



ماعت للسلام والتنمية وحقوق الإنسان
Maat For Peace, Development, and Human Rights



League of Arab States Role

in Combating Conventional Weapons Spread
in Arab Region

Evaluating Mechanisms & Confronting Challenges

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Contents

Introduction	2
Executive Summary	4
Study Methodology	5
Overview of Arab League Work on Conventional Arms Issues	7
League of Arab States Mechanisms for Limiting Spread of Conventional Weapons.....	9
Absence of Unified Legal Framework to Restrict Proliferation of Weapons.....	14
Lack Of Coordination with Stakeholders in the Field of Disarmament	20
Challenges facing the League in building the capabilities of its members in the areas of disarmament and arms control	22
LAS Lack of Transparency and Openness on Disarmament Issues	25
Challenges and obstacles facing Arab League to limit the spread of weapons in Arab countries	28
Vision for Reforming Role of Arab League in Curbing Weapons Spread in Arab Countries	29

Introduction

There is a prevailing sentiment these days that our ability to enforce international law, including International Humanitarian Law and international human rights law, is diminishing throughout Arab world. The main reason behind this decline is Arab League detachment from its original goals and objectives. Despite its capacity to intervene and resolve conflicts spreading across Arab region, the League has failed to become an influential player in regional politics. Its role has receded in issuing condemnations, decisions, and initiatives that, in theory, aim to address differences and disputes between member states, but in reality, they do not contribute to changing the actual situation.

At a time when certain Arab populations are subjected to violations, such as war crimes, genocide, and crimes against humanity, due to the use of various conventional weapons by warring factions, particularly within a single state, the consequences are dire for millions of Arabs. The foremost among these consequences is the killing of civilians and the displacement of survivors who are either injured, mutilated, or forced to flee at gunpoint. Unfortunately, Arab League has not taken substantial steps to curb the proliferation of conventional weapons in conflict-ridden Arab countries, nor has it exerted sufficient pressure on the warring parties to cease human rights violations against those caught in wars and conflicts.

What is even more distressing is the noticeable surge in illicit arms trafficking operations in Arab region since 2011, met with apparent silence from the League of Arab States. This silence has encouraged several parties to continue supplying weapons to armed conflict participants, including terrorist and armed groups. The consequences have been unimaginable suffering for civilians, particularly in Yemen. As an example, more than 151,000 people have lost their lives directly due to ongoing hostilities involving all parties to the armed conflict, including 3,774 children. Additionally, 7,245 children have been injured. Yemen is currently enduring the worst man-made humanitarian disaster, with over 80 percent of the population struggling to access sufficient food. Approximately 23.7 million people are in dire need of humanitarian assistance. In Syria, the armed conflict has resulted in hundreds of thousands of deaths and the destruction of significant portions of populated areas. Directly caused by the armed conflict, 143,350 civilians have lost their lives, including 76,417 deaths attributed to the use of small arms and light weapons. Furthermore, the armed conflict has left 15.3 million people urgently requiring humanitarian aid.

In Sudan, as a result of the conflict between the Rapid Support Forces and the Sudanese army in April 2023, approximately 12,190 people were killed by the end of 2023. Likewise, in Libya, the proliferation of weapons in the hands of armed groups has hindered the achievement of a political solution to the armed conflict.

I strongly believe that achieving full and unconditional respect for international law, including international human rights law and International Humanitarian Law, requires a stable and well-established regional framework to limit the spread of conventional weapons in the Arab region. Unfortunately, this goal has not been realized due to the current situation. The League of Arab States' position on the proliferation of conventional weapons in the Arab region is characterized by weakness, lack of clarity, and at times, duplicity. While the League has discussed the issue of weapons proliferation in Yemen through its various agencies, the proliferation of weapons in Sudan, Libya, Syria, Iraq, and other Arab countries has not received similar attention and has often been ignored. The League lacks a clear strategy and approach to address the issue of limiting the spread of conventional weapons in the region. Despite numerous meetings and statements since 2013, the League of Arab States has failed to develop a unified Arab protocol to address the spread of weapons in the Arab region.

The Arab world is currently going through a critical stage in its history. It is imperative to develop a plan to reform the Arab League system in dealing with disarmament and arms control issues. We must not succumb to defeatism and passively tolerate the irresponsible proliferation of weapons in the Arab region, as it poses a threat to our security, safety, and sustainable development efforts. Regional reform measures should be implemented to eliminate the threats posed by conventional weapons in the Arab region. A change in the approach and strategy of the League of Arab States is necessary to achieve peace, regional security, and conflict resolution in the region, particularly regarding arms control issues.

Ayman Okeil

Executive Summary

The widespread availability of conventional weapons and the lack of effective monitoring during armed conflicts and civil wars in the Arab region reflect the Arab League negligent approach to maintaining security and peace in the region. The decisions, statements, and steps taken by Council of Arab Foreign Ministers and specialized ministerial councils cannot be considered sufficient in addressing the proliferation of conventional weapons. Arab League Department of Arms Control and Disarmament within International Political Affairs Sector has made desperate and futile attempts to halt the suffering of millions of Arabs affected by the proliferation of conventional weapons. This study aims to evaluate the role of the Arab League in dealing with disarmament and limiting the spread of conventional weapons in the Arab region. It also aims to identify the shortcomings in the Arab League performance in conventional disarmament, as it has failed to prevent weapons from reaching terrorist movements, armed groups, and human rights violators in the region. This failure to protect civilians from the dangers of weapon proliferation undermines security and peace at the Arab level. It necessitates reform measures to establish a robust Arab regional framework and a clear vision for addressing the proliferation of weapons, ultimately preventing them from falling into the hands of parties involved in armed conflicts who will use them to perpetuate violence, harm civilians, destroy infrastructure, impede development, and violate human rights.

Keywords: *Arab League - Disarmament - Conventional Weapons.*

Study Methodology

The study employed a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods to monitor the decisions, activities, news, documents, and studies related to limiting the spread of conventional weapons issued by the League of Arab States. The primary source of data was the Arab League website. Out of a total of 9,004 decisions issued by the Council of the League of Arab States at the ministerial level, we analyzed 2,782 decisions available on the Arab League website. The remaining decisions were not reviewed as they were not accessible on the website or published on internet. Additionally, the study examined news articles about disarmament published on the Arab League website, particularly those related to arms control and disarmament management. It also monitored the activities, news, and decisions related to disarmament on the website of the Arab Interior Ministers. News sources associated with the Arab League work in limiting the spread of conventional weapons were also considered. All these sources were analyzed to evaluate the Arab League role in reducing the proliferation of conventional weapons.

