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GULF AND IRAN IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE GULF CRISIS 2017

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¹ This Paper was a term paper submitted to “Proactive Foreign and Security Policy: Geopolitics, Geostrategy, Change Management, and International Law as Tools for Designing Politics” course in Summer Semester 2020, and supervised by Prof. Dr. Fischer Klemens, the envoy and head of department at the permanent representation of Austria to the EU.

Abstract:

Gulf Crisis in 2017 is one of the important political issues in the intra-Gulf relations since its rise as independent countries in 20th century. This article argues that the 2017 crisis has many repercussions not only on intra-Gulf countries (Gulf unity, Gulf economies...), but also implications on Gulf-Iranian relations. The article relies on descriptive statistics and used process tracing method to show how united and strong were the intra-Gulf Relations before the Popular Uprising in Middle East and North Africa in 2011. Afterwards, the Gulf Unity over many GCC and regional affairs started splitting until 2017 when three of GCC countries and Egypt cut ties and imposed an air, land and sea “blockade” on one of the Gulf countries (Qatar). The article demonstrates clearly how the crisis that was intended to limit Iranian involvement in Gulf Affairs and halt the increasing political Islam influence, especially Muslim Brotherhood in MENA region was counterproductive and ended up in strengthening Qatar-Iranian Relation in different sectors. A new era in Gulf relations have Started since then.

Key words: GCC, MENA, Iran, Security, Muslim Brotherhood, Popular uprising

Introduction

The Arabian Peninsula Countries (Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Oman, Kuwait and Bahrain) share many similarities such as: common faith of Islam, hereditary political regimes, Arabian culture and sociocultural aspects. In 1981, these countries decided to establish the Gulf Cooperation Council to further cooperation and integration in all domains. Many scholars consider security and defense as motives behind its establishment (the Iranian revolution, the rise of Saddam Hussain, Iraq-Iran war, and the civil war in Oman). The procedures taken throughout the years are best demonstrating the reasons of the GCC establishment (the Peninsular Shield Force in 1981, GCC Security Agreement in 2000, Joint Defense Agreement etc. ...) (Miller, 2016).

The popular uprising of 2011 spread out quickly in the Middle East and North Africa and toppled down many dictators. Gulf countries were convinced that they had to act against it as protests arrived in their streets demanding democratization and political reform. Saudi Arabia, The UAE and other Gulf countries decided to face youth aspirations, but Qatar chose to back the popular uprising. The tiny rich country backed movements, young people's demands, offered financial support, and the use of its soft power (its active diplomacy and giant media network of Al-Jazeera). The gesture was considered as disobedience by Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain, and Egypt, then they decided to withdraw their Ambassadors to Doha in 2014. Despite the agreement signed, disagreement between these countries was not solved. Yet in 2017, the so-called "anti-terror quartet" severed diplomatic and commercial ties with Qatar and imposed an air, land and sea embargo.

Despite efforts of Kuwait and US to solve the Gulf Crisis, the two blocks (anti change and pro-change in the MENA region) did not reach any agreement. As Qatar relies on importation to feed its population, an immediate intervention from Turkey, Iran and other countries helped to secure food supply for its 2 million inhabitants. This crisis that aimed to limit Qatar's support to movements and individuals considered by "anti-terror quartet" as sources of threat led to an Iranian-Qatari convergence as this article aims to demonstrate. Moreover, the GCC faces an unknown destiny, as the organization,

which was once united against foreign threats (Iran), falls apart while Iran gains more influence inside the Gulf region itself. Since the Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979 the tension between Arabian Peninsula countries and Iran has been escalating. The former considered Iran a regional competitor and a security threat. Despite their unity of stances that longed for decades, three of the gulf countries confronted one of the founding members of the GCC in 2017 in an aim to force Qatar to align itself with Saudi Arabia, The UAE and Bahrain. This article answers the following question: to which extent the blockade on Qatar was counterproductive and gave Iran a foothold in the Gulf? In order to answer the question, the article applied process tracing method to demonstrate how besieging Qatar by other GCC countries aiming to urge Qatar to align itself with other GCC countries was counterproductive. In addition, it aims to unveil the mechanisms behind the Iranian increasing involvement in the region. It argues that the GCC crisis is a part of wider aggressive foreign policy led by Saudi Arabia and the UAE against Iran and democratic spring in 2011. it aimed to halt spread of popular uprising and voices of democratization in the MENA region, but had a counterproductive outcome, gaining Iran a foothold in the Arabian Peninsula.

The Gulf Cooperation Council was established by six Arabian Peninsula countries in May 1981 in an aim to further cooperation. Many studied GCC as a regional organization with an important international role and incentives behind its foundation. Although security was not mentioned as the main objective in its charter, it is argued that security is the main goal of the regional entity in order to face threats facing GCC member states especially those coming from their neighboring country: Iran after the Islamic revolution 1979 (Al Makhawi. 1990). After decades of unity, GCC faced substantial issues threatening its unity and continuity. While some believe that Gulf crisis of 2017 roots back to the popular uprising in 2011 as GCC member states held different stances over developments in the region, sources of instability and security threats menacing their traditional monarchies, notably the emergence of Muslim Brotherhood as modern Islamic governing regime, others believe that personal politics of the most influential figure in the crisis (the UAE's Muhammad bin Zayed Al-Nahyan), who had been pushing for a much harder line against the Brotherhood and

Qatari political figures mainly in dynasty family, was the cause of the gulf crisis (Davidson 2019). The personal politics and ideology versions of the leaders in the UAE mainly MbZ (Muhammad bin Zayed) and Qatar's HbK (Hamad bin Khalifa) came head to head as the Arab Spring erupted (Krieg 2019). The unexpected crisis of 2017 had many regional but also international repercussions as the GCC member states control 29 percent of the world's crude oil reserves. It could become also a field of confrontation for major actors. A study by (2018) concluded that the crisis has a great impact on strengthening Qatar's relations with Turkey whose "*parliament authorized fast-tracking the deployment of 3,000-5,000 Turkish troops to a military base in Qatar*" just two days after the "blockading countries" cut ties with Qatar. Qatar after June 5th, 2017 had only one option: to renormalize its ties with Iran. Thus, it returned its ambassador to Tehran days after the crisis (Baabood. 2018). Iran and Qatar after the crisis emerged stronger than before but the Qatari policies towards Iran are preserved for economic and energy reasons only. Eventually, "*Doha's policy towards Iran remains therefore a pragmatic one not overshadowing the fundamental differences in values and ideology between the two countries*". However, "*Iran has so far benefitted from the crisis exploiting the situation economically and politically to present itself as a reliable partner in times of crisis*" (Boussois, 2019). This article relies on economic relations, bilateral relations and visits of officials of Qatar and Iran before and after the 2017 crisis to examine the extent of the relationship between Iran and Qatar. In addition, it seeks to unveil the mechanisms pushing toward convergence of the two countries. The study is divided into three axes. The first axe "**the GCC, a past of unity**", digs deep into the history of GCC organization until 2011. The second axe is "**Crossroad of the Gulf Countries**"; it states stances of different emerging blocks within the GCC, while the third axe "**Gulf Crises and Regional implications**" discusses the implications of Gulf crises. The last axe "**Iranian Qatari relations :pre-and post-2017 crisis**" compares the Qatari-Iranian pre-and post-2017 crisis.

The GCC, a Past of Unity

The first attempts to establish a unified entity for Arabian Peninsula countries roots back to the Saudi efforts that call for deployment of a joint military force to respond in case of jeopardy threatening Gulf states' sovereignty (Al Hassan, 2014). Saudi failed efforts were followed by submission of a proposal by Omani Sultan Qaboos in which he called for a conference of foreign ministers of the six Arabian Peninsula countries in addition to Iran and Iraq. Although the conference gathered different contenders to sit at same table in the late of November 1976 that ended up by a call for closer cooperation between countries of the region and an agreed regional security and defense policy, no single achievement was made because of rise of tension between Iraqi regime and Shah regime in Iran (Al Makhawi, 1990). The third attempt to create a regional organization for Gulf Countries, but with remarkable focus on economic potential, cultural and political advantages of cooperation, was backed by Kuwait in order to achieve unity among Gulf Countries (Al Hassan, 2014).

Internal changes in addition to regional developments made six countries of the Arabian Peninsula aware of threats facing their region, mainly after the Islamic revolution in Iran, the escalation of tension between Iran and Iraq, the fall of King Muhammad Rizā Shāh Pahlevi's regime in Iran and adoption of exporting revolution by the new regime in Iran incentivized Saudi Shiite citizens in eastern provinces to revolt against Sunni regime of Saudi Arabia, unrest manifested by citizens of Kuwait and Bahrain where the majority of population are Shiites as well, and other Gulf countries had similar uprisings in addition to terrorist attacks against both citizens and officials. But, the aggressive action of Iran that bombed Kuwaiti territories in December 1980 revealed part of future destiny of these countries making them in no doubt that violent attacks could spread to their vulnerable territories at any time (Al Makhawi, 1990).

Despite the existed divisions between the ruling elites in Gulf countries such as tensions between Bahrain and Qatar, and between Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE (Cordesman, 1997), the Arabian Peninsula Countries share many similarities, such as the hereditary political regimes, shared borders, common geography, common history and Arabian culture... these were the reasons and motives to establish a collective platform unifying and gathering efforts of member states in different fields of interests

and having a common action against any regional or international events and developments. On 25th of May 1981, heads of states signed the charter to establish the Cooperation Council of the Arab States of the Gulf with an aim to achieve the following objectives:

Objectives:

The basic objectives of the Cooperation Council are:

- *To effect coordination, integration and inter-connection between Member States in all fields in order to achieve unity between them.*
- *To deepen and strengthen relations, links and areas of cooperation now prevailing between their peoples in various fields.*
- *To formulate similar regulations in various fields including the following:*
 - *Economic and financial affairs*
 - *Commerce, customs and communications*
 - *Education and culture*
- *To stimulate scientific and technological progress in the fields of industry, mining, agriculture, water and animal resources; to establish scientific research; to establish joint ventures and encourage cooperation by the private sector for the good of their peoples (GCC Charter).*

Despite the stated motives behind the creation of GCC in its charter, many believe that motives dictated by prevailing regional and international conditions and developments are the factors behind the GCC establishment. This region is considered with high importance for two key factors. First, the region's strategic location for international trade. Second, the region's oil reserves counted to be one third of the global oil reserves, a reason that made the region with important value for international economy. In addition to that, other factors were behind GCC foundation: the internal implications of the new regime in Iran after the Islamic revolution in 1979 (Export of revolution and Shiite uprisings), "tanker war" (Al Makhawi, 1990), the failure of the only Arab organization (Arab Nations League established on March 22nd, 1945, to unify Arabs and confront regional and international events and developments) and regional instability and deterioration of regional security (Iraq-Iran war) (Barrie et al. 2019). As a result, the creation of the Cooperation Council of the Arab States of the Gulf came as a response to the aforementioned factors.

Crossroad of the Gulf Countries

Since its emergence as independent states, GCC countries shared many similarities and tended to have similar stances over many regional and international developments (Table 1 shows decisions of GCC countries over major regional events from its independence to the beginning of popular uprising in MENA region in 2011).

Table 1: Gulf Countries' stances over major regional events

	Supporting Iraq (Iraq-Iran war)	Supporting Kuwait (Iraq's invasion of Kuwait)	Supporting US (US's invasion of Iraq)	Fighting against Houthis in Yemen before 2017	References
Saudi Arabia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Shahram C. Tripp, C (2014). Nufal, A. (1991)). (Alterman, J. (2007) & ÇETĐNOĞLU, N. (2010)). The European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR).
Kuwait	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Shahram C. Tripp, C (2014). Nufal, A. (1991). (Alterman, J. (2007) & ÇETĐNOĞLU, N. (2010)). The European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR)
Bahrain	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Shahram C. Tripp, C (2014). Nufal, A. (1991). (Alterman, J. (2007) & ÇETĐNOĞLU, N. (2010)). The European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR)
Qatar	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Shahram C. Tripp, C (2014). Nufal, A. (1991). (Alterman, J. (2007) & ÇETĐNOĞLU, N. (2010)). The European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR).
UAE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Shahram C. Tripp, C (2014). Nufal, A. (1991). (Alterman, J. (2007) & ÇETĐNOĞLU, N. (2010)).

Oman	1-0	1-0	Yes	No	The European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR). Baabood, A. (2018). Nufal, A. (1991). (Lefebvre, J. (2009), Alterman, J. (2007) & ÇETĐNOĞLU, N. (2010)). The European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR).
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No: opponent, Yes: supporter, 1-0: neither supporter nor opponent

2011 marked the beginning of a new era in GCC interrelations' history. As protests were sparked in Tunisia, it spread quickly in north Africa and Middle East causing more challenges for GCC member states as they have not been immune to the waves of protests. Reaction of authorities in these countries differed. While some countries warded off protests by offering jobs and huge investments, other countries, mainly Qatar did not consider the popular uprising as a security threat. As a result, different behaviors led to the emergence of different blocs as follows:

Anti-Popular Uprising Bloc

When protests arrived at some Gulf countries' streets and the influence of popular uprising became clearer internally, Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Bahrain setup very clear anti-democratization policies to halt demands of citizens in their countries and neighboring ones as well. The aforementioned states backed Mubarak in Egypt in order to promote stability and maintain their interests. Once Mubarak regime fell, they chose to back army elite and support the political regime in Egypt after *coup d'état* led by Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi. Saudi Arabia and the UAE considered Muslim Brotherhood group as source of threat to their internal security and ended up classifying the group as a terrorist group (Sailer, 2016 & Al-Matter, 2016). As this movement won elections in Egypt, it was regarded as an Islamic political competitor that sets an example of moderate Sunni Islamic governing that came to power through democratic election contrary to the strict Salafist hereditary regime in Saudi Arabia and traditional regimes in UAE and Bahrain. A successful experience of Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt meant

a threat that could encourage citizens of anti-change bloc to provoke social chaos which could at the end lead to social conflict.

All these factors made it clear for anti-popular uprising bloc and necessary to let social and political change spread all over the region of Middle East and North Africa in order to halt the popular uprising internally and in their region as well. Gulf Countries provided financial and political aids and support to countries in the region. “They gave Jordan \$1.4bn in aid and took both Jordan and Morocco into the Saudi-dominated Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC). Along with other Gulf states, Saudi Arabia sent troops into Bahrain to quash the Shia-dominated protest” (the Guardian, 2011). The leading members of this bloc were characterized by a negative perspective about the Popular Uprising.

“Two crucially entangled aspects determined their attitude: First, the notion of change, especially revolutionary change; as they are stable fixed monarchies in which terms such as reform, change and revolution are not well received. Secondly, both regimes have aggressive attitudes toward Political Islamist movements, The Muslim Brotherhood in particular, which initially appeared to be the upcoming regimes in all of the Arab Spring countries.”
(Othman, T. 2014)

Pro-Change Bloc:

Among pro-change powers, Qatar was the only Gulf country to support voices calling for change and democratization in many countries across the MENA region. Despite its very limited area (11,521 square kilometers) and population (in 2019, the country has an estimated population of 2.83 million (Government of Qatar), but most people (88.4%) are non-Qatari residents and Qatari people are at only (11.6%) (World Population Review), Qatar enjoys a very high GDP per capita and rapid increasing gas and oil revenues. The distribution of national fortune gave more legitimacy to the ruling family of al-Thani and kept popular uprising and anger away from its streets. It was domestically quiet, but on the other hand, its foreign policy was very active and efficient.

The popular uprising was considered by Qatar as an opportunity to expand its influence across the region. It supported youth aspirations in Tunisia, Libya, Egypt and other countries. The tiny ultra-rich Gulf country (Qatar) allied itself with the growing

movement of Muslim Brotherhood considered by its Gulf neighboring countries as a security threat. Qatar's standing for revolutions and Muslim Brotherhood was obvious (Kirkpatrick, D 2012). On June 4th, 2014 the head of state of Qatar (the emir Sheikh Tamim) denounced what he called a "military coup" that took place on July 2013 in Egypt (Hassan, 2014).

Qatar's support to revolutions and popular uprising stands on three pillars: the use of its giant media corporation "Aljazeera" to cover protests and make voices get heard. The second pillar was to provide financial support to new regimes and movements, for instance: supporting Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood-led movement by financing the Egyptian Central Bank. The third pillar was embodied by state's official diplomacy. Qatar did not consider these movements and regimes a source of threat as many neighboring countries did. It was a great supporter of change. Moreover, it confronted its neighboring country the UAE which did not regard the arrival of Muslim Brotherhood to power favorably (Almarzoqi, M 2014). However, Egypt was not the only country representing conflict of interests of the Gulf countries. Qatar had different stances over Libyan revolution as it was the first country to recognize the Libyan transitional national council after the fall of Gadhafi's regime (Colombo, S 2012).

