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**United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs**

**VESMUN XI**

**TOPIC A: Measures to prevent corruption and other irregularities in the extradition process.**

**TOPIC B: Restorative justice as a method to arrange the consequences caused by non-international armed conflicts.**

**PRESIDENTS:**

**María del Mar Ochoa & Mariana Monsalve**

**Vermont School**

**March 29, 30, & 31st**

**THE FUTURE BEGINS HERE AND NOW**

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## 1. Welcoming Letter

Welcome delegates, to this year's UNSS session:

"The future is not something we enter. The future is something we create." ~ Leonard I.

Sweet

The future isn't more than uncertain, what comes may seem beyond the control of a person, but the actions that are being made today do shape our upcoming future. Every day governments around the world make decisions that will furthermore completely change our lives, having the power to construct the future. Therefore the mistakes that are being made now are the ones shaping our future.

Yet, within this committee, we believe change can still be done, and actions can be made toward a better future and a new world. Mistakes have more certainly shaped negatively the present, wars, conflicts, and hostility between countries shouldn't be common bases of our societies.

Therefore, we invite you to fully submerge yourselves in this experience: look for different resources, open your imagination, and get in character. We hope that you recognize that the topics you will be debating are nonetheless possible consequences of our actions today.

Don't be afraid to make these topics your own, and hopefully what you learn won't stay on the committee, but go with you through the rest of your life. We are filled with joy to be able to guide you through the entirety of this process: from the moment your delegations are assigned to your last feedback during the Model. Please keep in mind that it is our responsibility to make VESMUN XI as enjoyable as possible, so don't be afraid to reach out if you need anything - remember, we were once in your position and want nothing less than to be the helping hand we always wanted, so feel free to contact us whenever via email or

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WhatsApp. Finally, we are honored to be able to guide you in this committee and we are convinced that together we can make great things.

The future begins here and now!

Sincerely,

Maria del Mar Ochoa.

Mariana Monsalve.

## **2. Introduction to the committee**

The United Nations Special Session (UNSS) is a committee designed with the purpose of addressing international crises and conflicts arising in the near future, which require an immediate and efficient response by members of the United Nations. In order to fulfill its aim, the UNSS has the power of holding meetings regarding a wide range of topics and possess special faculties.

The committee shares rules and procedures with the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). It may both discuss situations threatening the international community, and determine the category and response to threats against international peace and security. Furthermore, UNSS grants the People's Republic of China, the French Republic, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America veto powers.

Looking to achieve its goal as a dispute-resolving mechanism and due to the fact that the committee discusses topics of utmost importance, which can easily compromise the safety of the international community, the United Nations Special Session has also the power of passing binding resolutions and if it were necessary at a given time can also order an

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immediate action on the issue it is currently debating. It may utilize the faculties normally regarded to the UNSC of calling upon peaceful measures for the settlement of disputes, or collective coercive action by the UN.

Delegates who take part in this edition of the Special Session have the task of analyzing and hopefully drafting resolutions that can efficiently address and mitigate the damage caused by international conflicts, understanding the unique possibilities of the UNSS and the need for efficient and viable solutions.

### **3. Global Background: Influential Figures and Organizations**

#### **3.1. Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin - Russian Federation**

As a consequence of the 2020 amendments to the Russian Constitution, incumbent president Vladimir Putin was allowed to participate in the 2024 presidential elections, as the ban on a re-election for two consecutive terms was revoked in the country. Unsurprisingly, Putin won the presidency in the election's first round on March 17th with 56.34% of votes. Nonetheless, compared to the astonishing victory of the 2018 elections where the mandatory received 77.53% of votes, the 2024 elections evidenced a growing trend in Russia's domestic politics: increased polarization. Putin's administration continued its war effort all through 2022 to 2024. Two years of unsuspending hostilities with no meaningful achievement from either side has left a great part of the public doubting the worthiness of the conflict and the other, vehemently advancing the need of the Kremlin of avoid doubling down to the West and its effort to thwart the liberation of Russian minorities in Ukraine.

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President Putin maintains a foreign policy directed at diminishing any external intervention in the Ukrainian conflict (particularly of NATO), citing the principle of non-intervention on a third parties' conflict without any previous "direct" provocation. Equally, it has replicated such a stance when asked about the Russian position over the newly erupted civil demonstration in multiple Arab nations. Reminiscent of the country's declarations about the Arab Spring in the 2010s, Moscow insists that protests are "an internal matter" that should be "approached peacefully" by both sides.

Finally, Putin's administration continues to blame the global energy crisis on the intrusive economic sanctions against Russia and attempts to establish gas price caps from Western countries. Important gas pipelines such as Nord Stream 2<sup>1</sup> remain intermittently closed, affecting gas supply globally. Consequently, natural gas prices have exponentially risen and the Russian leadership, understanding its economic contribution, has refrained from embarking on any decarbonizing projects or energy transition proposals.

