The Syrian Conflict and the Threat of a Leaderless International Community

Idike, Adeline Nnenna, A
Department Of Public Administration and Local Government
University of Nigeria
Nsukka

Abstract

The deadly conflict in Syria has fiercely entered into its fourth year. Curiously, the international community has not been forthcoming in following recent trends, to create a common ground for a definitive intervention in the Syrian conflagration. Hence, the paper poses the research question: does the dilly dallying in Syria indicate a reality of leaderlessness in global affairs, particularly in matters of deadly conflict situations? The general objective of this study therefore is to examine how the reaction of the international community to the Syrian conflict relates with the threat of a leaderless international community. The specific objectives are to (i) examine the reaction of the international community to the Syrian conflict (ii) determine how the reaction of the international community to the Syrian conflict relates with the threat of a leaderless international community and (iii) recommend ways of resolving the Syrian conflict.

Keywords: Syrian Conflict, Leaderless International Community, Humanitarian Intervention, Humanitarian Russian-American Cooperation

1. Introduction

The deadly conflict in Syria has fiercely spilled into its fourth year. Curiously, the international community has not been forthcoming in following recent trends, to create a common ground for a definitive intervention in the Syrian conflagration. The current internecine Syrian crisis was prompted by protests in mid-March 2011, calling for the release of political prisoners (Sinjab, 2011). Mascarenhas (2013) highlights that inspired by the Arab Spring movement taking hold of the region, pro-democracy protests broke out across Syria in 2011, which resulted in Syrian forces violently suppressing multiple rallies. After protesters in Damascus and Deraa demanded the release of political prisoners, Syrian security forces shot down a number of civilians, which sparked off weeks of unrest that slowly moved throughout the country, within months. Hence, the Syrian crisis is above all, about the tyranny of the al-Assad dynasty and an obvious tendency of Bashar al-Assad to hold on to power at all costs. Mascarenhas (2013) explains that Bashar was "elected" president in the year 2000, after the death of his dictator father (Hafez al-Assad) as strongman of Syria. There was of course no opposition to the candidature of Bashar, yet he claimed 97% of the votes. The elder al-Assad had seized power in 1970, in an internal Ba'ath Party coup and became the newly "elected" President of Syria and during his thirty years' dictatorship, succeeded in keeping any potential enemies at bay by creating divisions among those in a position to challenge his authority (Mascarenhas, 2013). Following in his father's dictatorial footsteps, Bashar ruled with iron fist by detaining members of parliament and other pro-reform activists that challenged his authority (Mascarenhas, 2013). Thus, in Syria, it is not the Facebook generation that is taking to the streets. It is people who are tired of poverty and repression (Sinjab, 2011).

When the international community was very recently in Libya, confronted by similar incidents of repression, brutality and power-enamoring tendencies of the late Col. Muammer Gaddaffi, the reaction of the global community was remarkably different. In an unprecedented near unanimity, the international community duly rose to the occasion, which led to the deposition of the late maverick Libyan Leader. In the Syrian similar circumstances however, it has been the case of a net position of international inaction. This paper pinpoints the current problem as international dilly dallying, in the face of an ever escalating tragedy in Syria. Hence, the paper poses the research question: does the dilly dallying in Syria indicate a reality of leaderlessness in global affairs, particularly in matters of deadly conflict situations?

The general objective of this study therefore, is to examine how the reaction of the international community to the Syrian conflict, relates with the threat of a leaderless international community. The specific objectives are to (i) examine the reaction of the international community to the Syrian conflict (ii) determine how the reaction of the international community to the Syrian conflict relates with the threat of a leaderless international community and (iii) recommend ways of resolving the Syrian conflict. The theoretical framework for the study is the theory of humanitarian intervention. The study's methodology is logical argumentation.

