

Bratislava Model United Nations 2011

UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY



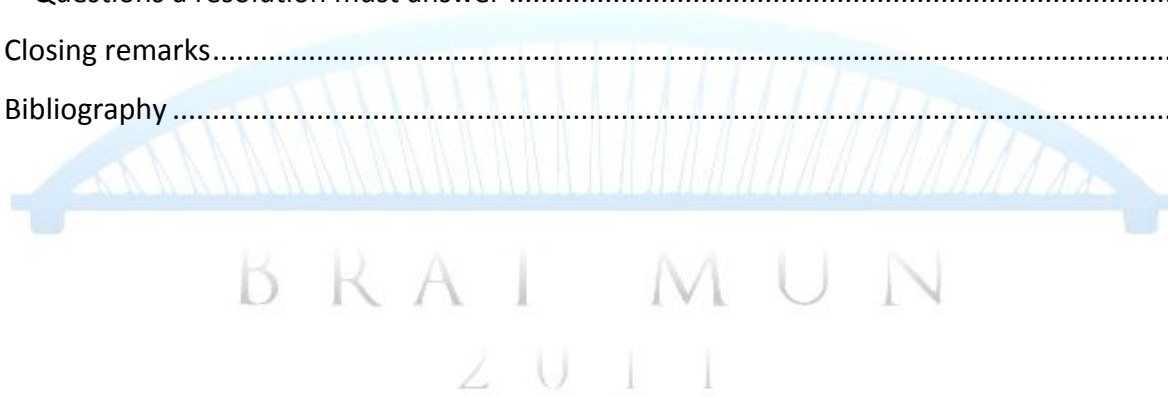
FUTURE OF THE NEW ARAB DEMOCRACIES

Study Guide

Chair: David Dutko

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Letter from the chair

Honourable delegates,

It is my very great pleasure to welcome you to the Bratislava Model United Nations. This is a time when we, the chairs, may finally let out a sigh of relief, since all study guides have been finished. We are proud to say that all preparations from our side have been made, all that to ensure the BratMUN 2011 experience will be better than ever. For me, personally, it was a challenging period of time – after all, managing seven chairpeople who appear as if though they were doing everything to give one a hard time is not easy.

However, for me, all the work is only a sign of this year's conference being well-organised. Now, with a clear conscience, we can rest for a short while and await your responses, enquiries and the much anticipated policy statements. Be not hesitant, though, for November is approaching at a quick pace, and in no time we should like to see your work. It will be a chance for you to prove yourselves thoughtful and responsible representatives of your schools and countries, while we work on ensuring as real an experience as we can.

My duty, as far as the in-conference time is concerned, shall be presiding over the General Assembly of BratMUN. Whilst in the respective committees only the relevant countries have a say, the General Assembly is particular in that every country's delegation is present. The UN body, having met for the first time in 1946, serves as one of the principal organs of the United Nations, tending to matters such as the appointment of the non-permanent members of the Security Council. The resolutions the GA produces are for the most part very general, as the name may perhaps suggest, dealing with world-wide problems and phenomena which represent the current zeitgeist.

I believe that the Arab spring is one such phenomenon; it represents the wave of social unrest that has taken the whole world by surprise in the past few years. Whether you look at the riots in the United Kingdom or the protests in Syria or Yemen, there is an underlying tendency that can be seen everywhere. Somewhere it has led to a substantial change in the system, in other places it is being repressed by the authorities.

Having said that, the primary concern of this year's General Assembly is not to evaluate the causes or workings of this wave of unrest. It is concerned, above all, with the aftermath – namely, how to preserve the democracy and liberty the Arab peoples have fought for. I trust the making of the decisions will be in good hands.

David Dutko, President of the General Assembly

Introduction

Ash-sha`b yurid isqat an-nizam – that is what echoed throughout the Arab world in the past few months. And the people really wanted to bring down the regime. Whereas in Tunisia and Egypt the revolutions seem to be in their finishing stages, in Libya, Yemen, or Syria, the people are still fighting for their freedom. All of these countries have something in common, however. The people united for a single cause, their aim being liberty. Regardless of their religious preference or race, the Arab nations stood as one against their dictators.

