

Ensuring security in the Middle East, northeast Asia and worldwide

Any conflict in northeast Asia would be devastating in its global impact, so international organisations need to consider how to respond to such a crisis

By Lee Dong-hwi, Korean National Diplomatic Academy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Republic of Korea

The so-called Arab Spring, which began in Tunisia and spread to Egypt and Libya, led to the prospect that these countries just might achieve political development at home. Moreover, the revolutionary wave in the Arab world raised hopes that it would contribute positively to regional peace and prosperity elsewhere. Yet the Arab world faces countless uncertainties, which are clouding the rosy view of the future. The mixed assessments of the international measures taken in response to the Libyan conflict, in particular, are now stumbling blocks to resolving the ongoing conflict in Syria.

Some countries have taken issue with the fact that the United Nations principle of the Responsibility to Protect – commonly known as R2P – had made possible unlimited military intervention, eventually resulting in regime change in Libya. Their line of reasoning has rendered the international community's positive intervention in Syria increasingly difficult.

International intervention

Viewed from this angle, the changes in the political dynamics of the broader Middle East have presented a difficult challenge to the international community: to more proactively seek means of legitimate and effective international intervention for crisis and conflict management. Whether this is possible is contingent upon how the international community figures into its discussions the views of emerging powers and the corollary power shift. This question will also be crucial for a peaceful resolution of the Iranian crisis, which has been escalating of late.

The importance of finding ways for agreeable means of international intervention is more clearly proven by the fact that a

necessary UN response to the Syrian crisis has stalled. China and Russia exercised their veto rights at the UN Security Council regarding intervention in Syria. Finding themselves somewhere between the traditional Western powers, namely the United States, the United Kingdom and France, and newly emerging powers, such as Brazil, India and South Africa, Beijing and Moscow now seem to have a greater strategic edge in the international community's collective decision-making process.

The lesson learned from the Arab Spring is that, as long as globalisation continues to advance quickly, a crisis – be it confined to an individual state or a particular region –

Large numbers of heavily armed troops are deployed, so military conflicts are likely to escalate into international armed clashes immediately

requires intervention by the international community, and major powers' strategic interests are bound to have an impact on the decision-making process. In this light, a regional crisis should be understood and dealt with as a matter of global security – in short, from the aspect of how the international community should cooperate to collectively respond to various security threats.

The northeast Asian security environment differs significantly from that of the Middle East, where armed conflicts tend to be limited in nature, occurring within the boundaries of the country concerned. But in northeast Asia, where large numbers of heavily armed

troops are deployed, military conflicts – though significantly less probable than in the Middle East – will be highly likely to escalate into critical international armed clashes immediately if they do occur.

Northeast Asia has become a volatile region. Strategic competition between the US and China is becoming increasingly intense; Russian and Japanese strategic interests remain; and India is eyeing the region with a greater strategic interest. Above all, North Korea, which is led by a hereditary successor in his twenties and continues to develop nuclear weapons as a means of regime preservation, is a major factor in the region's uncertainties. Should a crisis occur in North Korea under these circumstances, it is highly probable that the four major powers surrounding the Korean peninsula will intervene strategically, for geopolitical reasons. Northeast Asia has the potential of rapidly becoming an international trouble zone.

Humanitarian and supply crises

A conflict on the Korean peninsula will clearly be a military threat. More than that, it will give rise to humanitarian issues – matters of life or death – for the North Korean people, who have already suffered from prolonged economic difficulties. In addition, China, Japan and South Korea, situated on or around the Korean peninsula, are the world's economic powerhouses, home to irreplaceable, unique products.

While a Middle East conflict could generate an energy supply crisis, a northeast Asian crisis could give rise to an enormous crisis in goods supply, which in turn might cause even greater ripples on the global economic scene.

As can be seen, crises in regions besides the broader Middle East, including northeast Asia, would inevitably require an international response. This only reaffirms the fact that the international community ought to improve its ability to address global security issues.

The international community is making efforts to establish new global governance across various fields, including finance, climate change and nuclear security, with a hope that this will serve as a mechanism for international order management that fairly reflects the changing distribution of power on the global scene. This attempt is naturally being made in the global security domain as



Fighting between rebels and army forces in Idlib, Syria. The UN response to the crisis has been stalled by difficulty in reaching agreement on intervention

well. At the Deauville Summit in 2011, the G8 members agreed to respond positively to the shifting political dynamics in the broader Middle East and tackle all nuclear-related issues through the sustained progress of the G8 Global Partnership against Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction.

Similarly, a meeting of G20 foreign ministers was convened for the first time in Mexico in February 2012. This was a positive development, for it offered a window of

opportunity for great powers and emerging powers alike to respond, hand in hand, to the dangers of instability. The G7 similarly started out as an economic forum, but ultimately G7 foreign ministers' meetings offered a useful safety net as the world struggled to overcome the political fallout from the collapse of the Cold War structure.

The advantages of the G20 foreign ministers' meeting will only be redoubled this year, for a series of leadership transitions

around the world will fuel uncertainties, let alone those caused by the turbulence already apparent in the Middle East.

The G8 has recently become revitalised, and the G20 is broadening its sphere of international responsibilities. In this vein, how these two forums efficiently establish a constructive division of labour in the global security arena is bound to become a pivotal political question for global peace and prosperity in the future. ■

Building the new Arab world

Drive and commitment is needed to take forward the spirit of the Arab Spring and establish long-lasting peace and prosperity across the Middle East

By Hisham El Sherif, IT Ventures

The view of the future of the Arab world needs a paradigm shift. It should focus on development, democracy and knowledge, rather than on crisis management, religion and conflict. In simple terms, the view should be on how to build a new Europe or a new West in the Arab world while integrating its particular cultural harmony. For a long time, the world has focused on states, rulers and political power. But the Arab Spring is based on people, democracy, freedom and hope. For too long, the region has been run by dictators, military regimes and corrupt governments. Democracy, freedom and political opinion, which are taught and practised in the West, have been almost non-existent. Wealth is for the few who are close to the ruling minority, and poverty is for the large, silent majority. A basic level of education and healthcare has become almost a luxury in the region. Unemployment and job creation have been challenges for decades.

Democracy and harmony

The Arab revolutions were triggered by Mohamed Bouazizi, a young man in a small town in Tunisia who was striving for a job, like so many in the Arab world, and by Khaled Saeed, a young Egyptian blogger who was beaten to death. Empowered by the internet, social media and television, over the past few years the people of the Arab world have collectively created waves calling for change, freedom and justice.

The Arab world needs a new vision and programme for development and growth. It needs a vision based on people and on building prosperity. The region's population exceeds 380 million today and will reach 435 million by 2020; it will reach 530 million by 2030 and 790 million by 2050.

In 40 years, the population of the Arab world will double. This means that a region that was built over 4,000 years must be rebuilt in the next 40 years. By 2030, the Middle East will need to generate 100 million new jobs. At \$30,000 per job, this will require \$3 trillion.

