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The Egyptian Revolution and its Aftermath

There is a great similarity between the Egyptian and Tunisian political changes at the beginning of 2011. Not only were there similarities between the two economies—imbalanced development and investment indicators and increasing rates of inflation and unemployment—but also in a symbolic sense in the reaction of citizens to the harsh living conditions. The very same week that a young Tunisian man, Mohamed Bou Azeezi, set himself on fire to object to the municipality's confiscation of the goods he was selling, Egyptian Hamdy Al-Senoosi lighted himself on fire as well, objecting to the confiscation of his "tuctuc". Many analysts point to differences in the political system: In Egypt, there was allowed some space for political practices, while in Tunisia there existed a very repressive environment to the extent that human rights activists called Zine El Abidine Ben Ali "The Arab Pinochet." That repression led to the explosion of public outrage in Tunisia. The Tunisian system is a typical authoritarian one while the former Egyptian system was a model of "electoral authoritarianism," allowing some space of political movement via a sort of "pluralism" (even if it was a facade), a somewhat independent judiciary (even if it was subject to political pressures), something akin to freedom of expression (even if owners of media channels could not cross certain lines) and seats in parliament for the opposition (even if the majority always went to the main party).

From Authoritarianism to Revolution

This type of regime creates a passive attitude on the participatory level via two parallel mechanisms. The first is to rid citizens of trust in direct participation through rigged election results. The second is by dominating legislative power, making it lose credibility with citizens. However, citizens are given some space to express their point of view via freedoms given to the media and judiciary—these represent an alternative to direct participation. Some analysts picture democratic development as an ascending graph, starting with authoritarian regimes and ending with democracy, putting the "electoral-authoritarian" regime midway, as if it were more able to change towards democracy.[1]

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[1] See: Rachid Tlemcani, *Electoral Authoritarianism*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, May 2007, www.carnegieendowment.org; and Andreas Schedler (ed.), *Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition*, Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2006.

Yet, this cannot be taken for granted in the light of the Egyptian revolution. Democracy as a concept is formed through interaction between three main circles. The first is a democratic system with democratic laws that allow freedom of expression leading to a devolution of power. The second is an opposition that works to change the existing system, enjoys some institutionalism and vision for change and interacts with the audience of voters. The final one is connected to having a social culture that embraces democracy and pluralism. We can see then that the "electoral authoritarian" regime opens the door for opportunities that do not exist in normal autocratic systems. So, the system could undergo a change provided that the civil society uses the space granted by the independence at the judicial level, or if violations occur on the side of the legislative.

It also gives the opposition some space to operate through marginal freedom in the media or its representatives in parliament, who can present their visions and opinions, as well as by participation in elections that involve the public. A circle of democratic culture, though, could develop as a result of civil society activity and past opposition, plus an effective contribution in the permitted space for media.

The constant interaction generated by these systems (either positive or negative) makes electoral authoritarian regimes temporary with only two options possible: either there is a substantial change towards democracy (as in many Latin American countries and Eastern Europe) or these countries become traditional authoritarian regimes as with most Asian countries as well as Egypt.

In the past five years, the space for freedom in Egypt shrank when the role of the judiciary was marginalized after its supervision of elections was removed and new legal ways to stop the implementation of its provisions were invented. As for media, official outlets again turned into spokesmen of the government while withholding all dissenting voices. Private media was subject to attacks, whether by direct means such as putting chief editors on trial or lobbying owners to draw lines in the coverage as determined in advance by the government or indirectly through purchases of presses or other outlets and the exclusion of unsanctioned viewpoints through the new owners, as with the "Doustor" newspaper before the last parliamentary elections, and smear campaigns, especially against external media such as satellite-based channels like Al-Jazeera and BBC Arabia. On the electoral level, the last parliamentary elections in 2010 witnessed the largest fraud campaign aimed at influencing voters, including bribery and violence before it culminated in the dissolution of parliament just before the revolution where all opposition parties were excluded and the National Democratic Party won 97% of the seats.

