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Protest, Revolt and Regime Change in the Arab World

Actors, Challenges, Implications and
Policy Options

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Introduction:
A Region in Unrest

Muriel Asseburg

Since December 2010 the Arab world has been turned upside down. Ossified political structures that had held for decades have been cracked open. Rapid success of revolts in Tunisia and Egypt helped to dispel the fear of state repression and encouraged largely young people across the region to carry their grievances onto the streets. Against the backdrop of similar problems in many places, protests affected almost all the Arab countries over the course of 2011, with mass demonstrations in many. However, after the toppling of Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali and Hosni Mubarak and the initiation of transformation processes in Tunisia and Egypt, other Arab leaders dug their heels in. In most cases this initially meant ad hoc measures addressing socio-economic demands, but some also initiated broader reform processes in response to political grievances. Others went in the opposite direction, seeking to defend the status quo by violently suppressing dissent or applying a combination of repression, minimal reforms and sweeping financial handouts. Thus, even below the threshold of regime change the protests, uprisings and revolts are having a huge impact on Arab political systems. The leeway enjoyed by those in power has greatly narrowed and they are more dependent than ever on public acceptance of their policies. In those states where the old leaders have been driven from power – at the time of writing in mid-February 2012 Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Yemen – this has opened up opportunities for transitions to political systems that are more just, inclusive and participatory.

The contributions brought together in this volume illuminate various aspects of the changes occuring in the Arab world. They not only analyse the actors and the (first) effects of change, but also investigate the concrete challenges faced by the respective societies, political elites and economies, and examine the geopolitical implications. Finally, policy options, primarily for the EU, are identified in specific policy areas.

The first section is concerned with the actors. Contributions focusing on Libya, the small Gulf monarchies and Egypt ask: What are the social forces driving the protests and revolts? How are they organised? Do

they possess the potential to develop political influence beyond their present level of social mobilisation? What are their agendas? What should we expect from them? Who represents the forces of inertia and how strong are they? In all three cases, thus one of the conclusions of the authors, the importance of the new media should not be overestimated. In Libya online mobilisation was not decisive. But it was also only a secondary factor in Egypt and the small Gulf states: Even if young people use electronic social networks and other communication tools to inform themselves and others and to mobilise for their cause, they only succeed in building real protests and winning their demands if they are able to create alliances in the real world. If they are to achieve political success, online activists must be able to rely on a sufficiently large base of support in society and be able to build on pre-existing structures. In Egypt and Libya we are already witnessing anti-regime alliances breaking apart now that the dictator is gone. In Libya, to give but one example, it is still an open question how the balance of power will develop within the National Transitional Government and within the rebel forces, and which actors will leave a lasting mark on the transition process.

The second section examines the particular challenges that different Arab societies, states and economies face. Four contributions on Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Egypt, and Jordan and Morocco cover the breadth of the spectrum. It seems that it is the balance of power between status quo forces and forces of change that is crucial for the depth and scope of transitions – in addition to other factors such as the form of government (republican vs. monarchical), the regime's capacity to shape or prevent change, and the resource base available to the regime and nation. As the contributions demonstrate, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Morocco may have succeeded in achieving short-term stabilisation, primarily through chequebook politics in the first case, by means of limited top-down constitutional reforms in the other two. But none of them has arrived at a sustainable consolidation. That would require deeper reforms. The short- to medium-term situation appears a great deal more dramatic in Yemen, where the president finally accepted a transition plan mediated by the Gulf Cooperation Council in November 2011, a national unity government was formed and a successor confirmed by referendum in February 2012. Still, the spectre of state collapse and secessions as well as a slide into civil war, with massive destabilising regional effects, has not been

banished. In Egypt, finally, the end of the Mubarak era has opened up the possibility of comprehensive regime change. So far, however, only the first steps have been taken while important pillars of the old regime remain in place. The country now faces complex challenges arising out of the necessity of a simultaneous political and economic transformation as well as high expectations of the population for rapid progress in the social, political and security spheres.

The third section concentrates on the geopolitical implications of the so-called Arab Spring, focusing especially on the risks ensuing from a heightening of pre-existing conflicts, for example in the Levant. There, an increased isolation of Israel and a worsening of the regional conflict constellation bears the risk of renewed violent conflict. As a fallout of the Libyan power struggle and the end of the Gaddafi era fragile states in Libya's neighbourhood are being weakened further. Another contribution confronts Tehran's interpretation that the Arab Spring stands in the tradition of the 1979 Islamic Revolution and will lead to an increase in Iranian influence in the region with the real effects on Iran's role in the region that are already becoming apparent, namely a regional loss of influence. The contribution on US policies towards the changes in the region identifies a phenomenon that also applies to other external actors: whereas it is acknowledged that the changes fundamentally call into question previous US policy towards Arab countries, no fundamental policy shift can yet be detected. Instead, analysis and assessment of developments and the debate about an adequate answer are ongoing, with positions taken only on a case-by-case basis, rather reactively and still informed more by geopolitical interests than by values.

In the fourth section challenges and options for European policy are examined in depth in two major policy fields. The central challenge in the area of energy is securing a reliable and affordable energy supply both *from* and *within* the MENA region as well as supporting political opening and economic development there. The current changes also offer an opportunity to take action on a sustainable low-carbon energy supply by expanding the generation of electricity from renewable sources. Europe's support and cooperation are needed here. The contribution on migration notes that a diverse "migration space" straddling Europe and the southern Mediterranean has a long history, but is likely to gain in importance in the coming years as pressure of migration will remain strong even if political and economic trans-

formation processes succeed. At the same time EU member states will require more immigrants for demographic reasons. With its Global Approach to Migration and the concept of mobility partnerships the EU has developed instruments for coping with migration challenges. The goal must now be to develop a comprehensive and coherent policy that benefits all involved: countries of origin, receiving countries and the migrants themselves. Such a triple-win situation could help to stabilise transformation countries, satisfy the EU's need for skilled labour and offer migrants a better life. For the success of the mobility partnerships and the Global Approach it will be decisive whether EU member states are actually willing to permit (temporary) migration.

Each of the contributions concludes with concrete policy recommendations. The volume is rounded off by ten theses that point up the international repercussions of the Arab Spring, which reverberate far beyond North Africa and the Middle East. Two of the conclusions for European policy should be underlined: First, the need to challenge the notion of stability on which the EU's policies towards its neighbours are based and replace it with an adequate concept and a corresponding set of instruments. Stability should no longer be conceived as maintaining the status quo but as dynamic stability that embraces change and peaceful change of government. Second, it should be noted that the influence of Western states – and other external actors – on the course and outcome of these events is rather small. This is not necessarily a negative, as it enhances the legitimacy of the political and social orders that emerge from the unrest. But it should not be understood as giving Europe carte blanche to avoid responsibility for developments in its neighbourhood. Europe has every interest in accompanying the process by setting incentives designed to further dynamic stability.

I.
Actors

The Libyan Revolution:
Old Elites and New Political Forces
Wolfram Lacher

"Each city had its own reasons for rising against the regime." This assessment by a Tripoli resident sums up the dynamics that defined the Libyan revolution, and sheds light on the forces that will shape the transitional process. The defining aspect of the Libyan revolution was the emergence of local power centres in the wake of the state's collapse. As Libya moves towards elections to a General Assembly, scheduled for June 2012, local councils, tribes and militias are vying for influence at the local and national levels. Broader, nationwide coalitions and forces have yet to emerge. The National Transitional Council (NTC) and its government are facing a crisis of legitimacy: they are largely detached from the local forces shaping events on the ground, and unable to control them. The transition is likely to be led by a fractious coalition of local interest groups. The re-emergence of a strong central government is not yet even on the horizon.

From Revolt to Revolution

The Libyan revolution began in mid-February 2011 as an uprising in the north-east of the country and in the Nafusa Mountains in the north-west, triggered by the uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt as well as smaller local protests in Benghazi over the detention of a lawyer. Departing from the pattern of the many weeks of protest in Tunisia and Egypt, government buildings were set on fire right from the outset in Libya. Within days, the unrest also spread to the capital Tripoli and other cities in the north-west.

Unlike in neighbouring countries, social movements, opposition parties and trade unions played no role here because no such organisations had been allowed to exist under Gaddafi. The actors of the uprising's first days were unorganised young men acting spontaneously, whose level of education and access to information technology is likely to have been significantly below those of their counterparts in Egypt and Tunisia. Nor could they be identified as representatives of a growing middle class. The Libyan private sector is comparatively weak. Beyond the narrow elite, income differences are small within the rest of the population, which is characterised by underemployment and reliance on badly paid public sector jobs. The working class is made up almost exclusively of migrants.

Two developments were decisive for the revolt to escalate into a revolution. The first was the regime's violent response to the protests. The more protesters were killed by the security forces, the more quickly political, military and tribal leaders joined the revolt to protect their families and cities. Civilians armed themselves, and whole army units defected. The reason for this development lay in the strength of local, family and tribal loyalties. The defections of ministers, senior diplomats and army officers also underlined the weakness of state institutions. As a result, the country found itself in a state of civil war within two weeks of the protests erupting. The second key development was the establishment of the NTC in Benghazi in early March. With the NTC, an elitist leadership comprising a coalition of regime defectors and dissidents placed itself at the head of an initially unorganised uprising, vowing to bring down the regime.

The NTC and the Revolutionary Forces

From the outset, both the political leadership and the forces that led the revolution on the ground were heterogeneous and fragmented. Within the NTC, its Executive Office and its diplomatic representatives abroad, the clearest divide ran between former senior regime officials and longstanding members of the exiled opposition. But neither camp was by any means homogenous. The former included close Gaddafi aides and senior military officers (such as Generals Abdel Fattah Younis and Suleiman Mahmoud); former Gaddafi confidants who had seen exile or imprisonment (such as Council member Omar al-Hariri or Libya's representative to the Arab League, Abdel-Monem al-Houni), as well as technocrats and reformers who had only briefly occupied top positions (such

as leading figures Mahmoud Jibril and Mustafa Abdul Jalil).

Long-time members of the exiled opposition dominated the other main group in the NTC. They included many representatives of the aristocratic and bourgeois families who played a leading role under the monarchy, but were marginalised under Gaddafi. Among them were Ahmed al-Zubair al-Sanusi, a member of the former royal family; Defence Minister Jalal al-Dighaili and his niece Salwa; and Council member Ahmed al-Abbar. These scions of notable families all come from the north-east, which as a region was strongly over-represented on the NTC until the fall of Tripoli in August 2012. But even among representatives of other regions, members of families that dominated the monarchy-era elite also featured prominently, such as Abdelmajid and Mansour Saif al-Nasr, NTC member and ambassador in Paris respectively, who stem from the Fezzan, or Council members Mohammed al-Muntasir and Suleiman Fortia from Misrata. Such figures came to occupy leading roles at least partly due to their international education, professional experience and connections, although they should also be seen as promoting their families' interests. They were joined on the NTC and its Executive Office by former longstanding members of the exiled opposition from less prominent backgrounds, such as oil and finance minister Ali Tarhouni or information minister Mahmoud Shammam. Another group were members of the educated elite – university professors and lawyers – who had remained in Libya throughout Gaddafi's rule, such as NTC vice-chairman Abdel Hafiz Ghoga.

This elitist, self-appointed political leadership stood in stark contrast with the much more broad-based and even more heterogeneous forces that led the revolutionary struggle on the ground.[1] In Misrata and the towns of the Nafusa mountains, local councils formed at an early stage to organise resistance and supplies. They stood only in loose contact with the National Transitional Council, from which they often received but meagre support. Civilians mobilised along local or tribal lines to form armed revolutionary brigades and protect their towns and communities. They were led and funded by military officers, businessmen or tribal notables, but the fighters themselves were young men

from diverse social backgrounds. Every liberated city of any size formed at least one such brigade; as the civil war continued, dozens of different groups emerged in cities such as Benghazi or Misrata. These revolutionary brigades operated largely autonomously from the NTC, and their loyalties lay first and foremost with their towns, cities or tribes. At least three brigades that fought on the eastern front were recruited largely from people close to the defunct Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG). This group, which during the 1990s had waged an insurgency against the regime in north-eastern Libya but had later renounced violence, in turn had a strong local base in the cities of Derna and al-Baida.

Focused on obtaining international backing and geographically as well as socially disconnected from the forces leading the struggle on the ground, the NTC was unable to establish control over the revolutionary brigades. Even at its headquarters in Benghazi, command structures remained divided between the regular army, a coalition of revolutionary brigades, and armed groups operating outside of both frameworks. The problem was first highlighted by the murder of the commander-in-chief of the revolutionary forces, Abdel Fattah Younis, in July 2011. Although the details remain murky, Younis was apparently assassinated by members of a revolutionary brigade. In Misrata and the towns of the Nafusa mountains, local military councils were established to coordinate the brigades, though they maintained only loose ties to the NTC.

By the time Tripoli fell, the brigades and the towns they hailed from had emerged as the decisive political actors on the ground. A former LIFG commander, Abdel Hakim Belhadj, appointed himself head of the Tripoli Military Council, but failed to impose his authority on the numerous brigades from different towns and cities that established themselves in Tripoli. The NTC proved equally incapable of arbitrating between these interests; its Supreme Security Committee failed to make its voice heard among the armed groups that had established themselves in Tripoli.

Growing Rivalries after the Regime's Collapse

The political arena changed after the fall of Tripoli in late August 2011, the defeat of the regime's remnants in Sirte and Bani Walid, and the proclamation of Libya's 'liberation' on 23 October, which kicked off the NTC's transitional roadmap. The transitional govern-

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1 For a more detailed analysis of the social origins of the revolution's political leadership, as well as the role of tribal and local loyalties in the revolutionary forces, see Wolfram Lacher, "Families, Tribes and Cities in the Libyan Revolution", in: *Middle East Policy* 18, no. 4 (winter 2011): 140–54.

ment formed, after much wrangling, in mid-November 2011 saw the departure of many previously prominent players. Like Prime Minister Abdel Rahim al-Kib, most new ministers were technocrats without a prominent political background. Significantly, though, the influence of local power centres and brigades was reflected in the appointments of Osama al-Juweili and Fawzi Abdel Aal as defence and interior ministers respectively. Both had played a leading role in the struggle in their home towns of Zintan and Misrata, which had emerged as military heavyweights during the civil war. Moreover, between August and December 2011 the NTC significantly broadened its membership, asking local councils to name representatives for the NTC based on a formula that sought to ensure that all regions and towns were adequately represented. While many of the descendants of the monarchy-era elite stayed on, they were now a minority on the Council.

Yet, these developments have not closed the gap between the NTC and the revolutionary forces – both civil and military – nor have they curtailed rivalries among actors representing particular local or tribal interests. The announcement of the new government in November was greeted by small protests by representatives of certain tribes and towns against their alleged marginalization. A month later, larger protests erupted in Benghazi, Tripoli and other cities, targeting the NTC and its government as ineffective, intransparent and unaccountable.

The targets of popular resentment also widened to include some of the local councils – many of which, like the NTC, were self-appointed and failed to make tangible progress in solving urgent problems. The most dramatic instance occurred in January 2012 in Bani Walid, where local militias and tribal leaders forced out the revolutionary brigade and local council that had established themselves after the city's capture by a coalition of revolutionary forces in October 2011. Repeated clashes between militias in Tripoli, as well as local conflicts to the west and south of the capital, underlined the NTC's continued inability to establish its control over armed groups. Among the most common triggers for clashes between militias from different towns, or recruited from different tribes, were attempts by one group to arrest or disarm members of another community. Another common feature was attempts by one party to label their adversaries as 'Gaddafi loyalists', which often occurred when the conflict involved tribal constituencies that had played a key role in the former regime's security apparatus, such as the Gaddadfa, Warfalla or Magarha. Altogether, the NTC and its transitional government were unable to contain the growing rivalries between councils and militias representing local or tribal interests.

Outlook: Key Actors in the Transition

According to the NTC's 'constitutional declaration' of August 2011, which lays out the timetable for the transition, elections to a general assembly are to take place within eight months of Libya's declaration of liberation, i.e. by 23 June 2012. The assembly is in turn to appoint a provisional government and a constituent committee, which will have two months to produce a draft constitution. New elections are to be held seven months after the constitution has been adopted by referendum.

The dynamics that prevailed in the civil war and its aftermath would suggest that actors representing local or tribal interests will also be the defining forces during the transition. According to the electoral law adopted in early February 2012, three-fifths of representatives to the general assembly are to be elected on the basis of local constituencies – whose boundaries and weighting has yet to be announced, and could become the subject of power struggles – while the remainder will enter the assembly through national party lists. Local and tribal interests are therefore likely to feature strongly in both electoral campaigning and post-election politics. Indeed, it would be difficult to give greater weight to national lists, since there are (as of February 2012) virtually no nationwide political forces.

Even the various Islamist currents, which appear to have the greatest potential to emerge as national forces, have yet to evolve into well-defined parties and movements. They include the Libyan Muslim Brotherhood; a group surrounding the influential preacher Ali al-Sallabi, who is close to the international Muslim Brotherhood; the former members of the defunct LIFG; and grassroots Salafi networks.

It remains unclear to what extent these forces – as well as other new political parties that have mushroomed since the fall of Tripoli – can transform the political arena and help national politics to take precedence over parochial interests. The predominantly young members of the revolutionary brigades could potentially represent an important constituency for such national forces, since the backroom politics of

local tribal notables and elites in Tripoli could quickly alienate them. Local forces could coalesce into broader coalitions over a range of key questions, including the role of Islam in the new state; how to approach the prosecution of crimes perpetrated during the civil war, as well as during Gaddafi's rule; or whether to choose a centralist, federal or decentralised state model.

In the meantime, however, the absence of broader coalitions of interest groups also prevents local conflicts and power struggles from widening into larger-scale confrontations. Despite the possible development of national political forces, the local actors and power centres that emerged during the civil war are likely to remain a key force for some time to come. The central government is facing resistance to its efforts to bring brigades, weapons and prisons controlled by cities and tribes under its control. Given the government's legitimacy deficit, major progress on these issues is unlikely before the elections to the General Assembly. Even after the elections, however, local players could seek to use their military power to exert political influence. The transition is set to proceed under a loose, fractious coalition of competing local interests rather than a coherent central leadership. The question of distribution of power and influence over the spending of oil and gas revenues will be at the heart of rivalries among local players. While the central government's control of oil revenues could eventually lead to its renewed ascent, this is not yet on the horizon.

Implications for European Policy

External actors should avoid attempting to influence the outcome of the power struggles shaping the Libyan transition by trying to pick winners. Such attempts would be likely to damage the domestic legitimacy of the transitional process, and would be ultimately counterproductive: where leading figures have been perceived to be too closely associated with external interests, such perceptions have been effortlessly exploited by their political rivals.

While the EU and other international actors should support the development of civil society organisations and political parties, they face obstacles in providing effective support. Given that local organisations have only started to emerge since early 2011, it is often difficult to assess their background and interests. Moreover, suspicion of external interests remains wide-spread; extensive foreign support for local civil society groups could easily provoke a negative backlash. Rather than supporting individual organisations, the EU and its member states could support the development of civil society and national politics by helping boost access to information and fostering national debate. One way of doing so would be to support local journalism and media outlets, and back initiatives that reach beyond Tripoli and Benghazi to the hinterland.

