

# The Arab democratic wave

## How the EU can seize the moment

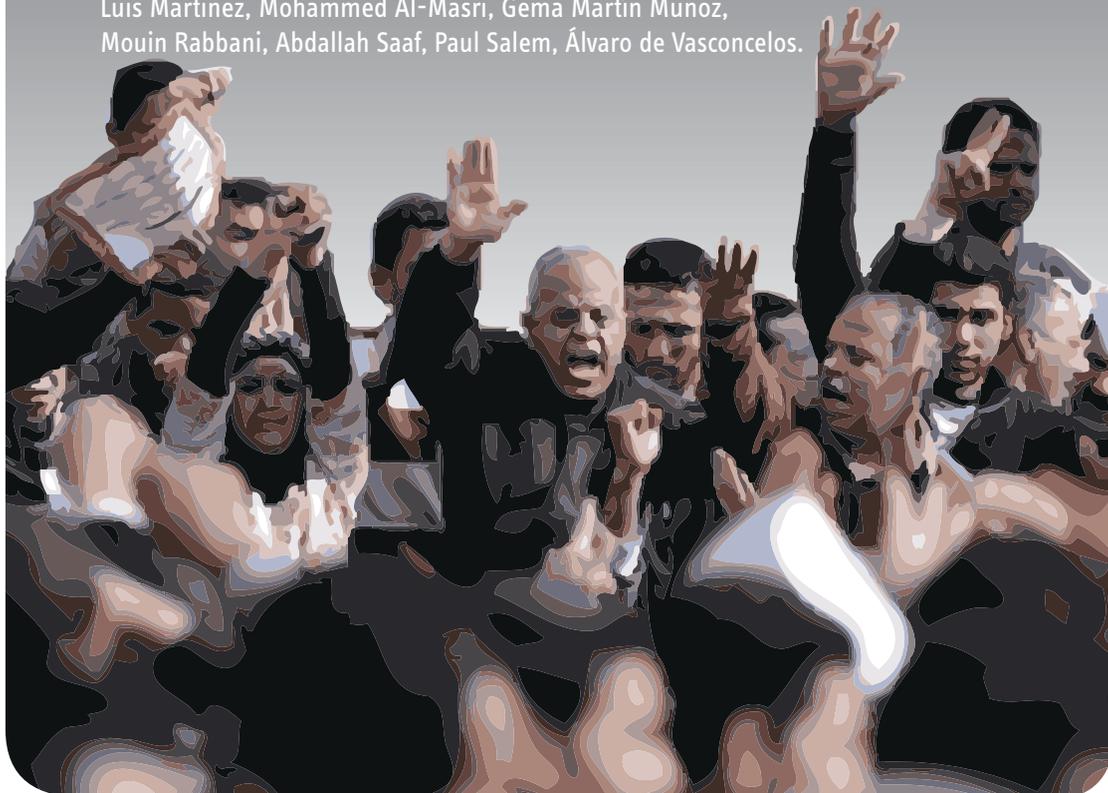
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This multi-author report, edited by Álvaro de Vasconcelos, was conceived as a response to the recent uprisings in Tunisia and in Egypt and the 'democratic wave' that has struck the Arab world. Clearly, these democratic uprisings call for a radical shift in the way in which Euro-Mediterranean relations are formulated and conducted.

The report seeks to examine the significance of these events in this context. The first part of the report focuses on individual countries in the region, in the following sequence: Morocco (Abdallah Saaf), Algeria (Luis Martinez), Tunisia (Azzam Mahjoub), Libya (George Joffé), Egypt (Amr Elshobaki), Palestine (Mouin Rabbani), Jordan (Mohammed Al-Masri), Lebanon (Paul Salem), and Syria (Sami Kamil). The second part of the report consists of three chapters addressing the question of human rights and the rule of law in the region (Gema Martín-Muñoz), the social and economic aspects of the democratic transition process (George Joffé), and the European Neighbourhood Policy (Erwan Lannon).

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The failure of the authoritarian model in the Mediterranean calls for a radical overhaul of EU Mediterranean policy and for a new paradigm. Political reforms should be reinstated as the major priority. This report seeks to identify: (i) what the impact of the democratic revolutions has been in the countries of the region; (ii) what are the main challenges to a successful democratic transformation; and (iii) what priorities the EU needs to address in order to assist the pro-democracy forces, in particular in Tunisia and Egypt, and how it should adapt its Mediterranean policy to that end. The democratic revolutions and the failure of the Union for the Mediterranean should be regarded as an opportunity to define a new common objective to be achieved as part of a multilateral initiative: building a Euro-Mediterranean community and revising the Neighbourhood Policy accordingly.

### **Main recommendations for the EU:**

1. To deal as a matter of priority with the socio-economic situation, including convening an international donors' conference to support Tunisia and Egypt, and assist in easing the immediate economic and financial impacts of the uprisings. This should include the creation of a financial institution based on the experience of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) in central and eastern Europe in the 1990s.
2. To urgently adapt the instruments and facilities under the Neighbourhood Policy to the specific demands of supporting democratic transformation, and move from the ill-defined 'advanced status' currently offered to some countries in the region to inaugurating a new generation of association agreements. These would be open to the countries undergoing democratic transition, and would in time give their citizens access to all the freedoms of the single market, including, progressively, the free movement of people. Economic cooperation should now prioritise an economic model that is appropriate for the region and an approach to trade relations that should favour job creation, social cohesiveness and social justice.
3. To build, in collaboration with the countries now on the path to democratic governance, a new partnership with the explicit objective of creating a Euro-Mediterranean Community of Democratic States by the end of the decade. This partnership should be open to the states willing to sign up to its charter, in particular its democratic objectives.
4. To make available EU 'know-how' on all critical areas of the democratic process, in particular with a view to the consolidation of democratic political parties and trade unions, security sector reform and reform of the media. Technical knowledge, consultancy and training courses could be delivered through established local NGOs.

5. To accept the role of political Islam in the democratic processes of the respective countries and reach out to those parties who accept the rules of constitutional politics.
6. To prioritise human rights in relations with the dictatorships and, in the face of lack of progress, to decide on sanctions targeting the dictators, their entourages and members of the repressive state apparatus, following the model applied to Belarus.

These recommendations are addressed to the European Union in the wider sense: EU institutions, European capitals, foundations and civil society groups all have a role to play with the objective of actively supporting democratic processes in the region and opposing dictatorial regimes and violations of human rights.

## INTRODUCTION

Álvaro de Vasconcelos

### **The shared goal of a Euro-Mediterranean Community of Democratic States**

The democratic uprisings in North Africa call for a radical shift in the EU's approach to Euro-Mediterranean relations. These have traditionally been dominated by economic concerns, founded on the misguided belief that globalisation will bring well-being for all if Southern countries make their economies attractive to foreign investment. The present upheavals, however, clearly demonstrate that politics and social challenges must be brought to the forefront of EU-Mediterranean relations. The wisdom of the Union for the Mediterranean's strategy of ignoring the political and social dimensions in order to ensure the goodwill of authoritarian leaders for the development of a number of concrete (though as yet unrealised) projects is thus called into question. The European Union now needs to revise its Mediterranean policy: in order to do so, it needs to build on some good practices of the past and pursue them in a more consistent way.

This should translate, first of all, into prioritising the citizens' agenda, which in fact corresponds to the basic principles articulated in the Barcelona Declaration of 1995, where EU Member States and the Southern Mediterranean countries jointly stated that they would seek 'to develop the rule of law and democracy in their political systems.' This objective was not consistently pursued, however, and this was highlighted in the important debate that took place on both shores of the Mediterranean during the preparation of the Barcelona summit of 2005. As was pointed out then, the main conclusion of the overview and evaluation of the first ten years of the Barcelona Process was that 'the causal and sequential link between economic reform and political liberalisation has failed to materialise. If there has been any progress in human development terms, it has been neither uniform nor sufficient to respond to the grave social problems of the region. Economic reforms have largely failed to encourage political reform.'<sup>1</sup>

In consequence, it was therefore proposed that the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership abandon a path that was leading nowhere and concentrate on meeting the aims set forth in the founding 1995 declaration, through the implementation 'of specific actions designed to create a Euro-Mediterranean Community of Democratic States.' This aspiration was already shared by the civil society of the south and has since then been reiterated on many occasions by their representatives.

1. 'Barcelona Plus: Towards a Euro-Mediterranean Community of Democratic States', report prepared by the EuroMeS-Co network at the request of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Partnership, April 2005.

The European Commission took on board many of these recommendations in the action programme that was approved at the 2005 summit, where it was established that the members of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership would ‘strive to achieve their mutual commitments’ in the implementation of the democratic objectives of Barcelona over the following five years through a number of measures, for example ‘extend[ing] political pluralism and participation by citizens, particularly women and youth, through the active promotion of a fair and competitive political environment, including fair and free elections’.<sup>2</sup>

In virtually all Southern Mediterranean countries, however, this commitment was blatantly ignored. In Egypt, Tunisia and Syria no progress at all was visible in this domain, quite the contrary in fact. Elections in Egypt, Tunisia, Syria and Algeria returned entrenched leaders with over 90 percent of the vote without any real opposition groups or figures being allowed to participate in the electoral process. Libya never signed up to either the Barcelona Process or the Union for the Mediterranean.

A fair and comprehensive assessment of the Barcelona Process still needs to be carried out. It is true that the 2005 Barcelona summit was a diplomatic failure. Mediterranean chiefs of state failed to show up, amidst complaints about their lack of ownership of the process and excessive conditionality on the part of the EU. From a democratic perspective, shared by southern civil societies, however, it was a success and the European Commission followed up on part of the recommendations relating to support for civil society with specific initiatives aimed at strengthening human rights, namely promoting women’s rights and examining ways of reaching out to Islamic political parties. The Neighbourhood Policy sought to adapt to the need to support political reform by granting an ‘advanced status’ to Morocco as a reward for the progress achieved in that country, in particular through its organisation of parliamentary elections that were judged to be fair and free, including allowing for the participation of the Islamist PJD, even if most of the constitutional powers remain in the hands of the sovereign.

Unfortunately, in 2008 the EU concluded that the Barcelona Process was a total failure, due to the fact that it was greeted with an increasing lack of enthusiasm by the leaders of the south, and decided to replace it with the Union for the Mediterranean, co-chaired by France and Egypt. The primary area of concern was no longer the democratic objectives of 1995 but the alliance against political Islam, the fight against terrorism and control of immigration. The democratic objective and political conditionality were sidelined in favour of a number of concrete projects: these included depollution of the Mediterranean sea, promoting the production and use of renewable energies, and business cooperation. Clearly, the following recommendation contained in an EUIIS Report published before the 2008 Summit of the Union for the Mediterranean, was not heeded: ‘The abandoning of political reform incen-

2. 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Euro-Mediterranean Summit, Barcelona, 27 and 28 November 2005, ‘Five Year Work Programme’, doc.15074/05 (Presse 327), Brussels, 28 November 2005. See: <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/05/st15/st15074.en05.pdf>.

tives and positive conditionality in the name of *realpolitik* and avoidance of the main socio-economic and political issues within the Mediterranean region is to be avoided as well, as is also the marginalisation of civil societies there. Positive conditionality in the ENP should emphasise respect for the international rule of law and evolution towards democratic governance.<sup>3</sup>

### Strengthening the democratic forces

In the current phase of dramatic transition, it is imperative that the EU fully support the democratic aspirations of the citizens of the Mediterranean, bearing in mind at all times that democratic processes are national in nature and that in spite of the 'domino effect' each transition process is different and unique.

As this EUISS report shows, differing attitudes to civic and political rights characterise four groups of countries and four different subsets of issues that must be urgently addressed by the EU.

- (i) **Egypt and Tunisia**, the democratic transition states, where the plurality of the political party system is still quite weak and, in the case of Egypt, the military have taken control of the transition process and have not yet made clear what steps will be taken to transfer power to elected civilian bodies.
- (ii) **Morocco and Jordan**, the liberal monarchies, where free, competitive elections now take place, and there is a certain degree of openness in relation to freedom of expression and of association, but power is fundamentally still in the hands of the monarchs.
- (iii) **Lebanon**, a weak liberal state, and a divided and occupied Palestine, where the outcome of free, democratic elections has yet to be implemented, hindered by sectarian divisions and war which have made the emergence of fully democratic processes quite difficult. In Palestine, it is impossible to build a fully-fledged democratic system in the absence of sovereignty and given the current context of occupation and blockade, but the aspiration was clearly expressed in the free and fair elections held in January 2006.
- (iv) **Libya and Syria**, the dictatorships, and **Algeria**, where no real democratic progress has yet been made, and grave abuses of fundamental rights are commonplace. The military have been in power in Algeria for decades. In Libya and Syria Presidents are nominated for life and have established a dynastic system: the media is tightly controlled and all expressions of dissent are brutally suppressed. Algeria is more complex, with a very weak, but at least existing, politi-

3. Roberto Aliboni, George Joffé, Erwan Lannon, Azzam Mahjoub, Abdallah Saaf, Álvaro de Vasconcelos, 'Union for the Mediterranean: Building on the Barcelona *acquis*', Report no. 1, European Union Institute for Security Studies, Paris, May 2008.

cal party system. The country is still marked by the trauma of the civil war of the 1990s.

Right now **Tunisia and Egypt need to be the EU's main priority** in the southern neighbourhood. The EU should aim to contribute to consolidate the results of the peoples' revolutions that have taken place in these countries, namely through constitutional reforms, promoting civilian control of the security forces and encouraging the development of a political party system, as well as supporting civil society organisations.

In its dealings with these countries in the throes of transition, the EU needs to move from the priority that it has traditionally and rightly given to NGOs to focusing on the consolidation of new democratic actors. For example, it should be active in funding training courses in local institutions: particular attention must be given to security sector reform, in particular with regard to the police, namely by leading and supporting initiatives in training on human rights and justice, as well dealing with the critical questions related to the civilian control of the military forces. The European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights should be activated in this regard.

The EU should assume a leadership role with regard to the provision of international financial support to Tunisia and, to a certain extent, Egypt, given that both countries face a grave economic and social situation, as a result of the financial and food crises, but also of the damage that their respective economies have suffered during the uprisings. There is a real risk of destabilisation in this critical transition phase if the economic and social crisis is not overcome. In this context, an international donors' conference co-organised with the transitional authorities would be an invaluable initiative.

### **Putting pressure on the dictatorships**

In the dictatorships, the repression of the opposition and of the right to demonstrate peacefully, which is particularly draconian in Syria and Libya, should be a matter of great concern to the international community. It is essential to prevent the regimes in these countries from brutally cracking down on those who, inspired by the citizens' revolts, are fighting for their freedom. In case of massive repression, as is happening in Libya, there is a need for strong UN involvement, including by invoking the Responsibility to Protect. The EU should establish, in cooperation with civil society actors in those countries, a concrete list of reforms in the area of human rights to deal with abuses, e.g. demanding an end to the emergency laws or similar legislation. If progress is not forthcoming in these countries, then if all else fails the EU should impose sanctions on the countries' leaders as the Union has previously done in relation to Belarus in the eastern neighbourhood. Human rights must become the overriding priority in EU policy regarding the dictatorships in the Mediterranean.

## **Supporting democratic reforms in the liberal monarchies**

In Morocco and Jordan the EU needs to support the continuation of the process of political reforms, including strengthening the role of both parliament and of government.

These countries should be aware that the privileged status that they currently enjoy in their relations with the EU may now be challenged by the emergence of the democratic transition countries. Support to civil society activities must remain a priority, but the EU needs to deepen its dialogue with all political parties, including the Islamists.

## **Working towards the twin goals of reconciliation and democratisation in Lebanon and Palestine**

In Lebanon, the country of the 'Cedar Revolution', reconciliation is key to overcoming the political divide and consolidating the *acquis* of the popular uprising of 2005 against the Syrian occupation and the call for free elections. In Palestine democracy is linked to statehood and the end of occupation, and national reconciliation should be the first step. The EU needs to become an active proponent of Palestinian reconciliation by removing the obstacles that stand in the way of that goal, which should facilitate the holding of new elections. Meanwhile, the protection of the Palestinians' rights both in Gaza and the West Bank must rank high on the EU agenda. Likewise, the time is ripe for a shift in focus, privileging the pro-democracy groups and the civic movements over the security forces.

## **A community of democracies by 2020: the new ambition**

The current conditions of transformation are favourable to a rethink of the long-term objectives of the EU's Mediterranean policy and a revision of the Neighbourhood Policy; most importantly, the Union for the Mediterranean must be reconstructed. In both cases priority should now be given to establishing coherence between political reforms and economic and social policies with the goal of creating, before the end of the decade, a Euro-Mediterranean Community of Democratic States, thus fulfilling the objectives announced in 1995 in Barcelona.

Such a Euro-Mediterranean community would validate the citizens and their aspirations as central actors: this should include extending all the freedoms of the European single market to the members of this community, including in time freedom of the movement of people.

