

# Socio-Political Map after the “Arab Awakening”: in Search of a Balance of Powers

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The new political and social context following the “Arab Awakening” has highlighted two elements that are common to the demands of all the countries involved: the will to break with authoritarianism and a demand for improved living conditions for the people. The changes in the public space have produced a new political and social panorama that has shown that, far from being apathetic, Arab societies have taken the reigns regarding their future development. Beyond the differences in how events in the last few years in the Arab world are labelled, the reality is that the magnitude of the protests, their popularity, their initial consequences (the overthrow of the ruling regimes) and the subsequent reforms that the movement has prompted (in Morocco and Jordan, for example), show a clear break from the past.

With the initial euphoria over, both in the countries in question and outside, the level of optimism generated at the outset by the unexpected and considerably quick fall of the Tunisian and Egyptian autocrats has gradually diminished. Not just because of repressive actions, in some cases the outbreak of

war, resulting from the revolutionary wave (in Libya, Yemen, Syria or Bahrain), but also due to the realisation that the transformation processes were going to be lengthy, complex and replete with nuances. After the “Spring” came the “Islamist winters,” after the “Arab revolutions” came the so-called “Arab regressions” and the analyses of the situation have been tainted by a dose of scepticism. Many have come to question whether it was “worth it” and if in fact “everything was changed in order to change nothing.” Ultimately, this evolution in the interpretation of events reveals the underlying tensions between the expectations that sparked the transition process towards democracy and the possibilities of achieving the established goals, especially because of the immediacy that was demanded. How could the desires of the people marry with the realisation that transitions are slow and complex processes, with their own rhythms and effects that are not likely to be seen until the medium or long term?

So, it is important to take stock for a moment and clarify, as far as is possible, what steps, both forward and backward, can be identified within the transition scenario. This is not a definitive overview, but rather an analysis of the events in their own time frame, looking at what has changed and what has resisted change, what has remained and what has been totally renewed by the new actors that are emerging with great force.

To this end, it is essential to keep in mind the main aspirations of the movements in question. These aspirations converge in more or less three – or even four – ideals that were chanted repeatedly during the days of the “revolution” and which continue to have great presence in the collective imagination:

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*aish, hurriya, wa adala iytimaiya / karama insaniya*, which means: bread, freedom and social justice / human dignity. These ideals, translated into structural changes, must produce, in the medium and long term, the building blocks for the democratic ideal.

## The transformation of the political scene has meant establishing new conditions, new rules under which the new actors can operate

One of the first areas where the change can be seen is in the issue of pluralism and participation of social and political actors. We therefore propose to assess how the political and social map has changed over the last two years and analyse how the relationships between the different pre-existing, new or emerging actors have been structured, and how their interactions determine the way the transitions progress. We cannot limit ourselves to political actors only, since one of the main characteristics of the so-called "Arab Spring" is the empowerment of wider sectors of the population. Evidently, this map is not exhaustive. Producing a map of all the actors and their impact on the transition process would be a titanic task, because of the diversity, multiplicity and the many countries involved. This is why many of the actors and dynamics that intervene in the socio-political development (religious institutions, communities – defined on ethnic, religious or linguistic grounds –, external actors, etc.) do not appear, as priority has been given to the internal actors which in recent times have had greater public relevance. "*Al shaab yurid*" ("the people want") were the demands chanted in Arab streets and squares in 2011. The people, from then on, became political subjects and their will became the legitimacy for building democracy. A new age had thereby dawned, in which the different political and social powers had to find their place.

### THE NEW POLITICAL MAP

The historical changes that have taken effect in recent times in the region have inevitably implied variations in the political and social panorama. The mass

protests have allowed a series of actors to emerge, which previously had been subject to enormous pressures or marginalised in the public sphere (intellectuals, journalists, public figures from civil society) or even subject to different degrees of repression or hostilities that, in many cases, had led to their imprisonment or exile, or forced them completely or partially underground (Islamists being the paradigmatic case). The transformation of the political scene has meant establishing new conditions, i.e., new rules under which the new actors can operate. This is the main change and one which allows political and social players to rise as new actors or even as driving forces for the change.

In little more than two years, Arab citizens have gone to the polls on several occasions in electoral processes that could be described as the fairest, freest and most transparent the region has ever known. Some of these have served to elect replacements for the ousted regimes (in Egypt, Tunisia and Libya), and others to show a readiness for democratic reform (as is the case for Morocco or Jordan). In the case of the former, the winning political formations, most of who have never held power, there is a dual aim. On the one hand to consolidate the break from the overthrown regimes; and on the other to pilot a transition period towards a new State.

### Islamists: New Actors, Old Faces

The main political actor to benefit from the opening of the public space in the new context is Islamism. This is not a new figure, but rather an old face of social activism and political militancy, which until now has been marginalised, oppressed or underground: the Islamism of the Muslim Brotherhood movement. The organisation of elections over the last two and a half years has indicated an unquestionable tendency throughout the countries involved: the rise of the political grouping known as "moderate Islamism," which rejects violence and accepts the rules of democracy. This rise is represented in Morocco by the victory of the Justice and Development Party (PJD), which won 27.8% of the votes in the legislative elections in November 2011. In Egypt and Tunisia, the pioneering countries of the revolution, the Islamist victory gravitates around 40%: 37.5% of the vote for the Freedom and Justice Party, the po-

litical showcase for the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, and 41.5% for Ennahda in Tunisia.

In contrast, in Libya, the Justice and Construction Party (which arose from the Muslim Brotherhood) has not been so successful: of the 200 seats in the General National Congress (GNC), the Islamist party took just 17, against 39 won by the National Forces Alliance, a non-ideological election coalition led by pro-reformist member of the Gaddafi elite Mahmoud Jibril, the former Prime Minister appointed by the National Transitional Council (NTC) following the outbreak of war in Libya in February 2011.

Unlike its Egyptian and Tunisian counterparts, the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood has maintained a kind of neutral alliance with the monarchy. This allowed it to operate within the social sphere during the ban on political parties, and thereby become the only opposition party, in a Parliament whose majority corresponds systematically to tribal representatives and those loyal to the regime. However, in recent years the capacity for action of the Jordanian Islamists has weakened, despite their adherence to the widespread demands in the region at the outbreak of the Arab revolts: the fight against inflation and corruption and constitutional reform to improve national representation, especially that of Jordanians of Palestinian origin, who are underrepresented by the voting system. Without the intention of overthrowing the monarchy, the Islamic Action Front (IAF) has led a group of opposition parties (left-wing, communists and nationalists) to drive the reform and organise protests since 2011. However, the boycott of the IAF of the January 2013 elections failed to delegitimise the results and instead gave rise to a new Islamist party that could neutralise the contentious position of the IAF and strengthened the controlled reform strategy of the Jordanian monarchy.

Although the Islamists were not initially the driving force behind the demonstrations and protests, neither in Tunisia nor Egypt, with the exception of the Jordanians they are the indisputable victors of these revolutions thanks to their favourable election results. This regional phenomenon can be explained by a series of common elements.

Firstly, the marginalisation of the Islamist movement (together with the void left by the authoritarian regimes regarding public policies) allowed them to occupy the social arena with a grassroots commitment and considerable social solidarity networks (services

related with education, health, charity, etc.). This has meant that the social dimension of their work has supported their discourse – which is similar from country to country –, focused around three specific ideas: the total rejection of the old regime, of its leaders and the promise to fight relentlessly against corruption.

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The second element is the moral component of the Islamist discourse with strongly religious leanings: in each country these parties hope to lead a more “Islamic” management of public affairs, in other words, conforming to the Islamic principles that call for justice, equality, transparency and human dignity. This element also represents a strong identity. In Tunisia, the aim is to “restore Islam,” in other words, recognise the society’s Islamic identity and break with the last few decades of secularity imposed from above. In Egypt the goal is to defend a “Muslim authenticity” (both against the Army and the Salafists), which breaks with the prominence of the “official Islam,” used by the former leaders. The Moroccan PJD, reliant on its complex relations with the Royal Family, is positioned as a religious bastion against the opposition, accused of westernising and secularising a society in which religion still has a strong presence.

Finally, these formations, when running in elections, have benefited from their image of “regime victims,” especially in the case of Tunisia and Egypt, after being excluded from the political arena. In fact, this exclusion has branded them with a political virginity that has been interpreted as a guarantee of integrity. All this has allowed them to position themselves against a pre-existing opposition weakened by the old regimes and little prepared for electoral competition. Furthermore, the accelerated electoral calendars established for the transition process have played in their favour, as the work on the ground and

the connection with the electorate had already been established beforehand.

The Islamists soon adapted to the new context. After the formation of the respective parties (except in the case of the Moroccan PJD), their politicisation included adopting a new language. If traditionally the central slogan was often "Islam is the solution," then in the electoral campaigns this was adapted for a new version that was more in keeping with the times: "democracy is the solution." And it is the democratic exercise of voting that has led them to piloting this complex phase of the transition process, with the added challenge of giving concrete answers to the demands of the population: employment, growth, equality and social justice. However, the political debate has gravitated almost exclusively around the identity of the States and societies, focused on those elements that are more susceptible to generating polarisation (such as the constitutional references to sharia), instead of developing the reforms and policies necessary to satisfy the demands of the population, which has led to growing social unrest.

#### *Tunisia: Polarisation Despite the Coalition Government*

In Tunisia, Ennahda formed a government coalition with the only two parties that agreed to form an alliance with the Islamists: the Congress for the Republic (CPR), that holds the presidency of the Republic through Moncef Marzouki, and the Ettakatol party which maintains the presidency of the Parliament with Mustapha Ben Jaafar, although it is Ennahda that sets the agenda within the coalition.

Since then, Ennahda has made several unsuccessful attempts to come to some form of consensus with the opposition, which is fiercely against any kind of agreement with the Islamists. Besides pushing forward the transition road map, particularly the drafting of the new Constitution by the Assembly, and acting as the country's caretaker government, Ennahda has had to face two major challenges with very little room for manoeuvre. On the one hand resuscitate an economy weighed down by mismanagement and severe social inequality and territorial disparities, which were the origin of the revolts. On the other hand, they also have to deal with the issues of security, social instability and the void left by the old re-

gime, made more complicated by the porosity of the country's borders with Libya and Algeria, the circulation of armed groups from neighbouring countries and the Sahel. Likewise in the country's interior, the most hostile part of the Salafist movement has taken advantage of the internal instability to lead a campaign of violence.

The lack of democratic tradition and a dangerous dynamic of polarisation have made dialogue between the political parties difficult and weakened their capacity to reach agreements. Strongly divided over two ideological axes – Islamist and secularist – and on the intended societal model, the different discourses have generated social tensions in the country that endanger the achievements of the "revolution." This polarisation was made evident during the election campaign won by Ennahda, in which many of the parties opted for a highly aggressive strategy with respect to the Islamists. Like in Egypt, both the opposition and the Islamists have had to use issues that tend to divide people as a weapon, such as the place of religion in society and institutions, women's rights or the primacy of religious law over civil law.

Ennahda has been unable to reach an agreement both between the different political formations, and within its coalition or even the party, which on occasion has displayed enormously divergent opinions. The exercise of power is therefore made more complicated thanks to two overlapping tensions. Firstly, are the internal tensions over the differences existing between members who have experienced exile and those who have suffered repression and imprisonment under Ben Ali, some belonging to more moderate sectors and others more extremist. The reality, however, has shown that this dividing line is not so clear, even though the two camps form the base of the same party. Secondly, is the disagreement on whether to take a line based on religious predication and ideology, or be more pragmatic and political than spiritual (Rachid Ghannouchi against Abdelfattah Mourou). The internal differences were made clear when Hamadi Jebali, the former Prime Minister of Ennahda, announced the formation of a technocratic government to lead the country out of the political crisis caused by the assassination of the left-wing leader Chokri Belaïd. The party leader rejected his proposal and opted for a cabinet shuffle prompting Jebali's resignation and the appointment of party hardliner Ali Laarayedh

### TOP-DOWN FOSTERED CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM AND RULE OF LAW

In his speech on 9 March 2011, King Mohammed VI set the groundwork for reform advocating the expansion of the Prime Minister's and Parliament's powers, the independence of the Judicial Branch and improved representation for regions. This discourse was followed by the creation of a technical commission that, after one hundred days, proposed a new constitutional text approved by referendum on 1 July 2011. The new constitutional text marks a step towards the consolidation of the Rule of Law: primacy of international conventions ratified by Morocco over domestic law, the constitutionalisation of gender equality and the recognition of cultural and linguistic pluralism. Insofar as the separation of powers, the expansion of the powers of the head of government and of Parliament anticipates unprecedented change in the regime's configuration. In fact, the King's obligation to appoint a head of government from the ranks of the winning party in the legislative elections introduces a mechanism to independently regulate the monarch: a relationship of dependency between an entire sector of the executive and the electorate is created. The regulatory mechanism is no longer the King's exclusive prerogative; there is now also electoral regulation based on universal suffrage.