2. Critical Dimensions of the Conflict in Syria

2.1. The Dictatorship of Bashar al-Assad

We have already made reference to the dictatorial tendencies of the al-Assad dynasty. In the particular case of Bashar al-Assad, Seifert (2013) opines: at an early point in his presidency, Bashar was seen as a reformer and a force of positive change in the Middle East. Now, evidence is mounting that he is behind the chemical weapons attack, which killed 1,400 people just outside Damascus with the UN classifying the attack as ''a war crime''. The Civil War has cost over 100,000 people their lives and has led to over 2 million refugees fleeing Syrian territory. Following his brother Bassel's death in 1994, Bashar entered the military academy in preparation for becoming his father's successor and achieved the rank of Colonel in the elite Republican Guard. In 1998, he took charge of the Syrian occupation of Lebanon and in 2000 he became President of Syria. Initially, Bashar al-Assad was seen internationally as a potential reformer. But Bashar soon returned to the more repressive policies of his father (Seifert, 2013). It is clear that Bashar al-Assad's upbringing and environment in which he was raised has had a significant impact on his development into the ruthless dictator that he is today (Seifert, 2013).

Applebaum (2014) further narrates as follows: in the 20th century, dictators used starvation not just as a battle tactic but also to murder people who did not fit into their vision of an ideal society. Before resorting to more "industrial" methods, Hitler used starvation to kill Jews: Nazi soldiers shut them in ghettos, closed the doors, and shot children who tried to smuggle food in, through the sewers. Stalin used starvation to kill Ukrainian peasants: Soviet soldiers confiscated their grain, forcibly removed food from their larders, and blocked roads, so nothing could reach them. As in the Middle Ages, the Jews of the Łódź ghetto and the peasants of Kharkiv district grew weak, lost their hair and teeth, and then died. Millions of people were thus murdered, without a whiff of sarin gas or a particle of plutonium. Nowadays, "death by forced starvation" sounds like something from an old newsreel. But it is not. Right now, in the 21st century, the Syrian dictator, Bashar al-Assad is once again making use of it. While the international community is haggling over his chemical weapons, he is following the example of his medieval and his 20th-century predecessors and deliberately starving thousands of people to death (Applebaum, 2014). The situation in Syria therefore calls for humanitarian intervention.

2.2. The Sectarian Angle to the Crisis

Lekic (2012), citing a U.N. human rights report, highlights that Syria's civil war is increasingly turning into a sectarian conflict, pitting majority Sunni rebels against government forces, supported by the country's religious and ethnic minorities. While the sectarian divide is sharpest between the Sunnis and Allawite communities – from which most of the senior government and military leaders hail – other minority groups have been increasingly drawn into the conflict. The conflict has become overtly sectarian in nature. Almost all of the 80,000 Christians who used to live in the central town of Homs, the scene of intense fighting between the warring sides have fled to Damascus or Beirut. Jabhat al-Nusra, the largest grouping of foreign jihadists in Syria, is said to have a significant presence in Homs. Tveit (2013) decries the situation whereby religious communities are being targeted in acts of violence, aimed at dividing and manipulating the nation. This same scenario usually plays out in other conflict situations in the world. Religious leaders must rise in unison to fight against the penchant of man to fight for the gods. The refugee problems do not recognize religious divides. Refugees are refugees. Hence, this paper continues to opine that the situation in Syria requires humanitarian intervention.

Furthermore on the sectarian dimension to the crisis in Syria, Mestou (2012) posits: As part of its campaign against all pro-democracy activists, the Syrian regime has been persecuting Christian citizens and clergy, who take part in the revolution or help the revolutionaries. The Syrian regime issued instructions to all banks across the country to stop transactions with the Greek Orthodox Mariamite Church ,on charges of money laundering . This step was taken right after the church started receiving money from churches abroad, to support Syrian revolutionaries.

Security forces allegedly killed Christian activist, Friday Hossam Mikhail for links with the Free Syrian Army and the Syrian army also allegedly killed Priest Basilius Nassar, although the State TV held terrorist groups accountable for his death. Nassar was believed to be delivering food to areas attacked by the Syrian army and was helping doctors out in Hama. Nassar was also believed to have been killed while rescuing a victim of an army attack in the Jarajmah neighborhood in Hama (Mestou, 2012).