What was unexpected was the fast reaction to this drawback by the youth, determined to act in order to form an alternative to the traditional opposition that was normally monopolizing any initiative.

Three Waves of the Egyptian Revolution

Inspired by the events in Tunisia, young people took the initiative using technology (including Facebook and Twitter) to call for demonstrations against torture and corruption on 25 January, Police Day in Egypt. It was mocked by the elite, as they saw that revolutions can't be determined ahead of time. The next 18 days of the Egyptian mass revolution witnessed three waves of what could collectively be regarded Mubarak's ouster. The first

wave took place between 25 January and 28 January when confrontations with the security apparatus, police and undercover agents took place in many cities, but mainly Cairo, Alexandria and Suez. The protesters emerged victorious, as security forces completely withdrew in front of the peaceful, determined masses. However, because of the severe violence used by the security forces, about 150 people were killed. A state of emergency was declared on the 28 January, and the army entered the streets to fill in a security vacuum deliberately created by the sudden departure of the security forces.

The second wave of the revolution began after the government-run media began to try to scare citizens, smear revolutionaries and attract sympathy for the head of the regime. It reached its peak when the president announced his intention not to run in the next presidential elections in September. The regime then decided to provoke or eliminate the mostly peaceful movement by using quasi-sanctioned violence in a surprise attack on the revolutionaries by groups of thugs encouraged by the regime, as well as by remnants of the security forces.

That battle began on Wednesday, 2 February. It came to be known as "the camel's combat" as the regimes' thugs broke into Tahrir Square on camels, horses and mules. Afterwards, a fight with rocks and Molotov cocktails took place until dawn the next day. The regime lost any kind of sympathy after the battle, which was more telling since it came just after the president's speech. Nearly eight million people across Egypt joined the protests, filling Tahrir Square in Cairo and the centres of Egypt's other main cities to support the revolution.

The final round came when the political arm of the regime tried to deceive the masses with its intentions to reform the National Democratic Party and its structure by excluding some of the blacklisted figures such as Ahmed Ezz and Gamal Mubarak, the president's son. The regime tried to put a couple of former ministers to investigation for corruption. However, the confidence the protesters gained through the previous stages of the revolution as well as their ultimate distrust in the regime's symbols was decisive in their perseverance. It is worth noting that the millions of people who joined the protests day after day were crucial in that matter: horizontally, as it spread in other governorates and cities and vertically, as the revolution moved to work and production locations.

On 10 February, Egyptian factories and companies witnessed strikes and demonstrations, finally pushing the army to support the protesters. In a desperate last try, the president gave his last speech in which he declared he was delegating his powers to Omar Soliman, the deputy who already had lost all legitimacy in the few days he stayed in power as vice president. Demonstrations under the slogan "No Mubarak, No Soliman" spread all over the country. On 11 February, Omar Soliman announced Mubarak's resignation, a fact that certainly records a historical victory of the peaceful mass-revolution model.

The Military, Protest Movements, Labour Movements: Current and Future Roles

The role of the Egyptian military was clear during the 18 days of the revolution, as it took the side of the "people," choosing to be loyal to the State and not the regime. Egyptians' trust was placed instinctively in the military. The Supreme Council of the Armed

Forces was handed power that it did not pursue. The military was more of a follower and a responder in this respect. This perspective offers a good starting point for understanding and predicting the role of the military.

The military took over in the light of a deteriorating security situation caused by the almost complete collapse of the police structure in the main Egyptian cities, a weak economy as a result of the revolution and corruption associated with the NPD in addition to a particularly unstable political situation (weak opposition, fragile political parties and social movements that have been pushing the military to speed up the reform process). The military seems to understand that its role now is solely to stabilize the country until it will be able to adopt political, constitutional and economic reforms that could guarantee a safe transition of power to a civilian government. However, with the deterioration of economic, social and political conditions, the weakness of the political parties and the state of the civil elite, the military is in complete control of power for now. Although all decisions since the military took over power have coincided with the people's demands, those decisions can be described as authoritarian as they were taken without any dialogue (such as a committee to amend the constitution, ministerial amendments, releases of political prisoners and other similar moves). Taking into account the military mentality and its decision-making method, we can see that the current political scene is spearheaded by the military, but balanced by the people's demands.