This year's plenary session is concerned with the three countries that appear to have attained the status of democracies – new Arab democracies, as it were. These are Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya, nations which have overthrown their authoritarian leaders in the course of the last year. Indeed they must be viewed individually, but the tendencies to which their future development will adhere are universal for all of them. On one side of the chasm are the Islamists who believe the Sharia should play an important role in lawmaking, and on the other the secularists who wish not to see religion mixed with politics. That being said, whichever side wins will have been chosen by the democratic majority, and therefore it is no business of the United Nations to interfere.

However, it is our concern to ensure that the elections themselves will be democratic, and that new tyrants, in the Ancient Greek sense of the word, will not take the posts of the old ones. Making sure that the democracy the three Arab countries have won is preserved is our primary goal.

A relatively brief overview of the causes and history of the revolutions is one part of this study guide; a glimpse at the current situation is the other. It serves to give you, the delegates, a comprehensive basis for the discussion in this year's General Assembly. The study guide is by no means a complete account of what is happening and has happened during the three revolutions, but it serves as a common starting point.

As of October 9, there is little hope of another such revolution happening in the next month or so, as the Yemeni leader Saleh effectively refuses to abdicate. He has been consistent in his statements so far, and not much indicates that his stepping down is imminent (1). The other country where extensive protests are taking place, Syria, is the topic of this year's Human Rights Committee and thus not discussed primarily in the General Assembly. Therefore, Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya, the only Arab countries where all-encompassing changes have happened, are this document's countries of interest.

History

As of October, 2011, three new democracies have arisen from the ashes of authoritarian Arab states. The vanguard of Arab peoples' sentiment of discontentedness, Tunisia, was followed by the sacking of President Mubarak of Egypt. Though not yet a proper revolution with political trials and all, the civil war in Libya continues to rage violently as the ex-supreme-ruler Colonel Gaddafi is on the run.

The Jasmine Revolution

Jasmine, the national flower of Tunisia, is not the word which most of the country's citizens would associate with the revolution. Instead, the city of Sidi Bouzid is what comes to their mind. It is, mostly, because it all started there. On the 17th of December 2010, Mohammed Bouazizi, an illegal vendor of fruit and vegetables had his produce confiscated by the authorities. He was 26 years old and had studied computer science, but the shortage of jobs had forced him to sell agricultural produce. Enraged, Bouazizi then soaked himself in petrol and lit himself outside the governor's office, dying a few days later in a hospital (2). Usually, any protests against the establishment would be repressed immediately (3); however, Mohammed Bouazizi's action provoked such a response that it was close to impossible for the government to contain it. This name would come to be widely known both locally and worldwide.

What transformed such a seemingly globally insignificant event into a starter of the series of Arab revolutions? The possible answer is that it was all but a spark that started the subsequent fire, for that was exactly what the desiccated forest was waiting for to start burning. The conditions in Tunisia had been nearly unbearable for some time – the food inflation was high and there were no jobs, even for highly qualified people. Partly because of that and the general neglect of human rights, the regime was seen as inefficient, corrupt and too authoritarian, and everything the people needed was a strong impulse to start a revolution (2).

Normally, the suicide of an ordinary citizen such as Mohammed Bouazizi would not have been heard about anywhere except maybe Sidi Bouzid. It has been suggested, though, that what made the overthrowing of the Tunisian regime possible was, interestingly, the Internet. Not only had the corrupt practices and nepotism of the establishment been revealed shortly beforehand by Julian Assange's Wikileaks (4) (5), internet provided a communicational medium for both spreading the news of the self-immolation of Mohammed Bouazizi and, later, for organising protests (6). By the time of his funeral, which was attended by a crowd of 5000 people, the sentiment of the mourners was shared by more or less the whole country. Bent on avenging the deceased protester, the crowd was stopped only by the police. More demonstrations, some in the nation's capital Tunis, would

follow, all of which were to be condemned by the officials as merely following the agenda of the opposition (3).

Even though the protests were generally viewed as peaceful by the West (7), the government claimed they only opened fire after being attacked using Molotov cocktails thrown by the crowd (3). President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali, 74, who had been in power since 1987, reacted by promising the protesters that security forces would stop using firearms against them and that the minister of interior affairs would be fired. He also said he would not run for presidency again in 2014 and that the prices of necessities would decrease. Nevertheless, even that very moment live rounds were being shot at the participants of a demonstrations, two of whom died (6). The total number of deaths is estimated to have been at least 219 (8).

28 days after the revolution started, it came to a successful end. President Ben Ali officially resigned and fled the country headed for Saudi Arabia on the 14th of January, 2011.