A new generation of association agreements should be signed with those countries of the south willing to subscribe to the objective of such a democratic community:

such agreements might include a democratic clause inspired by the EU enlargement experience. A democratic clause should seem natural if one bears in mind that even the British Commonwealth includes such a clause.

A Euro-Mediterranean community of democracies would be an important factor for peace and would enormously facilitate dealing with crisis in the region, in particular in relation to the Israel-Palestine conflict. Membership should only be extended to the Israelis and Palestinians on condition that the two-state solution is well on track.

This community would certainly find a lot of support in the Obama administration, reflecting the US President's own vision of a 'common humanity' in this post-Huntington Arab world.

This is not a utopian dream, but an ambition whose chances of success are much more viable in the circumstances currently prevailing in the southern Mediterranean. Were the EU to announce its commitment to this goal, it would represent an important incentive for the democratic processes in the region, in particular in the Maghreb where the European Union is seen as a major partner.

Right now the notion of a Euro-Mediterranean Community of Democratic States would readily find support in the transitional democracies and possibly the liberal monarchies. Furthermore this goal would garner enormous support among civil society movements all over the southern Mediterranean. If the EU were to announce its ambition to work to that end with likeminded southern partners, it would be a way for it to restore its credibility with Arab public opinion. It would show that European leaders have heard the call for freedom and democracy that is coming from their neighbours, who in spite of all the disappointments of the past still look to Europe with hope and believe in the ideals that the Union affirms as its own.

## I. CASE STUDIES

### LES MAROCAINS ET LA RÉVOLUTION TUNISIENNE

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*The relative silence with which the Moroccan political elite have greeted the events in Tunisia is eloquent in itself. This type of contestation is not unknown in Morocco, but popular movements tend to quickly lose momentum due to the country's highly fragmented social structure. The presence of authoritarian regimes in neighbouring countries precludes certain changes from taking place: during the Barcelona Process II, the other Arab states' refusal to introduce liberal reform forestalled Morocco's government from instigating further change. The conditions imposed on the regional economies to make them adapt to the freemarket model and to the globalised economy are too severe. The Western partners should therefore modify their position by lowering economic conditionality and increasing political conditionality.*

Le silence relatif de l'élite politique marocaine face aux événements survenus en Tunisie à la fin de 2010 et en janvier 2011 est frappant. L'absence de réaction à ce précédent « inattendu » peut s'expliquer surtout par l'affaiblissement général des acteurs politiques marocains, le rétrécissement du débat public et les limites actuelles de la chose politique dans le pays.

De nombreux Marocains pensent que le modèle tunisien a été un frein idéologique et politique pour la démocratisation pour deux raisons : d'une part, le poids des thèses selon lesquelles le développement économique primerait sur le politique ; de l'autre, la conviction qu'une ouverture ne peut se faire qu'en faveur des islamistes. Ils se posent plusieurs questions : Quels changements ces événements permettent de décrypter au Maroc ? Quelles sont leurs chances de s'y reproduire ? Quel est l'avenir de la démocratie dans la région ?

Le mode de contestation sociale engendré par le geste de désespoir du jeune Tunisien n'est pas inconnu au Maroc, mais les mouvements populaires (Sefrou, Ifni) s'essouffent vite car la carte sociale du pays est très fragmentée. En Tunisie, où les classes moyennes sont au centre de la configuration sociale du pays, y a-t-il homogénéisation des interactions politiques, économiques, sociales et culturelles ? Le Maroc est-il sur cette voie ?

La résistance tunisienne a témoigné du potentiel impressionnant de l'élite ; une renaissance des forces politiques traditionnelles semble avoir lieu progressivement et de nouvelles formations, différentes des précédentes, pourraient émerger à travers soit la cooptation traditionnelle soit une plus grande acceptation des oppositions.

À noter également que l'armée, après avoir refusé de s'associer à la répression commandée par le pouvoir, a soutenu la révolte populaire, l'appelant même à former des comités locaux de quartiers pour s'opposer au régime. Après le départ du président tunisien, beaucoup ont pensé qu'elle se préparait à prendre le pouvoir. Cela ne semble pas être le cas pour l'instant, mais cette possibilité ne doit pas être exclue. De nombreuses forces alternatives ont été affaiblies par une récupération de type primaire ; l'opposition était muselée et les organisations d'avocats ou de défense des droits de l'homme ainsi que les syndicats étaient loin d'apparaître comme des acteurs alternatifs. Mais l'UGTT (Union générale tunisienne du travail), qui n'était pas un acteur politique, a joué un rôle déterminant. Au Maroc, où le multipartisme est profondément ancré, la situation est différente et l'alternative à un supposé parti-État ne serait pas celle d'un syndicat unique comme en Tunisie.

Depuis des mois, les Tunisiens exprimaient leur écœurement et leur désespérance dans différentes instances. Corruption, atteintes à la dignité, dérives autoritaires, espace social et politique verrouillé par un parti-État omniprésent, la dictature avait franchi le seuil du tolérable ; en témoignait, comme pour l'Irak baathiste, le nombre considérable d'exilés partout dans le monde. Lorsque la situation sociale est devenue plus grave, l'encadrement policier s'est radicalisé ; l'appareil tunisien semblait trop primaire pour intégrer les composantes de l'opposition.

Le despotisme lui-même a considérablement affaibli l'État, la société s'est renforcée avec l'émergence un peu partout de mouvements sociaux diversifiés, relativement autonomes. Les performances sociales de l'État autoritaire ont fini par jouer contre lui car l'élévation du niveau de vie a fait monter exponentiellement les aspirations politiques et sociales. Cette Tunisie-là commençait pourtant à être admirée par une partie non négligeable de la classe politique marocaine. Son effondrement pourrait contribuer à revitaliser la vie politique marocaine.

En Tunisie, l'alternative islamiste n'apportait aucune réponse ni à la question politique ni à la question sociale : le discours et les projets d'action portent sur les grandes questions théologico-politiques, comme l'État et la société islamiques, la religion, la constitution, les élections. Le programme économique et social islamiste paraît peu convaincant, alors que les réseaux caritatifs semblent s'être épuisés. Dans le contexte tunisien, la connexion entre le religieux et le politique a peu de chances de se produire. Les risques d'islamisation restent stigmatisés mais cela semble plutôt minime. L'idée des islamistes comme élément d'une coalition semble l'emporter.

Le scénario tunisien ne se reproduira pas de la même façon dans tous les pays car les problématiques sont différentes. Cependant, les événements de Tunisie pourraient relancer des processus d'émulation dans la région et le redéploiement des forces populaires et des revendications politiques, économiques et sociales. Partout, les forces de sécurité sont devenues des acteurs incontournables, avec un rapport à la société aujourd'hui plus complexe. D'autres points communs existent : sentiment de répulsion à l'égard

des anciennes formes d'autoritarisme, économie politique comparable, centralité des questions sociales, montée en puissance de la problématique de la dignité.

Cependant, certaines interactions ne peuvent être ignorées : la chute du fameux « modèle tunisien » est invoquée par les acteurs politiques, marocains entre autres, qui cherchent à retarder l'émergence de la démocratisation dans l'ensemble de la région. La présence de régimes autoritaires empêche certaines expériences comme celle du Maroc, toujours en développement, d'aller trop loin et trop vite. Lors du Processus de Barcelone II, le refus des États arabes de promouvoir la libéralisation de leurs régimes a stoppé le pouvoir marocain dans son élan. Selon Wikileaks, le président déchu exprimait lui-même sa crainte de voir les islamistes prendre les rênes du pouvoir au Maroc.

Jusqu'ici, plusieurs perspectives de développement paraissaient possibles. Dans le contexte actuel, le passage à la démocratie intégrale ne semble pas réalisable. Les « mesurette » ne suffiront pas non plus, même grâce à des campagnes de communication disproportionnées. La perspective la plus plausible est celle de réformes substantielles sur le court terme, dont la somme pourrait induire un changement.

Le retour en arrière ou le statu quo sont-ils encore possibles ? Cela est difficile à imaginer au point où en sont ces sociétés, leurs États et leurs classes politiques. Deux évolutions non démocratiques ne sont pas à exclure non plus :

- Le pouvoir pourrait privilégier les besoins fondamentaux les plus urgents, en reportant par exemple la suppression des aides pour les produits de première nécessité ou, le cas échéant, la baisse des prix de ces produits, en plus des allocations de ressources de nature diverse. Avec, pour finir, le renforcement des politiques de subvention, voire la création d'emplois publics pour les jeunes.
- Il pourrait partir du principe que les conflits sociaux ne doivent pas se transformer en conflits politiques. La démocratisation contrôlée peut servir à calmer la demande sociale en impliquant plus de monde afin de partager le contrôle des populations. Associer les oppositions au gouvernement pour pouvoir négocier plus durement. Est-il plausible de choisir de faire de concessions et d'élargir des systèmes d'alliances politiques dans la mesure où les ouvertures sont nécessaires pour conserver le pouvoir ?

## **Le développement des revendications réformatrices**

Les secousses qui parcourent dans la phase actuelle l'organisme marocain présentent nombre d'aspects communs avec ceux de la Tunisie et d'ailleurs : le recul des partis politiques, une fermeture relative du pouvoir sur lui-même, le fait qu'il fonctionne peu comme machine d'intégration, l'affaiblissement des relais que sont les partis politiques et les syndicats, un parlement qui n'apparaît pas comme l'institution centrale de la vie politique et institutionnelle, les indicateurs économiques et sociaux porteurs d'insuffisances et de déficits (taux de croissance, tendance démographique, chômage, pauvreté), une recomposition sociale et une intensité du mouvement social

qui rappellent nombre de situations « révolutionnaires » arabes du contexte actuel (ouvriers, opposants habituels au régime, mêlés aux islamistes, jeunes désœuvrés, défenseurs des droits de l'homme), une ambiance d'affairisme effréné manquant souvent de transparence.

Le cas marocain est tout de même aggravé par l'idée qui semble prévaloir selon laquelle le processus de démocratisation entamé depuis deux décennies est en panne. Mais les faits politiques et sociaux en cours, dont les manifestations pour la réforme du 20 février 2011, restent indéterminés. On ne sait si leur potentiel est à même d'alimenter des mouvements populaires massifs déterminants de revendications du changement, ou simplement une vague de protestations qui reste dans les normes des mouvements de revendications habituellement tolérés dans le paysage marocain, et qui même en sont devenus une composante ordinaire.

Enfin, quelle lecture peut-on faire des réactions bien tardives des partenaires occidentaux de la Tunisie ? Cette inertie, le « manque d'intérêt » – ou de sensibilité selon le président français – pour la détresse des peuples de la rive Sud sont sans doute liés à l'importance que revêt au contraire « la nouvelle question d'Orient » : les représentations courantes de l'islam, les voies de l'immigration, l'identité nationale...

Étant donné l'ampleur du chômage des jeunes et les risques d'instabilité, entre autres, les exigences imposées aux économies pour se conformer au modèle libéral et à l'économie mondialisée doivent être revues à la baisse. Les partenaires occidentaux doivent par conséquent modifier leur position avec l'abaissement de la conditionnalité économique et l'élévation de la conditionnalité politique.

## VERS UNE VAGUE DÉMOCRATIQUE EN ALGÉRIE ?

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*With its massive police force, all-powerful army and huge oil revenues enabling it to resist external pressure, Algeria seems poised, despite the vulnerability of its president, to withstand the democratic tsunami currently sweeping the Arab countries of the Mediterranean. Nevertheless, certain symptoms – widespread corruption, mismanagement of national resources, worsening poverty – are identical to those existing in Tunisia and Egypt. The recent events show that the failed transition of 1991 and fear of Islamism no longer justify the view that democratisation in this country is impossible. In this regard, the active support of the United States and of Europe in promoting democracy is crucial.*

L'Algérie de Bouteflika sera-t-elle le prochain pays touché par la vague démocratique qui a emporté Ben Ali en Tunisie et Moubarak en Égypte ? Considéré comme malade, affaibli, vulnérable, Abdelaziz Bouteflika semble, en apparence, être une victime facile. En apparence seulement car le régime qu'il représente dispose de très sérieux atouts pour résister à un tsunami démocratique. Tout d'abord, le ministère de l'intérieur a une très grande expérience de la gestion des manifestations, émeutes et révoltes. Depuis les années 1980, l'Algérie est secouée par des révoltes. Les effectifs de la police s'élèvent à près de 200 000 personnes ; ils sont bien équipés et bénéficient de moyens considérables. Cette montée en puissance de la Direction générale de la sûreté nationale (DGSN) explique pour certains observateurs l'assassinat de son directeur, le 25 février 2010. Sous Bouteflika, la DGSN rivalise avec les services tout-puissants de l'armée. Une révolution sécuritaire s'est opérée en Algérie, à l'insu de tous ; l'armée n'a plus le monopole des moyens de contrôle et de coercition. Au niveau international, à la différence de la Tunisie et de l'Égypte, l'Algérie dispose d'une rente pétrolière qui l'immunise contre des pressions que pourrait exercer la communauté internationale : 10% de l'approvisionnement en gaz de l'UE provient de l'Algérie. Ses ressources ne dépendent ni de l'industrie touristique ni de la rente du Canal de Suez ; elle ne reçoit pas d'aide comparable à celle que fournit l'armée américaine à l'armée égyptienne. C'est dire qu'elle n'aurait aucun problème à résister à des moyens de pression.

En revanche, l'Algérie ne peut faire l'économie d'un « ajustement démocratique » en levant l'état d'urgence. Il reste qu'une telle démarche ne suffira pas à mettre un terme aux revendications démocratiques qui survolent la région du monde arabe. En effet, la chute du président Ben Ali en Tunisie, puis la démission de Hosni Moubarak ouvrent une ère nouvelle dans le monde arabe. La peur des régimes est vaincue, les révoltés de Tunis ou du Caire sont parvenus au nom de la démocratie à renverser des chefs d'État. Ce qui semblait inimaginable et impensable il y a peu s'est produit. L'Algérie partage avec la Tunisie et l'Égypte les mêmes symptômes. De façon structurelle, les États d'Afrique du Nord et du Moyen-Orient sont confrontés à des problèmes de corruption généralisée (comme le montre le classement de Transparency International), de privation des libertés politiques (Freedom House) et de vio-

lation des droits de l'homme (Human Rights Watch). De véritables régimes mafieux sont nés de l'incapacité de bâtir des institutions politiques susceptibles d'exercer un contrôle sur les ressources de l'État. Confrontés au triplement de la démographie en moins d'un demi-siècle, à une urbanisation accélérée et une alphabétisation massive (à l'exception du Maroc), les régimes dotés de revenus limités (Tunisie et Égypte) se retrouvent confrontés à des problèmes conjoncturels : crise financière de 2008 ; augmentation des prix des matières premières ; absence de réponse politique au sentiment d'appauvrissement.

Les forces démocratiques sont-elles capables de produire des actions collectives susceptibles de déboucher sur la reconnaissance de leurs revendications ? La coordination nationale pour le changement et la démocratie parviendrait-elle à structurer le combat au nom de la démocratie ? Il lui faut trouver un modus opératoire original et surtout approprié à l'Algérie. Car exiger le départ du président Bouteflika, par exemple, ne garantirait en aucun cas le commencement d'une transition vers la démocratie. De même, il lui faudra éviter d'être emportée dans une logique de confrontation violente, l'armée ne la tolérerait pas par crainte de revivre les années sanglantes de la guerre civile.

Le contexte national et international est favorable à l'émergence des sociétés civiles dans le combat pour la reconnaissance des droits politiques, ce qui constitue une surprise salubre pour les forces démocratiques de la région. En effet, depuis les années 1980, seules les organisations islamistes (associations, mouvements et partis) portaient le discours de la contestation. Si leur radicalisme trouvait écho auprès des masses populaires, il les privait du soutien des forces démocratiques, inquiètes de voir la contestation populaire servir de tremplin à l'instauration d'un État islamique. L'échec de la transition algérienne était un enseignement pour chacun : l'effondrement de l'État-FLN ne s'était pas accompagné du succès des forces politiques porteuses d'un projet démocratique, mais de celui du Front islamique du salut et de son projet d'État islamique. Pour les partis démocratiques de l'époque, le ralliement autour de l'armée pour « sauver la nation » du « péril islamiste » les a plongés dans une longue traversée du désert et un discrédit considérable vis-à-vis des populations. Incapables de porter un discours crédible, en raison souvent de leurs connivences avec le régime autoritaire, les forces démocratiques ont été prisonnières du paradigme sécuritaire. Après le 11 septembre 2001, le régime autoritaire bénéficie de la légitimité sur la scène internationale à la suite de la « guerre contre le terrorisme » : la Libye, l'Algérie, l'Égypte, la Tunisie y participent et offrent leurs services pour réduire la menace que représente Al-Qaïda. Au cours de la décennie 2000, seules les organisations de défense des droits de l'homme parviennent à résister à la logique sécuritaire et dénoncent les violations flagrantes de ces droits au nom de « la guerre contre le terrorisme ». Combat perdu pour beaucoup, tant les grandes nations démocratiques subissent les effets de la peur du terrorisme, acceptent la régression du respect des droits au profit d'une augmentation des moyens accordés à la sécurité. Aveuglées par cette peur, les démocraties mettent leurs valeurs en sourdine. Les experts de la « terreur islamiste » alimentent, en s'inspirant de la

thèse du choc des civilisations, ce sentiment par des publications alarmistes qui trouvent un écho favorable tant auprès des institutions internationales que des dirigeants politiques.