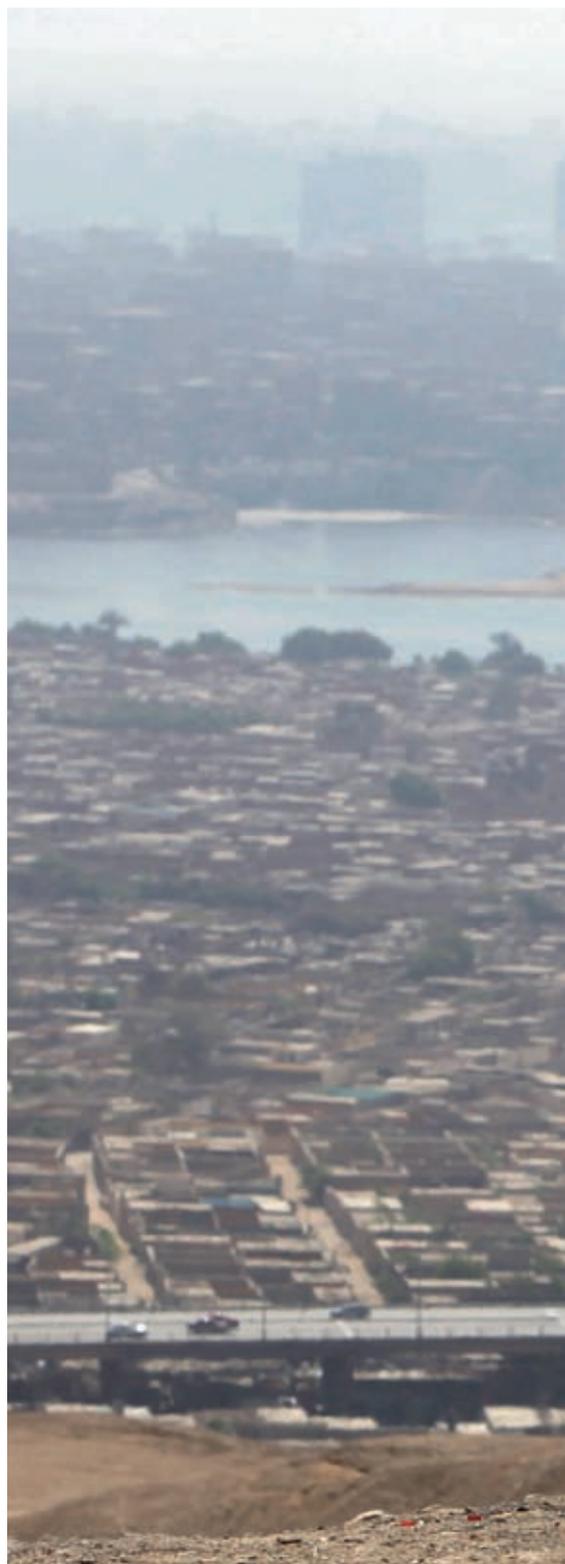
Similarly, the region will need 100,000 schools. At \$10 million each, this will call for another trillion dollars just for schools alone. To build a competitive region, the Arab world requires major investment in education and knowledge. This transformation into an information and knowledge society will require another trillion dollars for universities, life-long learning, cultural preservation, and communication and technology infrastructure. The region will also need 100 new cities, each with a million inhabitants, or 200 cities of half a million each. This requires designing and implementing new road networks and a proper transportation system, trade facilities, industrial cities, services, tourist destinations and efficient governments. The total estimated investments needed to

The Arab world needs a new vision and programme for development and growth

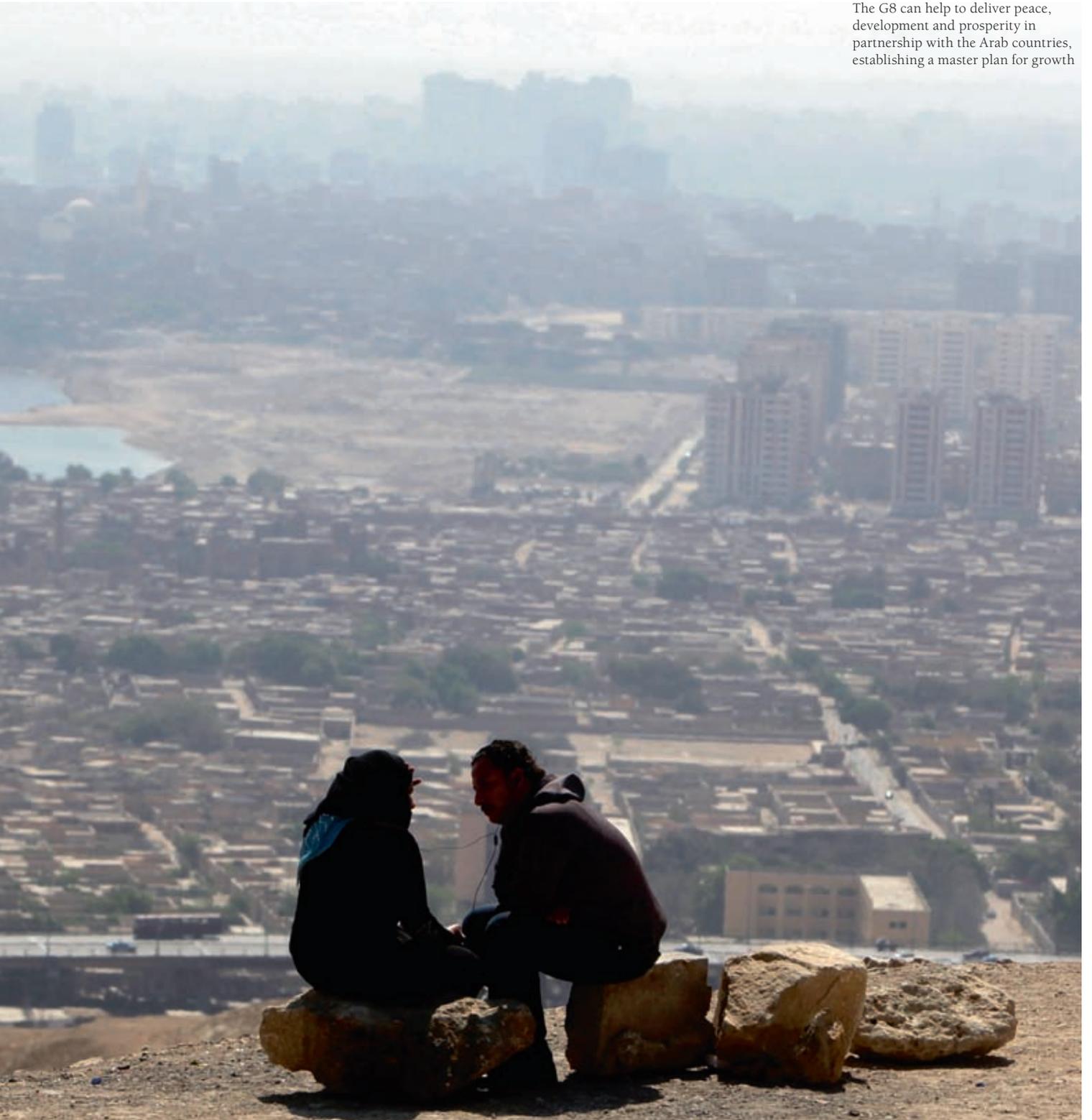
build the new Arab world exceeds \$8 trillion. This is an attractive market for companies and countries in the region and around the world.

In addition, today's Arab world urgently needs to finance the bill for the revolutions and the setback to where countries are today. The cost is becoming higher than any one country can afford. Egypt's losses to date exceed £400 billion (\$660 million) and each day the country loses more than £1 billion (\$165 million).

Throughout the Arab world, the setback is significant due to the cry for power and emerging monopolies by Islamists. Urgent investment needs for Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Yemen, Syria and Iraq exceed \$200 billion. These investments are needed to recover from the losses and destruction, to rebuild infrastructure and social sustainability for food, jobs and health, to re-energise production and to cover the opportunity cost



The G8 can help to deliver peace, development and prosperity in partnership with the Arab countries, establishing a master plan for growth





The minaret of a mosque rises above houses with satellite dishes on their roofs in the town of Jerma, Libya

to date. The Western world, the G8 and other leading partners, if they have the will, can help get the region out of the ongoing crises and build a base for a new Arab world in partnership with its people and countries.