A short timeline of the revolution (taken verbatim from BBC News (7)):

- **17 Dec:** A graduate sets himself on fire in Sidi Bouzid over lack of jobs, sparking protests
- **24 Dec:** Protester shot dead in central Tunisia
- **28 Dec:** Protests spread to Tunis
- **8-10 Jan:** Dozens of deaths reported in crackdown on protests
- **12 Jan:** Interior ministry sacked
- **13 Jan:** President Ben Ali promises to step down in 2014
- **14 Jan:** President dissolves government and parliament, then steps down

Mubarak leaves involuntarily

For many Egyptians, Hosni Mubarak was their pharaoh rather than a mere president. For nearly thirty years, he managed to keep relatively conflict-free relations with the USA and Israel, a feat that made Egypt seem stable from the outside and even ensured it a yearly donation from the US. Mubarak kept the Islamist fundamentalism, best exemplified perhaps by the Islamic Brotherhood, at bay using repressive measures. However, this also meant that the democracy present in the president's party's name, National Democratic Party, was not really given much thought for. As time progressed, the number of people dissatisfied with the regime grew, and Mubarak kept his office only by evading six assassination attempts (9).

However, the curbing of human rights and civil liberties was, strictly speaking, legal. A state of emergency had been in effect since the Six-Day War of 1967. It gave the establishment the power to suppress opposition virtually without any limit (10). Police brutality was commonplace, and there were reports of Islamist activists being tortured in prisons (11).

The Egyptians needed only to be shown that a country can get rid of its authoritarian ruler, and that was precisely what Tunisia did (12). Inspired by Mohammed Bouazizi, one self-immolation followed, and several others were attempted (13). However, the revolutionary movement was already in full flight. Even though the authorities refused the possibility that a revolution would happen in Egypt, tens of thousands of peaceful protesters gathered on Tahrir square, Cairo, and thousands more in cities throughout the country on 25 January (12). Social media are said to have played a vital role in the protests – as one activist expressed herself (14): “We use Facebook to schedule the protests, Twitter to coordinate, and YouTube to tell the world.” More protests would follow.

On the 28th of January, President Mubarak had a public speech in which he declared that his government would, unlike him, step down. He defended what he viewed as actions necessary to preserve order in the face of ongoing protests (9). There was one thing, however, which was without precedent at that time. Hosni Mubarak managed to have the internet shut down in the whole of Egypt. The protesters, reliant on electronic communication, appeared to have suffered a critical blow (15).

The day after that, Mubarak named Omar Suleiman, Egypt’s military intelligence chief, the new vice-president, but the involvement of the military in suppressing the protests has proven fatal to the government. On the 31st of January, the army announced they would not fire at protesters in Tahrir, and voices from their ranks started to join the people’s protests. All that time, protests were taking place 24 hours a day, and word spread on 10 February that Mubarak would resign. In his speech on that day, however, he did nothing of the sort; instead, he reiterated his February 1st promise that he would not take part in the September elections (9). On the next day, however, Omar Suleiman announced that the Armed Forces Supreme Council had taken over power. Celebrations ensued (16), while now ex-president Mubarak fled for Sharm El-Sheikh (9).

The Egyptian constitution was suspended shortly as well as the parliament dissolved in order to facilitate the transition to democracy (17). The army said they were not a legitimate government, but in the interim they would hold power (16). Changes in the constitution were drafted in order to allow a parliamentary election in the following six months, with the referendum set for the 19th of March. The turnout was relatively large compared to previous rigged elections, despite many activists claiming that the changes were not radical enough and that an entirely new constitution would be needed before a general election, instead of the parliament then drafting it (18). The minor changes in the constitution were backed by a majority of 77% (19).