Non-Aligned Bloc:

Oman and Kuwait in comparison to other Gulf countries showed neutral positions about popular uprising and tended to offer support to non-GCC countries only when positions and stances of other members of anti and pro change blocs are clear and unified.

Despite the conflicting interests of pro and anti-change blocs, the GCC countries agreed on some regional affairs as they were brought for instance to fight shoulder to shoulder against Houthis in Yemen who are seen by Saudi Arabia and the UAE mainly as a terrorist group, but as a legitimate component of Yemen's political scene by Qatar (Edward B, 2013). Moreover, all the GCC countries considered Syria with enormous importance and wanted to limit Iranian involvement in the region by separating Syria

from the Iranian axis. They had similar approach to overthrown Al-Assad's regime in Syria and offered to help rebellions.

Gulf Crises and Regional Implications

“2014 Ambassadors’ Crisis”

The popular uprising of 2011 had tremendous implications on Gulf Countries. The new political division within the gulf countries that was never witnessed led to different blocs with conflicting interests and motivated state members to look for a resolution. Despite their efforts (GCC conference held on November 23rd, 2013) to halt financial or political support to anti-government activist groups (Herb. J & Scuitto. J, 2017), both blocs (anti- and pro-change in the region) continued to support with tangible (financial support...) and intangible support (media coverage...) individuals, parties and organizations deemed as security threatening for other gulf member states.

The Gulf countries' conflicting interests ended up in unprecedented demeanor against Qatar when anti-change bloc withdrew their ambassadors to Doha in March 2014. The “Ambassadors’ Crisis” lasted nine months. After the mediation of Kuwait, member states of the GCC met in Saudi Arabia on November 16th, 2014 and agreed on offering help and support to “...Egypt's stability, including preventing Al Jazeera from being used as a platform for groups or figures challenging the Egyptian government” (Herb. J & Scuitto. J, 2017). and applying “refrain from hosting or employing unacceptable individuals” (Kabalan, 2018).

This agreement ended the nine-month long crisis and resulted in the return of the ambassadors to Doha. Although the regular GCC Summit was held in Doha in December as an indication of convergence and understanding, in reality, there was a crisis of confidence within the GCC states which led to holding different positions on a number of matters, because of the absence of a clear and common vision on the nature of the threats facing other members of the GCC and non-understanding of interests of other member states.

2017 Crisis and the New Gulf

Although the GCC countries signed the 2014 agreement to unify their stances, it felt as if Qatar was forced to such an agreement and meaning that fire was still under the ashes. The absence of a clear and common vision on the nature of the challenges and threats of other members of the GCC and non-understanding of interests of other member states led to lack of confidence and escalation of tension especially after the controversial statements posted by the state-run Qatar News Agency. The QNA statements showed comments made by the Emir of Qatar who affirmed the good relationship between Qatar and Iran calling Iran a “big power” (Wintour, 2017). However, Qatar claimed that its national news broadcaster had been hacked and denied the statements. This was the opportunity for anti-change bloc in addition to Egypt to launch enormous media campaigns against Qatar and its leadership and refused the Qatari excuses.

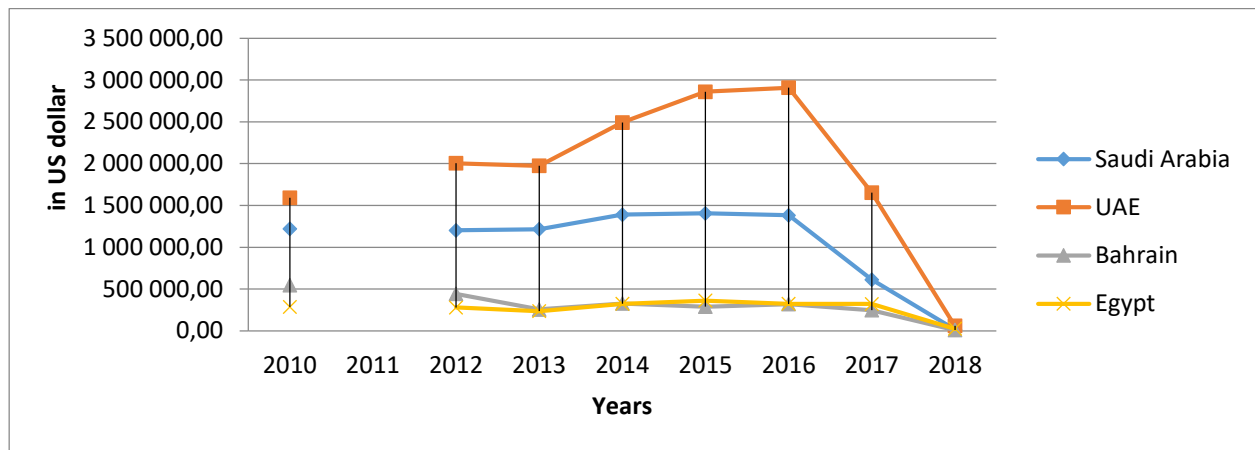
The media onslaught can be explained by the previous tension between the two blocs over many regional matters. On June 5th, 2017, GCC anti-popular uprising bloc and Egypt announced unexpected and surprising severance of diplomatic relations with Qatar. Furthermore, there was a suspending of land, air and sea travel from and to Qatar (Aleem, 2017). Few days later, the anti-change bloc considered by Qatar as besieging countries, escalated tension by launching further anti-Qatar decisions and policies such as banning their citizens to travel to Qatar and asking Qatari residents in their territories to leave. However, more surprising decisions that had never took place before in gulf history were planned to end up by invading Qatar (Aljazeera, 2017). Anti-change block foreign policies towards Qatar deepened misunderstanding between the two blocks but more importantly impacted the GCC unity.

Iranian Qatari Relations Before and After the 2017 Crisis**Qatar-Iranian Economic Relations:**

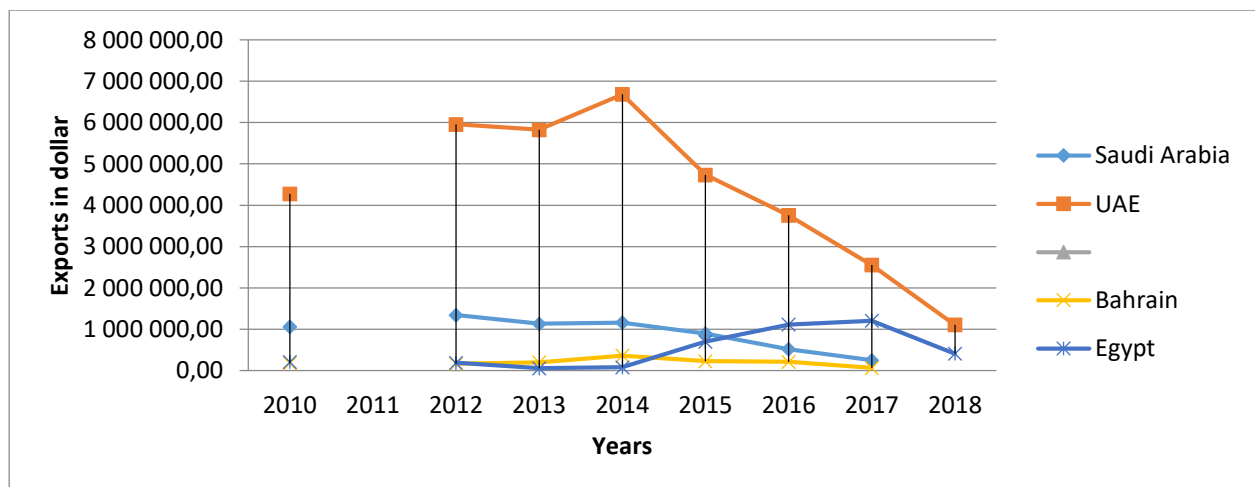
The Gulf crisis in 2017 had a severe impact on economic relations between the two blocs. Qatari imports from the anti-change bloc and Egypt, dramatically decreased in 2018 to 2.19% on the base of 2016 when total imports of Qatar from these countries

amounted to around five billion dollars (4,932,528.14 thousand \$) in 2016 and to (107,882.47 thousand \$) in 2018 (the graph 1 and 2 show Qatari imports and exports to Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain and Egypt from 2010, a year before the popular uprising in the MENA region, to 2018, a year after GCC crisis in 2017) (Data retrieved from: World Integrated Trade Solution).

Graph 1: Imports of Qatar from Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain and Egypt 2010-2018



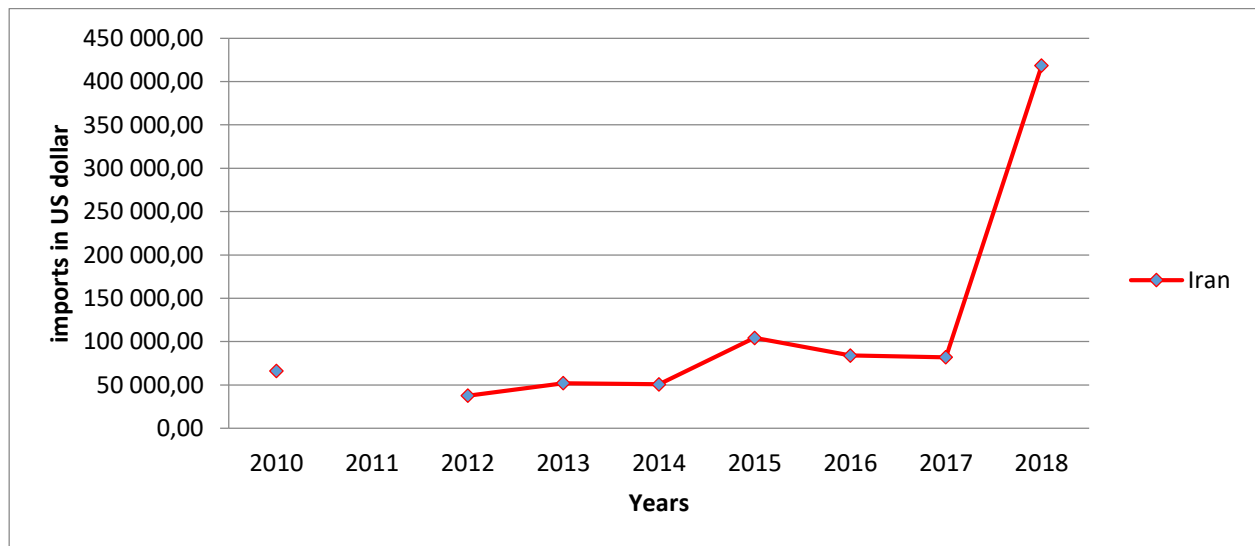
Graph 2: Exports of Qatar to Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain and Egypt 2010-2018



The decision of anti-change/ anti-popular uprising to besiege Qatar left the latter to rely on imports from Iran to feed its people. Imposing an air, sea and land embargo on Qatar forced it to look for other routes in its surrounding. On the other hand, Iran and Qatar share access to the world's largest natural gas field (Finn, 2016), a milestone in the economic relations of the two countries. Iran considered the GCC crisis an opportunity not only to shatter down the unity of its competing power in the region but also an economic fortuity. As a result, it allowed Qatar to use its airspace and shipping

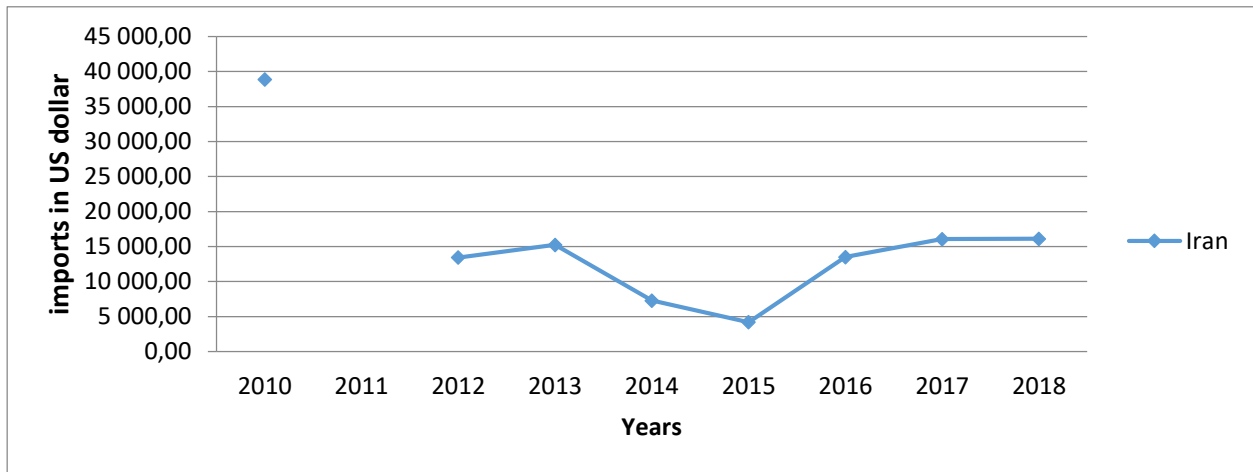
routes, but also increased exports to and imports from Qatar. Qatari imports from Iran then increased with 498% from (83,931.75 thousand \$) in 2016 to (418,403.96 thousand \$) in 2018 (Graph 3 illustrates the development of Qatari imports from Iran from 2010, a year before the popular uprising in the MENA region, to 2018, a year after GCC crisis in 2017) (Data retrieved from: World Integrated Trade Solution).

Graph 3: Imports of Qatar from Iran between 2010-2018



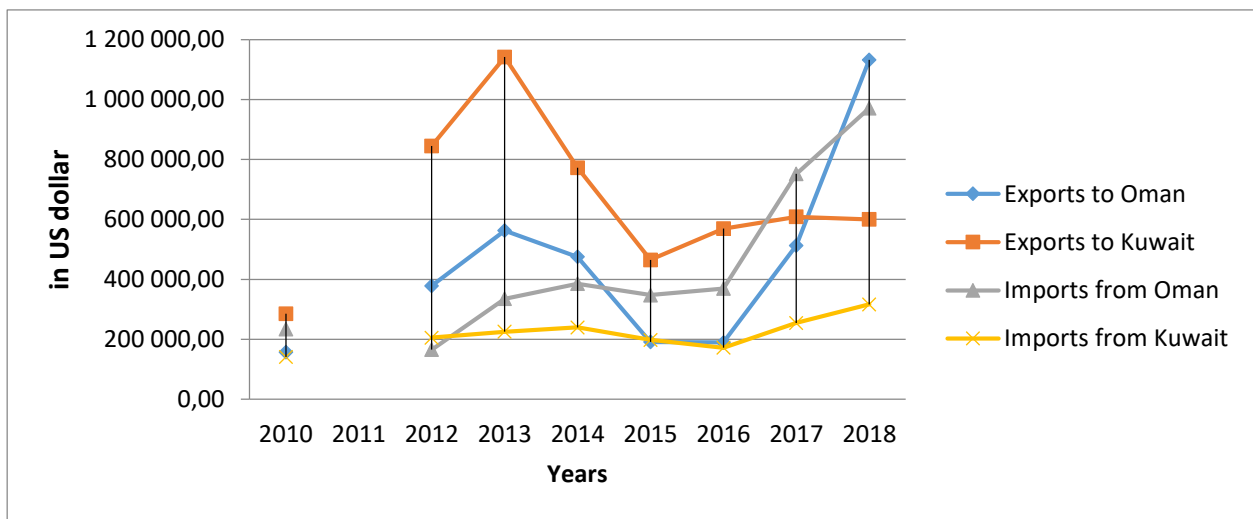
the Qatar's exports are oil and gas (or oil and gas related products such as chemical products) and the Iranian counterpart enjoys huge production of petroleum as well. Eventually, no huge transaction took place between the two countries. The Qatari exports to Iran were remarkably decreasing from 2010 to 2015 which can be explained by the US sanctions on Iran. However, 2016, the year that Iran reached nuclear deal with Obama's administration, witnessed a notable increase in Qatari exports to Iran which added up to (13512.56 thousand \$). After that, a slight increase in Qatari exports to Iran was remarked (Graph 4 illustrates the development of Qatari Exports to Iran from 2010, a year before the popular uprising in the MENA region, to 2018, a year after GCC crisis in 2017) (World Integrated Trade Solution).

Graph 4: Imports of Qatar from Iran between 2010-2018



The intra GCC crisis ended up in strengthening Qatar-Iranian economic relations, Particularly Qatari imports from Iran after 2017. However, Qatar maintained steady, or slightly increased or decreased, imports and exports with member states of Non-Aligned bloc (Graph 5 illustrates the development of Qatari exports and imports from states of Non-Aligned bloc -Oman and Kuwait- between 2010 and 2018).

