precisely because they are small, can be quietly and quickly sold through black markets to other non-state actors such as the terrorist group AQIM in parts of North and West Africa for use in wars where they can present long lasting and destabilizing problems.¹⁰ In Africa, the Sahel region has achieved notoriety for harboring terrorist such as the AQIM¹¹, who operate along the borders of Algeria, Mauritania, Mali, Niger and some parts of Chad, and have the potential to acquire some of these weapons from Libya.¹² In November, a convoy loaded with heavy weaponry was intercepted when trying to cross from Libya into neighboring Niger, according to Nigerien security officials. The officials said the convoy was composed of loyalists of Muammar Gaddafi. Mokhtar Belmokhtar, believed to be one of the leaders of Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, acknowledged that his Al-Qaeda franchise had acquired weaponry from Gaddafi's arsenal.¹³

3.2 Economic Implications

Following the Arab Spring, the MENA region was distressed by the disruption of activity, the reduction of Investment, the fall of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows coupled with capital flights and lowered tourism receipts. At the same time, surging global commodity prices have pushed governments to respond by increasing spending, including those on wages, food and fuel subsidies, which increased the average fiscal deficit in 2011.¹⁴ The turbulence in the oil – exporting countries in the MENA region has also had serious economic impacts globally.

According to International Monetary Fund (IMF) projections, as well as the United Nations Economic Outlook for the global economy, Africa stood to gain from the recent financial crisis that hit the developed economies in North America and Europe. African economies are less exposed to the global financial system than any other region, and African banks hold few of the ‘toxic assets’ that helped spark the crisis. Pre-crisis growth trajectories saw the region achieving strong economic growth rates averaging 6.5% per year. This notwithstanding, the protests in sub Saharan Africa following the Arab awakening has had a mixed effect on the economies of countries in Sub Saharan Africa.¹⁵

Already, the continent’s growth has fallen from 5% in 2010 to 3.4% in 2011. Commodity prices – crucial for Africa -- have declined from their peak due to weaker demand and increased supply, and some could fall further. Broader impact of the Arab Spring on the region and the African continent as a whole, is the deteriorating external economic environment (mainly in Europe) which has magnified the negative effects of social instability on external trade, commodity prices, tourism and other critical export receipts.¹⁶

The widespread protests across sub Saharan Africa will inevitably lead to uncertainty in the economic and political sphere: particularly by breeding uncertainty among investors, both domestic and international, concerning the economic and political stability within sub-Saharan Africa. This investor uncertainty will have a profound impact on the economies of sub-Saharan Africa, and the already dire economic conditions protestors are experiencing could worsen if investors are discouraged because of political instability.¹⁷

The current economic conditions in sub-Saharan Africa are also not likely to improve in the current global economic context. The Euro-zone crisis will negatively impact trade and export earning within the sub-continent as the major trading partners of the continent are facing their own economic slowdown and growing citizen discontent. This will lead to a downturn in the export sectors of affected countries especially the manufacturing and the mining sectors. What is most likely is that domestic production will experience a downturn and the socio-economic conditions will worsen.¹⁸

Another economic concern although not directly related to the Arab Spring is the high youth unemployment generally throughout sub Saharan Africa. At the heart of the Arab uprisings are relative deprivation, a fall of standards, and a clash between expectations and reality. Youth unemployment, corruption and dropping living standards intensified in the years of economic crisis following 2008.¹⁹

There are approximately 100 million people living in sub Saharan Africa between the ages of 15 and 24, and this number is anticipated to double by 2045. Current unemployment is significantly damaging Africa's potential for prosperity. The youth population is not only growing, it's getting better educated. Based on current trends, 39 percent of 20 to 24 year olds in sub Saharan Africa will have had secondary education in 2030, compared to 42 percent today. An explosive mix of socio-economic and political grievances lay behind all the Arab uprisings. This therefore is a growing economic concern especially because such trends among other things inspired the Arab spring.²⁰

3.3 Social Implications

One of the main social issues emerging is the extent to which the Arab Spring has impacted migration patterns not only in the region, but in other parts including Africa. Far from being the catalyst for waves of refugees to flee to European shores, the Arab Spring has played a greater role in generating intra-regional forced migration flows, constraining and changing migration patterns, and drawing greater attention to pre-existing migration flows.

Regarding generating forced migration flows within the region, approximately 30,000 Syrians have registered with UNHCR in Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Libya, compared to the less than 300 refugees registered before the start of the Arab Spring. These figures describe the forced migration of nationals from their countries; more than 800,000 migrants living and working in countries affected by the Arab Spring have also been displaced within the region. Intra-regional migration flows account for 98 per cent of the total displacement resulting from the Arab Spring.²¹

In terms of constraining migration, many migrants engaged in cross-border trade in Tamanrasset, Algeria have experienced a decline in their freedom of movement because political instability, conflict, and crisis arising from the Arab Spring have hindered economic opportunities, increased state border controls and deportations, and, subsequently, increased labour exploitation by employers who are aware of migrant traders' vulnerability and unofficial status.²² The Arab Spring has also caused migrants to change between migration categories. Many migrant workers in North Africa were forced to flee as refugees to third countries.²³

Tuareg soldiers who had been recruited to Libya by Colonel Ghaddafi were displaced to Niger and Mali. Similarly, increasing xenophobia and racism in Libya and Mali have prompted more than 100,000 black sub-Saharan migrants to flee and become asylum seekers in neighbouring countries. In addition to migrants becoming refugees, Oxby found that events related to the Arab Spring have caused the further displacement of refugees or have forcibly returned refugees to their countries of origin. For instance, many of the refugees crossing the Malian border into Niger were originally from Niger, but had been displaced during upheavals in 1990 and 2007.²⁴ In several Sahelian countries, the main impact of the Arab Spring has come not by way of political inspiration from Egypt, but as political fallout from Libya's civil war. As the forces of Colonel Muammar Qadhafi and his opponents fought in Libya, migrants from sub-Saharan Africa became targets of suspicion and violence. Over 80,000 refugees fled Libya into Niger and Chad, a burden those fragile states were ill-equipped to receive.²⁵ The loss of remittances from migrant workers in Libya also hurt Sahelian economies.

On top of humanitarian and economic problems came military threats, as Libyan weapons and fighters who had sided with the Colonel, began traveling through the Sahara to places like Mali. When Tuareg dissidents launched an uprising in northern Mali in January 2012, their ranks reportedly included some men who had fought for Qadhafi. The chaos in Mali, which has included a military coup in the south and the takeover of the north by Islamists, is rooted in local histories of grievance and exclusion.²⁶ But the aftermath of Libya's civil war probably hastened and exacerbated the chaos. The situation in Mali has added to the difficulties that West Africa faces, including terrorism and the fear that Tuareg uprisings could spread to Niger.²⁷

Furthermore, the Arab Spring has impacted the lives and livelihoods of migrants differently, according to migrants' ethnic group, language fluency, dress and appearance, legal status, and possession of identity documents.

For instance, in Tamanrasset, Oxby observed that:

Tamashek-speaking migrants have had relatively more freedom of movement than Hausa-speaking migrants during the Arab Spring – which sparked increasing border controls, deportations, and racism towards sub-Saharan African migrants in Libya and Algeria – because they more easily blend in with the national population through speaking a locally accepted language and adopting local customs and behaviours. Tamashek-speaking migrants have more flexible notions of identity and belonging and, as a result, many assume multiple identities, which they are able to switch between when crossing cultural borders. On the other hand, Hausa-speaking migrants have experienced severe constraints to their mobility because they are seen more as outsiders.²⁸

3.4 Security Implications

Security concerns following the Arab Spring has intensified. The situation in the West African sub-region has particularly been complicated by the fall of the Qaddafi regime. The fall of the Qaddafi regime has given rise to territorial and geo-political instability and has enabled terrorist groups and drug traffickers to reinforce their position in Mali. Arms have proliferated and now circulate even more easily across Mali, which has fallen into the hands of terrorist groups and drug traffickers. *The terrorist groups include Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Boko Haram in Nigeria, etc.*

Before the dawn of instability in Mali, large arms seizures have been recorded. The map below from the United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC) tells it all.

