IMES CAPSTONE PAPER SERIES

THE SYRIAN NATIONAL COUNCIL: A VICTORIOUS OPPOSITION?

JARED MARKLAND

KRITTIKA LALWANEY

MAY 2012

Jared Markland & Krittika Lalwaney

Introduction

The Syrian National Council (SNC) emerged as an opposition movement representing the democratic uprisings in Syria calling for regime change. The Assad regime's forceful measures against Syrians have delegitimized the government and empowered the revolution. The success of the revolution, in overthrowing the regime hinges on the Syrian opposition's ability to overcome its deficiencies. This paper analyzes the performance of the SNC by determining SNC success or failure to launch a successful opposition movement against the regime. The SNC's probability of success in the overthrow of the regime is contingent on its ability to unify internally, obtain financial capacity, establish international recognition, and build internal popular support.

Methodology

The methods used to examine the prospects for success of the SNC as a viable opposition movement consist of comparative case studies and qualitative field research. We examined four case studies, including Nicaragua, Libya, El Salvador and Guatemala. These cases establish a set of core factors necessary for an opposition movement to succeed. The utilization of these factors allows us to create a comparative assessment of the overall performance of the SNC. Our qualitative fieldwork entailed a total of 32 interviews with current SNC members, Syrian activists, refugees, Free Syrian Army members, academic experts, and government officials. Interviews were conducted during the span of

four months, from January to April 2012, and were carried out in Turkey, Lebanon, and the US.

Theoretical Framework

The Syrian uprising began with protests in Damascus on March 15, 2011, spreading a few days later to Dera'a, where demonstrations resulted in clashes with government security forces. This phenomenon is the product of larger regional Arab uprisings to defy authoritarianism and fight for individual freedoms. Syria's case started as an uprising and evolved into a revolutionary movement, without yet becoming a complete revolution. The best way to fathom Syria over the past year is through understanding the premise of Marc Lynch's book, *The Arab Uprisings.* Lynch says that "The [Arab] uprisings are an exceptionally rapid, intense, and nearly simultaneous explosion of popular protest across an Arab world, united by a shared transnational media and bound by a common identity" [1]. In this context, the utility of Marc Lynch's work explains the timing of the Syrian uprising. The overthrow of Tunisia's Ben Ali inspired Syrians to protest for concrete political reforms, free and fair elections, and eventually calling for the ouster of the Assad regime.

Syria's turmoil understood in the framework of the Arab uprisings context and through the lens of revolutionary theory provides an explanation as to why non-violent protestors calling for political reform transformed into a revolutionary movement, which eventually called for the overthrow of the Assad regime. Jeff Goodwin's seminal work in *No Way Out* (2001) illustrates a contemporary understanding of why revolutionary movements emerge in the context of contesting state power and authority. Furthermore,

[1] Lynch, M. (2012). *The Arab Uprising.* New York, NY: Public Affairs.

Jared Markland & Krittika Lalwaney

Goodwin's theory is beneficial for explaining domestic causes of the Syrian revolution. According to Goodwin, "A revolutionary movement is a social movement advancing exclusive competing claims to control of the state, or some segment of it."[2] In order to understand the context of the Syrian opposition's contestation for control of state power it is first critical to understand under what conditions this particular revolutionary movement materialized. The nature of the regime, its "embeddedness" in society, along with the level of inclusiveness or exclusiveness of the society it governs determines the probability that a revolutionary movement may rise to challenge its legitimacy. A central focus for examining the emergence of opposition or revolutionary movements is the level of inclusiveness or a regime's ability to incorporate citizen and social groups' claims, including elections, political parties, interest groups, and social movements into the state system (Goodwin pg. 13). In contrast, neo-patrimonial authoritarian regimes, such as Syria, maintain greater autonomy from society, though not necessarily from economic elites, which exclude certain mobilized groups from the political decision making process. Max Weber coined this specific form of extreme authoritarianism as a 'sultanistic' dictatorship. Hence, this form of dictatorship involves the concentration of a virtually unchecked power in the dictator, resulting in radically exclusionary practices in the decision making process, sometimes denying participation even to wealthy elites.

The development of revolutionary movements is proportionally related to particular state structures and policies. Even though the Syrian regime excludes growing numbers of increasingly organized elites and ignores their calls for reform, Goodwin

---

[2] Jeff Goodwin, <u>No Other Way Out: States and Revolutionary Movements</u> (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

asserts that this dissatisfaction with regime policies/behavior is insufficient to explain the emergence of oppositional revolutionary resistance to the regime. According to Goodwin;

> People do not tend to join or support revolutionary movements when they believe that the central state has little if anything to do with their everyday problems, however severe those problems may be. Not surprisingly, few people – even when they are extremely poor and palpably exploited (Goodwin pg. 26)

 Instead, Goodwin turns to the writings of Leon Trotsky to explain why discontented segments of society adopt revolutionary ideologies. In the words of Trotsky, "People do not make revolution eagerly any more than they do war… A revolution takes place only when there is no other way out"(Goodwin pg. 26) Thus, people conclude, revolution as the only option when facing regimes that respond to political claim making and dissent with violent and indiscriminate repression.

Within the framework of revolutionary theory, Stephen Sanderson explains more recent revolutionary movements that consist of an armed opposition. He notes that certain revolutionary elements, such as guerrilla forces, use similar tactics as terrorists and blur the distinction between the two[3]. The Syrian revolution increasingly resembles this model, where the government uses internal forces to suppress peaceful protests through violent means. In response, civilians, in the form of militias, take up arms in self-defense. Sanderson's description encompasses the Syrian government's response as 'contemporary state terrorism', where an existing government is repressive, using internal security forces for surveillance, and force against its citizens to maintain power This use of what

---

[3] Sanderson, S. (2010). *Revolutions* (2nd Edition ed.). Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.

Jared Markland & Krittika Lalwaney

Sanderson calls contemporary state terrorism by the Syrian government, resulted in the emergence of a more organized opposition, which has come to resemble the regime in its use of tactics. The adoption of similar tactics to the regime, by the opposition, is a direct result of state violence.

The SNC emerged as a political opposition group calling for an end to the Assad regime. At the same time an armed resistance militia, calling themselves the Free Syrian Army (FSA), composed of Syrian army defectors, was created for the purpose of protecting civilians from government forces' campaign of brutality inside the country. Given that the Syrian movement is composed of a political opposition and a guerrilla force, this most closely resembles the characteristic of Sanderson's third wave of terrorist movements. He explains third wave terrorist movements as "...terrorist organizations largely devoted to overthrowing what they perceived as exploitation and oppression. This wave also saw the emergence of right-wing organizations dedicated to the destruction of governments they see as illegitimate usurpers of individual freedoms."[4] Hence, The FSA is the guerilla force taking up arms to target government military and internal security forces, with the aim of establishing a new government seeking to rectify society's perceived grievances with the regime. The Syrian opposition movement is unique in comparison with the movements that emerged in the course of other Arab uprisings in the fact that, not only is there an internal guerilla force, but the existence of the political opposition is located outside the country.

---

[4] Ibid,182.

Jared Markland & Krittika Lalwaney

Case Studies: Successful/Failed Revolutionary Movements

The analysis of specific revolutionary movements provides valuable insight into the variables, which allowed for the success/failure of these particular movements in overthrowing their respective regimes. Thus, success for the SNC ultimately entails the overthrow of the Assad regime. Through the abstraction of specific metrics of success from case studies, such variables may then be applied to the case of the SNC in determining an analytical framework for gauging the probability of accomplishing its proposed objective of overthrowing the Assad regime. Furthermore, an assessment of the deficiencies in the key variables required for success enables an analysis and subsequent set of necessary prescriptions for accomplishing the feat of revolution. However, it must be noted that even though the SNC's performance is determinately effective in these variables, it does not necessarily mean that it will achieve success in overthrowing the Assad regime. Two valuable case studies, including the triumphs of the Sandinistas of Nicaragua and more recently, the National Transitional Council in Libya, serve as the basis for delineating a set of analytical metrics. In addition, the converse analysis of two failed revolutionary movements in El Salvador and Guatemala provide a similar set of factors in which they failed to achieve the overthrow of the regime.

One of the most frequently cited successes of a revolutionary movement is the case of the Sandinistas in Nicaragua. The victorious popular insurrection in Nicaragua (1978-79) was the result of several interconnected factors, including: the strength and popularity of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN); increased elite and moderate opposition; international support and the simultaneous geopolitical isolation of the regime;

the absence of a 'political opening'; and the inability of Somoza's National Guard forces to eliminate or suppress rising armed insurrection (Goodwing pg. 186) The extent to which these factors exist are all directly tied in one way or another to the neo-patrimonial nature of the Somoza regime, meaning that actions of the regime directly correspond to the environment each of these factors materialize, is critical for understanding the emergence of each factor.

On a deeper level of analysis, Nicaragua reveals a comparative structure for auditing the current progress of the SNC in achieving its revolutionary objectives. Initial attempts by the Somoza regime to maintain the support of the country's business elite occurred under a system of patrimonial state control for business and professional opportunities. The regime embezzled vast sums of relief assistance in tandem with the patrimonial monopolization by Somoza's state companies for the reconstruction of Managua, following the destructive 1972 earthquake. As a result of Somoza's patrimonial concerns for maintaining his structure of loyalties, opposition from the bourgeois business elite began to mature. Supplemental to business elite alienation was the fact that Somoza failed to enact any meaningful political reforms necessary to appease an increasingly disaffected class of political elite. The Carter administration urged the Organization of American States (OAS) to host mediated talks with the conservative opposition (FAO) following the assassination of Chamorro, a prominent member the opposition. Following the subsequent failure of negotiations, Somoza adamantly refused to abdicate or transfer power to an interim government, further alienating critical support from political elites. According to Goodwin, "the nature of neo-patrimonial rule makes it extraordinarily difficult to sacrifice certain

Jared Markland & Krittika Lalwaney

dictators without destroying their armies and states in the process" (Goodwin pg 188). This statement directly alludes to US policy at the end of 1978, with the goal of removing Somoza while preserving the National Guard.