The vision is conceptually simple, but it is extremely challenging in its implementation. It should focus on the development and sustainable growth of the region, rather than on short-term political compromise – which can lead to new dictatorships or religious states or empires that replicate the model of Iran or a violent environment such as Iraq. The question is how to shift from managing the daily crises in the region to constructing the base for a new developed, peaceful and democratic Arab world.

The starting point should be knowledge, democracy and harmony. Knowledge is the greatest power for humanity: it is the basis for development and peace. If people are empowered by education and they have jobs and services and enjoy justice, the region will be less violent and more prosperous.

The outcome of decades of corrupt dictatorships is significant. In more than a third of Arab countries, poverty exceeds 40 per cent and unemployment is in the double digits. These are key factors in fuelling extremism. Conflicts, fights and terror are created by lack of food and work and by illiteracy, and not only because of religious fanatics.

Need for commitment and drive

To transform the Arab world from the daily scenes on television to a vision of development and growth, and from that vision to reality, requires the commitment and drive to establish long-lasting peace and security for the people and countries of the region. The G8 can help in delivering, in partnership with the Arab countries, peace, development, prosperity and growth. The prerequisites are an implementation plan for peace and a master plan for growth.

Three specific actions are needed to prepare the Arab world for this reality. First, the G8

can help lead and support the formulation of the regional Marshall Plan required to build a new Middle East that is peaceful, modern, economically integrated, socially developed and just. A trillion dollars in investment is needed over 10 years to initiate and energise such a plan – \$100 billion a year. This is not a classical stimulus package, but a catalytic direct investment fund to stimulate, build and generate an \$8 trillion market by 2030, in the form of multinational public-private partnerships.

It would transform a fragmented, vulnerable, poor, divided and unstable Middle East into a more prosperous one. Can the countries of the region, G8 countries and emerging economies partner in this plan?

Second, all the G8 leaders gathering at Camp David can consider holding a G8-Arab world summit on development, democracy and knowledge.

Third, the G8 needs to help implement a long-lasting peace to help create a new, dynamic and prosperous Middle East. ■

After the Arab Spring: will leaders lead leaders?

In the wake of revolution, world governments face new challenges in helping to establish fairer power structures and protecting the human rights of all

By Lindsay Lloyd, Freedom Collection, George W Bush Presidential Center, and Christopher Sands, Senior Fellow, Hudson Institute

In 2011, when G8 and G20 leaders met in France, the events in North Africa dubbed an ‘Arab Spring’ captured imaginations. The question then was how the leaders of the world’s largest economies could help to foster stable, democratic transitions from authoritarianism. The mood was one of genuine sympathy with the people of Tunisia and Egypt, and of grave concern for the fate of those who took to the streets to demand change in Libya, Syria, Bahrain and Yemen.

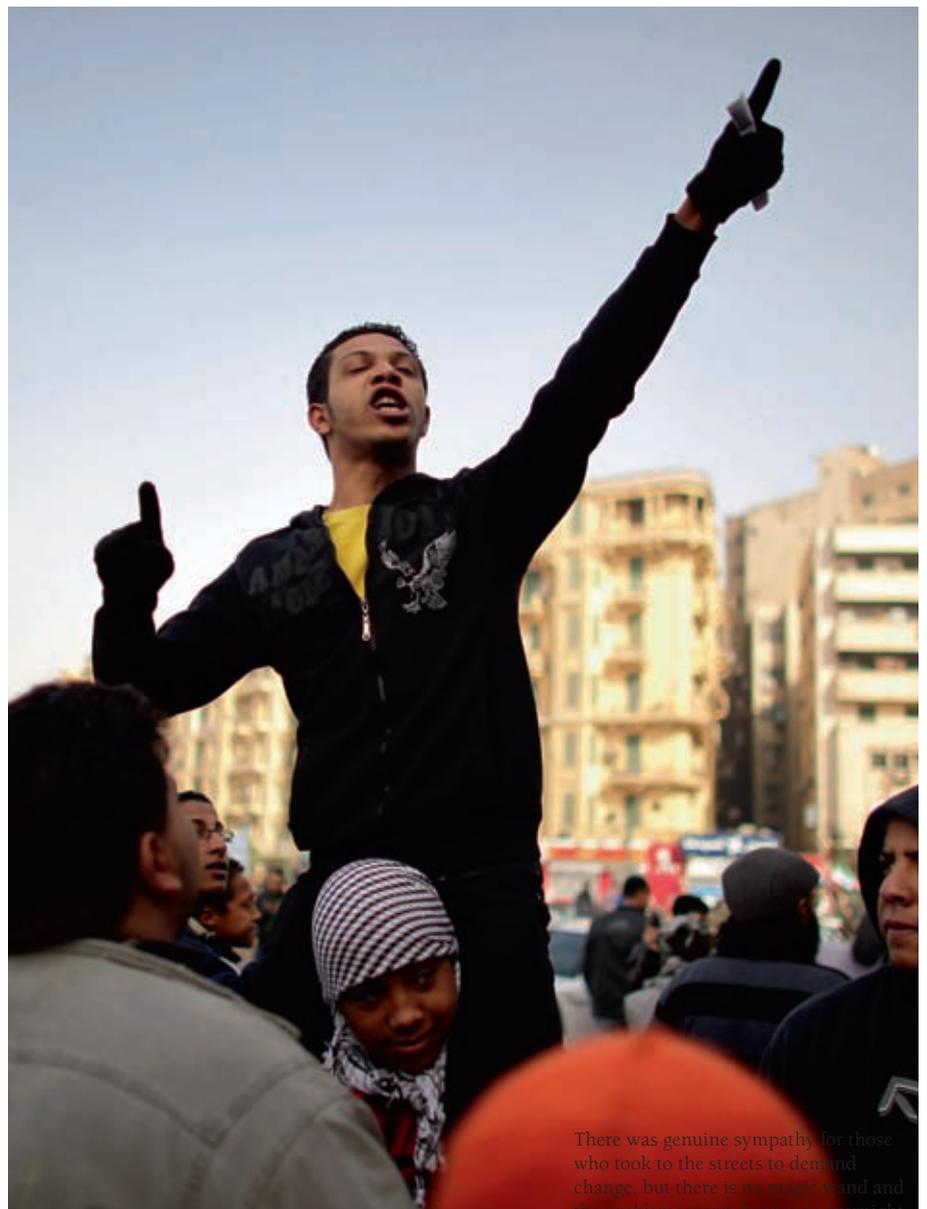
A year later, as the G8 meets in the United States and Mexico hosts the G20, the sympathy remains, but the concerns are mounting. In the wake of political upheaval in the region, human freedom and basic rights of free expression and assembly, conscience and confession have yet to be secured. The violent persecution of religious and ethnic minorities has been met with silence from those best positioned to come to power.

Continued violence

In Egypt, where protestors in Tahrir Square in 2011 captured the hearts of people around the world, the outbreak of violence against Coptic Christians has been shocking. Few among the victors in parliamentary elections have spoken out against this, even as the country prepares for the presidential elections in May.

Nicolas Sarkozy and David Cameron persuaded Barack Obama to support an

If economic prosperity is to return to the countries of the Arab Spring, the world’s leading economies must not stand idly by until economic sanctions are the only option



There was genuine sympathy for those who took to the streets to demand change, but there is no magic wand and the problems won't disappear overnight.

intervention by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in Libya, to which Canada, Italy and Turkey contributed.