Beyond these constitutional changes, the core of the constitution remains unchanged: the constitutional architecture gravitates around the King, who enjoys “inviolable” status as Commander of the Faithful and has extensive prerogatives: he chairs the Council of Ministers, controls religious institutions, presides over the Supreme Judicial Council and monopolises the domains of foreign affairs and defence.

As in Morocco, the Jordanian monarch has begun the process of constitutional reform and is supervising it, having appointed a royal commission to write a draft in April 2011. The new text denotes a certain decrease in the monarch's power to the benefit of Parliament and the

Prime Minister and his government: the King does not have the right to pass decree-laws except under exceptional circumstances and legislative elections can no longer be adjourned at will. Moreover, the king's power of dissolution has been limited: he may now proceed to dissolution only if he receives a written recommendation from the Prime Minister (who will not have the right to take up said position after deposition). And finally, the new electoral law allocates 27 parliamentary seats to national lists, the official aim being to foster the creation of national political parties, as opposed to the tribal solidarities that still structure Parliament. At the same time, the independence of the judiciary is encouraged by the creation of a constitutional court and an independent electoral commission designed to ensure transparency in elections. Nonetheless, the monarch remains the real authority since he retains the right to appoint the Prime Minister regardless of parliamentary majorities. Moreover, the creation of so-called “national” seats has reinforced tribal solidarities and relegated the issue of the under-representation of Jordanians of Palestinian origin to the background.

Consequently, despite changes towards a parliamentarisation of the regime, the privileged, top-down approach used by the monarchs keeps this change within continuity. In both cases, this approach has lent greater importance to universal suffrage and has granted more prerogatives to Parliament and to the government, thus opening a broader space for the expression of opposition. In any case, the King remains a central actor of the regime and retains the bulk of his executive power, validating the schema of an executive monarchy.

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as Prime Minister. Finally, another source of friction that Ennahda has had to deal with is its ambiguous relationship with Salafism. The Salafist movement, which claims to be the country's “most authentic” and “most Islamic” sector, could eventually overtake Ennahda thanks to its more conservative side, and become a rival in the competition for this space of religious morality. Ennahda has, therefore, maintained complex relations with this group, to the concern of the country's secularist sectors. Although the two groups are outwardly opposed to one another, they seem to have been privately trying to coordinate their actions, a viewpoint reinforced by the government's submissive attitude, according to the opposition, with respect to the Salafist violence. Hence the secularists repeated accusations that the Islamists are harbouring a hidden technocratic agenda. If Ennahda opts for a pragmatic approach moving away from a more hard-line rhetoric it is clear that it will lose a solid religious base, to the benefit of the Salafists.

The Tunisian political stage is extremely divided between Islamists and secularists, while the dominant party suffers from a kind of internal fragmentation worsened by the Salafist competition. This partly helps to explain the slowness of the transition process: the Constituent Assembly holds the third draft proposal for the new constitution, and has gone way beyond the initial term that it was initially granted. Ennahda must not only deal with the complexities of managing a transition but also the challenge of ensuring its own transition, its step from clandestine opposition to ruling party.

*Morocco: the Complex Coexistence between the PJD and the Palace*

Although the PJD won the November 2011 legislative elections, called after the approval by referendum of the constitutional reform, the majority it obtained – the best result in its history and a record in Moroccan politics – meant it had to form a coalition

rather than govern alone. The members of this unusual coalition were the conservative nationalist Istiqlal Party (PI), the former communist Party of Progress and Socialism, and the right-wing, royalist and Berber Popular Movement. The monarchy confirmed PJD secretary Abdelilah Benkirane as leader, but at the same time appointed a team of councillors, which was interpreted by some political analysts as a kind of parallel cabinet to oversee government decisions. Moreover, the link between political parties and the Royal Family means that if there is a divergence of interests or rivalries the monarch can influence the coalition and thus have a hand in government action.

The heterogeneous coalition and limitations regarding the government's room for manoeuvre have hampered the PJD's reform projects. Some of the economic initiatives, such as fiscal reform, have come up against resistance from government members or the opposition, who accuse their measures of being populist. The conflicts inside the coalition eventually triggered a government crisis in May 2013 over the PI's threat to withdraw from the coalition. After the sovereign's direct intervention from France, Chabat temporarily froze his decision. In the end, however, in July the monarch accepted the resignation of the Istiqlal ministers and the majority party was forced to look for another partner in the government or consider early elections, which according to the polls, the PJD would win again.

The current mess inside the government coalition shows, firstly, that the monarchy is still on top of the country's politics and its actors. However, the "cohabitation" of the PJD and the Palace has not been without its misunderstandings and public opinion swings between disappointment and the perception that, ultimately, the PJD is not the main actor with the authority to drive the changes that a part of the population is demanding.

*The FJP in Egypt: Hegemonic Ambitions Limited by Military Rule*

In Egypt, the confusion between majority and hegemony has been a constant feature since the electoral victory of the Muslim Brotherhood's, Freedom and Justice Party in the parliamentary elections at the end of 2011 and beginning of 2012. The Islamist victory was confirmed in the elections by the Shura

Council. Contrary to its promises the Muslim Brotherhood decided to put forward a candidate from their ranks for the presidential election. That meant that with Khairat el-Shater disqualified, Mohamed Morsi went through to the second round after eliminating the competition favourites (Abdel Moneim Aboul Fotouh, former member of the Brotherhood thrown out for running for President despite criticism from the group; Amr Moussa, former Minister of Mubarak considered a reformist, and Hamdeen Sabahi, the Nasserist candidate). In the second round he came up against Ahmed Shafiq, the army's candidate and seen as the standard bearer for continuity, presented by many as the "enemy of the revolution." After a tight result and an unexplained wait before announcing the results, which raised suspicions over a pact between the military and the Islamists, Mohamed Morsi was proclaimed the first civilian President of Egypt.

Morsi promised to be the President "of all Egyptians," and to show this he stepped down from his position in the FJP. However, the first display of the Islamist's hegemonic ambitions was his refusal to change the text of the constitution. In fact, on the contrary, he opted to maintain its composition based on the parliamentary majority, siding with the Salafists (71% of the People's Assembly). This sparked tensions not only between the Islamists and the opposition, but also between the army and the Brotherhood.

**All political actors have prioritised the short-term decisions and the political elite has failed to resolve the dilemma of how to couple the partisan competition with the need for consensus**

The deadlock between the military and the Brotherhood – the former believing themselves to be the champions of stability and the latter promoting power in the hands of the civilians – confirms these actors' desire to lead, which brought them progressively closer to confrontation. The attempt at monopolising the power resulted in the constitutional declaration on 22 November 2012, by which President Morsi

hoped to ensure immunity regarding his decisions, which he considered necessary to “defend the revolution.” In other words, through this declaration, due to the lack of a valid constitution, the President was able to pass laws and decrees without intervention from the judiciary. In addition, the Constitutional Court was not allowed to intervene in the process of drafting the constitution which was in the hands of the Constitutional Commission, and senior figures from the old regime were expected to be dealt with more severely. This was a display of the President’s determination, who accumulated executive and legislative powers to fight against the “deep State” by hoarding greater amounts of power.

This allowed Morsi to confront resistance from the “deep State” (sectors of the army, judiciary, the police, State institutions, the media, businesses, etc.) using fairly unorthodox measures. Instead of looking for support from a revolutionary front that would help him to fight the pillars of the old regime and the resistance of certain sectors of the state administration, used to operating with certain autonomy and based on sectorial interests, the Islamists adopted a heavy-handed strategy and one of “ikhwanisation” of the institutions: they put brotherhood-related figures in key posts of the institutions and administration; granted legislative powers to the high chamber, strongly dominated by the Brotherhood due to the dissolution of the Parliament by the Constitutional Court; they responded to opposition and media criticism with allegations and charges of “offending the President” and with the progressive interference of the state media.

The legitimacy of the ballot boxes was interpreted by the movement as *carte blanche* to monopolise the power without the obligation of accountability, ignoring the fact that a minimum of consensus is essential to legitimise the process. To this was added the confusion generated between the country’s presidency, the political party and the religious movement. Due to the nature itself of the Brotherhood, an extremely hierarchical organisation, where dissent was uncommon, faith and obedience was rewarded and the religious and identifying discourse overexploited, the impression grew of a lack of transparency and progressive sectarianism of power.

Instead of pushing forward social policies and the most pressing reforms – like that of the security sector –, the Islamist government focused on identity

which further deepened the existing social and political divide. In fact one of the main failings of the Morsi government was his *Nahda* project, by which he intended to transform the economy and reach growth nearing 7% in five years, reduce unemployment and significantly increase the budget for education. However, the project that was the pillar of the presidential campaign was unsuccessful with unemployment rising and less growth, the result of a lack of long-term planning and support from international financial institutions.

This trend to think in terms of hegemony and ignore the need for inclusion has been a constant feature of Mohamed Morsi’s mandate. He has been slow in reacting to public demand and has shown little readiness to amend the mistakes he has made. The opposition, however, has tended to follow a “negative” agenda, apparently focused on the idea that the government would fail. All political actors have prioritised the short-term decisions and the political elite has failed to resolve the dilemma of how to couple the partisan competition with the need for consensus.

**The straitjacketing of the political realm before the revolutions explains the enormous partisan vitality and the plethora of parties that proliferated after 2011. This multitude of political formations favoured the division of the non-religious groups in particular, thereby benefiting the Islamist parties**

The widespread demonstrations that took place throughout Egypt in June and July 2013 have not only united the anti-Islamist opposition, but also brought the army back into the political arena. After the mobilisation of millions of Egyptians on 30 June and the collection of 22 million signatures demanding the President’s resignation and that presidential elections be held, the army gave a 48-hour ultimatum to “satisfy the demands of the Egyptian people.” Once the deadline had passed, and despite the last-minute offer of the President to engage in dialogue

### REBUILDING THE STATE APPARATUS: SECURITY SECTOR REFORM

The objective of the Security Sector Reform (SSR) is to return the security apparatus to the hands of state institutions designated by a democratically elected government, i.e., the transformation of the security apparatus by the civil State in order to ensure its functioning according to democratic practices as well as its endorsement and protection of Human Rights. Ultimately, the security sector should be held accountable for its actions and should remain a passive actor in the general political sphere.

The case of SSR in Tunisia is characterised by the need to focus efforts on the transformation of the internal security sector, which mostly includes police and intelligence services, and not so much of the army, which has continued to be a cohort of civilian power. Throughout the Ben Ali era, internal security forces became more prominent and they were characterised by a stern opacity and no state regulation or clear legal framework. Most political parties agree on the need for depoliticising the security sector, however, Ennahda still needs to prove it is willing to attempt such internal reform. Internal resistance to reform shows that there is a need for improvement in matters of transparency, control and accountability in the running of the military, i.e., a democratisation of the civilian control over the security sector. Last but not least, there is a need to strengthen the democratic character of internal security institutions in order to put an end to the abuse of civilians and to ensure their operation under the rule of law.

In Egypt, the role of the armed forces has traditionally been a prominent one and their strength as a political actor is due to both the credit and legitimacy they have earned historically from society and their control over an important portion of the country's wealth and resources. Their neutral position during the beginning of the uprisings enforced civilian support; however it is important to consider that the SCAF is the institution which has issued most constitutional declarations, both acting according to its interests and claiming a sort of referee-type role in the transitional process. These arguments lead us to mention the extremely privileged and independent role of the military. Factors such as the retirement allowances of former military members, the extent of their influence in the economy whether by resources monopolisation or by owner-

ship of companies and the external military and budget aid coming from the United States obstruct the SSR process. Political and constitutional privileges include a complete autonomy when deciding the military budget and to what ends this budget is proposed, without the supervision of the Parliament, and complete freedom of action in matters of state security. Military institutions block any attempt at supervision or accountability by civil actors in matters of political decision-making, which includes issues related to the financial and administrative management of the country. Although Morsi and the MB believed that the drafting of a new constitution and the reforms were a reasonable start in their attempt at bringing transparency and civilian control over the security sector, the recent coup has proven their failure to do so.

The main problem in the Libyan context, on the other hand, is that the state security apparatus has collapsed along with all state structures, and the mass circulation of weapons during and after the civil war has become a persistent issue. This has resulted in the proliferation of numerous militias which do not respond to any state authority and lack the guidance of a democratically structured security apparatus. These militias act as police forces, but they do so arbitrarily and without accountability in a context in which indiscriminate detention, torture and murder of civilians has occurred repeatedly under their rule.

