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# The Arab Spring: One Year After

Transformation Dynamics, Prospects for Democratization  
and the Future of Arab-European Cooperation

Europe in Dialogue 2012 | 02



## Europe in Dialogue

Europeans can be proud as they look back on fifty years of peaceful integration. Nowadays many people worldwide see the European Union as a model of how states and their citizens can work together in peace and freedom. However, this achievement does not automatically mean that the EU has the ability to deal with the problems of the future in a rapidly changing world. The European Union must continue developing its unity in diversity dynamically, be it with regard to energy issues, the euro, climate change or new types of conflict. Indeed, self-assertion and solidarity are key to the debates shaping our future.

“Europe in Dialogue” wishes to make a contribution to these open debates. The analyses in this series subject political concepts, processes and institutions to critical scrutiny and suggest ways of reforming internal and external European policymaking so that it is fit for the future. However, “Europe in Dialogue” is not merely trying to encourage an intra-European debate and makes a point of including authors from non-EU states. Looking at an issue from different angle or from afar creates a shift in perspective which, in turn, renders Europe’s development more meaningful as it engages in critical dialogue with other societies.

## The Arab Spring: One Year After



*Amine Ghali, Ibrahim Hegazy, Salam Kawakibi,  
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## Taking Stock of the Arab Spring

Armando Garcia Schmidt and Hauke Hartmann

Just over a year ago, a wave of political upheaval began in Europe's southern neighborhood that shook the power structures throughout the region. In those authoritarian countries, in which until then, any form of opposition opinion or protest had been strictly prohibited, masses of people took to the streets and demanded greater political and economic participation, better governance and the civil rights denied them for decades. For Europe, these demonstrations of individual courage, collective determination and political progress signified and continue to signify that, for the first time, realistic prospects for a democratically governed Mediterranean region are in the making. For this reason, the significance of the sociopolitical transformation in the North African and Middle Eastern countries can be compared to that of the democratization processes in Eastern Europe – 2011 joins 1989 as a date of historical import, this time for the peoples of the Arab world, but again for Europe as well.

Thus, with the current volume, we would like to offer an interim appraisal: from a stock-taking of last year's political developments and an analysis of the current transformation dynamics in the Middle East and North Africa, to the prospects for stronger and overall better Arab-European cooperation. For a series of publications bearing the title "Europe in Dialogue," one set of questions takes on particular urgency: More than a year after the inception of the transformation processes, who among our southern neighbors are emerging as (possibly new) partners in dialogue? Which developments in the Mediterranean region can be expected and demand our special attention? And closer to home, how advanced is Europe's own capability to engage in dialogue with the Arab world?

This set of questions is closely related to the issue of political learning in times of rapid and radical change. The rulers in Arab countries weren't alone

in being unprepared by the force of the mass political protests. European media and academics too proved unable to foresee social upheavals of such considerable scope, at least with any accuracy. Even the Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index (BTI) – which for 10 years has regularly analyzed political and economic change toward democracy under the rule of law and a socially responsible market economy in 128 developing and transformation countries, while also assessing and comparing the steering capability of the countries' political elites – is in this case no exception. The BTI country reports on the Middle East and North Africa contained no prophetic scenarios describing the course of the protests and the toppling of dictators with any precision.

The advantage BTI reports of previous editions have held over all short-term political analysis, however, was a research-grounded account of the political, economic and social causes that led to the events of 2011, from the increasing political repression and the growing gap between poor and rich, to the lack of opportunity that for a growing proportion of young people in Arab countries became increasingly difficult to bear. Particularly in the North African states, the Transformation Index's analysis showed that the pressure associated with these problems had been steadily growing. What appeared as a sudden upheaval had, in fact, a long history, described in detail in the BTI country reports.

A particularly important part of this previous history is the immediate eve of the "Arab Spring," chronicled by the 40 experts that worked on the preparation of the BTI 2012 country reports for the Arab world. The deadline for the drafts of the 19 reports from the Middle East and North Africa was the end of January 2011 – thus, exactly the point at which Tunisia and Egypt found themselves in the initial stages of a radical change, which in turn triggered an unforeseeable change in the dynamics of the entire region. As a result, the Transformation Index published in March 2012 highlights the whole spectrum of stalled reforms and policy failures, corruption and repression, impoverishment and lack of opportunity that ultimately led to the outbreak of political protest and to the resignation of dictators that had held seemingly impregnable positions.

Here it proves to be an invaluable advantage that the BTI is not limited to a single issue such as the extent of corruption, or to a single research dimension such as the scope of political freedoms. Rather, the Transformation Index comprehensively examines the political, economic and social aspects of transformation, and also offers an in-depth presentation of the strengths and weaknesses of each country's political management. The protest by young demonstrators on the streets of Tunis and Cairo against political paternalism and arbitrariness cannot be separated from the explosive social mixture of unequal income distribution, rampant corruption, high youth unemployment and a marked rural-urban divide. The decrepit political and economic structures in turn are largely attributable to the ruling elite's hostility to reform and lack of learning capacity. All these facets of social development are examined in the BTI, with relations drawn between them.

For this volume, BTI regional coordinator for the Middle East and North Africa **Jan Völkel** analyzes the last year's political developments in the context of the BTI 2012's country reports and findings. He delves into the antecedents of the outbreak of mass protest and democratization efforts in the spring of 2011, and through a time-series comparison with the results of previous editions of the BTI draws a convincing portrait of social stagnation and despair, one which contains no fixed point of certain collapse, but outlines the urgent need for social change. In this analysis, he focuses primarily on the countries in which incumbent regimes have been shaken with particular strength: Bahrain, Egypt, Libya, Syria, Tunisia and Yemen. He succeeds not only in doing justice to the diverse and complex processes of change that affected these countries in the past year, but also in updating the BTI's examination of this important region, and placing it in the context of current developments. We also offer a special thanks to Jan Völkel for his invaluable role in the conception and supervision of this volume.

For many years, the Bertelsmann Stiftung's transformation project has held that analysis of political and economic developments and of associated government performance must be accompanied by dialogue with local reform actors. Since almost half of the BTI's nearly 250 country experts are drawn from the ranks of prominent scholars and experts in the countries studied, such dialogue for us represents more than the importance of gaining a local

perspective. Indeed, considering the internal view of social change alongside a scientific analysis of governance is for us an essential goal; we thus strive for exchange with young political decision-makers from the realms of politics, academia, the media and other areas of civil society.

To this end, in cooperation with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), the Bertelsmann Stiftung has for nearly 10 years conducted the “Transformation Thinkers” dialogue program. This has today grown into a network of almost 150 young leaders from all regions of the world, distinguished by sophisticated discussion driven by participants’ own leadership experiences. It is therefore a particular pleasure for us to have two Transformation Thinkers, **Ibrahim Hegazy** and **Salam Kawakibi**, as authors in this volume. Both have belonged to our network for many years, and here contribute their impressions and personal experiences with social change in Egypt and Syria. They are joined by **Amine Ghali**, who participated as a guest speaker at the September 2011 Transformation Thinkers alumni conference, and provides an arresting description of his own initially high – but ultimately sobered – estimation of Tunisia’s transition from dictatorship to democracy, in which he himself took on a role of significant responsibility.

**Elham Manea**, who served as a country expert for the BTI 2012, offers in her contribution a stimulating mix of scholarly analysis and personal impressions of the political upheaval in Yemen, which continues to meet with a variety of particularly strong obstacles. Finally, Libyan journalist **Samir Saadawi** forcefully urges the West to look at the hopeful new beginning in his home country with a perspective broader than that of energy policy alone. We are particularly grateful to these five “regional voices” for their moving and inspiring essays; their vital contribution enables us to include perspectives from the Arab world itself, instead of simply writing “about” a region in upheaval.

**Eberhard Kienle**, regional expert on the BTI board, the Transformation Index’s advisory panel, builds on Jan Völkel’s progress report and the experiences of the “regional voices,” undertaking an analysis of the current transformation dynamics in North Africa and the Middle East in order to evaluate the prospects for democratization. He expands on the focus of the previous contributions, including also those countries which to date have

shown no fundamental upheaval. With a special focus on Egypt and Tunisia, he depicts the essential actors and constellations of forces. His comprehensive and profound article examines the factors that favor or hinder the working of transformation processes, and discusses the prospects for better government leadership within the region, a question of critical interest to the region's European neighbors as well.

**Tobias Schumacher**, who as a former regional coordinator and current country expert has been a part of the BTI project for many years, concludes with a change of perspective, examining European perceptions of the Arab world's transformation processes, as well as the political course set by the EU through the revision of its European Neighborhood policy. He comes to a skeptical assessment, indicating the limits of positive as well as negative conditionality by pointing out conflicts of interest, insufficient differentiation and limited opportunities for influence. He therefore warns strongly against the danger of Europe striking a heavy-handed normative position while ultimately pursuing a transparently self-interested course, as well as against offering a policy of rhetorical but toothless opposition to authoritarian regimes. His article instead offers a number of pragmatic approaches that would allow the EU to engage with the region's transformation processes in a sophisticated and constructive way.

We hope that with this volume, we can contribute to clarifying and adding nuance to the idea of the "Arab Spring," a term both diffuse and often all too euphemistically used. Europe must develop a clearer picture of its southern neighbors if it wants to conceive the democratization and political upheaval in North Africa and the Middle East as an opportunity holding the potential to improve cooperation, rather than reacting with reflexive fears of instability or the influence of political Islam. Unlike the media, whose reports are driven by strongly fluctuating cycles of thematic interest, the BTI's view will remain firmly fixed on the region. The dictators in Tunisia and Egypt have fallen. Protests lasted 18 days before Mubarak resigned. But the process of change that now stands before these two countries and many others in the region will be measured in years, not days. Whether and how this may lead to stable democracies is today unknown. As this becomes clearer in years to come, the BTI will continue to analyze the long road to democracy, and record whether

citizens' demands for a greater participatory role in politics and the economy are in fact being fulfilled.

## Related publications from the Bertelsmann Stiftung

### BTI

Transformation Index BTI 2012: Political Management in International Comparison. Gütersloh: Verlag Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2012. [www.bti-project.org](http://www.bti-project.org)

Jan Völkel. "BTI 2012: Middle East and North Africa Regional Findings." [www.bti-project.org/mena](http://www.bti-project.org/mena)

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Khalil Al-Anani, Zeidan Ali Zeidan, Moncef Cheikh-Rouhou, Arslan Chikhaoui, Ahmed Driss, Moaaz Elzoughby, Bassma Kodmani, Mehdi Lahlou and Ziad Majed. *The Future of the Mediterranean: Which Way for Europe and North Africa*. Europe in Dialogue 2011/01. Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2011.

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# The BTI 2012: Looking Back on the Arab Spring An Interpretation of Recent Political Developments

Jan Völkel

## Introduction

The events of 2011 surpassed the wildest expectations of the potential for political change in the Arab world. First, there were two surprisingly sudden resignations: Tunisian President Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali on January 14th (after a mere four weeks of demonstrations) and shortly afterwards, on February 11th, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak (after demonstrations lasting about three weeks). Then, although the grueling back and forth between demonstrators and state security forces in Bahrain, Yemen, Libya and Syria had resulted in a form of deadlock, the expulsion of Muammar al-Qadhafi, who had ruled Libya since 1969, from Tripoli on August 23rd gave rise to new hope: perhaps the democratic wave sweeping across the Arab world had not simply petered out somewhere in the desert, but could indeed reach and change other states. Finally, even Yemen's President Ali Abdallah Salih was ousted on November 23rd; his departure for the United States via Oman in late January 2012 marked the de facto end of his reign, which had lasted since 1978.

In fact, there is now, at the start of 2012, hardly a single country in the Arab world whose political system has remained untouched by the events of the last year. In Jordan, the government has changed. In Algeria, the state of emergency has been lifted. In Morocco the constitution has been altered. All in reaction to protests or pre-emptive moves against possible demonstrations. This new-found popular power is astonishing, particularly given that Arab regimes had previously been considered largely resistant to reform (Schlumberger 2007). Samuel Huntington's 1991 book *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, which identified the era of political

reforms that swept through southern Europe, then Latin America and, by the start of the 1990s, eastern Europe and parts of Asia, but largely bypassed the countries of North Africa and the Middle East.<sup>1</sup> The reasons for this were fairly apparent: in numerous countries with large oil and gas reserves, governments bought the support of the population with cash and generous social benefits. The patriarchal traditions in these distinctly religious societies underpinned a hierarchical order that fundamentally impeded attempts at a critical political discourse. Autocratic regimes, in response to occasional demands from Europe and the United States to respect and extend human and political participation rights, repeatedly pointed to the threat to stability and security in the region allegedly posed by Islamic extremism or hasty liberalization. This argument, if nothing else, became caught up in the eyes of Western governments with the issue of Israel's security interests. Lastly, the governing elites were able to stifle any incipient protest with increasingly sophisticated mechanisms of repression and control.

Although there have been recurrent demonstrations against government policies in the past – such as 2008's protest marches in the phosphate-rich Gafsa region of Tunisia and in the southern Moroccan port of Sidi Ifni, or the weeks of protests in 2009 against the rigging of the presidential elections in Iran in favor of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad – these demonstrations never seriously jeopardized the regimes in power. Governments soon brought such protests to a standstill by offering social benefits, making promises and deploying brute force, after which they continued undaunted on their corrupt, anti-reform course. The apparent stability of this autocratic domination lasted until December 17, 2010, when, in the insignificant little Tunisian town of Sidi Bouzid, the street vendor Mohamed Bouazizi doused himself in gasoline and

<sup>1</sup> It is worth mentioning here that these global transformative developments also provided the impetus to create the Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index (BTI) in the mid-1990s. Since 2004, the BTI has appeared every two years, surveying and assessing the state of democracy, economic transformation and the management achievements of the governments of 128 countries in transition; see also [www.bti-project.de](http://www.bti-project.de).

set himself on fire in protest of the repeated humiliation and harassment he had suffered at the hands of local authorities.

This self-immolation led directly to demonstrations against the regime of President Ben Ali, who had held office since 1987. The demonstrations quickly spread throughout the country, taking the form of days of non-violent protests, particularly in the capital, Tunis. When the Tunisian generals refused to deploy military force against the demonstrators, it signaled the end of Ben Ali's reign. His resignation on January 14th became a beacon for the entire region, encouraging subsequent demonstrations in almost every Arab state. Qatar and the United Arab Emirates proved to be the only countries in which no notable demonstrations took place over the course of the year.

## An analysis of events on the basis of the BTI results

Even today, a full twelve months after the start of these events, the answers to many fundamental questions remain unsatisfactory. For example, it is not yet clear why no protest movement had transpired in the Arab world earlier and why the demonstrators were able in early 2011, of all times, to achieve their objectives with relative ease and speed. Nevertheless, it is possible to identify certain core factors that evidently interacted to decisive effect. These include the enormous dissatisfaction among broad swathes of the population, which was accompanied by a willingness and ability on the part of a few central actors within the protest movements to take responsibility and initiative. The use of the latest communication technology was combined with the astonishingly strong solidarity between various sections and strata of the population, who supplied each other with food, tents, cell phone chargers and access to electricity on Avenue Habib Bourguiba in the center of Tunis and on Tahrir Square in the heart of Cairo. Finally, non-violent protest movements were met by level-headed military commanders.

However, this merely describes the specific factors behind the successful political transformation in Tunisia and Egypt. These were the only two countries in which there was a relatively peaceful change of regime (relatively peaceful, given that at least 200 died in Tunisia and more than 800 people lost

their lives in Egypt during the revolutions). By contrast, in all the other countries, protests were either quickly suppressed by security forces or there were major clashes between demonstrators and the military. In Yemen, in particular, as well as Libya and Syria, there was fighting approaching the level of civil war that has dragged on for months and resulted in many deaths. As such, the issue at stake is not merely to identify the strategies of the protest movements and the dynamics of the various revolutionary processes, but to establish the similarities and differences among the individual countries in terms of the framework and conditions in which these developments have occurred.

Despite all the surprise, the upheavals and protest movements did not exactly appear out of thin air. In fact, the data in the Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index (BTI) provide ample insight into the fundamental political and economic deficits found in the Arab world of recent years. The BTI findings point not only to widespread political stagnation, found almost everywhere in the region, but also to the limits of economic improvement, which is effectively confined to the Gulf states. The BTI reports also show how this is combined with increasing socioeconomic tensions, especially in the large, non-oil-based national economies. Finally, the BTI data contain considerable evidence of disappointed hopes after the moves toward political and economic liberalization in the first half of the 2000s, which, despite bringing about privatization and some new laws, have failed to introduce lasting improvements for the majority of the population.

Whereas the underlying problems in each country show similar features, there are considerable differences in terms of their respective sociopolitical contexts. This is also true of the six countries most affected by the revolts of 2011, that is, Bahrain, Egypt, Libya, Syria, Tunisia and Yemen. Whereas Egypt and Tunisia, for example, are popular holiday destinations and earn a significant proportion of their public revenues from tourism, meaning that they have to take greater care of their image abroad, this does not apply to Libya, Syria or Yemen. Libya and Bahrain are classic rentier states, thanks to their oil and gas reserves (although in Bahrain these reserves are quickly diminishing and the income is very unequally distributed), whereas Syria and Tunisia have only scant raw material deposits by comparison. Tribal

stratification continues to structure society in Libya and Yemen, while in Egypt, Tunisia and Syria, tribes are of secondary importance only.

### Country developments as reflected in the BTI

A time-series comparison of the data in the Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index for the countries in the North Africa and Middle East region brings these differences to light. One example is trends in political transformation (see Table 1): whereas Egypt (2008 – 2012: -0.32), Bahrain (-0.28), Yemen (-0.20) and Tunisia (-0.10) have registered lower scores since the BTI 2008, Libya (+0.12) and Syria (+0.58) have noticeably advanced political transformation. The overall regional score for political transformation improved by 0.16 points between 2008 and 2012, so four of the six countries singled out here deteriorated, despite the positive trend in the region.

**Table 1: State of political transformation, BTI 2008 – 2012**

| Country       | 2008        | 2010        | 2012        | 2008–2012   |
|---------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Egypt         | 4.40        | 4.22        | 4.08        | -0.32       |
| Bahrain       | 4.63        | 4.42        | 4.35        | -0.28       |
| Yemen         | 3.90        | 4.23        | 3.70        | -0.20       |
| Libya         | 2.98        | 3.20        | 3.10        | 0.12        |
| Syria         | 2.60        | 3.23        | 3.18        | 0.58        |
| Tunisia       | 3.95        | 3.78        | 3.85        | -0.10       |
| <b>Ø MENA</b> | <b>3.97</b> | <b>4.21</b> | <b>4.13</b> | <b>0.16</b> |
| Ø LAC         | 7.02        | 6.97        | 6.83        | -0.19       |
| Ø SEA         | 5.98        | 5.69        | 5.60        | -0.38       |
| Ø WCA         | 5.24        | 5.08        | 5.32        | 0.08        |
| Ø ASO         | 5.04        | 5.16        | 5.09        | 0.05        |
| Ø ECSE        | 8.62        | 8.55        | 8.40        | -0.22       |
| Ø PSE         | 5.16        | 4.83        | 4.87        | -0.29       |

Note: The BTI regions are as follows: MENA= Middle East and North Africa; LAC = Latin America and the Caribbean; SEA: South and East Africa, WCA = West and Central Africa; ASO = Asia and Oceania; ECSE = East-Central and Southeast Europe; PSE = Post-Soviet Eurasia.

Similarly divergent trends can also be identified for the state of economic transformation, although with the situation reversed: five of the six countries that experienced a revolution improved (even if only slightly, in some cases), following the overall trend for the region (see Table 2). Only Tunisia worsened (markedly, by -0.68 points), so possible social and economic triggers should be sought there for the eruption of mass demonstrations; all the other states remained constant (Bahrain, Egypt and Yemen) or improved significantly: Libya gained 0.36 points and Syria 0.43.