Timeline of the revolution (20):

- **25 Jan:** First Day Of Demonstrations
- **27 Jan:** Egypt Shuts Down The Internet
- **28 Jan:** Mubarak Speaks, Says He'll Form A New Government

- **29 Jan:** Anonymous Internet Users Help Egypt Communicate
- **30 Jan:** Hillary Clinton: Egypt Must Transition To Democracy
- **31 Jan:** Egypt's New Government Is Announced, Sworn In
- **1 Feb:** President Mubarak Says He Won't Run For Re-Election
- **2 Feb:** Internet Service Returns In Egypt
- **5 Feb:** Members Of Ruling Party Leadership Resign
- **6 Feb:** Government Agrees On Concessions
- **9 Feb:** Widespread Labour Strikes Throughout Egypt
- **10 Feb:** Despite Rumours, Mubarak Refuses To Step Down
- **11 Feb:** Mubarak Resigns As President, Leaves Cairo for Sharm El-Sheikh

The Libyan Civil War

First major protests in Libya took place in mid-January; the events after that can be viewed as a natural continuation of the series of revolutions in the Arab world. Originally, what the people protested against were delayed subsidised housing units (21), but soon the protests grew into organised acts of antiestablishment protest. By February 15, the protests had already grown violent. The demonstrators had already become anguished with the regime as a whole, attacking its symbols – for instance by torching several police stations. The centre of these protests was the city Benghazi, whence many of the already jailed dissenters came (22).

A declaration was signed by a group of prominent Libyan public figures and human rights activists, stating that the objective of the protests was to instil free speech and press as well as the right to rally peacefully (22). Soon, a National Transitional Council representing the opposition was formed in the eastern city of Benghazi. Its demands comprised, among others, a pluralist democracy in place of the Jamahiriya, free elections and expression, and a new constitution clarifying the much obscure administration (23).

After that, it was clear that Muammar Gaddafi would not put up with such open insurgence. An attack on Benghazi, which is Libya's second largest city, was fielded, killing at least 32 people in airstrikes alone (24). Nevertheless, it is dubitable whether there could have been made a distinction between civilians and combatants, since the opposition forces do not wear a standardised uniform or any signs.

Colonel Gaddafi failed to uphold a unilateral ceasefire he proclaimed when his forces reached Benghazi; instead, they continued fighting in the following confusion (25). Perhaps concerned about the rising prices of oil due to the instability in the Mediterranean (24), the West reacted by proposing sanctions on Colonel Gaddafi's regime. On 17 March, a UNSC resolution authorised the establishment of a no-fly zone, which prevented the governmental forces from bombing the rebels (26). France and the UK were, unlike the apathetic Russia or China, among the more active members of the Security Council in this

matter. As mandated by Chapter VII of the UN Charter (26), they opened fire on the Libyan forces, which was quickly denounced by Gaddafi as a 'Western crusade'. The primary aim of the military action was to stop the Libyan army from targeting civilians as a means of demoralising the rebel forces (27). A warrant for the arrest of Gaddafi was issued by the International Criminal Court in order to protect civilians in June, shortly followed by an Interpol warrant (28).

Supported by the West, the rebels quickly gained an edge over the stricken loyalists. They gained control over a key Western city of Misurata, the third largest in Libya. Their advance was accompanied by many of the loyalist units siding with them, as well as members of the police force stripping their uniform and joining the protesters. It was announced that several of the tribes traditionally supporting Gaddafi were joining the revolutionaries, while their cronies in Benghazi were setting up provisional governmental structures (29).

Little stood then between the opposition forces and the capital of Tripoli. Without much resistance they took the outskirts, but as they were advancing in the direction of the regime's stronghold at Bab al-Aziziya, they encountered resistance composed of snipers and guerrilla warriors. Then, however, they managed to capture the fortress, but no traces of Colonel Gaddafi were found. As a reaction to the conquest, many figures of the former regime pledged allegiance to the new *de facto* administration, the National Transitional Council. Several embassies all over the world hoisted the new Libyan flag, a tricolour used before Gaddafi, instead of the plain green one that symbolised the old regime (30).

An overview of the key events in the Libyan Civil War (31):

- **Feb 15/16:** The arrest of human rights activist Fethi Tarbel sparks a riot in Benghazi
- **Feb 24:** Anti-government militias take control of central coastal city of Misurata
- **Feb 26:** The UNSC imposes sanctions on Gaddafi and his family
- **Feb 28:** EU governments approve a an arms embargo
- **Mar 5:** The rebel National Transitional Council in Benghazi declares itself the sole representative for Libya
- **Mar 17:** The UNSC authorises a no-fly zone over Libya and military action
- **Mar 19:** The first air strikes halt Gaddafi's advance on Benghazi, and target Libya's air defences.
- **Jun 27:** The ICC issues arrest warrants for Gaddafi, his son Saif al-Islam and intelligence chief Abdullah al-Senussi on charges of crimes against humanity.
- **Aug 21:** Rebels enter Tripoli with little resistance
- **Aug 23:** The rebels overrun Gaddafi's fortified Bab al-Aziziya compound in Tripoli
- **Sep 1:** Libya's interim rulers meet world leaders at a conference in Paris to discuss reshaping Libya. Gaddafi, on the 42nd anniversary of his coming to power, urges his supporters to fight on.