The study established several measurable and observable criteria to assess Arab League effectiveness in limiting the spread of weapons. These criteria were derived by transforming the goals and responsibilities of various departments and divisions within the League responsible for disarmament and arms control into quantifiable indicators. The specific standards used are outlined in the table below:

Criterion	Indicators	Evaluation
Existence of a unified regional framework to combat spread of conventional weapons	There are Arab regional guidelines, instruments, decisions and laws related to combating proliferation of conventional weapons.	Evaluation scale for all criteria is from 1 to 10. 1 is absence of any efforts and limited efforts of Arab League in combating spread of weapons, while 10 means effectiveness and efficiency of
	Arab regional laws and decisions cover all aspects related to combating spread of conventional weapons.	
	Ability of Arab League regional framework to monitor flow of weapons in all Arab countries through various tools and mechanisms in an equal manner.	

Communication, networking, and engaging with influential stakeholders in the field of disarmament	League of Arab States' dealings with civil society organizations concerned with weapons issues in Arab countries	efforts of Arab League in combating phenomenon.
	Participation of least fortunate and most vulnerable groups and those affected by proliferation of weapons in work of League of Arab States related to disarmament.	
Building capabilities of member states of League of Arab States in areas of disarmament and arms control	Size and extent of training provided by Arab League to member states in the field of disarmament and arms control.	
	Size and scope of meetings, panel discussions, and publications carried out by League of Arab States on disarmament issues.	
Openness and transparency regarding League work on disarmament issues	Making information and decisions related to disarmament processes issued by League of Arab States available to everyone for review.	
	Existence of a database to exchange information between member states about extent of proliferation of weapons in Arab countries, especially illegal weapons.	

Overview of Arab League Work on Conventional Arms Issues

Regional organizations play a crucial role in curbing the proliferation of conventional weapons and addressing the resulting severe human rights violations at the regional level. They achieve this through various means, including enhancing regional control over arms transfers, combating illicit arms trafficking, and strengthening the capacities of law enforcement agencies in member states. These measures enable effective tracking of illicit weapon sources, safeguarding weapon stockpiles from theft and looting, and enhancing expertise in disarmament operations, particularly in post-conflict scenarios. It is essential to promote information sharing regarding weapons and their locations among member states and encourage the exchange of best practices in combating this issue. Additionally, raising public awareness about the gravity of this phenomenon is crucial.

These objectives are accomplished through the implementation of several mechanisms. Key among them is the establishment of legal standards and controls that facilitate collective action at the regional level. Providing adequate training, resources, and support to law enforcement agencies within member states is imperative. Evaluation of existing laws and regulations in member states and offering advice on potential amendments and revisions are also significant aspects. Furthermore, the establishment of a regional information-sharing system concerning conventional weapons and their regional proliferation is essential.

Despite the recent escalation of conflicts and armed struggles in the Arab region, particularly in Yemen, Syria, Sudan, Libya, Iraq, Lebanon, and Somalia, along with the rise of armed groups and terrorist movements, the illegal transfer of weapons to the parties involved in these conflicts has worsened the situation. This has been exacerbated by the theft of weapons from government forces' storage facilities, leading to these weapons falling into the wrong hands.

These armed conflicts have resulted in severe violations of international human rights law and International Humanitarian Law. Various conventional weapons obtained by armed groups, terrorist movements, or conflicting parties, whether legally or illegally, have facilitated a wide range of human rights abuses. These violations include the killing and serious injury of civilians, hindering their ability to lead normal lives. Additionally, crimes such as sexual violence, enforced disappearances, and torture have been committed by these armed groups. The proliferation of weapons has also hindered the chances of achieving peaceful resolutions to conflicts and has undermined sustainable

development opportunities. Consequently, millions of men, women, and children live in constant fear of violence perpetrated by these weapons.

League of Arab States, as the regional organization responsible for collectively addressing the spread of conventional weapons, plays a crucial role in enhancing the survival chances of civilians in conflict zones, protecting them from human rights violations and daily violence, and promoting opportunities for conflict resolution and sustainable development.

However, the Arab League performance in this regard has been ineffective, despite its primary mandate of achieving peace, security, and protecting vulnerable populations from violations. Insufficient measures have been taken to limit the flow of weapons into conflict-affected countries, resulting in their proliferation among armed groups and terrorist movements. Moreover, there is a clear lack of regional legal standards and regulations to combat this phenomenon. The training provided to enhance the capabilities of law enforcement agencies in member states is inadequate. Additionally, the Arab League work on this issue lacks representation from relevant stakeholders, including civil society organizations. Obtaining information and legal documents on disarmament operations, particularly the Arab strategy to combat the illicit proliferation of weapons in the Arab region, is challenging due to the lack of public availability on the internet. Furthermore, the Arab League stance on weapons proliferation in certain conflict areas, such as Sudan, Syria, Libya, and Iraq, is weak. There is also a lack of a transparent and accessible public database on the extent of illegal weapons proliferation among armed and terrorist groups in the Arab region.

Overall, the Arab League has failed to effectively address the phenomenon of weapons proliferation and combat its expansion in crisis-ridden countries experiencing civil wars. It has not developed a unified Arab protocol to limit the spread of weapons in the Arab region and has provided insufficient technical assistance to law enforcement agencies in conflict-affected countries.

League of Arab States Mechanisms for Limiting Spread of Conventional Weapons

League of Arab States comprises three primary branches: the Council, permanent committees, and General Secretariat. Additionally, ministerial councils focus on interior affairs, justice, health, and other fields, as well as various bodies established through the Arab League decisions or encouraged by League. These structures aim to advance the economic, social, cultural, and political interests of member states.

League Council serves as the highest governing body and encompasses a wide range of specializations. Its key responsibilities include determining cooperation methods with international organizations to safeguard international peace and security, promoting and supporting collaboration among member states, and ensuring the implementation of agreements across different domains. The permanent committees constitute the second branch of the League and are tasked with conducting specialized technical studies on assigned topics. They also contribute to the finalization of draft agreements initiated by member states.¹

General Secretariat, operating within Council, undertakes administrative, technical, and political functions. Its crucial roles involve monitoring the implementation of Council decisions and committee resolutions, providing oral and written reports or statements on discussed issues, and representing League before international organizations. Secretariat serves as executive body responsible for executing plans and decisions adopted during foreign minister meetings or specialized ministerial councils.

While League of Arab States has limited entities explicitly dedicated to addressing the spread of conventional weapons, [Arms Control and Disarmament Department within International Political Affairs Sector](#) plays a central role. This Department coordinates Arab positions on disarmament, non-proliferation, and arms control, and ensures the implementation of the Arab League decisions regarding conventional weapons. It also raises concerns related to weapons proliferation and threats to Arab national security to the League Council, both at the ministerial and summit levels, to facilitate appropriate decision-making.

Although no other bodies explicitly focus on arms control, disarmament, and countering weapons proliferation, discussions within the Council, including foreign minister and delegate levels, as well as specialized ministerial councils, touch upon these issues. Given that the primary objectives of these entities are [to preserve security and](#)

¹ الجامعة العربية، موقع جامعة الدول العربية، <https://2u.pw/2kwYlduN>

peace in the Arab region, which is threatened by the widespread proliferation of weapons, disarmament matters are inherently addressed.