Graph 5: Qatari imports and exports from Oman and Kuwait between 2010-2018



Qatar-Iranian Bilateral Relations:

For many years, GCC countries were backing each other whenever one of them is targeted by Iran either directly (violent activities against diplomatic missions...) or indirectly (historical claims to Bahrain...). During pre-2017 period, all members of the two aforementioned blocs had similar stances. For instance, Qatar withdraw its ambassador to Tehran in 2016 after Iranian protesters looted both Saudi embassy and

consulate. Once the anti-change bloc members severed diplomatic ties with Qatar and imposed a land, air and sea blockade, the latter restored ties with Tehran and sent back its ambassador (Aljazeera, 2017).

Qatar withdraw its ambassador to Tehran in January 2016 after its Gulf ally cut ties with Islamic Republic of Iran due to the failure of the latter in protecting Saudi embassy and consulate against protesters who had looted them. These tense relations between Iran and Qatar will totally be restored after three Gulf countries and Egypt severed diplomatic ties with Qatar and imposed an air, land and sea blockade. On August 2017, a new stage of Iranian and Qatari relations was launched as the latter decided to restore its diplomatic ties by returning its ambassador to Tehran. The Gulf crisis led up to significant bilateral relations and visits and the strengthening of Qatar-Iran relations. By relying on different media news, we are going to check out chronologically bilateral visits of officials, extract speeches of officials from both countries and agreements and memorandums signed by official actors of Qatar and Iran.

Nine months after the GCC crisis, an Iranian delegation visited Doha looking for cooperation and developing relations with Qatar. The head of delegation, reported by Iranian national news agency, Deputy Commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps' Navy Rear Admiral Ali Reza Tangsiri, said “Ground is ready for development of cooperation with Qatar and we are doing our best to have stronger relations with Doha” (Iran National New Agency, 2019). To improve its relations with Iran, Qatar sent a delegation to Iran in order to seek the opportunity to invest in Iranian ports and “establish long-term strategic relations with Iran” (Majidiyar, 2018). Only a month later, Iran sent another delegation considered the first of its kind since 13 years. The delegation headed by Deputy Minister of Industry held discussions in Doha on six panels: trade, mines, customs, oil, petrochemicals, exports and banking (The National, 2018). As Qatar relied more on imports from Iran, the 140th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) held in Doha-Qatar on Saturday 6th April 2019 was an opportunity to several protocols between Qatari officials and Iranian officials who arrived at Doha to take part in the assembly (Iran Press News Agency, 2019). In an aspiration to solve the GCC crisis, Qatar has been during the first two years after the GCC crisis cautious in dealing with

Iran. As tension escalated between USA and Iran, Qatar proposed mediation when its foreign minister flew to Tehran to seek ways to resolve the growing crisis with the United States (Aljazeera, 2019). But despite the Qatari efforts to ease the tension between the United States and Iran, the latter considered the presence of US forces in the region a source of instability as Iranian Minister of Foreign Affairs declared while visiting Doha and meeting the head of state of Qatar the Emir Tamim bin Hamad in August 12th 2019 (Iran Press News Agency, 2019).

Qatar Iran bilateral relations started by exchange of visits on level of delegation and then ministerial level in late 2019. In 2020, the bilateral relation between the two countries witnessed a surprising leap when head of state of Qatar visited Iran on January 11th, 2020. The president of Iran Hassan Rouhani's important decisions were taken about enhancing bilateral relations and security in the region (Financial Tribune, Jan 2020). Since pro-2017 GCC crisis, Doha and Tehran have improved their bilateral relations. Qatar stood by Iran during the current covid-19 epidemic and assisted Tehran in fighting the coronavirus outbreak (Financial Tribune, Feb 2020). As efforts to solve the GCC crisis failed, it is undoubtably sure that bilateral visits and relation between Iran and Qatar will scale up and become stronger.

Conclusion:

The anti-change bloc severed diplomatic and commercial ties with Qatar and imposed a total blockade to compel Qatar to give up supporting Muslim Brotherhood and young aspirations in the region. As a result, Qatar found itself isolated with only one gate to the world through Iran with which it shares the world's largest natural gas field beneath the waters of the Gulf (Finn, 2016). Moreover, Iran has provided help to the isolated country since the first days of the crisis. As a result, the crisis was counterproductive and added fuel to the fire in a region suffering from high tension between Iran and Arabs and pushed Qatar away from the Gulf to the Iranian circle with implications for Middle East's complicated geopolitical order.

After around four decades since its creation, the GCC was not able to overcome the crisis threatening the unity of its member states because of the absence of an effective

mechanism to use in conflicts resolution. Furthermore, the GCC did not realize neither its declared goals nor undeclared ones, mainly defense and security. With no resolution on the horizon, the 2017 crisis with Qatar made the GCC a dormant organization granting Iran more involvement in the region and weakening the position of blockading countries.

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Gender Empowerment in Yemen*Dr. Ali Ahmed Alsagaf**Professor of Statistics & Econometrics**University of Aden / Yemen*aliahmed214@yahoo.com**Abstract**

The Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) seeks to determine the degree to which women and men participate actively in economic, professional and political activity and take part in decision making. The GEM uses variables constructed explicitly to measure the relative empowerment of men and women in political and economic spheres of activity. The GEM calculates inequality between women and men in three main dimensions. These are:

1. Political participation and decision- making power and measured by women's and men's percentage shares of parliamentary seats
2. Economic participation and decision-making power, measured by women's and men's percentage shares of administrative and managerial positions and their percentage shares of professional and technical jobs.
3. Power over economic resources and measured by earned income for women and men.

This study used descriptive analysis method and has gone through the issue of empowering the Yemeni woman and analyses the factors affecting the empowerment of women by economic, social and demographic characteristics through a set of indicators, namely: women's education, women's work, and political participation in Yemen

The results of the study reveals that Yemen ranked 121 , among 177 countries of the world , in terms of the Human Development Index related to gender with Index (0.556). Yemen has a gender inequality index (GII) value of 0.834, ranking it 162 out of 162 countries in the 2018 index. In Yemen, 0.5 percent of parliamentary seats are held by women, and 19.9 percent of adult women have reached at least a secondary level of education compared to 35.5 percent of their male counterparts.

The education of women without their participation in economic and political decision making activities is a waste of human capital and the removal of a large sector of human power in society and disable it to contribute to the process of economic and social development.

1 . Introduction

The Beijing Platform for Action (1995) is an agenda for women's empowerment and recognizes the “full implementation of the rights of women and girls as irreversible and integral parts of human rights and fundamental freedoms.” It aims to remove obstacles to women's active participation in public and private life.¹

Since 2000, women have had a global commitment against which to measure progress in building answerability to women: the Millennium Declaration and its Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Achievement of the MDGs depends increasingly on women benefiting from development investments in education and health, being able to engage in the market on an equal basis with men, and being able to participate in public decision-making at all levels².

Gender equality and women’s empowerment are central to achieving the other Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Women’s empowerment is not a standalone goal. It is the driver of efforts to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, achieve universal primary education, reduce child and maternal mortality, and fight against major diseases like HIV/AIDS and malaria.

¹ . Earth Negotiations Bulletin (1995) , Summary of the Fourth world Conference on Women , 4-15 September 1995 , International Institute for Sustainable Development , Vol.14 , No.21

2. UNIFEM (2008) Progress of the World’s Women 2008/2009: Who Answers to Women
<http://www.unifem.org/progress/2008>[http](http://www.unifem.org/progress/2008)

Women's empowerment is also a driver of sound environmental management and is, finally, essential for ensuring that development aid reaches the poorest through making women a part of national poverty reduction, planning and resource allocation.

Population of Yemen was about 28 million for the Year 2018, according to population projections of 2005-2025. 27.3% of the total population lives in cities compared to 73.7% in rural areas. The population is growing at a rate of 3% with a population density of 40 per km squares. The fertility rate is 6.5 children per woman. 75% of the population is under 30 years of age. Males represent 50.9% of total population and females 49.09%. Almost half of the population lives below the poverty line. The population growth rate is one of the highest in the world. Yemen's population is expected to reach 30.8 million in 2020, and 36.3 million by the Year 2030, putting Yemen ahead of future challenges.

Yemen's governorates have significant shifts in the proportion of rural and urban population, between Yemen's 1994 census and 2004's census and such a shift in urban population growth. The results of the 1994 census indicate that the proportion of urban population was 23.5%, while this percentage rose to reach in 2004 to about 28.64%, which confirms that the rural pattern is prevalent in the Republic of Yemen.

The population of Yemen in 2010 was estimated at 23.2 million, and it is expected that this number will reach 34 million in 2025 (under the alternative medium). Birth rate Declined from 43.16 births per 1000 population in 2004 to 34.37 births per 1000 population in 2010. And the mortality rate continues to decline gradually from 8.78 deaths per 1000 population in 2004 to 7.24 deaths per 1000 population in 2010. It was expected that the percentage of the working age population (15-64 years) would increase from about 50% to 59% of the total population by 2010, which opens Yemen to the opportunity of the so-called demographic window. An important role in development, if properly exploited.

Yemen has the 30th highest fertility rate in the world at 4.45 children per woman, which is largely driven by religious beliefs and a lack of education and reproductive resources.

Female participation in labor force represents one of the main elements in women's development. But there are still significant gaps facing this participation, whether in developed or developing countries. The economic literature on the determinants of female participation in the labor force is quite extensive. Demographic, socioeconomic and cultural factors play a part in guiding women's decisions and their level of labor force .

According to the 2013-2014 labor force survey of Yemen, the working- age population (aged +15) was 13.4 million, of which slightly more than one-half (50.8 percent) were men. The labor force participation rate was 36.3 percent. However the rate for men were considerably higher than that for women (65.8 percent men and 6.0 percent for women).

The overall unemployment rate was 13.5 percent, considerably higher among women (26.1 percent) than among men (12.3 percent).

This study used descriptive analysis method and has gone through the issue of empowering the Yemeni woman . The study was divided into four parts , where the first part dealt with the introduction . The second part deals with the concepts and measurements of gender empowerment . The third part deals with the factors affecting the empowerment of women by economic, social and demographic characteristics through a set of indicators, namely: women's education, women's work, and political participation in the Yemen . In the fourth part, Challenges and Opportunities facing Gender empowerment in Yemen is discussed . And finally the results and the proposals reached by the study were reviewed through analyzing the data, available from various sources.

2. Gender Empowerment

Over the last thirty years there have been fundamental changes in policies on and approaches to population, development and gender equality. These are best exemplified in the program of action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo, 1994 and the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW) in Beijing in 1995. The issue of gender and development has found a

great importance from researchers all over the world particularly after the international conferences (ICPD & FWCW).

The sharp differences between men and women in access to assets and as the opportunities in many developing countries restrict women's basic freedom to choose and have negative consequences for the well-being of their children, families and communities. These differences entrench inequality and are unfair¹. Gender equality does not necessary mean equality of outcomes for males and females; it means equal access to the "opportunities that allow people to pursue a life of their own choosing and to avoid extreme deprivations in outcomes" – that is ¹gender equality in rights, and voice. Equality of rights refers to equality under the law, whether customary or statutory. Equality of resources refers to equality of opportunity, including equality of access to human capital, investments and other productive resources and to markets.. Equality of voice captures the ability to influence and contribute to the political discourse and the development process .

The roots of the discourse namely gender and development lie in debates about women and development (WID) in the early 1970s .WID is associated with development projects aimed at women only, especially income –generation projects. Such projects have been criticized for playing down the importance of welfare and ignoring the complexities of gendered distributions of resources within households. These critiques were the starting points for the discourse characterized as gender and development (GAD), which have gained momentum since 1980s. Gender analysis is a widely used GAD framework and identifies differences between men and women in productive work and access to resources and decision making .

2.1. Gender Empowerment , Concepts and Measurements

1. World Development Report 2006

The United Nations Development Program's (UNDP) Human Development report for 1995 focused on gender disparities in development . The report constructed the gender –related development index (GDI) for 130 countries . The GDI owes its origin to its precursor human development index (HDI) . The HDI comprises three main components , viz., per capita income , educational attainment and life expectancy which is proxy for health attainment . The same indicators are used in the construction of the GDI as well , the implication being that it is deprivation in these three components that is important from the point of view of gender disparities

2.1.1. Gender Empowerment Measure

The Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) developed in the UNDPs, HDR (1995), seeks to determine the degree to which women and men participate actively in economic, professional and political activity and take part in decision making. The GEM uses variables constructed explicitly to measure the relative empowerment of men and women in political and economic spheres of activity. The GEM calculates inequality between women and men in three main dimensions. These are :

- 1 .Political participation and decision- making power and measured by women's and men's percentage shares of parliamentary seats.
2. Economic participation and decision-making power, measured by women's and men's percentage shares of administrative and managerial positions and their percentage shares of professional and technical jobs.
3. Power over economic resources and measured by earned income for women and men.

The three indices for economic participation and decision-making, political participation and decision-making, and power over economic resources – are added together with equal weight to derive the final GEM value.

The 1995 HDR estimates GEM for 116 countries of the world and notes that only nine countries have GEM values above 0.60, while 24 countries have values below 0.25. The

report correctly states that many countries have much further to travel in extending broad economic and political opportunities to women than they have in building their capabilities .In 2017 Yemen was placed at the bottom of the Gender Gap Index 2017 (144 out of 144 countries)^{1,1}

2.1.2. Gender Inequality Index

The new Gender Inequality Index (GII) reflects women's disadvantages in three dimensions – reproductive health, empowerment, and economic activity. Reproductive health is measured by maternal mortality and adolescent fertility rates. Empowerment is measured by the share of parliamentary seats held by each gender and attainment at secondary and higher education by each gender; and economic activity is measured by the labor market participation rate for each gender. The GII replaces the previous Gender-related Development Index (GDI) and Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM). The GII shows the loss in human ²development due to inequality between female and male achievements in the three GII dimensions. These are health, empowerment and labor market .

Yemen has a GII value of 0.834, ranking it 162 out of 162 countries in the 2018 index. In Yemen, 0.5 percent of parliamentary seats are held by women, and 19.9 percent of adult women have reached at least a secondary level of education compared to 35.5 percent of their male counterparts¹

3. Gender Empowerment in Yemen

The role that women can play in the development process depends mainly on the type of services available to them, which helps them to develop their social, economic and political conditions and raise their level of participation in the development process

1. 1. The Global Gender Gap Report 2017, World Economic Forum
file:///C:/Users/moon/Downloads/Documents/WEF_GGGR_2017.pdf

1. UNDP , *Human Development Report 2019 Inequalities in Human Development in the 21st Century , Briefing note for countries on the 2019 Human Development Report , Yemen*
<file:///C:/Users/moon/Downloads/Documents/YEM.pdf>

through the standards that underpin human development, including indicators related to education, employment and political participation .

3.1. Education and Female

Yemeni women continue to live in underdeveloped conditions governed by traditional values in society, leading to a persistent gap between the numbers of males and females enrolled in education. Despite the State's interest in providing educational services through government policies and strategies that give special attention to girls' education and spending nearly one-fifth of the annual budget on education and its interest in integrating gender in the educational process, a number of social, economic and cultural factors have continued to impose themselves and prevent an educational renaissance. Rapidly meet the needs of human development, which provided a gap in education . The gap is illustrated by the following indicators:

There is a large gap between males and females in terms of illiteracy, where the rate of illiteracy in Yemen among females to 7 illiterate females out of 10 females aged 15 years and older, compared to 3 males out of 10 males.

In basic education, data and statistics indicate that the enrollment rate of males was 94% while the enrollment rate for females was about 74%, there is a gap in the gross enrollment rates in favor of males. Female dropout rates in primary school are about 24%, and the rate is higher in advanced levels of basic education in cities and more in rural areas.

As for secondary education, the participation rate of females reached 35.2% in 2013, which means that females represent only one third of those enrolled in this stage, and the chances of girls in secondary school diminish as they move up the educational level.

With regard to technical and vocational education, the percentage of female enrollment is about 13.2% of the proportion of male enrollment in 2013. Technical education is usually seen as the prerogative of males and hence there is no future for females in it. The inclusion of women in vocational education gives them the right to choose their roles and diversity of roles, and contributes to their economic empowerment and their contribution to the labor market to meet the needs of the labor market.

With regard to university education, the data indicate that the percentage of female enrollment in university education reaches 28% of the total enrollment. Not only does the disparity in the number of enrollments of both sexes, but also in the type of specialization, as the trend of girls to literary, human and social studies is still a trend supported by the family and supported by society. The cultural and social heritage in Yemeni society is one of the most important factors that hinder the reality of women and the level of exercise of women's rights in general. This pattern has devoted concepts that underestimate women and the importance of their role in society.

According to the 2005-2006 Family Budget Survey, the illiteracy rate among women was 60% and 21.3% among males. The gap between women and men was 38.7 %. High illiteracy among females is due to the poorest and early marriages, as well as the lack of schools for girls, especially in rural areas.(Table1)

Table(1) Illiteracy gap between males and females (1994-2006)

Year	Female illiteracy rate	Male illiteracy rate	The Gap between females & males
1994 census	76.3	36.7	39.6
2004 census	62.1	29.8	32.3
2005-2006 Family budget survey	60.0	21.3	38.7

Central statistical organization , Statistical Year Books ,1994/2004/2006

From the table (2), it is clear that the general picture reflects the increasing number of female students in the basic education , but the gap between female education and male education continues.