Present state of affairs

It appears that the new governments of the Arab countries are hard at work trying to completely rebuild their political system and legislative. Observers have been sent to Poland to survey the parliamentary election and gather experience that will be used to ensure smooth progress of their respective elections. The first free elections in decades are scheduled for late October in Tunisia, while in Egypt they will start at the end of November (32). In Libya, elections are expected to take place sometime in 2012 (33).

Politics in Tunisia

After the ouster of President Ben Ali, Prime Minister Mohammed al-Ghannouchi announced that he would take over authority as interim president. The army took over the duties of the police, and a nationwide state of emergency was declared. Al-Ghannouchi, a member of the former ruling party, Rally for Constitutional Democracy, said that a new cabinet would be formed (34). He also proclaimed that nationwide elections in which the formerly banned parties would be eligible would be held in an effort to transition Tunisia to a democracy, along with scrapping all undemocratic laws. The acting president promised to leave politics after the elections are held (35). He assured the public that he would put an end to imprisoning political opponents and that the media would get “total freedom”. Some members of the opposition, however, were discontented with the presence of members of RCD in the new cabinet (36). Further protests and fatalities preceded Al-Ghannouchi’s handing over his unconstitutionally gained presidency to the speaker of the largely RCD-dominated parliament, Fouad Mebazaa, who was tasked with organising the elections and given emergency powers (37).

In February, RCD was suspended from all official activities by the interior ministry. It has been disbanded by a Tunisian court shortly thereafter in March for having attempted to overthrow the constitution and to impose a totalitarian regime. It was decided that all its funds would be nationalised. The court remarked that the party had never been audited since its formation in 1988 (38).

An assembly is to be elected which will create the new Tunisian constitution. The polls are due to take place on the 23rd of October, as announced by Mebazaa. The new constitutional body will determine whether Mebazaa will stay in power or a new representative will be appointed (39). Initially, the elections were to be held on the 24th of July but were postponed after the election commission said it needed more time to prepare. The EU is sending its representatives to oversee the polls, according to whom security is not going to be an issue (40).

As of now, over 80 parties have registered for the October elections, most of which are now only introducing themselves to the voter. The main contest will be between the secularists wishing separation of the mosque from the state, and the Islamists, among them

those who would like to see elements of the Sharia law incorporated into the legislature (40).

Egypt under military rule

It has been found by an Egyptian judicial committee that the death toll of the several-weeks-long uprising was 846, twice as much as original estimates suggested (41). Accordingly to popular request, the state security responsible for much of the atrocities was disbanded by the interior minister. He promised a new agency adhering to the principles of the constitution and human rights would be formed. However, to prove any of the old officials responsible for the crimes seems close to impossible, since many of the security documents had already been shredded by the time the new government took over (42). Once again copying the events in Tunisia, NDP, the former ruling party of 30 years has been dissolved and its funds confiscated. The former president, along with his sons, one of whom had been considered an heir apparent in the Egyptian pharaonic line of succession (43), has been detained. Their former associates in the National Democratic Party have, in addition, tried to distance themselves from the former ruling clique and to rebrand the party, just like it had been done in Tunisia (44).

However, the voices of dissent were still powerful. It has been observed that, once again, there was division among the Egyptians – along the much feared sectarian lines. The Coptic Christians generally didn't agree with the amendment of the constitution in the 19 March referendum, whereas some Islamists even said it was against the Sharia to vote negatively (45). Indeed, that was not all there was. Protesters continued to populate the Tahrir square, whose name aptly signifies 'liberation' in Arabic, expressing their concern over the slow pace of prosecuting the former governmental figures. On the 8th of April, they gathered for what they called the 'Friday of Cleansing', demanding the state prosecutor's resignation, which was exemplified the best by the banners they were carrying: 'Slow justice is injustice'. The demands comprised also quicker fulfilment of revolutionaries' other demands, such as sacking the rest of the former administration. Those present also carried the flags of Libya, Yemen, and Syria as token of support, while similar demonstrations were taking place in Suez and Alexandria as well (46).