**Table 2: State of economic transformation, BTI 2008 – 2012**

| Country       | 2008        | 2010        | 2012        | 2008–2012   |
|---------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Egypt         | 5.36        | 5.43        | 5.43        | 0.07        |
| Bahrain       | 7.39        | 7.68        | 7.43        | 0.04        |
| Yemen         | 3.93        | 3.93        | 4.00        | 0.07        |
| Libya         | 5.50        | 5.79        | 5.86        | 0.36        |
| Syria         | 4.18        | 4.54        | 4.61        | 0.43        |
| Tunisia       | 6.79        | 6.18        | 6.11        | -0.68       |
| <b>Ø MENA</b> | <b>5.58</b> | <b>5.86</b> | <b>5.84</b> | <b>0.26</b> |
| Ø LAC         | 6.28        | 6.34        | 6.27        | -0.01       |
| Ø SEA         | 4.71        | 4.76        | 4.79        | 0.08        |
| Ø WCA         | 4.25        | 4.19        | 4.26        | 0.01        |
| Ø ASO         | 5.70        | 5.50        | 5.57        | -0.13       |
| Ø ECSE        | 8.16        | 7.95        | 7.91        | -0.25       |
| Ø PSE         | 5.48        | 5.30        | 5.16        | -0.32       |

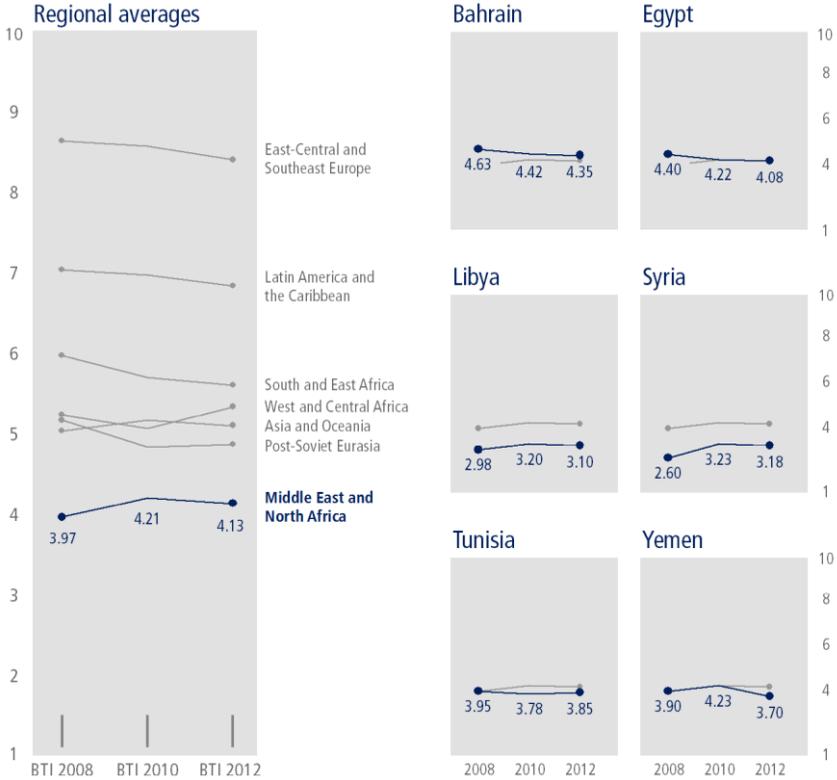
Again, the six states are very different in terms of the governments' management performance (see Table 3): Bahrain (-0.48), Tunisia (-0.41), Yemen (-0.30) and Libya (-0.26) worsened considerably, so that deficiencies in political management need to be examined in greater detail in order to investigate possible causes for heightened popular dissent. Egypt, by comparison, remained stable and Syria managed to improve significantly (+0.68). For the region overall, hardly any improvement (+0.09) has been recorded. In fact, things appear to be stagnating at a low level.

**Table 3: Transformation management scores, BTI 2008 – 2012**

| Country       | 2008        | 2010        | 2012        | 2008–2012   |
|---------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Egypt         | 4.15        | 4.30        | 4.21        | 0.06        |
| Bahrain       | 4.66        | 4.36        | 4.18        | -0.48       |
| Yemen         | 3.97        | 4.04        | 3.67        | -0.30       |
| Libya         | 3.15        | 3.05        | 2.89        | -0.26       |
| Syria         | 2.47        | 2.77        | 3.15        | 0.68        |
| Tunisia       | 4.75        | 4.30        | 4.34        | -0.41       |
| <b>Ø MENA</b> | <b>4.06</b> | <b>4.18</b> | <b>4.15</b> | <b>0.09</b> |
| Ø LAC         | 5.39        | 5.48        | 5.49        | 0.10        |
| Ø SEA         | 4.89        | 4.87        | 4.71        | -0.18       |
| Ø WCA         | 4.63        | 4.54        | 4.72        | 0.09        |
| Ø ASO         | 4.83        | 4.75        | 4.70        | -0.13       |
| Ø ECSE        | 6.37        | 6.37        | 6.25        | -0.12       |
| Ø PSE         | 4.30        | 4.04        | 4.15        | -0.15       |

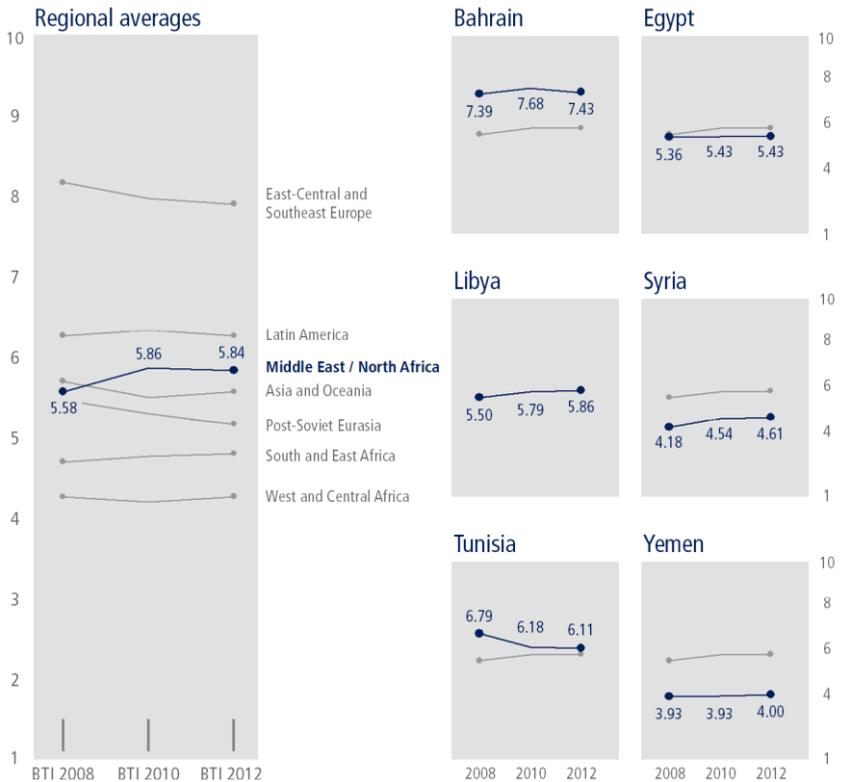
So, although the series of BTI statistics do not show any clearly identifiable trends over the six years shown here that could retroactively explain the outbreak of large-scale protest, the tables do open up two significant perspectives that are fundamental to understanding the unrest. The following visual representation of the data aims to illustrate these issues: the deterioration of the MENA region in absolute terms compared to the other BTI regions, in every year and on every index (with the exception of the economic index for the two African regions, Post-Soviet Eurasia and Asia and Oceania (in 2010 and 2012)); the worsening situation for the MENA states, almost across the board, from the BTI 2010 to BTI 2012.

Figure 1: Political transformation, BTI 2008 – BTI 2012



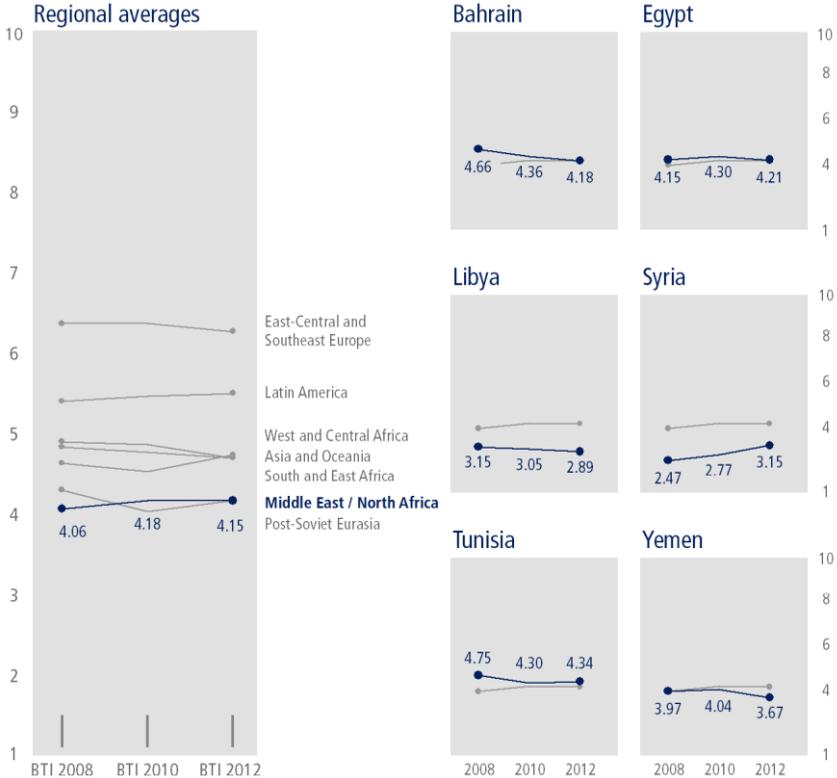
Note: In absolute scores, the MENA region lags behind all the other BTI regions. In addition, there is a downward trend in the six countries most affected by revolution, with the exception of Libya and Syria. Since the 2010 Transformation Index, every country but Tunisia has fared worse.

Figure 2: Economic transformation, BTI 2008 – BTI 2012



Note: Stagnation or downturn in most countries; the state of economic transformation in Yemen is lower than that found even in the West African countries, which suffer from especially adverse socioeconomic conditions. Furthermore, Egypt and Syria are below the average for the MENA region.

Figure 3: Transformation management, BTI 2008 – BTI 2012



Note: The MENA region has (together with Post-Soviet Eurasia) the worst average scores. The graphs show very poor government achievements for Libya, Syria and Yemen. The strong improvements in Syria, which are largely due to Bashar al-Asad’s modernization of public administration (filling key positions with specialists, rather than party ideologues), have only a marginal impact on this finding.

The combination of these two factors – that is, the worst absolute scores worldwide for democracy and management performance, and the unsatisfactory economic performance overall (despite mineral wealth) together with the deterioration recorded since the BTI 2010 – provide initial clues to possible causes of the growing protest against the established regimes. Up until January 2011, for example, the state of political transformation in Egypt and Yemen had clearly deteriorated. Selected questions show the following changes for the two countries over two years (BTI 2010 – BTI 2012) (see Table 4).

**Table 4: Changes in democracy scores in Egypt and Yemen, BTI 2010 – 2012**

| Indicator / question                    | Egypt    |          |     | Yemen    |          |     |
|---|----------|----------|-----|----------|----------|-----|
|   | BTI 2010 | BTI 2012 | +/- | BTI 2010 | BTI 2012 | +/- |
| 1.1 Monopoly on the use of force        | 8        | 8        | 0   | 7        | 5        | -2  |
| 1.2 State identity                      | 8        | 8        | 0   | 8        | 6        | -2  |
| 1.3 No interference of religious dogmas | 6        | 6        | 0   | 6        | 4        | -2  |
| 2.3 Association / assembly rights       | 5        | 4        | -1  | 6        | 5        | -1  |
| 2.4 Freedom of expression               | 4        | 4        | 0   | 4        | 3        | -1  |
| 3.1 Separation of powers                | 4        | 3        | -1  | 4        | 4        | 0   |
| 3.2 Independent judiciary               | 5        | 4        | -1  | 4        | 4        | 0   |
| 3.4 Civil rights                        | 4        | 3        | -1  | 4        | 4        | 0   |
| 5.2 Interest groups                     | 5        | 5        | 0   | 5        | 4        | -1  |
| 5.4 Social capital                      | 5        | 6        | 1   | 5        | 4        | -1  |

In two years, Yemen deteriorated drastically, particularly in the area of stateness (questions 1.1 to 1.4) and sociopolitical integration (5.1 to 5.4), whereas Egypt worsened in terms of the rule of law, in particular (3.1 to 3.4).

The signs of disintegration in Yemen are complex and especially pronounced, with at least three major internal conflicts of note: (1) clashes between the Huthi rebels and the government in the northern province of Saada, which have recently spilled over into the neighboring western province of Hajjah; (2) the confrontation between al-Qaeda cells in central Yemen and the government, which in January 2010 officially declared war on the terrorists, most of whom have infiltrated the country from Saudi Arabia; and (3) the separatist tensions between the former South Yemen and the government, which have the potential to split the country in two.

Egypt regressed notably in terms of independence of the judiciary. Whereas independent jurists were responsible for monitoring the 2005 parliamentary elections, the most open and fair in Egypt's history, this responsibility was transferred back to an election committee with close ties to the National Democratic Party (NDP) in the 2010 ballot. In addition, civil proceedings were increasingly transferred to military courts, making them vulnerable to intervention by military commanders and, in the final instance, the regime.

Although the democratic standard remained largely stable in Bahrain and Tunisia in the period between BTI 2010 and BTI 2012, both countries had deteriorated in the two years prior to that (see Table 5); comparing BTI 2008 and BTI 2010, downward trends are apparent for several questions, such as the issue of stateness in Tunisia (questions 1.1 to 1.4). The greater fragility of the state was reflected in the handling of the workers' uprisings in the Gafsa region in 2008 and in some attacks and tourist kidnappings in the west of the country in the same year, for example. In Bahrain, meanwhile, there were retrograde trends in the area of opportunities for political participation (questions 2.1 to 2.4); a clear example of this can be seen in the numerous restrictions to freedom of the press and expression, ranging from the minor to the serious. However, some positive development was also noted in these two countries over the same period, such as slightly improved rights for both chambers of the Bahraini parliament and the reduction in censorship measures against the Tunisian media.

Table 5: Changes in democracy scores in Bahrain and Tunisia, BTI 2010 – 2012

| Indicator / question                    | Bahrain |      |             |      | Tunisia |      |             |      |
|---|---------|------|-------------|------|---------|------|-------------|------|
|   | 2008    | 2010 | 2008 – 2010 | 2012 | 2008    | 2010 | 2008 – 2010 | 2012 |
| 1.1 Monopoly on the use of force        | 10      | 8    | -2          | 8    | 10      | 8    | -2          | 8    |
| 1.2 State identity                      | 7       | 7    | 0           | 7    | 10      | 9    | -1          | 9    |
| 1.3 No interference of religious dogmas | 7       | 7    | 0           | 7    | 9       | 8    | -1          | 7    |
| 1.4 Basic administration                | 9       | 9    | 0           | 9    | 8       | 7    | -1          | 7    |
| 2.2 Effective power to govern           | 2       | 1    | -1          | 1    | 2       | 2    | 0           | 2    |
| 2.3 Association / assembly rights       | 4       | 3    | -1          | 3    | 3       | 3    | 0           | 4    |
| 2.4 Freedom of expression               | 4       | 3    | -1          | 3    | 1       | 2    | 1           | 3    |
| 3.1 Separation of powers                | 4       | 4    | 0           | 4    | 2       | 3    | 1           | 3    |
| 3.2 Independent judiciary               | 5       | 4    | -1          | 4    | 4       | 4    | 0           | 4    |
| 3.4 Civil rights                        | 7       | 6    | -1          | 6    | 4       | 4    | 0           | 4    |
| 5.1 Party system                        | 3       | 4    | 1           | 4    | 2       | 2    | 0           | 2    |
| 5.2 Interest groups                     | 5       | 6    | 1           | 6    | 4       | 3    | -1          | 3    |

Syria and Libya need to be examined as “special cases.” In Libya, some improvements were made at a very low level between 2008 and 2012, thanks to Saif al-Islam al-Qadhafi’s more open rhetoric and his father Muammar al-Qadhafi’s attempts at international reconciliation; nevertheless, these improvements were undermined by diminished rights of political participation, in particular. In contrast, Syria has achieved some change over time, but hardly

anything altered overall between 2006 and 2012, as shown by the values in the net column (colored gray) in Table 6.

**Table 6: Changes in selected democracy scores in Syria over time (BTI 2006 – 2012); the colored markings indicate deterioration/improvement.**

| Indicator / question                       | Syria |      |      |      | 2006 – 2012 |
|--|-------|------|------|------|-------------|
|  | 2006  | 2008 | 2010 | 2012 |             |
| 1.1 Monopoly on the use of force           | 8     | 9    | 8    | 8    | 0           |
| 1.2 State identity                         | 7     | 7    | 7    | 7    | 0           |
| 1.3 No interference of religious dogmas    | 7     | 6    | 7    | 7    | 0           |
| 1.4 Basic administration                   | 6     | 5    | 6    | 6    | 0           |
| 2.1 Free and fair elections                | 2     | 2    | 3    | 2    | 0           |
| 2.2 Effective power to govern              | 1     | 1    | 2    | 2    | 1           |
| 2.3 Association / assembly rights          | 2     | 2    | 2    | 2    | 0           |
| 2.4 Freedom of expression                  | 1     | 2    | 2    | 2    | 1           |
| 3.1 Separation of powers                   | 2     | 1    | 2    | 2    | 0           |
| 3.2 Independent judiciary                  | 2     | 1    | 2    | 2    | 0           |
| 3.3 Prosecution of office abuse            | 3     | 2    | 3    | 3    | 0           |
| 3.4 Civil rights                           | 3     | 2    | 2    | 2    | -1          |
| 4.1 Performance of democratic institutions | 1     | 1    | 2    | 2    | 1           |
| 4.2 Commitment to democratic institutions  | 1     | 1    | 2    | 2    | 1           |
| 5.1 Party system                           | 3     | 1    | 1    | 1    | -2          |
| 5.2 Interest groups                        | 3     | 2    | 3    | 3    | 0           |
| 5.3 Approval of democracy                  | n/a   | n/a  | n/a  | n/a  | n/a         |
| 5.4 Social capital                         | 3     | 3    | 4    | 4    | 1           |
| ∅  | 3.24  | 2.82 | 3.41 | 3.35 | 0.11        |

The wavelike ups and downs in Syria that can be seen in Table 6 clearly reflect the mixture of hope and disappointment. When the then-34-year-old Bashar al-Asad took office as the new president in 2000, there were great hopes that he would clear away much of the dead wood that had built up

during the reign of his father and predecessor in office, Hafez al-Asad; but by the middle of the decade, disenchantment had set in. Although a few reforms were, indeed, set in motion during Bashar's first years of power, this was followed by a period of stagnation and even deterioration, as depicted vividly in the BTI 2008 country report. Although some small steps were taken towards liberalizing the formerly strict Ba'athist structure, that is, a socialist system based on a one-party state and tailored to conditions in Syria, this did not result in any genuine increase in political openness – and certainly no changes that could have endangered the existence of the Asad regime. The improvements noted in the BTI 2010 were the result of the president's new strategy of increasingly appointing experts to key policy-making positions, instead of party ideologues. This mitigated both the lack of expertise in public administration, and the overwhelming influence of the Ba'ath Party.

### **In-depth analysis: The events of 2010 in the six MENA states most affected by protests: Bahrain, Egypt, Libya, Syria, Tunisia and Yemen**

Tunisia and Egypt, the greatest challenges proved to be preparing for the first democratic elections and the question of how best to deal with supporters of the old regime. Both countries have tried their former dictators in court, initiated a constitutional reform process and banned their former sole political parties, the Rassemblement Constitutionnel Démocratique (RCD) and National Democratic Party (NDP). Whereas in Egypt the ruling military junta has ordered the reforms “from above” and largely prevented any measures that would restrict the army's influence, it was a civil government in Tunisia that introduced the proceedings, permitting a far greater degree of participation by civil society. This difference is illustrated by the manner in which the two countries approached the task of creating a new constitution in preparing for future elections: In Egypt, the military junta adopted the transitional constitution and hastily ratified it in a referendum arranged at short notice for March 19th, and parliamentary elections were then held in various stages on this basis in the winter of 2011/2012. The newly elected parliament is now tasked with drawing up the new Egyptian constitution in a committee. When the electoral commission was appointed on June 19th, 2011, the military junta expressly stated that international observers would not be

accredited for the elections, as this would undermine Egypt's sovereignty. This statement was met with protest at the international level, but it also caused outrage among numerous Egyptian civil society groupings due to the legitimate concern that the military would impede a fundamental process of democratization. Critics feared that the military junta wished merely to install a new government favorable to themselves, with only limited democratic legitimacy, and would not tolerate genuine political competition between various parties and ballot options. Given the overwhelming success of the Muslim Brotherhood and the Al-Nour Party in the initial ballots (about 50% and 25% of the vote, respectively), it remains to be seen whether the military will, in fact, consent to transferring power to the interim government and parliament. Alternatively, it is conceivable that the Islamists and military will reach a power-sharing agreement and that the Muslim Brotherhood will in future be the dominant party in Egypt, under the military's supervision.