Table(2) Percentage distribution of enrolled students in basic education by gender

Schooling Year	2001-2002 (%)	2002-2003 (%)	2003-2004 (%)	2008-2009 (%)	2009-2010 (%)
Male	63	61.3	61	57.9	57.1
Female	37	38.7	39	42.1	42.9

Source : Yemen , Ministry of education, 2010

The above mentioned educational indicators confirm the low educational level of the girl in the various stages of basic, secondary and university education and the widening of the gap between males and females. This requires intensifying the role of the government and civil society organizations in empowering Yemeni women with advanced education, raising awareness of the importance of girls' education, especially in rural areas, conducting research on the causes of dropping out of basic education from a gender perspective, advocacy and building alliances against early marriage to reduce dropout.

3.2. Female Labor force Participation

Although women represent half of the population in Yemen, the percentage of female employees in the total labor force does not exceed 20%, and most of them are concentrated with a high percentage in the agricultural profession (37%). This reflects the rural nature of Yemeni society. The presence of urban women in the government sector is more concentrated than the private and mixed sectors due to the following reasons:

First, the government sector provides favorable working conditions for women, especially with regard to childcare leave, making women more able to reconcile their work outside the home with family responsibilities. Second, the government sector includes most of the professions that women accept, especially teaching.

The proportion of men outside the labor force (34.6%) of the total men (15+) and women 94% of the total women (15+). The gender gap between women and men outside the labor force was about (272%), and the equivalence index was about (172) women outside the labor force. That is, for every 100 men outside the labor force, about 272 women. (Table3)

Table (3) Percentage distribution of population (15+) by gender & relation to labor force (2014)

Population	Male(%)	Female (%)
In labor force	65.4	6.0
Out of labor force	34.6	94.0
Total	100	100
	6808000	6570000

Yemen , CSO , Labor Force Survey 2013-2014

Despite the Government's relatively successful efforts with regard to women's participation in economic activity and economic empowerment, there are a number of difficulties to women's effective participation in economic activity. The most important of these difficulties are customs, traditions, and social taboos, lack of employment opportunities for women and working conditions that are not commensurate with the abilities of women. It requires the State to give special attention to the economic empowerment of women through the adoption of programs to enhance the role of women in community development, the economic empowerment of rural women and the rehabilitation and training of women in small and income-generating enterprises.

3.3. Female Political Participation

The political participation of Yemeni women was weak during the parliamentary elections held in 1993, 1997 and 2003. Compared to the size of women in society on the one hand and their size as voters and a large voting power and influential in the electoral science on the other hand. The number of male participants in parliamentary elections decreased from 3124 participants in 1993 elections to 1292 participants in 1997 elections and raised to 1385 in 2003 elections. The number of female participants for the same period was 42, 19 and 11 participants respectively and consequently the

percentages of female participants was 18% , 28% and 11 in 1993 , 1997 and 2003 respectively . Percentages of female candidates was 1.3% in 1993 elections compared with male candidates which reached 98.7% . In 2003 elections the percentage of female candidates was 0.08%. with The number of female winners in the elections was 2 females in 1993 out of 301 parliamentary candidates and 2 females in 1997 elections and only one female candidate won in 2003 parliamentary elections (Table 4)

Table(4) Female participation in the parliamentary election 1993/1997/2003

Election	Male	Female	Total	% female s	Women candidates	Male candidates	Female ratio	Number of female winner
1993	2210	478	2688	18	42	3124	1.3%	2
1997	3365	1305	4668	28	19	1292	1.5%	2
2003	4683	3415	8097	42	11	1385	0.8%	1

Source : Yemen Human Development report 2006

The low participation of women in the elections is not limited to the parliamentary elections only, but is part of the low participation of women in public life such as political parties, civil society organizations and senior leadership positions in the state. The percentage of women in the leadership bodies of political parties in Yemen did not exceed 6.8% in 2005 and 9.9% in 2010.

Women are still underrepresented at the executive and ministerial levels. Figures and ratios indicate the large gap between women and men in decision-making positions. There is a great contradiction between what the state declares through its programs and what is being implemented on the ground. This confirms the low participation of women in the political sphere and their participation in decision-making. This is due to a number of cultural, social and political obstacles that stand in the way of the political, economic and cultural participation and empowerment of Yemeni woman .

Although Yemeni legislations and laws do not prevent women from being in leadership and decision-making centers, Yemeni society continues to divide roles according to

gender. Official indicators also indicate the level of presence of women in political and executive organs and the existence of a gap between men and women in decision-making positions.

According to 2006 Yemen Human Development Report , percentage of female representatives in the Yemeni parliament was 0.3% and 99.7% for males . 1.8% of female representatives in the Shura council and 98.2% for males. 6.1% of females in the cabinet and 93.9% for males . As far as general managers is concerned , percentage of females was 3.6% and 96.4% for males. (Table 5)

Table(5) Female representativeness at the executive and ministerial levels (2007)

Gov. job level	Female		Male	
	No	%	No	%
Parliament	1	0.3	300	99.7
Shura council	2	1.8	109	98.2
Local Council	37	0.5	7000	95.5
Cabinet	2	6.1	31	93.9
General Managers	186	3.6	4971	96.4

Source : Source : Yemen Human Development report 2006

The 2006 Yemen Human Development Report also revealed females representatives in the diplomatic level . 88% of the representatives was males compared with 1.14% females . Female delegate ministers was 6.56% and 8.2% female consultant . (Table 6)

Table (6) Female representatives in Diplomatic level

Jobs	Male	Female	Female ratio (%)
Ambassador	88	1	1.14
Delegate minister	61	4	6.56
Consultant	134	11	8.21
First Secretary	74	3	4.05
Second secretary	48	6	12.5
Third Secretary	60	6	10
Diplomatic Attaché	19	9	47.4
Administrative attaché	230	32	13.9

Total	714	72	10.08
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Source : Yemen Human Development report 2006

In extrapolating the above indicators, it is clear that the level of representation of women in decision-making positions is still low, as it is clear that there is a gap between men and women in the higher administrative bodies and the indicators also revealed the low level of women representation in the parliament and shura council .

3.4 . Gender Empowerment Status in Yemen

Data from the 2013 Yemen Human Development Report indicates that Yemen ranked 121 , among 177 countries of the world , in terms of the Human Development Index related to gender with Index (0.556). Gender-related human development index consists of life expectancy at birth, literacy rate, enrollment ratio in secondary education and per capita gross domestic product (GDP) . Life expectancy at birth in Yemen for males was 64 years compared to 62 years for females. The enrollment rate in secondary education was 81% and 70% for male and female students. The per capita gross domestic product was \$ 1993 for males compared to \$ 462 for females . Gender-related HDI as it approaches to the unity , the higher the equality between men and women and the higher empowerment of women.(Table 7)

Table (7) Gender related development index for Yemen

Rank	GDI Related Develop ment Index	LEB		Literacy Rate		Enrolment Secondary School (%)		GDP per capita	
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
121	0.496	61	63	68	37	60	45	1944	537

Source : Yemen Human Development Report 2013

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Table No.8 reflects a clear picture of the level of empowerment of woman in the disposition of the financial returns obtained by the husband and at the same time the education and cultural levels of Yemeni society . 5.8% of the women dispose of the proceeds obtained by the husband on their own, 37.5% of them stated that they dispose of the husband's returns in partnership with the husband, and the husband disposes 52.8 % (alone) of his financial returns .

Table (8) disposition of the financial returns earned by the husband (2014)

Wife	Wife & Husband	Husband	Other	Not Known	Total
6.6	37.5	52.8	2.9	0.2	100

Source : Yemen, Demographic and health survey 2013

Table (9) shows that the wife is the one who takes the decision on her treatment with a percentage of 9.4% . With regard to the participation of the woman in taking the decision of basic purchases for the family registered as 8.4 % as it was decided on her own, which are two low percentages that refer to low gender empowerment . With regard to basic family purchases, they share 45% of the decisions regarding the wife's health care. And 41.6 % with regard to basic family purchases. The table data indicate that the husband takes 42.2% of the decisions alone with regards of health care of the wife , and 43% with regard to basic family purchases. Although health care for the wife and basic family purchases are two family matters, women are supposed to have a greater role in their decision-making, but it is noticed that the level of empowerment of women in them is still low.

Table(9)Women's Participation in making some decisions

Decision	Wife	Wife & Husband	Husband	Other person	Not Known	Total
Health care for the wife	9.4	45.2	42.2	3.1	0.2	100.0
Main purchases for the family	8.4	41.6	43.5	6.3	0.2	100.0

Source : Yemen, Demographic and health survey 2013

Table (10) shows the level of empowerment of the woman in Yemen , measured by the mean value and the data contained in it are of great importance as it gives a clear picture of the level of empowerment of the woman. The low level of this indicator indicates the low level of social structure, customs and traditions. The value for Yemen registered 6.35

Table (10) Gender Empowerment Measure (2013)

Mean	No. of Females	Percentage (%)	Standard deviation
6.53	136368	3.7	5.209

Source : Yemen, Demographic and health survey 2013

4. Challenges and Opportunities facing Gender empowerment in Yemen

4. 1. Challenges facing gender empowerment

The main challenges facing gender equality and women's empowerment in Yemeni cities are as following :

1. Women's participation and leadership in the public sphere is low: the 2014 gender gap index ranked women's economic participation and political empowerment in Yemen as 138 out of 142 countries. Yemeni women recorded low levels of participation in formal paid employment.
2. High rates of violence against women and girls, including forced and early marriages, were reported.
3. Structural inequality hinders women's and girls' access to basic services, leading to a significant gender gap in literacy and basic education, and high maternal mortality rates.
4. Both formal and informal justice systems discriminate against women in many aspects, contrary to Yemen's obligations to international conventions such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
5. The 30 percent quota for women was particularly controversial in the NDC, with some factions preferring a lower quota of 15 percent and others opposing it all together. Moreover, the NDC recommendations are just that — recommendations — so there is no guarantee that all the provisions will make it into the new constitution. Even if the quota is codified into law, there is no guarantee it will be implemented

6. The NDC's recommendation to set the age of marriage for boys and girls at eighteen will also be challenging to make a reality. Yemen has one of the highest rates of child marriage in the world and an estimated at 52% of girls in Yemen are married before the age of eighteen, and 14 percent before age fifteen.
7. The education of women without their participation in economic activity is a waste of human capital and the removal of a large sector of human power in society and disable it to contribute to the process of economic and social development. Even if women have the opportunity to participate economically, social taboos stand in the way of women's participation in the development process because of the state of the male society and its sovereignty.
8. Social customs and traditions that limit the contribution of women in some economic activities, for example, women do not work in the field of construction.
9. Early marriage among women, which significantly hinders the entry into the labor market, especially after childbirth, to devote full time to domestic work and raising children
10. There is an important problem that worries many workers, which is the fear of spinsterhood, due to the inadequate perception of those who work, which is still to this day, although it has subsided in the present day.
11. Structural barriers: For example, women may face legal challenges in registering to vote if they are unable to secure copies of the required identity documents. Women face economic obstacles such as participation in politics, particularly running for elections that require funding. Women often lack economic security and / or independence. As mentioned above, women are more likely to be illiterate and therefore not eligible to participate in politics.
12. Social, cultural, and religious barriers: For example, given the way gender roles are defined in many societies, women may be excluded from the formal and informal networks needed to advance policy. The prevailing notions of politics may be that

it is a dirty work that suits only men. Some may be tempted to use religion as an excuse to suggest that one particular religion does not allow women to participate in politics.

13. Time and place: Women have multiple responsibilities as wives, mothers and often have no free time. Women may not control their mobility because of their family responsibilities, which force them to stay at home longer, lack access to areas where men gather to engage in political debates, and lack access to transport. Women in a more conservative environment may not be able to travel without a mahram.
14. Safety: Women may be afraid for their safety. They may be threatened because of their political beliefs or face a greater risk when traveling to participate in political events.
15. Lack of confidence: Perhaps the most important obstacle faced by women is the lack of confidence in their leadership capabilities.

4.2. Opportunities of Gender empowerment of Yemeni women

1. Aside from providing aid and support to others during the war, Yemeni women are empowered through maintaining their own businesses and developing better leadership skills, which are two of the goals partner for democratic change . Though the country emphasizes the importance of equality among the genders, there are still cultural attitudes and patriarchal structures that cause barriers for women in Yemen. Partners for Democratic Change has worked to tackle these barriers by changing people's attitudes and by educating women. The organization has advanced woman's empowerment in Yemen by training 75 women in business and leadership so far.
2. Aside from Partners in Change, there are many other groups that have been established with the purpose of advancing women's rights, such as the Supreme Council for Women and the National Commission for Women. Furthermore, the National Dialogue Conference (NDC), which took place from March of 2013 to January of 2014, occurred so as to begin a discussion about women in elected positions in Yemen.

3. The percent of women that made up the membership at this conference was 27 percent. During the NDC, those in attendance agreed upon the idea that, from then on, the amount of women in elected council should be no less than 30 percent. Though there is still progress to be made in regards to women's empowerment in Yemen, the country has taken steps in the right direction through the various organizations and councils that it has established for advancing women in society. In addition, though the ongoing conflict in Yemen has been a source of turmoil for the country's women, it has also caused them to feel empowered by providing them with opportunities to help others and contribute to rebuilding efforts.
4. As far as Women's political participation is concerned, Yemen is obliged to represent women so that they can participate effectively in the bodies and authorities of the state and elected and appointed councils by at least 30%.
5. Citizens, both men and women, have the right to participate in politics by running for office and elections in the presidential, parliamentary, local, and referendum elections.
6. Political components are obliged to arrange their electoral lists to ensure that at least 30% of women have access to the electoral councils.
7. Criminalizing all types and forms of violence against women.
8. Protection of Motherhood and Childhood :
 - a. The State's commitment to develop strategies for the protection of motherhood and childhood.
 - b. Consider reproduction as a social function that is the responsibility of parents and state institutions. Extend the age of childhood up to 18 years.
 - c. Criminalize the marriage of minors and consider the minimum age of marriage to be 18 years for both sexes.
9. Establish specialized courts to deal with family affairs and personal status cases and regulate their form, jurisdiction and procedures to be followed by a special law.

10. Criminalization of assault on physical integrity, sexual harassment and exploitation of women in commercial advertisements in a manner that offends their dignity and trafficking.
11. Women working in any State institution shall be entitled to voluntary retirement upon reaching 25 years of service.
12. The State shall abide by all the provisions of the human rights conventions ratified by the State in accordance with the Constitution.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 : Conclusions

Population of Yemen was about 28 million for the Year 2018 , according to population projections 2005-2025. 27.3% of the population live in cities compared to 73.7% in rural areas. The population of Yemen is growing at a rate of 3%. The population growth rate is one of the highest in the world. Yemen's population is expected to reach 30.8 million in 2020, and 36.3 million by the Year 2030, putting Yemen ahead of future challenges.

According to the 2013-2014 labor force survey of Yemen , the working- age population (aged +15) was 13.4 million , of which slightly more than one-half (50.8 percent) were men . The labor force participation rate was 36.3 percent . However the rate for men were considerably higher than that for women (65.8 percent men and 6.0 percent for women) .

The overall unemployment rate was 13.5 percent , considerably higher among women (26.1 percent) than among men (12.3 percent) . The youth unemployment rate at 24.5 percent was almost twice the national average , though young people experienced relatively shorter spells unemployment than adults.

According to the 2005-2006 Family Budget Survey, the illiteracy rate among women was 60% and 21.3% among males. The gap between women and men was 38.7 % . High

illiteracy among females is due to the poorest and early marriages, as well as the lack of schools for girls, especially in rural areas.

There is a large gap between males and females in terms of illiteracy, where the rate of illiteracy in Yemen among females to 7 illiterate females out of 10 females aged 15 years and older, compared to 3 males out of 10 males.

In basic education, data and statistics indicate that the enrollment rate of males was 94% while the enrollment rate for females was about 74%, there is a gap in the gross enrollment rates in favor of males. Female dropout rates in primary school are about 24%, and the rate is higher in advanced levels of basic education in cities and more in rural areas.

As for secondary education, the participation rate of females reached 35.2% in 2013, which means that females represent only one third of those enrolled in this stage, and the chances of girls in secondary school diminish as they move up the educational ladder.

With regard to university education, the data indicate that the percentage of female enrollment in university education reaches 28% of the total enrollment. Not only does the disparity in the number of enrollments of both sexes, but also in the type of specialization, as the trend of girls to literary, human and social studies is still a trend supported by the family and supported by society. The cultural and social heritage in Yemeni society is one of the most important factors that hinder the reality of women and the level of exercise of women's rights in general. This pattern has devoted concepts that underestimate women and the importance of their role in society.