Calm and Squalls:
The Small Gulf Monarchies in the Arab Spring

Katja Niethammer

Seen from the Western perspective, the statelets along the Gulf of Arabia – Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) – have been a sideshow to the Arab Spring. In fact, its ripples have been felt here too, with protests of quite different forms and magnitudes occurring in the different Gulf statelets. At one end of the spectrum is the tiny kingdom of Bahrain, where tens of thousands took to the streets in long-running conflicts that were suppressed with a brutality not otherwise witnessed in the region. At the other end is Qatar, where no demonstrations took place. What they all have in common is that rapid transformations of the political systems are not to be expected.

Dissatisfaction Everywhere, But Few Commonalities

A brief overview demonstrates the range of difference in forms of protest. The demonstrations in *Qatar* were insignificant and in fact rather scurrilous, as they were purely virtual. A Facebook group calling for the abdication of the emir had already been deleted by the end of February 2011.[1] In the *UAE* there were limited demonstrations by labour migrants renewing their demands for practical improvements. A new development in the Emirates' context, however, was a petition by intellectuals, primarily university staff and former members of the Federal National Council, demanding free, open elections to that body. In *Oman* about two hundred citizens demonstrated as early as January 2011, and further protests ensued, although remained largely restricted to peripheral areas. Demands did not centre on political participation (and even less on regime change) but on jobs, pay rises and anti-corruption. After the protests began to escalate in February, the Sultan, who has ruled since 1970, succeeded in

taking the wind out of their sails by conceding certain demands and announcing the introduction of unemployment benefit, as well as conducting several cabinet reshuffles. Amendments were made to the Basic Law, the most important one being the addition of two civilian officials to the group of ruling family members that chooses the sultan's successor. Also, parliamentarians have been granted immunity to freely express their opinions. A high turnout in the October 2011 elections for the lower house suggests that Oman now has entered into a phase of peaceful political activism. Since then the situation has remained largely calm. Developments took a different turn again in *Kuwait*. On the one hand stateless people who have lived for several generations in Kuwait largely without rights, known as Bedoun, demonstrated for legalisation of their status and access to the Kuwaiti welfare state. These protests were vigorously suppressed and some Bedoun imprisoned for weeks. At the same time there were also protests from Kuwaiti citizens seeking democratic reforms and the dismissal of the prime minister, but not calling into question the fundamental arrangements of governance. By far the largest protests occurred in *Bahrain*, where up to one hundred thousand demonstrators took to the streets; an astonishing proportion of the population in a country with less than one million citizens. The regime declared a state of emergency and crushed the protests in mid-March 2011 with the assistance of troops from Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Several protesters died and more than one thousand activists were imprisoned, with some given life sentences in show trials. This escalation by the regime led in turn to calls for the abolition of the monarchy. Although the state of emergency was lifted on 1 June, the protests have continued as no tangible concessions have been made to the demonstrators' demands.

A New Facebook Generation?

This cursory overview shows that the question of what forces are behind the protests cannot be answered in

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1 L. Barkan, *Clashes on Facebook over Calls for Revolution in Qatar*, Inquiry and Analysis Series 672 (Washington, D.C.: Middle East Media Research Institute, 3 March 2011), http://www. memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/0/5058.htm.

general terms, as the internal situations in the different statelets vary too widely. Until 2001 the UAE, Qatar and Oman had neither an organised opposition nor a civil society (or even any debating culture to speak of). That is different in Kuwait and Bahrain, where political parties and NGOs operate and there is a lively if not exactly free media debate. In Bahrain the present conflicts are rooted in old distribution conflicts between an overwhelmingly Shiite underprivileged majority and the ruling Sunni elite, which have erupted at intervals for decades. In that sense the mass demonstrations there are not simply a phenomenon of 2011.

Nonetheless, in general, we can identify two groups: those that appeared in public for the first time in 2011, and those that were already politically active and saw the Arab Spring as an opportunity to gain more publicity (and thus greater chances of winning their demands). The first group, the "new" actors, appears to have had little impact in the Gulf region, the Qatari Facebook activities being a case in point. Although at the height of its popularity the biggest of these Facebook groups had been "liked" by about thirty-six thousand users, repeated calls for demonstrations came to naught.

Where public protests did occur in the monarchies, there were also real groups operating outside of electronic social networks, as was case with the sustained protests in Kuwait and Bahrain. In both states there were and still are regular demonstrations: smaller, more consensus-seeking and more peaceful in Kuwait, larger, more conflictual and partly violent in Bahrain.[2] Opposition groups, which have been working for political reforms for years in both countries, grasped the opportunity of the Arab Spring, also to gain international support, even if their efforts were in vain. Opposition forces certainly did make greater use than in the past of blogs, internet forums, Twitter, YouTube, mass text messaging and Facebook to organise, and these channels were decisive for coordinating and reporting the protests in both countries. This is not unexpected, as the state-run television stations and print media are censored and satellite broadcasters like al-Jazeera and al-Arabiya were plainly pre-

2 One example of larger (and ultimately successful) protests in Kuwait was the campaign to change the electoral law in 2006, which led to that the number of constituencies being reduced from twenty-five to five. A Bahraini example is the demonstrations since 2005 for a constitutional amendment, which brought tens of thousands of citizens onto the streets without achieving any successes.

vented from reporting the protests in the Gulf. Simply due to demographic developments a majority of the protesters belongs to a young technology-savvy generation, and the use of mobile phones and computers is very widespread in the Gulf region anyway.

Regimes in the region responded to these developments by clamping down on freedom of expression. Already restrictive media laws have been tightened further. In the comparatively calm UAE five activists were arrested in April 2011 and charged with "using the Internet to insult UAE leaders". Even Qatar, which markets itself as a liberal country, published a new media law that permits punishment of journalists and bloggers for hostile reporting about friendly states. In Kuwait and Bahrain known political activists were detained and bloggers and tweeters targeted for arrest. These new forms of organisation have proven problematic for the autocrats: as became especially obvious in Bahrain, it is no longer enough to lock away the organisational leaders of protests. New activists appear quickly to replace them, willing to put their mobile phones and computers at the service of the protest movement. But it has also been shown that if opposition takes place only in the internet and is not tied to any organisation in the real world it is bound to remain ineffectual.

Forces of Inertia Strong as Ever

No change is apparent on the part of the authoritarian regimes. The dynasties continue to rule with the tested tools of repression while at the same time making concessions that pose no risk to their power and continuing to distribute (financial) gifts. There is no reason to believe that this will change any time soon, still less that the Gulf states could transform themselves into constitutional monarchies on the European model. To understand why such a transformation is not on the cards it is worth taking a look at the special conditions of governance that prevail in these countries: It is not just the rulers who exercise power, but their entire extended families. Family members occupy the most important cabinet posts as well as dominating the judiciary, the military and the sphere of (civil) society as well as broad swathes of the economy. Many thousands of family members live directly from the exploitation of the state's resources and are thus far too dependent on oil rents and state posts to be able to grant parliaments serious means of control, still less powers of government. This form of govern-

ance distinguishes the Gulf monarchies in a central manner from their European counterparts (and also from Jordan and Morocco) and blocks the path to instituting a European-style monarch as head of state without real power.

The Biggest Challenge: Western Credibility

Neither the Western public nor its politicians have taken much note of the repression in the Gulf states. Even Bahrain received only a gentle ticking off for its brutal action against demonstrators. There are reasons for this of course: Firstly, there is a major US naval base in Bahrain that is welcomed by the regime but overwhelmingly rejected by the population. The same applies to the US air base in Qatar. Secondly, in the case of Bahrain there are fears of a Shiite Islamist insurrection modelled on (and supported by) Iran. In fact these concerns are mistaken. The Bahraini opposition is certainly heavily Shiite, but its political work over the past ten years demonstrates that it is working for political participation and rule of law, and not for an Islamist state. But the third and main reason for Western silence is probably Saudi Arabia's clear backing of the autocratic regimes. The West depends on Saudi support and resources and therefore shies away from conflict with the Gulf autocrats.

This leaves popular perceptions in the Arab world dominated by an impression that the West backs autocrats in the Gulf states as long as they pursue a pro-Western foreign policy. This obvious double standard threatens to undermine the proclaimed fresh start for Western policies towards Arab societies and states. Nonetheless, this conflict of interests – need for Saudi support versus credibility – cannot be swept under the carpet. The ruling elites are well aware of it, and given that the Gulf states have little in the way of institutional ties with the EU, the possibilities for European countries to have a stronger influence on domestic policies are marginal. All the same, the Gulf rulers do need Western goodwill as they search for backing against Iran. European policy should make use of that small opening to clearly address human rights violations and to point out the importance of political dialogue between the Gulf's rulers and the various groups in their societies.

No "Facebook Revolution" – But an Egyptian Youth We Know Little About

Asiem El Difraoui

The new media played an important role in mobilising the Arab uprisings. Young Arabs chose Facebook, Twitter and YouTube to send the news of their mass protests around the world. Yet, although symbiotic interaction of new media and mobile phones with more familiar communications channels such as television and newspapers has fundamentally transformed political communication, it was the people rather than the media that were the decisive factor for change in the region. There were real political and socio-economic reasons behind the Arab Spring: the misery and disaffection of a whole generation – a generation that comprises various political, religious and social groups about which we still know too little. This general lack of knowledge was impressively demonstrated when the world suddenly realised after the Egyptian parliamentary elections that the Salafis were a major political force.

In Egypt as in other Arab countries, democratisation can only be effectively promoted if all relevant societal actors and groups are identified and included, along with their needs and hopes. Only then can effective projects be developed, social and religious tensions reduced and the long-term development of the country effectively promoted. The creative use of new media by younger Egyptians opens up new chances for German development organisations, political foundations and other relevant actors to communicate directly with the youth, making it possible above all to reach groups that have otherwise been neglected and marginalised.

Youth and Change

The term "youth" must be understood in a broad sense here. The Egyptian revolution was not led by adolescents but rather by the generation of twenty-five- to forty-year-olds who are mostly still dependent on their parental home and share similar problems like unemployment and poverty. Together the two groups, adolescents and young adults, make up more than half of the population.

Certain sub-groupings of Egyptian youth have risen to prominence through the revolution. One of the best-known is the April 6 Youth Movement, a Facebook group which led the initial mobilisation for the protests. It was founded in 2008 by educated, mostly middle class activists including former members of the democracy movement Kifaya (Arabic for "enough"). Since 2005 Kifaya had been calling without success for Hosni Mubarak to resign without handing power to his son Gamal. The "6 April" in the name recalls the bloody suppression of a textile workers' strike in the Nile Delta city of al-Mahalla al-Kubra in 2008. Although the initiative failed in its attempt to expand this initially limited labour protest into a general strike, the Facebook page accumulated thousands of members. Some of the militants sought advice from the Serbian Otpor movement.[1] Under the guidance of the Serbs and the Qatari Academy of Change the young Egyptian activists developed strategies for non-violent resistance and for mass mobilisation through the new media.

The members of the Facebook group We Are All Khaled Said also contributed decisively to the revolution. The key event that led to its founding was the murder of the blogger Khaled Said, who was arrested in an internet café and beaten to death by Egyptian police in June 2010. While the security forces claimed that the young man had died after swallowing a packet of hashish, photos of his disfigured corpse disseminated on the internet clearly evidence the brutality with which the twenty-eight-year-old citizen of Alexandria had been assaulted. We Are All Khaled Said was already organising spectacular protests before the Arab Spring, for example a human chain in Alexandria, and became one of the driving forces behind the upheaval. The Facebook group's administrator, the thirty-year-old Google head of marketing for the Middle East and North Africa Wael Ghonim, was arrested on 28 January 2011 and detained in secret

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[1] The Serbian youth movement played a decisive role in the toppling of dictator Slobodan Milošević in 2000.

for twelve days. He later became one of the icons of the revolution.

In January 2011 members of We Are All Khaled Said and the April 6 Youth Movement joined forces with eight other opposition groups to create the Coalition of the Youth of the Revolution. Emboldened by the toppling of Tunisian President Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali, the Coalition used Facebook to call for the decisive mass demonstration on 25 January 2011. Afterwards the activists contacted the country's cautious but best-organised movement, the Muslim Brotherhood. It was the Brotherhood's youth wing and supporters of the two biggest Egyptian football clubs who decided the street battle against the security forces at the climax of the demonstrations on 28 January.

However, the revolution was also carried by a broad base that includes social groups that are very disparate and about which we know very little: female peasants,[2] local opposition formations like youth committees in provincial towns, Salafist networks in Upper Egypt and the Fayoum Oasis, and female academics in the provinces (in Egypt almost 60 percent of university graduates are female). Even less is known about marginalised population groups like young day labourers or the rural unemployed.

Young Egyptians of all population groups demonstrated an astonishing degree of unity in the events leading to the fall of Mubarak. As is often the case in post-revolutionary situations this unity is now crumbling. Some of the groups that played a decisive role in the revolution have founded their own parties. Young members of the Muslim Brotherhood set up their own formation because they felt that the old guard was too religious and not political enough. Other revolutionaries have joined existing or newly founded parties such as the liberal Free Egyptians Party of billionaire Naguib Sawiris or the Hizb al-adl, the Justice Party, jointly founded by supporters of the April 6 Youth Movement and Kifaya. Wael Ghonim, the icon of the revolution, is now working primarily at the civil society level. He plans to fight poverty through technical education, with his own aid organisation.

It is, however, worrying that the ruling military council is attempting to delegitimise groups that played a decisive role in the revolution and exclude them from the political process for the sake of

preserving its own power and strengthening conservative forces. One example of this was the exclusion of the April 6 Youth Movement from consultations about the electoral law. The forces that drove the revolution in the Egyptian countryside and provincial towns appear to be completely unorganised.

Challenges and New Possibilities for Engagement

In order to prevent large parts of the Egyptian youth remaining economically marginalised and excluded from the political process, and reforms grinding to a standstill, it is first of all crucial for Egyptian and foreign organisations and foundations to know more about the young generation. That is the only way to tailor existing and new programmes to this target group and promote the emergence of a politically involved young generation. Fortunately there was a certain amount of empirical research into young Egyptians and their living conditions under Mubarak. Thus we have information about average income and know that almost 90 percent of all the unemployed in 2010 were younger than thirty.[3] On the other hand there has been virtually no qualitative research to date. Too little is known about the opinions, needs and aspirations of the youth. The 2010 Human Development Report rightly calls for a dedicated "Youth Research Center" to investigate the needs of the younger generation, especially in the provinces, through intensive field research and opinion surveys.

On that basis initiatives should then be developed to specifically address the youth, potentially building on existing concepts. One example for this is the Egyptian government's "Thousand Villages Project", where the country's poorest villages are to be supplied with basic infrastructure such as running water and sewerage under a poverty reduction plan run by the Egyptian government and the World Bank. At the same time minimal cultural services are to be established. The project mobilises young volunteers, who thus learn to assume social responsibility. The proposed National Youth Policy for Egypt, which sets out to create youth centres in all larger villages, also dates from the Mubarak era. Although one hundred and

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2 Hundreds of peasant women from the villages came to the capital in January to prevent the army moving against the demonstrators.

3 United Nations Development Programme, ed., *Egypt Human Development Report 2010: Youth in Egypt: Building Our Future* (n.p., 2010), 147–59, http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/national/arabstates/egypt/Egypt_2010_en.pdf.

forty-three such meeting places were founded in 2008, their range is restricted to sporting activities. Today the centres could also be used for cultural and political education programmes. Existing civil society initiatives like Alashanek Ya Balady (Arabic for "for my country") could be involved or even become lead actors. The organisation, originally founded as a student association at the American University in Cairo, attempts to strengthen the economic and social position of marginalised youth, especially women. Alashanek Ya Balady now has numerous branches, including at the German University in Cairo. The range of activities extends from literacy programmes and craft training to the awarding of microcredits.

The new communication culture of social media and smartphones also offers a chance to intervene supportively. Throughout the difficult transformation process young Egyptians are engaged in energetic discussions about the meaning and function of democracy using the new media. The relevant ministries and political foundations could use these tools not only to communicate directly with the youth even in rural areas but also to offer tangible support such as stipends or microcredits. Facebook, YouTube and popular Arabic-language websites also enable a comprehensive dialogue about democracy, rule of law and Islam, as well as about everyday issues such as training, jobs, leisure and relationships. Participating in this discussion on the internet would offer a possibility for the European political foundations to pursue creative foreign policy and to play an important role in the transformation in the Arab world. Generally the new media can also be deployed to promote the emergence of a new culture of innovation among the Egyptian youth, which has hitherto been kept down by state control and a static education system.

The Goethe Institute's initiative to open the Tahrir Lounge is an important step. It provides a meeting point for young Egyptians who wish to build a democratic Egypt, with a free internet café in Cairo and a branch in the often neglected Nile Delta. This project should be expanded into all Egypt's major cities, in order to reach neglected population groups too. In this connection the founding and expansion of conventional media such as local television and radio stations is also of great importance, in order to reach the large number of illiterate people.

II.
Social, Economic and Political Challenges

Saudi Arabia: Buying Stability?

Ulrike Freitag

Saudi Arabia is an absolute monarchy largely financed by oil exports. The power of the king (since 2005 Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz) is restrained by Koran and sharia, whose constitutional status is guarded by the clerics, on the one hand, and by the roughly five thousand members of the royal family, in particular a smaller circle of influential princes, on the other. The king, who enjoys relatively strong popularity, has initiated a process of cautious social reforms over the past decade. Encouraged by the Arab Spring, several groups published petitions at the beginning of 2011, and there were smaller rallies and demonstrations especially in the Eastern Province, which has a considerable Shiite population. But a call for nation-wide demonstrations went unheeded, and potential participants were discouraged by a massive police presence. The initiators of such protests are above all intellectuals and clerics of various political persuasions from both the Sunni and Shiite camps (about 15 percent of the population are Shiites). A petition initiated by journalists addressed first and foremost the demands of youth (almost half the population is younger than eighteen). One important sub-group of online activists are educated (and often employed) women working both for women's rights and together with men for a fundamental reform of the political system. The most important domestic challenges taken up by the activists have been apparent for years.

Political Challenges

One central demand of the activists is a fundamental transformation of the state into a constitutional parliamentary monarchy. This would turn the appointed Consultative Assembly, which was formalised in 1992 in the scope of a codification of the Islamic system of government, into an elected parliament, and reform the constitution to institutionalise a division of powers and improve the protection of basic rights. The demand for political participation reflects rising levels of education and above all frustration with administrative inefficiency. So it comes as no surprise that other demands relate to a deep overhaul of the administrative system, as well as the release of political prisoners. Apart from corruption, segmented clientelist structures in the key ministries, most of which are run by princes, paralyse the administration, especially given that often several ministries are involved in a decision or its implementation. One example of this were the devastating floods in Jeddah in 2009 and 2011, which could have been avoided by timely implementation of long-planned water and sewage infrastructure projects and better construction and transport planning. Especially in 2009, the floods led to a mass mobilisation via social media, largely of young people. While the initiative was primarily about emergency relief for those who lost their homes and possessions, it also served as a catalyst for demanding action against corruption. To what extent the new anti-corruption agency, founded in March 2011 in response to the protests, is equipped to rectify such problems remains to be seen. It is not the first such attempt to contain corruption, and it fails to address the structural problems, instead creating a parallel structure while neglecting to fundamentally reform the old or address the problem for which it was created. Similar phenomena can often be observed in Saudi Arabia.