Regardless of the attempts, the lack of economic resources and experience in SSR and the failure to disarm, demobilise and reintegrate (DDR) militias and armed groups, heavily obstruct any possible success and reinforce the perception that the State will neither be able to ensure their protection nor offer a consistent force to punish the actions of militias and alike. Amongst the countries analysed, Tunisia might have the best chances of SSR, provided consensual political actions are taken in that regard. The success of an SSR in Egypt is highly unlikely due to the power the military sector still holds in the political arena and the case of Libya demands first the DDR of all militias as a first step towards SSR.

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and form a coalition government, the army deposed the President, announced a regime change and a new transition phase began in which once again the military set the agenda: the road map, calendar, new constitutional declaration, etc. With the appointment of a civilian as President of the Republic, unlike the period of government of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) that followed the fall of Hosni Mubarak, on this occasion the army decided to oversee the change, acting as arbiter and taking a questionable backseat in decision-making. This protects the military from the pounding suffered on the front line (which it experienced during the first year of transition led by the SCAF) but without risking losing control or its prerogatives.

The repressive campaign that has followed the removal of Morsi, who is being held by the army in an unknown location, the orders issued to arrest the movement's leaders, the closure of television channels connected with the movement and the aggressively anti-Islamist discourse, which demonised the movement from all the media and different sectors of the opposition, indicates that the Islamist movement will retreat and may even close in on itself. The group refuses to accept the removal of the President and has taken to the streets in protest and to attract the attention of the international community. Instead of prompting a thorough revision process of the movement and its political activity, or even providing a much needed internal renovation, the attitude of the military and the

Muslim Brotherhood is simply creating a greater social divide and leading to the victimisation of the movement, accentuated further by the massacres of the pro-Morsi demonstrators. The two opposing groups taking to the street has been a call for legitimacy through the number of demonstrators that have mobilised. However, the main result is that the violence is on the rise and the repression is fuelling the thirst for revenge and endangering the social peace.

### **Non-Islamist Parties and the Opposition Faced with the Challenges of Pluralism**

The other side of the coin is that the new oppositions and the movements described as “revolutionary” have not been as successful as they were expected to be. Before the “Arab Spring,” the political sphere was dominated by a single party linked with the Head of State. The Constitutional Democratic Rally (RCD), founded by Ben Ali, dominated in Tunisia, while Mubarak’s National Democratic Party (NDP) ruled in Egypt. Opposing them there were two kinds of main actors: on one side, the legal opposition parties, who participated in politics without really questioning the system, a condition for their participation; and on the other, a minority of opposition parties that were tolerated on the condition that their influence was limited and they posed no threat to the regime.

The straitjacketing of the political realm before the revolutions explains the enormous partisan vitality and the plethora of parties that proliferated after 2011 (over a hundred in Tunisia and several dozen in Egypt). This multitude of political formations favoured the division of the non-religious groups in particular, thereby benefiting the Islamist parties. Characterised by party discipline and cohesion, the Islamist parties came up against less competition and enjoyed far greater visibility in the run-up to the elections. On the other hand, the old dominant parties, officially dismantled, still maintain many of their members in positions of influence and are regrouping under other names and other political organisations.

The elections revealed the weakness in this political field. In Egypt, while 71% of the Parliament, currently dissolved, was composed of Salafists and members of the Muslim Brotherhood, the opposition consisted of a wide variety of actors, many of whom

were divided among themselves. The non-Islamist group that received most votes was Al-Wafd, with 8.2% of the seats, who were, in fact, one of the parties closest to the “feloul,” or remnants of the old regime. In Morocco, the number of PJD seats doubled those obtained by the second election “winner” (the Istiqlal Party), while in Tunisia, Ennahda won over 40% of the seats in the Constituent Assembly, followed by a myriad of opposition parties, the most important of which has 26 seats, compared with Ennahda’s 89.

This fragmentation of the non-Islamist field can be explained by circumstantial and structural elements. Firstly, many of the opposition parties after the Arab Spring are highly personalistic or built around a single figure. Such is the case, for example, in Egypt for Mohamed ElBaradei (al-Doustour), former director of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Ayman Nour (El Ghad), former opponent of Mubarak, Naguib Sawiris (Free Egyptians Party), the telecommunications magnate and party founder, or the Nasserist Hamdeen Sabahi (al-Karama). In Tunisia, there is a similar situation, with leaders like Najib Chebbi, from the Progressive Democratic Party (PDP), Hamma Hammami, from the Worker’s Party, both former opponents of Ben Ali, or Moncef Marzouki, leader of the Congress for the Republic (CPR) and current President.

In fact, this phenomenon of personalisation is not an Arab exception, but rather the mechanism itself of most incipient democracies, or at least of transition processes. The consequence is that the more “political entrepreneurs” that come onto the scene, the greater the probability of creating political parties, which in turn leads to the fragmentation of the political terrain, especially regarding those with non-religious, left-wing or liberal leanings. Furthermore, many of these parties are concentrated in the large urban areas, the arenas for the biggest mobilisations. This has pushed the interior regions and rural areas further into the background, leaving them deprived of representation and with less electoral weight. This is why many of these leaders, around whom new or old parties are built, have a significant draw in the cities, where they find support, among intellectuals and the middle and upper classes, but lack a social connection with the rural parts of the country. These areas continue to be ruled by local leaders who are generally linked to the old regime, or

the Islamist parties, which are more conservative and in touch with the rural traditions. Finally, the communication strategies of the new political leaders have focused more on the media and social networks and have neglected the ground work needed to gain popularity among the working classes and in the rural areas. This has prompted a political class whose influence is limited by its detachment from the "street."

### *The Tunisian Opposition to Conquering the Public Space*

Both in Morocco and Tunisia the election results forced the winning Islamist parties to seek government partners. Ennahda formed a coalition with Ettakatol and the CPR, centre-left secularist parties, but both parties have suffered numerous desertions or even splits because of divergences with respect to joining the coalition (eight Ettakatol members and 14 from CPR). What this has cost the two parties and their leaders will be seen in the next legislative elections that are set to take place following the approval of the new Constitution in autumn 2013.

While the assassination of Chokri Belaïd in February 2013 sparked a serious government crisis that ended with the incorporation of certain technocratic ministers and the replacement of Jebali with Laarayedh, it is yet to be seen what the consequences will be of the murder on 25 July 2013 of Mohamed Brahmi, leader of the Popular Current party and elected member of the National Assembly. The immediate reaction has been a call from the opposition and the trade unions to dissolve the Constituent Assembly and form a Council of Elders, which may further erode the legitimacy of a strongly criticised government and bring uncertainty to a fragile and highly polarised political process. The second option open to the opposition parties to increase their political clout and capacity to influence is the formation of common fronts. In fact, in Tunisia, out of the 144 political parties that emerged after the revolution, today there are just 49.

With the aim of counteracting the strength of Ennahda, on 6 July 2012 the Nida Tounes group became a political party. Led by Beji Caid Essebsi, this group presents itself as a "catch-all-party," at the crossroads between secularists, liberals and the tra-

ditional left, and with the incorporation of former members of the RCD that, after being excluded from the political scene with the fall of Ben Ali, see this movement as a chance for political rebirth. The party experienced a significant boost in few months, especially due to the presence of Caid Essebsi. This 86-year-old veteran politician was minister on several occasions under the presidency of Habib Bourguiba, was Parliament Speaker under Ben Ali and interim Prime Minister during the post-revolution period. A fervent secularist, his discourse presents the Bourguiba era as Tunisia's Golden age, because of its opposition to rampant Islamisation. This explains the glorification of the Bourguiba era within the party, focused on women's rights, education and infrastructure, among other things, in contrast to the constant accusations of incompetence directed at Ennahda.

In fact, for many secularists and liberals this forum is the only way of blocking Ennahda in the next elections. They argue that nearly 60% of the population did not vote for Ennahda in the 2011 elections and that Nida Tounes can capture this share of the vote and unify it. The question is whether the charisma of Essebsi, who has won the hearts and trust of many conservative and centrist Tunisians, can compete with Ennahda, especially bearing in mind Essebsi's age, which casts doubts over whether he will be able to run as a presidential candidate. This is why the fast rise of Nida Tounes may become a quick fall without its rallying candidate.

The Tunisian political scene is composed around three main poles: conservative, left-wing and centrist, structured by the three dominant parties, Ennahda, the Popular Front and Nida Tounes. The atomisation of Tunisia's opposition political field is confirmed by the formation of four common fronts:

- Union for Tunisia: formed by Nida Tounes, Al-Jumhuri, Al-Massar, the Socialist Party and the Patriotic and Democratic Labour Party (PTPD);
- Popular Front: unites twelve left-wing, nationalist and green parties and associations, as well as numerous independent intellectuals to oppose the troika and Nida Tounes, under the leadership of Hamma Hammami, Secretary General of the Tunisian Worker's Party. The murdered politicians Chokri Belaïd and Mohamed Brahmi also belonged to this coalition;

## RULE OF LAW AND CONSTITUTION IN TUNISIA: THE CHALLENGE OF POLITICAL CONSENSUS

Tunisia first proceeded to elect a parliament and then a provisional President in order to draw up a new Constitution, which was followed by more elections, the goal being to pursue transition in accordance with the Rule of Law. Thus, the High Commission for the Realisation of the Goals of the Revolution, Political Reform and Democratic Transition (a committee of experts and civil society actors) was entrusted with preparing the legal framework for the transition by enacting decrees in compliance with the Rule of Law: it created an independent institution for elections, issued a decree on elections for the Constituent Assembly and a series of decrees ensuring free, plural and transparent elections. In December 2012, the amendments to the first draft constitution were submitted to the Constituent Assembly, whereas the definitive draft was submitted on 1 June 2013. In view of the approval rate required to endorse the final draft of the constitution (two thirds of the Constituent Assembly), it is clear that the aim in Tunisia, in contrast to Egypt, is to draw up a text fostering consensus. Hence the debates on introducing Sharia and the principle of gender “complementarity” into the Constitution – proposals that Ennahda eventually relinquished – have fostered political polarisation and slowed the process of drafting the constitution. The latest draft constitution attempts to clear up polemic aspects: Article 1 stays the same and does not mention Sharia, Article 6 mentions the freedom to practice one’s religion as well as freedom of conscience. Moreover, it stipulates a number of institutional changes: legislative power is entirely transferred to Congress, the State is decentralised through local administration (Article 13) and five bodies have been created and enshrined in the constitution – the latter are in charge of elections, the media, sustainable development, good governance and the struggle against corruption (Articles 123-127).

The signature of numerous charters and international treaties establishing the prevalence of international over national law attests to the changes in the legal framework. In the first place, a decree from 23 March 2011 established the temporary organisation of the authorities while announcing the dissolution of the Tunisian Parliament, the Constitutional Council, the Supreme Court and the majority of the aforesaid institutions that participated in legitimising the former regime, including the Democratic Constitutional Rally (RCD). By the same token, on the regional

level, a number of town and regional councils were also dissolved and replaced by delegations.

Simultaneously, in a context marked by the proliferation of new political parties, the idea was to ensure the freedom of association in order to organise the transition under fair political conditions. Two decrees on the organisation of political parties (Decree No. 87, 2011) and associations (Decree No. 88, 2011) guarantee the freedoms of expression and association, subjecting them to compliance with the Rule of Law, rejecting recourse to violence and abiding by transparency. As a consequence, elections were a success insofar as abiding by law: they were free, regular and plural according to the majority of international observers. Thus, the Assembly was able to develop its own procedural rules and even ratify certain laws designed, among other things, to establish the temporary organisation of the authorities (Law of 16 December 2011).

Moreover, the High Commission issued a series of decrees to organise the government and the political framework, including diverse political sensibilities as well as a diversity of civil society actors, and making the Rule of Law the condition sine qua non of their existence. Emerging from this was the creation of various authorities designed to restore citizens’ confidence in their institutions by guaranteeing their independence. Among these are the High Commission (Decree No. 6 from 18 February 2011), the National Fact-Finding Commission on Cases of Embezzlement and Corruption (Decree No. 7, 18 February 2011) and the National Fact-Finding Commission on Abuses Committed during Recent Events (Decree No. 8, 18 February 2011).

The reform process in Tunisia appears to be the most successful and consistent with a participative (bottom-up) approach. First of all, because there is no one actor as central as a monarch or army; secondly, because the new actors have proceeded to progressively dismantle the former regime. In any case, considering the political configuration obliging a series of alliances and given the polarisation of the Tunisian political stage, political consensus on a text is the condition sine qua non for the next Constitution’s success.

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- Destourian Front (Constitutional): composed of Al-Moubadara (The Initiative), the Free Patriotic Union and the Neo-Destourian Party;
- Free Destourian Movement: formed by six Destourian parties (i.e. constitutionalist) that arose after the revolution and present themselves as “modernist, democratic and reformist.”

