NON-STATE ACTORS IN THE MIDDLE EAST: IMPLICATIONS FOR REGIONAL SECURITY

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By

Zulfiqar Ali Ishaq

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MSc. IR, EVENING

BY

ZULFIQAR ALI ISHAQ

Reg. No <u>01132011012</u>

SUPERVISED BY

DR. SYED QANDIL ABBAS

SCHOOL OF POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONs, QUAID-I-AZAM UNIVERSITY, ISLAMABAD.

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DECLARATION

I, Zulfiqar Ali Ishaq, Registration number. 01132011012, student of MSc. International Relation at the School of Politics, and International Relation Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad. Declares that the work done in this thesis is original and based on a personal effort. It is not copied from other sources and has not been presented elsewhere in any form. Wherever required references have been made and the corresponding citations have been given at the end. If any violation of Higher Education Commission rules (HEC) on research occurs, then, I shall be accountable for punishable action under the plagiarism rules of HEC.

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This is to certify the dissertation submitted by Zulfiqar Ali Ishaq, Registration No. 01132011012 on "Non-State Actors: Implications on The Regional Security in the Middle East" for partial fulfillment of MSc. International Relations is written up to my satisfaction.

Supervisor,

Dr. Syed Qandil Abbas

School of Politics and International Relations

Quaid-i-Azam University

Islamabad.

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Dedicated to,

My loving family and beloved teachers.

ABSTRACT

The state's Westphalian order, to be a high and powerful actor in international affairs, is declining. Now non-state actors have become major players in international affairs. These non-state actors have social, political, and military implications. Their armed forces and their media outlets are used to put pressure on states to change their policies or impose their ideology. These non-state elements vary based on organizational structure, operational strategy, ideological legitimacy, and military might. But, they have the same goal of increasing their power to influence states, protect their community, or impose their will. Most of the time, non-state actors come to the fore in response to the inadequacies, shortcomings, and unequal territorial demarcation of states. The Middle East is highly volatile and has more non-state actors than any other part of the world. The presence of many non-state actors has created more rifts and rivalries between enemies, and this trend has forced non-state actors to equip themselves more. Once non-state actors equip themselves, it threatens the security of the state as it enables them to conduct international operations. Regional competition between Iran-Saudi Arabia, UAE-Saudi Arabia, Turkey-Saudi Arabia, and Israel-Palestine, is the main reason for the emergence of non-state actors. Furthermore, peace, stability, and prosperity are considered to be in the best interests of the states that have the least supply in the Middle East. Sometimes, non-state actors work under the auspices of the state. The state inherits power from non-state actors, a legal force, but the problem arises when state hostages become the price of politics. This begs the question of what non-state actors are, and how they operate and endanger the security of states. In short, there is a correlation between non-state actors and weak states, negligence, and rights violations.

Table of Contents

ACRONYMS

EU   European Union

FSA   Free Syrian Army

GOs   Governmental organizations

GPD   Growth Domestic Production

GPS   Global Positioning System

KDP   Kurdish People's Democratic Party

IRGC   Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps

ISIL   Islamic State of Iraq and Levant

ISIS   Islamic State of Iraq and Syria

IS-K   Islamic State Khorasan

JCPOA   Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action

KDPI   Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran

KRG   Kurdish Regional Government

KSA   Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

MNCs   Multinational Companies

NGOs   Non-governmental Organizations

NSA's   Non-State Actors

NVNSA's   Non-violent Non-State Actors

OIC   Organization of Islamic Cooperation

PFLP   Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine

PJAK	Partiya Jiyana Azad a Kurdistan
	(Kurdistan Free Life Party)
PKK	Partiya Karker Kurdistan
	(Kurdistan Workers Party)
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization
PMF	Popular Mobilization Forces
PYD	Pasadena Young Democrats
	(Democratic Union Party of Kurds)
SA	State Actors
SSA's	Sub-State Actors
UAE	United Arab Emirate
UAV	Unmanned Arial Vehicle
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
USA	United States of America
VNSA's	violent Non-State Actors
VPNs	Virtual Private Networks
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

LIST OF FIGURES/TABLES

INTRODUCTION

The Middle East has a unique geo-strategic location. Because of this, it has a tumultuous and unstable history. The region is rich in natural resources along the Straits of Mandab and Hormuz, which are important gateways for trade. This section includes an introduction to the Middle East, its geography, its various names, resources, population, and population. This section also includes literature reviews and questions about hypotheses. Finally, the theoretical framework is discussed.

The Middle East: Geo-Political Profile

figure0.1

https://www.alamy.com/a-map-showing-the-Middle-East.

Geography:

The Middle East is geographically located horizontally between the Nile River and the Amu Darya (Oxus) River in Afghanistan, and vertically between Turkey and Yemen. There are 17 countries in the Middle East.

Total Population:

The total population of the Middle East is about 411 million. Egypt 100 million, Iraq 80 million, Iran 80 million, KSA 34 million, Yemen 30 million, Syria 17 million, Jordan 10 million, UAE 10 million, Lebanon 8 million, Israel 6 million, Palestine 6 million, Oman is 5 million. Kuwait is 4 million, Qatar and Bahrain about 2 million.

Different nomenclatures:

The Middle East[1] was first used by the Americans and has different names, as follows: West Asia, Near East, and the Levant.

Natural Resources:

40% of total world-proven gas reserves are in the Middle East along with 64% of world-proven oil reserves, amounting to 650 billion tons. In particular, the Gulf States are replete with an abundance of natural resources[2].

Opening

There are many non-state actors in the Middle East. The number of non-state actors in the Middle East is greater than in any other part of the world. Questions about their appearance, goals, and strategy have been addressed by scholars, researchers, and analysts. Non-state actors have a positive role to play in domestic politics. However, non-state actors endanger the regional security of the Middle East as they engage in arms proliferation and international operations. With this in mind, I have raised the following question.

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[1] Nazir Husain, „conceptual framework", in Strategic Dynamics of West Asia, Higher Education Commission, 1-8.
[2] Ibid.

Research questions

What are the non-state actors?

How and why did non-state actors emerge in the Middle East?

How non-state actors are endangering regional security in the Middle East?

Literature Review

Phill Williams[3], in "Violent non-state actors and national and international security", argued that violent non-state actors play a key role in the affairs of weak states and continue to expand their power until the state is taken, hostage. The arms industry has grown exponentially, and this trend is fueling arms procurement efforts. These actors now have easy access to weapons. Although it covers the reason behind the emergence of NSAs, it lacks details about the threats to state security posed by NSAs.

Fahad Eid, Mustapha Garba & Alfredo Gunter[4], in an article "Strategic challenges posed by non-state actors to collective security arrangements", argued since WW2, the globalization, humanitarian, and liberation movements have increased by non-state actors. Since then, non-state actors have expanded their operational capabilities beyond state borders and acquired international operational capabilities, which is a concern for regional security. In 1979, the United Nations imposed sanctions on Iraq, accusing it of supporting the PLF and al Qaeda. Along with the international operation of the NSAs, the United Nations passed a resolution in 2001 requiring 189 states to deny safe havens to terrorists. But simply passing a resolution does not address the issue of NSA expansion, as many states are still safe havens for armed militias.

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[3] Phill Williams, „violent non-state actors and national and international security", ISN, (2008).
https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/93880/2008/
[4] Fahad Eid, Mustapha Garba & Alfredo Gunter, „strategic challenges posed by non-state actors to collective security arrangements", Amy General Staff college (2016): 22-47.

Sumeyra Yildiz reviewed a book Insight Turkey's chapter "A Necessary Void in International Relations: Non-State Actors in the Middle East[5]". He described the problems of the Kurds, the manifestations of Hamas and Hezbollah, the first military, welfare, and political organizations, and the most influential. In 1962, Syria declared 120,000, then, later, 75,000 Kurds, foreigners, and sovereigns, depriving them of basic rights and citizenship. The mistreatment of Kurds in Syria was a major factor in the 2011 uprising. Lebanon's Hezbollah emerged to protect Lebanese Shiites from Maronite Christians because France, during their departure in 1943, had given Christians the most power in the division of power. Hamas emerged after PLO negotiated with Israel in the 1990s. The Muslim Brotherhood emerged after the fall of the Ottoman Empire in 1920. As a result, fragmentation, illegal occupation of native lands, and violations of fundamental rights are leading to polarization which increases the formation of violent militias.

Jin Liangxiang, in his paper "China and Middle East Security Issues: Challenges, Perceptions, and Positions[6]", said China's strategy to achieve stability in the region through regional players, rather than unilateral and partisan decisions, which is in the case of the United States. The United States has always been prejudiced in the Israel-Palestine issue. The Treaty of the Century and the recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital are just a few examples. China's role in the JCPOA was excellent, but Israel and the Arab states were unhappy. China has always supported constructive, neutral, and cooperative initiatives in the region and has maintained a neutral policy. Even during the ISIS peak, it kept its plants active in Baghdad, supplying it with 70 percent of its electricity. She also maintained the Huawei franchise in Syria during the peak of

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[5] Sumeyra Yildiz, „A Necessary Void in International Relations: Non-State Actors in the Middle East", Jstor (2016). Review: A Necessary Void in International Relations: Non-State Actors in the Middle East on JSTOR

[6] Jin Liangxiang, „China and Middle East security issues: Challenges, Perceptions and Position", Institute Affair International, (2020).

the war. The other things that are in short supply in the Middle East are prosperity and stability. Following the signing of the JCPOA, China imported 15 billion worth of oil in just 10 months in 2017. This indicates the weakness of the region in terms of economic opportunities.

Bashir Saade reviewed the book "New Conflict Dynamics: Between Regional Autonomy and Intervention in the Middle East and North Africa's" chapter "Hezbollah and its Takfiri Enemy in Syria rethink the relationship between states and non-state actors[7]". Bashir argued that the invention of the KSA version of the Wahhabis, called Shiite Kefir, led to the formation of an "Axis of Resistance" comprising Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon. The 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq, the 2005 assassination of Rafik Hariri (Lebanon's prime minister), and the FSA uprising in Syria strengthened the resistance axis in the region. During this phase, Hezbollah, with the help of the IRGC, expanded its operational capabilities in Syria. Beyond borders, the operational ability has endangered regional security. The current Hezbollah leader first appeared in 2000 on a program celebrating Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon. Hezbollah threatens those who will repeatedly try to break up Syria. This shows how important Syria is to Hezbollah geographically. The key fact about Hezbollah is that it does not call any Sunni an apostate nor does it openly support suicide attacks. The "Taif Treaty" was signed in 1989 to end Lebanon's civil war and was about Syria's withdrawal from Lebanon.

Christopher P. Dallas, in the article "Violent Non-state actors in the Middle East: Origin and Goals[8]", revealed that al-Qaeda was divided into al-Qaeda in Iraq and al-Nusra in Syria in 2004 and 2012, respectively. Then, in 2014, ISIS split from AQI with a radical Salafi jihadist ideology.

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[7] Bashir Saade, „Hezbollah and Its Takrifis Enemy in Syria Rethinking relationship between states and non-state actors", Danish institute of international studies, (2017). https//www.stir.ac.uk/research/hub/publication/507389.

[8] Christopher P. Dallas, „Non-state actors in the Middle East: Origin and Goals", E-International Relation, May (2019). https://www.e-ir.info/

The appearance of the NSA leads to further fragmentation and competition in the region. Summarizing the discussion, the author concludes that the ongoing competition and controversy are the launching pads of the NSA.

Al Qaeda 1988 Al Qaeda Iraq 2004 ISIS 2014

Al Qaeda 1988 - Nusra Syria 2014.