The Gaddafi regime fell, but the country is now dominated by regional militias that threaten to undermine attempts to hold elections this year.

Many of the G8 and G20 leaders have condemned the violence in Syria as Bashar Assad unleashed the armed forces against protestors and civilian populations. The recent mission of United Nations special envoy (and former UN secretary-general) Kofi Annan had wide support among the G20 members, but made little progress.

A healthy and open civil society

For a gathering of the world's largest economies, the denouement of the Arab Spring may seem to be a strange concern. After all, the combined economies of Libya, Egypt and Syria amounted to just three-tenths of one per cent of the global economy in 2010, according to World Bank figures.

Yet this is precisely why, at last year's meetings, G8 and G20 leaders took such an interest in the Arab Spring: decades of authoritarian misrule has stunted

economic growth and development in these once-rich countries. The hope of 2011 was that, with better governments that respected human rights and freedoms,

economic reform and growth would be possible, beginning the slow process of lifting millions out of poverty.

This hope was not misplaced. In Central and Eastern Europe, in Latin America, in Africa and in Asia the transition to democratic pluralism supported by a healthy and open civil society helped to boost the economic fortunes of households across those regions. According to the International Monetary Fund, the gross domestic product (GDP) per capita rose in Korea from \$4,570, in current prices, when democracy was restored in 1988 to \$22,777 in 2011.

In Poland, GDP per capita rose from \$1,675 in 1990 to \$13,539 in 2011. And the economic growth prospects of many G20 members rely on the dynamism of people liberated by the rule of law and respect for basic economic freedoms.

How can the leaders of the G8 and G20 foster this kind of positive economic outcome in the Arab world? By speaking out for human rights and economic freedom during the post-authoritarian transitions where turmoil can cloud perspectives and even democratic activists can lose their way. Current leaders must lead new leaders forward.

The evidence for this prescription can be found in the testimony of the dissidents and democratic activists who were eyewitnesses to past transitions, and know their pitfalls.

After leaving the White House, former US president George W Bush began an effort to capture the testimony of those activists in the Freedom Collection at his presidential library in Dallas, Texas. This growing repository of video, audio and text records illustrates how important the voices of leaders inside and outside government speaking to principle can be to those grappling with the hard issues of establishing new governments.

In her interview for the Freedom Collection, Liberian president Ellen Johnson Sirleaf discussed the challenges that she faced when assuming office as Africa's first democratically elected female head of state: "We inherited a devastated country, dysfunctional institutions, destroyed infrastructure – a debt overhang, a debt-distressed country. Everything was a priority. People think that their lives are going to change immediately, and that there's going to be a magic wand."

There are similar expectations today in countries such as Tunisia, Egypt and Libya, where the initial hopes for miraculous economic transitions are being replaced with rather more sombre perspectives.

Many of those who suffered during dictatorships in the Arab world are still suffering in the nascent

Many of those who suffered during dictatorships in the Arab world are still suffering

political struggles of the region. The old power structures of the past do not disappear overnight.

Siheem Bensedrine, a longtime democracy and human rights activist from Tunisia, notes, "But we have the right to do mistakes, and to change, and to correct our mistakes. We are learning from people from abroad. We are learning from other experiences – from Poles, from Hungarians, from South Africans, from Latin Americans. We are trying to learn how they did this transition. Because it's not easy at all, the old regime is still there.

"Because the people against this revolution are still in the administration. And we also need [to know] how to do it."

Revolutions are, of course, a messy business. This is part of the darker side of human nature, and common to past transitions as participants contributing their stories to the Freedom Collection admit.

Yet if economic prosperity is to return to the countries of the Arab Spring, the world's leading economies must not stand idly by until conditions worsen and economic sanctions are the only option.

Speaking out for human freedom is less costly in the short and medium terms, as well as the long run. As a contribution from the G8 and G20 leaders to the future leaders of the Arab world, it is also priceless. ■



Thousands of Tunisians rallied in celebration of the first anniversary of the popular uprising that toppled their long-standing dictator



Reaching nuclear global zero: a Japanese view on the G8's role

Japan's robust stance against nuclear proliferation cannot be taken for granted indefinitely, in the light of a growing arms build-up among its neighbours

By Mataka Kamiya, National Defence Academy of Japan

For many years, Japan has faced a difficult dilemma between its non-nuclear ideal and the nuclear reality surrounding it. Since the Second World War, Japan has been an earnest advocate of nuclear disarmament as the only country ever to have experienced nuclear devastation. At the same time, Japan has faced the nuclear arsenals of its neighbours for many decades.

Many in the world believe that US president Barack Obama was the first person to use the phrase "a world without nuclear weapons". In fact, Japan has held up the goal of aiming for a world without nuclear weapons for many years. Every year since 1994, the Japanese government has submitted a resolution calling for the abolition of nuclear

combination of its alliance with the United States (including its nuclear umbrella) and the limited acquisition of conventional military forces under its policy of "exclusively defence-oriented defence".

An increasingly serious situation

Since the end of the Cold War, the nuclear situation surrounding Japan has become increasingly serious. North Korea has obtained nuclear weapons and developed the ballistic missiles to deliver them. China has been modernising and enhancing its own nuclear weapons and ballistic missile capabilities. Russia remains a significant nuclear power, second only to the United States. Confronted with these kinds of nuclear threats, non-nuclear Japan can only respond

Every year since 1994, Japan has submitted a resolution to the United Nations General Assembly, calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons, and has received overwhelming support

weapons to the United Nations General Assembly, and has received overwhelming support from international society.

To be consistent with this goal, Japan has stuck to its policy of not possessing nuclear weapons, despite having the financial and technological resources to develop such arms. Since the early days of the Cold War, Japan has coexisted peacefully with its nuclear neighbours without acquiring nuclear arms. This peaceful coexistence, however, does not mean that Japan has renounced efforts to defend itself from the threat of nuclear weapons. Holding firm to its non-nuclear policy in a troubled environment, Japan has maintained its own security through a

by improving its conventional military capacity (including missile defence) and strengthening its alliance with the US.

Meanwhile, Japan has tried to ease this dilemma through various international bodies. The G8 has been considered one of the most important. Unlike the United Nations Security Council, where non-permanent members are not eligible for immediate re-election, Japan always has a say at the G8 table.

Unlike the G20, where the agenda to be discussed is largely limited to economic and financial issues, the G8, which originally started as a top-level meeting to discuss possible ways of handling the serious

economic and financial situation of the mid 1970s, has broadened its agenda to include a variety of political-security issues, ranging from human rights through regional and global security to the issues of arms control and non-proliferation.

The nature of G8 as a group of like-minded leading liberal democracies in the world has made consensus-building among the members relatively easy (although the inclusion of Russia has somewhat blurred this characteristic). And most of the G8 members have been sincere supporters of nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear arms reduction for many years, particularly since President Obama's speech in Prague on 5 April 2009.

However, the G8's actual performance in the field of nuclear issues has been mixed, from the Japanese point of view. Japan had hoped that the G8 would perform two types of functions in this field simultaneously: first, to lead the world in promoting the ideals of nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear arms reduction; and second, to lead the world in taking actions against nuclear proliferators and those countries that do not stop their nuclear military build-up.

As for the first role, the Japanese have been mostly satisfied with what the G8 has done. The G8 has repeatedly put nuclear non-proliferation on the table and has adopted many statements and commitments related to this issue. At the 2009 L'Aquila Summit, the leaders echoed President Obama's words by stating that they "are all committed to seeking a safer world for all and to creating the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons, in accordance with the goals of the NPT [Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons]".