With a few exceptions, most political parties do not have organisational capacities to rival Ennahda, but the formation of coalitions could be a good place for learning to negotiate, creating ideas and common projects and, in theory, might lead to longer-lasting formations.

### *Alliances against the Islamist Hegemony*

In Egypt there have been multiple attempts to form political and electoral alliances between the secular and liberal parties. Firstly, with the legislative elections approaching many parties regrouped around coalitions that have significantly varied over recent months, with a significant shuffle of parties and public figures modifying their affiliations. Some political figures have even formed or joined more than one movement at the same time, creating a complex landscape. The National Salvation Front constitutes the main opposition force to the Islamists and has also been the main beneficiary of the mili-

tary intervention because of the mobilisations on 30 June.

After the presidential elections, the candidates that reached third and fourth place, Hamdeen Sabahi, leader of the Nasserist party Al-Karama, and Abdel Moneim Aboul Fotouh, supported by a throng of young revolutionaries, formed the Popular Current (Al-Tayar Al-Shaabi) and Strong Egypt (Masr Al-Qaweya) respectively. In January 2012 Mohamed El-Baradei established the Constitutional Party (Al-Dostour). With social liberal or social democrat leanings, Al-Dostour has benefited from the infrastructures previously created as support platforms for ElBaradei. Its political programme is centred on rebalancing the relations between the State and its citizens, separating State and government to guarantee the neutrality of the institutions, the defence of individual freedoms and the establishment of an economic order that guarantees a minimum of social justice through a progressive fiscal system.

Strong Egypt, created in November 2012 by former members of the Brotherhood disillusioned by the lack of internal democracy and participation possibilities, defines itself as centre left, with a moderate Islamic vision. Its agenda includes fostering a participative democracy through greater decentralisation, social justice and inclusion through the redistribution of wealth, establishing a minimum wage and restructuring the welfare system and the independence of Egypt's foreign policy. Its principal line of attack was not so much to oppose Morsi, like the other parties, but rather to oppose the privileges conceded to the army during the 2012 Constitution. The party uses an innovative system of bottom-up structuring (the creation of sectorial organisations, of women or young people), to allow for greater participation in decision-making and the emergence of young leaders. There are two lines of thought in the party, one which is more conservative and linked to the Muslim Brotherhood, and another more liberal, embodied by the young revolutionaries. The division between both became clear when it came to taking a stance for or against the 2012 Constitution. The Popular Current is structured more as a movement than as a party, and is composed of diverse actors – nationalists, young revolutionaries and left-wingers -. It is strongly focused on the issue of social justice, hence the proposal for a maximum and minimum wage for public sector workers, and favours the adoption of an independent foreign policy for Egypt.

There are major obstacles to these goals: the political instability means the party focuses more on coordinating protests than on building party structures; it lacks sufficient human and financial resources; and it has to deal with the generational conflicts between its leaders and the revolutionary youth.

The National Salvation Front (NSF), a coalition created in response to the constitutional declaration of President Morsi in November 2012, brings together a wide range of liberal, secular and left-wing groups around three main leaders: Mohamed ElBaradei, Amr Moussa and Hamdeen Sabahi. The diversity of this alliance has led to numerous internal disagreements, such as for example the boycott of the constitutional referendum, rifts regarding the loan negotiated with the IMF, or even rivalry among personalities of the main political figures.

The most frequent criticism of the coalition is directed at their refusal to be involved in the constitutional reform process and its making demands that are difficult to meet, such as the replacement of half the cabinet with technocrats.

The coup d'état in July 2013, that ended Egypt's Islamist rule, has allowed the NSF to become the centrepiece of this new stage and capitalise on the anti-Islamist offensive. Nevertheless, it is yet to be seen whether the coalition can withstand the possible internal divergences and rivalries and, particularly, whether it can overcome the legitimacy deficit as a consequence of excluding the Muslim Brotherhood.

### A New Actor in the Mix: Salafism

If there is an unexpected actor on the current Arab political map it is the politicised version of Salafism. Salafism, initially opposed to political participation, has attracted attention because of the power share it has captured. Its politicisation reveals the strong mobilisation capacity of these movements that are reoccupying a public space that they have not been allowed in for a long time: some opt for violent strategies, others lead campaigns to intervene in the Islamisation of society, and others compete as political parties, form alliances and serve as opposition according to their own political calculations and party interests.

In Egypt, Salafists of different origins created their own political parties in 2011. The election results exceeded all expectations and al-Nour, the main Salafist

## CONSTITUTION AND RULE OF LAW IN EGYPT: THE ARMY AS GUARDIAN OF REFORM

The reform model adopted by Egypt seems to combine top-down and bottom-up approaches in order to legitimise the entire process. The army has effectively taken charge of the transition process by defining the constitutional timetable. On 23 March 2011, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) issued a constitutional declaration establishing the regulations for the forthcoming elections and temporarily granting itself the power to govern. After the legislative elections in autumn 2011, a committee resulting from the elections was entrusted with drafting the new constitution. The Constitution drawn up on 29 November 2012 was approved by referendum the following month. Largely based on the 1971 Constitution, this new text attempts to break with the “hyper-presidency” effect enshrined by the preceding regime.

In fact, the new constitution places limitations on presidential powers and grants certain competences to Parliament. The President is limited to two four-year terms (Article 133). Moreover, he is required to collaborate closely with Parliament in order to form a new government (Article 139). Above all, the President’s approval is no longer necessary in the case of proceedings to dissolve a government, a Parliamentary majority sufficing (Article 126). Certain prerogatives do remain intact, however. The right to appoint a tenth of the members of the Consultative Assembly (or Shura Council, Article 128), for instance, lends the president a certain influence in the legislative process. Hence we are dealing with a configuration resembling a semi-presidential system whose first objective is to break with an executive branch that encroaches upon the legislative and judicial branches.

In this regard, on the symbolic level, the trial of the former President and his entourage as well as the dissolution of the National Democratic Party (NDP) shows a possible rebalancing of power to the benefit of the judiciary. By the same token, the state of emergency (Law 162/1958) allowing the authorities to carry out operations with no restrictions by the legislative or judiciary branches was lifted in May 2012. In any case, the centrality of the military seems to endure: more than 11,000 civilians must appear in military courts. Indeed, it appears that the army’s central role poses a duality between civilian and military power, insofar as the SCAF claims to serve the nation and has designated the country’s stability as its priority. In this regard, by establishing a tight timetable for transition, the constitutional declaration issued by the SCAF was designed to promote a transition benefiting actors with a significant local presence (the Muslim Brotherhood, dignitaries of the former regime), a guarantee of stability and conservatism. Out of this came a conservative alliance between the Freedom and Justice Party (FJP) and the army against liberal trends. However, a divergence emerged while the consti-

tution was being drafted: whereas the army made an alliance with the Muslim Brotherhood with a view to ensure the country’s stability and retain their privileges, the FJP attempted to consolidate civilian power.

This civilian-military power duality is illustrated in certain judicial decisions such as the constitutional declaration of 17 June 2012 exhorting the Supreme Constitutional Court to dissolve Parliament on the grounds of unconstitutionality and granting the SCAF legislative powers until the next legislative elections. In so doing, the President inherited a government without a Parliament, de facto reducing the presidency to an empty shell. The tension persisted due to certain dismissals made by Morsi (Procurator-General Abdel Meguid Mahmoud) as well as a constitutional declaration issued by the president on 22 November 2012 immunising presidential decrees and laws against any court action. Moreover, this declaration prohibited the Supreme Constitutional Court from ruling against the Constitutional Commission in order to accelerate the adoption of the new constitutional text. Finally, said text was approved by the referendum held from 15 to 22 December 2012 by 63.8% of votes, with a low voter turnout (32.9%); a score that reveals the lack of consensus on the new constitution.

The showdown between civilian and military power led to the progressive isolation of Mohammed Morsi, who was facing growing political dissent and popular protest and an unsustainable socioeconomic context, and then to his overthrow by the army on 3 July 2013. The SCAF suspended the new constitution, issued a new constitutional declaration (approved on 8 July 2013) by which the President of the Supreme Constitutional Court acts as interim President of the nation while a committee of experts is tasked with preparing new amendments (Article 128) before being submitted to another referendum. In contrast to the March 2011 declaration, this one grants the interim President the majority of powers (Article 24): legislative powers, domestic and foreign representation of the State, appointment of the government and even the right to pardon.

The reform process in Egypt combines two approaches: on the one hand, an approach initially imposed from above and by the army, aiming to establish the rules of the transition game while retaining significant prerogatives allowing it to supervise the transition; and on the other hand, constitutional reform has been entrusted to those having legitimacy in the eyes of the general population. In any case, the growing rivalries between the different actors (the army, political parties, social movements, etc.) have begun a new process, again launched by the SCAF, thus ensuring the army’s return to the political arena.

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party, became the second political power with 112 seats. In coalition with another two Salafist parties, al-Asala (The Authenticity) and al-Binaa wal-Tanmiya (Building and Development), they attained 28% of the vote. Tensions soon emerged between quietest Salafists and the new political Salafism, especially over party discipline and the type of relationship they had to establish with their main rivals, the Muslim

Brotherhood. Therefore, during the presidential campaign and the work of the Constituent Assembly the first divisions began to emerge within the movement. Eventually, the driving force of the al-Nour party, Emad Abdel Ghaffour and another 22 Members of Parliament left Al-Nour and created their own party, al-Watan (The Homeland), a name whose connotations are more nationalist than Islamist.

The Salafists compete for the same electorate as the Muslim Brotherhood. Their role in the Constituent Assembly has consisted in putting pressure on the Brotherhood to reflect "more Islam" in the constitutional text, taking them to positions that are difficult to reconcile with the secular opposition and part of the public opinion. Their discourse has focused on the need to implement reforms, which they believe to be necessary especially for their project of social re-Islamisation (like in education), and in the fight against corruption.

In fact, the role of Salafism as a "hinge" party, positioned next to the Islamists or the opposition depending on the given interests, has given it considerable political benefits and ensured it a future place in the country's politics after the removal of Morsi. The Egyptian "deep State," fully aware of Egyptian Salafism having already given it wings during the Mubarak era to counter the popularity of the Brotherhood, has known to play the Salafist card once again to its own benefit. The military intervention to bring down the Morsi government had the blessing of al-Nour, which joined the popular mobilisation. The strategy benefits al-Nour because it makes it the only potential target of the Islamist vote once the Brotherhood is out of the running, and it is to the advantage of the army as the presence of al-Nour during this new phase serves to neutralise any accusations of an attempt to repress Islamism on ideological grounds.

Tunisian Salafism had a worse position, victim of a long history of repression under Ben Ali, but unlike the Egyptians, the Tunisian Salafists took to the streets during the revolution and then took up the rhetoric on Islamic identity during the election campaign. Their presence is growing in the working class neighbourhoods, where the radical elements carry out acts of violence, such as the sacking of UGTT offices, the attacks in Manouba University and, especially, the attack on the US Embassy in September 2012, among others. Other factions want to put an end to the violence and instead put pressure on Ennahda to propagate their ideas.

In its relations with the Salafists, Ennahda has implemented three strategies: integration, legalisation and repression. Firstly, it prioritised their integration. In Ghannouchi's own words, "They are our children; if we abandon them we condemn them to radicalisation." In 2012 four Salafist parties were legalised, on

the condition that they accepted democratic rules: the micro Rahma party (30 July 2012), the Asala party (March 2012), the influential Jabhat al-Islah (Reform Front, May 2012) and the most popular, Hizb ut-Tahrir (Liberation Party). It should be mentioned, however, that some of its members already formed part of the Constituent Assembly as independent candidates. So, Ennahda is pressured by parties that urge it to take a more dogmatic line to avoid people being "disappointed" again with the government's management.

However, neither integration nor legalisation have succeeded in wiping out the Salafist violence and, in the end, Ennahda has had no choice but to resort to repressive strategies, particularly confronting the Ansar al-Sharia group and charging several jihadist Salafists accused of acts of violence. The clashes between security forces and jihadists on the borders with Algeria have been cause for concern in recent months. These measures have been welcomed by many Tunisians, especially because the signs indicate that Salafists are behind many of the violent acts, including the assassination of Chokri Belaïd and Mohamed Brahmi.

### The role of Salafism as a "hinge" party, positioned next to the Islamists or the opposition depending on the given interests, has given it considerable political benefits

Tunisian Salafism is evolving and today presents diverse tendencies: that of preaching (al-miyya or scientific Salafism), political and violent. Time will tell if the non-violent versions and politicisation of Tunisian Salafism will be able to neutralise its violent arm, fuelled by a youth disillusioned by poor prospects and a pitiful economic situation. The integration of political Salafism and its democratic assimilation, its capacity to provide socioeconomic alternatives that avoid radicalisation, and balance repressive measures all depend on the deactivation of violent Salafism.