Frederic Wehrey, David E. Thaler, Cragin, and Nora, in the chapter "Iran and its Non-State Partners: Assessing Linkages and control[9]", of the book, Dangerous but not Omnipotent, raised questions about why does Iran support the NSAs, and how does it support them? Iran does this to counter its enemy's deterrent policy and acts as a retaliatory agent for Iran. Iran does so with economic, military, social, and ideological support. Initially, there was only one Shiite group in Lebanon called Amal. One was later split into Islamic Amal under the auspices of Iran, and Syrian Amal under Syria. This Islamic practice later manifested itself in the form of Hezbollah. Iran sent about 1,500 IRGCs to establish Hezbollah. At one point in the past, Iran was providing more than $200 million a year to Hezbollah. Initially, Lebanon's Hezbollah sought direct orders from Iran for its actions, but gradually it gained some sort of independence, and its policies revolved around Lebanese interests. Many times, Hezbollah directly denies the orders. As one of Nasrallah's speeches in 2007 said, "Nowadays, we are talking about new initiatives, Saudi-Iranian moves, and the revival of Arab moves. We would bless any effort." And bless anyone who tries to help Lebanon. I know the brothers in Iran, and whatever. Based on what we've heard from the Saudi brothers - neither Saudi Arabia nor Iran like the idea of embarrassing or forcing their friends into Lebanon. This is the first point. I am being humble here. Second, any agreement that can be reached between any two world states or governments, even if they enjoy

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[9] Frederic Wehrey, David E. Thaler, Cragin and Nora. „Iran and its Non-State Partners: Assessing Linkages and control", in Dangerous but not omnipotent, (Rand corporation, 2007), 81-128.

great respect and dignity, cannot be binding on the Lebanese, who have their true national interests and must be pursued. "Similarly, there is a large division of jurisprudential fatwas on the role of clergy in politics. Iraqi Miraji (the leading Shiite cleric) opposes Miraji's direct role in politics, which is why Iran has always failed to take a strong foothold in Iraqi politics and increase its influence by supporting its NSAs. This difference divides Iraqi Shiites into pro-Iranian (Hakim family) and Iraqi nationalist Shiites (Sadrists).

Udi Dekel, Nir Boms, and Ofir Winter, in the magazine "Syria‟s New Map and New Actors: Challenges and Opportunities for Israel‟s" first chapter "The Rise of Non-State actors in Syria[10] authors describe the sudden rise of violent militias in Syria to overthrow Bashar al-Assad's government in 2011. Shortly afterward, intervention by Turkey, KSA, Qatar, UAE, and the USA forced Iran, Russia, and Iraq to intervene. This led to a devastating civil war, in which about 350,000 people were killed and 6 million were displaced. Then the extremist ISIS began occupying the cities, bringing the Syrian government to the brink of collapse. Then Iran, Russia, and Hezbollah joined the war, sided with Assad to change the equation, and Assad survived. In this war, Israel remains neutral, thinking that extremists coming to power in Syria is a threat to Israel, and has promised to remain neutral until Syria provides logistical support to Hezbollah. Accusing Syria of supporting Hezbollah, Israel carried out 15 airstrikes on alleged Hezbollah camps between 2015-2016

Shedding light on the importance of NSAs writer Farida Lakhanzy, in the article "How important NSAs are[11]" argued that NSA has a great role to play in making international relations easier and smoother. They conduct seminars to train young people, address modern issues such

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[10] Udi Dekel, Nay Boms, and ofir winter, „The Rise of non-state actors in Syria‟, INSS, (2016).

[11]Farida Lakhany, „How important non-state actors are‟, Pakistan Institute of International affairs, (2007). https://www.jstor.org/stable/41394369.

as climate change, create awareness among citizens and teach skills. The author is mainly talking about non-violent non-state actors in the form of NGOs and MNCs. The author cites the example of British Petroleum, which for the first time addressed the issue of climate change and supported the Kyoto Protocol. The 20 MNCs of the world are larger than the GDP of 25 states. All of these help states co-operate economically and politically.

The American University of Beirut held the conference under the title "Emerging security threats in the Middle East". The conference noted that competition for limited natural resources, such as water, electricity, and energy, would lead to major conflicts in the region. Future wars and conflicts over water resources are expected as the region suffers from drought. The major rivers are the Euphrates (Turkey, Syria, and Iraq), the Tigris (Turkey, Syria, and Iraq), the Jordan River (Palestine, Israel, Jordan, and Syria), and the Nile (Ethiopia, Sudan, and Egypt). Conflicts between upper and lower basin beneficiaries are more likely. Decreased water flow due to climate change has been noted. At the same time, migration is becoming a headache for regional security, which has already happened, and repatriation is a major issue faced by the region.

Maryam Sinaiee, in his report on web news "Is Tehran readying an assault on Iranian Kurdish Groups in Iraq[12]", and Namo Abdulla, in his column "Turkish Operation increase conflicts among Kurds in Iraq", wrote about the Kurd issue. Both readings make it clear that the Kurds are the largest ethnic community with a population of about 40 million who do not have their state. After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, they were divided into Turkey, Syria, Iraq, and Syria. They started many freedom movements. That is why Syrian Kurdish liberation fighters fled to Iraq or Turkey, and vice versa. The same is true in the case of Iraq and Iran. All states view local

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[12] Maryam Sinaiee, 'Is Tehran readying an assault on Iranian Kurdish Groups in Iraq', Iran international, 10 September 2021.
https://old.iranintl.com/en/iran/tehran-readying-assault-iranian-kurdish-groups-iraq

Kurds with suspicion and carry out operations/airstrikes on them. On the other hand, the constant attacks on the Kurdish states raised the point of confrontation between them.

Muhammad Afzal Uppal, Handbook of Islamic Sects and Movements[13]. Explains the different traditions of Sunni and Shia Islam. The Sunni tradition includes Sufism and Salafis. Imamaya, Zaydism, and Ismailiyyah in the Shiite tradition. Both sects have radicalism, such as Al Qaeda, ISIS, Hamas, the Taliban, and Hezbollah. The author has studied the structure, ideology, and organizational structure of each armed militia of both Sunni and Shia sects.

Kabir Taneja, in his article "Israel, Palestine and the complication of an NSA's in Hamas[14]", reveals the politics of some states on the issue of Palestine. The OIC recently condemned the war between Israel and Hamas in the Gaza Strip, which is 12 kilometers wide and 40 kilometers long and has a population of about 2 million. Many OIC member states, such as Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Jordan, Turkey, and Egypt, are normalizing relations with Israel without consulting the Palestinians.

Seth Harrison, in his article "Evolving tech, Evolving Terror", argued that the new technology and its easy availability to the general public have reduced the security of states. Especially when terrorists use it. Using social media, VPN owners not only recruit members from anywhere in the world but also enhance their literary and operational abilities. A clear example is ISIS recruiting more than 400 people from Malaysia even though it is thousands of kilometers away from their headquarters. It enhances their recruitment, jihadist messages, ideology, arms purchases, and operations.

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[13] Muhammad Afzal Uppal, „Fundamentalism and Extremism", in Handbook of Islamic Sects and Movements, (Brill Publisher, 2021), 380-445.

[14] Kabir Taneja, „Israel, Palestine and the complication of non-state actors in Hamas", Observer Research Foundation, May 18, (2021).
 https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/israel-palestine-and-the-complication-of-a-non-state-actor-in-hamas/

.Dr. Nazir Hussain, in the chapter "Conceptual framework, West Asia and Future conflicts," of the book strategic dynamics of west Asia[15] mentioned that there are many problems in the Middle East. There have been many wars. The Israel-Palestine, Iraq-Iran war, the Hezbollah-Israel war, the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait to the four Arab-Israeli wars, are all covered. One of the main causes of conflict in the region is the unrepresentative and unpopular Arab governments. Sovereign monarchies do not focus on the public interest because there is no fear of direct or indirect reaction. They do what they want. Another aspect is that these authoritarian governments seek international acceptance, which is not possible without positive signals of great power on every issue. Therefore, all kingdoms remain weak as long as they do not bow to the demands of the great powers.

James Dobbins, Seth G. Jones, and Benjamin Runkle, in the chapter "Disarming Militias and Countering Insurgents[16]", of the book Occupying Iraq: A History of the Coalition Provisional Authority, authors explained a case study of Iraq, where there are more than 30 militias with the help of 100,000 armed supporters. When, in 2003, a Shiite cleric, Abdul Khoi, was assassinated and Shiite leader Muqtada al-Sadr was charged. Coalition forces, along with Iraqi forces, were unable to arrest him for fear of opposition from his supporters. It shows how strong the NSAs are. Unless and until all states have a joint strategy and plan to disarm the militia, nothing will change. Because one group is afraid of the other and vice versa.

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[15] Nazir Hussain, 'Conceptual framework, West Asia and Future conflicts', in strategic dynamics of west Asia, (Higher Education Commission, 2010), 163-176.

[16] James Dobbins, Benjamine Runke, and Seth G. Jones, 'Disarming Militias and Countering Insurgents,' In Occupying Iraq: A history of coalition Provisional Authority. (Rand corporation, 2003), 297-322.

In an interview Maha Yahya, Dan Kur,tzer, and Vali Nasr, with the title "Whither the Middle East: New Peace or More Conflict[17]?" talked about the Middle East. It covers current trends and predicts the future of the region. Shortly, Arab and non-Arab states are expected to normalize relations with Israel and compete for regional supremacy. KSA and UAE are now trying to become more liberal societies and economies to attract foreign investment. It will be interesting to see the reaction of the radical Islamists, especially in the case of KSA. The world is moving towards integration and multi-polarity. Powerful states in the region compete to gain strong footprints. Finding strong footprints will increase proxy wars which will result in more strong NSAs in the region.

Hypothesis:

Non-state actors challenge the writ of states by using unauthorized force and are equipped with sophisticated weapons that enable them to carry out their operations which consequently pose serious security threats to the Middle East.

Research Methodology

Qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques are applied to longitudinal time dimensional research.

The Theoretical Framework (by Thomas Aquinas)

As the global community[18], we face the problems of globalization, terrorism, 24-hour international news coverage, weapons of mass destruction, and failed states. All belong to the international political-ideological tradition. It is about the relationship between citizens and

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[17] Maha Yahya, Dan Kurtzer and Vali Nasr, „Whither the Middle East: New Peace or More Conflict?" Wilson center, (September 2020).
https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/whither-middle-east-new-peace-or-more-conflict
[18] Eric. E Smith, „Just War Theory and Non-State Actors", (Routledge 2020).

states, justice, and community. Also, the division of national and international politicians, and the demand for equality, and justice need to be seen from a domestic perspective.

Tracing the evolution of Just War Theory[19], we analyze situations involving armed non-state actors who are powerful and poses destructive abilities to achieve their basic goals of justice, fairness, and equality. This research shows that the Just War Theory adjusts its application to scenarios involving modern statecraft and armed non-state actors. As we know, non-state actors call their actions a just struggle to gain justice, and rights. They believe that their ideology is the answer to all problems and social evils. Therefore, all issues can be resolved fairly by imposing their ideology. The NSA calls their struggle a fair struggle, a movement, a fair movement, a conflict, a fair conflict, and a murder, a just murder.

Some people promote the idea of just war. For example, everyone should avoid war, but they should only adhere to the principles of just war. In other words, war is not only seen as a power of exchange but also as a social institution consisting of rules, and principles. Within this sphere of thought, we do not seek the causes of war, but the justifications for action. Just War Theory deals with the justification of how and why wars are fought. One of the most important studies is the political philosopher Walser's 'Just and Unjust Wars 1970'.

But analysts say that non-state actors use different ideologies to achieve their goals, and ordinary citizens are caught in this trap and push their agenda. With this concept, many non-state actors came into the force, which diminished the role of the state in international affairs.

The only theory of war is related to the justification of how and why wars are fought. The justification can be either ideological or historical. The ideological aspect has to do with the

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[19] Erik Jorgensen, 'International relations theory', (Palgrave 2018), 41-65.

moral justification of war. The historical aspect, or "war-only tradition", relates to the historical body of principles or treaties that apply to the various wars. War ideology also has a long history. Some parts of the Bible refer to the concept of morality and justice in war, usually declaring war justice through divine intervention.

CHAPTER ONE

UNDERSTANDING THE PHENOMENON OF NON-STATE ACTORS

This chapter explains what non-state actors are. How many types of non-state actors are there and what kind of violence do they use? In addition, this chapter clearly describes the involvement of non-state actors in national, regional, and international affairs. Last but not least, with the emergence of non-state actors, the role of states in international affairs is dwindling.