The breakdown in negotiations between the regime and the umbrella opposition group (FAO) led to the growing assertion, both inside Nicaragua and internationally, that an armed opposition movement led by the Sandinistas was the only viable solution to Somoza's intransigence. In turn, the regime's choice to respond with a campaign of swift repression caused segments of elite to enter into a strategic alliance with the Sandinistas. Thus, the growing number of elite defections and popular opposition to Somoza further generated regional and international support for the FSLN and concomitant international isolation of the regime. A critical factor for the success of the FSLN was the ability to operate from camps set up in Costa Rica and Honduras. These sanctuaries were pivotal in providing shipment routes for arms and other vital supplies in sustaining armed resistance against the regime.

The isolation of the Somoza regime played a central role in insuring the success of the Sandinistas in two ways, first, by diminishing its source of military aid and second, diplomatic isolation closed available avenues for the involvement of interlocutors to arbitrate a settlement between the Sandinistas and the regime. Military aid from the U.S. was cut off from the Carter administration and never resumed. On the level of regional isolation, Costa Rica broke diplomatic relations with Somoza following a border incident in which four Costa Rican's Civil Guardsmen died. Mexico severed relations in May 1979 and Panama and Brazil followed in June (Goodwin pg. 190) Thus, Somoza's refusal to adhere to

OAS and US calls for reform coupled with his brute campaign of military repression

ensured the eventual success of the armed insurgency.

A further analysis of the organizational capacity of both the regime's National Guard

and the FSLN reveals significant factors related to the collapse of the regime. First, the

National Guard was kept to a minimal size in order for Samoza to prevent the opportunity

for groups of dissident officers from organizing a coup. Due to this deficiency in raw

numbers, coupled with diminished arms provisions, the National Guard was unable to

contain the increasingly armed and organized Sandinista front. (Goodwin pg. 191) Two

additional factors contributed to the enhanced organizational capacity of the FSLN in

defeating the National Guard. The movement's organizational capacity and coordination

was greatly enhanced by external assistance in the way of acquiring wireless

communications equipment and broadcasts by Radio Sandino in Costa Rica. While the FSLN

suffered from a numerical disadvantage, it was significantly countered by extensive

popular support in organization, logistics, and combat effectiveness. During several urban

battles, the Front multiplied its members by volunteer fighters supporting the movement.

The combination of the National Guard's size limitation, external and internal assistance in

organizational capacity, and extensive domestic support facilitated the defeat of the

regime's forces.

The fact that one single factor alone cannot account for the success of the

Sandanistas indicates that the complexity of the processes and timing of events leading to

the overthrow of the Somoza regime. Any number of events, including Somoza's

resignation or a direct U.S. invasion might have reversed the popularity and successes of

the insurrection, or at least prevented the collapse of the state and National Guard.

(Goodwin pg. 193) However, the focal point of the materialization and eventual triumph of

the revolutionary movement was centered on the actions of the neo-patrimonial Somoza

dictatorship. Like other revolutions, this dictatorship radicalized and focused popular

resistance on the government. In addition, the strategies implemented by the regime

alienated and pushed elites and moderates into the revolutionary camp. Thus, the

solidification of elite opposition further assisted the isolation of the regime internationally.

As a result of the regime's insular structural organization, the Sandinistas exploited this

weakness. Goodwin quotes Phil Ryan in asserting that the Sandinistas, "helped forestall a

premature regime-change, an elite rapprochement with the regime, as well as direct U.S.

intervention."(Goodwin pg. 194) Overall, the success of the Sandinista revolutionary

movement was not the product of political opportunities allotted by the breakdown of the

state's administration or military apparatus. Instead, the Sandinistas insurrection

campaign weakened the state to the point of collapse and implies the state regime

infrastructure was weak to begin with.

Libya

Similar to the Nicaraguan model, features of Qaddafi's rule resembled a 'sultanistic'

dictatorship where popular protests motivated elites to defect from the government in

favor of the opposition. Additionally, the Libyan revolution shared the aspect of

internationalization of the conflict resulting in international isolation of the Qaddafi

government. International support for Libyan rebels culminated in a NATO led military

intervention. The Libyan revolution set new precedents for the role of the international

community, where for the first-time in history a unanimous UN Security Council resolution passed calling for NATO intervention. This new precedent changed the calculus of Arab revolutionary processes based on future arguments for NATO style interventions, making it harder to pass, especially in the case of Syria.

Libya's government under Muammar Qaddafi resembled a neo-patrimonial dictatorship, built around personal rule, family, and supporters. Vast oil revenues exploited by Qaddafi as a means of maintaining power, allowing him to eliminate political dissidents and emerging parties by buying the loyalty of economic and social elites. Through Qaddafi's patrimonial system, he rewarded supporters with government positions and economic rewards. This system of governance gave Qaddafi absolute power to control all aspects of Libyan public and private spheres. "His system of governance, defined not by a constitution but by a Declaration of the Establishment of the People's Authority, consisted of 2,700 local 'basic people's congresses' that met just three times a year"[5]. Qaddafi's authority as the head of state in Libya was limitless, as it was not delineated in a constitution and was defined by himself and his network of supporters. The inherent power of the regime where individual freedoms were repressed and elites were weakened due to their dependency on Qaddafi for power are casual factors leading to the revolution in Libya.

Libya's revolutionary success was largely due to elite defections from Qaddafi's inner circle. Initial defections from Qaddafi's inner circle urged European countries to take an interest in the Libyan uprisings because of Qaddafi's waning legitimacy among Libyans.

---

[5] David Ottaway and Marina Ottaway, "Of Revolutions, Regime Change and State Collapse in the Arab World," 28 Feburary 2011, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, <http://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/revolutions-regime-change-and-state-collapse-the-arab-world>.

This indicated to the international community that elites and close supporters of Qaddafi

sided with the opposition undermining Qaddafi's authority. The Libyan opposition

benefited from elite defections as it enhanced its credibility making it a viable opposition

against the regime. Domestic isolation of the regime occurred as senior regime officials and

key military commanders defected. Mustafa al-Kharroubi a leading figure in the regime's

old guard and Khweildi al-Hmeidi, whose daughter married into Qaddafi's family both fled

the country [6]. Another major defection by the justice minister, Mustafa Abdel-Jalil, defected

because of Qaddafi's systematic use of violence against his own people. [7] These high profile

defections were a significant factor that demonstrated to the Western powers Qaddafi's

growing unpopularity, resulting in the international community backing the political

opposition. The National Transitional Council (NTC) was recognized as the legitimate

representative of the Libya. The NTC, a newly formed political opposition group, gave a

voice to the revolutionaries that allowed the international community to rally behind it

hoping for a free democratic Libya.

The Libyan revolution mobilized an international response in advance of developing

its organizational capacity. The NTC came under international scrutiny in regards to the

leadership's lack of coordination and a plan for a post-Qaddafi political transition.

However, such concerns did not halt the passing of the UN Security Council resolution 1973

---

[6] Ian Black, "Libya: Defections leave Muammar Gaddafi isolated in Tripoli bolthole," The Guardian 23 Feburary 2011. http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/feb/23/muammar-gaddafi-libya-tripoli-uprising

[7] Ibid.

Jared Markland & Krittika Lalwaney

in March, authorizing a no fly zone and increased sanctions on the Qaddafi regime[8]. The

French government proposed a plan for a humanitarian intervention in order to prevent

Qaddafi from besieging Benghazi and avoid a humanitarian catastrophe[9]. International

consensus on aiding the opposition was a crucial factor in bringing about the downfall of

the Qaddafi regime and assisting the NTC in filling the power vacuum.

Despite the NATO mission in Libya, the NTC continued to face internal challenges in

establishing an effective political movement. The expected lack of political experience in

the country due to the authoritarian nature of the Qaddafi regime initiated political

rivalries within the NTC. This lack of unity prolonged the duration of the conflict, longer

than was expected. Opposition groups within the NTC formed armed factions to defeat

Qaddafi forces whom then after liberating Tripoli maintained diverging political interests.

Under the leadership of Justice Minister Mustafa Abdul Jalil, tribal interests began to take

precedence over the 'moderate' Islamic model of the state envisioned for Libya.[10] In

practice, Jalil favored policies aligned with constituents belonging to his own tribe and

allied tribes rather than representing all Libyans. This attitude triggered infighting within

the NTC bringing forth political rivalries amongst armed militias previously united against

Qaddafi. Today, as the post-Qaddafi transition is underway, more political groups vested

---

[8] UN Security Council, "Security Council Approves 'No-Fly Zone' Over Libya, Authorizing 'All Necessary Measures' To Protect Civilians, By Vote of 10 in Favour with 5 Abstentions," United Nations Security Council, 2011. http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2011/sc10200.doc.htm

[9] Edward Cody, "France pleads for military intervention as Gaddafi forces attack Libyan rebels," Washington Post 16 March 2011. http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/france-pleads-for-military-intervention-as-gaddafi-forces-attack-libyan-rebels/2011/03/16/ABSX3we_story.html

[10] Moammar Atwi, "Libya: The National Power Struggle Begins," Al-Akhbar 7 October 2011. http://english.al-akhbar.com/content/libya-national-power-struggle-begins

interest in moving Libya forward, increasing the role of Islam in the state, encouraged by Qatar and Turkey to bridge religion with secular style of government.[11]

The Libyan revolutionary process is an important framework from which to view the Syrian conflict as it also began in the context of Arab uprisings. The Libyan model changed the Arab regimes' calculus in responding to protests. The success of the Libyan opposition was achieved through international diplomatic efforts to gain French support, which paved the way for elite defections, further delegitimizing and isolating the Qaddafi regime. Ultimately, these actions resulted in UN approval of NATO intervention. However, in the case of Syria, international diplomatic channels and action through the UN to authorize a unified international response failed due to Russian and Chinese opposition to another international military intervention justified on humanitarian grounds. Similar to Libya, the Syrian opposition's success hinges on international support and official recognition of the SNC. The international process applied in Libya will not succeed in the case of Syria considering Russia and China's veto in the UN Security Council.

