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Democratization Process in the Middle East after 9/11
- The example of Lebanon

Course: Bachelor thesis in Political Science

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Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to evaluate the democratization process in the Middle East after 9/11. After 9/11 the US made a drastic change in their foreign policy towards the Middle East aiming on a "Freedom Agenda and fighting the "war on Terrorism" to ensure their national security. Therefore, the main effort of the policy was made on democracy promotion in the Middle East in order for the Bush Administration to achieve their goals. Democracy is a widely used concept in the West describing a ruling system that secures peace and stability since it ensures the citizens all their freedoms and human rights. A definition of democracy and its arenas will be given according to the definition of Linz and Stephan with a main focus on Civil and Political Society. Lebanon will be brought up as an example of a somehow democratic Middle Easter Country. The Lebanese political system is based on confessionalism thus it is important to show how democracy is preserved within Lebanon presenting both the civil and political society within the country. The study in question shows how the US approached the region and which efforts were made in the democratization process in the Arab Middle East and it will also deal with the outcome 9/11 had on the Lebanese-US relation.

The conclusion of the thesis showed that the Bush Administrations new foreign Policy faced many backlashes. Even though the US managed to overthrow the Taliban's and remove Saddam's Regime, the policy's main goal of achieving democracy in the Middle East was not successful. In the case of Lebanon the research concludes that to achieve a successful democratic policy the Lebanese strong confessional structures must be combined with the fundamentals of democracy. It further showed that there has not been a drastic change in the Lebanese-US relation due to 9/11.

Key Concept: Arab World, Civil Society, Democracy, Democratization Process, Freedom Agenda, Lebanon, Lebanese-US Relation, Middle East, Political Society

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1. Introduction:

The whole society is build upon political views and theories from ancient Greece till today's World. Without politics the society's structure would collapse. Politics is a constant recurring subject in societies. Through political discussion we bring forth our own believes and thoughts, we have the ability to influence our society by participating in political decision making. However, due to political issues conflicts arise between people in inside and outside the social community. Conflicts arise due to many reasons but are often connected with power structures within societies. In democratic countries the level of problems due to political issues are low because in such societies they often agree and the majority comes to an agreement regarding the best outcome of the citizens. In a democracy the opinions of majority are taken into consideration given the minority and therefore we rarely see those countries in war or conflicts with each other such as countries with dictatorial regimes.

The Arab Middle East (AME) is a region that has got much attention in political debates through history especially due to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the gulf war in 1991, the 9/11 attacks on the United States and the constant conflict and war possibilities in Lebanon. This region which consists of 21 countries whereas 18 of them are Arab states and the other three are Iran, Israel and Turkey, was for many decades subjected to foreign domination. The "external influences and interventions emanating from the international system have been an enduring recognizable feature of the Middle East"[1] since the breakup of the Ottoman Empire and the World War 1. Back then the great European powers argued that people outside their territory could not govern themselves and therefore they needed to interfere in those regions such as the Middle East.[2]

The end of colonialism gave the countries of the Middle East control over their internal affairs but it also contributed to a divided ideology and sentiment between its peoples where some were willing to cooperate with the west while others rejected the idea of a continues relationship with this external power. Lebanon is one of those countries where the French mandate gave the Christian population a bigger share of power than the Muslims

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[1] Raymond Hinnebusch and BA Roberson (2002) p.56

[2] Ibid. 2002

which created disturbance within the country. Due to the break of promises made to the Arabs and the manipulation of governments and rulers a high sense of Arab nationalism and unity by religious means arose in the AME. This Arab unity was supported by many states but it did not succeed even though Arabs regarded themselves as a nation. The problem was the surrendering of power because each states of the region were not willing to give up its own power for the so called greater Arab unity.[3]

Basically the issue of the nation (identity) and the territorial state (sovereignty) in the AME has been of great importance where the dilemma of the Arab world was laid in "one nation/many states".[4] Often nations and states are regarded as very similar but the real case is that they differ from each other. Nations are ethnic cultural communities consisting of groups of people with common traditions such as culture, religion and language that refer to a psychological aspect, which aims on describing what the individuals identify themselves with while a State is a political entity that refers to the institutions and governments that governs a territory and have sovereignty within its borders. Even though the states in the Middle East got the power to govern themselves the influence of foreign powers remained and still remain today. Lebanon is distinguished from other countries in the Middle East due to its population which consists of various religious affiliations. The concept of Nation/State among the Lebanese citizens is to be defined differently between the religious sects where some regard themselves as being Arabs, Phoenicians, only Lebanese, Muslims or Christian. The matter of what the Lebanese population sees as nationality or identity has been one of the reasons for many conflicts in the country especially during the civil war in 1975-1990.[5]

Many authors have dealt with the issue of democracy and the democratization process in the Middle East that the US imposed on the world. The issue of democratization has been discussed throughout history and the concept democracy has several definitions. The importance of democratization is due to the basic fact that we are living in a globalized society where the conditions for people in one part of the world affect the conditions for

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[3] Freed Halliday, (2005) p. 90-91

[4] Raymond Hinnebusch (2002) p.29-30

[5] Ibid. 2002

people in other parts. Due to continuous conflict possibilities in the region and the 9/11 attacks the whole Arab Middle East has faced intensive changes where the issue of democratization is constantly discussed. Therefore, it is essential to evaluate the democratization process in the Middle East after 9/11 and US relation towards the region and Lebanon.

1.1 Purpose:

The main purpose of this study is to evaluate the process of democratization in the Middle East starting after 9/11 attacks in 2001 on the World Trade centers in New York since they were the reason for the US immediate change in foreign politics. The main questions in hand will be what efforts were made by the US in the Middle East to achieve democracy and how both civil and political society functions in practice in the region. In particular the research investigates how the US approached its new Foreign policy of democracy promotion in the Middle East and how the Lebanese-US relation has been changed after 9/11. That is, the study will show efforts the US has made in promoting civil and political society in the Middle East with a focus on Lebanon. An example will be introduced on how democracy should functioning according to Linz and Stephan's democracy criteria's describing both civil and political societies in Lebanon.

2. Method:

The main focus of conducting any political research is that it should increase the knowledge of why things happen as they do in politics. The goal with research concerning political issues is to discover facts about politics in order to deepen the knowledge in political science.

This research deals with the issue of democratization in the Middle East after the September 11 attacks on the United States. A definition on what deliberative democracy and its two traditions will be given. The study will further provide a definition on consolidation democracy and its five arenas. In this research Lebanon will be taken as a case to show how

the structure of the Lebanese political system is build and how both civil and political society functions in Lebanon.

The research method used in order to perform the motive of the study is a qualitative analysis to collect data. Primary and secondary sources will be used as the basic method for gaining information. Primary sources are created by authors who themselves have experienced the events or circumstance that are studied hence the sources provide direct statement, facts and data concerning the research topic. The primary sources that will be used for this study are the Official government reports, publications and statistics given from institutions such as Swedish Foreign ministry and US Department of State etc. Secondary sources on the other hand are analysis, documents or interpretations of primary sources. The secondary sources will consist of articles, books, journals and internet sources concerning the subject of this research. Articles and journals that will be used are about the topics of Democracy, democratization process, Middle East, Lebanon, US-Lebanese relation, freedom agenda, civil and political society.

In order to examine either primary or secondary sources for this research the focus is laid on qualitative content analysis since the social reality will be addressed through a subjective scientific approach. Through qualitative content analysis, different sources can be used in order to obtain both credible and clear facts to the study thus the research purpose can be examined to create a conceptual framework. It was also considered to be the best way of conducting this study since qualitative analysis has a logical, rational and systematic approach on research. The qualitative analysis is a prescriptive method in a way that its observations may help to understand the underlying causes of conflicts and the need of change in certain areas such as the Middle East. Content analysis is used with a directed approach to interpret the meaning from various literature, theories or relevant research data to conduct the study.

By using this method, the investigation's credibility is improved as various sources are compared and contrasted to ensure that a selection of the most reliable information will be made. Nevertheless, critics argue that this method may be linked to subjectivity, since the information selected are often only based on the authors. Therefore, it is important to

remember that the qualitative analysis must be objective so it does not affect the substance of the study from the author's perspective.

One of the methods that was used in order to collect information to this study was to research the topic in libraries after books with relevant information about the topic democratization in the Middle East, possible outcomes from 9/11 etc. To use books as a source in libraries is good since those books have often been controlled in order to fit precisely that subject area both before and after pressure release.

Another source of information that has been used to the study is the internet however the internet can tend to be seen as an unreliable source since anyone can add or clear information in articles, documents etc therefore the information from internet sources needs to be carefully checked. The internet is often seen as the best source of gathering information because it is easier to get updated information faster despite its deficiencies.

3. **Democracy:**

In order to evaluate the process of democratization in the Middle East after 9/11 the theory of Democracy needs to be defined. First of all a theory is a statement of general principles of the underlying relationship in phenomena or events. Theory may be expressed as laws, arguments, hypothesis and/or facts. Historical theory has generally been descriptive in terms of describing and explaining relationships. A fixed model/theory or law can not be defined since the concept of democracy has many definitions. Democracy which can be multicultural is seen as a positive concept based on positive political principles such as self-determination, self-governance and moral egalitarianism. It is argued by Larbi Sadiki that "democracy as a form of government is still valued as the best system for regulating state-society relations".[6]

Linz and Stephan argues that democracy requires a definition of the "demos" (the people) since democracy is not characterized by subjects but rather by citizens in a state. Therefore when dealing with democratic transitions the question of who is "the people" is often put at

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[6] Larbi Sadiki (2004) p.11

the center of politics. Citizenship within a state must be defined since there is a strong relation between modern democratic governance and stateness. Democracy needs citizenship to exist in order to ensure the people civil and political rights. In the same manner citizenship needs a state since the community needs the state to certify memberships. The Authors statements for the criteria's of democracy that are followed in this study are

> *(1) "The more the population of the territory of the state is composed of multi-national, lingual, religious, or cultural societies, the more complex politics becomes because an agreement on the fundamentals of a democracy will be more difficult.*
>
> *(2) Although this does not mean that democracy cannot be consolidated in multinational or multicultural states, it does mean however, that considerable political crafting of democratic norms, practices, and institutions must take place.*
>
> *(3) Some ways of dealing with the problems of stateness are inherently incompatible with democracy." [7]*

Generally democracy is seen as the "rule by the people" because it aims to regulate the relationship between the governed and the governors. It is a form of government where the rulers can be held responsible for their actions by the ruled. The task is to create the maximum happiness to as much citizens as possible taken the minority into consideration. Democracy is about the equal dignity and rights. In a democracy, anyone has the opportunity to participate. The essence of a democracy is that everyone has freedom to express themselves, there should be a popular rule that safeguards all, the rule of law must include that all are equal before the law and all have the same chances and rights to development and education in freedom Thus, democracy aims to treat all individuals as equals where the bases are put on the ability to convince others, compromises, free discourses, human rights, rights of law, collective action, free and fair elections and

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[7] Linz and Stephan (1996) p.29

respecting both majorities and minorities. Decisions are to be made by all the members and everyone should have equal right to influence decisions.[8]

The democratic governance ensures the rule of law, political, civil, social and economic rights. Political and civil rights gives people the opportunity to draw attention convincingly to general needs and to demand appropriate public action especially for poor and weaker people. Civil right can mean the right of being equal in front of the Law. Individuals should be considered as equal and obey the law under equal conditions. The political right refers to every individual's equal political value and freedom which includes the right to vote, participate in demonstrations, establish political party etc. An economic and social right refers to the safety of individuals ensured by the government such as education and security.[9] Basically "democracy is a form of governance of life in a polis in which citizens have rights that are guaranteed and protected."[10]

In the sections below a definition of two types of democracy will be explained in order to show the reader how democracy can take form in a state.