Syrian forces also fired a non-explosive missile at the Convent of our Lady of Saidnaya, north of the capital Damascus, after knowing that its monks were involved in delivering medicine and supplies to bombed areas. In addition to delivering supplies to victims, several churches in Damascus and other Syrian cities have been giving lectures against the Syrian regime and its brutal repression of peaceful protestors. Individual Christian activists are also harassed by the regime, as many of them are summoned for interrogation on almost monthly basis while others receive threats, whether directly or through their family members, to stop taking part in the revolution or be killed. This drove several Christians to leave the country, like activist Yara Nosseir, who took part in protests and relief in Christian neighborhoods in Damascus, like al-Qasaa, Baba Toma, and Bab Sharqi. Christians were more outraged at the regime, after security forces attacked the historic Syriac Orthodox Um al-Zennar Church in Homs and stole its contents. This incident was followed by a remarkable participation of Christians in anti-regime protests. Anti-regime Christians have also established dozens of pages on the social networking website Facebook and which are all dedicated to posting news and videos about the revolution. However, many members of the Christian community in Syria still take the regime's side (Mestou, 2012). This fully suggests that sectarianism is diversionary from the central issues in the Syrian crisis, which critically borders on tyranny and its inhumanities. Hence, the situation in Syria calls for humanitarian intervention.

2.3. The Fate of Women and Children in the Syrian Deadly Combustion

ICRC (2009) has fully demonstrated that conflict increases the vulnerability of those who are already vulnerable, especially children. A child needs a family and a community that provide a nurturing and protective environment. The effects of war on the young can be devastating (ICRC, 2009). Indeed, in the Syrian deadly combustion, the effects of war on women and children have been monumentally tragic and devastating. As at the end of May 2013, more than 2.4 million Syrians were being hosted as refugees in Turkey, Lebanon, Iraq, Egypt and Jordan. There was a massive escalation of refugee arrivals in 2013, with the expectation that by the end of the year, over 3 million Syrians would have left their country. Incidentally, women and children make up three-quarters of the Syrian refugee population (unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/syria.php).

Mascarenhas (2013) further records that the Zaatari Refugee Camp, about eight miles inside Jordan, on the Syrian border, is a tent city sprung from the desert. The Zaatari Camp is home to roughly 120,000-160,000 refugees, fleeing the civil war. It is largely a city of women and children. About 60,000 of the camp's residents are children. It has become Jordan's fifth-largest city. Hence, Mascarenhas (2013) argues that in the back-and-forth diplomatic and political saga, regarding the Syrian civil war, the human element has sometimes been left out and that the brewing humanitarian crisis in the region is yet another layer in this mass tragedy which has claimed over 100,000 lives (6,000 of which have been children). UNICEF (2014) further reveals as follows: As the conflict in Syria approaches the end of its third year, the capacity of basic social services has reached a breaking point, with devastating impacts on millions of children. Unrelenting violence, massive population displacement and damage to infrastructure and essential services have left approximately 9.3 million people or 40 per cent of the population in need of humanitarian assistance. Nearly 6.5 million people have been displaced and are struggling to survive in increasingly desperate conditions and 4.27 million children have been directly affected by the crisis. Children who have been exposed to the horrors of war and have witnessed unspeakable cruelties are suffering from psychological distress. Children are paying the heaviest price. Close to 2.3 million boys and girls in Syria are still out of school or are at risk of dropping out of school. Lack of access to clean water, hygiene and sanitation, combined with deteriorating food security is raising serious concerns about the nutritional status of children. Over 200,000 children under 5 may be at risk of under nutrition. The collapsing health care and water systems are exposing children to infectious diseases. In November 2013, Syria confirmed 17 cases of wild poliovirus, the first confirmed cases since 1999 (UNICEF, 2014).