Figure showing departments dealing with disarmament and arms control issues within Arab League



In practice, both League Council at foreign minister level and the specialized ministerial councils are responsible for discussing threats arising from conventional weapons. They issue binding laws and decisions to member states, ensuring their implementation to maintain Arab security and peace. However, there have been instances of marginalization and lack of attention to the issues surrounding the limitation of weapons proliferation. This creates fertile ground for the outbreak of further conflicts and instability due to the flow of weapons to armed terrorist movements and groups.

After analyzing approximately 2,782 decisions issued by the Council of the League of Arab States at the foreign ministers' level, it becomes evident that the Arab League role in limiting access to weapons for armed movements, terrorist groups, and conflicting parties is limited. Out of these decisions, only 20 addressed the issue of weapons proliferation, with 3 directly tackling the matter and 17 indirectly touching upon it. Unfortunately, no viable proposals were presented to prevent the illicit flow of weapons to terrorist movements. The League was content with denouncing and condemning these actions. Furthermore, the resolutions did not address the issue of weapons being distributed among civilians or illegally obtained by armed groups in some countries.

While the Council of Arab Interior Ministers has issued several security and judicial agreements to combat the trafficking and illicit proliferation of weapons in the Arab region, particularly in response to the rise of terrorist groups, these laws are not readily accessible online. They are neither published on the League of Arab States' website nor

the websites of the Council of Arab Ministers of Interior or Justice. Some notable agreements include the Arab Model Law on Weapons, Ammunition, Explosives, and Dangerous Materials (2002), as well as the Arab Strategy to Combat the Illicit Proliferation of Weapons in the Arab Region.

The reality on the ground in several Arab countries demonstrates that certain nations have lost control over their weapons stocks. In 2011, numerous conventional weapons were stolen following the collapse of certain governments and subsequently sold to armed extremist groups in the following years. An example of this can be seen in Libya, where weapons were transferred to Niger after the fall of the Gaddafi government. Additionally, weapons have become widespread among civilians in various Libyan cities, particularly in Sabha, which is known as a hub for arms dealers and a transit point for smugglers from the south to the north. This situation has led to incidents of violence and loss of life among citizens.² Unfortunately, the Council of Arab Interior Ministers has made minimal efforts to address the spread of weapons among Libyan civilians, thereby perpetuating a problem that threatens regional security and peace.

Despite the existence of the Arab Security Media Bureau, which operates under the General Secretariat of the Council of Arab Interior Ministers, and its adoption of a model Arab media action plan in 2004 to raise awareness about the dangers of illegal possession and trade of small arms, little progress has been made in implementing this plan effectively.

Moreover, Arms Control and Disarmament Department of Arab League has not exerted sufficient efforts to enhance the capabilities of law enforcement agencies in Arab countries to tackle the proliferation of conventional weapons. The training initiatives conducted by the department have overlooked several Arab countries where illegal arms trafficking is rampant. In some cases, the training has focused solely on small and light weapons while neglecting other types of weapons used by terrorist movements in the Arab region, such as combat aircraft and unmanned vehicles.

The Department's work is further hindered by a severe lack of studies and research concerning the proliferation of conventional weapons, particularly illegal ones, in many Arab countries. Additionally, there is no database affiliated with the Department that is published on the internet, which would provide information on the extent of weapons spread in Arab countries. Maat reached out to the Department for clarification on the existence of such information or databases, but received no response with any data.

²سبها مخازن سلاح القذافي أنعشت "سوق الجريمة"، العربية، <https://2u.pw/StkeSs7z>

The challenges faced by the League of Arab States in limiting the spread of weapons in conflict-ridden areas of the Arab world are evident through various indicators related to the levels of weapons proliferation in countries affected by conflicts. In **Yemen**, for instance, small and light weapons are prevalent among civilians and easily accessible. Notable examples of these weapons include the M4 rifle, Glock pistol, M16A1 rifle, M60 machine guns, AR-15A rifles, American M4A1 carbine rifles, Tippmann 98 training rifles manufactured in the United States, as well as the 1-56 and U20EKA rifles and Model 9-98FC pistols. Many of these weapons were seized by the Houthi group from Yemeni army weapons depots after their takeover of the capital, Sana'a, in 2014, while others were acquired illegally from Iran.³

UN estimates indicate that a significant number of light and small arms are being offered for sale on the black market in Yemen, particularly in the cities of Sana'a and Saada, which are under Houthi control. These sales undermine peace, security, and stability both within Yemen and beyond, posing a threat to the safety, security, and lives of citizens.⁴

Furthermore, small and light weapons from Yemen are being redirected to several African and Arab countries, exacerbating tensions and contributing to violations in those regions. The UN confirms the existence of a well-coordinated smuggling network operating between Yemen and Sudan, supplying armed groups in Sudan with weapons. Small and light weapons, especially 3G rifles, perpetuate conflict, war, and human rights abuses within Sudan.⁵ The widespread ownership of weapons is considered a societal norm in Yemen, with approximately 60 million small arms in civilian hands.⁶

In **Sudan**, an estimated 8 million small and light weapons are spread among civilians.⁷ Sudan is recognized as one of the largest manufacturers of weapons and ammunition in Africa, with the industry flourishing during the rule of former President Omar al-Bashir. These weapons were used to arm loyal local groups and foreign fighters, such as the Lord's Resistance Army in northern Uganda and neighboring countries. The ease of acquiring weapons in Sudan contributes to the continuation and escalation of armed conflicts in a widespread and alarming manner.⁸

³ تحقيق تجارة السلاح الأميركي في اليمن.. كيف تسربت ترسانة خفيفة ومتوسطة إلى الأسواق، اليمن فيوتشر، <https://2u.pw/Y3IBail>

⁴ تقرير أممي يكشف عن شبكة حوثية لتهرب السلاح، <https://2u.pw/rZW2gRO>

⁵ تقرير أممي يكشف عن شبكة حوثية لتهرب السلاح، مرجع سابق ذكره

⁶ Small Arms Trade The Conflict In Yemen. <https://2u.pw/G9ehLqb>

⁷ رقم مفرع في السودان 8 ملايين قطعة سلاح في أيادي المدنيين، اسكاي نيوز، <https://2u.pw/rJ2AsGQ>

⁸ أسلحة السودان تنتشر وسط أعمال عنف لا هوادة فيها، <https://2u.pw/q70Xw56>

Regarding **Libya**, international estimates indicate that it holds the largest uncontrolled stockpile of weapons in the world, posing a threat to civilian lives. The estimated weight of these weapons is between 150,000 and 200,000 tons, with a total of 29 million pieces ranging from light to medium and heavy weapons.⁹ Libya has become a hub for arms trade, affecting numerous African countries and supplying armed groups in Nigeria, Chad, and other nations.¹⁰

In **Syria**, the conflict-ridden region is inundated with millions of small arms, light weapons, and artillery. Various armed factions, including opposition groups and extremist organizations, possess these weapons. Additionally, individuals and local smuggling networks are acquiring weapons from commercial and civilian sources in Lebanon, Iraq, and Turkey. For instance, representatives of armed factions obtained weapons from merchants in Eastern Europe and the Black Sea region, smuggling them across the Turkish-Syrian border. They also acquired weapons from Libyan armed factions that seized them from weapons depots following the fall of Muammar Gaddafi's government.¹¹

Iran is involved in smuggling weapons into Syria through illicit crossings via Iraq, purportedly intended for the Iranian Revolutionary Guard and Iranian-backed militias operating in Syria. The ease of purchasing small arms through online channels and open markets has contributed to the proliferation of unlicensed weapons within the country.¹²

In **Iraq**, weapons are widespread among the civilian population, with estimates ranging from 7 to 10 million illegally spread throughout the country. The Iraqi government is making efforts to address this issue, but it has not received robust support from the Arab League.¹³

The proliferation of weapons in Arab countries, particularly those grappling with armed conflicts, underscores the challenges faced by the League of Arab States in curtailing their spread and ultimately resolving these conflicts. Given the available resources and capabilities of this regional organization, it was expected to play a more substantial role in bringing an end to these conflicts.