Les mobilisations pacifiques au nom de la démocratie démentent tous ces préjugés, mais le plus dur reste sans doute à faire aujourd'hui pour les sociétés du monde arabe. Le contexte régional et international change. La dénonciation des régimes autoritaires n'est plus portée par les seules organisations islamistes, une convergence de vues se dessine : en témoignent les révélations de Wikileaks sur les critiques contre les régimes. Toutefois, leur affaiblissement n'est pas un gage de la réussite d'une transition démocratique. Ainsi, en Tunisie, il s'agit de faire déboucher la révolution vers un régime démocratique, c'est-à-dire mettre en place des institutions susceptibles de garantir la pérennité du nouveau système et ce, dans un contexte de sabotage par les nervis de l'ancien régime et de pression régionale, libyenne en particulier. En Égypte, le régime a ouvert la porte à un dialogue avec l'opposition, fait des concessions sur le plan constitutionnel et pris des engagements sur le plan de son agenda démocratique. À la différence de la Tunisie, le régime est en position de force, il résiste à la contestation et souhaite trouver une issue politique qui ne lui soit pas trop défavorable. Les dignitaires de l'armée savent qu'en lâchant Moubarak, ils ont fait tomber la pression interne. Mais sont-ils prêts à favoriser une transition vers la démocratie ? La mise en résidence surveillée de Chadli Bendjedid en Algérie, après la transition ratée de 1991, montre qu'il sera plus difficile de bâtir des institutions démocratiques capables de garantir les nouveaux droits politiques que de renverser un autocrate. Et cela exigera plus de temps !

Le soutien de l'UE et des États-Unis est donc fondamental. Après certaines tergiversations, les États-Unis et l'UE semblent changer de logique : la peur de l'islamisme ne peut plus justifier l'impossible démocratisation de la région. Il s'agit dorénavant d'encourager les régimes confrontés à la vague démocratique à changer afin d'intégrer ces revendications légitimes. Dans cette perspective, l'expérience tunisienne se révèle fondamentale : si la Tunisie parvient à mettre en œuvre, à force de compromis, des institutions démocratiques, elle démontrera que le temps du radicalisme politique dans la région est révolu et ferait figure de modèle. Si d'aventure elle échouait, en raison de l'intransigeance des uns ou des autres, elle réveillerait les vieux démons de la discorde et entrerait dans le palmarès des transitions politiques ratées. Espérons qu'après l'expérience malheureuse de l'Algérie en 1991, la Tunisie et l'Égypte de 2011 ouvrent la voie à la région en démontrant la maturité politique des sociétés. Le départ de Ben Ali a encouragé les Égyptiens à demander celui du Rais égyptien ; gageons que la réussite de l'expérience démocratique en Tunisie constituera un moment fondateur pour le monde arabe et un modèle pour l'Algérie.

## LES DÉFIS DE LA TRANSITION EN TUNISIE

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*The challenges posed by the transition in Tunisia are multifold. The first is linked to the emergence, in response to the establishment of a National Congress for the Defence of the Revolution, of a dual counter-revolutionary offensive, one branch of which is violent, and the other more peaceful but active nevertheless. The second challenge is social and above all economic in nature: the unprecedented scale of the protest movement exacerbates the difficult position of the provisional government. The third challenge concerns political reform and which alternatives should be pursued. The role of the EU is to support and help Tunisia in meeting these challenges, possibly within the framework of an international conference. It should listen to the viewpoints of both the provisional government and civil society. The paradigm of a partnership with the southern countries and advanced status should be re-examined and be replaced by a new paradigm of a community of democratic states.*

La Tunisie, après la fuite de son dictateur, a entamé la première phase de son processus de transition vers la démocratie. Une étape cruciale car les défis sont multiples.

Les forces de l'opposition à la révolution sont à l'œuvre. Certains groupes, liés à l'ancien dictateur, sont issus directement ou indirectement, par instrumentalisation ou manipulation, des services de sécurité et/ou des milices du RCD (Rassemblement constitutionnel démocratique), l'ancien parti au pouvoir. Composés d'anciens repris de justice ayant pris la fuite pendant la Révolution, ils ont une capacité de nuisance non négligeable dans la mesure où ils sèment la terreur par des actes de violence et de pillage, voire par le biais de rumeurs et d'une « intox » déstabilisant la population. D'autres acteurs s'efforcent quant à eux de détourner le processus de transition démocratique vers un autre autoritarisme teinté de libéralisation politique contrôlée.

Cette contre-révolution a donc deux aspects : une forme violente et déstabilisatrice sur le plan sécuritaire et une forme plus pacifique mais néanmoins active pour contenir et dévier le processus de transition. En face, différentes composantes civiles, favorables à la révolution au plan politique, en particulier l'UGTT (l'Union générale des travailleurs tunisiens) et l'Ordre des avocats, sont en train de constituer un Conseil national de défense de la révolution. L'objectif est de faire converger toutes les forces actives pro-révolution afin d'empêcher le blocage et/ou le détournement du processus de transition. De l'issue de cette confrontation dépendra le sort de la Tunisie.

Le deuxième grand défi est d'ordre social et surtout économique. La multitude de mouvements de revendication sociale (grèves, occupation de locaux, etc.) est un phénomène sans précédent. La contestation particulièrement forte met encore davantage en difficulté le gouvernement provisoire, dont la crédibilité demeure fragile. Ses capacités économiques et financières n'étant pas illimitées, la Tunisie pourrait bien se retrouver dans l'impasse. Un pacte social se révèle nécessaire aujourd'hui pour cana-

liser les revendications sociales, par ailleurs légitimes. Mais il existe un risque bien réel que la contestation sociale soit instrumentalisée pour alimenter le climat d'insécurité et renforcer le camp de la contre-révolution active ou passive.

Le troisième défi est, cela va de soi, d'ordre politique. Une réforme dans ce domaine est vitale. La question se pose de savoir si le gouvernement provisoire actuel, avec sa Commission de la réforme politique, a la crédibilité et l'efficacité nécessaires pour mener à bien cette réforme en utilisant directement ou indirectement les institutions et la législation actuelles : l'Assemblée nationale et la Chambre des conseillers du RCD, mais aussi et surtout la Constitution actuelle, taillée sur mesure pour le président déchu. On peut également se demander vers quelles élections il faut s'orienter à ce stade : président de la république ou assemblée constituante ? Le débat reste ouvert. Un compromis entre ceux qui se réclament du camp de la défense de la révolution, du gouvernement provisoire et de la Commission nationale de la réforme est-il possible ? Sans un consensus sur la définition des étapes à franchir et des objectifs à atteindre pour instaurer un système politique démocratique, le processus risque de patiner.

### **Qu'attendre de l'Union européenne ?**

La réponse est simple : l'UE doit soutenir et accompagner la Tunisie face aux défis qu'elle doit relever dans les différentes étapes du processus de transition, aux niveaux tant social et économique que politique.

L'idée d'une conférence internationale pour aider la Tunisie est la bienvenue, dans cette phase difficile de transition, caractérisée par un important manque à gagner en matière d'exportations (tourisme en particulier), mais aussi des dommages matériels et des dépenses publiques nécessaires pour satisfaire une demande sociale multiple et urgente (emplois, salaires, etc.). Les amis de la révolution tunisienne peuvent aider le pays à faire l'économie d'une nouvelle crise économique aiguë déstabilisant l'ensemble du processus de transition. Ce point est crucial.

L'Union européenne doit être à l'écoute non seulement du gouvernement provisoire pour répondre aux besoins urgents exprimés, mais aussi de toutes les composantes de la société civile pour contribuer à son renforcement si indispensable dans cette construction démocratique. De plus, l'UE peut, par son savoir-faire, contribuer au processus de réforme politique, y compris à l'organisation et à la supervision du processus électoral.

À terme, c'est le paradigme du partenariat avec les pays du Sud devenus démocratiques qui doit être révisé par l'UE. L'équation sécurité-stabilité versus autoritarisme au Sud est devenue caduque. Même le statut avancé doit être remis en cause pour imaginer, d'une manière concertée, une forme nouvelle de communauté d'États démocratiques.

## LIBYA FACES ITS 'DAY OF RAGE'

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*Les protestations en Libye sont d'une nature différente de celles qui ont conduit aux insurrections en Tunisie et en Égypte. Les manifestations contre le gouvernement ont eu lieu tout d'abord dans une région traditionnellement opposée au régime de Khadafi. Dans les centres urbains de la Tripolitaine au contraire, orchestrées par le gouvernement, elles soutenaient celui-ci, dont la violence a étouffé les dissensions populaires jusqu'à ce que Tripoli explose aussi. Le danger est maintenant que le régime provoque une guerre civile pour reprendre le contrôle de la situation. Comment l'UE peut-elle aider la population libyenne dans sa quête de démocratie ? Elle tente actuellement de négocier un accord cadre avec la Libye, indépendamment de la nature du régime politique libyen, alors que le respect des droits de l'homme et la gouvernance démocratique sont des éléments essentiels du Processus de Barcelone. Tout comme ce fut le cas dans le passé avec l'arme nucléaire, l'UE devrait exercer sur la Libye les pressions nécessaires pour atteindre ces objectifs et, si le régime venait à disparaître, être prête à soutenir son successeur.*

In the second half of February, Libya found itself confronted with popular protest, a phenomenon now widespread throughout the Middle East and North Africa and stimulated by the successes of the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions in late January and mid-February. There was a profound irony in this, for Colonel Qadhafi, the Libyan leader – although he has no formal role within the Libyan state – is fond of reminding his countrymen that they enjoy that most perfect of political systems, the *Jamahiriyah* or the 'state of the masses', founded on direct popular democracy ever since 1977.

On the other hand, the colonel was one of a very few number of Arab leaders – perhaps the only one – who publicly decried the overthrow of Tunisia's President Ben Ali and Egypt's President Mubarak. Both, he said, had their people's interests at heart and it was a profound mistake to force them out of office. Yet, at the same time and apparently unaware of the irony implicit in his comments, he recommended to Tunisia's revolutionaries that they should adopt the Libyan model of the *Jamahiriyah*, if they sought real democracy.

### **Demonstrations begin**

Now, of course, Libyans themselves have signalled their awareness of the real nature of the political system in Libya by protesting against it and demanding change. Starting on 15 February, there have been demonstrations in Benghazi, involving up to 6,000 protestors, and in Al-Bayda as well as in smaller centres, calling for an end to the regime in power in Libya and confronting the Libyan security forces. There have been many casualties – hundreds if not thousands of people have died.

The Libyan authorities had also taken their precautions. Days before the demonstrations actually occurred, the regime warned that it would not tolerate demonstrations and that it would punish those who participated. At the same time, it freed over 100 Islamists from prison. The authorities had also arrested a lawyer, Fethi Tarbel, who represented the families of the victims of the 1996 Abu Salim prison massacre in which a thousand Libyan prisoners died. Journalists and a well-known writer, Idris al-Mismari, were also detained in a pre-emptive measure designed to nip protests in the bud.

In the event, the arrests seem to have provoked the demonstrations they were designed to avoid and to have provided a springboard for much wider demands for true democracy rather than the Libyan version through which the Revolutionary Committees ensure conformity with the Libyan leader's ideals. Yet care must be taken in interpreting their significance. They were initially confined to Cyrenaica, a region traditionally estranged from the regime. It had been the centre of tribal support for the monarchy that Colonel Qadhafi's revolution in 1969 replaced.

Benghazi, on the other hand, always distrusted the revolutionary impulses of the *Jamahiriyah*, and was the cradle for the Islamist movement in the latter part of the 1990s that really threatened the Qadhafi regime. It is also the place where 413 children were infected with HIV/AIDS because of appalling hospital conditions, for which five Bulgarians and a Palestinian were notoriously and quite wrongly blamed. And in 2006, several people died there when security forces fired on demonstrators protesting about the Danish cartoons said to vilify the Prophet Mohammed. It has, over the last decade, seen repeated anti-regime demonstrations as a result. From this point of view, then, the demonstrations there reflect a much older and traditional antagonism towards the regime than the current wave of democratic assertion elsewhere in the region.

In addition, there were not, initially, significant anti-regime demonstrations in Tripolitania, either among urban sophisticates there or among Libya's persecuted Berber minority. Instead, there were demonstrations, clearly orchestrated by the regime, in its own favour. Unrepresentative although they may have been of real popular feelings in Tripolitania, they nevertheless stifled such expressions of what people there may really feel. And, until they reacted against it, the regime would not be seriously threatened. The regime had successfully repressed demonstrations there in the past and had also bought off potential dissidents with oil wealth in the form of consumer subsidies and salary increases.

That all changed after five days of demonstrations in which the regime progressively lost control of Eastern Libya. Suddenly, anti-regime demonstrations in Tripoli on Sunday, 20 February – which were met with gunfire, causing what one eyewitness called 'a massacre' – set the regime tottering. A rambling television address by Saif

al-Islam, both offering concessions and warning of civil war if demonstrations continued, only made things worse. The next day, his father left Tripoli, apparently to organise an armed riposte from his tribal homeland, involving Libya's armed forces, the Revolutionary Committees and the security services. Civil war does indeed seem very close.

### **European engagement?**

Even if the current situation in Libya reflects aspirations and responses different from those elsewhere in the Middle East and North Africa, Libyans themselves are well-aware of the powerfully repressive intent of the regime under which they live and wish to change it. They have little confidence in the virtues of 'direct popular democracy' and seek instead – as Colonel Qadhafi's own son, Saif al-Islam, has acknowledged in the past, often to his father's considerable irritation – real political participation. The question is, then, how this can be best articulated by the powers that dominate Libya's foreign policy concerns – the United States and Europe.

American concerns are hampered by its companies' drive for access to Libyan oil and gas and commercial tenders for the reconstruction of Libya's infrastructure, which is currently underway. Europe, however, knows well the cost of ignoring Libyan concerns; migration is an ever-present danger which the Libyan regime uses as a lever to force concessions from Brussels and Switzerland still recalls the outcome of an attempt to subject the colonel's own family to the normal principles of legal sanction in Geneva in 2009. Yet the European Union is anxious to include Libya in its holistic policy towards the South Mediterranean, started in 1995.

The result has been that the European Commission has, for the past four years, been trying to negotiate a framework agreement with Libya which would establish a relationship similar to those enjoyed by other Mediterranean states with Europe. The Framework Agreement, at present, studiously ignores, in its current form, the nature of the political process in Libya, yet the Barcelona Process, of which it is part, sees this as a crucial component of its agenda.

Past pressure has persuaded Colonel Qadhafi to abandon weapons of mass destruction. Now – if the regime survives its current crisis – pressure in favour of respect for human rights and democratic governance (the essence, after all, of the Barcelona Process) might have a similar effect if the Libyan leader sees that it can enhance his own conviction of what Libya should be. Equally, if the regime disappears, then its successors, whoever they may be, will need help in creating the democratic political systems that the Qadhafi regime so long denied. Despite European fears of political extremism and trans-national violence, this still remains a viable goal from which Libyans and Europeans alike would benefit.

## HOW CAN THE EU SUPPORT TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY IN EGYPT?

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*La jeunesse égyptienne a joué un rôle majeur en générant le gigantesque mouvement de protestation qui, en mobilisant l'ensemble de la population, a conduit à la chute du président Moubarak. Face à cette transformation radicale, l'UE doit modifier sa politique traditionnelle de maintien du statu quo dans le Sud de la Méditerranée. En particulier, elle doit soutenir activement la « troisième alternative » – au régime Moubarak et aux Frères musulmans – que représentent les dirigeants du mouvement de protestation du 25 janvier et leurs partisans. Elle peut jouer un rôle concret en offrant une expertise technique aux syndicats, aux associations de jeunes et aux médias, en fournissant une aide électorale et en contribuant à promouvoir la réforme du secteur de sécurité.*

The date of 25 January will henceforth have a special resonance in modern Egyptian history. It is the day that marked the start of the uprising which led to the resignation of President Hosni Mubarak on 11 February, thereby opening the door for a transition to democracy in Egypt. The 'youth revolution' that erupted on 25 January, fuelled by a context of increasing political and socio-economic frustration, began with the slogan 'Eish, horeya, karama insaneya', meaning 'bread, freedom and human dignity.' The demands on bread-and-butter issues were thus combined with calls for specific political reforms and measures to combat corruption. This is clearly demonstrated by the fact that the recruitment and mobilisation efforts of youth movements managed to bridge the gulf between youth activists and the general public, thereby generating this huge protest movement. The extent of the popular protests –unprecedented since the 1970s – increased from day to day, with numbers of demonstrators reaching around 8 million at their peak. The most important outcome of this revolution was actually the confirmation of the existence of a 'third alternative' The Egyptian regime has always relied on the strategy of weakening the secular opposition in order to present itself as the only viable counterweight to the Muslim Brotherhood, the most organised opposition in Egypt. This strategy was not only successful in conferring more legitimacy on the Egyptian regime in Western eyes, but also had the effect of drawing the US and Europe into a zero sum game, forcing them not to put any pressure on it. Herein lies the importance of the Egyptian revolution, which represents a milestone for the emergence of a credible third alternative that is both secular and democratic.

