

Forum: Security Council  
Issue: The Situation in Egypt  
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## Introduction

The Arab Republic of Egypt (hereby referred to as Egypt) has been an area of much unrest since 25<sup>th</sup> January 2011, the official commencing date of the Egyptian Revolution, also known as the Lotus Revolution. The demonstrations were varied and included marches, riots, plaza occupations, labour strikes, nonviolent civil resistance and civil disobedience to overthrow the regime of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak which had widespread allegations of corruption.

After the revolution, Mohamed Morsi was democratically elected to be the president but Morsi's government issued a temporary constitutional declaration that in effect granted the president unlimited powers, which Morsi attempted to justify by deeming it necessary to protect the elected constituent assembly from a planned dissolution from judges appointed during the Mubarak-era.

This led to widespread protests throughout Egypt and eventually caused the Egyptian Armed Forces (their National Army) to intervene and announce the end of Morsi's presidency. The constitution was temporarily suspended, democratic elections were planned and it was designated that the Chief Justice of the Constitutional Court, Adly Mansour, would act as Head of Government of a transitional technocratic government, until the final elections were put in place.

## Definition of Key Terms

### Egypt

Officially known as the Arab Republic of Egypt, Egypt is located in Northern Africa between Libya and the Gaza Strip. The state became independent from the United Kingdom on 28<sup>th</sup> February 1922 and was declared a Republic on 18 June 1953. Egypt's capital is Cairo, situated in Northern Egypt and located near the Nile delta. It has an estimated population of 6.76 million and is Egypt's political hub as it contains the Parliament of Egypt so many of the protests have occurred in this city. During the events of the Arab Spring, Egypt had a revolution on 25 January 2011 where the regime of President Hosni Mubarak was overthrown. Egypt's current acting President is Adly Mansour who has continued his role the head of the Supreme Constitutional Court despite political unrest. Egypt's acting Prime Minister is Hazem Al Beblawi who has previously served as deputy Prime Minister and minister of finance. Parliament has presently been dissolved.

### Civil Resistance

The term civil resistance is used to describe political action that relies on the use of non-violent methods by civil groups to challenge a particular power, force, policy or regime. Common forms of civil disobedience include vigils, petitions, boycotts, emigration movements and demonstrations. Civil resistances also tend to be non-violent but not necessarily because of any ethical principle.

### Civil Disobedience

Civil disobedience is the active professed refusal to obey certain laws, demands and commands of a government, or of an occupying international power. It is a form of civil resistance and can either be violent or peaceful.

### Hosni Mubarak

Hosni Mubarak is a former Egyptian President, leader and military commander. He served as the fourth president of Egypt from 1981 to 2011. Allegations of electoral fraud were one of the main causes for the 2011 Egyptian revolution which resulted in the overthrow of the Mubarak government and the beginning of a trial about Mubarak's alleged killing of peaceful protesters although Egypt's military prosecutors also proclaimed that they were investigating Mubarak's role in the assassination of his predecessor Anwar Sadat. Mubarak was sentenced to life imprisonment for the killing of peaceful protesters. He is currently under house arrest after a series of appeals.

Caption #1: Image of Hosni Mubarak

Caption #1: Image of Mohammed Morsi

## Key Issues

There are many issues that arise from Morsi's ousting; the main issues, however, being the crumbling democracy and political framework.

### Mubarak-era Judges

With many such as Mohammed Morsi claiming that Mubarak-era judges are corrupt, the judges need to be thoroughly investigated and if deemed to be corrupt, a trial needs to occur in order for the president to make changes in the country without difficulty and allegations of dishonourable behaviour which would likely lead to further protests. This would also show Egyptians that the government is serious about making change.

### Mubarak

Similarly to the Mubarak-era judges, the severe punishment of Mubarak would be hugely symbolic of change in Egypt as it would show that Egypt is serious about making change. Many Egyptians believe that the sentence of house arrest Mubarak has been put under is not harsh enough and it represents that change in Egypt is just a front. However, it must be noted that Mubarak has already been put on trial and is suffering from a variety of health issues so imprisonment may not be the best solution.

