

# **Arab Spring from Revolution to Democratization or Civil War**



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## **Introduction**

The purpose of this book is to provide an over view of the different revolution in in Arab countries, It also confirms the effectiveness of democracy reached in Tunisia, Egypt, Morocco, and Jordan after the Arab spring. Moreover, it provides an overview of the different dichotomies present in Arab countries and assets that the Arab Spring as described in the literature did not play out as planned by some countries, such and it is still a source of bloodshed in Libya, Yemen, Bahrain, and Syria. In these countries the democratization process did not lead to democracy. The background, the country dynamic before and after the Arab Spring, the foreign aid policy, the national response such as military involvement and the tangible results in each country, the human rights, ethnic favoritism, regulated patronage, unregulated patronage, perceived legitimacy and tactical control will be discussed for each country. It also confirms the ineffectiveness of the Arab Spring in nations that did not receive a significant amount of western assistance.

## Tunisia

The spark that ignited the Arab Spring was the incident that took place in Tunisia. Protests broke open against Ben Ali who had ruled for 23 years and abused power as Tunisians were fed up of poor economic conditions in the country. In fact, according to Muasher (Muasher, 2011), *"the improvements in economic performance of recent years hardly filtered down to the masses, creating a wide gap between the rich and the poor."*(Page 52)

Despite poor coverage of the incident and its consequences, news was spreading on social media and from one city to another, leading to solidarity marches. The more the protests grew, the more security forces became violent in their tendency to suppress them. Ben Ali retaliated and accused protestors of being extremists and even terrorists, only to make the elite move away from him and participate in a huge strike of lawyers on January 6, 2011.

The West recommended the government to manifest constraint and critiqued excessive use of force against demonstrators, but never called for the removal of the president. Moreover, according to Muasher (Muasher, 2011), *"as the nation's former colonial ruler, France stood by Ben Ali, while the United States refused to "take sides" according to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton."*

Protests persisted and resulted in overthrowing Ben Ali. The Tunisian army was the main support; it refused to attack demonstrators, leaving only the Republican Guard loyal to the

president, who offered multiple concessions in vain. The president fled the country and settled in Saudi Arabia after no European country had accepted to host him. Demonstrations persisted mainly against figures of the old regime but also as a sign of discontent as no reforms were in the horizon. *“Elections were held on October 23, 2011, with the Islamist party Ennahda winning a plurality, probably heralding a new era in Tunisian politics, as elsewhere in the Arab world” (page 510), according to Muasher (Muasher, 2011)”*

### **Background:**

The Tunisian military is viewed as a standout amongst the most expert and objective observers in the region. Tunisia's first President, Habib Bourguiba, was a modernizer who ruled for a long time after independence. In 1962, after an unsuccessful coup attempt, Bourguiba intentionally kept the military out of the political circle and used the paramilitary National Guard to screen the military. In 1987, Bourguiba was ousted in a bloodless coup by his Prime Minister Ben Ali Ware (1988). He oppressed opposition parties (remarkably, the Islamist Anahdha), civil society groups, and individual freedoms with a significantly extended *Mukhabarat*. Like his ancestor, Ben Ali discredited the military: lessening its size, slicing its financial plan, solidifying its advancements, and constraining its role to a border watch, tragedy support, and peacekeeping power. Moreover, he accused a few officers of a coup plot, which they claim was concocted by the regime to expel them from power in 1991, and twelve military officers died inexplicably in a helicopter crash with the fingertips of the regime's affiliate



Alexander in 2001. Despite all that, the military, driven by Ammar, was able to oust Ben Ali more than a year ago (Ware, 1988).

### **Country Dynamics: Before & After the Arab Spring**

Before the incident which took place in the city of Sidi Bouzid and initiated an uprising that would soon spread to other Arab nations to be known as the Arab Spring, Tunisians had lived under highly repressive conditions. Their president Zine el Abidine Ben Ali gained power after a coup in 1987. Ever since, he had been winning every election, almost unanimously, using every possible repressive measure to stay in power. Freedoms of press and assembly were denied and no negative critique was ever allowed. Despite that, Tunisia has always been considered a very progressive state.

After Mohamed Bouazizi set himself on fire, resentment increased and reached the stage of a revolution. Over a period of one month from December 2010 to January 2011, President Ben Ali was forced to leave the country. An interim government was in charge, and elections were then held. Calm was restored in Tunisia.

### **Foreign Aid Policy**

Before the revolution, Tunisia was neither a focal point for western aid nor for democracy promotion efforts of the West. Nonetheless, after the revolution, the United States of America transferred 100\$ million cash to Tunisia to *“provide fiscal relief to the Tunisian government and aid the nation in its transition to democracy more generally”* (OECD, 2013).

It also provided the country with a 30\$ million loan agreement, which would “*support...Tunisia’s democratic transition and economic recovery.*” page 11 (World report, 2012), and offered its new government \$300 million in total. France, Spain, Canada, and some other European countries have also contributed to Tunisia’s transition to democracy.

## **National Response**

### **1- Military Involvement and Death Toll**

During the uprising in Tunisia, the police forces were the ones to interfere and not the army, which had no interest in preserving the regime; “*the army had never played a political role in Tunisia and had been carefully kept out of power*” page 45 (Moss, 2011). The president only trusted his presidential guards and the young protestors were supported by the military and not by the repressive police. In fact, the police force “*displayed a blatant disregard for human life...and did not seek to minimize injuries,*” page 51, as Amnesty International notes (Amnesty, 2011). Even after Ben Ali had resigned, the police kept taking repressive measures against protestors. By the end of this uprising and based on an Amnesty International report (2011), 700 people were injured and almost 230 people were killed. Compared to other countries, this death toll is relatively low.

### **2- Tangible Results of Protests – Regimes & Elections**

The quest for democracy was achieved in Tunisia. The president and his family took refuge in Saudi Arabia. Mohamed Ghannouchi, who was somewhat too close to the previous regime, headed an interim government. Protestors asked him to

resign on February 27. He announced his resignation after protests escalated (Rifai, 2011). Beji Caid-Essebsi became the interim prime minister. Under his rule, fair elections took place and Tunisian citizens casted their votes and elected Hamadi Jebali as prime minister and Moncef Marzouqi as President in 2011.

### **3- Human Rights**

Tunisia had witnessed a real improvement in many areas of human rights, including freedom of expression, freedom of religion, freedom of assembly, and detention and torture. Although Tunisia enjoyed fairly liberal social policies, there was no improvement to be noted in the area of women's rights (OECD, 2013).

Under Ben Ali's rule, freedom in most areas was denied in 2001. Tunisia was considered as "*one of the worst media environments in the Arab world*" page 68 (Hafez, 2005). In fact, the president only allowed his advocates to broadcast and blocked any opposing opinions, but just after he fled Tunisia, the interim government "*proclaimed freedom of information and expression as a foundational principle for the country.*" Page 10 (Rifai, 2011). It also modified the press code, which used to criminalize slandering of state institutions and "offending" the president (OECD, 2013).

Before the uprising, freedoms of assembly and association were denied, and Ben Ali never respected international treaties his country had signed and even prohibited human right groups and NGOs from following their political goals or registering with the state. The scene was reversed in 2011.

During Ben Ali's presidency terms, detention and torture were common measures. Even after the uprising, force was still used to oppress protestors although not as fiercely as before. In the area of detention and torture, the country has witnessed some improvement, though not a complete reversal of this aspect.

Before 2011, Christians and Jews were allowed to practice their religion in an Islamic state. After the uprising, a slight improvement occurred as conservative Muslims were given the chance to express their beliefs without fearing the state's intervention (Dolma, 2008).

Finally, no improvement was made in the area of women's rights in a country that has always been known for its "progressive social policies" and where women's rights have been the best granted compared to other Arab countries (World report, 2012). In fact, Tunisia had signed the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and has not stopped adopting it after the uprising.