1.1   NON-STATE ACTORS' DEFINITIONS AND BASIC UNDERSTANDING

"Non-state actors include organizations or individuals that are not affiliated with, directed by, or funded by governments." according to the UN[20].

Or

"An individual or organization that has significant political influence but is not allied to any particular country or state."

Non-state actors enable public oversight and review of government actions. Such review procedures not only support the implementation by providing feedback for further policy improvement at the national and international levels. Also, guide the demand-driven policy framework. In addition, he tagged himself as a true defender of any ethnic or religious group.

Non-state actors use a variety of tactics to achieve their goals, including protests, hijackings, suicide bombings, kidnappings, and assassinations. In this age of modern technology, the lethality and power of attacks have become more powerful and lethal as non-state actors have adopted technology and gained easy access to weapons.

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[20] Economics Social and cultural rights, „non-state actors", google, viewed on 4 December 2021.
https://www.escr-net.org/resources/non-state-actors.

Types of Non-State Actors:

There are two types of non-state actors. The first is non-violent non-state actors such as multinational companies (MNCs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs, which participate in social, economic, political, and environmental activities) and the second is violent non-state actors who commit crimes. Are groups, terrorist organizations, militias, insurgents, and militants. These organizations use unlawful force, and use unauthorized force to further their agenda, weaken the state writ, and harm their opponents. This leads to the failure of states - which leads to further chaos and impact on neighboring states, which threatens instability and security.

In such a situation, the state first tries to resolve the problem on its own. In most cases, the state alone can't handle the rise of non-state actors. But, joint efforts go a long way in disarming or thwarting the threat of non-state actors.

Globalization has increased the influence of the private sector with mixed results for the economic, social, and political rights. The economic output of the world's largest MNCs exceeds the GDP of many countries. International corporations, with operations in different countries, wield considerable power (even in countries' domestic economic policies) that challenges the traditional state-based mechanism of accountability. As countries compete with each other for investment, they often relax investment requirements, which often violates the fundamental rights of indigenous peoples.

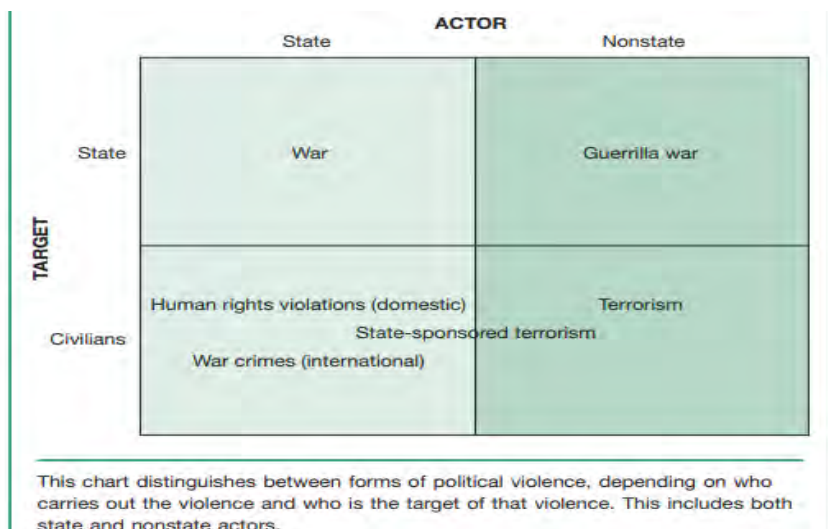**Area of concern**

Our area of concern is the non-state elements that are endangering the state writ and are highly equipped for cross-border activities in the Middle East. Within a wide range of non-state elements, the emergence of a range of armed groups throughout the Middle East has caused great concern and international attention. The trend of non-state actors is global and in no way limited

to the Middle East. As non-state actors, the category of violent non-state actors is wide. VNSAs violently challenge the state's monopoly on the use of force and can take many different forms, including tribal and ethnic groups, militants, drug traffickers, terrorists, militias, insurgents, and international terrorist organizations. Their goals are not limited to the state level, but also at the regional or global level. Many people are less motivated by ideology than by profit, while others are influenced by social concerns. In both politically stable and unstable countries, mafia-type organizations, community-based watchdogs, and private security forces have emerged. In the Arab world, the social and political conditions that have emerged since the 2011 uprising have paved the way for the emergence of armed non-state actors in many states.

These elements somehow get state patronage and are active in other states with destructive weapons ranging from rockets to missiles.

Types of violence

These are different types of violence that can happen at both inter-state level and intra-state level, differentiated in a given figure 1.1

This chart distinguishes between forms of political violence, depending on who carries out the violence and who is the target of that violence. This includes both state and nonstate actors.

Patrick_H._O'Neil, "Political violence, essentials of comparative politics," pp. 276.

1.2 NON-STATE ACTORS IN DOMESTIC POLITICS

The presence of non-state actors[21] in national politics is normal as they are an integral part of society to smooth public opinion and convey their demands to higher authorities. In general, they play an active role in the decision-making process and work to make these decisions more public-centric and acceptable to their group. They can be in the form of parties, trade unions, student unions, councils, committees, and companies. Their influence is so great that they can force the state to change its policy or decision. In other words, the role of state decision-making is diminishing. The strength of the domestic NSA depends on how strong it is economically and politically. Another determining factor is the NSA's street power, which is widely used in weak states. A state may benefit from its demands, but it has to pay a heavy price in the case of political, social, and economic instability. The free flow of information and misinformation has helped the NSA to make its statement and has challenged the existing structure of nation-states.

At the national level, the insurgents are seeking to overthrow established governments, militias filling in the gaps left by the states, and pressure groups infiltrating institutions. All of these are attracted to interest rather than theory. Although domestic NSAs are not capable of carrying out any international action, they are powerful enough to force the state to change policy at their behest. In this modern age, they have a strong lobbying structure to influence the foreign policy of the nation-states.

Typically, the emergence of NSAs at the domestic level is the result of injustice, negligence, weak state, violation of rights, religious ideology, or competition. Citizens are sometimes exploited by giving false information and, based on this specific information, they prepare

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[21] Farida Lakhany, 'How important non-state actors are', Pakistan Institute of International affairs, (2007). https://www.jstor.org/stable/41394369.

statements to attract the public. Opportunities for exploitation are directly linked to social evils in the form of illiteracy, corruption, lack of basic rights, unemployment, and extremist literature.

When non-state elements target a state, it is called guerrilla warfare and in the case of civilians, it is terrorism. On the other hand, when a state targets its citizens, it is called state-sponsored terrorism. In addition to their role in negative development, NSAs have been instrumental in the post-WWII eradication of colonies, the proper protection of ethnic groups, and the promotion of public opinion.

On the other hand, the state can fight extremism and other social evils with these actors instead of feeling insecure about them. Today, nation-states are not able to solve their problems alone. Therefore, strategies to counter national threats would be more effective if they engaged with the NSA. Ultimately, states remain superior because they provide protection and a legal framework to NSAs.

1.3 NON-STATE ACTORS IN REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

In addition to domestic activities, the NSA is involved in regional and international politics[22]. On the one hand, it prepares background papers, and reports to s educate delegates, facilitates transportation, facilitates trade, creates means of communication, and provides humanitarian aid for humans. On the other hand, when they have conflicts with states, they are a serious cause for concern because they use direct or indirect force to subjugate the state. State nations always feel insecure about these NSAs because they are involved in disproportionate wars with states without proper address and space.

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[22] Christopher P. Dallas, „Non-state actors in the Middle East: Origin and Goals", E-International Relation, May (2019). https://www.e-ir.info/

There are an estimated 40,000 NGOs by 2019. The value of the 20 largest MNCs in the world exceeds the GDP of 25 states. In addition, there are 5,000 nations in the world and only 200 nation-states. In addition to nation-states, a sense of loyalty between ethnic groups has led to the emergence of Kurdish-like liberation movements in the Middle East. NSAs can sometimes take the form of humanitarian organizations, such as Amnesty International, and the Red Crescent. Movements for independence from illegal occupiers such as Hamas are gaining momentum. Violent actors in the form of al-Qaeda and ISIS, religious extremists, justify their actions to revive the Khilafah. There are actors in the drug trade who do not have the support of a state like Madeleine in Colombia to deal with drugs. Therefore, in the international arena, NSAs can be in the form of NGOs, humanitarian organizations, MNCs, liberation movements, and religious movements.

If the NSA is violent and at war with the state, no single nation can defeat it alone. As they use new technical options as well as unconventional tactics to operate. In this case, the joint strategy of the neighboring states could be effective. Otherwise, terrorist organizations will find safe havens anywhere near to target area.

Most NSAs operate with state approval, except for a few. Without the NSAs, the state would not solve the problem alone, so it would have to cooperate with them. They have international or regional offices. Aligning with others and establishing regional or international animosity beyond the borders of states makes it more complicated and confusing. This will risk the sovereignty of the state, but it is at the expense of the prosperity of the nation. These figures reflect the declining role of states in international affairs.
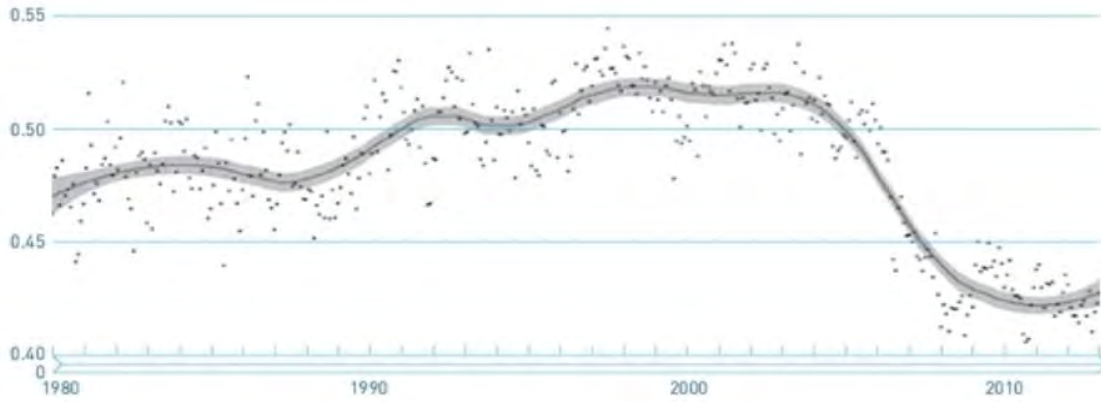
Figure1.2

FIGURE 4.1: DECLINING INVOLVEMENT OF STATE ACTORS IN GLOBAL EVENTS, MEASURED BY SHARE OF GLOBAL NEWS COVERAGE (%), SINCE 2000 (SOURCE: GDELT).

https://www.jstor.org/stable/pp. 147

CHAPTER TWO

NON-STATE ACTORS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

This chapter is dedicated to non-state actors from the Middle East. What is the reason for these actors to emerge on the scene, and what makes them relevant even in today's modern world? The background of non-state actors in the Middle East and how they get into politics are also discussed. Some actors use force indiscriminately, some use force only for caution. Last but not least, the Middle East is one of the most volatile regions in the world, and the facts and figures show that it is the biggest victim of terrorism in the world.

2.1 NON-STATE ACTORS IN THE MIDDLE EAST: A HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Middle East has a history of turbulence and instability from the very beginning when the Ottoman Empire disintegrated in the number of countries which are currently on the map of the Middle East and some in Eastern Europe. The Ottoman Empire's disintegration in 1920 wouldn't have happened without inter-communal, political, and ethnic divisions. Diversity of religions and competition, especially between Sunni-Shia can be traced long back. Newly established states started to compete with each other. Over the period, new states came into being, like Syria and Jordan in 1946. The self-styled announcement of Israel's formation at the heart of the Arab world gave a new spark to existing conflicts and violence. The formation of new organizations happened, like the PFLP by Jorge Habash, Al-Fatah, and PLO in 1982 to defend the cause of Palestine. Likewise, Israel forms the underground terrorist organization Hagana[23] to defend[24] resistance from the Palestinian side.

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[23] Lazar, „The Hagana by Arab and Palestinian historiography", (2002).