In Tunisia, there was some political turmoil immediately following Ben Ali's downfall, including the repeated formation of new governments. The situation calmed somewhat only after interim Prime Minister Beji Caid Sebti took office on February 27th and formed a completely new cabinet. Overall, the country has taken steps to advance the transformation process, even if the original schedule for democratization has been postponed more than once. After sluggish voter registration in August, the elections for the Constitutional Convention were held on October 23rd, professionally and in accordance with international standards. The result was a resounding win for the Islamist Ennahda ("Renaissance") party (the strongest faction by far, with 90 of 217 seats), which disappointed many of the January demonstrators, given that the original protests took place largely without any help from Islamist representatives, who nonetheless were the biggest winners of the free elections (see also the article by Ghali in this volume). The Constitutional Convention assembled for its first session in the fall of 2011 and, within the space of a year, plans to develop the fundamental structures of Tunisia's future political system (Loetzer 2011); the actual parliamentary and presidential elections will not take place until the new constitution is adopted, probably at the end of 2012.

Tunisia's economy, recently so highly praised, has suffered from problematic developments. The country dropped dramatically in the BTI market economy index from 2008 (a point score of 6.79) to 2012 (6.11). The Tunisian economy's close ties to the EU have been both a blessing and a curse. On the one hand, the 2008 economic crisis had far-reaching negative repercussions on Tunisia's economy, which put huge pressure on supplier companies, particularly in the automotive and textile sectors. On the other hand, the future Tunisian government can hope to receive economic and political assistance from the EU and, by extension, support for its upcoming restructuring measures. After all, despite its current financial policy crisis, the EU is bound to maintain its economic relations to Tunisia and to cushion the economic insecurity that transformation will bring. Economic and political support of this kind is considerably easier for a total population of 10.5 million Tunisians than for 84.5 million Egyptians.

As such, despite similarities with the course of events in Tunisia, developments in Egypt make it far harder to assess the prospects of success for the transformation process that has begun (see the article by Kienle in this volume). Although the party landscape is more diverse than in Tunisia, thanks to a more open fundamental outlook on the part of the Mubarak regime in the past, the regime intensified its repressive measures after the 2005 Cairo Spring; as a result, Egypt fell significantly in the BTI democracy index from 2008 (4.40 points) to 2012 (4.08 points). Furthermore, the economic outlook is grim. Despite a marginally improved overall score for Egypt's economic transformation in the BTI, from 5.36 points in 2008 to 5.43 in 2012, the liberalization measures taken in recent years were not sufficiently anchored in principles of social justice, and an increasing proportion of the population has sunk into poverty. The coming economic uncertainties, expected to involve mass layoffs in the oversized state-owned companies and the bloated civil service, as well as a decline in bookings in the tourism sector, will entail heavy losses for many in the population. As such, it is to be feared that those who lose out in the transformation process as well as those socially marginalized sections of the population may become radicalized. The success of the radical Islamist Al-Nour Party at the ballot box in the winter of 2011/2012 is an initial warning sign here. The increasingly aggressive demeanor of jihadist splinter groups towards political opponents since the end of the Mubarak

regime justify fears that Egyptian society is facing serious confrontation between liberal and radical forces. The 2012 Transformation Index already testifies to an increasing intensity of conflict within Egyptian society and this, together with the economic issues mentioned above, comprise the core political challenges to be addressed.

This also applies to a large extent to Bahrain, which suffers from a religiously based underlying conflict arising from the split between a Shi'ite majority (about 70% of Bahrainis are Shi'ites) and a Sunni governing elite that holds almost all the top positions in the state, army and society. This not only leads to recurrent tensions within the country, it also plays an important role in the regional balance of power. On the one hand, the country's geostrategic position in the middle of the oil and gas-rich region of the Persian Gulf is important to the global economy, on the other hand, maintaining Sunni rule in Shi'ite Bahrain has a great (psychological) significance to the rivalry between the two major regional powers: Saudi Arabia (strictly Sunni) and Iran (strictly Shia). This explains why, after the massive protests and weeks of unrest broke out in Bahrain in early 2011, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (both member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council, which, apart from Bahrain, is Sunni dominated) sent hundreds of soldiers to Bahrain to put a violent end to the demonstrations and prop up the Sunni Al Khalifa dynasty.

The BTI has described these internal conflicts since the country was included in the ranking in 2008: the Sunni minority increasingly mistrusts the Shi'ite majority, as shown by Bahrain's drop in scores from 6 points to 5 for the BTI question regarding social capital. The conflict is reflected at the highest political level: although the government permits Shi'ite interest groups (parties per se are not allowed in Bahrain) and invites them to take part in the political process via official registration, the two most important Shi'ite groups, al-Haq and al-Wafa, refuse to do so. Accordingly, the assessment of the Bahraini party system improved by one point (from 3 to 4I) between the BTI 2008 and BTI 2012. These Shi'ite groups fear that closer integration into the political system would not result in better opportunities to exert an influence, but would rather enable the repressive state apparatus to exercise greater control over their activities. In fact, it is reasonable to fear that this is the real motivation for the government's apparently open approach. In view of the

restrictions to political participation that have been imposed, the BTI 2012 has downgraded Bahrain by one point each in the areas of “association and assembly rights” and “freedom of expression,” in which it now scores 3.

In addition to the underlying sectarian conflict, the security forces have also increasingly had to deal with protests by South and East Asian migrant laborers, many of whom have to work under appalling conditions. Whether it is the recurrent roadblocks with burning barricades, starting in January 2009, or the violent confrontations between demonstrators and the police in August 2010, with up to 230 arrested – the BTI 2012 country report clearly illustrates the problems and features a drop of two points since the 2008 edition of the Transformation Index for “monopoly on the use of force” (from a score of 10 to 8).

This ominous growth in tension in Bahrain is accompanied by the ruling family’s increasing grip on the justice system. The 2012 country report describes in detail examples of how the king has repeatedly interfered in the dispensation of justice, for example by pardoning convicted persons and thereby seriously undermining court decisions. In general, judges are appointed by the king and enjoy little independence. The increasingly limited space for independent jurisdiction is reflected in the falling score for “independent judiciary” from 5 in the BTI 2008 to 4 in the current survey. Added to this, jurisdiction has effectively been split in two since a separate set of family and individual rights was codified for Sunnis in May 2009. This had the effect of intensifying the social schism along sectarian lines in the legal sphere, as well.

In recent years, BTI experts have observed in Yemen a trend similar to developments in Bahrain, that is, a worsening of the general security situation and increased tensions between the population and government and between different communities. However, this trend is much more intense in Yemen. The country, one of the poorest in the world, is faced by a variety of problems, from rapid demographic change, via growing ecological problems, to an increasingly poor provision of basic services in remote regions. Ethnic conflicts between tribes, the political tensions between North and South Yemeni fractions resulting from the former partitioning of the country, and growing disputes with criminal and terrorist organizations have made the

country virtually ungovernable outside the major cities. The conflicts in the northern province of Saada between Huthi rebels and the government, and the associated socioeconomic context and religious factors, take up a large part of the BTI 2012 country report. The repressive persecution of Sunni extremists in Saudi Arabia has shifted the problem to Yemen, where the lack of state control in some regions has given al-Qaeda an ideal base to which to retreat and from which to work on destabilizing the government of President Ali Abdallah Salih. In the past, the government attempted to check the rising tide of unrest with increased repression: civil rights were restricted and the press, once astonishingly free by regional standards, was subjected to stricter control, as can be seen in the lower BTI 2012 score for the question "freedom of expression." Despite escalating the repressive measures, President Salih was unable to hold on to power: after months of protests and negotiations, he agreed on November 23rd to a conflict solution plan put forward by the Gulf Cooperation Council and appointed his former deputy Abd Rabou Mansour Hadi as interim president, under whom democratic elections are to be prepared.

The country's disintegration is clearly expressed by the drop in score for "state identity": whereas Yemen received a score of 8 here in the BTI 2008, the analysts for the BTI 2012 were only able to award 6 points in the area of state identity; according to this, large swathes of the population are increasingly identifying more with their regional affiliation than with the state as a whole. The downgrade in the area of "social capital" from 5 to 4 is also a consequence of this trend. This does not bode well for the future of the country as a unitary centralized state. The mixture of state collapse, a weakened sense of national solidarity, and criminal intrigue lend credence to voices warning about an implosion of the country and the "Somalization" of Yemen. In this context, it is hard to assess the growing influence of religious actors on the political process. Whereas the BTI 2008 was able to point out that, unlike in other Arab states, religious institutions did not interfere in Yemeni politics and the relevant question ("no interference of religious dogmas") received a score of 6, above the regional average, the current report refers to the founding in the summer of 2008 of a morality police along Saudi lines and an "Islamic Scholars Committee," which President Salih called into

being in August 2010 in order to advise the government; as a result, the relevant score dropped to 4 points.

In Libya, both progressive and retrograde developments were recorded in the years running up to the fall of the “Guide of the Revolution,” Muammar al-Qadhafi. For a long time, al-Qadhafi was an international pariah, mainly due to the actions of the Libyan secret service in the 1970s and 1980s, and specifically the bombing of a passenger aircraft over the Scottish town of Lockerbie in December 1988. However, in recent years his reputation improved, not merely due to the economic interests of Western governments or al-Qadhafi’s support in stopping the flow of refugees into Europe, but also because of constructive mediation such as the negotiations with the Abu Sayyaf rebels on the Filipino island of Jolo in 2000, which ended with the release of a kidnapped German family, or the manifest Libyan policy of distancing itself from acts of terrorism. Positive recent developments raised hopes among observers that Libya’s domestic politics would also be liberalized. In particular, the Qadhafi Foundation headed by al-Qadhafi’s son Saif al-Islam excelled lately with various notable initiatives aimed at strengthening civil society, education and equal opportunities.

In the end, however, the underlying repressive nature of the Libyan autocracy remained unaltered. The scores in the BTI 2012 do not even come close to the minimum democratic standards in any of the categories of the Political Transformation Index. The only exception to this is the regime-neutral stateness criterion. It is symptomatic that, apart from this, the highest score achieved is a mere 4 for the question of prosecution of office abuse. No political parties were allowed in al-Qadhafi’s Libya and the annual sessions of the Basic People’s Congress were, in the end, nothing more than empty parliamentary routine of no significance to genuine politics: the Revolutionary Command Council, consisting of al-Qadhafi and his closest associates, ultimately determined the nation’s fortunes with no real consultation. The BTI 2012 report describes a probable power struggle between reform-minded members of the regime and reactionary forces. The increasing repression resulting from this power struggle, such as the months-long suspension of two newspapers that were favorable to the reformers in 2010, are reflected in the lower BTI scores in the areas of “free and fair elections” (from 2 to 1),

“freedom of expression” (also from 2 to 1) and “independent judiciary” (from 3 to 2). This latter was abused as a tool for political interests in the diplomatic dispute between Libya and Switzerland when al-Qadhafi’s son Hannibal was arrested in Geneva in July 2008 (all score comparisons are between BTI 2008 and BTI 2012).

The massive protests in Syria came after what was, in principle, a positive national trend in the BTI Status Index. However, these improvements were largely achieved up to the BTI 2010, after which almost every area of transformation experienced deadlock at what was still a very low level. It is also important to remember the downward trends between 2006 and 2008 that were mentioned before. Taking the 2006 Transformation Index as a starting point, almost no change is apparent in Syria (see also Table 6 on page 26).

The majority of the protests in Syria have been aimed at the still unchallenged repressive machinery of a religious minority (the Asad family are Alawis, a religious group associated with Shia Islam, whereas the majority of Syrians are Sunni). Nevertheless, the protests against the Asad regime in 2011 were not religiously motivated; instead, they were focused on the system’s outmoded structures and the lack of freedom in the country.

## Conclusion

So what drove the demonstrators onto the streets in almost every Arab state in 2011? As this analysis shows, no single reason can be identified. However, the data in the Transformation Index make it possible to deduce some tendencies that help provide a retrospective explanation:

Overall, despite individual improvements in some countries, the MENA region scores very poorly on a global scale in terms of both its democracy and economic data. Comparing regions, North Africa and the Middle East is much closer to the African BTI regions than to Asia or even Latin America.

After some improvements in the middle and second half of the last decade, reforms that had been made were revoked in almost every Arab state, and

particularly in Egypt, Libya and Syria. With the exception of Kuwait and Iraq, the level of political transformation stagnated or dropped in every country in the MENA region in the BTI 2012 compared to the BTI 2010.

One strong signal for the normative basis of the Transformation Index, which consciously focuses on democracy under the rule of law and a market economy anchored in principles of social justice as the best possible form of government, is Shibley Telhami's observation (2011): he pointed out in the early days of the protests that the uprisings were far less about food than they were about dignity. And according to Arnold Hottinger (2011) "the Arab revolutionaries talk about regaining their 'dignity.' They felt dehumanized and degraded at being seen by the powerful as nothing more than a resource to be used and exploited." The organizers of the uprisings in Egypt and Tunisia were not members of the impoverished underclass – not even the street vendor Mohamed Bouazizi was. But they were and are members of a society that had suffered decades of humiliation and indignity at the hands of their respective regimes, or they were well educated university graduates facing a lack of jobs and little prospect of a fulfilled life. The regimes of the Arab world have not merely ruled kleptocratically in recent years, they have not only deliberately manipulated conflicts for their own purposes, and they have not simply ruled arbitrarily and as they see fit. Above all, they have systematically deprived their people of dignity. Human dignity is best framed in constitutional democracies and socially just market economies: two areas in which the Arab regimes have consistently failed in the past. Now it is up to the new rulers to create political and economic structures that will guarantee both a better future for the respective countries and the dignity of their people.

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## Hopes, Expectations and Outcomes in Tunisia

Amine Ghali

Late in 2010, Tunisians of all ages and with no clear political affiliation took to the streets in a call for change. The slogans started with timid demands for reform denouncing social injustice. Faced with the blindness and oppression of the regime, the protestors' demands escalated to a bold political call for regime change. The surprise outcome came within days and with relative minimum costs, compared to similar revolutions. Tunisia's tyrant leader, President Ben Ali, fled the country, leaving behind a chaotic political scene.

During this revolution and the events following, a number of things caught my attention and further convinced me of the validity of the people's call. For one, the uprising was nonpartisan in the sense that no single politician or opposition leader sought to exploit it for their individual aspirations by assuming a dominant position, or could legitimately stake a claim in any such position. For another, despite security concerns, most state institutions have carried on with their work. There have been no shortages of electricity, water, fuel, food, or any other basic product. Finally, most Tunisians have felt united in overthrowing a regime and embarking on the path toward some form of change for their country.

Following Ben Ali's flight from the country, an interim government was established to drive the process of political transition. This early period of political transformation was characterized by new political dynamics as new political figures and approaches to running state affairs were introduced to Tunisian politics. Despite the security concerns of early 2011, I had great expectations of the political process for just one reason: It was run by individuals with insignificant political and partisan affiliation. Indeed, during this phase of political transition, four independent commissions were established: one dealing with the political process (an unelected parliament of sorts); one dealing with the investigation of corruption and embezzlement;

one dealing with human rights abuses; and the last dealing with organization of elections. Each of these commissions was headed by well-known figures in civil society and academia of unquestionable integrity. None of them harbored any political ambitions, and none of them ran for office after completing his mission. Recognition, respect and gratitude shall be paid to these agents of reform. I personally bow before them, for their work, neutrality and success.

During this phase we saw the establishment of a government of technocrats, again, most of them with no political ambitions. They all replied to the national call of saving a country at this critical juncture. Time was short and the challenges immense, but this team, led by transitional Prime Minister Beji Caid Essebsi, a fine elderly statesman who had held several ministerial positions under President Bourguiba, succeeded in making unprecedented decisions: signing the International Criminal Court's Rome Statute; lifting all measures preventing the implementation of the international human rights conventions; establishing an independent elections commission and unprecedented freedoms of the press and association. These accomplishments were mostly of apolitical nature; little was done within the economic sphere. Nonetheless, these decisions drew great attention and respect from the international community, boosting Tunisia's image and credibility as the first Arab country to embark on a path of democratic transition in 2011. This international recognition is of primary importance for a country attempting to attract the investment needed to tackle unemployment, which was one of the main drivers of the revolution.

However, alongside this almost utopist dynamic, political and partisan dynamics were growing and beginning to influence political and social life. Divisions and cleavages based mostly on ideological and religious grounds emerged among the political elite and their new constituencies. In a country with very few democratic traditions, political parties were quite successful in building their campaigns and extending their affiliation networks through undemocratic practices (e.g., bribery), demonstrating a lack of religious tolerance toward other religious groups, and by making unrealistic electoral promises.

At the end of this initial phase of the transformation process that centered around the election of a Constituent Assembly, some of the so-called

progressive democrats entering the electoral race and those supporting the process (i.e., members of the various commissions and representatives of civil society as well as the economic and cultural elite) placed so much confidence in the veracity of their hopes and dreams and the reliability of their peers that they failed to deliver a unified project of progressive democratic transformation for Tunisia. We all believed that we were defending the noble objective of democracy, an attainable dream with different facets, but obviously shared by every Tunisian supportive of the revolution. At the other end of the political spectrum, advocates of a more traditional and conservative approach to change, that is, an approach based on religion, tradition and (sometimes) intolerance, were closer to their constituencies. As a result, they were able to galvanize support for a single unified project of transformation shaped by a specific interpretation of democracy. Exercising their political acumen, they won the election and ushered in the second phase of transition: constitution-building.

This post-election phase of transition has since been shaped by partisan affiliation, the dynamics of majority or minority rule, and the need for coalitions and counter coalitions. The unifying dream of a democratic Tunisia, initially shared by many, has become a disassembled puzzle in which each side tries to force its pieces with little regard for those held by others. Some might argue this is merely the rule of the game, every winning party has the right to enjoy its success. But we should remember that the objective of this phase is to write a constitution, not run a country as if subject to a regular legislative term. A constitution is a national document to be shared and owned by all Tunisians today as well as those of decades and centuries to come. If a constitution is to succeed in providing the legal framework for a democratic nation, it ought to be sufficiently inclusive of all Tunisians irrespective of their political and partisan affiliation.

Personally, I have little faith that the ruling conservative coalition will draft a constitution inclusive enough to consider the variety of differences among all Tunisians. The ruling coalition appears to be aiming for a constitution that not only establishes their less progressive and diverse vision of Tunisia but confirms conservative rule as the only political option. Unfortunately, this

ruling majority is succeeding in its use of religion to garner support among many Tunisians in high jacking the once-shared dream of the revolution.

On October 25th, the day election results were announced, a progressive friend of mine commented on a social media platform "...today I discovered that I am part of a minority, the question is: Will the majority guarantee my minority rights?" I do not want to end this piece on such a depressing note. But I do believe that the transition to democracy is an everlasting struggle. Tunisia, as well as other countries of the Arab region, is destined to connect progressive and conservative visions of democracy. Those advocating democracy in Tunisia will need to find the right balance between their dream of a democracy based on humanistic values and the bargain-making demands of partisan politics.

## Hopes, Expectations and Outcomes in Libya

Samir Saadawi

As the wave of Arab Spring revolutions beginning in Tunisia and Egypt hit Libya in early 2011, it was logical to expect an uprising in Libya. From a historical perspective, Libyans have always been affected by the winds of change in its neighboring countries. People in the Libyan (eastern) city of Benghazi – who number among the country's most disadvantaged and deprived – soon took to the streets, marking the launch of the February 17 revolution that quickly engulfed the entire country.

The uprising in Benghazi was triggered by Muammar al-Qadhafi's violent response to peaceful demonstrations in which Libyans demanded the release of political prisoners. In a futile attempt to regain lost ground, the infamous Khamis Brigade, the tyrant leader's security force, resorted to the massacre of innocent Libyans, committed acts of genocide against a peaceful population, and imposed a blockade on the Libyan capital of Tripoli.

In an article I wrote for the Daily Star on March 4, I wrote: "These crimes must leave no option for the international community but to intervene against the regime, depriving it of its international legitimacy, as it lost all legitimacy among Libyan citizens." Fortunately, I was able to express myself freely at the time, being one of many that chose exile instead of living under tyranny.