⁹ الأمم المتحدة ٢٩ مليون قطعة سلاح تنتشر بأحاء ليبيا، <https://2u.pw/rxJvj4p>

¹⁰ الأسلحة غير المشروعة تندفق عائدة إلى الساحل، <https://2u.pw/v2VHNNhd>

¹¹ أسلحة داعش تحقيق مدته ثلاث سنوات في العراق وسوريا، <https://2u.pw/8QL1WMz>

¹² السلاح سلعة رائجة عبر "تلجرام" شمالي سوريا، <https://2u.pw/ZPqOkjt>

¹³ مليار دينار عراقي لكل محافظة لشراء الأسلحة المتوسطة والثقيلة من المواطنين، ما القصة؟، <https://2u.pw/fvgi1jrp>

Absence of Unified Legal Framework to Restrict Proliferation of Weapons

Having clear guidelines for the trade and control of conventional weapons at the regional level is essential. Such guidelines should aim to limit the flow of weapons within member states, encourage states to implement necessary measures to prevent and control the spread of weapons, and monitor the illicit flow of weapons to conflict zones. Other regional organizations have established these principles. For instance, in Africa, there are four protocols, agreements, and three declarations addressing the proliferation of weapons and measures to limit them. These include the Bamako Declaration on the Unified African Position on the Illicit Proliferation, Circulation, and Trafficking of Small and Light Arms issued by the African Union, as well as the African Union Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition, and Other Related Materials issued by the Economic Community of West African States. These agreements directly focus on combating the proliferation of weapons.¹⁴

In contrast, the number of agreements, protocols, and decisions aimed at establishing a framework to directly combat the spread of conventional weapons in the Arab region is significantly limited compared to other regional organizations. Currently, there are only two decisions issued at the ministerial level of the League of Arab States Council, as well as a law issued by the Council of Arab Interior Ministers in 2002 concerning weapons, ammunition, explosives, and dangerous materials.¹⁵ Additionally, there is the Arab strategy to combat the illicit spread of weapons in the Arab region, which aims to prevent and combat weapons smuggling crimes across national borders. This strategy was issued by the same authority in 2016.

Ministerial Resolution No. 6625, issued in 2006,¹⁶ and Resolution No. 6447, issued in 2004,¹⁷ aim to coordinate Arab efforts in combating the illicit trade of small arms and light weapons. These resolutions, available on the League of Arab States' website, outline several commitments to address the spread of such weapons. One key commitment is the assignment of the General Secretariat to develop programs that enhance national capacities in combating the illicit trade of small arms and light weapons, particularly in the areas of border management and information exchange. The resolutions also call upon countries to establish national focal points responsible for implementing the United Nations Program of Action, which seeks to prevent, combat, and eliminate the illicit trade of small arms and light weapons. Furthermore, it urges

¹⁴ الأدوات المتعددة الأطراف والإقليمية، مكتب الأمم المتحدة المعني بالمخدرات والجريمة، <https://2u.pw/XSlwpFvb>

¹⁵ الأدوات المتعددة الأطراف والإقليمية، مرجع سابق ذكره

¹⁶ قرارات مجلي جامعة الدول العربية على المستوى الوزاري في دورته العادية 125، جامعة الدول العربية، <https://2u.pw/Z7Sh3Ej2>

¹⁷ قرارات مجلي جامعة الدول العربية على المستوى الوزاري في دورته العادية 122، جامعة الدول العربية، <https://2u.pw/7eooH8qq>

countries to submit reports to the League of Arab States on their efforts in combating the spread of illicit small arms and light weapons. The General Secretariat is tasked with providing support and technical assistance to member states wishing to prepare these national reports.

Despite these obligations, a review of the national reports submitted by League member states reveals a lack of commitment to fulfilling the reporting requirements related to the implementation of the United Nations Program of Action and its international instrument for tracking small and light weapons. The reports, which are submitted every two years to assess progress in combatting small and light weapons, indicate that only the State of Qatar submitted its report in 2024.¹⁸ In 2022, only five Arab countries submitted their reports: Egypt, Iraq, Morocco, Sudan, and the United Arab Emirates. Similarly, in 2020, only five Arab countries submitted their reports: Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Somalia, and Iraq.¹⁹

Examining the submitted reports, it becomes evident that several Arab countries, where small and light weapons are prevalent and causing significant harm to civilians, have not submitted reports to the program since 2020. This is particularly notable for Libya, Yemen, and Syria, highlighting the lack of success of the Arab League and its regional contact point on small and light weapons in urging Arab countries to commit to combating the spread of these weapons.

On a different note, the Council of Arab Interior Ministers has issued several instruments aimed at combating the illicit spread of weapons. These include the Arab strategy to combat the illicit spread of weapons in the Arab region, which focuses on preventing and combating weapons smuggling crimes across national borders, and the Model Law of the Arab League on Weapons, Ammunition, Explosives, and Dangerous Materials, enacted in 2002. However, it is concerning that these documents are not publicly available on LAS website, rendering them ineffective as widely accessible regional guidelines capable of curbing the spread of illicit weapons in the Arab region.

The ministerial-level Arab League Council has issued approximately 20 resolutions addressing the issue of arms smuggling by Iran to the Houthi group in Yemen, which has illegally prolonged the war, exacerbated the humanitarian crisis, and caused immense civilian suffering. One of these resolutions holds Hezbollah in Lebanon accountable for providing advanced weapons to terrorist groups, resulting in violations against Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Yemen. Another decision discussed the

¹⁸ National reports. National reports from 2002 to current year. <https://2u.pw/IQoU3u6C>

¹⁹ National reports. National reports from 2002 to current year. <https://2u.pw/IQoU3u6C>

importance of supporting peace in Libya by urging armed militias to relinquish their weapons to the Libyan government. Despite the necessity of these decisions, they have not effectively reduced the flow of weapons in conflict zones within the Arab region, particularly in Yemen and Libya, as illicit arms trafficking continues unabated in these countries with widespread weapon proliferation.²⁰

For instance, in November 2023, the Libyan army successfully foiled an arm smuggling operation into Niger, intercepting large quantities of ammunition and Kalashnikov rifles.²¹ In March 2023, security forces in the West region announced the seizure of a massive container hidden among tools, which contained approximately 12,000 9mm pistols. The container was on board the ship "Biltaki," flying the flag of Liberia,²² en route from Malta to the port of Misrata. Additionally, the Libyan Tobruk Security Directorate seized significant amounts of high-quality and dangerous weapons in February 2023 before they could be smuggled into Egyptian territory through the Jaghubub desert oasis. While neighboring Sahel and Sahara countries make efforts to prevent weapons smuggling into their territories,²³ the proliferation of weapons within Libya poses a significant threat to societal stability, contributing to civilian casualties.