At least three scenarios are possible as concerns the military's role in the coming weeks and months. First—and that is also the most likely course of events—it will fulfill its promises to leave power to civilians, but with a greater leverage in political and national security decisions than in Mubarak's era. Second, if the political elite and parties fail to make a smooth democratic transition, we might see some military figures take the plunge into the political sphere through democratic mechanisms, or assume real control of the country's management through the president or a weak government. The third and least probable scenario is that of an internal or external crisis that would threaten national security and push the military to stay in power until things settle down, thus setting the vicious circle in motion again.

What about the protest and worker movements? These phenomena go back to the early 21st century, escalating dramatically in the past few years before the revolution. The division between protest movements with political demands and those that have had more class-based and economic demands was clear. Those who made class-related demands kept a distance from any relation with political movements or parties, fearing a backlash from security forces and the regime.

As the cycle of revolution moved past its first stage, many political forces and protest movements that have political demands, such as "Kefaya," "April 6 Movement" and "National Association for change" joined the revolution, pushing it forward.

After the resignation of President Mubarak, some groups tried to organize the revolutionists by representing them, such as the "25 January Revolution Youth Coalition" and others that included many political and protest forces. However, the workers' movement joined the protests in the last stage, even after returning back to work at institutions and factories, on Thursday, 10 March. The Egyptian economy already had been hit hard following

strikes in many vital factories: Timsah Shipbuilding, a subsidiary of the Suez Canal Authority; Al-Masriya, a telecommunications company; the electricity section in Damanhoor, textile factories in Al-Mahalla and Kafr Al-Dawwar (more than 24,000 workers went on strike), an iron plant in Helwan, and finally, banks and insurance companies that belong to the government, most notably the Al-Ahly bank, also known as the National Bank of Egypt. The economy became paralyzed despite the military's requests to stop the strikes "after 11 February. However, the military made those requests without engaging in any dialogue or negotiations with the workers and without responding to their claims. Strikes continued to pressure the military and Ahmed Shafik's government until they started a dialogue with the workers on 15-16 February and met their claims.

Consequently, political protest movements are working as a pressure factor on the military and the government to carry out the people's demands without delay, using a path of dialogue instead of the military's "one-way" announcements. The ability of these movements to mobilize significant numbers of youth, which contributed to the 25 January revolution, makes them the only guarantor of current and future reforms towards democratic transition. This will help counter any tyrannical military political decisions or even any attempts by former regime remnants to launch a counter-revolution or economic crises if businessmen of the former regime withdraw their capital from the country.

These protest movements and workers' strikes form a real challenge to those in power as they are more likely to restart if the government fails to meet their demands, neglects them or even delays as the former regime did. The last regime always was using "analgesics" in dealing with previous movements without trying to offer them real solutions, a situation that today could lead to a real economic crisis. Undoubtedly, it is expected that in the current climate of liberation, rebuilding and restructuring mediators between protest and labour movements and political authority on one hand, and between employers represented by syndicates and labour unions on the other hand will be a very important means for the assimilation of the workers' demands and structurally defending their legitimate needs. Some experts see that allowing independent syndicates will contribute to containing workers' needs, creating a more organized negotiating climate between employers and employees.

Finally, a quasi-survey of the religious currents. It is important to distinguish between different religious currents in Egypt, in which the most prominent is the Muslim Brotherhood, with more moderate or more extremist currents on either side. In all cases, though, these others do not carry as much weight as the Muslim Brotherhood since they haven't before practiced any sort of political actions. One of the most important currents are the Salafists (including Jihadist Salafi, led by the Islamic group "Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya," for example), in addition to the Sufis, which started practicing politics, as well as other Islamic parties like the "Wasat Party," or New Center Party

This paper focuses on the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) as they are the main faction on the Egyptian Islamic movements map.