However, the challenge now is how to translate the changes flowing from the popular uprising into the concrete measures and safeguards necessary to underpin a genuine transition to democracy. This is where the EU can play an important role. The EU needs to radically change its policy of supporting the *status quo* in the South Mediterranean. In the context of its Neighbourhood Policy, it needs to put forward a more coherent policy for supporting transition to democracy in Mediterranean countries, with Egypt certainly included. The EU's traditional policies of supporting democracy through NGOs or through funding certain prominent organisations needs to

be modified since the revolution has resulted in the emergence of new actors that urgently need the EU's support. Representatives of the third alternative mentioned above rank among these.

## Policy suggestions for the EU

**1. Committee of experts.** A committee composed of the European Commission staff in Egypt on the one hand and Egyptian experts in different fields such as politics, human rights and economics on the other hand needs to be established. This committee will have the duty to monitor and to judge the relevant projects that should be implemented in the ground. The Egyptian experts would have an important role in helping the European Commission staff in understanding issues that are extraneous to their area of knowledge. This committee would thus perform a valuable function in building trust and confidence between Egyptian society and the EU as it would include credible Egyptian experts and not just the EU delegates.

**2. Syndicates and trade unions.** Strengthening and supporting new syndicates and independent trade unions. Some such organisations were already established in the last few years (but were not legalised by the state). Because of the pressure of the current social demands as well as the new climate of freedom, a large number of new syndicates as well as trade unions will be established in the next few weeks. These steps will not only help workers to achieve their material demands but will also push the system towards more democratisation. Here, the role of the EU comes in. It needs to:

- Provide workers' leaders already present on the ground with technical knowledge related to the formation of democratic trade unions and means of representation. Training courses will certainly be relevant in this regard.
- Set in place criteria and benchmarking mechanisms on the basis of which the EU could financially support the trade unions, thus encouraging them to respect internal democracy.

**3. The third alternative.** As mentioned above, the Egyptian revolution resulted in the birth of a third alternative, an alternative to both the ex-regime and the Muslim Brotherhood or the Islamic current. In this context the role of the EU will be to fully support this third alternative, represented essentially by the leaders of the 25 January youth movement and their supporters. Technical knowledge, consultancy and training courses could be delivered through established NGOs in Egypt, thus forestalling any rumours of external interference and creating confidence.

**4. New youth initiatives.** In periods of democratic transition, support and special attention should be given to political culture and voters' attitudes. In such a climate, the previous prevailing authoritarian culture still casts a long shadow and can affect elector's choices, leading them to choose undemocratic or ineffective political actors. This risk should be an incentive for the EU to support youth initiatives, which are

based on promoting political awareness and democratic culture, especially in the provinces outside Cairo.

**5. Media reform.** The governmental media were far from professional in their coverage of the revolution and indeed even before. Reforming those media will be extremely important in the formation of a new democratic culture in this transitory phase and especially during the upcoming elections. Here, the EU could help by providing those media with training designed to promote professionalism and encourage democratic procedures.

**6. Security sector reform.** A crisis of confidence now exists between Egyptian society on the one hand and the security sector on the other hand. This sector is still a symbol of oppression as it played a very negative role during Mubarak's rule in general and during the revolution in particular. That is why rebuilding this sector in this transitory phase would be extremely important. The EU could play a valuable role in this domain by:

- Providing this sector with training courses on human rights and democracy in order to help it formulate a new mentality and even a new culture.
- Providing it with technical knowledge related to the rebuilding procedures, especially in certain branches within the security sector such as the state security forces whose primary role was to oppress opposition activists.
- Putting in place criteria and benchmarking mechanisms following which financial aid will be given.

**7. Human investment and state institution development.** Technical assistance needs to be provided to the main state institutions such as the Ministries of Education and Health. Cooperation through the exchange of expertise and experience must be a key component of this assistance.

**8. Elections and technical assistance.** During the upcoming six months, Egypt will witness one of its most important parliamentary as well as presidential elections. The EU has to be present as a visible monitor of these elections. The EU needs to communicate its experience in terms of holding free and fair elections with the actors on the ground. Technical assistance in this context will be extremely important.

Finally, the EU should put diplomatic pressure on the Egyptian government if human rights violations were to occur. This will demonstrate to the government that it will be subject to societal and external pressure if it does not respect the people's will. Clearly, the EU would be neither coherent nor credible in its policy of supporting democracy if it were to decide to pursue its traditional policy of supporting the *status quo*.

## PALESTINE: SAME CRISIS, DIFFERENT REASONS

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*La question qui préoccupe les Palestiniens est moins la démocratie que l'autodétermination. Mais leur impuissance face à l'occupation israélienne et le schisme entre le Hamas et le Fatah ont entraîné une crise de légitimité comparable à celle vécue par d'autres régimes arabes. Depuis 2007, le gouvernement palestinien est de plus en plus répressif. Mis dans une position difficile par les événements en Tunisie et en Égypte, les deux leaderships ont tenté d'étouffer les manifestations pro-égyptiennes juste avant le départ de Moubarak. La perception d'un lien profond entre le déficit de démocratie palestinienne et l'absence d'autodétermination pourrait avoir un effet explosif. L'UE, en partie responsable de la situation actuelle des Palestiniens, devrait s'efforcer de lever les obstacles à la réconciliation palestinienne et cesser de tolérer qu'Israël empiète sur le territoire palestinien.*

Palestine differs from other Arab societies in that its people are stateless and dispossessed and exist either under foreign military occupation or in exile. For Palestinians, therefore, the core issue is not democracy but rather national self-determination. That said, the absence of either is increasingly seen as related.

Over the past several decades, the core of the Palestinian political system has shifted from the diaspora to the occupied territories, and from the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) to the Palestinian Authority (PA). Although the PA, established by the PLO in 1994 pursuant to the Israeli-Palestinian Oslo agreements concluded the previous year, is formally an interim self-governing authority with no representational or other functions *vis-à-vis* Palestinians outside the West Bank and Gaza Strip, it has in practice displaced the PLO as the locus of Palestinian leadership and political life.

This is only one reason why the Palestinian leadership has been faced with a crisis of legitimacy similar to that of other Arab regimes. Its primary challenge has been its failure to either negotiate an end to the Israeli occupation, mobilise sufficient international support to establish an independent Palestinian state or organise successful resistance to continued Israeli rule by its own people.

An additional factor is the schism within the Palestinian polity. In January 2006, the Islamist Resistance Movement, Hamas, defeated the Palestinian National Liberation Movement, Fatah, in elections to the PA's legislature, thus posing the most serious challenge to Fatah's dominance of the Palestinian national movement since the late 1960s. The ensuing power struggle, which was highly exacerbated by the US and EU's open and covert support of Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas and their refusal to endorse various inter-Palestinian agreements to ameliorate the conflict, culminated in June 2007 when Hamas seized power in the Gaza Strip. Since that time, the West Bank has been governed by Fatah, and the Gaza Strip by Hamas.

Various attempts to achieve inter-Palestinian reconciliation since 2007 have failed. While the reasons for this are manifold, the West's refusal to countenance meaningful power-sharing arrangements on the basis of a Palestinian strategic consensus consistent with a negotiated two-state settlement is key among them. The integration and participation of Hamas within the Palestinian polity so far as the US and EU are concerned remains conditioned on the Islamist movement formally capitulating to a series of conditions that have more to do with its ideological positions than actual conduct on the ground.

Since 2007, Palestinian governance in both the West Bank and Gaza Strip has become increasingly hegemonic and repressive. The Palestinian political system, historically among the most pluralistic and tolerant in the Arab world, has in both of its present manifestations become increasingly restrictive and hostile to dissent. In part, this reflects a reality in which the security forces are playing an ever greater role in governance, while power is concentrated in the executive at the expense of a marginalised legislature and compromised judiciary.

At the same time Palestinian governance is not sovereign. In the West Bank, the PA operates under direct Israeli occupation and at the pleasure of the Netanyahu government. In the Gaza Strip, Israeli control is indirect in the form of a punishing blockade that has been sustained with Egyptian cooperation. In practice, the EU has tolerated not only continued Israeli occupation, but also for all intents and purposes condoned Israeli settlement expansion in the West Bank and the blockade of the Gaza Strip.

The popular eruptions in Tunisia and Egypt have come at a particularly bad time for the Palestinian leaderships. In the West Bank, Abbas had been closely aligned with the pro-Western regional axis that included Tunisia's Ben Ali and Egypt's Mubarak, and the latter had in fact been his primary regional sponsor. Furthermore, Abbas was already under pressure on account of revelations by Wikileaks and Al-Jazeera, which demonstrated the extent of his collusion and dependence upon Israel and Washington, and the resounding failure of his diplomatic strategy. In the Gaza Strip, its Hamas rulers were primarily concerned that mass protests initially motivated by socio-economic deprivation and disparity as well as a will to freedom might find fertile ground among a growing number of alienated Palestinians.

It is noteworthy that both Palestinian governments actively suppressed pro-Egyptian demonstrations during Mubarak's final days. If Abbas did so for more obvious reasons, Hamas additionally had to take account of the possibility that Mubarak and Omar Suleiman might survive and thereafter impose an even more punishing regime on the Egyptian-Palestinian border.

In recent weeks the Palestinian leaderships, particularly in Ramallah, have sought to be seen as acting proactively in response to regional unrest. The cabinet of Prime

Minister Salam Fayyad has tendered its resignation, and the PLO Executive Committee has resolved that new PA presidential and legislative elections should be held by September 2011.

While it for the moment appears unlikely that mass protest will spread to either the West Bank or Gaza Strip, or succeed in ousting either government if it does, measures such as those described above will have little impact on the course of events.

As much as Palestinians would like to see a restoration of pluralism and meaningful democracy, most feel that any such initiatives should contribute to reconciliation rather than deepen the divide. In other words, unilateral initiatives by either Fatah or Hamas are unlikely to garner much support.

At a more fundamental level, Palestinians across the political spectrum would like to see a transformation of the current reality in which the public and opposition is increasingly excluded from political participation by movements who place their own and member interests far above that of the nation, lawless security establishments do as they please unfettered by any legislation or institutions, and economies are the preserve of crony capitalist cliques.

Most importantly, however, Palestinians want to see an end to Israeli rule and ubiquitous control of their lives. Over the longer term, the accurate perception that there is a symbiotic relationship between the absence of Palestinian democracy and perpetuation of Israeli occupation could yet make for a combustible combination.

Palestinians are neither stupid nor ignorant, and are fully aware of the degree to which Western – including EU – policy is implicated in their present fate, whether at the hands of their Palestinian or Israeli rulers. If the EU were to develop the intention to redress this situation, it should focus on two issues: removing obstacles to inter-Palestinian reconciliation, and terminating tolerance for continued Israeli encroachment upon their patrimony.

## JORDAN: AT A POLITICAL CROSSROADS?

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*Les événements en Tunisie et en Égypte ont eu une influence sur les autres pays arabes et la Jordanie ne fait pas exception. Trois éléments y contribuent : un fort sentiment d'identité arabe ; le succès des manifestations en Tunisie et en Égypte ; la similitude du contexte politique et économique ainsi que du type de gouvernement dans les différents États arabes. Confrontés à un contexte politique et économique comparable à celui de leurs voisins (impopularité de l'élite privilégiée, corruption, contrôle des libertés politiques et d'expression) et au même type de pouvoir, il n'est pas exclu que les Jordaniens connaissent une révolution de ce type, surtout si les émeutes se poursuivent ailleurs.*

The developments in Tunisia and Egypt have clearly influenced the peoples of neighbouring Arab states. The protests in Algeria, Yemen, Bahrain and Libya have amply demonstrated that the peoples of the region exert reciprocal influence upon each other. Jordan in this context is no exception. As over the last two months the people of Jordan witnessed these uprisings calling for political reform and new economic policies, a heated debate was generated about the course that the country should take. Events gained momentum and the monarch himself was forced to react. This chapter argues that three factors have contributed to deepening the impact of the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions on the Jordanian people, facilitating their spread to Jordan: (i) the awakening of the Arab identity; (ii) the lessons learned from the success of the demonstrations in Tunisia and Egypt; and (iii) finally and chiefly, the commonality between the political conditions, economic circumstances and the characteristics of the ruling regimes in the different Arab states. The Jordanian demonstrations and protests have clearly reflected these components.

The extent to which Jordanians responded to the uprisings (whether this took the form of citizens closely following the events or organising activities expressing solidarity with the Tunisians and Egyptians) reveals the hidden strength of the Arab identity. In fact, the keen interest taken not just by political and civil society activists, but by ordinary Jordanian people, in the uprisings suggests that they consider the revolutions as a domestic issue.<sup>1</sup> This contrasts sharply with the much more muted reaction of the Jordanians to the revolution in Muslim Indonesia. The Jordanian reaction to what happened in Tunisia and Egypt reflects the vital importance of the Arab identity as a force driving people to action.

Certainly, the gains that the protestors made, whether in Tunisia or Egypt, inspired the Jordanians and revealed a new route for change. The formula is simple: take over the streets, articulate specific demands, show resilience, and do not wait for the exist-

1. Over the 18 days of the Egyptian revolution, more than 8 demonstrations took place in front of the Egyptian embassy in Amman to show support and solidarity with the protestors in Tahir Square. Many Jordanians interacted via Facebook and Twitter, and mobile phones. Some of them provided advice to the Egyptian protestors on how to handle the tear gas or how to protect themselves from the police. More than 10,000 people spontaneously, with no prior organisation, moved towards the Egyptian embassy after it was announced that Mubarak had stepped down.

ing political parties to act.<sup>2</sup> Not surprisingly, similar chants and slogans from the Tunisian and Egyptian protests were used in Jordan, with adaptations to reflect distinctive Jordanian demands and local concerns. The Jordanian demonstrations called for the immediate dismissal of the government, the dissolving of the current parliament and changing of the electoral system. They also called for better economic conditions.

In addition to the power of the common Arab identity, and the fact that they have been galvanised by having witnessed the success of the Tunisian and Egyptian protestors, the Jordanians are motivated by the difficult political and economic circumstances that they share with other Arab states. Jordan is similar to many other Arab countries with regard to its economic situation and the level of political and civil freedoms.

From an economic standpoint, the policies of privatisation, attracting foreign investment and encouraging state withdrawal from many sectors of the economy, that resulted in respectable GNP growth rate in some years, did not have a beneficial trickle-down impact on the great majority of Jordanians. The Jordanian economy is still dependent on foreign aid. The unemployment rate stands at 12 percent, while 14 percent of the population live below the poverty line. The inflation rate sits above 10 percent and annual income *per capita* is around US\$2,000. Moreover, Jordan's external debts have doubled over the last few years. In fact, the main visible outcome of these economic policies has been the emergence of a new elite in Jordan that has managed to combine economic clout with political power. This elite is not popular in Jordan. Indeed, the majority of Jordanians (65 percent)<sup>3</sup> believe that corruption is widespread. The political activities that took place over the last two months, whether they took the form of demonstrations or statements or debates, were focused on changing the state economic policies, fighting corruption and prosecuting venal officials as well as reinstating the role of the state in the economic sphere, especially with regard to education and healthcare.

Political concerns in the public debate over the last two months were as central as the economic issues. For the last 17 years, the Jordanians have felt excluded from the decision-making process. This can be linked to the systematic weakening of parliament. Much of the current frustration of the protestors stems from the interminably slow pace of democratisation.<sup>4</sup> The first obstacle was the enactment of a 1993 one-person, one-vote law which effectively ensured that candidates with tribal or tribal-like affiliations would be favoured over candidates running on a political platform. This led to a weakening of parliament as a true representative body of the people, and this problem was only further exacerbated with the fragmentation of voting districts in 2007 and the adoption of a virtual district in 2010. The system now favours MPs with traditional or tribal affiliations, and has effectively led to the depoliticisation of the parliament.

2. It is important to highlight the fact that the demonstrations in Jordan started one week after the beginning of the Tunisian protest. It derived momentum from the success of the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions.

3. Arab Reform Initiative, 'The State of Reform in the Arab World 2009-2010: The Arab Democracy Index', March 2010.

4. The process of democratisation started in 1989 when free general elections were held and martial law was ended.

The constitution stipulates that the parliament is one of three state branches and is a fundamental partner in decision-making. It is the institution which governs on behalf of the people through legislative processes, monitoring and promulgating public policies. However, in the view of most Jordanians, the parliamentary elections do not represent a true opportunity to reevaluate, review or transform the policies of the state either partially or fundamentally, as occurs in democratic nations.

