

EGYPT 2011

REVOLUTION AND TRANSITION

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FOREWORD

Dr Eugene Rogan

As Tunisia and Egypt celebrate the first anniversary of their respective revolutions, it is hard to believe that it has only been a year since the fall of Ben Ali and Mubarak.

Over the past twelve months, the relentless pace of change in the Arab world made 2011 the region's most eventful year in living memory. Perhaps only 1958 could match the past year for region-wide ferment, when Algeria was fighting France for its independence, Egypt entered into political union with Syria, the defensive alliance of the Jordanian and Iraqi monarchies was shattered by the Iraqi Revolution, the US Marines intervened to calm a Lebanese civil war and the British propped up King Hussein of Jordan. Yet 1958 left no lasting mark on the region, whereas 2011 proved a decisive break with the past. Henceforth historians will distinguish between a pre- and post-2011 Middle East.

Western governments have faced tremendous challenges in adjusting to the rapidly changing political landscape in the Middle East. All European countries and the US were taken by surprise by the speed and success of the Arab revolutionary movements. They had come to rely on the region's longstanding autocrats as partners – in combating the West's terrorist enemies, in ensuring the smooth flow of hydrocarbons to global markets, and in preserving Israel's security. In 2011, they had to choose between their long-time allies, the autocrats, and the legitimate demands of citizens for an accountable government they could choose and change by the vote. In this conflict between interests and values, the West has largely come down the side of the legitimate demands of the people (though the muted Western response to the crisis in Bahrain shows where interests still prevail).

The Arab revolutions of 2011 have promoted a whole new generation of political actors, who for the most part are unknown to the outside world. CMEC has done Britain a great service in organizing regular delegations to Egypt, to familiarize parliamentarians with the new political actors who are shaping the successor state to Mubarak's Egypt.

In their visits to Cairo and Alexandria in March and May 2011, and most recently in January 2012, Conservative MPs have had the opportunity to meet and engage with Egyptian men and women from across the political spectrum – in many cases, meeting the same individuals at three very different points in Egypt's revolution.



A summary of those conversations, and an analysis of what the CMEC delegations took away from their encounters, has been captured in this brief and informative document. The importance of CMEC's work in informing British and European policy towards Egypt cannot be overstated. After 2011, the West will have to re-evaluate all of its policies towards the Arab world.

Thanks to CMEC and its policy of engagement with the region, British parliamentarians are one step ahead of the rest.

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PREFACE

In March 2011, the Conservative Middle East Council (CMEC), under the guidance of its director, Leo Docherty, undertook a delegation to Egypt in the direct aftermath of the events of January 25. A small number of Conservative Members of Parliament, as well as a representative of the Party in the House of Lords, went on that first delegation.

It was decided that, given the historic nature of the events which were unfolding, subsequent delegations should take place in the ensuing months. It was also concluded that some kind of record of those delegations should be made in order to capture the significance of what was occurring.

This publication is the result of our experiences on the three delegations which were undertaken. We have connected accounts of these delegations with a continuous narrative, derived mainly from news sources on the internet, and have included our contemporary analyses as the events themselves unfolded.

A large portion of the sections which describe the delegations, as well as the analyses accompanying them, have been derived from notes and memoranda we wrote at the time. Where there were omissions in our records we tried to recollect, as far as we could, our impressions at the time and have included these.

Egypt 2011: Revolution and Transition has been deliberately timed to coincide with the first anniversary of the ousting of Hosni Mubarak on February 11, 2011. Events in Egypt are continuously unfolding, and so the publication offers a contemporary history of an eventful year.



INTRODUCTION

A year ago, President Hosni Mubarak's regime was typically presented as one of the most entrenched in the world and, for any casual onlooker, it was hard to imagine that revolution was even a possibility. Yet, in January 2011 – seemingly to the world's surprise – thousands of Egyptians took to the streets of Cairo, Suez and other cities to demand an end to Mubarak's 30-year rule. He swiftly stepped down and some of his accomplices have faced public retribution.

However, twelve months on, the old regime, with Egypt's armed forces and security services at its core, remains predominantly intact. Despite this, many commentators, perhaps too anxious to grab a headline, have rashly declared that events in Egypt represent a march towards western style democracy, a "turning point" comparable even to the fall of the Berlin Wall or the French Revolution. The more pessimistic, on the other hand, speculate that the Muslim Brotherhood will shape Egyptian politics for the foreseeable future, islamise it and end peace with Israel. Others even argue that Egypt's military will cling to power and retain considerable influence in the longer term.

While these predictions might make striking headlines, constructive debate over Egypt's political future has not really moved beyond conjecture; often we don't seem to have a clear sense of what is most likely to happen next or what the political ramifications of regime change might be, internally for Egypt and in terms of its relationship with Israel and the stability of the wider Middle East.

In many ways, the problem is unsurprising considering that the January revolt was unanticipated and given popular and persistent assertions that Egypt's revolution was wholly spontaneous. This just goes to show how there has been a lack of engagement with Egypt's recent political history and with what Egyptians are doing and saying on the ground.

History tells us that revolutions simply don't just occur at random, and contemporary Egypt does not exist in a void; its characteristics are rooted in its political development.

The roots of the Mubarak regime are found in Egypt's 1952 revolution that ousted the decadent monarch, King Faruq, and particularly in Gamal Abdel-Nasser's term as President, which began in 1956, after he manoeuvred to replace Muhammad Naguib, the Republic's first President.



Nasser turned Egypt into an authoritarian dictatorship, with a bureaucratic state structure, underpinned by radical nationalism and a centralised attitude to socio-economic development. He banned political parties, curtailed the independence of trade unions and outlawed strike action.

Taking an anti-imperialist stance towards foreign policy, Nasser attempted to end Egypt's political subordination to the West and lead a Pan-Arab nationalist movement, aggressively calling for Israel's obliteration. This proved too ambitious. While he did force Britain out of Egypt by nationalising the Suez Canal, the collapse of the Egyptian army during the 1967 Arab war with Israel, showed how far Nasser's aims exceeded Egypt's capabilities. Israel now occupied the Sinai Peninsula.

When Nasser died in 1970, his close friend Anwar El-Sadat succeeded him. He recognised that Egypt needed to come to terms with Washington, given the United States' strong support for Israel. Sadat initially sought a United States-sponsored peace with Israel. When it was clear that progress was not being made, however, he turned to war. But rather than attempting to recapture the entire Sinai Peninsula, in October 1973, he tried to establish a bridgehead on the east bank of the Suez Canal as a way of weakening Israel's grip on the area. The plan did not work: while Egypt's forces did enter the Peninsula, Israel penetrated the west bank of the Canal. To ward off a crisis, Sadat accepted a US-sponsored disengagement of forces, signing the temporary Sinai agreements on January 18, 1974 and September 4, 1975, which removed the Israelis from the West Bank but only part of the Sinai Peninsula.

After such a failure, it seemed that Egypt had a weakened bargaining position with Israel. However, through the 1978 Camp David agreements, Sadat was able to secure a complete return of Sinai. This came at a cost; because it led to a separate peace treaty between Egypt and Israel in 1979, which recognised Israel's right to exist, it ostracised Egypt from the Arab world.

Now isolated, Egypt needed the US even more to mediate with the Israelis, provide arms, and supply much needed aid. Sadat moved into an ever closer alliance with the United States; joint military manoeuvres were held and facilities, on Egyptian soil, were granted to US forces. Simultaneously, Sadat paved the way for a period of economic liberalisation in Egypt with his October 1974 Working Paper.

After Sadat's assassination in 1981, Hosni Mubarak came to power and continued in a similar vein to his predecessor. He supported IMF-mandated structural adjustment policies through the 1990s and, at the same time, eliminated many of the social



welfare benefits, which Nasser had awarded the working classes. Consequently, Egypt's wealth has fallen into ever fewer hands and thousands of ordinary Egyptians have been left without food and even shelter. This circumstance is aggravated by the fact that Egypt's population has increased dramatically over the last sixty years. In 1952, Egypt's population stood at just over 22 million. In 1967, it had climbed to 31.7 million, and when Mubarak assumed power in 1981 it had reached 44.2 million. Today, it stands at approximately 80 million.¹

Mubarak did rebuild bridges with parts of the Arab world and rejected pressures from the US, in late 1985, for joint action against Libya. However, a continued reliance on the US meant that Egypt remained politically and militarily aligned with Washington.