Due to the pressures associated with the air embargo and the resolve of the freedom fighters, Tripoli was liberated on August 27, 2011. This ultimately led to the fall of al-Qadhafi's last bastion in Sirt (central Libya), which in turn led to his capture and death on October 20, 2011.

Thus, for the first time in 42 years, Libyans have regained their pride and command of their national memory. They are determined to take the reins in managing their huge national wealth, whether this be in relation to oil,

agriculture, tourism, industry or free trade. All these sectors harbor great potential for Libya.

Though much has been achieved since the uprising on 17 February 2011, a great deal of work still lies ahead. At every step along the way, Libyans have remained steadfast in demonstrating national unity and exercising their free will. Yet they face the daunting task of building an entire country and its institutions almost from scratch. But perhaps the most important challenges ahead lie in restoring democratic values and a culture of tolerance.

The oppressive al-Qadhafi regime fostered a culture of dependency and hatred in which people were effectively deprived of their right to live freely. And by failing to provide or expand Libyans' access to a decent education, adequate health care and employment, the regime robbed them of their social choices and opportunities. The privilege of engaging in free enterprise and yielding its benefits were reserved exclusively for those within the tyrant leader's inner circle.

Whereas countless young couples waited for years to receive the apartments they needed to wed, entire apartment blocks were built and handed over to members of local pro-Qadhafi militias, most of whom were already homeowners. For many Libyans, it was these kinds of spoils that represented only the tip of the iceberg, leaving them unconvinced of the change promised by Muammar al-Qadhafi's second son and declared successor, Saif al-Islam Qadhafi.

As al-Qadhafi's regime began to fall apart during a revolution that lasted eight months, observers identified a situation in Libya very different from those situations seen in Tunisia and Egypt. In Libya, an entire country must be built anew, since al-Qadhafi left no institution untouched and kept a small security apparatus that was running the affairs of the state. This apparatus vanished following his capture and death.

The National Transitional Council attempted to run the day-to-day affairs of the state, but soon ran into legitimacy problems of its own. Lacking proper planning and adequate funds, it faced severe difficulty in carrying out the tasks of governing. To make matters worse, suspicions of corruption have multiplied as old elements have apparently infiltrated the new system.

The transition process is not expected to be smooth. The current vacuum in the political arena leaves ample room for would-be politicians to capitalize on the absence of political parties and exploit regional rivalry or differences between secularists and fundamentalists. Using support from foreign countries to secure their own future positions, these opportunists, many of them armed groups, pose a threat by trying to steal the country's recent achievements. They could derail current attempts to transition by exploiting the needs of citizens in order to purchase their support. Doing so would point the country down the path toward oligarchy.

But the problems associated with political transition are not peculiar to Libya or the Middle East. Let us not forget the example of many East European states that are still facing difficulties in establishing democracy years after the fall of the Soviet Union. Given the current state of affairs in Libya, we should not expect to see consolidated democracy and stability in the near future.

As Che Guevara said: the revolution is made by dreamers led by madmen and won by opportunists.

What can be done?

Once provisional state institutions are in place, an important step forward would involve kick-starting the economy by injecting funds obtained through the release of some of the frozen Libyan funds abroad. This will revive the services sector, provide some employment and liberate citizens from the dominance of private benefactors. With access to resources, the state could then provide much-needed community care services until elected bodies are in place to lead the development process.

Economic growth and security are essential in the context of restoring democracy. Without it, the prospects for an effective and participatory process of state-building involving vast numbers of the Libyan population are bleak.

Libya has much to offer in the beauty of its vast and long beaches, the diversity of its nature, the abundance of archaeological sites, and its agricultural potential. The people of Libya are at once extraordinarily kind and

strong. Having endured considerable poverty and pain, they are determined to pursue justice and equality.

The Libyan revolution marks not only the beginning of a thorny, tortuous and long journey to restore the country's national will and rebuild active participation in the rights and duties of citizenship. The revolution also represents the beginning of an attempt to return looted capacities by restoring public stewardship of the country's national resources. Indeed, investing the wealth of these resources in the education of citizens will enable young people and women alike to serve their communities while bringing them prosperity.

The concept of participation is an essential prerequisite to these efforts. Civic participation must be established early on, in particular by nurturing opportunities for the young to practice democracy within schools and universities. This involves teaching them tolerance and the appropriate means of claiming their rights while helping them resolve differences as they carry out their civic duties. Establishing youth associations in which students practice the art of debate, learning to acknowledge and interact with a diversity of opinions, is one possible means of teaching tolerance and citizenship. In order to facilitate democracy as a way of life, it is equally important to establish training centers where young people may exchange roles in the context of group work.

For many Libyans today, the transition to democracy is a must. It must prevail, even if this involves a corrective movement. It must prevail for the sake of the tens of thousands of martyrs and wounded. In the eyes of the international community, the transition to democracy must prevail because its inception is the result of an unprecedented effort among European states to initiate the protection of citizens under the umbrella of NATO. Finally, the most important lesson to be learned is that the international community must look less to the oilfields of Libya and place greater faith in the country's future as a source of stability on the southern shores of the Mediterranean.

## Hopes, Expectations and Outcomes in Egypt

Ibrahim A. Hegazy

For the last two decades, Egyptians have faced devastating societal problems including severe poverty, cancerous corruption, humiliating violations of human rights, excessive unemployment, high illiteracy rates, a widening of the gap between social classes and an erosion of the middle class. Egyptians felt no hope in their future. Meanwhile, the government persistently acted as though deaf to its citizens' complaints.

Yet what ultimately sparked the 2011 Egyptian revolution was the killing of a young Egyptian who lived in the city of Alexandria, the country's second-largest urban center after the capital Cairo. In June 2010, young Egyptian businessman Khaled Said died after being beaten by the police. Witnesses described how Said was taken from an Internet café, had his head smashed into marble stairs, and was left dead on a street in Alexandria. Said had angered police officers by copying a video they had made of themselves divvying up confiscated marijuana, which later appeared on YouTube. Like the young Tunisian who set himself on fire after being harassed by a low-level government official, Said hoped to draw attention to police officials' corruption.

In conjunction with these events, online social media took on a role as a substitute for traditional mass-media communications, much of which in Egypt are controlled by the state. Acting as an anonymous page administrator, the young Wael Ghoneim, Middle East marketing director for Google in Egypt, created a Facebook page called "We Are All Khaled Said." The page featured horrific photos of Said's tortured face, shot with a cell phone in the morgue. That visual evidence undermined the official explanations for his death. By December 2011, the Facebook page had attracted some 500,000 members. After 30 years of emergency rule, abuses by police and state security

officials had become so common that the Khaled Said case proved to be a natural rallying point for a diverse network of outraged Egyptians.

On January 25, 2011, the day known as “Police Celebration Day,” many young Egyptians converged on Tahrir Square to demonstrate for democracy, social justice and freedom. The rest is history: The entire Egyptian population, across the country, joined these Egyptian youth in their call to overthrow the country’s corrupt regime after the shocking killing of well over 800 young demonstrators between January 25 and February 11, 2011, the day the ailing President Hosni Mubarak decided to step down.

Watching the situation unfold during January and February 2011, I decided to support the transformation by serving as an active member of the local civil committee in charge of protecting the residential area around downtown Cairo, about two kilometers from the center of the revolution, Tahrir Square. I realized that the revolution needed many supportive and assisting hands if it were to succeed. I realized, too, that Tahrir Square was not the only venue in which one could demonstrate his or her support and provide an assisting hand.

Moreover, in parallel, I decided to spread the word and share my inside views on and opinion of our 2011 revolution, helping others to understand its causes, players, primary forces and the challenges facing it. Hence, I took the initiative to accept several domestic and international invitations to lecture about the 2011 Egyptian revolution.

Now that the revolution has become real, many Egyptians hope for a better country and a better future. Yet, Egypt cannot have a better future without lifting overwhelming pressures from the shoulders of its population. These pressures are diverse: the state of the Egyptian economy, the health care sector, the education sector, and most importantly, cultural and behavioral patterns and expectations. Collectively, their weight is too heavy; if the new Egypt is to move forward and achieve the goals of the 2011 revolution, it must lift this burden quickly, in the short term.

Furthermore, one cannot hope to have a better future without also building a “better individual.” In other words, in order for Egypt to earn a better future, Egyptians must learn to respect and accept each other’s differences.

Egyptians should also focus on reinforcing social justice, combating illiteracy and gender inequality, upholding the rule of law and the freedom of expression, and above all, respecting human rights.

Unfortunately, instead of building, educating, securing and lifting our economy, some sectors of Egypt's civil society are a year later destroying, blocking, striking and calling for civil obedience – hence, hindering the Egyptian economy's ability to move forward.

My explanation for the situation currently unfolding in Egypt rests mainly on the fact that the average Egyptian, a year after the revolution, has not seen any genuine changes. The average Egyptian has not seen real, substantial changes in his or her life. On the contrary, as many Egyptians say: “We've removed the head, but the body remains riddled with cancerous cells in need of a fast remedy.”

I believe Egyptians are expecting too much in too little time. This tends to exacerbate the situation. In addition, the tremendous lack of trust in any form of government and in executive officials has widened, as no tangible changes have as yet been witnessed in the Egyptian economy.

Therefore, I strongly believe that Egyptians need to demonstrate more patience and more dedication to action rather than words. Three urgent and important tasks need to be addressed in parallel in order for Egypt to move forward. These include: establishing security on the streets; increasing employment; and settling sectarian differences, whether confessional or based in Islamic doctrine. First and foremost, street security must come at the top of the list of priorities for any government in power. Security in this context means protecting individuals, economic entities, tourism, foreign investment and expatriates. Second comes the state of the economy as a whole; in this area, the only way out of the dual traps of social injustice and poverty is not through international aid and assistance, but rather through work, work, work. Last but not least, I strongly believe that Egyptians need to work out their ethnic and doctrinal differences in order to move forward toward a better future.

## Hopes, Expectations and Outcomes in Syria

Salam Kawakibi

Since the beginning of the 21st century, and thanks to the astonishing development of new information technologies, autarky is no longer possible, no matter where you live. The political changes which swept through East and Central Europe, as well as the more or less successful waves of democratization in countries across Latin America and Africa, have left Arab populations with an intense hunger for change. At the same time, there is a widespread and a well-founded sense that these diverse and varied populations have been left behind by the new global system. This impression has long been a factor in the support found for dictatorships and autocracy. For Western countries, established regimes have served as reliable guarantors of stability in the region, helping prevent the expansion of radical Islam and control the influx of immigrants. Western countries vigorously supported the maintenance of strong and brutal regimes capable of safeguarding the peace of an ally for which every impropriety is pardoned: Israel.

Just after the start of the Arab uprising in Tunisia in January 2011, official announcements in Syria made it appear out of this world. When the wave of uprisings reached Egypt, the voice of denial persisted, attributing the Egyptian people's anger toward its government to the Israeli Peace Treaty signed in 1977. The Syrian media, which has for decades been subject to strict control, also served to mitigate the Arab Spring's effect on the Syrian public. On January 31, 2011, Bashar al-Asad himself refuted any likelihood that "his" country would be affected by the wave of Arab uprisings. Praising the stability and trust which, according to him, characterize the relationship between the rulers and the ruled, Asad insisted that his country had undertaken gradual but genuine reforms over the past ten years. Less than two weeks after this declaration, the capital Damascus started to vibrate to the rhythm of small protest meetings – which were quickly repressed by the police. On March 15, children in the city of Daraa were arrested and tortured, and their families

humiliated while requesting their release. These events triggered the uprising that continues today.

Their crime? The children, influenced by what they had seen in the press, dared to scrawl “down with the regime!” on a wall. This serious incident marks the true beginning of the people’s struggle in Syria. However, as with all the other revolts, the initial event is like a spark striking dry grass that has been parched by decades of repression, disastrous economic mismanagement, and endemic corruption.

To illustrate the impact that I myself have felt, I would like to share a personal experience. Shortly before the popular uprising in Syria, I was wandering through the streets of Aleppo, the country’s second largest city and economic capital, in order to observe the social and political behavior of the population in the context of Arab revolts. I was struck by the people’s revolting calmness, their pathetic lack of concern. As a political scientist who has devoted his entire academic life to questions of democracy and human rights, and as the great-grandson of an erudite reformist famed for his writings on the “characteristics of despotism,” I could not help but feel a deep sense of bitterness. Suddenly, however, a moderate-sized demonstration literally appeared before me in the center of the city. Students, workers and officials were brandishing portraits of Che Guevara, Nasser and other emblematic figures of modern political history. Tears came to my eyes as I followed the procession and listened to the slogans demanding freedom and dignity.

In a country where gatherings, even for a wedding party, require an authorization permit from the security forces, such a demonstration was, in my eyes, comparable to a revolution. But the most surprising aspect of the scene unfolding before me was the behavior of the police, who acted like casual bystanders, following the procession with lethargic, mocking gazes.

This came as a true surprise, and it marked a real revolution in the political practices of the country. I came closer to opening a discussion with my bold fellow countrymen, while reproaching myself for the pessimism that had driven me to deny any likelihood of political reform being initiated by the young president in office for the past 11 years. Yet proof of an evolution was there, it was tangible! A protest demonstration without repression, now that’s

really something! Just as I was about to approach a young woman demonstrating, a man's voice yelled at me: "STOP you bloody (...) can't you see we're on air?"

Shortly after this, my dreams began to come true, and this nation of people whom I had considered apolitical, obedient and apathetic, demonstrated great heroism by showing their anger and willingness to change their lives through peaceful demonstration. Every sneakily-orchestrated attempt by the government to discredit the protest movement has thus far failed. Even after more than 7,000 deaths and several thousand injured, young Syrians continue to demonstrate astonishing courage and determination to the world. In a country that has had effectively no political life for decades, the level of political consciousness and the sense of humor shown by its citizens confers a touch of hope on this unfolding tragedy.

I no longer have the right to be a pessimist, since fiction has become reality. It has come at a high price, but it demonstrates that the Syrian people have taken their fate into their own hands, and that they will ineluctably obtain their freedom.

Despite my own pessimism since the beginning of the Arab uprisings – accompanied by my doubts about their outcomes – I have often been pleasantly surprised by the results: tyrants do indeed leave. The rest is a complex and treacherous process. However, nothing will permit any regrets about the past. From this point onward and despite the high price exacted by the Syrian revolution, hope in the people and in their will must impose itself.

Why have these events taken place now and not earlier? There are several factors that can explain the timing of these developments, be they planned or improvised. These include the accumulation of political frustration, a favorable political climate throughout the region, a severe economic crisis, and the stubborn antagonism of despotic rulers toward those attempts by traditional opposition forces to undertake concrete political reforms.

Many observers and/or experts have been surprised by the Arab revolutions in general, and the ongoing revolt that has been taking place in Syria for almost a year. However, if we take a step back and examine the scholarly literature of the last 20 years, we see the details of a larger and more complex

picture of developments. Economic, demographic, political and even urban analyses point to the dismal failure of state apparatuses and a security takeover (securitocracy) of public and private life. The decline of the education system coupled with the widespread desire among most of Syria's young and educated to emigrate underscore just how deep despair runs. The repeated attempts among intellectuals and activists to trigger a wave of hope by creating the perception of building blocks for reform within the wall of authoritarianism failed to yield the desired results. Repression has been the government's sole response to the population's legitimate claims.

Since Bashar al-Asad came to power in 2000, there have been continual calls to reform the political system. These demands have never been radical. Those calling for such reforms would have been satisfied with a series of structural reforms in public policy and long-awaited advances in allowing for the freedom of expression. However, these calls were rejected with contempt and repression. So-called placebo actions have been undertaken instead to give the impression that genuine change was afoot. This policy might have attenuated some of the expectations and even convinced European governments of the Syrian government's supposed will to undertake genuine reform. Since the beginning of the 21st century, famous personalities and Syrian political groups alike have tried in vain to reach out to the new regime headed by Bashar al-Asad, who succeeded his father. They wanted to turn the page of the past "together" and try to make a fresh start in a relatively democratic new Syria. This included calls to establish an independent judicial system, annul the state of emergency (which has been in force since 1963), liberalize freedoms of assembly and expression, and introduce political pluralism and power sharing. But the al-Asad regime rejected the premises of the Damascus Spring, using the usual methods of arrest, trials and imprisonment to quell any opposition.

Disappointment leads to frustration, which can lead to a social protest movement in a country such as Syria where a culture of fear runs deep. Syrian society is primarily a young society which, thanks to new communication technologies, is now able to maintain contact with the outside world and can finally make its voice heard. This is a society capable of positive change without the leadership of a patriarchal or totalitarian figure. It is a society which feels entirely involved in what has happened in Tunisia and Egypt. It

has always been at the heart of the Arab world and wishes to remain so while at the same time upholding the spirit of freedom and conciliation.

However, for Syrians, it appears that the path of freedom is beset with terror, blood and pain. The past year has clearly brought to light a strong will among Syrians to bring down the wall of fear. At the same time, the means of bringing about change peacefully and constructively are blocked. Peaceful demonstrations, which continue throughout the country, are still being brutally repressed. The protest movement has grown increasingly militarized as many soldiers, rejecting orders to kill their fellow Syrians, have deserted the national military and joined demonstrators. Militarization is undesirable in the abstract sense, and it serves the purposes of those who hold the monopoly on violence and power – yet the human desire to defend civilians or to avenge one's own people is very understandable. It is thus all the more important that the political opposition should manage to circumscribe the military insurrection in order to avoid excesses and abuses. In a complex situation, nothing seems obvious.

To overcome the crisis, many attempts are being made on a regional level, with diverse initiatives coming from the Arab League. On a broader international level, there are declarations, sanctions, meetings and condemnations. As violence against civilians continues to grow, the armed opposition, formerly exclusively peaceful, is gaining traction. The creation of the Free Syrian Army (ALS) is a result of the deteriorating security situation and a direct response to the need to protect civilians against the killing machine of the state. The activities of the ALS, though, remain disorganized, which is hardly surprising considering its composition and due to its scattered geographic distribution. Civil resistance, even though it comes at a high price, remains the most effective means of overcoming the crisis. The militarization of political protest in the 1980s provided all the necessary arguments to crush it with unrestrained violence. But the circumstances are different this time, and the need for protection is a universal one. Hence, one must accept that the use of arms is necessary and unavoidable for some, and in specific situations.

In parallel, Syrians are thinking about a different future for their country on many different levels. To this end, think tanks have been created under different banners. The objective is to provide the Syria of the future with

concrete and feasible projects. As these developments gain momentum, the role of the long neutralized and apolitical Syrian diaspora will grow increasingly important. Syrian migrants, until recently concerned primarily with family matters and holidays spent in their country, now meet with political refugees worldwide to discuss the future of their country. And Syrians in exile have also begun to play out a variety of scenarios with experts inside Syria. After all, Syria has a considerable human resources potential that has long been hollowed out by acute clientelism.

The near future seems fraught with uncertainties and complexities. But the good will needed to restructure the country is gaining momentum. Stability and peace for the country's modern population will require more than the introduction of political, constitutional and legal reforms. Indeed, there is an urgent need to rebuild a civil society that has for many years been dissolute and repressed. Much is being done to reconstruct the notion of citizenship eroded by decades of a culture of fear that had turned the inhabitants of this country into mere subjects. Restoring the social fabric that has been damaged by the revolutionary process – and which so many have tried to destroy – will require tremendous effort.

Ultimately, after one year of conflict, Syrian men and women have come to understand they can rely only on themselves and that they should expect nothing from the world outside. Thanks to their astonishing tenacity in maintaining resistance, continued creativity in devising new forms of protest, and relatively stable sense of national unity, they will face the challenges ahead in determining their future.

## Hopes, Expectations and Outcomes in Yemen

Elham Manea

Was it a surprise?

Was it a surprise that people poured into the streets demanding an end to Yemeni President Ali Abdallah Salih's rule? No. It was not. The time was ripe for such an eruption.

When the youth demonstrations started in February 2011, after more than 32 years of Salih's rule, Yemen was the embodiment of a failed state, ranking 13th among countries deemed most at risk of failure in the Fund for Peace's 2011 Failed State Index. In a country where two-thirds of the population is under the age of 24, the unemployment rate was conservatively estimated at 35 percent; other estimates put the rate at 49 percent. Nearly half the population was living under the poverty line, on less than \$2 per day. Corruption was epidemically rampant. The country ranked 146th out of 179 countries on Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (2010). Water is scarce and the country's oil resources, which account for two-thirds of public revenue and 90 percent of export receipts, have dwindled.