Muslim Brotherhood youth played a very important role in the 25 January revolution when their presence in Tahrir Square was effective and notable. Although they helped to maintain security in Tahrir Square, one cannot say they led the street movements or that they were the key players, a fact that was admitted by their leaders. Thus, Dr. Tarek Al-Eryan

a senior member in the guidance office of the Muslim Brotherhood, affirmed that no one can say that the millions who participated in the revolution were Muslim Brotherhood. He also said that the Muslim Brotherhood did not begin the revolution and that they were only part of the people who went to Tahrir Square. Moreover, Al-Aryan confirmed that the previous regime had transformed the image of the Muslim Brotherhood in order to make the international community afraid of it if it were to gain power as this could affect strategic interests in the region.

Ever since the revolution started, there was a sense of division within the Muslim Brotherhood. On one hand there was a group consisting of most of the guidance office members, including Dr. Saa'd Al-Katatani, a member at the guidance office and chairman of the parliamentarians of the Muslim Brotherhood who negotiated with the former regime represented by Vice President Omar Soliman. On the other hand, opposing voices could be heard, like MB youth represented by Dr. Abdul-Mone'm Abo-Al Fotooh. However, the MB members who negotiated with the regime succeeded at getting it recognized as a legal political group—something they were deprived of since 1954. That is why the leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood insisted there be no secret or solo deals with the regime, and that protesters stick to a public recorded dialogue that involves all political parties and powers.

The other part of the MB refused to negotiate. In their opinion, dialogue was worthless as long as it was held with the former system, highlighting President Mubarak's presence in power to mean only procrastination or a waste of time. They asserted the regime had lost its legitimacy once the revolution started. In the end, there's no doubt that despite its differences internally, the Muslim Brotherhood succeeded at gaining politically, as it didn't consume a lot of time or effort participating in negotiations while the youth of the party remained at Tahrir Square participating in the revolution.

Its notion of an Islamic government already having raised controversy, the Muslim Brotherhood announced a message reassuring to most Egyptians, including secularists and Christians, and international public opinion: leaders of the group stated they were against an Islamic model of government, such as in Iran, and that they supported civic government "with an Islamic reference." This ambiguous expression could be partially explained through the announcements of the leaders, for example, by Dr. Saa'd Al-Katatni, who asserted that the reference in Egypt is to the law, the Supreme Constitutional Court and the Legislative Council, and that all of them assert a civil state where the people are the source of power. Some other assertions from Dr. Abdul-Monaem Abo-Elfotoh, Secretary-General of the Arab Doctors Union and former member of the Group's Guidance Office, see an Islamic state in Egypt already exists and that what was necessary was just to work on its development and reform.

In addition to statements of reassurance, the group's senior leaders also said on more than one occasion they do not want to control the State or the Parliament, and though they confirmed their right to nominate a candidate for presidential elections like any other political movement, they gave it up for the coming presidential period for many reasons. First, MB wanted to calm down various interests, both in and outside Egypt. Second, it did so in order not to solely take on the responsibility of rebuilding the whole country in the aftermath of the former regime, which should be important for all Egyptians in the coming period—as the MB's leaders see it. These reasons are the same ones motivating the group to declare it won't seek a parliamentary majority, betting that the

coming stage will be characterized by political participation in the form of broader coalitions with all political forces and wide participation in terms of "participation not domination."

In a similar context, the group's leaders also tried to emphasize more reassuring messages to the West concerning Egypt's international obligations, including treaties and conventions, with the most important being the Egypt-Israel peace treaty. The Muslim Brotherhood said that Egypt is a big country, with institutions that include the parliament, and that it is the only body elected by the people entitled to revise those conventions according to the people's political will. Although the group is against the treaty, it affirmed its respect for all international conventions that Egypt signed. This latter stance is very much contradicted by their former official announcement to cancel the treaty once Mubarak's regime fell.