Wolfe (2013) reports that the Syrian crisis has entailed a massive rape dimension. She highlights that although most coverage of the Syrian civil war tends to focus on the fighting between the two sides, this war, like most, has a more insidious dimension: rape has been reportedly used widely as a tool of control, intimidation, and humiliation, throughout the conflict. And its effects, while not always fatal, are creating a nation of traumatized survivors - everyone from the direct victims of the attacks to their children, who may have witnessed or been otherwise affected by what has been perpetrated on their relatives (Wolfe, 2013). Therefore, the continuing subjection of women and children to acts that indeed amount to bestiality, during violent conflicts and full-blown wars suggests that our world has not really made fundamental progress. Nagel (1972:127) posits: the policy of attacking the civilian population in order to induce an enemy to surrender or to damage his morale, seems to have been widely accepted in the civilized world and seems to be accepted still, at least if the stakes are high enough. It gives evidence of a moral conviction that the deliberate killing of noncombatants – women, children, and old people – is permissible if enough can be gained by it. This follows from the more general position that any means can in principle be justified if it leads to a sufficiently worthy end (Nagel, 1972:127). More than three decades after, the Syrian crisis supplies yet another evidence of the thinking that during violent conflicts, the deliberate killing of noncombatants – women, children, and old people – is permissible if enough can be gained by it. But what may be gained by warring factions of a nation-state, in decimating their own population and dehumanizing their women and children would remain difficult to understand. Nagel (1972:127) argued that this inclination seemed to have been widely accepted in the civilized world and seems to be accepted still. This paper opines that the world that accepts this form of bestiality can not in any way ever be described as a civilized world. And the paper further posits that the Syrian situation calls for humanitarian intervention.

2.4. The United Nations and the Syrian Conflict

Our presentation of the United Nations' actions on the Syrian matter relies extensively on Nichols (2014) as follows:

The U.N. Security Council has adopted five resolutions linked to Syria's three-year civil war, while Russia and China have blocked another three attempts at action by the 15-member body. The fifth resolution, aims to boost humanitarian access in Syria. It threatens to take "further steps" in the case of non-compliance, demands cross-border aid access and condemns rights abuses by the Syrian government and opposition armed groups. The previously vetoed and adopted Security Council resolutions on Syria are: Veto One - October 4, 2011: Russia and China blocked a European-drafted U.N. Security Council Resolution condemning Syria and hinting it could face sanctions if its bloody crackdown on protesters continues. The draft resolution received nine votes in favor and four abstentions from Brazil, India, Lebanon and South Africa. The failed resolution was a watered-down version of previous drafts that had threatened Syria with sanctions if it ignored international demands that it halt its crackdown on protesters. Later drafts removed the word sanctions, though this was not enough to satisfy Russia and China. Veto Two - February 4, 2012: Russia and China vetoed a Western-and Arab-driven draft resolution endorsing an Arab League plan for Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, to hand over power to a deputy, to make way for a transition towards democracy. The remaining 13 members of the council voted in favor of the draft resolution. Russia complained that the draft resolution was an improper and biased attempt at "regime change" in Syria. Veto Three - July 19, 2012: Russia and China vetoed a Western-backed resolution that threatened Syrian authorities with sanctions, if they did not halt the violence. The resolution - to extend for 45 days a U.N. mission in Syria observing a failed ceasefire - received 11 votes in favor, while South Africa and Pakistan abstained (Nichols, 2014).

Adopted One - April 14, 2012: The U.N. Security Council unanimously agreed to deploy an advance team of up to 30 unarmed observers to monitor a brief, fragile ceasefire. Before agreeing to support what was originally a U.S.-drafted text, Russia had demanded that the U.S. and European delegations dilute it so that it would not "demand" that Syria comply with the resolution. The approved resolution uses softer language, so that it "calls upon" Syria to implement it. Adopted Two - April 21, 2012: The U.N. Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution that authorized an initial deployment of up to 300 unarmed military observers to Syria for three months. The Russia-European drafted resolution said that deployment of the U.N. observer mission would be "subject to assessment by the Secretary-General (Ban Ki-moon) of relevant developments on the ground, including the cessation of violence."

It also noted that the cessation of violence by the government and opposition is "clearly incomplete" and warned that the Security Council could consider "further steps" in the event of non-compliance with its terms. Adopted Three - July 20, 2012: The U.N. Security Council voted unanimously to extend the monitoring mission in Syria for a final 30 days (Nichols, 2014).

Adopted Four - September 28, 2013: The U.N. Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution that demanded the eradication of Syria's chemical weapons but did not threaten automatic punitive action against Assad's government if it does not comply. The vote by the Security Council capped weeks of intense diplomacy between Russia and the United States. It was based on a deal between the two countries reached in Geneva earlier in September, following an August 21 sarin nerve gas attack on a Damascus suburb that killed hundreds. The resolution does not authorize automatic punitive action in the form of military strikes or sanctions if Syria does not comply. At Russia's insistence, the resolution makes clear a second council decision would be needed for that. Russia has made clear; however, it would not support the use of force against Assad's government, a close ally (Nichols, 2014).