### **Conclusion:**

At last, the Tunisian military had both the incentive and the mediums to expel Ben Ali's regime: it was not co-opted into support (through ethnic favoritism, regulated patronage, or unregulated patronage), nor was it effectively constrained (through tactical control) into submission. The military under Ben Ali was generally disregarded with minimum use of pressure. When he ordered the military to repress the uprisings,

no one should have been surprised by its response, as there were no motivating forces to hold him and no obstructions to hurling him aside. Moreover, the Tunisian military at all levels appeared to really agree with the transformation. The Tunisian contextual analysis shows two things: (1) that without any ethnic or economic motivators, national armed forces can be relied upon to sympathize for their people during uprisings, and (2) that insignificant compulsion and minimization is not enough to maintain military devotion toward the regime amid an emergency.

Tunisia was the most successful country in changing the regime and restoring a new and more democratic one that incited the Arab Spring. Although the uprising there was bloody, it was not nearly as bloody as in other Arab countries. Thus far, there are still goals to be pursued in many areas, and Tunisians are still expecting numerous social and economic changes to come (International business times, 2014). The positive outcome of the uprising proves that Western democracy assistance can be effective.

## Egypt

Egypt was similar to Tunisia in its response to protests. The Tunisian uprising inspired Egyptians and citizens of other nations to call for change too. On January 25, 2011 protestors invaded the streets and demanded change.

### Background:

The Egyptian military has controlled the political domain since the 1952 “Free Officers” coup against a degenerate and Western-oriented government that brought Gamal Abdel Nasser and his kindred officers to control. Nasser’s rule, which was enforced from 1956 to 1970, was characterized by a few patterns: the military’s favored position both politically and financially, some foreign policy disappointments in 1956 and 1967, and Egypt’s engagement in a 20-year arms agreement with the USSR<sup>1</sup>. The defeat of 1967 to Israel was a defining moment in Egyptian civil-military relations. Nasser took some steps in the direction of removing the military to some degree from political visibility. VP<sup>2</sup> and senior officer Anwar Sadat, who assumed control after Nasser’s death in 1970, changed many of Nasser’s approaches, presenting a multi-party parliament, opening up Egypt’s economy with his Intifah economic plan, and obviously signing the famous peace treaty with Israel in 1978. Despite the victory of 1973 over Israel, Sadat confronted challenges from both the officers and the masses because of

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<sup>1</sup> The Soviet Union, officially the ***Union of Soviet Socialist Republics***, was a socialist state in Eurasia that existed from 1922 to 1991. Nominally a union of multiple equal national Soviet republics, its government and economy were highly centralized.

<sup>2</sup> A ***vice president*** is an officer in government or business who is below a president (managing director) in rank.

these changes and almost lost power during 1977 bread riots – and was eventually assassinated in 1981 by Islamist junior officers over the Israeli peace treaty, according to Hashim (Hashim, 1990). The Vice President Hosni Mubarak took power. During his 30 years of ruling, Mubarak concentrated on fighting the Islamist impact in the military and in the society, with a fierce crackdown against Islamist revolt in the 1990s. He also proceeded to de-politicize the military, expelling prominent Defense Minister Abu Ghazala, and exchanging financial benefits for clear political control. Since the uprising, the SCAF<sup>3</sup> has attempted to protect its benefits. Some of the examples are barring sacred provisions from amendment, restricting political and monetary changes, re-squeezing proceeded with dissents against military rule, capturing a large number of protestors utilizing extrajudicial courts, banning various competitors from the presidential race (through the Constitutional Courts) and even supposedly plotting an assassination of Morsi and an uprising to retake control of the nation before being ousted in August. We should now analyze each of the five factors, so that we can assess the interests and motivators of the Egyptian military amid the Arab Spring.

### **Country Dynamics: Before & After the Arab Spring**

Before the Arab Spring, Egypt was under the authoritarian rule of Hosni Mubarak, and the National Democratic Party dominated the political system. Mubarak had been president for

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<sup>3</sup> The ***Supreme Council of the Armed Forces*** is a statutory body of between 20 and 25 senior Egyptian military officers and is headed by Field Marshal Abdul Fatah al-Sisi and Lieutenant General Sedki Sobhi.

thirty years and had managed to oppress all types of freedoms, and all types of political opposition employing all possible measures. However, Egyptians had never demanded any changes prior to the Tunisian uprising.

Protestors invaded the Tahrir Street in downtown Cairo on January 25, 2011. Media was their main support in their quest for freedom. Moreover, within less than a month, Egyptians were able *“to challenge conventional chestnuts about Arab lethargy; transformed national politics; open up the political space to new actors; massively reinforce protests throughout the region; and call into question fundamental pillars of the Middle East”* page 88 (Myers, Steven & Lee, 2012). The president stepped down. Presidential elections were held and Muslim Brotherhood Candidate Mohamed Morsi was elected as a president. Shortly, after the military issued a *“series of decrees seeking to undermine the presidency”*, page 106 (International Crisis Group, 2011). Morsi forced military related figures to retire to comfort those who believed that the military was growing more powerful in the new system (Erin, 2013). Nonetheless, he reversed his move on November 22 as he *“issued a decree granting himself broad powers beyond court review”* page 56 (Egypt News, 2013). He was probably protecting the assembly from dissolution. In fact, the assembly had proposed a new constitution that would limit the president’s powers, enhance parliamentary power, help boost human rights’ activities, and also provide military generals with more power. In December, the constitution was indeed ratified, but observers



were concerned with its future potential implications (Myers, Steven & Lee, 2012).

Inspired by the successful uprising in Tunisia, Egyptians staged large-scale protests against the corrupted regime of Mubarak, demanding more democracy and better economic conditions. The most memorable demonstration in Egypt's uprising was the one which took place on January 25, 2011. As reported by King (2009), Twitter which facilitated planning for demonstrations was blocked by the government yet protests continued resulting in the first serious confrontations between the people and the police.

In a span of few days, on January 27, the "Day of Rage" was scheduled. The government obstructed Internet access, and even mobile phones were shut down. Still, hundreds of thousands invaded the streets and gathered in Tahrir Square in Cairo surrounded by an undecided military. As per Gumuscu (Gumuscu, 2012), people feared Mubarak police forces, but dealt with the army as an independent institution close to the people.

At the same time, Mubarak was inflexible, offering insignificant reforms through TV broadcasts. Tension rose between pro-Mubarak groups and their opponents. Protests continued as violence and the death toll escalated, and international calls for restraint were substituted by calls for "orderly transition". Some Arab states and even Israel were supporting Mubarak, while others were against him. On February 2011, instead of resigning, he declared delegating some of his powers to Vice-

President Omar Suleiman leading to more protests stirred up by rage and frustration. Demonstrations persisted till the next day, and on the famous Friday of Departure, Suleiman announced that Mubarak had stepped down and handed power transitionally to the military. Nonetheless, protests continued in the country and sectarian violence started to appear as the military's Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) was clearly not rushing toward serious reforms and contented to prepare for the coming elections. Prosecutors in the country arrested the former president on charges of deliberate killing of innocent protestors. The trial was broadcasted on TV in a powerful symbolic image. Mubarak was sentenced to life in prison, in an indicative sign of the conflict that was to arise between the military and the new political figures. (The guardian, 2014)

The secular and liberal groups who were at the core of the protests failed to unify their stances, while Salafist groups and the Muslim Brotherhood succeeded in making impoverished classes support them. In fact, the Islamist groups were obviously winning the elections in the country, in a turnout that was alarming for both liberals and Christian Copts. This victory was solidified by the Muslim Brotherhood candidate Mohammad Morsi becoming the first democratically elected president in the country.

### **Foreign Aid Received**

Egypt had largely benefited from U.S. aid since the 1970s following the Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty. It had picked up the

assent of the United States. It had approximately received \$12.5 billion from 2002 to 2011, with The United States being the main contributor, in addition to France and Germany. The United States started introducing democracy assistance since the beginning of the 1990s, and continued to do so after the Arab Spring. It has also contributed to the improvement of the government and civil society sector, and so did Germany and the Netherlands. However, other sectors such as the economic and infrastructure sectors had received more aid (NY times, 2013).

In 2012, the United States declared that it will “relieve \$1 billion in Egypt’s debt as part of an American and international assistance package intended to bolster its transition to democracy.” Page of 98 (OECD, 2013). Besides, the European Union confirmed that it will provide a \$6.4 billion aid package to help Egypt in its “path to development.” Page number needed here (Human Rights Watch, 2015).