This division in statements confirms the existence of distance between wings of the group, which raised more controversy among the group's leaders about the possibility of founding a political party in the future. On one hand, we note that a large number of leaders inside the Muslim Brotherhood, including Katatni and Al-Arian for example, have recognized the desire of a large number of youth that wished to establish a political party to represent them, especially with the founding of the new "Wasat Party," which many analysts argue might take the place of the MB if it were really established. On the other hand, Abdel Moneim Aboul Fotouh, for example, said that the agenda of the Muslim Brotherhood does not include the pursuit of power, which can be interpreted in light of the need to keep the group as a civil society institute that practices political action and seeks to reform the state and society.

This reflects a real crisis within the MB, showing different positions and streams related to the question of the separation between religious work on one hand and political work on the other. Numerous Brotherhood leaders believe that the competition for power is the task of political parties and movements, not preachers, and thus sees that the movement since its inception (going back to the approach of its founder Hasan al-Banna) does not seek authority, which is not in its agenda or messages, and that the call for forming a party will not be supported by the Brotherhood members. However, many leaders have declared the importance of forming a civic party, with an open-membership for all Egyptians, Muslims and Christians. Dr. Mohammed Badi, the General Guide of the Muslim Brotherhood, has announced the founding of a group of the party under the name "Freedom and Justice." Although the group had not yet announced the party's final agenda, it stressed that the party would have a very inclusive profile. In this context, however, they did not explain their point of view on the question related to a real separation between religious and political activity. This remains the most important challenge associated with the Muslim Brotherhood.

As for the other Islamist groups on the scene, it is surprising that most of these groups that previously did not have a presence in politics or a desire to run for political work suddenly announced the decision to establish political parties, reflecting the boom in freedom of association brought by the revolution of 25 January. In the next phase, Egypt will witness an "explosion" in the number of parties that will be undoubtedly established.

The Political Opposition

Egypt has a newly drawn map of political opposition forces. Certainly, the existing political parties (Al-Wafd, Al-Tagammu and the Nesserists) will witness a clear split—in fact, it already has begun—between the youth who participated or at least supported the Revolution of 25 January and the party leadership who did not welcome it, as with the Al-Tagammu party, and those that at least did not clearly engage in the revolution, as in the case of the Al-Wafd party.

Under pressure from its youth wing, the Central Committee of Al- Tagammu issued a no confidence statement against Refaat Al-Saeed, the chairman of the party, and its governing bodies such as the central secretariat and political office. The youth of the Wafd party also called for the replacement of the leadership of the party, including its entire board, with young leaders representing those who participated in the revolution of 25 January. In fact, leaders of these parties have always adopted policies that did not get along with the spirit and objectives of the revolution of 25 January. A fact that was proven when they entered negotiations with the regime early, even before President Mubarak stepped down.

The problem was not in their acceptance to join these negotiations. After all it was possible to continue these negotiations and the revolution simultaneously in a way that could even multiply political gains for the opposition. The real problem was in the use of old logic during the negotiations, one based on the idea of getting some parliamentary seats or other partial gains before the revolution ended.

There is no doubt that what is happening now is a positive opportunity for change and development in these parties by changing its ineffective cadres for more influential and efficient ones, especially with credible personalities appointed to the new cabinet, which may give weight to the youth front amongst these parties.

The newest political parties established with the support of youth (i.e., Al-Ghad and EL Gabha El-Dimocrayeya) announced their participation in the revolution from the beginning.[2] Those parties are likely to have greater momentum after the revolution along with attempts to reform their political structures, especially for the El-Gabha El-Dimocrayeya party, which is not as internally divided as Al-Ghad. In this case, it is not inconceivable that strong divisions could end up with a schism in the party.

Days after the revolution, Wasat, a civil party based on a reference to the Islamic civilization, obtained a license and legal recognition as a political party, although under the ancient regime it had existed for almost 10 years without it. It is expected that Al-Karama, a Nasserite oriented party will also get a license. Those parties (and others) couldn't get their licenses because the Committee of Parties Affairs refused to grant them. The entry of those two parties to the Egyptian political arena could increase competition, although this cannot be considered a sufficient step towards an efficient political system.

