

## Ten Years Since the Arab Spring: What Changed?

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### Introduction

For decades, the Arab region has suffered from lack of democracy and social justice, and was controlled by dictatorships that prevented all parties and powers from their right to take part in the political scene. As a result, the public and other civil society organizations were unpleasant with the situation which gave strong motive to the people to rebel and demand full civil rights.

The regimes in the Arab region have sought suppressing any opposition that would rise against the established rule, and have spread fear and forced silence among their rivals. In addition, the regimes used all forms of torture against these peoples. The corruption of these regimes has resulted in very difficult conditions of the peoples at political, social, cultural, security, and most importantly, economic levels, which enraged the people against their rulers.

This rage was soon turned into revolutionary acts in the streets. It started in Tunisia, moved to Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Syria, Iraq, Algeria, Bahrain and Morocco. The revolutions in these areas took different paths; some of them kept a peaceful approach while others were faced with militarized response which resulted in bloodshed and destruction of assets that made the countries retreat decades behind.

This study examines the Arab Spring revolutions 10 years after their conduct. It highlights the most important factors and motives that caused their breakouts, and describes the most important events, accomplishments and failures. It also presents the international role and positions, and offers an evaluation of such revolutions and field engagements.

### Topic One: Arab Revolutions' Reasons and Motives

The Arab regimes have excluded any groups that attempt to engage in the political scene. The regimes' measures created a gap between the authorities and the people, which made the latter very displeased.

The autocratic Arab regimes led to corruption and absence of accountability and transparency. The economic, social, political, right, and security conditions deteriorated and led to a popular outburst that rejects the collapse of the entire national system<sup>(1)</sup>.

The key factors that led to the break out of the revolutions in the Arab states can be listed into the following:

**First: Internal Reasons:** These constitute the main element in the outburst of the revolutions because they directly influence the communities where the revolutions took place.

1. Social and economic reasons: Arab communities have long suffered from difficult social and economic conditions such as:
  - The spread of extreme poverty and increase in unemployment rates.
  - Social underdevelopment.
  - Debt crises.
  - Decline in per capita income.
  - Financial and administrative corruption.
  - Disparity in the distribution of wealth and increase in gap between classes<sup>(2)</sup>.

The international institutes have published statistics showing the unemployment rate reaching 15% and estimations of increase to 25% in the coming decade<sup>(3)</sup>.

2. Political Reasons: The Arab regimes have followed a systematic practice that aimed to destroy the political environment at all levels<sup>(4)</sup>. The most notable results of such practices are:

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<sup>(1)</sup> Al-Jaburi, Khalaf, **Arab Spring Revolutions and Their Impact on the State**, Alraidain of Law, Mosul University, pp. 168-172.

<sup>(2)(2)</sup> Ayasra, Thaer, Main Factors Leading to Eruption of Protests and Revolutions in the Arab Spring states 2009-2011, the University of Jordan, 2016, p. 2.

<sup>(3)</sup> Al-Asmar, Waddaj, the Impact of the Arab Spring on the Occupational Role of 'Israel', An-Najah National University, Nablus, pp. 108-111.

<sup>(4)</sup> Al-Nweishi, Mohsen, the Arab Spring Revolution: Reality and Expectations, TRT Arab, December 26, 2020.

- The disappearance of political pluralism, peaceful transfer of power, and freedom to exercise political representation<sup>(1)</sup>.
  - Authoritarian rule over the people and management of the country's affairs disregarding the will of the people.
  - The weakening of the social fabric, breaking of national unity, and practicing discrimination against the people.
  - The control of the ruling elite over the major positions of the state which increases their level of power.
  - The mixture of the legislative, executive and judiciary authorities in what serves the interests of the ruling regime.
  - The absence of accountability and spread of corruption at all political levels<sup>(2)</sup>.
3. Security Reasons: The ruling regimes in the Arab Spring states used oppressive measures and police force to silence their opponents. Some of these methods are:
- Torturing and depriving the opponents from their rights with complete disregard of the law.
  - Exercising arbitrary detention and enforced disappearance.
  - Imprisoning them for long periods of time without charging or building cases against them.
  - Depriving the arrested and opponents from their right to defend themselves before the court.
  - Imposing securing censorship and suppressing the freedom of expression and press<sup>(3)</sup>.