With the king in poor health and former Crown Prince Sultan dying in October 2011, the question of succession became central. Since 2006 the succession has been decided by the thirty-five members of the Allegiance Council. It duly acclaimed Interior Minister Prince Nayef, since 2010 Second Deputy Prime Minister, as Crown Prince. While the decision-making processes, which take place exclusively within the royal family, are difficult to penetrate from outside, it seems that this decision in favour of a prince known for his conservative leanings was not uncontroversial. The appointment of grandchildren of the state's founder Ibn Saud to important government and military positions suggests that an internal redistribution of influential positions between different factions within the family has begun, even if past experience

would ultimately lead us to expect a show of family unity when it comes to crucial decisions.

Challenges in the Field of the Judiciary and Religion

The question of what role the religious scholars, who are vital for the Islamic legitimacy of the Al Saud dynasty, but also central to public life and the legal system, should play represents a further challenge. In the past the leading clerics have generally taken the side of the monarchy, but radical preachers remain an important inspiration to the young Islamists who sporadically set out to topple the regime.

The creation of an autonomous Saudi judiciary in 1975 divided the religious scholars. A judicial reform announced in 2009 proposes expanding the independence of the courts from the Justice Ministry, but the extent to which the Supreme Judicial Council appointed by the king will actually succeed in operating more independently than the ministry remains to be seen. The codification of the sharia that is being considered to improve legal security, especially in the fields of criminal and family law, would considerably restrict the substantial latitude enjoyed by individual judges.

Sharia not only affects law but lifestyle as well, and fatwas have become a popular means to lend Islamic legitimation to controversial issues such as education, culture, leisure or the position of women in public life. In order to stem the proliferation of controversial fatwas and thus take the heat out of the religious debate, the king decreed at the end of 2010 that only members of the Council of Senior Scholars were permitted to publish fatwas. This establishes state control in a highly contested field designed both to block radical Islamic positions and to fend off overly liberal interpretations of religious law. This control of religious statements came in parallel to a clampdown on public expression and debate in other areas that had been generally cautiously liberalised only in the past decade (above all journalism but also cultural work). The large number of political prisoners locked up without trial shows that Saudi Arabia has a long way to go in the field of guaranteeing basic political and civil rights, as does the "Islamic" ban on demonstrations.

Finally, the role of the religious police must be mentioned. Operating under the authority of the Interior Ministry to enforce Islamic laws concerning dress, food and other aspects of lifestyle, controversy over its role in public life thus falls at the intersection of debate over the influence of religion in Saudi Arabia with power struggles between the various factions of the royal family and the different institutions they control. Recent moves to limit the role of volunteers within the religious police may be understood as an attempt to limit what was perceived as undue interference in public life.

It remains to be seen to what extent the strengthening of the previously heavily criticised religious establishment, which has been apparent since March 2011, will revise the previous policy of opening. At any rate, the reasserted alliance between the House of Saud and the scholars potentially represents a central challenge for its relationship to the population and its modernisation policies.

Social Challenges

The aforementioned question of gender relations represents a central issue. Whereas the driving ban for women is widely known in the West and the strict separation of the sexes in public is conspicuous, other matters are actually often more important for Saudi women: legal and political equality as well as access to the labour market are their priorities. Especially in the latter area striking progress has been made in recent years. The quantitative and qualitative expansion of education (for both men and women) has dramatically increased the number of women able to compete successfully on the labour market. They are making great use of the new opportunities and many are committing themselves consciously to future equality, making use of official channels (for example public engagement, education, national dialogue, advisory functions, journalistic activity, petitions and so on) as well as campaigns (for example for the right to vote and against the driving ban) to demand their rights. Women are not represented in the Consultative Assembly, nor were they permitted to stand or vote in the 2005 and 2011 local elections. The potential for dogged lobbying work to bear fruit was demonstrated in September 2011 when the king announced that women would be admitted into the Consultative Assembly and would receive the right to stand and vote in local elections. This is an important step, even if its immediate repercussions are likely to remain rather moderate because many conservative men and

women continue to oppose any active participation by women in public and political life.

Another problem that affects women and young people most of all is the high level of unemployment. Figures vary between 6 and 30 percent. Moreover, up to 30 percent of Saudi citizens live below the poverty line. Foreigners supply 75 to 80 percent of the labour force, partly because Saudis lack the required training and qualifications, partly on the basis of their idiosyncratic "labour morale" and higher wage expectations. At some point in the future the large presence of foreigners in Saudi Arabia could confront the authoritarian regime with demands, especially by second-generation immigrants, for education and possibly even for citizenship. Attempts to enforce a policy of "Saudisation" to increase the proportion of Saudi staff in companies and government agencies through state regulation have largely failed. A new initiative launched in spring 2011 was explicitly presented as a response to the demands of Saudi youth. The measures are accompanied by the expansion of universities and the sending of large groups of students abroad (currently about one hundred and twenty thousand). Unemployment and lack of leisure opportunities (from entertainment through to social and political activity) have led in recent years both to religious radicalisation and to growing problems with drugs and hooliganism.

The treatment of religious minorities brings together religious, political and social questions. The religious diversity among the country's Muslims was officially recognised only in 2003, in the scope of the National Dialogue; previously the Shiites had often been denied the status of 'real' Muslims. They are still targeted by religious polemics and suffer widespread prejudices. The public practice of Shiite beliefs (above all ceremonies mourning Imam Hussein) is still suppressed in many places and the recruitment of Shiites to top government, military and security positions continues to be treated very restrictively. Saudi support for the crushing of the largely Shiite uprising in Bahrain in spring 2011 has further reinforced Shiite alienation, especially in the immediately adjacent Eastern Province. While the recurrent protests, resulting arrests and occasional shootings are officially portrayed as the actions of Iranian *agents provocateurs*, many Shiites would dispute such a view and argue that their political and economic demands continue to be ignored.

Economic Challenges

For all its diversification efforts, the Saudi economy remains dependent on its largely state-owned oil sector and petrochemical industry. This makes the country very vulnerable both to fluctuations in the world economy and to the problem of the finite nature of fossil fuels. The latter is exacerbated by strongly rising local energy consumption, making the question of alternative sources of energy central in the medium to long term. In recent years the government has made efforts to boost diversification and create new jobs by stimulating private investment and developing the industrial and services sectors (IT, commerce, education, tourism). It is not yet apparent whether this will also increase the influence of private-sector actors on political decision-making processes.

Outlook and Policy Options

The House of Saud has sought to release domestic political and social pressure through the reform process of recent years, but it has refused to permit fundamental changes to the system. This orientation on the status quo has been backed up by alternately promoting liberal and religious/conservative forces, the former advertised as backing the overdue modernisation of the country, the latter generally presented in terms of satisfying the conservatism of large parts of the population. This phenomenon can be seen in the developments of spring 2011, when the House of Saud deployed a combination of measures to smother the mood of expectation triggered by the Arab Spring rather than grasping it as an opportunity for further reforms. The means chosen included big spending to counter poverty (minimum wage in the state sector, unemployment benefit, job creation, social housing construction) combined with moves to strengthen the position of the scholars, who once again backed the government, for example with a fatwa rejecting demonstrations as "un-Islamic". In this respect the sole exception to date is the women's right to vote, granted in autumn 2011. The monarchy successfully deployed its security forces to prevent demonstrations, and took harsh actions against activists. Even if there is no reason to believe that this approach can work indefinitely, the internal pressure of change does not seem yet strong enough to generate mass protests. While this might be linked to the relative well-being

of large (but by no means all) sectors of society and the genuine popularity of the monarchy among certain sectors of society, it might also be linked to the lack of a credible opposition and thus of a popular alternative political scenario. There is, as yet, relatively little dialogue between oppositional forces which are, anyway, banned from organising within the country. Furthermore, the violence accompanying the Libyan, Yemeni and Syrian revolutions with their uncertain outcomes has clearly a deterring effect.

It seems contradictory that the West supported the revolutions in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya, but at the same time keeps backing a monarchy which has helped a neighbouring state (Bahrain) to suppress a popular uprising in 2011. Because of its economic importance, its geostrategic location and its regional policies (i.e. its antagonistic position vis à vis Iran and moderate policies towards Israel), Saudi Arabia has for a long time been a major ally notably of the United States. It is therefore unlikely that it will come under any great external pressure to institute fundamental political reforms in the foreseeable future. To that extent, Europeans mainly have the option of cautious dialogue. This might include addressing the desirability of a constitutional monarchy and a larger role for a democratically elected Consultative Assembly, or even its conversion into a parliament. The importance of human rights needs to be emphasised with reference to the international conventions the country has signed (including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, CEDAW). Promising and important fields of cooperation are education and culture, which have gained in importance as a result of the reforms discussed above. Special attention should be paid to including women who, despite their often marginal presence in public political space, represent a growing potential of influential and at the same time critical educated Saudis. That will allow an enhanced dialogue with the educated population, the barely organised "civil society", extending well beyond the political elites.

Yemen Without Ali Abdallah Saleh?

Iris Glosemeyer

The fall of Tunisian President Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali in January 2011 immediately raised question marks over the future of the most fragile of Arab states. Yemeni students initially took to the streets in January to demonstrate solidarity with the Tunisians, but within just a few days their peaceful protests turned against their own President Ali Abdallah Saleh. Other groups successively joined the young demonstrators and the country's main towns and cities became the stage for mass demonstrations for and against the president that resembled festivals – until the deployment of snipers on 18 March 2011.

Following the examples of the presidents of Libya and Syria, rather than those of his counterparts in Tunisia and Egypt, Saleh, a master of delaying tactics, stubbornly resisted resigning. Not even an initiative presented by the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) in April and an unclaimed assassination attempt on 3 June that forced him to spend more than three months in Saudi Arabia for treatment seemed to impress the president. Refusing three times to put his signature to the GCC document, Saleh showed the world yet again that he had no intention of relinquishing his post without a fight. Not until 23 November 2011 did he sign a transition agreement based on the Gulf states' initiative. While Saleh left the country again for medical treatment in January 2012 and a referendum on his successor took place on 21 February 2012, his relatives and supporters still cling to influential positions in the security apparatus, protests against some elements of the Gulf initiative continue and major parts of the country are beyond government control. In short: The risk of state collapse and a civil war with regional repercussions has not been eliminated.

The Consequences of Bad Alliances

What we are seeing today is the outcome of a change of strategy from inclusion to exclusion since the mid-1990s. A clear shift in the balance of forces occurred after 9/11, and again after the death of the politically influential Sheikh Abdullah al-Ahmar in December 2007: The security forces gained access to new political rents and the president strengthened his networks. As long as the Yemeni president was able to present himself as a vital ally in the War on Terror, the international community plainly saw no problem in him placing his sons, sons-in-law and nephews at neuralgic points in the military and security apparatus. Foreign suppliers had no control over the arms they provided. In the ensuing period traditional gentlemen's agreements between the president and actors like the politically and economically influential al-Ahmar family lost their force. As a consequence, the al-Ahmar clan actively supported the protest movement, and generally the list of Saleh's former allies who are now his foes is long. It includes southern Yemeni elites of diverse political persuasions as well as tribal, political/religious and military elites like General Ali Mohsin al-Ahmar, the most powerful man in the military and security apparatus after Ali Abdallah Saleh.[1]

The strategy shift was accompanied by Saleh's attempts to secure the office of president for his family, emulating other Arab presidential dynasties. Constitutional amendments to officially abolish the restriction on the number of presidential terms were accepted for debate by parliament on 1 January 2011, angering the opposition and coinciding with the first protests in North Africa. Saleh's unilateral termination of the elite coalition left him with few domestic allies, and the murder of more than fifty demonstrators by snipers on 18 March turned even the politically neutral against him (although it remains unclear whether he actually ordered the operation).

Actors

Despite the president's strategy of divide and rule, the opposition has succeeded over the past decade in

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[1] Ali Muhsin is not related to the family of Sheikh al-Ahmar but stems, like the president, from the Sanhan tribe's village of Bayt al-Ahmar.

bringing together socialists, Islamists, Baathists and other political currents in the Joint Meeting Parties coalition (JMP). But outside the political centre ideological rifts remain deep. The protests in North Africa functioned as a catalyst and fueled massive demonstrations, while the organised opposition was largely unprepared for the window of opportunity that opened up in January 2011. It has neither a common ideological denominator nor an institutional base, and the age and attitudes of the leading generation in the political parties is an obstacle to cooperation between the JMP and "the street": The overwhelmingly young demonstrators do not feel represented by the JMP, and there is at least a generation of age difference between the leaders of the JMP and prominent figures of the civil society scene. Many of them see the JMP as representing the old system. While the JMP accepted the Gulf initiative that provides a mechanism for a peaceful transfer of power in return for immunity for President Saleh and his followers, the demonstrators maintained their demand that Saleh should be prosecuted. Their opposition to the immunity law, approved by parliament on 21 January 2012, is shared by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and international human rights organizations. According to Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, at least two hundred protesters were killed and thousands injured during 2011.

The volume of weaponry circulating in the country and the degree of violence used against the demonstrators gave reason to fear that the peaceful demonstrations would quickly degenerate into violent armed clashes. In fact, throughout the first year of protests the demonstrators showed themselves to be exceptionally disciplined, even when they were beaten, shot at and arrested, their protest camps were burned and living conditions steadily deteriorated.

The president was just as unprepared as the JMP for the developments in the region. During 2011, Saleh has further isolated himself at home and abroad to a point where he is left relying solely on his patronage network, for which he needs access to resources. But he still enjoys the respect of many Yemenis and knows how to exploit the population's fear of a complete collapse of the state. The ongoing weakness of the Yemeni state, manifested in the lack of adequate infrastructure, functioning administration and social security systems, reminds Yemenis on a daily basis how important personal networks are. The reasoning cited by the late Sheikh Abdullah al-Ahmar for his decision to support the president for re-election in 2006 still convinces many Yemenis today: "better the devil you know than the devil you don't."[2] If at some point in the future, Saleh were to stand for President again, his victory can by no means be excluded.

Protracted Conflicts and Their Regional and International Dimensions

Resistance to the presidential network has grown steadily in the north and south of the country, erupting into violent clashes time and again especially in the past ten years. Alongside many small sources of conflict there are three major ones. First, the uprising of the Houthi rebels in some of the governorates bordering on Saudi Arabia to the north, directed against Saleh's clumsy attempts to wrest control over these areas and against his alliance with the United States (since 2004); second, resistance in governorates of the former People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY), which see themselves as the losers of the 1990 unification with the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR) (since 2007 loosely organised in al-Hirak al-Janubi or Southern Movement); third, the militant and in several cases non-Yemeni extremists who reorganised in 2009 to form al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). Recent developments have offered new opportunities for AQAP, the Houthis and al-Hirak. A collapse of the state would give AQAP greater latitude, and some observers foresee a secession of the southern and northern governorates leaving only a rump state without any natural resources to speak of.

Two of the long-running conflicts have a regional or international dimension. The formation of AQAP by Saudi and Yemeni extremists has repercussions within and potentially beyond the region, even if attacks to date have been mostly directed against Saudi and Yemeni targets. In recent months, AQAP affiliates and imitators have temporarily taken control over smaller towns in the southern part of the country. The Houthi rebellion in turn involves Saudi Arabia and – if the claims of the Yemeni government are to be believed – Iran. After fighting occurred on Saudi territory in 2009 some observers fear a Saudi-Iranian war by proxy in Yemen, even if the relationship between the Houthis and Iran is unclear. To date, no reliable evidence has been presented proving any involvement of Tehran. However, the assumption that the Houthis are

2 *Al-Ahram Weekly Online* (Cairo), no. 812, 14–20 September 2006.

supported by the Iranian government fits well with the perceptions of many regional and international observers.

Yemen is seen in some quarters as a primarily Saudi problem. Yet Saudi Arabia, despite throwing its weight behind the GCC mediation initiative in April 2011, appeared powerless in the face of developments in Yemen for most of 2011. The death of Sheikh Abdullah al-Ahmar in 2007 cut off one of the central communication channels between Yemen and Saudi Arabia, and the former negotiator on the Saudi side, Defence Minister Sultan bin Abdul Aziz, died in October 2011 after a long period of poor health. And anyway, Saudi interventions have been largely restricted to chequebook diplomacy designed to preserve the status quo. President Saleh skilfully exploited this vacuum and systematically sabotaged international mediation efforts. His arrogant behaviour towards the mediators of the GCC initiative, which was supported by the United States, the EU and the UN, however, cost him regional and international goodwill. On 21 October 2011 the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 2014, demonstrating to President Saleh that the international community would not leave the matter to Saudi Arabia this time.

From Stalemate to Transition

Even if the Yemeni state is turning out to be surprisingly resilient, its constitutional institutions were largely paralysed throughout 2011. The current – and already extended – parliamentary term expired in April 2011, and Abdu Rabbu Mansour Hadi, vice-president since 1994 and confirmed as president in February 2012, possesses no power base of his own in spite of his high military rank.[3] The government was dismissed in March 2011 and continued to serve only in a caretaker capacity; the chairman of the Consultative Council died of injuries sustained during the assassination attempt on the president. Only Saleh could claim constitutional legitimacy, as his re-election for another seven years in September 2006 was regarded as relatively fair. Even Article 165 of the constitution, which regulates a vacancy of the presidency, offered no handhold for dismissing him, as Saleh is not unfit for office. But Article 124 does allow

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3 Abdu Rabbu Mansour Hadi followed former PDRY President Ali Nasir Muhammad into YAR exile after his defeat in the civil war in the former PDRY in 1986.

the president's responsibilities to be transferred to the vice-president. On 12 September 2011 Saleh used this article to authorise the vice-president to sign the initiative presented in April by the Gulf Cooperation Council. Although the vice-president began negotiations with the other signatories, no broader powers were transferred to him in what was seen as yet another move by Saleh to delay his departure.

However, international pressure continued, and on 23 November Saleh finally signed the two-phase transition plan of the Gulf initiative in Riyadh. Nearly one year after the beginning of the protests the constitutional and political paralysis seemed to have been overcome. A new prime minister was appointed by the vice-president within days, a new cabinet – made up of JMP and Saleh supporters – gained its parliamentary vote of confidence on 28 December, a committee was appointed to remove security forces, tribal militias etc. from the streets of the main cities, parliament passed the disputed immunity law for the president and his followers on 21 January 2012, and a presidential referendum with Vice-President Hadi as the only candidate took place on 21 February 2012.