After the unraveling of the Islamic Revolution of Iran and the war with Iraq from 1980-to 1988, the eight-year war further triggered the war of proxies. Furthermore, the Iranian deterrent policy to dissuade other states from attacking Iran by activating proxies in other states puts fuel on the fire. Neighboring states became skeptical of Iran and the involvement of big powers led Iran to defend its revolution on fronts beyond the state. Hezbollah came into being in 1982 in Lebanon, the most organized non-state actor armed with highly strategic weapons in the Middle East. It is a politico-military organization with its welfare and media organizations. Its intelligence service is the most integrated and powerful, which is why Israel, which is its main enemy, does not dare to target Hezbollah inside Lebanon. This force came into being with the help of the IRGC after the unjust and maltreatment of the Shiites of Lebanon. After the rise of the Saudi strand of Wahhabism called Shia Kefirs, Hezbollah became more active to protect Shia from such an ideology in the region. It believes in three fundamental things, which are Shiite Islam, Faqeh, and Jihad. Its armed forces are estimated to be at 10000. The emergence of ISIS in Iraq and Syria helped Hezbollah to extend its operational ability beyond the border.

ISIS[25] is a militant Sunni Islamist group that gained global attention in 2014 when it drove Iraqi security forces out of key cities in Iraq, followed by its capture of Mosul. A UN report estimated a total of 15,000 fighters from over 80 countries were in ISIS"s ranks in November 2014. US intelligence estimated an increase to around 20,000 foreign fighters in February 2015, including 3,400 from the Western world. Where did it come from, and what are its intentions?   In 2011-12, ISIS emerged on the scene with more destructive and lethal weapons with an ideology to establish an Islamic Emirate comprising Iraq and Syria initially, then to expand it into all Middle

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[24] ibid.
[25] Wilson center, „Timeline: The Rise, Spread, and fall of the Islamic State", viewed on October 28, 2019. https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/28/10/2019 state.

Eastern states. Putting many states" security under threat, many states use non-state actors on other nations" soil to protect their borders. In this context, Hezbollah became active in Syria and Mobilization Force in Iraq to fight ISIS. About ISIS's emergence, many analysts believe that it was because of the failure of Iraq in 2003 to provide sustainable livable opportunities to all communities. The dramatic territorial expansion of IS has also been linked to the failings of the Iraqi state since the US invasion, especially the sectarian approach pursued by Nouri al-Maliki, the then Prime Minister of the country.

Muslim Brotherhood, Arabic al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin, is a religious-political organization founded in 1928 in Ismailia, Egypt. Islamist in orientation, it advocated a return to the Quran and the Hadith as guidelines for a modern Islamic society. The Brotherhood spread rapidly throughout Egypt, Sudan, Syria, Palestine, Lebanon, and North Africa. Although the figure for Brotherhood membership is variable, it is estimated that at its height in the late 1940s it may have had some 500,000 members. Muslim Brotherhood members participated in all the Arab-Israeli wars. Then in 2011, the Arab spring emerged unexpectedly, influenced by the Islamic revolution, Tunisian revolution, and social evils along with economic stagnation in Arab states. Ikhwan-al-Muslimin was successful in overthrowing monarch Hosni Mubarak. This event was a source of encouragement for other non-state actors in the region.

The Houthis are Zaidi Shia and were rulers of northern Yemen when, in 1963, Imam Yahiya was overthrown by commander Abdullah al-Salal. After that, the Houthis were the target of injustice and prejudice in Yemen. Due to their various demands and pressure, President Hadi promised to hold a fair election, which never materialized. Then in 2014, Houthis rebelled against the government and captured Sana. Iran found this opportunity to exert influence in Yemen, which has been the most recent and is the most limited, but it has got tremendous

momentum in the wake of Saudi intervention in Yemen in March 2015. This fragile atmosphere helps other non-state actors to reorganize themselves. Now they are capable of carrying out strikes outside Yemen with drone or missile attacks. The Yemen War has cost almost 233,000 human lives and billions of dollars in economic loss to parties involved in the conflict.

Kurds[26] are considered to be the largest ethnic group without a nation and are Sunni Muslims. The disintegration of the Ottoman Empire divided Kurds into four states: Turkey, Syria, Iran, and Iraq. The Kurds" population is almost 35 million. 14 million are in Turkey, 8 million are in Iran, 3.5 million are in Iraq, and 1.7 million live in Syria. In 1962, 120,000 and later some 75,000 Kurds in Syria were given the status of Ajanibs, and Maktoumeen, which deprives them of the right to citizenship and other basic rights. In 2014, the rise of the Democratic Union Party (PYD) in Syria against the government was the result of maltreatment and injustice toward Kurds. Later on, this movement was overshadowed by ISIS"s advancement. Kurds believe in the reunification of Kurds" living areas, consider borders illegitimate, and demand autonomy. The US supported this movement and President Wilson promised the Kurds a separate state. But now the USA has abandoned the Kurds. They are freedom fighters, which is why parents look suspiciously at them. The Kurdish Workers Party (PKK), which is involved in many guerrilla warfares against the state in the Middle East to support their cause, is declared a terrorist organization by Turkey, Iran, the UK, and many other states.

Hamas is a Sunni militant Islamist group. Hamas is the only non-state actor to form a government in 2006 in the Gaza strip. Like Hezbollah, Hamas is also a socio-political and military organization. It came into being in 1987 and is an offshoot of the PLO. Israel-PLO

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[26] Maryam Sinaiee, „Is Tehran readying an assault on Iranian Kurdish Groups in Iraq", Iran international, 10 September 2021.
https://old.iranintl.com/en/iran/tehran-readying-assault-iranian-kurdish-groups-iraq

negotiations The PLO endorse a two-state solution, but Hamas doesn''t believe in the two-state solution, and considered the whole of Palestine a land of Palestinians, rejecting the existence of Israel. It is powerful in the Gaza strip and competes with Al-Fatah, which is powerful on the west bank, a moderate group.

2.2 CAUSES BEHIND THE PRESENCE OF NSAs IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The history of the Middle East is full of violent conflicts - interstate wars, civil wars, insurrections, revolutions, uprisings, attacks by foreign powers, and ethnic and sectarian riots. There has been no peace in the Middle East, especially since the 1967 war between a group of Arab states led by Israel and Egypt. There are a variety of structural conditions in the Middle East that allow a range of political actors to violently resist or defeat the authority of the state and its allies.

Competition for regional supremacy is a fact of life in the international system and is especially evident in this region of the world - whether it is a long-standing enmity like Iran vs. Iraq or current enmities like Iran vs. Saudi Arabia. As part of this hegemonic contest, state-sponsored groups are bidding to maintain the status quo. As a result of the use of military force by civilians or by foreign powers, countries in the region[27] (Yemen, Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon) are considered failed states that provide shelter for many violent and resilient non-state actors.

Multiple states in the region do not have a monopoly on the use of force within their borders, and that means, NSAs hold vital and decisive power throughout political events in the region. The current level and nature of conflict in the region seem to be degrading the power of the state even further. This allows not only the major NSAs to influence the politics of the region but also

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[27] Christopher P. Dallas, „Non-state actors in the Middle East: Origin and Goals", E-International Relation, May (2019). https://www.e-ir.info/

the „industry" of hundreds of other groups who also act as critical factors in the course and speed of political change.

The insurgency in Iraq has tens of thousands of fighters who both resist the government, conflict between ISIS and Shiite militias, and fight against the US coalition. The civil wars in Yemen and Libya have been going on unabated since 2011 and these states are slipping into even deeper failure, allowing different types of NSAs to flourish and rule over parts of these countries. In addition, racial tensions contributed to the formation of NSAs. A good example would be the case study of the Kurds, who are demanding a separate homeland on ethnic grounds.

The creation of the state of Israel in the heart of Palestine has, of course, played an important role, with the involvement of a major power, as well as the United States, in particular, multiplying the number of NSAs. The emergence of the Islamic Revolution in Iran made the neighboring states suspicious, which led to the activation of the NSAs. In addition to these unquestionable monarchies, it contributes greatly to the formation of the NSAs to become a regional power. In this regard, the abundance of natural resources and the violation of rights cannot be ignored.

2.3   POLITICS OF NON-STATE ACTORS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The number of violent non-state actors in the Middle East is greater than in other parts of the world. These actors differ in their organizational structure, operation strategy, types of weapons used, objectives, and dynamic theory. Many have the same goals on a large scale, like Hezbollah and Hamas, despite their differences. On the other hand, many actors seem to be the same but have different goals, such as Al Qaeda and ISIS. The most volatile region for decades

is the Middle East and North Africa. This picture is enough to understand the region most

affected by terrorism in the Middle East. terrorism[28] in the Middle East.

Table2.1

Terrorist attacks from 2002 to 2019, by region
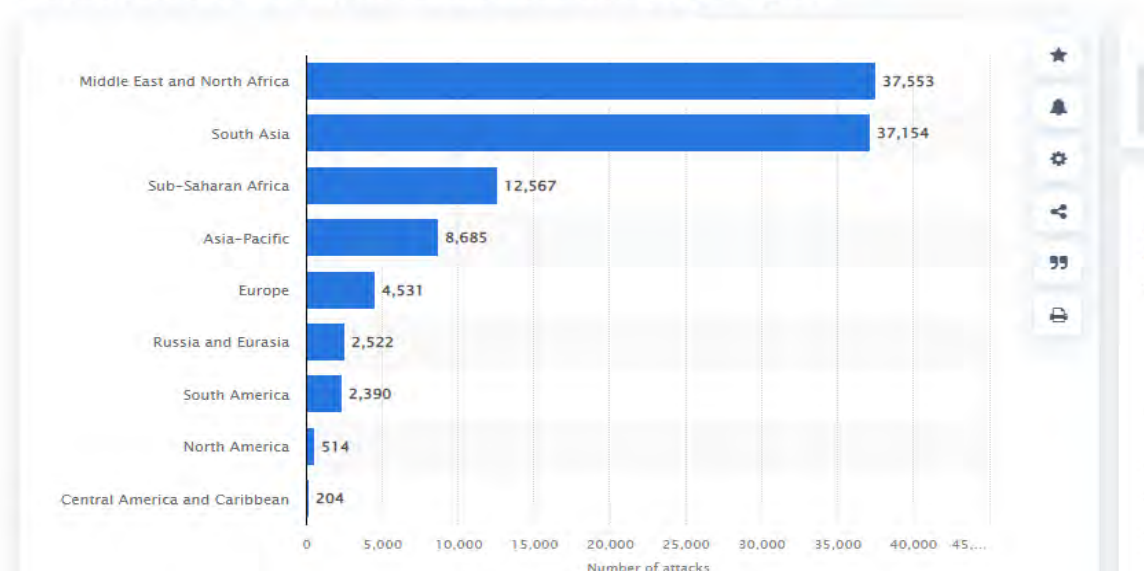
"ISIS" (Syria and Iraq): It is a militant Sunni Islamist group that gained international attention

in 2014 when it pushed Iraqi security forces out of key Iraqi cities, after which it seized Mosul.

In December, the New York Times published Major General's secret remarks to the United States

in the Middle East, in which he admitted that he had barely traced the Islamic State. "We have

not defeated the idea," he said. "We don't even understand the idea." The group had seized large

and was close to their capitals until 2016. Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi is its leader. He was the first

(so-called ISIS caliph to deliver the Ramadan sermon at the Great Mosque of Al-Nuri in Mosul.

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[28] Statist Research Department, „Terrorist attacks from 2002 to 2019, by region", December 2021.
https://www.statista.com/statistics/489581/terrorist-attacks-by-region/.

The Islamic State, also known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), follows a particular type of Islam whose beliefs focus on the revival of the Khilafah in the Middle East rather than the world. The group is a branch of al-Qaeda.

ISIS came to the fore with extremely destructive weapons and a brutal massacre strategy to stop its opponents on the battlefield. Second, it uses social media more effectively to convey its message, including the brutal killings of innocent civilians in the affected states. During its heyday, it carried out operations outside its home states, carrying out suicide attacks in France, Spain, Britain, and Russia.