The political participation of Yemeni women was weak during the parliamentary elections held in 1993, 1997 and 2003. Compared to the size of women in society on the one hand and their size as voters and a large voting power and influential in the electoral science on the other hand . The number of male participants in parliamentary elections

decreased from 3124 participants in 1993 elections to 1292 participants in 1997 elections and raised to 1385 in 2003 elections . The number of female participants for the same period was 42 , 19 and 11 participants respectively and consequently the percentages of female participants was 18% , 28% and 11 in 1993 , 1997 and 2003 respectively . Percentages of female candidates was 1.3% in 1993 elections compared with male candidates which reached 98.7% In 2003 elections the percentage of female candidates winners was 0.08%. with The number of female winners in the elections was 2 females in 1993 out of 301 parliamentary candidates and 2 females in 1997 elections and only one female candidate won in 2003 parliamentary elections.

The National Dialogue Conference (NDC), which took place from March of 2013 to January of 2014, occurred so as to begin a discussion about women in elected positions in Yemen. The percent of women that made up the membership at this conference was 27 percent. During the NDC, those in attendance agreed upon the idea that, from then on, the amount of women in elected council should be no less than 30 percent. Though there is still progress to be made in regards to women's empowerment in Yemen, the country has taken steps in the right direction through the various organizations and councils that it has established for advancing women in society. In addition, though the ongoing conflict in Yemen has been a source of turmoil for the country's women, it has also caused them to feel empowered by providing them with opportunities to help others and contribute to rebuilding efforts.

As far as Women's political participation is Concerned Yemen is obliged to represent women so that they can participate effectively in the bodies and authorities of the state and elected and appointed councils by at least 30%.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the results of the study , the following recommendations are made :

1. The study suggests the need for comprehensive and organized policy towards female education , by emphasizing illiteracy reduction among females and introducing equal opportunity between males and females in enrollment in basic and secondary and university education . The illiteracy rate among women is 65

per cent, compared to 27 per cent among men for the year 2015 . Adopting an educational policy that reduces female illiteracy from 65% in 2015 to 30% by 2030. The National Basic Education Strategy 2003-2015 aimed to increase enrollment rates for basic education in rural areas for children aged 6-14 years to 95% by 2015. The report suggests to reach this target by the year 2030.

2. A Total Fertility Rate (TFR) of 2.1 represents the Replacement-Level of Fertility: the average number of children per woman needed for each generation to exactly replace it without needing international immigration. TFR for Yemen to be reduced from 3.8 births per woman in 2020 to 2.1 in 2030 .
3. The prominent representation of youth in the population structure will require efforts to empower youth as well as develop youth-oriented policies. Within the context of high adolescent fertility, high maternal mortality and a high prevalence of gender-based violence, the needs of young women require special attention. The youth revolution that started in January 2011 gives an indication of the frustrations of the youth and their cry for change. For the program this is an opportunity to engage the youth in socioeconomic and political decision making .
4. Female economic participation is the important factor in gender empowerment . The report noticed that ,According to the 2013-2014 labor force survey of Yemen ,the labor force participation rate was 36.3 percent . However the rate for men were considerably higher than that for women (65.8 percent men and 6.0 percent for women).The overall unemployment rate was 13.5 percent , considerably higher among women (26.1 percent) than among men (12.3 percent) . The youth unemployment rate at 24.5 percent . The report suggests to increase the labor force participation rate for women to 30 % by the year 2030 and narrowing the gap between men and women . As a result to decrease unemployment rate among female to 6% by the year 2030 and among the youth by 50% to be 12% in the Year 2030.

5. The 30 percent quota for women was particularly controversial in the NDC, with some factions preferring a lower quota of 15 percent and others opposing it all together. Moreover, the NDC recommendations are just that — recommendations — so there is a need to adopt the output of the conference by the year 2030 to reach the target of 30% quota for women in the parliament and in different levels of executive bodies of the country .
6. Female mean age at marriage is one of the proximate determinates of fertility and having the direct effect on female education and female labor force participation . There is a need for issuance of law forbidding early marriage and defining the legal age of marriage (e.g. 18 years for males and females) according to the outputs of national dialogue conference in 2013 .
7. Family planning program plays a vital role in informing the people about the alternative methods open to them to regulate their family size. Family planning services should be made available to the people and services have greater relevance and effectiveness if made an integral part of medical and public health services especially of maternal and child health program . Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) data from 2013 found that 29% of married women in Yemen were using a modern methods of family planning with a large difference between women in rural areas (24%) and women in urban areas (40%) In this regard there is a need to increase contraceptive use rate from 29% in 2015 to 40% by the year 2030 . and narrowing the differences between urban and rural areas.
8. The improvement and expansion of public services , such as drinking water , electricity and transportation etc. particularly in rural areas and reduction in rural-urban disparities in the country

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Geopolitics of the Arab-Israeli Normalization

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Abstract:

Egypt and Jordan, as core countries in the Arab-Israeli conflict, signed peace treaties with Israel in 1979 and 1994 and, respectively, established full diplomatic relations with it. However, in the last few months, the Middle East North Africa "MENA" region has witnessed the current fostering process of Arab-Israeli normalization of relations which involved Arab countries whose lands had never been threatened by the Arab-Israeli conflict. The process began when UAE and Israel signed the "Abraham Accords" in August 2020. Soon after, UAE was followed by Bahrain, Sudan and Morocco. Other Arab countries are expected to follow the path. This research analyzes the phenomenon of Arab-Israeli normalization of relations. It focuses mainly on both the geopolitical driving forces behind normalization and the prospects of the similar future Qatari move. The research investigates the relation between the current process of normalization and the great game which involves a number of geostrategic players in the "MENA" region and which aims to recreate the Middle Eastern regional system as well.

Keywords: Geopolitics, Normalization, Reconciliation, Israel, UAE, Bahrain, Sudan, Morocco

Introduction:

In the last few months, the Middle East North Africa (MENA) region has witnessed the fostering process of Arab-Israeli normalization of relations. The process began when UAE and Israel signed the “Abraham Accords” in August 2020. Soon after, UAE was followed by Bahrain, Sudan and Morocco. US secretary of state, Mike Pompeo, said in November 2020, that other Arab countries are expected to normalize ties with Israel.⁽¹⁾

This research paper sheds light on such a significant, recent and ever new phenomenon, it analyzes the geopolitical driving forces behind it. In this regard, the research paper raises the following questions: Why do Arab countries hurry towards normalizing relations with Israel? What are the geopolitical driving forces behind this phenomenon? Can gulf reconciliation encourage Qatar to follow the path?

The paper argues that the current normalization process is part of the ongoing geopolitical rivalries within the "MENA" region, for power, prestige and even hegemony, which aim to recreate the regional system.

The research adopted both the inductive method and the geopolitical approach. Geopolitics is not only the field which studies how foreign policy is affected by geographical variables, it is also the field that powers which seek either world or regional prestige and hegemony have, increasingly, been interested in.

The research is divided into three sections; the first one analyzes the current geopolitical landscape of the MENA region, the second one analyzes the geopolitical factors which encouraged UAE, Bahrain, Sudan and Morocco to normalize their relations with Israel and the third one analyzes, in the light of gulf reconciliation which has been achieved in January 2021, the prospects of future Qatari normalization with Israel.

⁽¹⁾ Pompeo: Other Arab Countries Will Normalize Relations with Israel, *Arab News*, <https://www.arabnews.com/node/1766591/middle-east>, November 22, 2020.

Section I: The Geopolitical Landscape of the MENA Region

This section analyzes the current geopolitical landscape of the MENA region. It first determines the main regional “geostrategic players”, then it analyzes their “geopolitical codes” and finally it determines the main regional rivalries and axes.

The Main Middle Eastern Geostrategic Players:

According to Brzezinski, the former American national security advisor, “geostrategic players” are “the states that have the capacity and the national will to exercise power or influence beyond their borders in order to alter the existing geopolitical state of affairs. They have the potential and/or the predisposition to be geopolitically volatile”.⁽¹⁾

The current Middle Eastern geopolitical landscape began to crystalize at the beginning of the 21st century. Israel, Iran, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and eventually UAE are the most active geostrategic players in the MENA region. While non-Arab powers are first rank geostrategic players, Arab powers are second rank ones.

Israel is a first rank geostrategic player which seeks hegemony of the Middle East, its geopolitical aspirations are not new; they date back to the old dreams of establishing a nation-state for Jews on the Palestinian territories. After consolidating itself against the existential threats, Israel’s hegemonic aspirations in the Middle East has begun to emerge since 1990s.⁽²⁾ Moreover, when the neo-conservatives ascended to power in the United States in 2001, Israel had a historic opportunity to assert its influence in the region. The war against Iraq in 2003 was just the starting point in a longer process aimed to recreate the Middle East. In the context of “the Broader Middle East Project”, as named by the neo-conservatives, other regional powers were expected to be next on the agenda.⁽³⁾

⁽¹⁾ Brzezinski, Zbigniew, *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Implications*, New York, USA, Basic Books, 1997, p.40.

⁽²⁾ Seddik, Amira Elsayed Hassan, *The Iranian-Israeli-Turkish Competition in the Middle East: A Geopolitical Study (2001- 2014)*, Ph. D. Dissertation, Alexandria University, Egypt, 2017, p.135-136. (in Arabic)

⁽³⁾ Ibid, p.206.

Iran is another first rank geostrategic player which seeks hegemony of the Middle East. Its hegemonic aspirations are not new, they date back to the Shah era who dreamed of turning the country into a prominent regional power in the Persian Gulf.⁽¹⁾ Leaders of the Iranian Islamic revolution have inherited those hegemonic aspirations and gave them an Islamic form. Like Israel, Iran had a great opportunity to extend its regional role after the war against Iraq. The war has not only helped Iran to get rid of Iraq, which effectively played the role of the balancer against its regional aspirations for years, it has also helped the latter to integrate the new Iraq in the its sphere of influence.⁽²⁾

Turkey is the third first rank geostrategic player which seeks hegemony of the Middle East. Unlike Israel and Iran whose geopolitical ambitions are old, Turkey's geopolitical ambitions in the MENA region are relatively new; they crystalized under the Justice and Development Party (AKP) which has been ruling Turkey since 2002.⁽³⁾ Unlike the previous ruling elite whose orientations were western in the first place, AKP's ruling elite showed greater interest in the Middle East. Davutoğlu's famous book, "The Strategic Depth" is a clear manifestation of the changing orientations; Davutoğlu criticized the pervious Turkish elite for ignoring such a strategic region.⁽⁴⁾ After Arab revolutions, Turkey's regional aspirations have dramatically risen.

Saudi Arabia is a second rank geostrategic player whose regional role dates back to cold war era when it played an active role in opposition to both the communist and the Islamic Iranian ambitions. After Arab revolutions, the kingdom's regional role expanded to several arenas in opposition to the Iranian and Qatari ambitions. Qatar is another second rank geostrategic player whose regional role began to emerge when Emir Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani ascended to power in 1995. Qatar's role expanded during and after the Arab revolutions. UAE is the newest second rank geostrategic player whose

⁽¹⁾ Fuller, Graham, *Center of the Universe: The Geopolitics of Iran*, Boulder, USA, Westview Press, 1991, p. 242, 245.

⁽²⁾ Seddik, Amira, Op. Cit., p.215.

⁽³⁾ Ibid, p.177.

⁽⁴⁾ Davutoğlu, Ahmet, *Strategic Depth: Turkey's International Position*, Beirut- Lebanon (Arab Scientific Publishers) and Doha-Qatar (Aljazeera Center for Studies), Second Arabic Edition, 2011, p. 168-169.

regional role has begun to emerge since 2011 as a result of threats stemmed from the Arab revolutions.

Geopolitical Codes: Perception of Friends and Foes

The manner in which a country orientates itself toward the world is called a “geopolitical code”. Setting the geopolitical code consists of five main calculations; who are the current and potential allies, who are the current and potential enemies, how to maintain allies and nurture potential allies, how to counter current enemies and emerging threats and finally how to justify the four calculations above to the public and to the global community.⁽¹⁾ This part analyzes the “geopolitical codes” of the first rank geostrategic players, focusing mainly on their perception of friends and foes.

Israel’s Geopolitical Codes:

In the early stages of Israel establishment, Iran and Turkey didn’t pose any existential threat to it. On the contrary, both powers have provided Israel with a great opportunity to counterweight the Arab enmity which then has been constituted the main existential threat.⁽²⁾ However, as a result of a number of variables, Israel’s geopolitical perception of friends and foes witnessed a sea change. First, the Egyptian threat has been overcome thanks to the peace agreement signed in 1979. Second, the Iraqi threat has been eliminated after the war against it. Third, after Arab revolutions, Libya and Syria, which posed a threat to Israel, have become busy with their internal problems. Fourth, almost all current active Arab geostrategic players, like Saudi Arabia, UAE, and relatively Qatar, don’t pose a threat to Israel’s security.

While Arab existential threat to Israel was in decline, non-Arab powers, which sought to exploit the new variables to fill the power vacuum and play greater regional roles, posed greater threat to Israel interests.⁽³⁾ That changing Middle Eastern geopolitical landscape turned non-Arab powers, that were once the most favorable allies of Israel, into today’s adversaries.

⁽¹⁾ Flint, Colin, *Introduction to Geopolitics*, London and New York, Routledge, 2006, p.55-56.

⁽²⁾ Seddik, Amira, Op. Cit., p.139.

⁽³⁾ Ibid, p.139.

Turkey which was one of Israel's strategic partners is no longer the same. Turkey's geopolitical regional aspirations have made the two powers more distant. They both diverge on some regional issues like; Turkey's relations with the Palestinians, its support for the Islamic groups across the region and using anti-Israeli discourse in order to attract the Arab public.⁽¹⁾ Turkey's new foreign policy orientations have even damaged the Turkish-Israeli relations, eventually, both expelled each other's ambassadors in 2018 after Israeli forces killed dozens of Palestinians in clashes on the Gaza border.⁽²⁾

Iran which was once one of Israel's strategic partners is no longer the same. Such a change was not only a function of the Islamic revolution of 1979, as Israel was still interested in keeping the good relations with it after the revolution, Iran's geopolitical aspirations again, which brought it closer to Israel's regional foes, made the two powers more distant.⁽³⁾

In this regard, it's clear that Israel has traded friends and foes; as its current regional alliances shifted away from the non-Arab powers to the Arab ones, especially, almost all Arab powers, which Israel seeks to ally with, consider Iran and Turkey as their main regional foes.

Iran's Geopolitical Codes:

As mentioned above, Iran's geopolitical ambitions have had an Islamic form since 1979. As a result, Shi'ism is being used as a tool to expand Iran's influence across the MENA region and beyond. According to the revolutionary leaders, establishing an "Islamic political system" in Iran is an important prerequisite for its primacy in the Middle East.⁽⁴⁾ Moreover, Iran has adopted a strategy which is known as the "Shi'a Crescent"; as it is keen to ally with the Shiite faction across the region; that's the case

⁽¹⁾ Ibid, p.256.

⁽²⁾ Turkey Seeks Closer Ties with Israel, Says Erdogan, but Palestinian Policy a 'red line', *France 24*, <https://www.france24.com/en/middle-east/20201225-turkey-seeks-closer-ties-with-israel-says-erdogan-but-palestinian-policy-a-red-line>, December 25, 2020.

⁽³⁾ Seddik, Amira, Op. Cit., p.198-199.

⁽⁴⁾ Ibid, p. 156, 160, 170.

for Hezbollah in Lebanon, the Alawite ruling elite in Syria, the Shi'a factions in Iraq and the Houthis in Yemen. Iran even tried

to exploit the Shiite groups in the other gulf countries, like Bahrain and Saudi Arabia, to its advantage. The task became easier after 2003. Iran even tried to exploit the Arab revolutions which were described as part of an "Islamic awakening" in the Middle East.⁽¹⁾

In fact, Shi'ism is only a representation for projecting the Iranian power, however, the game is political in the first place; the Middle Eastern conflicts have never been a sectarian issue and Iran doesn't mind to ally with whatever faction than can secure its geopolitical interests in the region even if it is a Sunni one. That explains why Iran allied with the Palestinian Hamas movement and the Sudanese Bashir regime as well.

While the revolutionary leaders inherited the shah's geopolitical aspirations, their perception of friends and foes has been completely different than that of the shah. Once allies, both the United States and Israel became "the great Satan" and "the lesser Satan", Saudi Arabia felt threatened and considered Iran as its main foe. Moreover, as a result of Iran's expanding regional role after war against Iraq, Iran-Israel rivalry for hegemony of the Middle East has intensified. As a result of its expanding regional role since 2011, UAE eventually has become another geopolitical foe of Iran. Turkey and Iran are not enemies, however, their interests sometimes converge and sometimes diverge.