In summary, as a result to corruption, unemployment and tyranny; the people resorted to the streets in order to overcome the economic, social and political

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<sup>(1)</sup> Al-Asadi, Tamara, Al-Shabout, Mohammed, Storm of Change: The Arab Spring and Political Transformations in the Arab Region, the Democratic Arab Center for Strategic, Political and Economic Studies, Berlin, 2018, p. 12.

<sup>(2)</sup> Bin Qaddur, Eman, the Other Face of Globalization: the Arab Spring an Example, the University of Abou Bakr Belkaïd, 2014, pp. 106-107.

<sup>(3)</sup> Ibid.

sufferings that have been going for decades. It is in human nature to face injustice and oppression and fight for freedom and gain of their rights.

## **Second: External Reasons**

The most influential external factors were as follows:

1. American intervention in Arab countries' internal affairs: The Arab regimes are perceived as submitting to American power and interests in the region at the expense of the Arab countries' main interests.
2. Arab countries bias to new alliances: This is clear in the countries supported by Iran and Russia for ideological or sectarian reasons. This behavior generates emotions of racism and discrimination for marginalized groups in the Arab communities.
3. The revolution in media and communications: The information revolution contributed to the development of ideological, cultural and right platforms that do not submit to the control of the ruling regimes. In addition, the platforms and technologies have created virtual communities for the people to convey their own messages and voices<sup>(1)</sup>.

Lots of publications, preceding the Arab Spring, described the undemocratic conditions and tyranny in the Arab states, how the regimes used some formal reformation to calm their peoples, how they passed down the rule among themselves and how they either bribed or contained the opponents. The authors of such publications lived a state of surprise, which reflects the unfamiliarity of the Arab Spring in the Arab communities whose awareness and abilities were not well predicted<sup>(2)</sup>.

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<sup>(1)</sup> Ibid: Al-Asadi, and A-Shabout, Storm of Change: The Arab Spring and Political Transformations in the Arab Region, pp. 13-14.

<sup>(2)</sup> Al-Afandi, Abdelwahhab, Documenting Televised Revolution Incidents: Presence of Visuals and Absence of Insight in Understanding the Truths about the Arab Spring, Siyasat Arabiya Journal, 18, January 2016, pp. 177-178.

## Topic Two: Most Prominent Arab Spring Stops

The Arab Spring revolutions took place in several countries, not just one. Most Arab states suffered from injustice and corrupt regimes which led to the eruption of revolutions across the nation. One of the most representing results of the Arab Spring is that the country that suffered most from injustice and control of the police state was the first to break past fear and rebelled against its rulers.

### First: Most Prominent Arab Spring Revolutions

#### Tunisian Revolution: The Beginning

The bad economic, political and security conditions in Tunisia enraged the people against the regime as the poverty and unemployment rates rose very high. On December 17, 2010, Mohamed Bouaziz, a Tunisian street vendor, set himself on fire protesting against the police' harassments<sup>(1)</sup>.

Bouaziz died a few days later becoming the catalyst that triggered protests and clashes with security forces in Sidi Bouzid city. The protests then called against the poor conditions the people had been suffering from, and later called against Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, Tunisian President at the time. He was toppled and he fled to Riyadh after ten days of protests hence making Tunisia the first country to revolt against its ruling regime<sup>(2)</sup>.

The Tunisian revolution, also called the Jasmine Revolution, inspired other Arab countries - such as Egypt, Libya, Syria and Yemen - that had also been suffering from corruption and injustice. The protests and demonstrations filled the streets of Cairo, Tripoli, Damascus and Sana'a.

#### Egyptian Revolution

The conditions surrounding the Egyptian revolution were somewhat different from earlier ones. Unlike the Tunisian revolution, it was not completely spontaneous. Several revolutionary and youth powers mobilized the crowds to gather in the

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<sup>(1)</sup> Most Prominent Arab Spring Stops, Euronews Network, December 17, 2020.

<sup>(2)</sup> Ibid.



Egyptian squares. These powers chose January 25, 2011 as the date for the demonstration as it coincided with the National Police Day in Egypt. The most famous groups calling for the revolution are We are all Khalid Said<sup>(1)</sup>, Rasd News Network, April 6 Youth Movement, Kefaya (that's enough) and others<sup>(2)</sup>.