In Yemen, on January 10, 2024, a ship carrying 2,100 Kalashnikov-type assault rifles,²⁴ originating from Iran and bound for Yemen to support the Houthi movement, was intercepted in the Gulf of Oman. In December 2023, another ship was seized in the Gulf of Oman, containing over 50 tons of weapons and ammunition intended for Yemen. The shipment included ammunition, fuses, and missile fuel.²⁵

During the first quarter of 2023, seven shipments of weapons illegally smuggled from Iran to the Houthi group were intercepted. These operations resulted in the seizure of more than 5,000 weapons, 1.6 million rounds of ammunition, 7,000 rocket fuses, 2,100 kilograms of rocket-propelled grenade fuel, and 30 anti-tank weapons by the US Navy and partner forces. In February 2023, British and American naval forces confiscated illegal weapons, including anti-tank guided missiles and components of medium-range ballistic missiles.²⁶ These incidents highlight the inability of the resolutions issued by the

²⁰ تحليل مؤسسة ماعت لقرارات مجلس جامعة الدول العربية على المستوى الوزاري، متاح على موقع جامعة الدول العربية على الرابط التالي، <https://2u.pw/tLjwOHMq>

²¹ Libyan Army Foils "Niger-bound" Arms Smuggling Operation. <https://2u.pw/pt10klk>

²² عودة تهريب الأسلحة من ليبيا إلى النيجر إلى العمل مرة أخرى، المعهد الإفريقي للدراسات الأمنية، <https://2u.pw/GjHLAmN>

²³ تهريب السلاح» من ليبيا وإليها أزمة عمقها الانقسام السياسي، الشرق الأوسط، <https://2u.pw/zzVzhL8>

²⁴ اعتراض سفينة محملة بالأسلحة المهربة من إيران إلى اليمن، أسكاي نيوز، يناير 2024، <https://2u.pw/rSa0jVw>

²⁵ البحرية الأميركية تعترض سفينة محملة بالأسلحة في خليج عُمان، عربية اسكاي نيوز، ديسمبر 2023، <https://2u.pw/vE5uxZQ>

²⁶ اعتراض سبع شحنات أسلحة إيرانية متجهة للحوثيين خلال 3 أشهر، الشرق الأوسط، <https://cutt.us/JVIOH>

Arab League Council to effectively combat the illicit arms trade and the Arab League limited role in reducing weapons flow and resolving armed conflicts in these countries.

In this context, the ministerial-level decisions issued by the Arab League Council have overlooked the proliferation of weapons in several other Arab countries, particularly Sudan and Syria. Estimates suggest that there are approximately 8 million small arms and light weapons in circulation among civilians in Sudan, making it one of the largest producers of weapons and ammunition in Africa. The easy accessibility of weapons in Sudan exacerbates the armed conflict, leading to its widespread and disturbing continuation.²⁷

In Sudan, during December 2023, the Sudanese army seized two arms shipments. One shipment contained 85 "G3" automatic rifles, while the other contained 107 additional automatic rifles. These shipments were en route to the Rapid Support Forces via boats in the Upper Atbara and Setit dam complex in eastern Sudan.²⁸ In November 2023, the Sudanese Armed Forces confiscated smuggled weapons and ammunition near the village of Al-Masran on the Butana road. The seizure included 13,190 different types of ammunition, 1,160 boxes of 9mm ammunition, 4,200 Kalashnikov ammunition, and several Kalashnikov rifles.²⁹

In August 2023, Sudanese authorities successfully seized a weapons shipment in the city of Kassala, located in eastern Sudan. The shipment contained various weapons, ammunition, and highly efficient sniper rifles intended to support the Rapid Support Forces.³⁰ In May 2023, the Sudanese army intercepted a group of weapons and ammunition in the Suakin region of eastern Sudan, which were also destined for the Rapid Support Forces. It is worth noting that there has been an increase in the smuggling of small arms and light weapons to the Rapid Support Forces since April 2023, following the outbreak of conflicts between the Rapid Support Forces and the Sudanese army.³¹ The illicit flow of weapons contributes to the perpetuation of the conflict, while the Arab League role in curbing the spread of these weapons in a country plagued by long-lasting civil wars has been almost nonexistent. These problems have not been addressed or resolved by the decisions of the Arab League, despite their crucial significance.

On the other hand, various regional agreements and instruments issued by the Arab League have emphasized the necessity of combating arms trafficking and the illicit

²⁷ رقم مفزع في السودان 8 ملايين قطعة سلاح في أيادي المدنيين، اسكاي نيوز، <https://2u.pw/rJ2AsGQ>

²⁸ إحباط تهريب أسلحة بشرق السودان لصالح الدعم السريع، صدي البلد، <https://2u.pw/Xu6101k>

²⁹ القوات المسلحة تعلن ضبط كمية كبيرة من الأسلحة والذخيرة، <https://2u.pw/WLX9FKb>

³⁰ ضبط أسلحة بولاية كسلا في طريقها لمليشيات الدعم السريع، وكالة السودان للأنباء، <https://2u.pw/qJM侯1>

³¹ السودان الجيش يضبط أسلحة مهربة إلى "الدعم السريع" والسياسي يطالب بوقف إطلاق نار شامل، <https://2u.pw/ZKZafWV>

proliferation of weapons in the Arab region. The Arab Convention to Combat Terrorism, for instance, obliges countries to establish systems for detecting the transfer, import, storage, and use of weapons, ammunition, explosives, and other means of assault, murder, and destruction. It also outlines procedures for monitoring these items at customs and borders to prevent their movement between countries, except for legitimate purposes. Furthermore, Article 19 of the Arab Convention to Combat Cross-Border Organized Crime addresses the criminalization of illicit production, smuggling, or possession of firearms, explosive materials, and ammunition.³²

The League of Arab States has played an ineffective role in limiting the proliferation of weapons, particularly in conflict-affected countries, resulting in a significant number of civilians falling victim to extrajudicial killings. For example, in Yemen, an estimated 108 individuals, including 56 children and 11 women,³³ were killed or injured in 2023 due to the use of small arms and live ammunition, according to civil society organizations. Similarly, in Syria, UN estimates indicate that approximately 76,417 people were killed from the beginning of the conflict until June 2022 due to the use of small arms and light weapons.³⁴ Sudan has also witnessed incidents where small arms have been used to attack and threaten civilians since April 2023, leading to loss of life and endangering their physical safety. On January 9, 2024, a group of Rapid Support Forces attacked citizens, using bullets and small weapons, resulting in the death of one person and injuries to other civilians.³⁵

In this context, despite discussions dating back to 2013, the League of Arab States has failed to develop a unified Arab protocol to address the spread of weapons in the region. The specialized ministerial councils, including the Council of Interior Ministers and the Council of Arab Ministers of Justice, have been unable to reach a final formulation of the protocol's articles, which should complement the Arab Convention to Combat Transnational Organized Crime.