It was the largest and richest in 2015. Then Russia, along with Iran and Hezbollah, changed the equation. And by 2017, ISIS lose 95% of its control in Iraq and Syria. Along with the destruction of these two states, thousands of militants were killed and the loss of civilians was invincible.

It is now considered a defeated organization, but its ideology can still recruit manpower from anywhere in the world. Experts say it will target civilians in Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan from unknown harbors. Its current leader is Abu Hashim al-Qureshi.

"Hezbollah" of Lebanon: Hezbollah[29] is considered one of the most organized and powerful non-state forces in the Middle East and Iran's most trusted ally. When Israel assassinated its leader Mousavi in 1992, Hezbollah retaliated by attacking the Israeli embassy in Argentina, leading to an informal agreement between Israel and Hezbollah to allow Israeli troops to operate in northern Lebanon, and Hezbollah and its leaders will not be attacked by Israel.

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[29] Bashir Saade, „Hezbollah and Its Takrifis Enemy in Syria Rethinking relationship between states and non-state actors", Danish institute of international studies, (2017). https//www.stir.ac.uk/research/hub/publication/507389.

Hezbollah's 24-day war with Israel in 2006 was significant in the history of the Middle East when a non-state actor fought with the state after capturing Israeli soldiers. The state must win the war that was not in the Israeli-Hezbollah war and the non-state elements to survive the war. The war ended with the exchange of Palestinian prisoners with Israeli troops. During the conflict with Israel, Iran helped Hezbollah to the best of its ability to provide missiles, rockets, and tanks. Iran is a major supporter of Hezbollah and has helped its foundations and strengthened them financially. In the past, Iran has provided more than 200 million a year to Hezbollah. The links between Iran and Hezbollah have been noted by many experts and analysts, as well as the role of the Quds Force in its successful operations against Israel.

Hezbollah played a key role in the Syrian civil war and is the most important source of power for the Assad regime in fighting anti-Assad forces in Syria.

The joint Iranian-Hezbollah military campaign against Israel was multifaceted: it included guerrilla warfare, and ambush attacks, and succeeded in removing Israeli forces from southern Lebanon. Motivated their alliance for dialogue. Hezbollah's main goal is to eliminate Israel in the future.

The current leader of Hezbollah is Hassan Nasrallah and he has not shown his manpower. However, Hassan Nasrallah said in 2021 that his organization has 100,000 trained fighters, of which about 30,000 are full-time fighters and the rest are reserves.

"Hamas" of Palestinian Authority: It is a Sunni Militant Islamic group. Hamas is the only non-state actor to form a government in the Gaza Strip in 2006. Like Hezbollah, Hamas is a socio-political and military organization. Although it has differences with Hezbollah on several grounds, its main goal is to eliminate Israel from Palestine and consider Israel its sole enemy.

Like Hezbollah, Iran supports Hamas and supplies many rockets and missiles. Iran began financing Hamas in the 1990s and was a key supporter of Hamas in gaining control of Gaza in 2006. Hamas's alliance with the Quds Force has often favored Hamas, Iran's most powerful Palestinian ally. The Quds Force has a long history of training, funding, and arming Palestinian militant groups fighting Israel.

In 2017, Saudi Arabia imposed sanctions on Qatar, saying it supported Hamas politically and financially. So far, the UAE has transferred 1.5 billion euros ($ 1.8 billion) to Hamas. Turkey is also supporting Hamas, as President Erdogan has repeatedly promised to support Hamas leader Ismail Aniya.

Hamas has launched several phases of intifada movements against (the Israeli occupation of land). It is considered a closer ally of Iran than the Arab states. In May 2021, 250 Palestinians were killed in the recent 11-day conflict between Israel and Hamas. During this time, Hamas fired thousands of rockets into Israel, some of which penetrated. And Hamas has an estimated 8,000 rockets. Sources estimate that its manpower is around 30,000-50,000.

Trump called Hamas a terrorist organization. Hamas published a "document of general principles and policies"). According to Hamas, the Jews have no right to any part of the Palestinian territories.

Popular Mobilization Force (PMF) "Hashad-e-Shabi" of Iraq: The Popular Mobilization Force[30] is an Iraqi state-sponsored organization of about 40 forces, mostly Shiite Muslim groups, but also Sunni Muslim, Christian, and Yazidi groups. It was formed in 2014 and has fought every major war against ISIS and by early 2018 it was formally recognized as a regular force in Iraq.

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[30] Michael Knights, Hamdi Malik, Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, „The Future of Iraq's Popular Mobilization Forces", The Washington Institute of Near East Policy, May 28, 2020.

Some of its leaders are considered terrorists like other states and many are accused of sectarian acts, with large numbers of protesters and activists killed during protests in Iraq in 2020.

Although there are no official figures for its strength, many believe it includes about 20,000 militants and a total of 130,000 with 40,000 Sunni militias.

It was formed on the orders and fatwas of Ayatollah Sistani following the rise of ISIS and its ambitious moves to occupy all of Iraq and Syria. It was set up primarily by the Iraqi counter-terrorism organization Quds Force, with the help of Iran, Syria, and Russia. It has good relations with other non-state actors, such as Hezbollah and the Dawa Party of Iraq. Its main opponent is ISIS, the Nusra Front, and the state of Israel.

Although it was legalized by the Iraqi parliament in 2016, the force has 40 sub-groups, so they will play a role in regional politics and security because they are trained and equipped with modern weapons.

"Kurds" of Syria, Iraq, Iran, and Turkey: The Kurds are considered the largest ethnic group without a nation and are Sunni Muslims. With the breakup of the Ottoman Empire, the Kurds were divided into four states: Turkey, Syria, Iran, and Iraq.

The rise of the Democratic Union Party (PYD) against the government in Syria in 2014 was the result of mistreatment and injustice against the Kurds. Later, the movement was overshadowed by the advance of ISIS. The Kurds believe in the reunification of all Kurdish territories, deeming the borders illegitimate and sovereign. The United States supported the movement, and President Wilson promised a separate state for the Kurds. But now America has abandoned the Kurds. They are freedom fighters, and parental states view them with suspicion. The Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK), has been involved in several guerrilla wars against the state

in the Middle East and has been declared a terrorist organization by Turkey, Iran, Britain, and many other states.

The Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) is an autonomous Kurdish government in northern Iraq with a population of about 3 million. When a referendum was held in the region in 2017 with a 92% turnout in support of independence, all states, including Syria, Iran, Iraq, Turkey, and China, rejected and insisted on Iraqi unity. When the referendum was announced, Russia, the UK, and the USA called for reconsideration of the KRG or postponement of the event. Later, Iraqi forces occupied the area and KRG President Barzani resigned following orders from the Iraqi Supreme Court to maintain the alliance. KRG endorsed the Supreme Court's statement and said it respects its decisions. If it was successful, it would have encouraged Kurds in other states to follow suit.

Houthis Rebellion in Yemen: Houthi Zaidi is a Shiite and was the ruler of northern Yemen when Imam Yahya was overthrown in 1963 by the order of Abdullah al-Salal. The Houthis then became victims of injustice and prejudice in Yemen. Due to their various demands and pressures, President Hadi promised to hold fair elections, which were never fulfilled. Then in 2014, the Houthis revolted against the government and captured Sanaa.

Iran has had the opportunity to increase its influence in Yemen, which has been the most recent and the most limited, but it has gained momentum as a result of the Saudi intervention in Yemen in March 2015.

Relations between the Houthis and Iran gradually strengthened in the 1990s, when the group adopted Iran's anti-US, and[31] anti-Israel slogan "Death to America." Until 2002, "Israel is dead"

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[31] Bruce Riedel, „Who are the Houthis, and why are we at war with them?", (December 2017).

was a protest against both US foreign policy in the region and US support for Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The main reason for the Houthi enmity against Saleh was the rise of Salafism and the backwardness of Zaidi in his town, Saada. These conditions led to six armed conflicts between Saleh's government and the Houthis between 2004 and 2006. It is not clear when Tehran began providing material assistance to the Houthis, but the Yemeni government and Saudi Arabia have repeatedly accused Iran of aiding the Houthis. Financial aid to the conflict in 2009-2010. Tehran has refused to support the Houthis. Iran has supported the expansion of the Houthi movement by providing political support.

   Despite Saudi Arabia's full support of the government and retaliation, the Houthis still retain control of strategic parts of Yemen. Today, they are stronger than ever with their state-of-the-art ballistic missile systems and drone strikes targeting Saudi oil installations. Recently, Saudi Arabia has offered a ceasefire because of its tough response and extreme weakening of the Saudi-backed Yemeni government. Iran has supported Zaidi Shiites not only to expand the country but also to counter Saudi interference in the country. The war has cost the KSA about ́ 6 billion during the height of the war since it declared war on Yemen in 2014.

Ikhwanul-Muslimin of Egypt "Muslim Brotherhood": The Muslim Brotherhood[32], the Arabic Muslim Brotherhood, is a religious-political organization founded in 1928 in Ismailia, Egypt. An Orientalist Islamist advocated a return to the Qur'an and Hadith for modern Islamic society. The Brotherhood spread rapidly in Egypt, Sudan, Syria, Palestine, Lebanon, and North Africa. Although the Brotherhood's membership figures are variable, it is estimated that at its peak in the

https://www.brookings.edu/blog/markaz/2017/12/18/who-are-the-houthis-and-why-are-we-at-war-with-them/

[32] Noah Tesch, 'Muslim Brotherhood,' Britannica', last modified by, 2017.

late 1940s, its membership reached 500,000. Members of the Muslim Brotherhood have fought in all Arab-Israeli wars.

In January 2011, a protest movement of non-religious youth against the Mubarak government emerged in Egypt[33]. After some hesitation, the senior leadership of the Muslim Brotherhood supported the movement and appealed to its members to join the protests. Protests soon forced Mubarak to step down as president in February, paving the way for the Muslim Brotherhood's public participation in Egyptian politics. Brotherhood leaders outlined a cautious political strategy for the group, saying they would not win a majority in the legislature or run for president.

Then, in the 2012 election, the Muslim Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party won the election with 47% of the seats, and Mohamed Morsi was elected president. The new government passed a draft constitution drafted by Islamists without the input of other religious minorities, which was boycotted by Christians. Soon after, non-religious youths took to the streets. The situation worsened and the army was given an ultimatum to resolve the issue or else it would take over the charge. Then in July 2013, Morsi was overthrown and General Fatah al-Sisi, the head of the armed forces, took over the responsibility of closing down the Brotherhood's offices and its affiliated media.

Brotherhood supporters took to the streets after the incident, and the armed forces carried out a massive crackdown that killed more than 1,500 people in a short period. The Supreme Court later banned the Muslim Brotherhood, imprisoning thousands of its supporters and closing its offices.

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[33] ibid

CHAPTER THREE

NON-STATE ACTORS AND REGIONAL SECURITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

This section revolves around the assumptions of the basic question. Non-state actors in the Middle East have threatened regional security on several fronts. These include: First of all, challenging the writ of the state with various tactics. Second, to destabilize the whole region through international operations. Third, use unauthorized force to carry out their will, which is not legally approved by the state. After all, a culture of weapons is by no means good for stability and peace.

3.1   CHALLENGING WRIT OF THE STATES

Article 2 (3) of the United Nations states that all members shall resolve their international disputes peacefully in a manner that does not jeopardize the security and justice of international peace. One of the biggest challenges facing the Middle East right now is the rise of non-state actors and the threat they pose to the state. As already mentioned in the previous discussion, many non-state actors are either active or suitable for reactivating their dead cells in the area. Some NSAs have some form of state patronage, in the same state or another.

There are many theories behind the existence of such violent actors. These actors work for any state or act based on their interests. But it is a fact that many ideologies came into the force in the late 20th century. Religious fundamentalism is the driving force behind most actors. The emergence of ISIS can be cited in this course. Many unresolved issues arise, such as in the case of Palestine, and sometimes due to state negligence, inadequacies, or shortcomings such as the

Houthi movement. Some actors are developing based on race and community, such as the Kurdish movement.