## **National Response**

### **1- Military Involvement & Death Toll**

The role of the military during Egypt’s uprising was quite obscure as it played an *“ambiguous role, purportedly standing with the people while at the same time being an integral part of the regime they were confronting.”* Page 57 (Human Rights Watch, 2015). Controversial reports came out at the time. Also, based on Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International reports, there has been *“torture at the hands of security forces”* and *“use of excessive force”* during protests ( Human Rights

Watch, 2010). Also, the State Security Investigation Service (SSI) was accused of abusing, mistreating, and even killing detainees as HRW reported officials "disappearing" political dissenters. The SSI was disbanded in 2011 (International Crisis Group, 2011). Furthermore, AI manifested concern toward human rights' violations that occurred when the Supreme Council of Armed Forces ruled after Mubarak had stepped down (OECD, 2013).

It is difficult to assess the role of the military during that period, yet most Egyptians believe it played a positive role. Other than a matter of fact, 846 Egyptians were killed while 600022 were injured in the somewhat bloody uprising.

## **2- Tangible Results of Protests – Regimes & Elections**

Mubarak stepped down and the SCAF ruled until Morsi was elected and sworn into office. Egyptians aspired for a new regime. They wanted a democratic government, and the polls of 2012 showed that 67% of Egyptian citizens were hoping for a democratic regime (Myers, Steven & Lee, 2012). The elections of 2012 were a turning point in the modern history of Egypt. A new constitution was ratified in December 2012 although experts feared its future consequences.

## **3- Human Rights**

In Egypt, there was no real improvement in most areas of human rights. Slight improvements have taken place in the areas of freedom of expression and freedom of assembly. Before the uprising, bloggers and journalists opposing the government or exposing human rights' violations were arrested

(Human Rights Watch, 2012). After Mubarak's resignation, some improvements occurred and even the media was able to report, with less restrictions issues that were not related to the military (International Crisis Group, 2011).

A slight improvement in the freedom of assembly could also be noticed. Before 2011, there were laws which "stifled legitimate NGO<sup>4</sup> activities" page 78 and permitted the government to intrude "*in the national interest* page of quote needed her (Myers, Steven & Lee, 2012). In the new era, the law 40/1977 was amended, but the SCAF never amended the Associations Law (84/2002), so change was still limited.

No change took place within the scope of freedom of religion, women's rights, and torture. Women in Egypt have always suffered from domestic violence and sexual harassment. During the uprising, some women were beaten, abused and even underwent virginity tests (Human Rights Watch, 2012).

Detention and torture continued to take place after the uprising. Security forces and police who were responsible for mistreating and abusing detainees, continued to exhibit physical violence over protestors during the uprising. The police injured 1114 people using tear gas and pellet guns to break up protests.

On the religious freedom level, there was no noticeable improvement. Clashes broke between Muslims and Christians in 2009, sometimes causing injuries and deaths. Serious religious

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<sup>4</sup> A non-profit organization that operates independently of any government, typically one whose purpose is to address a social or political issue. "Thousands of people have been displaced, seeking refuge at police stations, churches, and temporary accommodation set up by NGOs"

clashes persisted in 2011 and led to the death of forty-seven people at least. The overall conditions of human rights witnessed some improvement but within certain restrictions.

### **Conclusion**

Egypt has come back to military control, with pluralism and restriction – including the Muslim Brotherhood – confronting the harshest climate since 50 years ago. The political administrations focused by the Arab Spring dissent developments were a varying partner of nondemocratic governments. Some were to a great degree oppressive, utilizing the risk of savagery to hush faultfinders, control open spaces, and wreck opposition. There have been pockets of development in select monetary divisions that have pulled in speculation, for example, material assembling in Egypt. In Egypt, for example, the fierce concealment of all restriction including the Muslim Brotherhood as well as autonomous common society developments and understudy bunches has achieved levels not seen since the Nasserist time. The vanishings and deaths of those in detainment have achieved the hundreds. In numerous nations also, the judiciaries have fixed hostile to dread laws, which has criminalized many types of online discourse, decreased the space accessible to censure government strategies.

Also, residents who openly ate and drank amid Ramadan were captured last June for not indicating regard for the sacred month and Islam. We are additionally mindful that on a mass scale, Egyptian ladies nonconformists arrested have been subjected to virginity tests. These virginity tests have had the impact of

mortifying and disgracing them, while the security powers legitimize this training on grounds of guaranteeing the ethical integrity of both the ladies and the state. In brief, Egypt will eventually confront another uprising in the wake of neglecting to revive the myth of develop mentalism. The wide monetary changes and basic redesigns of the Egyptian state important to produce a large number of new occupations are difficult to attempt by a tyrant administration that requires such brought together control over society.

## Morocco

In Morocco, the situation was a little different, which helped in solving it successfully. The Moroccans did not suffer as Egyptians and Tunisians since they had some rights. However, the outcome of the Arab spring was similar, especially that the presidents responded to the protestors, and the military did not oppress the citizens.

### Background:

Morocco experienced its own peaceful Arab Spring. King Mohamed VI responded to protestors' demands and implemented reforms peacefully. Moroccan citizens were not as oppressed as those in other countries and the military did not interfere. The transition was smooth due to a *"fear of chaos, a prevalent security apparatus, and genuine respect for King Mohammed VI."* (Page 11, Erlanger, S. 2013).

### Country Dynamics: Before & After the Arab Spring

In Morocco pre-1990, freedom of expression was denied, and political opposition was not allowed. Under the rule of King Hassan II, *"numerous political opponents were arrested, tortured and killed, or simply disappeared."* Page 13 (Human Rights Watch, 2012). When Mohamed VI took power, he ruled with more tolerance. Then again, Moroccans, inspired by protests in Tunisia and Egypt, aspired for more democracy, and invaded the streets claiming that the King's power needs to be reduced to *"a natural size"* Page 113 (Tremlett, 2013)

The King eventually responded and *"reduced his own nearly absolute powers and created a system in which the prime*



*minister would be the leader of the party with the most seats in Parliament”* Page 98 (Silva, 2013). Activists were not fully satisfied with the changes and were hoping for many more to come.

### **Foreign Aid Received**

Being a solid ally of the United States and other European countries, Morocco had always received considerable foreign assistance as of 2002, mainly coming from the United States, Germany, and France. The civil society sector and government received huge assistance aimed at promoting democracy and good governance, yet this assistance did not largely increase during the Arab Spring.

### **National Response**

#### **1- Military Involvement and Death Toll**

Police intervened occasionally to control protests while the military remained on the sidelines. Overall, the uprising was peaceful and according to the media, only one death was reported during protests (Morocco News, 2012).

#### **2- Regime Change and Elections**

The King was not overthrown, but his absolute power was reduced while reforms took place. The King declared that a government would be elected through direct universal suffrage and promised that these steps would “*make Morocco a state that will distinguish itself by its democratic course*” Page 89 (Freedom house, 2012). Executive power was to be given to the government. The King chose the Prime Minister from the

winning party in parliament, and the prime minister became president of the government (Freedom house, 2012). He could appoint officials and even dissolve the parliament after consulting the king.

Parliamentary elections took place; the Justice and Development party were victorious. Although many Moroccans were aspiring for more changes, reforms in the right direction were supported by the West as Morocco was “*settling into a new democratic order*” Page 105 (OECD, 2013).

### **3- Human Rights**

In the area of human rights, no real improvement could be underlined, especially when it comes to freedom of expression.

In Morocco, freedom of expression has long been repressed, and political opposition was fiercely oppressed under the rule of King Hassan II and did not disappear under the rule of his son. The state continued to control the media in 2012 and did not allow discussing anything concerning the King and his family or critiquing them (Human Rights Watch, 2015).

Moroccans had the right to form associations, unions and non-governmental organizations in 2010. It was a right that was noted in the constitution in 2012. Freedom of assembly has recently gained more respect as security forces allowed protests. Morocco witnessed some improvement in this area (Refworld UNHCR, 2012).

In the area of torture and detention, there was no real improvement. In fact, there were reports of detention and torture

from 2010 when Islamic extremists were detained until 2012, and members of the February 20 Movement and a famous rapper in Morocco were also imprisoned and mistreated.