The source of what is happening in Egypt lies in developments overseen by Nasser, Sadat and Mubarak. The purpose of this pamphlet is to make better sense of the causes, likely outcomes and implications of Egypt's revolution by acknowledging this in an analysis of the last twelve months' events.

CMEC visited Egypt in February and May 2011 and January 2012 to meet and interview a cross-section of over fifty junior and senior figures from across the political spectrum: this is our starting point.

1 U.S. Census Bureau data, as listed at, http://www.data360.org/dsg.aspx?Data_Set_Group_Id=205



PART ONE

SECTION A

NARRATIVE OF EVENTS: JANUARY 25 - MARCH 17, 2011

On Tuesday January 25, 2011, thousands of Egyptian activists, mostly in their twenties and thirties, organised themselves through Facebook and Twitter to defy a ban on public gatherings and swamp the centres of Cairo, Alexandria and Suez to protest against President Hosni Mubarak's regime. This very modern approach to protest quickly gained momentum.

On January 27, Mohamed El Baradei, the liberal Nobel peace laureate, returned from self-imposed exile to rally crowds camped at Cairo's Tahrir Square. The Muslim Brotherhood, the most organized opposition group in Egypt, declared its support for protest and, after losing eighteen percentage points in two days, Egypt's stock market closed.² A day later, after Friday prayers, thousands more ordinary citizens took to the streets, in eleven of Egypt's twenty-eight provinces. The National Democratic Party's (NDP), Mubarak's former ruling party, headquarters in Cairo was burned to the ground.³

In reply, Mubarak ordered foot soldiers and tanks to clear the streets and enforce a 6pm-7am curfew.⁴ Violent clashes ensued and protestors were killed, but Egyptians stood firm. The protests escalated. Internet organizers and activists from across the political spectrum - Islamists, liberals and Nasserists - united on the basis of one overriding objective: the removal of Mubarak from office.⁵ Within two weeks, demonstrations of hundreds of thousands of people brought Egypt to a standstill. Workers across social divides, initiated a wave of strike action.⁶

Mubarak's military support buckled, and on February 11 he stood down, handing presidential powers, on a temporary basis, to Egypt's Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF), a grouping of eighteen top generals led by Field Marshal Mohamed Hussein Tantawi.⁷ This development was rapturously celebrated, and the Youth Coalition, a broad-based umbrella of activists, declared on its Facebook page: *The unity of revolutionary forces was the way for us to succeed in tearing down one of the most stubborn dictatorships of the world.*⁸

2 CNN, <http://edition.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/africa/02/03/egypt.protests.timeline/index.html>; BBC News, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-12845523>

3 The Guardian, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/jan/28/egypt-protests-mubarak-army-curfew>; Ahram Online, <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/5/35/19486/Arts--Culture/Stage--Street/NDP-headquarters-building-what-will-it-be.aspx>

4 Guardian, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/jan/28/egypt-protests-mubarak-army-curfew>

5 Guardian, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/belief/2010/mar/29/egypt-islamism-secularism>

6 Counterfire, <http://www.counterfire.org/index.php/articles/international/15203-egypts-second-revolution-confronts-the-counter-revolution-tahrir-cairo>

7 CNN, <http://edition.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/africa/02/03/egypt.protests.timeline/index.html>

8 Al Arabyiya, <http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2011/09/22/168200.html>



Inside two days, the military junta dissolved Egypt's Parliament and set a six-month target for parliamentary and presidential elections, promising to return to barracks once a civilian government was established. It suspended Egypt's existing 211-point 1971 Constitution, which had been heavily skewed in favour of Mubarak and the NDP. It also appointed an eight-man committee led by Tareq al-Bishry, a respected judge, and including Sobhi Saleh, a member of the Muslim Brotherhood, to propose constitutional amendments, to form part of an interim constitution, within two weeks.⁹ Egypt's Prosecutor-General, Abdel-Meguid Mahmoud, ordered that ex-Ministers of the Interior, Housing and Tourism, Habib el-Adly, Ahmed El-Maghrabi and Zuheir Garana, be remanded in custody.¹⁰

On February 22, SCAF reshuffled a number of more minor cabinet positions, bringing in some opposition and independent figures.¹¹ On February 26, nine constitutional amendments, to be put to a national referendum as soon as March 19, were announced. These included imposing a two-term limit on presidents, restricting the executive's capacity to declare states of emergency and obligating a new parliament and president to appoint a 100-member constituent assembly within six months of elections to rewrite Egypt's constitution.¹² On February 28, SCAF stated that parliamentary elections would be held in June, followed by presidential elections later in the summer.¹³

Opposition groups denounced the amendments and SCAF's actions. They protested and did gain some concessions.¹⁴ Tantawi selected a new Prime Minister, Essam Sharaf, a former minister who sided with protestors in January. He also approved the appointment of new Foreign, Justice and Interior Ministers.¹⁵ With Mubarak deposed, though, the united front of January 25 crumbled: protests fragmented, violent crowds looted and clashed with Coptic Christians and opinion over constitutional change was divided.

The Brotherhood, alongside groups affiliated with the NDP and other Islamic parties, including Al-Wasat, quickly declared its support for Bishri's amendments, and while not yet an official political party, they organised quickly. They drew on countryside support networks to run an aggressive and disciplined referendum campaign, which, at the same time as adopting a persuasive public slogan, "Yes is a vote for stability,"

9 The Telegraph, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/egypt/8321838/Egypt-sets-six-month-target-for-elections.html>; Al Jazeera, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/02/201121563130198336.html>; The Wall Street Journal, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703312904576146553328143280.html>

10 Al-Ahram, <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2011/1036/eg31.htm>

11 Reuters, <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2011/02/22/uk-egypt-idUKTRE70018Y20110222>

12 Carnegie Endowment, <http://carnegieendowment.org/2011/03/01/egypt-s-draft-constitutional-amendments-answer-some-questions-and-raise-others/fr>; <http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2011/03/16/overview-of-egypt%E2%80%99s-constitutional-referendum>

13 Carnegie, <http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2011/03/03/egypt%E2%80%99s-draft-constitutional-amendments-answer-some-questions-and-raise-others>

14 Aryabiya, <http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2011/03/14/141440.html>

15 BBC News, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-12634117>; The Daily News Egypt, <http://www.thedailynewsegypt.com/egypt/ministers-sworn-in-amid-support-from-opposition.html>



targeted Egypt's working classes, labourers, and farmers, urging them to vote "yes" out of religious duty.¹⁶

It was not only the Brotherhood who endorsed the "yes" campaign; others were afraid that, if the amendments were rejected, Egypt would remain in a state of flux. Some, including influential Egyptian bloggers Alaa Abdel-Fattah and Nawara Negm, argued that a "Yes" vote was necessary because it would, at least, help bring an end to SCAF control.¹⁷

Conversely, an array of secular liberal parties, some older, including the New Wafd and el-Ghad parties, and many others founded since January by young revolutionaries, called on Egyptians to vote "no" in the referendum. They said that the amendments did not go far enough, favoured more organised parties, and would, therefore, lead to parliamentary elections being dominated by the Muslim Brotherhood and Mubarak's old patronage network. These more secular parties argued that a new Egyptian Constitution would be disproportionately shaped by the Muslim Brotherhood and elements of the old regime. They maintained that an entirely new constitution should be written prior to elections taking place, rather than after, as planned. These groups, though, were not organised into a political force with broad appeal. They were disjointed, lacked resources and were predominantly urban.¹⁸

CMEC visited Cairo on March 17, two days before the referendum, amidst economic chaos. When we arrived, the stock exchange remained closed and nearly a quarter of Egypt's reserves, approximately \$10Bn, had already left the country.