### The Military

With many deeming the 2013 protests a massacre and with the widespread belief that the coup was just a power-grab by the military, the military are undoubtedly a large problem for Egypt and solutions are needed. The Egyptian military is also extremely powerful and receive large amounts of aid from the United States of America who provide \$1.3 billion in military aid and about \$250 million in economic aid annually - the U.S. currently also provides the army with modern machines such as the F-16 jets as long as Egyptian Presidents support solutions to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

### Mohammed Morsi

Morsi is the first democratically elected president of Egypt and has been charged over the deaths of protesters outside the presidential palace in December 2012. The prosecutions official list of charges include charges such as but not limited to: inciting his supporters to carry out premeditated murder crimes, inciting the use of violence, thuggery and imposition of control with the intention of intimidating citizens, calling on his supporters to disperse a sit-in outside the presidential palace by using force, complicity with others to seize 54 protesters at the wall of the presidential palace and torturing them. Ensuring that Morsi has a fair trial is essential to the Egyptian people as it is a clear indication that change is taking place in Egypt.

## Timeline of Key Events in the Egyptian Crisis

### 21 November 2012

Secular groups walk out of the constitutional constituent assembly as they believe that it will impose strict Islamic practises whilst members of the Muslim brotherhood supported by Morsi deny these allegations.

### 22 November 2012

Morsi issues a constitutional declaration purporting the protection of the Constituent Assembly of Egypt from judicial interference. However, the declaration only applies until a new constitution is ratified. Furthermore, the declaration extends the mandate of the constituent assembly by two months and also demands for new trials for those acquitted of Mubarak-era killings of protesters. Additionally, the declaration authorises Morsi to take all measures necessary to these ends. As a result, this declaration makes all constitutional declarations, laws and decrees made since Morsi assumed power immune to any appeal by any individual, political or governmental body in effect granting President Morsi unlimited powers. Morsi deemed the decree necessary to protect the elected constituent assembly from a planned dissolution by judges appointed during the Mubarak-era. As a result, tens of thousands of protesters return to Tahrir Square demanding the prosecution of officials blamed for killing demonstrators; a faster pace of political reform as well as protesting against the growing influence of the Muslim Brotherhood.

### 24 November 2012

The Supreme Judicial Council, the highest judicial body in Egypt joined protesters in lambasting the president's constitutional declaration. The leadership of the Egypt Judges Club (an association of judges from across the country) called for a nationwide strike in all courts and prosecution offices to protest the president's declaration. MENA news agency (a publicly funded Egyptian news agency) reported that Egyptian human rights agencies filed a lawsuit at the Court of Administrative Justice calling for the declaration to be annulled.

### 25 November 2012

Shares on Egypt's stock market plunge almost 10% and trading is suspended for 30 minutes. The Muslim Brotherhood calls for nationwide protests in support of Morsi's declaration. After meeting with Egypt's justice minister Ahmed Mekki, the Supreme Court of the Judiciary (the highest council overseeing the Egyptian courts) urged judges to cease the disruption of their work by joining in a proposed strike over the decree. However, the council also urged the president to scale back his writ and to limit the immunity from judicial review.

The Muslim Brotherhood's party offices in Damanhour Alexandria, Mansoura, Suez and Cairo were ransacked and damaged. Since the beginning of the protest, over 500 people had been injured with clashes with the Egyptian police. The Al-Ahram state newspaper reported that three women were victims of sexual assault during an anti-Morsi demonstration. Egypt state news media reported that Morsi advisers who has resigned over the decree include Sami Morqos, one of the few Christians in the administration; Sekina Fouad, one of the few women and Farouk Guweida.

### 26 November 2012

Morsi meets with representatives of the supreme judicial council to settle the crisis over the extent of his powers and agrees to limit his decree to "sovereign matters" only. According to Al-Jazeera "sovereign matters" were widely interpreted to cover the declaration of war, imposition of martial law, breaking diplomatic relations with a foreign nation or dismissing the cabinet.

