Perils Accompanying the Moment of Promise

Security Challenges in North Africa following the Arab Spring

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Cover Picture: Jasmine Flower symbolising the Jasmine Revolution in Tunisia in 2011. Picture used with permission of Istockphoto.com

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Sammanfattning

Studien analyserar den säkerhetspolitiska utvecklingen i Nordafrika med fokus på Algeriet, Egypten, Libyen, Marocko och Tunisien och tar sin början med den arabiska våren med start i slutet av 2010. Syftet är att generera en bättre förståelse for hur de arabiska revolterna kommit att påverka den säkerhetspolitiska miljön i området. Genom att undersöka och försöka ge en förklaring till särskilt viktiga skeenden, så syftar studien till att särskilja och identifiera mönster och trender i den säkerhetspolitiska situationen i regionen. Fokus ligger på s.k. "hård säkerhet", men omfattar dock ej den nuvarande militära insatsen i Libyen. Även s.k. "mjuka" säkerhetsvariabler ligger till grund för analysen. Således finns sociala och kulturella aspekter med i studien för att bättre förklara de säkerhetspolitiska utmaningarna regionen står inför. Analysnivån ligger på både regional och landsspecifik nivå. Forskningsfrågorna som studien vill besvara är huruvida revolterna i Nordafrika har bidragit till att göra regionen mer eller mindre stabil, förstått i termer av säkerhet, samt vilka implikationerna av revolterna kan komma att bli för regionen. Studien bygger på primär- och sekundärkällor samt intervjuer med experter och forskare specialiserade på området, samt avslutas med förslag till vidare forskning. Ett Memo med policyrekommendationer som bygger på denna analys finns även tillgängligt utöver denna rapport ('Perils accompanying the moment of promise: policy summary and recommendations').

Summary

This study examines the political and security developments taking place in North Africa: Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia. It is confined to the events of the Arab Spring starting in late 2010. The aim is to generate a deeper understanding of the Arab revolts and how they are likely to shape the security environment in the region. By investigating key political events and their main causes, the study seeks to distinguish patterns in the events to date in terms of security, as well as some future trends from a security perspective. While the immediate focus is on broad security and defence matters, albeit excluding the current military intervention in Libya, a number of the aspects touched on also link to 'softer' security factors. In addition, the study seeks to explain the country-specific contexts in order to increase understanding of the events taking place. The main research questions tackled are whether the current uprising in North Africa has made the region more or less stable (in terms of security), and the implications the popular uprisings will have for the future security and stability of the region. The study builds on primary and secondary sources and interviews carried out with experts and scholars based in the area, as well as interviews with scholars and specialists on North Africa. The study concludes with suggestions for further research. A standalone memo based on this study provides further policy recommendations (Perils accompanying the moment of promise: policy summary and recommendations').

Acknowledgements

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Hey you, the unfair tyrants...
You the lovers of the darkness...
You the enemies of life...
You've made fun of innocent people's wounds; and your palm covered with their
blood
You kept walking while you were deforming the charm of existence and growing
seeds of sadness in their land

Wait, don't let the spring, the clearness of the sky and the shine of the morning light
fool you...
Because the darkness, the thunder rumble and the blowing of the wind are coming
toward you from the horizon
Beware because there is a fire underneath the ash

Who grows thorns will reap wounds
You've taken off heads of people and the flowers of hope; and watered the cure of the
sand with blood and tears until it was drunk
The blood's river will sweep you away and you will be burned by the fiery storm.

("To the Tyrants of the World" by Abou-Al-kacem El-chebbi)

1   Introduction

The poem cited above gives a literary sense of the anger that unfolded in North Africa in December 2010 when a number of Arab demonstrators took to the streets and called on their leaders to step down from power. Their lust for a new political dawn - which originated in Tunisia and followed in Egypt, Libya, Morocco and Algeria – also travelled to many other parts of the Middle East. The widespread recitation of the poem, which became a symbolic protest hymn across the region, further illustrates that the underlying basis of the revolts, namely that the protests were not only country based *political grievances*, but also a more profound question concerning *dignity* that was shared on an intra-regional basis. Some key features of the revolts were years of frustration with far-reaching political oppression, the lack of economic opportunity, a lack of dignity and trampled pride. Hence, the sense of grievance was shared among the Arab people across state borders and cultural affinities. This suggests that there was a pan-Arab kinship with regard to the popular revolts, an important element that must be included in any analysis that seeks to explain why things unfold as they do.

A preliminary review of the immediate events that took place in North Africa and the wider Middle East during the first half of 2011, indicates that triggering events in each country were quickly picked up and organised by larger networks both inside and actors beyond sovereign borders. The demonstrations and protest movements that erupted in Tunisia were as much an uprising by co-supporters in Egypt. In some cases, these triggers were picked up by ready formed networks, such as trade unions, and in others by looser networks organised through popular social media such as Twitter and Facebook.

In addition to the profound implications for Arab citizens in the region, another important implication of the developments is the new order of geopolitical dynamics in Europe's southern neighbourhood. No country in Europe has escaped the political impact of the Arab Spring. It has been challenging not only to follow, but also to provide adequate policies in response to, the unfolding events. Anyone who claimed in early 2011 that within only a few months a number of Arab leaders would be forced to resign by popular uprising, and that the international community would be entrenched in a new war in a Muslim country (Libya), would have been met with scepticism.

According to one expert on the political systems in Northern Africa: "Europe's suburbs are ablaze".[1] This analogy, which raises parallels with events in the

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[1] Inga Brandell, a Swedish scholar with expertise on the Arab world, was commenting on the events taking place in North Africa (addressing a public seminar at the Swedish Parliament on 9 March 2011). It is also worth noting that riots and rage flared up not only in the north-eastern suburbs of Paris, but also in the suburbs of Swedish cities such as Stockholm, Malmö and Göteborg. In many

suburbs of many European capitals throughout the 21st century, as well as with the events currently unfolding in the Arab world, suggests that the best way to deal with such a fire is to provide young Arab men and women with conditions that permit political participation and achievable visions for a better future.[2] Durable economic growth will inevitably lead to pressure for democratization. Without pre-empting the conclusions of this study, security will be heavily dependent on just and durable economic growth in each of the North African countries. A future economic policy built on diversification, regional integration and inter-regional cooperation could contribute to such stability. Public spending and the provision of social benefits for all groups in these societies seem particularly important. In fact, the region has the potential to become an important emerging market important for European and other actors. This is critically important for the region itself, but also for its neighbours – not least for Europe. In the end, the degree of democratization is likely to be determined by economic growth and a balance among societal classes. Once this process of power-balancing has started, other factors such as political and groups' interest will define the ensuing democratization process.[3]

In sum, these unexpected and profound events could continue for some time and will continue to pose challenges to which European and other countries in the international community will need to respond.

This study on the security implications following the popular revolts in North Africa tackles a number of questions that the new environment in the region has raised. The main thread is that although urgent and profound changes have occurred, there are a number of structural conditions necessitating this moment and which will continue into a post-authoritarian era that is likely to come.

Security structures can emerge over time and become permanent, but they can also emerge rapidly through temporary political fractures. Although unique in themselves, there are a number of historic examples that may help put in perspective ongoing events.

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cases, these rioters have roots in the region. Although triggered by different motives, some shared grievances seem to exist, most notably the sense of an unpromising social situation and a perceived lack of political representation.

[2] Note that a number of European capitals hosts political opposition groups in exile, e.g. Algeria, Libya, Tunisia and Egypt. Europe therefore gets directly affected by the political events on ground in the region (aside from the Arab communities receding in Europe in general).

[3] For more on how democratization processes in the Middle East has developed see for instance Niblock (1998).

To begin with, the Arab world has experienced revolutions throughout the 20th century, sometimes with anti-colonial features, sometimes with pan-Arabic or socialist foundations. Likewise, parallels can be identified between events in the Arab world and the popular protest wave in Africa in and around the 1990's. For example, in matter of months nearly sixteen countries in sub-Saharan Africa expressed popular revolt following experience of political and economic hardship.[4]

A parallel to the current Arab revolt is the unique collapse of the Soviet Union, and with it the idea of a functioning communist political and economic systems. Both the Soviet system and the patrimonial and authoritarian system in North Africa depended on particular societal arrangements, which once broken led to the collapse of the entire system. In the Soviet Union, the 'politico-military' complex was keeping the society together. Once Soviet satellite states had to confront their opposition without the support of Moscow, they collapsed and broke loose. For a number of Arab states, the 'glue' keeping the system together has been the possession of oil and natural gas.[5] Once the economic benefits ceased to be distributed to the general citizenry of a particular country, and instead were vested only in the elites, this inevitably invited popular protest leading to system collapse.[6] Although the analogy stops there, the unexpected and speedy fall of a number of states and the uncertain security implications that follows have some profoundly similar elements to them. One difference, however, between the events unfolding in North Africa and those which took place in Eastern Europe in the early 1990s is that Western governments had long occupied the moral high ground in terms of supporting human rights and democratic values prior to the collapse of communism. Political and economic support had been offered over the years to opposition groups and civil society. One could even argue therefore that segments of societal communities and underground political parties in Eastern Europe had either democratic experience or acquaintance with democracy in a different way than groups and political parties active in North Africa. Western leaders also openly accused communist leaders for not reforming their political system towards a more democratic system. Few Western governments accepted these repressive systems, and the new regimes stood for something sharply politically different to the existing system.[7] In contrast to the criticism frequently directed at the oppressive

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[4] Bratton and de Walle 1992: 419.

[5] Although Libya and Algeria are the only countries that have oil and gas reserves, all governments (including Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt) are great beneficiaries of the Petro-economies in North Africa and the Gulf (jobs, trade, as well as political and economic support). The problem of Arab governments over relying on oil this was also a point made in the *Arab Human Development Report* 2009: 197.

[6] See Grand 2011-02-10.

[7] Although some Western governments such as the Scandinavian sought to nuance the capitalist/socialist dichotomy.

communist regimes of Cold War Eastern Europe, Western governments did not attempt to exert the same degree of political pressure on regimes in North Africa. Even on matters such as democracy or human rights abuses, the same level of moral robustness was not applied. On the contrary, Western governments failed to offer the kind of support to oppressed groups that might have been expected. Although democratic demands were at times formally communicated to non-democratic Arab regimes, for example, by the European Union when entering into economic and political agreements, there were no subsequent reviews of how these demands were being met by Arab governments. A telling example is that of the former French Foreign Minister, Michele Alliot-Marie, who on the eve of the *Jasmine Revolution* in Tunisia proposed that France should support the incumbent Ben Ali by deploying riot police to quell demonstrations.[8] As late as January 2011, this French minister also allegedly wanted to provide the Tunisian government with teargas to disperse the protestors.[9] This illustrates the problem and suggests the difficulties of analysing political developments with a shaky moral compass. Parallels can also be made to other historic revolutions. Indeed, several historical events can serve as comparative cases for increasing understanding of the developments in North Africa; for example, the Boston revolt in 1773 (marking the beginning of the American Revolution), France in 1789 and Iran in 1979 have been suggested as reference cases.

With regard to the British loss of its American colonies, it is worth noting that, for example, the current US administration is drawing parallels between events in the Arab world and US history. As the US President, Barack Obama, stated in one of his speeches on developments in the Middle East and the Arab world in 2011:

> *For the American people, the scenes of upheaval in the region may be unsettling, but the forces driving it are not unfamiliar. Our own nation was founded through rebellion against an empire. Our people fought a painful Civil War that extended freedom and dignity to those who were enslaved. And I would not be standing here today unless past generations turned to the moral force of non-violence as a way to perfect our union – organizing, marching, protesting peacefully together….*[10]

Although historically different, US self-identification with the events of the Arab Spring provides a perspective on how important the events are and could potentially be. Events in the region are taking an unprecedented democratic turn.

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[8] *The Daily Mail Online* 2011-02-28.

[9] Meanwhile, the Swedish government has been supporting Swedish companies in selling monitoring systems to Libya in order for it to intercept migrants and refugees seeking to enter Europe *Dagens Nyheter* 2010-02-03.

[10] *The White House*, 2011-05-19.

With regard to the revolution in Iran during 1979, a number of Iranians revolted against a serving regime that was perceived as corrupt and fraudulent. The regime at the time maintained its power through political, military and financial means, and the gap between the Iranian people and the Shah finally became so wide that people could no longer accept his rule and forced him from power by popular revolt.[11] Although popular outcry resembles the rage unfolding in North Africa, the parallels stops here. After all, there was a much more ideological base present in the revolution in Iran. It is worth noting that the protests at this time never mentioned human rights, freedom and democracy in the same way as the revolt in the Arab world witnessed today. A more pertinent parallel therefore are the protests made by the Green movement prior to the Presidential elections in Iran during 2009. However, a related question in this respect, but translated to the 21st century revolts in the Arab world, is how the Iranian leadership will respond to the current events in the Arab Spring (could we potentially witness another *Persian Spring*?).

Finally, historical processes and events in Europe also parallel what is currently unfolding in some Arab countries. For instance, the revolution that took place in France in 1789 and the storming of the Bastille share similarities with the current revolts unfolding in the Arab world in that it concerns human dignity, human rights, political liberation from authoritarianism and public demands for political participation. Experiences from European states own experiences may be useful for understanding the process North African societies are undergoing.

By mid-2011, the security landscape in North Africa is just beginning to adopt its new contours. Protest movements continue to rage in many capitals across the region, despite the fact that the government has fallen in some of these countries (e.g. Egypt's Hosni Mubarak and Tunisia's Ben Ali; and Libya's Muammar Gaddafi seems about to do so). One of the most important factors for security developments in these countries in the near future will be the ability of transitional governments to deliver the profound and speedy political and economic change expected by many in the face of huge structural obstacles. Improving life quality, decreasing the economic gap between those that have and those that have not, and dealing with daily corruption are only some of the 'softer' aspects that will have to be addressed to achieve long-term stability and security. Moreover, the balances between new interest groups will be another. Libya will obviously be a special case, as it will have to go through a total state and societal reform once the military conflict is over. Meanwhile, Algeria and Morocco will not be unaffected by the turmoil despite their relative political stability maintained by authoritarian regimes and effective control of domestic security apparatus. All the countries in North Africa face not only immediate domestic political challenges, but also significant regional tests (political,

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[11] There was obviously another element to the Iranian revolution: the exiled Khomeini's political activism in Paris, which greatly shaped events on the ground in Iran.

strategic and military), not least vis-à-vis each other. Moreover, they will have to re-establish their relationships with Europe, which can no longer be politically tolerant of authoritarian behaviour in these states.

Finally, future developments in North Africa will be highly dependent on developments in the wider Arab region, including countries such as Bahrain, Israel (though not Arab), Lebanon, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Yemen, and the Palestine Occupied Territories (Palestinian Authority, PA).

In a worst-case scenario, a number of countries in the region could descend into sectarian, religious or ethnic violence, with profound impacts for world politics and the world economy, not least because of drastically higher fuel and food prices (for example in Tunisia 36 per cent of the household consumptions goes to food bills, 38 per cent in Egypt; in comparison with the UK where only 9 per cent, and in the US only 7 per cent, of this household consumption goes into this grocery bill).[12] Some of this violence could be quick and dramatic, while elsewhere it could root itself and become a source of tension for a long time to go. After all, as one commentator describes it "…the lid is being blown off an entire region with frail institutions, scant civil society and virtually no democratic traditions or culture of innovation".[13] None of the countries in the region has a democratic tradition, and there is little social capital and human rights thinking to build on. Obviously, this would negatively impact on the possibilities for progress in turning the countries in North Africa around.

On the other hand, in a best-case scenario, transitions in these countries could be non-violent and more gradual in their aim of achieving greater political influence.[14] A less extreme scenario could be that a number of countries in the wider Middle East end up in a state of political impasse, in which the transition to democracy only reaches half way. However, such a status quo should not be confused with stability as a result of oppression. A half way transition with, for instance, increased military influence over the political process, could easily turn out to be unreliable and produce unpredictable actors on the world scene, causing systemic insecurity. Obviously, in this context different states would play more pivotal roles than others. For example, a political turn by Egypt or, for example, Saudi Arabia would have a much more profound impact on the region than Tunisia – a fairly small, albeit symbolically important, regional actor. Regardless of the possible turns, one truism overrides most of the uncertainties: that there is no turning back with regard to the political events that have unfolded.

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[12] *Time* 2011: 13.
[13] *New York Times*, 2011-02-22.
[14] However, at the time of writing there are few such tendencies as the governments facing popular challenges are becoming increasingly desperate.

1.1   Scope and delimitation

The North African countries covered in this study are Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia. The focus is on the security situation that the region faces because of developments linked to the Arab Spring. A number of political, economic and social variables are also included in order to explain the research question presented below. The study mainly covers the situation in the region up to July 2011. In terms of delimitations, this study mainly adopts a regional perspective, although attention is paid to country-specific variations. Moreover, the study does not attempt to examine in detail developments in the military conflict in Libya, which is a microcosm in itself and better covered elsewhere. Lastly, one should recognise that the popular revolts, as much as the military conflict in Libya, will have immense impact for the political and economic development in the region and beyond.[15]

1.2   Research question

The main underlying issue dealt with in this study is whether the events unfolding in North Africa are the result of an expected or unexpected societal process. More specifically, the conundrum tackled here is whether and how the underlying political and security conditions existing in the region prior to the revolts have helped pave the way for the processes currently taking place in the region, and whether these background conditions together with the revolts can guide us in our understanding of the future political and security landscape there. These questions echo many of the queries posed by scholars and practitioners at other times of considerable state and societal change. Insights generated in this study could hopefully prove valuable for practitioners and scholars trying to identify the challenges that lie ahead for the region. Examination of these questions can also make available better supporting data for decision-makers planning security and defence policies. The research question for the present study is: what security challenges is the region likely to face in the near future as a result of the popular revolts taking place? The research question can also be formulated as: *has the current uprising in North Africa contributed to making the region more or less stable (in terms of security), and what implications will the popular uprisings have for the future security and stability of the region?*

1.3   Method

This study is based on a qualitative methodological approach. Process tracing is applied to analyse some of the developments that led to the uprisings in North

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[15] The developments elsewhere in the Middle East is not covered here but in Eriksson forthcoming (2011).

Africa. The process tracing based on open media sources is applied in order to better understand the specific challenges these revolts have led to and what new political and security challenges might lie ahead for each country concerned and for the region. The study also reports on interviews with scholars and experts with a particular understanding of political, military and security aspects relevant to the region. Most of these interviews were conducted face-to-face, but some were also conducted via telephone.

1.3.1 A note on terminology

North Africa is here defined as encompassing the following states: Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia. These are also the countries under investigation in this study. Generally, the literature tends to refer to the Maghrib, that usually includes Morocco (Western Sahara), Algeria, Libya and Mauritania – a definition too broad for this study. Mashriq, on the other hand, commonly denotes Egypt, Iraq, Syria and Lebanon, and those states north of the Gulf, though a focus not taken here. Lastly, this study sometimes also makes reference to the wider Middle East, sometimes as the MENA (Middle East and North African) countries. This is usually considered to be those countries that form the Arab League (with the exception of a few African countries).[16] A distinction could be made here between other entities traditionally associated with the Middle East, such as a number of Islamic states located in Asia and Africa.[17]

In the context of defining the region, it is worth noting that the countries in the region share many similarities: politically, in terms of the authoritarian experience since the colonial era; socially, in terms of widespread poverty and large youth cohorts; and culturally, in terms of post-colonialism, as well as possessing a shared notion on a religious and cultural identity – while recognising the existence of many other ethnic identities throughout the region. However, the region is by no mean homogeneous. Each country has experienced its own political evolution, which has shaped the political and security situation these countries experience today. The developments taking place across the region are therefore context-specific, which makes it difficult to generalise. These features also suggest that the ensuing political process in each country will face its own particular obstacles in the renegotiation of norms and patterns for future political order and stability. One example is that the countries' economies are very diverse. For instance, in Egypt *youth* unemployment in late 2010 is

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[16] See for instance all member states of the Arab League: Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya (temporarily excluded), Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, (Palestine Occupied Territories), Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

[17] See for instance all member states of the Organisation for Islamic Cooperation (compromising nearly 57 states).

currently estimated to be close to 30 per cent (in comparison to 9.7 per cent in average for the population at large), which obviously poses grim challenges for the new government in Cairo, especially in comparison with other Arab countries in the region with lower unemployment rates (see also table below).[18] Another example is that some Arab states, such as Morocco and Tunisia, import oil and gas while others, such as Algeria and Libya, are net exporters. The vast resources associated with oil exports obviously create different challenges for economic and political reform.[19]

Lastly, references made to the 'West' mainly refer to the United States and European states, but also to other liberal democratic and capitalist countries. A category like this is obviously problematic as it tends to create images that hardly exists or hold tight when deconstructing them, yet it is commonly used in daily references and sometimes also in this analysis. When referring to the international community, such a reference mainly refers to the United Nations (e.g. the UN Security Council), the European Union (EU) and other multilateral entities concerned with the region.