Map 5: Major seizures of illicit weapons and direction of movement in West Africa, (2008-2011)



Source: Analysis of 38 major weapon seizures between 20 March 2008 and 14 November 2011⁷¹

Mali has until recently been regarded as one of the most politically stable countries in West Africa. However, since the fall of the former Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi in 2011 and the coup d'état on 22 March 2012 against former Malian President Amadou Toumani Touré, the situation in Mali, and especially in the north, has dramatically deteriorated. Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Ansar Dine (Defenders of the Faith) and the Unity Movement for Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) forces have strengthened their presence in the north and some intelligence reports even indicate a growing link between AQIM and the Nigerian terrorist group Boko Haram.

The situation in the north of Mali is further complicated by the growing presence of drug traffickers. Until 2008, and due to its landlocked nature, narco-traffickers had largely ignored the Malian route to Europe. However, the country has since then increasingly become a transit hub for the international trafficking of narcotics emanating from Latin American drug cartels. South America’s cartels have in the past years particularly directed their drug ‘exports’ to Europe – the world’s largest drug consumer market – through West Africa.



Source: UNODC Report 2013

With these cartels taking advantage of a power vacuum due to a lack of judicial and institutional power, the Sahel in general and Mali in particular has undeniably become the hub for all kinds of illegal trafficking. Already vulnerable due to the porosity of its borders, a catastrophic humanitarian situation and tension between the north and the central government of Bamako, the stability of Mali is becoming increasingly worrisome. According to a recent United Nations

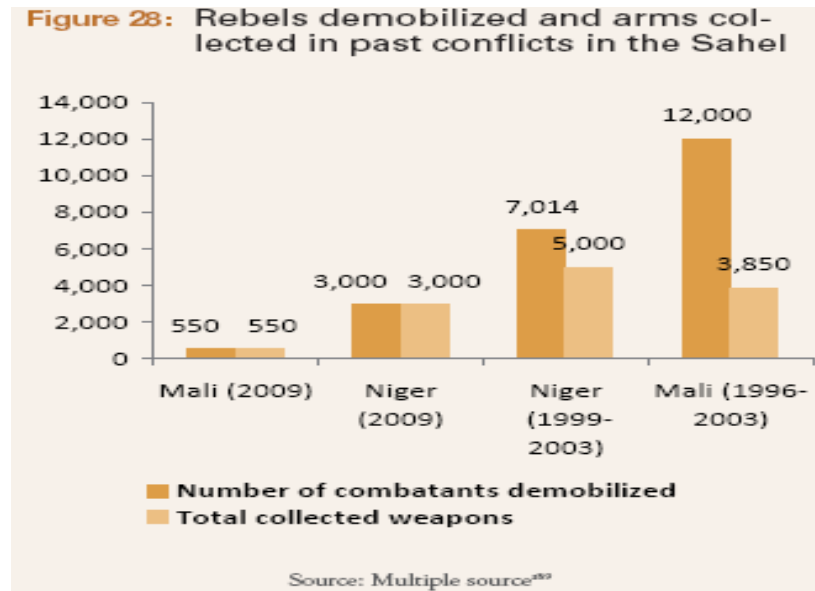
mission in the Sahel region, northern Mali has now become a dangerous crossroads of drugs, crime, terrorism and rebellion. Indicatively, in 2008 Malian forces intercepted 750 kg of cocaine, equivalent to 36% of the Malian military budget that year.

In November 2009, a Boeing 727 coming from South America landed in the northern desert of Mali. Once the cocaine was unloaded, the plane, bogged down in the sand, could not take off. Forensic personnel found significant traces of cocaine in the plane. Similarly, in January 2010, another plane arriving from Latin America landed in north-west Mali near the Mauritanian border. It has also been established that the airport of Bamako has become a transit point for drug traffickers, especially Nigerians, transporting drugs to Europe. The traffickers and terrorists have chosen Mali largely due to the serious lack of surveillance, the porous borders of the country, and the high level of corruption in all strata of the army, police and customs.

Such drug trafficking is moreover made worse by the participation of terrorist groups such as AQIM, Ansar Dine, MUJAO and Boko Haram, who have found roots in northern Mali. These groups are increasingly financing their criminal and terrorist activities through the trafficking of illicit goods and drugs.

To complicate the security situation in Mali, the fall of Libya's Gaddafi and the territorial and geo-political instability that followed have enabled these terrorist groups and drug traffickers to reinforce their position in the country. Arms have proliferated and now circulate even more easily across Mali, which has fallen into the hands of these terrorist groups and drug traffickers.

Indeed, before then the Sahel region has been known to be volatile. Previous attempts at stabilizing the situation had involved demobilization and collection of arms, albeit minimally.

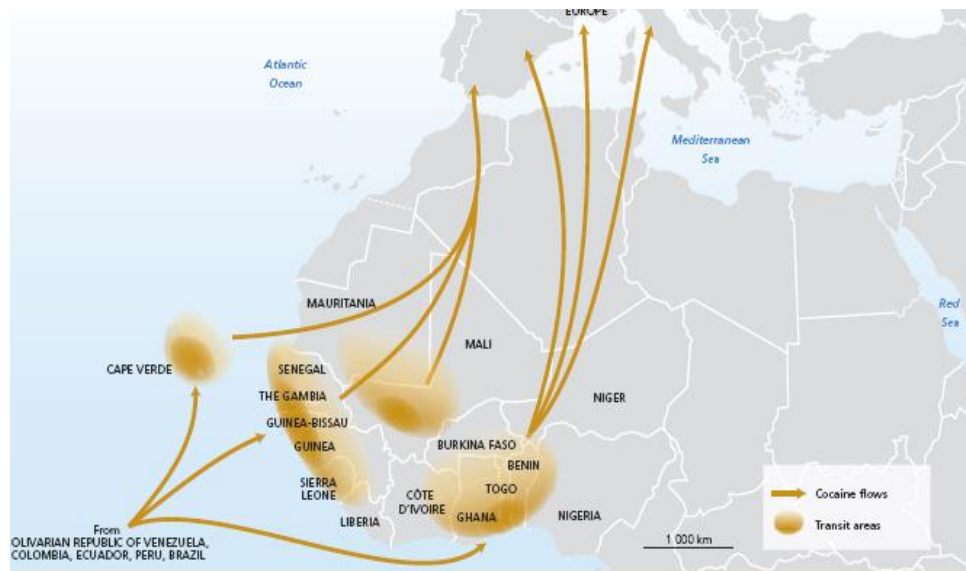


Source: UNODC 2013

It has also involved a collective international programme to stabilize the region. This was known as the Pan-Sahel Initiative.