In Morocco, freedom of religion has been respected although it has been, in some cases, limited by the state (Freedom house, 2012). Accordingly, based on a UNHCR<sup>5</sup> source, the country *“did not demonstrate a trend towards either improvement or deterioration in respect for and protection of the right to religious freedom.”* Page 35 (Morocco News, 2012). Therefore, in the area of freedom of religion, there was neither an improvement nor a regression.

In the area of women’s rights, women were still subject to discrimination in society in 2010 despite the government’s efforts to promote gender equality (Human Rights Watch, 2012). After the constitutional reform of 2011, women still faced discrimination on the basis of gender (OECD, 2013).

Overall, no real change has been witnessed in the areas of human rights. Steps that were performed specifically in the areas of women’s rights and freedom of assembly were cautious, and improvements were not huge in major areas of human rights.

## **Conclusion**

Moroccans’ demands were different than Tunisians and Egyptians’. All demanded some pro-democratic reforms and not

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<sup>5</sup> The **Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)**, also known as the **UN Refugee Agency**, is a United Nations program mandated to protect and support refugees at the request of a government or the UN itself and assists in their voluntary repatriation, local integration or resettlement to a third country.

a complete change of the regime. The change came gradually, somewhat like in Jordan, protests were not a subject to violence, and constitutional reforms were implemented. The King's power was reduced, a new parliament was elected, and a prime minister was chosen from the new parliament. The lack of improvement prevailed mainly in the area of human rights. Therefore, Tunisia and Egypt, in terms of the regime change, might have been more successful than Morocco, but it is important to note that Morocco witnessed little military involvement and a low death toll during its uprising. Finally, Morocco was more successful in responding to protests than countries which received small amount of Western assistance such as Syria, Libya, Yemen, and Bahrain.

With this assistance, Morocco was able to take positive steps toward democracy including the establishment of a parliamentary monarchy. Due to this assistance, the country's response was more rewarding.

This present trend of challenges mirrors that experience. The Moroccan police have not meddled in the dissents, and the legislature has so far made all the correct moves to keep the challenges from turning savage or spiraling crazy. The ruler requested an exhaustive examination concerning Fikri's passing and sent the Interior Minister to convey his own sympathies to Fikri's family. Inside Minister Mohamed Hassad even issued an announcement communicating solidarity with the dissenters, "Nobody had the privilege to treat [Fikri] like this... We can't acknowledge authorities acting in flurry, outrage, or in conditions

that don't regard individuals' rights." Second, the Moroccan political framework is under a lesser level of risk than the 2011 Tunisian or Egyptian governments, since it is a government. While amid the current week's dissents, some have required the finish of the makhzen (Morocco's decision first class), they have abstained from specifically condemning the ruler. Lords for the most part admission superior to presidents amid times of change, and significantly more so than different governments in the locale, King Mohammed figured out how to remain over the shred amid each influx of challenges due both to the natural authenticity managed him by his double position as head of state and religious pioneer (emir al-mu'minin or authority of the unwavering) and by the insurance he gathers from his huge and steadfast system of administration partners.

## **Jordan**

Protests in Jordan were not as intense as those in Tunisia or Egypt. Over there, the movement was similar to the one that had occurred in Morocco and almost ended up with the same outcomes. It all started in 2010 when students, teachers, and public servants started protests in the quest for better labor conditions and more freedom. Subsequently, protests escalated in 2011 with uprisings taking place in other Arab countries, though not with the same intensity. As a result, superficial reforms took place, but the king stayed in power, free elections were yet to come, and real improvement was noticed in the area of human rights. The death toll in Jordan was much lower than in Bahrain and Syria. Protests are not over, and Jordan might face a revolution any time in the future.

### **Background:**

Jordan is a multiethnic country characterized by deep divisions, and that is why protests were never successful. The groove between East Bankers and Palestinian Jordanians was aggravated recently mainly because of the poor economic situation in the country (Rana, 2012).

East Bankers relied on agriculture and dominated the public sector, preventing Palestinian-Jordanians from playing any parliamentary or governmental roles (OECD, 2012). In the past, East Bankers were afraid that they would be dominated by Palestinian Jordanians who were more numerous than them, and thus they had supported the government (Sharp, Jeremy M., 2013), Palestinian Jordanians were usually businessmen;

they felt discredited and even treated as betrayers of the country (Rana, 2012)

### **Country Dynamics: Before & After the Arab Spring**

The government benefited from this tension, trapping these two groups against each other to stay in power, as these groups will never be “*united in anger*” Page 39, against it (International Crisis Group, 2012).

With the deterioration in the agricultural sector, East Bankers were also starting to oppose the government. The two groups were now “simultaneously angry, “*but definitely not “united in anger*”, Page of quotes needed here a factor that has helped the government to stay in power (OECD, 2012).

### **Foreign Aid Received**

Jordan, being a strategic ally of the United States, as it had cooperated with it on many issues and mainly on the Arab-Israeli peace process, received a considerable amount of foreign aid from it. Jordan has received an aid targeted at the government and civil society sectors more than Tunisia, Egypt, and Morocco. It has also received large amounts of foreign assistance mainly from the European Union targeting at “*enhancing...the economic, social and political atmosphere in the country*” Page 705, (Human Rights Watch, 2013).

The social services sector received considerable assistance too, more than the economic infrastructure sector did. As the protests continued, Jordan continued to receive foreign aid.

## **National Response**

### **1. Military Involvement & Death Toll**

In Jordan, the military did not interfere in oppressing protests. Reports stated that security forces suppressed protestors violently, yet the death toll remained low (Sharp & Jeremy, 2013).

### **2. Tangible Results of the Protests – Regimes & Elections**

The military was not involved in the uprising, mainly because the Jordanian government has been responding to protestors' demands on many occasions. For instance, the King replaced Prime Minister Samir Al Rifai with Marouf al Bakhit to calm down protestors (International Crisis Group, 2012). Moreover, a National Dialogue Committee has been created, comprising members of opposition parties, political elites, members from women's and youth groups, and a diversity of other groups. It was supposed to come up with an agreement on political reform, a step that was considered insignificant in the eyes of protestors. In 2011, the King suggested reviewing the Constitution of Jordan in a move that eliminated opposition party members and ordinary citizens, and the Constitution was slightly amended. A commission was established in order to supervise elections, a constitutional court was created to decrease the power of the State Security Court, and the government's power to rule by decree was narrowed (Sharp & Jeremy, 2013).

As some changes have taken place after the protests, the regime was still unchanged, promising to implement free and fair elections. Jordanians feared instability and unlike



Moroccans and Egyptians, they wanted a gradual change. In fact, it seems that “*Jordanians are asking for reform without changing the regime*” Page 41, (International Crisis Group, 2012).

### **3. Human Rights**

Human rights did not improve in Jordan from 2009 to 2011. In 2009, freedom of expression was repressed. Any critique of the King or officials or any comments offensive to the Islamic religion could lead to arrest and imprisonment (OECD, 2012).

In the country, media, such as newspapers, magazines, and broadcasting station was controlled by the government. It was under the government's supervision despite the fact that the citizens had an access to foreign media.

In 2011, freedom of speech was still limited, attacks against journalists were numerous, and broadcasting stations were still controlled by the state (Sharp & Jeremy, 2013).

In the area of freedom of assembly and association, there was a slight change for the better. In 2009, the government was allowed to interfere in any NGO activities, knowing that these organizations could not hold any meeting without the state's permission and intervention. Also, Jordanians needed the state's permission in order to hold a demonstration (International Crisis Group, 2012). In 2011, meetings and demonstrations could be held without the state's permission based on the Public Gatherings Law (OECD, 2012).

In the area of detention and torture, no improvement has been noticed. In 2009, reports of mistreatment and torture were outrageous, as thousands of people were detained in case they

were suspected of committing a crime and held endlessly with no trial (International Crisis Group, 2012). In 2011, the Interior Minister proposed to alter the Crime Prevention Law in a way that the citizen would not be detained for more than 15 days with no specific charge. Still no tangible improvement has been noted ever since (OECD, 2012).

In the area of women's rights, the situation was not bright either. Women, who supposedly had equal rights as men, were still dealing with discrimination in divorce cases and custody battles (Sharp & Jeremy, 2013). Furthermore, "honor killings" persisted with no serious punishment (OECD, 2012).