It is opined in this paper, that in comparative terms, during the Libyan crises of 2011, the United Nations were largely united in their actions against an intransigent Libya, with minimal dissenting voices. In Syria however, it has been curious victory for dissenting voices, in the face of ever escalating tragedy. The thorny question remains: why this prevarication? Why the reluctance to act on the grounds of humanitarian intervention, by the leading international actors?

2.5. The Role of China, Russia and Iran in the Intractability of the Syrian Crises

Three notable states that their roles in the Syrian crisis have been detrimental to a concerted international action are China, Russia and Iran. According to Mascarenhas (2013), although the U.S. and Britain are making moves to take possible military action in Syria, China and Russia are against any attack on the country. An attack on Syria it must however be pointed out is not the sole viable option for the resolution of the Syrian internecine conflict. Gladstone (2012) had earlier reported as follows: diplomatic efforts at the United Nations Security Council to address the Syria crisis suffered a potentially fatal blow, when Russia and China vetoed a British-sponsored resolution that would have punished the Syrian government with economic sanctions, for failing to carry out a peace plan. It was the third time that Russia and China had vetoed resolutions on Syria since the uprising against President Bashar al-Assad began and the collegial atmosphere in the Security Council chambers was tinged with bitterness and acrimony afterward. Laub and Masters (2013) narrate that both Russia and China have significant economic and military relations with Syria. As permanent members of the UN Security Council, the duo has vetoed three resolutions designed to isolate the Assad regime.

Attempting to fathom a guess for the Russia-Sino veto, Gladstone (2012) suggests: Russia and China, embittered by Security Council actions last year that led to Western military intervention in Libya and the downfall of its longtime leader, Muammar el-Qaddafi, are intent on avoiding a repeat in Syria. They have consistently objected to any resolutions concerning Syria that would impose sanctions or criticize Mr. Assad for his efforts to crush an increasingly violent rebellion against his family's four-decade hold on power. Russia, Mr. Assad's most important foreign backer, has also accused the West of funneling support to Mr. Assad's opponents. According to Brennan (2013), despite Chinese rhetoric of supporting a political solution, its actions suggest otherwise. China has many interests in Syria, which are guiding its actions. Aside from strong economic and military ties to Assad's government, which predate the current crisis, China fears radicalization of its own Sunni-majority Muslim population, some of whom it accuses of travelling to Syria for combat training with the rebels. Assad's survival is also tied up in a Chinese geostrategic consideration of the energy-rich Middle East, whereby supporting Assad is seen as an effective block on Western power in the region. Moreover, the Chinese government is nervous of creating a precedent for intervention on human-rights grounds due to its own insecurities at home (Brennan, 2013). As permanent members of the Security Council, the joint opposing stands of Russia and China, thus remains the most crucial negative factor to a globally concerted action in Syria.

Nader (2013) elaborately describes the stake of Iran in the Syrian crisis as follows: the Islamic Republic of Iran is a crucial player in the current Syrian conflict. Iran is the Syrian regime's biggest supporter, even more so than Russia. Tehran's ties with Damascus have historically been based on shared strategic interests, including thwarting U.S. and Israeli power in the Middle East. Both countries have also relied on each other to balance unfriendly Arab states. The Syrian-Iranian alliance has largely lacked an ideological or religious dimension.