3.1 Deliberative Democracy

As stated earlier democracy has several definitions and models. Hans Wiklund examines the model of deliberative politics and procedural democracy formulated by Jürgen Habermas. Within democratic state there should be a relation between society, law and organization where practical reasons which is how things should be done and communicative reasons refers to rightness, sincere communication and truth must be separated. To achieve democracy culture, deliberations, norms, laws and tradition must be combine where the basic conditions are met. Wiklund states that democracy functions as a mechanism for maintenance of social order and control of social development. He means that a model of

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[8] David Beetham, Kevin Boyle (1997) p.15-19

[9] Linz & Stephan (1996) p.9

[10] Ibid (1996) p.10-11

democracy is, explicitly or implicitly, in need of a conception of social order. The liberal (liberty) and the republican (popular sovereignty) tradition along with models of democracy are based on conceptions of social order which refer to state-centric conceptions of governance and politics.[11]

It is argued that democracy rests on two political traditions. The first is popular sovereignty which refers to the "rule by the people" and the second tradition is liberty or freedom as it can be called. Wiklund's definition is that the liberal tradition claims that individuals are sovereign and it consists of a legal system which regulates the individual rights and protects political and economic rights from abusive use of state power. The state power should be limited by constitution in order to protect the private interests. The republican tradition or popular sovereignty on the other hand refers to that individuals are sovereign as a people since they are social in nature. Democracy in the context of popular sovereignty is a mean of regaining power to the community where the community should be allowed to govern itself.[12]

Deliberative democracy claims that a majority decision will be easier to justify to all involved if it is preceded by a process of deliberation which not only seek to establish a solution that may obtain a majority but also seeks as far as possible to take into account the reasonable objections of a minority. It is therefore possible to reach understanding across different cultures even in situations where deep diversity threatens to destroy any hope of future co-operations. In deliberative versions of democracy it is presumed that mutual respect develops through talking to each other as equals, therefore arguments cannot be criticized before taken seriously. The deliberative concept of democratic politics is unified with how to see democracy as an instrument for democratic organization and guideline of collective action. The central point with deliberative politics is to understand the democratic process as a process of social learning through rational argumentation which is an effort to develop alternative notions to democratic politics. The effort is laid in the combination of the most attractive attributes of both the liberal and republican tradition in order to integrate them

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[11] Hans Wiklund (2002)

[12] Ibid. (2002)

into communicative structures. Deliberative democracy is also important because it may lead to questioning the limits of formal decision-making power at the collective level.[13]

3.2 Consolidation Democracy:

Since democracy is a form of government a state must exist. In order for consolidation democracy to exist when there is a state, five other arenas also need to exist. The first arena that should exist is the development of a free and lively **civil society**. Second, a valued **political society** which is relatively autonomous must exist. Thirdly, to ensure legal guarantees for citizens' freedoms and independent associational life there must be a **rule of law**. Fourth, the new democratic government must have a functioning **state apparatus/bureaucracy.** In order to protect the rights of citizens which is a precondition for democracy, a functioning state and state bureaucracy is needed by the democratic government. Finally, an institutionalized **economic society** must exist. Linz and Stephan argues that ***"at least a nontrivial degree of market autonomy and ownership diversity in the economy is necessary to produce the independence and liveliness of civil society so that it can make its contributions to a democracy."***[14] There are constant negotiations between these five arenas since each one of the arenas has an effect on the other arenas in a democratic system thus democracy also becomes like an interacting system not only a regime. [15]

Within a community civil society refers to self-organizing movements, groups and individuals that are independent from the state. This arena needs necessary support from the rule of law which establishes its legal guarantees, the state apparatus in order to organize the implementation of rights of civil society if they are violated and thirdly it needs support from the economic society so that the degree of autonomy and liveliness is maintained. Political society which refers to free and inclusive electoral rights needs legitimacy in eyes of civil society. The necessary and legitimate tasks of political society are to create intermediation

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[13] Ibid. (2002) p.53-57

[14] Linz & Stephan (1996) p.11

[15] Ibid. (1996)

and structuring compromises between civil society and the state. It also needs the support of the rule of law and state apparatus since legal guarantees are embedded in the former while the later maintains them. The rule of law must be respected by significant actors as the state and the democratic government. The necessary support from other arenas refers to a legal culture which has strong roots in civil society while it is respected by both the political society and the state apparatus. State apparatus gets monetary support levied by political society which is produced and rendered to the state by economic society. It also needs support from civil society for rational-legal authority. The economic society refers to an institutionalized market that needs legal and regulatory structures which are created through political society, enforced by the state apparatus and respected by civil society.[16]

4. Civil society in theory and its practice in the Middle East:

As mentioned earlier the arena of civil society is one out of five important arenas that must function correctly in order for democracy to be achieved within a state therefore, a definition of what the concept of civil society refers to will be provided in this chapter. The chapter will state the criteria's for what the concept of civil society stands for and how its organizations, movements and associations are functioning. Furthermore the chapter also includes how civil society looks like in practice in the Middle East, describing its development and the different sector frames it operate within in the region. In present contemporary societies civil society is one of the modern concepts besides the concept of democracy, human rights, rule of law, justice, the free market and citizenship that is constantly discussed. Since the 9/11 attacks and the beginning of the US democracy promotion the strengthening of civil society has become an essential precondition for the democratic transition in the AME.[17]

According to Linz and Stephan *"the idea of civil society, as a normative aspiration and as a style of organization, had great capacity to mobilize the opposition to the military-led bureaucratic-*

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[16] Ibid. (1996)

[17] Linz & Stephan (1996)

authoritarian regimes in South America, most notably in Brazil, and was crucial in Eastern Europe as a vehicle for asserting the autonomy of those who wanted to act "as if they were free."[18] Therefore, once a democratic system is established, civil society is essential since it can help to maintain and organize that system and contribute to the democratization process of authoritarian regimes. Citizens while involved in civil society get knowledge about the fundamental democratic values of participation and collective action which in turn makes them spread these values further to their communities.[19]

The concept of civil society can be defined as, the zone of voluntary associative life beyond family and clan affiliations which is created by groups of people constituting the public sphere but are separated from the sphere of the state and the market. This associative life can consist of self-organizing groups, movements or individuals such as women's groups, neighborhood associations, non-profit organizations, NGOs, intellectual organizations, religious and clan organizations. These different kinds of groups, movements, organizations etc seeks to establish associations, solidarities and articulate values which can be linked together by their common interests.[20]

The main point with creating civil societies in a community is to limit the intervention of the state in the public spheres. These spheres act to guide the government while the government only can be legitimate if it listens to the public spheres. To fully obtain democracy a dialog must exist in order to have a mutual understanding on politics in the public spheres, not just accepting all decision by the government. Government policy and social activities may be shaped by civil society movements because they represent the interests of its citizens. Further, it is argued that civil societies can create a form of counterweight to state power due to the public sphere of citizen activity which functions beyond the direct control of the government.[21]

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[18] Ibid. (1996) p.7

[19] Ibid.

[20] Amy Hawthorne (2004) p.11

[21] Ibid. (2004) p. 5 and 14

Civil society according to a Turkish scholar named Serif Mardin is a historical aspiration of a Western dream while on the other hand, "the Muslim dream is said to be a yearning for social equilibrium created under the aegis of a just prince". [22] For that reason, it is claimed that it is difficult to incorporate civil society in the Muslim world. [23]

The development of civil society through history in the Arab world has been divided in four phases. Civil society in the first phase before the European power domination consisted of community-based self-help groups, religious and educational institutions. During the European colonialism the second phase began which referred to the emergence of independent civic activity groups such as trade unions, cultural groupings, intellectual and Islamist organizations across the region. These modern forms of associative life were often politically active and were of importance in supporting pan-Arabism during nationalist struggles. The third phase started when the Arab countries got independent. During this phase civil society organizations were either repressed or turned into state-dominated institutions by the new regimes because they believed that independent associative life might undermine national unity thus threaten their own powers. In the 1980s the fourth phase began. This phase saw a liberalization and diversification of the civil society process. The spread of Islamist movements contributed to a proliferation of religious groups active in civil society, international influences, Arab government's implementation of limited economic and political liberalization in order to stay in power whereas the fact that they allowed new NGOs to form are some factors that have contributed to this phase. The formation of Arab human rights and democracy organization has been encouraged by prodemocracy and human rights movements. These organizations, groups of civil societies and NGOs have received much foreign aid which also has encouraged their growth.[24]

Today, in the Middle East the civil society consist of five sectors. In the majority of the Arab countries the first sector comprises of Islamic civil society which consist of verity of groups, associations and movements with the main purpose to spread the faith of Islam. These

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[22] Amyo B. Sajoo (2002) p.1-2

[23] Ibid. (2002)

[24] Amy Hawthorne (2004) p.6

Islamic organizations provide social services such as education, employment assistance, medical care as well as religious instruction and guidance. This sector is the most active and widespread form of civil society in the AME where the different movements have diverse forms and political orientations. Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood who oppose to the ruling regimes are some of the political movements in this sector. Other more radical organizations that use terrorism to obtain their goals of an Islamic society are the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and Al Qaeda.[25]

Nongovernmental service organizations or NGOs are included in the second sector of Arab civil society. Arab countries have realized the role associational life play in society developments while being worried about the support radical Islamic movements are gaining thus encouraging NGOs as an alternative source. NGOs in the Middle East are nonprofit groups which are similar to the Western nonprofit organizations. NGOs provide community development to the public to complement government services and deliver social services such as job retraining, civic education and micro-credit. The government puts restrictions on these NGOs while they operate openly. The NGOs finance their services by Western countries who willingly donate aid for associational life, especially to NGOs since they are seen as efficient recipients of funds rather than Arab government bureaucracies. The difference between NGOs and the Islamic movements which also provides the people with different services is that they do not share the goals of promoting the faith of the religion.[26]

The third sector consists of membership-based professional organizations such as professional association (doctors, lawyers, engineers etc), labor unions and chambers of commerce. These associations and unions are among the largest civil societies in several Arab countries with a history of involvement in nationalist political campaigns and their main task is to deliver social and economic services to their members. Professional association operates under tight government controls because they are the most politically active organizations of civil society in the Arab World.[27]

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[25] Sean L Yom, (2005)

[26] Ibid. (2005)

[27] Ibid. (2005)

Associations whose main purpose is to foster solidarity and companionship, and provide services among groups of friends, relatives, colleagues and relatives compounds the fourth sector. Mutual aid societies that for example helps migrants of Egypt's urban areas who immigrates from certain villages, societies of artists, writers and youth organizations make up this sector.[28] NGOs and organizations in this sector differ when it comes to the form and funding but movements in this sector are often fluid and informally organized and the interaction between government officials is low. They do not try to seek government or donor aid thus they are self-funding. The majority of these groups are engaged in social identity, solidarity and culture issues rather than being involved actively in politics.[29]

The last sector of civil society in the Arab world consists of prodemocracy associations. It is argued that *"the organizations in this sector seek to promote democratic change by spreading democratic concepts among their fellow citizens and by pressing Arab governments to adhere to international democratic norms. They carry out democracy-education programs, often targeted at politically marginalized groups such as women and youth; they mobilize citizens to vote, run for office, and observe elections: they monitor governments' human right practices and press for women's rights: they lobby for changes in laws and governments practices and fight corruption: and they research political issues."*[30] In Lebanon the Lebanese association for democratic elections (LADE)[31] (which in June 2009 monitored the governmental elections in Lebanon) is one of the prodemocracy associations. This sector is the newest and most fledgling one where the expansion has been fueled by political reforms and hopes of western democracy. According to many democracy promoters it is believed that associations in this sector make up the "Arab civil society" but the groups are smaller both in number and membership than the movements in the other four sectors.[32]

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[28] Amy Hawthorne (2004) p.7

[29] Sean L Yom (2005)

[30] Amy Hawthorne (2004) p.8

[31] LADE

[32] Sean L Yom (2005)

Condoleezza Rice, the US former Secretary of State, expressed that even though changes in terms of universal suffrage such as educations for girls and women and more influential parliaments are slow, the US have taken appropriate measures to promote civil society in the Middle East. The effort to foster civil society by the US has been done through issuing programs promoting civil society movements such as the "Forum for the Future" and the "Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI)" and by pushing non-democratic regimes in the AME through public and private diplomacy to transform their regimes.[33]

The taken measures can be shown through US relationship with Pakistan. After 9/11 the US was indirectly forced to establish a relationship with the military government of Pakistan in order fight terrorism and extremists together. The US invested more than 3 billion dollars by providing medical aid after the earthquake in 2005, supporting political parties and the rule of law and building health clinics and schools. The Pakistani government was pushed into developing a modern and moderate path and when this process was threatened President Musharraf was pushed to hold free elections. According to the US this restoration of democracy in Pakistan was a success when the Pakistani citizens opposed the extremism.[34]

The Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) was one of Bush's administrations project to promote civil society. This project was launched in 2002 and funded at 430 million dollars with an intention to serve 17 countries where the purpose was to promote education, entrepreneurship and women's rights. The MEPI was based on the fact that transition of democracy requires not just a change in political institutions but also changes in cultural, economic and social sectors. Through this project national and local political party organizations, their members in the Middle East, and the only live satellite broadcast of Arab parliamentary conferences has been supported. In 2005 the MEPI showed an increased transparency of the Lebanese elections by targeting material and technical support to education, journalists, domestic monitoring organization and candidates. The Middle East Partnership Initiative has also functioned to *"strengthening the role of civil society in the democratic process by facilitating dialogue among activists, NGOs, foreign ministries at G8/BMENA*

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[33] Condoleezza Rice (2008) p.16

[34] Ibid. p.17

meetings and by awarding more than 70 indigenous civil society organizations with direct grants."[35]Through granting awards, promoting dialogues between civil society organizations and other institutions the aim is to encourage the work of these movements and other upcoming ones.[36]

Basically the aim for the Bush administration in its foreign policy was the promotion of a gradual, evolutionary process of liberalization which stressed the importance of building civil society movements, the opening of political space, the strengthening of democratic values, including judicial independence, women's rights, governmental transparency, the rule of law and freedom of press and associations. The United States believed that civil society promotion to obtain democracy in the Middle East was one of the best ways to ensure its national security.[37]

5. Political society in theory and its practice in the Middle East:

One of the most essential parts to a state of being a democracy is to have a functioning political society. If the state does not have a fair and freely functioning political society, it is contradictory to call it a democratic state since the citizens human and civil rights cannot be fully ensured. To ensure citizens their rights political society is one of the main elements of a democratic society thus this chapter will deal with the theoretical concept of political society and its practice in the Middle East. Human and civil rights are necessary to those citizens living in democratic states. All people should have equal rights and living standards regardless of race, religion, age, sexual orientation, gender or political affiliation. Political society which is one of the necessary arenas for a democratic transition refers to free and inclusive electoral contestation where the legitimate tasks of a political society is to create intermediation and structuring compromises between civil society and the state.[38]

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[35] Marina Ottaway (2008) p.2-6

[36] Ibid. (2008)

[37] Richard N. Haass and Martin Indyk (2009) p.44

[38] Linz & Stephan (1996)

One necessary condition for democracy is that there should be free and fair elections within a democratic state. Through the political society the public has a right of free and equal participation in both politics and government. According to Linz and Stephan different parties are required within democracies in order to represent differences between democrats. Otherwise they state that *"disagreement among democrats over such issues as a unitary versus a federal state, a monarchical or republican form of government, or the type of electoral system may create questions about the legitimacy of the emerging democratic government, the decision-making process, and indeed the future of the political system."*[39] Other tasks of political society are to craft the constitution and major laws, produce overall regulatory framework for economic society, and to manage the state apparatus.[40]

The Middle East is a region that has some of the most enduring authoritarian regimes in the world. The political society or process within these countries differs significantly from those countries with a democratic regime. In the Arab Middle East the constitutions are issued from incumbent elites (above) rather than being issued from the people (below) and therefore the authoritarian regimes influences the different electoral laws that emerge.[41] Basically the politicians in power in the region have been in power for many years. King Fahd, Egypt's president Mubarak and Gaddafi have been in power between 23-35 years while in Syria, Morocco and Jordan the leaders were replaced by their sons when they died after respectively 31, 40 and 47 years.[42]

According to Rice most of these authoritarian regimes have through six decades been supported by the United States while they supported the US interest in regional stability. The 9/11 attacks when Al Qaeda was striking at the "faraway enemy"[43], as a result showed that this stability was never obtained since the political activity in the region was never

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[39] Linz and Stephan (1996) p.4

[40] Ibid. (1996)

[41] Laleh Khalili (2009) p.18

[42] Bahgat Korany (2005) p.75

[43] Gilles Kepel (2004) p.70

expressed officially. Political activity was instead expressed through religious groups and as a result the best-organized political forces became extremist groups. Therefore, to prevent this Rice states that the promotion of democracy must remain a top priority for the United States since *"democratic development is a unified political-economic model, and it offers the mix of flexibility and stability that best enables states to seize globalization's opportunities and manage its challenges[...]Democratic development is not only an effective path to wealth and power; it is also the best way to ensure that these benefits are shared justly across entire societies, without exclusion, repression or violence."*[44] Meaning that through democratization there will be more stability and flexibility in the society which would ensure the citizen their human and civil rights in the best way possible.[45]

It is argued that in single-party regimes the incumbent elite prefer electoral laws that concentrate on the legislative power in the hands of a dominant party while monarchs prefers system where representation to a wide rage of parties is allowed. This means that establishment of electoral system in single-party regimes and monarchs should be different but in the Middle East this does not occur due to authoritarian regimes. Authoritarian regimes are not able to constitute a self-contained system of political activity thus the political system in those regimes faces problems. It is argued that these regimes posses four characteristics; *"One, they cannot tolerate organized groups within their own structure. Two, they tend to deal with the people not as individuals but as members of some larger regional, ethnic or religious collectivity. Three, they systematically inhibit the development of and active class consciousness, for example, by preventing the development of free trade unions. Four, they subordinate economic politics to measure political control."*[46] Thus, they want to have total control of organized groups such as civil society movements, decisions affecting all individuals are made behind closed doors and divisions in regimes are hidden in the interest

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[44] Condoleezza Rice (2008) p.9

[45] Ibid. (2008)

[46] Roger Owen (2000) p.35

of presenting a united front where everything seems to be locked inside a bureaucratic apparatus to obtain further political control.[47]

US Former of secretary of state argued that the problem arising in the AME is not that people resist the basics of democracy (right to choose those who will govern them and other basic freedoms) but that when these people have freely elected democratic leaders through political activity, they become impatient and holds the leader accountable on their duty to deliver a better life. Therefore, the US stresses the importance of supporting the leaders and their democratic institutions by trying to obtain long-term partnership through integration of diplomatic, economic and political elements as have been done in countries such as Lebanon. Expanding fair trade agreement and bilateral investment treaties are believed to be one of the most appropriate ways of supporting political society, civil society and democratic institutions.[48]

Laleh Khalil argues that the creation of new electoral institutions is dependent on the power and performance of the involved actors thus the more powerful these actors are the better chance they have in forcing the creation of institutions which fits their preferences best. Basically this is occurring in the Arab Middle East where stronger incumbent elites negotiate new rules with weaker opponents in limited political conventions. According to Khalil ***"political opponents threaten to boycott elections or promote political unrest to gain their preferred politics, but they generally prefer to gain some access to the political system rather than to return to stricter authoritarianism."***[49]

In order to obtain its interest in the Middle East and create a stable political society the US have tried to establish friendly relations and allies who are able and willing to take action against terrorism. Democratic paths to advance their interests peacefully, develop their talents, redress injustices and live in freedom and dignity has been assessed which also contributes to the stability of political activities. However, since the United States have been in need of support by allies in the Middle East in fighting terrorism and promoting

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[47] Laleh Khalili (2009) p.271

[48] Condoleezza Rice (2008)

[49] Laleh Khalili (2009) p.278

democratization, their allies have consisted of non-democratic regimes which has raised troubles for the US since it contradicts to their goals. Nevertheless the US has argued that the cooperation with these governments is important to secure its security thus it will still promote democratic change in these countries through measures such as encouraging political participation and fair elections.[50]

It was believed that by incorporating human rights and promoting democratic development it would entail stability in the Arab Middle East where a rising middle class will contribute to the creation of centers of social power for political parties and movements. Condoleezza Rice stated that providing foreign aid, assistance and security cooperation the US could obtain its foreign policy goals and help countries develop self-sufficiency. After 9/11 the United States approach regarding its promotion of political society has been very clear. The forward strategy of freedom has suggested that America's predilection of promoting political and economic freedoms has been reflected through its new policy. Countries in the Middle East who succeeds in implementing political reforms and sanctions (towards those countries that refuse to offer more political participation) should be offered economic reliefs.[51]

In expressing support for democracy and political reform in the Arab world the US was convinced that the only system that dominated the global political arena was the liberal-democratic western system. The Bush administration pushed for Arab democracy by establish aid programs as stated earlier and diplomatic initiative to support political reforms. Bush emphasized the importance of overcoming political stagnation and decay in the Arab countries. Significant feature to post 9/11 attacks has been Washington's controlled process of expanding political participation in the Middle East. The Bush Administration strongly supported free and fair elections in the Middle East which turned out to have both positive and negative effects due to reasons such as that "political reform avoids the pitfalls of the Islamist dilemma by limiting the right to participate in politics to those who the governing elite feels are safe enough to take part."[52] When uncertainty about US intentions had passed

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[50] Condoleezza Rice (2008)

[51] Daniel Neep (2004)

[52] Ibid. (2004) p.82

incumbent regimes in the region neither one rushed in to political reforms when they realized that the Bush administration would welcome modest reforms. Which in turn lead to the pace of reforms to be driven out of domestic factors thus it later lead to administrative, economic and political reform actions in countries such as Bahrain, which guaranteed that opposition would obtain a minority presence in the election of one parliamentary chamber. However, the presence of radical Islamic movements and organizations helped incumbent regimes to curtail reform.[53]

Most significant for this period was the strong support of free and fair elections in countries such as Palestine, Egypt, Iraq and Lebanon. The US promotion of the "freedom agenda" gained a lot of support in the Arab world at its beginning. The hope of free and fair elections was that it would bring the participation of the biggest number of people where the power would be divided between all parties thus it would be a progress in the democratization process. Even though all the efforts of this promotion it is a fact that there has almost not been any redistribution of power away from the president or king during the last few years. The only cases where change in the distribution of power occurred through electoral process was in the elections in Egypt in 2005 and in 2006 in the Palestinian parliament. Unfortunately, the United States who had stressed the importance of holding such elections stood in front of a disappointing result. The result of the Egyptian elections, was that 88 members of the Muslim Brotherhood (a banned organization), by running as independent won seats in the parliament. Hamas a radical Islamic opposing party in Palestine won the vast majority of seats over the incumbent Fatah movement.[54] The US response to the Palestinian elections was very harsh and immediate because Hamas who does not recognize Israel has been stamped as a terrorist organization. The Bush administration did not recognize the government it formed and imposed boycotts on Hamas. In the Arab Middle East this raised the question of "double standard" and underestimated the credibility of "freedom agenda" since Hamas who had won the elections freely and fair was not

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[53] Ibid. (2004)

[54] Marina Ottaway (2008) p.3

recognized by the US.[55] These events showed the Bush administration that the pushing for political participation in the Middle East is not always the best means for democracy promotion since those elections may lead to unfavorable results to the US. Rice concluded this matter by stating that this should not result in no elections at all but standards should be put prior to the elections because "it cannot be the case that people are denied the right to vote just because the outcome might be unpleasant"[56] to the United States.

6. Historical background of the Middle East after 9/11:

This section of the research will focus on the historical background of the Middle East after 9/11. It will foremost discuss what the post 9/11 era have been like since these attacks where the reason of US policy chance towards the region. This chapter highlights the US arguments why reform was needed in the region to ensure the safety of their national security. It will also show the two categories that the agenda of "war on terrorism" were divided into, in the whole region. Therefore, the Middle East is seen as a broken region today. The structure and power balances that emerged in the 1970s and amended after the cold war do not exist anymore. These structures and power balances were based on different developments such as Israel's peace agreement with Egypt and Jordan and the informal truce with Syria, Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) being chased out of Lebanon, the Oslo accords, Syria's role in Lebanon, Iraq growing as a counterbalance to Iran, the end of Soviets influence in the region etc . Since the 9/11 attacks the AME has faced many critical challenges and its regional system has changed drastically. The regional system consists of a group of states who interact and influence each other through their relations of interest, economies, ideology and power. These systems such as North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), European Union (EU), The Arab League etc tries to coordinate their actions while they share common values and institutions. These changes are all due to the

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[55] Richard N. Haass and Martin Indyk (2009) p.44

[56] Condoleezza Rice (2008) p.20

9/11 attacks because they changed the foreign policy of the US totally especially towards the Middle East which became the center of their new foreign policy.[57]

This post 9/11 era from the US involvement has mostly been characterized by the global "war on Terrorism". The attacks on the World Trade Centers in New York and Pentagon in Virginia made the US people question "Why do they hate us" and it "changed America forever". The George W. Bush administration viewed the Middle East as the base camp of threats to the US national security. Since every great power bases its foreign policy on what benefits its own national interest and security, the US had to develop a new foreign agenda. The neoconservative's new agenda consisted of promoting unilateralism, preemptive intervention with the main focus to fight Islamic terrorism in the area since it was the biggest threat to US national security. The new agendas called the "freedom agenda" main goal consisted of modernization and democratization in the Middle East.[58]