El Salvador and Guatemala

In contrast to the triumphal success of the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, armed forces in both El Salvador and Guatemala were able to conduct extraordinary campaigns of repression against urban insurgencies to stymie their respective revolutionary movements; however, they were unsuccessful in their attempts to completely eliminate them. Furthermore, both regimes enacted limited, although ultimately effective campaigns of political, social, and economic reforms, including: competitive elections, opening 'political

---

[11] Ibid.

space' for unarmed social movements, and limited socio-economic reforms – all of which undermined potential domestic and international allies for the revolutionaries (Goodwin pg. 195). These same political openings insured economic elites and military officers' loyalty to the regime. In addition, both countries were far less isolated internationally, while conversely, the revolutionaries remained devoid of international support. As a result of the institutional nature of military domination in these societies, revolutionary movements were inhibited from seizing power; instead, the state of détente between the regime and the revolutionaries ensured the emergence of a civil war (in El Salvador) and a protracted low-intensity conflict (Guatemala), where neither side possessed the capacity to defeat the other (pg. 195). Again, like Nicaragua no single factor can account for the failure of revolutionary movements in El Salvador and Guatemala. Key factors accountable for the maintenance of the regimes against revolutionary forces in both countries are attributable to the capacity of the armed forces to remove ineffectual rulers through coups, limited political openings necessary to pacify economic elites and moderates, and lobby international powers for aid in fighting counterinsurgencies; which directly correlates to the institutional organization of military dominance in these societies.

One of the foremost attributed reasons for the failure of the Salvadoran and Guatemalan cases is the occurrence of military led coups against leaders perceived as incapable of dealing with guerilla movements in the late 1970's. In El Salvador, during a period of increased political polarization, military reformist elements allied with the moderate left to overthrow the military regime of General Carlos Humberto Romero and established a junta governing council. Following a protracted campaign of violence against

Jared Markland & Krittika Lalwaney

guerilla groups and their supporters, preparations were enacted for an elected constituent assembly to draft a constitution, followed by the election of a civilian government. Analogous in Guatemala, General Efrain Rios Montt came to power through a military coup in 1982 in order to prevent the allegedly fraudulent winner of election, General Angel Anibal Guevara, from taking office.(Goodwin pg. 196) Subsequently, General Guevara initiated a similar policy for an authoritarian transfer to democracy.

El Salvador and Guatemala's ability to conduct coups and initiate limited political reforms demonstrates their relative institutional autonomy and rationality in sharp contrast to the National Guard in Nicaragua and Libya's Republican Guard. Even though both governments were able to carry out successful coups they still embarked on brutal campaigns of state terrorism against revolutionary groups, both countries concomitantly implemented transitions to semi-electoral regimes. In El Salvador, the military tolerated a political transition in a strategic effort to receive U.S. military aid; which in retrospect was a critical component in preventing a guerilla victory. Although in Guatemala, the U.S. banned military aid, reforms were calculated in an effort to reduce international isolation and secure foreign aid, loans, and investments. Instead of relying on U.S. military aid, at least until 1984, Guatemala turned to other countries for military assistance, specifically, Israel, Taiwan and South Africa (Goodwin pg. 203). Elected governments in both countries prevented the same degree of international isolation as Somoza in Nicaragua. Thus, in contrast the revolutionary movements in these countries were extremely isolated. No single country provided sanctuary for Salvadoran or Guatemalan rebels such as Costa Rica provided for the Sandinistas. In fact, the U.S. proved quite hostile to the Salvadoran rebels

Jared Markland & Krittika Lalwaney

through joint operations with the Salvadoran military along the Salvador-Honduras border. Without international support and tentative U.S. superpower backing of the regime, with military and/or economic aid, revolutionary movements in El Salvador and Guatemala were extremely disadvantaged.

In regards to elite support, both the Salvadoran and Guatemalan regimes managed to implement limited political openings in an attempt to prevent defection to the respective revolutionary movements. Campaigns of semi-open political elections and partial civilian rule insured semi-loyal elite support in part due to the fact that remaining with the regime instead of the revolutionaries did not threaten their economic interests. As a result, the lack of elite support for revolutionary movements cemented the regimes' continued legitimacy with elites, while simultaneously causing reduced popular support for guerilla forces conducting operations in urban areas.

The purpose of assessing the four case studies (Nicaragua, Libya, El Salvador, and Guatemala) of successful/failed revolutionary movements, unveils a structural framework of factors or metrics for determining the current trajectory of the SNC in toppling the Assad regime. Factors extrapolated from the case studies that warrant attention focus on the critical element of the countries orientation in the geopolitical environment and global powers' interests in the current regime or revolutionary opposition. Subsequently, the events in each country correspond with Goodwin's citation from Robert Dix when he states, "revolutionaries will often need to assemble a broad "negative" coalition – a coalition, that is, which opposes the status quo but may not agree on much else – of diverse social classes and external allies in order to seize state powers"(Goodwin pg. 212). The capacity of a

revolutionary oriented opposition to assemble such a coalition is the main factor distinguishing the two successful case studies from the failed movements. Such a coalition rests not so much on socio-economic, rather on political factors in response to a regime utilizing repression and intransigence to political opposition. In addition, Goodwin argues that a dictatorship be infrastructurally weak, because a powerful regime with a reliable army maintains the potential to repeatedly and effectively repress any opposition threatening its interests and/or existence. (Goodwin pg. 212)

In order to assemble an effective revolutionary opposition, a host of other factors, extrapolated from the four cases, are essential to constituting a viable movement, including: international support (intervention, financing, and sanctions), financing for conducting operations and capacity building (militarization, administrative, and paying salaries), unity to effectively confront the regime (both internally and intra-organizational), and the ability to win legitimacy and promote elite defections through the provision of services to segments of the population affected by acts of regime repression (civilian protection and humanitarian aid). Deficiencies in failing to achieve a cohesive movement through developing the aforementioned factors, not only allows a regime to consolidate its authority in the face of opposition, but simultaneously undermine the viability of any feasible challenge to the regime.

Goodwin's analysis of the variables that contribute to successful revolutionary movements is a valuable tool to comparatively evaluate the SNC. Through an extrapolation of Goodwin's principles this assessment highlights international support, financing, unity, and internal legitimacy as central to measuring success. Field based interviews conducted

Jared Markland & Krittika Lalwaney

in Turkey and Lebanon, coupled with open source media publications, give an inside

perspective to the SNC's performance in each one of these categories. Subsequently,

analyses of the SNC's evaluation within these guidelines enables the formulation of a set of

recommendations to objectively correct deficiencies and outline a comprehensive course of

action for increasing the probability of success.

This paper is thus an assessment of the conditions vital for the SNC to gain increased

legitimacy inside Syria and become a viable alternative to the Assad regime. Currently the

Syrian opposition, led by the SNC, which is composed of loosely organized elements, the

revolutionaries on the ground, and the Free Syrian Army. Most actors within the opposition

acknowledge the SNC's vital role in challenging the regime, but the objective is to unify all

the factions under a single functioning oppositional umbrella. Unification of the opposition

under the SNC is a significant challenge, a prerequisite for international support against an

extremely organized and well-armed regime. In addition to unity, other factors hindering

the effectiveness of the SNC are regional geopolitics, financial procurement, and legitimacy

inside Syria. The composite level calculated from these factors will determine the

likelihood of the SNC's success or failure in launching a viable opposition against the

current regime.

The following list of variables is applicable to the assessment of the SNC's performance

in constituting a viable opposition to the Assad regime:

- International Support- Recognition of the SNC enables countries to engage in

  official diplomatic negotiations, financing, and arms provisions directly to the

movement. This support serves as a means of further isolating and

delegitimizing the Assad regime.

- Unity- Provides a cohesive ideological and organizational front for the

  opposition to effectively challenge the regime. Unity consists of inter-

  organizational and intra-organizational solidarity (LCCs and FSA).

  Organizational solidarity directly correlates with the ability of the SNC to

  demonstrate to the international community of its capability to challenge the

  Assad regime and thus, garner international support as a result.

- Financing- Allows the SNC to develop organizational capacity and provide

  assistance to domestic elements of the opposition, including citizens affected by

  the conflict, including the FSA, and LCCs. Providing assistance to domestic

  elements of the opposition in turn enhances the level of internal legitimacy. This

  factor, although not directly mentioned in Goodwin's case studies, is deemed

  essential due to the SNC's disadvantaged position as an external element of the

  opposition.

- Internal Legitimacy- Contributes to the level of domestic popular support within

  Syria vital to the sustainability of the SNC's position as the voice of the

  revolution. Internal legitimacy provides the SNC with the opportunity to unify

  the disparate elements of the opposition. With increased legitimacy the SNC is

  more likely to convince elites currently supporting the regime to defect. Two

  elements considered essential to gaining internal legitimacy are the ability to

Jared Markland & Krittika Lalwaney

provide civilian protection and humanitarian assistance to Syrians directly

affected by the conflict.

