



Asociace
pro mezinárodní
otázký
Association
for International
Affairs

Middle East Change Observer

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REVOLUTIONS TIMELINE

Tunisia: the “Sidi Bouzid Revolt”

Dec 17 2010 – beginning of protests in Tunisia
December – further suicides; protests intensify and spread to the capital
Jan 6 – lawyers join the protests
Jan 14 – Tunisian president Zine el-Abidin flees Tunis; violence and looting; prisoners freed (perpetrators unknown)

Egypt

Jan 25 – first massive protest on Cairo’s Tahrir sq. followed by a two days police repression and civilian deaths
Jan 28 – police disappears from the streets, frees prisoners, looting
Jan 29 – Omar Suleiman appointed vice president
Jan 31 – pres. Mubarak presents new government
Feb 1 – Huge protests pres. Mubarak will not run for another term
Feb 2 – violence on Tahrir sq. by pro-regime supporters
Feb 4 – Friday of departure massive protests
Feb 5 – Christian mass on Tahrir sq.; NDP leadership resigns
Feb 8 – Wael Ghonim on Tahrir sq.
Feb 9 – strikes spread
Feb 10 – pres. Mubarak’s last unclear address
Feb 11 – Friday of departure – pres. Mubarak resigns

Libya

Feb 17 –Day of rage in Libya
Mar 3 –rebels pushed back an attack on air terminal
Mar 4 –Bengazi rebels form a 30-member provisional authority
Mar 5 – Qaddafi forces mount an attack around Tripoli

ONGOING PROTESTS

Yemen

Jan 27 –first major demonstration in Yemen
Feb 2 – pres. Saleh will not run for president in 2013
Feb 20 – Protests at Sana’a University
Feb 28 – Massive protests; Pres. Saleh offers to form a unity government; opposition rejects the offer and calls for him to step down
Mar 3 – Pres. Saleh rejects the opposition’s transition plan; massive protests
Mar 5 – resignation of minister Abdullah al-Ahmar

Elsewhere

Jan 17 – Protests in Mauritania
Jan 26 – Syria: a man burned himself in Hasaka

Jan 28 – Jordan: peaceful demonstrations for change
Feb 1 – Jordan: King nominates a new govt under an ex army general
Feb 4 – Jordan: king meets with the Muslim Brotherhood
Feb 5 – Syria: protests in Hasaka, arrests
Feb 12 – Algeria: Resumed protests in Algiers
Feb 14 – Iran: First protests in Tehran in a year
Feb 15 – Bahrain: protesters occupy the Pearl sq. in Manama; death by police shots
Feb 17 – Syria: a traffic incident turned into a demonstration in Damascus
Feb 19 – Bahrain: after firing at the protesters for several days, police retires
Feb 21 – Bahrain: massive demonstration
Feb 22 – Syria: protest disrupted at the Libyan embassy in Damascus; arrests
Feb 22 – Algeria: government announced the end the emergency law (in function since 1992)
Feb 26 – Bahrain: Govt reshuffle
Feb 27 – Oman: protests at a mall in Sohar port city, one dies in clashes with police
Mar 5 – Oman: Sultan Qaboos changes two ministers

STEPS TOWARDS DEMOCRATIC REFORMS

Tunisia

Jan 17 – New govt announced including opposition figures, under M. Ghannouchi, PM since 1999; protests resume
Jan 17 – The Gvt named the High Political Reform Commission charged to consult on dismantling oppressive laws
Jan 20 – ministers resigne from the ruling RCD party
Jan 27 – major RCD ministers design, retaining two old members and PM
Feb 2 – former interior minister arrested
Feb 3 – regional governors replaced
Feb 6 – activities of RCD suspended
Jan 31 – the banned moderate Islamist party’s leader Rashid al-Ghannouchi has returned from exile
Feb 26 – protests for the change of government leave 6 people dead
Feb 26 – Mohamed Ghannouchi, **Tunisia’s PM since 1999, resignes**; Beji Caid el Sebsi named the new PM
Feb 28 – the industry minister Afif Chelb resignes, later followed by the two remaining ministers from old govt
Mar 1 – legalisation of R. Ghannouchi’s Renaissance Party (an-Nahda)
Mar 3 – interim president Fouad Mebazaa announced elections for the Constitutional Assembly will take place July 24



Egypt

Feb 11 – The Supreme Council of Armed forces assumes power in breach of the constitution

Feb 13 – The Supreme Council suspends constitution, dissolves both chambers of parliament and promises elections within 6 months

Feb 16 – The Supreme council nominates a 10-member constitution committee to suggest const. changes

Feb 18 – Yusuf al-Qaradawi speaks on Tahrir

Feb 20 – The attorney general freezes the assets of the ex-pre. ex-pres. Mubarak's family

Feb 26 – Partial amendments to the Eg. constitution unveiled

Mar 3 – **PM Ahmad Shafiq resigns**; SCAF nominates his deputy Essam Sharaf; Abdullah Gül visited EG.