But the aftermath of the Arab Spring has rendered all such efforts ineffective. Drug trafficking has been made worse by the participation of terrorist groups such as AQIM, Ansar Dine, MUJAO and Boko Haram, who have found roots in northern Mali. These groups are increasingly financing their criminal and terrorist activities through the trafficking of illicit goods and drugs, thereby exacerbating the already known menace of routing South American drugs through West Africa. (See Map below)



Source: UNODC

Moreover, the current volatile situation in Mali has had a dramatic and negative impact on the national economy, with, for instance, the tourism industry plummeting. And despite encouraging macro-economic indicators, almost half of the Malian population lives on less than a dollar a day, most of them in the northern rural areas, making them easy prey for recruitment by AQIM. Drought, the lack of food security, including famine, and the absence of economic opportunities, are all important factors that can enable and encourage fringes of the Malian population to succumb to the manipulation of drug traffickers and terrorist groups. The socio-political and

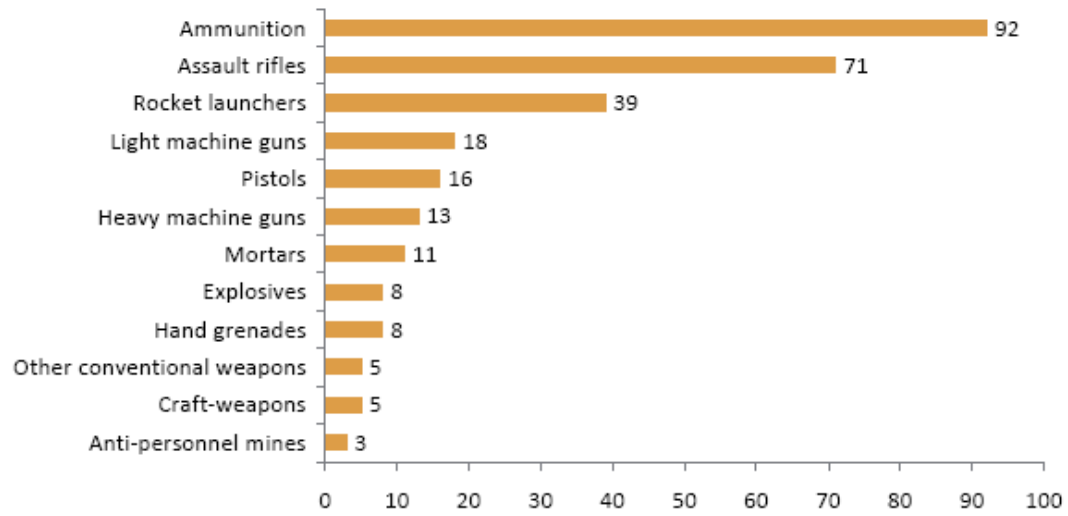
economic situation in Mali thus remains worrying. The same may be said of adjoining countries (Niger, Chad, Burkina Faso, Mauritania, and Nigeria)

The ongoing conflict in Mali has affected more than 2 million people, causing the internal displacement of an estimated 200 000 people and leading to an estimated 320 000 Malians fleeing the country since the beginning of the year. Additionally, an estimated 1.6 million people are currently facing food insecurity in the north, which is controlled by the rebel groups. To make matters worse, humanitarian assistance to the population in the north is rendered extremely difficult due to the high insecurity there. As a result, malnutrition has increased especially in the regions of Timbuktu, Gao, Koulikoro and Kayes.²⁹

Indeed, the whole of West Africa is at risk. Experts say Niger, Mali's neighbour to the east, is the most vulnerable, considering previous kidnapping of foreigners there and trafficking routes. The capital Niamey is at risk because it is located on the "Gao-Tillabéri axis (cross-border route) which is a corridor for traffickers, jihadists and home to an Arab community which would be more likely to link with former MUJAO fighters. Besides, the possibility of linking with Boko Haram in Nigeria and Al-Shabab in Somalia is always a reality.

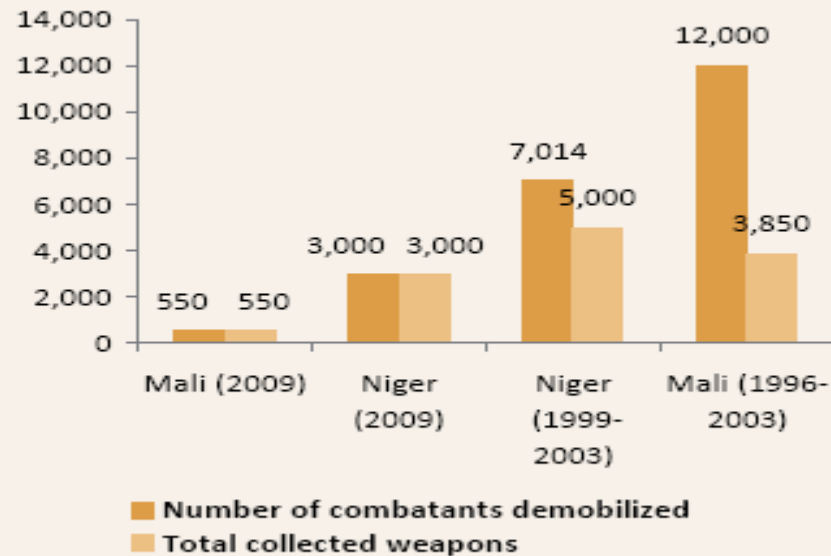
Another case of concern with regards to the security implications of the Arab Spring for Africa is Instability through Gun-running (smuggling and sale of arms and ammunition); narcoticism; human trafficking; money laundering. The figures below throws light on the situation.

Figure 27: Seizures of weapons in West Africa, 2008-2011



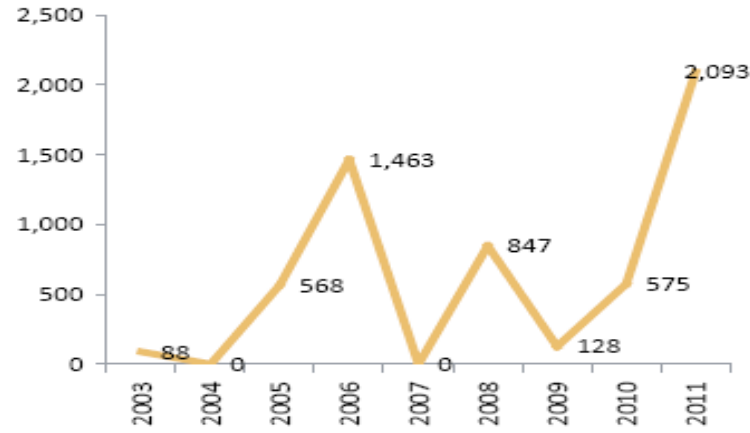
Source: Analysis of 38 major weapon seizures between 20 March 2008 and 14 November 2011⁶⁷