In Morocco, the authorities have shown a significant change in attitude since March 2011, by promising to release numerous detained Islamists. Following

the pardons issued in April to 196 prisoners, the PJD won the elections prompting a new wave of releases, including certain prominent members of Moroccan Salafism. In fact, the Movement for Unity and Reform, a Moroccan Salafist association publicly supported the PJD, as this constitutes its hard core, or at least an important base for the party. This means there is neither the competition nor the ambiguity that can be seen in Egypt or in Tunisia between the majority Islamists and Salafists. In fact, in Morocco the relationship works for everyone: through the PJD the Salafists can propagate their ideas and put pressure on the government to avoid any threats to their existence; for its part, the PJD shares the “struggle” against the liberals and both the monarchy and the PJD gain recognition for religious legitimisation thanks to the Salafists.

Therefore, the “Arab Spring” has allowed for an official opening of dialogue with the moderate wing of the Salafist movement (quietest, scientific and non-jihadist), on the condition that it recognises the King as the Commander of the Faithful. This is a key difference with respect to the other Moroccan Islamist movement that enjoys great popularity, Al Adl Wa Al Ihsane, tolerated but not recognised officially for forty years. In fact, recently there has been talk again about the legalisation of the movement of the deceased Sheik Abdesslam Yassine, although this would only be possible if Al Adl Wa Al Ihsane decided to give up its historical position: the rejection both of the role of the Palace in politics and the religious authority of the monarch.

Most importantly will be how the Salafist movements relate with the other political actors and, especially with the majority Islamists, who they can collaborate with or compete with for the same electorate, power share and the monopoly of the religious discourse. On the other hand, it remains to be seen whether the politicisation of Salafism will push Islamism to more dogmatic postures that incorporate Salafist demands or, to the contrary, greater political pragmatism.

### **The Libyan Exception: Radical Change and Fragmentation**

Libya has without doubt seen the most radical political transformation, with all actors striving for a common goal: a change of the political and eco-

nomic elite. The political panorama is extremely fragmented between former regime leaders and revolutionaries, Islamists and non-Islamists, or even between ethnic minorities and majorities and regional representatives. Furthermore, from the political landscape are emerging numerous non-state actors who are gradually making a name for themselves in politics, such as local councils, tribal forum or revolutionary brigades.

**Libya has without doubt seen the most radical political transformation, with all actors striving for a common goal: a change of the political and economic elite**

The July 2012 elections, which ended in victory for the National Forces Alliance (NFA), led by Mahmoud Jibril, were seen as a liberal victory. However, the reality is that the true winners were the independent candidates, who accumulated 120 of the 200 seats in the General National Congress. While the NFA won 39 seats, the Islamist Justice and Construction Party (JCP) won 17. However, the divide existing between Islamists and non-Islamists in other countries does not occur here. Libyan society is majority conservative, and issues related to Islamism seem to enjoy wide consensus: all parties, including the NFA accept the inclusion of the sharia as the main source of legislation. In fact, there are few ideological differences between the different parties, which is the result of an absence of political pluralism under Gaddafi, and the only parties to present a national agenda were the Islamists from the JCP, whose influence was important in the field of security and the religious institutions.

Another phenomenon worth highlighting is the presence of Salafism. There are, like in other countries, diverse Salafist tendencies: mainly the political and jihadist. Political Salafism has 27 seats and is represented politically through: the Authenticity Movement (Al-Asalah); revolutionary Salafism, which was active during the war against the regime and linked with the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG); and diverse revolutionaries and independent figures led by Abdelhakim Belhadj. The other jihadist Salafism,

which had a significant role during the Libyan revolution has led numerous anti-West attacks (against the convoy of the British Ambassador and the UN Special Envoy, the Red Cross offices in Misrata and Benghazi, the French embassy in Tripoli and, in particular, the attack that killed the American ambassador in Benghazi in September 2012). Even some groups like Ansar al-Sharia have decided to unite with soldiers from al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) in their fight against the French intervention in Mali.

The other political actors are small parties and independent figures, and likewise those that represent the Berber minorities, which lend themselves to the coalition game. The weight of the independent candidates is of great significance due to their proportion in the Assembly (60% of the seats for individual candidates), since many of them represent local interests, whether these are districts, tribes or families. In the post-civil war context, the dividing line is drawn by participation, or not, in the revolts. The self-proclaimed "revolutionaries" are brigades, Islamists and highly diverse actors that are poorly represented in the GNC. Many of them have positions in the new military and security institutions and attempt to influence in the new political context. This is a poorly unified group, since the local character has a strong influence on the identity and the deployment of the brigades, and the relation between these and the government is increasingly tense. This has led to the government's open desire to disarm these groups, integrate them into the forces of the regular army and take back control of the prisons that are under their command. The element that these "revolutionary" actors all agree on is the political exclusion of all those related with the Gaddafi regime. To this end, on 5 May 2013 the "political exclusion law" was passed, under pressure from the brigades and revolutionary actors supported by a significant part of the GNC, with the exception of numerous independent members from the country's south and centre.

The other side is represented by the so-called "counter-revolutionaries," i.e., the moderates, conservatives and those who collaborated with the old regime or abstained from getting involved during the civil war. Among these are members of the NFA, independent candidates and tribal chiefs who have remained loyal to Gaddafi, especially from Sirte, Bani Walid or the Fezzan region. Some of these

pro-Gaddafi actors have been totally marginalised in the transition process, are victims of stigmatisation or even repression in jails that are not under state control.

Mention should be made of the actors that demand greater federalism against the resistance of the elected politicians. With particular presence in Cyrenaica, the federalist tendency enjoys three forms of support: the intellectuals from Benghazi and Derna; certain tribes (Obeidat, Awaqi and Magharba); the classes of officials close to the Berber and Tubus tribes; and minorities, who see decentralisation as an opportunity for recognition of their rights. The insistent demands for political and economic decentralisation due to the region's oil wealth have met with resistance from the revolutionary brigades and the Islamists, which have a strong presence in this area.

Ultimately, the issues of wealth and power distribution in Libya on national, regional and local scales is a central problem that is yet to be resolved. Likewise, the need for transitional justice is highly evident, since the divisions between the political actors are determined by the lack of reconciliation.

### A SOCIAL MAP IN MOVEMENT

In 2002, the civil society organisations registered in the Middle East and North Africa came to 130,000 entities, with major differences between countries based on the different degrees of tolerance of regimes with respect to social activism. With the exception of Libya, where all forms of civil society organisations were totally prohibited, in the other countries the tonic was that relative tolerance combined with an attempt to control the organisations via different instruments. Legislation was one of such instruments, as were control of financing and the infiltration of figures close to the power into key positions within the organisations' structures.

Despite the restrictions, the existence of these organisations allowed the regimes to offer the outside world an image that was more in keeping with the demands for democratisation formulated by external actors, particularly the European Union and the United States. Likewise, organisations that were dedicated to social action, education, health, food, etc., served the State to compensate to some degree for its incapacity to respond in these areas. On occa-

## TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE: A STAGE IN DISMANTLING FORMER REGIMES

Transitional justice can be defined as a series of approaches and mechanisms implemented to address abuses committed in the past “in order to establish responsibilities, deliver justice and allow reconciliation.” Addressing past crimes and abuses – through inquiry commissions, through a justice system obliging perpetrators to answer for their actions – constitutes a fundamental stage in the transition process. This is particularly the case with Egypt, Libya and Tunisia, where demands for reparation of acts of violence and wrongdoing (crimes, abuse, torture, imprisonment, etc.) committed under authoritarian regimes have become urgent. Such reparation would include: prosecution of those responsible for mass atrocities, attending to demands for compensation and demonstrating the will to put an end to human rights violations.

In Tunisia, the issue of transitional justice has been deeply politicised. On the morrow of Ben Ali’s departure, a number of inquiry commissions emerged to investigate cases of corruption, abuses and even crimes committed during the uprisings. Since the election of the Constituent Assembly in October 2011, however, this desire for justice has gradually faded. In fact, the political stage being highly polarised, it is extremely difficult to reach a consensus on such subjects and the civil society actors engaged in said justice process are actually neither trained nor prepared: in order to appease the population, a number of trials were conducted in haste or unfairly. In addition, the reform of the judicial branch and the security sector is now an urgent, considerable challenge for the transition. Despite the purge of the Ministry of the Interior, it has not yet been the object of in-depth reform. Moreover, the bill of law on transitional justice, which would create a Truth and Dignity Commission with a compensation fund and establish judge training, has not yet been passed by the Constituent Assembly. Though this bill was, surprisingly, the object of consensus in the Assembly at first, in the absence of a reform of the judicial system and the presence of a majority of judges having served during the Ben Ali era, its implementation will prove complicated. Finally, the bill for the “Law on the Immunisation of the Revolution,” aiming to exclude the dignitaries of the former regime, is likely to increase the politicisation of the question of transitional justice and thus delay its implementation.

Although both Tunisia and Egypt have dissolved the respective Ben Ali and Mubarak political parties, only the members of the former Tunisian regime were excluded from elections for the Constituent Assembly. In Egypt, the majority Islamist Parliament drew up a bill of law on political exclusion but the Supreme Court, inherited from the former regime, declared it unconstitutional. The decision by the Administrative Court confirmed the right of members of the former regime to participate in politics. Moreover, in Tunisia, an ad hoc ministry – the Ministry of Human Rights and Transitional Justice – was tasked with co-ordinating and carrying out transitional justice, whereas in Egypt, it is the SCAF, close-

ly tied to the Mubarak era, that supervises the transition. Nevertheless, in both countries, many legal proceedings and trials have above all targeted Ben Ali or Mubarak and their respective families. With the exception of these highly publicised cases, many cases are being handled extremely slowly, which has led to a sort of disenchantment. Therefore, though military justice has become the first recourse for handling transitional justice cases in Tunisia (thanks to the military courts), in Egypt, military justice has been manipulated. In this regard, Mubarak’s very brief, highly politicised trial, the maintenance of the state of emergency law after the fall of the regime and the prosecution of over 11,000 civilians in military courts are all factors attesting to the SCAF’s political agenda.

Politically dominated by State and non-State actors, Libya has a second handicap complicating the entire process of transitional justice: the absence of a security apparatus. As a consequence, war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by revolutionaries have not been investigated at all, which raises the issue of the judiciary in general and transitional justice in particular. In addition, through the amnesty declared in May 2012, the National Transitional Council (NTC) officially established the impunity of perpetrators of crimes and forced displacements occurring during the uprisings. Also, despite the ensemble of measures taken to “purge” the civil service and political arena of senior government officials having served under Gaddafi, the fact remains that the preferential terms resulting from the power relations at play seem insufficient: due to a radical split between “revolutionaries” and “collaborators,” the process of transitional justice is not being conducted as per the mechanisms observed in the aforementioned countries (commission to inquire into human rights violations, “truth” commissions, etc.). At the same time, armed groups – although considered the initiators of the regime change – are not held legally accountable for the crimes they committed. On the contrary, they enjoy amnesty and various recognitions. In this regard, a more comprehensive approach – reconciling today’s and yesterday’s victims in a less polarised perspective – combined with the establishment of a security apparatus and effective judicial system, would allow transitional justice to be carried out in Libya. It is undeniable that transitional justice is one of the stages of the transition process and a necessary instrument on the road towards instituting the Rule of Law. It rises to the demands made by citizens concerning the acknowledgement of human rights violations and other crimes committed in the past. However, each country is facing structural problems arising from both the power relations at work as well as from the State and juridical structures in place.

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sion, certain organisations (like the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, for example) were able to become real alternatives to the local or government authorities in the provision of social services.

In the stage following the revolution, civil society has attempted to restructure and occupy the spaces left

by the fall of the regime. However, paradoxically, faced with a society demanding more freedom of association and expression, the new democratically elected governments have had to be reticent to this social dynamism and, on occasion, have reproduced the same restrictive models that characterised the

previous regimes. The most emblematic case in this sense is that of the bill relating to NGOs in Egypt, as an attempt to use the law to control the creation and registration of the country's new civil associations. In fact, the issue of foreign financing of NGOs in Egypt has been a historical motive for attacking these organisations both during the Mubarak years and also under Mohamed Morsi. This was seen on 4 June 2013, when 43 Egyptian and foreign workers belonging to international NGOs were sentenced to up to five years in prison for receiving funds from abroad and, allegedly, contributing to the country's instability. After the fall of Ben Ali, Tunisia was witness to a proliferation of associations, more than 160 in less than a month, and among the most active are those that protect human rights. Their work consists in reporting any human rights violations, demanding the release of political prisoners and justice for those who were persecuted, tortured or suffered reprisals at the hands of the former regime. Like with other organisations that had previously been illegal, such as the Tunisian Association for the Struggle against Torture, the organisation Lawyers without Borders has worked in Tunisia since 2012 with the aim of dealing with the thousands of claims of human rights violations under Ben Ali.