Certainly, under these circumstances, protest demonstrations and demands for change were only to be expected. The time, I repeat, was ripe for such an eruption. Not to expect this would have been bizarre.

What surprised me, however, was the involvement of the youth – their pivotal role in shaping the dramatic events that took place in Yemen, as well as their determination to stay peaceful. That was a bit of fresh air.

Few, if any, expected the chain of events that started when Tunisian Mohammad Bouazizi set himself on fire on December 17, 2010 – a flame that spread from one authoritarian Arab state to another. These countries were also ripe for a change. And like their Arab counterparts, Yemeni youth were fed up with their corrupt political elites; they wanted change, a future, and

wanted it now, in their own country. Just a day after President Ben Ali fled Tunisia, young, middle-class, educated Yemenis decided to organize a demonstration in front of the French embassy to protest the shameful official French position toward the Tunisian uprising. A day later, a huge demonstration started at Sana'a University. The uprising was thus launched, and spread to other cities in Yemen.

At this moment, there was again hope in Yemen – something I have long missed in my country. I belong to a middle-aged Yemeni generation that lost hope, a fact that prompted me and many other educated Yemenis to leave the country and build a future elsewhere. And now here I am, meeting a different sort of Yemeni youth – educated, determined to make a difference, but in their own country. In fact, when I attended a women's rally at Taghir Square at Sana'a University on February 28, 2011, nothing but hope could be sensed.

Unity was the motto at the time. But at that point, unity was achievable only because the rallying cry of toppling the president proved to be so powerful. It managed to unify different groups that in other circumstances stand at odds with one another. In this case, each joined the movement, but for different reasons.

Even during these days, before the March 19 massacre of protestors in Taghir Square, I was pestered by doubts. As a human and a Yemeni I could not help but hope; and hope, believe me, is a magical force. But as a social scientist, I learned long ago that one cannot cook without the necessary ingredients. In the Yemeni case, the necessary ingredients for a stable nation-state are absent. In fact, the problem with Yemen has to do with the project of the state itself.

In the end, the reality of Yemeni political and social structures rose to take over once again, and the expectation that things could indeed change for the better faded away. This is in short where we stand today.

If we try to untangle Yemen's web of political problems, it becomes clear that the country is facing serious concurrent issues:

**First:** There is a power struggle among the core ethnic elites who have run the country for decades, enabling the president to survive and remain in

power. Their bickering threatens the stability of the whole system. Over time, the state came to represent the interests of a dominant ethnic group (northern Zaydi Qahtani of the Hashid tribal confederation), becoming a vehicle for safeguarding their ethnic interests. Other social groups were pushed to accept the institutional reality of a state that has rarely considered them to be equal citizens. The lack of solid institutional foundations made it possible for the “ethnicized” elites to hijack the state’s institutions for their benefit. These core leaders control among themselves the army and security services. However, their solid alliance began to wither at the beginning of 2000, when Salih started to groom his son Ahmed as his successor. The youth protests provided a golden opportunity to one faction of these core strongmen, the Al-Ahmar brothers (the sheiks of the paramount Hashid tribal confederation) and Ali Mohsen Al-Ahmar (Salih’s half brother and top military commander). They readily joined the youth protestors, and military confrontations followed. Ironically, the youth protestors were calling for an end to the Salih regime, but found themselves stuck with a situation in which those who decided to join and protect them were very much part of that regime. This is one reason why the youth project of change ultimately floundered.

**Second:** Yemen is not one Yemen. It is many Yemens. And the issue here transcends the north-south division. The issue here has to do with the statehood projects in both North and South Yemen. The scope of this article does not allow this issue to be discussed in depth here. Suffice it to say that Yemen is two units, each of which is divided in turn along ethnic lines, a situation that led to recurrent violent coups and wars in each region both before and after their unification in 1990. More specifically:

North Yemen has been split along tribal and sectarian lines, among other divisions. The most relevant division today is that between Hashimite Zaydis, Qahtani Zaydis, Sunni Shafites and Sunni Salafites.

This division has since 2004 partly expressed itself in the tribal and sectarian war of Sada’a, led by the al-Huthi family, and in the current fighting between Salafi groups and the Huthis in the northern provinces. The Huthi movement has turned the northern Sada’a into a state within a state. Its troops have been fighting their way to neighboring governances since the end of 2011 (Haja, Amran and Al-Jawf). Some news reports indicate that this fighting is taking

place with the blessing of the Yemeni president. It would not be a surprise if this turns out to be true.

Sectarian division has also been obvious in the alienation of the Sunni Shafites in the area's middle regions, specifically in Taiz, Ibb and Al Baida. It was no coincidence that many of the youthful students who started the protests came from these middle regions!

South Yemen, on the other hand, has been divided along tribal, regional and cultural lines. The most prominent division has been that between the Ad Dali and Radfan regions on the one hand, and the Abien and Shabwa regions on the other. The region of Hadramout, moreover, has always considered itself a separate unit that deserves statehood. The Southern Movement is divided between those who demand separation and those who demand a federal system. Interestingly, this divergence also falls along regional lines!

Both the Southern Movement, with its fractured leaderships, and the Zaydi Huthi movement supported the youth uprising when it started in February. However, the support of Ali Mohsen al-Ahmar and the al-Ahmar clan has increased the influence of Salafi and Muslim Brotherhood Islamists in the sit-in camps, leading to an end to this cooperation.

**Third:** Yemen has always been a weak state. Today the state is not only weak; it is on the verge of collapse. North Yemen has struggled to control its territory since its inception in 1962. And South Yemeni political elites used brutal coercive measures under the socialist system (1967 – 1990) to keep the state under control. But the moment the party collapsed, the state apparatus toppled with it. Since the 1994 civil war, the weakness of the Yemeni state has been its most characteristic feature. The power struggle between core elites, the south's persistent challenges to northern authority in their regions, and the on-and-off Huthi rebellion have destabilized the whole system, creating a power vacuum. This vacuum has been filled in some parts of the south by Islamist terrorists.

Given the magnitude of Yemen's problems, I have expressed doubt that the Gulf Cooperation Council's initiative, issued on May 21/22, 2011, which led to a presidential inauguration of the former Vice President Hadi, would provide Yemen with a safe exit from its explosive situation.<sup>1</sup> In fact, I have considered it a patchwork solution unable to defuse the crisis either in the short or long run. This document treats the Yemeni crisis as a simple conflict between two fighting parties and ignores the Huthi and Southern movements. Most importantly, it seeks to preserve the status quo within the Yemeni political system. This has to do with the leading role played by Saudi Arabia in charting the initiative. The kingdom has an interest in preserving the old Yemeni system, whose leaders have been its trusted allies despite the tensions between the two. The Saudi government also has an interest in hindering real political reforms in Yemen, lest this encourage Saudi citizens to demand similar actions.

Yet keeping the status quo is the surest way to impending disaster in Yemen.

What Yemen needs are serious steps that address the very core of its problems: a single ethnic group's control of the decision-making process and the corresponding exclusion of other regional, sectarian and tribal groups; the absence of a nation-state that represents all segments of its population; an institutional deficit; and a need for real democratic reforms that usher in the rule of law and are able to hold state officials accountable. Achieving this will require three important steps to be taken:

<sup>1</sup> The initiative calls for the Yemeni president to delegate his authorities to his vice president, and set a 90-day period within which the vice president is to call presidential elections. However, it makes sure there will be only one candidate in the presidential election, the vice president. It also holds that after the vice president is "elected" as president, he is to be responsible for overseeing a transitional period. The opposition is to name a candidate for the position of prime minister, and a "national consensus government," divided on a 50/50 basis between the government and the opposition, is to be created. The government is to have the authority to "disengage" the armed forces and their rival military forces and send them back to their camps. The government and the president are to call for a national dialogue conference, tasked with discussing the Yemeni conflicts (including the southern question) in a manner that preserves Yemen's unity.

**Demonstrating the will to be part of a nation:** The Yemeni state, before and after unification, has been perilously weak since its inception. For the country to start afresh, its various social groups with their diverse sectarian, regional and tribal affiliations have to agree to be part of this nation. They have to want to be part of this nation. But if this will is to emerge, the state must guarantee equal citizenship to its citizens and must stop acting to safeguard a single ethnic group's interests.

**Creating a federal system:** I am of the mind that keeping Yemen unified will be less costly than allowing it to separate into different units. To give one example, the separation of South Yemen would not mark the end but the beginning of southerners' problems. The divisions within South Yemen would come to the fore, which would ultimately divide it into at least three parts. From this point of view, a federal system that guarantees regional autonomy, prevents the hegemony of one region over others and respects citizens' rights offers a way out of this crisis. The one condition necessary for this step is that the various Yemeni social groups must demonstrate a will to be part of this federal system. If this is absent, then an orderly separation is warranted.

**Creating a state that functions:** The international community would be wise to step in and help Yemen build its institutional foundation, strengthen its state's capabilities and achieve conditions of law and order. I am mentioning the international community here because Yemen is not in a position to do that alone.

I am well aware that all these steps will be very difficult to achieve. Nobody said that the task is simple. A difficult and complex situation requires difficult decisions and solutions. And even if this task seems overwhelming, as a human and a Yemeni I will never lose sight of the fact that it is we, the humans, who can make a difference.

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# Looking Ahead: Prospects for Democratization and Better Governance in the Arab World

Eberhard Kienle

## Introduction

Many Arab states have seen greater political change in the last 15 months than in the preceding decades. Largely untouched by the famous third wave of democratization, they had been havens of continuity, falsely interpreted as stability. However, in late 2010 and early 2011 peaceful popular protests of an unprecedented scale spread from Tunisia to most other Arab-speaking autocracies. Collective action, despite the various differences in terms of initial demands, extent, intensity, actors and forms, expressed long-standing grievances that could not be effectively expressed or addressed under authoritarian rule. Within two months, the seemingly irremovable presidents of Tunisia and Egypt resigned, the former after some twenty-five years in office, the latter after thirty years. A few months later, their Libyan counterpart was overthrown after more than forty years of basically undivided rule. Even in the largely calm oil monarchies in the Gulf, tensions rose as discontent repeatedly generated public protests; a number of demonstrations took place in parts of Saudi Arabia while a sustained popular movement developed in Bahrain. Political regimes had not faced challenges or undergone transformations of similar importance since the “socialist” revolutions of the 1950s and 1960s that had brought to power Gamal Abd al-Nasser in Egypt and the Ba’thist rulers of Iraq and Syria. Similar popular contestation at a regional scale had not been seen since the period of decolonization when protests against foreign domination occurred roughly simultaneously in various Arab states.

From the outset, actors and observers alike have referred to the protests as revolutions, sometimes even as one single Arab revolution reminiscent of the “Arab revolt” that a century ago contributed to the defeat of the Ottomans. Others more cautiously preferred to interpret developments as belated

transitions to democracy that would finally bring an end to the “Arab exceptionalism” that for decades had delayed the advent of the democratic end of history. Both readings may ultimately be borne out by events as revolutions and transitions frequently take years to unfold; however, they may also overemphasize change where important continuities persist. The most palpable revolution so far has occurred at the level of individuals who transformed themselves from subjects into citizens, ready and able to take their destiny into their own hands. Politically, however, most of the “revolutions” remain unaccomplished and the transitions partial or blocked at best. The question therefore arises whether recent changes and likely future developments should at all be examined from these perspectives.

In any event, the prospects for democratic government and good governance in the Arab world need to be discussed on the basis of developments on the ground and against the backdrop of the history and conditions of each of the countries concerned. The rapid spread of contestation across state boundaries should not obscure important differences among and even within these countries. The different ways in which the incumbents responded to the protests and the equally diverse political dynamics that they have generated point to the limited validity of the domino metaphor and the underlying assumption that the stakes were the same everywhere. Contestation in one country spread to other countries because it spoke to constituencies that felt unable to effectively voice their grievances and seek redress under authoritarian rule. Nonetheless, beyond this common denominator and a number of other similarities, neither the grievances nor their effects were identical, once they became articulated in public. The extent and the forms of protest have varied from country to country, and so has their impact on the various forms of authoritarian rule prevailing in the region. These differences may appear more distinctly over time as diverging dynamics of regime transformation and governance progressively unfold and take shape. Recognizing that the history and conditions of each country are reflected in recent and future developments does not, however, enable us to predict outcomes. It only allows us to identify scenarios that are more likely than others but that may still unfold with the same degree of probability.

## Transitions from authoritarian rule and the prospects for democracy

In order to discuss the different trajectories of events it appears useful to make a first and basic distinction between: (1) countries in which large-scale peaceful contestation has entailed major forms of regime transformation without foreign intervention; (2) others where limited contestation has led to equally limited adjustments; (3) yet others where prolonged contestation has not (yet) shown similar results or (4) the impasse has been resolved by foreign intervention; and (5) countries where contestation has remained narrowly circumscribed if at all it occurred, and political regimes remained basically untouched.

So far, Tunisia is the country where the transition from authoritarian rule in the wake of large-scale collective action is most advanced. The new political order epitomized by the Constituent Assembly, elected in October 2011 in the first competitive elections for decades, may well develop into that of a fully fledged liberal democracy where the rulers are chosen by the ruled and where positive liberties are continuously guaranteed by negative liberties. The absence of an overall winner in the elections and the power-sharing agreement reached by three of the major parties, including the Islamist Ennahda party, bode well for the dual institutionalization of competition and cooperation that characterizes democracies.

However, the demise of the leaders and institutions of the ancien régime has not (yet) prompted the departure or complete marginalization of its many supporters in the bureaucracy, the judiciary and the police. Incidentally, only the major representatives of the former regime party, the Neo-Destour, are prevented from running for election. The armed forces undoubtedly pushed former president Zine El-Abidine Ben Ali to step down and leave the country. However, little else is known about them except for their relatively small size, which may prevent them from opposing a government or regime that enjoys popular legitimacy. To an extent, the question is whether the new Tunisia will resemble Germany after World War I, when remnants of the authoritarian Empire contributed to the disintegration of the Weimar republic, or whether it will resemble the Federal Republic, which more efficiently marginalized

remnants of the Nazi regime, though largely thanks to the winners of World War II.

At present, the former representatives and other advocates of the old order may be no more than a nuisance power with little appeal among the broader population that the law enforcement agencies of the new regime can keep in check. The same applies to new forces that are ambiguous about the merits of democracy, most notably Salafis in and around the Tahrir Party (which has no link to Tahrir Square in Cairo other than linguistic) who are not represented in the Constituent Assembly. However, even nuisance powers are able to sabotage and derail institutional reforms and policies. The future influence of both categories of actors will also depend on the extent to which the new regime is able to meet the demands and expectations of a population that is growing increasingly diverse, economically and socially. Input legitimacy inherent in the democratic aspects of the new regime will have to be matched by output legitimacy and, thus, by policies that cater to the interests of the majority, or to those of constituencies that are sufficiently strong to insure the stability of the new regime.

Only 15 months after the departure of Ben Ali there is reasonable hope that Tunisia is closer to the Federal than to the Weimar Republic. It is nonetheless too early to tell whether the balance of power between the advocates and opponents of democracy has definitely been tipped in favor of the former. Nor have the new institutions yet been tested to the extent that they could be considered sufficiently consolidated to transform political conflict lastingly into democratic competition.

In Egypt, the transition from authoritarian rule remains more tentative, patchy and uncertain than in Tunisia. To date, the departure of president Hosni Mubarak, his friends and family, and the decision to disband the National Democratic Party have not entailed the departure of other components of the ancien régime. This applies in particular to the armed forces which have dominated politics since the Free Officers around Gamal Abd al-Nasser took power in 1952. They remain the most powerful political actor even though Nasser's successors, Anwar al-Sadat and Hosni Mubarak, themselves military officers, increasingly tried to strengthen the police and various secret services as countervailing powers. The armed forces still control

a sizeable part of the Egyptian economy and continue to draw considerable legitimacy from the wars they fought, in particular the 1973 October War that ultimately enabled Egypt to regain control of the Sinai peninsula. In contrast, the Tunisian armed forces never engaged in the sort of military action that could have made them appear as the saviors of the nation. For decades they have been sidelined by the police and the secret services through which president Ben Ali rose to power. Faced with contestation and disorder they had no particular reason to side with the old regime.

So far in Egypt the domestic balance of power has not tilted towards the advocates of a radically new political order. Though weakened by its clumsy exercise of power since February 2011, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) chaired by Field Marshal Muhammad Husayn Tantawi, Mubarak's long serving minister of defense, continues to monopolize the means of coercion and control vast economic (and other) resources to influence the course of events. Though preferably outside the limelight, the officers no doubt seek to defend for many years to come not only the economic interests of the armed forces which control important industries, but also their numerous other privileges, political influence, and the vision of Egypt as a regional power strengthened by conservative moral values, a relatively egalitarian social contract and nationalist ideology.

The sustained large-scale protests that took place in January and February 2011 in and around Tahrir Square in Cairo, in Alexandria, in Suez and in other cities prompted the military commanders to withdraw their support from President Mubarak, himself a former air force officer. In their eyes, his failure to defuse the protests threatened the survival of the entire regime. His attempts to pass power on to his son Gamal further alienated the armed forces who had no sympathies for the person and his economic reforms that collided with their interests. As Egypt's dependency on external actors, in particular the United States, and possible sympathies for the protesters among the lower ranks of the armed forces and among the conscripts ruled out repression, the only viable option consisted in controlled political reforms and attempts to build a new coalition of political forces willing to accept the privileged position of the military.

The limited amendments to the old constitution put to referendum in March 2011 confirmed the preponderant role of the SCAF in the transition to a new political order. Attempts to restrict the powers of the new parliament (elected in late 2011 and early 2012) to shape the new constitution and the transition process more generally reflect similar concerns to avoid any form of “democratic slippage.” The major winners of the parliamentary elections, the Muslim Brothers, who (together with smaller allies who had joined their list) obtained some 47 percent of the seats in the People’s Assembly (at the moment of writing the largely consultative Upper House was not elected yet), seem ready to enter into a tactical alliance with the officers and trade their own participation in the exercise of power for continued, if indirect, military dominance. The Muslim Brothers are clearly aware of the unequal balance of power between themselves and the military, but feel that it still affords them a unique chance to increase their political influence and powers of patronage. The position of junior partner moreover allows them to avoid full political responsibility in a period marked by serious economic challenges related to the transition. To an extent, the alliance with the officers is facilitated by their roughly similar social origins and moral conservatism. This alliance will nonetheless be subject to continuous distrust and to disagreements about future economic policies, an area where the Muslim Brothers emphasize the role of the market while the officers defend state intervention and a strong public sector.

The arrangement may also be challenged, perhaps even violently, by less amenable Muslim Brothers and other political forces, in particular those at the origin of the 2011 protests. However, these other political forces are highly fragmented and deeply divided. Parties and deputies representing the initiators of the February protests obtained no more than a single digit fraction of the vote and would have to continue demonstrations and other forms of action outside the new institutions. Most parties have found it difficult to compete with the Muslim Brothers, who have been known to the population for decades, suffered at the hands of the previous regime, nonetheless transformed networks of support into an impressive political machine, and collected large amounts of funds through these networks inside the country and among Egyptian labor migrants. No less importantly, the Muslim Brothers defend conservative values and speak a language closer to that of the majority

of the population. Often critical of the Muslim Brothers, the Salafis of the Nur Party, who obtained some 25 percent of the seats (again including smaller allies who had joined their list), may occasionally or ultimately side with the non-Islamist opposition, but they appear undecided, partly divided and, moreover, ambiguous as to the merits of democracy. Like the Muslim Brothers, the Nur Party can rely on strong and large networks of support that its members have built over the years to distribute among the needy funds that they have collected among the wealthier. They thereby succeeded in spreading a moral message which, after the fall of Mubarak, could easily be used to mobilize political support. Such uncertainties notwithstanding, the electoral legitimacy of the Muslim Brothers and the coercive power of the armed forces may form the basis for a “historical compromise” of undetermined duration that both sides could use to find additional support through patronage and co-optation. In the short- and medium-term, Egypt may indeed feature the traits of a deficient democracy reminiscent of Turkey after the 1980 military coup or Chile after the official end to military rule.