Analysts agree that the biggest security threats to states in the Middle East are due to food shortages, water resources, energy, civil/guerrilla warfare, and conflict. Of these, the closest to the NSAs are urban unrest and refugee issues. The sudden influx of refugees into the states is worrisome as it could lead to chaos and instability in the host states, leading to disruptions in demand-supply, scarcity of resources, and a food crisis along with a law and order situation. Is. Most conflicts in the Middle East are fueled by NSAs, and the Middle East is a haven for all NSAs due to weak states due to the increasing activity of non-state actors. In other words, we can say that there is a connection between a weak state and active violent actors.

There are 1.5 million displaced Palestinian refugees in Jordan, Syria, the Gaza Strip, and Lebanon. There are more than 6 million Syrian refugees in Lebanon, Iraq, Egypt, and the European Union. More hateful than the war in Iraq since the 2003 US-led invasion, with nearly 9 million people becoming either internally displaced or refugees abroad. When people become refugees in their land or elsewhere, they can loot them for their benefit through gangs. These groups use ideology, religion, or ethnic cards to provoke these oppressed sections of society. This shows an increase in the migrants[34] from 2005-to 2015.

Table3.1

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[34] Pew research, "conflicts-in-syria-iraq-and-yemen-lead-to-millions-of-displaced-migrants-in-the-middle-east-since-2005", October 18, 2016.

Nearly all of the Middle East's displaced migrants lived in six countries in 2015: Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Yemen, Turkey or Lebanon
Displaced migrants, in thousands

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Syria	460	1,150	1,961	1,570	1,530	1,504	1,244	2,994	7,190	8,313	7,130
Iraq	1,252	1,881	2,431	2,689	1,591	1,381	1,372	1,236	1,206	3,876	4,688
Jordan	1,845	2,378	2,404	2,453	2,435	2,453	2,436	2,340	2,717	2,790	2,854
Yemen	83	97	195	241	422	414	568	629	556	600	2,809
Turkey	7	9	12	18	16	17	25	291	662	1,694	2,754
Lebanon	407	631	535	473	477	465	447	577	1,306	1,614	1,541
Iran	974	969	965	982	1,072	1,075	887	868	857	982	979
Egypt	100	104	112	113	108	109	114	127	253	262	251
Israel	2	2	7	14	22	31	48	54	53	45	45
Kuwait	2	<1	39	41	3	3	1	2	2	2	2
UAE	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	1
Bahrain	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1
Oman	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1
Palest. ter.	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1
Qatar	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1
Saudi Arabia	241	241	241	241	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1
Total	5,373	7,463	8,902	8,834	7,678	7,454	7,144	9,120	14,806	20,180	23,055

Note: Rounded to nearest thousands, except for estimates below 1,000 which are shown as <1. Rank ordered by the number of displaced migrants as of 2015. Displaced migrants include internally displaced persons within their birth countries, refugees and asylum seekers who have crossed an international border and Palestinian refugees registered with UNRWA in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. Palestinian refugee figures for 2015 were extrapolated from 2013 and 2014 estimates and may not reflect final estimates. See methodology for details.
Source: Pew Research Center analysis of UN data.
"Middle East's Migrant Population More Than Doubles Since 2005"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2016/10/18/.

Together with these events, migration activities add to the humanitarian crisis, such as the food crisis, inadequate resources, and law and order situation, unemployment, poverty. These social evils can paralyze the state and the state writ in its territory to handle, control, and exercise sovereignty. In such cases, citizens lose confidence in the state, leading to the emergence of more interest groups and violent actors.

A well-known fact about the Middle East is that it is rich in natural resources, especially in terms of gas and oil. These resources are a major source of income and growth for most Middle Eastern countries. With violent actors and the growing role of civil wars, how can the state use its natural resources to meet its needs? If violent groups disagree with the state on a particular issue, they either attack gas or oil plants, oil or gas tankers, or take control. The attack on the Aramco oil field and the attack on an Israeli oil tanker are good examples. Violent groups do not need too many bombs because oil wells, oil, or gas tankers are bombs themselves. Therefore, in short, with the reduced role of armed non-state actors in these states, peace and stability is in the best interests of the region, which has very little supply.

In addition, violent groups own social media and armed forces that use force primarily to pressure the state to accept their demands. Sometimes, participation in political activities forces the state to meet its demands. The most organized and politically active actors in this course are Hezbollah and Hamas. Iraq cannot pursue a policy of ignoring the Kurds and the Popular Mobilization Force of Iraq even though it is in favor of Iraq. Similarly, in the case of Lebanon, Hezbollah is a major player in the political, military, and economic arenas. Hezbollah has a social welfare structure that helps those in need, regardless of religion. As power is shared by the formula of a Christian president, a Sunni prime minister, and a Shia speaker. If the president and prime minister ignore Hezbollah's demands or try to sideline them, Hezbollah responds by using a speaker to disrupt the legislative process in Lebanon, because it plays an important role in the election of the Speaker of the Lebanese Parliament.

Although there is no obvious threat to ISIS because it has to serve the ideology of a defeated violent group, it can spread the same chaos it did in 2011. According to the US general, "we failed to defeat ISIS. Ideology." The Muslim Brotherhood is now banned in Egypt but has millions of followers and members in the region. Activation does not take much time, just a spark under the banner of this organization in one state is enough to reactivate its dead cells.

3.2   TRANSNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Article 2 (1) of the UN Charter states that the organization is based on the principle of independent equality of all its members. This means that all states are equally independent and that others have no right to undermine their sovereignty[35].

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[35] Jin Liangxiang, 'China and Middle East security issues: Challenges, Perceptions and Position', Institute Affair International, (2020).

The involvement of VNSAs in accomplishing goals outside the parent state's borders is clear. In this modern age, they can use local media and technology with local helpers to attack their targets using local recruitment strategies. This is a serious problem because it could bring two states to the brink of war.

When Israel assassinated Hezbollah leader Mousavi in Lebanon in 1992, Hezbollah retaliated by attacking the Israeli embassy in Argentina, killing scores of people. Then, in 1994, another suicide bombing in Argentina. Hezbollah's 34-day 2006 war was a milestone in Israel's history, in which Hezbollah fighters demonstrated their readiness against Israel. In 2012, another Israeli tourist bus was attacked in Bulgaria, killing six of them. The world blamed Hezbollah, but Hezbollah vehemently denied it. Beyond that, Hezbollah has strongholds in Iraq and Syria and can strike any target in those states

Then ISIS has carried out hundreds of transnational attacks[36], especially since its resurgence in 2011. Of these, the Paris attacks in 2015 triggered a series of coordinated attacks of about 35 minutes at six locations in central Paris. The first shooting took place at a restaurant and a bar in the 10th Arrondissement of Paris. There were shootings and bombings at the theater, a Germany-France football match in the vicinity of the stadium, and other venues. About 130 were killed there. Then, in France, in another attack in 2016, a man rammed a truck into a crowd, killing 86 people. Similarly, in 2016, ISIS attacked Brussels Airport, Brussels, and Ataturk Airport, killing 39 and 45 people in Turkey, respectively. In 2017, Turkey was again attacked by ISIS in which 39 people were killed, and in Russia 15 were killed by ISIS. The group killed millions in Iraq and Syria during its heyday. After defeats in Iraq and Syria, Afghanistan emerged as a

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[36] European Travel information and authorization system, „Terrorism in Europe: timeline and measures taken by the EU", viewed on November 2020.
https://www.etiasvisa.com/etias-news/terrorism-europe-timeline-measures

stronghold of ISIS under the name ISIS-K. Here it carries out heinous attacks against the Taliban regime. The latest attack took place on October 8, 2021, at a mosque in Kunduz, targeting the Shia community, and killing 50 people. Oil tank warfare is new happening in recent times. The below image[37] is illustrating the targeted ships by suspects. Figure3.2

https://www.solaceglobal.com/report/maritime-update-persian-gulf/.
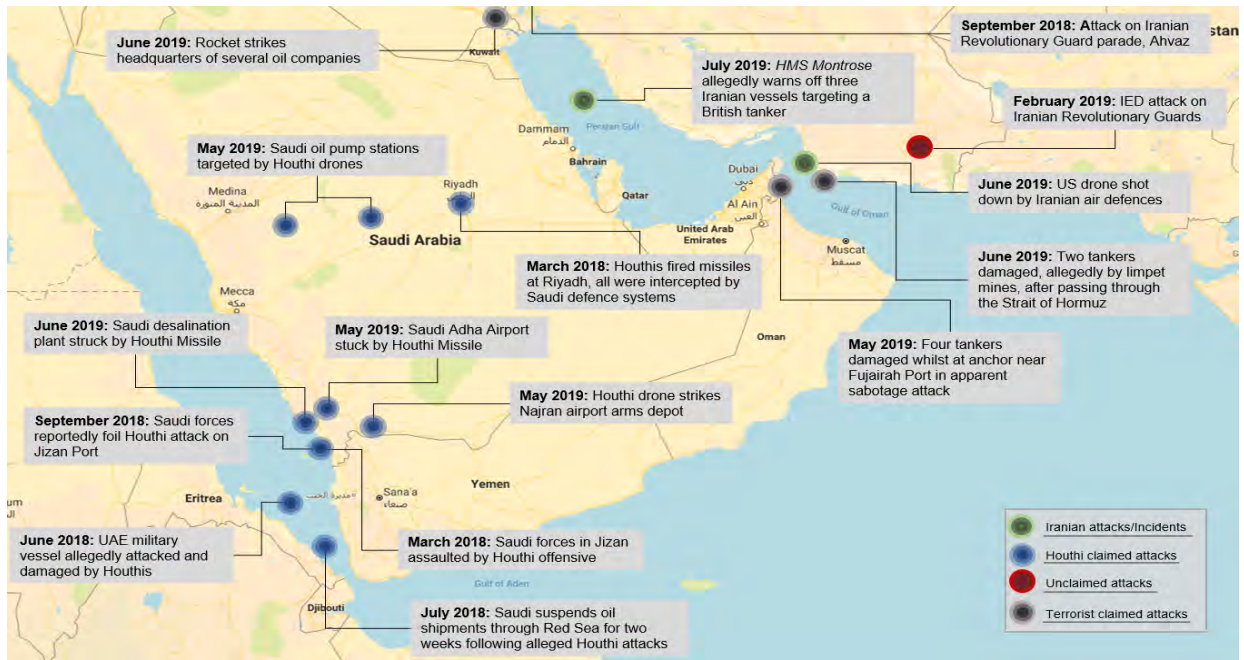
The Houthi attacks were limited to Yemen, but by 2018 they had launched international attacks using missiles and drones. In 2018, a UAE oil tanker was allegedly attacked by Houthi drones in Bab al-Mandeb. Then in 2019, the KSA experienced a sharp increase in deep attacks from within the Houthis. These airports are Aramco oil field as well as Najran airport. As a result, KSA's oil production was reduced by half of the production before this attack. At the same time, attacks on oil tankers in the Persian Gulf increased sharply. Four oil tankers were attacked at the port of Fujairah in May 2019, two rankers were attacked again in June, British tankers were attacked in

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[37] Solac Global, „Maritime update Persian-Gulf", 5 November,2020.
https://www.solaceglobal.com/report/maritime-update-persian-gulf/

July and then Israeli oil tankers were attacked in August. One of the common denominators of these attacks was that no one claimed responsibility for the attacks, and the states had no choice but to blame each other. Most of them blame Iran and its proxy IRGC for the attacks. This reflects the involvement of non-state actors in these attacks, which is a matter of concern for the states of the Middle East.

Hamas is the organization that came into being as rejection Oslo peace Accords[38] between the PLO-Israel. Hamas still believes in a one-state state that is dispelling the notion that Israel exists as a two-state formula. Hamas is considered a terrorist organization by most states. In December 2018, the UN General Assembly rejected a US resolution condemning Hamas as a terrorist organization. The first attack took place in 1993, a month before Yasser Arafat met with the Israeli prime minister. A major war broke out between Hamas and Israel in 2008, after which 2,200 Palestinians were killed in 2014. Then in 2019, Hamas launched the "The great march of return[39]". That led to another Hamas-Israel war, in which about 300 Palestinians and 12 Israelis were killed. It is not just the Hamas-Israel war but the most dangerous one that has the potential to drag other states into war. As with Hezbollah's involvement, Israel targeted Lebanon and other states in Hezbollah's strongholds, prompting retaliation from those states and Iran.