Activists camp in Cairo's Tahrir Square for the fourth day, blocking traffic with makeshift barricades

to protest against Morsi's decree and clashes between riot police and protestors were interminable. The Muslim Brotherhood staged a counter-demonstration and a member of the Brotherhood, Islam Fathy Massoud was killed. Thousands of people also march through Tahrir Square for the funeral of Gaber Salah, a member of April 6 Youth Movement after being shot by a rubber bullet at close range during clashes with riot police in downtown Cairo.

### 27 November 2012

At least one protester dies in protests in Cairo and in the Nile Delta City of Mahalla, police reported dozens of injuries when demonstrators stormed and destroyed the headquarters of the Muslim Brotherhood. The Muslim Brotherhood also scraps its own demonstration in support of Morsi "to avoid any problems due to tension in the political arena." Freedom and Justice Party offices in Alexandria and Mansoura are stormed and

### December 2012

Morsi annulled his temporary decree which had expanded his political authority and removed judicial review of his decrees but the results of the temporary declaration still stood. The constitution supported by Morsi was later approved by 64% of voters in a national referendum with the opposition claiming fraud in the process and calling for an inquiry.

### 30 June 2013

On the first anniversary of the election of Morsi, tens of thousands of Morsi opponents massed in Tahrir Square and outside the main presidential palace in the Heliopolis suburb demanding Morsi's resignation. Demonstrations were also reported to be in progress in 18 locations across Cairo and in other different locations across the country including Alexandria, El-Mahalla and cities of the Suez Canal. The demonstrations are described as being backed by multiple entities, including the Tamarod movement formed by members of the Egyptian Movement for Change in April 2013 that claims to have collected 22 million signatures calling for President Morsi's resignation

### 3 July 2013

During the evening, after a warning 48 hours earlier to intervene, the Egyptian Armed forces led by General Abdul Fatah al-Sisi came out with a statement announcing the end of Mohammed Morsi's presidency. In the same statement, the military announced that the constitution was suspended, that a presidential election would be held soon and Adly Mansour is now head of the government. Morsi was put under house arrest and several Muslim Brotherhood leaders were arrested. In the protest of the coup, supporters of the ousted President Morsi staged large demonstrations in the Nasr City district of Cairo, and in Alexandria, Luxor, Damanhour and Suez.

The Egyptian army also cracked down on public media and shut down several news outlets that it deemed pro-Morsi, including al-Jazeera. In what many have deemed a massacre, hundreds of pro-Morsi demonstrators have since been killed in army crackdowns and attacks on pro-Morsi demonstrations. In many cases the army has denied shooting any demonstrators with live ammunition, contrary to eyewitness and firsthand accounts of western news outlets and local residents.

### 4 November 2013

Morsi's trial opens for the killing of peaceful protestors and various other charges as previously mentioned. The trial was later adjourned until 8 January while lawyers examine

documents.

### 18 December

It is announced that Morsi and more than thirty others in the Muslim Brotherhood's leadership were to stand trial for conspiring with foreign organisations to commit terrorist acts, with prosecutors alleging that that Morsi formed an alliance with the Palestinian militant group Hamas and Lebanon's Hezbollah.

## Possible Solutions

### Trials for Mubarak-era judges, Morsi and Army Generals

In a government that many deemed as corrupt, trials for judges might be a symbolic step to creating a new Egypt as it would be the easiest way for the people to see change and curb the protest culture. These trials would need to be carried out in a neutral country in order to prevent bias from other judges. The Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey and many others claim that the protests of 2013 were a massacre and if true, the individuals or groups responsible for this; whether Morsi or the Army Generals will need to be tried in the International Court of Justice in the Hague. This is essential in generating change for Egypt and would likely bring stability to the region as people would finally see the change that they had been craving.

### Free Democratic elections

Although this was promised by the army, many believe that this process is unlikely to happen as it would mean that the army would have to give up power in a country that is suffering from what many call a 'power vacuum.' Considering the recent wave of protests, establishing that these elections are free would be essential to prevent further unrest. These elections could be monitored by Transparency International to make sure that it is fully democratic, so that the Egyptian people would not have doubts over the legitimacy of a candidate's win. UN peacekeepers could also monitor the situation during the times leading up, during, and immediately after the election so that in the likely event of protests, violence would be prevented from both the Egyptian army and the protesters. The timing of this protest will also be essential if the trials go ahead as if Morsi is deemed to be guilty, he will not be able to run whilst if Morsi is elected by the Egyptian people, the majority of the trials will be significantly delayed as Morsi is likely to be a witness in the trials of the judges.