### **3.2. Xi Jinping - People's Republic of China**

For the third time in a row, Xi was elected general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party on Sunday, the highest post in the nation's ruling political party. Up until 2027, he will serve as party leader. Climate change mitigation has been a significant aspect of Xi's administration during the past two years. He promised that China would reach its peak carbon dioxide emissions "before 2030" and become carbon neutral "before 2060" in September 2020. These two goals, referred to as the "dual carbon" objectives are thought to have been personally promoted by him. He reaffirmed these objectives at the congress last

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<sup>1</sup> Nord Stream 2 is a 1,234-kilometer-long (767 mi) natural gas pipeline from Russia to Germany running through the Baltic Sea, financed by Gazprom and several European energy companies.

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week while outlining the party's intentions for the following five years in a protracted speech. According to experts, China's energy security policy increases the uncertainty around its climate agenda during Xi's third term. China has an abundance of coal, thus the fuel is frequently linked to energy security. Together with its internal economy and fossil fuel policies, China's climate plan will certainly face additional obstacles brought on by global geopolitics. Cross-border trade, multinational supply chains, and technology sharing will be particularly challenging.

### **3.3. Donald John Trump - United States of America**

After a four-year term full of political turmoil, the rising presence of alt-right collectives, economic recession, and global inflation following the COVID-19 pandemic, apparent government inaction in the Ukrainian conflict and its subsequent repercussions on the energy and food crises; Joe Biden's administration managed to gather enough opposition to lose the presidential elections by a slight difference. Once again, as the head of the Republican party, Donald J. Trump was elected president of the United States for the 2024-2028 term. Trump's campaign emphasized his commitment to reactivating the economy of the country, declaring his unwillingness to fall for Russia's de-stabilizations efforts and presenting his plan to supply European countries if necessary with natural gas and oil to mitigate the energy crisis. However, Trump has explained that if there were to be a scarcity of energy resources within the US, the government would swiftly prioritize domestic demand and ensure supply for citizens. This new increase in exploitation of non-renewable resources is bound to impact and possibly sidetrack the previous administration's plans of energetic transition or mitigation of climate change, two causes known to be unimportant for the newly elected head of state.

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Additionally, Trump wishes to “make America the great international player it used to be”, and is determined to defend the nation's values of “democracy and liberty” in its foreign policy. The new government has not shied away from expressing its full support for the anti-government protest in Iran, a clear political rival of the nation.

#### **4. Important events**

##### **4.1 Rising oil prices**

Since 2022 global oil prices have been rising exponentially. The OPEC+<sup>2</sup> countries maintain their reduced oil production by 2 million barrels a day, and Russia and Saudi Arabia have continued to express their plans to keep reducing supply, especially towards European markets. This shortage of supply for Asian and European markets in particular, who strive to recuperate from the 2020 global recession and subsequent inflation periods, has provoked an overflow of demand and the rising of oil prices up to \$148 per barrel for 2024. These prices are expected to continue rising, and nations around the world speculate this is a strategy to coerce Western countries to withdraw any bans on the purchase of Russian goods or any price caps for crude. Rising prices are especially worrying for developing countries, where the cost of most goods will inevitably also rise, as oil is fundamental for production and transportation processes of all kinds. This is expected to aggravate the current global energy and food crises. Nonetheless, in great oil exporting countries like Iraq, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Iran, social collectives have demanded the investment of the increased national income in the alleviation of unequal economic conditions and promotion of rights for the population. However, reports show that these same countries Iran and Iraq have augmented

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<sup>2</sup> OPEC+ is a group of 23 oil-exporting countries which meets regularly to decide how much crude oil to sell on the world market. Current OPEC+ countries are Algeria, Angola, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Nigeria, the Republic of the Congo, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Venezuela, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Brunei, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mexico, Oman, Russia, South Sudan and Sudan.

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their military and police budgets, a possible sign of the regimes' bigger interests in shutting down any civil unrest or "dangerous" demonstrations.

#### **4.2 Taiwan crisis**

Taiwan has shut down yet another nuclear power plant, increasing the risk of potentially fatal blackouts this summer, making the independent island more vulnerable to a Chinese blockade, and raising the possibility of an increase in greenhouse gas emissions from one of the top 25 emitters in the world. Only one nuclear power plant is still operational in Taiwan as a result of the facility's final and second reactor permanently going down. The two reactors at the Maanshan Nuclear Power Plant, which is the last station and is situated close to the southern tip of the oval-shaped East Asian island, are expected to shut down in the following two years, achieving the Democratic Progressive Party's goal of a "nuclear-free homeland" by 2025.

#### **4.3 Heavy economic sanctions**

More than 2200 policies and actions aimed at decreasing or mitigating greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from a variety of sectors, including the energy and transport sectors, agriculture, industrial operations, forestry, and waste management, have been recorded by the European countries collectively. Between 2020 and 2023, there were 11% more national plans and programs to cut greenhouse gas emissions. According to a recent estimate by the EEA, current policies and initiatives are anticipated to reduce GHG emissions by 34% by 2030 compared to 1990, and if all stated planned (extra) policies are implemented, the overall net reduction might reach 41%. Notwithstanding

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this positive development, more work will be required from the EU and its Member States to reach the aim of a 55% net reduction in GHG emissions by 2030.