16 New York Review of Books, <http://www.nybooks.com/blogs/nyrblog/2011/mar/24/egypts-first-vote/>

17 Ahram Online, <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/7707/Egypt/Politics-/Will-Egypt-vote-Yes-or-No-to-constitutional-amendm.aspx>

18 New York Review of Books, <http://www.nybooks.com/blogs/nyrblog/2011/mar/24/egypts-first-vote/>



PART ONE

SECTION B

DELEGATION DIARY: MARCH 17 - MARCH 21

From the first meeting with a member of one of the youth movements involved in the revolution of January 25, we detected a reluctance on their part to engage with traditional party politics. Indeed, the spokesman we met compared his movement to a pressure group, rather like the Tea Party movement in the United States.

This initial meeting set the scene for our subsequent interviews. It became apparent that the young activists who had inspired events in January had already themselves been overtaken by events. It was clear to us that the secular forces had not organised themselves. This feeling was reinforced by further discussions with a representative of the Muslim Brotherhood.

Our impression over the course of the few days we were in Egypt was that the Muslim Brotherhood was divided among a number of axes. There were moderates and hardliners; there were highly educated younger members and older activists. It seemed likely at this time that the Muslim Brotherhood would not contest the parliamentary elections as a single party, but rather would have a number of affiliate parties which would individually seek the support of the electorate.

Estimates of the level of support for the Muslim Brotherhood at this stage ranged from 15 to 20 percent, although, due to their greater political organisation, it was apparent even then that they would perform better in parliamentary elections than perhaps their support in the country would suggest.

Our meetings led us to believe that the Brotherhood was cautious. At this stage they were evasive about policy, and they seemed more economically populist, with hostility to Israel also a visible undercurrent of their ideas. One spokesman told us that "Parliament will decide" if the Camp David treaty should continue.

The ambitions of the Army at this point remained unclear. Rumours of a deal between the Muslim Brotherhood and the Army were common. These rumours were fuelled by the fact that members of the Brotherhood were granted places on the Council which would shape constitutional amendments. There was also a belief that the Army would be reluctant to hold power for too long.

Conversations with members of the business community revealed mounting anxiety about stability and the uncertain political prospects of the country. A common fear among businessmen was that a "hunger revolution" could follow the revolution



of January 25. It was said that a number of prominent loyalists in the regime, roughly eight thousand, had already been imprisoned and there were also fears of a wider purge.

Fears about political stability were accentuated by the fact that food prices continued to increase, often at an alarming rate. It was remarked that the price of tomatoes had increased from the start of the revolution at the end of January to the third week of March by LE 3 (Egyptian pounds) a kilo to LE 9 a kilo; this represents an equivalent rise of 50¢ to \$1.50. We also met a former official in the Egyptian Treasury, who noted that possibly \$10bn (roughly a quarter of the reserves) had left the country since January 25. The Egyptian stock exchange remained closed.

We met a prominent member of the former Mubarak regime who appeared in a dishevelled state, and spoke of wishing to get a visa to an undisclosed destination in Europe. We met a leader of one of the new emerging secular parties in his flat, who seemed unfocused, though full of enthusiasm.

On the Sunday morning, we were privileged to attend a smart rally by the Nile's edge in Cairo, at which many of the leading modern figures of the revolution were present. At this rally, Wael Ghonim, a manager at Google, who played a prominent part in the "facebook revolution", addressed the crowd. We were lucky to exchange a few words with him after his address. He rejected any idea of his playing an overt political role as a member of a party. We also managed to snatch a few moments with Amr Hamzawi: a liberal professor of political science at Cairo University; he was a spokesman for the "Committee of Wise Men" that negotiated between protestors and the government during the revolution, and in May 2011 he founded the Egypt Freedom Party. He was busy on his phone, and did not seem to have much time for us.

Later that day, we met a senior figure in the Muslim Brotherhood, who seemed to express mildly socialist economic views.

The delegation was concluded with a visit to the British Embassy, where we were kindly entertained by the British Ambassador. We discussed with him a number of the things we had discovered on the delegation.

Our delegation, of course, was set against the highly charged background of a referendum on the constitutional amendments, which took place on March 19. Had the referendum cast a "no" vote, parliamentary elections would have been postponed, by perhaps a year. As it turned out, the resounding support for the "yes" vote (77 percent voted in favour of the amendments proposed) endorsed the idea that parliamentary elections should precede the writing of a completely new constitution, revealed the extent of the Muslim Brotherhood's organisation and exposed the relative weakness of the secular / revolutionary parties who had hoped to derive an advantage from the ousting of President Mubarak.



PART ONE

SECTION C

ANALYSIS

After the delegation, it was clear that the “facebookers” had already been eclipsed by the more organised Muslim Brotherhood. The political outlook was very uncertain, and it was only really with the referendum result that a number of tentative predictions could be made. It was apparent at this time that the Muslim Brotherhood was strong. They were well organised and well funded. It was not clear at this moment where their funding was sourced, but rumours of international contributors abounded.

The economic vulnerability of Egypt was another phenomenon which we perceived clearly. In times of revolution, intellectuals and students of history look back to earlier revolutions for a road map, as it were, as to what might happen. Clearly, the Bolshevik revolution of 1917 was on people’s minds. In 1917, the initial revolution had taken place in February, in which Kerensky, a moderate, assumed control of the Government only to be displaced by the Bolsheviks in October of that year. In a similar way, there were widespread worries that the middle class revolution of January would be supplanted by a “hunger revolution” in which the disaffected and impoverished elements of the broad mass of the Egyptian people would assert themselves.

At this relatively early stage, the power of the Muslim Brotherhood was already very apparent. Any political settlement in the country would necessarily involve them as a leading player. We concluded that the British Government should engage with the Muslim Brotherhood, simply recognising the fact that they were likely to play an important role in the country’s future.

Other trends remained unclear. The Army remained a shadowy though insistent presence. Economic conditions on the street were clearly difficult. We were told that there had been increasing disorder in the capital, and Egypt lived and worked under the shadow of uncertainty.



PART TWO

SECTION A

NARRATIVE OF EVENTS: MARCH 21 - MAY 24

On March 28, SCAF announced that parliamentary elections would be held in September and promised Egypt’s emergency laws, put in place in 1981, would be lifted before then.¹⁹ Then, on March 30, the constitutional amendments approved by the March 19 referendum were officially incorporated into a provisional constitution, a document providing a legal framework for governance until elections were completed.²⁰ On the same day, SCAF also announced that presidential polls would be held by November, in advance of the drafting of a new national Constitution.²¹

Egypt’s young revolutionaries were, on the whole, displeased by the announcements and angry that demands they had made in January still had not been met. More than a hundred thousand protestors thronged Tahrir Square on Friday, April 8, in the biggest demonstrations since February.²² They called for the arrest of former President Mubarak and his associates for corruption, the trial of police officers and senior officials for the deaths of protestors in January, estimated to amount to 846, and, joined by a handful of mutinous military officers, called for Field Marshal Tantawi to step down.²³ They demonstrated peacefully into the night.

In the small hours, though, Egyptian military and security forces, together with plain clothed mobs with bats and clubs in hand, stormed the Square. They fired live rounds into the hazy air and brutalised protestors with electric batons. At least two demonstrators were killed and hundreds were wounded or detained as they fled. Through Saturday, violent clashes ensued in the city’s side streets and a resolute band of protestors returned to barricade themselves behind barbed wire in the plaza itself.²⁴

SCAF issued a televised statement condemning the bloodshed and on its Facebook page deflected blame onto the NDP, Mubarak’s former ruling party. SCAF declared that NDP “remnants” had incited the violence.²⁵ It then moved to gratify the protestors’ demands for retribution and publicly distanced itself from Mubarak’s regime.