1.4 An outline of the report

Section 2 offers an analytical contour of events so far in the region. This provides both a regional overview and a country-specific outlook. To further advance our understanding, section 3 examines some of the political and security conditions that have led to the events that took place. This is done by providing a general overview of the development and establishment of contemporary Arab regimes, beginning in the early 1970s. This section also assesses the temperature of the political situation in the region and each country on the eve of the revolt, in order to contrast the situation then with the situation at the time of the protests. Section 4 provides data on military capabilities to give a sense of the military strength of the North African countries. These data give some indication of the region's power centres, should the uprisings lead to intra-regional conflict. Moreover, data will also provide an indication of the military capabilities that fall in the hands of new governments. The data for Libya have obviously changed because of the war. The section ends with a brief discussion of some of the main security challenges in the region prior to the revolt, with an emphasis on the role of radical Islam. Having looked at background conditions, section 5 examines new and old security issues in the emerging post-authoritarian phase in order to highlight emerging trends and patterns. Section 5 also investigates the political attitude to the region of external actors, by examining the reactions of the EU, the

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[18] Statistics from the region should always be treated carefully.
[19] This heterogeneity is much greater when the wider Middle East is taken into account. For instance, Saudi Arabia's USD 440 billion economy is 14 times bigger than that of Yemen (see *White House Factsheet*, 2011-05-18).

United States and the African Union. Section 6 reconnects to the research question posed in the introduction to this report.

2 What happened?

Since mid-December 2010, all states in North Africa have witnessed social and political turmoil, with ramifications for individual, societal and state security. Below, some of the most relevant political aspects of the revolt are discussed, notably the main incidents and causes are analysed, beginning with indigenous and exogenous factors, and then turning to country-specific events.

2.1 Key features of the revolts

The uprisings in North Africa, which were mainly internally driven, had many different triggers, including a number of acts of self-immolation, civil disobedience and human rights abuses (as was the case in Tunisia). Thereafter fierce clashes erupted in most countries between police and unarmed non-violent demonstrators, usually followed by increased protests. Some political leaders left more or less voluntarily, Ben Ali of Tunisia and Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, but others have held on to power, such as Algeria's Abdelaziz Bouteflika and Morocco's King Hassan II. In Libya, the revolt has turned into a civil war.

In both Egypt and Tunisia, violence has continued despite the ousting of the regimes, albeit on a more limited scale. Resorting to non-violent protest hence paid off in these two countries, as the street protests led to the fall of the regimes without large-scale violence. In Algeria and Morocco the protests have continued but have been unable to force out the ruling government, although there have been promises of social and constitutional reform. Libya took the most violent turn in the regional context, with the UN Security Council backing a no-fly zone, the imposition of targeted UN sanctions (including an arms embargo) and the country descending into civil war. As President Obama put it in his Middle East and North Africa speech in late May 2011, the nations of the region took to the streets because the Arab states "…won their independence long ago, but in too many places their people did not. In too many countries, power has been concentrated in the hands of a few".[20] However, as is noted above, the revolt took different paths in different countries.

Regimes used different tactics to deal with the popular revolts. Following months of riots across North Africa, leaders in the region responded to local and national demands for freedom and human rights by providing subsidies to their people (a common way for Arab regimes to respond to social unrest). A number of statistics illustrate this point. For example, fiscal spending includes higher food and fuels subsidies, social transfers, tax reductions and spending on public salaries. However, what was not addressed in the immediate reaction by

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[20] *The White House*, 2011-05-19

governments were calls for dignity and personal freedom. Initially, Ben Ali in Tunisia and Hosni Mubarak in Egypt promised to step down after finishing their term in office. Later there was a similar response from Yemen's Ali Saleh. Algeria responded by proposing USD 156bn in new infrastructure projects to boost employment, as well as a tax cut on sugar. Libya's Gaddafi proposed giving USD 450 to each family, a 150 per cent wage increase for some public sector workers and the abolition of taxes and customs duties on food. Morocco introduced a new compensation system for wheat importers. The government of Tunisia proposed welfare spending and some food price subsidies.[21] Similar patterns of subsidies were provided across the wider region,[22] but questions were raised about whether they were genuine changes or merely cosmetic.[23]

Another important issue with major significance for the processes taking place in each country – especially Tunisia and Egypt – was the role of the Internet. Internet has been important for highlighting and coordinating protests (so-called Netivism), and together with the use of Facebook, Twitter and various blogs – collectively labelled social media – making information available in an unprecedented manner for individuals, collective action, the wider citizenry and the state.[24] The social media have brought people from inside most of the Arab states into contact and collaboration with national diasporas and political parties in exile.[25] It is unclear whether the Internet has made its "first significant breakthrough" in terms of political impact on a country, but the use of the Internet is nevertheless likely to go down in history as what some scholars as

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[21] *The Economist* 2011-03-12: 28

[22] *The Economist* reports that Bahrain proposed USD 100 million to families; i.e. proposal for USD 2,500 for each family; Jordan proposed: a salary increase for civil servants and military personnel, tax cuts on fuel and food, and more money to the National Aid Fund for the poor (the US has promised support of nearly USD 1 billion for economic development inside Jordan and provided Jordan with 50,000 tonnes of wheat); Kuwait: promised USD 4,000 for each citizen and free food for 14 months; Oman: offered a minimum wage increase and 50,000 new government jobs as well as a monthly stipend of USD 390 for job-seekers; Saudi Arabia: announced a 15% pay increase for public sector workers, unemployment benefits and housing subsidies; Syria: cut the consumption tax on coffee and sugar, reduced customs duties on food, and provided money to the Social System Fund for the poor and increased wages; Yemen: increased welfare spending. *The Economist* 2011-03-12: 28 (partly based on Peterson Institute for International Economics) and The White House "Remarks by President Obama and His Majesty King Abdullah II of Jordan After Bilateral Meeting, 2011-05-17. In addition to economic responses, several Arab rulers, such as Jordan's King Abdullah, fired the cabinet and appointed a new prime minister, while Syria's Bashar al-Assad agreed to allow local elections in order to tackle growing unrest (see Desai, Olofsgård and Yousef 2011-02-09).

[23] UNRISID research has previously showed how social policies in the past have been used to deal with political transformation in the region, for more on this see for instance Moghadam and Karshenas (eds.) (2006).

[24] In Tunisia, 18.6% of young people are on Facebook (figure cited in a speech by Gunilla Carlsson, Swedish Minister for International Cooperation, 2011-04-06).

[25] One can debate whether the use of Internet among exiles (or other concerned actors) constitutes an indigenous or an exogenous event.

well as politicians have called a "tool of technologies of liberation".[26] This is based on the fact that it has helped promote the causes of democracy and human rights, provided a platform for independent information and exposed corruption and abuse, while at the same time connecting citizens across countries and the wider world. In this way, media censorship – traditionally a tool of the state – was easily circumvented.

A pertinent question in this regard is why social media were able to play such an important role in these countries in comparison with other non-Arab states suffering under authoritarian rule. Here, a number of conditional factors are worth noting, such as the younger generation's familiarity with social media, the availability of electricity and other infrastructure required for the Internet, the inability of the government administration to sustain censorship, a lack of skills to capture evasion tactics and the inability of the government to foresee the role that social media could play in mobilising social protest.[27]

Besides new forms for social media, one should not underestimate live-TV broadcastings of demonstrations. In particular the role of Al-Jazeera is worth mentioning in this context. Besides, the use of mobile-phones and the ability to promptly up-load pictures or assemble large gatherings of protestors were seemingly important.

There are different ways to assess the results of the events in North Africa. One way is to compare degrees of democratisation. In Egypt and Tunisia, the former authoritarian regimes have been replaced by transitional bodies or interim governments. Tunisia may have gone the furthest, while the Military Council is still playing a major political role in Egypt – and allegedly also continues to violate human rights. The challenge for the government in Egypt is therefore to convince Egyptian citizens and the international community that the political process has not become stuck in a hybrid democracy stage, that is, where the military continues to play a decisive role in Egypt's political system, leading to a pseudo-democracy or semi-authoritarian democracy. It is important that government institutions function and perform efficiently and that there is control and protection of societal institutions such as the police, courts, media etc. Without trust and a social contract between the state and its people few political problems can be overcome. Algeria and Morocco for their part could experience similar developments to those in Egypt, while Libya's political and security paths are most likely to remain uncertain for at least a decade to come because of the inevitable need to rebuild the country in all its aspects. Thus, it can be concluded that the stages of democratic transition in the North African states will span the democratic scale from highly authoritarian to liberal democracy, recognising that

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[26] Speech by Gunilla Carlsson, Swedish Minister for International Cooperation, 2011-04-06.
[27] Note though that there were several attempts made by governments in the region to close down the Internet.

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liberalism does not necessarily equal democracy and vice-versa (though the road to a 'complete' liberal and democratic state will take long time).[28] In addition to the internal political perceptions of this transition, judged both by street protests and the electoral process, an important question is how the international community will respond to these various transitions. Clearly, each government in the region will be dependent on the kind of support it is able to garner from within the international community. This aspect is discussed further below.[29]

A number of fears and uncertainties raised during the spring of 2011 had profound and important impacts on shaping the international community's perceptions of and responses to the events taking place in the region. It is impossible to identify them all here, or to grade their importance, but some aspects with geopolitical relevance are briefly described below. The unfolding developments brought other exogenous factors into play, which had a profound impact on the course of the revolt. The most immediate one was raising fear of an oil-price shock for major countries around the world already suffering from economic difficulties' (e.g. Italy, Spain, Ireland, Portugal, Greece and the US etc.).

In terms of politically reacting to the popular revolts, several members of the international community initially took a 'wait and see' approach. Initially, complacent in their handling of the political situation in Tunisia, traditional powers such as the EU, France, Germany, Russia, UK and US only took a more active political interest after the continuing stand-off in Egypt. The Egyptian and Israeli military were in close and friendly communication throughout the revolt. Important in this context were the implications of the departure from power of Hosni Mubarak. Here, Egypt's relationship with Israel was a major factor.[30] A third factor that brought international attention to the region, as well as more active exogenous involvement, was the engagement by the international community to evacuate migrants from the increasingly violent situation in Libya.

There were also a number of minor activities that brought international attention and insecurity into the region. For example, the presence of the Chinese naval missile Frigate 'Xuzhou' off the Libyan coast, and the presence in the Mediterranean of an Iranian warship that had passed through the Suez Canal for – making it the first of its kind to pass since 1979.

However, the events in North Africa did not occur in isolation. The uprising should also be viewed in the context of the wider Middle East, and thus also as a

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[28] For a good overview of some pressing policy issues on this matter see *Foreign Affairs*, May/June, 2011, vol. 90 no. 3.

[29] Moreover, countries where the Arab Spring is taking place will, as is noted above, also have to move their economy towards more economic diversification and sustainable economic growth. Political reform will be heavily affected by the speed of this transition.

[30] Especially the status of the 1979 Camp David Accord signed in the US between Egypt and Israel.

product of exogenous factors. Non-violent protests – as well as more violent challenges to existing regimes – occurred in other Arab countries, including Bahrain, where Shia Muslim protestors were viciously dispersed from Pearl Square following weeks of continuing protests; Yemen, where the incumbent President Saleh was de facto 'blasted' from power; and Syria, where government forces under Bashar al-Assad allegedly may have killed more than 1,000 people as of the end of June 2011 (a figure that is likely to change as more information gets available).[31] Street demonstrations have occurred in most Arab states outside North Africa.[32] Given the importance of shared Arab grievances, albeit with sub regional variations, these processes are all related.

Last but not least it is worth noting that the scope and intensity of the revolt did not come as a surprise for those scholars and policymakers with insight into the political, economic, social and religious dynamics of North Africa. A telling source has long been the publication of the *Arab Development Reports* which have systematically raised awareness of structural social problems (human rights, education, social spending, corruption, welfare, etc.).[33] Although the events came about swiftly in each country, both domestic and international factors in combination led to the intensity of the revolt.

2.2 The Arab revolt, non-violence and change: country developments

The Arab revolt came about in a dramatic way. To capture some of the most important events, in order to get a better sense of the consequences and the political challenges ahead, this section summarises the key events that took place in each country.[34]

2.2.1 The Jasmine Revolution in Tunisia

Mohammed Bouazizi's self-immolation in Sidi-Bouzid in southern Tunisia has by many contributors been assigned as the triggering event that marked the start of the so-called *Jasmine Revolution* on 17 December 2010 and a societal

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[31] Still subject to confirmation. For updates, see various reports published by *Amnesty International* and *Human Rights Watch* during 2011.

[32] E.g. Iraq, Jordan, Syria, Yemen, Oman and to some extent also Sudan. See Eriksson forthcoming in 2011.

[33] Located at http://www.arab-hdr.org/. Another good source capturing the obstacles of daily life in the Middle East is Asef Bayat.

[34] The descriptions of the events taking place here are based on a number of media sources including *BBC World News* [Internet], Al-Jazeera [English Internet version], Swedish National Radio [Authors translation from Swedish]).

collapse, after decades of authoritarian rule.[35] The act was a desperate and symbolic protest against daily pestering under decades of dictatorship by the Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali regime. The incident, in which Bouazizi was harassed by local police, initially sparked local civil protest. By 27 December, larger non-violent demonstrations, not only in support of the victim but also against the regime, had spread to major cities across Tunisia. The civil protests were supported by trade unions both inside Tunisia and across the region.[36] A game-changer took place on 28 December, when Ben Ali warned in a television broadcast that the protests were unacceptable. To quell the demonstrations, the government did a number of things, including for example to close all schools and universities on 10 January. The police further acted against the demonstrators with increasing brutality, but the military remained neutral. This decision not to use violence would have significant implications for Tunisia's political developments. In the face of further protests and no sign of things abating, on 13 January 2011 Ben Ali promised the Tunisian people reforms and declared his intention not to participate in the next election. The following day, by which the country was under emergency law, there were violent clashes between police and civilians, Ben Ali left the country for Saudi Arabia and the government was dissolved. The remaining ministers described his departure as temporary, and power was handed over to the Prime Minister, Mohamed Ghannouchi. However, on 15 January this handover was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court (a sentiment shared by street protesters), and power was transferred to the Speaker of the Parliament, Fouad Mebazaa, who was later asked to form a caretaker government until elections could be held. Despite the president's departure, large-scale demonstrations continued across Tunisia. Violence intensified and paramilitary forces (e.g. members of the Presidential Guard) looted cities and villages. Human insecurity increased for ordinary Tunisians, as prisons across the country unlocked their gates. On 22 January, demonstrations continued in Tunis and Sousse. Demands were made for further reforms as well as the ousting from power of all members of the ruling party of Ben Ali. In principle, protestors were not willing to allow any former member of the ruling RCD party to remain in government positions. Such demands were voiced during the spring. On 24 January, the chief of the Tunisian army declared his support for the Tunisian people, and subsequently demonstrations continued against the caretaker government. On 27 January, Ghannouchi stepped down and was replaced by Beji Caid el Sebsi. During his tenure, the secret police was dissolved. Meanwhile, in late January the EU adopted targeted sanctions against Ben Ali, his family and near associates.[37]

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[35] The Jasmine revolution is domestically also referred to as the 'Sidi-Bouzid revolution'.

[36] E.g. Tunisian Federation of Labour Unions, Tunisian General Union of Labour (UGTT) and Tunisian National Lawyers Unions. For a brief overview of their involvement see *Africa Research Bulletin* 2011-01-1-31.

[37] *BBC World News* (2011-02-04)

In early March it was announced that parliamentary elections would be held on 24 July, and that national elections would be held on 16 October 2011. Some 100 separate political parties have been formed since the fall of Ben Ali.[38] The RCD has been dissolved although members (under Ben Ali nearly 2 million supporters) appear under different political affiliations. The Islamic Hizb-Ennahda (al-Nahda) has emerged as a political force, having been banned and forced into exile under Ben Ali.[39] Although not likely to change the Tunisian society into a religious path, it is estimated that it could gain as much as 20 per cent of electoral votes.

2.2.2   The Arab Spring in Egypt

Like many countries in North Africa and the wider Middle East, demonstrations for better living conditions had occasionally occurred in Egypt over the past years. Inspired by, and somewhat coordinated with, the events in Tunisia, demonstrations erupted across the country on 25 January 2011. Non-violent street protests were partly organised through social media such as Twitter and Facebook. In a matter of hours, media reported on the first lethal confrontation between non-violent protestors and the police. The following day, the US administration was quick to publicly call for an end to the violence, and for the Egyptian government to heed the street protests. On 29 January, the day after the so-called 'Day of Anger', Mubarak responded publicly to the demonstrations taking place in many different parts of Egypt. In his speech, he declared that he had sacked the government. A national curfew was announced later in the day, but it was widely ignored. Dissatisfaction with Mubarak remaining in power led to a national strike on 31 January. The EU became involved by publicly calling for just and fair elections.

In a further public pronouncement on 1 February, Mubarak declared his intention not to stand as a candidate for another Presidential term. Demonstrations peaked in Tahrir Square and protestors vowed to stay until Mubarak left. On 2 February, violence intensified as non-violent protestors were met by pro-Mubarak mobs seeking to disperse the protestors. At least 1,500 demonstrators were injured in one day. The Egyptian army remained neutral and did not involve itself on either side. In the days that followed, street protests continued although the mood of the demonstrators changed from optimism to pessimism with regard to the success of their strategy for ousting Mubarak.

Defiantly, in a national television address on 10 February, Mubarak declared that he intended to stay in power until September 2011. However, despite this attempt

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[38] Taylor 2011-05-18.
[39] A pertinent question in this context is whether it has regained support simply because it has been allowed to be politically active, or because its political agenda is seen as attractive

to hold on to power, Mubarak stepped down a day later.[40] A Military Council, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, took over as the caretaker government. In one of its first announcements, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces stated that the 1979 Peace Treaty with Israel would remain intact. This call was probably made to signal to the wider international community that relations with Israel would be honoured and that no major foreign policy shift was to be expected. On 13 February, the national parliament and the constitution were suspended, and a few days later the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces declared that it did not intend to participate in the upcoming election.

On 15 March, the US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, visited Cairo and publicly supported democratic action by all parties concerned. A national constitutional referendum was held on 19 March, with 77 per cent of the votes in favour (23 per cent opposing it). Nearly 41 per cent of the electoral voters participated. The reforms included 1. a limitation on the presidency to at most two six-year terms, 2. judicial supervision of elections, 3. a requirement for the president to appoint a deputy, 4. a commission to draft a new constitution, 5. and easier access to presidential elections by candidates. Following the elections, actors like the European Union imposed targeted sanctions on members of the previous regime (an assets freeze was imposed on 21 March).[41]

Although progress was made, street demonstrations continued, not least because different interest groups (e.g. trade unions, students) had grievances about the proposed reforms and the speed of their implementation. As a result, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces made demonstrations illegal. On 1 April, a "Save the Revolution" demonstration was held, with hundreds of thousands protesting in central Cairo against the slowness of reforms. Moreover, on 27 May 2011, protesters organised Egypt's so-called second revolution. Demonstrations called for further, quicker and more profound reform. The demonstrations were held because the political reform process was seen as moving too slowly, and with too much corruption. There were also demands for the regime to bring Mubarak to trial (Mubarak was detained on 13 April).[42]

In retrospect, a number of preliminary observations can be made with regard to the character of the protests. The Arab Spring in Egypt was marked by: (a) the absence of clear protest leaders; (b) non-violence; (c) a clear absence of party interests; (d) a general sense of fatigue among Egypt's citizens with regard to the

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[40] Although the protests had been marked by non-violent acts of civil disobedience, according to *Amnesty International* (2011-05-19) nearly 840 people were killed and 6,000 injured in the first stage of the protests.