With the election of a new president, the first phase of the transition period has been completed and a second two-year phase begins. The successful implementation of the first phase is promising. But there are major challenges ahead, such as removing Saleh's supporters from key positions the security apparatus. Saleh, who left for medical treatment in the United States in January 2012, has already announced his intention to remain head of the long-term ruling party, the General People´s Congress, and to return to Yemen.

Outlook and Recommendations

The slow pace of escalation left enough time to initiate a transition process, thus providing a chance to stabilise Yemen and avoid civil war and total state collapse. Saleh's adversaries and allies alike have narrowed their sights to the figure of Saleh, as have international actors. And indeed, unless the international community finds a way to stop him from interfering in the transition process, he remains a force to be reckoned with. However, as far as stability is concerned, properly functioning institutions are more important than individuals. Little can be done about the lack of resources. But factors like inefficient management, poor qualifications, fast population

growth and the exclusion of women from public life certainly can be influenced. Stopping development cooperation with civilian state agencies – often over-rated as the essential pillars of Saleh's regime – would therefore be counterproductive.

In terms of political economy, its dependency on various rents is the regime's Achilles heel. Conversely that means that effective anti-corruption measures (which would ultimately have to include revealing Saudi payments and freezing foreign assets of Saleh and his relatives) and economic diversification could counteract the hegemony of individual patronage systems.

Also, the ongoing discussion about the status of national immunity laws versus international law is likely to influence the strategy of the outgoing president. The draft of a transitional justice law, published in early February 2012, however, foresees compensation of victims of human right violations – not only in 2011, but since 1994 and in some cases even before. To finance this huge national reconcilia-tion effort the Yemeni government is looking to the donor community. Whether Yemeni institutions are capable of handling such a process transparently is doubtful and whether the international community should provide the expected funds, needs a thorough analysis.

Any kind of support for the security forces is coun-terproductive. The military is the heart of Saleh's patronage system and both the bone of contention and the big prize for his opponents, as the security forces also function – voluntarily or not – as arms suppliers to individual tribes, AQAP and the Houthis.

A fragmentation of the currently at least nominally centralised Yemeni state appears inevitable. Germany and the EU should therefore weigh up the risks and opportunities of supporting a decentralisation process that began years ago. On one hand, the transition to a federal system could strengthen separatist tendencies and accelerate fragmentation. On the other, greater autonomy for governorates that are already outside the control of central government could take the wind out of the sails of the secessionists.

Jordan and Morocco: Pacification through Constitutional Reform?

André Bank

Since early 2011 the Arab Spring has defined politics in the Arab monarchies, too, but without events going as far as the toppling of an authoritarian head of state like in the republics of Tunisia, Egypt and Libya. This also applies to the non-oil monarchies of Jordan and Morocco: they have been and remain the scene of persistent social protests. Both kings have instituted controlled constitutional reforms. The chosen path of "top-down" constitutionalisation will bring short-term stability to authoritarian regimes in Jordan and Morocco (in view of the greater scope of its constitutional reforms this applies especially to Morocco, but is also apparent in a weaker form in Jordan). But given how little is being done to tackle the socio-economic challenges of mass unemployment and underdevelopment, above all in rural areas, and the lack of political participation by the young generation, monarchical authoritarianism in Jordan and Morocco has certainly not been lastingly consolidated.

Background and Protest Dynamics

The protests of the Arab Spring in Jordan and Morocco build on earlier mobilisation processes. In *Morocco* a lively protest culture in the early 2000s was driven above all by the "diplômés chômeurs" (unemployed graduates). Although their primary concern was a career perspective adequate to their training, they added demands orientated more strongly on the common good after the successful ousting of the authoritarian presidents in Tunisia and Egypt. The leaders and programme of the February 20 Movement which has led the mass protests since early 2011 now extend beyond the "diplômés chômeurs" milieu. The Movement calls for a sweeping democratisation of the country and demands clear limits to the broad powers enjoyed by King Mohammed VI, who came to power in 1999. This heterogeneous movement succeeded in organising demonstrations with tens of thousands of participants in various parts of the country and sustaining them over months. The Moroccan regime initially responded to the new movement with a mixture of repression and cooptation. While the demonstrations were closely policed, the king drew the most influential parties represented in parliament more closely into his "makhzen", the Moroccan power centre. All the biggest parties repeatedly affirmed their loyalty to the king: the nationalist Istiqlal, the social democratic Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USFP) and the moderate Islamist Justice and Development Party (PJD). Indeed, the February 20 Movement itself, unlike its counterparts in the Arab republics, has never called for the head of state to be deposed, still less the abolition of the Alaouite monarchy.

In *Jordan* the controversial parliamentary elections of November 2010 represent the decisive background to the social protests of the Arab Spring. Following violent clashes in rural areas characterised by tribal structures, "street politics" in Jordan shifted in early 2011 – inspired by developments in Egypt – increasingly to the cities of Amman and Zarqa. The urban Muslim Brotherhood, which represents the traditional opposition in Jordan and advocates a constitutional monarchy with a real division of powers, gathered momentum. The regime permitted the demonstrations to take place, but under a massive police and secret service presence. The accompanying cooptation strategy raised public sector wages and rescinded announced subsidy cuts. King Abdullah II also visited the major tribal confederations that have long been the backbone of Hashemite power. On 1 February 2011, as a concession to the protest movement, he sacked Prime Minister Samir Rifai who was regarded as corrupt, and replaced him with Marouf Bakhit from the influential Al Abbadi tribe. As a general, Bakhit represents the military and security apparatus, and his appointment signalled that substantial political reform or liberalisation was not to be expected. In fact, during his first term as prime minister (2005 to 2007) he was responsible for the containment policy against the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood following Hamas's election victory in the Palestinian territories in January 2006. Alongside the traditional opposition, the Youth of March 24 emerged as a new, urban and overwhelmingly Transjordanian movement. Conserva-

tive counter-demonstrators loyal to the regime belittled these young people as "Palestinians" and "Shiites" and in some cases attacked them physically. In the end, the protests did not achieve the intensity or breadth of those in Morocco – partly because of the Transjordanian/Palestinian rift in Jordanian society, which the regime knows to instrumentalise.

Royal Constitutional Reforms

Alongside repression, cooptation and leadership reshuffles, the Moroccan and Jordanian monarchs have adopted constitutional reforms as a strategy for countering the protests. In *Morocco* King Mohammed VI announced a far-reaching revision of the 1996 constitution on 9 March 2011, less than three weeks after the mass demonstrations of 20 February, appointing a commission chaired by Abdellatif Menouni that completed its work within three months. One central innovation is that the king is no longer considered "sacred", but that the "integrity of his person" is only "inviolable", although that places no more than a symbolic restriction on his immense real power. The position of the prime minister, who now bears the title of "president of the government" as well as the role of parliament are formally strengthened. A comprehensive catalogue of basic rights contains substantial passages on human rights, political participation and decentralisation. The Berber Tamazight is granted recognition as an official language. Finally, one article of the new constitution addresses the "diplômés chômeurs" directly, with the proposed establishment of a Consultative Council on Youth and Associative Action. The king held a snap referendum, announced on 17 June 2011 and held on 1 July 2011, in which the population approved the constitutional reforms with official figures of 98.5 percent approval on a turn-out of about 73 percent. Even if the February 20 Movement criticised the constitution as being imposed "from above" and called for a boycott, King Mohammed VI can still count the reform and its strong popular approval as a strategic victory. Following the constitutional amendments, early parliamentary elections were held in Morocco on 25 November 2011, in which the moderate Islamist, promonarchy PJD received 27 percent of the votes, becoming the strongest party in Parliament. King Mohammed authorised the party's general secretary, Abdelilah Benkirane, to head a new government.

In *Jordan* a comparable process of "top-down" constitutionalisation took place slightly later. On 14 August 2011 King Abdullah II announced a total of forty-two mostly minor amendments to the constitution of 1952, prepared by a commission he had appointed himself. The central changes relate to the establishment of a constitutional court; restrictions on the powers of the security courts, which had even recently been used against oppositionists; independent election monitoring; and the right to freedom of expression. There is no mention of even a symbolic restriction of the king's absolute power. Formal approval for the Jordanian constitutional reform is certain to be granted by the parliament, which is loyal to the king. Unlike in Morocco there will be no referendum in the Hashemite Kingdom. The Muslim Brotherhood, the Youth of March 24 and a protest movement of young Transjordanians in the southern cities of Karak, Maan and Tafilah that has been growing since summer 2011 were disappointed by the outcome but in view of the slow pace of reforms over the past twenty years hardly surprised. The dismissal of Prime Minister Marouf Bakhit on 24 October, after only eight months in office, and his replacement by Awn Khasawneh has done nothing to substantially alter the negative prospects for political reform. Even though Khasawneh, former jurist at the International Court of Justice, represents an overall more liberal position than his predecessor, he is still not considered to question the pillars of monarchical authoritarianism in Jordan.

Political Perspectives and Policy Recommendations for Europe

The strategy of "top-down" constitutionalisation specific to the authoritarian monarchies of Jordan and Morocco has helped to stabilise the political status quo in the short term. In *Morocco* the new constitution incorporates individual demands of social groups such as the Berbers, through the official recognition of Tamazight, and also addresses the problem of the "diplômés chômeurs" who have been driving the protest movement. Even if the restrictions on the absolute power of the monarch are merely symbolic, Mohammed VI can nonetheless point to a reform that is far-reaching in the regional context. In *Jordan* King Abdullah's cosmetic constitutional amendments and elite reshuffles are supposed to convey his willingness to reform to the urban middle and upper classes and his

Western backers, the United States and the EU. Morocco and Jordan can rest assured of generous financial support on the basis of this reform discourse, and even more so because of their foreign policy orientation and geostrategic importance. If their applications to join the Gulf Cooperation Council, submitted in May 2011 at Saudi initiative, were to be accepted this would have additional financially lucrative and stabilising effects in the short run.

In the medium term, however, the monarchical regimes in Jordan and Morocco cannot be regarded as consolidated as their crisis management only scratches the surface of the structural socio-economic problems of mass unemployment, underdevelopment and lack of prospects for the youth. The social protests have continued after the constitutional reforms and are unlikely to die down without more fundamental political change that places the "social question" front and centre. It is doubtful whether this option is conceivable in Jordan and Morocco under the existing form of monarchical authoritarianism. First of all it will be decisive whether the monarchies actually abide by the limited constitutional reforms they have promised "from above". The chronic gap between declared constitutional guarantees and "constitutional reality" has already discredited more than one reform in the Middle East and North Africa.

In such a context Europe should insist more clearly on earnest and rapid implementation of the constitutional reforms. In a second step further-reaching political reforms that more than symbolically restrict the absolute power of the kings should be supported in both countries. The social dimensions that underlie the protests should at last be made into a priority of external financial support. Stiffer conditionality in the G8's assistance package for Egypt, Tunisia, Jordan and Morocco, which totals $38 billion for 2011–2013, offers the chance to achieve more than merely rewarding the reform antics of two Arab monarchs that Western leaders have grown too fond of over the years.

Egypt: Complex Challenges of Simultaneous Political and Economic Transformation

Stephan Roll

The collapse of the Mubarak regime under massive protest, especially by young Egyptians, in spring 2011 has opened the way for a comprehensive transformation in Egypt. This involves setting up a representative political system with proper structures of governance as well as fundamental economic and social reforms. Both processes are closely interlinked. Democratic institutions will only be able to take root in the long term if the social and economic situation of the people improves. But comprehensive economic and social reforms can only be implemented by a government that enjoys the trust of its population. Whether and when there will be such a government is currently by no means certain.

Establishing Capable Political Institutions

Since the military took power on 11 February 2011 the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) led by Defence Minister Hussein Tantawi has been holding Egypt's political reins. To oversee the transition process the SCAF appointed a government of technocrats, which has been reshuffled several times. A referendum on 19 March amended the constitution in several important respects and cleared the way for multi-phase parliamentary elections: Between November 2011 and January 2012 elections of the People's Assembly (lower house) took place successfully, followed by the elections of the Shura Council (upper house) which should be completed by the end of February. The new parliament is to appoint a committee to thoroughly revise the constitution for popular approval by referendum. After fierce street protests the SCAF also agreed to conduct presidential elections in June 2012, significantly earlier than originally planned.

However, the general atmosphere remains very tense. Two conflicts in particular may prove to be obstacles on the path of further political transition. The first is about the question of what the new constitution should look like, and above all what place religion should be given. With the Islamists' victory in the parliamentary elections – the Muslim Brother-

hood's Freedom and Justice Party won 43 percent and the Salafist Nour Party 23 percent of the seats in the People's Assembly and there is no doubt that they will win the Shura Council elections as well – there are fears in the secular camp that they could push for an even larger role for Islam in the new constitution. That said, the Muslim Brotherhood has clearly committed to democratic principles such as free elections and rule of law, at least for the moment defusing the conflict between the two camps.

The second conflict could, however, escalate. It derives from the unclear future role of the military in the political system.[1] Since the military's take-over the relationship between political parties and civil society on one side and the military leadership on the other has become increasingly complicated. The SCAF's intransparent handling of the transition process, its attempt to play the political forces off against each other, and, above all, the disproportionate use of force against young protesters have stirred frustration and anger across the political spectrum. Most political forces are currently demanding that the military should subordinate itself as quickly as possible to a civilian government. Whether this will actually happen in the near future is questionable, however. The generals would have to fear being held legally accountable for their actions. And even if a civilian political leadership is established as promised, it would face a difficult tightrope act. On the one side the military must be integrated constructively into the political transformation process and its huge economic and financial resources harnessed for society. Also, and especially in view of the poor security situation in the country and the desolate state of the police, the military represents an indispensable law and order force for a transitional period. On the other side, any civilian government will be keen to massively curtail the political influence of the military in the

[1] For a more detailed analysis see Stephan Roll, *The Military and the Muslim Brotherhood. Will a Power-sharing Agreement Be Reached in Egypt?* SWP Comments 4/2012 (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, February 2012).

medium term. The Egyptian army is a state within the state with numerous privileges and a business empire of its own that accounts for up to 15 percent of the country's GDP but is not particularly efficient. In view of massive economic problems, the high level of defence spending is hardly going to be viable in the long run.

Stimulating and Realigning the Economy

Egypt faces enormous socio-economic challenges. Economic growth collapsed to less than 2 percent in the 2010/11 financial year because of the unrest and is likely to remain at this level in 2011/12 according to local economists. According to estimates by the International Monetary Fund, however, an annual growth rate of 6 to 7 percent would be needed merely to provide enough jobs for young people entering the labour market. In February 2012 many businesses have still not returned to "normal" production because of recurring strikes, and corruption investigations generating uncertainty over ownership as well as making external financing impossible. The rising cost of living could well fuel growing labour unrest. According to official figures average consumer prices rose by 10 percent between July 2010 and July 2011, with price increases for basic foodstuffs in some cases significantly larger. A turnaround of falling direct investment and tourism revenues is unlikely in the coming months, and in view of production bottlenecks manufacturing exports could also fall. Consequently Egypt faces a rapid contraction of its foreign exchange reserves, leading in the worst case to insolvency by the end of 2012 or even earlier.

This dramatically worsening situation demands immediate action. Tangible measures such as the introduction of an adequate minimum wage must be implemented as soon as possible to stimulate domestic growth and prevent rising prices fuelling social unrest. Out-of-court procedures are needed to deal with the corruption of the Mubarak era and establish clarity about ownership in the private sector. But above all, fundamental reforms in the economic and social system are required, not least to restore the confidence of foreign investors. In certain fields such as simplifying bureaucracy or modernising the decayed banking sector, progress had already been achieved under Mubarak. But a whole raft of sensible reforms were systematically left to one side, including revamping the tax and subsidy system, setting up an effective system of competition and corresponding market oversight instances, anti-corruption and corruption prevention measures, and reform of the inefficient education and health systems.

Alongside the establishment of legitimate political institutions, the precondition for carrying through such reforms would be a fundamental commitment by political leaders to a market- and competition-based economic order. Fears, largely on the part of foreign observers, that a new Islamic-minded political leadership could initiate a different kind of transformation process that Islamises the economy appear unfounded in this connection. The moderate Islamists of the Muslim Brotherhood clearly favour a free-market economic policy, that would include a shift away from large and in some cases monopolistic family holdings to focus more strongly on small and medium-sized enterprises.

Outlook and Implications for European Policy

In the immediate and medium-term two main political and economic development scenarios are conceivable. In a *positive scenario* presidential elections noticeably diminish current political uncertainties. A newly elected president forms a government based on the parliamentary majority. The constituent assembly agrees relatively quickly on a draft constitution that maintains the status quo in relation to the role of Islam and strengthens the role of parliament in the political system. The military subordinates itself to the civilian leadership or at least stays out of political decisions that do not impinge upon its core tasks. The government thus enjoys not only the necessary popular legitimation but also the required political leeway to initiate the outlined political and economic reform projects. A stable government under a non-partisan president restores the confidence of foreign investors. Egypt experiences an economic boom from which, unlike in past decades, broad sections of the population are able to benefit. This in turn helps to stabilise the political system.

In the *negative scenario* the upcoming constitutional process fails to correct current political uncertainties. The unelected transitional government remains in office. Above all, the military remains in power and refuses subordination under civilian rule. Political paralysis and steadily growing street protests exacerbate the country's socio-economic woes and medium-

term economic collapse becomes inevitable despite foreign aid. A radicalisation of the protest movement is on the cards and many young Egyptians seek to leave the country.

It lies of course in the European interest that this second scenario should not become reality, as that would massively increase pressure of migration and the danger of a radicalisation of the protest movement that could also give a boost to militant Islamists. And it would be a negative signal for the region as a whole. Therefore, the scenario should be prevented from materialising. However, outside influence on the political process in Egypt is very limited. Offers of generous support for reforming the economy and social system, and possibly covering associated budget shortfalls, certainly make sense, as would an easing of market access for Egyptian agricultural products and a temporary increase in European work permits and visas for young Egyptians. But it is also important to demand the fastest possible empowering of democratically elected political institutions, on which progress is presently too slow. In this vein, diplomatic pressure on the military leadership to hand over full power to a civilian government should be stepped up. As a first step the government should be reshuffled immediately to reflect the new political majorities after the parliamentary elections. The Europeans for their part should seek to strengthen the elected parliament by supporting its capacity. Finally, the military leadership should be urged to unconditionally lift the much-maligned state of emergency and stop trying civilians in military courts, not least because both robs the political transition of its credibility.

III.
Geopolitical Implications

The Arab Spring and the Islamic Republic of Iran: Islamist Vision Meets Political Reality

Walter Posch

Even if Tehran tries to interpret the Arab Spring as the continuation of its Islamic Revolution of 1979, a good year into this tectonic shift it is becoming clear that the strategic balance has shifted to Iran's detriment. This does not apply to Iran's position in Iraq and Afghanistan, where its influence is likely to be secure for at least a generation thanks to the US-led interventions. But in all other arenas the Islamic Republic is taking punches, some of them hard.