In the area of freedom of religion, no real change has ever occurred. Islam was always the religion of the state, Christianity was allowed, and other religions were accepted. Therefore, citizens could worship freely until 2011 (Sharp & Jeremy, 2013). In general, no tangible improvements occurred in the area of human rights, except the slight change in the area of freedom of assembly.

## **Conclusion**

Finally, the protests in Jordan did not result in a new regime or free elections, yet the government took some steps to placate demonstrators. The uprising was rather peaceful compared to those in Libya, Bahrain, and Syria, but it did not lead to a real improvement in the human rights area.

The proposed hypothesis is applicable in Jordan's case, and a shift toward democracy has been achieved although it was not as obvious as in countries like Tunisia and Libya. The death toll was lower than in other nations providing another sign of a

positive response. Consequently, Jordan which received a considerable amount of western assistance was able to make a shift toward democracy, while countries like Syria and Bahrain could not do the same as they did not get the same amount of foreign aids.

# Libya

## **Background:**

Libya got its independence post World War II when European forces proceeded with their withdrawal from the Middle East. King Idris, who governed the nation from its independence in 1952 until his toppling by Col. Muammar Gaddafi in 1969, was a generally moderate monarch who kept up close ties with the West and centered assets in the Eastern region. In 1969, a youthful officer named Muammar Gaddafi seized control of the state while the aging Idris was getting medical treatment in Turkey. Gaddafi, who managed the nation for more than four decades before being toppled, was a merciless despot who developed an Arab nationalist-socialist philosophy and was renowned for his oppression of any domestic opposition and his hostile foreign policy, which included intercessions against his neighbors and supporting terrorist assaults around the world. And according to Mattes (2004), these foreign “experiences” frequently failed, but defense spending stayed high all through his rule and different security administrations assumed a key part in supporting his regime (in spite of failed military coups in 1969, 1970, 1975, and 1993).

## **Country Dynamics: Before & After the Arab Spring**

The Arab Spring took on a different turn than those in countries like Tunisia and Egypt mainly because of the state’s historical background. Libya prior to Gaddafi’s rule was a pro-western monarchy. In 1969, when Gaddafi rose to power after a military

coup and created the *Jamahiriya* i.e. the state of the masses, the country shifted away from the West and leaned toward Arab Nationalism, a step that many citizens approved of, at that time.

Then again, Gaddafi's rule was very repressive and practiced all sorts of oppressive measures to eliminate any opposition or criticism to its governance "*effectively prohibiting political parties and stripping religious institutions of their historic power and importance*" Page 96, (Laub, 2012). Gaddafi focused on an anti-imperial ideology as a means to stay in power as he "*set about buttressing the [1969] revolution with an ideological discourse that would validate his regime and disarm its critics*" Page 65 (Laub, 2012). Indignation started building up but did not surface until protests successfully broke out in Tunisia and Egypt.

Benghazi was the first city to witness protests in Libya on February 15, 2011. Citizens' resentment was due to the bad economic situation and to the oppressive nature of the regime. They demanded that they step down. Gaddafi openly refused. Thus, protests transformed into armed conflicts within a period of two weeks (OECD, 2013). For the first time since the beginning of the Arab Spring, NATO<sup>6</sup> forces launched an intense military campaign to protect Libyan citizens.

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<sup>6</sup> **NATO:** The **North Atlantic Treaty Organization**, also called the **North Atlantic Alliance**, is an intergovernmental military alliance between several North American and European states based on the North Atlantic Treaty that was signed on 4 April 1949.

Gaddafi was killed on October 20, 2012. Shortly after, the Transitional National Council (TNC)<sup>7</sup> took control, but it was unable to handle the diverse militia groups that were fighting against Gaddafi. That is why the popularly elected the General National Congress (GNC)<sup>8</sup> to take power instead of the (TNC). After Mubarak's resignation, an uprising began in Libya. Gaddafi, the longest-ruling dictator, did not intend to resign and promised to consecrate \$20 billion to repair living conditions. But when demonstrations broke out on February 15, 2011, the police suppressed them violently. An armed opposition was being formed, and soon conflicts in the country mutated into civil war. And on February 27, 2011 opposition leaders established the National Transitional Council (NTC) in Benghazi. Gaddafi started facing international critique and domestic isolation too with many of his prominent official figures abandoning him.

Gaddafi's regime started retaliating violently as it launched a major attack against rebels. But while it was preparing to demolish Benghazi, the UN Security Council issued Resolution 1973. The resolution issued on March 17, 2011 was meant to establish a no fly zone and even to allow the use of any forces, including foreign ones to save civilians. So, a coalition under the NATO leadership started attacking pro-Gaddafi forces, and an outrageous war continued in the country. It was only in August

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<sup>7</sup> **The National Transitional Council (NTC)** was the de facto government of Libya for ten months between 2011 and 2012. It played a key role in the country regaining peace, following the harsh Muammar Gaddafi era, and was recognized internationally.

<sup>8</sup> The **General National Congress** was the legislative authority of Libya for two years following the end of the Libyan Civil War. It was elected by popular vote on 7 July 2012, and took power from the National Transitional Council on 8 August

that rebels had reoccupied the Capital where NTC was to relocate. Gaddafi was killed at the hands of rebels, marking the end of a long-rule tyranny.

The elections of 2012 led the National Forces Alliance to power in the new parliament with more than double seats of the Muslim Brotherhood's Justice and Construction party. But some of the militias never handed in their weapons rejecting the new government's authority, thus the country may still face a civil war in the future.

### **Foreign Aid Received**

During Gaddafi's rule, Libya had not received much western assistance. The main contributors of this aid were the United States, Germany, and France. The government and civil society sectors received aid significantly more than the economic and infrastructure sectors.

The Aid increased considerably after Libya had been liberated, but it remained less than the aid Syria or Yemen had received. But then again, since Libya's population is small, it received more aid per capita than those two nations, a factor which may have led to a more positive response in this country.

### **National Response**

#### **1. Military Involvement and Death Toll**

Protests in Libya were violent and bloody from the first day. Gaddafi relied on his personal security forces (his family members and tribes) to remain in power. His forces shot protestors on the second day of the uprising, and Amnesty

International noted that they used “*lethal and disproportionate force*” Page 15, to oppress citizens (Amnesty International, 2012). In the span of two weeks, an armed conflict prevailed in the country. Militias opposing Gaddafi had the recourse to abandoned weapons while Gaddafi’s security forces fired cannons and rockets into areas full of innocent civilians (Human Rights Watch, 2011). Moreover, these forces planted landmines throughout the country, and arrested and murdered more and more opponents as the fall of the regime approached (International Crisis Group, 2012).

The struggle transformed into a civil war, and the death toll increased. The NATO forces interfered, supported by the United Nations Security Council in the hope of “*averting a bloody rout of the rebels by loyalist forces*” Page 32, (Freedom House, 2011).

In March, American and European forces joined NATO forces in their campaign against Gaddafi. In October 2011, rebels finally brought Gaddafi down.

The conflict was very bloody; around 30000 people were killed while 4000 remained missing (Laub, 2012).

## **2. Tangible Results of Protests – Regimes & Elections**

Turmoil in Libya persisted after the fall of the Gaddafi regime mainly due to insolent militias’ activities which the Transitional National Council was unable to control. The interim government, which became the legitimate government, valued the need for fair and free elections. Libyans voted for the first time since 1952 for the General National Congress, which in turn became



the legitimate government of the country, and parliamentary elections were to be held in 2013.

Libya still has a long way to go before it reaches the aspired democracy, especially that the Benghazi September 11 attacks proved “*the power of radical Islamic militias and the inability of the government in Tripoli to provide security and maintain order across the country*” Page 63, as Dirk Vandewalle states (Nicole G. , 2012).

### **3. Human Rights**

There has been an improvement in some areas of human rights from 2010 to 2012, mainly in the areas of freedom of expression, freedom of assembly and association, and freedom of religion.

Freedoms were restricted under the rule of Gaddafi in most areas. Media was closely monitored, websites were blocked, journalists were oppressed, and “defamation” was treated as a criminal offense (Freedom House, 2011). After the uprising, a minimum of 130 media streams were registered, and Libyans used social media more freely (Jomana, 2012).

