

After Mubarak, What's Next for Egypt?

Feb 6, 2011



Articles & Testimony

Dina Guirguis joined other experts in charting a course for post-Mubarak Egypt in a special Washington Post feature on Sunday, February 6, 2011.

In its Sunday "Topic A" feature on February 6, 2011, the Washington Post asked experts what should happen in Egypt after President Hosni Mubarak leaves office. Below is a response by The Washington Institute's Dina Guirguis; read (<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2011/02/04/AR2011020406581.html>) additional responses by Michele Dunne, John Bolton, Newt Gingrich, Shadi Hamid, Aaron David Miller, and Salman Shaikh at the Post's website.

Egyptians seek a democratic transformation, not another military dictatorship or a theocracy. Hosni Mubarak should transfer his presidential powers and step down. A transitional national unity government representing diverse political forces and composed of respected independent figures should be installed; their first order of business should be to lift Egypt's notorious "emergency" law, with which Mubarak has governed the country for 30 years. Next, they should approve the formation of a committee of independent legal experts to draft a new constitution enshrining principles of true citizenship, religious and political pluralism, and the civil (non-religious) nature of the Egyptian state. The military should preserve and protect Egypt's newly drafted constitution and the civil nature of the state.

Egypt's two national legislative bodies, the Shura Council and People's Assembly, should be dissolved, as their current composition is the result of elections marred by substantial documented irregularities. The government should establish a timetable to hold both parliamentary and presidential elections. Meanwhile, the transitional government should rapidly move toward opening up the political space, through permitting and encouraging free media, embracing civil society, ensuring the judiciary's independence, and relaxing laws governing the establishment and operation of political parties. The new government should likewise move toward restructuring the state security apparatus and remove its jurisdiction over political matters, such as sectarian violence.

Dina Guirguis is the Keston research fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy and former executive director of Voices for a Democratic Egypt. ❖

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