The Freedom agenda's biggest argument was that by bringing democracy to the region, terrorism (supported by repressive and authoritarian states) would be fought and the promotion of participatory political system would lead to improvements on fighting terrorist attacks. The US argument was that the politics of repressive or authoritarian states creates frustration and violent politics therefore by focusing on democratization and participatory politics they would try to prevent terrorism and tensions. Further, the US encouraged and put pressure on its allies to develop their political processes and organize more political participation and elections. By promoting democratization in the Middle East, the US hoped to bring pro-Western elites to power and creating a US friendly zone of influence.[59]

William B. Quandt argues that the US policy in the Middle East after 9/11 consisted of four main themes; *"first, the war on terror would be pursued aggressively; second, the Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq would be overthrown and disarmed; third, pressure would be exerted on Iran and Syria to change their hostile foreign policies; fourth the Israeli-Palestinian conflict would*

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[57] Paul Salem (2008) p.2

[58] Marina Ottaway (2008) and Paul Salem (2008)

[59] Marina Ottaway (2008) and Paul Salem (2008)

be placed on the back burner"[60]. Meaning that to gain support from the people for these themes and the "war on terrorism" the Bush Administration acted rationally by creating a sense of fear of being attacked once again but this time by Saddam Hussein or other authoritarian regimes. Their propaganda for war was strictly aimed to create moral justification arguing that the Islamic regimes were in need of change so that liberty and freedom could be obtained. According to Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad the Bush Administration argued that by changing Iraq it would function as a model of inspiration for the whole Arab Middle East to change. The US was convinced to obtain these themes with the help of or without the help of other countries hence the Bush administration did not spend time on multilateral diplomacy.[61]

Basically ***"the United States had shifted from a policy of managing the Middle East through power balancing, containment, and crisis management to a policy of changing the Middle East through domination, confrontation, regime change, and democratization"***[62] ie. Now they were more determinate to reach their goals almost by any means and not only by using diplomacy, thus the Invasion of Iraq was justified according to the US. The global "war on Terrorism" after 9/11 can be divided into two categories; one consisting of a military aspect where the focus was laid on Afghanistan and Iraq and the other consisting of a democratization objective which was believed to change the Middle East. However, with nowadays facts it is known that this agenda, the change of US foreign policy and the so called promotion of democracy lead to unexpected consequences both for the US and the whole Middle East. US involvement in the region created an eruption of the conflict between Christians, Sunni and Shiites in Iraq, empowering of Iran and the democratization efforts has not had much of impact on the Arab Middle East.[63]

The military aspect began as soon as Al Qaeda took responsibility for the 9/11 attacks. Al Qaeda and its Islamic fundamentalists who could not change the habits of its people saw the

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[60] William B. Quandt (2003) p.496

[61] Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad (2003) p.524

[62] Paul Salem (2008) p.17

[63] Ibid. (2008)

9/11 attacks as the solution to make people change their habits and approach towards the US since they believed that the US would hit back on all the repressive states. Instead the US acted rationally and pointed its attacks towards Al Qaeda, the Taliban's and the organization which they considered as terrorists. The US was quickly determined to find and destroy Al Qaeda which had its base camp in Afghanistan. Thus the invasion of Afghanistan was a fact with the main target on the terrorist who had taken refuge in the country. However, *"the hunt for Al Qaeda turned Afghanistan into a testing ground for a formidable arsenal of "smart" weapons that had been developed to strike down the USSR. But GPS-guided missiles and unmanned drones proved unsuitable against an elusive, intangible enemy."*[64]Al Qaeda was an unpredictable and invisible enemy which could not be outlined or defined. Therefore when it proved difficult to find these terrorist the US changed their targets which became to eliminate the threats of the Taliban hosts. As soon as the US succeeded in abolishing the government of the Taliban the invasion of Iraq was the new plan.[65]

The military invasion of Iraq went more smoothly than expected. Within a couple of month Saddam Hussein was captured while there had not been any massive refugee outflow or extreme bloody fighting. The US belief was that by this occupation the allies of the US would feel pressure to democratize and it would expand its power into the Middle East. Unfortunately the consequences of this invasion did not turn to be in the favor of the US. By removing the Saddam regime the military invasion of Iraq firstly eliminated the country as a strong state which in turn created a regional power vacuum hence leading to the eruption of power balances. Secondly instead of creating a democratic state which would be a model of inspiration to the Middle East it created domestic power vacuum within the country leading to sectarian civil war, instability and insecurity. Thirdly while the invasion itself had not produce bloody fighting as expected the outcome of it was that the US military were put in a situation of constant occupation and aggressive regional regime-change agenda where the Iraqi people opposed the existence of the US military. Basically the backlash US faced by

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[64] Gilles Kepel (2004) p.6

[65] Ibid. (2004)

invading Iraq was not winning the war (which they did very fast) but in keeping the peace security and stability.[66]

The second category consisting of the democratization objective is mainly characterized by the "freedom agenda". The democracy promotion after 9/11 has had three components. The first component the US followed was that the transformation of Iraq into a democracy would encourage other countries in the region to change. Secondly pressure was put on US allies in the Middle East to modify their domestic politics. The third component of democratic promotion has been the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) which stated that social, economic and cultural changes along with changes in political institutions are required for democratic transformation. The basic idea of the "freedom agenda" and its democracy promotion was to promote free elections, women's right, education etc.[67]

7. The Political Development in Lebanon

7.1 Background

In the Arab Middle East, Lebanon has during history been regarded as the most democratic country of the region (not counting the state of Israel). This part will highlight an example of Lebanon after 9/11. The structure of the Lebanese political system is very complex comparing to other democratic countries. In Lebanon politics are based on confessionalism dividing the important parliamentary positions accordingly to which sect the candidate belongs to. Chapter 7 and 8 will thus explain how the political system is structured from the outset, when Lebanon gained its independence, national pact, civil war and the conflict/changes that occurred after the assassination of the former prime minister in 2005. This chapter will go further into the period of the civil war in 1975-1990 and the Ta'if Agreement that ended the civil war.[68]

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[66] Michael Heazle (2006).

[67] Paul Salem. (2008)

[68] Aron Lund (2006) p.8

To go back in history Lebanon had even during the Ottoman Empire some self-governing institutions but the so called modern state of Lebanon was created during the French mandate in 1943 but it received its total independence in 1946 after the French troops withdrawal from the country.[69] Lebanon is a multinational and multicultural state with diverse population of religions with a land area of 10400 km².[70] During the 20th century Lebanon received much attention due to its multicultural society. After the creation of Israel in 1948 many Palestinian refugees fled to Lebanon and since then the country has always been pressured by its two great neighboring countries, Syria and Israel. Their presence has further contributed to a division of the country which has affected the political arena. The country has also faced many challenges, conflicts, and wars over the last 40 years especially during the period of 1975-1990 when Lebanon faced an enormous civil war. These conflicts draw a continuous shadow over Lebanon that has been and is being brought to the surface now and then in which religious and political groups have constant parliamentary disputes. Further, to some extent the leaders that governed the country during the civil war are still somehow in power. Lebanon is a republic state with a democratic electoral system whereas the rights of freedom of speech in the country are very wide. The population is about 4-4.5 million that are divided between Muslims, Christian and some minorities groups whereas the constitutional law recognizes 19 official registered religious groups.[71]

In Lebanon there is a strong sense of confessionalism thus the mainstay of Lebanese politics is the unwritten National Pact which was agreed upon in 1943. Through the National Pact the power share in the political system was divided according to confessional grounds to achieve balance, stability and confessional solidarity among the population. Most of the Lebanese consider themselves as Arabs since their mother tongue is Arabic, however, there are Lebanese especially among Christians and Druses who regard themselves as descendant to the Phoenicians. During the French mandate the Christians according to the last national census in 1932 were the majority of the Lebanese population. It is believed that already in

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[69] Aron Lund (2006) p.8

[70] Socialstyrelsen (2008) p.24

[71] Sweden Foreign Office (2007) p.6

1940 the Muslims reached an obvious population majority not including the Palestinian refugees. However, since there has not been a new national census the "official" recorded number of the population nowadays is that Muslim consists of 60-65% whereas the Christian population consists of 35-40%. The Muslims are divided between Shiites 35-40 %, Sunni 20 %, druses 5%, and the Christians are divided between Maronite 20-25%, Greek Orthodox 5% and others 10%.[72] Yet, included in this figure are not the 400000 Palestinian refugees and 500000 immigrant workers and stateless persons from Syria, and other Asian and African countries. The Palestinian refugees are registered with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). UNRWA handles their primary health care and education if they cannot afford private schools since both Palestinian and stateless persons are not eligible to enjoy the legal rights like the rest of the population.[73]

7.2 Civil War 1975-1990

The eruption of the civil war was rooted in the power division between Christians and Muslims. The clashes that occurred the spring of 1975 in Beirut came to affect the entire Lebanese society with harsh consequences. The continuous marginalization of the Muslim majority, the ongoing conflict about the Lebanese identification such as Arabs/Lebanese, east/west, secularism/religion, Islam/Christianity etc and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) activities as well as both Syrian and Israeli interference with Lebanese politics contributed to lighting the sparks between Christians and Muslims. Thus, it created one of the biggest conflicts in the history of Lebanon. [74]

The lighting spark arose in Beirut on April 13, 1975, when some Phalangists were killed by gunmen during an attempt aimed at killing Pierre Jumayyil. The Phalangists stroke back later at the same day (believing that it was some Palestinian who issued the assassins) by attacking a bus filled with Palestinian passengers thus, killing about twenty-six of the

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[72] Aron Lund (2006) p.7

[73] Global Security (2010-05-20)

[74] Ibid.

occupants. The next day fighting erupted more, with Phalangists pitted against Palestinian militiamen. During this period the streets of Beirut faced random killings thus making people stay in their homes. No one could have imagined that these fighting's were about to start a war that later turned to divide the country and devastate its cities.[75]

The fighting's had to be controlled immediately but the political machinery of the government was not able to do nothing over the next few months. The leaders of the government did not act effectively since they could not reach a decision on whether or not to use the army to end the bloodbath. The fighting spread to other sides of the country thus getting other groups involved in the conflict. Therefore people in cities with mixed populations had to leave their homes and seek safety in areas where their own group of origins were dominant, "even so, the militias became embroiled in a pattern of attack followed by retaliation, including acts against uninvolved civilians."[76]

In 1976 Syrian diplomatic involvement grew on the Christians side against PLO and their allies among the Lebanese Muslims thus provoking outrage from much of the Arab world. However, compromise was achieved through Syrian good office and a seventeen-point reform program known as the Constitutional Document was issued. Two years later Israel attacked PLO in the south of Lebanon allowing the South Lebanon Army (SLA) to gain control over a much bigger area in the south in order to retain control later in next Israeli invasion in 1982. The following years Lebanon got totally drawn apart whereas each religious sect was headed by at least one militia force often with backup from foreign powers.[77]

The country was transformed to a continuous battle area in which both Syria and Israel was two of the dominated countries involved each backed up by other superpowers. They served to manipulate the local fighting leaders to their benefits thus sometimes using own forces but rarely having a conflict in public with each other. However, Syria was later seen as the wars great winner who during the 1980s had brought down both Palestinian and Lebanese

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[75] Ibid.

[76] Ibid (2010-05-20)

[77] Ibid.

Christian resistance powers. Syria had defeated the Christian general Michel Aouns forces thus forcing the remaining militias to accept the Ta'if Agreement of 1989 which marked the end of the Lebanese civil war and the beginning of peace.[78]

7.3 Ta'if agreement

During the civil war more than 100000 people had been killed, even more had been injured and same amounts had become refugees in their own country. In the year, 1990 Lebanon was politically split leaving the country with a devastating economy. The whole country was in total ruins whereas the northern part had been occupied by Syria and the southern part occupied by Israel. The Lebanese people were divided on issues such as Lebanese identity and national sovereignty. Political reform therefore a solution of political reform was strongly needed.[79]

In 1989 the Ta'if Agreement was negotiated in Ta'if, Saudi Arabia, by the Lebanese National Assembly and on October 22 the agreement was signed but it was not ratified until the fourth of November. The Ta'if agreement was regarded as an outcome of the negotiations among religious groups within Lebanon supported by external powers in order to create security, stability and satisfaction among groups and parties in the Country. In order to satisfy the Christian needs the agreement managed to acknowledge the Lebanese homeland, the need for foreign troops to withdrawal from Lebanon, and to emphasize Lebanese territorial integrity. The agreement also emphasized Lebanon's Arab affiliation and increasing its Muslim citizen's political role. The Ta'if Agreement was necessary with its main purpose to liberate Lebanon from the domination of outside powers and to eliminate political confessionalism.[80]

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[78] Aron Lund (2006) p.9

[79] Ibid.