### Modifying and Reinstating Morsi's Decree

One of the main reasons for the protest apart from the decree, was a slow rate of change and the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood. The recent events have also created a culture of protests and the increase of military force has deemed to highly unsuccessful. To prevent these protests, the decree that Morsi initially planned could be significantly changed so that it would be less extreme, but still allow the new democratically elected president to make decisions in a faster amount of time.

### Reducing Military Power

By far the most controversial solution, reducing military power would prevent further

coups in the future and would also prevent the mass violence of the protests in 2013. However, it would have significant affects international relations such as with the United States of America who provide \$1.3 billion in military aid and about \$250 million in economic aid annually because the American policy has been to provide strong support to Egyptian presidents who supported the solutions to the Arab-Israeli conflict, especially president Anwar Sadat (1970-81) and Hosni Mubarak (1981-2011). Military links with the Pentagon are priorities for both Egypt and the United States as the Pentagon has for decades had a close relationship with Egypt's military which has also been an important customer to U.S. defence contractors. This aid has only been allowed to commence by the United States of America classifying this issue as a 'civil uprising' instead of a coup which has enabled them to continue giving aid because of the U.S 'coup law' which bars aid to countries whose democratically elected head of state has been removed in a coup d'état or by military decree.

On 18 December 2013, the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee overwhelmingly passed legislation to ease tight U.S. controls on aid to Egypt which have been reduced after the coup d'état in 2012. The panel passed the measure by a 16-1 vote hours after Egypt's public prosecutor escalated a crackdown on the movement that brought Morsi to power by charging the ousted president and 35 other leading Islamists with international conspiracy. Backers of the legislation said it struck an appropriate balance between pushing Cairo to embrace democratic reforms and continuing the U.S. commitment to Egypt.

The "Egypt Assistance Reform Act of 2013" allows aid, but makes it subject to conditions such as adhering to the Israel-Egypt peace treaty, cooperating on counter-terrorism and taking steps to restore democracy. This committee vote has cleared the legislation for consideration by the full Senate, but it is not certain when it might get the floor, or whether it would be considered a standalone bill or as part of a larger appropriations bill. This law would have huge impacts on Egypt as it requires the U.S. Secretary of State to determine whether a coup took place and advise congress of that decision. It also allows the president to waive the coup law restrictions for 180 days if doing so is deemed to be in the vital U.S. national security interest and a government is committed to restoring democracy and the rule of law.

## Points of View from a Selection of Security Council Countries

### Australia

The then Prime Minister Kevin Rudd called for a swift return to democracy in Egypt and upgraded the national travel warning for Egypt to its second highest level. The current Prime Minister later released a statement saying that "it is important that Egypt's interim president re-establishes order and that all sides respect human life. It is vital that the elections he has promised happen soon, that they be free and fair and that a genuine democracy is established which protects the rights of all Egyptians, including religious minorities and women.'

### France

President Francois Hollande talked of Tunisia as an Arab Spring model on the visit there by a French leader since the Tunisian Revolution where he said that Islam and democracy were "on the same path." He compared this to other Arab Spring countries in saying: "You (Tunisia) are heading in the right direction. In Libya the transition has been tainted by violence; in Egypt the transition was stopped after the removal of the elected president; and in Syria, desire for change led to war." Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius said: "In a situation that has worsened seriously and with extreme tension in Egypt, new elections have finally been announced, after a transition period. [A timetable should be drawn up respecting] civil peace, pluralism, individual liberties and the achievements of the democratic transition, so that the Egyptian people can freely choose their

leaders and their future."

### Pakistan

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif requested the immediate release of Morsi. A statement issued by the Foreign Office read: "Pakistan therefore urges all sides in Egypt to address the legal and constitutional issues in an inclusive and peaceful manner to enable the country to successfully restore the democratic institutions as early as possible. We also call for the immediate release of President Mohamed Morsi."