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[2] Interview with a revolution activist, a member of El-Gabha Party, 19 February 2011.

Following the revolution, many youth coalitions were formed out of different ideologies and streams, from extreme right to extreme left, aiming at protecting the unfulfilled demands of the revolution. Lobbies or pressure groups were established, such as the Egyptian Revolutionists Alliance (*Tahalof sowar masr*), The Egypt is Free Coalition (*e'etelaf masr hora*) and the biggest and best organized group, The 25 January Revolution Coalition (*E'telaf shabab el sawra*). This coalition comprised of youth from different political parties, members of The National Association for Change (*El Game'ya el watanya lel taghir*) and a number of Muslim Brotherhood and 6 April movement members.

It is expected that this coalition could evolve along two scenarios. In the first scenario, all members of the movements return to their original movements or parties according to the ideologies they belong (with the exception of The National Association for Change whose institutional existence has become meaningless) trying thus to transfer their expertise to the political parties with which they are affiliated and working to develop them.[3] It is worth mentioning that the "National Association for Change" consisted of representatives of different political parties and movements and public and opposition figures such as Hamdin Sabbah, chairman of the Al-Karama party, Ayman Nour, chairman of the Al-Ghad party, and the well-known novelist Alaa al-Aswani. All those united under this association umbrella aiming at reform and change under the leadership of Mohamed ElBaradei differ in terms of the membership and coordination of "The popular campaign for supporting ElBaradei and demands for change", which consisted mainly of young people and which will be framed after the revolution, in a different way, as we will refer to later.

The second scenario is that a member of the movement could form a new movement that consists of different ideologies or even a new party that has an intermediate ideology such as social democracy, social liberalism and so forth.

Leaders of the El-Baradei support campaign, which participated actively in the revolution of 25 January, has issued a communiqué to the youth coalition, encouraging it to frame its efforts of building social and popular constitutions in all provinces that were part of the 25 January revolution within a new party institutional framework that will be announced soon.[4] The party will be called Al-Nahda, with a socio-liberal ideological outlook. This means that the revolution succeeded in generating a civil and a democratic "third alternative," despite the attempt by the old regime to weaken these forces using the Muslim Brotherhood as a scarecrow, internally as well as internationally.

The Egyptian political arena will likely witnesses more interactions that may lead to changes in the political realm. Hence, we may see greater freedom of expression and the formation of many political parties. However, it is also expected that those small parties will evolve into broad coalitions or bigger parties according to their ideological affiliations, which is an expected and normal development in the first phases of a democratic transition. Yet, it can also present a risk to the newly born democracy if it lasts for a longer time.

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[3] Interview with a revolution activist, 19 February 2011.
[4] Interview with a revolution activist, 18 February 2011.

The International Context

Political developments in Egypt have received wide attention from the international community. The Egyptian political regime is one of the most important pillars of regional order in the Middle East. Since the first day of protests, both the European Union and the United States followed the situation closely.

During the first week of protests, both the United States and the European Union showed sympathy with the aspirations of the Egyptian people for freedom and democracy. They also called on the Egyptian regime to take real steps for an "organized transition" of power through a broad-based government leading the process of democratic reform.[5] When the protests intensified and hundreds of thousands joined in Tahrir Square, the tone of the EU sharpened. EU High Representative Catherine Ashton announced that the Egyptian political regime had reached the point of no return and that "change must come now," thus urging the Egyptian authorities to begin a dialogue with all political forces. The U.S. president conducted a phone call with his Egyptian counterpart on 1 February just after the latter had announced his intention not to nominate himself for a coming presidential period. In that conversation, Obama confirmed that the situation could not continue and change had become necessary.[6]

The attack on protesters in Tahrir Square by the hands of supporters of the regime on 2 February attracted a wave of international criticism. Ashton expressed her concerns about what had happened to the peaceful demonstrators. The U.S. administration condemned the violence and considered it a threat to the Egyptian people's aspirations.