Frustration over nuclear proliferation

As for the second role, however, Japanese frustration has been increasing. With regards to North Korea's nuclear development and nuclear tests, the G8 has made many statements. Beyond the rhetorical level however, the members, except for Japan and the United States, have been unenthusiastic about acting to halt Pyongyang's ambition.

With regards to China's nuclear build-up and modernisation, Japanese irritation is even stronger, because many G8 members are reluctant to put this issue on the agenda in case it might provoke China. In the past year,

Advanced capability land-to-air ground-based interceptors in place in Tokyo in April, to counter any possible threat from missiles launched by North Korea





A soldier stands guard in front of the Unha-3 rocket on a launch pad near Pyongyang: North Korea's nuclear ambitions are causing concern in Japan

The essential prerequisite for the international community in pursuing the road to 'global zero' is the stability of the nuclear order

some Japanese diplomats have complained that the G8 agenda has been dominated by the issues concerning North Africa and the Middle East. Although they recognise the importance of recent developments in these regions, they believe that the G8 should pay more attention to the Asia-Pacific region and spend more time discussing nuclear issues in Northeast Asia.

The essential prerequisite for the international community in pursuing the road to 'global zero' is the stability of the nuclear order, regionally and globally. In Northeast Asia, stability has rested on Japan's nuclear self-restraint. It is, however, incorrect and dangerous for the international community to take Japan's non-nuclear stance for granted. Despite its extremely strong desire to remain non-nuclear, Japan would have to make new cost-benefit calculations when international developments cause it to consider important foreign and security policy decisions, as every other country does.

The decision with regard to nuclear weaponry is no exception. In other words, Japan's current decision to remain non-nuclear would not inevitably continue automatically, but would be affected by the international environment.

For example, if the international community keeps failing to respond adequately to North Korea's nuclearisation, it could have an undesirable effect on Japan's cost-benefit analysis of remaining non-nuclear. Up to the present, such calculations by Japan has been based on an assumption that any country that violates the NPT and develops nuclear weapons would have to face tough reactions from the international community. But in the eyes of the Japanese, the international response to Pyongyang's acquisition of nuclear weapons has been lukewarm at best.

In order to get closer to global zero, the world needs a non-nuclear Japan. In order to maintain its non-nuclear policy, Japan needs cooperation from the world. Many in Japan believe that the attitudes of the G8 countries, which are the core members of international society, are particularly important. They are watching closely to see what the G8 can do to promote nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear arms reduction, not only by word, but also by deeds. ■

The views expressed are the author's own and do not represent those of either the National Defence Academy of Japan or of Japan's Ministry of Defence



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Finding a middle way to curb Iran's nuclear ambitions

Fears that Iran is spearheading a nuclear arms race in the Gulf have caused huge international tensions, but a resolution to the impasse may now be in sight

By Graham Allison, director, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard University's John F Kennedy School of Government

When the G8 meets at Camp David, one can be certain that Iran's nuclear challenge will be at or near the top of the agenda. In March 2012, negotiations between Iran and the Permanent Five members of the United Nations Security Council plus Germany (P5+1) were due to restart in mid April; Iran was producing an additional 250 pounds of low enriched uranium (LEU, enriched up to five per cent) and 16 pounds of medium-enriched uranium (MEU, enriched to 20 per cent) per month; and American and European pressure on Iran's financial and energy sectors was steadily increasing. Speculation that either the United States or Israel would be forced to bomb Iran or accept Iran with a bomb was rampant.

Both under President Barack Obama and his predecessor, the US has stubbornly resisted Israeli pressure to attack Iran, fearing a wider war in the region and dubious that setting the Iranian nuclear project back two or three years would justify these costs.

The US would much prefer to make a deal that achieved the majority of its non-proliferation objectives without violence. Recent reappointments of pragmatic politicians in Tehran are encouraging; although their significance may have been overstated, they may signal a willingness by the Supreme Leader to come to some form of face-saving deal. If so, this shift within Iranian politics could prove crucial.

A story of failed negotiations

In international relations, it takes three agreements to make a deal between two states. The first is agreement among contending views within State A; the second, within State B. Then the two states need to find a 'zone of agreement' between these first

two agreements. In recent history, internal differences within Iran and the United States have often been as extreme as differences between them. Moreover, when differences within one state were sufficiently resolved for it to propose a deal that should have been in the zone of agreement of the other one, differences within the second state remained too great to reach that point, and vice versa.

The story of failed negotiations between the US and Iran offers many instances of this phenomenon. In 2003–04 Iran was clearly interested in reaching an agreement that could have limited its enrichment of uranium to a research facility. In the aftermath of the swift dismantlement of Saddam's regime, fearful

Both under President Barack Obama and his predecessor, the US has stubbornly resisted Israeli pressure to attack Iran, fearing a wider war

mullahs had a clear incentive to make a deal. The Bush administration did not. Many of its members subscribed to the slogan seen on T-shirts at the Pentagon: 'Real men go to Tehran'. But when Obama entered office determined to offer Iran an open hand for negotiations without preconditions, Iran was in its electoral season. Demonstrations against the rigging of the vote in Ahmadinejad's favour were crushed by a thuggish response that brought the Revolutionary Guard to the rescue of the regime and scuppered any prospects for negotiations.

The question remains: can either side say yes to a deal? I am hopeful, but sceptical. The



most promising possibility in the near term is the proposal suggested by Ahmadinejad in September 2011: Iran would stop the enrichment of uranium beyond levels used in civilian power plants (LEU) if it is able to buy fuel enriched at 20 per cent (MEU) for use in the Tehran Research Reactor that produces medical isotopes to treat cancer patients.

The significance of a red line capping Iranian enrichment at LEU is hard to exaggerate. If Iran amasses MEU, its potential timeline for breaking out to bomb material would shrink from months to weeks. In the metaphor of American football, having uranium enriched at 20 per cent takes Iran 90 yards along the field to bomb-grade material. Capping enrichment at five per cent would, in effect, move Tehran back to the



Iran has claimed it wants to be a peaceful nuclear power; there have been widespread fears that it is also developing weapons capabilities

30-yard line. Even more importantly, a commitment to a five per cent enrichment cap would stop those in the Islamic Republic who hope to move beyond 20 per cent to 60 per cent enrichment and then 90 per cent.

Arguments against the US and its allies testing this offer are easy to make. An embattled Ahmadinejad may not be able to deliver. Iran could use negotiations to seek to relax or escape sanctions. If a deal were reached, it would be more difficult to win international support for new sanctions. An agreement that stops only the 20 per cent enrichment could imply acceptance of Iran's enrichment up to five per cent and is not, in itself, a solution to its nuclear threat.

Given all of these negatives, the policy question remains: would the likelihood

of stopping Iran short of a nuclear bomb without bombing be improved if Iran made an unambiguous, verifiable commitment to no uranium enrichment beyond LEU for civilian nuclear fuel – in exchange for the right to purchase MEU fuel for its research reactor? The answer is yes.

A solution is possible

The fuel required for such research reactors is highly specialised, and often entails a significant delay between ordering and delivery. The US should ensure that the few countries able to produce these specialised fuel types (such as France) begin preparation of a fuel load for the Tehran reactor so that, if a deal were reached, the P5+1 would be able to fulfil Iran's requirements immediately and

give it no easy excuse to back out of the deal. Such a deal would be an excellent starting point for a more comprehensive agreement that acknowledged Iran's right to enrich uranium to five per cent to fuel its civilian nuclear energy plants and made explicit and unequivocal an Iranian commitment not to enrich beyond this level.