Morocco and Jordan form the second group of countries where the monarchies managed to absorb more limited contestation by moderate adjustments that reconfigure or “upgrade” authoritarian rule. Less extensive and less intense than in Tunisia and Egypt, contestation could be channeled into policy changes that address a variety of socioeconomic grievances and new constitutional provisions that strengthen (or in the case of Jordan are supposed to strengthen) elected bodies and the judiciary without endangering the preponderant role of the rulers. For instance, under the new Moroccan constitution, the king remains the “Commander of the Faithful,” a position that invests him with religious legitimacy and the capacity to circumvent other provisions of the constitution in complete legality. Similarly, the president of the council of ministers (as the new constitution renames the former prime minister) presides over cabinet meetings only as long as the agenda does not include security and strategic issues. By implication, the domestic balance of power has not been redressed in favor of the forces of contestation. The limits to both contestation and adjustments seem to confirm the advantages not of monarchies per se, but of monarchies endowed with mechanisms of popular representation. The latter translate into legitimacy and co-optation gains that allow these monarchies to contain demands for broader change and to avoid

substantial regime transformation prompted by positive responses to these demands or by rifts among their own supporters (see below).

The cases discussed so far differ from a third group of countries where contestation, though strong and sustained, has so far failed to entail the transformation of political regimes. In Yemen and Syria protests continue to face severe repression, a fact that in both countries pushed small minorities of opponents and army deserters to switch to armed forms of resistance. To the extent that the rulers have announced “reforms,” they remain rhetorical or devoid of substance, such as is the case with the official end to the state of emergency decreed by Bashar al-Asad in Syria. In Yemen, the ultimate departure of president Ali Abdallah Salih does not necessarily weaken his associates and allies, including his son and other family members who control a large part of the “security” services. At the moment of writing, the opposition in both countries seems to lack the strength to unseat the rulers who, in turn, seem to lack the strength to crush the opposition. The internal balance of power has no doubt changed to the advantage of the opponents in the sense that they are managing to pose a serious challenge to the rulers, but it has not changed to the extent that it would enable them to turn the tables on their adversaries.

Depending on the material, symbolical and moral resources available to the protagonists, the stalemate may continue for a considerable length of time until one or both sides are exhausted. Obviously, scorched earth policies, continued harsh repression, and the punitive disruption of food, drinking water and medical supplies may precipitate the defeat of the opposition. In the case of Syria, international sanctions may weaken the ruling group over time, though probably only once they are implemented by all neighbors and major global players. If in any of the two countries the rulers ride it out and defeat the opposition, they may at some stage concede a degree of political decompression to avoid future uprisings and regain the favors of the international community. Needless to say, after the defeat of the opposition any such decompression would only perpetuate authoritarian rule. In the event of a rift within the ruling group or the simultaneous exhaustion of both conflicting parties, a historical compromise and power-sharing agreement may pave the way to a new political order. However, even then, opposition from

extremists on both sides may result in continued conflict, though with the battle lines partly redrawn. In the event of their outright defeat, the present rulers of Syria and Yemen may face a fate similar to that of Muammar al-Qadhafi in Libya. Since they belong to a different sub-state solidarity group than the majority of their opponents, their demise may precipitate that of the entire group. In both countries many participant actors have increasingly come to see their conflict as one opposing such groups defined by family, tribal, linguistic and religious terms. In Syria the fall of the Alawite rulers around Bashar al-Asad may entail the social, economic and political marginalization of the Alawites at large, if not worse. The fact that the current ruling groups represent some members of this faith rather than all may easily be forgotten. In Yemen, so-called tribal dynamics could spell similar trouble for the associates of (former) president Ali Abdallah Salih. Only if the conflict parties manage to reach a power-sharing agreement will there be the opportunity for the future regime to be built on more than co-optation for the winners and repression for the losers.

Developments in Bahrain and Libya illustrate a fourth trajectory which may also be seen as a variation on the aforementioned one. Unlike in Syria and Yemen, decisive foreign intervention in support of one of the sides has at least temporarily brought an end to the conflict between advocates and opponents of the status quo. In Bahrain, the arrival of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) troops led by Saudi Arabia consolidated the embattled monarchy; in Libya the intervention by NATO forces brought about the end of the Qadhafi regime. Societal cleavages as deep as in Syria and Yemen separated the rulers of Libya from large parts of the population and continue to do so in Bahrain. Narrow family, so-called tribal and regional ties provided the social basis for the Qadhafi regime, while the Bahraini monarchy continues to stake its future on support from the Sunni minority, thus marginalizing the country's vast Shi'i majority. The conclusions of an official inquiry ordered by the king and chaired by a reputable international lawyer that were published in November 2011 could be critical of government repression precisely because the regime felt relatively secure again.

Although in Libya the domestic balance of power has been reversed in favor of those who fought Muammar al-Qadhafi, their coalition remains fragmented

while supporters of the old regime may regroup. Above and beyond ideological differences, the population at large is divided into solidarity groups based on regional, family and tribal identities similar to those that supported the old regime. These divisions are reflected in the composition and workings of the National Transition Council which, for the time being, remains the highest political authority in the land. The old regime represented some of these groups who obviously continue to command the loyalty of their members, even though they have lost their privileged access to power and resources. In their eyes, the new regime lacks legitimacy, a deficiency that is exacerbated by the means of coercion that they continue to control. Under these conditions, post-conflict efforts at state-building will face tremendous challenges. The success of such efforts will depend on the extent to which they cater to the interests of all or the strategically most important groups. Rents may help to erect co-optation into the main pillar of the new political order. Since co-optation is likely to involve groups as much as individuals, the new political order is likely to feature consociational traits, however informal they may be. Such efforts may also fail and further deepen societal cleavages, with outcomes ranging from continuous tension between the various groups to open civil war. The latter is all the more likely as alleged supporters of the old regime are being marginalized or persecuted while the country is awash with weapons and the various groups compete for rents. Put differently, a new Iraq may be in the making. In the only country apart from Tunisia where events put in motion by popular contestation led to the complete demise of the ancien régime, the future remains undecided.

The fifth trajectory is that of most GCC states and Algeria, where contestation has been narrowly circumscribed if not almost absent. All countries in this group are major oil and gas exporters, even though the cases of Libya and, to a lesser extent, Bahrain illustrate that not all major rentier states have been immune to contestation. Bahrain is a special case insofar as it now lives primarily on the recycling of rents accruing to its neighbors and therefore faces additional challenges to its welfare regime. In both Bahrain and Libya, cleavages between solidarity groups based on strong sub-state identities over-determined relations between the rulers and many of their subjects and thus counterbalanced the soothing effects of rents. Another exception, Kuwait, did experience contestation but largely as part and parcel of a conflict

that for decades has opposed the ruling Sabah family to the advocates of constitutional monarchy.

Contestation related to the Arab Spring has also been narrowly circumscribed in Lebanon, Iraq and Palestine where conditions in critical aspects differ from those prevailing in the other Arab countries. Neither the Lebanese nor the Iraqis live under authoritarian rule, even though they suffer from various and serious restrictions on positive and negative liberties. From a formal and procedural point of view both states are democracies, obviously with significant shortcomings and deficiencies. Their parliaments, governments and presidents are elected, and recent elections have changed parliamentary majorities and the composition of governments. Protests mainly focused on the inefficiencies of government and the absence of good governance rather than on the nature of the political regime. At the same time, the consociational aspects of political representation and of the exercise of power frequently prevent mobilization from reaching parts of the population that feel represented, protected and able to influence decisions. In Palestine, finally, the authoritarian exercise of power by the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) in the West Bank and Hamas in the Gaza Strip appears closely linked to the intrinsically authoritarian nature of Israeli occupation and encirclement. In the three cases, contestation has been a permanent feature of politics not only over the past 15 months but for years and decades, only partly affected by recent events in other Arab countries.

In Palestine, the Arab Spring may ultimately entail a greater degree of unity and cooperation between the PNA and (parts of) Hamas, partly in response to protests against the current divisions and stalemate, but largely as a consequence of developments in other Arab countries. Hamas, for instance, appears to draw comfort from the performance of the Muslim Brothers in the Egyptian elections and is yet weakened by the exacerbating conflict in Syria, two contradictory developments that both push it to mend fences with the PNA.

## Recent change and its future promises: The factors at work

Contestation from below, responses from above and regime transformations in the various Arab countries correlate with a number of societal, economic and political features some of which have already been referred to. These correlations in turn suggest some causal relationships that by and large reflect processes of state formation and other long-term historical processes. To the extent that they explain events since December 2010, they also provide some indication as to how far transformation processes are likely to take political regimes on the road to democracy and good governance.

The countries where discontent has failed to translate into effective contestation and those where protests were contained by the expansion of welfare provision are all major oil and gas producers. The correlation thus tends to confirm traditional assumptions about the political effects of rents which enable rulers to pursue expansionary budget policies and thus alleviate socioeconomic grievances on the one hand and develop mechanisms of control and repression on the other (Beblawi and Luciani 1987; Ross 2001, as opposed to Herb 2005). In spite of various limitations and hesitations, oil-producing countries have adopted such policies for decades. From the early days of the protests, the swift increase in subsidies, new cash payouts, and the creation of tens of thousands of new jobs in government administrations no doubt further stabilized the regimes. In Algeria, memories of the civil war that followed the aborted elections of 1992 may also have reduced readiness to challenge the rulers. The soothing effects of expansionary budgetary policies have also been reinforced by repression, by limited “authoritarian upgrading,” or any combination thereof. Developments in Algeria, Oman, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates amply illustrate variations on this theme. The argument may hold some truth even for Sudan, even though the roughly simultaneous accession to independence of its southern parts have created a quite unique situation.

The countries where rents failed to stabilize incumbents and regimes differ from the others in at least two important ways. Though a member of the GCC, Bahrain balanced limited oil reserves with sophisticated service industries and thus largely turned into an indirect rentier state. Moreover, in

Bahrain and in Libya, populations are deeply divided into sub-state solidarity groups built on family, tribal or religious ties. In both cases, power and income from hydrocarbon resources have been distributed unevenly, especially in Bahrain where the Shi'i majority is heavily disadvantaged in both respects. In both cases, however, foreign intervention has played a crucial role in perpetuating or toppling the regime in place. Qadhafi fell as a result of NATO intervention, whereas King Hamad of Bahrain consolidated his position thanks to the arrival of Saudi troops.

None of the other rentier states are as internally divided and are therefore in a far better position to avoid massive popular contestation. With some exceptions, protests in Saudi Arabia have remained circumscribed geographically. Although they have in part reflected the concerns of sub-state solidarity groups such as the Shi'is in the eastern parts of the country, they have mobilized altogether smaller sections of the population than in Libya and Bahrain.

In the countries where contestation has remained limited and yielded no more than the upgrading of authoritarianism, rulers not only derive their legitimacy from sources other than popular choice but also rely on representative institutions and mechanisms that allow them to deflect criticism. In Morocco and Jordan, authoritarian monarchies have promulgated constitutions that, without transforming them into constitutional monarchies in the narrow sense, provide for a degree of popular representation. In Morocco such representation – already prior to the recent demonstrations – bordered on participation and co-decision powers in some policy areas; the amendments to the constitution that were introduced in 2011 in order to diffuse the protests further strengthen these participatory features while containing them within limits compatible with the authoritarian exercise of power by the king. Elections and parliaments with limited effects and powers not only postpone the moment when discontent turns into protests; as easy targets they also absorb both and thus shield the unelected seat of power. The Jordanian example shows that even prime ministers and governments that are responsible to the king rather than to parliament may serve as protective fuses as long as it is understood that their term in office may be terminated in response to popular discontent. Even in Kuwait, where voters and deputies

tend to present their demands forcefully, the very existence of a representative parliament may afford the ruling Sabah family a permanently renewable lease of life.

The creation of institutions and mechanisms able to deflect criticism is a possibility that is not open to all authoritarian regimes. Only monarchies may allow parliaments and even governments to be elected in ways that somehow reflect the preferences of the voters simply because the powers of these institutions always remain subordinate to those of the unelected sovereign. In contrast, the continuity of authoritarian rule in republics crucially depends on heavily rigged elections or even elections without choice. Unlike in monarchies, the head of state himself or herself derives his or her legitimacy from the people and therefore needs to be elected. However, not all authoritarian monarchies have tried or managed to establish institutions that would shield them against unrest. The representative bodies created or slightly strengthened by some GCC rulers in the 1990s have remained too obviously dominated by the monarchs to play such a role.

All countries where strong and sustained popular contestation has been met by violent and sustained repression display deep societal cleavages that pit against each other sub-state solidarity groups with differential access to power and resources. In fact, prolonged and violent domestic conflict has rattled all countries displaying such divisions, except where groups considering themselves disadvantaged are relatively small in numbers or weak. In Bahrain and Libya the continued dialectics of protests and repression have only been disrupted by decisive foreign intervention. In the absence of such intervention the impasse in Syria and Yemen may continue for a prolonged period of time.

Contestation and its transforming effects also seem to differ in line with the broader nature of the state as shaped by long-term processes of state formation. Both Tunisia and Egypt, where peaceful large-scale contestations have led to major regime transformations (in Tunisia arguably a new political regime), come closer than most other Arab states to the ideal type of the nation-state defined as a political arena whose boundaries coincide with those of an imagined community commanding the ultimate loyalty of its members. For centuries, the successive masters of both countries have ruled over roughly the same territory and population and thus been able to pursue not

only state but also nation-building strategies with some degree of success. These strategies have reduced internal divides or contained their disruptive effects even though the mutual alienation between Christians and Muslims in Egypt illustrates their possible failure. In contrast, Libya, Syria and Yemen are territorial states that mainly claim or aspire to be nation-states (Korany 1987). They are not only deeply divided internally (as already pointed out); sometimes also their external borders have been redrawn substantially, which further complicates the imagination and building of a community of solidarity coextensive with the population of the state (Kienle 1990).

In the case of Syria in particular, internal divides based on family, religious, linguistic and regional criteria are paralleled by cross-border solidarities based on the same ascriptive criteria. The Syrian Druze, for instance, have close ties with the Druze in Lebanon and even in Israel. Populations in the Euphrates valley and the eastern desert have equally close family and so-called tribal ties with their neighbors in Iraq. These and other cross-border solidarities are older than the borders of the Syrian state that were drawn in various stages after the end of World War I. They persist because, over decades, first the French mandatory power then the governments of independent Syria, all for reasons of their own, avoided or neglected sustained nation-building efforts.

In territorial states like Syria, conflict over power and resources easily develops into a more basic and severe conflict between identity groups. In the case of political entities closer to the nation-state, model contestation and repression target members of the same imagined community rather than “others” and therefore tend to be less violent. In Egypt, for instance, the use of excessive force by the police and armed forces caused numerous deaths and injuries over the past year but never reached the level of violence currently seen in Syria.

The argument may also apply to Morocco and provide an additional explanation for the peaceful nature of contestation and regime response in the kingdom. Morocco is not only a monarchy endowed with the representative mechanisms referred to above but also by and large a historically consolidated entity that like Tunisia and Egypt comes close to the nation-state model. Though rationalized as an act of national reunification, the occupation and annexation of the formerly Spanish Sahara took place at a moment when

Morocco was already largely consolidated as a state and as an imagined community. Unlike in Bahrain, societal divides never prevented the however selective and differential incorporation of different solidarity groups into the state. Tamazight (Berber) has been recognized as a second official language rather late, but some of those who speak it as their mother tongue have for long played an important role in the administration and in the armed forces.

Differences among the countries concerned should not obscure important similarities that have also affected recent events. With regard to protests and regime transformation, such similarities are strongly suggested by their roughly simultaneous eruption in a fair number of Arab states with visible ripple effects in the others. Explanations based exclusively on the contagion effect of contestation encapsulated in the domino metaphor appear to be incomplete. They cannot explain why the various authoritarian regimes had been weakened to the extent that contagion could fall on fertile grounds. Above and beyond their diversity, the various country trajectories converge to the extent that these regimes over decades prevented discontent from being articulated effectively and alleviated through appropriate policy changes. The similarity thus resides in the ultimate and simultaneous failure of the authoritarian regimes to absorb, deflect or oppose pressures from “below.” Nor should grievances specific to certain countries hide the fact that other sources of discontent were more commonly shared. In Syria for instance, the societal cleavages between the mainly Alawite rulers and the majority of the mainly non-Alawite (largely but not exclusively Sunni) ruled have affected the course of events at various stages and levels. However, like in Egypt and elsewhere, contestation in Syria has also reflected the socioeconomic concerns of a variety of constituencies, and considerably so.

The Bertelsmann Transformation Index’s (BTI) time-series show that with the exception of Tunisia, in all countries where major protests have taken place, the overall economic performance remained constant or moderately improved over the past decade. At least subjectively, though, not everybody in these countries benefited from the improvements to the same extent or at least was insured against losses and decline. Independently of how people looked at their own destiny, as far as Arab countries are concerned, the calculation of Gini coefficients has been at best patchy and intermittent. More

importantly, discontent has been rife not only among the losers but also among many winners of the economic reforms that have been implemented since the late 1980s. If in some places and at some moments protests have primarily mobilized the poor, the marginalized and the downwardly mobile, other demonstrations and gatherings have mobilized the better-off and social climbers (Bayat 2011). The initial protests in Sidi Bouzid in December 2010 and those in Suez a month later largely represented the former, but the large demonstrations on Bourguiba Avenue in Tunis and Tahrir Square in Cairo that brought down Ben Ali and Mubarak included many of the latter. There is a Tocquevillian dimension to many of the protests in the sense that the upwardly mobile no longer accepted that authoritarian rulers and crony capitalists denied them access to markets and decision-making. They were even less ready to countenance regression as illustrated by the heavily rigged parliamentary elections in Egypt in autumn 2010 and another glorious “re-election” of Ben Ali in Tunisia. As the BTI also shows, regression or stagnation (which from a dynamic point of view comes down to regression) marked political transformation in most Arab countries over the past few years; the slight improvements at a low level of advancement that the index records with regard to Syria and Libya is not incompatible with an important gap between reality and expectations. Rather than growing poverty, impoverishment and decline, the protests thus more broadly reflect the inability of the authoritarian regimes to respond to the needs and wishes of increasingly socially diverse populations. They remind us of the mismatch between political institutions on the one hand and economic and social change on the other that Samuel Huntington considered a key challenge to existing forms of political order (Huntington 1968). As for the growing social and sociological diversity of the populations, it cannot be disassociated from developments such as the growth of the private sector, the related increase in income differentials, and the intensification of ties with the outside world that are part and parcel of policies of external and internal economic liberalization and ultimately of broader global transformations. One might be tempted to embrace modernization theory if it were not tainted by dubious teleological claims or the equally problematic distinction between modernity and tradition.

In light of the increasing alienation between the rulers and the ruled, and the increasing importance of global standards as a reference at home, the many

efforts by Mubarak, Ben Ali, Qadhafi and Salih to promote the political and business careers of their sons and family members became all the more problematic. Among the ruled, attempts to establish monarchical republics where power would be passed on from father to son no doubt challenged considerations not only of interest but also of dignity (El-Meehy 2011).

## The scope for good governance

The prospects for good governance as a process of decision-making and implementation which, according to one definition need to be accountable, transparent, responsive, equitable and inclusive, effective and efficient, participatory, respectful of the rule of law and consensus-oriented, necessarily need to be discussed with regard not only to procedure and outputs but also to inputs. Phrased differently, good governance depends as much on the opportunities offered to the addressees of public policies to participate in their design as it depends on the intrinsic quality of these policies and the procedures governing their production and implementation. The promotion of due diligence and the fight against corruption are aspects of good governance but cannot sum it up.

Ultimately, forms of governance are closely related to the nature of political regimes as even the World Bank once conceded (World Bank 1991). Thus, authoritarian regimes can hardly compete with functioning democracies on the input side where participation matters. However, the picture is far more blurred on the output side since, for instance, effective policies designed without participation may more adequately reflect demands than policies based on participation that are poorly implemented.

In the new, more participatory regimes in the Arab world, governance is likely to become more complex than it was under their authoritarian predecessors. The number of demands and inputs may rise sharply as citizens can make their voices be heard more easily and elect representatives to defend their causes. By implication, inputs will be more diverse than they had been in the past or will at least come from different social backgrounds. This notwithstanding, the objectives and contents of public policies may show a

degree of continuity as participatory decision-making or new dominant forces may confirm policy choices made previously by authoritarian fiat. For instance, voters may seek to perpetuate out of their personal interest subsidies that authoritarian rulers decreed in order to buy popular support.

However, in line with the above caveat, improvements of governance on the input side will not necessarily be reflected in the intrinsic quality of public policies and their responsiveness to given needs or demands. Far less progress should be expected in countries that continue to suffer from authoritarian rule which, in the Arab countries, moreover displays strong patrimonial features. There will likely be no progress at all in countries like Syria and Libya where the future of the political regime as such remains an open question; rather, continued conflict and uncertainty will entail deteriorating standards of governance. No doubt the BTI Management Index will trace these developments in detail and enable us to assess retrospectively such guarded pessimism.