Figure 28: Rebels demobilized and arms collected in past conflicts in the Sahel

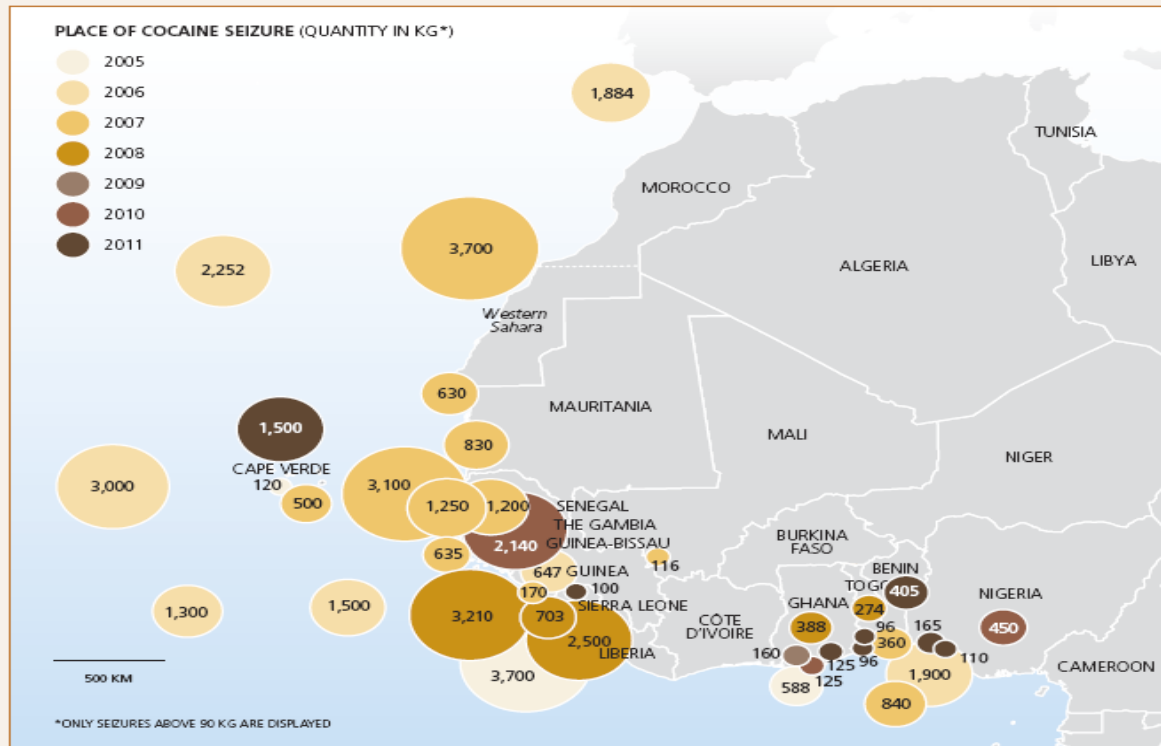


Source: Multiple source⁶⁸

Figure 2: Kilograms of cocaine seized from shipping containers related to West Africa



Map 1: Major cocaine seizures in West Africa (2005-2011)



3.5 The North African Revolutions and Sub – Saharan Africa

The North African Spring has without any doubt influenced politics in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). Since the beginning of 2011, bemused Africans have seen “permanent” dictators such Ben Ali or Mubarak fall. Gadhafi used to be, if not an admired figure, at least a feared leader not only in his country, but also in SSA where he financed a number of investments (as well as coups and revolutions).

According to Boka (2012), Gadhafi's demise may weaken some dictators who benefited from his financial and military support. Opposition movements and pressure groups in SSA have immediately seen the opportunity arising from all these changes and are trying to organize people, with some success in some countries.³⁰

The influence of youth organizations and artistes on SSA organizations cannot be denied, as evidenced by the Y'en a marre (“We're fed up”) movement in Senegal, modeled after Egypt's Kefaya (“Enough!”) and other movements such as April 6, initially a Facebook group in support of a strike that took place in 2008. Mid-February 2011, Dakaronline published an article titled “the demise of Mubarak puts an end to Wade's dynastic ambitions”. From then on, the Senegalese press enthusiastically followed Mubarak's fall, drawing a parallel between Gamal Mubarak and Karim Wade, the alleged successor of his father, President Abdoulaye Wade. Opposition leader Niasse wished “the same for Senegal”.³¹

In Uganda, during the February elections, SMS and other messages including the words “Mubarak”, “bullet”, “Tunisia”, “people power”, “dictator”, “teargas”, “army”, “police”, “gun”,

“Ben Ali” and “UPDF” were prohibited. UPDF is the acronym for the Ugandan military that has supported President Yoweri Museveni, in power for the past quarter century, and could violently put down any public protest.³²

In Angola, an anonymous group in March via the Internet called for a protest against President Eduardo dos Santos, the attempt was nipped in the bud but artiste Brigadeiro was arrested. In Zimbabwe, students were arrested for watching an Al Jazeera and BBC video showing the “uprisings that brought down autocrats in Tunisia and Egypt”. The Zimbabwe Independent also drew a parallel between Robert Mugabe and Hosni Mubarak.³³

In Burkina Faso, references to the Arab spring were not so obvious during the March/April protests by students and the civil society. Although international media tried to draw a parallel between the unrest and the Arab spring, it seemed that the protests did not draw directly on inspiration from further north. Burkina is a country where seemingly very polite and patient people suddenly rise up and get rid of their leaders when confidence is gone; and they have done so at least three times since 1966. Maybe it was bolder this time. The army tried to join the April and May protests and will probably try again until President Blaise Compaoré, in power since 1987, is ousted from power, especially since he fired over 500 soldiers in July (without daring to touch officers though). Compaoré has allowed luxury housing projects to flourish in Ouagadougou, such as “Ouaga 2000”, where water sprinklers hiss over grass and flower beds in a poor and dry, Sahelian country; and his inner circle is perceived as being corrupt. The conditions are ripe for an “Arab” revolution, especially since his role in a number of West African conflicts is increasingly being revealed for example in Côte d'Ivoire, where rebels were

able to organize themselves and plan their 19 September 2002 attack from Burkina's territory. For Liberia and Sierra Leone, Compaoré introduced Charles Taylor to Gadhafi and financed rebellions in West Africa.³⁴ But things are not that simple.

3.6 Comparing and Contrasting the Conditions that led to the North African Revolutions and the Conditions in SSA

Dictatorial regimes in place for 20 or so more years, such as those of Presidents Museveni (26 years in power), dos Santos (32 years in Angola), Biya (28 years in Cameroon), Compaoré (24 years in Burkina), Obiang (32 years in Equatorial Guinea), are revolution- and conflict-prone. They look very much like the pre-revolution eras in North Africa, with the muzzling of the press – as in Ben Ali's Tunisia, or any number of SSA countries. Countries where the army is at the president's feet are also candidates for a change (in Togo, where the Kabyé, a tribe from the north, dominates the army); a ruling family entrenched (Gabon or Togo – and suspicions that the same is intended in Senegal); or the regime is totally controlled by a clan, precluding de facto any candidature by the opposition (Egypt or Equatorial Guinea), and/or with resources embezzled on a grand scale (widespread, but Gabon and Equatorial Guinea stand out). However, things are different in Sub – Saharan Africa. Population and money play a significant role.³⁵

Although conditions in Gabon or Equatorial Guinea may call for an uprising, the population may not be ready. The same holds even for Libya. Indeed, small, relatively pampered and/or well-controlled populations seldom rise up spontaneously. Libyans were relatively wealthy (per capita income of \$11,000 in 2010, IMF) relative to the rest of Africa and until recently did not exactly display a “revolutionary spirit”, probably partly because of the brutal repression by Gadhafi (who

himself came to power by a coup). Did they also suffer from the “Gulf state syndrome” whereby there is money (mainly from oil) but few exciting projects as the entire economy is based on oil, migrants do the work and bored youth drives fast cars in the desert to kill time, enjoying drifting, a free style sport? It seems to have been a “favoured diversion in sleepy Benghazi, a city with lots of cars and young men. Before the February uprising, young men gathered in Kish Plaza (Benghazi) on Thursday nights to watch drivers punish their rides with high-speed drifts and doughnuts, until the police would stop the show.” Until recently, Libyans were seen as a people thinking more about spending on luxury goods or nice holidays in Tunisia, where they are nicknamed “green locusts” (for the wads of U.S. dollars they carry). The ragtag rebel army is a mix of Islamists and ex-members of the regime with very few people defending a credible cause apart from getting rid of Gadhafi, which in itself is a fully understandable goal. Gaddafi himself, who rebelled against a weak and corrupt monarchy, to some extent redistributed oil wealth after he achieved a higher oil price in the 1970s, until he drifted himself.³⁶

Small Gabon, with its 1.6 million people, and a per capita income of \$4,200 (2009), is a typical example of a SSA country where money weakens political determination. Gabonese are used to comfort (that could pass for luxury elsewhere in Africa), with the minimum wage set at CFA 150,000 (about \$300). The opposition, more or less linked to the regime and its goodies, lacks credibility. The main opponent, Mba Obame, from the powerful Fang tribe which stretches from Equatorial Guinea to Cameroon, is an ex-minister and friend of the president. His attempts to set up a parallel government early in 2012 had been met with indifference if not amusement. What would make young Gabonese take to the streets are blatant injustice, ethnic issues, and rising unemployment.