The secular Syrian regime is dominated by members of the Alawite sect, which is distantly related to the Shi'a religion practiced by the majority of Iranians. Yet the Islamic Republic, the world's only theocracy, has displayed little religious affinity for the Assad regime. Rather, Tehran views Syria as a strategic gateway to the Arab world, a bulwark against American and Israeli power, and, perhaps most importantly, a crucial link to Lebanese Hezbollah. Syria is also a buffer against internal instability in Iran. Iran's position on Syria is straightforward: It will do its best to keep Bashar Assad in power. But Tehran is smart enough to realize the Syrian regime could be overthrown sooner or later. Hence, Iran has stepped up its support of Alawite and other minority militias, not only to preserve some influence in Syria but also (and more importantly) to maintain a physical connection to Hezbollah, if Assad is overthrown. The Alawites are often referred to as an offshoot of Shi'a Islam, but religion's importance as a bond between Iran and Syria should not be overstated. Some Shi'a clerics, such as the spiritual founder of Hezbollah, Musa al-Sadr, may have recognized Alawites as "true" Shi'a, but the Alawites' more esoteric religious traditions, including the lack of an organized clergy and syncretic beliefs, clearly distinguish them from the Shi'ism prevalent in Iran and Iraq (Nader, 2013).

The close ties between Iran and Syria are based on geopolitics rather than religion. Iran has long viewed Syria as a counterweight to the United States, Israel, and its Arab rivals. Iran's war with Iraq cemented the Iranian-Syrian partnership. The Islamic Republic was regionally isolated due to its efforts to "export" the Iranian Revolution to the Arab world, and major Arab powers, such as Saudi Arabia and Egypt, backed Saddam Hussein during the war. Syria, ruled by Bashar's father, Hafez al-Assad, was the only Middle Eastern state that actively backed Iran during the war. Hafez al-Assad viewed the Baathist regime in Iraq as a major threat to Syrian interests; the Iran-Iraq conflict sapped Iraq's energy and prevented it from focusing on Syria. The Islamic Republic soon thereafter emerged as an influential power in Lebanon, in Syria's backyard. The historic disenfranchisement of the Lebanese Shi'a and Iran's newfound revolutionary zeal allowed Tehran to make major inroads into Lebanon, by helping to create Hezbollah (Nader, 2013). Moreover, Iran and Hezbollah protected Syrian interests in the face of external threats. The 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq was viewed as a major threat by the Syrian regime, which considered itself a possible target of an American driven regime change. Damascus also saw Hezbollah's 2006 war with Israel as a victory. For the first time since 1973, an Arab armed force had been able to withstand an Israeli assault while inflicting significant casualties. Hezbollah relied heavily on Iranian weapons and military tactics, which enhanced Iran's value in the eyes of the Syrian leadership. Syria's military and security relations with Iran appear to have grown since that conflict. The Islamic Republic, isolated internationally and regionally due its nuclear pursuits, cannot afford to lose Syria as an ally. The fall of the Assad regime would not only affect Tehran's ability to maintain influence in the Arab world, but it would also degrade its ability to sustain Hezbollah militarily. Most of the weapons that Tehran routes to Hezbollah are shipped through Syria. The only other efficient way is through Turkey. Ankara, which competes with Tehran for influence in the Middle East, has prevented Iranian planes and trucks from supplying Syria and Hezbollah through its territory. Iran could supply Hezbollah by sea, but this would take much longer, and Iranian ships would be vulnerable to interdiction. The elimination of the Syrian routes to Hezbollah could prevent Iran from resupplying Hezbollah in a future conflict with Israel. Such a scenario could make Israel more willing to attack not only Hezbollah but also Iran's nuclear facilitates. Hezbollah's thousands of missiles, some of which can reach Tel Aviv and other major Israeli cities, are an important Iranian deterrent against an Israeli attack on its territory (Nader, 2013).

Thus, the notable pro-Syria states in the ongoing crisis would condemn the intervention of the international community, under the pretext of the equality of states in international affairs, and regards for the rights of states to internally resolve their domestic disputes. But there are other extraneous issues, as indicated by the foregoing narrations.

3.0. *The Conflict in Syria and the Scenario of a Leaderless* International Community

A critical supposition of the net international inaction in Syria is that no one, not even America, has the power in today's world to drive a global agenda (Bremmer, 2013:viii). This scenario indeed translates to a threat of leaderlessness in the international community. In the conflict in Syria, Russia contends that the American interest is regime change. Russia therefore resists regime change in Syria, while the Syrian population is being daily decimated.