Mar 4 – Essam Sharaf speaks on Tahrir sq. Referendum about constitutional change will take place on March 19

Mar 5 – Trial with former interior minister al-Adly starts with corruption charges

Mar 5 – People break into state security building in a number of cities upon rumours that police are burning documents

March 6 – Eg. PM **nominates a new cabinet** with a new foreign, interior and justice ministers

CURRENT STATE OF CHANGE

Almost every Arab country has been affected – with various results.

Two (with Libya three) countries have seen the end of a decades long authoritarian regime.

Tunisia has so far *gone the farthest in direction of reforms*. It has a provisional government including opposition and civil society figures and none of the previous regime's ministers. *The long-term Prime Minister Ghannoushi has stepped down* after prolonged protests against his continuation in office and after those protests had claimed deaths on Feb. 26. The former state-part RCD has been dissolved. Revolution is accepted as the official term for Tunisia's changes.

The Tunisian government has announced elections to the constitutional assembly for July 24; general elections will take place later.

The country has witnessed a certain amount of looting, police desertion, dysfunction of provincial administration; and with steady, sometimes violent protests until the resignation of PM Ghannoushi.

In Egypt the resignation of pre. Mubarak on Feb 11 has been accompanied by a military coup. The High Council of Armed Forces has suspended the constitution, dissolved both chambers of parliament and nominated a 10-member constitution committee to

amend a dozen of articles in order to enable presidential elections. These changes will be submitted to a referendum on March 19.

Few days after the resignation of Tunisia's PM *Egypt's PM also resigned*. Army council has nominated a former transport minister Essam Sharaf, who had taken part in the protests. PM Sharaf has dismissed the unpopular foreign minister and nominated new foreign, justice and interior ministers.

Egypt is still recovering from three weeks of a virtual stop of most social and economic activity. Universities resumed, stock exchange is still closed.

Political and economic concessions

The president of **Yemen** will not run for another term in 2013 and started to negotiate possible government changes with opposition, backed by massive and prolonged protests. Seven parliamentarians resign over violence.

Bahrain's King Hamad has changed government, released prisoners and promised economic concessions.

The King of **Jordan** has changed the government and talks with opposition.

Partial changes

Iraq's PM Maliki will not run for a third term; made demands on his ministers to be effective;

The **Sudan** president, in power since a coup in 1989, will not seek another term in 2015.

The **Omani** absolute monarch has offered economic concessions and reshuffled government.

The King of **Morocco** has created an advisory council to study people's demands and continue reforms.

Repression

Saudi Arabia has banned protests, arrested protest leaders and offered financial payment to the population.

Iran has seen first massive street protests since the failure of the Green movement to affect change. At least one died; opposition leaders are possibly under arrest.

Minor protests in **Syria's** Kurdish region and in Damascus have been quelled.

Morocco has repelled protests in occupied **Western Sahara**.



FIRST CONCLUSIONS

Every MENA state has been affected in some way by the fall of two strongmen and the example of protests, yet in varying degrees. Generally, authoritarian republics seem more prone to changes while monarchies resist changes with concessions. Other countries where demands of elections and opening of political space might succeed are: Algeria, Yemen, The occupied territories

Revolutions

The reforms have started by changed governments in preparation to elections. Protesters in both countries continue to demand more to insure an effective passage of power from the state, army, and economic structures of the old regime to a new

New Forces

The revolutions' motor – youth groups and movements – remain active in both Egypt and Tunisia, yet they did not succeed to form a united structure. Nor has a popular leadership or a rallying figure emerged in either country.

Islamist Parties were the promptest to issue statements and demand official recognition. They act very prudently and declare the willingness to obey to the rules of liberal democracy. The an-Nahda party has been officially founded in Tunisia, al-Wasat in

Egypt. Other Egyptian Islamic parties will seek recognition: the Muslims Brotherhood, the Salafists and even the Sufis.

The former state parties, Tunisia's RCD and Egypt's NDP, have been dissolved and suspended, respectively, after many cadres left. There is not yet a sign of their reconstitution under a younger leadership, although it is to be expected, especially in Egypt.

Unions have been vocal and effective during the protests and afterwards. They have a broad support because they uphold one of the main demands, salaries increase, and they face a change in leadership. The Unions have scored some minor increases and remain a strong mobilising force.

EXPECTED EVENTS

Libya's leader Qaddafi mounted an attack on towns fallen to population or to rebels around Tripoli and eastwards. Rebels try to push towards Qaddafi's city of Sirt. Next week will possibly decide the fate of popular uprising or cement Libya's division or, in case of massive life loss, pressure EU and US to take action.

In **Egypt** the new government is expected to start putting Egypt back to normal and show if it can be in charge.

In **Yemen** indirect negotiations are underway between protesters and government; progress possible