Also, in the area of freedom of assembly and association, an improvement was noticed. Under Gaddafi’s rule, assembly and association were restricted, and independent NGOs could not operate. After the uprising, the TNC encouraged the emergence of political parties and motivated political engagement (Freedom House, 2011). NGOs were then allowed to practice in Libya (Human Rights Watch, 2011). Detention and torture prevailed under Gaddafi’s rule and still occurred in 2012 at the hand of

militias, but not at hand of the government, which was unable to control them.

No improvement in the area of women's rights can be noted either. Although women had always enjoyed the same legal protection as men, they were always under the influence of unchanged discriminatory social norms (OECD, 2013).

In the area of freedom of religion, there has been a slight improvement. All religions were allowed to be practiced under Gaddafi's rule, but the government kept all Islamic activists under close supervision. In 2012, different types of Muslims had the freedom to express their opinions openly (Jomana, 2012).

### **Conclusion:**

Finally, the Libyan military's defections from the first day of the conflict, preceding the NATO mediation, can be clarified by a blend of ethnic considerations and opportunity: the way that a significant part of the military was loaded with the unpopular people who were not all forced by Gaddafi. In any case, many from Gaddafi's family and tribe started abandoning the army, pre-NATO intervention when they had a chance to (for example, the pilots and top officers). As there were no monetary motivators to protect and there was no feeling of legitimacy to recover, no indication of intervention, and above all no powerful regime intimidation, a significant part of the military began grabbing its chances for surrender in the initial couple of weeks (Hubbard, Ben and Karin Laub, 2011). Only tribal units and the elite stayed unchanged, their positions supported with unwilling and ill-equipped conscripts and remote hired soldiers. The

Libyan case shows the significance of organization and pressure on the micro level in holding the devotion of the military amid a crisis. Gaddafi, similar to Ben Ali, did not prepare a tactical plan for a tyrant's crisis.

Although protests in Libya led to the end of the Gaddafi rule, and the country headed to new elections and some improvement in the area of human rights, the uprising in Libya cannot be considered successful, as it has been very costly. The death toll was very high and economic and political institutions in the country remained incapable of providing security and stability.

Consequently, Libya's response to protests was not as successful as Tunisia's and Egypt's. The country had received less foreign assistance than the two mentioned nations, and it still has a long way to go before achieving democracy and stability. It has been divided into four types of armed groups: the revolutionary brigades that has emerged during the initial months of intense fighting but have since then become closely integrated into local authorities and associations; the unregulated brigades are revolutionary brigades that broke away from the authority of local military councils in the last stages of the war; the post-revolutionary brigades are formed from the military councils and armed groups which wanted to fill the void after the defeat of Qaddafi forces which has left security vacuums at each step; and the militias that are a collection of armed groups that range from criminal networks to violent extremists. Adding to these four types of armed groups there is

the Islamic state which is the Muslim Brotherhood that was formed after the defeat of Qaddafi's government.

## Yemen

Unlike other countries, Yemen's uprising was violent, but it led to a smooth transition, although the amount of foreign nonmilitary intervention was huge there.

### Background:

Yemen's situation was unstable even before the rise of the Arab Spring. President Saleh's 33-year rule- regime was facing many challenges: internal opposition, tribal and opposition forces and, the threat of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP)<sup>9</sup>. And with the break out of protests in January 2011, even members from his military and government, and some of his most influential political rivals joined the opposition.

Saleh benefited from his tribal ties and used security forces, some of which were equipped and trained to fight against (AQAP), to suppress protests, and clashes with opposition mutated into bloody conflicts. The GCC<sup>10</sup> of six Gulf States convinced the president to step down in exchange for immunity. The man consented orally but never signed the agreement. His palace was attacked on June 3, 2011 and the president had to

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<sup>9</sup> **Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula**, or **AQAP**, also known as Ansar al-Sharia in Yemen, is a militant Islamist organization, primarily active in Yemen and Saudi Arabia.

<sup>10</sup> The **Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf** , originally (and still colloquially) known as the **Gulf Cooperation Council** is a regional intergovernmental political and economic union consisting of all Arab states of the Persian Gulf, except for Iraq. Its member states are Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. The Charter of the Gulf Cooperation Council was signed on 25th May 1981, formally establishing the institution.

seek medical care in the KSA. Eventually, he signed a new agreement brokered by the GCC on November 23, 2011 and resigned. But Saleh is still engaged in the dynamics of the country which might witness its portioning along tribes in the future, as Satloff (2011) claims (Satloff, 2011).

### **Country Dynamics: Before and After the Arab Spring**

Yemenis, before the 2011 uprising, lived under the repressive rule of president Saleh, who had been in power for 33 years. There was no room for free elections, and the president, who enjoyed executive influence, was elected twice with 77% of the votes. Yemen suffered from poverty before and after the uprising.

Protests have ended; President Saleh stepped down from presidency, and his powers were moved to his vice-president. Nevertheless, the country was still in turmoil. Elections took place in February of 2012, and a National Dialogue Conference was set in perspective to alter the constitution before the elections in 2014 (Moriarty, 2011).

Eventually, turmoil still prevailed, and political corruption has continued. Despite some steps toward democracy, Yemen's destiny was still ambiguous.

### **Foreign Aid Received**

Yemen has not received much foreign assistance just like Bahrain, Syria, and Libya. Recently, the United States has increased its assistance in an attempt to fight terrorism. Yemen received more foreign assistance than Egypt, but it did not respond to protests the way Egypt had done. It is probably due

to the fact that the country received less democracy assistance than Egypt did.

On the other hand, the amount of aid provided mainly by the United States and Germany and given to the government and civil society sector was much lower than the amount given to social services and infrastructure. In addition, these amounts did not change much before and after the uprising in Yemen. Even with the support claimed from Obama's administration that aimed at fighting Al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups, assistance did not increase substantially (Robinson P. , 2013).

## **National Response**

### **1. Military Involvement and Death Toll**

The military was involved in responding to protests in Yemen. The army split into two factions: one was pro-Saleh, while the other was anti-Saleh (Thomas B. , 2013).

The pro-Saleh faction fiercely oppressed protests by murdering insurgents and preventing wounded ones from getting proper medical care. It is essential to note that this faction included the Central Security, which receives US training to oppose terrorism. The conflict became bloody with around 250 Yemenis killed and over 1000 wounded (Ai Camp, 2016).

### **2. Tangible Results of the Protests – Regimes & Elections**

The outcome of the uprising was rather positive. The Gulf Cooperative Council supported by the United States granted Saleh immunity from prosecution if he resigned. Saleh handed power to his vice president Hadi. An opposition-led government

was to be established while Saleh founded a military council in order to minimize tensions between armed groups (Knustsen, 2012).

On February 21, 2012, Hadi was elected as a president. He and his government were responsible for “*restructuring the military-security apparatus and address[ing] issues of transnational justice*” (page 45), in addition to establishing a National Dialogue Conference to revise the constitution before the elections of 2014 (Rayman, 2014). Hadi made great efforts, but the task was too hard to be accomplished (Rahim, 2011).

The response to protests led to a different type of change, but not the same change that took place in other nations. In the case of Yemen, other nations stepped in to aid and caused a change in regime and further elections.

Despite the little change, conflicts were still bursting between Saleh and his Family and general Ahmar and his family. Corruption was still prevailing in political life. The conflict was then more like an elite power struggle, while unsatisfied activists were aspiring for the real change (Behr & Aaltola, 2011).

### **3. Human Rights**

Diverse human right organizations have stated that humanitarian conditions in Yemen were alarming. Citizens did not have access to basic needs such as food (Perez-Linan, 2012). Moreover, human right violations continued to take place after Saleh stepped down. In the area of freedom of expression, most radios and TV stations were controlled by the state under Saleh’s rule, while websites, newspapers and magazines opposing the state were blocked (Rosenberg, 2011). According

to Human Rights Watch (2012), there have been some improvements in this area although journalists were still subject to harassment and prosecution (Knustsen, 2012). Prior to the uprising, freedom of assembly and association was acceptable although threatening protests were violently oppressed (Robinson, 2013). In 2012, there has been a slight improvement as multiple associations, political parties, and nearly 100 NGOs were allowed to register (Moriarty, 2011). In the area of detention and torture, no real improvement took place. Prior to the uprising, Yemenis were subject to arbitrary detention. In 2012, these activities persisted in addition to torture; many prisoners were released while others remained in the government and opposition prisons.