19 Voice of America, <http://www.voanews.com/english/news/middle-east/Egyptys-Military-Rulers-Set-Parliamentary-Election-for-September-118771449.html>

20 Carnegie, <http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2012/01/05/the-scaf-an-overview-of-its-actions>

21 Voice of America, <http://www.voanews.com/english/news/middle-east/Egyptys-Military-Rulers-Promise-Presidential-Election-by-November-118911809.htm>; Ahram Online, <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/23432/Egypt/Politics-/Egypt-awaits-elusive-elected-president,-while-SCAF.aspx>

22 Guardian, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/apr/08/protesters-return-tahrir-square>

23 London Evening Standard, <http://www.thisislondon.co.uk/standard/article-23943323-egypt-death-toll-was-846.do>; New York Times, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/14/world/middleeast/14egypt.html?pagewanted=all>

24 Ibid; Washington Post, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/egyptian-military-uses-force-to-break-up-tahrir-square-protest/2011/04/09/AFTVpO6C_story.html

25 Ibid; Al Arabiya, <http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2011/04/09/144767.html>



Egypt's Supreme Administrative Court dissolved the NDP, and Egypt's former Interior Minister and Head of Domestic Security Habib el-Adly, a popular hate figure already in custody for embezzlement, was put on trial for ordering the shooting of unarmed activists in January.²⁶ On April 13, Egypt's Prosecutor General finally ordered the detention of Mubarak, along with his two sons, Alaa and Gamal, on suspicion of corruption and abuse of power.²⁷

Mubarak was placed under police custody in a Sharm el Sheik hospital, after reportedly suffering heart problems. His sons were taken to Cairo's infamous Tora Prison, where other prominent NDP-era figures were also being held, including Ahmed Nazif, the former Prime Minister.²⁸ Adel el-Saeed, the Prosecutor General's spokesman, stated that Mubarak was, among other issues, being questioned about selling gas to Israel at an artificially low price, which amounted to "hurting the country's interests."²⁹

El-Saeed's announcement engaged with a persistent grievance in Egypt: in 2005 Mubarak signed a gas agreement with Israel. Furthermore, a cross-border pipeline was opened in 2008, valued at \$2.5 billion over a 15-year period. The details of the deal, however, were kept secret, and ever since there had been a deep suspicion amongst Egyptians that Israel received gas at a preferential rate, to the financial benefit of Mubarak and his associates but at a cost to Egyptian consumers.³⁰ In addition, because the deal was supported by Washington and had been an integral part of Egypt-Israeli relations over the last decade, the decision to question it represented a subtle shift in SCAF's approach towards Israel and foreign policy, which seemed to develop between our first and second delegations.

Indeed, between March and May, while Egypt's Military rulers announced no change to a promise, declared in February, to uphold all international commitments, SCAF began to normalise dealings with two of Israel and the West's most notorious Islamist foes: Iran and Hamas.³¹

In a televised press conference on March 29, Nabil El-Araby, Egypt's new Foreign Minister – subsequently appointed Secretary General of the Arab League on May 12 – declared, "Iran is an important country and we are bound by historic ties with it... it is a neighbour and we don't consider it an enemy." He went on to say, "Hezbollah is a part of Lebanese society, and if this party wishes to have dialogue with

26 Sky, <http://news.sky.com/home/world-news/article/15973666>; BBC News, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-13198627>

27 New York Times, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/14/world/middleeast/14egypt.html?pagewanted=all>

28 Ibid.

29 New York Times, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/23/world/middleeast/23egypt.html>

30 New York Times, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/28/world/middleeast/28sinai.html>;

31 Haaretz, <http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/obama-welcomes-egypt-s-pledge-to-maintain-international-treaties-1.343002>; BBC News, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-12440138>; New York Times, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/29/world/middleeast/29egypt.html?ref=egypt>



Egypt, we welcome it."³² Iran subsequently appointed its first ambassador, Ali Akbar Sibouyeh, to Egypt since the Islamic Revolution.³³ Then, on April 27, on the same day saboteurs blew up a terminal on the Israel Egypt gas pipeline near the North Sinai city of El Arish, SCAF brokered a deal to reconcile the secular Palestinian party Fatah with its rival Hamas.³⁴

In the midst of these events, organised protests dissipated. However, the streets did not clear. Just as in February, demonstrators fragmented. Christians and Muslims who had stood side by side on April 8 clashed, as sectarian violence escalated.

On Saturday, May 7, several hundred Salafist Muslims gathered outside the Coptic Saint Mena Church in Cairo's Imbaba district to protest over the allegation that a Christian woman was being held against her will because she had married a Muslim man and wished to convert to Islam. The church and nearby homes were set alight, 12 people died and more than 180 were wounded.³⁵

The next day, Egypt's Justice Minister, Abdel Aziz al-Gindi, warned that those who threatened the country's security would face "an iron fist," and Prime Minister Sharaf, after an emergency cabinet meeting, backed the police to use all legal procedures, "including the use of force," to defend themselves, their police stations, or places of worship.³⁶ SCAF announced on its Facebook page, "The Supreme Military Council has decided to send all those who were arrested in yesterday's events – that is 190 people – to the Supreme Military Court."³⁷ This form of rough justice – Egyptian military courts typically handle groups of between five and thirty defendants at a single trial lasting only 20 to 40 minutes – had become SCAF's preferred response to crime and peaceful demonstration alike; by the end of April, more than 5,000 civilians had stood before military tribunals since February.³⁸

The posturing, however, had little effect. In remarkable contrast to life in Mubarak's police state, when street crime was a rarity and few feared walking alone at night, Egypt's newspapers brimmed with reports of violent crime and lawlessness throughout May.³⁹ Former President Anwar el-Sadat's grandniece was kidnapped for ransom, police stations were attacked, mobs ransacked homes in Cairo's plush Maadi suburb

32 Ahram Online, <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/9243/Egypt/Politics-/Revolution-warms-EgyptianIranian-relations.aspx>; Inside Iran, <http://www.insideiran.org/media-analysis/egyptian-foreign-minister-seeks-better-relationships-with-iran/>

33 Press TV, <http://www.presstv.ir/detail/175532.html>

34 New York Times, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/28/world/middleeast/28sinai.html?ref=egypt>;

35 BBC News, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-13325448> <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-13325448>>; <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-13403504>

36 New York Times, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/13/world/middleeast/13egypt.html?ref=egypt>

37 BBC News, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-13325845>

38 Human Rights Watch, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4dbfa40714.html>

39 Ibid.



and three successful jailbreaks were reported in the city.⁴⁰ At a football match between el-Zamalek, one of Cairo's top teams, and Club Africain, a Tunisian team, the police stood aside as a rabble of fans assaulted the referee and mauled the visiting team, hospitalizing two players. "Things are actually going from bad to worse," said Mohamed El Baradei, now a presidential candidate, "Where have the police and military gone?"⁴¹

Amidst this deteriorating security situation, CMEC arrived in Cairo on Tuesday, May 24, for its second visit to Egypt; the stock market too remained closed and the country was running a public spending deficit of 12 percent of GDP.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid; United Press International, http://www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2011/05/13/Egyptians-decry-crime-wave/ UPI-14041305284516/



PART TWO

SECTION B

DELEGATION DIARY: MAY 24 - MAY 28

The May delegation was significant in that we managed to spend some time in Alexandria, away from the capital. We held, in all, 25 meetings with junior and senior figures from across the political spectrum and the business world in Cairo and Alexandria. During the course of our visit, the Rafah border crossing between Egypt and Gaza was reopened, on Saturday, May 28. SCAF (the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces) announced that former President Mubarak would be prosecuted, and a significant public rally was held in Tahrir Square calling for the postponement of parliamentary elections.

In Cairo, we held a notable meeting with the prominent Muslim Brotherhood member we had met in March. It was revealed subsequently that he had left the Brotherhood, in order to pursue wider political ambitions. His tone was noticeably more moderate, and this was confirmed when we saw a senior Brotherhood spokesman, who said that the Camp David treaty will "not change in the near future at all".