Arab Spring Shifts the Balance of Power

Tehran's best hope is that anti-Western and pro-Islamic forces take power in *Libya*, *Tunisia*, *Yemen* and *Egypt* and normalise their relations with Iran. The Iranians place their biggest hopes in *Egypt*, which they believe to have been ripe for Islamic revolution for decades. The cautious thawing of the diplomatic ice between Cairo and Tehran is regarded as heralding a possible strategic alliance. That is why Tehran plays up any step Cairo makes towards normalisation, for example granting permission for Iranian warships to pass through the Suez Canal, as a great strategic triumph. Egypt will most probably continue to make small conciliatory gestures towards Iran but only to the extent that these serve its own interests. Looking beyond that, a more active Egyptian role on the Palestine question will automatically diminish Tehran's standing in the region. Even more so if Egypt were to succeed in establishing itself as an Arab – perhaps even Islamic – power with leadership aspirations on the political stage.

The shift in the balance of power is especially apparent in the relationship with *Saudi Arabia*, where the initiative in the conflict between "revolutionary" Iran and the "reactionary" Saudis lies, at least for the time being, with the latter. The intervention of the Gulf Cooperation Council in *Bahrain*, which took place at the Saudis' behest, allowed Riyadh to strengthen its claim to hegemony in the Gulf region at Tehran's expense. This intervention marked the provisional climax of a series of Saudi diplomatic and political interventions designed to erode Iran's standing and contain its influence: When friends and allies of Tehran won the elections in Iraq (2005) and Palestine (2006), Saudi Arabia had immediately warned the international community against the emergence of an anti-Western Shiite crescent stretching from Iran to the Mediterranean. This placed a negative interpretation on Tehran's gain in standing and prepared the ground for intervention to prevent an expansion of Iranian/Shiite influence to Bahrain in 2011.

The situation in *Syria* has reaffirmed Tehran's anti-Western and anti-Israel stance. Iran values Syria's commitment as a "frontline state" against Israel and as a partner in Lebanon. Thus Tehran firmly supports the Syrian regime diplomatically and politically. Timid and half-hearted attempts to reach out to the Syrian opposition in the beginning of the uprising went nowhere. Therefore, Tehran has tied its own as well as its most important regional ally's, i.e. *Hizbollah's*, standing to the fate of the Syrian regime: if the regime falls, it will be a dramatic setback for Tehran's regional role. And in case the regime survives, Tehran will have a dramatically weakened partner: a burden rather than an ally. By contrast *Turkey's* clear and principled position enhanced its reputation not only with the Syrian opposition but also internationally. However the confrontation in Syria ends, Ankara will come out looking better than Tehran. If Assad falls Turkey's position in its regional political competition with Iran will be further strengthened. If the regime survives, Tehran will still only find itself on the side of an isolated and weakened autocracy.

Iranian Leadership Ambitions

The Islamic Republic of Iran stands in competition with Saudi Arabia and increasingly also with Turkey. For decades the Saudi-Iranian antagonism was the main conflict, radiating out from its centre in the Gulf region to the neighbouring states of Afghanistan, Lebanon and from 2003 also Iraq. In essence it is about

two questions: leadership in the Islamic world and defining spheres of influence.

Iran's current strategy for dealing with this rivalry is based on its ideologically driven conviction that the pro-Western regimes of the region will fall, either through elections or popular uprisings, hence Tehran's reading of the Arab Spring as an "Islamic Awakening". New Islamic-based regimes, answerable to their people rather than the West and Israel, would then come to power, shifting the geostrategic balance in Tehran's favour, increasing the pressure on Israel and making it harder for the United States to justify its presence in the region. This process would end with the withdrawal of the United States and other outside powers from the region and a "South African" solution for Israel in which the autochthonous Arab population of Mandate Palestine would receive its rightful share of power, automatically leading to the end of Jewish dominance in Palestine and thus to the end of Israel. At the same time Iran would play a leading role in promoting peaceful Islamic South-South cooperation (intensifying economic, political and security cooperation without the Europeans and Americans). In a sense Tehran's attitude to leadership in the region treats this vision of the region's future as a foregone conclusion.

In the Persian Gulf Iran seeks classical nationalist hegemony. In the Levant it supports the Palestinian cause in search of recognition as a leading Islamic power among the Arab nations and to maintain or increase strategic pressure on Israel. The same goal is served by cooperation with Hezbollah and Syria. In its immediate neighbourhood (Iraq and Iraqi Kurdistan, Afghanistan) Iran is keen simply to prevent anyone acting against its interests. The Iranian nuclear programme and the technological, economic and social development course laid out in the "Twenty-Year Vision Plan" serve largely to back up these leadership ambitions.

Outlook

The Arab Spring can be expected to fundamentally narrow Iran's room for manoeuvre. In the medium term Iranian leaders will accept this loss of regional strength, even though they play down the new reality when talking to their domestic audience. This became quite clear during the Bahrain crisis. At the same time, the Iranian position should be expected to harden for a certain period, for example in the

nuclear dispute or over Iraq. Tehran's intention will probably be to play for time and hope to exploit political errors made by its adversaries.

However, Tehran will be able to exercise restraint only as long as it can rest assured of the Lebanese Hezbollah's situation and thus its own position in the Levant. Here is where the greatest danger lies. As soon as the regime in Damascus falls, Tehran's adversaries will regard the Islamic Republic as substantially weakened. Then international pressure on Hezbollah and its Iranian supporters will increase. Realistically the conflict with Iran is likely to be conducted below the threshold of war – more likely is a combination of American isolation of Tehran, an expanded regional role for Turkey, a hardening of the Saudi position and Israeli pressure on the Lebanese Hezbollah. This said, new developments could dramatically heat up the situation. In a context of rising tensions between Iran and the international community, the situation in the Persian Gulf bears the risk of military confrontation: time and again the United States has warned that Iranian threats to disrupt the flow of oil in the Strait of Hormuz represent a "red line" and made it abundantly clear that it is ready to use "all means necessary" to safeguard free passage for oil tankers.

Policy Options

In a context of increasing pressure on Tehran, Europeans should use the opportunity to reassess their Iran policy as well as the trans-Atlantic approach. Two tracks should be pursued in parallel. First, a start should be made with reworking the EU's Iran strategy of 2001, which is out of date and needs to be reformulated in the light of changed circumstances. That would provide an indirect opportunity to evaluate developments to date and assess the relationship between the various aspects of nuclear policy, human rights, legitimate interests in the energy field, and regional issues (such as Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria). It must be made clear that the policy of sanctions and isolation currently pursued by the United States will automatically lead to a Cuba scenario. Quite apart from the question of the consequences for the civilian population, isolating Iran on the "Cuban model" would mean that sanctions were no longer an instrument but the purpose of policy. That would mean to abandon the German and European Iran policy of the past decade and open the gates to the hitherto rejected policy of regime change.

Beyond that, the EU should understand that authoritarian Arab regimes are likely to be replaced with extremely fragile democracies (or at least more democratic systems than hitherto) in which political Islam will gain in influence and Islamists will play an important role. That implies an initial advantage for the leading Islamic powers in the region: Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Iran. If Europe wishes to secure its long-term influence in the region it must redefine its relationship to political Islam. Rather than criminalising groups and organisations that possess a mass base in their populations they should be included in cooperation activities. Brussels should offer dialogue and use existing structures in the EMP framework for confidence-building. Ankara, Tehran and Riyadh have long since made their invitations.

The Arab Spring and the Arab-Israeli Conflict: Freedom without Peace?

Muriel Asseburg

The changes related to the Arab Spring have a longer-term potential to lead to Arab-Israeli peace not only being a matter between rulers but also being carried by Middle Eastern populations. However, the short- to medium-term prospects for progress on the road to peace between Israel and its Arab neighbours are anything but good. On the contrary, the situation in the eastern Mediterranean has clearly worsened since early 2011, with the reverberations of the Arab Spring being one important factor among several. As a consequence Israel finds itself today more isolated in the region than it has been for a long time, and relations with its neighbours are extremely tense. This also bears the danger of violent escalation – and the final demise of a two-state settlement to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Israel Loses Its Partners in the Region

The upheaval in the Arab world has had four main effects on the conflict constellation in the Middle East. *First*, at the governmental level Israel has lost further partners in the region and finds itself increasingly isolated. The 2008/2009 Gaza War and the May 2010 flotilla incident had already severely frayed Israel's strategic alliance with Turkey. The relationship took another turn for the worse at the beginning of September 2011 when the panel of inquiry set up by the United Nations published its investigation into the flotilla raid (the "Palmer Report"). When Israel continued to refuse to apologise for the deaths of the nine Turkish activists, Turkey expelled the Israeli ambassador, cancelled all military cooperation agreements and announced plans to step up its military presence in the eastern Mediterranean. The Turkish prime minister's drastic response not only reflects Turkish political and economic ambitions in the Arab world, it is also connected to the conflict over exclusive economic zones in the eastern Mediterranean as well as the Cyprus question. As a result, Israel has not just lost its only strategic partner in the region, but also an alliance with an increasingly influential regional player. Indeed, while Turkish-Israeli relations have become rather hostile, at least at the level of rhetoric, and in the process have produced stronger Israel-Greece-Cyprus and Turkish-Arab cooperation, considerable room for repairing relations remains. As a matter of fact, Turkey has taken on responsibility for Israel's security by installing on its territory the central radar of NATO's missile defence system, which is intended, above all, to protect Israel from Iranian missiles.

In addition, the end of the Mubarak era in February 2011 robbed Israel of one of its most important and reliable Arab partners. The bilateral relationship has already deteriorated noticeably since the military's assumption of power and the appointment of a transitional government in Cairo. Egyptian gas supplies, which used to cover about 40 percent of Israeli demand, have repeatedly been interrupted by attacks on pipelines in the Sinai, reducing deliveries to about a quarter of the pre-revolution level. The transitional government also announced its intention to renegotiate cooperation agreements with Tel Aviv, especially concerning gas deliveries – the amount and below-world-market price of gas sales having been a matter of political contention for years. In early 2012 negotiations on a modified gas deal were well under way between Egypt and Israel while a new deal between Egypt and Jordan had already been struck earlier. Also, under public pressure the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) distanced itself from prior close Israeli-Egyptian cooperation relating to the blockade of the Gaza Strip. In reality, however, the blockade remains in place and has witnessed only a slight relaxation in the form of Egypt's limited reopening of the pedestrian crossing at Rafah in May 2011.

Even the weakening of the Assad regime by the Syrian uprising turns out to be problematic for Israel. True: the two sides are officially still at war and Bashar al-Assad has expanded Syria's alliance with Iran, turned up its rhetoric as the avant-garde of the "resistance to Israeli and American regional hegemony," and supported militant movements, especially Hamas and Hezbollah. At the same time, Syria has actually

shown itself to be a reliable partner when it comes to securing the Syrian-Israeli border, where Damascus has ensured calm for almost four decades now (since the October War of 1973). In recent years Syria has also cooperated with Israel, at least to the extent of permitting exports from the occupied Golan Heights to Syria. While the fall of the Assad regime raises medium-term prospects of a severing of the close Syrian-Iranian alliance as well as a thawing of Israeli-Syrian and Israeli-Lebanese relations, this is by no means guaranteed. After all, it is rather unlikely that a new Syrian leadership would be any less robust in its demands for the return of territory occupied by Israel. In addition, in mid-February 2012, a gradual and peaceful transfer of power in Damascus seems to be rather unrealistic. Rather, confrontations between regime, defectors and protesters have developed into an armed power struggle and bear the imminent danger of large-scale civil war and atrocities between ethnic and religious communities. Already today, Syria's neighbours are affected by the violence in the form of refugees and cross-border violence. In the case of escalation of communal violence, which also risks bringing further regional meddling and proxy fighting, massive destabilising effects are to be expected for the whole region, above all for Syria's neighbours.

Popular Influence Increases and Decreases Arab Regimes' Room for Manoeuvre

Second, the influence of Arab populations on regional relations has increased or, put the other way round, the foreign policy latitude of Arab regimes has diminished. True: the protests, uprisings and rebellions in the Arab world are in the first place driven by domestic political and socio-economic demands. Burning Israeli and US flags has been at most a side-show. Also, Arab populations are no longer willing to accept domestic repression as the price of the Arab-Israeli stand-off or to be distracted by the latter from grievances at home. Yet there is no warm peace between Israel and its neighbours, and normalisation of relations at the societal level has not taken place. Indeed, the very notion of such a rapprochement is overwhelmingly rejected by Arabs as long as the Israeli occupation of Arab territories endures. Thus the growing influence of Arab peoples on regional relations is at least initially a problem for Israel, as more representative governments will have to align their policies more closely with majority opinion at home

rather than following those of external actors like the United States or the self-interest of regime elites. And even those regimes that refuse greater democratic participation will steer well clear of unpopular actions in the current circumstances.

As a consequence, in the present situation no Arab government is going to approach Israel's right-wing government with peace initiatives or would want to be seen taking Israel's side. The latter is also relevant to the question of preventing demonstrations and marches on Israel's borders, where we should expect the neighbours to be loath to act as Israel's border guards. Quite the opposite in fact: rulers in the region might regard clashes between Palestinian exiles and the Israeli military on Israel's external borders as a welcome distraction from their domestic problems – as happened on the Syrian-Israeli border on 5 June 2011.

Another source of tension stems from the very fragile security situation in the Sinai, which has not only entailed repeated attacks on the gas pipeline but also serious cross-border attacks on civilians and military personnel in Israel, leading to the killing of Egyptian border guards in August and again in November 2011. A crisis erupted when the Israeli embassy in Cairo was stormed and besieged in reaction to the August incident and its staff had to be evacuated amidst escalating rhetoric on both sides. Further attacks from the Sinai would bring the danger of violent escalation as well as of further deterioration of Israeli-Egyptian relations and a dangerous dilution of the Camp David arrangements. This remains true even if bilateral relations relaxed temporarily in the context of the October 2011 Egyptian mediation of the Israel-Hamas prisoner exchange.

In addition, the results of the 2011/2012 elections to the Egyptian parliament have raised concerns about the direction Egypt is heading in and in particular the future course of its relations with Israel, with the Islamists (the Freedom and Justice Party, which is affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood, and the Salafi Nour Party) winning some two thirds of the seats. But an abrogation of the 1979 Israel-Egypt peace treaty is unlikely, still less a military attack on Israel. Even though some 50 percent of Egyptians demand that the Camp David Accords be revoked, as an April 2011 Pew poll found, Egyptian governments will act on the basis of the national interest – and will therefore want to keep the peace treaty. In the end, the Egyptian budget relies not only on massive military and development assistance from the West, and the United States in par-

ticular, but also on revenues from the Suez Canal and tourism. Therefore regional stability and good relations with the West are critical. In this context, it was noteworthy that after the fall of the Mubarak regime representatives of all important movements and parties, including the Muslim Brotherhood, stressed their commitment to the peace treaty so as to underline their international acceptability.

Israel Misses a Chance to Refashion Its Relations with Its Neighbours

The unrest related to the Arab Spring, the election victory of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, the anti-Israel rhetoric of Turkey's prime minister, the growing influence of Hezbollah in Lebanon, the perception of increased Iranian influence in the region and worries about Tehran's nuclear programme have, *third*, reinforced the bunker mentality of Israel's right-wing government. The coalition led by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanjahu has felt confirmed in its conviction that the time was not ripe for peace initiatives or a peace agreement. While parts of the Israeli left, the centrist opposition (Kadima) and even representatives of the security establishment have called for reaching out to neighbours and strengthening efforts at reaching a peace settlement, the government has instead concentrated on expanding its military advantage over its Arab neighbours and Iran, on a diplomatic campaign to prevent recognition of Palestine and its admission as a full member to the United Nations, and on shifting the debate towards the Iranian threat.

In summer 2011 the Israeli government was challenged at home by a nation-wide protest movement, whose participants were motivated primarily by housing costs and other living expenses – with Israel being the OECD country with the largest income inequality after the United States. Although some of the young Israelis involved were inspired by the Arab Spring, as their placards showed, few of them demanded that their political leadership work for a rapprochement with Israel's Arab neighbours. Nor did they pick out the connection between public spending on education and social welfare and the costs of occupation and a policy of military strength as a central theme. In the end, the Israeli government did not exert serious efforts to make use of the changing regional environment to build better relations with the newly forming societies and governments.

The Palestinians Go for Power Sharing and UN Membership Rather than Negotiations

Fourth, the Arab Spring brought new impetus to overcoming the internal Palestinian division. In early May 2011, Hamas and Fatah, together with smaller Palestinian factions, signed a power-sharing agreement, after years of earlier talks and different mediators had failed to overcome the differences between the main competitors. The deal reflected the realisation of the leaderships in Ramallah and Gaza City (or rather in Damascus) that the people of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip were no longer willing to accept their competing governments' intransigence or the consolidation of two increasingly authoritarian systems. Unlike in other Arab states, Palestinian protests in mid-March 2011 focused not on the demand to overthrow the regime(s) but on overcoming internal divisions. This demand has also for years been consistently expressed in opinion polls as one of the Palestinian priorities. Other factors linked to the Arab Spring also had an effect on both movements. After all, both saw their regional supporters weakened or overturned: the Mubarak regime, the main supporter of Fatah, had already been displaced; the Syrian regime, Hamas's principal sponsor, was wobbling, which necessitated a reorientation of the Hamas leadership. In addition, an – at least temporarily – more independent, more self-confident and more constructive Egyptian foreign policy, which neither favoured one Palestinian movement over the other nor put US or Israeli concerns first, allowed the agreement to be sealed.

Still, due to mutual mistrust and contradictory interests of Fatah and Hamas, implementation of the agreement did not see progress until late 2011. Also, Hamas representatives in Gaza and Damascus seemed to disagree on the analysis of regional developments, their relevance and the conclusions to be drawn for their own strategy. The Hamas leadership-in-exile found itself under increasing pressure to find a new place for its headquarters – as it did not want to side with the Assad regime – and to gain regional and international recognition. In contrast, the Hamas leadership in the Gaza Strip expected more Islamist election victories to follow and therefore saw the regional environment shifting in its favor. It thus sought to avoid any action that could be seen as softening its positions and endangering its control over the Strip.

Another factor that opened the way for the power-sharing agreement to be concluded was the lack of

progress in the peace process. Bilateral talks between Israel and the PLO had already ceased in September 2010 with the end of the partial Israeli moratorium on settlement construction. President Barack Obama's speeches on the Arab world and the Middle East (at the State Department and the AIPAC conference) and Benjamin Netanyahu's address to both houses of the US Congress (all in May 2011) were overwhelmingly welcomed in Israel as confirmation of the staunch Israeli-American friendship. While the Palestinians were pleased that Obama insisted on two states on the basis of the 1967 borders and agreed land swaps, their leadership saw the speeches as proof that no active, consistent and balanced mediation could be expected from the US administration and that it was impossible to reach a negotiated peace with the Netanyahu government. The Palestinian leadership therefore focused its political efforts not on a renewal of negotiations but on mobilising international support for full membership in the United Nations, thereby trying to improve its international standing and internationalising the resolution of the conflict. Although it was able to count on broad international empathy and recognition of their progress in state- and institution-building, e.g., by international organisations like the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the UN, it was also clear that the road to full membership was blocked at the current point in time as the United States had announced early in the process that it would veto such a move in the Security Council. In the end, while a large majority welcomed Palestine as a full member of UNESCO in early November 2011, it could not even muster the nine Security Council votes necessary to pursue full UN membership.