Boka sums her views on Gabon as follows:

The authorities make sure things never fester beyond control, keeping an eye on powerful trade unions; especially since in August 2011, 13 of them started a movement called *ça suffit comme ça* (“That’s enough now”) who have been able to mobilize workers more than the opposition has been able to organize Gabonese around a cause. Resentment against the French, who have become unpopular for supporting the Bongo regime for 40 or so years (including the succession from Bongo père to fils in 2009), and keep a military base there in addition to exploiting oil, could however be the trigger. The question however is whether young Gabonese would want a radical change? Gabonese felt angry right after the 2009 elections that brought Ali Bongo to power, and although the youth accounts for 60 percent of the unemployed, they are not hungry and may feel that maybe things are not too bad after all, looking at their neighbours. Indeed, according to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Human Development Index, Gabon moved from 103rd in 2007 to 93rd in 2010, ranking fifth in Africa after Libya, Mauritius, Tunisia and Algeria, and first in SSA (UNDP, 2010). At the same time, Congo Republic was 126th; Cameroon, the top economy of CEMAC, the French-speaking economic zone of Central Africa, ranked only 131st; and Congo DRC miserably trailed at bottom, ranking 168th out of 169. In Equatorial Guinea, the small (about 600,000) and literate (87 percent) population is totally controlled by the Obiang clan. Power is incestuous (with several members of the president's immediate family in the government); the opposition is weak and operates from outside the country. Geography would make an Arab spring even more difficult as the country is an island with part of its territory on the mainland, neighbouring Gabon.³⁷

The main differences between North Africa and Sub – Saharan Africa stem from the fact that socio-economic conditions are not there: Tunisia’s 74 percent literacy rate, or Egypt's 71 percent, barely compares with Burkina's 22 percent. In a changing world, literacy is important to understand new concepts, own them and apply them at home, otherwise one faces the risk of taking shortcuts and applying ill-digested concepts at home. A Facebook revolution requires a minimum literacy rate for activists to be able to exchange views via the Internet, read messages, express themselves and agree on a strategy, largely in writing. Nonetheless, other technologies are available and in the past, when literacy rates were even lower, SSA people managed to kick out unpopular leaders.³⁸

Although Zimbabwe's literacy rate is 90 percent, income per capita was \$176 in 2008 in that country. One would first need to feed oneself and then think about “higher” things such as political freedom, especially via Facebook. In 2008, during the post-electoral crisis, some observers wondered why Zimbabweans seemed unable to get rid of Mugabe. Zimbabweans rebelled against the ZANU-PF regime, but their efforts were blunted if not thwarted by huge challenges on a daily basis: power outages, poor communications and fuel shortages, scarce food in some areas and high unemployment (80 percent of the population).

Elsewhere, lower unemployment rates would have set the country on fire, but how does one call for a rally if the phone is not working? How does one stage a protest at the other end of town without transportation, and with an empty stomach? Not even mentioning the well-functioning Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO), the semi-official War Veterans and other paramilitary forces. Also, it is argued that the “Egypt moment” in Zimbabwe occurred in the late 1990s when a strong alliance of trade unions and civic forces confronted the Mugabe regime in a series of strikes, stay-aways, demonstrations, the creation of a vibrant constitutional movement and the formation of a strong, national and multi-class opposition party, which effectively challenged the ruling party at the polls throughout the 2000s and in 2008.”

Meanwhile, for the Zimbabwean press, “the systems [Libya and Zimbabwe] thrived on repression and the use of security apparatus. In most cases the police is used and at times the military, when it is necessary to do so especially during elections.” In Uganda and Zimbabwe, as in Tunisia, the army is loyal and probably not republican enough to distance itself from the regime — but the North African wind is blowing and change is coming.³⁹

3.7 Major Findings

With regards to the hypothesis: The Arab Spring has a greater influence on the political dynamics of Africa than on the social sphere.

- Piven & Cloward (1977) argued that the emergence of protest entails a transformation of both consciousness and behavior. People need to develop a frame of indignation, a shared perceived identity with contenders as well as the sentiment that they could bring about social and political changes. Many grievances were out there: poor living conditions, high levels of unemployment, police brutality, limited freedom of speech, state arbitrariness, etc.

National unity, severe coercion, the emergence of revolutionary movement, confrontation with state's goals, economic structure of the state (rentier and non rentier states), autonomy of the military and cracks in incumbent elite's structure explain differences in the Arab spring among the countries in the MENA Region.

The issues that sparked the first uprising "Jasmine Revolution" in Tunisia clearly were socio – economic. Even though the Arab Spring has had and perhaps continues to have an influence on all three trajectories (political, economic and social), there has been a greater political influence. The impact of the Arab spring on the social spheres is still unfolding.

Since December 2010, the Arab world has been turned upside down. Ossified political structures that had held for decades have been cracked down. Rapid success

of revolts in Tunisia and Egypt helped to dispel the fear of state repression and encouraged largely young people across the region to carry their grievances onto the streets. Against the backdrop of similar problems in many places, protests affected almost all the Arab countries over the course of 2011, with mass demonstrations in many. However, after the toppling of Zine el – Abidine Ben Ali and Hosni Mubarak and the initiation of transformation processes in Tunisia and Egypt, other Arab leaders dug their heels in. In most cases this initially meant ad hoc measures addressing socio – economic demands, but some also initiated broader reform processes in response to political grievances. Others went in the opposite direction, seeking to defend the status quo by violently suppressing dissent or applying a combination of repression, minimal reforms and sweeping financial handouts. Thus, even below the threshold of regime change the protests, uprisings and revolts are having a huge impact on Arab political systems and perhaps sub – Saharan Africa. The leeway enjoyed by those in power has greatly narrowed and they are more dependent than ever on public acceptance of their policies. In those states (Tunisia, Egypt and Libya) where the leaders have been driven from power – this is opening up, if not already opened up, opportunities for transitions to political systems that are more just, inclusive and participatory.

2011 saw dramatic changes in Africa’s governance landscape, which led to the overturning of a century of autocratic rule in North Africa. Developments are ongoing and the future is open-ended and uncertain. Nevertheless, it can already be discerned how the uprisings are beginning to transform the political landscape and, in

particular, how they may affect the prospects for democratization in the Arab world and sub Saharan Africa. The Arab Spring is serving as a trigger, rather than a driver, for further democratic reforms in the region. There have been protests in more than a dozen sub Saharan African capitals demanding greater political pluralism, transparency, and accountability following the launch of the Arab Spring. Some have even explicitly referenced North Africa as a model. The Arab Spring is contributing to changed expectations citizens have of their governments, and has prompted several African leaders to put in place some 'safeguards'. In this way, the Arab Spring is serving as a catalyst to political reform in Africa.

- It is also worth mentioning that, relative deprivation, a fall of standards, and a clash between expectations and reality are at the heart of the Arab uprising. Youth unemployment, corruption and dropping living standards intensified in the years of economic crisis following 2008. These socio – economic conditions not only prevailed in the Arab autocratic world but also exists in the “so – called” democratic countries in sub – Saharan Africa. A number of African countries are faced with deep corruption. High youth unemployment is also prevalent in Africa, at least this is what sparked the first uprising (the Jasmine Revolution) in Tunisia. While many of the youth have had access to secondary and tertiary education, the expanded access to education has not correspondingly given rise to expanded economic opportunities and job creation. Proliferation of small arms and light weapons, especially in the case of the Libyan revolt amidst these economic weaknesses therefore has dismal consequences for Africa. A report by the United Nations Support Mission in Libya

said that Gaddafi's government had accumulated a large stockpile of MANPADs, and that although thousands were destroyed during the 2011 military intervention in Libya, there were "increasing concerns over the looting and likely proliferation of these portable defence systems, as well as munitions and mines, highlighting the potential risk to local and regional stability.