Over the past 18 years citizens' understanding of the parliament's role has diverged from its actual constitutional role. As frequent opinion polls indicate, more than 75 percent of citizens identify the parliament's role as providing private and semi-public services, with a focus on surreptitiously securing employment, financial assistance or free health care for key figures within their support networks. Citizens have come to regard the parliament as an intermediary between society and the executive authority that channels the personal demands of citizens to the government so that the latter can undertake action it deems appropriate. In other words, they see the parliament as akin to a civil society institution or a lobbying group. ***This viewpoint drains the parliament of its constitutional relevance and therefore denies the people access to the decision-making process.***

In addition to the weakening of the parliament, the current state regulations limit political freedoms and access to the public sphere. Political and civil freedoms, political participation, freedom of expression and freedom of association are government-controlled. For example, in practice, the public gathering law allows the authorities to arbitrarily deny any requests for either holding meetings or organising peaceful protests. Forming a civil society organisation requires official state approval, which can be next to impossible if the applicants are considered to belong to the opposition.

In essence, the Jordanian people have no real voice in ruling themselves nor do they have free access to political participation. These issues constitute the main grievances of the protestors. The Jordanian political system evolved around a nexus between three centres of power, i.e.: the security services, the government, and the Royal Court. In the past, the state counted on Western support<sup>5</sup> and official propaganda that incited public fear that political reform would result in either chaos or a system controlled by the Islamic movement (the latter scenario now discredited in the light of the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions). The government routinely dismissed frequent calls from both political and civil society actors for reforms such as amending the laws restricting political freedoms and changing the electoral system.

The Jordanian state swiftly took a few important measures to contain the protests. A reduction in fuel prices, an immediate increase in civil servants' salaries, and allocating substantial funds to aid-deprived families aimed to ease the economic pressure. On the political reform front, the monarch held several meetings to consult a

5. Jordan's alliance with the West on fighting terror, and its commitment to the Middle East peace process, relieved Jordan from serious international pressure for political reform.

wide range of interlocutors including the leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood<sup>6</sup> and the professional unions. In the face of continuous protests, the King had to dismiss his government and form a new government with clear instructions to take action on the political reform issues. These measures managed to assuage the majority of the mainstream political forces that were demanding that action be taken. However, the public sphere in Jordan continues to witness the emergence of new opposition figures who refuse to be satisfied with cosmetic reform, but instead demand changes in the paradigm of the system. These new groups are focused on activating the articles of the constitution stating that the government should be formed from the parliament. They also want the abolition of all of the amendments that were made to the constitution since 1957, which reduced the power of the legislative body. Demands also include constitutional reforms according to which special courts should be abolished, and the security services, police and ministers can be tried before the judicial courts.

It could be argued that, in the light of the fact that the protests in Jordan were fundamentally different from those in Tunisia and Egypt – in so far as they were organised by political parties in Jordan rather than originating as a civilian movement on the streets – and bearing in mind the speed with which the Jordanian regime reacted to the protests, as well as the fact that the new emerging groups lack experience in organising such protests, it is unlikely that Jordan will witness similar events in the short term. Additionally, the fragmentation within Jordanian society along country-of-origin lines (Palestinian, Jordanian), and regional and tribal affiliation, can be a dissuasive factor when it comes to organising large-scale collective actions. However, claiming that Jordan is not going to experience events similar to those that have happened in Tunisia or Egypt in the short term does not exclude the possibility of Jordanians experiencing such an upheaval in the future, especially if these events continue to take place in other Arab countries. The Jordanians have learned from the experience of the groups demonstrating in Tunisia and Egypt, and used similar methods of communicating their demands, and have thus brought about a new era of protests in Jordan. The political system has to respond by making concessions on a few issues to maintain its stability and must follow a route of negotiation for political reform. Such reforms would include dissolving the parliament that was elected in November during an election many considered to be rigged, changing the electoral system to a mixed system that combines proportional representation and single-member districts,<sup>7</sup> removing all of the restrictive articles in the laws on political and civil association freedoms, as well as abolishing all of the amendments that were made to the constitution during the martial law era.

6. The first meeting in 8 years.

7. This has been proposed by the National Agenda 2005. The National Agenda is a state initiative for political reform.

## LEBANON: GOVERNANCE STAGNATION VERSUS REGIONAL AGITATION

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*Le Liban semble être l'un des pays de la région les moins touchés par les événements en Tunisie et en Égypte. Cela est dû probablement moins à ses pouvoirs pseudo-démocratiques qu'à la paralysie d'un système politique caractérisé par une puissante oligarchie confessionnelle. Le Liban est confronté à des défis majeurs en matière de souveraineté et de réforme politique. Au plan interne, la réforme de la gouvernance est liée aux intérêts de l'oligarchie. Le vecteur de la réforme et de la démocratisation est la société civile, et l'aide occidentale dans ce domaine est cruciale. Les États-Unis jugeant toujours la confrontation stratégique plus importante que la réforme démocratique et institutionnelle, c'est en l'UE que celle-ci devrait trouver un avocat convaincant.*

It is remarkable that Lebanon has been one of the countries least affected by the historical and transformative uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt. Perhaps this is because Lebanon is already fairly open and pseudo-democratic, is not ruled by a strong repressive dictatorship, and does not suffer from the severe unemployment and poverty that prevail in those countries. But perhaps, also, it is because the political system in Lebanon has been stuck in the dysfunctionality of divided confessional politics dominated by an entrenched oligarchy, and has lost the ability to transform political and social grievances into meaningful political contestation.

The Lebanese, like everyone else in the region, have been mesmerised by the historic events in Tunisia and Egypt and have followed them closely on Arab satellite television. Some have argued that the millions of Lebanese that had taken to the streets in March 2005 as part of the Cedar Revolution had preceded Tunisians and Egyptians in this form of popular revolt. Others have voiced the hope that Tunisia and Egypt's popular revolutions will not be wasted in the same way that Lebanon's Cedar Revolution apparently was.

Lebanon faces two sets of political challenges: one is at the level of sovereignty; the other is at the level of domestic political reform. Lebanon lost its sovereignty in the late 1960s and has not regained it: it lost internal control of its territory first to the PLO and then to Hezbollah; and lost control of its border and large parts of the South repeatedly to Israeli invasions and attacks. It also lost control of its border with Syria in the mid-1970s.

Lebanon currently does not have the internal unity nor does the Lebanese state have the power to re-impose full state sovereignty on the country's borders and territory. Realistically, the only way that this situation will change is if one of two things happens: either Syria signs a full peace treaty with Israel, or the West arrives at a grand bargain with Iran. Both scenarios are very unlikely, but without one of them, Lebanon will continue to be used as a proxy arena by Syria and Iran against Israel and the West. In other words, the best way to help Lebanon regain its sovereignty is to seek

a breakthrough in the peace process, or a dramatic improvement in relations with Iran. In the meantime, Lebanon and the Lebanese have in effect to figure out a way to coexist with Hezbollah, maintain stability and push forward governance and policy decisions, even in the absence of real state sovereignty.

Internally, the problem of governance reform stems from the vested interests of an entrenched confessional oligarchy. Lebanon is effectively dominated by five political bosses or leaders (without using their religious and political titles: Hassan Nasrallah, Nabih Berri, Saad Hariri, Walid Junblatt and Michel Aoun). President Michel Suleiman plays a significant role because of his position, and a few other politicians (namely Samir Geagea, Amine Gemayel, Suleiman Franjiyyeh, Najib Mikati, Muhammad Safadi, Omar Karami, Talal Arslan) play additional but mainly secondary roles to the big five. There are a few political parties, but they are either top-down military-style organisations as in the case of Hezbollah, or family-dominated institutions without real internal democracy, like the Kataib party or the Future Movement.

The oligarchy benefits from the perpetuation of the confessional system as each sits atop a confessional group or sub-group; they also benefit from the spoils of government and influence without effective transparency, anti-corruption institutions or accountability. As a result they do not have an interest in electoral reform (that might dilute their dominance), accountable government (that might limit their influence), or strong judiciary and anti-corruption institutions (that might curb their abuse of power for private gain).

Nevertheless, despite this basic hurdle, some reform does take place. This is the case for a number of reasons: Lebanon has a fairly open media and civil society, and issues of reform are constantly discussed; politicians feel obliged to engage in such debates and occasionally grant partial concessions in this direction. There are some ministers and government officials, appointed by the bosses, who are actually well-meaning or technocratic, and these officials push changes and reforms in areas under their control. Occasionally, conflict among the top oligarchy opens up opportunities for change: e.g. on the issue of electoral reform, the March 8 politicians believe that introducing proportional representation might hurt the March 14 politicians more than it hurts them; for this self-interested reason, it is possible that they might push such a 'reform'. In other words, some reforms are occasionally gained opportunistically in the context of oligarchic infighting.

The main proponents of fuller democratisation and more accountable government are in civil society. Western assistance to this civil society over the past few decades has been crucial in growing and sustaining many organisations and raising dozens of key issues in the country, that would have been completely ignored otherwise. This clamour from civil society has some, although limited, payoff: occasionally a minister or other politician or official responds to these civil society issues in order to appease the public or to appear in a positive and reformist light. In other cases, the reforms being suggested by civil society might actually help an official solve a particular policy challenge that they are not able to resolve otherwise.

In some other cases, activists from civil society end up ‘rising’ into the political class and assuming positions of influence: the most obvious case is that of current Minister of Interior Ziyad Baroud who was a pro-democracy activist and ended up being chosen by the president of the republic to be the Minister of Interior. Civil society as an incubator for future leaders, particularly in the absence of vibrant political parties, is an aspect that should not be ignored.

The oligarchic opponents of real reform receive external support from many quarters. The oligarchs of the March 8 coalition receive support from Syria and Iran. The oligarchs of the March 14 coalition receive support from Saudi Arabia, the UAE, (formerly) Mubarak’s Egypt, the US and some European states. The democratic impetus that could come from the US and Europe to the March 14 oligarchs has been absent, because the support has been more about confronting Hezbollah and Syrian-Iranian influence in Lebanon than about reform.

At the socio-economic level, Lebanon has had modest growth in the past few years, but not enough to provide the quantity and quality of jobs that the educated workforce needs. But Lebanon has avoided much of the pain of poor economic policy for two reasons: (i) Lebanon has exported hundreds of thousands of its skilled workforce to the Arab Gulf countries, from which they send remittances back home; (ii) the strong and extended family structure in Lebanon has cushioned individuals and young people from the distress of poverty and unemployment – as long as one or two members of the family are working somewhere, the remittance money is shared within the family to protect individuals from economic ruin.

In conclusion, as relates to the external aspect of pushing reform, the US might continue to consider strategic confrontation as more important than reform, but the EU should be clear and forceful about the need for democratic and institutional reform in Lebanon.

The agenda is not very complicated. At a bare minimum, Lebanon needs:

- A new parliamentary election law (deliberations could start with the draft prepared in 2006 by the Boutros Commission), including proportional representation, an independent electoral commission, stringent election finance and media laws, a women’s quota, and expat voting rights.
- A new administrative decentralisation law to create elected autonomous councils at the Qada level, and unleash the potential for decentralised political engagement and economic development.
- Reform of the political party system to encourage internal party democracy and accountability.
- And an empowered Anti-Corruption Commission.

These reforms alone would transform the political and governance landscape in the country.

## QUID DE LA SYRIE ?

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*Syria is a country in the throes of economic crisis, where civil liberties are increasingly curtailed and a climate of fear reigns, and which is moreover confronted with the Kurdish problem as well as with the conflict with Israel. In this context, the example of the Tunisian and Egyptian uprisings might prove an inspiration for a similar movement to develop in Syria. However such a view fails to take into account the ingenuity of the Syrian regime, which manages to assuage the grievances of the country's multiconfessional population by convincing them of its efforts to improve their daily lot. In this regard, the Europeans can play a key role by avoiding any association, in the context of their economic relations with Syria, with the endemic corruption prevailing in the country, and by promoting cooperation between civil society in Europe and in Syria. They should also adopt a more equitable position in the Middle East peace process.*

Le 12 février 2011, juste après le départ d'Hosni Moubarak, le journal saoudien *Al Hayat* publiait un article de son correspondant à Damas intitulé « Des facteurs économiques et politiques pour la stabilité du régime syrien ». Dans ce papier, considéré par des observateurs reconnus comme une déclaration officielle, l'auteur souligne l'importance de la politique étrangère de la Syrie pour la popularité du régime auprès des citoyens : le refus des « diktats » américains, le soutien à la résistance libanaise et palestinienne (Hezbollah et Hamas), la fermeté vis-à-vis de la politique israélienne et les alliances avec la Turquie et l'Iran, deux forces régionales moyennes.

Le régime fait ainsi état des progrès réalisés dans les dossiers économiques en glanant des chiffres au hasard, dans un pays où une grande partie de la population vit sous le seuil de pauvreté et où la migration de centaines de milliers d'habitants de la région orientale vers les grandes villes, après cinq années de sécheresse consécutives, crée de nouvelles ceintures de pauvreté. Pourtant, les libertés publiques sont de plus en plus muselées malgré la lueur d'espoir qu'avait suscitée l'arrivée au pouvoir de Bachar Assad en 2000. La déception fut rapide, avec le contrôle renforcé des services de renseignements dans l'ensemble de la vie publique (et même privée). Après l'assassinat de Rafik Hariri le 14 février 2005, le régime syrien, que son lien présumé avec ce crime isolait sur la scène internationale, s'est « vengé » contre sa propre population, mais sans pour autant perdre vraiment le soutien du citoyen lambda.

Dans ce pays, où le parti Bath domine la vie politique depuis 1963, le pouvoir explique la lenteur des réformes politiques par la situation régionale, les menaces extérieures, l'isolement diplomatique et les priorités économiques. La presse demeure étroitement contrôlée, la vie associative se limite aux secteurs du développement social et de la charité, l'expression publique est sanctionnée par des tribunaux d'exception et une culture de peur s'installe à tous les niveaux de la société et de l'appareil dirigeant.

Certes, la politique syrienne concernant la gestion du dossier libanais a porté ses fruits et que la Syrie a pu être réintroduite sur la scène internationale grâce aux efforts du président Nicolas Sarkozy en juillet 2008, mais le régime n'a pas assoupli ses pratiques en matière de politique et de liberté d'expression.

Parallèlement, la corruption s'est véritablement institutionnalisée dans le pays. Elle était déjà utilisée par le régime du père de l'actuel président (1970-2000) comme un moyen de redistribution et de partage en vue de préserver la pyramide « bien bâtie » du pouvoir « sécuocratique ». Les affaires ont prospéré avec l'apparition des holdings rassemblant une nouvelle génération d'hommes d'affaires « parasites » et des officiers des différents services de renseignement. Visant surtout les responsables locaux de deuxième et troisième rangs, les campagnes de « lutte » contre la corruption n'ont pas inquiété les détenteurs de la richesse colossale issue de ce qui est devenu une véritable institution.

Enfin, la Syrie est confrontée à une crise aiguë liée aux revendications culturelles et identitaires de sa population kurde. Ce dossier n'a été résolu par aucun gouvernement depuis l'indépendance du pays (1946). Les revendications kurdes ont donné lieu le 12 mars 2004 à un soulèvement violent dans la région Nord-Est de la Syrie qui a été rapidement réprimé.

**Dans ce climat, il est tout à fait légitime de penser que la Syrie est prête à suivre l'exemple de la révolte tunisienne ou égyptienne** ou, du moins, de connaître des mouvements revendicatifs qui mèneront le pouvoir politique à entreprendre une réforme réelle et un changement crucial dans les pratiques économiques et politiques. Pour certains, cet « espoir » est vain, au moins dans l'état actuel des choses, et ce, pour plusieurs raisons :

- La Syrie est une société complexe composée de plusieurs ethnies et confessions. Les minorités religieuses (chrétiens, druzes, chiites, ismaélites, etc.) ont été souvent amadoués par un pouvoir représentant, sous une étiquette laïque, une assurance relative face à la domination probable des musulmans sunnites. De plus, l'invasion de l'Irak par les Américains en 2003 et le sort des chrétiens d'Irak ont largement fait craindre le développement d'une volonté d'éviter toute alternative imprévisible qu'un changement à la tête du pouvoir pourrait entraîner. De leur côté, les mouvements de l'opposition sont presque inexistantes depuis la répression sanglante des années 1980 qui a marqué tous les esprits.
- Le système politique en Syrie est également parvenu à encadrer toutes les composantes de la société avec des « organisations populaires » auxquelles appartiennent les différents corps de métier, les ouvriers, les paysans, les étudiants et les femmes, et qui ne sont ni plus ni moins que des organismes de contrôle, de canalisation et de redistribution des privilèges.