[80] Middle East Web Historical Document (1992-2002)

The allocation of power within the country shifted to the benefit of the Muslims when the Ta'if agreement was issued. The power of the president who always has to be a Maronite decreased while the power of Sunni Prime minister increased. The Shiites who long had been discriminated got more influence through giving them the position of the Speaker of the Parliament and increasing their representation in the parliament. The Presidents executive authority was relocated to the Council of Ministries (The Cabinet) in order to in a more equal way redistribute the power between the Christians and Muslim.[81] However, the confessional electoral system remained but Ta'if abolished the Christians majority in the parliament. The new distribution of power between Christians and Muslim were now 50-50% instead of the previous 60 % and 40 % even though the new percentage still implicates a Christian over-representation. The seats in the parliament were expanded and each one of the religious groups got a certain number of seats reserved for them.[82]

The purpose with the Ta'if Agreement was peace settlements and anticipated a secular electoral system. The causes and problems of conflicts being the traditional communal representation and its power sharing were distinguished through Ta'if. It claimed that the main purpose of the Lebanese society ought to be the elimination of the confessional system. The Agreements also "includes those contradictions as in earlier constitutions which also claimed for a combination of the confessional politics together with collective rights in the process of becoming a modern democratic state".[83]

The Ta'if agreements also raised the question of Lebanese sovereignty without involvement of either Israeli or Syrian influence in Lebanese politics. The continued Syrian presence in the country could not allow the establishment of a Lebanese state with an effective and full sovereignty even though Syrian troops were temporary needed to ensure security until Lebanese troops were developed. However, since the agreements implementation was under the Syrian regulation no directive was given on when its troops should leave the country. The agreements only regulated relocations of Syrian troops thus as the forces

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[81] Ladan Madeleine Moghaddas (2006) p.40

[82] Middle East Web Historical Document (1992-2002)

[83] Ladan Madeleine Moghaddas (2006) p.41

remained Syria got a broader involvement in Lebanese politics. Through its intelligence service both the Lebanese economy and Beirut's political life was controlled by the Syrian Baath regime.[84]

Issues related to political and administrative reforms, balanced developments, the upholding of a liberal economic system, expanding popular participation in the decision-making process through the establishment of the Socio-Economic Council, and administrative decentralization were addressed through the agreement while issues such as the identity of the country, external and internal relations to the international arena in its political system towards democratic values were left questionable. Through increased participation and unified elements of enforcement of the legislative system the Ta'if Agreement managed to consolidate the rule of party system.[85]

However, by reading the Ta'if Agreement it is clear that it did not provide any specific guidelines on how to address or implement issues such as the decision making process in local and national levels.[86] Further, because of the lack of political structure and direction in the agreement, it is alleged that it failed to address the issue of electoral law in Lebanon which had to promote free and competitive elections which are necessary in a democracy. Yet, it is argued that the outcomes of the agreements turned out to be serving the way of a more confessional system rather than identifying the future of the country since it has not been clearly implemented. Lebanon has always had a strong tribe inheritance culture therefore confessionalism and family attachments will always remain very important.[87]

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[84]Middle East Web Historical Document (1992-2002)

[85] Nawaf Salam (2004) p.107

[86]Middle East Web Historical Document (1992-2002)

[87] Ladan Madeleine Moghaddas (2006) p.41

8. Civil and Political society in Lebanon

8.1 Civil Society in Lebanon

Lebanon has been regarded as the most democratic country (excluding Israel) in the Middle East. Therefore, it serves as an important example to discuss when addressing the issue of democratization, civil and political society in the Middle East. In the AME Lebanon has been seen as the most modern and open minded state with a lot of western influence. This section will focus on how civil society is functioning in Lebanon and how its political society is build with its national pact and the confessional system i.e. how the political events have affected the Lebanese society as a whole. Ever since the rise of cultural, economic, and social challenges at both national and regional levels the Arab Middle East has during the last years faced an increase in the number of national and regional civil society groups, including networks, organizations, and platforms. The Arab governments' roles in the global system have due to increasing burdens of debts and economic stagnation in the countries weakened which have created threats to sovereignty and independence. As a result, in order to face these negative impacts of globalization and to enhance the integration in the global system new dynamics have emerged in the Arab states.[88]

However, the context and legal frameworks in which Arab civil society organizations (CSOs) operate is up to each country to decide therefore it differs from country to country. During time of conflicts in some countries when governmental services were lacking CSOs have had a significant role such as during the Lebanese civil war. The daily lives and needs of the citizens were sustained during those times through CSOs who provided both humanitarian and medical services. CSOs play an important role due to their specialization in many areas such as education, health, human rights, and rural development, social and human development. In the case of Lebanon, "Lebanese non-governmental organizations (NGOs) provided service delivery, networking, mobilization, and the creation of "support systems" of various kinds, ranging from day-care centers to income generating projects".[89] Further they

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[88] Ziad Abdel Samad (2005)

[89] Ibid. (2005)

also have a major role in programs such as community development and reducing poverty in rural areas. [90]

Yet, in some parts in the Arab Middle East as stated before CSOs are being opposed from governments due to the fear that these organizations would interfere too much and advocate policies adverse to the local politics of the country. Therefore, some Arab governments increase both pressure and restrictions on CSOs activities thus it aggravates their work. It also leaves these Arab NGOs and CSOs to remain short of the enabling factors which could allow them an effective role in society. The strict and limited participation conditions of CSOs along with the lack of democracy has contributed to the adoption of irrelevant public policies which has created huge losses of progress opportunities in various fields of development in the Region. It has also weakened the decision making process and the local governing structures.[91]

Lebanon is one of the few countries in the Middle East with a history of practicing democratic values besides Israel. When Lebanon gained its independence in 1942 democratic institutions, and independent judiciary were developed into its political framework along with a parliament, who could legislate and offer the executive levels of supervision. However, due to the serious clashes between Christians and Muslims during the late 20th century the spirit of democratic values and practices diminished drastically. The whole society touching on the civil, political, and educational system and their legislation that initially was in the control of the state were based on the opinion and values of the confessional groups.[92]

The Lebanese history of civil society organizations is to be found in the late 19th century during the Ottoman Empire. In the Lebanese National constitution freedoms of meetings and freedom of associations within the framework of law is guaranteed. The Ottoman Authorities issued the law of 1909 which regulated the formation of association thus only requiring that the Ministry of Interior should be informed of their existence and internal

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[90] Ibid. (2005)

[91] Ibid. (2005)

[92] Ladan Madeleine Moghaddas (2006)

structure.[93] Civil societies in Lebanon who have tried to confront the chronic, social and political system of the country are of the most vibrant among the Arabic countries. However, today's civil society in Lebanon has both in a sectarian and non sectarian way been shaped and influenced by the new agendas, concepts, and forms of political life that were developed in the end of the Ottoman Empire. As a result "the appearance of cultural, intellectual, political, professional, family, welfare and youth associations paved the way for regulation and formation of such organizations".[94]

The key to achieving consolidation democracy is to develop partnerships on community issues, improve citizen's participation, and strengthen the dialogue between both local authorities and civil society organization. In order to do this, dialogue with local authorities is needed to engage civil society associations in the decision making process of the local government and to build advocacy skills among both the civil society and community organizations. In Lebanon when the new constitution was created, civil society associations developed from being identity based organizations concerning matters related to family, religion and tribal, to becoming interest based organizations concerned with issues such as cultural, economic, and professional and social services. The associations focus has nowadays been on protecting the civic space against the state instead of sectarianism and social divisions as it was during the civil war.[95]

Within the developing modern Lebanese state where the citizens spent years of living together, new connections were created between those citizens who preferred the more traditional ways of characterizing their ordinary life. This was due to the emergence of national associations, institutions and organizations along with new activities that united and centralized the states institutions. At the national society level in Lebanon both traditional and civil ties had coexisted together for a long period. Noteworthy for the time of the developing modern Lebanon and its new constitution was all the various associations, institutions and organizations that were created. New infrastructures were built along with

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[93] POGAR (2010-05-16)

[94] Ladan Madeleine Moghaddas (2006) p.34

[95]Ibid.

socio-economic institutions, public education institutions, unions, professional associations, sports and youth organizations and political parties and organizations established new fields of social, political and professional activities. Nevertheless, these new activities were slowly threatening the traditional ones who held up the old social community before the transition to a modern state. The Lebanese citizens became more interested in these new and modern activities since their objectives, projects and values brought people more closely together than those of the traditional values.[96]

Fadia Kiwan, a Professor at the Lebanese University argues that associations who showed signs of the formation of civil society that was stronger than the traditional community bounds began to appear before the civil war in 1975. She brings forth examples of "the nation-wide student movement whose national slogans reflected the aspirations of Lebanese youth within a framework of full socio-economic development"[97] and labor union movements who were able to establish new platforms for relations between the different actors in Lebanon's economic life, at many times. At that time public opinion grew so that it could influence and affect the positions of those persons of authority. Through the growing free media the public opinion gained freely rights of liberty. Further at the national level various political parties arose which either supported or were against those in power or totally rejected the political system. However, the new constitution was regarded by some as a solution to the division between the religious groups which in a way assured both their rights of participation and influence in the political system.[98]

Lebanon has a strong tradition of both freedoms of press and speech which is guaranteed by the Lebanese National Constitution, Article 13. Programme on Governance in the Arab Region (POGAR) states that there is a big variety of radios, news papers and TV-stations "despite the government decision in 1996 to drastically reduce the number of television stations, some fifty of which had proliferated in the context of the civil war".[99] There exist no

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[96] POGAR (2010-05-16)

[97] Fadia Kiwan (1993)

[98] Ibid.

[99] POGAR (2010-05-16)

mandatory preview but official censorship occurs now and then. The media debates are considered to be lively but the Medias themselves uses censorship in some political matters related to confessional or Israeli questions. However, the press-liberty has during the last years been threatened through incidents aimed at journalists and the murders of two journalists – Samir Qasir och Gibran Tueini.[100] According to facts some journalist are living in exile since they are afraid of their lives.[101]

According to the constitution there is both freedom of association and assembly but it is sometimes limited by the government. Political parties have to be formally approved by the government in order to be registered. Other assemblies and associations are also created but the Ministry of Interior has to be informed first. Public political meetings and demonstrations should get approval by the Ministry of Interior. However after the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri in 2005 the Ministry of Interior loosened their demands on demonstrations liberties.[102]

Labor and trade unions have the rights to be created and to operate freely. There are approximately 160 labor unions in Lebanon but only about 40 % of Lebanese employees are members of a labor union.[103] The Association of Lebanese Industrialists, the Beirut Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the International Chamber of Commerce in Lebanon are some of the professional organizations existing in the country. One of the main trade union organizations is the Confederation of General Workers of Lebanon (CGTL). The Rassemblement des Dirigeants et Chefs d' Entreprises Libanais (RDCL) which is a group of businessmen, bankers, and industrialists is believed to be "one of the few genuine institutions in civil society representing economic interests"[104] by the Lebanese Center for Policy Studies. Further the right of going into strike is guaranteed by law. Lebanon has ratified seven of eight conventions by the International Labor Organization (ILO). Convention

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[100] Sweden Foreign Office (2007) p.7

[101] Ibid (2007)

[102] Ibid (2007)

[103] Ibid. p.9

[104] POGAR (2010-05-16)

number 87 concerning the freedom of associations is the only of ILOs convention which has not been ratified.[105]

However most important is that the Liberty of Religion is guaranteed by the principal Law and is respected throughout Lebanon. In 1999 about 1100 associations (mostly sectarian reflecting the division of the confessional groups) were registered in the Ministry in Beirut. Lebanon's associational life was organized by the material resources provided by the Major Christian, Druze and Muslim communities along with the Armenian Christians. In a sense each confessional group in Lebanon has its own civil society however many professional associations and environmental, advocacy, and women's groups exist which supports the integration of national Lebanese civil society and are not related to any of the confessional groups.[106]