[41] See *Council of the European Union* 2011-03-21 (or the latest published overview of restrictive measures provided by the Council).

[42] Calls were also made for more profound constitutional reform, and by some demonstrators also, that Supreme Council of the Armed Forces limited its cooperation with the Muslim Brotherhood.

ruling president and his party; (e) its secular character;[43] (f) a common purpose of wanting to oust Mubarak from power; and (g) the protestors' resilience to government counter-measures. In addition, demonstrators were drawn from many different classes and interests, although not evenly represented. The *International Crisis Group* has noted that the middle and upper classes, and urban groups were disproportionately represented in Tahrir Square.[44] Several of these observations would probably fit a review of the protests in Tunisia but would be in sharp contrast to the initial protests in Libya.

2.2.3   Popular Unrest in Algeria

Unlike Tunisia and Egypt, no immediate event triggered popular protest against the regime of Abdelaziz Bouteflika. On the contrary, protests had been ongoing (at a level that was manageable for the government) over the years for a number of political and economic reasons. These protests were for similar reasons as those in most countries in the Arab world: poor-living standards, high youth unemployment and continuous violations of human rights. There have also been long-term demonstrations among the Berber community, especially in the Kabylia region. Events in Tunisia increased pressure on President Bouteflika in January 2011 to change the constitution and to limit presidential influence over the political process to acceptable levels. Initially, street demonstrations were organised by some of the main trade unions and a number of human rights organizations.

Following days of protests, the government proposed a number of tax subsidies including increased salaries in the public sector. It also temporarily cut taxes and duties on selected food items. However, the non-violent demonstrations constantly changed in character as protests were met with police violence. Overwhelming government pressure on the demonstrators hampered protest, but the demonstrations continued. The departure of Mubarak in Egypt gave the demonstrations in Algeria new momentum. Consequently, a new united platform, the National Coordination for Change and Democracy, was established on 12 February and a new national demonstration was organized. On 22 February, the government announced that the 1993 Emergency Law had been terminated.

A milestone for the protests came in mid-April, when President Bouteflika announced that the Algerian Constitution was to be amended to allow for stronger democratic governance. The stated goal was to reinforce representative democracy, including changes to electoral law. The proposal would be submitted

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[43] For example, the Muslim Brotherhood was not in the forefront of the demonstrations, instead taking a very cautious approach. The Brotherhood delayed its participation but was later represented mainly by its younger activists. Once participating, it focused mainly on democracy and social justice (see the *International Crisis Group* no. 101. 2011: pp. 23-25).

[44] See for instance *International Crisis Group* no. 101, 2011: 22.

to a national referendum, hence a Constitutional Commission was established to achieve this. Included here was to limit Presidential terms for only two mandates. However, no timeframe was set for its work. On 20 April, the interior minister announced that the new law on political parties would not legalise Algeria's Islamist parties or allow any political party based on religious, ethnic, linguistic, sexual or racial lines.

As is indicated above, the anti-government protests in Algeria were similar to those in Tunisia and Egypt. However, their characters differ in that the intensity and time span were not as profound. The Algeria case also differs in that the political and historical conditions are different, given its experience of profound societal upheaval and civil war in the 1990s. Interestingly, however, the demonstrators were successful in gaining concessions on democratic reform from the regime. It is as yet unclear how this will end. Most likely the influence of the military in Algeria's domestic political affairs will be maintained.

2.2.4   The February 20 Movement in Morocco

Over the past decade, the civil society in Morocco has grown larger.[45] With an increasing number of NGOs, the demands for democratic reforms have increased. Yet, the situation in Morocco however suffers from deep democratic deficiencies. Consequently, the Arab Spring also reached Morocco. Nationwide demonstrations took place on 20 February 2011.[46] Some of the main demands of the demonstrators were the need to dissolve parliament, the resignation of the government, as well as the creation of a "free and fair legal system". Moreover, there were also demands for reform of the monarchy.

In responding to the street demonstrations (later labelled the *February 20 Movement*) King Mohammed VI agreed in principle on the need to make reforms, but reforms that "suited Moroccans". This acknowledgment of the need for constitutional reform marked a turning point in the popular revolt. In early March, King Mohammed VI reconfirmed the need for reforms, promised "comprehensive constitutional reform" and put forward the idea of a commission to reform the country's Constitution. Despite the King's willingness to take Morocco along a more democratic path, demonstrations continued. Taking note of other events in the region, the Moroccan government repeatedly promised state subsidies to counter commodity price rises, which several commentators believed were a major part of the popular grievances. Demonstrations, although not at the level of those in Tunisia or Egypt, were held throughout the spring. Over the next months, several important events took place. For example, on 16 June, a draft constitution was presented to King Mohammed VI. In a national

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[45] For more on the role of the civil society in Morocco, see Sater (2007).
[46] Different estimates suggest that 37,000–300,000 citizens took part (estimates by government and opposition).

speech, the King pledged to introduce democratic reforms. According to the reform proposals, both the prime minister and parliament will be given more executive authority. However, the king will retain key powers and remain the head of the army. In addition, the minority Berber language could be given a stronger status within Moroccan society. No reference was made to the issue of Western Sahara.[47] However, in response to the proposals, the February 20 movement argued that the King's proposals were only cosmetic, and that it wanted too see concrete steps towards more far-reaching reforms. More specifically, the movement wanted a constitutional reform proposal to be worked out by a democratic committee.[48] Despite a referendum with 98 per cent vote in favour of the king's proposal under an unusually "high" voter turn-out, the push and pull between the king and the demonstrators was continuing in late July 2011.[49] In all however, it is worth noting that the demonstrations did indeed get a reaction by the political leadership in a way not seen before.

2.2.5 The Libertarian Turn in Libya

The events in Tunisia and Egypt spread to Libya in mid-February 2011.[50] Demonstrations took place at several locations across Libya. In the early days of the protests, Gaddafi's son Saif al-Islam made a national speech in which he warned protestors and the Libyan people of the consequences of allowing the demonstrations to continue. A similar speech denouncing the protests was made the next day by Gaddafi himself.

The demonstrations quickly escalated. On 25 February, Libyan security forces used live ammunition against the protesters. There was mass migration from Libya to neighbouring Tunisia and Egypt, and also by sea to Italy and Malta. The demonstrations were initially non-violent, but opposition groups formed into organised rebellion. The formation of demonstrators into an armed opposition changed the dynamics of the protests towards becoming more lethal. Moreover, the mass migration from Libya caused a number of European countries (as well as other concerned actors) to begin evacuation operations. A number of governments, including the British and the Dutch, put soldiers on the ground in Libya to secure the evacuation.[51] In addition, covert US CIA agents later

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[47] It was also announced that a national referendum on the revised constitution would be held on 1 July.

[48] *BBC World News* 2011-06-20.

[49] *The New York Times* 2011-07-10.

[50] For a good introduction to the popular unrest in Libya see the *International Crisis Group* no. 207, June (2011). See also *World Politics Review*. Special Report (May, 2011).

[51] *CNN* (Internet edition) 2011-03-06.

travelled to Libya to gather intelligence.[52] France, on its part has continuously provided opposition forces with arms (as reported in media in late June 2011).[53]

On 26 February, rebel groups formed a *National Transitional Council*. This radically transformed the dynamic on the ground as the revolt against the regime could be better organised. The Council received support from all parts of society, although it was unclear how much support it had in Tripoli.

On 2 March, a number of rebels repelled an attack by government security forces, in a first sign that the country was heading towards a civil war. According to several media sources such as New York Times, Gaddafi invited mercenaries from the African continent to take part in pro-government campaigns. By late March, Gaddafi had de facto lost influence over most of eastern Libya, while remaining strong in Tripoli and nearby cities.

A turning point for political and military affairs, and Libya as a sovereign country, was the decision on 17 March 2011 by the UN Security Council to adopt resolution 1973 (2011), which called on its member states to take all necessary measures to protect civilians, including the establishment of a no-fly zone and an arms embargo. Two days later, a military campaign against Gaddafi was initiated by the UK, US and France, later transferred to NATO.

Anti-government campaigns by the National Transitional Council grew in scale. Meanwhile, Gaddafi's foreign minister, Moussa Koussa, defected to London in a symbolic blow to the Libyan regime.[54] During the course of the spring, the rebels sought to present themselves as a democratic alternative to the government in Tripoli. Meanwhile, humanitarian problems increased by the day. In late June 2011, at least 16 countries had recognized the National Transitional Council as the sole legitimate representative body of Libya, including the UK, France and the United States. In late July, intense mediation was ongoing in a bid to end the violence.

2.2.6   Conclusion

The events unfolding in the region have been marked by a number of key features, most notably the non-violent character of the demonstrations, which in the case of Libya later turned violent. Initial demonstrations in all countries in the region were met with severe brutality – violence that would continue after the head of state was ousted.[55] It is also noteworthy that the military in both Tunisia and Egypt remained neutral, as a barrier between the ruling elite and the

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[52] *The New York Times* 2011-03-30.
[53] *Washington Post* 2011-06-30.
[54] In late February, Libya´s UN Ambassador Muhammed Shalgham defected. This marked the beginning of a number of public officials changing sides.
[55] See for instance the early July 2011 clashes in Cairo (*Washington Post* 2011-06-29).

demonstrators. Later, loyal presidential guards were more active on the government side.

Another key feature is that the revolt spread in a resemblance of a domino effect. However, although countries in the region are closely interlinked, each country had its own dynamic and events were fundamentally, although not exclusively, indigenously driven. The interlinkages were mainly the intra-regional organisations and the support for the protests from trade unions and looser communities connected by the various social media. The interlinkages demonstrated and proved for different groups and societies that a revolt was possible.

While analysts have been quick to comment that presidents are particularly vulnerable to popular revolt, but monarchies are not, this feature only held true at the outset of the popular revolt.[56] Though, Presidents were the first to fall in several Arab countries, monarchies have increasingly come to face considerable political challenge the longer the demonstrations have taken place.

As much as it is useful to note the key patterns of the revolts, it is also important to note what did not happen. An important part of the political developments was that the demonstrators were united across party interests. Western fears of fundamentalist Islamist rhetoric, such as anti-US or anti-Israeli slogans, proved unfounded at least until now (increasing pressure from Islamic groups could eventually come if no changes come about). Another important element was that despite the political turmoil, neither Tunisia nor Egypt descended into state chaos. On the contrary, in both countries the citizens chose to defend state institutions on a non-violent basis, instead urging their reform.

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[56] See for instance analysis made by Shlomo Ben Ami, a former Israeli foreign minister, as published in *Al Jazzera* 2011-04-07.

3 Background conditions

In order to understand the Arab revolts currently unfolding in North Africa, and its future political and security implications, attention must be paid to background conditions.[57] It is clear that a number of military and security problems existed locally in each country, but also regionally between different countries. Some of these were shaped by the colonial legacy in North Africa, not the least in terms of state building and national identity building processes.[58] Examining the background conditions more broadly can reveal which of these security challenges are old and which are new. The discussion below also covers the more immediate conditions or triggers that led to the patterns discussed in the section above.

3.1 Historical conditions in the region

For a number of structural reasons, such as its closed political system, its weak political and social institutions and frail economic infrastructure (although some states are significant energy exporters), North Africa came late to the era of globalisation. While Asia and South America adapted their political and economic systems to the new world order that emerged after the Cold War in the 1980s and 1990s, North Africa never fully achieved such a phase. Several economies in North Africa expanded, but they never diversified or reached across social classes. This will pose a challenge for any government entering a post-authoritarian era.

Politically, throughout most of the 1960s and 1970s, Arab leaders played an important role on the international stage, not least in the rivalry between East and West. Clearly, oil played an important role for several Arab countries, by providing the answer to growing energy demands around the world. Even Arab leaders that did not have oil reserves still had a say, simply through their bonds with those Arab leaders who did (e.g. Morocco and Tunisia). Another important part of the ability of these governments to play a significant political role was their influence over the relationship between the state of Israel and the Palestinian people through the general mood of the Arab citizenry tending to favour the Palestinian cause). From this point of view, ever since the birth of the state of Israel in 1948, Western powers have had to balance their rhetoric and policies towards the Arab leaders to maintain strategic interests in the region (e.g. protection of Israel and of energy resources).

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[57] This study is limited to the post-colonial period in these countries, while recognizing the limitations of not taking a longer perspective.
[58] Damidez and Sörenson 2009: 22.

From a western perspective, extreme political movements and the spread of terrorism generally forced a number of states to handle Arab leaders carefully. A general fear, in retrospect, seems to have been that unless they did so, the region's leaders might mobilise their people and intelligence capabilities against critics abroad. Over the years, factors such as these have given Arab leaders political room on the international scene, often though only on a personal level (as official representation in international bodies have been low). Despite being politically shaken by local and regional conflicts (e.g. the Six Days War in 1967), local popular uprisings, and attempted and successful assassinations, Arab leaders found themselves for the most part politically unchallenged. The few challenges that existed were dealt with by the existence of strong security forces. The fact that they were able to stay so long in power gave them a chance to acquire much political influence, which they could use both domestically and internationally. Hence, many Arab leaders and their families were able to play an important geopolitical role over time. For example, the oil crisis of the 1970s played a decisive part in the international exercise of power by certain Arab countries, not least Saudi Arabia. As a result, leaders around the world have been queuing up to establish good ties with leaders in the region. An obvious effect of this was that the Arab masses felt pride not only in their countries but also in their leaders, thereby strengthening their rule. This interaction between the West's need for energy and stability, on the one hand, and the need for Western governments to come to terms with dictatorships, on the other, was the basis for the problematic approach by the West to this region.

In this context, although perhaps more so for the wider Middle East than only for North Africa, it is worth noting that by the end of the 1970s and in the early 1980s, oil revenues were pivotal in sustaining the "social contract" between Arab rulers and their population. Oil provided a high standard of living in many Arab countries, while for non-producing countries oil production provided secondary income and employment (e.g. at this time, nearly 3.5 million Arab migrants were employed in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states).[59]

During the 1980s and 1990s, the respect that Arab leaders in North Africa had enjoyed among their citizens increasingly turned to an attitude of mistrust. The reason was often that the leaders had distanced themselves from their citizenry amid growing abuses of power, corruption and severe economic inequality. All of this led to an increasing loss of legitimacy.

As is noted above, while democratisation and globalisation took off in other parts of the world, Arab leaders turned increasingly authoritarian and sought to demonstrate their power by closely aligning and balancing the military and politics, although this was done very differently by various actors in the region. In cases where there were attempts at some liberalisation and democratisation,

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[59] Desai, Olofsgård and Yousef (2011).

Muslim movements quickly challenged these attempts using political and social means. Algeria and Egypt are two such examples where this took place. For instance, the Muslim Brotherhood increased their social engagement with those segments of Arab societies that came to 'suffer' from the liberal policies allowed to thrive by Arab governments (e.g. economic inequality and the perceived moral and liberal decadence).[60] The result of this Islamist challenge was further repression in most Arab countries, even though the role of Islamic movements varied from country to country across the region. Increasing repression alongside increasing political organisation (either alone or in symbiosis with different political forces) made extreme Islamist movements much more influential in the 1980s and 1990s.

Meanwhile, in order to maintain power, Arab leaders in North Africa together with family ruling elites were increasingly transformed into political dynasties or family businesses. Against this arose further demands for greater influence by the populations of these countries. Algeria represents an important exception, however, as it, at least in theory, moved towards parliamentary democracy in the early 1990's.

Globalisation (i.e. increasing interdependence in political, economic, social and cultural terms), the end of the Cold War and the first Gulf War gave rise to a US hegemonic order, which manifested itself forcefully across the Arab world. The ideas of democracy, human rights and capitalism were important forces that came to serve as the foundation on which relationships between states were meant to be 'built'. Such forces were many times neatly tied into official economic and military aid conditions. Other Western powers, projecting their similar interests, frequently championed the US order. However, despite their professed liberal principles, Arab masses often perceived Arab nations as being dealt with according to double standards. Typical examples included Israel's handling of the Palestinian people; the West's support for Arab dictators; and the many wars waged against various Muslim countries, such as Iraq and Afghanistan. Interestingly, the indignation often appeared as part of the *Umma*.[61] This outrage frequently further fanned suspicion against Arab leaders, who at the same time were receiving Western support and legitimacy.

The attacks on the United States on 11 September 2001 dramatically changed the geopolitical dynamics in the world. They also forced a number of Arab leaders to think about a new survival strategy. The US government at the time, led by

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[60] The Muslim Brotherhood plays an important political role in several Arab countries. Besides Egypt the movement is represented in nearly 12 Arab countries.

[61] The *Umma* concept is historically based on the idea introduced by the Prophet Muhammad of a congregation of Muslim and Arabic People. Perhaps one could even argue that the Umma concept has lived on to contemporary times, and has been 'rejuvenated' in post-modern terms through interregional cable television stations such as the Al-Jazeera network, i.e. by linking people together in a shared notion of a common identity.

President George W. Bush, had no intention of allowing rogue states to harbour 'terrorists' that could be considered a threat to US interests. As a result, a number of Arab leaders had to become more reconciliatory (i.e. repressive towards their own population) in order to avoid hegemonic confrontation. Not unlikely, as a result of this increase in repression, segments of islamist groups (and members of these) radicalised. In the end radicalised groups both domestically and within Muslim diasporas were recruited in the fight against the West.[62].Afghanistan, which had been an unstable state since the Soviet invasion in 1979, became the latest centre for state-sponsored terrorism, alongside Tripoli and Baghdad. This led to the so-called war on terror, a paradigm that came to dominate most of the US and western security policy thinking of the first decade of the 21st century. In terms of political survival, there was little option among Arab leaders but to join the war on terror, as those that did not do so would be labelled entities opposing US national interests. A quick consideration led to the conclusion that alone they would be weak in standing against US policy and therefore that there was no room for objections. On the other hand, for many Arab governments (and some non-Arab governments for that matter) this was an easy option. Clearly, the war on terror was a suitable cover for Arab leaders to eliminate political opponents. Consequently, most countries in North Africa passed new laws to fight terrorism or used special laws to curb political opposition.

Inevitably, there was a growing sense in a number of Arab countries that the divide between the leaders and the people was widening.[63] This sense of frustration was further augmented by the fact that people generally lacked social and political mechanisms to express themselves in the midst of political, economic and social repression. Moreover, this domestic grievance and frustration also translated into a sense of mistrust against a number of Western governments, as they were unwilling to use their political position and liberal principles to mount pressure on Arab regimes. As a result, a number of men and women were easily led into Islamist rhetoric – that the Western world was only serving its own interests (a view held by many religious and non-religious actors). While the perceived persecution of Muslims appeared to increase internationally, especially in the wake of international and regional anti-terrorist operations, the political and social gap between the people and their leaders continued to grow in most Arab countries (partly by the fact that the fiercest oppression of Muslims took place in Arab countries by Arab leaders).

By the end of the first decade of the 21st century, the power of globalisation had effectively changed societal conditions in the traditional and conservative countries of North Africa. These forces led to a growing acceptance of the outside world, including the liberal paradigm associated with Western lifestyles –

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[62] It is interesting to note in this context that a large proportion of these fighters came from states in North Africa.