However, both the EU and the United States did not live up to the expectations of the Tahrir protesters as they only had invited the government and the opposition to commit themselves to dialogue in order to move to a more democratic, open and pluralistic regime. Throughout the crisis, none of the international powers declared any explicit need for the departure of the president until 11 February, when Mubarak decided to step down. The decision was welcomed by the EU in a joint statement for the European Council, the European Commission and Ashton. President Obama praised the Egyptian Revolution as well, and said that the resignation of President Mubarak reflects only the beginning of the transformation process and not its end.[7]

Generally, external actors were not instrumental in the Egyptian revolution, unlike it was in Eastern Europe in 1989, which witnessed strong external support. The European Union and the United States supported the revolution on a rhetorical level, which was always a reaction to the popular movement but without any significant pressure on the political regime. International community declared its support for democracy and freedom but expressed fears of political instability.

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[5] See: *Council conclusions on Egypt*, 3065th FOREIGN AFFAIRS Council meeting, Brussels, 31 January 2011, www.consilium.europa.eu.

[6] See: *Remarks by the President on the Situation in Egypt*, Office of the Press Secretary, The White House, 1 February 2011, www.whitehouse.gov.

[7] See: *Remarks by the President on Egypt*, Office of the Press Secretary, The White House, 11 February 2011, www.whitehouse.gov.

Consequently, their position was only to support "dialogue for an organized transition of power" in order to balance their two interests: supporting freedom and ensuring stability.

Challenges Ahead

The success of the Egyptian revolution—like any revolution—could be conditional upon the so-called counter-revolution and the way social forces deal with upcoming challenges.

Among these challenges is a threat that the military remains in power by paving the way for a new president affiliated with the army, as was the case in 1952. A committee that aimed at developing a civil constitution for the country was formed, but after its tasks had been fulfilled in 1954, the military decided to stay in power. If the history were to repeat itself, the "civil state" slogan raised during the revolution would ring hollow.

Also, one of the major fears stems from the speedy steps the military took towards a parliamentary election without giving enough time for new political forces to build up constituencies. This could bring the country back to the duality of the only well-organized parties—the National Democratic Party and the Muslim Brotherhood—that existed before the revolution.

The National Democratic Party still has its remnants in Egyptian institutions and can rearrange itself in order to re-appear in the political arena and dominate the country, especially since the old guard is out of the picture and no one has good information about them. The Brotherhood played a prominent role in the revolution. Now, they are the only organized political power on the list, having worked for several years as an underground organization while the rest of the opposition forces operated covertly and were suppressed under the previous regime. It is also possible in case of democratic elections that these forces could win overwhelmingly, thus eliminating the primary objective of the revolution, "liberty."

As for the opposition parties, the current low political culture of the political parties' leaders represents a threat to the revolution. It became apparent during negotiations with the regime when these leaders aimed at getting a "piece of the cake," disregarding the need for true democratic development.

There is no doubt that the remnants of the old system (for example, some National Democratic Party (NDP) members, networks of economic interests that benefited from the old regime, and state security forces involved in corruption and torture) are still working to abort the revolution and trying to reorganize themselves in order to regain power. This is one of the challenges of the current transitional phase in which the old system is trying to regain its position and power before the new system can change it or at least restructure and incorporate it in a new form within society. Although, this situation is normal and not surprising, as all democratic transition experiences bear witness to this phenomenon, it represents a prime challenge that needs to be taken into consideration.

Another outcome under the current circumstances is further deterioration of the economy. It is a natural result of the conditions experienced lately by the country. These conditions could represent an opportunity for business people to

control both economic and social life. This could result in the same situation as prior to the revolution in which there were economic monopolies and would thereby sweep away another slogan of the revolution, "social justice." Moreover, this could lead to the control of political life by business interests and taking the state back to square one.