Conclusion and Outlook

The interaction of the changes induced by the Arab Spring with stagnation in the peace process has worsened the Arab-Israeli conflict. It has been further complicated and exacerbated by Israeli-Turkish tensions. As a result, stabilising alliances and structures are in tatters. Israel finds itself increasingly isolated – not only in the region but also, against the background of the Palestinian application for UN membership, internationally (with the exception of continuing US and, to a lesser extent, European support). Domestic tensions coming to a head in the region, especially in Syria, could have the effect of further heightening the conflict. The conflict with Iran over

its nuclear program also risks dramatic repercussions for the Middle East should it escalate into war.

In addition, the prospects for an Israeli-Palestinian settlement are anything but good. On the contrary: the mutual reinforcement of negative tendencies and the increased insecurity in the region make a constructive approach to conflict resolution increasingly unlikely. After the failure of the Palestinian UN initiative and with no concrete perspective for an end to the Israeli occupation or for Palestinian independence, there is a very real risk of a third Intifada that, even if it were to begin as "civil resistance", might spiral into regional war. This danger is heightened even further by the weakening of the Palestinian Authority as a consequence of Israeli and US reactions to the Palestinian move at the UN: severe cuts in US financial support for the PA, the withholding of Israeli tax and customs transfers to the PA, as well as a renewed settlement drive. One option discussed ever more frequently among Palestinians is to dissolve the Palestinian Authority, hand all responsibility for the Palestinian territories back to the occupying power and concentrate the struggle on achieving equal rights within the state of Israel rather than independence from it. Such an approach, should it be pursued even against the strong interests of Palestinian elites, would clearly mark the definite end of the Oslo process. But it would be unlikely to see success – as Israel has no incentive to annex those territories in which the largest part of the Palestinian population live and make them citizens – and it would certainly not help to solve the conflict.

The persistence of the Arab-Israeli conflict, but even more its violent escalation, will make the consolidation of more open and participatory political systems in Israel's neighbourhood less likely, as it will entail: oversized armies and an allocation of resources that favours military and defence over human development, a dissent-intolerant atmosphere, an unfavourable investment climate, a strengthening of radical forces and non-state armed groups and the further weakening of states as well as the Palestinian Authority. It will also negatively impact on Europe's relations with states and peoples in the region as long as Europeans do not follow up their stances with concrete and credible engagement towards conflict settlement. Already, European attempts to dissuade the Palestinians from presenting their initiative for full UN membership to the Security Council as well as (some) European countries' votes on the Palestinian UNESCO membership bid and their stance in the Security

Council in November 2011 were in stark contrast to the enthusiastic European support for other Arab peoples' quest for freedom and self-determination. They were also out of sync with the agreed European approach towards the Arab-Israeli conflict: that the conflict should be settled through a two-state arrangement for its Israeli-Palestinian dimension, complemented by peace agreements between Israel and its Arab neighbors (Syria and Lebanon) on the principle of land for peace as well as peaceful, neighbourly relations between Israel and the wider Arab and Muslim world – as spelt out in the Arab Peace Initiative.

Europe and the United States have missed the opportunity of the Palestinian UN initiative to realise the Palestinians' right to self-determination, define the contours of a two-state settlement and create a more balanced starting point for negotiations. Now, in face of the urgency of a two-state settlement and against the backdrop of the US administration's paralysis in an election year, Europe needs to act. The E3 (France, Germany and the United Kingdom) should take the initiative to move the Quartet process forward after its re-launch in September 2011. This will require active and consistent mediation focused on balancing rather than amplifying the asymmetrical relationship between the parties. It also necessitates internationally fixing parameters for conflict regulation of the kind the Europeans already presented to the Security Council in February 2011, the stipulation of a binding timetable, as well as spelling out the consequences in the (likely) event that a negotiated solution cannot be achieved.

Regional Repercussions of Revolution and Civil War in Libya

Wolfram Lacher

In mid-January 2012, fighting erupted in northern Mali between a newly-formed Tuareg rebel group and the Malian army. By mid-February the rebels had largely confined the army's presence to the three largest cities in the north, displaying military skills and firepower unseen in northern Mali's previous insurgencies. The rebellion is a direct consequence of the Libyan civil war. While tensions in northern Mali had risen steadily in recent years, the return of Tuareg fighters from Libya, along with weaponry and vehicles, was crucial in triggering the conflict.

The repercussions of Libya's civil war also affect other weak states in the region, such as Niger, Chad and Sudan and put additional strain on Libya's neighbours undergoing transition, Tunisia and Egypt. Altogether, the Libyan revolution will have far-reaching consequences for regional alliances and security in Libya's neighbourhood. To contain the negative short-term fallout and realise the long-term potential of regime change in Libya, the EU should change its Sahel strategy and place much greater emphasis on regional cooperation.

Arms and Armed Men

Among the most obvious destabilising consequences of the Libyan civil war is the enormous increase in arms smuggling after Libyan arsenals were plundered. Large numbers of small arms, but also heavy weapons and explosives entered regional smuggling networks. Since mid-2011, Libyan weapons have been intercepted in places as far apart as the Egyptian Sinai Peninsula, Tunisia, southern Algeria and northern Niger. Given the region's porous borders, the bulk of Libyan weapons is likely to go undetected. This will allow existing and emerging armed groups in the region to equip themselves more easily. Western governments have been particularly concerned about Libya's huge stocks of surface-to-air missiles, parts of which remain unaccounted for as of February 2012. While it is unclear to what extent such weapons have entered regional smuggling networks, they could pose a significant threat to civilian air traffic if they ended up in the hands of terrorist groups such as al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM).

The return of thousands of combatants from the Sahel states who fought on Gaddafi's side in Libya has been even more problematic for regional stability. They can be divided into three main categories in terms of origin and recruitment. Former longstanding members of the Libyan army from the Sahel states – most of them Tuareg from northern Mali and Niger – represent the first and largest group among the returning fighters. Many had been recruited during the 1980s. They are likely to have numbered several thousand men when the revolution erupted. Members of rebel groups that enjoyed close relations with the Libyan leadership make up the second category. The leaders of the 2006/7 Tuareg rebellions in Niger and Mali, Aghali Alambo and Ibrahim Ag Bahanga, both joined Gaddafi's forces with fighters from their groups. The Darfur rebel Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), led by Khalil Ibrahim, also fought on Gaddafi's side. The leaders of these three groups returned to their countries around the time of the fall of Tripoli, with many of their fighters as well as weapons and vehicles.[1] Young men without prior battle experience, who were recruited as mercenaries in the first weeks of the uprising represent a third category. Recruitment occurred either via Libyan embassies and consulates or through intermediaries such as Aghali Alambo. Most reports of such recruitment came, again, from northern Mali, Niger and Chad.

Estimates place the number of Tuareg from northern Mali and Niger who went to fight in Libya – excluding those who had previously served in the Libyan army – at around 1,500. While there are no reliable figures for the numbers of fighters and returnees, it is clear that they are of such magnitude that their return poses a major threat of destabilisation in their home countries. Contrary to a view voiced by many

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1 Bahanga was killed shortly after his return, apparently in a car accident.

African politicians since late 2011, however, these developments are not a direct consequence of the NATO-led intervention. As outlined above, a large proportion of the foreign combatants were already in Libya when the revolution broke out, and most others were recruited in the first three weeks of the uprising, before foreign intervention even became likely. The civil war therefore had a strong regional dimension from the beginning.

The impact on the states of the Sahel region has been uneven to date. In northern Mali, the return of fighters from Libya occurred within an already tense political context. The Algiers peace agreement, which had been supposed to put an end to the 2006 rebellion, was not being adequately implemented, and rebel leaders had been threatening to revert to armed struggle. In addition, tensions over cocaine smuggling and other criminal activities had been on the rise, with parts of the Malian security apparatus and its proxy forces competing with former rebels and their allies over the control of such activity. Such tensions also ran along tribal fault lines. Upon their return, fighters set themselves up in different camps – largely according to their tribal allegiances – with some groups obtaining assurances from the Malian government that they would be integrated into the army. Others, mostly Ifoghas and Idnan Tuareg, allied themselves with members of the 2006 rebellion (who had mainly been recruited from the same factions) and disgruntled youth to launch a new rebellion. The *Mouvement National pour la Libération de l'Azawad* (MNLA) explicitly espoused a separatist agenda. By mid-February 2012, around 120,000 people had fled the fighting.

In Niger, the return of fighters took place in a more favourable context, with former Tuareg rebel leaders having been accommodated politically during the recent transition from a military coup to an elected government. Moreover, Aghali Alambo was appointed advisor to the speaker of the National Assembly following his return from Libya, while another former rebel leader, Alambo's key rival Rhissa Ag Boula, was appointed presidential advisor. This reflected their increased military weight after their fighters returned from Libya, and gave both of them an unofficial mandate to maintain stability in the north. However, as of mid-February 2012, it remains unclear whether and how the bulk of returning fighters will be demobilised or integrated into the official security forces. The threat of destabilisation in the aftermath of the Libyan civil war therefore persists in Niger.

For Chad and Sudan, the return of Khalil Ibrahim's JEM from Libya was a major development. JEM had become the most militarily powerful Darfur rebel group mainly due to lavish support from Chad and – after President Idriss Déby expelled Ibrahim to Tripoli in May 2010 and cut off Chadian assistance to the group – Libya. Although JEM returned from Libya with an expanded arsenal, it was dealt a heavy blow by the loss of its main foreign backer. In late 2011, signs that JEM was fragmenting increased, with splinter factions entering into talks with the Sudanese government – though this has not substantially improved the prospects for the Darfur peace process. The group was further weakened in December 2011, when Ibrahim was killed in an airstrike in Kordofan. This also eased the pressure on Déby from his ruling Zaghawa Kobe clan to support their fellow clansmen in JEM.

The regional implications of continuing instability in Libya

Libya is likely to remain a source of regional instability in the short-to-medium term. The transitional authorities face the challenge of establishing control over the multitude of revolutionary brigades and other armed groups that emerged during the civil war, and building a new security apparatus. This process is proving difficult and could potentially take years. The consequences could reverberate across the region.

Looking beyond the fallout from returning combatants and armed groups, the Sahel states and Libya's North African neighbours are also affected by the much greater number of migrants who have returned home since the civil war erupted. Official estimates place the numbers of returning migrants at 260,000 in Niger (which has a population of fifteen million) and 140,000 in Chad (in a population of eleven million). They are unlikely to return to Libya anytime soon, not least because of the traumatic experience many underwent during the conflict, when widespread racist attitudes among Libyans surfaced in attacks against alleged 'mercenaries'. Reflecting such attitudes, the new Libyan authorities can also be expected to restrict immigration from sub-Saharan Africa.

For Egypt and Tunisia, Libya is an important market for exports of goods and services, as well as a major destination for labour migrants. Around a quarter of the estimated 2 million Egyptian workers in Libya, and the majority of the estimated 300,000 Tuni-

sians, left the country during the civil war. Libya's stabilisation is a precondition for these workers to return and find jobs that allow them to send home remittances. Continued instability in Libya would close an important social safety valve at a time when both Tunisia and Egypt are undergoing fragile transitions.

Finally, repeated cross-border incursions by Libyan armed groups into Tunisia have highlighted the threat that security developments in Libya could continue to spill over into neighbouring countries. The Tunisian government has reacted on several cases by closing border crossings, which has also disrupted trade relations. The longer local armed groups continue to operate in Libya, and the longer it takes the transitional authorities to re-establish its control over its territory and borders, the more likely criminal or other armed groups are likely to emerge and use Libya as a base for cross-border activity. For example, the country could become a preferred transit route for cocaine smugglers, whose routes increasingly pass through West Africa and the Sahel.

Rifts and Alliances: New Obstacles to Regional Cooperation

Revolution and civil war in Libya have produced new alliances and tensions in the region. In the short term, regional cooperation is likely to be weakened – at a time when it is most needed to contain the fallout from the civil war. The lack of regional cooperation had already emerged as a major obstacle to tackling the rising threat from organised criminal activity and AQIM in recent years. The former Libyan regime's unwillingness to join regional initiatives – such as the Algerian-led joint regional command centre established in Tamanrasset in 2010 – had been one problem. Others are the mutual suspicion between Algeria and Mali – which Algeria accuses of complicity with organised crime and AQIM – and Algerian aversion to increasing efforts by Western states to involve themselves in regional security issues.

A noteworthy new alliance developed during the conflict between the National Transitional Council and the Sudanese government. Whereas fighters from JEM and another Darfur rebel group, the Sudan Liberation Army-Unity (SLA-Unity), fought on Gaddafi's side, Sudan lent the NTC military support to defend Kufra in Libya's extreme south-east. As outlined above, the new Libyan-Sudanese alliance has removed JEM's main source of external support and thereby alters the conflict constellation in Darfur, although not to the extent of improving the prospects for conflict resolution. Whether the alliance will last remains to be seen. Beyond Darfur, Sudan's main interest is in obtaining financial support from Libya.

Elsewhere, new rifts have emerged. Despite efforts by all sides to mend fences, the National Transitional Council's relations with Algeria, Chad, Niger and Mali remain burdened by tensions that emerged during the civil war. In the first months of the war, NTC members publicly accused Algeria and Chad of supporting Gaddafi with weapons and mercenaries. Niger and Mali are regarded with suspicion, since they failed to prevent the recruitment of mercenaries. The fact that members of the Gaddafi family and top Libyan security officials were granted asylum in Niger and Algeria is another source of tensions.

Even if – as appears to be the case – the transitional authorities in Libya are willing to transcend these rifts, other obstacles to regional cooperation are likely to persist. The transitional government will for the foreseeable future be preoccupied with domestic developments and therefore unable to play an effective regional role. Without a functioning army and security apparatus, the new government will also find it difficult to influence developments in its border areas. Successive insurgencies in the Tibesti mountains of northern Chad, for example, had been contained through cooperation between Tripoli and N'Djamena. Under the current circumstances, the Libyan government would probably be unable to exert influence in the area – which is likely to have seen an influx of weapons from Libya.

Similarly, the new government is unlikely to invest in efforts to stabilise northern Niger and Mali, since this would mean supporting deals to integrate or demobilise fighters who fought against the NTC in Libya. This creates a gap at a critical moment. Gaddafi used his influence and financial clout to mediate peace settlements in the Sahel and back the demobilisation and reintegration of combatants – even if agreements negotiated by Libya rarely lasted long, and even if Gaddafi at times supported the same rebel groups he later brought to the negotiating table. There is an acute need for other actors – such as the EU – to step into the void.

In the short term, Gaddafi's fall and the repercussions of the civil war will therefore render regional cooperation more difficult. The new Libyan government is set to turn its back on sub-Saharan Africa, not

only because it will be focused on developments at home, but also because Gaddafi's African policies were largely a function of his personal ambitions and deeply unpopular in the broader population. Future Libyan governments are less likely to support rebel groups in the neighbourhood simply to project influence, as Gaddafi did, but they are equally unlikely to mediate and finance peace deals in Mali or Chad. In the long term, however, Gaddafi's demise removes a destabilising factor from the region, and could create new possibilities for conflict resolution.

Policy Recommendations

As the eruption of conflict in Mali demonstrates, the return of fighters from Libya presents an acute threat to the weak states in the Sahel. Swift action is needed to manage the return of combatants from Libya, such as by supporting their demobilisation, or integrating them into the security forces. The EU should support governments in the region, as long as the political context is conducive to the success of such measures. This is currently the case neither in Sudan nor in Mali; in the latter case, external support for the integration of certain factions would amount to taking sides and getting drawn into the new conflict. Efforts to demobilise or integrate fighters are currently more likely to succeed in Niger, though donors should seek to ensure that their aid reaches combatants and is not diverted by rebel leaders to bolster their own position.

Beyond these short-term needs, the EU should refocus its current approach to the region, which is primarily a reaction to the expanding activities of AQIM. As outlined in its Sahel strategy, the EU approach centres on a combination of development projects with capacity-building for the armies and security forces of Sahel states. However, new and potential future conflicts pose a much greater threat to regional stability than AQIM, which in turn is largely a symptom of increasing organised criminal activity in the Sahel. Building the capacity of the security forces does little to tackle these problems, which are political in nature. In Mali, provision of training and equipment to the security forces should be suspended until the conflict is resolved.

Much stronger emphasis should be placed on promoting regional cooperation. The EU Sahel strategy currently does not take Algeria's central role into account, nor Algerian distaste for the EU's apparent claim to leadership on matters of regional security.

The EU and individual member states could also help remove obstacles to cooperation between the new Libyan government and its neighbours. One way of doing so would be to negotiate asylum for Gaddafi security officials in third countries, if they cannot expect a fair trial in Libya. Finally, while the Libyan transitional government will remain a weak regional player for some time to come, the EU and its member states should encourage Libya to engage with, and invest in, regional security initiatives.

The United States and the Arab Spring: The End of the Post-9/11 Paradigm

Johannes Thimm

The 2011 upheavals across the Arab world took the international community by surprise almost exactly ten years after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Despite the enduring fascination of 9/11, which became apparent again on the tenth anniversary, the overstatement of the historical importance of the terrorist attacks has now been subjected to an overdue correction. Although it is yet uncertain where the transitions in the Arab world will ultimately lead, they possess the potential to assume a similar historical significance to the demise of the Soviet Union, while the meaning of 9/11 is likely to fade over time. The attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon itself did not in fact lastingly change the world. Of course the US response to the terrorist attacks had dramatic consequences, especially the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and the choice of tools for the "Global War on Terror". Pressure on countries the United States already regarded as "rogue states" was stepped up, in the cases of Afghanistan and Iraq to the point of massive military intervention. Support continued to flow to allied autocratic regimes from Pakistan to Egypt, now with the additional argument that they were important partners in the "War on Terror". But in 2001 the United States was not forced to fundamentally revise its policy towards the entire Middle East, and 9/11 did not bring change but rather more of the same to the region. The Arab Spring, on the other hand, fundamentally challenges the entire previous policy of the United States and the West.

Washington's Reaction: Reserved and Cautious

Comparing 9/11 and the 2011 Arab protest movements is not only instructive in terms of their relative historical importance. Washington's reactions to the two events could hardly have been more different. Ten years ago under President George W. Bush decisive action and simple answers appeared to be the order of the day. The current administration of President Barack Obama is responding much more cautiously

to the unfolding events. Very few in Europe or the United States expected such a wave of regime change, and there were no ready prepared strategies available for dealing with the situation. Much more than Bush, Obama analyses the alternatives before acting, and the process of understanding, interpreting and reflecting takes time. The situation also overwhelms the existing institutions, as foreign policy bureaucracies are stretched to cope with more than two or three major crises at a time. Moreover, domestic crises like the battles over budget policy have repeatedly distracted attention at the top level.