[63] Jensen and Rasmussen 2010: 14.

not least its combination of human rights and a desire for democracy. Social media gave room for a different kind of engagement with the local, region and international community. Similarly, the international community came into North Africa in a new way. Since in most Arab countries of North Africa young people constitute the vast majority of the population, the liberal winds associated with globalisation were easily rooted (though it should also be stated that certain segments of the young generation was similarly easy recruits to extreme Islamic ideology as well). After all, this group is generally most susceptible to the path of liberalism, a situation strengthened by the fact that this demographic cohort was affected by high levels of unemployment, poverty and powerlessness. Consequently, in the turn to globalisation in North Africa and the Middle East, modernity from the *Occident* has come to confront lethargic and conservative political thinking. The old imagined *Orient* is no longer what it was. Through Internet, social media and international cable television stations, young Arab women and men can now follow everything from Anglo-Saxon and Francophone soap operas to music, sports and cultural events. This appears to have significantly altered the traditional worldview in this corner of the world. Besides bringing new thinking, globalisation has also brought about new channels for expressing grievances. Whereas traditionally authoritarian governments could isolate complaints and anti-regime protests, this has now become increasingly difficult.[64]

In sum, it is no exaggeration to speak of an overall identity crisis in the Arab world following the implications of the forces of globalisation. It is this identity crisis, between old and new values, that has helped to drive the revolt in various Arab countries. It is noteworthy therefore that a greater share of the current demonstrations being echoed in Tunis, Cairo, and Rabat is marked by secular and liberal values, and not traditionally religious and anti-liberal slogans. Not all groups in society, however, welcome the force of globalisation. Modernity and post-modernity bring challenges to traditional and sometimes conservative values, in North Africa and the Arab world, and more conservative Muslims may even perceive such changes as hostile to the traditions of Islam.[65]

At a more theoretical level, it seems easy to bring the current developments into the competing narratives of the *End of History*, defined as the global victory of US liberal democracy, or the *Clash of Civilisations*, defined as a moment in history where anti-democratic forces such as Islamic forces seize the opportunity

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[64] For example, globalisation in general has made members of the international community aware of situations they would otherwise not know much about. For example, as is noted by Jensen and Rasmussen (2010: 35), the Egyptian Coptic diasporas in the United States took its grievances to public debate. This led to increasing strains in relations between the Coptic community and the Egyptian state.

[65] An aspect also raised by Obama in his speech in Cairo 2009-06-04.

to counter US liberal democracy.[66] However, both these characterisations seem extreme for two reasons. First, because Islam is not practiced by a homogenous group, but by followers ranging from radical to secular believers. Second, because there is a distinction to be made between the institutionalisation of a religion in a state and the cultural identity of the majority of its citizens. These together bring about neither a liberal nor a religious force ('civilization') that works against either value underlying these theoretical debates. On the contrary, they are likely to be compatible, that is, different values associated with liberal ideas and Islamic practices can function together.

3.2   Contemporary regional conditions

Having briefly discussed the broader political conditions leading to the current situation in North Africa, an additional focused thematic discussion of contemporary conditions immediately prior to the unfolding events is presented below.

3.2.1   Political problems

With regard to contemporary political stability and democratic representation in each of the countries in North Africa, each state was characterised by the 2011 *Freedom House* survey as "…one where basic political rights are absent, and basic civil liberties are widely and systematically denied".[67] The 2011 *Failed States Index,* provided by the *Fund for Peace,* further underscored the poor political situation.[68] The ranking and total country score is presented in the table below (note though that the original list include 12 indicators, but only 9 are included here. The entire list contains 177 countries).[69]

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[66] Fukuyama (2006) and Huntington (1996).

[67] Freedom House. "Freedom in the World 2011: The authoritarian challenge to democracy. Selected data from Freedom House's annual survey of political rights and civil liberties". 2011: 30. Check full reference at:
http://www.freedomhouse.org/images/File/fiw/FIW_2011_Booklet.pdf

[68] The table is taken from the 2010 *Failed States Index*. Note however that the original ranking scores 12 parameters: Demographic Pressures, Refugees and internally displaced persons, Group Grievance, Human Flight, Uneven Economic Development, Economic Decline, Delegitimisation of the State, Public Services, Human Rights, Security Apparatus, Factionalised Elites and External Intervention. The last two parameters are omitted here. A word of caution is always needed for such parameters as they do not always do justice to other non-measurable parameters. In addition, these measurements usually have subjective as well as normative underpinnings. For methods and definitions, see http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/06/21/the_failed_states_index_2010 (accessed 2011-04-03).

[69] A word of caution should be mentioned with regard to subjective coding rules in these kinds of rankings.

Table 1. Selected categories on North Africa from the 2011 *Failed States Index*

Country	Rank	Total	Demographic Pressures	Refugees and IDP's	Group Grievance	Uneven Economic Development	Economic Decline	Delegitimization of the State	Public Services	Human Rights	Security Apparatus
Egypt	45	86,8	7,1	6,4	8,3	7,4	6,5	8,6	5,9	8,3	6,8
Algeria	81	78,0	6,4	6,1	7,8	6,8	5,2	7,1	6,1	7,5	7,2
Morocco	87	76,3	6,4	6,5	6,4	7,5	6,0	6,9	6,6	6,4	5,9
Libya	111	68,7	5,5	4,6	6,0	6,9	4,6	7,3	4,3	8,3	5,9
Tunisia	108	70,1	5,5	3,4	5,6	6,6	5,0	7,2	5,3	7,7	7,0

In recent years, *Transparency International* has begun collecting data with regard to country-specific degrees of corruption. This assessment of corruption, like the Failed States Index, is a further representation of existing structural political problems in the region. Its annual report states that in North Africa and the wider Middle East (the MENA region):

> *Corruption is prevalent and widespread in the MENA countries, manifesting itself most frequently in the shape of both petty and grand corruption. Here, corruption is marked strongly by the unique style of governance found throughout the region; it is deeply rooted in the political infrastructure of the state (mainly military dictatorships, totalitarian regimes or monarchies); the institutional infrastructure of the public sector (typically very large, overstaffed with low salaries), and develops as a result of the relatively limited opportunities for public participation.[70]*

Moreover, it states that: "All countries exhibit weaknesses in terms of accountability and access to civil and political rights and political participation is less advanced in the Arab world than in other developing regions".[71] In the entry score of perceived corruption for the North African countries Transparency International rank states in North Africa in the following way: Tunisia ranked 59,

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[70] Quote taken from the website of *Transparency International* ("regional pages") 2011-07-11. See www.transparency.org/regional_pages/africa_middle_east/middle_east_and_north_africa_mena
[71] Ibid.

Morocco 85, Algeria 105, Egypt 98 and Libya 146 (1 being "best" and "180" worst).[72]

3.2.2 Economic problems

Most Arab governments in North Africa have experienced an annual economic growth. For example, Egypt has experienced 5-7 per cent annual economic growth in the five years proceeding the global recession in 2008, slowed down the economy. Yet, on the economic conditions of the region, the World Bank concludes that a number of factors paved the way for the unrest in North Africa and the wider Middle East including: (1) benefits from growth have not been shared equitably; (2) growth has been below potential, because of a lack of economic diversification and low private investment; (3) the labour market and education systems are dysfunctional; and (4) financial and social exclusion are high and trade integration and diversification low.[73] The Maghreb is simply not economically integrated. International Monetary Fund (IMF) officials have suggested that greater economic integration in the region will boost economic growth and employment and that there is no viable policy option to do otherwise.[74] From a security perspective, such integration could also boost stability. As is noted above, high levels of unemployment combined with a large youth cohort is likely to lead to political grievances that could trigger unrest.

There are reported two particular economic reasons for the decline in standards of living and the strength of the economy.[75] Arab governments failed to reform their economies after oil prices fell in the 1980s. The standard of living that had been created was difficult to maintain, leading to increased indebtedness. In North Africa, governments increasingly adopted socialist policies (nationalisation of industries), which eventually prevented private and foreign investment, reduced trade and hindered the development of competitive industry. Another important factor was the rapid rise in the birth rate between 1960 and 1990 in combination with falling mortality rates, which created a large demographic bulge of young people. Both these factors combined put a heavy burden on Arab economies.

Interestingly, however, several countries in North Africa have performed well economically in the past decade, especially in terms of economic growth. For instance, as Kiemnyi (2011) notes, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco were among the top ten improvers in the Human Development Index (the index is included in the *Human Development Report*).[76] However, as officials at the IMF stated in the

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[72] Transparency International Annual Report 2010: 79-80.
[73] Akhtar 2011-02-23.
[74] *International Monetary Fund*, IMF Survey online, 2011-04-08.
[75] Desai, Olofsgård and Yousef 2011-03-07.
[76] Kimenyi 2011-03-07, based on original data in the *Human Development Report* 2010.

midst of the Arab Spring, this strong growth masked serious problems of inequality within these economies. What is clear is that there has been an imbalance between economic development and democratisation. *The Human Development Report* for its part marks this as the Arab World's "democratic deficit". Since inequalities can lead to unrest, macroeconomic analysis needs to look beyond aggregated macroeconomic data. This becomes an important factor for better understanding the conditions leading up to the Arab Spring.[77]

In addition to political and economic conditions, the region is also greatly shaped by structural social factors. The table below illustrates basic conditions on the eve of the revolt.

Table 2: Structural social parameters late 2010.

	Tunisia	Egypt	Algeria	Morocco	Libya
Population (millions)	10.5	80.5	34.5	31.6	6.4
Average Age (years)	29.7	24	27.1	26.5	24.2
Unemployment (%)	14	9.6	9.9	9.8	30
Poor (% of Population)	3.8	20	23	15	33
Government	Civil Caretaker Government	Military Caretaker Government	President	Monarchy	Revolutionary Leaders

Closely related to their structural economic problems is the fact that several Arab states face challenges linked to growing urbanisation. This will also be discussed further below.

3.2.3   Poverty aspects

There are a number of economic hurdles to overcome in North Africa. For instance, a challenge for Egypt as it hopefully enters its post-authoritarian phase is how to deal with poverty. About 40 per cent of the people of Egypt live on less than 2 USD per day. According to Jensen and Rasmussen (2010), poverty in Egypt is unevenly spread. Nearly 78 per cent of the rural population is classified

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[77] *International Monetary Fund*, IMF Survey online, 2011-04-08.

as poor. Rural Upper Egypt is the most economically deprived area.[78] Similarly, in Morocco, poverty remains high in rural areas, where an estimated 68 per cent are considered poor.[79] Only 50 per cent of the rural poor have access to adequate health care and only 20 per cent have access to safe water.[80] In addition, 10–50 per cent of the urban population across the MENA region lives in slum conditions, one of the largest of which is in Cairo. In Morocco, 33 per cent of the population lives in slums, in Libya 35 per cent.[81] As is noted by Jensen and Rasmussen (2010): "Besides the problems of lack of water, sanitary and social and health services the slums are often characterized by a high prevalence of domestic and gender-based violence, crime, drug addiction and related problems".[82] Clearly inequalities like these will have implications for human security in North Africa. Can new governments deal with these?

Another element of the economic problem, not least for the ordinary citizen, is the skyrocketing cost of everyday life. For example, not only North Africa but also the wider MENA region has suffered from a food crisis, in which prices have increased significantly. An important element in this is that most MENA countries are net food importers. Some countries in the region have to rely on imports for 50 per cent of their food needs. As was found by Jensen and Rasmussen (2010), there has been a 50 per cent increase in household food expenditure and a nearly 100 per cent increase in the price of wheat, flour, rice and maize.[83] It is no surprise then that Arab leaders have been willing to buy off social grievances by high social spending.

There have been a number of intra-regional efforts to counter existing economic and political obstacles. For example, the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) was formed in 1989 with a membership of Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia. The establishment of a Union based on the free movement of people, goods and capital, and at a later stage further integration of diplomatic, military and economic policies, has been discussed, but plans for integration are currently dormant. One important reason is historical tensions between some of its members (e.g. Algeria and Morocco).

3.2.4   Armed conflicts in the region

There have been a number of armed conflicts and political tensions in the region prior to the revolts. However, more significantly than perhaps anything else the Israel/Palestine conflict has played an important role for the dynamics in the

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[78] Jensen and Rasmussen 2010: 38.
[79] Ibid.
[80] Ibid.
[81] Ibid., p. 39.
[82] Ibid., p. 41.
[83] Ibid., p. 17.

Arab world. Governments in North Africa have historically come to play important roles in the evolution of this conflict, especially with regard to support to the Palestinians. Yet, it is worth noting that that the contemporary uprisings in the North Africa have not significantly changed the conditions for the Israel/Palestine peace process. However, developments across the wider Middle East have together contributed to reshape the situation, most notably by giving inspiration and reference to the Palestinians that change is possible. There may also be some change of support for non-state actors in the occupied territories (Hamas, Hezbollah, Fatah and various violent groups). Egypt for example has agreed to host Hamas and Fatah in Cairo for signing of a reconciliation agreement laying ground for a joint PA government.

A shifting political attitude has also been observed by the US administration. As President Obama noted:[84] "At a time when the people of the Middle East and North Africa are casting off the burdens of the past, the drive for a lasting peace that ends the conflict and resolves all claims is more urgent than ever".[85]

There are other conflicts that pre-date the popular revolts, and these could be due for a change in dynamics. For instance, it is worth noting that Egypt has not only to deal with political tensions with Israel and armed Palestinian groups, but also faces armed conflicts in the southern neighbourhood (i.e. North/South Sudan). Some of Egypt's tactics have been opportunistic, playing off different armed groups in order to counter possible conflicts of interest, but there are also structural conflicts, for instance, over access to water. In addition to Sudan and the nascent Southern Sudan, other countries in the Horn of Africa complicate Egypt's neighbourhood. In recent years, Egypt has had to deal with the possible spill over from the instability in Yemen as well as with Somali Piracy. For Morocco, the independence struggle by the Polisario has attracted much attention in recent years. There are speculations that as a result of the uprising in the region, Morocco and Algeria may come closer on a deal on how to settle the conflict.[86] The popular revolts in North Africa may have changed the dynamics, and the government in Rabat may have faced a blow to its legitimacy by ignoring

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[84] *The White House* 2011-05-19.

[85] In a later speech to the AIPAC policy Conference in 2011, conditions for peace between Israel and the Palestinians had changed: first, because the number of Palestinians living west of the Jordan River is growing rapidly, fundamentally reshaping the demographic realities of both Israel and the Palestinian Territories, making it difficult to maintain Israel as a Jewish and democratic state. Second, because technology will make it harder for Israel to defend itself; and, third, because a new generation of Arabs is reshaping the region. Palestinians are impatient with the peace processes (The *White House*, 2011-05-22). However, for this to become a reality a number of security guarantees must be met: Israel's ability to defend itself, the prevention of a resurgence of terrorism, and a full and phased withdrawal of Israeli military forces coordinated with Palestinian responsibility for security in a sovereign and non-militarized state (ibid.).

[86] See for example the analysis on this question in the *Africa Confidential* 2011-06-10.

popular calls for democracy. Unconfirmed media reports suggest that the Polisario have even been fighting alongside Gaddafi in Libya's civil war.[87]

More immediate though, may be the Jihadist challenges posed against all governments in the region. The question is how these movements will respond to the popular revolts currently unfolding. Some scholars argue that democracies are less likely to produce terrorist activity, as grievances can be taken care of fairly and independently in the public domain and by public institutions. Similarly, some scholars argue that governments in political transition from authoritarianism to democracy are highly vulnerable to destabilisation.[88] In a study of Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, Boukhars (2011) found that Algeria serves as a model for the appalling consequences that can occur when there is a sudden reversal of democratic reforms, and how this can feed domestic terrorism; that in Morocco top-down reforms or controlled liberalisation cannot prevent terrorism, although it may limit its intensification as it did in Algeria; and that Tunisia, the most repressive state in the Arab world under Ben Ali, despite successful economic policies, was not able to prevent home-grown terrorism.[89] Below follows a brief discussion.

To begin with, Islamic movements with political attributes can be subdivided according to their goals and methods. On the one hand, there are Islamic groups that seek to gain power through constitutional means while, on the other, there are Jihadist groups seeking to achieve political goals through violent and unconstitutional means.[90] Moreover, radical Islamism has taken different forms in North Africa. As is noted above, it has posed political, social as well as military challenges to all governments in the region. A number of more militant and violent Jihadist Islamic groups favouring military solutions have posed a strategic threat not only to governments in the region, but also to Western countries with interests there.

Jihadism exists in many different forms and organisations, notably in Salafist, Tafrist, Qutbist and Wahhabist networks. There are currently two main radical, violent Jihadist groups operating in North Africa: al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), previously the Groupe Salafiste Pour La Prédication et le Combat (GSPC), and the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG). A number of members of the LIFG has been released from jail in Libya and have according to media accounts joined the opposition.

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[87] See article in *Africa Confidential* 2011-06-10.

[88] For a good case study on the implications of this argument for countries in North Africa, see Boukhars (2011).

[89] Boukhars 2011: 13.

[90] Norell, Sörenson and Damidez 2008: 14.

Most of the governments in North Africa have faced Jihadist challenges.[91] Algeria, however, probably suffered the most, from a civil war which lasted for most of the 1990s and claimed nearly 100,000 lives because of the Algerian military's refusal to acknowledge the victory of the Islamist Party, Front Islamique du Salut (FIS), in the 1991 parliamentary elections.

A particular threat has emerged in recent years from AQIM. According to secondary sources, AQIM is spread across the Sahel area, although its main base seems to be in Algeria. Intelligence estimates referred to in media suggest that AQIM has about 400 fighters. However, according to the Sahelo-Saharan Geopolitics and Strategy organisation (OSGS), there are between 200 and 300 combatants, mainly from Algeria, Mauritania, Mali, Nigeria and Burkina Faso.[92] On 31 May, 2009, AQIM killed its first "Western" victim in an incident that took place in Mali.[93] A few days later, Mali's President, Amadou Toumani Touré, declared war on AQIM. Despite having been at war with the Touareg community between 1995 and 2006, the Touareg were trusted to "patrol" the Sahara in search of AQIM supporters (northern Mali). Media reports suggest that Malian Touareg and Maur have been hosting AQIM and have "…forged commercial links and acted as its interlocutors with Bamako".[94] They are also considered their competitors. In recent years AQIM have come to root itself in the Sahel area. In recent years several foreigners have been kidnapped (mainly out of economic reasons) and governments in the region have engaged the group militarily. AQIM also provides some local communities in the Sahel area with social welfare and protection against un-ideological criminal bands operating in the region.[95]

There are different explanations for why AQIM has spread into the Sahel area. One important reason seems to be that the region is lucrative place for illegal trade. This would be ideal then for a group such as AQIM to generate an income for the Islamic cause.

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[91] In the period 1989-2010, the Uppsala Conflict Data Programme notes the following armed conflicts as active either in targeting government or civilians (or engaged in inter-group fighting): Morocco: Salafia Jihadia Some of the groups either challenging the state or attacking civilians in the period include Algeria's Groupe islamique armée (GIA) vs. and Armed Islamic Movement (AIS), Groupe islamique armée (GIA)El Forkane Battalion vs. Groupe islamique armée (GIA) - El Khadra Battalion, Groupe islamique armée (GIA) - El Forkane Battalion vs. Groupe islamique armée (GIA) - El Khadra Battalion; Tunisia's Tunisian Armed Resistance, Egypt´s al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya (the Islamic Group) and Tawhid wal Jihad. On a regional level we also find Qaida al-Jihad fi Bilad al-Maghrib al-Islami/ al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). There are also other groups not covered by the UCDP definition (see UCDP database at www.pcr.uu.se).

[92] *Africa Research Bulletin* 2010-12-01/31: 18645.

[93] *Jane's Intelligence Review*, vol. 21, no. 09, September 2009: 20.

[94] Ibid.

[95] According to unconfirmed government sources in the press, organized crime poses a far more acute challenge for the Sahel government than AQIM.

For example, northern Mali and northern Niger is generally regarded as a hub of trans-Saharan informal trade (mostly controlled by the Touareg) in commodities such as cigarettes, migrants, vehicles and narcotics.[96] According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, about USD 200 million worth of cigarettes were smuggled through Mali and to a lesser extent Niger to Algeria, and another USD 250 million worth of cigarettes trafficked to Libya through Niger.[97] In addition, kidnapping for ransom is thought to be a 'lucrative market'. (e.g. the German government has made multi-million Euro payments for kidnapped German nationals in Mali and Burkina Faso).[98] However, it is difficult to verify that AQIM are actually benefiting from such activities.

Another factor in the spread of AQIM in the region has been Mauritania's majority Arab-speaking population. Until March 2009, unlike Mali, Niger or Chad, Mauritania recognised Israel.[99] This provoked a great deal of political resentment.