#### **4.4 Increasing food insecurity, inflation and political instability in Africa**

Although not involved in major international confrontations, the African continent has been severely affected as a result of the dire conditions of the global economy and the effects of other nations' conflicts in international trade and relations. There is a widespread growth of inflation on basic food resources and fossil fuels, as evidenced in the majority of the world, worsened by the Ukrainian armed conflict. The IMF projected inflation rates to increase to 13% and estimates that at least 19% of the sub-saharan population will face acute food insecurity from 2024 to 2028 (compared to 12% in 2022 and 2023). Additionally, concerns about the rising population index and an aggravated drought season threaten the lives of hundreds of thousands of people and can potentially destabilize communities, countries, and entire regions. Nations fear that the crisis might ignite social mobilization as happened with the North African countries of Algeria and Sudan (2019-2021) as a result of poor conditions and government mismanagement. There have been attempts to plan collective regional strategies to de-escalate the economic, environmental, and social crises, however, no formal proposals have been successfully implemented, and this presents itself as a challenge specially for countries like Ethiopia, South Sudan or Somalia, battered by armed conflict.

#### **4.4 Political instability in Latin America**

After the so-called new “pink tide” in Latin America, where progressive governments were elected from 2018 to 2022, politics in the region have seen a greater polarization. The leftists governments in Brazil (2022), Mexico (re-election of Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador

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in 2024), Chile (2021), Colombia (2022), Honduras (2021), and Argentina (re-election of Alberto Fernández in 2023) entered office with the promise of fighting inequality, poverty, developing sustainable environmental plans for the economy and overall countering the social and economic effects of the pandemic. Nevertheless, several of these administrations faced well-organized and substantial opposition, and did not have majorities in their legislative organ, which halted attempts to pass significant reforms. Furthermore, governments have had the challenge of balancing an economic recession where natural resources such as coal or oil are fundamental for domestic and international markets, but they mostly defended a stance on green energy transition and the reduction of resource exploitation. This has generated backlash from sections of the population. Some claim expanding coal and oil extraction will reactivate the economy, and others demand a transition sooner, fearing the aggravation of natural phenomena due to climate change. Governments such as the ones in Mexico, Brazil or Argentina have diverted from more environmentally ambitious policies and in Peru after the destitution of the leftist Pedro Castillo, far-right politician Keiko Fujimori was elected into office. Colombia and Chile have experienced protests from the opposition, and the region continues to grow divided.

#### **4.5 Temperature changes and coal shortage**

In the world, electricity is becoming more and more scarce. Two-thirds of homes in a recent poll claimed to have experienced frequent power outages. Only a few hours of electricity are reportedly provided to certain rural residents each day. Even the majority of third-world nations, whose spoiled citizens are typically protected from many of their countrymen's discomforts, are experiencing a scarcity. The crisis is primarily caused by the extreme heat. In South Asia, the last few months have been even hotter than usual. The highest March and April average temperatures in north-west and central India since records began 122 years ago.

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As a result, air conditioners have been running at levels that are unusual until mid-May in homes and workplaces. This has added to the already increased demand that was brought on by the relaxation of new viruses and an increase in economic activity. This year, as countries try to wean themselves off Russian energy supplies and seek comparably cheaper alternatives, there has been an increase in demand for thermal coal for power generation due to high natural gas costs and worldwide competition for the fuel. To ensure they have adequate energy for this winter, some nations are reviving dormant coal plants, while others are increasing production in the hopes of making big profits from exports.

## **1. Topic A: Persian Spring and anti-government movements in the Arab Region (2024)**

### **1.1. Introduction**

Since a seemingly feeble wave of protests in multiple middle eastern countries at the beginning of 2018, the region has witnessed constant emergence and reemergence of anti-government movements, civil demonstrations for the improvement of life conditions, strikes against human rights violations and public dissent for economic policies. From 2019 to 2021 displays of dissatisfaction in countries such as Tunisia, Jordan, Iraq, Algeria, Sudan, Egypt and Lebanon, were said to ignite what many denominated at the time the *Second Arab*

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*Spring*, as the governments of Sudan and Algeria<sup>3</sup> were toppled down, and several others had high ranked officials resigning. However, this first instance was far from the peak of civil protest in the Arab world and barely achieved the overlaying demands of the population. The demonstrations would only be the beginning of what experts now call the *Persian Spring*.

The Persian Spring was named after the Arab Spring, a series of pro-democracy uprisings and armed rebellions in much of the Middle East and North Africa beginning in 2010 and 2011, confronting some of the region's decades-long authoritarian regimes. (Ali's, 2022). The Persian Spring has been an ongoing widespread wave of anti-regime and mutually influenced protests and rallies, following the initial late 2010s demonstrations, starting with the riots in Iran after the death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini in September 2022. The young women had been arrested and allegedly brutally beaten by Iran's 'morality police'<sup>4</sup>, a branch of the country's police force assigned with patrolling and enforcing laws on islamic dress code in public. Following her death, hundreds of thousands of people all around the nation began peacefully protesting against the repressive government. Nonetheless, their demonstrations were met with violent crackdowns, arbitrary detention and executions.