At the same time, the present administration is more aware of the limits of American influence. From the European perspective the demeanour of the United States is still assertive. But Obama does not display his predecessor's hubris. The experience of Afghanistan and Iraq has taught that the deployment of military power does not guarantee controlling the outcome of political developments. American leaders also fear that too much outside influence could be counterproductive. As Obama said in a speech at the State Department on 19 May 2011: "we have learned from our experience in Iraq just how costly and difficult it is to impose regime change by force."

In the early phase of the protests the following pattern was identifiable in the US response: Whenever the wave of protests over social grievances and political repression spilled over to a new country Washington proclaimed its sympathy with the protesters, told all sides to remain peaceful and called on the respective government to institute reforms. But the United States delayed dropping allied regimes until it was clear they had no chance of survival. The script changed with the civil war in Libya. Under pressure from France and the United Kingdom, the United States took the side of the rebels fighting Muammar Gaddafi even before their success was inevitable. In fact, their victory ultimately depended on NATO's intervention. In Syria the United States waited a long time before calling for regime change. On 19 May 2011 Obama was still giving Syrian President Bashar al-Assad the choice: "He can lead that transition, or

get out of the way." It was not until 18 August, after further weeks of violence, that he finally called on Assad to resign.

Washington went to great lengths to consider each situation in its own right and avoid explicit comparisons between individual states. Despite declarations of support for demonstrators' demands, nobody should conclude that the United States would turn against autocrats everywhere. It serves two purposes when Obama says, as in the 19 May speech: "Not every country will follow our particular form of representative democracy." It distances him from Bush's simplistic idea that disposing of despots automatically leads to democracy, while retaining a certain degree of flexibility to cooperate with regimes that are not perfect democracies. Obama explicitly concedes that America's short-term interests are not always identical with its long-term objectives.

Disagreement over Policy towards the Region

This cautious and pragmatic stance earned Obama widespread accusations of weak leadership. Conservative critics interpret his guarded approach as a sign that Obama acquiesces to the loss of America's leading role. But neither the President's supporters nor his critics can agree on the right way to proceed. The lines of conflict run right through the major parties and can even be detected within the administration. The self-proclaimed "realist" current tends to be risk-averse and prioritises stability; its adherents are sceptical that uprisings can lead to functioning democracy, and hold on to the status quo wherever possible. Their worries about Islamist tendencies in the protest movement outweigh any hopes they place in a lively civil society. While they wish to reduce US military engagement and restrict it to situations of outstanding strategic importance, there is no agreement as to which these are.

The idealist counterposition is found clear across the political spectrum, from the left margin to the right. Its proponents agree that the policy of defending the status quo was a mistake and are willing to accept greater risks to support democratic movements. Whereas liberal idealists support US intervention largely for humanitarian reasons, neo-conservatives seek above all to topple regimes that defy America. In the case of Libya, members of the Obama administration belonging to the liberal idealistic spectrum urged military intervention on humanitar-

ian grounds, with diplomats like Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, US Ambassador to the United Nations Susan Rice and Senior Director for Multilateral Affairs Samantha Powers taking the lead. The US military, led by then Defence Secretary Robert Gates, and conservative members of Congress took a much more sceptical stance.

In the case of Syria neo-conservative voices like Michael Oren, who was responsible for the Middle East in the National Security Council under President George W. Bush, argue for a harder line against President Assad, regarding Syria as especially important because of its close cooperation with Iran. The neo-conservatives rally round Israel, which feels threatened not only by the possibility of an Iranian nuclear bomb but also by Iranian and Syrian support for Hezbollah and Hamas. Military intervention in Syria may not yet be on the table, but neo-conservatives increasingly demand military support for the opposition and sanctions could prepare the ground for intervention in the longer term. US Middle East expert Joshua Landis warns that comprehensive sanctions against Syria could lead to a situation similar to Iraq at the end of the 1990s, where food shortages and suffering resulting from sanctions increased the moral pressure for external regime change. The ongoing atrocities by the Assad regime against Syrian civilians put the opponents of intervention even more on the defensive. Under these circumstances the neo-conservatives could eventually succeed in convincing the liberal idealists of the necessity of intervention.

The conflicts between realists and idealists or, as Obama put it, between America's short-term interest in stability and its long-term interest in democracy, do not disappear with the fall of dictators. The success of Islamist forces in Egypt's parliamentary elections spotlights the tensions that exist between fearing the policies of a more religious and independent Egypt and accepting the democratic process. Given Washington's influence with the Egyptian military, reactions to the military's abuse of power have been tempered: Threats to cut military aid to Egypt have been taken back despite ongoing abuse of power by the military council. Whether the United States will eventually force the military to stand down to make way for a democratic government remains open. The idealists and realists in Obama's administration are constantly having to negotiate concrete political measures in an ever-changing environment. Obama himself is not committing to either camp, but maintaining his prag-

matic style. His policies are driven by events rather than ideology.

Perspectives for Europe

Washington's caution and domestic disagreements in the US increase the demand for European initiatives. The trans-Atlantic dynamic towards states like Tunisia, Libya, and, to a lesser degree, Egypt differs from the war in Afghanistan or the "War on Terror", where the Americans demanded support without involving Europe in fundamental strategy decisions. As an immediate neighbour, Europe is much more directly affected by developments in these states. And because Washington is looking for ways to reduce its engagement in crisis regions, European initiatives are welcome, especially in states like Libya and Tunisia that are not central to American interests. Although the United States was caught off guard by the Franco-British call for military intervention it gave its support and was satisfied to take a back seat. Still, the operation would have been impossible without the US military contribution. When it comes to civilian and diplomatic initiatives supporting democratic reforms and economic development, Europe is less dependent on American backing. Such measures are not only less controversial within Europe, they also elicit no resistance from Washington.

The situation is different in states that represent central arenas in the fight against terrorism or are directly tied to Israel's security and the Iran issue. Here the Obama administration seeks to assert control and American tolerance for independent European policies is limited. Nevertheless, Washington's ambivalence with regard to Egypt's future may make it necessary for Europe to formulate its goals independently from US policies. Efforts for dealing with Syria and Iran, however, should be closely coordinated with the United States.

IV.
Challenges and Policy Options for Europe

Testing Times for Energy Security and Cooperation

Kirsten Westphal

The global energy system was deeply shaken by two events in 2011. The nuclear catastrophe in Japan and unrest in the Arab world have suddenly pushed the very physical availability of fuels to the fore of the energy security debate, supplanting the long-dominant aspect of economic sensitivity to price rises. The beginning of 2012 has seen tensions increasing between Iran and the West. The threat of a closure of the Straits of Hormuz is fuelling major concerns in the markets. For the energy economy, whose projects are very capital-intensive, geographically inflexible and long-term, stability is of central importance. Until recently the authoritarian Arab regimes have been relied upon to ensure this. The unrest in the Arab world contains considerable risks for fossil-based energy supplies, but also opportunities for an overdue turn to a sustainable low-carbon system. The central challenge is to secure a reliable, stable and affordable energy supply *from* and *within* the region while at the same time supporting the opening, democratisation and economic development of Arab societies.

The Starting Point

The Arab world and Iran are the heart of the world's conventional oil and gas supply. The region provides about 35 percent of global oil production and 20 percent of the world's natural gas. In terms of reserves its importance is even greater, especially as these are relatively easy and cheap to develop. Almost 50 percent of the world's natural gas and about 62 percent of its known oil reserves lie in this region. Oil and gas from North Africa in particular are of physical importance to Europe.

The MENA region also contains the world's most important oil and liquid gas arteries: the Strait of Hormuz, through which 20 percent of all globally traded oil passes; the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, the Suez Canal and the Sumed pipeline that follows it, as well as other strategic pipelines. Energy-poor countries like Tunisia and Morocco are important transit countries for Algerian gas.

The EU has therefore had its eye on the creation of a joint energy area with North Africa since the mid-1990s. All the important European oil and gas companies operate in this region, whose geographical proximity and resource wealth are the driving motivation for Europe to seek integration of markets and networks. In recent years, cooperation on renewables and networking a "green" electricity market has risen to prominence.

Energy exports from the Middle East are economically sensitive because of their effect on prices, and political turmoil in the region is associated with considerable risks of short-term supply loss through damage to infrastructure. In the medium and long term structural shifts in the supply and demand of fossil fuels must also be expected. Because energy policy is such a strategically important field, the transitions could also cause significant shifts in the MENA region, possibly even moving the coordinates of international governance and cooperation – the MENA states dominate OPEC and the Gas Exporting Countries Forum (GECF) and also play a major role in shaping the producer/consumer dialogue in the International Energy Forum.

The Arab Spring: Effects on Oil Production, Trade and Transport

Still, even after regime change, governments will retain their vital interest in exporting fossil fuels, which are by far the most important revenue source for states like Saudi Arabia, Libya or Algeria (above 90 percent). But political turmoil can *first* lead to short- or medium-term loss of supply. The reasons for this are diverse, from withdrawal of foreign personnel to damage of infrastructure or international sanctions. When Libyan oil production of almost 1.8 million barrels daily practically dried up during the armed conflict Germany lost its fourth-largest supplier. The Italian firm Eni was even worse affected, which was one reason why the EU oil embargo against Syria was postponed until November 2011. The sanctions

against Iran's oil sector announced by the EU-27 on 23 January 2012 also foresaw a transitional period for existing long-term contracts. This concession was made to the Southern Member States Greece, Spain and Italy which purchase significant volumes from Iran. *Second*, regime change is generally associated with a reorganisation of national oil companies which may also affect existing projects or result in renegotiation of exploration and production-sharing agreements. Representatives of the Libyan rebel government have made it clear that they are unlikely to award contracts for new projects to countries that supported Gaddafi or criticised the NATO intervention. *Third*, there is the "Iraqi" danger of protracted fighting, a weak state and persistent wrangling over the distribution of oil rents. In some cases, as in the case of Libya, that could be extremely problematic, because the global market would have great trouble compensating a lasting loss of crude in that high quality (as refineries are geared to using a specific quality of oil).

In the medium term we might see structural supply shortfalls if investment decisions are postponed or conditions for Western firms worsen still further. The security of future oil supplies depends on state-of-the-art production in the MENA region. Know-how and modern production technology are brought in largely by Western oil corporations, whereas national oil companies are generally motivated less by business calculations than by the political necessities of safeguarding the power of the elites. While Saudi Arabia has so far been largely unaffected by unrest, that threat hangs over the global oil supply like a sword of Damocles. With production of about ten million barrels a day it is the main exporter and holds by far the greatest reserve capacity (well over 2 million barrels a day). With Western oil embargoes in place against Syria and Iran, Saudi Arabia is the only decisive player left to balance supply and demand. And it is a voice of moderation in OPEC, further complicating the double bind for Western oil-importing countries dealing with the House of Saud. However, as tensions with Iran rise, the risk of a flashover of unrest to Shiite minorities in Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries has to be taken seriously as a destabilizing factor.

The Centrality of the Oil Price and the Fundamental Market Situation

The loss of Libyan exports caused the oil price to shoot up to $120/barrel in May 2011, the highest level since the record of 2008, leading the International Energy Agency to decide for the fourth time in its history – and the first time in connection with prices – to tap strategic reserves. The conflict over the nuclear programme in Iran and the fear of interruptions in oil trade through the Straits of Hormuz have brought up oil prices to the same level again, despite the fact that Libyan oil is back on the market with around one million barrels daily at the end of January 2012. Iran is exporting 2.3 billion barrels a day, and a reshuffle of trade flows will have to take place after the EU's imposition of an oil import embargo. In that respect the EU sanctions against Iran have sent a very strong signal in a period of relatively tight supply-demand balance, nervous markets, and persistently high levels of oil prices despite ongoing debt and economic crises in the EU and the United States and a slowing of demand in Asian markets. Saudi Arabia will again prove to be the decisive swing supplier for world markets.

The effects of the import embargo will, however, most likely be limited: China is expected to buy more oil at cheaper prices from Iran. This may play into China's hands as it builds up its strategic reserves. However, China will have to balance its strategic relationship with Iran with its ever closer trade relations with Saudi Arabia. China must have an imminent interest in uninterrupted energy flows through the Straits of Hormuz. The situation outlined above reflects the tectonic shifts that have taken place in world energy markets. With the United States building up its own conventional and unconventional production, it is becoming more and more evident that the EU has to deal and cooperate first and foremost with China and India when it comes to physical international oil trade. Yet, the fundamental market situation is only one part of the story.

The oil price is the pulse of the world economy and an important factor for currencies and their exchange rates. The oil price is set through a complex interaction of the fundamental market situation, expectations and financial market transactions. It is at the same time the lead currency for energy and agricultural commodities. Here the circle closes, for one of the underlying causes of the protests in the Arab world was the exploding cost of food. Increasing oil prices in the global markets have at least indirect

effects on the energy-rich countries of the MENA region, even if energy prices are highly subsidised there. Price rises and fluctuations are costly for all economies and drive up the rate of inflation. Price regulation is one means to calm the domestic situation, as the example of Saudi Arabia shows, but such a spiral of subsidies bloats the state budget. This ultimately drives up the global oil price, which has to counter-fund increased state spending. Indeed, oil prices continued to crabwalk from summer 2011 until early 2012 in connection with worries about the global economy, but clearly also reflecting fears about further supply failures.

Natural Gas in the Region: The Underestimated Significance of Domestic Demand

Although the region's strategically most important gas suppliers, Algeria and Qatar, have thus far escaped major unrest, the Arab Spring nonetheless coincided with slowly rising prices on the European gas market. In autumn 2011 rising Japanese demand for liquefied natural gas (LNG) in the aftermath of Fukushima and the loss of Libyan exports made an additional impact. The natural gas market of the EU-27 is dominated by pipeline imports (80 percent), allowing Italy to make up the loss of Libyan imports by importing more from Russia. However, LNG accounts for a rising share of European imports, most of it coming from North Africa (42 percent) with another 25 percent from Qatar passing through the Straits of Hormuz. The Gulf emirate of Qatar is the world's fourth-largest natural gas exporter and the biggest LNG supplier, and is of strategic importance for the gas market. Overall the MENA region is the backbone and motor of a globalised gas trade. For EU gas markets, LNG flows from the region are an important factor with regards to depth and liquidity.

Algeria is the world's sixth-largest gas producer and the EU's third-largest supplier, but its production has levelled off at 89 to 90 billion cubic metres annually. And domestic consumption has risen at an annual rate of about 3 percent for the past decade. While this warning may have gone unheard in Europe, it represents decisive critical development across the region. It must also be assumed that domestic electricity demand will increase at annual rates between 5 and 7 percent through until 2030. Given the fossil-dominated electricity mix in the region, considerable energy subsidies and consequently high energy in-

tensity, this will automatically have repercussions on export volumes to Europe.

The example of Egypt illustrates the associated problems for regional stability. Egypt is an extremely important regional gas exporter, supplying the entire gas consumption of Jordan and Lebanon and 40 percent of Israeli demand (at least pre-revolution). But the prospect of rising domestic demand caused further export expansion plans to be put on hold in mid-2008. With pressure to supply gas for growing domestic demand the country has started to renegotiate volumes and prices with all its customers. Furthermore, the pipeline that supplies Egyptian gas to Israel had been attacked twelve times by mid-February 2012, practically bringing exports to a standstill and increasing pressure on Israel to develop offshore gas fields in the eastern Mediterranean. However, development of these is in some cases hotly contested between Israel and its neighbours (especially the Palestinians and Lebanon).

Policy Options for Europe: International Consumer Dialogue and Cooperation on Electricity and Renewables

One central characteristic of oil and gas markets is their small elasticity of demand, meaning the very restricted possibilities for responding quickly to loss of supplies. The option of compensating by tapping emergency stockpiles from the IEA and national reserves is limited in quantity and duration, and can easily boomerang in the medium term. If unrest should spread to affect other strategically important exporters, Europe's short-term options are scant. The necessity to engage consumers (especially India and China) in a strategic dialogue is obvious. In the past, consumer countries have paid little attention to cooperating on a global level on strategic stockpiles, nor to developing spare production capacity and alternative strategic transport routes.

On the other hand, Europe has obvious and well-known medium- and long-term options: diversification, energy saving, increasing energy efficiency and expanding renewables. In view of the imminent risks for a stable, reliable and cheap supply from the MENA region there is no need to reinvent the wheel either.

What is needed, from the foreign and security policy perspective too, is a concrete plan for the MENA region and especially for North Africa. Improving the supply of reliable and cheap energy will be one of the

criteria against which the old and new governments in the region will be measured. So ensuring the domestic energy supply is a matter of destiny for stability in the region. Herein lies a unique opportunity for Europe to help these countries with a pact for work, energy and climate that offers positive spin-offs for Europe's own technology, energy and climate objectives. The vehicle for this is expanding electricity generation from renewables – concentrating solar power, solar photovoltaic and wind power – in connection with the establishment of supplier industries. Here European support and cooperation are required.

Migration from Transition States to the EU: Mobility Partnerships and the Global Approach to Migration

Steffen Angenendt

Many transition states in the Middle East and North Africa have seen substantial legal and irregular migration to the European Union by labour migrants, family members and asylum-seekers in recent years. A considerable amount of reverse migration has also taken place. The highly diverse "migration space" that has emerged is set to gain in importance in the coming years. Even if the political transformation proceeds smoothly and successfully, migration pressure from the transition states is likely to remain strong. At the same time the EU will need more immigrants, principally for economic and demographic reasons. Is the EU's Global Approach to Migration (and the most recent Commission proposal to develop it into a "Global Approach on Migration and Mobility") an adequate framework for a comprehensive and coherent EU policy? Does the concept of mobility partnerships to promote temporary and circular migration provide the EU with adequate instruments for coping with the migration challenges it faces? And what role can and should EU member states play?

The Euro-Mediterranean Migration Space

While the outcome of the political, economic and social changes in Arab transition states is still unclear, it can be expected that the number of people who wish to emigrate permanently or temporarily will increase, largely independently of the success or failure of the transformation process. There is little doubt that willingness to emigrate will increase if the transformation process becomes bogged down or suffers setbacks, but the same will probably also happen even if the political and social transition goes well and living conditions improve.

Demography is a core factor behind these migration pressures. Virtually all Middle East and Northern African countries still have substantially higher birth rates than European countries. Although fertility is declining, they all still have large shares of younger citizens, for example 37 percent under 15 years of age in the Palestinian population, 34 percent in Jordan, 28 percent in Egypt, and 25 percent in Tunisia. These youth bulges are so large that even under better economic conditions a considerable proportion of the young generation is not going to find adequate employment opportunities on the domestic labour market in the foreseeable future. Moreover, migration research shows that the fundamental willingness to migrate in fact increases with the level of development, because many potential emigrants only then acquire the (financial, human, and social) capital needed to migrate. An additional factor is the existence of trans-national networks providing assistance and support that were established during earlier phases of migration.