More likely though for why AQIM has based themselves in the region is because it is generally difficult to conduct advanced counter-terrorist operations given the unfriendly environment (severe heat, lack of basic infrastructure etc.).

Governments in the region have not delayed fighting AQIM. For example, on 21 April 2010, Algeria, Mali, Mauritania and Niger established a joint military committee in southern Algeria to coordinate counterterrorism efforts against AQIM.[100] In late December 2010, the Algerian government launched an offensive against AQIM. Unconfirmed sources suggest that the National People's Army involved nearly 7,000 soldiers.[101] Furthermore, media sources claimed the operation was observed by US Special Forces from a US camp in Tamanrasset.

In the end there are no clear indications that AQIM may have benefitted directly from the Arab Revolt. Algeria functions as a stronghold against further influence. Even in the case of an ousting of the government in Algeria, expert accounts suggests that strong security services is likely to continue to operate in the region in order to protect it from further terrorism actions.

Lastly, security is closely tied into the presence of circulating weapons. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, there have been indications of a growing arms build-up between Algeria and Morocco in

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[96] *Jane's Intelligence Review*, vol. 21, no. 09, September 2009: 21.

[97] Ibid.

[98] As reported by *Jane's Intelligence Review*, vol. 21, no. 09, September 2009: 22.

[99] *Jane's Intelligence Review*, vol. 21, no. 09, September 2009: 21.

[100] *Jane's Intelligence Review*, vol. 22, no. 06, June 2010: 4.

[101] *Africa Research Bulletin* 2010-12-01/31: 18655.

recent years.[102] This arms race, which also affected other countries in the region, notably Libya, was triggered by many different factors, including prestige, border rivalry and counterterrorism needs. However, perhaps the most important factor was the perceived need by governments in the region to modernise their regular armed forces and internal security forces. A number of countries have come to see North Africa as a lucrative market for arms trading, most notably Russia and France (see data on arms export in SIPRI Yearbook 2010). Following the military conflict in Libya and the adoption of an arms embargo under UN Security Council resolution 1973 (2011), many contracts have been temporarily put on hold. Another factor in arms flows to this region is the various polices of US administrations to keep these countries stable, not least in the context of the US war on terror.

3.3   Conclusions

As is discussed above, a number of structural conditions will shape much of the process that will come about as a result of the popular revolts in North Africa. Although these structural conditions have local characteristics in each state, there are also some shared structural features or obstacles worth noting.

In recent decades, governments in the region have concentrated power in political and economic elites. This has led to deep-rooted political corruption as well as deep-rooted political mistrust among the general population. The social contract has been broken. Restoring confidence in government institutions will therefore be a difficult challenge to overcome. Moreover, none of the governments, apart from Algeria's very limited attempt to become a democracy in the 1990s, have any experience of democracy. This inexperience will pose great cultural challenges to any government trying to survive in the post-authoritarian phase.

As has also been noted by commentators, "In essence the political culture in North Africa has developed along three lines: Patrimonialism, Militarism and Islamism".[103] This observation neatly summarises the main factors that liberal democratic forces will have to contend with.[104] Above all, what the popular revolts have brought to the fore is the identity crisis that the Arab population in the region is undergoing as globalisation challenges traditional societal and cultural values.

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[102] *Stockholm International Peace Research Institute* 2010: 296. In this context it is also worth noting that weapons exports to North Africa and the Middle East reached nearly 1.1 billion SEK (information accessed at the website of the Swedish Peace and Arbitration Society).

[103] Damidez and Sörenson 2009: 22

[104] Despotic rulers, government ineffectiveness, nepotism, patrimonialism, large bureaucracies, corruption and large security organisations are other features of these governments.

As is noted above, a number of profound social and economic challenges need to be overcome in order to reduce popular grievances. It is not likely that each country can master these by themselves. International support to the region is required. In addition, there have been a number of attempts by different actors in the region to integrate both politically, economically and socially. The question remains whether all the governments are moving in the same political and economic direction.

4 Military and security realities prior to and following the revolt

North African governments have come to play an important geo-strategic role linked to its geographical location, neighbouring Europe, Africa and the wider Middle East. Governments in the region are endowed with financial muscles and outside political support, and restrained by few constitutional ties. In addition, a military build-up in recent years has led them to play an increasingly important role in international affairs.[105]

This section presents data on the military capabilities of specific countries in order to provide background on the conditions in which the revolts are taking place, and get a better sense of where the region might be heading, and the obstacles and security challenges that need to be dealt with. New security challenges may arise because of the revolt. Defence and security policies in the region prior to the uprising are discussed as well as the challenges that have surfaced because of the new conditions since the Arab revolts.[106]

4.1 Country data[107]

The role of the military has taken different courses across the region, but mainly – as was also noted in the previous section – been shaped by intra-regional rivalries as well as domestic threats. Domestic security threats to the regimes are mainly based on either ethnic grievances or Jihadist challenges. The military has been used even for domestic challenges, sometimes under the umbrella of internal security forces, or republican or royal guards. In some countries, such as Tunisia, the police was involved with the government and in protecting regime interests. A reading of state security capabilities suggests that domestic security forces are many times as large as or larger than the regular armies built to protect the country. This suggests that Arab regimes have boosted internal forces to protect themselves from threats from within rather than from external threats. This raises questions about what role these forces will play in a post-authoritarian environment. Both Tunisia and Egypt, and very likely Libya, will require

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[105] Damidez and Sörenson 2009: 24.

[106] A great source of information of economic and military expenditures from North Africa can be found in Bergstrand (2009). In his analysis, military expenditures for each separate country are analyzed in great detail focusing both on trends, regional patterns and single country analysis.

[107] The following analysis mainly builds on the situation prior to the uprising in North Africa and the Middle East, here defined as starting in early 2011.

profound security sector reform (SSR) programmes.[108] As is noted by Emin, there is a profound need to not only reform security institutions, but also up-root the entire culture which some of these security institutions have stood for.[109] A consequence of slimming military and security forces will not be easy as it may leave large groups in a state of disgruntlement.

Another element that has served to reinforce the power of incumbent Arab leaders is the mix of intertwined interests of the economic, political and military elites. A change in government from this perspective would inevitably be a challenge to the interests of these elites. Beyond the immediate geographical horizon, the hegemonic influence of the United States (i.e. military support) as well as an aversion to Israel has further shaped the security sector in each of the countries.

From a geostrategic perspective, the region is politically, economically and militarily dominated by Egypt and Algeria: Egypt through its size and military cooperation with the United States; and Algeria through its heavy military influence in important political matters, with few discernible differences between the administration and the military. The Algerian army maintains the largest force in the region. This is somewhat surprising given the size of the population compared to Egypt. However, it could be argued that Egypt has the most overwhelming paramilitary forces, about double the size of those of Algeria. Another element to consider is that Algeria accounted for 89 per cent of all arms transfers to North Africa in the period 2005–2009 (excluding Egypt). Finally, both Morocco and Libya stand out with their alternative militia formations – a monarchical force in Morocco and a people's militia in Libya.

From a regional perspective, there have been attempts by the North African governments to further integrate security forces, for instance, in a North African Standby Brigade (NASBRIG) under the framework of the African Union (AU) and the organisations Peace and Security Architecture.[110] The North African Regional Capability (NARC) was established to overcome the lack of integration among North African members as well as vis-à-vis regional institutions (the AMU and the AU).[111] As of today, realization of the NARC is far behind the 2010 deadline for the AU to set up its African Standby Force, due to intra-

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[108] Indications suggest that Tunisia in mid-2011 had already begun such a process, for instance, by firing a great number of police officers and then re-hiring them after meticulous vetting procedures.

[109] Interview with Emin Poljarevic, researcher at the European University Institute, Florence, Italy, specialising in Islamic movements in Egypt. Interview held 2011-06-14. His comment mainly referred to the situation in Egypt but is also valid for the other countries.

[110] This led the AU to establish the North African Regional Capability framework in which all North African countries would take part.

[111] Damidez and Sörenson 2009: 19.

governmental rivalries (e.g. between Morocco and Algeria over Western-Sahara) and because Morocco is not a member of the AU.

A summary of each country's defence capability as of the end of 2010 is presented below. Obviously, Libya's capacity has completely changed because of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) military campaign against the Libyan regime.[112]

4.1.1   Tunisia

The Tunisian defence budget for 2008 was USD 534 million (no estimates exist for 2009–2010).[113] The estimated number of troops for each defence cluster has remained constant in the past 5–10 years.

Army: 5,000 (to which an additional 22,000 conscripts could be added); Navy 4,800; Air force 4,000 (27 combat-capable aircraft); Paramilitary forces 12,000 (National Guard 12,000 under the Ministry of Interior).[114] Conscription period: 12 months selective service.[115]

Unlike many forces in authoritarian states, Tunisia's military has kept itself fairly detached from the ruling family. This autonomy from the regime could also be considered an important factor in paving the way for revolution. The military stood as a buffer zone between the police and paramilitaries, on the one hand, and protesting civilians, on the other.[116] One explanation for this is that Ben Ali may have embraced an older French model for his security services, with a separation of the military from the security forces.[117] Some commentators suggests that the logic behind this was to prevent military coups d'état.

The Tunisian army is considered only to be capable of undertaking smaller defensive operations.[118] At the same time, however, the standard of officer training is generally viewed as high.

4.1.2   Egypt

The general view inside Egypt is that the Egyptian military's influence over society is normatively good as the military sided with demonstrators (although

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[112] Nonetheless, the figures cited here could also be of interest in the context of the military campaign.
[113] Figure should be put in relation to the size of the country.
[114] *International Institute for Strategic Studies* 2010: 274–275.
[115] Ibid., p. 274.
[116] *Jane's Defence Weekly* 2011-02-16: 32.
[117] Ibid.
[118] Damidez and Sörenson 2009: 35.

there are recent signs that this is starting to change).[119] It is estimated that the Egyptian defence budget for 2008 was USD 3.27 billion. No figures were publicly available for 2009 and 2010.[120] Egypt was ranked number 15 on a world comparison list of recipients of major conventional weapons in the period 2005–2009.[121] Egypt gained much support from its signing of the Camp David Accord with Israel, as a result of which the US government has provided assistance to the Egyptian government of USD 1.3 billion per annum.[122] In addition, US military training has increased the Egyptian army's effectiveness and professionalism. This support should be interpreted as an investment in regional stability.[123] For example, about 12 US navy ships per month pass through the Suez Canal, partly thanks to speedy administration by Egypt.[124] The United States also enjoys over-fly rights, another element securing access to the region by Western forces.

Army: 90,000–120,000; Navy 8,500; Air force 30,000 (461 combat-capable aircraft);[125] Paramilitary forces 397,000 (Central Security Force 325,000, National Guard including paramilitaries 60,000, Border Guard Forces including Ministry of Interior 12,000).[126] Conscription period 12 months to 3 years.[127] Reserves 479,000.[128]

During the recent political turbulence, Egypt's army was given much credit for its handling of the stand-off between the demonstrators and the regime, especially for not seeking to intervene on the government's behalf and securing the right of protestors (civilians) to demonstrate.[129] Later in the revolution, the military began to engage with the Egyptian citizenry using social media such as Facebook. Yet, as the revolt continued signs of human rights were reported under the military transition council rule (see recent report of Amnesty International).

4.1.3   Algeria

The military has long played an important role in Algerian politics. Before the civil war in the early 1990's, commentators contended that the Algerian armed

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[119] According to a public opinion poll in April 2011, by the Pew Research Center, 9/10 Egyptians had a positive attitude of the military and its role in society (as cited in Swedish National media: *Dagens Nyheter* 2011-07-18)
[120] *International Institute for Strategic Studies* 2010: 248-250.
[121] Stockholm International Peace Research Institute 2010: 311.
[122] Damidez and Sörenson 2009: 31.
[123] *Jane's Defence Weekly* 2011-02-09: 5.
[124] Ibid.
[125] Not including helicopters, etc.
[126] *International Institute for Strategic Studies* 2010: 248-250.
[127] Ibid., p. 248.
[128] *International Institute for Strategic Studies* 2010: 248.
[129] *The Economist* 2011-03-12/18: 25-26.

forces were fairly well trained and well equipped.[130] After the civil war, Algerian paramilitary forces were mainly used to combat various terrorist groups, thereby giving these forces significant combat experience. Later, increased counterterrorism activities also enhanced the capacity of the Republican Guard (with support from the French and US governments).[131] In 2008, the Algerian defence budget was USD 5.17 billion and in 2009 USD 5.3 billion.[132] Overall, military spending has increased considerably in the past 10 years or so.[133] Russia was the main arms supplier, accounting for nearly 90 per cent of military transfers.[134] Algeria is ranked ninth on a world comparison list of recipients of major conventional weapons in the period 2005–2009.[135] The estimated number of troops for each defence cluster has remained constant in the past 5–10 years. Finally, worth noting, Algeria has sought to modernise its entire military platform, which is currently shaped mainly by procurements made in 1970–1980. There are six military regions in Algeria.

Army: 147,000; Navy: 6,000; Air force 14,000 (197 combat-capable aircraft);[136] Paramilitary 187,200 (Gendarmerie 20,000, National Security Forces 16,000, Republican Guard 1,200, Legitimate Defence Groups such as the self-defence militia and communal guards 150,000).[137] Conscription period: 18 months.[138] Reserves 150,000.[139]

4.1.4 Morocco

Morocco's military has mainly been shaped by the conflict over Western Sahara. Low intensity combat operations in this area reaching over several decades have given the Moroccan army long experience of combat. The Moroccan defence budget for 2008 was USD 2.97 billion and for 2009 USD 3.19 billion.[140] In the past decade, military spending has increased by 127 per cent, although arms transfers in the past six years have declined. Russia was like for Algeria, the main arms exporter to Morocco, providing 78 per cent of Moroccan imports.[141] The estimated number of troops for each defence cluster has remained constant in the past 5–10 years.

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[130] Damidez and Sörenson 2009: 29.
[131] Ibid., 30.
[132] *International Institute for Strategic Studies* 2010: 245.
[133] Stockholm International Peace Research Institute 2010: 297.
[134] Ibid.
[135] Ibid., p. 311.
[136] Not including helicopters, etc.
[137] *International Institute for Strategic Studies* 2010: 245–246.
[138] Ibid.
[139] Ibid., p. 245.
[140] *International Institute for Strategic Studies* 2010: 264.
[141] Stockholm International Peace Research Institute 2010: 299.

Army: 17,000 (to which an additional 100,000 conscripts could be added); Navy 7,800; Air force 13,000 (89 combat-capable aircraft);[142] *Paramilitary forces 50,000 (Royal Gendarmerie 20,000, Auxiliary Force including a mobile intervention force of 30,000).*[143] *The conscription period in the army is 18 months, but most enlisted men are volunteers.*[144]

4.1.5 Libya

In Libya there exists no specific Ministry of Defence except for a short period in 1969. This has certainly had implications for the establishment of a professional military. Gaddafi made himself the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces on 2 March 1977.[145] In general, the military in Libya is based on clientelism and run as a family affair, with Gaddafi's sons in senior positions. Unlike its neighbours, Libya has had plenty of access to weapons. The bulk of its military hardware, however, has been kept in storage or is poorly maintained.[146] Some storage sites is said to be the largest in Africa. Parts of these have either been bombed or stormed during the military conflict following the revolt in 2011.

Libyan defence expenditure in 2008 was estimated at USD 800 million.[147] However, in recent years there have been several unconfirmed rumours of large arms imports from different countries, notably Russia, France and Italy. A number of factors have allowed Libya to become a lucrative arms market: the Libyan denunciation of international terrorism and weapons of mass destruction led the country to rid itself of international sanctions and to be treated more as a partner than a foe in international affairs; improved relationships with the United States and the EU member states; and the improving oil and gas market, which was derailed in 2011.[148]

The estimated number of troops in each branch of service has remained constant in the past 5–10 years, although the air force has grown some what. A striking development in term of military cooperation has been the Italy-Libya Treaty of Friendship signed in 2008, by which Italy undertook to enable and assist Libya with border control, counterterrorism, countering organised crime, controlling drug flows and migration. It also entailed assistance to modernise Libya's armed forces.[149] However, in mid-March 2011 Gaddafi told the Italian news media that he felt betrayed by Europe, and in particular by the Italian Prime Minister, Silvio

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[142] Not including helicopters, etc.

[143] *International Institute for Strategic Studies* 2010: 264–266.

[144] Ibid., p. 264.

[145] Mattes 2008: 73.

[146] Damidez and Sörenson 2009: 32.

[147] *International Institute for Strategic Studies* 2010: 262.

[148] See Stockholm International Peace Research Institute 2010: 301.

[149] Ibid., pp. 300–301.

Berlusconi, over the military campaign.[150] Below follows indicate figures of the military strength of Libya prior to the military campaign in 2011.

Army: 25,000 plus an estimated 25,000 conscripts: total 50,000; Navy 8,000; Air force 18,000 (374 combat-capable aircraft[151]).[152] Conscription period 1–2 years.[153] Reserves (People's Militia) estimated 40,000.[154]

Besides these official figures, it is worth noting that Gaddafi has allegedly been able to assemble a number of mercenaries from outside Libya. For example, in the initial phase of the Libyan revolt, unconfirmed sources suggested that about 3,000–4,000 mercenaries from Mali, Niger, Sudan and Western Sahara (Polisario) had been hired on high per diem rate. There may also be voluntary supporters from many other countries.[155] According to some accounts, a number of these mercenaries (as well as unpaid supporters) were members of the Touareg, who are spread across North Africa, mainly in Mali, Niger, Algeria and Libya, as they have come to consider Gaddafi a "champion".[156] For example, in midst of the Libyan uprising, unconfirmed sources suggested that hundreds of Touareg had crossed into Libya to fight for Gaddafi.[157] One explanation for this would be that in recent decades, Gaddafi has provided shelter for members of this (and other) ethnic group during its rebellion against the governments of Mali and Niger. This shelter has included military training. As a result, according to recent accounts, Touareg elders have suggested that many of the so-called "African mercenaries" supporting Gaddafi are Touareg. Touareg have formed part of the Libyan army for many years and are thus not considered new arrivals on the political and military scene.

In the military fighting currently taking place, experts suggest that Gaddafi's 3,000-strong paramilitary Revolutionary Guard Corps should be considered his most loyal force. The loyalty factor in this context may be important, but does not give any indication of the ability to coordinate and take part in complex

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[150] The Italian Prime Minister for his part is facing major legal challenges domestically and therefore may have abandoned the close relationship cultivated with Gaddafi. Doing so may help him stave off further political opposition.

[151] Not including helicopters, etc.

[152] *International Institute for Strategic Studies* 2010: 262-263.

[153] Ibid., p. 262.

[154] Ibid.

[155] In this context, it is worth noting that African governments have adopted the OAU/AU Convention on the Elimination of Mercenaries in Africa (the so-called Anti-Mercenary Convention). See also the yet-to-be enforced Prohibition of Mercenary Activities, Prohibition, and Regulation of Certain Activities in Areas of Armed Conflict Act 27 of 2006. Libya for its part adopted this convention on 25 January 2005 (Gumedze 2011-03-04). As a state party to this convention, Libya has an obligation to prevent foreigners on its territory from engaging in any such support.

[156] *New York Times* 2011-03-15.

[157] Ibid.

combat manoeuvres. The Revolutionary Guard is known as Liwa Haris al-Jamahiriya and is seemingly mainly from Gaddafi's tribal region around the port town of Sirte.[158]

The rebel force involved in the revolt is known as Jaysh-e-Libi al-Hurra (The Army of Free Libyan Forces). The movement, at least in the initial stages of the revolt, was named the "February 17 Revolution". As noted on 27 February, the National Transitional Council was formed as a political alternative to the government in Tripoli.

4.1.6   Regional military integration

Several political attempts have been made to integrate the North African countries militarily. Such formal integration has mostly taken place within the African Union under the NARC framework. The integration was considered a milestone for regional cooperation in this part of Africa. These efforts to integrate the countries have been very slow and come to a halt, yet interestingly, the popular revolts may trigger further integration as a show of confidence building between the governments. If so, it would probably result in the strongest military force in Africa.