The lack of economic opportunity and the availability of small arms can act as a push factor for many aggrieved youths to engage in armed robbery, etc to a bid to survive, thereby creating insecurity for innocent people. Where wars have officially come to an end, the presence of small arms makes sure that physical insecurity persists through banditry and violent settlement of scores. In Africa, many countries could be described as nominally at peace. But even in these societies – South Africa, Ghana – armed robbery is rampant and coercive protection and vigilante justice is replacing the incapacitated state security rackets. As long as the small arms pipelines remain open, the prospects for peaceful conflict management, reigning in crime and promoting human rights will be greatly undermined, and this has dire consequences for the process of democratization and fostering secure livelihoods.

Of greater security concern is the fact that some mercenaries who were recruited to help in the Libyan crisis have left Libya with these weapons and may trade them for money with non-state actors – pirates, terrorists, arms smugglers, and drug traffickers, among others.

From a broader perspective, the proliferation and illicit trade of Small Arms and Light Weapons can undermine economic development and erode the capacity of the state. Putting weapons in the hands of insurgents and rebels breeds insecurity and instability. In this type of environment, sustainable development is impossible. Armed groups seek to disrupt transit routes and divert natural resource development for their own purposes. Faced with an armed insurgency, governments are forced to spend more on defense, diverting funds away from agriculture, education, and healthcare projects, thereby further weakening economies. Furthermore, insecurity often cancels foreign investment, a necessary economic component for many developing countries.

- Modern technology penetration is deeper in North Africa. According to a recent study published in Moroccan paper Assabah, Egypt is the number one Arab country in terms of Facebook users (quantitative), but Tunisia (with 20 percent of the population using Facebook) is the Arab country “that has made the best use of the social network to spark the revolution.

The events that happened between December and January in Tunisia started when people posted graphic photographs and videos from their mobile phones on Facebook. Even though the uprising started in Sidi Bouzid, the centre of online action was Facebook. The coordinated mass protests which began in Tahrir Square in Egypt also commenced when a computer-savvy Egyptian reached out to youths on Facebook to organize a protest rally against police brutality, the state of emergency

laws, lack of free elections and freedom of speech, and corruption in high places, forcing the resignation of long-serving Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. Two days after the fall of Tunisian president Ben Ali, a 32-year-old mother of three in Yemen posted a message on Facebook, calling on the people to celebrate the Tunisian uprising. The Facebook-page “We are all Khalid Said” is a case in point. Originally founded by the Egyptian Google-employee Wael Ghonim, the page was established in memory of Khalid Said, a 26-year old Egyptian who died while in the custody of Egyptian police. The group was an important news-outlet during the Egyptian Revolution of 2011. By August that year 1.6 million people were following the Arabic page, while the English version gave over 140 000 people news about revolutionary activities during the Arab Spring. These are among the events that were organized using the social media particularly, Facebook.

Young people, who account for about 40 percent of the population in Sub – Saharan Africa go to Internet cafes rather than surfing from home, making it more difficult for them to organize around a cause. Again, very few people in sub Saharan Africa can afford a computer. In Mozambique, internet penetration rate is 2.6 percent, but a reasonably high 25 percent mobile phone penetration rate. Togo, with a low internet penetration rate of 5.26 percent, has a 32 percent mobile penetration rate, while Zimbabwe, with 11 percent internet use, has 24.8 percent mobile use. Angola has a 60 percent mobile phone usage while internet use is only 4.5 percent.

During the September 2010 food riots in Mozambique, mobile phones were powerful tools in assembling rioters. In this regard, social media plays a less likely role in democratization sub Saharan Africa than it did in the Arab Spring. Perhaps, mobile phones could be the “Facebook” of sub Saharan Africa, since it presents a great opportunity for democracy.

- The democratic protests in the Middle East and North Africa are having an impact and shaping the debate on the future of democracy in Africa. They are also teaching important lessons that democracy is not bestowed on but earned by its citizens. Once initiated, it is not a passive or self-perpetuating governance model, but one that requires the active engagement of citizens. Perhaps most meaningfully, then, the Arab Spring is instigating changes in expectations that African citizens have of their governments. What makes these changed expectations especially potent is that they dovetail with more fundamental drivers of change that are likely to spur further democratic advances in Africa in the next several years.

Access to information technology is rising in Africa, dramatically enhancing the capacity for collective action and accountability (as was evidence in Tunisia and Egypt). Rapid urbanization is further facilitating this capacity for mass action. Africa’s youthful and better educated population is restive for more transparency from public officials and expanded livelihood opportunities. These youth are increasingly aware of governance norms elsewhere in the world and yearn for the same basic rights in their societies. Rising governance standards in the region and

internationally, in turn, are placing ever greater value on legitimacy while heightening intolerance of unconstitutional transitions of power. Civil society, typically the bottom-up vehicle for governance change, is growing in breadth, sophistication, and influence. And Africa's democratic institutions have begun to put down roots. Parliaments are becoming more capable and autonomous, independent media is more diverse and accessible than ever, and elections are becoming increasingly common, transparent, and meaningful.

While there are many competing forces at play, for instance, some 40 percent of Africa's states continue to be organized around authoritarian governing principles, and norms of personalistic governance, remain strong across the continent, including within some of Africa's heretofore leading democracies; the democratic calculus in Africa has changed. African populations now have higher expectations that government leaders act in a more democratic and accountable manner. There is a palpable sense that African citizens will no longer passively sit back and accept abuses of power. While positive outcomes are not assured, prospects for further democratic advances in Africa over the next several years are promising. These advances will almost certainly not be as sudden and dramatic as in Egypt, Tunisia, or even Libya — but are likely to be widespread, contingent on the starting point of each given society.

Indeed sub Saharan Africa's democratization experience, predates the Arab Spring. The demands of protesters in North Africa — elections, a free press, freedom of

assembly — are rights most sub Saharan Africans ostensibly already have. One of the remarkable aspects of the prospective democratic transitions in North Africa and the Middle East is that it has taken so long. The Arab world is the last major region to start down the democratic path. Still, the dramatic struggle for freedom in North Africa reverberates deeply throughout the rest of Africa. For while there has been noteworthy progress relative to the previous autocratic decades, Africa's democratic path has been checkered and is far from complete.

In the midst of the Arab Awakening, there has been much emphasis on the political aspect of the popular revolts. While this facet is undoubtedly of utmost importance, it is worth mentioning however that these uprisings have also brought economic and financial dimensions to the forefront.

- An explosive mix of socio-economic and political grievances lay behind all the Arab uprisings. In the months following the Arab Spring, economies of some countries in the MENA region worsened and is only gradually picking up. The MENA region was distressed by the disruption of activity, the reduction of Investment, the fall of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows coupled with capital flights and lowered tourism receipts. At the same time, surging global commodity prices have pushed governments to respond by increasing spending, including those on wages, food and fuel subsidies, which increased the average fiscal deficit in 2011. The turbulence in the oil – exporting countries in the MENA region has also had serious economic impacts globally.

After an initial rebound from the 2009 world economic crisis, Africa's economy has been undermined by the Arab uprisings. The continent's growth fell back from 5% in 2010 to 3.4% in 2011. Commodity prices – crucial for Africa – have declined from their peak due to reduced demand and supply, and some could fall further. Broader impact of the Arab Spring on the region and the African continent as a whole, is the deteriorating external economic environment (mainly in Europe) which has magnified the negative effects of social instability on external trade, commodity prices, tourism and other critical export receipts.

The widespread protests across sub-Saharan Africa will inevitably lead to uncertainty in the economic and political sphere: particularly by breeding uncertainty among investors, both domestic and international, concerning the economic and political stability within sub-Saharan Africa. This investor uncertainty will have a profound impact on the economies of sub-Saharan Africa, and the already dire economic conditions protestors are experiencing could worsen if investors are discouraged because of political instability.