Similarly, Lebanon continued to experience protests from the '17 October Revolution'<sup>5</sup> and Jordan's citizens followed their steps after fuel prices rose to the delegation's all-time high. The Jordanian government, fearing the destabilizing of the monarchy, responded with extreme use of force across the territory. The following aggravation of the energy and food crises globally in 2023, brought the last triggering event

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<sup>3</sup> In February 2019, protests in Algeria toppled the government of president Abdelaziz Bouteflika and in April, Sudan's military forced president Omar al-Bashir out of power.

<sup>4</sup> Officially named "Gasht-e-Ershad" which translates as "guidance patrols".

<sup>5</sup> Will be explained below.

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for the consolidation of the largest uprising in the country's history. The regime excessively taxed bread and other basic food goods and failed to counter the overflowing economic crisis, subsequently millions of people from all social backgrounds joined the rallies, now attempting to overthrow the government. By late December, King Abdullah II was forced to leave the country and the Republic of Jordan was declared, ending the 102 year old monarchy.

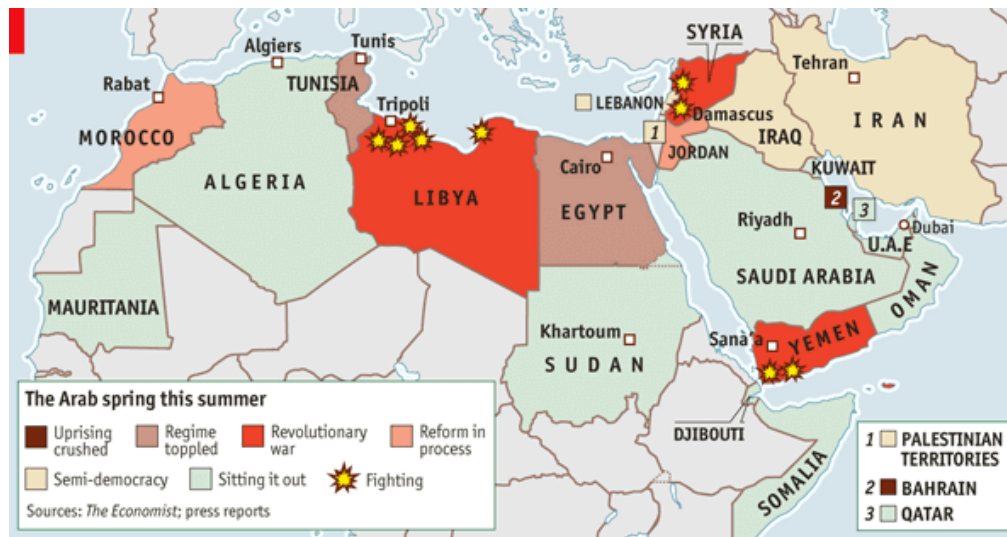
By 2024, the unexpected downfall of Abdullah inspired people from all over the region, where previously existing uprisings grew stronger and new ones arose in countries like Egypt or Tunisia. As a response, various central governments decided to deploy their military to prevent the escalation of protests, provoking extensive and systemic human rights violations. Most European countries have denounced these measures and have called for international sanctions and government accountability. Other conservative Arab nations fear the demonstration might spread to their territory as well.

## **1.2. Historical background**

Before the Arab Spring the region was predominantly ruled by authoritarian and heavily oppressive autocracies and monarchies. Decades of almost null political participation of every-day citizens, high rates of unemployment (above 10% in most countries), limitation of civil liberties, corruption and economic recession provoked social discontent that had remained mostly silent. Nevertheless, when Tunisian street vendor Mohammed Bouazizi committed suicide by setting himself on fire to protest the police's arbitrary seizing of his vegetable stand in December 2010, millions of people identified themselves with the man, recognising in their lives the same precarious conditions and lack of opportunity. A

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nation-wide protest engulfed Tunisia, and the government attempted to dilute the situation by responding violently to demonstrations and offering economic and political concessions. However, neither measure was capable of halting the movement, and on January 14, 2011 President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali stepped down and went into exile.



Ben Ali’s resignation incited a similar movement in Egypt, where social media played a fundamental role in the organizing of protests and proliferation of information, images or videos. Protests beginning on January 25 took only 18 days to force President Hosni Mubarak out of office, ending a nearly 30 year administration. The government of Mubarak tried to disrupt demonstrations with the same strategy as the former Tunisian ruler, but the Egyptian army had refused to attack any protesters and sided with their demands. Unlike the success of free elections in Tunisia to choose members for a constitutional assembly (council to draft a new constitution) and to elect president and prime minister after the protests, Egypt’s democratically chosen president Mohammed Mursi was removed from power in 2013 in a coup by the military and replaced by Adly Mansour<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> President Mansour was replaced in 2014 for Abdelfatah El-Sisi, who remains in power currently.