In Yemen, freedom of religion was protected by the constitution, but this was often unapplied. Islam is the state's religion and Sharia is the law (Aljazeera, 2012).

Moreover, non-Muslims citizens did not run for parliamentary positions, and Jews could not run for federal ones (Moriarty, 2011). Religious minorities suffered from discrimination before the uprising and continued to do so after it.

In the area of women's rights, women continued to face discrimination. Nevertheless, the democratic move has *"envisaged adequate representation of women in all political bodies, during and after the transition."* Page 86 (Lloyd-hughes, 2014).

Based on Freedom House reports (2015), Yemen's ranking regressed from 5 to 6, according to an organization which ranks



countries based on civil liberties due to its violent response to protests.

## **Conclusion**

In Yemen, it seems that a political game has led to a change of regime and not protests, although protests were bloody especially after the military's intervention (Rahim, 2011). The country continued to struggle with problems, corruption, and conflicts. Then the regime change did not lead to a radical change in the political system. Thus, the original hypothesis was applicable in this case as Yemen's minimal response to the protests was compatible with the little amount of Western democracy aid it had received. The competition between Saudi Arabia and Iran has been affecting Yemen in the last few years. Saudi Arabia perceives the Houthis, who founded the revivalist movement for the Zaydi form of Shia Islam that is largely unique to northern Yemen, as an Iranian proxy. However, while the group has some support from Iran, this is not the same as taking orders from it and they were not able to govern the country. Thus, Yemen has required the financial backing from the Saudi Arabia to avoid its economic downfall.

## **Bahrain**

### **Background:**

The uprising in Bahrain had a different underlying cause than the ones in other Arab nations. The country is a Sunni-ruled monarchy minority with a majority of Shiite citizens. So, according to Ottaway (2011), the Shiite demonstrations claimed political democratic reform and the termination of biased practices against them and when the police killed 3 of the protestors on February 17, 2011, sectarian tensions escalated and efforts made by Crown Prince Sheikh Salman bin Hamad al-Khalifa to establish a dialogue with the opponents failed, especially that the opposition demanded an overthrow of the monarchy. On March 15, a State of emergency was declared in the country and Gulf Cooperation Council troops interfered and fiercely suppressed the opposition in a military campaign. Iran opposed this “illegal” intervention, while the United States convicted the violence practiced by the Bahraini regime but did not call for its overthrow.

### **Country Dynamics: Before & After the Arab Spring**

The uprising in Bahrain, just like in Libya, has its own particularity, unlike the ones Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt and Jordan have witnessed. Actually, the monarchy, which ruled the country for over two centuries was part of the Sunni minority and was headed by al Khalifa family. King Sheikh Ahmad who took the throne in 1999 created in 2001 a constitutional monarchy where the Shiite sect acquired 40 seats in the National Assembly, a step that did not prevent tensions from

escalating between Sunnis and Shiites in the country especially prior to the 2010 parliamentary elections (Freedom House, 2010). Moreover, most types of freedoms were restricted in Bahrain, so opposing media broadcast channels and websites were blocked, and protests were prohibited (Nicole, 2012). The uprising in March 2011 demanded a regime change. When protests persisted, the regime called for an intervention from Gulf Cooperation Council troops to save the nation from what it called "*the proxies of Iran*" (Freedom house, 2012). No tangible change has been accomplished, and tensions between Shiites and Sunnis remained in the country.

### **Foreign Aid Received**

No clear cut statistics could be found in the area of Foreign aid statistics for Bahrain. In fact, OECD and Foreign assistance government statistics were contradictory. However, Bahrain has in all cases received less foreign aid than all the countries studied so far. The closest nation that could be compared to Bahrain in terms of Western assistance would be Libya, which had also received more aids than Bahrain ever did. It is also important to note that no actual aid was directly provided to the government and civil society sector, and there was no trace of aid targeted toward developing a democratic system. Aid was given to the Peace and Security sector in a move to fight national and international threats and terrorism (Nicole, 2012).

Also according to the State Department reports, the country received military aid from the United States, which had established a large base there. In addition, according to the same source, the United States had supported Bahrain's quest

for democracy through diplomatic channels and the Middle East Peace Initiative (Freedom house, 2012).

## **National Response**

### **1. Military Involvement & Death Toll**

In the Bahrain protests, the military was heavily involved. When demonstrations escalated, Gulf Cooperation Council troops (mainly composed of Saudis) interfered, followed by troops from the United Arab Emirates.

The king declared a state of emergency in the country and granted forces the right to have recourses to all needed measures in order to suppress protests (Nicole, 2012). He also set Courts of national Security where demonstrators would be tried and sentenced (Freedom house, 2012).

Local security forces and GCC troops suppressed demonstrators harshly; they hit them and tortured them (Freedom house, 2012).

Also, medical staff that tried to help the injured were detained and attacked too (Nicole, 2012).

Shiites were brutally targeted; security forces demolished their mosques. Nonetheless, the death toll was not as high as in other nations although the conflict was bloody to a certain extent.

### **2. Tangible Results of the Protests – Regimes & Elections**

Protests in Bahrain did not lead to a change in regime, or to new elections. In fact, the United States and European Union both had interests there and did not want to take any risk by intervening in the conflict. Prior to the Arab Spring, the crown

prince and Al-Wifaq- a large organized opposition group- had agreed on starting a formal dialogue between them ( Human Rights Watch, 2010). After the protests, it all failed and each party became more rigid in its positions giving no chance to any concessions (Freedom house, 2012). The two parties were far from any agreement: Al-Wifaq wanted a reform and demanded the creation of a Constituent Assembly, a step that was viewed by the Khalifa regime as the beginning of the end, as Shiite would soon dominate the country (Nicole, 2012).

### **3. Human Rights**

In the area of human rights, no improvement has been noted. Prior to the Arab Spring, Bahrain's regime was repressive; and Al-Khalifa family wanted to remain in power. Freedom of expression was limited; the state controlled the Internet, shut down a huge number of opposition sites, and restricted the broadcasting of any controversial issues ( Human Rights Watch, 2010). After the uprising, conditions worsened; journalists and bloggers supporting the opposition were detained, and more sites were blocked (Nicole, 2012).

In the area of freedom of assembly and association, there was no improvement. Prior to the Arab spring, citizens needed a license in order to demonstrate between sunrise and sunset, and political parties were banned (Freedom house, 2012). Conditions worsened after the protests as demonstrators were fiercely suppressed.

In the area of torture and detention, human rights deteriorated too. Before the protests, there were reports of torture and

coerced confessions ( Human Rights Watch, 2010). Reports after the upheaval talked of detainees being tortured with electrical shocks; they were sleep-deprived, beaten, and sexually assaulted ( Human Rights Watch, 2010).

Also, no improvement in the area of women's rights was noticed prior or after the protests. Women had the right TO vote, but underwent social discrimination. Sharia judges favored men over women, and mothers married to a non-Bahraini man could not pass on their nationality to their children (Freedom house, 2012). In the area of freedom of religion, things remained the same. Islam was the state's religion, and minority religions could practice legally after obtaining a license from the Ministry of Justice and Islamic Affairs (Nicole, 2012).

## **Conclusion**

The Bahrain response to protests was unsuccessful. There was no transition toward democracy. In fact, there was no change in the regime, no elections were held and no real improvement in the area of human rights was seen.

This failure was consistent with the given hypothesis: nations which received little amount of Western democracy assistance, were not successful in responding to protests.

## **Syria**

The uprising in Syria started in the city of Daraa when children were ruthlessly tortured after they had scrawled slogans against the regime. As a result, demonstrations broke out in many areas of the country demanding that Assad step down. Saudi Arabia and Turkey supported the opposition while Iran and Hezbollah supported Assad's regime, and so the Sunni-Shiite battle was also mutating into a bloody civil war at the same time. As the tensions escalated, the international community considered imposing sanctions on the regime. Assad retaliated with all kinds of military actions including air power against his people and was not ready for tangible concessions. No other serious sanctions are in perspective as China and Russia will veto them, and the West is not considering a military intervention according to Wessel and Cummins (2011).