Background

On March 2011, the Arab uprisings spread to Syria. Now, a year later, the revolution

in Syria continues to face an intense campaign of brutal repression by regime forces, killing

more than 10,000 citizens since the onset of the conflict[12]. While protests continue on the

ground, the Syrian diaspora communities continue to play an instrumental role in forming

opposition groups. The most prominent Syrian opposition group, the SNC, consists of

coalition of groups representing broad segments of society. The biggest challenge for the

SNC is operating in exile and appealing to the international community in an attempt to

garner international support in aiding the revolution. The SNC has extensively lobbied

through UN channels to achieve their goal of international recognition as the official

representative of the Syrian people. However, recent vetoes from Russia and China in the

UNSC to condemn the violence and demanding President Bashar al-Assad step down

resulted in widespread criticism of the SNC for its lack of action.[13] The SNC leadership is

increasingly divided over the proper course of action to take after its attempts to obtain a

UNSC resolution failed. With lack of a clear direction and official recognition from the US,

EU, or the Arab Gulf states, the SNC is left to devise an alternative strategy for toppling the

Assad regime.

---

[12] CNN Wire Staff, "Syria reponds to Annan's proposal; rebel stronghold of Idlib seized," CNN 14 March 2012.
[13] CBS, "Russia, China veto UN resolution against Syria," CBS News 4 Februrary 2012.
http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-202_162-57371608/russia-china-veto-un-resolution-against-syria/

Jared Markland & Krittika Lalwaney

The growing level of militancy inside Syria raises the stakes for the SNC to take effective action and respond to the new developments of civilian protection, humanitarian assistance, and financing the continued momentum of the domestic opposition on the ground. The role of the SNC has expanded in the past year evolving beyond it's initial role as the foreign representative of the revolution for the purpose of attracting about international attention to the conflict. Since its inception, the SNC has evolved into a political organization that aspires to lead the transitional period after Assad's rule and serve as an interim governing authority. However, the challenge remains for the SNC to attain the necessary legitimacy from revolutionaries on the ground as the true representative of the Syrian opposition.

The Syrian National Council

The Syrian National Council was officially formed on October 2, 2011. The initial purpose of the SNC was to serve as the voice of the revolution and represent Syria internationally. Official SNC documents define its purpose as, "the formation of a national body to represent the Syrian Revolution, embody its aspirations in toppling the regime, achieve democratic change, and build a modern civil state."[14] The goal of the council was to allow peaceful protestors the right to oppose their government and to condemn the regime's violence against unarmed demonstrators. Initially, the SNC's role was to provide an international platform for the uprisings in Syria and to legitimize the revolution against an authoritarian regime.

---

[14] Syrian National Council, "Established Document," USIP, 2011.

Jared Markland & Krittika Lalwaney

> The goal of this body is to support the revolution and their [Syrian people's]struggle for freedom, dignity, and democracy. Over the course of the six months, the concept of a political umbrella organization, which encompasses the youth of the revolution, the nation's political forces, and national figures emerged. This organization would deliver the message of the Syrian people in the field of international diplomacy, with the aim to overthrow the regime, its figureheads, and the pillars on which it stands in order to establish a democratic, multi-party, and civil state. [15]

A central goal of the SNC, aside from being a representative body rallying international support, is to ensure that the political vacuum after the fall of the regime is occupied by a competent transitional body. The fears of sectarian conflict and further militarization of the Syrian conflict made the SNC recognize the need for a transitional body, which will stabilize the country and set up elections. The SNC faces many challenges today in gaining international support, promoting national unity inside Syria, and developing a road map for democratic processes in Syria.

A team of Syrian experts, technocrats, and political figures convened to form the SNC where they mapped out Syrian intellectuals and political groups, which supported the revolution and invited them to join the SNC. The SNC determined qualifications for membership and set standards for the council to ensure a common goal of a free Syria. According to SNC documents, the initial number of total seats in the SNC was 230, which has now reached 310. Specifically, there were 75 seats for technocrats, 55 seats for Grassroots Coordinating Committees, 20 seats for the Damascus Declaration, 20 seats for the Muslim Brotherhood, 20 seats for the Kurds, 20 seats for Independents, and 20 seats

---

[15] Syrian National Council, "National Consensus Charter," 2011.

for leftists. Governance of the SNC lies in the hands of a Secretariat General composed of 33 seats with representation for minorities and different ideologies. There are 10 seats for Grassroots Coordinating Committees, 5 seats for technocrats, 4 seats for the Damascus Declaration, 5 seats for the Muslim Brotherhood, 4 seats for the Kurds, 4 seats for Independents, and 1 seat for Assyrians. Within the Secretariat General, there is a smaller Executive Committee made up of 8 members who are the leaders of the SNC. The president of the SNC is selected from members of the Executive Committee. The current President of the SNC is Burhan Ghalioun, who represents the Independent Liberal Bloc and is originally from Homs. The SNC decided to allow Mr. Ghalioun to serve several additional terms due his close relationship to the French government and to prevent jeopardizing the fragility of on-going negotiations with the international community.

The Assad Regime

The Assad regime's calculated strategy since the beginning of the military's campaign of brute repression to maintain power and crush the opposition has relied on the two-fold tactic of balancing international geo-politics to prevent foreign intervention, coupled with the tactic of swift repression of protests and any acts of armed resistance. In the international arena Assad has skillfully managed to balance the geopolitical interests of world powers between the allied camp, including of Russia, China, and Iran demanding the preservation of the regime. The 'Friends of Syria' alliance has voiced the need for Assad to implement a massive campaign of political reform and abdicate his hold on power. The result of international gridlock over developing a unified strategy to end the violence in Syria has given Assad a free hand in conducting his domestic strategy of repression and

coercion. Another critical component of Assad's domestic strategy is to divide the various factions of the opposition based upon ideological and sectarian differences. The effect of Assad's two-prong strategy of preventing international intervention and swift repression presents a host of challenges for an already divided opposition.

The ability of Damascus to maintain Russian and Chinese support at the UN in maintaining a diplomatic solution, possibly military in nature, response to resolve the crisis in Syria is evidenced by the passing of UNSC Resolution 2043. This resolution permits the Assad regime to continue utilizing its strategy of oppression for another 90 days while UN observers struggle to implement a failing cease-fire agreement. Pro-Assad support continues to exist in the Kremlin for several reasons. Most importantly, Russia loathes losing its last ardent strategic alliance in the Arab world, fearing a new government may be less hospitable to Kremlin interests in Syria.[16] Russia is also more reticent in allowing foreign intervention or military support for the opposition set by the precedent of the international community's intervention in Libya for foreign interference in the affairs of a sovereign government. Conversely, the 'Friends of Syria' countries, abhorred by Assad's outright campaign of repression against unarmed civilians, also remain hesitant to pursue a course of military action to force Assad from power. A factor Assad is successfully leveraging to his advantage is the role militant Islam. As a result, the state of international gridlock negatively affects the opposition's ability to sway the international community in drafting a unanimous UNSC decision for military support of the opposition or intervention of any kind.

---

[16] Bassal Salloukh, Current state of the SNC, Jared Markland (16 March 2012).

Domestically, the Assad regime has developed a successful multi-pronged strategy involving taking advantage of the divisions amongst the opposition, a comprehensive military response to uprisings, and the maintenance of elite and minority support based on sectarian fears. Assad's decision to pursue a brute military response has caused a great deal of division amongst the opposition over the best option to ending the nearly fourteen months of bloodshed. Amongst these divisions, one faction supports a military response with international backing to overthrow the regime, while others, such as Michele Kilo's Democratic Forum, supports the approach of negotiating with the regime to end the violence and negotiate a new socio-political contract for reform.[17] The regime's tactic of targeting and isolating protesting communities greatly affects the grassroots opposition's ability to communicate and coordinate protest efforts on the ground. The regime isolates areas where protests and armed resistance occur stymieing efforts of the opposition to consolidate its efforts. In addition to military force, the regime is effectively utilizing the deployment of 'Shabiha' para-military units to intimidate, coerce, and attack protesting communities. The utilization of a massive campaign of force and coercion by the regime against protestors has increased support for the adoption of armed resistance and insurgency against the government.

Through the increase of armed opposition, the regime is taking advantage of the fears of sectarian minorities, including Christian, Alawite, Druze, and Kurdish sects, purporting that militant Islamists are perpetrating the violence. Elements of minority communities, which are critical of the regime, remain hesitant to support the opposition

---

[17] Ibid.

concerned over the possibility of Sunni dominance in the new government. This same

factor insures the maintenance of elite support for the regime, threatening their economic

and political interests. Overall, Assad's ability to manipulate sectarian fears, capitalizing on

divisions within the opposition, and an effective military campaign, all serve to further

impede the solidification of the opposition against the regime.

International Support

The variable of international support is unarguably the most important factor in the

strategic calculus determining the success of any revolutionary movement. First and

foremost is the patronage of international powers, such as the U.S., Russia, China, and the

European Union. Next, the extent of support provided by patron countries, whether in the

context of the international community or regional, coupled with the unity of supporting

countries, all factor into the complex calculations of successful opposition movements. In

the context of the SNC every one of the aforementioned variables figures into the equation

of auditing the success of the movement's challenge to the Assad regime.

Under the milieu of superpower patronage for the SNC, the 'Friends of Syria'

coalition is the most instrumental international support network. In regards to the extent

of financial and military support to the SNC, the 'Friends of Syria' thus far has appropriated

minimal provisions. Official statements released following the coalition's second summit

reiterated calls on the Assad regime to end government violence and open humanitarian

corridors. The coalition agreed to help fund Free Syrian Army fighters' salaries and provide

essential communications equipment necessary for limited militarization. In addition, the

summit recognized the SNC as "a legitimate representative of all Syrians and the umbrella

organization under which the Syrian opposition groups are gathering"[18] The issuance of

this statement, although enhancing international legitimacy, did not go as far as

recognizing the SNC as "the legitimate representative of all Syrians." However, the level of

increased legitimacy facilitates the SNC to serve as the official conduit of the opposition to

the international community, through which all political and diplomatic dialogue will occur,

in addition to financial and humanitarian support. Furthermore, the U.S., France, Turkey,

and several Arab Gulf states either recently implemented increased sanctions or plan to

discuss tougher measures at the upcoming Paris summit[19]. As such, the coalition hopes to

amplify political and economic pressures on Assad as a means to further isolate the regime

internationally. There are however limits to current initiatives of international support for

the SNC. Several reasons exist as to why international powers such as the U.S., France, and

the U.K. are hesitant in fully backing the SNC or allowing the militarization of the conflict, as

Gulf countries led by Saudi Arabia and Qatar are advocating.