Further meetings with prominent supporters of the secular parties showed us the extent to which they were still distracted by calls to postpone the parliamentary elections. We could see that they were not concentrating on how best to maximise their support in those elections, but were rather hopeful that the elections themselves would be postponed, in the belief that they needed more time to prepare, and that they would perform better after due preparation.

In Alexandria, we held meetings with Coptic community leaders, some Muslim Brotherhood spokesmen and business leaders. The businessmen seemed quite pragmatic, and were resigned to the inevitability of a Muslim Brotherhood dominated government. There was some disagreement as to the nature of such a government. Some were sanguine, and anticipated that Egypt would follow the Turkish model in which the Army would underwrite the democratic constitution, by reserving itself a power of intervention. Others regarded the Muslim Brotherhood as essentially a socialist redistributionist party and believed the Brotherhood were unfit to run the economy. The businessmen proudly claimed that 70 percent of the Egyptian economy was in private hands (the real number is 65 percent, according to OECD figures).



They were all anxious simply to get on with their business activities, and seemed to anticipate political events with resignation.

Coptic leaders we met in Alexandria were fearful of increased sectarian violence and believed that a Muslim Brotherhood government would reveal itself to be increasingly hardline when in power.

The visit to the Bibliotheca in Alexandria was a welcome interlude and proved to be an excellent showcase for the country. We were impressed by the modern, sophisticated technology. We made a rather poignant visit to the Anwar Sadat museum, in which the lifestyle and some of the possessions of the former assassinated President were on display.

On our return to Cairo, we bumped into a prominent member of the US Embassy, who wryly observed that any delay in parliamentary elections would not necessarily lead to the better organisation of the secular parties. Such a delay, it was alleged, could result in an even greater degree of readiness on the part of the Muslim Brotherhood. Later, on the same day, we met an Egyptian in his early 40s, who had spent most of his formative years in the West and had worked in finance in London. He had come back to Cairo in the wave of optimism after the revolution, and hoped to make some impact in an online business.

We also met a Salafist preacher. His observations, given through an interpreter were surprising, in so far as he claimed that his interpretation of Islam precluded any active involvement in politics. He was sceptical of any attempts to politicise Islam on the part of the Muslim Brotherhood and the Salafists.

The delegation was undertaken at a time when there was still considerable uncertainty as to the eventual political settlement. It seemed likely, at the end of May, that parliamentary elections would take place soon, although no firm dates had as yet been announced. It should be noted that our impression of the Muslim Brotherhood in Alexandria was slightly different from the image we had seen in Cairo. The representatives of the Brotherhood in Alexandria were, as one might have expected, less fluent in English, and perhaps more traditional in their outlook. One female Egyptian who worked in the British Consulate remarked that she felt uncomfortable not wearing a headscarf. The atmosphere in Alexandria, especially around the University and the library, was perhaps more conspicuously Islamic than the parts of Cairo with which we were familiar.



PART TWO

SECTION C

ANALYSIS

The established secular parties (e.g. the Wafd, Ghad, Tagammu, El Gabha) had insignificant support and lacked organisational capability. The newer parties, such as the Free Egyptians and El Adl, had failed to make any impact. All of the secular parties seemed disorganised, and were more interested in working towards trying to postpone the elections, rather than preparing for the elections themselves.

At this stage it was not clear if Egypt would adopt a parliamentary or presidential style of government. However, certain features could be discerned. At this point, the Muslim Brotherhood affiliated Freedom and Justice Party had emerged as a prominent political force. We felt they would gain a significant share of parliamentary seats, probably 35 – 40 percent. It was also likely that other religious parties and the Salafists would capture a number of seats. At this point, we believed that an Islamist block would receive around 50 – 60 percent of seats in any democratically elected Parliament.

During this delegation, the Muslim Brotherhood's representatives seemed more emollient and pragmatic. There were signs of internal division. The Muslim Brotherhood's representatives in Alexandria were very reluctant to say anything definitive about their stance on policy matters. At this point, Dr Abdul Monem Fatouh, a former member of the Muslim Brotherhood, had openly declared his desire to stand in the presidential elections. He downplayed the popularity of the Muslim Brotherhood, by referring to a recent National University Election in which they won only 15 percent of the vote.

On the economy, Fatouh's opinions seemed to have moderated from the more openly redistributionist approach he seemed to espouse in March. "We are capitalist, but we respect the people" he said. There were still rumours of some kind of an alliance between the Muslim Brotherhood and SCAF. The main contention of these rumours was that SCAF needed the cooperation of the Muslim Brotherhood to maintain order on the streets. The advantage of such a deal to the Brotherhood was that they would be allowed to participate fully in the political process for the first time since their creation in 1928.



The overwhelming referendum results in March, when 77 percent voted for the constitutional amendments, meant that any postponement of the September elections was unlikely. Resources from Saudi Arabia were reported on the street to be funding Salafist groups. The Egyptian people were always ready to believe that external forces were spending large sums of money to affect their internal affairs.

Some of the middle classes, and the business community were unabashed in expressing their desire for a “strong man”, a leader. They said, “people don’t feel safe...democracy without law will never work... we need a strong man”.

Egyptian reserves continued to fall, there was an expectation that traditional increased food prices during the holy month of Ramadan, which fell in August in 2011, could create popular unrest.



PART THREE

SECTION A

NARRATIVE OF EVENTS: MAY 28 - JANUARY 12, 2012

It is important to understand the context of the long-expected parliamentary elections of 2011. In November 2010, Egypt’s People’s Assembly, the lower house, elections had been conducted without judicial supervision. Mubarak had removed this requirement in 2007. There had been blatant vote-rigging and human rights groups said it was Egypt’s most fraudulent poll ever. Not surprisingly, the NDP gained a sweeping parliamentary majority.⁴² This was an important motivating factor behind the January revolution and ensured that the question of how to elect a new parliament became significant after Mubarak was deposed.

Under the former President’s regime, parliamentary elections were held under a two-member district, first past the post (FPTP), individual candidacy voting system, with candidates required to win more than 50 percent of the votes to avoid a run-off contest. Because this system favours larger parties and pushed Egyptians to elect MPs according to tribal and familial relations, it suited the NDP but gave little space for smaller parties to emerge.⁴³

Protestors in Tahrir Square had, since February, remonstrated that if this system went unchanged, the well-organised Muslim Brotherhood would dominate future elections and crush Egypt’s fledgling liberal parties. They demanded to be included in shaping the country’s political processes, arguing that a proportional system would be fairer on smaller parties, allowing them to be represented with slighter voting proportions. This, it was believed, would encourage citizens to elect representatives according to political programmes.⁴⁴ Their calls went completely unheeded, until May at least.

On May 29, without warning, General Mamdouh Shahrin, a member of SCAF, declared draft changes to Egypt’s 1972 People’s Assembly law. These restored judicial supervision of elections and proposed that the lower house should be elected by a mixed system, which retained FPTP to elect two thirds of seats but used proportional representation, using lists drawn up by parties and alliances, to elect the remaining third.⁴⁵

⁴² Arab Reform Initiative, <http://www.arab-reform.net/spip.php?article4836>

⁴³ Ibid; Middle East and North Africa International Foundation for Electoral Systems, ‘Elections in Egypt: Analysis of the 2011 Parliamentary Electoral System’, 2011; New York Times, <http://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2011/02/17/how-to-have-fair-elections-in-egypt/egypt-needs-some-form-of-proportional-representation>

⁴⁴ Freedom House, <http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=70&release=1167>; Al-Ahram, <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2011/1049/eg3.html>; Arab Reform, <http://www.arab-reform.net/spip.php?article4903>

⁴⁵ Ibid; Elections in Egypt; Ahram Online, <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/13291/Egypt/Politics-/Draft-law-introducing-mixed-electoral-system-trigg.aspx>



Essam El-Erian, a prominent spokesman in the Brotherhood, welcomed the announcement. "This law is a very progressive step, and the leaders of the political parties should not make themselves busy attacking the Army and accusing it of imposing its decisions on the political forces when this is not true," he said.⁴⁶ Unsurprisingly, though, most secular parties condemned the decision to preserve the old system.