### The mobilisation of citizens has meant a drastic turnaround for the perception of citizens who, for the first time, have acquired a sense of full citizenship

In the Egyptian context, the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights (EIPR), active since 2002, is focused on reporting any government activity that violates the international treaties on human rights and on implementing both social and legal defence practices in cases of corruption and violation of the rule of law. Like the EIPR or the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies, many of these organisations have positioned themselves politically during this transition period. After the overthrow of President Mohamed Morsi, for example, they have shown concern regarding certain articles in the July 2013 Constitutional Declaration and have been critical of police action.

Ultimately, the "Arab Spring" has confirmed that civil society has the capacity to promote democratic change. However, the way in which society has become involved in the process of change, the explosion of activism, the vitality of the "Arab street," is cause to reconsider the focus of this social dynamism in the hierarchical organised structures, like the NGOs, and become aware of a much wider phenomenon, that of "active citizenship."

The mobilisation of citizens is more than an "awakening" of social actors that were previously "dormant;" it has meant a drastic turnaround for the perception of citizens who, for the first time, have acquired a sense of full citizenship. The gags that muffled an active but restricted civil society gave way to multiple actors, causes and movements that became highly active during the transition. These consist of youth, women, the media, trade unions and other groups and individuals that participate in the public debate with a strong sense of appropriation of the process, and a determination to rewrite their own future. The different groups identified do not constitute isolated blocks. The dividing lines are blurred because of the strong interaction between the different groups and because their action is not restricted to a single area of action. Some of these actors are new to the scene, others have a known history in social activism, but in all cases their participation is developing in a new context, under new conditions, and they have much wider repercussions than in the past.

### Youth Trapped between "Street Politics" and the Parties

The main actor and factor of the "Arab Awakening," the youth, today represents the majority of the population of the Middle East and North Africa, where half the population is under 23 years old. This is the best trained Arab generation in history, but they are struggling to find their place in society. These young people have lived under political leaders who are disconnected from their reality, three times their age and whose rhetoric has little meaning. This generation perceives the world in a very different way to their parents. The vast majority have no political project, and no connection with the mobilising ideologies of the past, which now seem ob-

solete, and their social and political clout has been, until very recently, negligible or non-existent. In many cases, disconnected from the traditional hierarchies, whether family-based, religious or socio-political, these young people have ended up asserting themselves by using their skills, taking advantage of the potential of technological tools which have helped them open to the outside, communicate, organise and explore new forms of individual and collective action.

After the undeniable role of youth during the revolts, many of them now feel distanced from the political scene, and in no case have they demobilised. They have taken part in parties and civil society groups, they are active on the Internet, blogs and social networks, they express themselves through art, cinema and music and continue with “street politics” without having yet found a balance between the street and conventional politics.

#### *Institutionalisation of the Revolutionary Youth*

In a political landscape that is traditionally dominated by middle-aged to older males, the political visibility of the revolutionary youth has been limited. Some of the better-known activists decided to make the leap to politics after the revolts, although with little success. Moreover, the political polarisation and lack of direction of many of the parties has only served to distance them further from the political scene, to continue, in many cases, with social action.

In Egypt, those that were associated with religious movements joined the FJP or al-Nour, while others opted to join the **Coalition of the Youth of the Revolution**, composed of a wide spectrum of parties and movements with different political leanings, and formed by the main activists from 25 January. Focused on pressuring the Military Council, their activity was so firmly based on the street that they were unable to form a social base, which led to their dissolution in July 2012.

Others decided to form their own parties (El-Adl, centrist, Al-Tayyar el-Masry, post-Islamist, Masr El-Horreya and El-Waa'i, liberal). Only El-Adl and Masr El-Horreya won seats (one each) in the Parliament. They were unable to forge a sufficient base or mobilise electoral support due to the lack of time, experience, resources and leaders that could attract donations and votes, especially among the older

generations. A strong idealist spirit among youth and a social resistance to giving positions of responsibility to young people have prevented them from making any political gains.

Integrating into other political parties like El-Masryeen el-Ahrar, liberal, El-Hizb El-Masry El-Dimuqrati, social democrat, El-Tahalof El-Shaaby, left-wing, or those built around emerging political figures (Baradei, Moussa, Aboul Fotouh or Sabahi), has not been easy due to generational conflicts, especially caused by discrepancies when it comes to taking decisions, hierarchies and a lack of internal participation mechanisms. Other activists are members of grassroots political movements, like the Egyptian Revolutionary Socialists movement, founded in 1995 and largely underground during the Mubarak regime. The role of this group was significant during the organisation of the 2011 protests and they have subsequently been active in reporting any “deviations” in the transition process. Under the slogan “no to Mubarak, the SCAF and the Muslim Brotherhood,” this group has been highly critical of the repression and, above all, in the current turbulence are very active in condemning the return of military power to the political scene.

Among the groups of more politicised youth and those who have gained a more relevant role during the transition are those that existed before the revolution. The **April 6 Youth Movement**, in Egypt, was created in 2008 by a group of young people opposed to the Mubarak government to give support to the workers of Mahalla al-Kubra, an industrial and agricultural city on the Nile Delta. The group is based on an ideology of non-violence and uses the social networks as a means to mobilise and raise awareness. This group took part in the protests for the “Day of Rage,” on 25 January in Egypt and was a key player in the revolts that deposed the dictator.

Since then, with its claim of “the revolution continues,” it has been one of the unavoidable social actors and its leaders have been courted by the political class and visited by foreign dignitaries. During the mandate of the SCAF, the 6 April was fiercely criticised, which led part of the group to offer its public support for Mohamed Morsi in the second round of the presidential elections, as a way of rejecting the army’s candidate, Ahmed Shafiq. Despite the differences with the Brotherhood, the April 6 Youth saw in Morsi a candidate that would break from the previous regime, as well as someone they

could trust to carry out the promises made by the Islamist party of political opening and inclusion of different opposition groups.

One year on from Morsi's appointment, in view of the deteriorating political and economic situation, the movement has participated actively in anti-Morsi demonstrations and in the Tamarod (Rebel) movement. However, as the campaign against the deposed Islamist movement has gained strength, some members of April 6 are increasingly reluctant to approve of the army's strategy, which has even led them to ignoring the army's call to take to the streets to demonstrate against the Muslim Brotherhood, arguing that the presence of both groups in the streets would lead to more violence. There is currently a divide among the leaders, particularly between Ahmed Maher, one of the most visible faces, who openly criticises the anti-democratic nature of the military coup in July 2013 and the anti-Islamist campaign, and Israa Abdel Fattah, who believes that the military intervention has been an opportunity to free the country from Morsi's authoritarian power.

Regarding its future, it is not clear whether the aim of the movement is to push forward with its non-partisan citizen activism or if, on the contrary, they are preparing the terrain to make the leap to politics as soon as they have a bigger social base and a better knowledge of the country's political and institutional architecture. It is also yet to be seen whether the group will overcome its internal differences and uphold its independence with respect to the other political and social actors.

The culmination of youth activism against Mohamed Morsi is the formation of Tamarrod (rebel), an amalgamation of civil society groups and organisations, which includes the old Kefaya movement and April 6. By collecting signatures – they claim to have over 20 million – and organising demonstrations on 30 June, the day that marked a year of Morsi rule, the group brought about the fall of the elected President through the military intervention. Despite the dilemmas arising from the army's actions and the removal of a democratically elected government, part of Tunisian society has seen the Egyptian initiative as a source of inspiration. On 3 July the creation of Tamarrod in Tunisia was announced, with the aim of dissolving the National Constituent Assembly. The mechanisms are the same as that of the preceding case: collecting sig-

natures and organising popular demonstrations. Although its main instigators claim to have collected more than two million signatures in support, which would exceed the number of votes gained by the Troika, this figure is impossible to verify. In reality, it is difficult to believe that this movement could obtain the same result as in Egypt, since in Tunisia, for the time being, there have been no mass demonstrations, and no one knows what stance the Tunisian army would take, and there is no consensus between activists and political formations, with whom they refuse to have any kind of connection.

Youth demands are not all the same, but they are essentially focused on common principles: access to quality education and employment that allows young people to live with dignity, respect for freedom of expression and association, as well as the establishment of a non-repressive government that respects human rights

In fact, the removal of Morsi in Egypt has created a divide inside of various civil society groups. Like the April 6 movement, the instigators of the Facebook page **We are all Khaled Said** have also shown differing opinions. This group represents a different kind of action: cyberactivism. Its participation in the public realm has been more individual-based than as a homogeneous group. Faced with the current political crisis, the division between the group's leaders has become evident on Facebook. While the administrator of the Arabic page, Wael Ghonim, has declared his support for the military coup, the administrator of the English page, who has remained anonymous to avoid reprisals, uses the page to fiercely criticise the military coup. Zahraa Said, sister of Khaled Said, the blogger whose murder at the hands of the police prompted the creation of the page and allegations of police harassment, has completely disassociated herself from the English page.

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to quality education and employment that allows young people to live with dignity, respect for freedom of expression and association, as well as the establishment of a non-repressive government that respects human rights. In fact, social issues are an important part of the “agenda” of youth groups. Proof of this is the existence of the group **Zwela** (the poor) in Tunisia, a collective created in 2012 that brings young people together who are dissatisfied by the current social and economic situation. Its aim is to attract attention to the extreme poverty that a large part of Tunisia’s population suffers (around 30%), especially through actions like painting graffiti in public places. Its activity has made it a target for the new government, which has persecuted its members, five of which have been imprisoned for “spreading disinformation harmful to the public order” and “defacing government property.”

Lastly, it is worth noting the development of the **February 20** Movement in Morocco. Since its creation in 2011, the group has become involved in human rights defence and the fight against corruption and authoritarianism and, despite the arrest and conviction of its founder for harassing a minor in May 2012, the movement continues to be active and is still taking to the streets to make its demands, which have recently been focused on releasing political prisoners. However, the movement seems to have lost momentum in recent times. The changes made by the Moroccan authorities have managed, in part, to detract legitimacy and visibility from the movement, and the youth that form 20-F are struggling to keep the “revolutionary moment” alive. This is owed partly to the fact that part of the population has given a confidence vote to the reforms, but also to basic organisational problems. Also the network of activists received the initial support of left-wing militants and members of *Al Adl Wa Al Ihssane* (Justice and Charity), which has now separated with the announcement last December that the Islamist movement was withdrawing its support for 20-F. Nevertheless, the movement still has the potential to fill a void in the Moroccan political and social panorama, channelling secular groups that are not satisfied with the status quo, do not believe in the capacity of the secular political parties (due to the very present crisis in confidence between citizens and political parties in Morocco) and do not identify with the Islamist movements.

### *From “Street Politics” to Street Violence*

A different category of youth groups active in the “Arab Street” is that of the previously depoliticised “ultras” in Egypt. These young people, followers of the country’s biggest football teams, have used their capacity to mobilise and organise to occupy the field of political activism. In this case these are groups of young people, mostly minors, who have had a history of confrontation with the police since the Mubarak years; something that has served them for organising their resistance against the repressive tactics employed by the police against demonstrators, before, during and after the revolution. The ultras refuse to be labelled politically, but they are very active in street combat and in tactics of civil disobedience. Their central demands are focused on the need for a far-reaching reform of the police force, their sworn enemy, who they, like many other activists and opponents, accuse of still using abusive tactics and violating human rights, as had been common practice in the past.

Among the most prominent ultra groups are the fans of Al-Ahly or Zamalek, in the capital. At the outset of the demonstrations, the group of Ahlawies (Ahly fans) positioned themselves as an apolitical group, affirming that their members were free to express political opinions, which is what happened when thousands of ultras filled Tahrir Square and led the fighting against the police and Mubarak supporters. In February 2012, a match between al-Ahly and al-Masry, the team of Port Said, one of the cities that had been favourable towards Mubarak, led to clashes between the fans of each team that left more than seventy fans dead. The subsequent death sentences given to several fans, accusations of police inaction – which according to the fans was deliberate – in breaking up the fighting, and the protests against the police, legal and political action, have led to numerous demonstrations, many violent and resulting in fatalities.