8.2 Political Society in Lebanon

8.2.1 National Pact

The focus of this chapter has been put on the political development in Lebanon before 1990 and after 9/11, because it was during these periods of time Lebanon faced many challenges and developments in their political structure. In 1990, as stated earlier a 15 year ongoing civil war was ended through mediation from foreign powers and after 9/11 Lebanon's former prime minister got assassinated which created enormous political outbreaks dividing the Lebanese into two coalitions which had not been seen since the civil war. To understand the Lebanese political society today it is important to discuss the unwritten agreement of the national pact and explain what occurred after 2005 when Rafiq El Hariri was assassinated.[107]

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[105] Sweden Foreign Office (2007) p.9

[106] POGAR (2010-05-16)

[107] Aron Lund (2006) p.8

In 1939 due to the Lebanese demands for more independence, France took total control over the country. Since both the President and the Parliament were ignored by the French the Lebanese opposition had to be unified. Four years later, in 1943 the National Pact was created and agreed upon by the Lebanese opposition. The National Pact is an unwritten agreement created with the aim to obtain both balance and confessional solidarity by deciding how the power should be shared between the religious groups within the country. The Pact was a result of negotiations between Lebanon's first president Khuri (a Maronite), and the first prime minister, Riyad al Solh (a Sunni).[108]

The Muslims feared a growing Western hegemony while the Christians feared that they would be overwhelmed by the Lebanese Muslim communities and surrounding Arabic countries. They therefore promised the Muslims that they would accept Lebanon's Arab character and not seek foreign (western-French) protection while the Muslims accepted the Lebanese independence and legitimacy with its boundaries from 1920 and not to struggle for a Lebanese-Syrian union. The government's sectarian system was reinforced through the pact during the French mandate by redistributing high-level position in the government which was based on the confessional 1932 census' six-to-five ratio that favored the Christians over the Muslims. The pact stated that the power should be divided as the President being a Maronite, the Prime Minister being a Sunni-Muslim and the Speaker of the Parliament being a Shiite. Even though the division became more fare and many sects were represented others were not.[109]

It is argued that the National Pact was implemented through a statement to the legislature in October 1943 by the First Cabinet. The fact that the National Pact outlined a confessional system was tactical since it provided measurement on how to overcome the divisions between Christian and Muslim leaders when achieving the country's' independence. The goal was to diminish the confessional system and its importance in the political structure by advocating and embracing a national spirit. Some groups used the pact as a way to achieve their interest at the expense of others especially concerning economical issues since its

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[108] Thomas Collelo (1987)

[109] Ibid.

maintenance was caused by both economic and political matters. In this sense the National Pact was considered to benefit and perpetuate the privileged and the sectarian elite. The politics based on the National Pact were characterized by both internal and external factors.[110] The secretarial elite belonged to the internal factors which consisted of both urban commercial and feudal parts that were able to uphold their authority and sustain their social positions disregarding confessional limitations. The influence of other regimes in the country causing challenges and changes were referred to the external factors. The National Pact managed to uphold a confessional model of democracy but due to the elites strong influence in Lebanon it was difficult to preserve the pacts legitimacy.[111]

Over the years, the pact was strongly confronted due to the constantly returning political disputes and conflicts along with the lack of institutional capacities and ideological flexibility contributed to the failure of the National Pact as a means toward societal integration.[112] The Lebanese state which is a parliamentary democracy without a state religion became much marginalized since the Parliament was divided according to religious affiliation, but still not proportional to the religions actual share of population. The peoples demand for more equal religious representation led to armed clashes in 1958, but after a U.S. intervention on the governments side the system remained unchanged. Among the rural inhabitants the political awareness grew as did the parliamentary divisions between the religious sects. The leaders of the Muslims and Christians thus faced many problems relating to issues such as the power division between the religious sects and the sectarian foundations of the state.[113]

However, in practice most of the Lebanese's priorities, concerns and interests were not represented in the politics as it was supposed to since they did not fully understand the politics taken form in Beirut. Politics were considered to be about communal, local and religious subjects among Lebanese outside the city. They prioritized and supported politicians who protected local and communal issues rather than being concerned about

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[110] Ibid (1987)

[111] Ladan Madeleine Moghaddas (2006)

[112] Thomas Collelo (1987)

[113] Aron Lund (2006) p.8

foreign and domestic politics.[114] The religions role in state politics differs between and among Christians and Muslims. Confessional based politics has a greater role than Lebanese political institutions whereas religious leaders often are very political active. Therefore, "the interplay for position and power among the religious, political, and party leaders and groups produces a political tapestry of extraordinary complexity".[115]

Regardless of which sect one belongs to, there is no civil code for personal matters in Lebanon. The secretarial conditions are the rules that the Lebanese citizens fallows in life and death. Personal status laws concerning matters such as adoption, annulment of marriage, dowry, divorce, engagement, inheritance and marriage are set by each religion. Even if the individual is a practicing member of his/her religious group or not these laws are binding upon him/her. The communal religious leaders are strengthened by the confessional system of personal status laws and they prevent an embracement of Lebanese nationalism or Universalist secular ideas.[116]

In accordance with the Ta'if agreement of 1989 the 128 parliamentary seats are distributed equally between Christians (50%) and Muslims (50%). As stated earlier the president must always be a Christian Maronite. The president is elected every sixth year and according to the constitution the president cannot be reelected. In September 2004 the parliament extended the former President Emile Lahoud's term of office for three years even though it violated the constitution and received both internal and external criticism.[117] On November the 24th 2007 his term of office expired but no new president was elected until May 2008 when General Michel Suleiman was appointed as President. He was elected by 118 out of 127 attending parliament members. The country had been governed by the Lebanese government before the political parties agreed upon the new President. The Lebanese crisis erupting after the summer war in 2006 came to an end as an agreement on the disputing

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[114] Ladan Madeleine Moghaddas (2006)

[115] POGAR (2010-05-16)

[116] Thomas Collelo (1987)

[117] Swedish Foreign Ministry (2008-2010)

issues was reached by the Lebanese Leaders at the Doha conference.[118] According to the Doha declaration the parties agreed that the parliament would convene in order to elect General Michel Suleiman as Lebanon's president. Through the Doha Agreement Lebanese leaders along with Arab League Mediators, a new unity government was formed. The agreement issued new guidelines for electoral law mandate thus sustaining equal division of parliamentary seats according to the Ta'if Agreement between Christians and Muslims. Further it set up directive stating that elections should be held on during one day and not consecutive weekends as before. Another change was that the agreement divided Lebanon into 26 electoral districts instead of 13 districts.[119]

The parliamentary elections are based on majority votes and takes place every fourth year. The recent election was held in June 2009 whereas the March 14 coalition (pro western block) was elected over the 8 March Coalition (pro Syrian Block). However, the new government could not be appointed until November the same year with Saad El Hariri as Prime Minister and Nabih Berri as the Speaker of the Parliament. There exist no traditional political parties since the existing political parties are either based on confessional grounds or created around an influential political actor or a temporary alliance concerning certain issues.[120] Candidates for the parliament must be at least 25 year old and they are elected by a party-list system. All Lebanese citizens over the age of 21 are eligible to vote in the elections however it is not mandatory. They are eligible to vote for all candidates not only members of their own religious affiliation. In each electoral district lists of candidates from all religious sects from among whom voters may choose are available. In the election of 2009 there were 587 candidates competing for the 128 seats whereas registered voters was around 3,257,224 representing around a 7% increase in the number of voters comparing to the 2005 elections thus the participation rate was 54,08 %. Most of the candidates belong to

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[118] POGAR (2010-05-16)

[119] Bureau of Public Affairs (2010)

[120]Ibid.

political parties that are local and representing the confessional and local political interest who later forms alliances in the Assembly.[121]

Women have both equal voting right and equal rights of being elected as men. However, only 12 of the 587 candidates in the recent election were women i.e. gender equality has still not been achieved. After the elections in 2005 6 of 128 seats in the parliament belonged to women and there was one female minister.[122] However in the elections in 2009 only 4 women were elected which constituted only 3% of the new parliament. Women's rights of land and inheritance are regulated by each religious sect's legislation. They have the right to inherent and own property but are often forced to refrain from their property to male relatives by tradition. A Lebanese women cannot give her Lebanese citizenship to her children if their father is a foreign national or stateless such as Palestinian. A married Lebanese woman must have her husband's approval in order to apply for a passport.[123]

8.2.2 Assassination of Rafiq El Hariri

Rafiq El Hariri was one of the Arab world's most successful business men. He made his business empire in Saudi Arabia and had a wide net of international contacts. In accordance with the Taif Agreement he returned to Lebanon and gained the Prime Ministry position with support of Syria. During his time as Prime Minister he managed to get a central position within Lebanon's political and economical sphere. He also contributed to the reconstruction of the country. His power position unlike any other politician gave him an independence from Syria but at the same time he still cooperated with them taking advantage from their protection. However a conflict was raised in 2004 when Emile Lahouds term of office was extended. Hariri and Lahoud did not get along since Lahoud had got more influence on behalf of Hariri by Syria. This extension received major critics from actors inside as well as outside of Lebanon. Hariri became one of the important actors of the opposition using his

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[121] POGAR (2010-05-16)

[122] Swedish Foreign Ministry (2007) p.8

[123] Ibid. p. 10

international contacts to gain support for his cause. UN issued resolution 1559 declaring *"support for a free and fair presidential election in Lebanon conducted according to Lebanese constitutional rules devised without foreign interference or influence and, in that connection, called upon all remaining foreign forces to withdraw from Lebanon[…]strict respect of Lebanon's sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity, and political independence under the sole and exclusive authority of the Government of Lebanon throughout the country"*[124] which was strongly supported by France and US. When Lahouds term of office was extended Hariri resigned from his position thus Lebanon was divided between two coalitions, one pro Syrian and one anti Syrian.[125]

The 14th February in 2005 a huge bomb exploded near International Phoenicia at the Lebanese *Corniche*, Beirut's famous boardwalk. Several facades were destroyed and an almost two meter deep crater was thrown into the roadway, where former Prime Minister Rafiq El Hariri's motor convoy just had passed on their way from the parliament building. The bomb killed 23 people among them the Prime Minister.[126] The Lebanese opposition reacted with disgust against this act. Next day, at the funeral of Rafiq El Hariri a massive demonstration was held by thousands of participants condemning Syria. Both France and USA made it clear that they regarded Syria as actor behind the attack which further strengthened the oppositions will to fight. In Syria, the government unconditionally condemned all accusations and denied any involvement of the assassination. The Syrian government claimed that Israel must have been behind the attack to frame Syria.[127]

In Lebanon, it now was the opposition who were setting the agenda, encouraged by the international support they received. Hence, there were some powerful forces that feared that a Syrian withdrawal would reduce their influence in the country. The Shiite parties Amal and Hezbollah kept a low profile but in general supported the Syrian governments proposition that a Lebanese investigation should clarify the responsibility issue and that the

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[124] Security Council (2004) S/RES/1559

[125] Swedish Foreign (2007) p.16-17

[126] Bureau of Public Affairs (2010)

[127] Aron Lund (2006) p.17

situation required every part to stay calm. The opposition was however determined to internationalize the conflict. They argued that the Lebanese security service was completely interlined with Syria therefore they would hardly contribute to an honest investigation about Syria's involvement in the attack. Supported by the US and France despite the protest from President Emile Lahoud the opposition demanded that the UN should be involved.[128] UN:s general secretary Kofi Annan sent a team headed by the Irishman Peter FitzGerald to Lebanon to investigate a couple of days after the attack. When the team arrived to Lebanon they began their investigation along with the Lebanese team who had focused on an unknown Islamist group, which had claimed the responsibility to the television channel AL Jazeera stating that the reason for the assassination was Hariri's ties to the Saudi royal family. However they never managed to give any evidence for their involvement. Syria's presence in Lebanon was challenged by the demonstrations in a way not seen ever since the civil war end. Christians, Sunni-Muslims and Druses stood unified together against Syria demanding the truth about the assassination and Syria's withdrawal from Lebanon. In the beginning of Mars Syria's President Bashar Al-Assaad announced that Syrian troops would withdrawal with accordance to the Taif agreement however not stating when it would happen. The opposition continued with demonstration showing that they were unbeatable.[129]

However, the strong resistance towards Syria showed how divided Lebanon actually was since the largest but poorest religious sect the Shiite-Muslims did not participate in the demonstrations. On 8 of mars the Shiite party Hezbollah arranged an own demonstration like the opposition under the Lebanese flag, condemning all actions taken place against the Syrians but without clearly opposing a Syrian retreat. They stated that Hezbollah would keep their weapons as long as the Sheba farms were still occupied by Israel. The opposition countered with a bigger anti Syrian demonstration. However, both the Shiites and the opposition later decided not to continue with demonstrations in order to prevent bigger conflicts of occurring among the people to preserve the peace. Later the same month the UN team reported that an international murder investigation was recommended since they