It would need to include specific arrangements for International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors and other transparency measures to maximise the likelihood that any Iranian government that stepped across the five per cent red line would be discovered, and lock in an unambiguous US threat to act decisively were Iran to be caught doing so. Such a deal would be ugly, but clearly preferable to war or a nuclear-armed Iran. ■

Working to prevent nuclear proliferation in the Gulf

Iran's nuclear ambitions have provoked widespread condemnation. The latest sanctions – spearheaded by the US and the EU – may finally pay dividends

By David Shorr, The Stanley Foundation

When it comes to topics of discussion at summits such as the G8, some items are the product of months of careful planning while others arise on the spot – or with a few days' or weeks' warning at most.

At one level, the G8 is a distinct multilateral body, with certain sets of issues or initiatives falling squarely within its ambit. In an echo of the old joke about where an elephant sits, however, it is a truism about summit meetings that world leaders talk about whatever they want. This is not necessarily a comment on the leaders' capriciousness, but instead a nod to their political and diplomatic imperatives. Presented with the chance to do business directly with their counterparts, it is only natural for them to focus on their own foreign-policy priorities and the crush of current events, and not be confined to a multilateral forum's particular agenda.

These are the impulses that often spur leaders at summits to issue collective statements on the day's urgent crises or just discuss them quietly, either as a group or in bilateral side meetings.

A question of multiple forums

Just as the attention of political leaders ranges across issues irrespective of mandates or agendas, conversely those issues are handled in multiple forums. Depending on the nature of the diplomatic or technical problem at a given moment, the heart of the action will be the corresponding multilateral venue. But for issues of the utmost political sensitivity, world leaders always reserve the option to work things out directly with each other, wherever their paths may cross.

As the controversy over Iran's nuclear programme has intensified, the international discussion of how to respond is constant

– in the United Nations Security Council, the International Atomic Energy Agency and bilateral channels (particularly over the specifics of economic sanctions).

So it is safe to assume that Iran will be discussed at Camp David. If the most significant activity at the summit is the attempt to harmonise the positions of, say, the United States and Russia, it may or may not be reflected in the summit communiqué.

The latest phase of sanctions has been aimed at constraining Iranian oil exports and disconnecting its financial institutions

As of early April, the main international contact group for negotiations over Iran's nuclear programme (the P5+1) was slated to meet on 13–14 April. But with the Iranian government resisting the meeting's proposed venue, the plan was not yet firm.

The P5+1 is composed of the Security Council's five permanent members (United States, United Kingdom, France, Russia and China) plus Germany. Interestingly, Iran is balking at meeting in Turkey, which was the site of the last round of talks in January 2011. More to the point, Turkish prime minister Tayyip Erdoğan served as an important bridge builder with Iranian leaders in 2010, brokering an agreement with Tehran that was rejected by the P5.

Two years later, Iran's government no longer sees Turkey as a hospitable site; it countered by suggesting China or Iraq. Most recently, US president Barack Obama relied on

Erdoğan to serve as a go-between with Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

Negotiations on how to guarantee the civilian character of Iran's nuclear activities pose a dilemma for the key powers, as they search for a peaceful solution. The longer the process drags on, the further Iran progresses in its enrichment of uranium that it could use for a nuclear weapon. From the Iranian vantage point, a drawn-out negotiation gives more time to hone its enrichment technology – a classic strategy of running out the clock.

The P5+1 is thus wary of being strung along by the Iranians, with diplomatic talks merely helping shield Iran from pressure. This is the point of economic sanctions: to prod Iran towards serious negotiations after it has already run the clock down for several years.

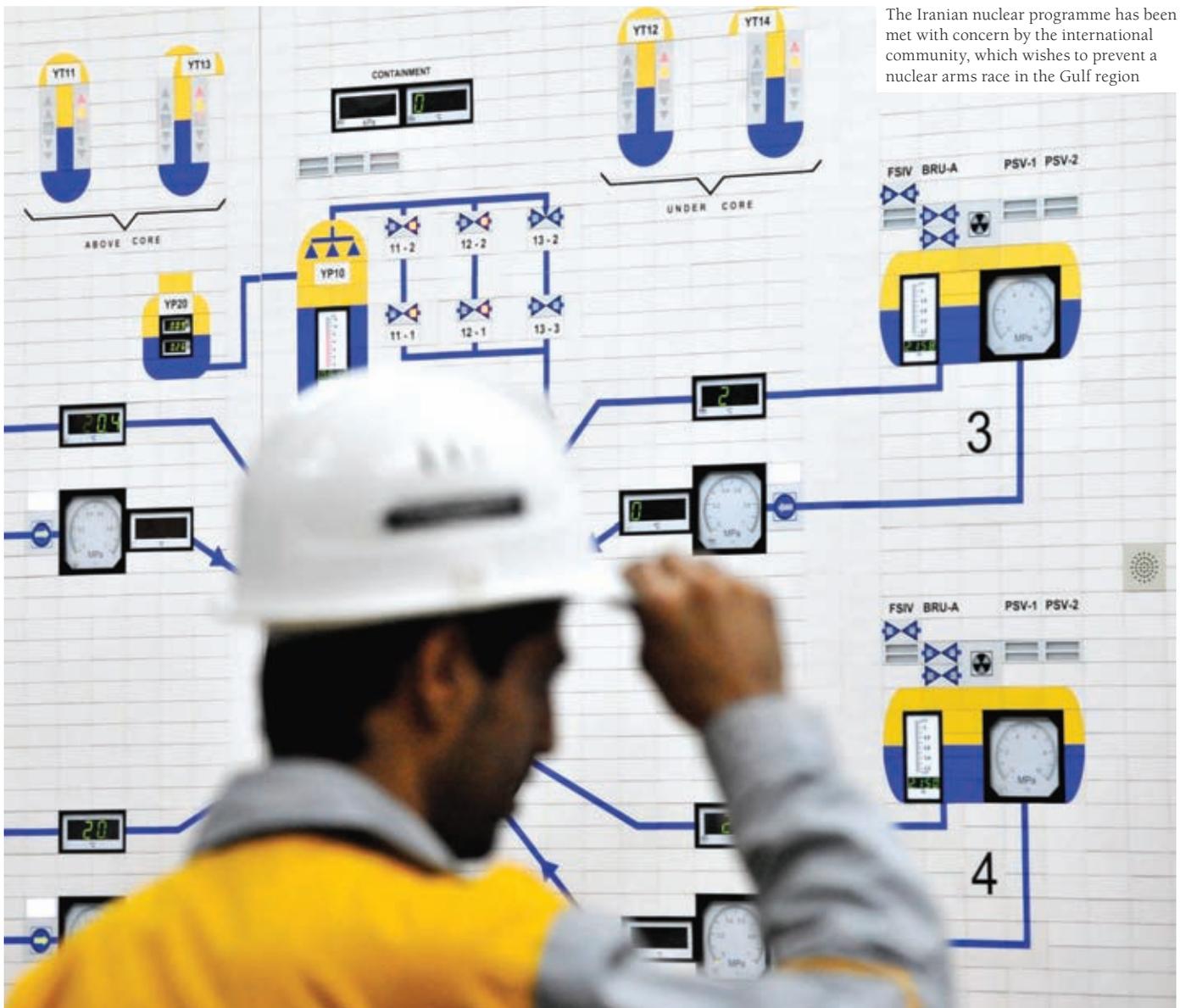
The weight of sanctions

In June 2010, the Security Council enacted the toughest sanctions ever imposed on Iran, the culmination of a major diplomatic push by the Obama administration. Russian support for these sanctions was the main pay-off of Obama's 'reset' with Moscow.