Current reasoning underlying 'Friends of Syria' members' reticence to fully

accommodate SNC demands of militarizing the conflict or direct military intervention

stems from a number of concerns about the escalation of violence in Syria. Instead, the

coalition continues to prefer a diplomatic oriented solution engendered by Kofi Annan's UN

brokered peace plan, involving negotiations with the regime for immediate political

reforms. The most plausible answer as to why countries maintain reservations against

---

[18] Yezid Sayigh, "The Syrian National Council Wins Recognition Abroad, But May Lose Out at Home ," 5 April 2012, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 20 April 2012.
http://carnegieendowment.org/2012/04/05/syrian-national-council-wins-recognition-abroad-but-may-lose-out-at-home/a6n8>.
[19] The Voice of Russia, ""Friends of Syria" ministers to discuss tougher sanctions against Assad," The Voice of Russia April 18 2012. http://english.ruvr.ru/2012_04_18/72102219/

further militarization is the presence of extremist elements operating in Syria, some under

the guise of FSA resistance fighters. Out of the estimated 30 armed groups fighting in Syria,

it is reported that only 3 of them can actually be classified as actual organized defecting

members of the military[20]. The decentralized organizational structure of the FSA in Syria

makes it an unlikely candidate for arming when the legitimate concern remains about the

inadvertent possibility of radical Islamist militants infiltrating the opposition. According to

Yara Nseir, a member of the SNC, "militarization of the conflict in Syria presents the threat

of arming radical Islamist militants, who will further destabilize the country, is a reality."[21]

Thus, reservations expressed by the U.S. government are in fact well founded.

Over the past couple of weeks numerous reports of Islamist militants operating

within Syria have surfaced, most recently with the reported death of Abdel Ghani Jawhar, a

wanted bomb-maker of Fatah al-Islam in Lebanon. Furthermore, reports of several militant

actions including car bombings in Aleppo and Damascus claimed by an Al-Qaida affiliated

organization calling itself the Al-Nusra Front demonstrate the realization of such fears[22].

Claims by the Assad regime that it is fighting Salafi-Jihadi militants are thus in part well

founded. Bassal Salloukh, an expert on Syria, expressed this concern in the following

statement, "part of the regime's discourse is that we are fighting Salafi-jihadists, there is no

doubt in my mind that part of this is true."[23] Unless the organizational capacity of the FSA,

coupled with a process of vetting members occurs, the feasibility of arming the FSA will

---

[20] Sami Atallah, <u>State of the SNC</u>, Jared Markland (16 March 2012).
[21] Yara Nseir, <u>SNC Membership</u>, Jared Markland (16 March 2012).
[22] Liz Sly, "Fears of extremism taking hold in Syria as violence continues," <u>The Washington Post</u> 22 April 2012. http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/fears-of-extremism-taking-hold-in-syria-as-violence-continues/2012/04/22/gIQA8CInaT_story.html?tid=pm_world_pop.
[23] Bassal Salloukh, <u>Current state of the SNC</u>, Jared Markland (16 March 2012).

Jared Markland & Krittika Lalwaney

remain highly unlikely, due to the uncertainty of who is actually being armed and the possible outcomes of such action.

The most pressing issue compounding SNC attempts to garner international support via the UN is Russia and China's continued adamancy in deflecting UNSC pressure against the Assad regime to cease hostilities against unarmed civilians. By preventing international condemnation of the Syrian regime's brutal campaign against its civilian population and refusing to recognize any sort of opposition, Russia and China have hindered international attempts to effectively isolate the regime. In addition, Russia refuses to accept any form of military intervention similar to the UN mandated intervention in Libya. Intensive diplomatic campaigns persuading Russia to relinquish support for Assad remain in vain. Russia recently signaled a slight shift in policy by voting in favor of Kofi Annan's peace plan. Several reasons exist for Russia's continued support for Assad when viewed through the lens of its strategic interests. The most perplexing question to ask is why Russia supports a regime, which maintains a relatively minimal level of importance in the way of an advantageous strategic interest. Sami Atallah purports that Russian posturing is actually part of a larger grand strategy designed to support the Assad regime until it is nearing collapse, in an attempt to leverage an agreement with the transitional government to maximize concessions. Atallah goes on further to say:

> The Russians will be convinced to change directions in one of two ways. One, they are guaranteed a stake in a post Assad regime, which means both gas or oil contracts and a military contract for the use of the naval port at Tartus or elsewhere on the coast. Also, they are interested in intelligence stations in the mountains of Syria. Decreased support might come in the way of the U.S. offering Russia concessions in

Jared Markland & Krittika Lalwaney

another strategic location elsewhere in the world. The Russians are holding off as long as possible in an attempt to bargain for more concessions from the West to rescind support for Assad.[24]

Based on this analysis, Russia is attempting to contain the situation in Syria, to a drawn out low-intensity conflict, as a means to build the sense of urgency in the international community to resolve the crisis. In turn, this sense of urgency will pressure the SNC to offer a set of favorable concessions to the Kremlin. Unless an intensive multilateral diplomatic effort is made by both the SNC and 'Friends of Syria' to guarantee strategic concessions to Russia, the likelihood of it completely relinquishing financial and military support and abandoning Assad remains minimal. As a pre-requisite to serious diplomatic negotiations between the SNC and Russia, the 'Friends of Syria' must go a step further than announcing recognition of the movement, otherwise the Kremlin will put little credence in verbal contracts offered by a merely semi-recognized opposition movement.

After auditing the SNC's extent of international support it is prudent to conclude there are sufficient deficiencies in the level of support necessary to qualify as an effective opposition to the Assad regime. It would be very difficult to assume that the SNC is capable of overthrowing Assad without extensive support and de facto recognition from superpower patrons. International support for the SNC has fallen short of the movement's expectations, despite its appeals to 'Friends of Syria' governments and other international institutions, including the Arab League and the UN. Even though the SNC was guaranteed concessions in the form of pledges from the 'Friends of Syria' for recognition, the announcement of financial donations from the Gulf, and a base of operations for military

---

[24] Sami Atallah, State of the SNC, Jared Markland (16 March 2012).

Jared Markland & Krittika Lalwaney

and administrative headquarters in Turkey, these alone are insufficient concomitant with other successful revolutionary movements. In order to reach an adequate level of international support for overcoming the equilibrium of assessed deficiency, additional measures of international support are required.

Unity

Unity amongst the Syrian opposition, under the umbrella of the SNC, is fundamental to successfully accomplishing its revolutionary objective in overthrowing the Assad regime. Unification provides an essential pre-requisite for the effectiveness of obtaining international support, financing, and internal legitimacy. Unless the opposition unifies into a solidified organization with a unified vision, internecine divisions will continue to inhibit the progress of the movement. Current divisions and fragmentation within the Syrian opposition further complicates foreign policy decisions to fully support the Council. Although the SNC remains the most organized trend among the plethora of opposition factions, up until now it has been plagued with internal fragmentation, disproportionate representation, and deficiencies in coordinating with domestic elements of the opposition.

Inter-organizational

The founding members of the SNC are part of diaspora communities living in the U.S., France, the U.K., Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar. SNC members residing in these nations not only present the challenge of geographical separation, but also highlight the different political interests vested in their countries of residence. The overall vision of the SNC developed into an ambiguous interest driven representation of international

Jared Markland & Krittika Lalwaney

prerogatives. As such, the SNC has been detracted from compromising on a cohesive vision over a unanimous consensus on the direction of the movement. In turn, particular countries that support factions of the SNC manipulate these members to further their own geopolitical interests, as Bassal Salloukh posits, "Whether you like it or not they [SNC] are being used as pawns in a greater geopolitical game."[25] Understanding the geopolitical interests of their host countries illuminates a host of reasons underlying the current state of internal divisions within the SNC. The SNC concomitantly buys into international political machinations as a means to further its own interests.

As the conflict deepens, the SNC's role expanded to encompass other political parties under its oppositional umbrella. Subsequently, the SNC's membership also expanded to include a broader demographical representation of the Syrian population. Newly incorporated political factions included into the General Secretariat consist of Independents, Old Council's Executive Council, the Damascus Declaration, Kurds, Assyrian organizations, Revolutionary Youth Groups, and the Muslim Brotherhood[26]. This expansion amplifies existing ideological differences even further contributing to internal fragmentations.

The inclusion of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) brought with it a centralized ideology, which is more organized than other factions. This contributed to the elevation of MB's position of status within the SNC. The SNC's willingness to allocate MB members to prominent positions within the Council is part of an organizational strategy to garner additional support from Islamist oriented governments in Turkey, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia.

---

[25] Baasal Salloukh, Current state of the SNC, Jared Markland (16 March 2012).
[26] Sasha Ghosh-Siminoff, "SNC Composition," Taskforce on Syria, n.d.

Jared Markland & Krittika Lalwaney

In the early stages of development of the SNC, Turkey showed a keen interest in welcoming the opposition group to Istanbul on the basis of ideological similarities between the AKP and MB. The rise of the MB within the SNC has resulted in an increasing divide between the organization and the internal opposition as Syrians inside the country distrust the intentions of the political group[27]. The role of the MB within the SNC has caused contentions among other members of the group over its influence, especially between the diaspora community, and the people inside Syria. An SNC member in Syria said, "the SNC has paid too high of a price for international support" when referring to Turkey's role in supporting the SNC [28]. However, as a result, the SNC now risks alienating secularists and minorities as the MB becomes more dominant within the Council[29]. At the same time, the MB is still the best-funded and one of the most organized factions in Syrian opposition politics, making it difficult for the SNC to exclude the MB, because of its popularity with Turkey and the Gulf countries[30]. It is a tough bargain for the SNC to compromise on the extent of the role of the MB within the council choosing between the benefits of receiving additional funds from Islamist countries and sacrificing popular support amongst the revolutionary youth groups inside Syria and the international community.