- La société civile, émergente depuis les années 2000, se contente d'œuvrer dans les domaines autorisés et bien contrôlés (développement et charité). Une nouvelle forme d'ONG se développe autour de la Première dame avec des moyens considérables (dont une partie importante est financée par des bailleurs occidentaux) sous le nom de Fondation syrienne pour le développement. L'objectif est d'accaparer l'espace public et de mieux canaliser le travail associatif.
- Pour la majorité des Syriens, leur pays adopte à l'évidence une diplomatie efficace face à une multitude d'ennemis déclarés et cachés. C'est non seulement ce dont le pouvoir tente de convaincre la population, mais aussi une réalité qui démontre la réussite d'une diplomatie visant à détourner les opinions de leurs besoins réels dans les domaines économiques, politiques et socioculturels. Le soutien aux mouvements de résistance libanais et palestiniens donne quant à lui une dimension régionale apaisante, parallèlement au développement accéléré des relations économiques et politiques avec la Turquie.

**En revanche, le régime syrien pressent un danger** : reconnaissant implicitement que la peur a changé de camp, le moment lui semble venu d'entreprendre quelques démarches d'ouverture. Dans cette logique, des subventions ont été débloquées pour les familles les plus démunies, les fonctionnaires ont vu leur prime de mazout augmenter et des sites comme Facebook, Twitter et YouTube ont été autorisés à la veille de la chute de Moubarak. Dans un entretien récent<sup>1</sup>, le président syrien a contesté toute possibilité que les événements tunisiens ou égyptiens se produisent en Syrie, précisant que la stabilité et les réformes économiques étaient sa priorité. Dans le registre politique, il a évoqué une nouvelle vision des élections municipales ainsi qu'une amélioration de la loi sur les associations. Les représentants de l'opposition, voire certains intellectuels syriens craignent néanmoins que la Syrie ne doive se préparer à une longue attente, assortie d'une économie défailante et de la confiscation de certains droits politiques.

**Il est donc préconisé**, pour éviter un scénario chaotique, de consolider les liaisons entre la société civile européenne et la société civile syrienne réelle. La société civile cooptée par le pouvoir ne doit pas être le seul interlocuteur des Européens. Le renforcement des relations entre les deux sociétés civiles avec un appui institutionnel européen contribuera au développement de réseaux et d'échanges dans des domaines variés. L'UE, pour ouvrir une page nouvelle et regagner sa crédibilité auprès de l'opinion publique arabe en général et syrienne en particulier, devra associer le discours aux actes. Actuellement, la position « timide » à l'égard des atrocités qui se déroulent en Libye n'arrange pas les choses. La situation est profondément différente avec la Syrie et le dialogue, accompagné de mesures de contrôle fermes et efficaces des mouvements de fonds liés aux réseaux corrompus aidera les deux parties à mieux établir un terrain d'entente. La question des droits de l'homme doit être mise claire-

1. *Wall Street Journal*, 31 janvier 2011.

ment en avant sans risquer d'irriter l'interlocuteur : par exemple, dans les accords économiques, il est normal d'exiger la transparence et une justice indépendante et impartiale, les deux piliers d'un État de droit. Les pressions médiatiques n'ont jamais abouti avec un régime de cette nature. Ainsi, le contrôle des contrats signés entre les entreprises européennes et syriennes doit être renforcé afin d'éviter toute association, de près ou de loin, avec des symboles de la corruption. Par un dialogue constructif, les Européens arriveront peut-être à convaincre le « jeune » président d'entreprendre de vraies réformes politiques. Cependant, la crédibilité de cette démarche nécessite une position plus juste et plus équitable dans le processus de paix, vis-à-vis d'un conflit arabo-israélien qui contribue à pérenniser les dictatures. La révolution égyptienne l'a bien montré puisque le gouvernement israélien a tenté – en vain – de convaincre l'administration américaine de retarder la chute de Moubarak. Car les ennemis de la démocratie dans la région peuvent aussi être des démocrates des deux rives.



## II. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DIMENSIONS

### THE DIGNITY OF THE RULE OF LAW

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*Les émeutes en Tunisie et en Égypte ont été déclenchées par des citoyens ordinaires sur fond de misère sociale et économique, de frustration et de privation. Une évolution a joué un rôle majeur : la jeune génération arabe est éduquée et très politisée. L'émergence des femmes et le recul des structures patriarcales ont également participé de cette transformation sociale. Mais cette dynamique ne s'est pas accompagnée de la transformation correspondante du système politique. En fait, la situation des droits de l'homme dans de nombreux pays de la région s'est considérablement détériorée depuis quelques années et une évolution marquée vers l'autoritarisme peut être observée. Pour autant, l'UE n'a fait aucun effort, dans le cadre du partenariat euro-méditerranéen, pour lier les échanges commerciaux au respect des droits de l'homme et des libertés civiles. Il est temps maintenant qu'elle s'investisse de manière proactive dans la région à la fois financièrement et politiquement. Surtout, elle doit promouvoir un nouveau processus politique, lequel ne sera crédible que si les partis islamiques sont autorisés à y participer.*

The uprisings that have taken place, first in Tunisia and then in Egypt, are, above all, a movement of citizens that have taken to the streets to demand the rule of law. Undoubtedly, these are the most momentous events to have occurred in this part of the world since the national independence movements. Moreover, and as in those times, events have been closely linked to far-reaching generational changes. The youth of today have grown up in a context of multiple social transformations, acquiring a growing political consciousness, and are now prepared to challenge the ruling regimes' disregard of their rights and freedoms. Societies have evolved and have now reached a level of maturity where they will no longer submit to an oppressive political regime. That is why this massive social reaction is fundamentally political in nature and why any attempt to 'buy off' the demonstrators is bound to fail.

In the Arab and Muslim world there is a widespread feeling of frustration, together with a historical legacy of powerlessness and dispossession. For over a century, the territories and peoples in this region have been the pawns of incessant power stratagems as a result of their geographical situation. Another powerful factor is the particular context in which this frustration is rooted. The Arab and Muslim populations are mainly urban and this populous new generation of young people has had almost universal access to education. Accordingly, a substantial proportion of these societies is very highly politicised. Furthermore, their members have a keen collective

sense of belonging to a pivotal region (the cradle of great civilisations, and a strategic location of enormous geopolitical value with, beneath its soil, the most extensive hydrocarbon energy reserves in the world). Such attributes should provide the area's populations with influence and well-being, but for over a century, such benefits have eluded them. These sociological and psychological factors have all contributed to aggravating the feeling of dispossession.

The latest UNDP Arab Human Development Report<sup>1</sup> observed that this new generation was a powerful motor for change and progress but also warned that if conditions were not created to enable its members' integration into society, the subsequent frustration would create a formidable challenge.

Therefore, a key question that has arisen from the present situation is how to recover a people's dignity, as citizens by right, when this dignity has been systematically usurped. How can a state of rule be established and prosper, to assure this dignity? The anticipated processes of democratic reform, proclaimed following the Gulf War, were in most cases replaced by a drift toward authoritarianism, asphyxiating popular dissent. As long ago as 1995, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership proclaimed its goal to 'create an area of peace and stability based on the fundamental principles of respect for human rights and democracy.' However, this has been translated *de facto* into scant concern for genuine and progressive transformation of political modes of government, and rather into increasing support for authoritarian regimes. On many occasions, this lack of active interest in democratisation has been excused or justified in the interests of political pragmatism, according to which if attention was initially focused on promoting economic liberalisation, this would generate profound social changes, which would inevitably result in political liberalisation. However, the application of this theory did not yield the hoped-for results. In recent years, the human rights situation has deteriorated considerably in some countries on the southern rim of the Mediterranean, where authoritarian regimes are becoming increasingly distant from their own societies, which are harshly treated and oppressed. In fact, the EU has made no effort to enforce Article 2 of the Free Trade Agreements, which tied trade issues to greater respect for human rights and civil liberties. And although some human rights organisations have received financial support from the EU (especially the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network), the signals issued have been too faint for these bodies to apply effective pressure on entrenched regimes.

In the last two decades, under the appearance of a continuing *status quo*, a latent process of destabilisation has intensified, aggravated by the use and abuse of counter-terrorism measures, and there has been an alarming increase in violations of human rights and of the Geneva Convention.

1. United Nations Development Programme, *Arab Human Development Report 2009: Challenges to Human Security in Arab Countries* (UNDP, July 2009).

In the present situation, respect for human rights is viewed as a necessary condition for these societies to regain their dignity; there can be no doubt that this concern is a central element in democratic transition and one that is essential for the stability of the region. These countries have strong civil societies in which defenders of human rights have developed an institutional network to play an important role in monitoring and supervising national progress towards the rule of law. And the right to equality is an essential part of the rule of law. Indeed, the social transformations undergone in these societies have opened the way for these rights to become more firmly established. The prevailing Western image of Arab women is one of passive subjects; veiled, exotic women who are victims, and who react to events rather than actively participating in them. As often happens, these simplistic images and clichés are belied by complex, contrasting realities. In opposition to these time- and geography-bound concepts, empirical evidence reveals that, on the contrary, a profound revolution is taking place, in which everything is changing, despite the power of patriarchal structures and of reactionary sectors of society. Arab societies find themselves immersed in a process of intense, irreversible change in which women play a crucial role, as has been observed in recent popular movements in which they have been very active.

In the last fifty years, an intense urbanisation and feminisation of the workforce throughout all Arab countries has placed women firmly in the public eye. During this period, differences between boys and girls in school attendance levels have decreased everywhere, albeit at different rates. And in many Arab countries, there are now more girls than boys enrolled in secondary and higher education, which shows that parents consider the education of their daughters as important as that of their sons. Surveys unanimously report that young people, both men and women, now wish to study and begin work before getting married. Moreover, they increasingly wish to choose their own marriage partner. The rise in average age at marriage, together with falling birth rates (the direct result of an increasing use of contraception) is reducing average family sizes, bringing them much closer to those of 'nuclear families' in the West. This new family model is becoming so widely accepted that it is also expanding within rural societies, where the deteriorating agricultural economy is now accompanied by a marked trend towards smaller families. These changes have resulted in a redistribution of powers between the young and their elders, and between men and women. Thus, representatives of the patriarchal order are experiencing a progressive loss of power, which is accentuated by the profound transition from the extended family model to a nuclear one. This increasing significance of young people and of women, as a result of trends towards individualisation, is a prominent feature of the evolution taking place in the Arab world today, and is at the forefront of the movement for greater democracy and citizens' rights.

These dynamics of change have rarely been accompanied by a corresponding transformation of the political system. Most states have resisted transferring processes of social transformation into their legislative framework, fearing that greater freedom and the development of individual autonomy within the family – and thus

weakened patriarchal authority – might call into public doubt the ideological foundations of state power. The ground, thus, is prepared so that democratisation and the rule of law – the crucial factor still lacking – may be advanced, through intra-systemic change, in favour of the right to equality. This is a particularly important aspect, because the situation of women is one of the main points of reference used by the Western world to evaluate Arab societies. And, unfortunately, these valuations tend to focus on the supposed resistance to change implicit in Islamic norms, a view that hampers understanding of the true scale of the social transformations taking place, and which the dramatic reality of current events is revealing with dazzling clarity. The standard, blinkered focus on the status of women in Islamic societies has hidden the reality of ongoing changes. Under the prevailing essentialist view of Arab societies, no interest has been expressed as to what might break the firmly-held view of this ‘Islamic specificity’, under which all Arab women conform to a single reality, whereas there is in fact a tremendous variety of situations. This restricted outlook has prevented many from seeing, and much less evaluating, the profound changes taking place – and the fact that women are promoting these changes. In consequence, the West has deprived itself of a key factor to facilitate understanding the Arab world as it is today, and to understanding what it wishes to become tomorrow.

These issues are of crucial importance to the construction of a credible political process that will satisfy the ambitions for democracy and the rule of law among the peoples of this region, and the Islamist parties must participate in this process. It is an unavoidable fact that current processes of democratisation must take into account the presence of Islam in this part of the world (as is also the case in Turkey). Islamist parties such as al-Nahda in Tunisia or the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt must be considered political actors with a right to participate together with the other parties in the process of democratic transition. Otherwise, such a democratic process would not be credible. What is really significant is the process itself and not the participants. In other words, it is necessary to enhance the functioning of structures and institutions rather than *a priori* selecting actors or leaders. What is needed are stronger governance mechanisms, which are transparent, competitive and subject to democratic laws, irrespective of whether the actors implementing these mechanisms belong to secular or Islamist backgrounds. It is the citizens of these countries who must determine their own destiny, electing their own representatives. Moreover, the process of transition, in itself, will enable the emergence of new leaderships with which younger generations can identify, following the severe erosion of support and the internal crises that have affected all the established parties, including the Islamists. The Islamist world, too, has been affected by the generational transformation now under way. The new generation is more political and pragmatic, taking the Turkish model as its reference, and forcing the establishment to accept changes and modernisation. The best framework in which this new generation can take the helm and pilot a far-reaching *aggiornamento* is that of democratic transition.

The recent demonstrations have challenged many preconceived ideas about the supposed incompatibility between democracy and the Arab world, about the essentialist doctrines according to which Arab citizens are passive subjects of religious determination, and about the intrinsic violence that supposedly dominates them. Many Western veils, which had impeded a clear view of these societies, have now been stripped away. The demonstrators have shown, peacefully, that their greatest and most fundamental ambition is to be respected as human beings with rights and freedoms. Such aspirations are universal; these societies must not be abandoned to their fate. They must be accompanied politically and supported financially. It is now that financial aid and investment can achieve results, bringing peace to a part of the world on which true global stability depends.

## SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

*Les événements récents au Moyen-Orient et en Afrique du Nord sont essentiellement dus à une hausse des prix mondiaux des produits alimentaires et des ressources énergétiques insupportable pour des populations appauvries, souffrant d'un fort taux de chômage, chez les jeunes surtout, et dirigées par des régimes autocratiques corrompus. La société civile a démontré qu'elle est désormais assez forte pour défier les gouvernements arabes ; les mouvements islamistes n'ont quant à eux joué qu'un rôle marginal. L'UE doit reconsidérer sa position à cet égard et soutenir activement la transition démocratique sans interférer dans les choix du monde arabe. Il lui faut également revoir ses politiques d'engagement économique dans la région, notamment la Politique européenne de voisinage, promouvoir la création d'emplois ainsi que la construction et le remplacement des infrastructures régionales.*

The recent dramatic events in the Middle East and North Africa share common features, despite the fact that each of the peaceful mass demonstrations that have led to the democratic transitions currently under way also have their own distinctive characteristics and have taken place in a specific national context. Those shared features tend to highlight the role of economic and social circumstances that are common across the region as a whole – not least, of course, the fact that virtually all the regimes there have been liberal autocracies and, furthermore, supported as such by outside powers in the name of regional stability and security.

### The economic dimension

First and foremost, the initial demonstrations – in Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Jordan, Yemen and, even, Libya – have all been sparked off by economic deprivation. The immediate cause has been the dramatic escalation in global food and energy prices which has had a direct impact on populations already living close to the poverty line. Behind this, however, looms the question as to why populations in the region should have been so vulnerable. One key factor has been the high rate of unemployment, averaging between 10 and 20 percent – with much higher rates among young people.

After all, virtually every country in the region has wholeheartedly adopted the neo-liberal principles of the Washington Consensus, whether through IMF pressure or in response to the European Union's Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. Yet, despite some cases of impressive macroeconomic growth, unemployment and poverty remain depressingly high and foreign investment – the universally-proclaimed panacea – depressingly low, while disparities in wealth have grown alarmingly, exacerbated by overt corruption. Surely this suggests that the model of economic development that these countries have been persuaded into adopting is inadequate and needs to be rethought.

The simple fact is that the unrestrained operation of the free market in a globalised context, to the exclusion of the state, has not produced the benefits it promised. It failed to generate sufficient employment to absorb the demographic explosion in the region's economically active population or to stimulate investment in the enterprises that could provide such employment. It also made it even more difficult for the state to provide essential social services in countries where 60 percent of the population are below the age of 30. And, by failing to promote transparency and accountability effectively, it presided over the growth of massive, regime-directed corruption.

It is clear that more rational developmental models are needed: ones that take into account the specific local realities of the Middle East and North African region, given its heavy reliance on the European market – over 70 per cent of all Maghreb trade is with Europe while in the Middle East the figure is around 30 percent – and the distortions caused by its dependence on oil-and-gas production and exports.

An associated problem is the nature of economic activities in each of the countries concerned. Oil-and-gas producers with small populations run significant current account surpluses and provide their populations with social and economic benefits while excluding them from the process of governance in return. Energy exporters with large populations – Iran, Iraq and Algeria – on the other hand see their external revenues fluctuate with global energy prices while oil-and-gas distort their economies, generating mass unemployment. Nor are non-oil producers in a much better position, for they must compete with far more efficient producers in Europe and Asia, this condemning them to chronically high levels of unemployment.

The result of these relationships is twofold. First, the Middle East and North Africa generate massive outward migration pressures because of unemployment and exploding demographic growth, with Europe as the target destination. Second, Europe depends on the region for its own supplies of imported energy – 33 percent of its oil and 20 percent of its gas comes from the Gulf and the Maghreb. While the energy relationship is welcomed, as a counterbalance to European dependence on Russia, migration and the supposedly associated spillover effects of regional violence are feared and excluded, thus poisoning the overall links across the Mediterranean.