In the meantime, the al-Assad regime is engaged in a show of power against her own citizens and the Russians and the Americans are engaged in combatant hints of powerful capabilities, in place of an ability to engender conflict resolution. But the resort to the display of powerful antics is totally unhelpful in the resolution of the Syrian conflict. Above all; the Syrian imbroglio signifies a descent to the specter of a leaderless international community, which further suggests a looming danger of international anarchy.

In further comparing UN's decisive role in Libya, with the dilly dallying in Syria, we look at excerpts from the United Nations' Resolution 1970 (2011), adopted by the Security Council at its 6491st meeting, on 26 February 2011, on the basis of which the international community was galvanized to intervene in the Libyan crisis. The excerpts are as follows:

The Security Council, *Expressing* grave concern at the situation in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and condemning the violence and use of force against civilians, *Deploring* the gross and systematic violation of human rights, including the repression of peaceful demonstrators, expressing deep concern at the deaths of civilians, and rejecting unequivocally, the incitement to hostility and violence against the civilian population, made from the highest level of the government, *Welcoming* the Human Rights Council Resolution A/HRC/S-15/2 of 25 February 2011, including the decision to urgently dispatch an independent international commission of inquiry to investigate all alleged violations of international human rights law in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, to establish the facts and circumstances of such violations and of the crimes perpetrated, and where possible, identify those responsible, *Considering* that the widespread and systematic attacks currently taking place in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, against the civilian population may amount to crimes against humanity,

Expressing concern at the plight of refugees forced to flee the violence in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, *Expressing concern also* at the reports of shortages of medical supplies to treat the wounded, *Recalling* the Libyan authorities' responsibility to protect its population, *Underlining* the need to respect the freedoms of peaceful assembly and of expression, including freedom of the media, *Stressing* the need to hold to account those responsible for attacks, including by forces under their control, on civilians, *Reaffirming* its strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. *Mindful* of its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, under the Charter of the United Nations, *Acting* under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, and taking measures under its Article 41, *Demands* an immediate end to the violence and calls for steps to fulfill the legitimate demands of the population; etcetera.

In very specific terms, it took the leadership of the United States, to so galvanize the international community, into decisive action in Libya. Similar circumstances are playing out in Syria, as suggested by the text of Resolution 1970 and neither the United States nor any other actor or group of actors seems to be in the lead in chatting a way forward. This scenario of leaderlessness is considered a threat to international peace and security, and if allowed to persist; pockets of power-monger-regimes may begin to task the patience of the international community in waiting to see dictators reform on their own, into some apostles of good governance. In a nutshell, the role of the UN in the Libyan crisis was motivated by humanitarian intervention. The same grounds of intervention are what the Syrian situation critically desires. In the meanwhile, the net position of inaction of the international community in the Syrian crisis, positively relates with the threat of a leaderless international community.

4. Concluding Remarks

Findings of this study have finally led to the conclusion that the reaction of the international community to the conflict in Syria indicates a net position of inaction. Indeed, the renewed resort to the display of balance of terror and hints of power potentials on the part of Russia and America, are detrimental to the ultimate national interest of Syria. Fundamentally, the issues at stake in the Syrian crisis are Syrian national interests; not Chinese, not Russian nor American or Iranian interests. Russian-American cooperation is indeed, critical to the resolution of the Syrian conflict. In as much as China and Iran are notable state-supporters of the al-Assad regime in Damascus, there is a leeway in a decisive Russian-American understanding, of which the inherent opportunities must be exploited, even with the problematic nuances of the discussions. If a new Russia-America leadership understanding is what it may signify to end the catastrophe in Syria, let it be so realized. The world must begin to totally treat the theory of equality of states as largely anachronistic, except in terms of equality of peace-engendering capabilities.

In the opinion of this paper; the world must finally begin to replace the notion of equality of states with an acknowledgement of the equality of human beings, either as Syrians, Chinese, Russians, Iranians or Americans; hence, the necessity for humanitarian intervention in Syria. The question in Syria remains that of who will provide global leadership (Bremmer, 2013: ix). Despite their current combat-ready differences in some other conflict spots therefore, let global leadership understanding be jointly provided by Russia and the United States in Syria, by the resolution of both states to work for peace in the failing State of Syria. Let the two states discover common grounds on the basis of humanitarian intervention.

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