Domestic Opposition

Mainly an external opposition, the SNC maintains relations with internal opposition groups inside Syria, including activists and protestors that have formally organized into

---

[27] Oytun Orhan, <u>Turkey's Role in Syria</u>, Krittika Lalwaney (9 January 2012).
[28] Christian Doctor, <u>Sectarianism and Syrian Conflict</u>, Krittika Lalwaney (11 January 2012).
[29] Ibid.
[30] Nour Malas, "Brotherhood Raises Syria Profile," <u>The Wall Street Journal</u> (2011).
http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703509104576327212414590134.html

Local Coordinating Committees (LCCs), Revolutionary Councils, Revolutionary Command Councils, and the FSA. The relationship between the SNC and its internal counterparts lack effective coordination. Although the SNC is loosely connected to its internal components, opposition forces inside Syria are highly organized and effective in coordinating protests, reporting on the regime's human rights abuses, keeping track of Syrians missing and killed, and pinpointing strategic targets for the FSA.

Largely organized and composed by the Syrian revolutionary youth, LCCs are local volunteers that facilitate protests, organize means to deliver aid to cities under siege, and communicate with media sources to expose the inhumane brutality of Assad's forces. Grassroots based, LCCs formed in every village and neighborhood, nearing 400 existing groups. [31] Volunteers involved in the grassroots revolutionary campaign represent a diverse Syrian demographic that is united regardless of sectarian, gender, political, and ideological differences. Fawwaz Traboulsi describes the internal revolutionary networks as, "it's a divide of generation... the problem is that inside [opposition] is very spontaneous, very loosely organized, very local, highly decentralized movement, which is united in a very imaginative way."[32] The rapid development of the LCCs provided the need for oversight and as a result, the Revolutionary Councils materialized to manage LCCs in specific districts. Bigger cities have created Revolution Command Councils that manage and coordinate all Revolutionary Councils within a given city. The chain of command established in the hierarchy of the grassroots revolutionary movement suggests a highly organized internal structure. The coordination of the internal components in the Syrian

---

[31] Elizabeth O'Bagy, "Syria's Political Opposition," Insitute for the Study of War , 2012.
[32] Ibid

Jared Markland & Krittika Lalwaney

revolution is bottom-up, most of the coordination occurs at the municipal level, which is then managed and delegated by higher groups such as the Revolutionary Councils and Revolutionary Command Councils. The highest coalition in the hierarchy of the internal opposition is the Syrian Revolution General Commission (SRGC) that nationally represents most of the LCCs, Revolutionary Councils and Revolution Command Councils. The SRGC coordinates of all LCCs, Revolutionary Councils, and Revolution Command Councils, and FSA activities nationally, demonstrating a highly organized internal opposition force that maintains a popular support inside Syria.

The internal opposition's highly organized nature starkly contrasts with the SNC's deficiency in the level of organized structure. The deficient nature of the structure and command within the SNC hinders unification. The SNC's inability to communicate a unified vision affects internal popularity and hurts its reputation as a legitimate opposition on the ground. The SRGC's grassroots base, including the FSA enjoy more popular support because of their ability to respond to domestic needs while keeping the revolution's momentum alive. The internal opposition perceives the SNC's interests as diverging from the needs of revolutionaries on the ground. The d (Orhan) (Doctor)isconnect between the actions of the internal opposition and the SNC is compounded further by the latter's failure to translate the rhetoric of domestic support into effective action. Because of this, the Syrian people are disillusioned by the SNC's inability to provide for their daily revolutionary needs[33]. Thus, through the lens of the revolutionaries, the SNC is out of touch with domestic concerns and realities.

---

[33] Ibid.

Although the SRGC has established a unified internal network with the LCCs, the Revolutionary Councils, the Revolution Command Councils, and the FSA, working alone as an internal opposition is insufficient to successfully overthrow the regime. The internal opposition possesses insufficient funds and resources to keep the momentum of the revolutionary process on-going. The FSA has on many occasions retreated tactically due to insufficient ammunition and lack of weapons to defeat the regime's well-armed forces. As a result, coordination between the SNC and the internal grassroot networks is a vital component contributing to the ability of the opposition in overthrowing the regime. The combined utility of the strengths of the internal and the external opposition are necessary for a unified Syrian opposition. For example, the SRGC currently maintains an existing popular support inside Syria that will assist in establishing the SNC's credibility, in exchange the SNC's international lobbying efforts can insure official international recognition. From international recognition, the SNC will obtain increased financial capacity needed to fund the internal opposition. The nature of the Syrian conflict invigorates the claim for unity, as individual actors none possess the capacity to effectively challenge the regime.

Financing

The main shortcomings of the SNC are its organizational capacity in establishing administrative structures, offices, and internal communication channels due to insufficient sources of financing. The financial resources of the SNC are largely procured through private donations limit the Council's ability to provide services for Syrians affected by the

conflict. The lack of financial means to provide services also inhibits the SNC from attaining full internal legitimacy.

Reliance on private donations for financing SNC operations is insufficient for meeting the Councils's prerogatives, thus international financial support is essential. In an attempt to obtain international financial support, the SNC has concentrated its efforts on lobbying for recognition. However, lobbying in the international arena proves challenging for the SNC to obtain. Keeping the protests ongoing with minimal finances makes it very difficult for the opposition to consolidate their forces against the regime[34]. The SNC is currently under international and domestic scrutiny for its inability to respond to the domestic crisis. SNC member Abdulrahman Alhaj claims, "In reality, the biggest problem is that SNC has not had sufficient funds to address humanitarian concerns or anything really. The only source of funding has been through Syrian businessmen. "[35] The lack of finances to provide services for Syrians and to bolster the armed resistance on the ground over time will give way to regime's complete silencing of the opposition. Complete defeat of the Syrian revolution plays on the minds of SNC members who urge the Arab League and Western powers to take immediate action. Louay Safi, a member of the SNC recently visited Doha, working closely with Qatar, to plan a strategy for methods of strengthening the financial capacity of the organization. In response, Louay Safi remarked, "Qatar finally heard us by opening up a bank account for the SNC."[36] The opening of a bank account is a major step towards establishing credible financial support from the international

---

[34] Muhammad Issa, <u>Financial support for opposition</u>, Krittika Lalwaney (8 Janurary 2011).
[35] Abdulrahman Alhaj, <u>SNC and Finances</u>, Krittika Lalwaney (12 January 2012).
[36] Louay Safi, <u>SNC and Foreign Financial Support</u>, Krittika Lalwaney (13 March 2012).

community. Securing a bank account for the SNC demonstrates financial independence and commitment of international actors to financially back the organization.

The 'Friends of Syria' conference held in April 2012 increased the likelihood of additional international support. More than 70 countries pledged $300 million for the purpose of strengthening the capacity of the Syrian opposition.[37] The US allocated $25 million for humanitarian assistance and emergency relief to Syrian refugee families, in addition to distributing "non-lethal" assistance, including communications equipment and protective gear such as bulletproof vests to FSA fighters.[38] Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the UAE pledged $100 million to pay the salaries of current and defecting FSA members.[39] The decision to pay FSA fighters' salaries is a move designed to encourage more officers to join the ranks of the FSA and deter the radicalization of the conflict. In addition, funding from donor countries establishes a foundation for trust and confidence building between the financial backers and the SNC.

Since the 'Friends of Syria' meeting in April, countries that pledged financial donations to the SNC have yet to deliver on their promises. Qatar and the US are the only two countries that followed through on their proclaimed amounts for humanitarian assistance to refugee communities. The multi-million dollar slush fund announced by the

---

[37] Barbara Slavin, "Syrian Opposition Must Prove It Can Handle Foreign Funds," Al-Monitor 2 April 2012 http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/contents/articles/opinion/2012/barbara-slavin/syrian-opposition-must-provebr-i.html.

[38] AP, "Nations Pledge Millions for Syrians Opposition," USA Today 1 April 2012. http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/story/2012-04-01/syria-violence-diplomacy/53928196/1

[39] Barbara Slavin, "Syrian Opposition Must Prove It Can Handle Foreign Funds," Al-Monitor 2 April 2012 http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/contents/articles/opinion/2012/barbara-slavin/syrian-opposition-must-provebr-i.html.

Gulf for the FSA salaries has not yet been set up[40]. Radwan Ziadeh said, "Qataris are the

only international actor that is serious in aiding the Syrian opposition to victory. They have

been delivering $5 million consistently"[41]. Radwan Ziadeh like some others in the SNC,

hear about promises from international partners ready to fund the Syrian opposition, but

until now only a few have delivered. Another member of the SNC urged the foreign powers,

'"Hurry up and do something before the opposition gets further radicalized," Murhaf

Jouejati advised. "The longer they [international powers] wait, the more complex the

situation will become."'[42] As long as the SNC is deficient in consistent funding sources, the

opposition group will suffer from internal legitimacy and formal international recognition,

which easily could further divide the opposition and contribute to decentralization of the

conflict.