In Tunisia and in Egypt, where the transition from authoritarian rule is most advanced, policy-making may be expected to reflect a greater degree of participation and therefore more diverse inputs. Clearly, public debates and parliaments are marked by greater pluralism than in the past; in Tunisia the coalition government further increases the likelihood of diverging inputs reaching decision makers. Nonetheless, a number of important caveats apply. In Egypt, public debate has already been relatively open even under the ancien régime, unlike in Tunisia. Conversely, in Egypt, the new parliament is more clearly dominated by an identifiable majority than in Tunisia, and so may be the new government. Despite their numbers, civil society organizations unaffiliated to political parties are still relatively weak in both countries, even though they have enjoyed greater (but nonetheless limited) freedom under Mubarak than under Ben Ali. Their relative weakness may ultimately prevent a meaningful and effective participation of organized and concerned groups and citizens in the policy-making process.

The greater freedom of public debate does not ipso facto entail additional quality of debate. Economic debates, for instance, continue to pit against each other protagonists of far-reaching economic reforms inspired by neoclassical and neoliberal textbooks on the one hand and nostalgia for state-led

development of the 1950s and 1960s on the other. In social matters, advocates of the minimalist state oppose defenders of the old social contract as it existed in the heydays of state-led development. Currently, fashionable debates about a “social market economy” and an “Islamic economy” are extremely general and basically converge towards equally general proposals aimed at some sort of regulation of the market. Decades of authoritarianism have stifled intellectual debate, pushed thinkers and activists into exile, and left the remaining ones with the impression that they would never be heard which, in turn, discouraged them from developing viable projects and alternatives.

In both countries, the objectives and contents of future public policies necessarily depend on the relative strength of political forces in parliament, but also on the strength of extra-parliamentary actors such as the military on the one hand and groups that try to push their demands from forums such as Tahrir Square on the other. Public policies are likely to be legitimated increasingly with regard to values that the mainly Islamist winners of the recent parliamentary elections consider Islamic. However, it must be borne in mind that the old regimes already tended to legitimate numerous decisions with reference to their own interpretation of Islam, in part to fight their Islamist challengers with their own weapons. Thus, on paper at least, Shari’ah law has for long been the major source of legislation in Egypt, even though it remained undefined and its actual impact has also been limited to a few areas such as personal status law. In the future, differences about the definition of Islamic values are likely to prompt numerous debates among Islamists of different shades and allow for a variety of outcomes and alliances with non-Islamists. This applies in particular to Tunisia where members of the Ennahda party occupy less than forty percent of seats in parliament. However, it also applies to Egypt where the Muslim Brothers, the Salafist Nur Party and other Islamists obtained a combined 70 percent of seats, but partly differ in language and in interests.

Although basically all Islamists are morally conservative, they disagree among themselves with regard to important issues such as the rights of women. Their shared claim that an Islamic economy is a regulated market economy cannot hide important differences as to the forms and degrees of regulation which in turn entail different balances of power between the market

and the state. At present, the leaders of the Islamist parties by and large emphasize the role of markets more than that of the state. However, pressures from among their own electorate may push them to opt for more substantial state intervention, in some cases even the redistribution of wealth.

Most other political forces in the two parliaments are also morally conservative and defend various incarnations of the regulated market economy. Only small parties and few independent deputies argue for the return to state-led development and related social security arrangements. However, the armed forces clearly defend a strong public sector, partly because they control a fair share of it, partly because they see it as a guarantee for national independence and sovereignty. At the same time, they defend the merits of the old social contract which, in their eyes, seems to guarantee social cohesion and therefore strengthen national independence even further.

Unfortunately, in Tunisia and in Egypt, the translation of inputs into outputs and the design and implementation of policies as means to attain specific objectives will not overnight benefit from major efficiency gains simply because the political regimes have begun to change. Administrations still lack capacity in terms of human, organizational and other resources, with the exception of some privileged ministries and economically relevant state agencies. Moreover, some parts of the administration may continue to be dominated by remnants of the old regime and drag their feet. Even improved accountability will not immediately remove corruption. More generally, state agencies are not sufficiently insulated from society for their agents to be immune against family and other loyalties. In both countries, major long-term efforts will be needed to build capacity and upgrade state agencies in ways that simultaneously strengthen democratic government.

*Mutatis mutandis*, the future of governance in the other Arab states is likely to be shaped by the very factors discussed for Tunisia and Egypt. Clearly, increasing diversity of inputs will only affect policy-making in countries where mechanisms of representation and even more so mechanisms of participation are being strengthened. At the moment, this is the case in Morocco, to a lesser extent in Jordan, and still in largely informal ways in Libya. In the three countries the weakness of civil society organizations will limit their impact on policy-making. However, in all countries governance will to various degrees

suffer from the institutional deficiencies already described: weak state capacity in terms of human, organizational and material resources, lack of insulation of state agencies from society, divided loyalties of civil servants and other state employees that result from such lack of insulation, and low levels of accountability.

Conditions are particularly grim in Libya where the new, potentially more participatory regime disposes of hardly any administrative capacity that would enable it to process inputs into policies and implement them. The combined effects of erratic rule, the resource curse, and recent violent domestic conflict have destroyed whatever administrative capacity once existed in the country. Even a committed government will need time to address these issues; they will only be settled within the broader context of successful state-building efforts that probably have to start from scratch.

In Yemen and Syria the current political impasse limits diversity on the input side even more so than was the case before. If the opposition is crushed, policy-making is likely to continue as before the uprisings, except for some limited technical improvements in state capacity; if the regime collapses, governance will probably face the same challenges as in Libya. In the case of a power-sharing agreement between the current rulers and the opposition, more diverse inputs will still be processed and policies will still be implemented by highly deficient institutions.

In the GCC states and in Algeria the absence of major regime transformations are likely to contribute to the continuity of processes of policy-making and implementation as far their institutional workings are concerned. Greater financial resources than in countries without significant oil and gas rents will enable governments to address the material dimensions of institutional deficiencies. However, the effects of authoritarian rule are likely to cast their shadow over other aspects of institutional reform, in particular accountability; even improvements to organizational structures and in the area of human resources are likely to collide with some aspects of authoritarian rule. Nor will prevailing patrimonial aspects of the exercise of power help to enhance the insulation of state agencies to the point that bureaucratic logics would dominate decision-making and the implementation of policies. In some countries, selective and limited political decompression may moderately

diversify inputs and thereby affect outputs. In Saudi Arabia, for instance, the extension of suffrage in municipal elections to women might force local councils to cater to new types of demands.

In all countries, policy objectives and content will obviously (continue to) reflect domestic balances of power as well as the impact of external constraints. Independently thereof, remaining authoritarian regimes are likely to try and maintain increases in social spending decided after the beginnings of the protests in Tunisia or to increase such spending even further. While not necessarily convinced that the protests were primarily prompted by material concerns and grievances, these authoritarian leaders think that policy adjustments are their best bet in avoiding broader political reforms that could push them down the slippery slope of democratization. Though disposing of mechanisms to absorb and deflect popular grievances, the monarchies of Morocco and Jordan are likely to make or confirm similar policy choices in order to reduce the potential of further and possibly larger trouble. While all governments will have to worry about output legitimacy, those with little input legitimacy are likely to emphasize it most, partly to compensate for the latter, partly because they cannot rely on free elections and opinion polls to get a clear and detailed picture of the concerns of their subjects. As long as sufficient financial resources are available, general, inclusive, non-targeted disbursements that reach as many people as possible seem to be a viable insurance policy that even lack of administrative capacity cannot easily defeat.

Additional welfare spending may, for the time being, ensure the survival of the incumbents and the resilience of the regimes. In actual practice, such upgrading of co-optation seems to go hand-in-hand with the search for additional legitimacy through a degree of political decompression and continued repression if the new red lines are transgressed. The solution may nonetheless reach its limits when expanding welfare provision and increasing expectations collide with growing populations or a decline in revenues caused by the vicissitudes of the energy market.

## Contextualizing the challenge to good governance

With regard to policy-making and governance, capacity issues in the broader sense will remain a key challenge to all regimes, new and old. Though partly exacerbated by authoritarian rule, these issues affect non-authoritarian regimes as well whose ability to formulate more responsive policies needs to be matched by a similar ability to implement them. Aspects such as the paucity of intellectual and public debate, limited administrative capacities in terms of human, material and organizational resources, the insufficient insulation of state agencies from society and resulting conflicts of loyalty among their staff are common features in the countries of the so-called global south. In these states, dynamics of state- and nation-building have been less successful in producing Weberian bureaucracies than those observed in Western Europe and North America. These limitations are particularly strong in Libya, Syria and Yemen, but they are also clearly visible in the more consolidated states like Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia. In that sense, approaching the nation-state model does not necessarily involve sharing all the features commonly associated with that model. Ultimately related to the history of state formation outside the historical heartlands of capitalist development, these deficiencies are among the defining features of the so-called periphery. To date, they are manifest in all Arab states, whether authoritarian or more participatory in nature. The member states of the GCC and major oil producers more generally may differ from the others in terms of per capita income and imported technology but not in terms of history, social structure and related sub-state solidarities and loyalties. Traditional, largely technical, capacity-building measures dear to development agencies will only entail limited improvements. Whether specific sanctions and incentives can replace long-term historical processes related to successful state- and nation-building remains to be seen.

## Future prospects

In light of these considerations, the prospects for the emergence and ultimate consolidation of a new, more participatory political regime, and possibly a fully fledged democracy, are best in Tunisia and not all too bad in

Egypt. Both are historically consolidated states which their inhabitants accept as legitimate entities and political arenas within which they can articulate and defend their demands. Prospects are less promising in Egypt largely because of the important role that the armed forces have carved out for themselves and continue to play in politics. Most likely it will take time for Egypt to overcome the limitations of a deficient democracy. In Morocco, regime transformation is facilitated by the historical consolidation of the state but simultaneously constrained by the representative aspects of the monarchy which ultimately favor regime resilience through authoritarian upgrading. In Jordan, the representative aspects of the monarchy, though less developed than in Morocco, pose all the more constraints to large-scale regime transformation as the state is also less consolidated historically. While Morocco has certain attributes of the nation-state, Jordan clearly remains a territorial state. In the other states of the latter type the emergence of new political orders face even greater uncertainties. In Libya, the demise of the ancien régime still allows for a variety of scenarios to unfold. In Syria and Yemen, the authoritarian rulers are still clinging on. In the absence of significant contestation, regime transformation in most of the hydrocarbon monarchies in the Gulf and in Algeria will probably be limited to partly prophylactic window dressing. However, not even the repression of the protests in Bahrain will guarantee that the Gulf states will remain calm and quiet forever. Like in Tunisia and Egypt, Tocquevillian dynamics of change may at some point encourage social climbers to challenge the old order; Kuwait may already be on that path. However, even then, future change will not necessarily be substantial enough to transform the events of the past 15 months into fully fledged revolutions or transitions to democracy. By implication, governance in general will continue to suffer from limited participation on the input side. At the same time, capacity issues largely unrelated to the authoritarian, democratic or hybrid nature of the political regimes will continue to affect – and bedevil – policies on the output side.

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# New Neighbors, Old Formulas? The ENP One Year After the Start of the Arab Spring

Tobias Schumacher

## Introduction

In January and February 2012, thousands of people gathered in cities across Tunisia and Egypt to remember the fall of Tunisian President Zinedine Ben Ali and his former Egyptian counterpart, Hosni Mubarak, on January 14, 2011 and February 11, 2011 respectively. While the peaceful demonstrations in Tunisia were marked by pride and joy at the removal of one of the world's worst totalitarian regimes, they were also an expression of many Tunisians' concerns about ongoing socioeconomic problems and the dramatic rise in unemployment since the Jasmine Revolution early last year. In Egypt, on the other hand, regular violent attacks on peaceful protesters carried out by Egyptian security forces are chiefly a reflection of uncertainty about future political development. And even though the first anniversary of the Egyptian uprising was marked by the lifting of the 31-year-old state of emergency and the inaugural session of the first freely-elected parliament, military rule continues its decades-long hold on the country. A similar state of affairs prevails in Algeria, where the political and military elite has, until now at least, proved immune to the oft-cited "North African liberalization virus," despite lifting emergency laws which have been in place since the early 1990s. As for the rest of the southern Mediterranean area, post-revolutionary Libya is currently involved in a complex process of nation-building and Syria has long since crossed the threshold to civil war, whereas the monarchical regimes of the two electoral dictatorships, Morocco and Jordan, have managed to negotiate a path between political reform and maintaining their monopoly on power.

Shortly after the anniversaries of the Tunisian and Egyptian revolts, March 8, 2012 marked one year since the "Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity with the Southern Mediterranean" was unveiled amid much

euphoria by the European Commission and the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton. At the time, Ashton declared that the EU “has the experience and tools to help the countries in the region as they make the journey to deep democracy,” but since then the partnership – partly in response to pressure from the governments of those EU member states that see themselves as advocates of the 2008 Eastern Partnership (EaP) – has converged with the almost identical framework document which also relates to the EU’s eastern and southern neighbors, published on May 25, 2011 under the title “A New Response to a Changing Neighborhood.” This document has since constituted the EU’s strategic response to political developments among Europe’s southern neighbors. It provides the political framework for the EU’s foreign policy initiatives. With reference to the centrality of this document, this author will lay out the most relevant fundamental amendments to the revised, “new” European Neighborhood Policy (ENP). I will then offer a critical overview of the EU’s reaction to the upheaval in the Maghreb and the Mashriq, frequently referred to as the “Arab Spring,” and its associated challenges. Finally, in light of the findings of the BTI 2012, various socioeconomic sectors will be shown in perspective, sectors which are of central importance to the sustained success of partially implemented political and economic transition processes in the southern Mediterranean area, and in which the EU has the capacity and scope for.

## New strategy, old thinking: The basis of the “new” ENP

The priority areas of the supposedly “new” ENP are essentially a remake of the original neighborhood policy, widely regarded as unsuccessful by experts, which was launched in 2003 with the publication of the original “Wider Europe” document, drawn up by the European Commission (hereafter the “Commission”). Incorporating much of the old ENP – promotion and support of democratic transformation processes, establishment and reform of efficient institutions, strengthening of basic law and human rights, anchoring of good governance, reform of the judiciary, battling corruption as well as supporting sustainable socioeconomic development, accompanied by

economic modernization as well as integration in the global economic system – this document is once again based on the “more for more” principle. In other words, the more governments in neighboring southern Mediterranean countries implement reforms in the sectors outlined in the EU strategy paper, the more assistance the EU will offer. At the same time, and this is the central innovation of the revised neighborhood policy, the EU indicates more clearly than ever before that it will restructure or even reduce support for those regimes which delay, impede or prematurely abort reform plans. The “more for more” policy based on positive conditionality already represents the cornerstone of the “old” ENP, not least in light of the offer of “everything but institutions” made by then Commission President Romano Prodi. The emphatic reference to “less for less” indicates on the other hand a greater determination on the part of the EU to sanction aberrant, that is, anti-reform behavior, instead of mutely accepting it. Consequently the EU is threatening that where there is less reform, it will provide less financial aid and sectoral support.

The revision of the ENP is partly based on the realization that since 2003, regimes in the southern Mediterranean neighbor states responded in widely differing ways to the partnership offered to them under the 1995 Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP), which was more or less free of such conditions. The ruling elite in Syria and Lebanon, for instance, were largely indifferent and involved their regional neighbors Algeria and Egypt in the cooperation mechanisms it presented, merely on an occasional, case-by-case basis and as a result of pragmatic cost-benefit analysis. This contrasts with the governing elites in Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia who – although in differing political fields – demonstrated a greater willingness to cooperate and even reform, which nonetheless failed to result in the creation of far-reaching democratic structures and political systems. Consequently there were widespread expectations that the revised ENP would take into account these differing cooperation behaviors and henceforth incorporate mechanisms which allow the EU to respond flexibly and on a case-specific basis to varying degrees of cooperation and reform and thus progress towards democracy.

In the last 13 months, EU Commissioner Füle and the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton, have repeatedly

stressed that the “new” ENP represents the EU’s strategic response to the Arab Spring. Even in the face of the failure of other responses and the fully implemented adaptation of individual elements of the “old” ENP to political developments, particularly in Tunisia and Egypt, such statements cannot be dismissed out of hand. But they only partially correspond to political realities. For one thing, the revision of the ENP was already decided in the second half of 2010, thus at a time when the EU and the regime of then Tunisian President Ben Ali were in the final phase of bilateral negotiations to award Tunisia “advanced status,” and Arab rebellion wasn’t even a theoretical consideration among planning staff in the Brussels institutions. What’s more, both the May 25, 2011 strategy paper and the March 8, 2011 report from the Commission and the European External Action Service (EEAS) dealing exclusively with the Mediterranean area read more like blueprints for an assistance program concentrating on economic and humanitarian aid than a coherent and clearly defined program designed to promote external democracy.

It’s therefore hardly surprising that in its new document policy, the EU proceeds from the assumption that governments in the southern Mediterranean area are ready to embark on a path of reform accompanied or even initiated by outside forces, as they did in the context of the original ENP which came into effect in 2003. However, the revised ENP fails to acknowledge the well-documented fact that in recent decades, not one (Arab) regime has been motivated to implement and maintain a sustainable process of political liberalization as a result of external, non-military pressure. Furthermore, the EU seems to have a limited awareness of the complexity of current transition processes as well as the associated societal protests whose form varies greatly from country to country (see Eberhard Kienle’s contribution in this edition). The strategy paper offers generalizations accompanied by a tendentious and unjustified transfer of the Tunisian development path to other countries in the region which are still overwhelmingly characterized by authoritarian structures. Moreover, within the same document relevant terms such as democratization, transition and democratic transformation are used in the same interchangeable and ill-defined manner as concepts like democracy, rule of law, governance reform and the need to strengthen human and civil rights. The “new” ENP therefore

stands in the tradition of bilateral action plans up to the present day which are also marked by these characteristics, representing nothing more than a vague and incomplete catalog of reforms. There are two additional aspects.

Firstly, even though the EU implicitly acknowledges the continued existence of authoritarian regimes with reference to the “less for less” principle and in its rhetoric, at least, threatens to take a different approach, the May 25, 2011 strategy paper merely alludes to “other political measures” without identifying them, apart from the vague mention of “targeted sanctions.” Therefore, the revised ENP must be seen as an expression of the EU’s inability to exert effective influence on authoritarian regimes to establish and maintain democratic reforms, as long as this threat isn’t credibly substantiated by the appropriate political will.

Secondly, the “new” ENP doesn’t devote a single word to the changed internal power structures in Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt and Libya. Admittedly, free and fair parliamentary elections in the first three named countries only took place in late 2011 and thus after the official adoption of the “new” ENP. In light of the fact that transnational revolts were particularly targeted at the ruling parties which had been in power for decades, and that the success of Islamic parties stood out early on, such an omission is inexplicable. It is, in fact, problematic. Not just because Islamic movements now represent the governing majority in all three states, but rather because the associated long-simmering conflict between secular and religious movements and currents in the Arab Mediterranean states has now come to the light of day, visible even to external observers such as the EU, and providing a lasting solution to this issue is the first and central condition for political consolidation.

## The “new” ENP and the limits of the conditionality principle

### The ENP and the failure of a strategic long-term goal

Enshrining the effective simultaneity of the “more for more” and the “less for less” approaches in policy cannot disguise the fact that the revised ENP

provides neither southern nor eastern neighbor states with an explicitly formulated, strategic long-term goal or a detailed roadmap for realizing it. Whether the principle of “more for more” can really achieve a leveraging effect and inspire reform as desired by the Commission and the EEAS is in turn more or less wholly dependent on prospects offered by neighboring states. Despite recent political developments in the southern Mediterranean area the EU has nonetheless refrained from defining this oft-cited conclusion of the EU European commitment to its neighbors either for itself or for its governmental and non-governmental partners. Neither the May 25, 2011 strategy paper, nor Article 8 of the Lisbon Treaty is useful in this respect. Where the former fails to define the degree to which the “more for more” principle prevails over the principle of tailoring an approach according to the policy area in question, Article 8, which constitutionalizes neighboring states and the associated ENP, merely speaks of the EU’s aim of developing a “special relationship with neighbouring countries, aiming to establish an area of prosperity and good neighbourliness, founded on the values of the Union and characterized by close and peaceful relations based on cooperation.” Aside from the standardized phrasing of this paragraph and the fact that “neighboring countries” remains undefined as a geographical term, the terms used make clear that “special relationships” could potentially incorporate all issue areas and so achieve great depth. In any case, the references to “close relations” and “great depth” are not sufficient to concretize the offer of “more for more” and “everything but institutions,” as they do not set out what cooperation and integration prospects they might provide to the agents of reform in return for which implemented reforms.