As far as the Kurds are concerned, they are divided into four stages, and the borders are considered illegitimate. They have political parties in all the states, like PKK, KYD, and KDP. Those who are fighting for an independent state are armed and are always working against the parent states. The Kurds who are against Turkey have fled to Syria and vice versa. The same is

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[38] Aljazeera, „The Palestine Remix". February 2015.
https://interactive.aljazeera.com/aje/palestineremix/the-price-of-oslo
[39] Aljazeera, „The Gaza Great March of Return Protest", 30 March 2019.
https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/3/30/gazas-great-march-of-return

true in the case of Iraq and Iran. Kurds who oppose the Iraqi state have safe havens in Iran and vice versa. Turkey has repeatedly attacked the PKK in Syria in the KRG region, accusing the PKK of killing Turkish troops in border areas. An estimated 40,000 people have been killed in the conflict between Turkey and the PKK. Most of the victims were Kurds. Similarly, Iran has repeatedly attacked the PFAK in the KRG region, accusing it of being Iranian separatists. Three years ago Iran fired ballistic missiles at the KDPI headquarters in the northern Iraqi region, killing at least 16 people.

These international activities have the potential to bring these states to the brink of war. The intervention of international powers is also clear. Russia and China want the integrity of the states as Eastern Bloc powers, and the United States has supported separatists in the past.

3.3   USE UN-AUTHORIZED FORCE

The Charter of the United Nations reads in Article 2 (4): All members shall, in their international relations, refrain from any threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other way contrary to the purposes of the United Nations.

The United Nations also discourages the use of force by states. In that case, the state should restrain non-state actors from using force against citizens, government officials, state structures, and any other state. The state determines each role according to the structure of the system. Suppose there is a democratic structure, then the state allows NSAs[40] to influence and achieve goals through political means such as contesting elections, protesting, or demanding their needs. But after gaining power, these NSAs not only use force within the state but also carry out illegal

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[40] Fahad Eid, Mustapha Garba & Alfredo Gunter, 'strategic challenges posed by non-state actors to collective security arrangements', Amy General Staff college (2016): 22-47.

operations to achieve their goals. Such as kidnappings, murders, hijackings, and bombings. It is considered an illegal and unauthorized force and is called terrorism. The use of illegal force not only threatens state security but also poses a major threat to regional security as the NSAs carry out international attacks challenging the state's writ.

The use of force outside the constitutional limits will weaken some ethnic or religious groups, leading to retaliation by victims by forming groups along the same lines and using illegal force. Thus begins a never-ending cycle of the formation of violent groups and subgroups. Furthermore, it undermines the state's confidence that it will protect them from any violent group. Civil wars engulf all sections of society which are hostile to states and are an uncontrollable situation because civil war is the mother of all other social evils. The best example that can be cited in this course is the emergence of Houthi movements in Yemen, followed by the Southern movement, then Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, and then ISIS. It has provided critical ground for another violent actor.

This trend leads[41] to the assassination of state leaders if they refuse to take action in favor of armed non-state elements or follow suit. That is why we can say that leaders are bound to act according to the wishes of powerful non-state actors and to formulate policies. Here are some examples: In 1951, King Abdullah bin Hussein of Jordan was walking out of the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem after the afternoon prayers when he was shot dead by a Palestinian. Then, in October 1981, Anwar Sadat of Egypt was presiding over an annual military parade when he was shot dead by radical Islamic militants. In November 1995, Yitzhak Rabin was riding in his car after guiding thousands of Israelis in a "song for peace" when he was assassinated by a fanatical Jew trying to stop the Oslo peace process. It is not only a case of the assassination of

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[41] ibid

some of the leading leaders but also reflects the volatile environment created by the great clash of religious extremism and interests. Similarly, Lebanese President Rafik Hariri was killed in a bomb blast in Beirut in 2005. If someone disagrees with someone, even if the president or a high-ranking official has done something wrong, then there are institutions and laws in the courts or parliament to prosecute accordingly? But unfortunately, the militias are so strong-minded that they can avoid legal hurdles and resort to heinous killings.

Therefore, religious extremism is the real threat when one begins to believe in these ideas because they believe that religion is beyond the state. This religious fanaticism breaks down borders and forms a kind of group, and prides itself on uniting to achieve the same goal of decriminalizing borders and exercising international, illegitimate power. - In addition, it leads to killings, bombings, kidnappings, and mass killings of people who are considered outside the group. Peace can never be established in the presence of the above conditions because, unless there is madness, there is always an atmosphere of confrontation. The best example of this is the story of ISIS.

3.4   FLOURISHING WEAPON CULTURE

Acting under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, it states that all States shall refrain from providing any assistance to non-state actors who develop, acquire, or acquire nuclear, chemical, or chemical substances. Attempt to manufacture, own, transport, transfer, or use. Biological weapons and their means of delivery; ii. Prohibit any such activity by non-state actors under international law, especially for terrorism, and prohibit any support or financing of such activities; domestic adoption of domestic means of transmission, and related materials to prevent

the spread of WMD[42], including accounting and physical protection of such items; establishing and maintaining effective border control and law enforcement measures; And reviewing and maintaining national export and transshipment controls (with appropriate criminal or civil penalties).

One of the hateful evils that grow out of the actions of violent non-state actors is the culture of weapons. When we talk about states that acquire weapons after agreeing to full security and non-proliferation protocols, non-state actors do not follow any convention or agreement, they only do what they want. Easy access to weapons has been made possible by the involvement of third parties (perhaps the state or profiteers) for their interests. Only payment is required as there are large markets for illegal weapons at international borders.

Case study of ISIS & Houthis: Uses weapons and ammunition from at least 25 different countries - a large portion was originally obtained by the Iraqi army from the United States, and the former Soviet bloc states. Some of the items used by the Islamic State group were those seized by terrorists on the battlefield, the report concluded. The quantity and quality of weapons have increased significantly. Russia, China, and Eastern Europe have jointly inspected 90 percent of the items, the report said. But the United States and Saudi Arabia are also responsible for some of the exported equipment, which the research group determined was diverted from Syrian opposition forces. According to the investigation, the forces of the Islamic State group quickly seized weapons and ammunition brought to Syria from regional proxies, especially Jordan and Turkey. ISIS weapons include portable air defense systems, guided anti-tank missiles, and armored combat vehicles, as well as rifles such as the Russian AK series and the

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[42] Phill Williams, 'violent non-state actors and national and international security', ISN, (2008).
https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/93880/2008/

US M16 and Bushmaster. In addition to the weapons, the group enjoys Toyota's world-class luxury cars, with figures showing that sales of Hilux and Land Cruisers tripled from 6,000 in Iraq in 2011 to 18,000 in 2015. These figures will show us how ISIS is involved in promoting a culture of weapons as it acquires weapons from different borders through its various channels. Figure3.3

https://www.ft.com/content/.
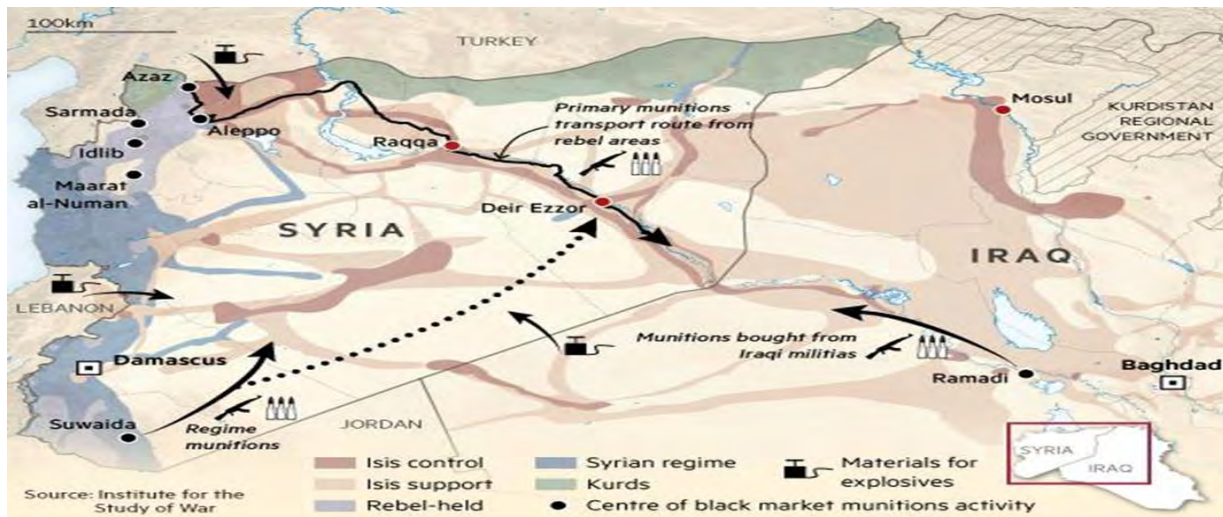
Another example of a weapons supplies chain of the Houthis of Yemen. In these, the Houthis are acquiring weapons, especially UAV parts, which is why they have attacked many targets in KSA. As given in the figure below. Figure3.4
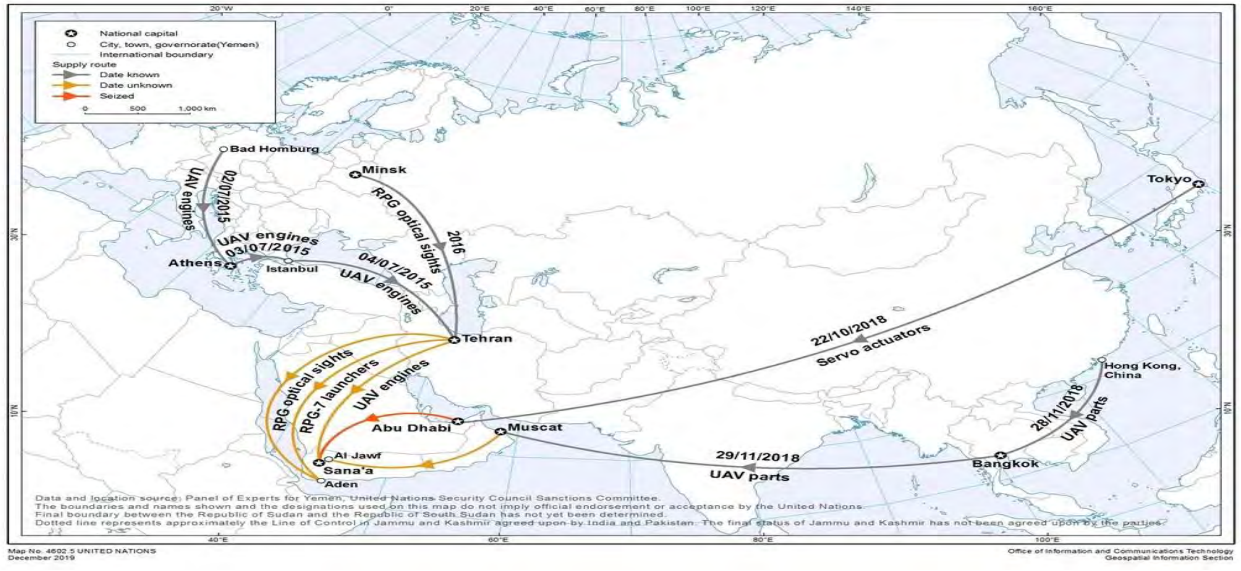
https://iranprimer.usip.org/blog/2020/feb/.

CHAPTER FOUR

NON-STATE ACTORS AND COUNTERING STRATEGIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST

This chapter discusses ways to deal with threats posed by non-state actors. These include: First, enhancing state relations on various fronts to make proxy war unimaginable. Secondly, the regions can be strengthened by adopting a representative system of government. Third, different strategies are needed to disarm armed groups, and effective monitoring of the technology, i.e. social media, can play an important role.