In this more radical segment of youth mobilisation, the new post-revolution panorama has seen the birth of a new group into the Arab world, the Egyptian Black Bloc. This group, allegedly linked with the ultras, appeared during the second anniversary of the revolution in January 2013. Inspired by the European **Black Bloc**, the anarchist group dress in black and cover their faces during demonstrations, to avoid

being identified. The opacity with respect to the organisation makes it difficult to know its real size and whether there is any kind of organisational structure or concrete leadership behind it. On a Youtube video on 23 January 2013, the group identified its objective as the fight against the Muslim Brotherhood, the Morsi government, corruption and oppression. After their entry into the social sphere, its members were quickly branded as terrorists and their immediate arrest was ordered. Contrary to the beliefs that the movement would quickly disappear, the Black Bloc has continued to participate actively in the demonstrations against Mohamed Morsi and its actions have not always been peaceful. Today, it is still considered to be a terrorist organisation and its members are wanted by the police.

#### *Youth and Social Networks, Vectors of Democratisation?*

The analysis of the new dynamics in social movements includes the recognition of the role of the Internet and new technologies as mobilisers and creators of revolutionary attitudes in the revolts. Virtual space has been an exceptional place for meeting and exchanging opinions and plans among specific sectors of the population, especially young people. The virtual environment has therefore favoured the emergence of new social actors, cyber activists, and the break from the monopoly of the state rhetoric, generating a "non-captive" public to the official line. Their potential is evident, not just because of what they have achieved, but also because of the efforts made by different government members to silence them (there are activists like the Egyptian Alaa Abd El-Fattah who have been persecuted first by the Mubarak regime, then under the rule of the SCAF and finally by the Morsi government). Censorship is still present, also in the virtual world, especially regarding certain subjects that are considered taboo, such as criticism of the government, religious dogmas or issues of a sexual nature. Repression does not only come from the hands of the authorities, but also from conservative society, who are very reluctant to allow certain issues to be publicly discussed. On many occasions the Internet and social networks serve as a testing ground for the conventional media to gauge how far they can go. This was the case with the reports of corruption made by cyber activists against

certain members of the Tunisian government, and which were later taken up by the traditional media. Ultimately, it is too soon to say whether the activity in cyberspace is becoming a vector of democratisation. Events take place at high speed, and countries in transition are subject to great tensions. However, it is interesting to note some of the initiatives that have arisen during this period as ways of "monitoring" the transition process. As we saw in the previous section, some activists already have a public online dimension for joining the political realm, while others have preferred to focus on activities of "citizen journalism" and on training new activists. Saddled between training and journalism is an initiative whose popularity is on the rise: Mosireen. This group organises training workshops, offers equipment for documenting events and publishes its videos, photos and testimonies online, as well as organising open-air projections so that those who are not connected to the Web can see their work.

### Online activism having repercussions on political and social construction will depend largely on the essential connection between these worlds, the real and the virtual

There are also specific initiatives, like the campaign, "No military trials for Civilians," that calls for the release of political prisoners and equal justice, or the "Tweet Nadwa," the twitter meetings led by Alaa Abd El Fattah to take political discussions offline held between actors of different ideologies on Twitter. Other projects arising from the virtual realm have been enormously popular, like the "Morsi Meter," for overseeing whether or not Morsi's election promises were being kept, the "Zabatak" web page, dedicated to gathering and reporting corruption cases, or the initiative "Opengovtn" in Tunisia that promotes direct and participative democracy.

The Internet tools have become, in many cases, instruments for supervising those managing public affairs and mechanisms for strengthening civil society. Criticism has soon arrived, however, over the role of social networks during the transition phase. While they have been useful and effective at times, their tendency to

exaggerate has lost them credibility. Although highly effective in mobilising the population, they do not seem so effective in structuring civil society, partly due to their failure to adapt when formulating a coherent political strategy. Moreover, they do little to help people learn to make concessions and form consensus, which are so important at this critical time, but rather tend to strengthen positions and prejudices or push more “neutral” actors into taking up positions on one side or another. Furthermore, the speed of communication that these tools enable also allows negative ideas to be spread more quickly, and the – sometimes camouflaged – interference of actors bent on torpedoing the transition process and contaminating the virtual sphere has strengthened this aspect.

Bloggers are emerging leaders, but as a rule are restricted to a public realm limited by cyberspace; they are potential connectors, often towards the exterior, but many of them have still not managed to connect with their citizens, with those who live their daily lives outside of the virtual environment. As Ahmed Maher, founder of the April 6 Movement confirms, “The Internet media are old, now it is more important to reach the poorer neighbourhoods and increase our dissemination among those who are not connected.” This is the real challenge, to bring the online dynamism out of its virtual surroundings and into the political arena. Online activism having repercussions on political and social construction will depend largely on the essential connection between these worlds, the real and the virtual, and on cyber activists as much as committed political and social actors.

### **The Media: Trapped in the Balance of Powers**

The media landscape in Tunisia after Ben Ali has shown notable changes, specifically a move from restricted and highly uniform content, transmitted by the state media, to a more pluralistic content and the multiplication of private actors after the revolution. To deal with the new media panorama and try to regulate and guarantee freedom in audiovisual, written and electronic media, the INRIC (The National Authority for the Reform of Information and Communication) proposed the creation of the Independent High Authority for Audiovisual Communication (HAICA), in other words, a regulatory authority present in all democratic governments. The proposal generat-

ed a heated debate, but the persistence of a legal vacuum in this respect led Tunisian journalists to organising a general strike of all the media involved (public, private, radio, television, written and electronic press), especially anticipating an attempt by the authorities to control the media, which could lead to their politicisation.

Finally, in June 2013 the situation began to change. Faced with the risk of politicisation, the HAICA dismissed the idea of adopting a joint regulation for all media, and has opted for a distinction to be made between audiovisual media and the written press, an option that seems to have satisfied the demands of the professionals and corresponds to the regulatory systems in other countries. With the goal of ensuring freedom of expression, the written press must regulate itself, thus creating a pressing need for the formation of an independent press council composed of professionals and trade unions. Nevertheless, the Tunisian media keep coming up against structural problems, like the lack of resources or poor professional training. Tunisian journalists are clear on the matter: today there is greater freedom, but not as much as they would like.

In Egypt the period immediately after the revolution was characterised by a relative opening up of the media. However, this was only temporary and did not entail real progress in the quality of media production. The state media are grouped in a conglomerate that is closely controlled by the State, and those responsible for managing these bodies are appointed by the Minister of Information. This has all meant that, after an initial opening, there has been a step backwards in the release of information due to the Islamist government’s attempts to interfere, particularly through the appointment of figures close to the government in the regulatory authorities and in the upper echelons of the main media groups, and also the written press. In this way, the state media have shown a worrying tendency to change their stance based on who is in power, and private media have shielded themselves by taking up offensive or defensive positions depending on their political leanings. The reform of the media sector in Egypt is a real challenge because it implies modernising an oversized sector, which is historically badly managed and with a deep-rooted culture of obedience and a lack of professional standards, making it even more difficult for the media to become free and pluralist,

and not subject to state authority. In fact, the legislative reformulation of the sector until now has not contributed to its reform and in recent months there have been endless conflicts between journalists and media figures and the legal and political authorities. Recent events in Egypt cast even more doubts over the quality and impartiality of the Egyptian media, both public and private. After the military intervention on 3 July 2013, the first act of the military was to close the religious television channels and those connected with the Islamists, especially Misr25, and arrest some of their employees. The team of Al-Jazeera, a channel seen as the main defender of the Brotherhood, was criticised and expelled by press colleagues after the coup, while the other media have led a virulent campaign to demonise the Islamists and glorify patriotism and the army.

### The situation of the Arab media shows a paradox between a society demanding greater freedom and governments reluctant to adopt laws that fully protect freedom of press and expression

In Libya, after the media's extreme closure during the Gaddafi regime, the sector has experienced an explosion of vitality. In the big cities more than 200 new newspapers have appeared and over twenty new satellite television channels. However, it is true that it is very difficult to analyse the sector's situation, since many of these media companies are closing down as fast as others are opening up.

Article 14 of the constitutional declaration, presented by the caretaker government, confirms respect for freedom of opinion, communication and press, both individual and collective. This means that the Libyan media is no longer subject to government control. However, the situation is far from being optimal since the sector suffers from a lack of professional training, as well as a regulatory framework for the journalists to work to. Furthermore, the private media are running the risk of becoming the mouthpiece of the interests of certain political groups, while the state media run the risk of losing objectivity faced with such polarisation.

As a general rule, the situation of the Arab media shows a paradox between a society demanding greater freedom and governments reluctant to adopt laws that fully protect freedom of press and expression. As well as dealing with government restrictions and structural problems, such as insufficient training, a lack of funding and support for investigative journalism, for example, the Arab media now find themselves trapped in the power balance between the different groups that comprise each country's political and social spectrum. The last two years have undeniably seen advances regarding the multiplication of more independent media channels, but it is clear that the freedom of the press and expression is not an irreversible achievement and the media still have not achieved the independence and level of professionalism and quality desirable for creating a pluralist and diverse public space. Ultimately, the evolution of the Arab media will serve as a mirror for assessing the progress of democracy: if the legislative frameworks are adequate and the policies develop to accompany the democratic opening, we will be witness to a flourishing of free and independent press. However, if the new governments continue to reproduce the authoritarian models inherited from the old regimes, the situation will only get worse, meaning that the role played by civil society will be all the more important to avoid the partisan monopolisation of information again.

### Women and the Pending Revolution

Although women were active participants in the revolutions, their situation has not improved in line with this involvement. On the contrary, the rise to power of certain political forces with a conservative agenda has engendered the perception that the limited progress in women's rights is in danger. Libya and Egypt are cases in point, where the situation for women seems to be gradually worsening, not just regarding political participation, but also in terms of their access to the public space, particularly due to problems of sexual harassment. This situation has reactivated the feminist struggle, which, more than being focused on political participation, is aiming to prevent a regression in the rights they have won and fight violence against women.

Feminist militancy is not new. In the Arab world it began in the 20th century with the national liberation

movements, based on the idea that an improvement in the social situation must unquestionably imply an improvement in conditions for women. However, the priority of the fight against the colonial power meant that the feminist movements progressively disappeared and were unable to recover their strength until the beginning of the 70s. A similar phenomenon seems to be happening today: although women were in the front line against the autocratic regime, the goals of the “revolution” seem to omit the struggle to improve the situation for women.

Thanks to the 1956 Code of Personal Status, a legacy of Bourguiba, Tunisian women are more numerous in universities and participate in the country’s political, economic and cultural life. In Tunisia, “state feminism” has evolved with a strong presence of feminist organisations and grassroots support. The Tunisian Association of Democratic Women (ATFD) is an example of an association that works to improve the legal status of women. Created in the eighties, this association bases its struggle on the CEDAW and the issue of inequality of inheritance is central to its fight. The Association of Tunisian Women for Research and Development (AFTURD) has made political participation one of its bones of contention.

This strong support for the feminist struggle in Tunisia made militants very suspicious when faced with the possible conservative agenda of the Islamist party, although Ennahda was quick to ensure throughout its election campaign that it would respect the progress made in the area of women’s rights, especially the more equal family code throughout the region. Controversy arose from the draft of the new constitution, the emblem of conflict between conservatives and liberals. In an initial draft constitution, one controversial article stipulated the notion of “complementarity” of men and women: “The state guarantees the protection of women’s rights and gains, following the principle of complementarity with man, their roles being made complete within the family structure, and as man’s partner in developing the country.” This article, supported by Ennahda, caused such a commotion that after several demonstrations it was withdrawn from the text. In the new draft, article 5 affirms equal rights between men and women and avoids any kind of discrimination, while article 7 stipulates the role of the State in protecting women’s rights. However, the Tunisians are not satisfied and demand that the constitutional text incorporate the membership of the

country in CEDAW, especially in reference to custody of minors, marriage and inheritance.

In 2011 the transitional government voted in a law that provides for parity between male and female candidates for the elections to the Constituent Assembly. The law, however, failed to increase the number of women in political life. The percentage of women elected (49, 24% of the 218 members) has seen little change and the vast majority of the women members (42 out of 49) belong to the same party, Ennahda.

In Egypt, the 2011 parliamentary elections produced disappointing results with respect to women’s participation in politics. The proportion of women elected fell from 12% to 2%, possibly due to the cancellation of the women’s quota established in 2009. Furthermore, the constitutional text has a decidedly masculine and Islamist tone. The clear fall in female participation in Egyptian political life and the growing pressure exerted by Morsi’s conservative government have pushed many women into joining activist associations and movements.

Apart from the organisations that already existed within the controlled framework of “state feminism,” today there are many highly active organisations that defend women’s rights, many of them grouped under the Network of Women’s Rights Organisations, which includes the New Women Foundation, the Woman and Memory Foundation, the Nadim Center for Rehabilitation of Victims of Violence, the Nazra Foundation for Feminist Studies, the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights, and many more.