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A number of different countries equally experienced major opposition movements. For instance, Jordan and Kuwait, dissolved their parliament in response to public pressure. Yet in the cases of Libya, Yemen, Bahrain and Syria, attempts for reform or regime change caused stronger government confrontation and even full blown civil conflicts. In Libya uprisings against dictator Muammar al-Qaddafi in mid-February 2011 turned into an armed revolt. Qaddafi's indiscriminate use of force and the army against rebel forces led to the Security Council's approval of an international coalition. NATO launched air strikes in important military targets and allegedly financially aided the armed opposition. As a result, rebels took control of the capital Tripoli and managed to kill Qaddafi. However, the multiple opposing factions continued to fight against each other, failing to exert authority or establish any government. The situation triggered a civil war and civilians have suffered significantly through the years, having limited access to food and health care.

Yemen suffered a similar fate as massive demonstrations forced president Ali Abdullah Saleh's, who had ruled for 33 years, to hand power to his deputy Abdrabuh Mansur Hadi on February 27, 2012. Unable to improve conditions or maintain stability, however, Hadi's government faced armed confrontation and rebellion that in 2014 devolved into a civil war which constitutes one of the world's worst humanitarian crises. (*What Is the Arab Spring, and How Did It Start?*, 2020) On the other hand, in Bahrain protesters demanded the release of political prisoners and political, economic and human rights reforms. Protests were suppressed by Bahraini security forces, helped by a Gulf Cooperation Council security force<sup>7</sup> that entered the country in March. By the end of the month, the mass protest movement had

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<sup>7</sup> Composed of about 1,000 soldiers from Saudi Arabia and 500 police officers from the United Arab Emirates.

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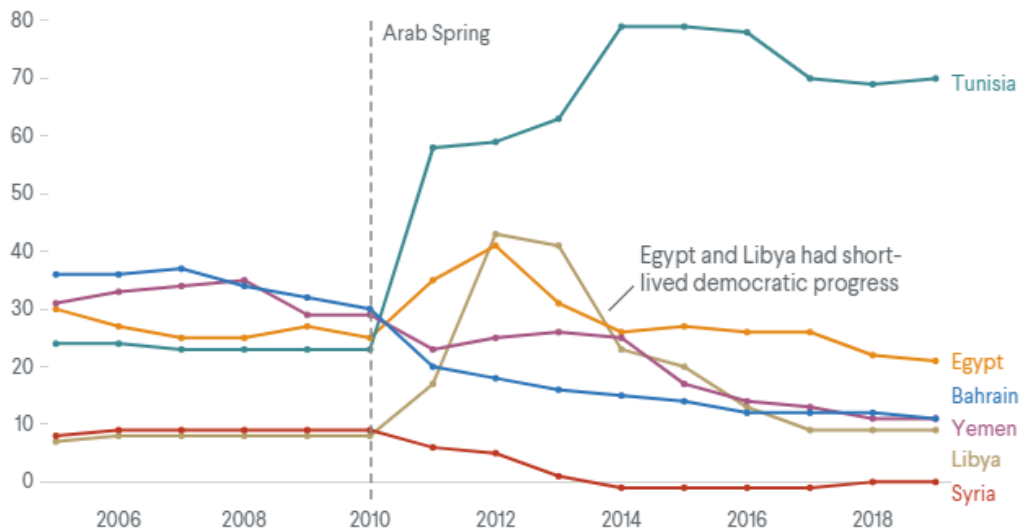
been stifled. Finally, in Syria rallies calling for the resignation of Bashar al-Assad faced a brutal crackdown. Opposition militias began to launch attacks on government forces resulting in another civil war, but foreign support of Assad's regime allowed him to retain power.

In the aftermath of the Arab Spring most countries developed more aggressive policies against political opposition in the hopes of preventing any further anti-government movements. Furthermore, social and political liberties were extensively restricted. The region experienced population growth but economic progress was insufficient to sustain it. Poverty increased over the past decade, making the Middle East the only region in the world where people have become poorer; and in 2018, for the first time, the Middle East surpassed Latin America in terms of the number of people classified as poor, according to the World Bank. Unemployment augmented as well. As Lebanese political analyst and activist reported in 2021 "We have failing states across the entire region. We have a huge economic challenge coupled with a young generation rising and asking for a role. This puts us on the path to an explosion. The region is in a worse situation than ever before."

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## No Lasting Democratic Progress, Except in Tunisia

Countries' political rights and civil liberties scores



Note: The score is an index by Freedom House with ratings for indicators such as electoral process, political pluralism, and freedom of expression and belief.

Source: Freedom House.

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FOREIGN  
RELATIONS

Hence, another wave of protest appeared in the 2018-2021 period in Egypt, Lebanon, Tunisia, Jordan, and Iran. Citizens had specific demands and had begun protesting due to a particular grievance. Nonetheless, when concessions or mild reform had been achieved, they ceased. Only in the case of Sudan, the rallies culminated in a military coup d'etat, ousting former president Omar al-Bashir. Another outstanding effort at the moment were the protests in Iraq. From October 1st 2019 to November 2021, demonstrations, marches and sit-ins took place, as a reaction to corruption, unemployment, political sectarianism, inefficient public services and interventionism. The protest then escalated into calls to overthrow the Iraqi government. The demonstrations were met with widespread violence from the government, aided by iranian-backed militias, who ended up killing more than 600 protesters. The Covid-19 pandemic hindered the continuation of protests and with time they fizzled out. However, the people's demands never materialized.