Rifaat El-Said, chair of the leftist Tagammu Party, warned that Egypt's "Islamist forces, particularly the Muslim Brotherhood, are the ones that will benefit from SCAF's legislative amendments", and Mohammed El Baradei called for parliamentary elections to be postponed until liberal forces had taken root and a new constitution, upholding the principles of the January revolution been drafted.⁴⁷

On June 6, the Freedom and Justice Party (FJP), the Muslim Brotherhood's main political vehicle, was given legal status.⁴⁸

By June, forty different liberal and leftist movements had joined forces to back El-Baradei's demand that elections be dropped. Protests over continued lack of reform and retribution more generally escalated, and activists threatened a "million-strong" occupation of Tahrir Square, which would start on July 8, unless SCAF abandoned its "roadmap" to democracy.⁴⁹

On July 6, SCAF responded, approving new electoral laws, so that 50 percent of contested Assembly seats would be allocated through a PR system and 50 percent through the old system. It also confirmed that the Shura Council (upper house) would be elected by a similar system.⁵⁰ While the "million-strong" march was officially cancelled, this failed to thwart large rallies taking place on July 8 in Suez, Alexandria and Cairo. In Tahrir Square, youths called for Prime Minister Essam Sharaf to step down, lamenting his failure to force SCAF to achieve their demands. They chanted, "Down with the Marshal!" The April 6 Movement passed out fliers calling for faster trials of ex-regime members, educated liberals reiterated their yearning for a new constitution, and Muslim Brothers, who had sat out recent protests, distributed refreshments.⁵¹

On July 12, SCAF delayed Egypt's presidential elections until January.⁵² A day later, it fired nearly seven hundred police officers, including eighteen generals accused of



involvement in the killings of protestors earlier in the year, and announced that Assembly elections, scheduled for September, would be delayed for another month.⁵³

Then, in the second cabinet reshuffle of the year, Prime Minister Sharaf, following the resignations of his Finance, Industry and Foreign Ministers, submitted a full list of cabinet changes for SCAF approval. After some wrangling, fourteen new ministers were sworn in on July 21.⁵⁴

On August 1, the first day of Ramadan, security forces moved to break up a group of protestors still camped at Tahrir Square and guard against their return.⁵⁵ Two days later, in a spectacle on live television, the trial of Mubarak and his sons began; Mubarak told prosecutors that he denied all charges.⁵⁶

On August 12, the al-Nour Party, a Salafist party legalized in June and led by Emad Abdel Ghabbour, announced it was joining forces with Fadila and Asala, two smaller Salafist parties, to run a united candidate list in the parliamentary elections.⁵⁷

In the past, Egypt's Salafists, who call for a return to the political and moral practice of the first Muslims, had shunned the concept of democracy, claiming it gave the laws of man precedence over those of God. Since February, though, they had started to form parties and, in this period, they began to mobilize their forces. Unlike the FJP, who were keen to stress their pragmatism and moderation, the Salafists made no attempt to soften their more extreme views. They spoke openly about their ambition to turn Egypt into a state where personal freedoms are constrained by Sharia codes.⁵⁸ One Al-Nour leader even refused to appear on a political talk show until the female host put on a headscarf.⁵⁹

On August 16, fifteen political and social movements announced the formation of the Egyptian Bloc, a liberal alliance including the Free Egyptians party, Tagammu and the Social Democratic Party. The Bloc declared that its main objective was to prevent "an imminent electoral victory" of the Freedom and Justice Party.⁶⁰

At midnight, on Thursday, September 8, security forces vacated Tahrir square, intending to come back the next day. A defiant band of demonstrators, demanding an immediate end to military rule, had other ideas. They immediately returned to the

53 BBC News, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-14143879>; <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-14148292>

54 BBC News, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-14176578>; <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-14234137>; Guardian, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/jul/17/egypt-prime-minister-reshuffles-cabinet>

55 Reuters, <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2011/08/01/us-egypt-tahrir-idUSTRE7702Q220110801>; The Daily News

Egypt, <http://www.thedailynewsegypt.com/egypt/tens-of-thousands-flock-to-tahrir-to-correct-the-path.html>

56 Guardian, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/aug/03/mubarak-trial-dictator-denies-charges>

57 Egypt Independent, <http://www.almasyalyoum.com/en/node/485598>; BBC News, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-15899539>

58 The Daily Mail, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2069199/Islamic-fundamentalists-set-force-Sharia-law-Egypt-election-victory.html#ixzz1gWZKVRja>

59 Foreign Policy, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/12/20/arab_spring_women?page=fullhttp://

www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-16112833

60 Latest Business World News, <http://latestworldbusinessnews.blogspot.com/2011/12/tahrir-square-turned-into-world.html>

46 Arab Reform, <http://www.arab-reform.net/spip.php?article4903>; Al-Ahram, <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2011/1049/eg3.htm>

47 Ibid.

48 BBC News, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-15899548>

49 Guardian, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/jun/23/egypt-activists-tahrir-square-elections>

50 Elections in Egypt; People's Daily Online, <http://english.people.com.cn/90001/90777/90855/7432343.html>

51 Al Jazeera, <http://www.aljazeera.com/video/middleeast/2011/07/20117810134178303.html>; BBC News,

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-14128073>; Time,

<http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2082172,00.html#ixzz1hNX3Y2hd>; The Los Angeles Times,

<http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/babylonbeyond/2011/07/egypt-prime-minister-sharaf-commences-cabinet-ministers-reshuffle-amidst-continuing-protests.html>

52 Carnegie, <http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2012/01/05/the-scaf-an-overview-of-its-actions>



plaza and, on a day dubbed “Correcting the Path”, their numbers swelled as marches arrived from Giza and Heliopolis, more than fifteen kilometres from central Cairo.⁶¹ On Friday evening, a mob attacked the Israeli Embassy, destroying the security wall, breaking in and throwing documents out of windows. Police moved in with tear gas. Gun shots were fired, two people died and hundreds were injured in clashes outside. Israel’s ambassador, Yitzhak Levanon, fled out of Egypt.⁶²

SCAF responded on September 11, by widening the remit of Egypt’s Emergency Law, having previously promised to end emergency rule, to cover some loosely defined transgressions that could almost certainly be applied to valid protest, including “infringing on others’ right to work”, “impeding the flow of traffic” and “spreading false information in the media”.⁶³ It then asserted that the Law would remain in place until June 2012, a decision described by Amnesty International as the biggest threat to human rights in the country since the Mubarak era.⁶⁴

On September 24, SCAF announced a final change to the election rules: raising the proportion of seats contested for the upper and lower houses using PR from 50 percent to two thirds. It also set the size of the elected People’s Assembly to 498 seats - 10 seats would be appointed by SCAF – and declared that elections would take place in three stages, starting on November 28, December 14 and January 3, 2012. The Shura Council elections were scheduled to take place in three rounds, beginning on January 29.⁶⁵

Most parties welcomed the changes but objected strongly to another electoral law amendment, Article 5. This stated that to stand in a FPTP district, candidates could not be members of a political party and, if elected, could not join one. Sixty political parties and groups across Egypt, including the FJP, threatened to boycott November’s elections - arguing that this would allow the return to Parliament of corrupt businessmen and officials who had dominated the Mubarak regime, unless the rule was changed by October 2, so that parties could contest all seats.⁶⁶

On Saturday, October 1, SCAF said it would amend Article 5 and announced that a joint meeting of the People’s Assembly and Shura Council would take place by the first week of April 2012, after both houses were seated, to choose the composition of a

61 Daily News Egypt, <http://www.thedailynewsegypt.com/egypt/tens-of-thousands-flock-to-tahrir-to-correct-the-path.html>

62 Guardian, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/sep/10/egypt-declares-state-alert-embassy>

63 Reuters, <http://af.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idAFTRE78B3GM20110912>; Guardian, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/sep/16/egyptians-rally-tahrir-square-laws>