### United Kingdom

The United Kingdom's Prime Minister David Cameron said that the United Kingdom "never supports intervention by the military. But what now needs to happen...in Egypt is for democracy to flourish and for a genuine democratic transition to take place and all the parties need to be involved in that. And that's what Britain and our allies will be saying very clearly to the Egyptians." [168] Foreign Secretary William Hague said the United Kingdom "does not support military intervention as a way to resolve disputes in a democratic system." He also called the situation "dangerous" and called on all sides to "avoid violence" and resort to "a political process that includes all groups on an equal footing leading to early and fair elections which all parties are able to contest, and civilian-led government."

### United States of America

President Barack Obama said he was "deeply concerned" by the actions of Egypt's military and urged a return to democratic governance. He ordered his administration to review United States aid to Egypt.

He added: "No transition to democracy comes without difficulty, but in the end it must stay true to the will of the people. An honest, capable and representative government is what ordinary Egyptians seek and what they deserve. The long-standing partnership between the United States and Egypt is based on shared interests and values, and we will continue to work with the Egyptian people to ensure that Egypt's transition to democracy succeeds."

In the most senior visit to Egypt since the ouster, Deputy Secretary of State William Burns said on 15 July: "Only Egyptians can determine their future. I did not come with American solutions, nor did I come to lecture anyone. We know that Egyptians must forge their own path to democracy. We know that this will not mirror our own and we will not try to impose our model on Egypt. [The U.S. would] stand behind certain basic principles, not any particular personalities or parties." He also criticised the exclusion of Islamist parties from the political process: "If representatives of some of the largest parties in Egypt are detained or excluded, how are dialogue and participation possible?"

On 26 July, the United States said that it would not make a formal determination of whether the events in Egypt constituted a coup. State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki said: "The law does not require us to make a formal determination...as to whether a coup took place, and it is not in our national interest to make such a determination."

Representatives Ed Royce, the chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and Eliot Engel, members of different parties released a statement that read: "The decision by the Egyptian military to take state authority out of the hands of the ruling Muslim Brotherhood government marks another sharp turning point in Egypt's incomplete revolution. What the Brotherhood neglected to understand is that democracy means more than simply holding elections. Real democracy requires



inclusiveness, compromise, respect for human and minority rights, and a commitment to the rule of law. Morsi and his inner circle did not embrace any of these principles and instead chose to consolidate power and rule by fiat. As a result the Egyptian people and their economy suffered greatly. It is now up to the Egyptian military to demonstrate that the new transitional government can and will govern in a transparent manner and work to return the country to democratic rule. We are encouraged that a broad cross-section of Egyptians will gather to rewrite the constitution. All parties in Egypt must show restraint, prevent violence, and prepare to be productive players in the future democratic Egypt. We encourage the military to exercise extreme caution moving forward and support sound democratic institutions through which the people and future governments can flourish.”

Ambassador to Israel Dan Shapiro said from Tel Aviv that the U.S. supports any democratic regime in Egypt and such a commitment towards democracy is what pushed Obama to call for a swift peaceful transition of power.

Former American Ambassador to Egypt, Frank Wisner said: "It wasn't the military that plotted the seizure of the government and grabbed it. It was a massive public uprising that, left unchecked, would have produced great violence. It would have left the military in the miserable position of having to control those demonstrations by force. The cry from the crowd was they wanted new elections ... to help decide the country's future, which has been so troubled. The military was faced with, genuinely overheated situation ... It isn't a coup in any classic sense and, yet, the military played a role in upsetting the government. We have to ask ourselves, then, finally, what are the interests of the United States? And here the president wisely has waived authority and has to make a judgment. Egypt is the largest and most influential country in the Middle East. Egypt is central to peace with Israel. Egypt's fate will influence the course of politics elsewhere in the region. So we want to be very, very careful before we go out and condemn an event that has, by the most recent polling of Egypt's best pollsters, 80 percent support in the population. What is clear is the wave of anger against the government that drove Morsi from power, enjoyed massive, massive public support in the many, many millions of Egyptians.”

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