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[128] Ibid. (2006) p.18

[129] Ibid. (2006) p.18

found that both Lebanese and Syrian authorities hampered the investigation. It was now clear that Syria had lost their influence in Lebanon and at the end of April 2005 the Syrian retreat was a fact. These actions of 2005 have been called the "Independence Intifada (*Intifadat Al-Istiqlal*)" or the "Cedar Revolution (*Thawrat Al-Arez)*".[130]

9. Lebanese-US Relation

The US is a great power that has had big influence in the Middle Eastern region specially the last decade. Their "war on terrorism" that broke down the Taliban and overthrew Saddam's regime affected the whole AME. Lebanon that has through times been between the battlefield of Syria and Israel is an essential strategic country to obtain good relation with thus it is important to discuss the Lebanese-US relation. However, the complicity with a good Lebanese-US relation lies in the confessional division within Lebanon itself. Before the Civil War of 1975 Lebanon and the United States largely enjoyed good relations. These relations got their support through the Lebanese-American community in the United States.[131] In 1958 as the Lebanese government were struggling with the pressure of the Muslims to strengthen Lebanon's relation with Egypt and Syria, the US send off a unit of US Marines to support the government. However, despite the fact that the Marines were withdrawn shortly after their arrival without even participating in battles many Lebanese together with other Arab states considered the US acts as interference with Lebanese internal affairs.[132]

After the worst clashes during the civil war, around 1980s, America interfered with Lebanon in many ways. Their aims were divided in three levels, political, military and economic. First on the political level they wanted to strengthen the power of the President Amine Gemayel and to negotiate a treaty between Israel and Lebanon. Secondly as they were a part of the Multinational Force (MNF) the goal of the military level was to preserve the peace. Thirdly they aimed to help Lebanon with its reconstruction on the economic level. The US

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[130] Ibid. (2006) p.20-21

[131] Casey L. Addis (2009)

[132] Thomas Collelo (1987)

interference was not welcomed by all Lebanese especially among Muslims who suspected them to be pro-Gemayel thus strengthen the positions of Christians on behalf of the Muslims.[133]

The United States never managed to complete their goals and their support for the Christian Brigades of the Lebanese army at the Mountain War 1983-84 led to failure. The shelling at Shiites and Druses strengthen their suspicions that US backed the Christian side. However, as the fighting evolved within the country, attacks were launched against foreign interests. Both the United States Embassy in West Beirut and Annex in East Beirut were attacked during 1983-84 (almost 70 dead), the headquarter of the MNF containing both French and US forces were bombed (almost 300 dead) and the President of the American University of Beirut was assassinated. When safety and operation of the US Embassy mission in the end of 1989 could not be guaranteed the US officials were withdrawn. These events forced Ronald Reagan to decrease US efforts to aid and support the Lebanese state.[134]

Nowadays, the US tries to sustain their relations with Lebanon. Its efforts aim to help Lebanon preserve its sovereignty, national unity, independence and its territorial integrity. Together with the international community the US seeks to achieve full implementations of Security Council Resolutions such as 1559, 1680 and 1701. US reaffirms the importance of demarcating the Lebanese-Syrian border, decreasing both Syria's and Iran's political influence within the country, deploying the Lebanese Armed Forces all around Lebanon and most importantly disarming Hezbollah and other militias. A peaceful Lebanon where stability is achieved is an essential step in the way of reaching peace and democracy in the AME.[135]

US have established a recovery, rehabilitation and relief program in Lebanon that has contributed with more than 400 million dollars in aid between the years of 1975-2005. After the summer war 2006 the American government contributed with over than 1 billion dollars in further funding to assist in the rebuilding the relief and security of Lebanon. Beyond this,

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[133] Ibid. (1987)

[134] Bureau of Public Affairs (2010)

[135] Ibid. (2010)

the financial assistance also contributes to help voluntary organizations working with municipal and rural development programs. These programs serve as a measure to strengthen security services and to increase the economic climate for global investment and trade in Lebanon. Programs for Humanitarian demining and victims' assistance are also supported by the US to improve development in the country. In order to achieve a sustainable development it is important to restore a sovereign and independent Lebanon.[136]

The United states have also been very supportive when it comes to the educational area in Lebanon. Both the American University of Beirut (AUB) and the Lebanese American University (LAU) have received budget support and student scholarships. The US has also given budget support to the International Collage (IC) and the Lebanese American Community School (ACS). Back in 1993, the international Military Education and Training Program were supported by the US in order to reinforce the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF). The LAF is the only national institution in Lebanon that is not based on confessional grounds thus the importance of strengthening civilian control of the military. During the Civil War the Lebanese army faced a lot of damages to its transportation and communications capabilities. Through sales of excess defense articles the LAF managed to enhance these capabilities. After summer war 2006 the LAF and the Internal Security Forces (ISF) received over 500 million dollars in security assistance to support the Lebanese government.[137]

The democratic institutions in Lebanon must according to the US be strengthened. The US has contributed with large sums of assistance however Lebanon's future assistance depends on key issues in the relation between Lebanon and the US. Unlike other Arab countries in the Middle East, Lebanon's relationship with the United State does not concern oil fields, international waterways, military bases, military or industrial strength. Therefore it is argued that Lebanon is of limited strategic value to the US but on the other hand some argue that since Lebanon is located between Israel and Syria, it has always been the US interlocutor with the Arab world, and has a large population of Palestinian refugees it serves as a strategic buffer zone. When the former Prime Minister El Hariri was assassinated the Bush

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[136] Ibid. (2010)

[137] Ibid. (2010)

administration were very critical to Syrian presence and demanded that Syrian troops should withdrawal from Lebanon. After the Syrian withdrawal the new Lebanese government was supported but the US. The Hariri tribunal that was created by the UN to prosecute those who assassinated the former Prime Minister was supported by the US.[138]

The war between Hezbollah and Israel in 2006 complicated the Lebanese-American relation. The efforts that had been made to rebuild the infrastructure and democratic institutions were now destroyed and the Bush administration supported the Israeli military action stressing their right to self-defense against a terrorist organization. The outcome after the fighting was that the opposition (8 march coalition and its allies) to the US supported government (14-march coalition) were reinforced. Hezbollah gained more support among the Lebanese people after the war thus demanding an increased role in the Lebanese government. However, while the US continued to support the 14 March coalition, internal government conflicts in Lebanon grew stronger resulting in a vacant presidency and a political stalemate for 18 months. This period was characterized by disagreements and disputes among the two coalitions. During this period the Lebanese Armed forces was targeted when sectarian clashes occurred bringing back old civil war disputers. After many efforts to solve the new upcoming problems such as political assassinations, labor strikes, cabinet resignation, and internal conflicts with Palestinian militants and the sectarian disputers the stalemate was ended with the Doha Agreement in May 2008.[139]

US encouraged the united government and their choice of the new elected president. Condoleezza Rice stated the US support of Lebanon's "complete authority over the entire territory of the country"[140] in that sense democratic institution may be empowered hence the government, military and police control will be stronger and more applicable within Lebanon. Furthermore, due to the conflicts that occurred with militia groups the international community have recalled the importance of disarming all militia groups, especially Hezbollah. Hezbollah's support increased after the summer war of 2006 with

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[138] Casey L Addis (2009) p.3

[139] Ibid. (2009)

[140] Ibid. (2009) p.3

Israel and the party gained more influence through the Doha agreements in the new united Lebanese government. As a result the Security Council Resolutions 1559, 1680 and 1701 calling for disarmament of militia groups has not been implemented.[141]

The United States have kept on stressing the importance of stability in Lebanon without interference from anti-western powers. Through economic and security assistance US may strengthen the 14 march coalition in order in attempt to demise the influence of the anti-western forces. The United States policy aims at diminishing the power of both Syria and Hezbollah in Lebanon. Before the parliamentary elections in June 2009 it was discussed that the US contributions in future assistance were to be based on the results of those elections. The support for Lebanese armed forces, economy, civil and political society movements were set on an edge. The fear was that Hezbollah had got more influence in the government if the March 8 coalition won the majority of seats in the parliament. However, the US was criticized for these approaches since it was considered that if the American government would act in this way they would only support outcomes that served their own interest instead of really being concerned for democratization in Lebanon. Therefore it is argued that US instead should focus on the conflict as a whole not which camp it should support thus involving Israel, Syria and the peace process between these countries.[142]

Some argue that in order to achieve peace and stability Hezbollah which indeed is representing Lebanon's largest groups of population the Shiites should be integrated politically in Lebanon moving it away from its resistance path while in Lebanon's national security area making use of Hezbollah's armed faction. However, the US who during a long time have been targeting their policy towards defeating Hezbollah no matter what the outcome will be, have faced more political stalemates and violence in Lebanon. Their policy towards empowering the Lebanese government has had the opposite effect whereas Lebanon almost fell back into the worst fighting's since civil war in the first months of 2008. Lebanon's political sphere is very fractious therefore it is important that US policy toward

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[141] Bureau of Public Affairs (2010)

[142] Casey L Addis. (2009) p.20

Lebanon should aim at making the Lebanese parties adopt consensus for reconciliation and reform instead of trying to empower one coalition in the country.[143]

Mona Yacoubian, special advisor to the Institute Center for Conflict Analysis and Prevention, directs the Lebanon Working Group at the U.S. Institute of Peace. She has discussed four basic recommendations that the Obama administration should consider while dealing with the Lebanese-US relation.[144]

First she argues that the administration should understand Lebanon's political and demographic spheres in a nuanced way. Lebanon always struggles with danger of sectarian tensions therefore US policy should aim towards Lebanon's confessional structure. In that sense the Policy must face Hezbollah's role, influence, intentions and objectives within Lebanon. US should seek to find possibilities on evolving Hezbollah into a political actor while integrating its arms. Secondly, US should not get involved or dragged into internal Lebanese politics by taking side with any coalition. The violence in Lebanon has often increased through such actions therefore the Obama administration should stay above Lebanon's political conflicts. Thirdly she recommends that US policy should focus on achieving political reconciliation and on institution building. The policy must be aimed at reinforcing state institutions such as the army, the judiciary and parliament bodies. By supporting National dialogue the US can smooth the progress of settlement between Lebanon's rival coalitions. The Lebanese government should be supported by the US in "improving basic services and promote reforms that undermine corruption by establishing accountability and transparency".[145] At last, Yacoubian states that in order to strengthen the process of peace and stability Obama's administration must seek dialogue with Syria. Syria has always had long-term interest in the country that should be acknowledged even though it relinquishes Lebanese sovereignty. She believes that the US ought to promote the normalization of ties between Lebanon and Syria. However, it is also essential that the

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[143] Mona Yacoubian (2009)

[144] Ibid. (2009)

[145] Ibid. (2009)

borders be demarcated and that the majority of treaties signed when Syria was in control of Lebanon should be processed.[146]

Yacoubian believes that the government of Lebanon will continue to struggle with rebuilding institutions within the country as well as its tries to gain control over its whole territory. The United States policy is aimed at supporting Lebanon with these issues in order to maintain the process of stability, peace and democracy within Lebanon. It is very important to realize that foreign countries cannot impose their set of view and values into Lebanon. Lebanon has to flourish by its own nature and only through dialogue and acceptance of each other it can achieve its peace. Every party in the government representing its own religious sect must aim at cooperation and collaboration instead of violence means to reach their goals.[147]

10. Concluding Discussion

10.1 US efforts in the region and democracy in Lebanon

The Middle East is a region with a long political history. The world's Super-powers have repeatedly tried to influence political Issues in the region. US changed its foreign policy after 9/11 attacks therefore the aim of this study was to evaluate the democratization process in the Middle East after the attacks. By conducting this study the historical and political developments in the AME were shown along with the efforts made by the US in the region. It also showed to what extent civil and political society is functioning in Lebanon hence purpose of the research was achieved by evaluating the democratization process in the AME. In order to conduct the research a qualitative method of collecting data was made with an aim on content analysis. Through content analysis, a definition of the key concepts democracy, civil and political society was given. Further this analysis provided that books, websites, articles, journals etc were used to collect important data for the research.