Furthermore, the Euro-zone crisis will negatively impact trade and export earning within the sub-continent as the major trading partners of the continent are facing their own economic slowdown and growing citizen discontent. This will lead to a downturn in the export sectors of affected countries especially the manufacturing and the mining sectors. What is most likely is that domestic production will experience a downturn and the socio-economic conditions will worsen.

- Beginning in early 2011, mass public protests swept much of the Arab world. These movements and their targeted regimes have taken different trajectories. While the uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt were relatively peaceful, the violent conflicts in Syria and particularly Libya have had greater costs on civilian lives. In Tunisia and Morocco, there was little bloodshed if any. In Libya and Syria, there has been much more.

According to government figures, at least 846 Egyptians died in the three-week uprising early 2011. In subsequent months, at least another 150 died in violent street clashes. There is also no independently verified account of the number of people killed in the Libyan civil war, but the new government claims at least 30,000 people died on both sides. Postwar clashes have killed dozens of others. Further, Yemen's government recently estimated that 2,000 people were killed in the uprising leading to Ali Abdullah Saleh's resignation. Recent U.N. estimate of civilian deaths in the Syrian uprising, from late March 2012, is more than 9,000. This number is likely to have exceeded 10,000 presently. Opposition groups cite figures closer to 15,000. Presently, there could broadly be anywhere from 25,000 to 60,000 casualties (civilian and military) across all countries in the MENA region where there has been an uprising.

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CHAPTER FOUR

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter concludes with a summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendations for further research and implementation.

4.1 Summary of Findings

The Arab Spring is an ongoing wave of demonstrations and protests in the Arab world, which began in December 2010. Popular protests have led to the overthrow of regimes in Tunisia and Egypt; a civil war in Libya; civil uprisings in Bahrain, Syria and Yemen; major protests in Algeria, Jordan, Morocco and Oman; and minor protests in a number of other countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. The protests have been widely seen as a ‘watershed’ event, which has ‘irrevocably changed’ the region and the global political landscape. Developments are on-going and the future is open-ended and uncertain.

Nevertheless, it can already be discerned how the uprisings are beginning to transform the political landscape and, in particular, how they may affect the prospects for democratization in the Arab world and sub Saharan Africa. The Arab Spring is thus serving as a catalyst to political reform. There is a potentially important religious element in all this, but it was less central initially than one might have expected. Religion has been there but largely helping than leading. The events that happened between December and January in Tunisia started when people posted

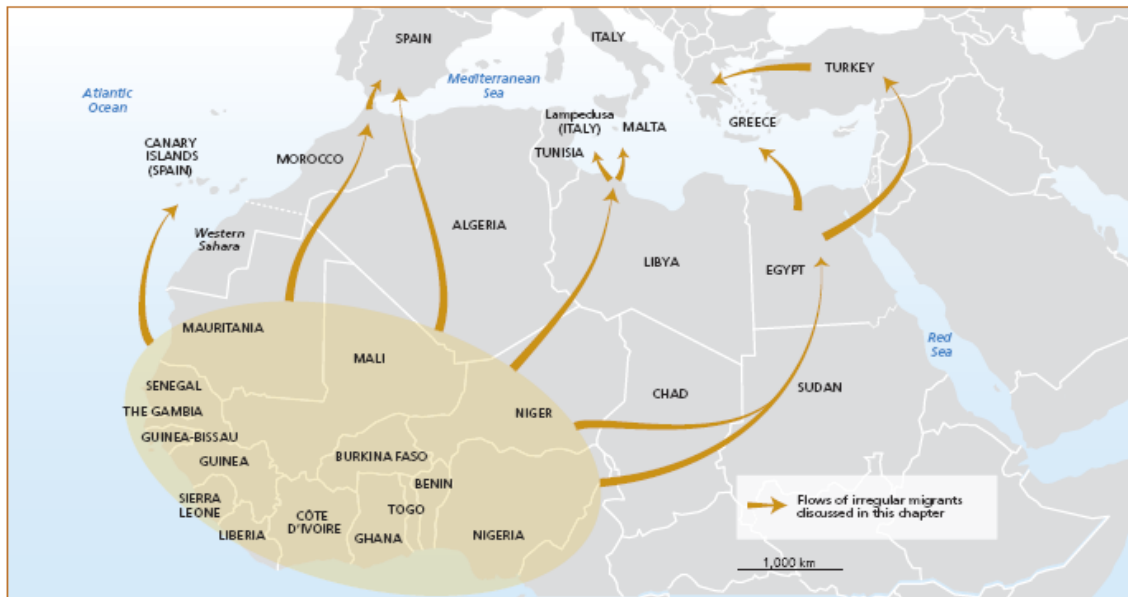
graphic photographs and videos from their mobile phones on Facebook. Even though the uprising started in Sidi Bouzid, the centre of online action was Facebook. Social media and technology consequently played a significant role in the Arab Spring.

In the spring of 2011, dramatic political changes and events took place in the Arab World. However, during the same period there was also a high level of civil unrest and several demonstrations in Sub-Saharan Africa. There were political events inspired by and similar to the Arab Spring. Yet, a striking link between the events in the Arab world and Sub-Saharan Africa seems to be the heavy-handed and fear-driven reactions of governments to peaceful demonstrations. Another, stem from the fact that socio-economic conditions are not there: Tunisia's 74 percent literacy rate, or Egypt's 71 percent, barely compares with Burkina's 22 percent. In a changing world, literacy is important to understand new concepts, own them and apply them at home, otherwise one faces the risk of taking shortcuts and applying ill-digested concepts at home.

Following the Arab Spring, the MENA region was distressed by the disruption of activity, the reduction of Investment, the fall of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows coupled with capital flights and lowered tourism receipts. At the same time, surging global commodity prices have pushed governments to respond by increasing spending, including those on wages, food and fuel subsidies, which increased the average fiscal deficit in 2011. The turbulence in the oil – exporting countries in the MENA region has also had serious economic impacts globally. After an initial rebound from the 2009 world economic crisis, Africa's economy has been undermined by the Arab uprisings. The continent's growth fell back from 5% in 2010 to 3.4% in 2011.

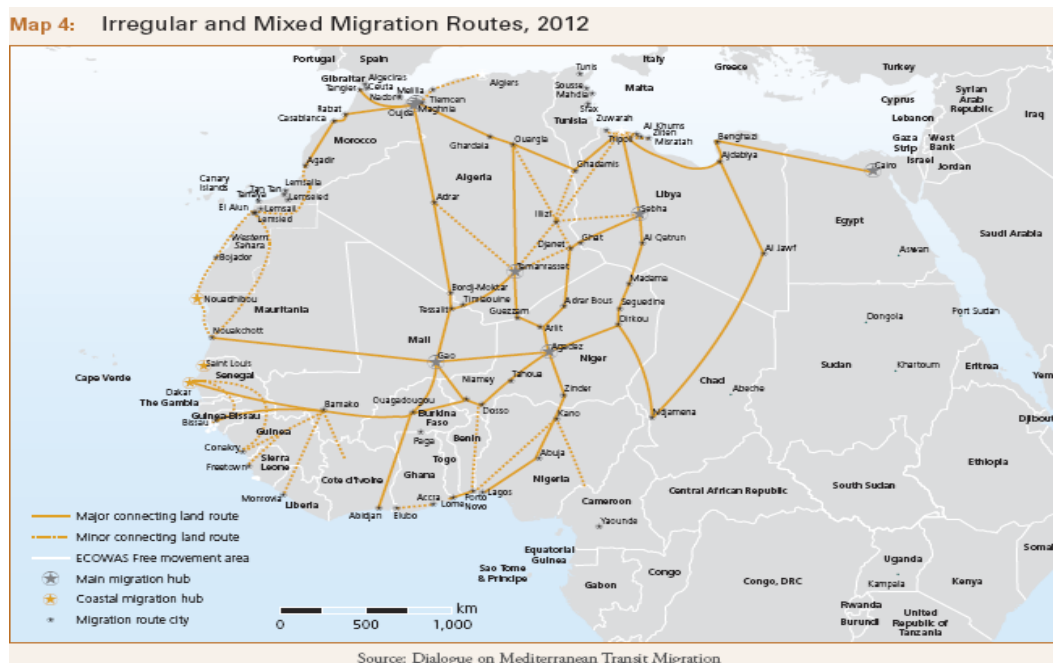
Commodity prices – crucial for Africa – have declined from their peak due to reduced demand and supply, and some could fall further.