³² جهود مجلس وزراء الداخلية العرب في مجال مكافحة الإتجار غير المشروع للأسلحة في المنطقة العربية، <https://2u.pw/xnLVlKn5>، استمرار الانتهاكات خلال العام 2023، <https://2u.pw/RGCplx4>

³⁴ Civilian Deaths in the Syrian Arab Republic - Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (A/HRC/50/68) (Advance Unedited Version) <https://2h.ae/ueCF>

³⁵ انتهاكات قوات الدعم السريع في مدينة المعيلق، <https://2h.ae/rwam>

Criterion	Indicators	Evaluation									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Existence of unified regional framework to combat spread of conventional weapons	Are there Arab regional guidelines, instruments, decisions and laws related to combating the spread of conventional weapons?			○							
	Arab regional laws and decisions cover all aspects related to combating spread of conventional weapons.			○							
	Ability of League regional framework to monitor flow of weapons in all Arab countries through various tools and mechanisms in an equal manner.		○								

Lack Of Coordination with Stakeholders in the Field of Disarmament

The active involvement of civil society organizations, especially those representing vulnerable and marginalized groups affected by the proliferation of weapons, is crucial in discussions related to curbing the spread of conventional weapons. These organizations play essential roles in combating weapon proliferation by conducting research, disseminating reports, and organizing campaigns to raise public awareness about the dangers of weapons such as landmines and small arms. They also strive to increase awareness about the humanitarian costs and consequences resulting from the spread of these weapons. Civil society organizations exert pressure on decision-makers to support and implement international treaties and national legislation that restrict arms sales and production. Additionally, they collaborate with law enforcement agencies, providing them with data, research, and studies related to illicit arms trafficking. Their efforts can focus on building the capabilities of law enforcement agencies regarding the necessary methods and measures to limit the spread of weapons.

The participation of victims is also crucial, as they offer firsthand accounts of the devastating impact of weapons and the physical and psychological injuries they have endured. This helps drive government officials, public opinion, and various stakeholders to undertake measures aimed at reducing this phenomenon.

Regarding the League of Arab States, while there is a dedicated section within the Department of Arms Control and Disarmament for cooperation with international organizations and civil society, its primary mission is to enhance communication between the League and regional governmental and non-governmental organizations, research centers, and civil society organizations working in the field of disarmament. However, in practice, this section does not effectively engage with civil society organizations, particularly Arab civil society organizations that consistently participate in international forums on conventional weapons proliferation, such as Arms Trade Treaty conferences.

LAS Department of Arms Control and Disarmament lacks specific guidelines to clarify the participation of civil society organizations in their efforts to combat the proliferation of conventional weapons. Furthermore, there is no formal mechanism for regular participation or influence on the decision-making process within the League of Arab States on disarmament issues.³⁶ This lack of transparency and openness on the part of the League towards civil society organizations is evident. Civil society organizations

³⁶ إدارة الحد من التسلح ونزع الأسلحة، جامعة الدول العربية، <https://2u.pw/TUsqBhdk>

are not invited to participate in meetings related to arms control and disarmament, nor are they consulted on the matters under discussion by League Department.

For instance, in 2019, the League of Arab States received €6 million in funding from the European Union as part of the Strategic Dialogue between the two entities on weapons of mass destruction, small arms and light weapons, and arms control. The funding was intended to support member states of the League in building their national capacities sustainably, with a focus on combating the illicit trade and proliferation of small arms and light weapons. The project involved partnerships with organizations such as the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol), the World Customs Organization, and the Small Arms Survey Program, a civil society organization dedicated to combating small arms proliferation. However, the League disregarded the participation of Arab civil society organizations, disregarding the project decision that explicitly allowed for their contribution.³⁷ This demonstrates a deliberate approach of marginalization towards Arab civil society organizations by the League of Arab States.

Furthermore, the League of Arab States has not made any efforts or plans to enhance the capacities of civil society organizations working in the field of disarmament and arms control in the Arab region. No statements have been issued on this matter, despite the crucial role that civil society organizations play in reducing the proliferation of conventional weapons, particularly in countries affected by this phenomenon. The capacity-building initiatives undertaken by the League of Arab States in disarmament do not include the participation of civil society activists and experts.

Arab civil society organizations face significant barriers to participating in Arab summits, including those with observer status or other organizations. This is evident in the meetings of the League Council, where the agenda of the Council of Arab Foreign Ministers or Arab Summit is not announced in advance. As a result, civil society organizations have limited access to these summits or sessions of the Council of Foreign Ministers, which prevents them from effectively raising issues and concerns related to weapons proliferation at the decision-making level of the League.

When it comes to the involvement of vulnerable groups and those affected by the spread of weapons in the disarmament efforts of the League of Arab States, there are no legal texts or official statements indicating the Arab League intention to include victims and their families in initiatives aimed at combating the proliferation of conventional weapons. Consequently, they are completely marginalized, despite being the ones most

³⁷ قرار المجلس (السياسة الخارجية والأمنية المشتركة للاتحاد الأوروبي) رقم 2021/1726 المؤرخ 28 أيلول/سبتمبر 2021 بشأن دعم مكافحة الاتجار غير المشروع بالأسلحة الصغيرة والأسلحة الخفيفة وانتشارها في الدول الأعضاء في جامعة الدول العربية – المرحلة الثانية، <https://2u.pw/7gIKduyT>

directly impacted by the spread of weapons in Arab conflicts. The Arab League has failed to take any significant action to address the loss of hundreds of civilian lives resulting from the flow of weapons into the hands of armed and terrorist groups in conflict areas.

Criterion	Indicators	Evaluation									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Communicate, networking and engaging with influential stakeholders in the field of disarmament	Extent of LAS dealings with civil society organizations concerned with weapons issues in Arab countries.		○								
	Participation of least fortunate and most vulnerable groups and those affected by proliferation of weapons in the work of LAS related to disarmament.	○									

Challenges facing the League in building the capabilities of its members in the areas of disarmament and arms control

Building the capabilities of key stakeholders involved in reducing the proliferation of conventional weapons is essential for maintaining security, regional peace, and minimizing the risks of armed conflicts. This includes providing training to law enforcement officials, judicial personnel, members of national parliaments, and civil society organizations. The training programs vary depending on the target groups. Law enforcement officials receive technical training on techniques related to detecting illegal smuggling routes of conventional weapons, monitoring the flow of small arms and light weapons, and restricting their cross-border movement. They are also trained on managing and safeguarding weapons and ammunition depots to prevent vandalism and theft.

