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UN Day is that day that all global citizens might undertake to do more: to be more aware of their rights and responsibilities and those of others; to think of their footprint on the world. Is it one which furthers peace and cooperation? Is our footprint one that respects our environment and those with less.

Global citizenship is an attitude, recognition that we share a small planet and have an effect on it. It is timely that the culmination of the Libyan uprising should be declared by the National Transitional Council as the world marks UN Day (October 24th). Millions in the Arab states have stood in the most courageous ways, to say they want more and they will no longer be cowed by those leaders who know international human rights norms but flout them to their own people.

UN Day should also be a day of global solution seeking, where ideas for a better world are offered and considered.

Here is one to consider for Arab states in flux: is this moment of groundswell, made manifest by an unprecedented bulge in a youth cohort, to create an Arab development bank? One of the strongest contributors to post cold war Europe's transition to peace and prosperity was the European Reconstruction and Development Bank. With a nimble responsiveness to regional issues a focus on growth and development and the move to a market economy, an Arab development bank could also unify the newly liberated Arab countries and others in the region to a common goal.

The World Bank predicts that the Arab countries will need to create 100 million jobs over the next eight years. Right now the youth unemployment rate is pegged variously between 25 – 35%. The potential of a development bank in the region would be to turn this demographic risk into an asset by encouraging entrepreneurship and the creation of small and medium sized enterprises. Such a bank could also be a market place of knowledge exchange of good practices. It could also encourage trade between the Arab states which (like Canadian provinces and territories) is largely absent.

It is true the dust has not settled and will not settle for some time in the region. This should only give us more reason to encourage innovation and for the international community to offer solutions which can be crafted to emerging local leadership. One of the strengths of regional development banks is their links and bridges to the UN and Bretton Woods system, an important stability following destabilizing and terrible state attacks on citizens.

It will be a happy UN Day in new, freer, Libya.

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