The Arab Spring has also played a greater role in generating intra-regional forced migration flows, constraining and changing migration patterns, and drawing greater attention to pre-existing migration flows. In terms of constraining migration, many migrants engaged in cross-border trade in Tamanrasset, Algeria have experienced a decline in their freedom of movement because political instability, conflict, and crisis arising from the Arab Spring have hindered economic opportunities, increased state border controls and deportations, and, subsequently, increased labour exploitation by employers who are aware of migrant traders' vulnerability and unofficial status.



Known Migration Flows. Source UNODC 2013

On top of humanitarian and economic problems came military threats, as Libyan weapons and fighters (particularly the Tuareg soldiers) who had sided with the Colonel, began traveling through the Sahara to places like Mali. When Tuareg dissidents launched an uprising in northern Mali in January 2012, their ranks reportedly included some men who had fought for Qadhafi. The situation in Mali has added to the difficulties that West Africa faces, including terrorism and the fear that Tuareg uprisings could spread to Niger.



Also, following the Arab Spring is the fact that al-Qaeda is expanding its reach and clearly sees Africa as fertile ground for this expansion. Groups such as Boko Haram (BH), the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJWA), Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and other splinter terrorist organizations have made substantial progress in either heavily influencing or controlling significant hub swathes of territory in some countries in West Africa. The west of Libya, northern Nigeria and northern Mali are all experiencing extreme levels of violence at the hands

of BH and like-minded Islamic militant groups. Northern Mali fell to al-Qaeda-linked militants in early 2012, and their influence soon spread to Niger and Nigeria. In the case of the Libyan revolt is the issue of proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons not only in the region but in sub-Saharan Africa. A report by the United Nations Support Mission in Libya said that Gaddafi's government had accumulated a large stockpile of MANPADs, and that although thousands were destroyed during the 2011 military intervention in Libya, there were "increasing concerns over the looting and likely proliferation of these portable defence systems, as well as munitions and mines, highlighting the potential risk to local and regional stability. This is further heightened by the allegations that some mercenaries who were recruited to help in the Libyan crisis have left Libya with these weapons and may trade them for money with non-state actors – pirates, terrorists, arms smugglers, and drug traffickers, among others.

4.2 Conclusion

Every country is undergoing change in its own way and the Arab Spring defies generalization. The common theme, however, is the desire for dignity that unites people across the Arab world. This desire is universal to all humans; the desire for a job, a future for one's children and the ability to fulfill one's potential.

The end of 2010 and the beginning of 2011 brought about the surprising spread of revolutions across North Africa and several other Arab countries. While the repressive conditions under the autocratic regimes in those countries have been spoken about by many, it is difficult for anyone to claim that they had anticipated such sweeping and popular uprisings. Among those who envisioned some sort of eventual protest against repression and abuse of the rule of law, none

foresaw the dramatic outcomes witnessed in Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya and the events as they have unfolded in Syria and Yemen.

The Arab Spring has given hope to young sub – Saharan Africans and has already inspired a series of protest in some sub – Saharan African countries; for better economic opportunities, civil and political rights, end to endemic government corruption and decades – long dictatorship. Not all the elements for a successful revolution in North Africa are available in sub – Saharan Africa and ultimately, most, if not all of the sub – Saharan African protests have been quashed.

This notwithstanding, some of the missing elements of revolution in sub-Saharan Africa – in particular, literacy and access to technology – will be remedied over time, as many African societies continue to develop at a pace, raising the prospect of new forms of political mobilization and new challenges to entrenched power. So far, political leaders in sub-Saharan Africa have survived the wave of protests, but many of them are now looking warily over their shoulder.

It will take years, if not decades, for the full consequences of the Arab Spring to be understood. But local leaders and activists in the Middle East and North Africa, regional and international organisations like the Arab League and the Gulf Cooperation Council, the European Union, the African Union and the United Nations all have a responsibility to make sure that the revolutions of the Arab Spring in the end improve the living conditions of the people not only in the region, but in Africa as a whole, rather than install just a different brand of self-serving rulers that only pay lip-service to human rights, democracy, and individuals' well-being.

4.3 Recommendations

While the Arab uprisings certainly have been a game-changer for Africa's wider political and security structure, much more systematic research needs to be done to identify clear implications on a case-by-case basis and at a micro level.

Civil society plays a critical role in a vibrant democracy by facilitating public participation on issues of interest to the general population and allowing citizens to take initiative to address local or national challenges rather than passively waiting for government to take action. Civil society also plays an indispensable role in holding government actors accountable by serving as a watchdog over public budgeting, procurement practices, natural resource allocations, personnel appointments, the even-handed application of the rule of law, and the abuse of official power, among other facets of governance that are vulnerable to influence peddling or state capture. In all these ways, civil society serves as a vital check and balance in a democratic society. It is therefore recommended that civil society organisations in Africa initiate and continue to campaign for anti-corruption initiatives, promote needed constitutional reforms, advocate for poverty alleviation, and oppose the prolongation of presidential terms.

The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) in the sub region should step up its efforts in relieving the humanitarian pressure of forced migration and subsequently refugees, owing to the Arab Spring.

The African Union (AU) has been essentially sidelined and struck by political disunity in reacting to the Libyan crisis. It is recommended that, the AU should work to regain some leverage in Libya, but more importantly is its future development of alliances and interaction on the continent.

With regards to proliferation of small arms and light weapons, recommendation follows three cases. In the case of weaponry remaining stationary at the point of origin, it is recommended that weapons stockpiles should be identified as soon as conflict and instability ignites. This can be done using human informants, satellite imagery and drones. A policy option that should be considered and discussed with partners in the country and region is the pre-emptive destruction of said weaponry stockpile in order to prevent movement of usage by hostile groups.

In the case of weaponry moving within the state of origins borders: It is recommended that, there should be continued tracking of their location as well as where they are likely to be headed. Strategic alliances in the country should be formed and strategies should be formulated to offer parties holding the weaponry incentives to turn them in. This can include financial incentives and a swap for weapons deemed less dangerous. The international community should help in seizing or destroying weapons when the opportunity arises.

In the case of weaponry moving beyond the borders of the state of origin, a core threat is having them falling into the hand of non-state actors. It is therefore recommended that, the international community should work to influence the sovereign of that country to seize the weapons by a

number of means; supporting weak governments to track weaponry, assistance gathering intelligence and sharing information, the provision of military consultants to provide technical support and logistical support (such as transporting national law enforcement authorities to weaponry locations).

Furthermore, existing structures on border control should be enhanced by prioritizing small arms as a security issue. It is necessary for African countries to recognize the issue of small arms proliferation as being relevant to their own, and regional security concerns. Control over national armories should also be stepped up.

Again, security agencies should form strategic alliances inter and intra country in disintegrating Al – Qaeda’s prospects and expansion in sub – Saharan Africa.

It is also recommended that African governments not only propose but implement policies on re – diversifying their economies by re – investing in other sectors of the economy, particularly manufacturing, which would create jobs and also add up to the income stream of the country.

In the same vein, institutional measures should be put in place to promote entrepreneurship with particular emphasis on university graduates, which would ensure creation of jobs and subsequently cut down on unemployment. These economic institutions should also develop and implement appropriate regulatory framework which would ensure the swift provision of capital and license to operate.

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