64 Reuters, <http://af.reuters.com/article/egyptNews/idAFL5E7KL5KY20110921>

65 Elections in Egypt; Reuters, [http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJOE78N09Q20110924?pageNumber=1&virtualBrandChannel=](http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJOE78N09Q20110924?pageNumber=1&virtualBrandChannel=;); Ahram Online, <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/22697/Egypt/Politics-/SCAF-finally-reveals-parliamentary-elections-dates.aspx>

66 Elections in Egypt; Al Jazeera, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/09/2011928234830274426.html>; BBC News, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-15101798>

67 The Daily Star - Lebanon, <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2011/Oct-02/150251-egypt-parties-to-review-army-vote-concessions.ashx#axzz1ZYYSFfn1>; Dawn, <http://www.dawn.com/2011/10/01/egypt-military-rulers-agree-to-amend-election-law.html>



100-member constituent assembly responsible for drafting a new constitution.⁶⁷ Tantawi also stated that Egypt’s army would not field a presidential candidate.⁶⁸

On October 6, SCAF announced that presidential elections would come after a new constitution had been put to a referendum and ratified, having previously promised they would take place in 2011, a process which was predicted to stretch into 2013 or longer. SCAF confirmed its intention to keep control until then. “We will keep the power until we have a president,” said Major General Mahmoud Hegazy.⁶⁹ On November 1, Deputy Prime Minister Ali El-Silmi, at a conference to discuss the drafting of a new constitution, presented a draft document of constitutional principles. The document, in contradiction to declarations made by SCAF, stated that 80 out of 100 members of the constitutional committee should be appointed rather than elected by Parliament, and contained articles that gave the army the final say in its budgets, allowing for no civilian oversight.⁷⁰ On November 10, a provincial court in the Nile city of Mansoura ruled that former NDP members could not run for Parliament.⁷¹ Egypt’s Higher Administrative Court overruled the decision.⁷²

On Friday, November 18, furious crowds gathered in central Cairo, Alexandria and other cities to protest against these developments and to demand faster political reform. Prime Minister Sharaf and his cabinet resigned on November 21 and, a day later, Tantawi announced that presidential elections would happen by July 2012.⁷³ This did not satisfy the demonstrators. The April 6 Movement and the Youth Revolution Coalition demanded that elections be postponed and power handed immediately to “a national salvation government.”⁷⁴ Deadly battles with security forces were fought into the night. Over the course of a week, 41 people were left dead and hundreds were injured.⁷⁵

68 Reuters, <http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJOE7940LJ20111005>

69 Carnegie, <http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2012/01/05/the-scaf-an-overview-of-its-actions>; Crescent, <http://www.crescent-online.net/news-a-analysis/1993-november2011/3194-concern-grows-over-militarys-intentions-in-egypt.html>; Ahram Online, <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/23432/Egypt/Politics-/Egypt-awaits-elusive-elected-president,-while-SCAF.aspx>

70 Al-Ahram, <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2011/10/72/op2.htm>; BBC News, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-15894656>,

71 Wall Street Journal, http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970203537304577032302540211524.html?mod=googlenews_wsj

72 BBC News, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-15727106>

73 BBC News, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-15795972>, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-15826048>; <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-15843425n>; Al Arabiya, <http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2011/11/21/178463.html>

74 BBC News, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-15849285>

75 Guardian, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/middle-east-live/2011/nov/22/tahrir-square-police-clash-protesters-live-coverage>; MSNBC, http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/45426434/ns/world_news-mideast_n_africa/t/egypt-activists-step-protests-us-students-ordered-freed/



On Friday, November 25, at least 10,000 people staged a rival, pro-SCAF, rally in Abbasiya Square, just north of Tahrir, dubbed the “Million Man March of the Silent Majority.” Thousands of Cairenes thronged to show support for SCAF and its electoral timetable.⁷⁶ SCAF appointed a new Prime Minister, seventy-eight year old Kamal Ganzouri, a man who served as Prime Minister in the 1990s under Mubarak. Two weeks later, Ganzouri announced a new Cabinet, with the key post of interior minister going to Cairo’s ex-police chief, Mohammed Ibrahim Yusuf. SCAF also granted Ganzouri “presidential powers”, without oversight of the armed forces or judiciary.⁷⁷

On Monday, November 28, voting in the first round of Egypt’s lower house elections began, as intended, in nine of Egypt’s provinces, including Cairo, Port Said and Alexandria, where queues as long as 1,000 people formed.⁷⁸ According to partial results, the FJP garnered 36.6 percent of ballots cast in the party list vote, while al-Nour captured 24.4 percent.⁷⁹ On December 8, Major General Mukhtar Mulla affirmed that these results did not accurately reflect the views of Egyptians, “We are in the early stages of democracy...The Parliament is not representing all sectors of society,” he said. SCAF moved to appoint a 30-strong technocratic “civilian advisory council,” giving it authority to help select Egypt’s constitutional assembly. Brotherhood spokesman, Mahmoud Ghazlan, said his organisation would play no role on such a council, and Sobhi Saleh, another senior Muslim Brother, said this arrangement could not be forced on Parliament.⁸⁰

The second round of voting started on December 14, in nine more provinces, including Aswan, Beni Suef, Giza, Ismailia and Sohag (rural regions around the Nile Delta). The third round of voting started on January 3, in nine remaining provinces, including Gharbiya, North and South Sinai.⁸¹

While most ballots across most of Egypt went ahead peacefully, clashes between protestors and police persisted in central Cairo throughout December. The most violent of these occurred over the weekend of December 16 when the military crackdown was particularly brutal. It was infamously symbolized by video footage of soldiers dragging a woman by her black full-body veil, exposing her bra as they clubbed and kicked her.⁸²

76 BBC News, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-15900768>; Daily News Egypt,

<http://www.thedailynewsegypt.com/egypt/pro-scaf-protesters-march-to-abbasiya-square.html>

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Egypt’s net international reserves plunged by \$18.1 billion in December, bringing the decline in reserves to 50 percent over the course of 2011. The Egyptian stock exchange closed out the year over 45 percent down from its levels at the start of 2011.⁸³

On January 1, SCAF announced that the Shura Council would be elected in two instead of three stages, so that final run-offs would end on February 22 instead of March 12, as previously planned.⁸⁴ On January 5, Egyptian prosecutors called for the hanging of Hosni Mubarak, arguing that his authority over the security forces made him accountable for the deaths of hundreds of protesters.⁸⁵

CMEC arrived in Cairo late on January 12, 2012. The morning newspapers announced the results for the final round of Egypt’s parliamentary elections: the FJP had attained 35.2 percent of the party list vote, followed by al-Nour with 27.5 percent, Al-Wafd with 9.8 percent and the liberal Egyptian Bloc with 5.6 percent. In total, after three rounds, it was predicted that the FJP had won 232 - of 498 - seats, and al-Nour, 113.⁸⁶

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PART THREE

SECTION B

DELEGATION DIARY: JANUARY 12 - JANUARY 16

The delegation in January 2012 began with an interview of the same leading figure in the revolutionary youth movement with whom we started the first delegation in March last year. He believed that if a fair political system were established, the more secular parties would gain the support of a larger portion of the electorate. He was confident that SCAF would soon step down as a result of pressure from "the streets". He was uncompromising in his denunciation of the continued involvement of the military in the Egyptian government, while expressing a surprising degree of tolerance for the prospect of a Muslim Brotherhood led Government.

Walking through Tahrir Square after the meeting, it was difficult to discern many traces of revolutionary momentum. Other interviews we conducted suggested people on the streets had become disillusioned with the revolutionary youth movements. One such movement, the April 6 Movement, was given the nickname the 'six devils', a pun in Arabic.

The major new factor was the success in the parliamentary elections of the Salafists, who had gained over 25 percent of the seats. One secular political commentator observed that nothing had changed, all that had happened was the removal of Mubarak.