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### 1.3. Current situation

In spite of the apparent new social ‘stability’ gained after the ending of most civil demonstration, an unforeseen second wave of protests were initiated in 2022 within three nations, and have escalated exponentially in the subsequent years giving birth to the Persian Spring:

#### *Jordan*

In the last months of 2022 Jordan was experiencing a long-standing economic crisis. The Kingdom suffered from high inflation rates, unemployment (22.6%), and an unsustainable increase in fuel prices (linked to global market rates, which jumped in part due to the Russia-Ukraine war). The cost of living for Jordanians of middle and low income increased by 6% and it has disproportionately affected poorer southern cities. In parallel, the government's public debt was at a record level along with the deficit in the trade balance. Consequently the government imposed higher taxes to provide the financial revenues needed by the state and designated 14% of the 2023 budget toward debt relief. Unsurprisingly, sectors of civil society began striking. The initial strike of truckers and public transportation workers in southern cities like Ma'an and Karak was quickly joined by more citizens, whose demonstrations encountered the violence of the government's security forces almost immediately. Public opposition to the government's disproportionate response gave rise to a general national strike, this time calling for a total regime change and a democratic transition. The overwhelming anti-monarchy sentiment forced King Abdullah II to leave the country by late December 2023. Elections for members for a new constitutional assembly have been called for June 2024.

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## *Lebanon*

In 2019 national protests in Lebanon, denominated ‘17 of October Revolution’ surfaced due to planned taxes on gasoline, tobacco, and applications such as WhatsApp. The demonstration resulted in the resignation of Prime Minister Saad Hariri, however the country suffers deeper structural issues. The government has historically failed to provide basic services such as electricity, water, and sanitation; three-quarters of the country’s population is in poverty, the Lebanese pound has a devaluation of about 90 percent against the US dollar; and food inflation is among the highest in the world, with food prices rising by 1000 percent in 2022. Therefore, after the constant failure of the parliament to elect a president and contrarrest the ongoing crisis, Lebanese people, moved by Jordan’s successful revolution went to the streets massively on January 2024, demanding end to the sectarian system<sup>8</sup>. The new demonstrations have been the largest of the century. The divided and polarized government, in an effort to smother the protest, have mobilized army soldiers to major cities and suspended internet coverage. Human Rights organizations report indiscriminate attacks and systemic human rights abuses from both sides.

## *Iran*

The 2022-2023 protests in Iran intensified similarly to those in Lebanon. The overall opposition to the theocratic regime of the Ayatollah and the people’s desire for democratic political systems, women’s equality and economic prosperity were the

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<sup>8</sup> Sectarianism in Lebanon refers to the formal and informal organization of Lebanese politics and society along religious lines. It has been formalized and legalized within state and non-state institutions and is inscribed in its constitution.

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fundamental reasons citizens protested in the first place. However, the repression faced by the regime in the first year of demonstrations had deterred a great number of people from protesting. The government had developed a campaign of persecution, detaining and executing influential public figures to incite fear. Still, Jordan's and Lebanon's movements served as inspiration for Iranians, showing that change was possible. In Tehran alone, 4 million people were part of the national uprising. Protesters in provinces such as Kurdistan, where the upheaval and deaths have been centered, had entered and vandalized government buildings and paralyzed multiple cities. Great parts of the country descended into chaos. Thus, the military (improved by funding of the government thanks to new fuel revenue) have circled Tehran and Sanandaj (capital city of Kurdistan), in addition to being commanded to 'end the public security threat by all means'.

Just like the first Arab Spring, the wave of demonstrations has had a domino effect on the region, affecting economically and socially vulnerable delegations. It is notable to add that in other seemingly more 'politically stable' countries reactions and replications of the movement have begun emerging. In Egypt there was already extensive public discontent, as claims that Abdel Fattah el-Sisi had rigged the 2024 presidential elections to ensure his stay in power became louder<sup>9</sup>. There have been reports of protests in Cairo, Luxor and Aswan, that as the trend follows, have been met with an iron fist by el-Sisi's administration. Tunisians have also demanded the resignation of president Kais Saied, who many think had illegitimately seized power in 2021 and has been authoritarian. Saied had sacked the prime

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<sup>9</sup> This instance is not the only accusation of irregular presidential election. In March 2018 Sisi stood for another term in a lopsided election that served more as an affirmation of his status as an all-powerful president than as a genuine democratic contest. In the months leading up to the election, several credible candidates were arrested or disqualified for procedural reasons, leaving Sisi to face only token opposition in the form of Mousa Mostafa Mousa. As expected, Sisi won an overwhelming victory, taking more than 97 percent of the vote.

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minister and suspended parliament in July and a year later changed the constitution, affording the head of state full executive control, supreme command of the army and the ability to appoint a government without parliamentary approval. There have only been a few confrontations between government security forces and protesters.