Currently, Ex-President Hosni Mubarak stands trial for the murder of protesters. According to the media, he may eventually be sentenced to death penalty. On the other hand, there has been talk over the army protecting one of their own (Mubarak had been an air force commander before stepping to power); it is possible, though, that they will simply throw him to the protesters as a scapegoat for the whole former government. Mubarak is, at this time, kept guarded in a hospital rather than a prison in the Red Sea resort of Sharm El-Sheikh. Analysts say that the possible deathly fate of the overthrown ruler may pose a disincentive for other dictators in the region to step down (43).

As of now, Egypt is *de facto* ruled by the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces Chairman Mohamed Hussein Tantawi, who is by many considered undoubtedly a member of the former regime, but one clear of the massacres and human rights suppression, even though the opinion is not universal. Nevertheless, fears that he will abuse his power are, in light of the past events, close to nonexistent (47).

Democratic elections to the People's Assembly (Parliament) have been scheduled to begin on the 28th of November, 2011 and end on 3 January, 2012. Polls will take place in four phases spanning the various governorates of Egypt. The resultant parliament is to meet for the first time on the 16th of March. The Supreme Council of the Armed Forces also decreed that the Shura (Upper House) elections will begin on 29 January, 2012, which will hold its establishing session on 24 March, 2012. So far no date has been set for a presidential election, which is expected sometime in March or April (48), but the army have already said they will not field their own candidate (49).

The National Transitional Council

The death toll during the course of the Revolution has been estimated at 50 000 by the National Transitional Council (50). The number, however, refers to only those that have died so far, even though the fighting has not yet stopped. Parts of the country are still under loyalist control, among them Muammar Gaddafi's hometown of Sirte, and the city of Bani Walid. The forces present in the besieged cities are reportedly eager to fight to the death, or, as they put it, martyrdom. Apart from that, clashes between Berbers and Seaan Arabs, who joined to defeat Gaddafi, have occurred, which may be a sign that the Colonel is no longer that a prominent figure and the source of all violence. The clashes have been deemed isolated cases and consequences of past disagreement (51).

In the meantime, the ousted Colonel Gaddafi urges the Libyan people to protest against their new leaders. He speaks of the conditions in the country as unbearable and questions the legitimacy of the NTC as the nation's sole representative. His primary concern is that it was, according to him, imposed on the Libyans by the fleets and air forces of Western nations. His remarks come at a time when NATO ministers are convening on the further steps in the Libya campaign (52). Concurrently, he is believed to be hiding near the Algerian border, where the Tuareg, the only tribe that have not yet turned their back on him, reside. The interim government stated that they are close to capturing Gaddafi, as there are less and less places for him to hide (53). The rebel National Transitional Council has already been accepted by the UN as the Libyan people's rightful representative, and the official name of the country has been changed in UN archives to 'Libya', its flag having been reverted to its pre-Gaddafi state (54) in the light of a Security Council resolution. The African Union also recognised the NTC as a legitimate representative of Libya (55).

The NTC has moved its headquarters to Tripoli and vowed to organise general elections within the next eight months, followed by a constitutional referendum in an effort to prepare for a 2013 regular election (33).



Possible outcomes

It is possible that the three countries that are the subject of this study guide will suffer from the same ailments as the post-communist countries of central and south Europe. The Libyan Civil War can especially be likened to the Hungarian uprising of 1956, due to the socialist character of the former Libyan Jamahiriya – of course, if it had been successful. The new governments need to be wary of problems such as non-transparent privatisation, the rise of oligarchs, and excessive dependence on the West.

There are three possible outcomes of the revolution in each of the countries, each connected with certain political parties in the respective countries. They are:

- **Islamists:**

- In **Egypt**, the Islamic political bloc comprises mainly the Nour Party and the Freedom and Justice Party, whose main constituent is the Islamic Brotherhood (56). This is the direction Egypt will probably be headed with the Islamists supported by **44%** of the populace, even though the new law allowing more or less everybody to found their own party may shuffle the results (57).
- **Tunisian** Islamists are grouped under the common banner of the Nahda (Renaissance) Party. According to current opinion polls, it possesses 25% of the votes, which makes it the most prominent political party in Tunisia. Islamists are supported by **29%** of the people (58).
- **Libyan** politics are, at this point, very unclear – only three parties announced their participation in the elections. A party that could fill the niche of an Islamist party may be the Green Party – Libyan Socialist Movement (59), whose colour green is traditionally considered Islamic. So far, the distribution of voters is unknown, but it is likely that many people will have been disillusioned by the Islamic Jamahiriya and consequently by Islamists themselves.