### **The ENP caught between insufficient differentiation and duplicity**

The logic of differentiation emphasized anew by Catherine Ashton and EU Commissioner Stefan Füle in May last year, which in any case already underpinned the 2003 ENP, has not proved effective in the EU’s negotiations following the Arab Spring nor, in fact, previously. In fact the contrary has generally been the case. Instead of considering the political, economic, socioeconomic, cultural and historic specifics and developments in each neighbor state and carrying out a policy to promote external democracy

customized and tailored to requirements as well as national, regional and local conditions, since the 2003 ENP the EU has instead pursued a “one size fits all” policy and stuck to this approach – despite declarations to the contrary – since the outbreak of the Arab Spring. With their oft-mentioned vagueness, individual, bilateral action plans may accentuate fundamentally different policy areas and call for partly differentiated reform efforts at the micro level. However since spring 2011, the EU continues to rely on the same instruments as well as the same incentive programs, regardless of whether they are attractive to the recipient country. This applies, for example, to the recent offer of “Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas” (DCFTA) whose structural distinctions from previously agreed Euro-Mediterranean free trade agreements remains to be explained by the Commission and which in any case were also offered to partner countries of the eastern partnership. It also applies to the agreements signed in recent years, at least by individual EU member states and southern Mediterranean states, over readmission of illegal immigrants. Although both types of agreement have proved cost-intensive over the years from the point of view of the relevant neighboring countries, and have in fact generated negative socioeconomic consequences, the EU, which is almost exclusively interested in such agreements, ascribes model characteristics to this approach in the context of its revised ENP. The EU extols it as the central component of the “more for more” approach and so effectively invalidates the principle of differentiation which was supposed to rely on the specificity of each case and promote targeted utilization. That the EU claims to pursue positive and differentiated conditionality according to normative premises, but is instead clearly calculating primarily in accordance with its own interests, independent of the respective conditions in partner countries, serves to confirm accusations of duplicity leveled against the ENP over the years.

This aspect relates directly to the question of the attractiveness of the incentives which are apparently being offered. The EU assumes that Arab and/or North African regimes value putative rewards for political and economic reforms, that is, a vague offer of gradual integration into the EU single market, more highly than the costs that would arise from adaptation to, and adoption of the *acquis communautaire*. This assumption was confirmed, for example, by the signing of the Euro-Mediterranean Aviation Agreement with

Morocco in December 2010 and the parallel gradual integration of the country into EU-European regulations, long sought by the Moroccan regime. In any case the agreement, which is advantageous to both parties in competitive and technical terms, hasn't led to any noteworthy reform projects in accordance with the applicable ENP action plan. Nor did the runup to the signing of the agreement bring any change in Morocco's disregard for political and human rights, adherence to which is one of the concrete preconditions for EU "rewards." In other words, the EU has put aside the "more for more" principle, as it has in numerous other instances, instead of reacting to the lack of reforms and the ongoing abuse of human rights in Morocco by resorting to negative conditionality as required. This precedent means that it will no longer be safe to assume that autocratic regimes in the southern Mediterranean area will be motivated to more reforms because of the "new" ENP, and thus commit to *less* authoritarian practices. Conversely, this is accompanied by an awareness that the "less for less principle" propagated since mid-2011 in practice embodies nothing other than the negative conditionality anchored in every Euro-Mediterranean agreement – and ignored by the EU for years – representing no real threat to reform-averse regimes and remaining, of necessity almost, an ineffective instrument for promoting external democracy.

### **The ENP caught between integration and fragmentation**

The application of the principle of positive conditionality, in place since 2003, which was reinforced in 2011 by the "more for more" approach, essentially raises the possibility that reformist neighboring countries will become involved in a process of gradual, sectorial and policy field-specific integration in parts of the EU's regulatory framework and so gain access to the EU single market. Such a process could very well lead to convergence between the EU and the respective country in the relevant policy area and an accompanying harmonization of its national body of law with the *acquis communautaire*, that is, common vested rights. The Euro-Mediterranean Aviation Agreement signed with Morocco in 2010 serves once again as a vivid example in this context.

But such a scenario only reflects the best-case scenario. Those countries whose regimes are not ready to cooperate with the EU's "more for more"

approach and at the same time reject far-reaching and sustainable political reforms – Algeria, for instance – generally end up even further behind, at least in their democratic development, than those neighboring countries whose ruling elites display a greater willingness to reform. From the EU’s point of view, this is then linked to the consequence that the rejection of transformation among southern partners means that the ongoing watering down of sector-specific external EU borders which are an inevitable by-product of neighboring regimes’ convergence process with parts of the common vested rights will be accompanied by further fragmentation in the Mediterranean area in the policy field of “rule.” In other words: even the “new” ENP can scarcely prevent an already disparate and until now diffuse picture of democratic development in the Maghreb and Mashriq being overlaid by a sharper image of regression, or even a return to authoritarian rule.

If the EU must proceed from the assumption that its southern Mediterranean neighbors still contain reform-averse regimes among their number, who respond insufficiently or not at all to external pressure or external offers and incentives to reform and thus endanger the goal of a Euro-Mediterranean area based on democratic principles, the question inevitably arises: how prepared is the ENP to cope with these challenges? This also incorporates the question, how consistent are conceptions of usage of the “less for less” principle within the EU? And: how should one approach the policy field of “security” and associated fields like energy security and migration in such a context? An especially relevant question when one considers that pursuit of its own vital interests in these fields has brought the EU to a relationship of purely negative, asymmetrical interdependence with authoritarian regimes.

### **The ENP in light of the EU’s internal conflicts of interest**

Almost one year after the publication of the revised ENP, it is already clear that prevailing conflicts of interest both between and within individual EU institutions, which had already hampered the original 2003 ENP and the 1995 Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP), also affect the credibility of the revised ENP. While the Foreign Affairs Council, the EEAS and the

Commission are essentially united in agreement on normative goal setting in support of southern Mediterranean societies' quest for democracy, rule of law as well as consolidation of human rights, there is no agreement either within the respective EU institutions or between the three about how these goals should actually be implemented. In Egypt, for example, the ongoing abuse of human rights resulting from continued de facto rule by the military (see contribution by Kienle in this publication) should, strictly speaking, result in a targeted reduction of EU support in line with the "less for less" principle. Nevertheless, undistinguished and watered-down declarations which simply demand Egyptian authorities refrain from using violence and ensure human rights and civil liberties are in harmony with international standards, are nothing but the lowest – and least effective – common denominator to which the governments of the EU member states can agree between themselves and with the Commission and the EEAS. So instead of evoking the principle of negative conditionality in compliance with the May 25, 2011 strategy paper, based on the gravity of the breach of the relevant association agreement or action plan, the loose coalition led by France and Spain which prioritizes usage of the "more for more" principle, in contrast to some northern European member states and sections of the European Parliament, has prevailed within the EU since the outbreak of the Arab Spring. This development is reflected in the mandate to resume negotiations with the Egyptian government over the DCFTA in the spirit of the association agreement of 2004, given by the Foreign Affairs Council to the Commission on December 14, 2011. Even though it was accompanied by an accurate reference to the country's ongoing democratic and economic reform process, it ignored the military's persistent blockage of democratic reforms.

## The "new" ENP, conditionality and security

Even the passages that deal directly or indirectly with the policy field of "security" are problematic in that the EU – as seen already in the context of the EMP and the original ENP – fails either to define security or to explain the conception of security that should underpin the closer political and security partnership being offered once more. This is especially worth

emphasizing in light of the EU's self-imposed demand for increased engagement in conflicts in its immediate neighborhood. And given that the logic of "more for more" has effectively represented one of the major foundations of the EU's external governance efforts in the southern Mediterranean area, it is difficult to assume that emphasizing it again as part of the "new" ENP will lead to a change in the conflict behaviors of southern Mediterranean regimes or to a more influential and lasting role for the EU in solving territorial conflicts. Leaving aside the fact that territorial conflicts in the southern Mediterranean area are exploited by regimes for domestic purposes and that they represent potential instruments of power to shore up their legitimacy, in its revision of the ENP the EU has once again failed to directly link conflict resolution to the provision of explicitly formulated incentive or reward systems, arranged according to the particular geopolitical sensitivities and security needs of all participants in regional conflicts. This stands in blatant contrast to the Commission and EEAS's affirmatively formulated call for the ENP to be used as a means to stronger, more confident engagement in conflict management and resolution.

Bilateral political and security policy dialogue with regimes in the southern Mediterranean under the EMP was already – apart from negative spillovers from the unresolved Arab-Israeli conflict – hampered by a conceptual imbalance, distinguished above all by the fact that security in the southern Mediterranean remained first and foremost territorially defined, unilaterally organized, and marked by an absence of partnership-building measures. Aside from Europe's security concept, gradually deepening and built on multilateral relations and interdependence, the "new" ENP seems to at least implicitly confront this otherness with its rejection of a wide conception of security, covered in the context of topics such as climate change, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, international terrorism, cross-border criminality, the drug trade, illegal migration, and energy and resource security.

### **The ENP and energy security**

In terms of energy and resource security, the "new" ENP appears quite ambitious at first glance. Both the Commission and the EEAS discuss the prospect of institutionalizing an energy policy dialogue in the future, which

along with the development of partnerships in the areas of renewable energy, energy efficiency and nuclear security also allows for the market integration of those neighboring states considered important by the EU in the area of gas and oil export (Algeria, Libya) as well as solar energy (Morocco, Tunisia). Whereas the EU and almost all countries in the southern Mediterranean area find themselves in relations of mutual dependency and mutual potential advantage in establishing facilities to produce and exploit renewable energy, an early example of which is the energy partnership of the EU-supported Desertec project in the Maghreb, the situation is different in the field of classic hydrocarbons. Here the EU, gradually implementing energy supplier diversification, is in a position of asymmetrical interdependence, its member states depending more on imports of Algerian and Libyan natural gas and oil than those supplier nations, with increasing commercial ties with the United States and China, depend on the EU. Consequently it can be assumed that the area of energy security does not come under the scope of the “less for less” approach. On the one hand this is understandable in light of the interdependence described earlier. On the other hand, it is exactly the type of exception-based practice that casts doubt on the “new” ENP’s credibility and thus also on the EU’s determination, so often cited in the last 12 months, to make consistent use of the “less for less” concept. The example of Algeria, where hydrocarbon products represent 98 per cent of exports, and which is the EU’s 13th most significant import partner, makes it clear that even under the “new” ENP the EU’s foreign policy objectives, almost of necessity normative, will remain subordinate to vital foreign trade interests, formulated under the banner of promoting democracy abroad. At the height of the Arab Spring and to this day, both the Commission and the EEAS have exercised restraint in their assessment of domestic political developments in Algeria and the perennial disregard for political and human rights displayed by the country’s security forces. In fact, the Commission granted the authoritarian and reform-averse Algerian regime financial support to the amount of €34.5 million as well as €23.5 million to support programs in the areas of cultural heritage, transportation and job market development in the second half of 2011 in what amounts to a “more for less” arrangement. It has done so while emphasizing the need for deeper bilateral cooperation, not least to protect external economic interests and thus, in the widest sense, security policy interests.

## The ENP and migration

A similar assessment applies to the EU's call for deeper cooperation to handle waves of illegal migration. Although of only limited significance for security policy, migration was mainly mentioned in the May 25, 2011 strategy paper in tandem with the establishment of as-yet-undefined mobility partnerships and security policy considerations. Given that the EU also finds itself in a relationship of asymmetrical interdependence with sending or transit countries such as Morocco and Tunisia, and that it is virtually dependent on the cooperation of authorities in both countries, the deepening of bilateral dialogue mechanisms as well as cost-intensive supply of expertise and materials in the context of the EU's oft-cited integrated border management seems detached from reform progress in other policy areas. Regardless of the fact that the policy area of migration is increasingly characterized as a security issue, as can be observed in Euro-Mediterranean relations since 2005 and the process of outsourcing border controls driven by the EU that has been underway for years, this means in end effect that a potential application of the "less for less" principle which forms the basis of the "new" ENP within the policy field of migration is largely irrelevant from the standpoint of southern Mediterranean neighbor states, and from the EU's standpoint it might even be counterproductive in terms of managing its border regime. Consequently the "new" ENP is not suitable for applying positive or negative conditionality in this sector or in any aspect of bilateral action plans relating to migration.

## Outlook: The "new" ENP's options for action beyond conditionality

Although the state of economic transformation in all Arab Mediterranean neighbor states has improved in the four-year period from 2008 to 2012, with the exception – as the BTI 2012 makes clear – of Tunisia and Jordan, and management services have experienced a modest upswing at least in Algeria, Egypt and Syria, the Arab states of the southern Mediterranean area are still marked by massive deficits in terms of democratic developments as well as politico-economic structural deficiencies (see Jan Völkel's contribution in this edition). True, the "new" ENP deals with this situation but as demonstrated in

this chapter, its implementation is hampered by a variety of inherent structural weaknesses and contradictions. While these are especially evident in the area of political transformation, it raises the question of whether the EU and its member states regard the evidently undifferentiated application of a “less for less” approach as generally helpful, in light of the problematic socioeconomic situation in almost all Arab Mediterranean neighboring states that triggered the 2011 revolts in the first place. Given that reduction or cancellation of external support measures negatively impacts the policy field of “welfare” first of all, a field already underdeveloped in neighboring states, in implementing the “new” ENP it is worth considering the option of partially detaching it from the policy area of “rule” and instead concentrating on promoting those economic and social sectors that are most affected by the structural deficiencies described in the BTI 2012.

It could be argued that such a practice stretches the logic of incentive-based bilateral relations *ad absurdum*. Such an accusation must be countered with the durability and consequent prospects for success of political reforms and democratic transformation, particularly in Tunisia but also in Egypt. After all, the success of these reforms is inextricably linked to improving the micro- and macroeconomic situation and thus a noticeable improvement in individual living conditions. Furthermore, support which has no basis in negative conditionality does not necessarily have to apply to all policy fields. The logic of both “more for more” and “less for less” can be evoked, if both are applied in parallel by the EU, at least in those sectors in which reforms primarily affect the power monopoly of the ruling authoritarian regime and its abuse of that power. To put it plainly: retaining the normative core of the ENP and maintaining a minimum scope for foreign policy action and influence means that the area of “rule” must be distinguished from the socioeconomic/humanitarian area. In the area of “rule,” “double” conditionality should be maintained, subject to those vital interests that from the EU’s point of view must be considered, even when there is little cause for optimism as to its effectiveness, as this article shows. But coordination with other external agents in each field of cooperation is also vitally important in such an approach, to generate greater scope for action, wider social acceptance and consequently synergy and sustainability effects. It is especially worth mentioning Turkey here, as it serves an exemplary function for large sections of southern

Mediterranean society due to its social model based on an apparent synthesis of democratic and religious values, its participation in the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) and its systematic building of economic relations in the Middle East and North Africa in recent years. The member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council could also prove useful in the Maghreb and Mashriq, their engagement having systematically increased in the last twelve years, not least in complementing supply of capital with sector-relevant expertise and minimizing duplication.

Finally, therefore, I will outline five areas in which the “new” ENP, in addition to the sectors it already targets, should provide active and non-bureaucratic support. This is recommended for creating further scope for action to allow the relevant agents of political reform to concentrate on implementing political reform, at the same time preventing potential veto players who may exploit socioeconomic hardship and torpedo those transformation processes already underway. Although the ENP is based on the principle of differentiation, its application is dispensable in the following areas, as the basic characteristics are alike in all Arab Mediterranean neighboring states:

- Common to all Arab Mediterranean neighbor states is that they suffer under enormous economic differences. North-South differences are joined by East-West as well as urban-rural differences. These contrasts are one of the reasons that not all citizens have been able to profit to the same extent from the impressive economic growth rates of recent years. With enthusiastic support from foreign investors and financial support from the EU, regimes have pursued a course of economic modernization that all too often concentrates on the coastal regions dominated by the tourism industry – as seen in Tunisia, Morocco and Egypt – thus neglecting agrarian interior regions suffering from water shortage. Reducing these contrasts and eliminating them altogether in the medium term is therefore a challenge to which the “new” ENP must rise if it wants to fulfill its self-imposed holistic demands and break with support practices that have all too often run out of steam in the past.
- This is accompanied by a need to reduce the dependence of almost all southern Mediterranean societies on the rural sector as well as dependence

on food imports and contribute to macroeconomic diversification. Agriculture employs a large proportion of the region's working population (50% in Morocco, for instance) and represents a significant portion of the GDP (between 10% and 15% in Morocco, depending on harvests). At the same time, high dependency on food imports (around 70% in Algeria) greatly reduces each government's scope for socioeconomic action. In light of its most recent eastern expansion the EU has relevant experience in this area and given the ambitious objective of integrating southern Mediterranean neighboring states in global economic structures as formulated in the "new" ENP, it is obliged to contribute.

- These issues are also reinforced by the fact that the EU's agricultural imports from southern Mediterranean states are still hampered by non-tariff barriers that disadvantage precisely the product categories in which Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt and to a lesser extent Lebanon and Jordan have considerable competitive advantages. Given that a key platform of the "new" ENP is the launch of the DCFIAs, there is currently a concrete opportunity to move away from the asymmetrical free trade practices of recent years and at the same time complement the hub-and-spoke approach that forms the basis of this practice, which only provides for bilateral trade agreements on a horizontal basis, with the establishment or strengthening of vertical, intraregional and interregional free trade pacts to finally make use of the regional convention regarding preferential pan-Euro-Mediterranean rules of origin.
- Similarly underdeveloped in the Maghreb and Mashriq is a national and consequently transnational transport infrastructure, which greatly complicates mobility within societies as well as the deepening of regional or sub-regional cooperation and integration structures as embodied, for instance, in the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) or the 2004 Agadir Agreement. In this area especially the "new" ENP offers possible approaches and lines of communication with the UfM, which explicitly prescribes project-specific cooperation in the area of infrastructure, among others. Along with the chance it offers to pull the UfM out of the evident stagnation into which it has sunk since its establishment in 2008, and to unite both cooperation structures in the spirit of the coherence requirement,

this further opens up a chance for the EU to contribute in a complementary manner to the success of national infrastructure programs, such as those already underway in Algeria (as part of the national five year plan), and in Morocco.

- Health care has also been on the periphery of national and international development priorities in almost all southern Mediterranean neighbor states for years, despite numerous partnership initiatives and different policy approaches. Whereas Germany, for example, has a doctor-patient ratio of around 3.7 per 1000 inhabitants, the three states of the inner Maghreb are particularly marked by poor medical care. The ratio in Algeria is 0.9 doctors per 1000 inhabitants, in Tunisia it is 0.8 and in Morocco just 0.5. Despite this starting point, which can be described as precarious from a development policy point of view, the May 25, 2011 strategy paper makes no mention of these problems apart from a marginal note, and therefore underestimates the integral links between development of society as a whole, socioeconomic modernization and the existence of a readily accessible and functioning health system. In the Maghreb the Algerian regime, for instance, is currently rethinking this issue and has promised to use a portion of oil profits to build 60 hospitals. While the EU discerns an opportunity to assist this process in an advisory and support capacity, with recourse to the TAIEX program, it is obliged from a humanitarian standpoint to push for the implementation of similar measures in Morocco and Tunisia, cooperating with each country's newly elected government and leaving aside considerations of positive or negative conditionality.

Admittedly, many of these policy areas have been thoroughly discussed by the EU in recent months and both the March 8 and May 25 strategy papers have been afforded priority. However, the EU has so far failed to back up its rhetoric with active, decisive and credible action or to detach some selected policy fields, such as the five final areas laid out here, from the principle of double conditionality. Beyond this urgent need, which in the widest sense can be interpreted as a measure to promote democracy from abroad, it should be noted that the simultaneity of the principles of “more for more” and “less for less” introduced by the “new” ENP generates *more* problems and contradictions without necessarily generating *greater* influence over local

transition processes. Consequently the “new” ENP seems unsuitable as the sole agent for the implementation or support of democratic reforms and carries the risk of counteracting the normative objective which the EU has officially pursued since 1995, that of transforming the Euro-Mediterranean area into one of peace and prosperity built on democratic principles.

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