Lessons about the development process learned from within Europe itself and from South-East Asia and Latin America about the appropriate role of the state in economic development, rather than its total exclusion, need to be adapted to address the overriding problem of job creation, rather than just focusing on macro-economic success. After all, South-East Asia and China have all recognised the importance of indicative planning in achieving economic success and Europe has long recognised the importance of structural assistance in its own achievement of the European Union. And the colossal deficiencies in regional infrastructure and regional economic integration call for active external intervention.

## The social implications

Yet, surprisingly, the real anger of the demonstrators has not been solely fuelled by their straitened economic circumstances. Instead it has been the open contempt – *hoghra* – with which ruling elites and their leading autocrats have treated their populations that has led to the ‘days of rage’. It was the death of Mohamed Bouazizi in protest at his treatment by the Tunisian police who confiscated his only means of livelihood, and President Ben Ali’s pretence that the resulting violence was due to ‘foreign forces’, that led to the large-scale demonstrations that brought down the regime in Tunisia. In Egypt, it has been the gross and ostentatious wealth of the ruling business elites, led by Gamal Mubarak, alongside the latter’s aspirations to political power, that amplified the frustrations of students and the intelligentsia and, on 25 January, led to mass demonstrations after Friday prayers. And Libya’s Colonel Qadhafi has made his contempt for his fellow countrymen quite clear, now that they have rejected his political project because of the brutality that accompanied it.

In Yemen, the arrogance of Ali Abdullah Saleh, in power for 30 years, in proposing his son as his successor, produced major demonstrations in a country where civil war looms over the question of the integration of North and South, so blatantly biased to the advantage of the North and where economic failure has been accelerated by a universal addiction to *qat*. In Jordan, it has been the monarchy’s cavalier attitude towards parliamentary government as much as economic hardship that has galvanised the demonstrators. Only in Algeria, where memories of the harrowing civil war in the 1990s remain acute, have demonstrations died away in the face of a minor governmental concession over the state-of-emergency, even though social and economic conditions there are as acute as elsewhere in the region.

Yet, despite the momentous changes that are taking place within the region, it is not clear that economic and social outcomes, at least in the short-to-medium term, will significantly improve. Unemployment, driven by adverse terms of trade and inappropriate development models, will persist and the actual political outcomes of the recent revolutions are not clear. In short, the political structures which, alongside an unfavourable international and regional environment, created the current crisis in social and economic expectations could well remain. The result will be that popular aspirations for significant social and economic change could well be stymied, with the danger that such frustrations will only provoke renewed popular anger. Here Europe has an opportunity to engage to help avoid such consequences, if only its own prejudices about appropriate economic models can be set aside and it honours its own principles about social and political justice.

Yet, to do this successfully, Europeans will have to confront their own prejudices about the Arab world as an example of chronic social and political failure. Two features of the recent events, which have social as well as political aspects, stand out as a warning to commentators who persist in believing that the Arab world is incapable of real change. The first is that civil society in the Arab world is a powerful force that is

now ready to challenge governments. After all, it has been spontaneous civil groups that have protected life and property against the regime-inspired chaos that followed the initial demonstrations in both Tunisia and Egypt.

And it was the local branches of the trade union federation in Tunisia, together with lawyers' associations, human rights organisations and journalists, which organised the rolling demonstrations and brought down the dictatorship within hours of reaching the capital. In Egypt, the effects have been more amorphous but the country's traditionally well-established professional associations and human rights organisations have helped, in tandem with the 'new social media', to organise the massive demonstrations that have led to the downfall of the Mubarak regime. Egypt also showed that the 'new media' have been important organisational tools – although word-of-mouth performed a valuable function too, after the regime blocked mobile phone networks and cut off access to the internet.

The other factor has been the virtually non-existent role formally played by Islamist movements in orchestrating the demonstrations. Such movements have been notable by their absence: only in Jordan did the Islamic Action Front take an overt role in organising them and then only alongside other groups. As was the case in Algeria over twenty years ago, the Islamist movements seem to have been caught off-guard by popular anger and, although they will undoubtedly play a role in the democratic transitions to come, they will have to compete for public attention. They are also powerful forces for social support, often far more efficient than government in providing those services that impoverished populations urgently need. In addition, their agendas, over the years, seem to have changed, for all now emphasise their commitment to political pluralism rather than religious absolutism. Perhaps Western pessimists should listen to them, too, for only then will true democratic transition come about.

## **Consequences**

The European Union must learn the lessons that the recent events reveal. It should reconsider its concerns over Islamism – now, in its moderate forms at least, an inevitable concomitant of any future viable political dispensation. It must actively support the democratic transition process with all the technical means and experience at its disposal without being seen to interfere in the free choices of the Arab world. Regrettably, it has signally failed to do this effectively until now, with the result that it has been regarded as being complicit with the regimes that have just been toppled.

And, finally, it must review its policies of economic engagement, especially the European Neighbourhood Policy, in order to promote employment creation as a first priority in its own right rather than as a consequence of macro-economic orthodoxy; this is not something that will simply be generated by economic restructuring and

‘trickledown’. It must be prepared to engage in regional infrastructure construction and renewal as a second imperative. No doubt, this will be costly and will require official intervention alongside that of the private sector. However, if this is not done, the ultimate consequences for Europe itself, in terms of both political and economic repercussions and domestic social unrest, will be more costly still as migration burgeons and domestic violence explodes again.

## THE REVISION OF THE EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY AND THE UNION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN

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*L'UE a un rôle capital à jouer dans les semaines et les mois à venir pour consolider la transition démocratique en Tunisie, en Égypte, et ailleurs dans le monde arabe. Avec la Politique européenne de Voisinage, l'Union a les outils nécessaires pour promouvoir la réforme politique ; il lui faut pour cela réviser les Programmes indicatifs nationaux de la PEV, revoir cette Politique avec l'Égypte et la Tunisie, utiliser l'Instrument européen pour la démocratie et les droits de l'homme afin de soutenir le processus de transition et activer la Facilité de gouvernance ainsi que le Fonds d'investissement de voisinage. Elle devrait également être prête à fournir une assistance électorale immédiate. Elle devrait en outre accorder rapidement un statut avancé à la Tunisie, lequel pourrait servir de base à un nouvel accord de voisinage renforcé avec ce pays. Enfin, l'UE devrait concentrer son attention sur la question cruciale de la réforme constitutionnelle en Tunisie et en Égypte.*

The EU has a crucial role to play in the coming weeks and months in order to consolidate the transition to democracy in Tunisia and Egypt, as well as in other Arab Mediterranean Countries.

### **How can the ENP support democratic reforms?**

A commitment to promoting reform lies at the very heart of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). The EU is thus equipped to activate a number of existing instruments designed to facilitate reforms. In 2002, the EU Member States made clear that the ENP aimed at promoting 'democratic and economic reforms in its neighbourhood'.<sup>1</sup> The Commission also indicated that 'in return for concrete progress demonstrating shared values and effective implementation of political, economic and institutional reforms (...) the EU's neighbourhood should benefit from the prospect of closer economic integration with the EU.'<sup>2</sup>

1. Presidency conclusions of the Copenhagen European Council, 12/13 December 2002.

2. European Commission, Communication, 'Wider Europe - Neighbourhood: A New Framework for Relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbours', COM(2003) 104 final, Brussels, 11 March 2003.

### *The need to revise and update the 2011-2013 ENP National Indicative Programmes*

The recently adopted National Indicative Programme (NIP) for Tunisia<sup>3</sup> and Egypt<sup>4</sup> for the period 2011-2013 should be revised and reinforced in the field of political reforms and also in terms of its financial provisions. This does not mean that the current allocations for employment or justice mentioned in the Tunisian NIP for example should not be maintained. On the contrary, the judiciary is a crucial sector, but it is clear that, given the changes and current challenges, the financial envelopes should be increased and new political priorities should be introduced.

In this respect, an envelope to support political reforms and notably freedoms of the press and of publication should be considered as key elements together with support to the civil society organisations. For the time being, the NIP with Egypt earmarks only 11 percent of the total financial envelope for reforms in the areas of democracy, human rights and justice. This is obviously insufficient.

Also the funding available for the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights should support the transition processes notably in the fields of ‘strengthening the role of civil society in promoting democratic reform’ and in ‘consolidating political participation and representation’.<sup>5</sup>

### *The ENP Governance Facility and the Neighbourhood Investment Fund*

In December 2006, the European Commission proposed to earmark an amount of €300 million for a Governance Facility, intended to provide ‘additional support to acknowledge and support the work of those partner countries who have made most progress in implementing the agreed reform agenda set out in their Action Plan’. A second envelope of €700m for a Neighbourhood Investment Fund, building on the FEMIP, was created to ‘support IFI lending in ENP partner countries’.<sup>6</sup>

As indicated in the document of the European Commission entitled ‘Principles for the Implementation of a Governance Facility under ENPI’, basic progress in the areas of human rights and fundamental freedoms and the rule of law are ‘an essential criterion (*conditio sine qua non*) for receiving an allocation under the Governance

3. See : Commission européenne, Programme Indicatif National 2011-2013. Available at :[http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/country/2011\\_enpi\\_nip\\_tunisia\\_fr.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/country/2011_enpi_nip_tunisia_fr.pdf)

4. European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument Arab Republic of Egypt National Indicative Programme 2011-2013, [http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/country/2011\\_enpi\\_nip\\_egypt\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/country/2011_enpi_nip_egypt_en.pdf).

5. See: European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) Strategy Paper 2011–2013, 21 April 2010. Available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/human-rights/documents/eidhr\\_strategy\\_paper\\_2011\\_2013\\_com\\_decision\\_21\\_april\\_2011\\_text\\_published\\_on\\_internet\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/human-rights/documents/eidhr_strategy_paper_2011_2013_com_decision_21_april_2011_text_published_on_internet_en.pdf).

6. Communication From the Commission on Strengthening the European Neighbourhood Policy, COM(2006)726 final, Brussels, 4 December 2006.

Facility.<sup>7</sup> It is obvious that these two instruments should be activated for Egypt and Tunisia.

### *Election observation and assistance*

Catherine Ashton and Štefan Füle have already indicated that the EU was ready to provide immediate assistance to prepare and organise the electoral processes in Tunisia<sup>8</sup> and Egypt.<sup>9</sup>

The attitude adopted by the EU after Hamas's electoral victory in the Gaza Strip in 2006 was generally not well perceived in the Arab world. For instance, many observers accused the EU of having a double standard approach. Whatever the results of the elections will be, and as long as the latter will be transparent and democratic, the EU and its Member States will have to respect the will of the people.

## **The issue of advanced status and the new bilateral agreements**

### *Advanced status: a road map for countries willing to promote democratic reforms*

It will be also important to quickly put the issue of Tunisia's advanced status on the table. This is of major importance as it will give a clear sign not only to the Tunisians but also to the international community that the EU is ready to support and accompany Tunisia on its way to democracy. Of course, such an advanced status must be conditional on the achievement of a successful democratic transition.

As far as the content of such an advanced status is concerned, it would be advisable to take into account the lessons of the status previously granted to Morocco as up until now this advanced status has been considered, on the one hand, as being a positive political sign of a strategic choice made by the Kingdom but also, on the other hand, as lacking in real substance compared to the ENP as such. It could therefore be proposed that this future advanced status be considered as a 'road map' for concluding a new enhanced neighbourhood agreement on the basis of Article 8 of the Lisbon Treaty.

7. 'Principles for the implementation of a Governance Facility under ENPI'. See: [http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/governance\\_facility\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/governance_facility_en.pdf).

8. Joint statement by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton and Commissioner Štefan Füle on the situation in Tunisia, A 018/11, Brussels, 17 January 2011.

9. Commissioner Štefan Füle on Egypt, Plenary Session of the European Parliament Strasbourg, SPEECH/11/111, 16 February 2011.

### *New neighbourhood agreements to consolidate transitions to full democracy*

The Member States underlined in the European Council conclusions of 4 February 2011 that they were ‘committed to a new partnership involving more effective support in the future.’ A new agreement, i.e. a new legally binding contractual relationship to be signed and ratified with a new democratically elected Tunisian government and parliament, would certainly be an effective way of showcasing EU support.

There is a need to conclude a new neighbourhood agreement with Tunisia in order to:

- i) Reinforce the provisions of the political chapter (political dialogue notably);
- ii) Include a number of new provisions (Rule of law, cooperation in judicial matters, organised crime, fight against racism and xenophobia etc.);
- iii) Take stock of the fact that Tunisia completed the tariff dismantling process and is now willing to conclude a Deep and Comprehensive FTA (DCFTA).

The only other Arab Mediterranean country with whom it would be feasible, from a technical point of view, to conclude a new agreement is Morocco. However, clear commitment to consolidate political reforms should be considered as a pre-condition.

### **Repercussions for the Union for the Mediterranean**

Obviously the Union for the Mediterranean in its restrictive sense (i.e. taking into account the new institutions and the six regional programmes) does not seem, contrary to the ENP, to be the best instrument to accompany political reforms. First of all, most of the multilateral meetings have been postponed or cancelled, including the Summit. Second, the co-president Mr. Mubarak, given the current political context, no longer has any legitimacy. Third, the six programmes do not have a proper political dimension. However, the development of regional programmes regarding small- and medium-sized enterprises and large-scale infrastructure projects could certainly be of great help to consolidate transition processes. In any case there is a need to develop reflection on the future of the Union for the Mediterranean.

### **Conclusion**

One should also not forget that the strategy to be adopted *vis-à-vis* Tunisia and Egypt could become a model for other countries of the region where the democratic aspirations of the people are as huge as they are legitimate. On the one hand it is important for the EU to react quickly and with appropriate means. On the other hand it is crucial to consolidate a transition to real and effective democracy. The worst scenario would be to see the emergence of a new ‘soft authoritarian regime.’

One of the key issues in the coming weeks will be the constitutional reforms that are foreseen in Egypt and Tunisia. In this regard, dialogue with all components of civil society and with all the actors of the Tunisian and Egyptian political scenes is of crucial importance. A number of EU Member States possess considerable expertise in the field of democratic transition and this should be used to help our partners. For the EU it is time to invest in democratic reforms that should lead to full democracy.

## *The recent political situation in the countries of the Middle East and North Africa*

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### **Morocco**

**Political system:** A monarchy, its Constitution was amended in 1996, to create a bicameral legislature. Morocco's chief of state is King Mohammed VI (since 30 July 1999). He appoints the head of government (Prime Minister Abbas El Fassi, since 19 September 2007) and the Council of Ministers.

Elections for the upper house – the Chamber of Counselors – were held on 3 October 2009 (the next elections are due to be held in 2012), and elections for the lower house – Chamber of Representatives – were held on 7 September 2007 (with the next also due to be held in 2012). In the 2007 elections, the participation rate reached 37 percent and 19 percent of the votes were nullified (either blank votes or spoiled ones – no distinction can be made).

**Last election results:** Despite surveys forecasting a landslide victory for the moderate Islamists of the Justice and Development Party, the latter only came in second place with 46 seats out of 325, after the Independence Party (a pro-monarchy party, 52 seats). Parties that came in next in terms of number of parliamentary seats were the: Popular Movement (MP: 41), National Rally of Independents (RNI: 39) and Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USFP: 38).

**Comments on the elections:** According to NDI (National Democratic Institute), 'notwithstanding important contextual issues and some technical concerns described in the body of the report, election day [in Morocco] was administered in a professional manner, including smooth ballot counting and the prompt public posting of polling results by district.' (See [http://www.ndi.org/files/2316\\_ma\\_report\\_elections-final\\_en\\_051508\\_1.pdf](http://www.ndi.org/files/2316_ma_report_elections-final_en_051508_1.pdf)).

### **Algeria**

**Political system:** A republic, its Constitution was approved in 1963, and lastly revised in 2008. This last revision separated the position of head of government from the position of prime minister, and abolished presidential term limits. President Abdelaziz Bouteflika has been both chief of state and head of government since 28 April 1999, and for five-year terms. He appoints the Council of Ministers. The last presidential elections were held on 9 April 2009 (with the next to be held in 2014), where Abdelaziz Bouteflika was re-elected President for a third term, with 90.2 percent of the vote, and more than 75 percent of voter turnout.

Algeria's legislative branch is bicameral, with a Council of the Nation (upper house) and a National People's Assembly (lower house).

**Last election results:** Despite the very low voter turnout at about 35 percent and the numerous spoiled votes accounting for more than 14 percent of the cast votes, in the last election for the National People's Assembly President Bouteflikas's political party, the National Liberation Front (FLN) won with almost 40 percent of the seats, followed at a distance by the National Democratic Rally (RND) with 15 percent of the seats and Society of Peace Movement (MSP) with 13 percent of the seats. The FLN governs in coalition.

**Comments on the elections:** No significant international election observation mission was present.

## Tunisia

**Political system:** A republic, its Constitution was approved in 1959, and amended twice in 1988 and 2002. From 1987 to January 2011, President Zine el Abidine Ben Ali was the chief of state, vested with the power to appoint the Prime Minister (head of government) and the Council of Ministers. Last time he was elected President was in October 2009 with 89.6 percent of the vote. He was ousted from power following the popular uprising and fled the country on 14 January 2011.