The thrust was to clamp down on any dealings between Iranians and the rest of the world that could help the nuclear programme. Eight months earlier, the P5+1 process had reached a hopeful moment, hammering out a fuel-swap deal to move the bulk of Iran's low-enriched uranium out of the country in exchange for foreign-milled civilian nuclear fuel. When Iran balked, the Obama administration started to line up support for a new sanctions resolution.

The latest phase of sanctions has been aimed at constraining Iranian oil exports and disconnecting its financial institutions, including the Central Bank of Iran (CBI), from the global financial system. The two key levers have been a European Union oil embargo due to take effect on 1 July 2012 and a law passed by the US Congress in December 2011. For all banks operating in the United States – after all, the very hub of global finance – the new law imposes strict limits on any transactions with the CBI other than oil purchases.

Specifically, for the import of oil from Iran, the US will also crack down on any bank doing such business unless the bank's parent country is reducing its imports. This exception was opened to minimise the economic harm to American allies such as



The Iranian nuclear programme has been met with concern by the international community, which wishes to prevent a nuclear arms race in the Gulf region

Japan and Korea. Of course, America's fragile recovery is itself threatened by rising global oil prices, which in turn have been fed by fears of a potentially escalating conflict with Iran. Meanwhile, Obama's political opponents stoke those fears while simultaneously blaming the president for high prices at the pump.

The European Union and its key members have taken an increasingly tough line with the

Iranian regime. In addition to the impending European Union oil embargo, the Belgium-based SWIFT system announced in February 2012 that it would also stop processing transactions with many Iranian banks.

The European leaders in the P5+1 have even outflanked Obama in their rejection of any future uranium enrichment in Iran – a stance that puts a cloud over the negotiations.

As an interesting footnote to the brinkmanship of recent years, one of the most dramatic revelations about Iran's nuclear programme (the hidden Fordow facility near Qom) was announced in the margins of the G20 Pittsburgh Summit in September 2009. This kind of diplomatic fireworks is unlikely to be seen at the Camp David Summit but, of course, one never knows. ■

Helping Afghanistan to make the transition to peace

As Afghans prepare for the move towards greater autonomy, the international community needs to consider the three most likely potential outcomes

By Omar Samad, senior Afghanistan expert, United States Institute of Peace; former ambassador of Afghanistan to France and Canada

Sustaining progress in the areas of Afghanistan's economic and social development is closely linked to the country's security and political stability, which are, in turn, subject to regional geopolitical developments and the impact of international aid.

As Afghanistan approaches the two critical timelines of transition to an Afghan lead by 2014 and the start of a new decade of transformation, which aims at establishing considerable self-reliance by the 2020s – three scenarios can be identified, in the light of the decision by the international community to significantly cut back its military footprint and financial contributions.

First, the worst-case scenario assumes an escalation in conflict as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) withdraws, which leads to the failure of the transition processes to Afghan ownership and undermines the nascent constitutional order.

Under such conditions, international funding of major development work would be suspended, while the paradigm shifts to an economy of war and subsistence, not too dissimilar from the situation in the 1990s, when failed national and subnational institutions emerged, and new alignments – some along ethnic lines – either sided with or against an oppressive re-Talibanisation effort.

Consequently, such a vacuum would spur an international humanitarian response, spearheaded by non-governmental organisations, with the primary purpose of providing emergency assistance to the vulnerable and the displaced. The illicit narcotics sector, reliant on cultivation, production and smuggling, would re-emerge as the country's primary generator of income.

Emboldened transnational terrorist groups, allied with local militants, would leave their Pakistani sanctuaries and re-establish encampments on the Afghan side of the border, reconstituting a South-Central Asia axis. Other regional players, including Iran, would attempt to hedge their bets, accentuating proxy rivalries and reversing gains made in regional cooperation. Central Asia would seek insulation from the twin evils of drugs and radicalism.

This scenario would not only eviscerate the monumental investment and effort made by the international community since 2001 in trying to fight terrorism and to stabilise

The best-case scenario assumes that not only are the main insurgent groups reconciled, but that the country has experienced a trouble-free and legitimate political transition

and rebuild Afghanistan, but may also provoke regional confrontation and threaten international security as well.

The second, intermediate scenario, envisages conditions similar to today's, minus the strong NATO footprint. Some elements of the insurgency would be reconciled, but others would opt to pursue their objectives through violent means, continuing to enjoy sanctuaries and covert support outside Afghanistan.

The menace, however, will not alter the strategic balance, as NATO-trained Afghan security forces will most probably be able to remain cohesive and protect major cities, communications arteries and strategic assets.

Thus, a peaceful and legitimate political transition in 2014 would become a focal

point to assure continuity, especially in terms of sustainable democratic governance and development activity. If dysfunctional institutions continue to undermine service delivery, good governance and the rule of law, and if cronyism, patronage and corruption continue to plague state structures, the questions relating to aid conditionality, accountability and effectiveness would become even more pressing.

In a low-intensity conflict, it would become harder to attract foreign investment, to prevent substantial capital outflows (estimated at more than \$40 billion in 2011) or to turn the economy around and engage in long-term planning. The country would be more reliant on quick-impact projects and high-risk loans for small- to medium-scale infrastructure development. Job creation would suffer as an environment of ambivalence would feed uncertainty and push more young Afghans into leaving the country.

The key challenges ahead

The third, most optimistic and best-case scenario assumes that not only are the main insurgent groups reconciled, but that the country has experienced a trouble-free and legitimate political transition, enabling national and local institutions to undergo reform and improve service delivery. It would also suppose that most of the key regional players are on board with the Afghan transitions, seeing their respective interests best served through Afghan stability and expanded economic activity.

This scenario would require a strong engagement by the international community to consolidate the gains made since 2002 and assure that new development efforts are sustainable, while maintaining pressure to prevent a security or political relapse for another decade. Bilateral strategic security partnerships offer a degree of risk mitigation if the political order were to face coercion.

While the first scenario forces an emergency humanitarian response, the other two alternatives offer varying degrees of risk and opportunity to advance the development agenda. To spur growth in both the public and private sectors, the key challenges faced by the country's leaders and their international



Women in Afghanistan have been prevented from playing a full role in society, and the development agenda will need to include reform in this area

partners will include strengthening political stability by adhering to principles of inclusivity, democratic governance and constitutional reforms; overseeing reforms to assure better governance, more accountability and the rule of law; developing strategies that prioritise agricultural output, coupled with water management and responsible extractive industries as the main economic drivers, both in terms of revenue generation and job creation; and fighting endemic poverty and the poor deployment of human capacity.

The 2010 Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS), which sets overambitious benchmarks for measuring progress, needs to be revised to better reflect development needs. Finance, however, will need to continue to be aligned behind reformed, Afghan-led priority programmes.

Encouraging private investment

To put development on the right track, better coordination is essential between Afghans and donors, and also among donors. Serious emphasis on public financial management, procurement and anti-corruption measures would also improve Afghanistan's poor record in directing development aid.

Diminished political risks backed by a reform agenda would undoubtedly regenerate business confidence and help to attract private-sector investment, directly from foreign investors and from indigenous sources. These are essential components of the engines of growth and job creation.

Development also means strengthening the growth, effectiveness and sustainability of civil society organisations as critical defenders of rights and as a pillar of a system of checks and balances, with special attention given to the freedom of the press and in allowing women to participate in all areas of society.