Moreover, countries like Qatar, Bahrain or Saudi Arabia, which have a history of political oppression and targeting dissidents are in danger of experiencing demonstrations of any size, depending on the willingness of protesters to risk facing direct government violence. These nations have not shied away in the past from intervening, even militarily in neighboring countries to prevent anti-regime movements from reaching their borders.

Several countries have expressed concern in regards to the sudden escalation of the use of force against civilians and lack of accountability from government forces. Mostly European nations have voiced their fear of potential repetition of human rights abuses akin to the ones perpetrated in Libya in 2011. But with worries about the intolerable repression of the population, questions about whether foreign states should intervene, in what basically constitutes an internal affair, are also present. States like China or Russia point out to the disastrous international military intervention in Libya, and how it helped to create the circumstances that led to the civil war. Equally, the United States, along other NATO members, highlight the consequences of inaction when Bashar Al-Assad began attacking his own citizens in Syria and the international responsibility of states to guarantee the protection of civilians all around the world.

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#### 1.4. QARMAS

1. Has your country been affected in any way, either directly or indirectly, by conflicts in the Arab region?
2. What was the position taken by your delegation over the 2010s protests of the Arab Spring? Were they in favor or against?
3. Did your delegations support the 2011 international intervention in Libya? Would it support a similar operation in a country of the Persian Spring?
4. What other actions or solutions can be implemented to guarantee the protection of human rights in these countries? Or should the international community refrain from intervening?

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## **2. Topic B: Development of Collective Strategies for the Energy Transition and International Mechanisms to Counter the Global Energy Crisis. (2028)**

### **2.1. Introduction**

The globe has been moving more quickly toward cleaner energy. Globally, the amount of renewable energy produced over the last ten years has more than doubled, and in 2021, it will account for 13% of all primary energy consumption, up from 9% in 2011. Although hydropower and geothermal energy are included in the category of renewable energy, we primarily focus on solar and wind energy in this article. In order to meet the rising need for energy, fossil fuels are also being used more and more, despite increases in renewable energy. Between 2011 and 2021, the world's energy demand increased by 14%, primarily due to emissions-intensive sources.

As a result, the percentage of primary energy coming from fossil fuels has stayed relatively constant at 82 percent over the previous ten years, rising by around 5 percent, or 1.7 gigatons (Gt) of CO<sub>2</sub>. Given this ongoing reliance, simplistic explanations for

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the function of fossil fuels are not acceptable. Rapid and significant reductions in fossil fuel consumption are necessary for the net-zero transition. The "achieved commitments" scenario in our research, which assumes a 1.7°C rise in global temperatures by 2100, might result in a larger global demand for natural gas in 2030 than it would in 2021, but oil consumption would fall by less than 5% during the same period.

Investment in fossil fuels would be necessary to secure this supply in order to guarantee energy affordability and resilience. The expedited decommissioning of ineffective and highly polluting assets, such as coal or oil power generation plants, must be balanced with incremental investments in lower-emissions fuel production in order to achieve a more orderly transition. If investments in fossil fuels are made, they should be focused on less-emitting options and adaptable assets that can quickly change their production when demand declines to achieve net-zero targets. It will also be necessary to make investments and take steps to lessen the carbon intensity of fossil fuels, such as reducing methane emissions and electrifying oil and gas operations.

The socioeconomic environment has simultaneously become more unstable and open to the energy transition. Beyond the unfathomable human cost, the war in Ukraine has driven up energy and food prices dramatically, accelerating inflationary dynamics that were already evident in the COVID-19 epidemic recovery. It has also increased the importance of affordable and resilient energy. The pandemic also hampered international supply chains and increased, among other things, the price of building energy projects. These difficulties have raised awareness and sparked new energy transition initiatives, particularly in Europe.

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## 2.2. Historical background

Year	Traditional Biomass	Renewables	Fossil Fuels	Nuclear Power
2000	10.2%	6.6%	77.3%	5.9%
2005	8.7%	6.5%	79.4%	5.4%
2010	7.7%	7.7%	79.9%	4.7%
2015	6.9%	9.2%	79.9%	4.0%
2020	6.7%	11.2%	78.0%	4.0%

Renewables has seen their contribution to the energy mix grow Image: Visual Capitalist

Only 1.1% more renewables were used in the United States in the ten years between 2000 and 2010. However, the rate of increase is accelerating; it was 3.5% between 2010 and 2020. In addition, the pace and size of the energy transformation are unprecedented because 2050 net-zero emissions are required to meet climate goals. After a record year in 2020, the addition of renewable energy capacity was on track to establish an annual record in 2021. Likewise, in 2021, investments in the global energy transition reached a new high of \$755 billion. History, however, demonstrates that merely increasing generation capacity is insufficient to support an energy transition. Oil needed wells, pipelines, and refineries; coal needed mines, canals, and trains; and electricity needed generators and a complex grid.