The trend of growing emigration potential encounters a soaring need for immigration in the EU. For all their differences, all EU states face similar (and long-known) demographic challenges: fertility rates remain consistently below replacement levels while life expectancy is steadily increasing. In many states the resulting ageing process will lead to a reduction in the labour force and a lack of skilled labour. However, like emigration potential in the source countries, economic immigration demand in the destination countries can only roughly be approximated. In Germany, the Institut für Arbeitsmarkt- und Berufsforschung (Institute for Employment Research) estimates that without immigration the national labour force will shrink by 6.5 million by 2025 if participation rates remain constant. Even with significantly higher participation rates and annual net immigration of one hundred thousand the labour force would still contract by 3.5 million. Sectoral demand is even more difficult to predict, and might be higher than currently expected, as official estimates are rather conservative. Similar trends can be found in most other EU countries.

Mobility Partnerships and the Global Approach to Migration (and Mobility)

Although demographically induced immigration demand has been apparent for some years, the challenge is not yet properly reflected in national and EU politics. Nevertheless, in 2005 the EU heads of state and government responded to the growing migration pressure and increasing national inability to control irregular immigration with the Global Approach to Migration, an initial attempt to develop a comprehensive common migration policy. The political turmoil in the Middle East and North Africa has further increased the importance of this approach.

The Global Approach aims to establish a coherent migration policy capable of connecting security and development aspects. To implement it the Commission has developed the instrument of mobility partnerships, tailored to the specific needs of the partner country and designed to improve the management of legal immigration. Partner states that constrain illegal migration from and through their territory, improve border controls and successfully clamp down on document and visa forgery are offered support to curtail irregular migration and control migration movements. Possibilities can also be opened up for legal labour migration into the EU. However, a brain drain is to be avoided and the source countries are to be given assistance for reintegrating returning migrants. The decision to participate in a partnership lies with the individual EU member state. While the Commission coordinates implementation, a single member-state manages the partnership with the respective third country.

Four very different pilot mobility partnerships have been set up so far. Four EU member-states participate in the mobility partnership with Cape Verde (since 2008; thirty-one projects as of December 2011), fifteen in the partnership with Moldova (2008; sixty-four projects), sixteen in the partnership with Georgia (2009; currently eighteen projects), while a fourth partnership has recently been established with Armenia (October 2011). In addition, negotiations took place with Ghana and Senegal (without concrete results), and preliminary talks started in 2011 with Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt.

In an initial evaluation of November 2009 the Commission concludes that the mobility partnerships enhance the coherence of EU policy and recommends expanding it. Attention should be paid to the question which source countries are of strategic interest for the EU and what these partners can be offered in the way of substantial new cooperation. New partnerships should only be planned where the respective third state shows a real interest in cooperation. These findings were confirmed by a public consultation in spring 2011. The assessment indicates that 70 percent of the member states consider mobility partnerships as "very important", another 20 percent as "important". The EU member states are fully aware that these partnerships are very demanding of resources, and that their success depends on early communication and transparency, as well as strong commitments by the partner country and the EU member states.

In 2011, the EU reinforced its mobility partnership offers as a way to support the Arab Spring and the transformation in North Africa, but also made cooperation conditional on the potential partner countries' progress. Visa facilitation, especially, is to be based on a commitment by these countries to negotiate readmission agreements. This should, according to the Commission, be "flanked by a support package geared towards increasing mobility, capacity building, exchange of information and cooperation on all areas of shared interest. The principles of appropriate conditionality and monitoring will apply." In November 2011 the Commission proposed stepping up dialogue and cooperation in the area of migration and mobility by establishing a Global Approach on Migration and Mobility (GAMM). This enhancement of the 2005 Global Approach is intended to provide a framework for an advanced level of dialogue and cooperation, and should, in addition, offer a "light" version of mobility partnerships to countries currently not able or willing to engage in the full set of obligations and commitments (notably in relation to the facilitation of mobility and readmission).

Central Concern: Promoting Development

The Global Approach is led by the realisation that a migration policy can only be effective and sustainable if it succeeds in linking at least three fields – legal migration, irregular migration and development (and according to the 2011 proposal, a fourth field: international protection) – in such a way that the partner countries have an interest in cooperation. The EU Commission and the member states place great hopes in such a migration policy. The Commission is convinced that it is possible to develop a comprehensive and coherent policy that benefits all involved: coun-

tries of origin, destination countries and the migrants themselves. Such a "triple win situation" would help to stabilise the transformation states, ameliorate skilled labour shortages in the EU and offer the migrants themselves the chance of a better life.

The Commission's plans for a comprehensive and coherent migration policy are based on a reassessment of the connection between migration and development. In development research it is now broadly recognised that structural conditions and government activities are crucial in deciding whether migration will promote development, and that these framework conditions have to be taken into account if migration is to have a positive development impact. Increasing temporary and circular migration plays a great role. Rather than a permanent move from one place to another, migration increasingly means living and working temporarily in one or more other countries: in other words, mobility. This structural transformation of migration influences its development impacts, especially in relation to financial remittances, the role of the diaspora in destination countries, and the brain drain.

Remittances attract particular attention. They have strongly increased across the globe and are becoming ever more important in development terms. The World Bank estimates that migrants transferred at least $325 billion to developing countries in 2010, of which $35 billion went to MENA countries alone. Altogether these transfers amount to about two and a half times the total global volume of public development aid. Remittances that escape official recording increase the total by at least one third. Even through the financial and economic crisis these transfers have turned out to be rather stable, unlike for example foreign direct investment. Many studies show that such remittances reduce the extent and depth of poverty in source countries and can have stabilising effects on economies and households. Moreover, considerable development contributions are attributed to the diaspora, above all with respect to facilitating direct investment and to assistance in recruiting workers for newly founded businesses in the source countries.

Finally, there is now also a more sophisticated understanding of the brain drain, taking into consideration whether skilled workers would have stood any chance of finding suitable employment if they had stayed in their home country and whether the source country deliberately trains skilled workers over and above its own needs. In these cases, and more

generally for temporary or circular migration, the development risks of the brain drain are today regarded as less grave.

Existing Links and Agreements

Mobility partnerships with North African and Middle Eastern countries do not need to start from scratch. Over the past decades, a range of agreements have been concluded between the European Community and these countries, providing a basis for further (and more advanced) agreements on migration, mobility and development. In the case of Morocco and Tunisia, for example, relations with the EU have been governed since the mid-1990s by Association Agreements, which also included provisions for dialogue and cooperation in the field of mobility and security. With regard to enhancing legislative and administrative capacities in the partner countries, the EU established the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and its associated action plans in 2004, providing partner countries an "advanced" or – in the case of Tunisia – "privileged" partnership status. Financial assistance was offered through the MEDA program and (since 2007) through the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument ENPI. In the field of migration and asylum, the Aeneas Programme and (since 2007) the Thematic Programme for Cooperation in the area of migration and asylum have been established.

The EU also set up programs to assist North African countries in developing migration and asylum policies, mainly through the EMP Migration Projects and through contributions to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). In addition, some EU countries have started to cooperate bilaterally with North African countries in the field of migration and security. Even though not all of these programs and projects had the initially intended outcomes, the administrative and political links established within in this framework could also be used to promote mobility partnerships.

Perspectives

Obviously, mobility partnerships present considerable political management requirements. They are medium- and long-term programmes that must be carefully planned and executed, and are not suitable

for managing short-term migration. They also presuppose determined and strong political leaderships in source countries with which complex contractual agreements can be concluded, administrations capable of implementing the agreements and a largely stable political situation without refugee flows or forced migration. Although this is not yet the case in all transition countries, the EU member states should, in anticipation of positive developments, consider seeking further mobility partnerships with countries in the Middle East and North Africa as soon as the necessary preconditions exist there. In view of the long preparation time such partnerships require, the process should start soon. Such a move would also convey the EU's commitment to lasting support for the transformation and development process in the transition countries.

Mobility partnerships ultimately depend on the participation and engagement of EU member states. They are framework agreements where each member state can contribute projects it believes to be worthwhile. Germany, for example, possesses valuable experience in supporting remittances, promoting development activity among diasporas living in Germany, and providing development-relevant support to returning migrants. Moreover, Germany has for decades organised large-scale temporary and circular migration flows, mainly of seasonal worker and skilled workers from Eastern European (although this fact is often not fully acknowledged by German politicians and the public). This experience should be put to better use, shared with other EU and partner countries and further expanded.

A decisive factor for the success of the mobility partnerships and the Global Approach to Migration will, however, be whether EU states are actually willing to permit temporary and circular migration from the transition states. If a partner state has an interest in promoting migration, but this option is excluded from the mobility partnership, this partnership cannot be expected to be successful. In the initial talks with North African transition states such willingness on the side of EU member states, for example by offering temporary or circular migration schemes, has not been apparent.

Nevertheless, European states should actively promote the Global Approach and foster mobility partnerships as the "most innovative and sophisticated tool to date of the Global Approach to Migration" (EU Commission). In cooperation with other interested EU countries the German government should – as a

first step – propose pilot projects for temporary on-the-job-training migration schemes for younger academics who currently have no access to their national labour market due to lack of work experience. Such pilot programs could also give valuable insights into the extent to which labour demand in EU countries is matched by migrants' skills from these countries, how temporary and circular migration potentials can be identified and – in the end – how a development-orientated migration policy could generally contribute to fostering the transformation process in North Africa and the Middle East.

V.
The Impact on International Politics

Beyond North Africa and the Middle East: The Impact on International Politics

Volker Perthes

The Arab revolts and revolutions are of more than merely local and regional relevance. They impact beyond the Arab world, containing lessons and challenges for international politics and, not least, the foreign policy of Europe and the West. Ten initial theses:

Perception and early detection: Actors in politics and business who predicted the revolts and revolutions in the Arab world were few and far between, even though the causal political and socio-economic factors were known and enough has been written about them. There were no "unknown unknowns" or "black swans" but rather, to stick with the ornithological metaphor, a whole flock of very well-known white swans about whose behaviour too little was known. As so often in crises that turn out to be systemic, the phenomena were known but early detection was hampered by a lack of understanding as to how they would interact. This has been exacerbated by the unwillingness of politicians and experts to anticipate ruptures: the familiar is held to be stable even when it is known to be problematic. One need only think of the enormous willingness of international actors, even now, to regard Saudi Arabia as a reliable island of stability. Analytically the only apparent way out is to seek with even greater rigour the social, economic and political factors that could lead to ruptures and on that basis to develop scenarios that are conceivable, even if uncomfortable and unappetising.

False geopoliticisation: The revolts and revolutions[1] in the Arab world have made a mockery of the division of these states into friends and foes of the West (and, moreover, of Western policy in the region). United States political diction after 9/11 and the Iraq war tended to distinguish between "moderate" and "radical" states in the region. "Moderates" backed the US and European agenda against Iran, in the "War on Terror" and in the Middle East conflict, whereas "radicals" were those who refused to. Although the EU did not assume this phraseology itself, its actions followed the same pattern. As a result many of the weaknesses that made these systems unstable or, in the cases of Egypt and Tunisia, have already led to their collapse were (and still are) overlooked, especially among the "friends" and the "moderates". Sorting states into friends and foes is plainly not a good epistemological or political yardstick. A better rule would be: beware of regimes claiming to guarantee our geopolitical interests.

Influence: Western states discovered that they had no influence on the outbreak of revolts and little sway over their course. They can help or hinder, but they cannot determine outcomes. This applies even to Libya. Granted, Gaddafi would have survived a good deal longer without NATO intervention. But it will be Libyan actors who decide whether a new dictatorship emerges, some kind of tribal-based confederation, a democracy – or chaos. Russia and China neither had nor have such influence, nor did they expect to; and they are dealing with lower outside expectations concerning their ability to determine events. The limited influence of outside actors is not necessarily a problem. The legitimacy of the political and social orders that emerge from the revolutions in Tunisia, Egypt and elsewhere will depend decisively on their being perceived as the outcome of authentic national political processes. But having little influence does not give Europe carte blanche to escape responsibility for developments in its neighbourhood. It will, if need be, receive reminders of this from those neighbours.

Unknown actors: Europe, the United States and other states will have to learn to deal with actors about whom they as yet know nothing. They will even have to give such actors a certain benefit of the doubt. In a whole series of Arab states – and elsewhere too – it is already apparent that not only are the old political elites out of the game; the known political oppositions and counter-elites are too. And it is largely the latter

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1 A "revolution" is defined here as an uprising that forces a change of leadership or regime (as in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya) when the process is identified as a "revolution" within the country itself. The term "revolt" is used where regime change has failed to materialise, at least to date, or an uprising has been suppressed (as in Syria or Bahrain). For much greater detail see: Volker Perthes, *Der Aufstand: Die arabische Revolution und ihre Folgen* (Munich, 2011).

with whom European states have maintained contact and whom they occasionally discreetly supported. Extending such advance trust, as it were, is particularly difficult when new influential actors stand outside Europe's traditional circle of "clients" and are unfamiliar with Europe's languages and customs. It might help to remind ourselves that the problem was not these unknown actors but much too often the well-known elites to whom Europe (and at other points China, India, Russia and the United States) for a long time granted great trust, often against better judgement and only out of fear of the unknown.

Confident new actors: The "new" transformation countries that are setting out to build democratic institutions after the fall of the old authoritarian regimes will remain unconsolidated democracies for quite some time. But their leaders will act with great self-confidence, often refusing the wishes of the United States or Europe and pointing out that they too, like the older democracies, are subject to domestic pressures and answerable first and foremost to the wishes and interests of their own population. The United States is likely to see its regional competence and leadership frequently challenged. EU member-states will not necessarily gain a responsive audience if they try to tell transformation states how to keep their finances healthy, for example. Generally, the democratic part of the world will become more pluralistic. New democratic states will not have to model themselves on the EU or the United States. If they need models, their societies and elites will find alternative paradigms and partners, such as Turkey, India, Brazil, South Africa or Indonesia. This will also impact on the new democracies' support for international conflict resolution efforts where the United States or the EU take the lead, and debates about reweighting power in international institutions. Particular international norms bearing the signature of the powers that today dominate the Security Council and the G8 are likely to be called into question more often; demands for new norms and standards will appear on the agenda. The fear of certain American and European observers that this could represent a classical zero-sum game, strengthening China or Russia at the expense of the West, reflects outdated thinking. Politically Russia and China represent a model for the old authoritarian elites, if at all. In fact, the debate about international norms and redistributing power in the international system is also about a rethinking of rules from which Russia and China have profited, including the nuclear weapons status of the five permanent members of the Security Council.

Revolution is contagious: Revolutions have a tendency to migrate. To that extent the Arab world could become the starting point for a series of uprisings and revolutions in other authoritarian systems. Whether this leads to a "fourth wave of democratisation" remains to be seen. And whether or not this turns out to be the case, regime elites in states like Azerbaijan, Armenia and Kazakhstan, and perhaps also Vietnam, Cambodia, Angola or Ethiopia, will have to prepare themselves for trouble. States with a youth bulge, relatively good access to regional and international news and information, growing social inequality, widespread corruption and authoritarian governments are plainly not going to be stable forever. Internationally we should therefore also be prepared for a series of regimes that fit this bill to regard the Arab revolts as a warning shot and preventatively step up repression, restrict the flow of information or pour petrol on conflicts with neighbours.

External conflicts do not save regimes: The experience of the Arab revolts to date also demonstrates that the externalisation of conflicts offers no protection against dissatisfied citizens. The assertion that Arab autocrats have instrumentalised the Middle East conflict to their own repressive ends remains correct. But it would be false to conclude that this was a recipe for success. As the Syrian example shows, revolts and revolutions can no longer be stopped by pointing to external enemies and "overriding" conflicts in which the nation must stick together. The countervailing thesis that a resolution of regional conflicts would only require the disappearance of the authoritarian regimes is equally false, though. The revival of the territorial dispute between Iraq and Kuwait offers an obvious example. And Syria, after regime change in Damascus, will call no less vigorously for the return of the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights than it does today and perhaps much more so.

Interventions: The role of NATO in ending the Gaddafi regime in Libya will cause the debate about the usefulness and legitimacy of international humanitarian intervention to take another turn. As was already becoming apparent in the case of Darfur, the rapid and general availability of images and information and their use by a transnational civil society to demand military intervention is a relevant new development. For the first time the support of *al-Jazeera* was more important for the regional legitimacy of an international intervention than the consent of two veto powers in the UN

Security Council. In the short term a similar mobilisation of regional and international public opinion for an intervention is conceivable in the case of Syria, in the medium term also in other regions. After Libya NATO and its members will have to decide whether they will be willing to treat Security Council mandates similarly nonchalantly in future cases if the objective, in the Libyan case regime change, enjoys broad regional support but is not covered by a mandate. And the question of when the protection of a civilian population not only legitimises an international intervention but makes it imperative will arise in all kinds of forums, not just in the Security Council. The permanent Security Council members, especially, are liable to come under pressure to justify themselves: the United States for its explicit willingness to intervene without a UN mandate if need be, China and Russia for their reticence to grant such mandates. China's policy of strict non-intervention towards dictatorial regimes will be more or less unsustainable in the longer term, not only because China loses more international soft power than it gains, but also because its experience of having to evacuate tens of thousands of its own citizens from a collapsing Libyan dictatorship will increase its interest in the domestic conditions of the countries with which it has dealings.

Stability: The Arab revolts and revolutions have called into question the understanding of stability on which the EU's policy towards its neighbourhood is based. Europe will continue to have a vital interest in a stable neighbourhood. European leaders have however, particularly in this neighbourhood, too often confused political stagnation and longevity of regimes with sustainable stability. Arab autocrats are not alone in successfully presenting themselves as guarantors of stability. Europe should certainly work to promote political and social stability in its neighbourhood. But it needs a new unambiguous concept of what stability actually means and a corresponding set of instruments. Stability should be understood not as defending the status quo but as a dynamic equilibrium that permits change and peaceful power transitions.

Universal values: The uprisings and revolutions in the Arab states have sent a clarion call that reverberates far beyond the Arab world, demonstrating the enormous vitality of the desire for democracy, individual liberties, justice and human rights. The fear of many a Western observer and politician that the rise of China could bring about a global value shift towards an authoritarian capitalist model based on harmony,

growth and wise leadership was plainly exaggerated. It is conspicuous that the young generation at the heart of the Arab revolts gives little for European politics but absolutely regards the democratic ideas promoted by Europe as its own, thereby underlining their universality. European values have received political support from a region where Europe would certainly not have expected it. And that is another reason why Europe's interest in successful democratic transformations in the Arab world must be at least as great as twenty years ago in Eastern Europe.

Appendix

Abbreviations

AIPAC	American-Israel Public Affairs Committee
AQAP	Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979)
EMP	Euro-Mediterranean Partnership
G8	Group of Eight (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, United Kingdom, United States)
GECF	Gas Exporting Countries Forum
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
IEA	International Energy Agency
JEM	Justice and Equality Movement (Sudan)
JMP	Joint Meeting Parties (Yemen)
LNG	Liquefied Natural Gas
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NCFPR	National Council for the Forces of the Peaceful Revolution (Yemen)
OPEC	Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
PJD	Parti de la justice et du développement (Morocco)
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organisation
QIZ	Qualifying Industrial Zones (in Egypt, Jordan)
SCAF	Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (Egypt)
SLA	Sudan Liberation Army
USFP	Union socialiste des forces populaires (Morocco)
UAE	United Arab Emirates

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