In the current state of affairs, international financial assistance is inconsistent due to

the fears of mismanagement, corruption, and squandering. The 'Friends of Syria' is

concerned over accountability and the fear that funds will end up in the wrong hands. The

disbursement of funds to the FSA inside Syria poses a significant challenge, one that is

impeding the much-needed aid for bolstering armed resistance on the ground[43]. The

concern over increased Jihadi infiltration under the FSA umbrella makes it harder to

distinguish real FSA elements from Jihadi fighters. The enigmatic decentralized conflict

inside Syria further complicates the methods of delivering aid inside the country. Thus, due

---

[40] Bradley Klapper, "Gulf Fund's Problems Highlight Syria Aid Challenge," ABC 18 April 2012.
http://www.wbay.com/story/17520247/gulf-funds-problems-highlight-syria-aid-challenge
[41] Radwan Ziadeh, The SNC, Krittika Lalwaney & Jared Markland (23 April 2012).
[42] Barbara Slavin, "Syrian Opposition Must Prove It Can Handle Foreign Funds," Al-Monitor 2 April 2012.
http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/contents/articles/opinion/2012/barbara-slavin/syrian-opposition-must-provebr-i.html.
[43] Ibid.

to the aforementioned concerns, without the existence of an institution and sufficient training to properly manage financial resources, foreign assistance will remain deficient. The main test for the SNC remains in demonstrating to the international community it possesses the ability to manage foreign assets.

Internal Legitimacy

Internal legitimacy for the SNC poses an obstacle, as the SNC is largely an external opposition loosely connected to factions inside Syria. The SNC's function as the legitimate opposition movement capable of undermining the regime needs to be firmly established among Syrian protestors. The means to achieve internal legitimacy is by halting Syrian aggression, increasing the protection of civilians, and providing humanitarian assistance to refugees and IDPs.

Civilian Protection

The need for civilian protection emerged from the regime's insistence to crush popular protests. The SNC's external existence hinders it from responding to civilians' need for protection inside Syria. The inability of the SNC to provide civilian protection initiated the rise of the FSA. The FSA's ability to defend civilians from regime assaults gained the FSA a level of popular support, which detracts from the SNC's support inside Syria. The SNC and FSA rivalry resulted as a byproduct from the SNC's failure to provide civilian protection and the rise of the FSA. As opposition forces inside Syria resort to militarization in order to protect civilians, the SNC has reformulated its stance to incorporate and coordinate with the FSA as means to gain internal legitimacy.

Jared Markland & Krittika Lalwaney

The SNC's initial insistence on maintaining a peaceful revolution depicted its unrealistic understanding of protestors' grievances. The SNC's disassociation from the opposition movement inside Syria is lucid in its demands to use non-violent means to defeat the regime when the regime's strategy consistently utilizes tanks and artillery against protestors. This misunderstanding adversely impacts the SNC's legitimacy among internal components of the revolution. In response, the SNC has since reevaluated its stance on militarization and recognized the FSA's ability to protect citizens. Abdulrahman Alhaj, a member of the SNC explained the organization's position, "The SNC has a common belief now that the Free Army is very important for protecting non-violent protesters. We need to protect individuals and the only way to protect individuals is through the Free Army. The SNC will support the Free Army as long as they are fighting to protect people."[44] When pushed on the SNC's ability to provide arms assistance to FSA, Alhaj said, "It is possible but depends on the situation. Some people [in the SNC] support sending weapons but officially the SNC has not agreed on supplying weapons." Arming the FSA, was not a consensus in the SNC in January but they are considering the option when the international community endorses the decision. The SNC's formal recognition of the FSA and its promises of support indicate coordination and enhance the possibility of increasing internal legitimacy.

The SNC's internal legitimacy is dependent on its ability to coordinate with the FSA. Inside Syria the FSA leads the armed resistance movement, protecting civilians and defending the opposition against the regime, for meaningful change and successful

---

[44] Abdulrahman Alhaj, SNC and FSA relations, Krittika Lalwaney (12 January 2012).

overthrow of the regime the militarization needs to be managed[45]. The SNC's role in managing the militarization will not only bring it internal credibility, due to its relationship and coordination with the FSA, but also enhances the level of unification necessary for full international recognition. The SNC depends on the FSA for internal support and for civilian protection, and conversely, the FSA expects the SNC to provide funding, ammunition, and logistics for continuing its armed resistance. This symbiotic relationship between the FSA and SNC is essential and also one that has yet to be established.

Although the SNC established a Military Bureau for coordinating and developing communication channels between the SNC and FSA, distrust between the two continues to impede the symbiotic relationship. Ammar al-Sheikh reasons, "…SNC in my opinion is scared of the FSA because people of Syria think of FSA as heroes and [FSA] has more power inside Syria than the SNC. After the revolution, FSA will have more legitimacy inside than SNC, which is probably why SNC is afraid"[46]. Due to the SNC's lack of internal support and its effectiveness in responding to domestic needs, the FSA has gained a loyal constituency. However, Hozan Ibrahim, a member of the executive committee in the SNC clearly stated, "FSA has no political ambitions and remains a force only to protect citizens". Some in the SNC fear the FSA, an armed group that may threaten the likelihood for a democratic outcome. Therefore, SNC's role in managing the armed conflict through establishing clear communication channels and increased organizational coordination between it and the FSA leadership is a strategic way of imposing civilian authority over the military. The SNC's role in managing the logistics and funding of the FSA raises accountability and institutes checks

---

[45] Steven Heydemann, "Managing militarization in Syria," The Middle East Channel 22 February 2012.
[46] Ammar al-sheikh, Operations of the FSA in Turkey and inside Syria, Krittika Lalwaney (10 January 2012).

and balances. Through the SNC's Military Bureau, the FSA and SNC coordination is achievable and one that is essential in elevating the SNC's trust and legitimacy among the internal opposition. Ultimately, internal legitimacy through SNC and FSA coordination progresses towards objective of a unified opposition.

Humanitarian Assistance

Similar to the SNC's inability to provide civilian protection, the organization is also unable to provide relief efforts inside Syria to address the humanitarian conditions on the ground. This affects the SNC's credibility among protestors who question the effectiveness of the Council. Humanitarian conditions inside Syria continually deteriorate as Assad's forces systematically shell buildings in the residential neighborhoods of Homs, Idlib, Hama, and Rastan. According to the Strategic Research and Communication Centre, the number of Syrians killed in the conflict in the past year is 13,535 with number of missing persons exceeding 65,000 people, and the number of protestors incarcerated is over 212,000. The number of refugees over the past few months has grown, in Turkey there are 24,564, in Lebanon there are over 14,348 and in Jordan there are over 5,600 Syrians.[47] High refugee influxes have resulted in Syrians crossing borders without enough money to sustain their new life as a refugee. Long-term sustainability in temporary shelters or dependency on host families to provide shelter is impractical. Syrians look to the SNC to address these concerns. Therefore, the resultant domestic concerns should involve an immediate SNC response in developing a long-term strategy for refugees and IDPs.

---

[47] Strategic Research and Communication Centre, <u>Syrian Revolution News Round-Up (Day 399: Monday, April 16 2012)</u>, 16 April 2012, <http://us2.campaign-archive1.com/?u=556aeef60722f6e5811ea2519&id=fa41508d89&e=8a3bc9b448>.

Jared Markland & Krittika Lalwaney

Developing new strategies to respond to the humanitarian crisis inside Syria and providing assistance to refugees living in surrounding countries are means to establishing internal legitimacy by the SNC. The legitimacy of the council is much debated as Syrians inside find themselves barely holding on with serious shortages of food, water, medicines, and electricity[48]. Inside Syria, the LCCs, established routes for smuggling food and water into neighborhoods under siege. Even though the SNC maintains connections to the LCCs, most people inside Syria do not recognize SNC's role in providing assistance. An activist inside Homs said, "The SNC only works on the political issues and has no presence inside to help us. On the ground our situation is much different and we see FSA on the ground helping us everyday"[49]. The SNC is deficient of an effective physical presence inside Syria. Therefore, revolutionaries lack faith in the SNC's ability to provide assistance. The inconsistency of the SNC's domestic outreach instills incredibility and distrust among revolutionaries over the SNC's ultimate goals in the revolution.

As the leadership of the SNC operates outside of Syria, the council lacks a physical presence within Syria. This contributes to the internal components of the SNC getting sole credit for establishing a presence on the ground. The indirect connections between the SNC and LCCs afford the latter to operate autonomously, under its own brand, thus further legitimizing the LCCs while undermining the SNC. As a result, the SNC is seen as an entity removed from the revolutionary calculus. For building legitimacy within Syria, it is in the interest of the SNC to build a stronger relationship with the LCCs.

---

[48] Elizabeth Ferris, "The Worsening Humanitarian Crisis in Syria," Brookings Institution 2012 February 2012.
[49] Abu Musaib, Activist inside Homs, Krittika Lalwaney (19 April 2012).

Analysis

An overall assessment of SNC's performance in the four variables of international support, finance, unity, and internal legitimacy reveals severe deficiencies in each category. Under the field of international support, the SNC, although acknowledged as an opposition movement representing all Syrians it lacks the benefits of official recognition. For instance, the 'Friends of Syria' declared the SNC as a "legitimate representative" however, this coalition of countries falls short of recognizing it as the new transitional government of Syria. Along with this status of legitimacy comes the provision of international financial backing and humanitarian assistance. Furthermore, this support allows the SNC to leverage official diplomatic relations with other countries to strategically increase political and economic pressures on the Assad regime. The hesitancies of the 'Friends of Syria' group stems from the fear of escalation of violence in Syria and the fear of Islamist extremists operating among revolutionaries. The SNC's renewed stance on aiding the FSA in protecting civilians complicates full international recognition. Escalation of violence within Syria is not only a concern, but also the trepidation of the conflict spreading beyond its borders, further destabilizing the region.

The financial capacity of the SNC was limited to private donations and recently Qatar granted initial funds to sustain the organizational operations. The 'Friends of Syria' pledged $300 million in buttressing the Syrian opposition, but is yet to be disbursed. Currently, Qatar is the only country to provide monetary assistance directly to the SNC. Countries pledging funds lack the mechanisms to disburse the money locally through accountable organizations and individuals. This stems from the international community's fears about the uncertainty of the identity of aid recipients. The SNC suffers from

Jared Markland & Krittika Lalwaney

deficiencies of accountability and institutional mechanisms for financial distributions.