4.2   Conclusions

To summarize, the region was characterised by a low number of formal armed conflicts prior to the revolts. Most armies in the region were relatively weak compared to the security forces in place to deal with domestic threats. While old tensions have remained between different countries, and at times have led to armed confrontation, these tensions are mostly of a political nature (e.g. Algeria's support for Polisario, or Libya's support for various opposition groups).

The main security challenges have come from radical Islamist groups. These threats have been dealt with in all countries. It is worth noting, however, that radical Islam was by no means the only threat. For instance, in Algeria, the central government has at times had to deal with the Berber community, in Egypt the government has had to quell sectarian violence by Christians, the Tunisian government has had to deal with various left wing and communist groups and Libya has had to counter threats from different tribes. However, radical Islam is still very much alive, most notably in the form of AQIM. It is as yet unclear whether AQIM will use its base to strike against regional governments or whether it will plan attacks against European countries.[159] New challenges may

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[158] Middle East Online 2011-03-15 (accessed 2011-03-15).
[159] *The Economist* 2011-03-05/11: 43.

arise if AQIM starts cooperating with other regional terrorist networks such as Al-Shabab in East Africa.[160]

Finally, the region has had to face increasing activities by criminal networks. Some have even argued that a group such as AQIM is simply a criminal enterprise with some core elements of radical ideology.

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[160] In June 2011 also prompting the US government to announce massive increase of its military and financial anti-terrorism support to the Sahel countries.

5   Post-Arab Spring

The revolts in North Africa are ongoing. While some political processes are occurring in parallel in all the countries, other processes are coordinated, spontaneous or isolated. Beyond the immediate structural and systemic ruptures that unfolded during early 2011, continued popular protests are seen in the region in the second part of the year. Protests continue to reshape the political and security order. There are also a number of mini-revolts taking place at different locations: government offices, security forces, bureaucracies, the private sector and universities – perhaps even within families. All these together cloud deterministic scenarios of where things will turn. For some participants, these protests will be considered at an end when a regime falls, whereas for others the revolt is an everlasting state- and identity-building process. This section treats the events unfolding in the region as an upheaval that has led to the emergence of a number of new political and security challenges. The section presents a regional outlook and country-specific contexts, identifying some of the main challenges ahead.

5.1   New security dynamics

The final political outcome of the events in North Africa is yet to be determined. The challenges ahead are profound and, as noted by one commentator: "Caretaker governments will have to be formed, constitutions rewritten, free and fair elections held, and new democratic political institutions crafted".[161] To this list could be added that a number of "old" conflicts need to be ended and "new" civil wars need resolutions. It is not clear that the democratic turn being witnessed in the region will be maintained. A good point raised is that "…of the 28 countries in the former Soviet sphere, only 13 are today categorized by Freedom House as "free" and another 8 "partly free"".[162] Nonetheless, with the Arab revolt, the conditions shaping traditional security challenges have been transformed or face new demands. The *fear factor* of authoritarianism has mostly disappeared in several Arab countries, paving the way for demands for genuine reform.

Different scholars suggest different pathways on which the region should embark to best deal with political and economic shortcomings in a post-authoritarian phase. Important suggestions involve the reform, reduction and reconstruction of often top-down, rigid and centralised government institutions.[163] Other areas in

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[161] Grand 2011-02-10.
[162] Ibid.
[163] Desai, Olofsgård and Yousef 2011-03-07.

need of reform are the education system,[164] the armed forces, the economy (i.e. diversification) and general political accountability. However, the conditions in each country leading up to the unrest differed. The revolt in Egypt started in an environment with fairly well functioning institutions, for instance, the judiciary in Egypt is considered by many commentators to be semi-independent. Moreover, Egypt has strong labour unions, a parliamentary assembly and a lively civil society. Libya, on the other hand, has very few active NGO's and functioning government institutions in comparison, not least because Gaddafi uprooted many of the institutions that existed at the time of independence. Tunisia is somewhere in between, while in mid-2011 Algeria and Morocco remaining authoritarian.

There is already a new geopolitical situation in North Africa. The fact that some authoritarian regimes have fallen, but others remain, is likely to lead to future friction. Tunisia, Egypt and very likely Libya will move on to a democratic path, while Algeria and Morocco will proceed more slowly. The civil war in Libya could easily attract regional governments to engage in support on either side, prompting new political tensions. Obviously, there is no clear-cut line of interest between the North African governments, or other regional actors for that matter. There may be certain preferences to support one side ahead of the other, for instance, linked to the economic interests among specific individuals, groups or companies, in order to make money. For example, unconfirmed claims suggest that members of the Polisario in Western Sahara-region of Morocco have members fighting on the government side in Libya. Similarly, elements in the Algerian security apparatus may have an economic interest in supporting Gaddafi.[165] This could potentially lead to tension with Alger, should rebels be able to oust Gaddafi. The animosity that will emerge, unless geopolitical conditions continue to change, will primarily be between governments and not necessarily between the Arab people in the region.

Although there is reason to believe that there will be friction among the more democratic and the authoritarian states in the region, there are also grounds for further integration. To begin with, there is probably an interest among most stakeholders in the Arab revolts in future economic development. Economic integration will not only be needed for each country, but will also lay the ground for a more vibrant economic market for domestic and outside actors. In terms of security, new political actors could find new common ground to revitalise the North Africa Standby Force as part of the AU peace and security architecture. However, cooperation among governments has been dormant for some time.

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[164] Ibid.

[165] According to the Africa Confidential, the head of the Interim Transitional National Council in Libya, Algeria is claimed to have supplied military aircraft to transport arms and mercenaries to Qaddafi (in addition to fuel and vehicles). See Africa Confidential 2011-06-10.

Domestically, new political forces have already emerged in most North African countries, some of which were previously active in exile (e.g. the February 20 movement in Morocco or the exiled but now returned al-Nahda movement in Tunisia). Some of these groups, both new and old share the democratic spirit of the revolts, while others seek to advance their own agenda and vision of a transformed society. How new democratic governments will tackle these movements remains open to question.

In terms of the region's political outlook, it is likely that most countries in the region will increasingly turn towards Europe, although with different speeds and interests. This however depends on reform swiftness. Egypt for its part will have to face an uncertain Middle East (Syria, Yemen, Israel and the PA), as well as an increasingly shaky sub-Saharan Africa (Sudan and the Horn of Africa). Once Gaddafi is out of power, Libya is unlikely to be as engaged in Africa as it was before, although strong relations will continue to exist. Algeria and Morocco for their part will have to face regional democratic pressures from Egypt, Libya and Tunisia, and also from Europe and the United States. At times, this is likely to cause tensions between these states in North Africa, but also to lead to avenues for further cooperation. The region will also have to face 'new' security challenges, including those of climate change, migration from sub-Saharan Africa, corruption, ethnic grievances and drug smuggling.[166]

5.1.1 The political reactions of actors external to the revolts

As alluded to above, developments in North Africa will be shaped not only by domestic events, but also by external actors supporting or not supporting the popular revolts. Similarly, the events will change the policy agenda of external interested actors. Below is a brief discussion of the reactions by the US, EU and AU.[167]

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[166] According to estimates by 33 European immigration authorities in late May 2011, nearly 40,000 people have fled North Africa out of the region, nearly 30,000 of whom are of Tunisian descent. About 38 500 of these are currently in Italy, while about 1500 are in Malta. Nearly 10,000 seem to be in direct need of protection (e.g. Somalis and Eritreans) (*Dagens Nyheter* 2011-05-28). Noteworthy though, the majority of all refugees from Libya is hosted in Tunisia (at least 400,000), while large numbers are also found in Egypt and in Sahel countries).

[167] China has been fairly silent on the revolution in North Africa. Most visible it has engaged itself in large–scale evolutions of citizens following the turmoil in Libya as well as voting in favour of a No-fly-Zone at the UN security Council. The vote in favour of UNSCR 1973 (2011) could have implications for China's view on non-interference. Moreover, the fall of Ben Ali and Mubarak probably highlighted the challenges associated with globalization (e.g. capitalism, the social media and individual liberties in combination with harsh government policies that prevent these forces from existing). A policy of government/state stability at all costs comes at a price, often restrictions on human rights. The revolt in the Arab world shows that in the long-term such a strategy can easily undermine the political system (see for instance article in Deutsche Welle 2011-02-11). Another

5.1.1.1 The United States

Given its close relationship with Israel and the need to protect regional stability, Egypt has become a pivotal state for US interest in North Africa and the wider Middle East. This is mainly manifest in a long-term economic and political support to Egypt. In the past 30 years, different US administrations have provided nearly USD 30 billion of USAID assistance alone.[168] In the 2012 fiscal year, the US administration requested USD 250 million in economic support and USD 1 billion in foreign military financing from the US Congress.[169] For the immediate economic and political transition, the government has made available USD 165 million to support jobs and economic growth. In addition, there are a number of other multi-million dollar initiatives to support the Egyptian economy. The events in North Africa and the Middle East seem to have encouraged the Obama administration to adopt a strategy of promoting democracy.[170] The support of the United States provided has three core principles: 1. opposition to the use of violence; 2. support of universal rights; and 3. support for political and economic change. In particular, the United States has formulated a policy for Tunisia (including support to democratic foundations and the economy; holding democratic elections; designing a new constitution; implementation of a reform agenda; and establishing partnerships with civil groups in society and technology companies to make communications capacity available throughout society) and Egypt. In its activities regarding these countries, the United States will:[171] "support free and fair elections"; "support vibrant civil society (beyond elites and support to those that may not be 'officially sanctioned')"; "support basic rights"; "support strong democratic institutions"; "support the empowerment of women";

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aspect is that the revolt may lead to new policy towards authoritarian regimes in North Africa (still unclear in what directions). Russia, meanwhile, is likely to perceive the fall of Ben Ali and Mubarak as challenges and dilemmas of ignoring popular calls for democracy, an over reliance on one-man leadership, and dependency on oil in order to secure welfare. Moreover, the revolt is probably also feeding into Russia's view of the role of the social media could play in fostering domestic opposition (See Hill 2011-02-15). Most visible, Russia voted in favour of a no-fly-zone on Libya (UNSCR 1973). However, given the military engagement by US, UK and France, Russia has been overtly critical about Western Governments interpretation of the resolution (calling for modest engagement). Thus, the vote in favour of UNSCR 1973 (2011) could have implications for Russia's view on non-interference.

[168] Embassy of the United States in Cairo, 2011-04-21.
[169] *The White House*. "Assistance to Egypt", 2011-05-19.
[170] Hill 2011-02-15.
[171] *White House Factsheet* 2011-05-19.

and "deliver economic programs".[172] Overall support will also go to the promotion of human rights and democracy in places where transition has not yet taken place. This engagement will reach beyond elites by "cultivating reformist voices", and supporting legitimate and independent groups (as well as groups not recognised by the government).[173] With regard to other countries in the region, the United States will support Morocco by promoting democratic development by means of "constitutional, judicial and political reforms",[174] and work with the people and the government to consolidate the rule of law, human rights, governance, youth empowerment and constitutional reform. In Libya, in a short-term perspective, this will work to implement Security Council resolution 1973 and the no-fly zone imposed by NATO (NATO took over leadership of operation on 25th March), and further to support the National Transition Council.

In addition, in the wider Middle East the United States will pursue a set of core interests in the region: countering terrorism, stopping the spread of nuclear weapons, securing the free flow of commerce, safeguarding the security of the region, and standing up for Israel's security and the pursuance of Arab-Israeli peace. Above all, no aggression across borders will be accepted.[175] An important development that could further drag the US into the region is the potential declaration of an independent state by the Palestinians during the fall of 2011. This could potentially change US policy in a more profound way. Commentators have suggested that the United States in its future strategy towards the region could offer a "reform endowment, i.e. financial incentives for Arab regimes to meet political reform".[176]

Importantly, much direct support will come through economic means. The economic support for North Africa and the Middle East has officially been based on four pillars: support for economic management (transparency and prevention of corruption), economic stability (debt swap arrangements, support in international financial institutions, for Egypt: loans of up to USD 1 billion to financial infrastructure and job creation through the Overseas Private Investment Corporation), economic modernisation (support from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the International Financial Corporation, the establishment of the Egyptian-American and Tunisian-American Enterprise Funds for private sector investments) and the development of a framework for trade integration and investment (the launch of a comprehensive Trade and Investment Partnership Initiative).[177]

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[172] Ibid.
[173] Ibid.
[174] Ibid.
[175] *The White House* 2011-05-19.
[176] Hamid 2011-02-25.
[177] See *White House Factsheet* 2011-05-18.

There are different reasons for this massive support, including both moral and ideological positioning, but it can also encounter criticism of double standards (i.e. the promotion of democracy and human rights, on the one hand, but continued support for authoritarian regimes, on the other). In addition, it will serve national interests and create strong bonds with new regimes; it will create room for US conditionality, thereby shaping political developments; and, most importantly, economic support will allow ideological influence.

Finally, in early June 2011 the US administration announced a wide-ranging financial support package to the Sahel countries to help them combat Islamic radicalism (including AQIM and al-Shabaab). There are unconfirmed but credible indications that radicals are moving from Pakistan and Afghanistan to West and East Africa as well as to the Sahel countries.

5.1.1.2 The European Union

The events in the Arab world and in North Africa have had a considerable impact on the EU's Common Foreign and Defence Policy (CFSP). It will prove a test case for the European External Action Service (EEAS) and Europe as a global actor. The developments in the region have reshaped political structures in all Arab countries, and they will have profound implications for European governments. It remains to be seen whether the events unfolding in North Africa and the wider Middle East will be as strong as the changes seen previously in contemporary history, such as the liberation of Eastern Europe, the break-up of the Soviet Union and the Balkan wars of the 1990s.[178]

A debate that is likely to emerge is what role the EU managed to play in supporting the uprising in North Africa. So far, the engagement of the EU with the Arab Spring has been cautious. In fact, critics argue, the EU has been sidelined by its own member state governments through their own initiatives. This became particularly clear with regard to the British and French engagement in Libya and their early support for the National Transitional Council of the Libyan Republic – both politically and militarily. One reason for taking a cautious approach could be the sensitivity of not being perceived to take the momentous events away from the Arab citizens themselves.

Nonetheless, the EU has by no means been a silent actor. On the contrary, the EU has provided both solid support for the demonstrators and criticism of human rights abuses by previous and existing institutions. It has also engaged in reforming its own political and economic relations with the region (see below). The EU may as such already have exercised its power to spread so-called soft values by peaceful means, in a way that could affect politics across the region.

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[178] This point was also raised by Niklas Bremberg at Stockholm University, a specialist in EU-Maghreb relations, addressing a public seminar at the Swedish Parliament, 2011-03-09.

This strength has perhaps even exceeded that which tangible military forces could ever have achieved. Thus, that the event matters for Europe is unquestionable. In this context it is worth highlighting what the Swedish foreign minister, Carl Bildt, said in his introductory remarks at the Doha meeting on 9 May 2011: "We 500 million Europeans – and the further 100 million Europeans in south-eastern Europe including Turkey that are actively seeking to join us – are neighbours not only of the more than 200 millions living towards our East in Europe but also the soon to be close to 400 million people of the Arab world. And you could easily argue that how this relationship develops will be crucial for both of us in the decades to come. History has once again thrown us together".[179]

EU Support and cooperation with the region goes back decades. Official cooperation between the EU and North Africa was launched with the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EUROMED) in 1995 under the so-called Barcelona Process (later to be replaced by the Union for the Mediterranean in 2008). In 2004, the European Neighbourhood Policy was established in order to tailor integration on a bilateral basis, including cooperation on policies covering security, migration, human rights, and political and economic reforms. Its strength arises from its country-specific Action Plans.

Relationship with the EU has made it one of North Africa's largest trading partners. *Algeria*'s exports to the EU in 1996 were worth USD 6,784 million (note that there were fewer members of the EU at the time). In 2009 the figure was USD 25,673 million to the EU15; The equivalent statistics for *Egypt* were USD 3,408 million in 1996 and USD 8,800 million in 2009; for *Morocco* USD 5,190 million in 1996 and USD 9,480 million in 2009; and for *Tunisia* USD 4,469 million in 1996 and USD 11,621 million in 2009.[180] According to statistics from March 2010, the EU provided financial assistance in the period 2011–2013 to Morocco (USD 783 million), Algeria (USD 232 million), Tunisia (USD 324 million) and Egypt (USD 606 million). Morocco received an 18.2 per cent increase in EU aid compared with the period 2007–2010, and Libya a 1,000 per cent increase over the same period.[181]

Despite such cooperation, however, critics argue that the institutional framework that sought to integrate North African countries into EU economic standards achieved meagre results, and that the income gap barely narrowed.[182] Ulgen (2011) notes two main reasons for this failure: the failure to focus on private sector development and the EU's refusal to open its markets to agricultural products. Another indication of this failure is noted by Ulgen: "Egypt, the region's top performer, created 514 new export categories over that period

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[179] Remarks by Carl Bildt 2011-05-09.
[180] Secondary data presented and analysed by Ulgen 2011-01-27.
[181] Ibid.
[182] Ulgen 2011-01-27.

[1996–2009], compared to 865 new categories in China, 714 categories in Turkey and 619 categories in Thailand. Every emerging market economy outperformed the North African countries".[183]

At the political level, the EU had by late spring 2011 promised nearly EUR 5.7 billion in support of the democracy process in North Africa. Before the G8 meeting in Paris in late May 2011, the European Commission officially promised another EUR 1.4 billion.[184] Moreover, in late June 2011, the EU Council expressed official support for all reform efforts in North Africa and the wider Middle East. Those governments engaged in reform processes will gain political and economic benefits in a classic carrot and stick approach.[185] These initiatives go beyond the strong support the EU has given specifically to humanitarian assistance and crisis management in relation to Libya.

In late May 2011, the EU reconfirmed its preparedness to support the democratic transitions in North Africa and the Arab world. Tunisia and Egypt were considered particularly important, but also other Arab countries such as Morocco (and Jordan). Maximum support was provided in the short, medium and long term.[186]

5.1.1.3 The AU/Africa perspective

The revolts in North Africa have two sides to them from the AU's perspective. On the one hand, the revolt gives hope to those democratic forces that see authoritarianism as a considerable political problem. On the other hand, the revolts have caused obstacles and a great deal of anxiety. In particular, events in Libya have caused concern in the AU. As is well known, Gaddafi and Libya have played an important role in the development of the African Union. Gaddafi has provided the organisation with strong financial backing, and perhaps equally importantly provided the continent with a clear vision towards further integration.[187] This political vision for Africa is likely to be lost should Gaddafi be removed from politics. The departure will remove much needed institutional and financial resources from the Union. Algeria, Egypt and Libya each contribute about 15 per cent of the AU's general budget. In this context, it is

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[183] Ibid.

[184] Social Watch 2011-06-29

[185] EU Commission and the High Representative of the CFSP: The envisioned support is noted in the Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: "A New Response to a Changing Neighbourhood" (2011)

[186] European Union "Remarks by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton ad the end of Foreign Affairs Council" 2011-05-23.

[187] This vision has every now and then been confronted by other visions of leading African countries (read South Africa) on a more slow-moving integration process. Others have also been sceptical towards his undemocratic ambitions in relation to the AU.

worth noting that three of the five largest contributors to the AU are Arab states (in addition to South Africa and Nigeria). The consequences of Gaddafi's departure and the continuing turmoil in Egypt and Tunisia are that AU integration will be slowed due to lack of financial support. The AU will have to look for external funding, making it more vulnerable to outside influences.

Overall, developments during the spring of 2011 proved to be a challenge for the AU in many ways. First, the sovereignty principle became a major challenge for the AU when tackling political developments. For instance, how should it handle a situation like a popular revolt when political change is not carried out through democratic elections? How should it react without interfering in domestic affairs of sovereign country facing major political breakdown? Another challenge for the AU was linked to handling unconstitutional changes of power. The AU has recently been proactive in coming up with ways to handle such instances, not least by the adoption of the constitutive act of the African Union.[188] The popular uprisings in North Africa to date have been unconstitutional, but have been to the benefit of the people involved in the revolt. How do these principles hold together? Politically, there may not be any real problems but legally there are likely to be major issues. Clearly, responses by the AU and the way it handles revolutions will have significance for future political developments among its member states.