Unlike the Shah era, the current Iranian geopolitical aspirations exceed the gulf region.⁽²⁾ Iran eventually showed greater interests in other regions like Central Asia, Horn of Africa, Maghreb and the African Sahel. Those interests can be explained in the light of the recent geopolitical regional developments which played a significant role in drawing Iran's grand strategy; the more Iran feels contained and encircled in its "near abroad", the more it seeks greater influence in other regions, so that it can compensate

⁽¹⁾ Lutz, Meris, Iran's supreme leader calls uprisings an 'Islamic awakening', *Los Angeles Times*, <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-2011-feb-04-la-fg-khamenei-iran-egypt-20110205-story.html>, February 4, 2011, accessed January 12, 2021.

⁽²⁾ Seddik, Amira, Op. Cit., p. 156, 160, 170.

its deteriorating relations with its neighborhood and break the ring of encirclement around it.

Turkey's Geopolitical Codes:

Since the emergence of its regional role, Turkey has adopted a doctrine called “Zero Problems”; it sought to put enmities with other countries aside and to use “soft power” to assert its influence in the region. However, since the “Arab revolutions”, turkey has been increasingly using its hard power in order to accomplish its geopolitical goals, a move that brought new enmities upon it. Turkey allied with Qatar and Sudan under Bashir, it also backed the Islamic factions in Palestine, Egypt, Libya and Syria. Eventually, its influence became more obvious in Lebanon, Yemen and other regions like the Horn of Africa, Maghreb and Sahel. Those new geopolitical orientations have put Turkey at odds with other regional powers, like Israel, Saudi Arabia, UAE and Egypt, which felt threatened by the Turkish policies.

Geopolitical Rivalries in the MENA Region:

The Middle East is a “multipolar regional system” where several active geostrategic players compete. Non-Arab first rank geostrategic players like Israel, Iran and Turkey are competing for hegemony of the Middle East; the regional great game is being played by them. However, Arab second rank geostrategic players like Saudi Arabia, Qatar and relatively UAE don't seek hegemony. However, their policies can affect the regional balance of power, shape the future of the region and determine which power will dominate.

In addition to non-Arab rivalries for hegemony, there are other minor rivalries in the MENA region like; the Saudi-Emirati rivalry especially in Yemen, the Moroccan-Algerian, the Saudi-Qatari, the Saudi-Iranian, the Egyptian-Turkish, the Egyptian-Qatari and the last but not least the Emirati-Qatari one.

In sum, a new Middle Eastern regional system is being created.⁽¹⁾ After both the Iraqi war and the Arab revolutions, the region became deeply divided between two major axes; the first one is called the “Moderate Axis”, it is anti-Iranian and includes

⁽¹⁾ Ibid, p. 104.

Saudi Arabia, UAE, Egypt and implicitly Israel before the current process of normalization. The second one is called the “Resistance Axis”, it is pro-Iranian and includes Iran, Syria, Hezbollah and Hamas. Turkey is a relatively independent regional player; it has no fixed but relatively loose alliances across those two axes,⁽¹⁾ and Qatar seeks not to align itself with any axis. At the end, MENA’s future will be determined by polarization between those two axes.

Section II: The Geopolitical Driving Forces behind Normalization with Israel

In the light of the regional geopolitical landscape which has been mentioned in the previous section, this section analyzes the geopolitical factors that encouraged UAE, Bahrain, Sudan and the kingdom of Morocco to normalize relations with Israel.

The Emirati-Israeli Normalization: Abraham Accords

UAE is the newest second rank geostrategic player in the Middle East whose role became apparent after the Arab revolutions as a result of shifts in the way it perceives itself and the region as well.^{(2)(*)} In the light of the current regional geopolitical landscape, UAE faces three geopolitical rivals; Iran, Turkey and Qatar.

While UAE and Iran have very good economic relations, matters are not the same on the political level. First, UAE has a territorial dispute with Iran over the three Emirati islands the latter occupied in 1971. Second, UAE became more suspicious of Iran after 1979 Islamic revolution. Third, Iran’s threat to the Emirati interests increased after the war of Iraq which gave rise to the expanding Iranian regional role and as a result of the Iranian nuclear program. Fourth, Arab revolutions made both powers more distant; as

⁽¹⁾ Ibid, p. 257.

⁽²⁾ Al Ketbi, Ebtesam, Contemporary Shifts in UAE Foreign Policy: From the Liberation of Kuwait to the Abraham Accords, *Israel Journal of Foreign Affairs*, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/23739770.2020.1845067>, November 19, 2020, p.5.

^(*) UAE’s regional role is rapidly expanding; it recently played greater roles in the Gulf, Horn of Africa, the Maghreb, Sahel and the Eastern Mediterranean regions. UAE not only plays a role in the regional balance of power, its hegemonic aspirations in those regions began to emerge, which makes UAE a candidate to be a first rank geostrategic player in the future.

Iran tried to exploit such a variable in order to expand its regional influence. The latter supported the Bahraini uprisings, backed both Al-Assad regime of Syria^(*) and the Houthis in Yemen. Iran has even expanded its influence to other strategic regions, like the Horn of Africa, Sahel and Maghreb which are vital to UAE's maritime interests. All those policies posed a threat to the Emirati interests.⁽¹⁾

In addition to the Iranian threat, the Turkish threat to UAE's interests began to emerge after Arab revolutions; as both diverge on several issues. First, Turkey's support for Islamic factions across the MENA region, especially in Libya, Tunisia and Egypt, is perceived by UAE as a threat to its regional interests. Second, while UAE is one of the "quartet" which boycotted Qatar in 2017, Turkey not only supported Qatar against the boycott calling it "un-Islamic", it also sought to establish its second military base in Qatar, a move that constituted a direct threat to the gulf security. Third, Turkey began to play an active role in new strategic areas like the Horn of Africa, North Africa, Maghreb and Eastern Mediterranean, which posed a threat to UAE's regional interests.

In addition to Iran and Turkey, Qatar's regional geopolitical aspirations have put it at odds with UAE and other powers. First, Qatar's support for the Islamist factions across the region and the Houthis in Yemen pose a threat to UAE interests. Second, Qatar strong relations with Iran and Turkey upset the regional balance of power in their favor. That explains why UAE joined the quartet on boycotting Qatar.

While Iran, Turkey and Qatar are the geopolitical foes, Israel had never posed an existential threat to UAE. On the contrary, UAE-Israel interests intersect; both are regional geostrategic players and need one another to curb the Iranian, Turkish and Qatari aspirations which threaten their regional interests. It is obvious that UAE eventually considers Israel as a potential ally and the ablest to help curbing those threats.⁽²⁾ In the light of that convergence of interests, normalization of Emirati-Israeli relations, which has been announced in August 2020 by signing the "Abraham

(*) At the beginning of the Syrian crisis, both Iran and UAE diverged on the issue. While Iran backed Al-Assad regime, UAE backed the opposition. However, the Emirati policy changed later on; as it softened its tone on Al-Assad regime as a result of the ascendance of the "Islamic State" (ISIS) threat in 2014.

(1) Al Ketbi, Ebtesam, Op. Cit, p.2,5.

(2) Ibid, p.7.

Accords”, can be understood. That explains why Iran, Turkey and Al-Jazeera, the pioneering Qatari media outlet, have condemned the Emirati move.⁽¹⁾

Before normalizing relations, Israel and UAE had covert diplomatic and commercial activities that lasted for years. First, during 2018 and 2019, three Israeli officials have visited UAE. Second, the latter has also financed the gas pipeline that links Israel to Europe. Third, both cooperate on the military and security levels, as UAE depends on Israel in acquiring weaponry systems. Fourth, both have previously normalized relations in the fields of tourism and sports.⁽²⁾

The Bahraini-Israeli Normalization:

Bahrain is not an active geopolitical player, rather, it is a “Geopolitical Pivot”. According to Brzezinski, “geopolitical pivots are the states whose importance is derived not from their power and motivation but rather from their sensitive location and from the consequence of their potentially vulnerable condition for the behavior of geopolitical players.”⁽³⁾

With a Shia population which approximately constitutes 70.3% of its total population according to 2010 estimates⁽⁴⁾, but ruled by the minority Sunnis, Bahrain perceives Iran as an existential threat. First, Iran’s policy of exporting revolution as well as playing the Shi’a card against it, among other countries, undermines Bahrain’s security. Second, Iran considers Bahrain as its 14th province^(*) which threatens the very

⁽¹⁾ Iran, Turkey slam UAE over agreement with Israel, DW, <https://www.dw.com/en/israel-uae-relations/a-54564050>, August 14, 2020. See also: Naar, Ismaeel, Massive Qatari Media Campaign Targets Arab Opinion Following UAE-Israel Peace Deal, *Al Arabiya*, <https://english.alarabiya.net/en/features/2020/08/14/Massive-Qatari-media-campaign-targets-Arab-opinion-following-UAE-Israel-peace-deal>, August 14, 2020.

⁽²⁾ Beleisha, Mohamed and Alobeidi, Mohamed, The Geostrategic Implications of the Emirati Normalization with Israel: Israeli Perspective, *Journal of Asian Issues*, Democratic Arab Center, Issue 5, July 2020, p.103. (in Arabic)

⁽³⁾ Brzezinski, Zbigniew, Op. Cit. p.41.

⁽⁴⁾ Population of Bahrain, <https://fanack.com/bahrain/population/>

^(*) In 2009, the speaker of Iran’s parliament was quoted complaining that under the Shah “Bahrain was our 14th province and had a representative at the parliament.” Lynch, Marc, What’s happening in Bahrain (I mean, the 14th province of Iran)?, *Foreign Policy*, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2009/02/19/whats-happening-in-bahrain-i-mean-the-14th-province-of-iran/>, February 19, 2009, accessed January 4, 2021.

existence of the Bahraini state.⁽¹⁾ Third, Iran's threat has increased amidst Arab revolutions, when the former explicitly supported the Bahraini uprisings against the Sunni ruling elite.

Bahrain had never stood idly by in the face of the Iranian threats. First, it was one of the founding members of the GCC. Second, it supported Iraq in its war against Iran during the 1980s. Third, with the help of "Peninsula Shield Force", Bahrain could preserve its stability amidst 2011 uprisings. Finally, it severed diplomatic relations with Iran in January 2016.^(*)

In addition to the Iranian threat, both Qatari and Turkish threats have begun to emerge in the face of Bahrain. First, Qatar has better relations with Iran, so the friend of Bahrain's enemy is an enemy too. As a result, Bahrain joined the quartet and boycotted Qatar in 2017. Moreover, the Turkish support for Qatar which hosts the former's military bases on its territories turned Turkey into a foe.

As a result of Bahrain's security environment, In September 2020 Bahrain became the second nation to sign a peace deal with Israel after UAE. According to Bahraini officials, normalization shall "strengthen Bahrainis' security and their economic stability."⁽²⁾ It is clear that Bahrain is exploiting the changing Arab geopolitical perception of Israel in its favor; Bahrain perceives Israel as a regional power and the ablest to counter all regional foes. Bahrain gained that perception as a result of the increasing dependence on the United States in security issues. However, since the United States is reducing its commitment to the Middle East and increasing its

⁽¹⁾ Shanahan, Rodger, The Gulf States and Iran: Robust Competitors or Interested Bystanders?, *Lowy Institute Perspectives*, Lowy Institute for International Policy, Australia, November 2009, p.3.

^(*) Bahrain and Sudan have joined Saudi Arabia and severed diplomatic relations with Iran after attacks on the embassy of the Kingdom in Tehran. The attacks were reaction to the Saudi execution of the Shiite cleric, Sheikh Nimr al-Nimr, who was a critic of the Saudi monarchy and had led protests, amidst Arab revolutions, in the eastern part of the country, where many Saudi Shiites live.

Calmur, Krishnadev, the Diplomatic Fallout of Saudi Arabia's Execution of a Shiite Cleric, *The Atlantic*, <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2016/01/saudi-iran-relations/422454/>, January 4, 2016, accessed January 4, 2021.

⁽²⁾ Koduvayur, Varsha and Daoud, David, Welcome to a Brand-New Middle East, *Foreign Policy*, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/09/30/israel-uae-bahrain-palestinians-peace/>, September 30, 2020.

dependence on regional allies, the gulf monarchies and Israel have become the ablest to curb Bahrain's regional threats.⁽¹⁾

The Sudanese-Israeli Normalization:

Sudan was the third nation to normalize relations with Israel after UAE and Bahrain, a move which reflects both the sea change the Sudanese strategic thinking witnessed after the revolution of December 2018 and the way the new ruling elite perceives friends and foes.

Under Bashir's Islamic oriented regime, Sudan had very close relations with Turkey, Iran and Qatar. Relations with Turkey improved after 2002, moreover, Turkey's involvement with Sudan in particular, and the Horn of Africa in general, has deepened since 2013 as a result of the former's geopolitical losses in the Egypt and Syria. Bashir's regime sought to exploit the geopolitical variables; it aligned Sudan with Turkey in an attempt to receive the economic support needed to counterweight sanctions which have been imposed on Sudan since 1993.⁽²⁾ That is why Sudan has granted Turkey rights of developing "Suakin Island", a move that directly brought Turkey into the Red Sea region. Likewise, Sudan improved its political and economic relations with Qatar in order to get economic support. Qatari investments expanded to develop Port Sudan, which brought Qatar too into the Red Sea region.⁽³⁾ According to other Red Sea nations, Saudi Arabia and Egypt in particular, both the Turkish and the Qatari presence undermines Red Sea security.

Sudan relations with Iran improved after Bashir's ascendance to power in 1989; both regimes have alike Islamist orientations.⁽⁴⁾ Despite their Sunni-Shiite divide, both

⁽¹⁾ Inbar, Efraim, Gulf states seek warm peace with Israel, *Policy Papers*, The Jerusalem Institute for Strategy and Security, <https://jiss.org.il/en/inbar-gulf-states-seek-warm-peace-with-israel/>, September 14, 2020.

⁽²⁾ Shay, Shaul, Turkey-Sudan strategic relations and the implications for the region, Institute for Policy and Strategy, https://www.idc.ac.il/he/research/ips/documents/publication/5/shaul_shay_turkeysudan11_01_18a.pdf, January 2018, accessed December 31, 2020.

⁽³⁾ Shaul Shay, Op. Cit.

⁽⁴⁾ Cafiero, Giorgio, Is a Sudanese-Iranian rapprochement possible?, *Middle East Institute*, <https://www.mei.edu/publications/sudanese-iranian-rapprochement-possible>, May 9, 2019, accessed December 21, 2020.

had the same geopolitical perception of friends and foes; both supported Islamist factions across the Middle East and both considered the United States and Israel as their foes. Since the Sudanese economic situation has deteriorated as a result of the sanctions imposed on it, Sudan found in Iran a reliable ally. Likewise, since Iran considered Sudan as both strategic asset and foothold thanks to its strategic location in the African continent, Iran exploited Sudan's economic needs in order to strengthen its influence. As a result, Sudan allowed Iran's dock warships in its ports in 2012.⁽¹⁾

Good Sudanese-Iranian relations didn't last for long. As a result of the regional political and the domestic economic pressures, Bashir decided to switch alliances. First, in 2015 [Sudan joined](#) the Saudi-Emirati war on Yemen against the Houthis, hoping both to receive economic support in return and to encourage the United States to lift sanctions imposed on it. ⁽²⁾ Second, Sudan joined Saudi Arabia and Bahrain and severed diplomatic relations with Iran in 2016. However, according to reports, Sudan was still using Iran as a secure route to smuggle weapons to Hamas.⁽³⁾

While having good relations with Turkey and with Iran, Sudan under Bashir had no diplomatic relations with Israel,⁽⁴⁾ they both considered each other as enemies and both backed rival factions in the region. Under Bashir, Sudan played a crucial role in arming Hamas movement as well securing weapons smuggling routes to it. As a result, first Israel sometimes used its military force in Sudan to abort any smuggling of weapons to Hamas,⁽⁵⁾ second, Sudan has been put on the list of state sponsors of terrorism for approximately 27 years, third, Israel helped arming and training South-Sudanese rebels who had split Sudan in two in 2011.⁽⁶⁾

After the revolution which toppled Bashir's regime, Sudan's political orientations during the transitional period witnessed a sea change. First, Sudan now does perceive

(1) **Cafiero, Giorgio, Op. Cit.**

(2) Shehada, Muhammad, Why Hamas Is Mourning the Downfall of Sudan's Dictator, *Haaretz*, <https://www.haaretz.com/>, April 15, 2019, accessed December 21, 2020.

