Egypt's Fragile Stability

Jan 25, 2011

Articles & Testimony

Egypt, long a pillar of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East, faces an imminent transition -- not only politically but societally. In the fall of 2011, Egypt will hold its second ever multi-candidate presidential elections. This will follow recent parliamentary elections that served as a bellwether for next year's scheduled presidential elections and determined who can run against the 82-year-old President Mubarak for his sixth term should he choose to run. As the political transition nears, Egypt is becoming increasingly authoritarian, sectarian and politically exclusionary, even as Egyptian society becomes more restless. The interaction of these twin developments will have ripple effects throughout the entire region.

In Washington, the reality of the situation is slowly dawning but the Obama Administration remains unable or unwilling to find and/or use tools of leverage to substantively engage the Egyptian regime on critical issues of domestic reform. During his recent speech at the UN General Assembly last September, President Obama articulated a renewed commitment to democracy and human rights within a broader security paradigm that recognizes nations' domestic stability as integral to the role they play, for better or for worse, in the international community. Now -- at the moment of Egypt's first potential political transition in 30 years -- is the time for the U.S. to act on these stated values. Not only is it the right thing to do; ultimately it is in the United States' national security interest....

Dina Guirguis is the Keston Family research fellow in The Washington Institute's Project Fikra: Defeating Extremism through the Power of Ideas. **(/templateI02.php?SID=24&newActiveSubNav=Project%20Fikra%3A%20Defeating%20Extremism%20through%20the%20Power%20of%20Ideas&activeSubNavLink=templateI02.php%3FSID%3D24&n**

Democracy & Society

RECOMMENDED

BRIEF ANALYSIS

Tracking Anti-U.S. Strikes in Iraq and Syria During the Gaza Crisis

May 4, 2024
Michael Knights,
Amir al-Kaabi,
Hamdi Malik
(/policy-analysis/tracking-anti-us-strikes-iraq-and-syria-during-gaza-crisis)

BRIEF ANALYSIS

Is Kataib Hezbollah Behind the Saraya al-Ashtar Claimed Attack on Israel?

May 4, 2024
Michael Knights,
Amir al-Kaabi,
Hamdi Malik
(/policy-analysis/kataib-hezbollah-behind-saraya-al-ashtar-claimed-attack-israel)

BRIEF ANALYSIS

Nuclear Agency Chief Visits Iran: Expectations and Next Steps

May 3, 2024
Simon Henderson
(/policy-analysis/nuclear-agency-chief-visits-iran-expectations-and-next-steps)

TOPICS

Arab & Islamic Politics (/policy-analysis/arab-islamic-politics)
Democracy & Reform (/policy-analysis/democracy-reform)
U.S. Policy (/policy-analysis/us-policy)

REGIONS & COUNTRIES

Egypt (/policy-analysis/egypt)