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[146] Ibid. (2009)

[147] Ibid. (2009)

Throughout history democracy has been about political rights and duties regulating the citizen's activities towards the state and its government. It refers to the right of participating and voting in elections by the basic rule of "one man, one vote" where everyone should have equal right to vote regardless of gender. The Nation-state has been essential for the global political system since it provide stability and safe-guarding of both the domestic and international political issues. There has been an increase in the internationality in political decision-making, where the structures are becoming increasingly international. Internationalization of political problems means that many of the political problems that a country faces come increasingly from abroad which probably is the case for the Middle East.

To have a functioning democracy many issues have to be considered and the basic democratic ideas are equality, self-determination, rule of the majority, the strife for common good and the accountability of states and people. The main focuses of social movements are peace, human rights, environment rather than promoting public support for multilateralism which also are important values of democracy. Efforts have been made to reduce the inequalities among these focuses and political participants have got the opportunity to enhance the global democracy. Democracy has proven to work if one regards the progress it has made in many non-western countries for instance in east-Europe, east-Asia, south-Asia etc. Therefore the Middle East should not be excluded from also obtaining these progresses even though it may seem more difficult to asses' democracy in Arab regimes which are mostly Islamic. The general belief goes that Muslims in general carry a hatred towards the fundaments of the western societies. Islam is believed to be the main cause why Muslim societies are resistant to modernity and therefore the Middle East lack democratic states.

This study has investigated and reflected upon the United States new Foreign Policy for regime change after September 11. After the 9/11 attacks the United States foreign policy consisted of promoting democracy which was a part of their "freedom agenda". As stated earlier the Bush administration first step towards this new foreign policy was the invasion in Afghanistan where the Taliban regime was overthrown followed by the occupation in Iraq which put an end to Saddam Hussein's regime. After these goals were accomplished the US turned its goals to obtain democracy transformation in the Arab Middle East.

Since the 9/11 attacks the US changed their foreign policy towards the Middle East dramatically stressing the importance of democratization in order to fight terrorism. By promoting democratization in the Middle East, the US hoped to bring pro-Western elites to power and creating a US friendly zone of influence. The concept of democracy combined with its adoption in the Middle East has been a wide and difficult subject to examine.

Instantly after 9/11, Afghanistan, the location of Al Qaeda's headquarters, was invaded by American troops to fight terrorists. The invasion was a measure of retaliation, which marked the official beginning of the War on Terror. The Bush Administration presented to the world that the invasion-objectives were to capture Osama Bin Laden, eliminate his terrorist network, and relieve Afghanistan of the Taliban Regime that had given Al Qaeda a safe base camp.

With the justification of fighting terrorism and removing a hazardous authoritarian regime, the US unleashed a full scale invasion and occupation of Iraq in 2003. Thus, later the reasons for the intervention proved to be false under closer investigation. Even though weapons of mass destruction and terrorism justified the measures against Saddam Hussein to the public, the prime incentive was most likely the economic profits by Iraqi oil resources. The motives presented by Washington pre- and post- the invasion faltered throughout the progress of war and occupation, as they were proven inaccurate and unjustified. The economical aspect is the only remaining motive characterized by credibility, which also has had a historically influence on the US policies towards the Middle East.

The Bush administration's effort to promote democracy in the Middle East has not been regarded as successful. The new foreign policy that the Bush administration adopted did not lead to any results, it only decreased the United States credibility thus it has created difficulties for the new Obama Administration. Many Arab regimes as well as western countries come to realize that the Bush administration's policy had more fake intentions than true. Even though the US was able to overthrow the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and the Saddam regime in Iraq its foreign policy post 9/11 only brought more chaos to the region by making matters worse when it tries to make them better.

According to critics the United State has been regarded as unable to deliver many of its promises since the Bush administration only succeeded in raising various suspicions about its true intentions and competence. However, of course the American government should not give up on its goals but it is essential that the Obama administration develops a new kind of reform or approach towards dialogue. The Obama administration should learn from the mistakes of the previous administration in order to succeed and restore US credibility thus still base its foreign policy on what benefits the US national security. For instance in Lebanon Obama should not give up on the democracy promotion but instead of directly targeting and promoting free and fair elections (which turned out to have an undesirable result to the US in some parts) the administration should try to build up a liberal society and improve the civil society. The coalitions in Lebanon should be united instead of differentiated from each other more than they already are. These actions will definitely contribute to further developing of the democratization process in the Middle East and stability in Lebanon.

Democracy has been defined to some point the relation between society, law and organization where a distinction between practical reasons and communicative reasons is drawn. Deliberations, culture, traditions, norms, and laws are necessary to combine in order to achieve democracy in a country as Lebanon. Lebanon is characterized by 19 official registered religious groups whom all consider their history, culture and tradition in the country as important. Practical reasons refer to how and that something should be done. In Lebanon where the political sphere is divided into different coalition reconciliation, collaboration and reform should be encouraged and promoted. However, to do so one also has to consider the communicative reasons which are based on truth, rightness and sincere communication when basic conditions are met.

Lebanon is belayed in the Middle East and its relationship in the area has for years been fraught especially near the Lebanese-Israeli border. After being a French colony Lebanon gained its independence in 1943 but the French troops were fully withdrawn in 1946. There is always a constant risk of conflicts or war to occur in the country. Due to its variety of people with different religious belonging Lebanon has become a strategic battlefield for many actors in the Arab Middle East and Western countries. Syria has during long time been involved in Lebanese politics with military presence while Israel has occupied Lebanese

territory during several periods of time. However in the year 2000 the Israeli withdrawal was a fact and five years later after the assassination of the former Prime Minister Rafiq El Hariri Syrian military also withdrawal themselves from Lebanese territory.

The Lebanese population consists of over 4 million people not including the Palestinian refugees and guest workers with an area of 10400 km². This population was during a civil war of 15 years (1975-1990) divided into religious belonging. The political and electoral system is based on religious affiliation and through the unwritten National Pact it is stated by law that the Lebanese President must be a Christian Maronite, the prime minister Sunni Muslim and the speaker of the Parliament Muslim Shiite. Laws are supposed to govern the countries citizens whether they like it or not and bring forth national peace. The Laws and norms in Lebanon are a part of why it is divided in the way it is today. Laws that divide the citizens based on religious affiliation are legitimate in Lebanon which creates a division in power share thus it disrupt the social welfare and harmony within the country. The people strongly identify themselves with their religion whereas belief and faith is a strong tool of power. The power share in this republic state with a democratic electoral system is somehow indirectly inherent since the Leaders sons or other relatives often take over the power within their own party.

However, the Lebanese society has nowadays become more tolerant and accepted its heterogeneous nature more than it used to do, it is to some extent no longer held together by series of laws and norms, due to the fact that politics and laws are being more and more separated and disintegrated from each other. Thus, for the first time in many years Lebanon has served independent without foreign actors in their political system. However, Rafiq El Hariri's assassination created a division between the Lebanese people leading to the worst political clashes since the civil war. On one side, a coalition supported by the western countries maintaining of mainly Lebanese Sunni Muslims and Christians and on the other side, a coalition strongly supported by Iran and Syria consisting of manly Shiite Muslims and Christians.

The relationship between laws and politics to understand how people interact in Lebanon and how the foreign actors affect the country must be explained as two concepts that need each other to exist, they are interrelated. Politics needs laws as well as the existence of laws

creates structure so that the politics can get power, the law legitimate political power. The type of power that is created appears in the interaction between people. In Lebanon the citizens behave accordingly to how and what confessional rules/laws that governs them, in which the leaders legitimate their power with. The political power is developed and structured through a legal code that is the internal connection of law with political power which can be seen in Lebanon. The political authorities within the country as well as foreign actors who are involved in Lebanon use laws as means of organizing their political rules and interest in the country. The political leaders in Lebanon therefore use allies of foreign actors as a way of ensuring their supporters of their power.

The traditional forms of political decision making have had an authority that governs, but the modern society is more pluralistic and involves its citizens in the decision making. The belief is in traditions and social norms where no reflections behind motive of the actions are done. The key concept to obtain legitimacy is through discourse which means that before fully obtaining deliberative democracy the Parties must have a dialog to have a mutual understanding on political issues in the public spheres not just accepting all decision by the government. The public spheres acts to guide the government while the government only can be legitimate if it listens to the public. The Lebanese government should be pushed by the US further to cooperate with Civil Society Movements and Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs). These kinds of collaborations with civil society movements and NGOs are vital components for the progress of democratization hence it may also improve economic growth and development. Also even though there are some women influence at the political arena in order for Lebanon to serve as a democratic state it should be stressed to enhance gender equalities and improve the role of women in politics.

Lebanon with its variety of people which also plays a central role for foreign actors has struggled during a long time with conflicts and peace settlements. US democratization and peace process policy towards Lebanon ought to be characterized by discourse. In order to enhance their interest in the country democracy should be a central measure where the American government needs to have a dialogue with all parties in Lebanon including Hezbollah to benefit Lebanon and achieve the Lebanese government society goals. The focus should be laid on inclusiveness vs. representative democracy as well as direct vs.

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representative democracy where the most convincing "best" argument/solution will win and agreements are reached through compromises where those concerned or their representatives are participating, no matter of who is performing it. The parties involved in the process gets deeper understanding of the reasons behind the argument/solution resulting in better solutions to deal conflicts and problems while it leads to legitimacy and solidarity within the Lebanese society. In order to spare Lebanon the risks of continued instability and conflicts, the US government must try to facilitate a peaceful demobilization of Hezbollah. The idea should to reach an armistice where Hezbollah is to be integrated into the Lebanese national security apparatus but in order for that to be possible the Obama administration should try to push Israel to leave the Sheba farms in southern Lebanon while encouraging a diplomatic dialogue with Syria not to interfere in Lebanese politics.

The prospects for development and peace process at any levels are affected by the current situations and relations between the parties who seek development. It is important to keep in mind that every party has different goals, thoughts and opinions that must be understood and respected. The AME and the western states govern their society in different ways which creates conflicts when one party wants the other to be more democratic. The problem of conflicts is that it often drives the parties away from each other or makes a third parties caught in the middle e.g. civilians in a conflict between countries. Lebanon has long struggled with the question of identity and national unity. During decades Lebanese people has sought safety and comfortableness within their own religious groups which through history only have raised more conflicts between them. The Lebanese believe that religion is very coherent and connected with both their culture and tradition which strengthens the patterns of group life among them. Therefore, In the case of Lebanon the foreign actors should promote the democratization process by enhancing peace building and dialogue between the internal parties within the country. It is essential for the US not to impose its beliefs and values on the Lebanese government. In that sense one can help the Lebanese people to cross the threshold of hostility towards each other. In a multicultural society as Lebanon it is of greatest importance to integrate the people from all different religions/sects with each other in order to strengthen the democratization process.

Following Linz and Stephan's criteria's for democracy in the example of Lebanon the conclusion would be that Lebanon may fall into their criteria's. The Lebanese society as mentioned earlier is a very multinational, lingual, religious and cultural society thus politics have been and still are very complex within the country. Although the Lebanese themselves are modern compared to people from other Middle Eastern countries, due to its variety of people, all having the same strong religious, cultural, traditional and historical attachment to the country, it has turned out to be extremely difficult and complex to agree on the fundamentals of democracy. Even though Lebanon nowadays is divided into two coalitions the majority of the Lebanese strives to obtain democracy (where they can fully ensure their human and civil rights), but it is done accordingly to their own coalitions point of views. This makes the society clash since there becomes a conflict of interest on which coalitions views to fallow. Linz and Stephan also argues that democracy is possible in multinational societies but strong political reforms of democratic principles are needed in order for it to happen, which is the case of Lebanon. History has shown that Lebanon has experienced various conflicts/clashes because of the people's demands and needs for political reform to ensure their human and civil rights. By being the most democratic country in the AME after Israel is a great step further into the democratization process.

Nevertheless, it is important to remember that since some problems of stateness are incompatible with democracy, one has to be careful and cautious when taking measures in the case of Lebanon. Despite the fact that the Lebanese are more modern than others in the Middle East, they are extremely attached to their confessional structure within the country which in turn becomes closely linked to their Lebanese stateness. When dealing with stateness and national identity in Lebanon there are many aspects that should be considered to keep the society together and maintain peace within the country. The confessional structure in political system will remain for a long time ahead, strongly supported by the Lebanese themselves. The confessional structure will and cannot be excluded since the Lebanese national identity is composed of confessionalism, culture, tradition and history regardless of whether the Lebanese are Muslims or Christians. In conclusion, in order to further enhance and empower the democratization process in Lebanon, the confessional structure in the political system must be combined together with the fundamentals of democracy to please both the Muslim and Christian Lebanese population.

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