### **Background**

In 1946, after a 30-year French mandate, Syria gained its independence. The two decades following independence were characterized with great instabilities, with coups and counter-coups, and an expansion of ethnic influences on politics; leading to the Alawite minority's union of force in 1966 under the initiative of Hafez Al-Assad. The 30-year rule of Hafez Al-Assad was remarkable for the mastery of the instruments of state control by the Alawite minority, a tight security tie with the Soviet Union that holds on with post-Soviet Russia to this today, and ruthless oppression of any opposition (including massacres). After the demise of Hafez in 2000, Bashar Al-Assad acquired

control of the state from his dad and was at first hailed as a reformer because of his experience. Bashar soon inverted liberalization, demonstrating his imperviousness to any genuine change in Syria. The violence of Bashar's response to the uprising over the previous eighteen months – with the military and security benefits as his killing machines – has been shocking. The objective here is to clarify the military's identification of its harsh role, with just a restricted flow of defections, all through the Arab Spring.

### **Country Dynamics: Before & After the Arab Spring**

The result of Arab Spring in Syria is still unclear, as the country continues to endure a civil war. Syria has been a repressive state where the president had to be chosen by the Ba'ath party and elected through a popular referendum closely controlled by the government (Coogler, 2013); the nation has also been governed by Emergency Law since the 1963 coup which led the Ba'ath party to power.

The protests in Syria soon mutated into a violent conflict between the regime holding on to power and the opposition. These opposition forces created the National Coalition Forces of the Syrian Revolution as of November 2012. But then again, the conflict escalated and grew into a civil war. The results are still ambiguous, but it is possible to judge the impact of the Western aid on the situation in the country.

### **Foreign Aid Received**

Syria did not receive much foreign aid like Egypt, Tunisia, and Jordan did, but the amount of foreign assistance was larger than



the one Libya and Bahrain received. The main contributors to the aid were the United States followed by Germany. The large amount of assistance was given to the government and civil society sector; other sectors received more than this one. As the conflict expanded, the United States helped the Syrian opposition coalition in order to overthrow the Assad regime (Ryan, 2014).

## **National Response**

### **1. Military Involvement & Death Toll**

Military involvement was huge in the Syrian conflict, and so was the death toll. The regime has practiced violent military and security measures in order remain in power (Brumberg, 2013).

According to the International Crisis Group (2013), the Syrian conflict has undergone three stages. At the beginning of the protests, the regime response was very harsh and repressive; it killed and detained many citizens including children (Kinninmont, 2012). As this first stage failed, a second stage known as the security solution started. Brutal operations were launched on Daraa (where the first protests took place) and its neighborhoods, including arbitrary arrests, murders and torture (Khan, 2012). It resulted in pushing protestors in the direction of an armed confrontation (Abedine, 2012). The third stage consisted of a military solution, which mutated into a full-scale bloody civil war.

As a result, the death toll was astronomical; and opposition forces reported 37000 dead by November 2012 (The New York

Times, 2013), while other groups estimated the number to be around 26000 dead (International Crisis Group, 2011).

## **2. Tangible Results of Protests – Regimes & Elections**

Protests have not resulted in any tangible results: Assad was still in power, and no elections were to be held. After the March protests, he took superficial measures: he released a number of political prisoners, lifted the state of emergency, and dismissed the government. The protestors were more frustrated (Gordon Mark & Michael Landler, 2013). In May 2012, He also held parliamentary elections, which were not acceptable for the opposition, which considered them a merely elusive aspect of democracy as they remained under the regime's supervision (OECD, 2013). The regime remained in power, and the restless bloody conflict continued.

## **3. Human Rights**

In the area of human rights, no tangible improvement was seen in Syria. Prior to the crisis, the country was always repressive, and authorities could arrest and punish opponents of the regime. The press law of 2001 allowed authorities to detain adversaries whose publications also needed a license that could be denied at any time (Sterling Joe, 2012) delete Joe. Then, the freedom of expression has not improved even after the state of emergency had stopped in 2011, and journalists continued to be punished or killed. Also, the Internet was blocked and around 200 sites were shut down (Freedom house, 2011). In the area of freedom of assembly and association, no improvement was noted. In fact, human rights' NGOs and opposition political

parties were illegal, and public demonstrations were prohibited (CNN, 2012). All activities in the country were under close surveillance through informant networkers.

In the area of torture and detention, conditions worsened mainly after the protests, as detainees underwent outrageous types of torture from electric shocks to whippings, beatings, and other brutal acts (Freedom house, 2011).

In the area of women's rights, women were facing discrimination and violence in a country where the constitution praised gender equality.

In the area of freedom of religion, freedom of worship has always been tolerated. But then, after the protests, Alawites started prosecuting Sunni Muslims as sectarianism increased along with the conflict (Freedom house, 2011).

### **Conclusion:**

Syria has manifested till now the worst response of all other nations, to protests. Taking everything into account, the Syrian military's devotion to the regime with just moderate defections in the course of recent months has primarily been a result of ethnicity and tactical control. Ethnically, the Alawite immersion of every key position has extremely limited high-positioning defections, and, strategically, the control at the unit level of non-Alawite warriors utilizing broad checking, shadow leaders, and a do-or-kick the bucket compulsion strategy has constrained Sunnis and different groups to go against the regime or endure the results.

In spite of the unmistakable inclinations of these groups, which contain a significant part of the general population, to go against the government, the regime's control of the military at the unit level has decided their conduct. In Syria, the military intervention was outrageous and so was the death toll. The regime remained the bloodiest and most violent party, and no improvement was seen in the area of human rights. Despite some similarities between the conflict in Syria and the one in Libya, the Gaddafi regime ended the help of the NATO. Consequently, Syria's case is compatible with the hypothesis, which stated the following: a country that had received a little amount of democracy assistance would not be successful in its response to protests, and accordingly it would not be able to make a shift toward democracy.

Syria's conflict has degenerated from tranquil dissents against the legislature in 2011 to a rough insurrection that has attracted various different nations. It's somewhat a common war of government against individuals; incompletely a religious war setting Assad's minority Alawite organization, lined up with Shiite contenders from Iran and Hezbollah in Lebanon, against Sunni revolt gatherings; and progressively an intermediary war highlighting Russia and Iran against the United States and its partners. However, this has encouraged the ascent of ISIS. While an accepted universal coalition – one that makes casual partners of Assad, the United States, Russia, Iran, Turkey, the Kurds, and others – is centered on vanquishing ISIS in Syria, the front line includes various other covering clashes.

Thus, Syria has turned into the immense disaster of this century, a disreputable philanthropic cataclysm with torment and uprooting unparalleled in late history. The main comfort is the mankind appeared by the neighboring nations in inviting and sparing the lives of such a large number of refugees.

### **Conclusion of the Book:**

The failure in gaining democracy was the conclusion for Libya, Bahrain, and Syria. Libya's reaction to protests was doomed since it still needs some time to reach democracy, Bahrain is not different as well, and the situation in Syria is a crystal clear example of failure in reaching democracy after the Arab Spring. On the other hand, this book has confirmed that also the Arab Spring was the key to open the door of democracy in other countries. As a proof of this, we consider the examples of Tunisia, Egypt, Morocco, and Jordan. With rare incidents of blood shedding, Tunisia was able to attain democracy and the elite rank of success among other countries that joined the Arab Spring protests. Changing its government, its social situation, and its economic situations encouraged other countries such as Egypt to reach democracy although the latter reached it with the help of the military, which contrasted the situation of Tunisia. However, Egypt's case was better than Morocco's and Jordan, since the first did not receive as much aid as the other two countries, and the Jordanian government worked on calming the protestors instead of putting them in jail and killing them as in Egypt. They were able to have their new election system, which was not different than the Moroccans who were able to establish their new parliamentary government. A last important point to note is that democratization is what these countries really reached and not democracy itself. With this book we concluded the literature review of the failures and successes of the Arab Spring. The next book will present the Arabic Spring and International Players of this Thesis review.

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# **Arab Spring from Revolution to Democratization or Civil War**