Tunisia's legislative branch is bicameral, with a Chamber of Advisors and a Chamber of Deputies, elected for five-year terms.

**Last election results:** The last elections for the Chamber of Deputies were held in October 2009. President Ben Ali's political party, the Constitutional Democratic Rally Party or RCD, won these elections by 84.6 percent. No other party reached the threshold of 5 percent.

**Comments on the elections:** According to NDI 'during the 2009 elections, the majority of several opposition parties' lists of proposed legislative candidates were rejected and severe restrictions were imposed on opposition party newspapers and freedom to assemble.' No significant international election observation mission was present.

## Libya

**Political system:** An authoritarian regime defining itself as a *Jamahiriyah* (or 'state of the masses'), it does not have a Constitution, but adopted in 1977 the Declaration of

the Establishment of the People's Authority. Since 1969 Revolutionary Leader Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi has been *de facto* its head of state. In March 2006 the General People's Congress elected al-Baghdadi Ali al-Mahmudi as head of government.

**Last election results:** The last elections were held in March 2010, and the next are expected to take place in early 2011. National elections are held indirectly through a hierarchy of basic people's congresses to form a unicameral General People's Congress of 760 seats. No form of opposition is allowed inside the country's political system.

## Egypt

**Political system:** A republic, its Constitution dates from 1971, and has been amended three times, in 1980, 2005, and 2007. President Mohamed Hosni Mubarak became chief of state in 1981. The popular uprisings in January 2011 led him to nominate a Vice-President in the form of Omar Suleiman. Due to the same uprisings, a new cabinet was sworn in on 31 January 2011: on 11 February 2011 Mubarak stepped down from power. The head of government is Prime Minister Ahmed Shakif. The President is elected by popular vote for a six-year term with no term limits.

**Last election results:** Last elections were held on September 2005 (with the next due to be held in September 2011), and President Mubarak was re-elected with 88.6 percent of the vote. Only one other candidate surpassed the 5 percent threshold, Ayman Nour, with 7.6 percent.

The legislative branch is constituted by a bicameral system, with an Advisory Council or *Majlis al-Shura* that traditionally functions only in a consultative role and the People's Assembly or *Majlis al-Sha'b*. The Egyptian government refused an international election observation mission for the last parliamentary elections, held in November 2010.

**Comments on the elections:** On the eve of these last parliamentary elections Human Rights Watch published a report on Elections in Egypt, where it stated that: 'At present the Emergency Law and other restrictive measures like the Political Parties Law remain the biggest deterrents to the ability of Egyptians to exercise freedom of expression, association, and assembly - rights that are vital in any meaningful exercise of political rights more broadly. The legal framework for parliamentary elections, and in particular the constitutional amendments of 2007, along with the behavior of security forces in the weeks leading up to the elections, make it difficult to see how the elections this November can be fair or free.'

## Palestine

**Political system:** The Palestinian Authority (PA) is an interim authority, established by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) pursuant to the 1993 Oslo agreement. It only has limited jurisdiction over the occupied Palestinian Territories, enjoying only those powers devolved by Israel, and only over those territories from which Israel has redeployed. The PLO remains the sole legitimate, and internationally recognised, representative of the Palestinian people. At the same time, the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas), which won the 2006 PA legislative elections, is not yet integrated into the PLO.

The current Chairman of the PLO Executive Committee is Mahmoud Abbas, leader of Fatah. Abbas was elected to the Presidency of the PA in January 2005 for a four-year term, at the conclusion of which new elections were indefinitely postponed. Since the political-territorial schism within the Palestinian political system in 2007, the PA has two governments: the Gaza Strip is governed by Ismail Haniyyeh from Hamas, dismissed by Abbas in June 2007, and the West Bank is governed by (independent) PM Salam Fayyad, whose constitutional legality is in question.

**Last election results:** The PLO's representative organ, the Palestine National Council, has not held a new round of elections since the 1990s. The PA Legislative Council (PLC) last held elections in January 2006, in which only Palestinians in the occupied territories were permitted to vote. Of 132 contested seats, Hamas won 74, Fatah 45, with the remainder going to smaller factions and independents. The PLC was elected for a term of four years, but a date for new elections has yet to be determined.

**Comments on the elections:** NDI together with the Carter Center sent an election observation mission to the 2006 elections and commented that 'despite the difficult circumstance of the ongoing conflict and occupation, hundreds of thousands of Palestinians went to the polls on 25 January 2006 to elect the new members of the PLC. Voting occurred in a largely festive and peaceful environment. The delegation was deeply moved by this clear demonstration of Palestinian enthusiasm to participate in democratic elections. The CEC and electoral staff operated confidently, effectively and impartially, resulting in a process that compared favorably to international standards.' ([http://www.cartercenter.org/resources/pdfs/news/peace\\_publications/election\\_reports/Palestine2006-NDI-final.pdf](http://www.cartercenter.org/resources/pdfs/news/peace_publications/election_reports/Palestine2006-NDI-final.pdf)).

## Jordan

**Political system:** A monarchy, its Constitution was approved in 1952 and amended many times after that. Since 1999, King Abdallah II has been the chief of state, and since January 2011, the head of government is Prime Minister Marouf Al Bakh, des-

ignated by the King after popular uprisings. The cabinet is appointed by the Prime Minister in consultation with the monarch.

The legislative branch is constituted by a bicameral National Assembly or *Majlis al-'Umma*, consisting of the Senate (the House of Notables or *Majlis al-Ayan*), appointed by the monarch to serve four-year terms, and the Chamber of Deputies (the House of Representatives or *Majlis al-Nuwaab*), elected every four years.

**Last election results:** Last elections were held on November 2010 after the King prematurely dissolved the previous Chamber of Deputies in November 2009.

**Comments on the elections:** According to NDI, 'The technical preparations for balloting and the conduct of the voting on election day compared favorably to accepted international practices, although the delegation noted that structural shortcomings – widely unequal districts, lack of an independent election body and limited press freedom – means that Jordan's political processes need further improvement.' (See [http://www.ndi.org/files/Jordan\\_2010\\_Election\\_Delegation\\_Statement.pdf](http://www.ndi.org/files/Jordan_2010_Election_Delegation_Statement.pdf)).

## Lebanon

**Political system:** A republic, its Constitution dates back to 1926, amended a number of times, most recently in 1990, to include changes necessitated by the Charter of Lebanese National Reconciliation (Ta'if Accord) of October 1989. The chief of state since May 2008 is President Michel Sulayman, and his Prime Minister since November 2009 is Sa'ad al-Din al-Hariri. This government has a caretaker status until Prime Minister-Designate Najib Miqatti is able to form a new government that is approved by the National Assembly.

The Hariri government fell in January 2010 following the resignation of over a third of its ministers. The prime minister designate is chosen by the President based on binding consultations with all members of the National Assembly. The cabinet is chosen by the Prime Minister in consultation with the President, and then needs a vote of confidence in parliament.

The President is elected by the National Assembly and cannot serve for consecutive terms. The legislative branch is a unicameral 128-seat National Assembly, elected by popular vote.

**Last election results:** Last elections were held in June 2009 (with the next due to be held in 2013). Two party-coalitions divide out most National Assembly seats: the 8 March Coalition and the 14 March Coalition, with 54.7 percent and 45.3 percent of the total vote.

**Comments on the elections:** The Carter Center commended Lebanon's successful elections; but noted shortcomings and encourages continued reform (<http://www.cartercenter.org/news/pr/lebanon-statement-060809.html>). According to NDI, 'While not without flaws, Lebanon's June 7 election was fundamentally peaceful and well administered and should provide the bases for confidence in the electoral process and by extension, the formation of the new government' (See [http://issuu.com/deen-sharp/docs/statement\\_of\\_ndi\\_lebanon\\_observer\\_mission\\_june\\_200?mode=a\\_p](http://issuu.com/deen-sharp/docs/statement_of_ndi_lebanon_observer_mission_june_200?mode=a_p)).

## Syria

**Political system:** A republic under authoritarian rule, its Constitution dates from 1973. Since July 2000, the chief of state is President Bashar al-Assad, who has the power to appoint the vice-presidents, the Prime Minister, the deputy Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers. Prime Minister Muhammad Naji al-Utri has been the head of government since September 2003.

The legislative branch is constituted by a unicameral People's Council or *Majlis al-Shaab*, and last elections were held in April 2007 (next to be held in 2011).

**Last election results:** Al-Assad's National Progressive Front (including the Arab Socialist Renaissance (Ba'th) Party) obtained 172 seats, while independents rose to 78. Among those non-legally recognised parties are, among others, the Kurdish political parties and National Democratic Party, a compendium of five different political parties.

**Comments on the elections:** According to Democracy Reporting International, a non-partisan, independent, not-for-profit organisation registered in Berlin, 'Syria did not invite international election observers and there was no systematic independent monitoring of last year's elections by domestic groups, which creates difficulties in assessing in detail the actual conduct of the elections. There is a lack of transparency to the electoral process and many of the key legal instruments relating to the elections are not readily available for public access.' ([http://www.democracy-reporting.org/files/pe\\_briefing\\_08.pdf#search=SYRIA%20LEGISLATIVE%20ELECTIONS](http://www.democracy-reporting.org/files/pe_briefing_08.pdf#search=SYRIA%20LEGISLATIVE%20ELECTIONS)).

## *European Commission democracy support instruments in the MENA region*

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The European Commission includes a Directorate General for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy, headed by Commissioner Štefan Füle. The Commission has, therefore, the prerogative over programmes and projects pertaining to the European Neighbourhood Policy, and other instruments dedicated to globally supporting democracy.

Within the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy, and after individual Country Reports were published from May 2004 to March 2005 – assessing the economic and political situation of a given country – individual Action Plans were developed with each of these countries.

The financial instruments/programmes relevant to democracy support include:

- **European Neighbourhood Partnership Instrument (ENPI)** – replacing the MEDA instrument that supported the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (Mediterranean-European Development Agreement, 1995-2006), is the financial instrument for the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), in force since January 2007.

It includes the Governance Facility, a €50 million instrument spanned between 2007 and 2010 aimed at *‘providing additional support, on top of the normal country allocations, to acknowledge and support the work of those partner countries who have made most progress in implementing the agreed reform agenda set out in their Action Plan.’*<sup>1</sup>

- The **European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR)** – the only financial instrument that allows direct civil society funding abroad (allegedly) without the consent of the beneficiary’s government.
- The **Instrument for Stability (IfS)** – in force since January 2007, is a strategic tool designed to address a number of global security and development challenges in complement to geographic instruments.

*The Information in this annex was compiled by Kimana Zulueta-Fülscher, EUISS Visiting Fellow and Fellow at the Center for Transatlantic Relations, SAIS.*

1. Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament, ‘Strengthening the European Neighbourhood Policy’, COM (2006) 726, Brussels, 4 December 2006.

**Table 1**

**Instruments dealing also or exclusively with democracy assistance  
in the Southern Neighbourhood**

<b>Funding Instrument</b>	<b>Geographical zone covered</b>	<b>Average annual funding</b>	<b>Total funding available (2007-2013)</b>
<b>ENPI</b>	Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, the Palestinian Territories, Russia, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine	€1.6 billion	€11.181 billion
<b>EIDHR</b>	Global, exc. industrialised countries	€160 million	€1.104 billion
<b>IFS</b>	Global, exc. industrialised countries	€290 million	€2.062 billion

**Table 2**  
**‘Governance and Civil Society’ funds in US\$ million**

	Morocco	Algeria	Tunisia	Libya	Egypt	Palestinian Territories	Lebanon	Jordan	Syria
	21.85	5.71	3.67	0.79	60.88	553.71	150.12	78.49	40.70
<b>DAC<sup>*</sup></b>									
<b>Countries, total</b>	21.71	5.37	3.33	0.70	58.02	351.90	114.75	64.49	5.70
<b>Australia</b>	..	..	..	..	..	0.55	..	..	..
<b>Austria</b>	..	..	..	..	..	0.71	..	..	..
<b>Belgium</b>	1.10	0.66	..	..	..	1.93	0.94	0.06	0.25
<b>Canada</b>	0.62	0.20	0.59	..	0.37	21.63	4.32	1.12	..
<b>Denmark</b>	1.84	..	..	..	5.44	5.59	1.42	2.32	..
<b>Finland</b>	0.16	..	0.09	..	0.21	4.84	1.36	0.25	..
<b>France</b>	1.69	1.20	0.62	0.01	0.11	4.09	0.90	0.95	0.12
<b>Germany</b>	0.03	0.24	0.02	..	5.16	21.30	5.03	0.71	1.90
<b>Greece</b>	0.01	..	0.01	..	0.14	0.26	..	0.13	..
<b>Ireland</b>	..	..	..	..	0.21	3.64	0.06	0.10	..
<b>Italy</b>	0.13	..	0.07	..	1.07	2.77	3.32	0.08	0.95
<b>Japan</b>	0.17	0.15	0.15	..	0.03	0.87	0.02	15.54	0.11
<b>Korea</b>	0.12	0.10	0.16	..	0.14	0.10	1.41	0.00	..
<b>Luxembourg</b>	0.09	..	..	..	..	0.83	0.11	..	..

<b>Netherlands</b>	1.41	..	0.15	..	0.87	54.62	1.78	0.43	0.19
<b>New Zealand</b>	..	..	..	..	..	..	0.55	..	..
<b>Norway</b>	0.01	0.06	..	..	0.11	10.38	5.53	0.42	..
<b>Portugal</b>	0.00	..	..	..	..	..	9.13	..	..
<b>Spain</b>	5.20	0.98	1.02	0.02	0.55	11.56	2.21	1.26	0.44
<b>Sweden</b>	0.02	..	..	..	0.29	27.65	0.09	..	..
<b>Switzerland</b>	0.03	0.18	..	..	0.14	1.46	1.07	0.05	0.09
<b>United Kingdom</b>	1.57	0.32	..	0.48	0.05	40.48	4.55	0.41	0.37
<b>United States</b>	7.52	1.28	0.46	0.20	43.13	136.62	70.95	40.66	1.27
<b>Non-DAC* Countries, total</b>	..	..	..	..	..	174.99	..	9.38	..
<b>United Arab Emirates</b>	..	..	..	..	..	174.99	..	9.38	..
<b>Multilateral, total</b>	0.14	0.35	0.34	0.10	2.86	26.82	35.37	4.62	35.00
<b>EU</b>	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
<b>Institutions</b>	..	..	..	..	..	25.44	34.81	4.18	34.44
<b>OPEC Fund</b>	..	..	..	..	..	0.20	..	..	..
<b>UNDP</b>	0.02	0.25	0.28	0.10	2.11	0.73	0.36	0.26	0.50
<b>UNICEF</b>	0.12	0.09	0.06	..	0.75	0.45	0.20	0.19	0.06

\*DAC = Development Assistance Committee

Source: OECD/DAC database (Development Creditor Reporting System) for the Middle East North Africa Region, 2009.

**Table 3**  
**European Institutions' Governance and Civil Society' spending, in US\$ million**

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
<b>Morocco</b>	0.49	6.28	45.47	99.39	22.40	142.02	99.93	40.39	..
<b>Algeria</b>	1.27	0.84	30.42	20.11	25.85	37.66	23.27	..	..
<b>Tunisia</b>	0.25	2.94	1.98	27.60	0.99	0.13	82.14	0.15	..
<b>Libya</b>	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
<b>Egypt</b>	0.72	..	..	1.24	38.28	..	23.27	28.85	..
<b>Palestinian Territories</b>	1.94	23.69	12.84	19.80	5.31	15.91	18.02	41.40	25.44
<b>Lebanon</b>	3.41	..	..	0.62	23.90	18.83	22.56	31.73	34.81
<b>Jordan</b>	0.56	11.31	..	0.84	5.72	27.61	64.34	10.10	4.18
<b>Syria</b>	0.46	..	..	32.92	2.91	..	..	14.42	34.44

*Source: OECD/DAC database, Development Creditor Reporting System*

## ***Abbreviations***

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<b>DGSN</b>	Direction générale de la sûreté nationale
<b>EIDHR</b>	European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights
<b>ENP</b>	European Neighbourhood Policy
<b>ENPI</b>	European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument
<b>FEMIP</b>	Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership
<b>FTA</b>	Free Trade Agreement
<b>GNP</b>	Gross National Product
<b>IFI</b>	International Financial Institutions
<b>IMF</b>	International Monetary Fund
<b>MENA</b>	Middle East and North Africa
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>NIP</b>	National Indicative Programme
<b>OPEC</b>	Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
<b>PA</b>	Palestinian Authority
<b>PLC</b>	Palestinian Legislative Council
<b>PLO</b>	Palestine Liberation Organisation
<b>UAE</b>	United Arab Emirates
<b>UfM</b>	Union for the Mediterranean
<b>UGTT</b>	Union générale tunisienne du travail
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme

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