(3) *Ibid.*

(4) **Kavaler, Tara, Fall of Al-Bashir Leads to No Change for Israel's Sudanese Refugees, *The Media Line*, <https://themedialine.org/people/fall-of-al-bashir-leads-to-no-change-for-israels-sudanese-refugees/>, April 17, 2017, accessed December 21, 2020.**

(5) Shehada, [Muhammad, Op. Cit.](#)

(6) *Ibid.*

neither the United States nor Israel as enemies, rather, it became the third nation, after UAE and Bahrain, to normalized relations with Israel after signing a peace deal in October 2020. Moreover, Sudan is working now to establish good relations with the United States, a move which encouraged the latter to remove the former from state sponsors of terrorism list in December 2020.⁽¹⁾ Second, in the light of the strong relations which the Sudanese transitional government have with Saudi Arabia and UAE, any Sudanese rapprochement with Iran (and Qatar before reconciliation) is not expected at the moment. Third, until now, Sudan has good relations with Turkey and the deal of developing the Sudanese “Suakin” is still running. However, it is reported that Sudan is under pressure to suspend such a deal.⁽²⁾

It's quite clear now that unlike other Arab powers which normalized relations with Israel as a means for countering the Iranian, Turkish and Qatari threats, Sudan's motive behind normalization is economic in the first place. Sudan has been suffering from economic sanctions since the 1990s, it even lost more than 70% of its energy reserves after the secession of South Sudan in 2011.⁽³⁾ All that put pressure on the Sudanese economy, that is why the transitional government, following late Bashir's steps, sought to exploit the changing Arab perception of Israel in its favor and shifted political alignments towards the moderate axis in order to fulfill its economic needs. Furthermore, since Sudan is a “geopolitical pivot”, Saudi Arabia and UAE have sought to keep it away from their geopolitical foes; Iran, Turkey and Qatar.⁽⁴⁾

The Moroccan-Israeli Normalization:

The Kingdom of Morocco faces three geopolitical foes; Iran, Algeria and Turkey to some extent. The Iranian Moroccan relations fluctuated across history between friendship and enmity. Despite the fact that it is geographically located miles away from

⁽¹⁾ US removes Sudan from ‘state sponsors of terrorism’ list amid warming Israeli-Arab ties, *Russia Today*, <https://www.rt.com/news/509617-us-sudan-terrorism-israel/>, December 14, 2020.

⁽²⁾ **Sudan: Is it being exploited by foreign powers?**, *BBC News*, <https://www.bbc.com>, July 9, 2019, accessed December 21, 2020.

⁽³⁾ **Giorgio Cafiero**, *Op. Cit.*

⁽⁴⁾ *Ibid.*

Iran, Morocco was not far away from Iran's geopolitical aspirations. Iran's interests in the Maghreb, and the Horn of Africa too, increased as a result of the changing Middle Eastern geopolitical environment mentioned in the first section. In an attempt to increase its influence in the kingdom, Iran first played the Shiite card, it second supported the Polisario liberation front in "Western Sahara". As a result of the Iranian threat, the Iranian Moroccan relations deteriorated; the kingdom joined the Saudi-led military operation in Yemen against the Houthis in 2015 until 2019 and severed diplomatic relations with Iran in May 2018.

Unlike Iran, Turkey is not considered as a direct threat to Morocco, despite the fact the both diverge on the Libyan issue. Since it considers Libya as a strategic asset, Turkey has been using all tools, including the military one, to maintain its influence in Libya. However, Morocco supports the political solution to the Libyan crisis, it opposes any external intervention in it⁽¹⁾ and has also sponsored "Skhirat agreement" of 2015 and "Bouznika dialogue meeting" held in October 2020 between different Libyan factions. That divergence put Morocco and Turkey at odds, their bilateral relations have eventually deteriorated on the economic level.⁽²⁾

Besides Iran and Turkey, divergence of interests has put Morocco and Algeria at odds. First, both compete for power and leadership in the Maghreb. Second, Algeria supports the Polisario liberation front in the "Western Sahara".

Unlike Iran, Turkey and Algeria, Israel doesn't pose a threat to Morocco, on the contrary, Israeli-Moroccan relations are not new. Despite the lack of formal political relations, both have covertly cooperated in the past on security issues, Israel has even helped the Moroccan regime to obtain intelligence and weapons⁽³⁾ and its aid for the

⁽¹⁾ **Hatim, Yahia, Morocco Condemns Foreign Intervention in Libya, *Morocco World News*, <https://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2019/12/288533/morocco-condemns-foreign-intervention-in-libya/>, December 8, 2019, accessed January 14, 2021.**

⁽²⁾ Hanna, Andrew, Saudi-Turkish Clash Reinforces Tensions in the Maghreb, *United States Institute of Peace*, <https://www.usip.org/publications/2020/11/saudi-turkish-clash-reinforces-tensions-maghreb>, November 4, 2020.

⁽³⁾ Abouzzohour, Yasmina, Order from Chaos: Morocco's partial normalization with Israel comes with risks and gains, *Brookings Doha Center*, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2020/12/14/moroccos-partial-normalization-with-israel-comes-with-risks-and-gains/>, December 14, 2020.

building of the Moroccan Western Sahara Wall was reported in the press.⁽¹⁾ It is even reported that the piece of information regarding the Iranian support for the Polisario front was provided to the kingdom by Israel itself.⁽²⁾

In the light of the Moroccan security environment, it obvious that Morocco found in Israel a reliable ally and the ablest to help countering threats. Morocco is even using relations with Israel in order to improve relations with UAE, Saudi Arabia and the United States. As a result, Morocco became the fourth nation to normalize relation with Israel, after UAE, Bahrain and Sudan, after signing the peace deal in December 2020. That explains why both Iran and Algeria condemned such a move, Iran even called it a betrayal and a stab in the back of Palestinians.⁽³⁾

Normalization with Israel was in Morocco's geopolitical advantage. First, in return for normalization, Morocco won US recognition of its sovereignty over "Western Sahara" territory.⁽⁴⁾ Indeed, the United States is seeking now to open a consulate in Dakhla, one of Western Sahara's cities,⁽⁵⁾ a step which was unlikely to be taken without normalizing relations. Second, thanks to the American recognition, Morocco scored a geopolitical point against Algeria and Iran which back the Polisario front. Third, normalization opens the way for Israeli aid to support the Moroccan army.⁽⁶⁾ Fourth, Morocco's relations with UAE and Bahrain, which deteriorated because of the Yemeni

⁽¹⁾ Inbar, Efraim and Lerman, Eran, from the Ocean to the Gulf: Normalization takes hold amidst realignment of regional forces, *Policy Papers*, The Jerusalem Institute for Strategy and Security, <https://jiss.org.il/en/inbar-lerman-from-the-ocean-to-the-gulf-normalization/>, December 14, 2020.

⁽²⁾ Ibid.

⁽³⁾ Oman Welcomes Morocco Israel normalization of as a step towards regional peace, *The Jerusalem Post*, <https://www.jpost.com/breaking-news/morocco-israel-normalization-is-betrayal-of-palestine-iranian-official-651830>, December 11, 2020.

⁽⁴⁾ Mezran, Karim, Experts react: What the Morocco-Israel Deal Means for the Middle East, *the Atlantic Council*, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/menasource/experts-react-what-the-morocco-israel-deal-means-for-the-middle-east/>, no date, accessed December 21, 2020.

⁽⁵⁾ US unveils plan to open consulate in Dakhla, *Middle East Online*, <https://middle-east-online.com/en/us-unveils-plan-open-consulate-dakhla>, January 10, 2021.

⁽⁶⁾ Algeria PM on Israel-Morocco deal: 'Zionist entity' wants to be near our borders, *Times of Israel*, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/algeria-pm-on-israel-morocco-deal-zionist-entity-wants-to-be-near-our-borders/>, December 12, 2020.

and Qatari issues, is expected to improve.^{(1)(*)} Indeed, they decided to open consulates in Laayoune, the largest city in the Western Sahara.⁽²⁾ Moreover, the deal will even secure the flow of political and economic support of the Arabian gulf nations which Morocco needs and which will help the Morocco to diminish its economic reliance on Turkey and Qatar.

According to Saudi Arabia, UAE and Israel, Morocco is a geopolitical prize. Getting the latter into the anti-Iranian axis is an old dream came true,^(*) such a move will certainly help to contain the expanding Iranian and Turkish influence in the Maghreb.

Section III: Prospects of Future Qatari Normalization with Israel

Two days after Israel and Morocco signed their first deals in the process of establishing full diplomatic relations, Israel's prime minister said that "many, many more countries" would be signing normalization agreements with the Jewish state "a lot sooner than people expect."⁽³⁾ In the light of the recent gulf reconciliation and signing "Al-Ula agreement" in January 2021, this section analyzes the prospects of future Qatari-Israeli normalization.

Qatar as a Geostrategic Player:

Qatar is a second rank Middle Eastern geostrategic player. Since 1995, it has sought a foreign policy which is independent from, but not necessarily against, that of

⁽¹⁾ [Abouzzohour, Yasmina](#), Op. Cit.

^(*) Morocco first stopped taking part in military action with the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen's war in February 2019, it second refused to join the Quartet on boycotting Qatar in 2017 for economic reasons.

⁽²⁾ UAE Officially Opens Consulate General in Morocco's Laayoune, *Morocco World News*, <https://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2020/11/324713/uae-officially-opens-consulate-general-in-moroccos-laayoune/>, November 4, 2020. See also, Bahrain will open consulate in Western Sahara, *Alarabiya News*, <https://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/north-africa/2020/11/27/Bahrain-will-open-consulate-in-Western-Sahara>, November 27, 2020.

^(*) Morocco was invited in May 2011 to join the GCC.

⁽³⁾ Netanyahu says 'many, many more' Arab states to normalize ties with Israel soon, *Times of Israel*, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/netanyahu-says-many-many-more-arab-states-to-normalize-ties-with-israel-soon/> 24 December 2020.

Saudi Arabia; Qatar is quiet aware of its power limits.⁽¹⁾ Qatar's regional role is based on the economic tool and of being a mediator in regional conflicts. After Arab revolutions, Qatar became a major sponsor of Islamic factions across the region.⁽²⁾

Qatar faces no geopolitical threat from the three non-Arab regional geostrategic players, on the contrary, it even seeks to keep good relations with all parties without aligning itself with any axis.⁽³⁾ However, Qatar's foreign policy orientations, especially after the Arab revolutions, brought it closer to both Turkey and Iran, while put it at odds with Egypt, Saudi Arabia, UAE and Bahrain. So, the four of them boycotted Qatar in 2017 in an attempt to counter its regional role. However, Qatar dependence on Turkey and Iran has increased amidst the Arab boycott.

Pros and Cons of Normalization:

Despite the fact that Iran and Turkey pose no threat to Qatar, the prospects of future Qatari normalization with Israel is questioned, especially after the Qatari reconciliation with the quartet.

Indeed, Israel and Qatar lack any formal political relations, but the latter was the only gulf country which had economic and commercial relations with Israel since 1995. However, Qatar sought to keep those relations covert in order not to cross the Arabian lines, it even cut ties with Israel in 2009 in solidarity with Gaza.⁽⁴⁾ Qatar and Israel are not natural geopolitical foes, however, the former's convergence with Iran and Turkey, especially on backing the Islamist groups across the region including Hamas, put Israel and Qatar at odds.

After the Quartet's boycott, Israel's strategic importance to Qatar increased; the latter assumed that the Jewish lobby in the US could provide a counterweight to the gulf boycott and highlight Qatar's importance to American interests in the region.⁽⁵⁾ In

⁽¹⁾ Khatib, Lina, Qatar's foreign policy: The limits of pragmatism, *International Affairs*, The Royal Institute of International Affairs, Oxford, UK, Issue 89, 2013, p. 419.

⁽²⁾ Ibid, p. 422-423.

⁽³⁾ Yaari, Michal, *Israel and Qatar: Relations Nurtured by the Palestinian Issue*, Israel, The Israel Institute for Regional Foreign Policies, March 2020, p.3

⁽⁴⁾ Ibid, p.4, 6.

⁽⁵⁾ Ibid, p.4.

addition, after the Emirati and Bahraini normalization with Israel, Qatar viewed Israel as potential ally in mending relations with fellow gulf nations.⁽¹⁾

On the one hand, Israel may aspire to polarize Qatar away from Iran, Turkey and Hamas, that will help Israel to score a point against its geopolitical foes, alter the regional balance of power in its favor and gain legitimacy in the Arab world. On the other hand, Qatar has something to win in return for normalization. First, relations with the United States, the main sponsor of reconciliation and normalization, will improve. Second, like UAE, Qatar may acquire more developed weaponry systems.⁽²⁾ Third, normalization may not affect Qatar's relations with other regional powers; Iran is not an ally and even Turkey currently seeks closer ties with Israel.

Despite the pros, any Qatari foreign policy reorientation away from Iran, Turkey and Hamas is doubted, there are good reasons for that. First, while Qatar's regional role is highly dependent on being a friend of all and being a mediator in regional conflicts, normalization will bring Qatar closer to the "moderate axis" and undermines its role as neutral mediator. Second, while Qatar's involvement in the Palestinian arena is an important item in the Qatari toolbox to establish its status as an influential and essential regional player,⁽³⁾ reviewing alliance with Hamas will undermine Qatar's regional role. Third, it is obvious that the Qatari leadership is unwilling to take such a step; as the Qatari foreign minister said that reconciliation will not affect relations with any other country.⁽⁴⁾

In sum, it is early to judge whether reconciliation will lead to a future Qatari normalization with Israel, the task is not easy. US state department officials expect Qatar

⁽¹⁾ Israel-Qatar ties warming amid joint efforts to ensure Gaza calm – Israeli TV, *Times of Israel*, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/israel-qatar-ties-warming-amid-joint-efforts-to-ensure-gaza-calm-israeli-tv/>, 21 October 2020.

⁽²⁾ Michael, Kobi and Guzansky Yoel, Might Qatar Join the Abraham Accords?, *INSS Insight*, The Institute for National Security Studies, Israel, No. 1391, October 12, 2020.

⁽³⁾ Ibid.

⁽⁴⁾ England, Andrew, Qatar says deal to end Gulf crisis will not change its ties with Iran, *Financial Times*, <https://www.ft.com/content/ea1e7058-960d-416c-93dc-f4f8c7945c12>, January 7, 2021.

to eventually normalize relations with Israel,⁽¹⁾ however, the Qatari ambassador to the US clearly said that “Qatar has no problem with normalizing relations with Israel but will not do so before a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is reached”.⁽²⁾ The step may take some time, the current process of normalization is sponsored by trump administration, however, the new American president is more committed to the two-state solution in which Qatar’s role may be needed.

Conclusion:

A new Middle East is being created where different regional geostrategic players are competing for power and prestige. The recent process of Arab-Israeli normalization shouldn’t be separated from those ongoing regional geopolitical rivalries. UAE was the first to normalize relations with Israel, which was a result of the Iranian, Turkish and Qatari threats. Bahrain was the second to normalize as a result of the Iranian threat. Sudan was the third to normalize; the main driving force behind its behavior is economic, as it aspires to align itself with the “moderate axis” in order to fulfill its economic needs, however, Iran and Turkey don’t pose an existential threat to it. Morocco was the fourth to normalize and the latest until now, its behavior was a result of the Iranian threat and its rivalry with Algeria. Qatari-Israeli normalization is not impossible and could be a long run goal, however, reconciliation could be a short run alternative to normalization which faces challenges. Israel was exploiting Trump’s last days in the White House in order to score geopolitical points against its regional geopolitical foes. We will wait and see whether the new administration will follow the steps.

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⁽²⁾ Qatar won’t normalize with Israel before 2-state solution reached, envoy says, *Times of Israel*, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/qatar-wont-normalize-with-israel-before-2-state-solution-reached-envoy-says>, September 18, 2020.

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The Rights of the Defense as a Guarantee before the Oppressive Authority of Independent Administrative Authorities

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Abstract

The sanction, whether administrative or not, always entails deterrence, security or derogation from rights and freedoms and infringes legal positions, those positions cannot be based on suspicion or intuition, but must be based on certainty. The way to do this is to balance the right of independent administrative authorities as protector of economic public order with sanction against the offender. To take away from it in the name of society and for its interests, on the one hand, the right of economic aid, accused of administrative violation, to defend itself, is not taken in a sudden.

But treachery, and the defense is therefore the most important legal and judicial guarantee for balancing the rights of defense and administrative follow-up by the independent administrative authorities, since justice is not achieved without these elements, a right that highlights its role in the trial stage more than in the investigation stage and the investigation stage. One of the most important general legal principles established by the French State Council in this regard is the principle enshrined in its own texts by these bodies.

Keywords: *independent administrative authorities, punishment, administrative sanctions, the lawyer, the violation.*

Introduction

One of the most important guarantees of a fair criminal trial is that the accused can defend himself and be assigned to defend his rights, so most modern procedural systems have sought to enshrine this right by activating the role of the defense establishment in the course of criminal proceedings, and some have even considered the task of defense to be an element of justice¹.