4.1   ENHANCE STATE-STATE RELATION

The present situation can be reduced to a significant level by enhancing state and state relations, which is called interdependence[43]. In terms of international relations, as states expand their relationships with the economy and development, they become more dependent on each other to survive and thrive. In that case, the idea of war would be impossible. Then why would they support their proxies, which are capable of bringing states to the brink of war? If they engage with each other frequently, the state will understand each other, which is a great way to promote relations and guarantee the protection of their interests. This will end mistrust and mistrust of each other. Why would the state support or establish proxies to protect its interests when its interests are protected based on mutual dependence? When we talk about interdependence, we need to work on some basic principles, from equal potential partners and equal interdependence. Otherwise, the more dependent state will be weaker in the event of any conflict and this is a catalyst for more conflict.

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[43] Jorgenson, „the Liberal international theory tradition", in international relation theory, (2018): 71.

The relationship between the state can only be strong when a state is strong, which is possible only with the institutions and structures of a strong state. But the focus is not on specific institutional forms but on the relationships and related functions of the institutions of the state and society. Neither the state nor civil society is seen working in isolation. Rather, the state gains its legitimacy through dialogue with citizens and an organized and active civil society. Providing Citizenship without Discrimination is important as a research Centre[44] for the development of citizenship. See a citizen as someone who has rights, aspirations, and responsibilities to others in the community and state. It means a relationship between citizens, and citizenship provides various benefits between the state and those living within its borders, including the right to enjoy nationality. Voting, holding office, and participating in the political process; for access to education, health, and other equipment; for access to the labor market beyond the informal sector; owning business, land, and other forms of property; and for the protection of housing and freedom of movement.

This system allows the state to resolve its current problems and disputes peacefully. Because there is no war in the interest of the states. They frequently engage with each other, negotiating cross-border activities help to thwart the activation of NSAs.

4.2   ADOPTION OF REPRESENTATIVETIVE SYSTEM

Unfortunately, many Middle Eastern states lack a representative system of government, with either a monarchy (government headed by a king) or an oligarchy. This system allows the government to make unpopular decisions without fear of public outrage and reaction, which is not the case with a representative system of government. When state leaders or governments are

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[44] Haider, Machluglin, „State- society relation and citizenship", 2016.
https://gsdrc.org/topic-guides/state-society-relations-and-citizenship/

directly or indirectly accountable to ordinary citizens, they will not dare to make unpopular decisions for fear of direct public or indirect reaction.

The only positive example of this is in the Arab world in Tunisia. Kuwait, Jordan, and Morocco have elected parliaments, but their kings have transferred very little power from the royal palaces. In Egypt, an elected president has been ousted in a popular uprising, the military retains control, and President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi has cracked down on political activity. Iran and Turkey are among the non-Arab states that have democracies. Here we can see the hypocritical attitude of the pro-democracy United States, which wants real democracy in Iran and Turkey but is not ready to ask other Arab states to adopt at least democracy. The king or oligarch dares to crackdown on opponents. This type of crackdown is often carried out on the opposition or anti-ethnic / religious group, which creates fear and panic. This pain will one day erupt in the form of terrorist organizations.

A survey of the "Arab Barometer[45]" series conducted by Arab and American scholars found that 80% of respondents support the proposal, "Democracy may have problems, but it is better than other political systems."

The adoption of a representative system of government will encourage the people not to abuse power outside the states. The development of democracy is possible only when they are pressured for inhumane measures, such as imprisoning opposing institutions. Significant reductions in the severe crackdown were noted by the Egyptian president between 2003-2005 when the US president condemned it.

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[45] Abrams, „How to support democracy in the Arab world". (December 2016).
https://www.cfr.org/expert-brief/how-support-democracy-arab-world

4.3   DISARMING ARMED GROUPS

All violent groups are armed like the regular armed forces of the states. However, there is a difference between non-state actors in the quality and quantity of weapons. Only Hamas and Hezbollah are considered both political and military entities. The rest of the NSAs are military entities and are not participating in the political arena.

It is linked to growing state relations and interdependence. When states are in good relations, states can prevent[46] the rise of violent non-state actors through effective multilateral or bilateral agreements. Furthermore, when states are interconnected in such a way that they are interdependent, they cannot afford armed groups or non-state actors with multifaceted or bilateral losses and trade losses as well as fear of losing investor confidence.

Tajikistan's model[47] (1997-2001) - widely regarded as a success story - where the reintegration of ex-combatants was preferred and initiated in the absence of appropriate disarmament levels. The reintegration package should include psychological support procedures, healthcare, and the benefits of education, vocational training, and employment. The Malaysian model of counter-terrorism is excellent in this regard and like the Indonesian model of using clerics to counter the scourge of terrorism.

The state should not allow any group to remain armed. Only the national army or forces should be allowed to remain armed and all should be disarmed through appropriate strategy.

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[46] James Dobbins, Benjamine Runke, and Seth G. Jones, 'Disarming Militias and Countering Insurgents,' In Occupying Iraq: A history of coalition Provisional Authority. (Rand corporation, 2003), 297-322.

[47] ibid

4.4   SAGA OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY

The world is advancing[48] rapidly with the evolution of the media and technology, but there are flaws in it and anyone can take advantage of these facilities. Social media have helped violent groups spread their message near and far without physical contact. There are reports of several terrorist organizations setting up new branches with the help of social platforms. The use of the media is not limited to hiring aspiring and like-minded people abroad but also helps in conducting operations. The emergence of technology through the media has helped violent non-state actors to acquire highly sophisticated weapons.

The advent of technology has revolutionized all areas of trade, travel, communications, and defense. Just as potential terrorists use encrypted messaging for a crime, to carry out attacks through their VPNs, VPNs provide users with a private connection to the Internet. Replaced with doing so, the technology effectively monitors the user's Internet activity via GPS, from easy access to any location to cashless payments, etc.

Despite the geographical distance between the Malaysian and Syrian, the coming of Malaysian foreign fighters from Malaysia to Syria is a matter of concern for policymakers. Although estimates vary, about 400 Malaysians entered the conflict zone in Syria. This advanced technology not only contributes to the proliferation of armed militias but also increases the lethality of the weapons they acquire.

Therefore, a joint and comprehensive state strategy for surveillance to prevent misuse of technology is important for regional security. If technology is in the hands of every individual, a state cannot handle this problem alone.

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[48] Seth Harrison, 'Evolving tech, Evolving terror', Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2018. https://www.csis.org/npfp/evolving-tech-evolving-terror.

4.5 NON-STATE ACTORS AND THE FUTURE OF THE MIDDLE EAST

Dan Kurtzer has been one of America's most prominent diplomats. He was ambassador to both Israel and Egypt. He was present when President Anwar Sadat was assassinated in 1981. He argued that the state system in the Middle East had ceased to play a significant role. It is difficult to oppose the idea of normalization[49] between Israel and an Arab country. This reflects a shift in the balance of power within the region. In many regional disputes, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Egypt are largely at odds with Turkey and Qatar. We are seeing a bit of competition from Egypt and Jordan, which are a little jealous of the rise of the Gulf States and the importance attached to the activities of the Gulf states.

Former US President Donald Trump's recent peace initiative on the Israeli-Palestinian issue came without consulting the Palestinians. The Palestinians rejected it when asked why the Palestinians do not bring their peace agenda. The answer is how we can do it in possession. Therefore, getting out of the matter is not a solution but paves the way for an escalation of disputes. Israel is so powerful both economically and militarily that it took action against Iraq in 1981 and against Syria in 2007 to prevent it from acquiring nuclear weapons. Israel is ready to do the same in the future. He said that the Arab-Israeli issue has also been resolved, but it is really difficult to believe in a solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict because militias do not believe in a two-state solution. When the UAE recognized the existence of Israel as a state, the IRGC responded by saying that from now on, any action by Israel inside Iran would be equally pose threat to the UAE.

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[49] Maha Yahya, Dan Kurtzer and Vali Nasr, 'Whither the Middle East: New Peace or More Conflict?' Wilson center, (September 2020).
https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/whither-middle-east-new-peace-or-more-conflict

Speaking on the Iran factor, Vali Nasr (expert on Iran and the Gulf states) said that the policy of containment and promotion of proxy war through maximum sanctions/pressure[50] on Iran and supply of heavy weapons to its neighbors, including Israel and Arab countries. Iran had no choice but to use proxies to prevent war beyond Iran's borders and to make direct war impossible. As long as the United States does not end its biased and preferential treatment of regional rivals Iran, especially Israel, the proxy war will continue. There is no reason to ask Iran to reduce the range and quality of its missiles while at the same time providing Israel with an F-15 fighter jet which is only 90 kilometers away. Iran has a proxy weapons system. They are the answer to the Israeli Air Force. And Hezbollah is how the Soviet Union wanted to launch missiles into Cuba. This is a way for Iranians to fly to Iran every week if Israel did not have the threat of Hezbollah.

Lebanon is going through a catastrophic situation, said Maha Yahya, a Middle East expert. Some of these are local currencies that are losing 90% of their value against the dollar, inflation, fuel and food shortages, and political stability since the Beirut bombings in 2020. This precarious situation paved the way for Turkey to intervene in Lebanon along with Iran, the KSA, and France. This intervention will further aggravate the already existing inter-state war, which in turn will further mobilize proxies.

Most of the young protesters in Syria during 2011, 2012, and 2013 are now internally or externally displaced. After a war in which thousands of people have been killed, it will be difficult for the Assad regime to calm them down.

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[50] ibid

The racial change in the leadership of the Persian Gulf kingdoms is particularly interesting. The MBS (Mohammed bin Salman of Saudi Arabia) and the MBZ (Mohammed bin Zayed of the United Arab Emirates) represent very different perspectives on priorities for their nations. They are not looking at the old Pan-Arab, Pan-Islamic kinds of ideas. They want a vision of modernity. I think a historical parallel between them is the Shah in Iran as a Westernized modern power.

If you look at all the demonstrations in the Arab Spring, from Sudan to Tunisia to Yemen to Lebanon, everywhere people were demanding basic freedom, social justice, and the right to say their way of governing. With the provision of fundamental rights, a significant reduction in inter-state wars can be expected.

The Middle East says its importance in oil production will increase from 20% to 30% by 2025. The population is expected to be around 500 million, which is 20% more than the current population. After that, per capita water is to be reduced by 40% by 2025. This means that there is always a new challenge facing the Middle East, which is the conflict over water resources. With the proliferation of NGOs and militias, the proliferation of ammunition will diminish the role of the state. Even small gangs and smugglers will be equipped with state-of-the-art and state-of-the-art weapons. The process of division between Arabs will intensify proxy wars.

Wali Nasr believes that the future war in the Middle East will not be between Arab Iran but between three non-Arab states, Iran, Turkey, and Israel. In the future, there will be either bi-polar (US-China) or multi-polar (US-China-Russia) in the Middle East.

CONCLUSION

In this modern age, there have been very few direct interstate wars. There have been rare instances of direct wars between states, especially since the end of the Cold War. After World War II, there was a huge influx of non-state actors who played a role in decolonization. The Cold War and the 21st century are considered to be the epoch of inter-state wars and the mobilization of proxies. The advent of technology has made it easier for violent NSAs to operate, list, operate, and get their message across. All violent militias somehow threaten the state command, dare to carry out international operations, use illegal force and engage in the illegal smuggling of modern weapons. These militias are a cause of concern as they recruit and mobilize locals to carry out activities. Locally exploited people know about the interior, have easy access to it, such as national cards and citizenship holders, and trust those who exploit them. One of the main reasons for the rise of violent NSAs; The Balfour Declaration, the fall of the Ottoman Empire, the establishment of the state of Israel in the hearts of the Arabs, and the Islamic Revolution of Iran have all played a significant role in the expansion of militias. In addition, the wealth of natural resources and their geostrategic importance, as well as the involvement of forces to increase their influence, are important factors in the expansion of violent NSAs. In addition to the negative effects of armed militias, they play several positive roles, ranging from social services to preventing states from waging direct wars. Among them, the rejection of foreign intervention by militias seems to be a legitimate demand, with militias having some positive role to play, along with movements to protect their community or ethnic group from abus

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