The AU has been criticised by some commentators for responding too late to the popular uprising in North Africa. One line of criticism was that the slowness by the AU to respond to the crisis demonstrated that the African peace and security architecture was not able to cope with the crisis in Libya. On the other hand, there were good reasons for this inability to promptly engage: AU member states were not willing to side with the government or rebels until it was politically clear which side would come out the on top in the conflict. One counterargument is whether it is fair to expect a young organisation such as the AU to respond to the Libyan crisis, when a more mature actor such as the EU was itself very slow in responding. Moreover, despite the criticism of AU inactivity, when the crisis in Libya broke out on 15 February, the AU responded in only a matter of days by establishing an ad hoc committee.

A related question is whether the countries in the region will "look south" or in the direction of the wider Middle East. So far, this region has been considered exceptional, with its enduring stability and its notion of a shared Arab identity (recognising the existence of a number of ethnic groups and sects in the region). The region has also demonstrated itself to be exceptionally strategic for Western interests. In one important way, however, the question of a regional move is misplaced because individual countries will have to choose their own relationship with their southern neighbours. In this context, Egypt represents an

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[188] See Eriksson (2010)

exception, as it is likely to have no choice but to balance its relationship with the Middle East, particularly because of its proximity to Israel/the PA, Saudi Arabia and Iran, and the 'African continent' because it shares the Nile. Strategically, Egypt is also facing two "new" countries in the south by the division of Sudan, i.e. Sudan and South Sudan, of which the former has an Arab/Muslim identity. Morocco is not a member of the AU and has no real reason to engage with the nearby African region (besides in policy areas such as counterterrorism where it has its own stakes). Morocco resigned from the predecessor to the AU, Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 1984 in protest at the Western Sahara or the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) being given a seat at OAU meetings. With the transformation of the OAU into the AU, the situation had not changed significantly enough for Morocco to consider re-joining the continental actor. Instead, it became more interested, like Tunisia, in turning to Europe. Most importantly, however, seen in a long-term perspective, the developments in North Africa could help strengthen the AU peace and security architecture following a new view on support for popular call for freedom.[189]

5.2   Challenges ahead

North Africa is facing a number of fundamental challenges. The overall direction will be determined by country-specific dynamics. An examination of the main challenges confronting each state, with some reference to the path already taken, is set out below.

5.2.1   Tunisia

Significant steps have been taken by the Tunisian people to alter its political future by dealing with the remnants of Ben Ali's authoritarian policies. In the short run, the protests will have negative impact on the Tunisian economy, not least following a sharp economic fall of the tourism sector as well as decline in overall foreign direct investment due to security uncertainties. This will affect growth.[190] Economists at the African Development Bank suggest that economic growth in North Africa will be down to 0.7 per cent (previous years at 6-8 per cent growth). For Tunisia, a challenge ahead is to bring down unemployment. Another economic challenge, especially with aid-money coming in, is how to develop the country-side, areas previously neglected by the government. The political turbulence is likely to increase food prices and government subsidies to tackle it, leaving ground for public economic deficit.

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[189] Depending on the room for mediation granted to the AU by other international actors, such as the UN Security Council, and the success or political concessions it manages to achieve, the role and credibility of the continental organisation in future mediation could for example be strengthened.

[190] *Arab News.com* (article based on *Associated Press* news) 2011-07-04.

In terms of security and stability, the armed conflict in Libya is problematic for Tunisia. Nearly 400,000 refugees from Libya were hosted in Tunisia in mid 2011. A number of border incidents have occurred and are likely to occur for some time as Gaddafi loyalist will target fleeing opposition members. Tunisia's policy towards Libya is low-key, especially with Gaddafi's outspoken hatred of Tunisia following its ousting of Ben Ali. Algeria is disturbingly silent on Libya, a policy noted by Tunisia. Family members of Gaddafi have hinted gratitude for Algeria's support).

A challenge in terms of domestic security will be how to proceed with the reform of security forces, and especially the police force. The police corps was loyal to Ben Ali but now suffers from a legitimacy problem. Tunisia has called for international support on help with reform programs.

The far most pressing issue is the constitutional process. An election has been moved from July 24 to October 23 due to technical reasons. There are both domestic and foreign concerns over the role of Islamist parties, but the secular character of the popular uprising do not suggest, today at least, that a party like the al-Nahda has a large role to play in the sense that it will turn the entire state into a religious path. In fact, state and religion has a culture of being well-separated. The former Constitutional Democratic Rally (RCD) party is banned as is a Salafist Party. One problem that needs to be arranged is information dissemination, as public opinions suggest that the awareness of what registered parties stand for is low.[191]

Following the 23 October election, a constitutive Parliament will be elected. A new government will be formed on this parliamentary election. The Parliament's main task is to work through a new constitution. It will work for 6 months and then subject it to a popular referendum. A new parliament and possible Presidential elections are then expected to be held in mid 2012 (possible fall).

The third caretaker government currently running the country is further occupied with managing administrative leftovers from the previous regime. The court process of Ben Ali and his family is highly symbolic feature for Tunisians. The former President has already been convicted in his absence. In this context it is also worth noting that Tunisia is about to join the International Criminal Tribunal, ICC.

The government is also in the process of formulating a new foreign policy. So far, indications that Tunisia will normalize its relations with Israel have caused street demonstrations.

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[191] *Voice of America News.com* 2011-07-11.

5.2.2 Egypt

Street demonstrations in Egypt were not a *new* phenomenon prior to the events that unfolded in 2011. On the contrary, in recent decades a number of demonstrations and strikes had taken place, for various domestic reasons (e.g. trade union activism), but also because of international events (e.g. Israel's military operations in the Palestine Occupied Territories). For instance, in 2004 the *Egyptian Movement for Political Change* (i.e. the 'Kefaya movement') attracted large street crowds to protest against the government, a movement active throughout the years. In fact, media accounts have suggested that nearly 1,800 strikes were noted in 2007 alone and that there was a sharp increase in 2010 (albeit an election year).

What really sparked the Arab Spring in Egypt in 2011 has yet to be identified. However, critical events certainly included the events in Tunisia (demonstrations in Egypt were said to have been partly organised in Tunisia), the rigged November 2010 Egyptian parliamentary elections, during which a number of Egyptians were killed or imprisoned, and sectarian violence involving the Coptic community and subsequent attacks on churches.[192] Sectarian violence has also received international attention, such as reaction from the EU.[193]

The revolt in Egypt is likely to continue for some time, as the political change has led to advances for different interest groups. Demonstrators will continue to monitor how far and how fast reform processes are proceeding. Protestors are also likely to demand that a number of the decision makers associated with the former leadership step down from office, and will continue to protest until this has happened.

Following the departure of Mubarak, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces dissolved the Egyptian parliament and, on 20 March, a national referendum was held on a number of proposals to modify the constitution. Nearly 77 per cent voted yes to the proposals in an election in which nearly 41 per cent of Egyptians participated. No major irregularities have been reported.

A recent indication of the perceived slowness of the political reform was the second revolutionary rally held in late May 2011, during which protestors called for fast-track reforms. The success of Egypt in terms for moving from authoritarianism to democratic rule will be an important test-case for reforms across the Arab world.

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[192] *International Crisis Group* no 101 (2011).
[193] The European Union, "Statement by the High Representative Catherine Ashton on the sectarian violence in Egypt", 2011-03-10.

Moreover, demonstrations continued also during the summer of 2011 with continued demands for a complete reform of the security sector.[194] The process of dismantling and reforming the security sector had begun already in February but has been slow-moving.[195] The secret police led by the ministry of interior has now been replaced with a new 'national security sector' (apparatus). However, it remains unclear under which rules it will operate (some views are held that it should work under the guidelines of the parliament, as opposed to the government alone as was the situation under Mubarak). Moreover, in mid July the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, as a result of continued protests, removed 505 generals and 164 officers of the police from their job, allegedly because of their maltreatment of demonstrators during the spring.[196]

The immediate political challenge is how to satisfy the popular demand for change in the economic situation, which if not tackled could result in violence. Since the transition to democracy, Egypt has faced severe financial challenges. Its budget deficit is expected to reach 10 per cent of GDP and economic growth has fallen to 1 per cent (compared with the expected trend before the protests of an 8.4 per cent fiscal deficit and 5.5 per cent growth).[197] The year-round tourist economy has been severely affected by the demonstrations in the country. This has led to a decline in economic activity. Moreover, the crisis in Libya has meant that about one million Egyptians working there have been unable to send money home.[198] Economic grievances, in combination with high unemployment, increasing criminality and few police on the streets (many police have been slow to return to duty) could easily lead to increased societal tensions.

5.2.2.1 The Muslim Brotherhood

A test case for the progress of reforms will be the parliamentary elections, originally scheduled for September, later postponed to November 2011. Parliamentary representation will be particularly important as it will choose a 100-member committee to rewrite Egypt's constitution. Thereafter a Presidential election is expected to follow. Opposition parties claim that larger and more

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[194] There are three security sectors in Egypt of which the State Security Investigations Services has been subject of popular protests because of its function of protecting Mubarak. The other two includes the National Intelligence Agency and the Military Intelligence Agency. For more on this see: Sirrs's *A history of the Egyptian Intelligence Services (*2010).

[195] One aspect of this is that demonstrators destroyed or removed documentation held by the secret service working to protect Mubarak and his regime. A new website has reportedly also published a number of previously secret documents, see http://25leaks.com/.

[196] *BBC Wold News* 2011-07-13.

[197] See *White House Factsheet* 2011-05-18. See also Ahmed, 2011-05-19.

[198] *The Economist* 2011-03-05/11: 44.

established parties and the Muslim Brotherhood have political benefits of an early election process (given that they are already established).[199]

In mid-June 2011, the Muslim Brotherhood's *Freedom and Justice Party* and the well-established liberal party, *Wafd Party*, joined in an alliance, which is expected to win an outright majority. The *Freedom and Justice Party* is expected to win at least 20 per cent of the votes on their own. In June 2011, nearly 40 new political parties had been established.

The direction the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt (and the wider Middle East) takes will pose political challenges for any country aspiring to create room for democracy and human rights. The *Freedom and Justice Party* is well-organised and has a strong grassroots presence. In 2005, the Egyptian government allowed the *Freedom and Justice Party* to participate in national election (after having been forbidden to participate since the mid-1950's) and it managed to make a surprise win of nearly 20 per cent of the mandates in the Parliament. As a consequence, Mubarak prohibited it to participate in any future elections afraid of a possible loss to them. Harassments and arbitrary arrests followed. The government sponsored repression of the Muslim Brotherhood led it to participate in the 28 November 2010 election under "independent" candidates.[200]

Now, the question is if this movement will turn more radical in its rhetoric and ideology, or if it will become more politically inclusive, accommodating the quite secular aspirations of the demonstrators throughout North Africa. Clearly a government in Cairo built on the political foundation of Muslim Brotherhood ideology would have far-reaching implications for other parts of North Africa. An important factor in this context is the generational factor. Older members are more conservative, while younger members are more relaxed, albeit with a more radical youth core.[201] The competition among these will determine the Muslim Brotherhoods' future.

The Muslim Brotherhood has strong legitimacy in the Egyptian society. That in combination with loyalty, discipline and motivation suggests continued strong political influence. However, the role of women, the view on homosexuals and attitudes towards certain forms of human rights may invite domestic and international criticism. The question is how it will respond to such without loosing membership support.

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[199] It is worth noting here that the centrist-socialist party National Democratic Party/NLD (Mubarak's party) was ordered by Egyptian court to dissolve (this occurred on 16 April 2011). It remains unclear where former associates will turn politically.

[200] For more on the human rights situation during the November 2010 elections, see *Amnesty International* "Egypt: 'Shouting Slogans Into the Wind'" (2010).

[201] At the moment there are at least three ideological sub-branches of the movement: the older and conservative group, the pragmatists and the liberal and more mainstream group in which current Muslim Brotherhood parliamentarians are part.

It will also be exposed to competition from other more radical groups, such as the Salafists and Wahhabists, which are mainly located in Egypt. Radical Islamic groups were under strong political pressure under authoritarian rule in the countries that have experienced uprisings, and continue to be so in those countries where the revolt has not yet been successful. The question is whether they will take this opportunity to realise their goal of societal Islamisation.

5.2.2.2 The Military

With regard to the security forces in Egypt, their continued role and involvement will be an important marker of the democratic quality of Egyptian governance. However, as is noted by Ranstorp, an expert on international terrorism, regardless of how far the democratic turn goes in Egypt, threats to national security will always have to be dealt with.[202] It is important that the international community does not become too overoptimistic or expect too much – a change in the leadership will not necessarily mean that democracy immediately takes its place.

Throughout the first phase of political turmoil in Egypt, it was clear that the Egyptian army played an important role, acting as a barrier between Mubarak and the street protestors. The protestors subsequently managed to convince the military to topple Mubarak.[203] As is noted by the *International Crisis Group*, the military appears to have been guided by several principles, such as protecting stability, political and economic interests and preserving its reputation.[204] As noted above, the military is keen to demonstrate an official version that it does not want to shoulder the political responsibility as a caretaker government, yet informally it has not yet made any moves to distance itself from political and economic interests.[205]

In terms of the political challenges following the revolution, the Egyptian military appears, as noted above, to have no immediate interest in governing the country, and its idea is to let other actors take responsibility. It is highly likely that the direction taken by any post-Mubarak government will have direct political and symbolic consequences for the Egyptian people, the region and beyond. One scenario is that the military will play a similar role to that played by the military in Turkey, that is, as an informal force that will give its blessing to or veto different political options. Other commentators suggest that Turkey cannot

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[202] Interview with Professor Magnus Ranstorp at the Swedish Defence College, 2011-06-22.
[203] *The International Crisis Group*, no. 101 (2011).
[204] *The International Crisis Group*, no. 101 2011: 17.
[205] Ibid.

act as a model because its social and political structures are different, and Turkey is far more secular than states in North Africa.[206]

Of great concern is how far the military in Egypt (or in other North African countries that experienced revolt) is prepared to go in terms of allowing the state to become democratic. After all, the military elite in Egypt has, as a result of the popular uprising, been able to advance its position and influence. Thus, it is not likely that the army will step back without some political guarantees. Senior military officials also have certain economic privileges that they will maintain, and therefore have indirect political and economic interests in the society.[207] This in itself is not problematic as long as there is transparency and accountability, something not existing at the moment. Clearly, the military in Turkey seems far more ready to do so, as it steps in on those occasions when it considers politicians to be moving in non-liberal and religious directions. Magnus Norell, adjunct Scholar at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, suggest that the process could go in a similar direction to that in Pakistan, although not as profound (that is, that the army will continue to rule the country indirectly).[208] Another parallel could be Thailand, where the government is still much influenced by the military. However, Thailand (and states like Pakistan) has different social and political movements than Egypt does, why such parallels are not easily made. Moreover, the focus should not only be on the transitional government, but also on the role to be played by different actors and groups loyal to the old political system. It is worth noting that human rights abuses are continuing in Egypt, and that there have been a number of military trials of bloggers and demonstrators. Incidents of violence and torture by the security forces have also been reported.[209] Continued support by the EU and the United States for security sector reform is therefore an important element, not only for Egypt, but for all the countries and their respective services, in order to support professionalism, accountability and democracy.

Two scenarios are worth distinguishing here. The bright one suggests that regardless of the political course that the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces takes, there will be a generational change that is not likely to be aligned with old and conservative world-views but more in tune with forces of globalisations and interdependence. The Supreme Council of the Armed Forces has a high

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[206] Torun 2011: 1–2.

[207] As reported in Swedish media, the military has particular accounts for some of its services and commodities that are not taxed and goes straight into the military sector (most likely without transparency, see *Dagens Nyheter* 2011-07-18).

[208] Interview with Magnus Norell, adjunct Scholar at the *Washington Institute for Near East Policy* (Washington, US), 2011-06-13.

[209] See Amnesty International (2011-05-19).

percentage of older officers, which will soon have to be replaced and substituted with younger officers with different political references.[210]

The grimmer one is a future clash between reform prone democrats and an army keen on maintaining its political and economic privileges.

Partly connected to the above-mentioned challenges for Egypt's quality of governance in the immediate years to come will be how the revision of the constitution comes about. Constitutional uncertainties that follow the incoming president's revision of Egypt's constitution will cause political friction and tensions among different interest groups.

In its foreign relations, Egypt will have to respond to its insecure neighbourhood. A new state of South Sudan will change the dynamics with Sudan, to its west Libya has collapsed into civil war, and to its east the new reconciliation push between Fatah and Hamas and the prospect of a Unilateral Declaration of Independence are likely to create a new dynamic. With regard to Sudan and its other Nile-sharing neighbours, Egypt has begun to modify its policy, becoming more reconciliatory and avoiding the previous "arrogant" attitude. A shift in policy has already been noted. Although the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces officially declared it would maintain the peace agreement with Israel, the relationship with Israel may change and become more remote, but still politically correct.[211] For example, after Hamas approached the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces in Cairo in May 2011, the latter opened the Gaza border for some age groups and some goods. The situation in Gaza will play a significant role for any caretaker government in Egypt. If the peace process does not proceed, there is a chance that tensions with Israel will increase.[212] The border between Egypt and Israel (and the Gaza strip) had effectively been closed since 2007. However, Egypt has, as noted earlier, now allowed a reopening of that passage. In the short term, this will allow population movements and items to cross between Gaza and Egypt. It will also provide some infrastructural support to the Palestinian people, including its representatives such as Hamas.[213] In the long-term, this could potentially make Egypt more involved in Palestinian affairs, and more responsible for Israeli safety. Egypt will also gain more influence over Palestinian groups and as such potentially more leverage over anti-Israeli groups. Similarly, Iran's influence could diminish as groups such as Hamas become more responsible to Cairo.

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[210] Interview with Jan Hjärpe, Professor Emeritus, Lund University 2011-06-09.
[211] Ibid.
[212] Interview with Emin Poljarevic, researcher at the European University Institute, Florence, Italy, a specialist in Islamic movements in Egypt, 2011-06-14.
[213] It is not very probable that any new regime in Egypt is likely to favour Hamas given its sponsors overall interest.

Moreover, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces will have to maintain good relations with Saudi Arabia while also fostering better relations with Iran.[214] Relations with Saudi Arabia will be based on economic needs, not least because of the large number of Egyptian guest workers in the Gulf, and the relationship with Iran will be based on maintaining a more stable political environment. An interesting point noted by Professor Jan Hjärpe is that the younger generation in most Arab countries has different views on the nation state than perhaps older generations do. For younger people, the interest in preserving the nation state – be it Egypt or Israel – may not be as high as integrating a country in all its aspects into the global village.[215] It is worth noting though that there may be a different attitude between urban and rural citizens.

5.2.2.3 Other political and security challenges

Related to the election, there are also some concerns about possible election-related violence. In previous years there have been media reports about the existence of a market where hooligans can be bought to harass and intimidate political rallies. Violence is likely to occur between different parties, the question is how government ministries and security forces will respond to these.

Another immediate political and legal challenge for the Egyptian government (and its citizens) will be how to hold certain people accountable for their violations of human rights, both prior to and during the revolution. Members of the former ruling regime, including Mubarak's family, do not feel safe. Trials could not only be symbolic, but also become test cases of how far reform has penetrated the independence of the judiciary. In this context, there are a number of positive signs – of an independent judiciary, a free and fair press and less day-to-day harassment by the police. Much of the above mentioned challenges depend on the future role of the army.

5.2.3 Algeria

The popular uprising taking place in all North African countries has been least visible in Algeria. Despite reform promises by Bouteflika to revise the Algerian constitution (e.g. change of Presidential mandate from three to two), there are no signs of significant progress. Although demonstrations continued as late as in mid-July, there are not any signs of a 'popular momentum' as seen in the wider Maghrib and Mashriq. One important explanation is the experiences of the Algerian people of the civil war in the country. Also the conflict and collapse of Libya gave Algeria a reminder of the implications of popular protest.

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[214] As suggested by Magnus Norell, adjunct Scholar at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy (Washington, US), 2011-06-13.

[215] Interview with Jan Hjärpe, Professor Emeritus, Lund University, 2011-06-09.