If criminal penalties, administrative or disciplinary, are to be imposed not on the basis of intuition and conjecture, but on the penalty and certainty to ensure the person to follow-up, then evidence of a conviction and an opportunity to defend himself or herself

¹¹- MAHDA Mohamed, guarantees of the accused during the Investigation (Legal Series), Part III, Edition 1, Dar El Hoda, Algeria, 1992, p 266.

is required¹, This guarantee, until 1974, was translated into the principle of the rights of the defense² and is intended to provide the accused with the opportunity to present the proven support for his claim or defense, or to refute the evidence of his opponent against him through the use of his right to pay, evidence and oral or written pleadings, this is a general guarantee from which other guarantees, including the principles of adversarial.

First: The legal value of the right of defense

The rights of the defense are constitutionally enshrined in Algerian legislation, under article 151/1 of the 1996 Constitution, which provides for the "right to defense recognized"³, and in paragraph 2 of the Constitution, it is more specific to ensure this right in criminal cases. Where did this take place in the Code of Criminal Procedure as the constitution of freedoms and the rule between the power of the judiciary and the rights of citizens in application of the principle of legality, where the accused was able to seek a lawyer in the judicial investigation stage? Article 100 of the Code of Criminal Procedure required the examining magistrate, under article 157 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, to alert the accused to his right to choose a lawyer and to appoint a lawyer if the accused so requested.

In the United States of America, the Federal Supreme Court confirmed the constitutionality of the right to a defender under the sixth amendment of the American Constitution, and the Supreme Court confirmed that the right to defense is a fundamental right necessary for fair trial and allowed the accused to waive this right. However, the court may not accept the accused to defend himself without the use of a defender if it considers that he waives his right to use a defender who has committed untrue behavior⁴.

The constitutional value of the right of defense, in the non-penal provision, was confirmed by the French Constitutional Council in its resolution 86-224 of 23 January 1987 in Higithia N°22, in which it was considered that the penalties imposed by the Competition Council were invalid unless the principle was respected.

¹- Hammadi Nawal, Basic guarantees in Administrative repression (e.g., independant administrative authorities), Master's degree in Law, Public Law Branch, Public Law Department, Faculty of Law and political Science, Abderrahmane Mira University, béjaia, 2011, p 50.

²- Eiden Rezaika, Disciplinary competence of the independant administrative authorities, MBA, Law Branch, Public and Governance bodies, Faculty of Law and political Science, Abderrahmane Mira University, Béjaia, 2014, p 142.

³- Article 151/1 of the Constitution of November 28, 1996, promulgated by Presidential Decree No. 98-438, dated December 07, 1996, JORADP N° 76, promulgated in 1996, updated by Act N° 02-03, of 10 April 2002, J. J. JORADP N°25, 2002, as amended by Act N° 08-19, N° Dated November 15, 2008, JORADP N° 63, released on November 16, 2008.

⁴-BOULEHIA Chahra, the right of the accused to defend against criminal justice, Law Forum Journal, Faculty of Law, Mohamed Khidher Pescara University, N° 05, Algeria, DC, p 91.

The Council of State of France stressed that respect for the rights of the defense was a general principle of law and applied even if there was no provision in 1944, either the position of the Algerian State Council is reflected in its 2002 decision, where an administrative decision has been suspended based on a constitutionally guaranteed right of defense¹, emphasizing the need to respect the principle even in non-negative punishments of rights².

Second: Inclusions of guarantee the right of defense

Respect for the rights of defense before independent administrative authorities is very similar to the rights of defense in criminal cases established by the Algerian legislator, in order to preserve this right and to prevent its violation by the authority imposing sanctions on the law enforcement authority, in particular:

A) The presumption of innocence

The presumption of innocence is one of the most important constitutional guarantees for the person in general and is particularly important in the 1996 Constitution, where he considered that every person is innocent until he is convicted before a regular judicial authority with respect to legal guarantees³, and this presumption still receives attention until it became one of the advocates of what has recently become a fair trial, The presumption of innocence means: The presumption of innocence, whatever the weight of the evidence or the power of doubt it is about.

The Constitutional Council of France recognized the constitutional value of this principle⁴, but does this constitutional and judicial recognition apply to repressive administrative penalties imposed by independent administrative bodies?

In Algerian law, the provisions that give the independent administrative bodies no reference to this principle, but this is not a defect, as long as the Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure are not included, as the constitutional reference to it is sufficient, and to see how the principle is respected before these independent bodies, it is necessary to refer to the jurisprudence⁵, his is not available as far as we know, and

¹- Council of State, resolution 10339, dated 30/04/2002, case against the Minister of Justice, State Council Journal, N° 02, 2002, pp 226-227.

² - DIBACH Souhila, State Council and Competition Council, Ph.D. in Law, Public Law, Faculty of Law, University of Youssef Ben Khida, Algeria, 2010, p 538.

³- The Council of State, resolution 12101, dated 01/04/2003, Algerian International Bank A. I.B. against the Governor and his accompanying Governor, Council of State, N° 03, 2003, pp 135-138.

⁴⁴- This is what the French Constitutional Council has insisted on by accepting the oppressive authority of the Supreme Council of Phonetics and Visas.
C, Const, DC N° 88-248 du 17 Janvier 1989, Consid, Conseil Constitutionnelle.

⁵- KHEN Lamine, "Privacy of Disciplinary sanctions applied to Economic officers in the Financial sector", National Forum on the impact of Economic transformation on the National

therefore we try to read this principle through the practice of these French independent administrative bodies and the French judiciary, which is not available as we know, and thus try to read this principle through the practice of the French independent administrative bodies and the French judiciary¹.

The Court of Appeal of Paris abolished a financial penalty signed by the Securities and Exchange Commission, as the Commission published a communication on the acts four days after the person concerned was informed of the acts attributed to him, as the Commission went beyond the principle of presumption of innocence².

In another case, the French Court of Cassation overturned the Paris Court of Appeal ruling and annulled the (COB) procedure, as its president violated the presumption of innocence in an interview with *Le Figaro* about Ciment French, where the company's managers have been accused of concealing and providing false information, these statements were made between the stage of informing the company of the acts attributed to it and the imposition of the sanction³, being imposed and before informing and informing the person, he does not know all the acts attributed to him, although his institution or place was inspected, that this measure is respected by the mail and communications control committee, the penalties are imposed only after the concerned has been informed of the place to which they are assigned⁴, the same security is provided to the Competition Board. The decision appointed by the Competition Board shall produce a preliminary report containing the presentation of the facts, as well as the registered outlets, and shall inform the parties concerned⁵.

B) Respect for the principle of confrontation:

The guarantee of defense rights cannot be envisaged without ensuring and respecting the principle of confrontation, according to which the accused party is entitled to know the acts and violations of the competition law and within a reasonable time, as well as

Legal System, November 30, December 2011, Faculty of Law and political Science, Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia University, Jijel, 2001, p 284.

¹- See Article 37/1 of Law N° 2000-03, dated 03 August 2000, setting out the General Rules on Mail and Telecommunications, JORADP N°48, issued on 15 April 2000, amended by Law N° 06-24 dated 26 December 2006, containing the Finance Act 2007, JORADP N°85, promulgated on 27 December 2006.

²- See article 52 of order N° 03-03, dated 19 July 2003, concerning Competition, JORADP N° 43, issued on 20 July 2003, repeals order N° 95-06, dated 25 January 1995, concerning Competition, JORADP N°09, issued on 8 February 1995, N°08-12 of June 25, 2008, JORADP N° 36, issued on July 02, 2008, and Law N° 10-05 of August 05, 2010, JORADP N° 46, issued on August 18, 2010.

³- Cass Com DC du 18 Juin 1996, Conso ciment français C/COB, cited by LAFORTUNE M.A., Gaz. Pal du 24– 25 February, 1999, JP, 10.

⁴- See article 37/1 of Act N° 2000/03 of 05 august 2000, which establishes general rules on mail and telecommunications, as amended and completed, op. cit.

⁵- See article 52 of Ordinance N° 03-03, of 19 July 2003, concerning competition, amended and completed, op.cit.

giving the party following the competition Council the possibility to present its defense after being informed of the place registered against it. The right to seek an additional investigation, if called by the circumstances of the case, by a legal representative or lawyer, is, as the French Court of Cassation had argued in its resolution 05/03/1990, that this right should be included before the Competition Council: « the principle of adversarial proceedings and respect for the guarantees of the defense imply that the parties or their representatives may ask the Council, which shall assess its usefulness, to hear other witnesses»¹.

It is not enough that the person concerned should be notified in a short time, but should be given an opportunity to present his or her defense to the penal body. It is a second stage where the acts attributed to him can be discussed in terms of their validity and assignee, and the fact that they are adapted as violations, thus fulfilling his responsibility, is the principle of confrontation.

c) Right to access the file and provide feedback:

This right cannot actually be realized unless the accused is given access to the file, which is guaranteed by the competition law, when the Competition Board decides to issue a report that contains the facts as well as the registered outlets and the whistleblower of-laws. In turn, the President of the Council shall inform the Parties concerned and the Minister in charge of Trade to make their observations in writing within two months shall determine the date of the hearing on the issue, and such written observations may be made 15 days before the date of the hearing².

The possibility of accessing the file and providing written observations is also enshrined in the Law on Mail and Communication³, as well as the Law on Electricity and Transfer of Gas through channels in its article 146, and the Law on the Exchange of values transferred does not refer to the right of access to the file and to make observations. However, no penalty can be imposed unless the qualified representative of the accused is heard before or if no law is enacted to hear him⁴.

If these last two texts enshrine the right of confrontation and access to the file, we note that it is not enough to devote them, because they require that sufficient time be

¹- KHEN Lamine, "the Privacy of Disciplinary sanctions applied to Economic officers in the Financial sector," op. cit, p 284.

²- See articles 54 and 55 of Ordinance N° 03-03, of 19 July 2003, concerning competition, op. cit. However, article 22 of Presidential Decree N° 96-44 of 17 January 1996, established by the rules of procedure of the Competition Board, JORADP N°05 of 21 January 1996, provided for 60 days in spite of the disagreement between him and the date of the two months.

³- see article 37/1 of Act N° 2000/03 of 05 April 2000, setting out the general rules on mail and telecommunications, op. cit.

⁴- AISSAOUI Azeddine, oppressive Authority of the independent administrative bodies in the economic and financial field, Master's degree in Law, Business Law Branch, Faculty of Law and political Science, Mouloud MAAMERI University, Tizi Ouzou, 2005, P 100.

given to the meaning of his remarks, he cannot take it very seriously, if the procedures are fixed for the Competition Board (One month from the date of filing the file from decision 15 days before the session for written observations of the parties), the Mail and Communications Control Committee and the Exchange Operations Control Committee have not set a deadline for the file and the submission of observations.

Under these considerations, the French State Council has set the duration requirement for not to be too long, to miss the wisdom of penalty, lose the opiate, and not too short, the relevant person cannot prepare his defense, and find the same shortcoming before the Electricity and Gas sector Control Committee. The type of feedback was not shown in writing or verbally.

D) Bringing witnesses:

The Electricity and Gas sector control committee can hear witnesses¹, as the Competition Board reporter has been given the same possibility during his investigation, as he can request information from any institution or any other person², but this does not mean the persons concerned. The above-mentioned case concerns the independent administrative body which is looking for evidence, but can the person in his defense testify to and face witnesses? The texts do not refer to this possibility, contrary to the penal provision, and we note the same in French law.

E) Counsel of defender:

The face-to-face procedure guarantees the parties fair trial by presenting their evidence during the session, but in the matter of economic control, the idea of the parties as defined by the penal law is absent, as there is no prosecution, no civil party or judge, as the independent administrative body accuses the follower. In the face of this situation, the latter appears as a single defender, who demonstrates the importance of having a lawyer next to the moral person, but this right to choose a defender who is devoted by the Algerian legislator as a party in matters of competition and the stock market³.

In the field of competition, the right to seek assistance from a recognized advocate is enshrined in the investigation stage, when the president of the competition board appoints the reporter to investigate the case, and the latter listens to people to collect evidence, then these people can at this stage seek the assistance of an advisor⁴, and the

¹ - See article 135/2 of Act N°02-01, dated 05 February 2002, on electricity and the distribution of gas through the channels, JORADP N° 08, issued in 2002.

² - See article 51/3 of order N° 03-03, of 19 July 2003, concerning competition, op.cit.

³ - ZOUAIMIA Rachid, Independent Administrative Authorities and Economics regulation in Algeria, Houma Edition, Algiers, 2005, p 107.

⁴ - See article 52/2 of order N° 03-03, of 19 July 2003, concerning competition, op.cit.

concerned persons are entitled to Cases brought before the competition board in the suppressive phase, seek the help of a lawyer or any person they choose¹.

In the field of the stock exchange, the right to seek the assistance of a recognized advocate for every person summoned by the Committee for Organizing and Monitoring the Operations of the Stock Exchange to provide information on the cases presented to it, in this case any person summoned can seek the assistance of consultants of his choice², at the time of the imposition of the sentence, the disciplinary chamber of the Commission shall not impose any punishment unless the competent representative of the accused has been heard in advance or is not legally invited to hear him³, but other bodies shall not make any reference to this guarantee.

Third: Deficiencies in the guarantee of the right of defense

If the security of defense is a guarantee that cannot be derogated from, wasted or denied, then, on the other hand, it should be balanced between the guarantee and the administration's failure to obstruct its functions in the interests of the public.

Therefore, the oral and public nature of the penal procedure is enshrined as a matter of course, and administrative sanctions imposed by the independent administrative authorities for their obstruction of the latter's repressive function must be devoted to ensuring respect for the rights of economic aid that follow, in addition to the public nature of the penal procedure:

A) The punitive action between the written and oral character

If the principle in the Criminal Code is the oral nature of the proceedings because of the protection that this method provides to the person following by persuading the competent body, the new Code of Civil and Administrative Procedure is outside this rule known in the Penal Code. Article 9 of the Act stipulates that: "The original of the proceedings is to be written"⁴, which has been the subject of most of the constituent texts of the independent administrative bodies, the defense of these bodies is often reflected in the form of the editing of notes sent to the competent circulating body. It is possible

¹- See article 30 of order N°03-03, *ibid*.

²- See article 38 of Legislative Decree N° 93-10, dated 23 May 1993, concerning the value Exchange transferred, JORADP N°34, issued on 23 May 1993, amended and complementary to order N° 96-10, dated 10 January 1996, amended and completed by Act No. 03-04, dated 17 February 2003, JORADP N°11, released in 2003 (JORADP N° 32, released on May 07, 2003).

³- See article 56 of Legislative Decree N° 93-10, *ibid*.

⁴- Law N° 04-15, dated November 10, 2004, contains the Penal Code, JORADP N° 71, promulgated in June 2004.

that the framing of these bodies of highly technical sectors is the reason for the legislator to devote its written character to the presentation of the defense¹.

B) The sessions are public.

The public hearing means allowing everyone the right to attend sessions and allowing the publication of their proceedings, which are the fundamental guarantees created by the legislature to enable both opponents and public opinion to monitor the work of the judge. "I am not sure whether I am a judge or a judge who is biased or a judge or an enemy of me, as long as he does nothing except in front of the public,"²

Public hearings are a principle enshrined in article 114 of the 1996 Constitution, as well as in the Code of Criminal Procedure in article 285, and, except in cases where public publicity poses a danger to public order and morality, discussions and the sentencing are public; While before independent administrative bodies, the hearings are confidential in the face of the judgments (decisions) of these bodies, they can sometimes be published.

In order N°95-06 on canceled competition, the sessions were public, but in order N°03-03 on competition, the Algerian legislature has turned away from this trend and the hearings are held in secrecy, but with regard to the publication of the decisions, the procedure is known by both the Competition Board and the Electricity and Gas Control Committee³.

Conclusion

The right of the defense to enforce its elements, or components, in order to balance the rights of the defense and the administrative follow-up by the independent administrative authorities, as justice is not achieved without these elements. It is inconceivable that the defense will be effective without a reasonable time to prepare the person who follows up the practice of violating the market or violating the legal provisions governing economic activity in order to defend him, inform him of the charges against him, confront the witnesses prepared by the independent administrative authority as proof of his claim, and not deprive him of the compulsory means by which he believes that he will appear for his benefit, to share with him the documents submitted by the independent administrative authority against him and to discuss them, and not to isolate the economic aid that has been accused of having contact with a lawyer in a direct or indirect way; All these rights were decided only by the legislature to protect economic

¹- Hammadi Nawal, op. cit, p 61.

²- Boubshir Muhannad Amqran, Algerian Judicial System, Edition 2, University Publications Office, Algeria, 1994, p93.

³- AISSAOUI AZEDDINE, op. cit, p 103.

aid as the weak party facing the most serious competence granted to independent administrative bodies, which is the repressive jurisdiction.

This guarantee, however, and if it is very recent in the texts of the independent administrative authorities, suffers from deficiencies in the lack of a verbal and public nature of the penal procedure. This is mainly due to the fact that these bodies do not know the distinction between repressive tasks, contrary to the penal code, which distinguishes between all stages, starting from the search for violation, follow-up and punishment.

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