Furthermore, this reflects international community's inflexibility to work with rogue

organizations that implement assistance through individual networks. In the case of the

SNC, its relationship with revolutionary grassroots bloc would provide it with the means to

locally distribute funds through an accountable system. For the Syrian opposition to

strengthen its position against Assad, financial capacity is vital for revolutionary processes

on the ground to continue.

The origins of the SNC as a diverse diaspora community spread throughout several

countries poses the obstacle of unification in geographical location and political interests.

The original core of the SNC began as academic elites that expanded membership of the

organization as the Syrian conflict unfolded. Membership expansion occurred as a result of

attempts to incorporate a wider constituency reflective of Syrian demographics. This

resulted in the simultaneous divergence of ideological differences and the direction the

opposition group should pursue. This brought about the ascendancy of the Muslim

Brotherhood (MB) that was in exile in these countries. Since Muslim Brotherhood members

connected on a centralized identity, allowing them to organize more rapidly than other

political interest groups within the SNC umbrella. In addition, the patronage of the Islamist

oriented governments of Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar bolstered their position and

increased their stature of their membership in the SNC. In an attempt to cede concessions

from Turkey, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia the SNC elevated the role of the Muslim Brotherhood

in the appointments of its members to prominent positions within the organization. Hence,

this exacerbated tensions between moderates, liberals, secularists, and religious minorities.

These groups fear domination of the Muslim Brotherhood and potential for religious

extremism embodied in sectarian tensions, as the MB represents the majority Sunni population. Concomitantly struggling factions within the SNC, over political concerns, denigrates the possibility for unification because of a loss of faith in proportional representation. Thus, these factions look to pursue self-interests in furthering their position by forming new alliances and groups in preparation for post-Assad politics. The internal divides within the SNC affects the movement's appeal amongst the domestic opposition.

The SNC's obsession with lobbying for official international recognition and assistance, it failed to anticipate the urgency of domestic responsibilities. Primarily, the magnitude of the regime's brutal use of force against unarmed civilians and exodus of forced migrants created the need for civilian protection and humanitarian assistance. The emergence of the FSA was a result of the need to protect civilians. The FSA's growing ability to protect civilians harnessed greater internal legitimacy, which further undermined SNC representation inside Syria. In response, the SNC developed the Military Bureau to coordinate efforts with the FSA, however, cooperation has yet to materialize to full capacity. One of the main deficiencies with the SNC is its proclivity to only react to civilian needs, instead of simultaneously anticipating developing needs on the ground. SNC's reactive nature is attributable to the movement's inability to communicate effectively with revolutionaries on the ground. Internal legitimacy for the SNC is critical to insure the movement's survival.

Recommendations

Based upon the guidelines set forth in the assessment of the SNC regarding its performance as a successful opposition movement in overthrowing the Assad regime, the following recommendations provide a course of action to overcome deficiencies alluded to in the analysis.

The foremost vital prescription interrelated to all the other factors is unification within the SNC, the coordination between the SNC and the FSA, and the revolutionary youth bloc inside Syria. Without a comprehensive strategy of unifying all the disparate components of the SNC, other prerogatives such as international support, financial sustainability, and internal legitimacy are unattainable. The following recommendations are listed in order of utmost priority.

Unity

1. The SNC needs to further integrate the revolutionary youth bloc by appropriating more representation within the council, specifically in the Executive Commission.

2. Increased coordination between the SNC and FSA is essential for decreasing radical factions from taking hold in the conflict. Fully implement the rule of the Military Bureau and increase communication between the FSA leadership and SNC Military Bureau. The SNC Military Bureau should support FSA capacity building measures.

3. Reassess MB leadership positions for specific bureaus to ensure equal distribution of power and influence for all factions.

Jared Markland & Krittika Lalwaney

International Support

1. Intensify lobbying efforts to the 'Friends of Syria' coalition asking for capacity building in the way of political organization, administrative functions, and telecommunications technology.

2. Lobbying the US domestically via prominent Syrian activists, SNC members, and academics to pressure the government (Congress, White House, State Department, and Department of Defense) to bolster the capacity of the Syrian opposition (the SNC, Revolutionary youth groups, & FSA)

3. Organize a SNC delegation to conduct a comprehensive diplomatic dialogue with Russia to offer strategic concessions in the way of preserving existing economic contracts, access to the port at Tartus, access to intelligence monitoring stations; which aims to relinquish Russian support for the Assad regime.

Financing

1. Elicit a proposal to the 'Friend of Syria' for the SNC to become the financial intermediary for funds disbursed to organizations inside Syria (FSA, LCCs, SRGCs) and in order to achieve higher levels of accountability salaries need to be paid by western financial institutions.

2. Request funds pledged from donating countries in addition to finance and accounting training from 'Friends of Syria' for efficiently managing disbursed funds.

Jared Markland & Krittika Lalwaney

Internal Legitimacy

1. Establish stronger relations with SRGC and its LCCs through more frequent bilateral exchanges of up to date information on internal dialogues conducted between SNC and international actors.

2. Procure resources and develop LCC networks inside Syria to deliver humanitarian assistance through individual networks to areas most in need of assistance.

3. Expand on the financial relationship with the FSA through the SNC's Military Bureau to coordinate the protection of logistical conveys.

Bibliography

Alhaj, Abdulrahman. SNC and FSA relations Krittika Lalwaney. 12 January 2012.

al-Sheikh, Ammar. Operations of the FSA in Turkey and inside Syria Krittika Lalwaney. 10 January 2012.

AP. "Nations Pledge Millions for Syrians Opposition." USA Today 1 April 2012.

Atallah, Sami. State of the SNC Jared Markland. 16 March 2012.

Atwi, Moammar. "Libya: The National Power Struggle Begins." Al-Akhbar 7 October 2011.

Black, Ian. "Libya: Defections leave Muammar Gaddafi isolated in Tripoli bolthole." The Guardian 23 Feburary 2011.

CBS. "Russia, China veto UN resolution against Syria." CBS News 4 Februrary 2012.

Strategic Research and Communication Center. Syrian Revolution News Round-Up (Day 399: Monday, April 16 2012). 16 April 2012. <http://us2.campaign-archive1.com/?u=556aeef60722f6e5811ea2519&id=fa41508d89&e=8a3bc9b448>.

Cody, Edward. "France pleads for military intervention as Gaddafi forces attack Libyan rebels." Washington Post 16 March 2011.

Syrian National Council. "Established Document." USIP, 2011.

 Syrian National Council. "National Consensus Charter." 2011.

The Syrian National Council. Relief and Development Projects Bureau. <http://www.syriancouncil.org/en/bureaus/relief-a-development-projects.html>.

UN Security Council. "Security Council Approves 'No-Fly Zone' Over Libya, Authorizing 'All Necessary Measures' To Protect Civilians, By Vote of 10 in Favour with 5 Abstentions." United Nations Security Council, 2011.

 Christian Doctor. Sectarianism and Syrian Conflict Krittika Lalwaney. 11 January 2012.

Ferris, Elizabeth. "The Worsening Humanitarian Crisis in Syria." Brookings Institution 2012 February 2012.

Ghosh-Siminoff, Sasha. "SNC Composition." Taskforce on Syria, n.d.

Goodwin, Jeff. No Other Way Out: States and Revolutionary Movements. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Heydemann, Steven. "Managing militarization in Syria." The Middle East Channel 22 February 2012.

Issa, Muhammad. Financial support for opposition Krittika Lalwaney. 8 Janurary 2011.

Klapper, Bradley. "Gulf Fund's Problems Highlight Syria Aid Challenge." ABC 18 April 2012.

Lynch, Marc. The Arab Uprising. New York: Public Affairs, 2012.

Malas, Nour. "Brotherhood Raises Syria Profile." The Wall Street Journal (2011).

Musaib, Abu. Activist inside Homs Krittika Lalwaney. 19 April 2012.

Nseir, Yara. SNC Membership Jared Markland. 16 March 2012.

O'Bagy, Elizabeth. "Syria's Political Opposition." Insitute for the Study of War , 2012.

Orhan, Oytun. Turkey's Role in Syria Krittika Lalwaney. 9 January 2012.

Ottaway, David Ottaway and Marina. "Of Revolutions, Regime Change and State Collapse in the Arab World." 28 Feburary 2011. Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. <http://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/revolutions-regime-change-and-state-collapse-the-arab-world>.

The Voice of Russia. ""Friends of Syria" ministers to discuss tougher sanctions against Assad." The Voice of Russia April 18 2012.

Safi, Louay. SNC and Foreign Financial Support Krittika Lalwaney. 13 March 2012.

Salloukh, Bassal. "Current state of the SNC." Current state of the SNC. Jared Markland. 16 March 2012.

Sanderson, Stephen. Revolutions. 2nd Edition. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2010.

Sayigh, Yezid. "The Syrian National Council Wins Recognition Abroad, But May Lose Out at Home ." 5 April 2012. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. 20 April 2012 <http://carnegieendowment.org/2012/04/05/syrian-national-council-wins-recognition-abroad-but-may-lose-out-at-home/a6n8>.

Slavin, Barbara. "Syrian Opposition Must Prove It Can Handle Foreign Funds." Al-Monitor 2 April 2012.

Sly, Liz. "Fears of extremism taking hold in Syria as violence continues." The Washington Post 22 April 2012.

CNN Wire Staff. "Syria reponds to Annan's proposal; rebel stronghold of Idlib seized." CNN 14 March 2012.

Sayigh, Yezid. "The Syrian National Council Wins Recognition Abroad, But May Lose Out at Home." 5 April 2012. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Carnegie Endowment

for International Peace. <http://carnegieendowment.org/2012/04/05/syrian-national-council-wins-recognition-abroad-but-may-lose-out-at-home/a6n8>.

Ziadeh, Radwan. <u>The SNC</u>. Krittika Lalwaney & Jared Markland. 23 April 2012.