Judicial authorities receive training on international treaties and laws pertaining to limiting weapons proliferation. Civil society organizations are equipped with knowledge about the illicit proliferation of conventional weapons, including detection methods, research on weapons proliferation, identifying violations, and preparing

reports for policymakers and the public. Parliamentarians are trained on international and regional laws and regulations related to arms production, trade, and export controls.

Capacity-building efforts also involve providing technical support to countries in managing weapons stockpiles and facilitating the exchange of experiences through conferences, meetings, and discussion panels. Although the League of Arab States has collaborated with various regional and international bodies to enhance the capabilities of its member states, these efforts have been weak and have had limited impact. Between June 2019 and February 2020, in cooperation with the European Union, the League provided nine training courses to several member states, two of which were conducted in-person, while seven were conducted remotely. The aim of these courses was to combat the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, and a total of 409 state officials from League member states received training. Additionally, 16 weapons-related documents were translated into Arabic language.³⁸

Although the training courses provided by the League of Arab States are important in limiting the spread of conventional weapons in the Arab region, they have primarily focused on law enforcement agencies, neglecting other crucial stakeholders such as members of national parliaments, actors in civil society organizations, and judiciary employees. Furthermore, these courses have not been adequately conducted in all Arab countries. Maat has not monitored the implementation of these training courses in countries currently experiencing conflicts and widespread armed conflicts. For instance, Sudan, a country heavily affected by conflicts, has an estimated 8 million small and light weapons in the hands of civilians.³⁹ Sudan is also one of the largest manufacturers of weapons and ammunition in Africa, yet the Arab League has not provided training to law enforcement agencies in Sudan regarding the control of small arms proliferation.

Similarly, Libya is known to possess the world's largest stockpile of uncontrolled weapons, estimated to be between 150,000 and 200,000 tons, posing a significant threat to civilian lives. The number of weapons in Libya amounts to 29 million, including light, medium, and heavy weaponry.⁴⁰ These weapons have found their way into the hands of armed groups in various African countries, including Nigeria, Chad, and others.⁴¹ However, the League of Arab States' efforts in capacity building for law enforcement agencies in these countries remain insufficient compared to the extensive proliferation of weapons and the threats they pose.

³⁸ مشروع الاتحاد الأوروبي وجامعة الدول العربية، منظمة مسح الأسلحة الصغيرة، <https://2u.pw/078ATgh7>

³⁹ رقم مفزع في السودان 8 ملايين قطعة سلاح في أيادي المدنيين، اسكاي نيوز، <https://2u.pw/rJ2AsGQ>

⁴⁰ الأمم المتحدة ٢٩ مليون قطعة سلاح تنتشر بأحاء ليبيا، <https://2u.pw/rxJvi4p>

⁴¹ الأسلحة غير المشروعة تتدفق عائدة إلى الساحل، <https://2u.pw/v2VHNHd>

Moreover, the existing publications and studies concerning the proliferation of conventional weapons in Arab countries are limited in scale and scope, given the magnitude of the issue on the ground. Countries like Sudan, Yemen, Syria, Lebanon, Libya, and Iraq are particularly affected, with Iraq alone estimated to house around 8 million weapons in civilian hands. This situation necessitates the issuance of more research and studies by the League to address this phenomenon and explore ways to mitigate it.⁴²



screenshot from LAS website showing absence of publications on Arab League Arms Control and Disarmament Department

Criterion	Indicators	Evaluation									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Building capabilities of member states of LAS in areas of disarmament and arms control	Volume of training provided by LAS to member states in the field of disarmament and arms control, and extent of their effectiveness			○							
	Volume of meetings, discussion panels, and publications carried out by LAS on disarmament issues. And how effective it is.		○								

LAS Lack of Transparency and Openness on Disarmament Issues

Transparency and openness are crucial for enhancing trust, accountability, and improving the decision-making process within any regional organization. However, the League of Arab States, particularly concerning matters related to combating the proliferation of conventional weapons, lags behind other regional organizations such as the African Union and the European Union in terms of transparency. Several laws and decisions regarding operations to combat the spread of weapons are not available on the Internet, including the Arab Model Law on Weapons, Ammunition, Explosives, and Dangerous Materials (2002), and the Arab Strategy to Combat the Illicit Proliferation of Weapons in the Arab Region, which aims to prevent and combat weapons smuggling crimes across national borders. Maat attempted to obtain texts related to these documents by reaching out to Council of Arab Interior Ministers, the issuing body, but received no response.

There is also a clear absence of much information related to conventional weapons on Arab League website, and the site merely writes the phrase “No Content,” which explains the need to update LAS website, as there is difficulty in accessing some information and it is not constantly updated.

لا يوجد محتوى.

screenshot from LAS website showing absence of some data and information while Maat was searching for some information related to weapons

Sometimes LAS Arms Control and Disarmament Department does not publish detailed information about activities and the work it carries out and merely posts pictures of those activities without going into details about them. This adds ambiguity to the work of the Department, whose primary role is supposed to be the link between LAS and stakeholders to study the phenomenon of arms proliferation and work out how to find solutions thereof.

فعالية لبناء قدرات الأجهزة المعنية في الجمهورية اليمنية في مجال مكافحة الاتجار والانتشار غير المشروع للأسلحة الصغيرة والأسلحة الخفيفة
التاريخ من: 2023/09/24 إلى 2023/09/28
المكان: المملكة الأردنية الهاشمية



League of Arab States lacks transparency in its decision-making processes, strategies, and laws related to weapons. The public is not consistently informed about the various stages of discussion, and copies of these decisions are not made available to the public or civil society organizations to express their opinions. Additionally, the various categories of Arab societies are not adequately represented during these discussions.

Furthermore, although the Arab Bureau for Combating Extremism and Terrorism created an Arab database in 2016, which includes information on lost, stolen, and smuggled weapons and ammunition across national borders, this database is not accessible to the public, indicating a lack of transparency on the part of the Arab League. Moreover, regional databases and public access to data on conventional weapons in Arab countries are non-existent. Maat reached out to the Department of Arms Control

and Disarmament inquiring about the existence of a database regarding the spread of weapons in the Arab region but did not receive a response.

Criterion	Indicators	Evaluation									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Openness and transparency regarding LAS work on disarmament issues	Making information and decisions related to disarmament processes issued by LAS available for public review		○								
	Existence of a database to exchange information between member states about extent of the proliferation of weapons in Arab countries, especially illegal weapons	○									

Challenges and obstacles facing Arab League to limit the spread of weapons in Arab countries

Maat analysis of information shows that the League of Arab States faces major limitations concerning limiting the spread of conventional weapons in Arab region, and they can be discussed as follows: -

First: Absence of political will is evident in the Arab League failure to develop a unified Arab protocol to limit the proliferation of weapons in the Arab region, despite discussions on the protocol and its articles since 2013 within specialized ministerial councils. The League also shows unwillingness to prioritize arms proliferation issues on its agenda, despite the prevalence of civil wars and armed conflicts in several Arab countries and the continuous illegal flow of weapons to the warring parties, which poses a threat to civilian lives. Sudan and Libya serve as clear examples of this situation.