Similar to this, a full transition to low-carbon sources necessitates significant investments in infrastructure, grid storage, natural resources, and our patterns of energy consumption. In 2018, fossil fuels continued to provide 81% of the world's energy. Through 2019, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions increased globally, and more than 770 million people still live in countries without access to electricity. In December 2015, 195 nations adopted the first-ever universal, binding global climate accord at the Paris Climate Conference (COP21).

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As part of this agreement, efforts will be made to minimize the rise in the average global temperature to 1.5 °C or less and to keep it below 2 °C.

The choice to reduce greenhouse gas emissions with a reference level established in the agreement's year is one that many nations have made. Each nation is allowed to set its own targets to achieve this aim (2015). The European Union has made a commitment to much more ambitious goals than any other region in the globe. In this contribution, we present the three variables selected to measure the energy transition (ET) in Europe over the period 2000-2019: reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 20% compared to 1990 levels; increase the share of renewable energy to 20%. The adoption of the climate-energy package at the European Council on December 12, 2008, defined an action plan to enable the EU to achieve three objectives by 2020.

### **2.3. Current situation**

Renewable energy sources are now a potent and affordable source of electricity after years of relying on regulation for sector expansion. Both solar and wind energy have shown such steep price declines that in some U.S. regions as well as in the U.K. and Europe, wind power is now more affordable than conventional, high-carbon energy sources. The renewable energy industry will only expand and grow, solidifying itself as a promising investment opportunity as costs continue to decline and wind and solar power become more commonplace. The capacity of all renewable energy sources worldwide is expected to rise by 80% between 2024 and 2028, according to the International Energy Agency. Utilities have started a quick energy transition away from coal in reaction to this change.

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Pressure is mounting on power generators to retire existing assets that depend on coal supplies and expand other forms of power generation, even though some market observers anticipate that transition to slow. In response to growing worries about climate change, many large oil firms are increasing investment in and diversifying into renewable and low-carbon energy. S&P Global's ESG Solutions offer a comprehensive view of the energy transition as the movement grows. The demand for renewable energy will probably remain high even after the federal subsidies for wind and solar energy expire because of the major corporate buyers of renewable energy.

Many industrial sites—possibly millions—were constructed as a result of the new suggestions. In order to create batteries, storage systems, and energy networks, a lot of resources had to be used (and extracted, transported, etc.). Electricity networks are made of copper, storage systems require metals like lithium and silicon, some solar panels need silicon, and many electrolyzers are needed to produce "green" hydrogen. Regarding the latter, the devices that use electricity to convert water into hydrogen also need resources, such as platinum, cobalt, or even nickel. Large quantities of numerous different resources, including minerals and metals, had to be extracted by industrialized corporations. To fully utilize non-renewable resources, we must specifically significantly expand our mining efforts.

This is known as extractivism, and it could swiftly cause serious ecosystem issues. In fact, there is a lot of pollution, devastated natural ecosystems, and jeopardized biodiversity in mining sites. All of these disruptions have a significant and long-lasting impact on ecosystems. Likewise, numerous studies have emphasized the connections between local ecological deterioration and mines of commodities essential to the energy transition. For instance, according to a study from the University of Arizona State, between 2019 and 2027,

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the surface area of lithium mining in Bolivia's Atacama Desert increased by around 7% per year (lithium is a metal required for electrical use).

Environmental indicators were severely impacted by these changes, including soil and water pollution, habitat degradation, drought, and a reduction in vegetation cover. The general degradation of ecosystems caused by industrial and heavy mining activities poses a threat to the various species—including humans—that live in these very same (now-different) ecosystems. According to their research, the world has over 50 million square kilometers of mining land, more than 80% of which is used to extract resources for the energy transition. Sadly, this region, which makes up around 37% of the Earth's land surface (excluding Antarctica), has many vital habitats for species.

Hence, 8% of these regions are protected areas, 7% are important to biodiversity, and nearly 16% are among the last remaining "wild" areas on Earth. The energy transition would therefore probably "exacerbate threats to biodiversity due to mining activities," according to the experts. Wind turbines and solar panels require a lot more room to produce the same quantity of electricity than a coal-fired power station does. Similarly, because they require agricultural resources, bioenergy like biogas or biofuels (which may contribute to the energy transition in some areas) may occasionally result in increased land use or even deforestation.

#### **2.4. Cases and responses**

#### **2.5. QARMAS**

1. Has your country started any type of energy transition?
2. Are the energy transition impacts positive or negative in your country?
- 3.

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## **2.6. Useful links**

### **3. Delegations present in the committee**

1. United States of America
2. People's Republic of China
3. Russian Federation
4. French Republic
5. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
6. Islamic Republic of Iran
7. Federal Republic of Germany
8. Kingdom of Spain
9. Islamic Republic of Afghanistan / State of Qatar
10. Republic of Iraq
11. Republic of Lebanon
12. Arab Republic of Egypt
13. Japan
14. Republic of India
15. Federative Republic of Brazil
16. Commonwealth of Australia
17. Kingdom of Bahrain
18. Ukraine
19. Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
20. Tunisian Republic

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21. Dominion of Canada
22. Republic of Türkiye
23. Portuguese Republic
24. Kingdom of Morocco
25. Italian Republic

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