In terms of security challenges ahead, the most imminent threat comes from a potential spill-over from the armed conflict in Libya. The government of Bouteflika has, as noted, so far kept a low profile in the conflict, though giving Gaddafi's regime its indirect support. Should the opposition in Libya seize Tripoli, the relationship with Alger is likely to get tense (there are already chilly relations with Tunisia and Morocco). With democratic governments in the region, and parliaments with more democratic accountability, the pressure on Algeria for further reforms may grow over time.

Besides potential spill-over from Libya, Algeria will continue to face Jihadist insurgency. Not only will the government in Algeria confront such movements domestically, but it will also face such challenges on a regional level, notably by groups such as the AQIM. The US and Algeria will continue to be close allies in the war on terror.

On a less immediate level, though not to be underestimated, lies continued ethnic grievances (especially by the Berber community vis-à-vis the state), general socio-economic challenges similar to other countries in the region, and security implications following severe impact of climate change as threats to the Algerian state and to general human security.

5.2.4 Morocco

On 1 July Moroccans voted on the king's proposal for constitutional reform. The reform proposal came in the light of a general backing by major western powers (e.g. supported by the US).[216] The referendum had nearly 98 per cent of the voters in favour of the proposal (and nearly 77 per cent participation of the electorates).[217] Yet, the real test case of the king's reform proposal will come later in the fall of 2011 when these amendments and adjustments are taken to parliament. Doing so will indicate whether the king's proposal has wings and not simply a desperate response to steer off opposition.

In the immediate reactions, moderate Islamists seem to have welcomed the proposal, while some elements of the 20 February Movement and Jihadist radicals turned down the proposal (demonstrators wanting further reform, while Jihadist wants a complete overthrow of the government).[218] The political process

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[216] US support of Morocco's Reform Process expressed in *Office of the Spokesman*, Fact Sheet, 2011-05-19.

[217] The referendum was heavily criticized by the Moroccan Human Rights Association (*Reuters* 2012-12-07). The referendum was heavily criticized by the Moroccan Human Rights Association. The EU on its part said it welcomed the "…positive outcome of the referendum on the new Constitution in Morocco and commend the peaceful and democratic spirit surrounding the vote", see the *European Union* 2011-07-02.

[218] In this context it is worth noting the view held by Zeghal, namely that Islam will continue to present in the public political discourse, as noted, "Islamists and state elites are not in dissonant

unfolding will obviously have symbolic bearing on other ongoing political processes in the region, notably Jordan, which is also a monarchy.

The Arab spring in Morocco has brought about new security dynamics domestically and for the region. Firstly, as indicated above, Morocco is likely to become more democratically accountable (though it will have a long road to consolidated democracy). This will have consequences for its domestic political landscape, e.g. the role of human rights, activities by previously outlawed Islamist parties, etc. Secondly, Morocco is likely to join the Gulf Cooperation Council (along with Jordan). One aspect of this is to gain support to buy off opposition movements.[219] This will give Gulf countries a greater sway in Morocco's foreign relations position (unclear how though). Thirdly, the conflict in Western Sahara will remain, but possibly with greater influence through political candidates in the Moroccan parliament (if becoming more democratic). Possibly, Polisario will have their voice more easily heard as a result of the Arab spring. Given the conflict in Libya and Algeria's alleged facilitation and support of the Polisario in Libya may either become a source for further tension between Morocco and Algeria or a source for future negotiations between the two governments on how to deal with the group.[220] The Polisario conflict also needs to be put in the context that both Morocco and Algeria in the end shares a common threat of the AQIM and therefore further cooperation is needed to solve existing tensions.

5.2.5 Libya and the 2011 civil war

Acting under Chapter VII, the UN Security Council on 26 February 2011 adopted Resolution 1970 (2011) after weeks of popular unrest across Libya. The resolution authorised mandatory action to isolate the Libyan regime following the indiscriminate use of violence against its own citizens. The resolution stipulated the implementation of an arms embargo, of a travel ban and assets freeze, referral of the situation to the International Criminal Court. Moreover, it included inter alia an end to violence and all attacks against civilians; the dispatch of a UN Special Envoy, as well as further involvement of the African

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states of mind regarding the public presence of Islam: both groups want the religion present in the public space and both seek to define a public Islam". The problem, as further noted by Zeghal is its form (Zeghal 2009: xii.).

[219] *Africa Confidential* 2011-06-10: 7.

[220] According to a previous Libyan official, Qaddafi is purportedly paying nearly 10,000 USD each to 450 Polisario fighters (As reported in *Agence Maghreb Arabe Presse* 2011-04-25).

Union and the Arab League, to uphold the resolution and effective search for peace; and for the imposition of a no-fly Zone.[221] Having ensured as best they could that Arab countries, their people and foremost the Libyan opposition that it would not view any forthcoming engagement in Libya as a crusade, in the days leading up to Resolution 1973 (2011) coalition members, mainly the US, UK and France (later NATO) enforced the imposition of a no-fly zone by military means. Following events on the ground that were about to tilt the military situation in favour of the Gaddafi regime, rebels and other Arab/Muslim commentators elsewhere in this stage urgently *called* for outside engagement. Since the (civil-) war began, both sides have suffered heavy losses. Yet, despite overwhelming support from the international coalition, the military campaign was in mid-July still pending.

Regardless of the current dynamic, the Interim National Council foresees three likely scenarios: 1. a liberated and unified Libya, 2. the internal disintegration of the Gaddafi regime, or 3. a divided Libya.[222] As the "day of peace" will come, steps to rebuild Libya will according to the oppositional Council have to include a number of elements of which some of the more important ones include a profound reform and re-build of the political and economic sector. In its vision for peace, i.e. "A Roadmap for Libya", the Council also foresees that a caretaking government and National Congress will have to be formed (two weeks after the regime's fall), lay ground for a National Committee of the Constitution (draft to be ready within 45 days), thereafter a referendum (within one month), later followed by parliamentary election (and presidential elections (2 months after parliamentary elections).

In terms of economic reconstruction, the view of the Interim National Council is that an international Marshall Plan for Libya could be supported. One element to gain economic support could come from the de-freezing of funds and assets held by the former regime (result of UN targeted sanctions).

For the future, Libya is likely to be subject to a far reaching *liberal peace agenda* once the armed conflict is terminated. This will most likely include: 1. re-building most of its government institutions; 2. a profound security sector reform process; 3. a Demobilisation and Re-integration of former combatants; 4. a process of national Reconciliation; 5. and a justice sector reform. In fact, the main challenge for a liberal peace will be related to rebuilding existing identities, from loyalty based mainly on family and tribe, towards a more a national Libyan identity. Before any of these programmes begins the nearly 218,000 internally displaced persons in Libya – as of mid July 2011 - may need to be re-located

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[221] See also Eriksson 2011: Long-term implications of adopting the no-fly zone over Libya (www.foi/asia).

[222] Taken from the *Interim National Council* "A vision of a Democratic Libya" 2011-03-29 and "A Roadmap for Libya". Documents presented at The Interim National Council Website (as well as in various international news-papers).

back home (estimates from the UNHCR). To that should be added the return of all Libyan's in displacement across North Africa.

5.2.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, governments in North Africa have taken different paths in confronting popular demands. In Tunisia, a caretaking government is currently in place and an expected political process to revise the constitution will commence after elections in October. The situation is in mid-July characterised as non-violent. In Egypt, constitutional amendments have already been made (although to a lesser degree than is expected for Tunisia) and elections are expected. Some election-related violence as well as sectarian violence is likely. The role of the military will be decisive for Egypt's democratization process. In Libya, the civil war is ongoing, without a clear time-limit. Violence is intense. An increasing number of governments have recognised the Libya National Transitional Council (LNTC) while increasing military support is provided.[223] This support also comes in the midst of ongoing mediation between the groups. In Algeria, the government has promised reforms, but together with the security services, it still keeps a firm grip on opposition. Human rights violations are widespread. Morocco is still experiencing street opposition and political reforms have been promised, but it is unclear if these are far-reaching enough. Also in Morocco, human rights violations are widespread. Whereas in some countries the first phase of the Arab revolutions is completed or have reached far (i.e. the formal ousting of authoritarian rulers), some are stuck (Algeria, Libya and Morocco), while other countries may be facing a second revolt, e.g. Egypt's dealing with the power of the Military Council. Meanwhile conflicts are lurking in the background, such as the continued threat by Jihadist groups and more long-term socio-economic threats (structurally based).[224]

5.3 Waking up to a new political and security environment

The region is waking up to a new phase filled with new regional and domestic dynamics. Not only are local and regional parties adjusting to events, but so are external actors. Foreign political, economic and military attention is increasing. Much of this attention is welcomed by the people, but some fears and criticisms are also being raised that the revolts could move out of the demonstrators' hands and into the hands of more empowered actors. This explains, for example, the

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[223] According to the National Transitional Council's website in late July 14 governments had given them their recognition. Other media sources suggest that nearly 31 governments has given their recognition.

[224] In this context also the security implications of climate change.

early reluctance by external actors to provide support to Gaddafi opposition forces, an attitude which later changed when military advances slowed against Gaddafi. Similarly, the large-scale economic support now being offered by many NGOs raises fears that elites in the country are likely to be the main beneficiaries, while the people (the middle and lower classes) see little benefit and even become economically stressed by the profound economic reforms. The implications of local dynamics will also change the region's own outlook. This will have implications for Europe, the wider Middle East and for Africa (the AU). A question for all the parties engaged is whether these implications and processes will lead to more or less political stability. For instance, an unstable Middle East could easily create a situation in which higher energy costs propel already high prices. This will have an impact on the United States, and also lead to higher food prices which could lead to further unrest.[225] Thus far, no major turbulence has been seen only stable progress with the demands made by the demonstrators.

In addition, new actors, political interests and new identities are being formed and becoming increasingly active. These are blended with existing actors and deep-rooted societal forces. An important question here is what turn political Islam, as well as Jihadist groups, will take. For the moment, it seems that mainstream political Islam is aligning itself with the democratic forces, while the support for Jihadist groups is increasingly waning. Radicals are likely to re-strategize and reorient themselves, possibly merging in new alliances. There are media reports suggesting that AQIM is becoming more active but in the Sahel area. There are also unconfirmed indications that AQIM is moving closer to becoming a criminal network in the area together with other Jihadist groups (al-Shabaab). This has recently attracted a more significant US presence in the area. Counterterrorism will continue to be an important activity.

The strong state surveillance of terrorists and potential terrorists that existed under Ben Ali and Hosni Mubarak is now gone.[226] Will this create more room for terrorists to operate, plan, train, and so on? If this is the case, terrorist groups may grow. On the other hand, bringing down authoritarian regimes and "puppets of the West" has been part of the rhetoric of Jihadist movements, and the new political reality undermines such rhetoric. This suggests that some underlying conditions for recruitment to terrorist groups may have been undermined. After all, democracy poses a dilemma for Islamic movements; increased participation in a democratic system could give groups more influence if organised, yet the more involved they get, the more they become part of a political system they generally tend to distrust. A third important aspect, however, is that the events in North Africa, using non-violent means, accomplished more in a few months than

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[225] *The New York Times* 2011-02-24.

[226] Algeria and Morocco will continue their strong counter-terrorism operations under an undemocratic umbrella.

terrorism had since it became more active in these countries. President Obama raised this point in his Middle East and North Africa speech: "Those shouts of human dignity are being heard across the region. And through the moral force of non-violence, the people of the region have achieved more change in six months than terrorists have accomplished in decades".[227] Care should be taken with such comparisons, however, as accomplishments can be understood in many different ways.

5.3.1 'New security challenges'

The dynamic in the region also calls for new security issues to enter and climb the security agenda. Energy, critical trade flows and climate change are some of these.

5.3.1.1 An emerging energy market?

The region is highly likely to become an important new energy market. Germany's recent decision to close its nuclear power plants has already led German policymakers to look at solar panel parks in North Africa. Clean energy flows from this region to Europe are no longer unthinkable. Spain has shown a similar interest. In the Eastern Mediterranean basin, not far north of Egypt, the largest gas-energy pocket in this decade was found in late 2010, and is already bringing actors into political friction (e.g. Israel, the PA, Lebanon, Turkey, Greece and Cyprus). How will Cairo deal with this?

Related to this, and given the market potential for European companies, it will be important to maintain secure trade routes. In addition, there is increasing trade interdependence, making securing critical infrastructure, such as harbours, electric plants, oil and gas production sites and communication bases, an important element in such an environment. Cargo transport through the Suez Canal has long been a strategic interest.

5.3.1.2 Climate change as a new security factor

As noted in this study some of the more immediate and structural challenges ahead concerns socio-economic developments. An area seldom associated with these obstacles, although intimately tied into the problematique, has to do with the impact of climate change. The implications of climate change on North Africa are profound and can thus lead to long-term instability. Clearly it will have an impact on human security, something which is also shown in the *Arab Human Development Report* (2009). For example, recent research suggests that North Africa is expected to be particularly badly affected (e.g. the Climate

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[227] *The White House.*2011-05-19.

Change Index). Changing weather patterns will have an impact on water poverty, desertification, accessibility of food, agriculture, and so on. This in turn will have an impact on intra- and interregional migration. For instance, Algeria alone is expected to lose some 7,000 hectares of arable land per year. Another example, noted by Jensen and Rasmussen (2010) (themselves citing recent research) is that a sea level rise of about 1 metre would affect over 10 per cent of the population and lead to a loss of 13 per cent of the nation's total land.[228] Developments foreseen in research findings like these will pose a profound challenge to any new government in the region. As governments are now tasked to tackle more profound social hurdles, there is a risk that long-term threats can fall into the back-seat.

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[228] Jensen and Rasmussen 2010: 20.

6 Conclusions and final reflections

In late June 2011, Paris inaugurated *Place Mohamed Bouazizi* in order to pay homage to the young vendor in Southern Tunisia who sparked the Arab Spring in 2011. As streets are symbolically renamed around the world to mark the historic events, upheavals in the Arab world continue. The many new rifts and the geopolitical events that followed opened up a number of new political, economic, social and military alternatives not only for the Arab people, but also for their neighbours and the wider international community. The question from a defence and security perspective is whether the current uprising in North Africa has contributed to making the region more or less stable, and the implications the popular uprising will have for the future security and stability of the region. This has also been the research question for this study.

Clearly, revolts in the region have taken many turns towards democracy. Authoritarian regimes have been toppled in Tunisia and Egypt, and other leaders are being seriously challenged in Algeria, Morocco and Libya. The processes are still ongoing and the end goal has not yet been reached, if the belief is that a liberal democratic society is the destination. Nearly six months since the start of the more immediate revolts, popular demonstrations may have relaxed but by no means stopped. Political and security contours are only beginning to take shape in that Arab governments will end up at different levels on a democratic scale – some more or less democratic while others will have much further still to travel. Overall, the main challenge, as is noted in this study and elsewhere, will be for new governments and political parties to meet the popular demands voiced in the various Arab capitals. This will obviously be very challenging. One element is the profound nature and the number of reforms required, but another is the speed at which they can be implemented. Some steps will have to be taken quickly in order to meet basic demands. Others require the complete uprooting of state institutions and cultures.

The positive signs so far are that popular referendums and elections are being held to elect new caretaker parliaments and governments. The negative sign, is as noted by commentators following events that Mubarak and Ben Ali may be gone, but the individuals and institutions overseeing the transitions remain the same—the old cronies of the former presidents and the pillars of the old regimes.[229] How old and new actors position themselves to safeguard new and old interests will be an important factor, but not the only one. Disturbing reports indicate continued abuses of human rights in all countries.

This study has sought to present some factors that conditioned the result of the Arab Spring in North Africa, and those that might be relevant to a subsequent

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[229] Ottaway and Ottaway 2011-02-28.

post-authoritarian phase. On a general level, one of the more profound elements of the Arab revolts was the general identity crisis in the Arab world that resulted from globalization. Pre- and post-modern ways of living met, became a source of tension and presented a challenge to be overcome. Moreover, a combination of authoritarian rule, patrimonialism, Islamism, poverty, inequality and fear of the state, that is, insecurity, were elements that led to the popular uprising and have paved the way for a democratic turn in the region. How these general issues are tackled politically will be the centre of attention on the political scene for years to come. Clearly, legal reforms and support for state building will be required.

The popular revolts were also shaped by a number of profound economic challenges demonstrated by popular grievances. There may have been wealth and economic growth in most of the countries in North Africa. However, the benefits of this were not evenly spread, but concentrated in the hands of a few. The management of these conditions will shape the political process moving forward. As is observed in this study, it is unlikely that each country will be able to master this alone. International political and economic support is needed and the region has begun to receive such assistance.

The Libyan state will pose a considerable challenge not only for coming Libyan generations, but also for the wider international community. Most immediately, concerned actors will have to engage in small-arms collection programs, de-mining and other disarmament programmes may also be needed. Overall, a down-scaling of the size of the security forces will be much needed not only to restore government confidence, but also because they are probably very costly. This, however, will be for the national parliaments to decide.

In sum, the region was, prior to the revolts, experiencing few formal armed conflicts. The main overriding challenges were security challenges posed by radical Islamist groups. These threats were dealt with in all the countries. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that radical Islam was by no means the only threat. Algeria has at times had to deal with the Berber community, Egypt has had to deal with sectarian violence, Tunisia has had to deal with various left wing and communist groups (also active in the contemporary uprisings), and Libya has had to counter threats from different tribes. As is observed above, radical Islam is still very much alive, most notably in the form of al-Qaida in the Maghreb. It remains unclear whether this group will use its base to strike against governments in the region or use these countries as a base to mount attacks against Western interests.

Beyond the immediate region, there are several new security uncertainties lurking in the background, which once again could change the way we perceive the dynamics. Examples of such indirect uncertainties include the impact of climate change, so-called peak oil in Saudi Arabia, Iran-Israel nuclear weapons rivalry, the impact on trade flows (critical security flows) and the recognition of a Palestinian state.

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Whether the current uprising in North Africa has contributed to making the region more or less stable in terms of security can be answered differently depending on what level of analysis one uses. Seen from a human security perspective, different countries will provide different environments. Clearly, these human security environments are not static but constantly changing. In Tunisia and Egypt, human rights and the principles of legal security and due process will be most far reaching. The human security situation is currently very dire in conflict affected areas, e.g. in Libya, Morocco and Western Sahara. Algeria and Morocco, on the other hand, have made some democratic progress as a result of the demonstrations, but the human security environment has not significantly changed for its people. It is worth noting, however, that different groups in each country may have better or worse relations with their governments. None of the governments engages in daily physical abuse in public spaces (as in Iran), but the indirect presence of security forces or secret services might be a continued source of stress for democracy activists and citizens in general.

At the level of the state, the role of military and security actors will continue to be a source of uncertainty for all governments in the region. (The fate of Libya is still unclear.) Will military leaders allow a democratic turn while continuing to exercise power informally? Although the survival of the state may at times depend on military protection, influence in the daily political and economic affairs of the country is likely to be problematic. Another security problem for the stability of the state could come from continued challenges by different societal and political party interests. Continued demonstrations may lead to paralysing reform efforts. One considerable challenge is likely to come from radical Islamist groups, in different shapes and forms. These will continue to be dealt with like any other national security threat, although hopefully with greater legal protection in the civil courts – and not in military courts.

With regard to regional security, the fact that some authoritarian regimes have fallen, but others remain is likely to lead to future friction. Egypt, Tunisia and perhaps Libya will probably move on to a democratic path, while Algeria and Morocco will proceed more slowly. The civil war in Libya could easily attract regional governments to engage in support of either side, prompting new political tensions. Any such animosity would, as throughout history, primarily be between governments and not necessarily between the Arab people in the region. Nonetheless, while there are reasons to believe that there may be friction between the more democratic and the authoritarian states in the region, there are also grounds to believe that there may be further integration. For a start, there is probably great interest among most stakeholders in the Arab revolt in future economic development.

Last but not least, the developments in the region will be with us for some time to come. This suggests that policy resources and attention will have to be

redirected from other places, given the importance of the region's future. Failure to provide much needed support to the region will be detrimental not only to the region and its people but also to the region's neighbours.

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