Second: LAS failure to recognize civil society contributions. There is no cooperation between LAS and CSOs and no specific guidelines from Arms Control and Disarmament Department on how civil society organizations can participate in combating the spread of conventional weapons. Additionally, there is no formal mechanism for regular participation or influence of civil society organizations in the decision-making process of the League of Arab States on disarmament issues. This lack of transparency and openness toward civil society organizations is apparent.

Third: Lack of long-term vision, planning, and commitment. This is evident in the limited training provided to enhance the capabilities of law enforcement agencies in the Arab world, which fails to prioritize countries affected by conflicts and armed struggles. The proliferation of weapons in crisis-stricken countries like Iraq and Libya is a pressing issue. For instance, Libya is estimated to possess the world's largest stockpile of uncontrolled weapons, ranging from light to heavy, with an estimated 29 million pieces of weaponry weighing between 150,000 and 200,000 tons. This poses a significant threat to civilian lives.

Fourth: Absence of data, statistics, and information regarding illicit arms trade in Arab region, the amount of money invested in this trade, the quantity of arms stolen in conflict-affected countries since 2011, and the arsenal held by terrorist groups and armed militias. This lack of information is primarily due to the Arab League lack of transparency in addressing arms proliferation and its insufficient cooperation with civil society organizations.

Vision for Reforming Role of Arab League in Curbing Weapons Spread in Arab Countries

Every year, thousands of lives are lost, and countless individuals are injured or displaced due to conflicts and violations involving conventional weapons and ammunition in several Arab countries. This necessitates the intervention of the League of Arab States to address the situation effectively. To achieve this, Maat proposes a strategic framework that aims to halt irresponsible arms transfers and illicit arms trafficking in the region, while overcoming the challenges hindering the Arab League efforts to combat the proliferation of weapons.

Maat's vision for reforming the institutional and regional framework of the Arab League, regarding the limitation of conventional weapons proliferation, is based on several key principles. First and foremost, it emphasizes the establishment of comprehensive Arab regional guidelines, instruments, decisions, and laws about combating the spread of conventional weapons. These laws should encompass all aspects of the issue. Additionally, it highlights the need to enhance communication and collaboration with influential stakeholders in disarmament, particularly civil society organizations. It is crucial to build the capacities of Arab League member states equally in the areas of disarmament and arms control. Furthermore, there is a pressing need to gather comprehensive data and information on arms trade and circulation among various parties, and it is essential to ensure effective implementation of global agreements related to disarmament. Achieving these objectives requires introducing necessary amendments to the **mechanisms frameworks responsible for limiting spread of conventional weapons within Arab League**, particularly Department of Arms Control and Disarmament in the International Political Affairs Sector, as well as the League Council, ministerial decisions, and specialized ministerial councils such as the Council of Arab Ministers of Interior and the Council of Arab Ministers of Justice.

Foundations To Be Achieved	Steps To Achievement
Existence of a unified regional framework to combat the spread	It is recommended to establish a small working group within Council of Arab Ministers of Interior and Justice, for discussing necessary reforms to the regional framework concerning weapons and investigating the reasons behind the delay in issuing the Arab Protocol on limiting the

of conventional weapons.

spread of weapons. The participation of all stakeholders, including experts and civil society organizations, should be ensured.

Arab laws related to limiting the spread of weapons should be presented to relevant stakeholders for review, discussion, and amendment. This process aims to establish a robust legal framework that effectively combats the spread of conventional weapons. Of particular importance is the Arab strategy to combat the illicit spread of weapons in the Arab region, which seeks to prevent and combat weapons smuggling across national borders, as well as Arab Model Law on Weapons, Ammunition, Explosives, and Dangerous Materials (2002).

Council of Arab Foreign Ministers or specialized ministerial councils, such as Council of Arab Interior Ministers, should engage in discussions regarding decisions pertaining to the possibility of imposing an Arab embargo on weapons exports to countries involved in human rights violations or exporting weapons to conflict areas. Such a decision should be issued by the Council once it has been substantiated and implemented by the LAS.

It is imperative to urge Arab countries to ratify international and global arms treaties and agreements, particularly Arms Trade Treaty, which contains effective controls to responsibly regulate the flow of arms.

To establish a regional monitoring system within LAS that is characterized by effectiveness and transparency, a committee of experts should be formed within the specialized ministerial councils. Member states would be responsible for submitting reports to the Council of Arab Interior Ministers on arms transfers conducted throughout the year. Council would convene once a year to discuss measures aimed at reducing the flow of weapons in Arab countries, and decisions made would be enforced by Arms Control and Disarmament Department within the International Political Affairs Sector.

Communicating, networking and engaging with influential stakeholders in the

The section on cooperation with international organizations and civil society within the Arms Control and Disarmament Department should establish guidelines ensuring the participation of civil society organizations in all activities related to the League of Arab States' efforts in the field of arms control. The continuous involvement of civil society organizations should be guaranteed.

<p>field of disarmament</p>	<p>of</p> <p>It is necessary to present data and information related to combating spread of weapons in the Arab region to stakeholders to discuss and exchange information about it.</p> <p>Arms Control and Disarmament Department should review its communication approach with Arab civil society organizations participating in international arms conferences. Coordination between the two parties should be enhanced to strengthen the fight against the proliferation of weapons in the Arab region.</p>
<p>Building capabilities of LAS member states in the areas of disarmament and arms control</p>	<p>Arms Control and Disarmament Department should provide training and technical assistance to Arab countries affected by the proliferation of conventional weapons. This can be achieved by enhancing the capabilities of their law enforcement agencies through the development of a comprehensive plan that ensures sustainable capacity building. Trained agencies should subsequently train a maximum number of their law enforcement personnel.</p> <p>The involvement of local civil society organizations in the training provided by Arms Control and Disarmament Department is crucial. These organizations possess valuable experiences in combating weapon proliferation within conflict-ridden countries and have the ability to reach marginalized and vulnerable groups.</p>
<p>Openness and transparency regarding work on disarmament issues</p>	<p>and LAS on</p> <p>There is an urgent need for electronic platforms containing information related to the arms trade in the Arab region. Such platforms should include data on the volume of illegal weapons in Arab countries, information about stolen weapons stockpiles and their locations, as well as details about prominent terrorist movements possessing weapons in the region. Arms Control and Disarmament Department within the Arab League should take the initiative to launch this platform.</p> <p>Arms Control and Disarmament Department within the Arab League should establish a dedicated unit to launch an electronic magazine focused on arms-related issues. Furthermore, efforts should be intensified to publish analyses on the proliferation of weapons, aiming to identify solutions to limit their spread.</p>