We spent the whole delegation in Cairo, where we saw a variety of political participants. One highlight of the delegation was a dinner on Saturday, January 14, which was attended by a number of prominent people in the diplomatic corps, businessmen, and at least one military figure. The general consensus of that meeting was that the Army would continue to play a part in the political future of the country; although many hopes for the new democracy were expressed.

The role of the military opens up a new political dispute. There are widely differing views as to how the Army should be involved in the politics of Egypt in the short to medium term. Some, in particular the youth movements and a number of the secularists, are firmly opposed to any continuation of Army interference in Egyptian politics. Others, most notably the Muslim Brotherhood, were more relaxed about the prospect of continued Army involvement.



We met a noted tele-preacher who spoke in conspiratorial tones about the financial support the Salafists enjoyed from Gulf states. Copts that we met expressed continued concern about the prospect of sectarian violence, and voiced their traditional hostility to the Muslim Brotherhood.

The context of Egyptian politics is still very much framed in terms of the Islamic faith. A member of the Free Egyptian party described the difficulties faced by the secular parties when confronted with allegations that they were hostile to Islam. This representative was convinced that the Muslim Brotherhood, over time would "show their true faces, because ultimately they believe that God has authority over man".

There was the widely expressed view that the ultimate winner of the presidential race had not yet emerged as a candidate, and that a new figure would emerge.

A particularly interesting meeting was one with one young Muslim Brotherhood spokesman, who spoke pragmatically and fluently about the desire of the organisation to form a coalition on the broadest possible basis, including not only the secularist parties but also, potentially, the Salafists. This spokesman expressed the fear of the Muslim Brotherhood that they did not want a large and solid organised block opposing their government. On that basis, they wanted to have a broad coalition, a Government of national unity.

While this young representative was free in his criticism of SCAF, he did recognise that the military influence was all pervasive. "Some co-existence is necessary at this stage" he said. He believed that a new government in Egypt could retain some of the best elements of the old regime, such as important ministers and civil functionaries, while eliminating the most corrupt people.

He reiterated the Muslim Brotherhood line on the Salafists, saying that they had been successful because of their control of the mosques, which had been granted to them under the Mubarak regime. The representative was very pragmatic, but ruled out support for Abdul Fatouh in any forthcoming presidential election. Mr Fatouh's rift with the Brotherhood appears to be deep.

This spokesman summed up his feeling with the pithy expression, "the old has not died, and the new has not been born".

We were also fortunate in meeting a prominent Salafist, who had run unsuccessfully in the parliamentary elections as a member of the al-Nour party. He was taciturn, and non-committal when asked about specific policies. He uttered platitudinous clichés about the need to cooperate with "everybody". It was difficult to see what



his agenda really was, although when asked about Israel he said that “our principle priority is now economics”.

One former member of the Muslim Brotherhood, now a young intellectual studying for a Masters degree at university, expressed disenchantment and extreme frustration towards the military.

This delegation took place in an atmosphere in which attitudes towards the military were now polarised. While some believed the military would be a preserver of order, others expressed views ranging from regret to open rage about the prospect of continued military rule.

A further significant development, which occurred during this delegation, was the withdrawal of Mohammed El Baradei from the presidential race, “My conscience does not permit me to run for the presidency or any other official position unless it is within a democratic framework,” he said.



PART THREE

SECTION C

ANALYSIS

The success of the Muslim Brotherhood and the Salafists has left most of our interlocutors resigned to a government in which Islamist elements will be strong. The Muslim Brotherhood, in contrast to their earlier reticence and caution, were explicit in their suggestion that the Prime Minister of Egypt after June 30 would be a Muslim Brotherhood Member of Parliament. It was also widely acknowledged that although the President would not necessarily be a member of the Muslim Brotherhood, it would be difficult to envisage a President who did not at least have their tacit support.

The military was, as ever during this period, a very significant factor in political life. Given their economic influence (estimates of their control of the economy through various businesses vary from 20 – 40 percent of GDP), it seemed unlikely that they would retire to a position in which those interests could be jeopardised. Given much of the rage and hostility directed toward Mubarak, it was also unlikely that the military would expose themselves to the possibility of being tried and convicted by any new regime.

These factors have ensured that military involvement in political affairs, in the short to medium term, is likely. The exact nature of this involvement still remains unclear. An idea of a National Defence Council was mooted, much along traditional Turkish lines. From what we could discover, such a council would be half composed of civilian elements, with the other half derived from the ranks of the armed forces.

A particular area of responsibility for any council would be some oversight of the military budget, which remains obscure and up until now has been the exclusive concern of the senior ranks of the military.

A number of factors have become very clear. Firstly, the military will remain a force for the foreseeable future. Secondly, the Freedom and Justice Party, the party of the Muslim Brotherhood, will be the dominant player in Parliament and, as a consequence, will set much of the tone in Egypt’s emerging democracy. Thirdly, the agenda of the Salafist parties is still unclear.

We know that the Salafists are the second block in the Parliament, and in many ways have ranged themselves against the Freedom and Justice Party. There was considerable



speculation that both the FJP and the Salafists had been talking to secular parties, in the hope that each could form a coalition, with the object of excluding the other party. Clearly with the FJP commanding roughly 45 percent of the seats, any government without their significant participation seems very unlikely.

Anecdotally, we were informed of a slight stiffening of social attitudes, especially in Alexandria, where women were coming under increasing pressure to wear the veil, or headscarves.

The impression received was that the Army and the Muslim Brotherhood have, as always throughout the course of 2011, been shown to be the two most significant players on the Egyptian stage. The short to medium term evolution of Egyptian politics will largely be a variation on the theme of their relationship with one another. The Salafists remain a volatile and unpredictable element, and their significant successes in the election may well be a destabilising element. Their experience of politics remains rudimentary, and it will be interesting to see how they develop as a political force.



CONCLUSION

The events of 2011 across the Arab world will be long remembered by those who witnessed them. There will be interpretations and continuing debate about those events. Naturally, the course of time will enable people to see trends which may, at the present moment, remain obscure.

The purpose of this short account is to record, as sincerely as we could, our thoughts as those events unfolded. A small group of Conservative MPs from the British Parliament enjoyed the privilege of being able to return to Egypt and engage with many people who were directly involved in the political scene.

This publication is an attempt to record impressions we had at the time. It does not attempt to provide a comprehensive account of everything that happened in Egypt in 2011. Some commentators will no doubt wish to stress economic factors; others would perhaps emphasise the international context of the Arab Spring, seeking to relate what happened in Egypt to the occurrences in the wider Arab world.

We have not pursued either of these courses. Our report is derived largely from our own direct experiences and conversations. We have sought to connect our three delegations with a continuous narrative of the political scene in Egypt, derived largely from internet sources, some of which are listed at the back of the publication.

The conclusions we draw are naturally confined to the internal situation of Egypt. Early in the revolution, the Muslim Brotherhood was identified as the largest and best organised political force. In addition, the Army was felt to be in a very strong position. It was, after all, the withdrawal of their support which finally doomed Mubarak. How these forces would interact with each other was therefore always going to be the pressing question in Egyptian politics.

The unfolding events of 2011, however, did throw up some surprises. Even though some observers claimed that they had predicted the rise of the Salafists, and their eventual success in the parliamentary elections, none of the people that we spoke to before the elections gave any indication of this.

It was also significant how trusting people seemed to be, at the beginning of this process of political change, about the nature of the Army's intentions. Of course, the Army's aspirations may in fact have evolved during the course of the year. It was a widely held view that the Army had no real political ambitions. People thought that



they would gladly resign their power to a civilian authority. We can honestly say that we were always quite sceptical about the ease with which the armed forces would cede power to a civilian government.

It was a privilege for all of us to be able to travel to Egypt in the course of such an eventful year. We would like to thank all those who made it possible and we are eagerly anticipating developments in a country which many of us have grown to appreciate. We are as hopeful as any Egyptian about the future of democracy in Egypt. We only wish to present as realistic a view as possible of the lines along which that democracy may develop in the immediate future.



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