Finally, for those who believe in the realisation of the best-case scenario, the proposition offers win-win opportunities for all stakeholders. Failure would not be an option, if and when Afghanistan takes its natural place as the connecting hub for trade, transit and communications for Central Asia, South Asia and the Middle East. This would allow for regional interaction in sectors as diverse as energy, transport and natural resources, spurring economic growth, creating wealth and offering a better future for generations to come. ■

G8 action against terrorism and transnational organised crime

Specialist G8 forums are devising effective measures for dealing with terrorism and organised crime, while guarding against the erosion of civil liberties

By Amandine Scherrer, OPIAS Consulting

Since the 1990s, the threat of transnational organised crime has led to many discussions on the urgency of cooperation at the international level. The facilitation and harmonisation of police and judicial practices have been at the core of international mobilisation in the fields of investigation and prosecution. The intensification of expert-level exchanges on the international stage – within the United Nations, the European Union, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the G8 – over questions concerning enhancing cooperation to deal with transnational organised crime and terrorism has led to an impressive set of international standards.

In 1995, the G8 created the experts group known as the Lyon Group. After the 9/11 attacks, this merged with the Roma Group on counterterrorism that the G8 set up in the 1980s. Two sets of recommendations (in 1996 and 2002) have been negotiated and elaborated in these forums. In the aftermath of 9/11, additional recommendations and updated best practices were issued by the Roma/Lyon Group and others.

Sharing information

G8 recommendations seek to enhance international cooperation through education and exchanges, mutual legal assistance and law-enforcement channels and to strengthen investigative capabilities through the promotion of specific investigative techniques and the protection and cooperation of witnesses and other participants in criminal proceedings. Numerous best practices have been produced that address the development of biometrics and their use in travel documents, the enhancement of special techniques of investigation, the sharing of information and databases, including

DNA information, and the fight against terrorist financing. On the sidelines of the Roma/Lyon Group's activities, the G8 also organises meetings of the Counter-Terrorism Action Group (CTAG), which is essentially a diplomatic forum that incorporates not just the G8 countries, but Spain, Australia and Switzerland as well. The group concerns itself with issues linked to the struggle against international terrorism, as well as devising technical and professional assistance programmes for the benefit of police forces in third countries.

Supporting international efforts

Recent G8 presidencies have been consistent in addressing these priorities. With respect to counterterrorism, the G8 experts groups have focused on radicalisation processes and terrorist finance. In the 2011 Deauville declaration, the G8 leaders supported the newly created Global Counter-Terrorism Forum (GCTF), which aims to strengthen the international consensus in the fight against terrorism, creating new opportunities for cooperation and ensuring that the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy is implemented. This forum will provide a platform for senior counterterrorism policymakers and experts from around the world to work together on identifying urgent needs, devising solutions and mobilising resources to address key challenges. The G8 thus underscores the central role that the UN must play in global counterterrorism efforts and commits itself to ensuring that efficient UN tools continue to remain relevant in the future.

In the field of organised crime, the G8 has followed up collective mobilisation against international drug trafficking. Indeed, transatlantic cocaine trafficking was one of the top security priorities of the French G8 presidency in 2011. The



The G8's Counter-Terrorism Action Group devises technical assistance programmes for police forces on the front line of the fight against terrorism



G8 has also addressed illegal immigration, currency counterfeiting and the exploitation of minors as the result of sex tourism.

Cybersecurity has also become a significant concern for the G8. In Deauville in 2011, G8 leaders agreed, in the presence of representatives of the internet economy, on several key principles, including freedom, respect for privacy and intellectual property, and protection from crime. The e-G8 Forum held in Paris on 24-25 May was welcomed as a useful contribution to these debates.

The 2012 Camp David Summit will follow up these issues. As host, the United States has strongly supported the Global Counterterrorism Forum launched by secretary of state Hillary Clinton on 22 September 2011, which comprises

27 EU countries, 11 Muslim countries, China, India and Russia alongside regional representation from South America and Africa. In supporting international mobilisation against crime and terrorism, the G8 should also seek to guarantee the protection of democratic values and rights.

Since 9/11, numerous non-governmental organisations have objected to antiterrorism policies. The establishment of domestic

and international DNA databases for law-enforcement purposes, the use of electronic surveillance or other forms of technology during investigations and the tracing of networked communications are methods that are often not consistent with the protection of civil liberties and individual privacy. In the main fields of action deemed to be efficient in preventing and fighting transnational crime and terrorism, policies concerning communication and travel surveillance, immigration, DNA databases and data sharing raise questions about the

in some EU countries, but also in the European Parliament. These groups have asked for more clarity and legal certainty for both citizens and airlines, better information sharing between US authorities and law enforcement and judicial authorities from the EU, and the establishment of clear limits on what purposes PNR data may be used for, as well as strong guarantees on data protection. The fight against organised crime and terrorism inevitably lends legitimacy to some procedures that have previously encountered many political obstacles,

specifically with respect to civil liberties. These difficulties were pointed out in the G8 recommendations, as the experts advised the G8 countries to maintain an

In the field of organised crime, the G8 has followed up on collective mobilisation against international drug trafficking and has also addressed illegal immigration, currency counterfeiting and the exploitation of minors as the result of sex tourism

accountability of practices of exception regarding the rule of law and the respect for human rights. Law-enforcement practices that escape control by the judiciary, let alone parliamentary accountability, have been at the core of the concerns of civil liberties defenders over the past decade. Heated controversies surrounding the passenger-name record (PNR) agreements between the US and the EU have led parliamentarians to mobilise

appropriate balance between protecting individual privacy and democratic values and maintaining law enforcement's capacity to protect public safety. Nevertheless, no control mechanisms have been promoted to make sure those liberties are fully respected. The G8 countries and their experts groups could play a significant role here. The US presidency of the G8 should promote these critical values in the new Global Counter-Terrorism Forum. ■



One of the G8's main priorities regarding organised crime is to support international efforts to fight global drug trafficking



BRICS RESEARCH GROUP



The BRICS Research Group

The concept of the “BRICS” was first created by Jim O’Neill to refer to the investment opportunities in the large emerging economies. Today, the annual meetings of the leaders of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and now South Africa, which started in 2008, transcend that economic context to embrace a broad range of high-level issues requiring global governance, such as trade and investment, health, food and agriculture, development, energy, environment, climate change, social progress, peace, security and international institutional reform.

Led by Marina Larionova of Russia’s National Research University Higher School of Economics and John Kirton of Canada’s University of Toronto, the BRICS Research Group aims to serve as a leading independent source of information and analysis on the BRICS institutions and underlying interactions. Documentation from the BRICS and relevant research and reports are published on the BRICS Information Centre website at www.brics.utoronto.ca and the International Organisations Research Institute at www.hse.ru/en/org/hse/iori/bric. Together with international partners from the BRICS countries, the BRICS Research Group focuses on the work of the BRICS and diplomacy within the group as a plurilateral international institution operating at the summit level. Particular attention is paid to the relationship and reciprocal influence of the BRICS with other leading global governance institutions such as the G8, the G20 and those of the United Nations galaxy. The BRICS Research Group also conducts analyses of the compliance of the BRICS members with their summit commitments.

The BRICS Research Group is proud to announce its first publication – **BRICS: The 2012 New Delhi Summit**, published by Newsdesk Media and available online at www.brics.utoronto.ca/newsdesk – with guest editor Dr. Yoginder K. Alagh, chair of the Institute of Rural Management Anand and vice-chair of the Sardar Patel Institute of Economics and Social Research and a former minister of Power, Planning, Science and Technology in the Government of India.