- **Secularists:**

- **Egypt's** secularists are mainly composed of the Wafd Party and Free Egyptians. The Wafd Party currently holds the preference of **20%** of the electorate, which puts it well behind the coalition of Islamist movements (60).
- In **Tunisia**, **35%** of people have stated they plan on voting for the independent secularists, which comprise the Democratic Forum for Labour and Liberties and the Progressive Democratic Party (58). This means that Tunisia will probably be headed the secular direction in the years to come.
- **Libya** will likely see two parties with similar secular agenda in the 2012 elections, the New Libya Party and the Democratic Party (61) (62). They are likely to attract most of the votes simply because they pose a change compared to the Islam-based policies of Colonel Gaddafi.

- **Authoritarians**, the parties pertaining to the former leaders and the military:
 - An overwhelming 98% majority of **Egyptians** feel that the power should be transferred from the military as soon as possible (60). Also, as ex-president Mubarak and his sons are currently being tried, their return is not much more probable than Mr. Mubarak rising from the bed he is tied down to (43).
 - Only 9% of **Tunisians** would vote for any of the parties that have arisen from the former Constitutional Democratic Rally (58). The prospect of Ben Ali returning to the country is improbable, since he has been sentenced to 16 years in prison *in absentia* (63).
 - **Libya** already demands the extradition of Muammar Gaddafi's family from Algeria in order to prosecute them (64). It is, therefore, highly probable that Gaddafi would, if caught, face trial and possible lynching. The overthrown Colonel does not at this time possess the military power necessary for returning forcibly (30).

Questions a resolution must answer

The main questions that a good resolution that is to prevent any further atrocities in the south Mediterranean needs to answer are:

- *How to ensure that future Libyan, Tunisian, and Egyptian governments are democratically elected?*
- *Is it legitimate for the UN to interfere in any way with the elections, and if yes, what part should it play?*

There are a few supplementary issues the resolution should address, namely:

- *What to do about eventual foul play in the polls? Should thusly elected representatives be considered legitimate?*
- *Should the Sharia be a basis for the new legislatures? Is it necessary that the arising government be secular?*
- *Is there a possibility that the autocratic former rulers will return? How to provide for the safety of the people if such thing were to happen?*
- *What of the Berbers in Libya? How to ensure their culture and rights are respected?*

Closing remarks

While Libyan politics appear to be still in their infancy after long years of gestation, the outcomes of the Arab spring in Egypt and Tunisia seem to be turning out to be dramatically different. Egypt is eager to vote for Islamists after being ruled by the pro-Israel, pro-US Hosni Mubarak. On the other hand, Tunisia seems to uphold its liberal tradition – after all, it is the only Arab country where polygamy is banned (65).

Egypt has a history of conflict with Israel, and the presumable victory of Islamists might mean re-escalation of the disputes. A majority of Egyptians have expressed the need to revise the peace treaty with Israel, while 10% would abolish it completely. It appears that even though secularists do constitute a significant part of the political spectrum, they may have a hard time advocating pro-Western policies. Also, Egyptians generally believe that Sharia law should be the basis upon which the new system ought to be built (66).

An interesting story might be that of the Libyan Berbers, a group whose rights were extensively suppressed under the Gaddafi regime. The Berbers have their own culture and language distinct from those of the Arabs. They joined the rebellion against the Jamahiriya and were among the first to storm the capital of Tripoli in August. Nevertheless, their ties with the National Transitional Council are quite loose, and the prevailing sentiment is that they have been in a way forgotten in the hullabaloo of the civil war (67).

Nevertheless, I hope that the story of the Arab Spring will be an at least equally captivating topic. As much as possible has been done to give you a clear account of the history of the three revolutions, as well as to provide an overview of the political situation in Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia. Now, it is up to you to solve the problems that their transition to democracy poses.

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tl;dr: Either the secularists or the Islamists win. Return of former dictators is close to impossible. So far it looks that in Egypt Sharia will prevail, while the liberal Tunisians will be secular. As far as Libya is concerned, it is too soon to make any predictions, but secularist parties dominate the current political spectrum. Elections in Tunisia are on 23 October, the other two countries' ones are scheduled sometime in 2012.