Another form of activism comes in the form of less coordinated initiatives, like the street art group **WOW** (Women on Walls) that is dedicated to doing graffiti throughout the country, especially with the campaign “No to sexual harassment.” And evidently a significant amount of online activism has developed. The creation of the website **Harassmap** is another initiative that fights sexual harassment in Egypt through the creation of an interactive map showing locations where women have been assaulted, with a detailed report on the attack and the attacker. According to the United Nations, Cairo is the second most dangerous capital city for women, not just for sexual harassment in the streets, but also for harassment from the authorities. Proof of the latter are the virginity tests carried out on a group of women arrested during the rule of the SCAF. During the

demonstrations that brought about Morsi's downfall, at least a hundred women were assaulted in four days. The NGO Tahrir Bodyguard had to ask women to avoid the square and many associations have reported the use of rape as a political weapon to prevent women from participating.

In Libya, on 3 August 2011, the National Transitional Council enacted a Constitutional Declaration that laid the foundations for the transition period. The declaration confirmed that the sharia is the main source of law. The impact of this on conditions for women is the authorisation of polygamy and the revision of laws relating to divorce. At the same time, article 6 of the declaration affirms that all Libyans, regardless of their sex, whether tribal or religious, are equal in the eyes of the law. There is no specific mention of women's participation in political life and no quotas established ahead of the legislative elections.

### The challenges of feminists in Arab countries are therefore two-fold: to fight for the revolution by promoting democracy and placing demands for sexual equality at the centre of the fight for a fairer and freer society

Finally, it should be mentioned that in the last two years there have been initiatives for the feminist struggle, which are unheard of in the region. These include individual demands like that of Egyptian Aliaa ElMahdy, who was persecuted for publishing a naked photo of herself on her blog, or that of the Tunisian activists linked to the FEMEN movement, like the case of Amina Tyler. Although the cases of Alia, exiled in Sweden, or Amina, have caused great controversy and cannot be considered very representative of Arab feminism, it should be mentioned that there is a perception of greater freedom that clashes with generational differences, with political and social resistance and which, far from being accepted and strengthened, is under permanent negotiation. Despite the visibility women attained during the revolutions, this has not led to greater participation in the area of decision making. Women may be more involved in citizen activism than before, but so are a lot of men. What is more, in some countries the

changes have been perceived as a threat to the rights women have acquired until now, and there have even been steps backward taken in this regard. Maybe, as happened in the past, the new demands seem to eclipse the importance of the demands made by the feminist groups. The fight for democracy, freedom of expression and improvements in living conditions has again relegated the conditions for women to a secondary position. The challenges of feminists in Arab countries are therefore two-fold: to fight for the revolution by promoting democracy and placing demands for sexual equality at the centre of the fight for a fairer and freer society.

#### *Trade Unions: Essential Actors for a New Social Contract*

The trade unions constitute a form of social organisation with its own interests, specific character and a particular relation with politics and power. However, they do share spaces and activities with other social organisations. Although they were not leaders in the 2011 revolts, for example, they did act as key players thanks to their organisational experience, the participation of their activists and their use of strikes before, during and after the revolts.

Like in other cases, the trade unions have had to be merged with the State and the dominant, or only, party. In fact, under the Muammar Gaddafi regime, only a central union was allowed to exist, the General Trade Union Federation of Workers, that all workers had to be affiliated to and was under the total control of the authorities. There was no right to strike and foreign workers, a sixth of the population, had no union representation.

In Egypt, for a long time, the Egyptian Trade Union Federation (ETUF) was the only body that brought together the workers: affiliation was compulsory and it existed as a workers' body controlled by the regime. Since the eighties, trade unionism began to register initiatives outside of the official central body. In 1990, the Center of Trade Unions and Workers Services (CTUWS) was created, around which various sectors are structured. Progressively, the workers' protest movements stepped up their confrontational character until the fall of Mubarak.

After the fall of the regime, the workers came together in an independent movement of the ETUF and created the Egyptian Federation of Independent Trade

Unions (EFITU) on 30 January 2011, calling for a general strike to be staged. At the same time, other organisations began to emerge, like the Egyptian Democratic Labour Congress (EDLC). In the space of two years more than a thousand new trade unions have been created, although still with a limited room for manoeuvre. Under the rule of the SCAF, new forms of controlling trade union activity have been activated, including a law banning strikes, accused of damaging the economy, which can be punished with fines or imprisonment. The election of Mohamed Morsi did not bring about any changes in this area and there has been a flurry of accusations that workers active in Trade Unionism are suffering persecution, arbitrary dismissals, violence against them or even actions directed at penalising them legally. It comes as no surprise therefore, that the union movements have been active in demanding Morsi's resignation. Their demands are centred on the right to organise themselves into new trade unions without needing prior authorisation from the government and an end to the arbitrary dissolution of new trade unions that are independent of the ETUF, as well as the removal of this federation, considered to be a representative of the power and not the workers.

**There is, therefore, an enormous sense of citizen appropriation, an empowerment of the masses that are not just happy to express themselves, more or less freely, but consider themselves authorised to intervene, exert pressure and, if they see fit, overthrow a government, even if it has been democratically elected**

In Tunisia, the Tunisian General Labour Union (UGTT) was the main union before the revolts, and enjoyed an ambivalent relationship with the authoritarian regime. Despite its political ties with the dominant party since 1957, the union has led major clashes with the government and strikes, such as the union mobilisations in January 2008 in the Gafsa mining basin. The UGTT has kept its popular roots and internal pluralism as its bedrock, which historically has

allowed the trade union to integrate sectors that are critical of the authorities or even openly against them.

During the last two years, the trade union has come under strong internal and external pressures, but has been able to renew its management bodies, overcome the risks of internal splits and increase its membership. Its capacity to position itself against the political parties – despite a tendency to side with the left – and its social influence have made it a key actor in the new Tunisian political context.

In recent months new independent trade unions have begun to emerge in Tunisia, like the Tunisian General Confederation of Labour, but it is evident that, because of its historical weight, its capacity to mobilise and influence and its inclusive and representative profile, the UGTT is a key actor in the transition process and, especially, in the creation of a new social contract, which is crucial for the country's stability. Since the clashes in December 2012, the Tunisian government seems to be realising that there cannot be social or political consensus without the trade union, with who, as a key player in Tunisian society, it must reach an understanding.

The trade unions in these countries are facing multiple challenges in the transitional context: to fight for workers' rights, for their independence and for the right to organise themselves without being subject to government control. In other words, they are redefining their relation with the State and with other political and social actors, which is not easy in such a vulnerable and changing context.

## CONCLUSION

The two and a half years that have passed is a short time to assess whether the transition process will lead to the establishment of a solid and long-lasting democracy. These are uncertain times and the transition process is not irreversible. For democracy to become a reality, the countries will need to wait, realign the enormous expectations generated after the regime change and manage the turbulence along the way.

Despite the prevailing pessimism, it should be recognised that the situation of pluralism has improved. There are now many more political parties, social movements, young people, women, organisations,

etc. who have a voice in the process. They have adopted the rule that freedom implies their participation and their right to make demands; a formula they seem unwilling to surrender. There is, therefore, an enormous sense of citizen appropriation, an empowerment of the masses that are not just happy to express themselves, more or less freely, but consider themselves authorised to intervene, exert pressure and, if they see fit, overthrow a government, even if it has been democratically elected. The change in people's perceptions is one of most clearly identifiable out of all the changes that have taken place in the Arab world.

In conditions of greater freedom, society's potential is incalculable. Beyond the structured actors, youth and women are the two actors who, despite playing a key role in the mobilisations, have had least capacity to influence in this phase of the process.

Arab societies have experienced the consequences of a serious generational crisis, in which the political class is still distanced from the revolutionary youth. This is a youth with very clear ideals and with a concept of democracy that supersedes the hierarchical rigidity of the formal political structures. The utopia of the unled, spontaneous and participative revolution has clashed head on with the stagnation of the political class and with a society that is reluctant to surrender any of their power to today's youth, the potential leaders of tomorrow. Faced with the lack of capacity for action within the political sphere, young people resort time and time again to occupying streets and squares as a way of making their voice heard. On many occasions, they have been told that it was time for them to leave the squares and set their sights on Parliament, but the dysfunctional way in which politics is carried out has not favoured the institutionalised expression of the youth demands. Faced with an incapacity to influence through conventional politics, collective action and "street politics" have kept these actors from disappearing from the transition's political panorama and have given them considerable power.

In the case of women, it is clear that without the participation of half of the population it is impossible to create a real democracy. The rhetoric is clear, but the reality casts a pessimistic light: the fight for women's rights has been gobbled up by the goals of the "revolution," so that it is now very difficult for this collective to make their demands heard. This is

largely down to the lack of political representation, but also because of the violence they come up against when they opt for mobilisation and activism on the street.

Nevertheless, all social organisations and groups, youth, women, NGOs, etc. have benefited from a more open public space, although there are still structural problems because of the framework in which they have been operating until now: logistical problems due to the massive influx of people who need their help, funding issues, a lack of communicative capacities and, above all, difficulties building synergies between different groups that work in the same fields.

So, there is a vital need to connect different sectors working simultaneously and often in an uncoordinated way with similar goals. Activism on the ground has to be connected with online activism, coordinating and bringing together efforts to achieve greater effect, and, above all, more definition regarding their actual natures and the roles they are trying to adopt. The media, for its part, is facing monumental challenges in terms of; its reconfiguration within the current context, its redefinition, a more professional approach and forging a structure that fosters the generation of news that is independent, good quality and professional. This is why it is still a long way from becoming the barometer of the democratisation process and overseer of government action.

In the social realm, the trade unions are redefining their nature and their relations with the State and other actors, while fighting to defend workers' rights and maintaining independence within a highly unfavourable economic and social context. The crisis in the economies of the countries undergoing transition has generated a climate of social malaise, with a lack of effective social policies, in a politically unstable context. The construction of a new social contract requires the participation of all the actors involved, and especially of the trade unions.

Despite the prevailing instability, the capacity of the different actors to form relations with one another, and whether those relations can remain positive, will determine the new political and institutional panorama of the region. Until now, the lack of dialogue, consensus and willingness to compromise has weakened positions or endangered the transition process and consequently the goals of the revolution.

On the one hand, the political actors should be subject to their own reformulation, in other words transform from underground movements or exploited parties into political parties with programmes and functional structures, which understand the need for change and constant renovation of the political elite. It is not at all easy for the Islamist groups to pilot this dual transition: on the one hand the transition process towards democracy at state level and, on the other, the transition process of the group itself from an opposition stance, dominated by protest politics in informal contexts (neighbourhoods, mosques, social centres), to the position of legal political party, competing on equal terms and carrying out its political activity within the sphere of the Parliament and government, which is a far more complex arena. In this sense the Islamist groups have been unable to formulate the necessary public policies on a large scale.

**There is a vital need to connect different sectors working simultaneously and often in an uncoordinated way with similar goals. Activism on the ground has to be connected with online activism, coordinating and bringing together efforts to achieve greater effect**

On the other hand, the proliferation of new names and old faces in the political world poses a challenge of political co-existence for all involved. In the case of the current fracture between Islamists and secularists both in Egypt and Tunisia, it seems unlikely that a solid democracy will develop without a certain level of understanding between the two groups. If they continue with their zero-sum game logic, it will be difficult to advance in the transition process, as one party cannot be eliminated or excluded without the other party losing legitimacy or representativeness.

The political subjects will have to learn to work together in an extremely fragile context, to grapple with the challenges their economies are facing and place the need for consensus and inclusiveness at the centre of the process, as an essential condition for a society model in which all citizens can feel represented.

And all of this needs to be done within a legal framework, that of the rule of law, enshrined in the constitutions and considered by the majority as the main goal of the transition process and increasingly pressing reforms, such as that of the security sector.

Likewise, the political actors will have to combine the legitimacy of the ballot boxes and an exercise of power that favours the participation of all political sensitivities (input legitimacy) with a capacity to fulfil the aspirations of the citizens (output legitimacy). In this sense, in the short run it will be critical to achieve a balance between change and continuity, and a power balance that can create a competitive party system. The Tunisian context, where no party dominates and where the army is kept out of politics, offers greater expectations for building democracy, despite the turbulence the transition has to deal with. In Egypt, the lack of a truly competitive system has led to the return of the political establishment under military rule, as a way of rectifying the power balance. The consequences are still uncertain, but what is clear is that without reconciliation and inclusion there will be no sign of a natural advance towards democracy.

The internal political dynamics, the power struggles, the rivalry between actors and the prioritisation of party, group or sectorial interests, to the detriment of the ultimate interests of democracy, have so far prevented the construction of a social pact and an inclusive process. Greater compromise is needed by all actors, to overcome their differences and agree on a model for the State and society that transforms the grassroots legitimacy of the streets and the squares into legitimacy of state institutions and social structures and representative policies. The perception that "democracy is chaos" must be replaced by the logic that freedom and democracy work in everyone's favour.

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