The Egyptians chanted for freedom, and economic and social reformation. The poverty rate reached 40%<sup>(3)</sup> towards the end of 2010 in Egypt. Thousands of Egyptians gathered in the streets calling for 'Bread, Freedom, and Social Justice'; the Al-Tahrir Square became the center of all protests. The chants then changed to 'the People Want to Bring down the Regime' after having faced oppressive security bodies<sup>(4)</sup>. In two days only, 10 Egyptians had been killed<sup>(5)</sup>.

After about two weeks, the Egyptian President Husni Mubarak announced his resignation on February 11 after having ruled Egypt for about 30 years. The authority then became in the hands of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces. At least 850 Egyptians had been killed by the oppressive measures of the army and police<sup>(6)</sup>.

## Libyan Revolution

The Libyans were third to follow Egypt and Tunisia. The Libyan youth, aspiring for freedom and social and civil rights, was inspired to head to the streets as well. The economic situation in Libya was somewhat good. However, Colonel Muammar Al-Gaddafi had greatly restricted the people's freedoms and practice of politics in an oil-reserving country, and permitted assassination operations and forced disappearance of opponents<sup>(7)</sup>.

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<sup>(1)</sup> It was named after a youngster called Khalid Said who was killed by the police in Alexandria. The police had beaten him violently in front of the passersby on June 6, 2010.

<sup>(2)</sup> Abdel-Ghaffar, Faisal, the Arab Spring, Dar Ajandaria for Publishing and Distribution, Amman, 2016, p. 119.

<sup>(3)</sup> Ibid: p. 122.

<sup>(4)</sup> Abu Rizik, Mohammed, Ten Years since the Arab Spring: Fallen Regimes and UAE's Wicked Role, Alkhaleej Online, December 20, 2020.

<sup>(5)</sup> Shibr, Salah, the Arab Spring Revolutions: Inside View, Rwafeed Publishing, Baghdad, p. 331.

<sup>(6)</sup> Ibid: Most Prominent Arab Spring Stops, Euronews Network.

<sup>(7)</sup> Ibid: Al-Asadi, and A-Shabout, Storm of Change: The Arab Spring and Political Transformations in the Arab Region, p. 123.

On February 15, 2011, the Libyans gathered in the streets demanding for the fall-down of President Gaddafi and for obtaining their freedoms, democracy, peaceful rotation of authority, and enablement of all community groups to engage in politics. Al-Gaddafi and his military regime rejected the demands of the protesters and preferred using security bodies to oppress them. Hundreds of Libyans died<sup>(1)</sup>.

The rebels in Libya announced on October 20, 2011 the death of Al-Gaddafi in his hometown in Sirte after 8 months of battle between the revolutionary forces and the regime. Until this moment, the Libyan powers and military bodies are in constant conflict receiving support from external allies. As a result, Libya became a field for the influencers who fund these militants to settle their scores<sup>(2)</sup>.

## **Yemini Revolution**

The Yemini revolution's experience was greatly similar to the Libyan one. The protests started peacefully demanding good living conditions and rights. Yemen is internationally known as one of the most corrupted states according to the transparency international report. The Yemini regime insisted on confronting the protestors with fire which spread negative emotions forcing some revolutionary powers to militarize the protests and attack governmental interests in the state<sup>(3)</sup>.

The confrontations between the Yemini regime and rebels started affecting people's lives, and resulted in the death of over 270 Yeminis in less than a year. There was an assassination attempt of the president himself in early June in 2011 causing him a severe injury. At the end, the powers decided on forming a transitional government under Gulf sponsorship headed by Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi. Yemen remains unstable until this day<sup>(4)</sup>.

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<sup>(1)</sup> Ibid: Abu Rizik, Ten Years since the Arab Spring: Fallen Regimes and UAE's Wicked Role.

<sup>(2)</sup> What is Left of the Arab Spring after Ten Years? Swissinfo, November 23, 2020.

<sup>(3)</sup> Ibid: Abdel-Ghaffar, the Arab Spring, p. 105.

<sup>(4)</sup> Ibid: pp. 111-112.

## Syrian Revolution

The Syrian revolution started late as the Syrian regime had stronger control over the citizens. On March 6, 2011, the first signs appeared as some students in Daraa promised to bring down Al-Assad regime using ‘You’re Next Doc’ as their slogan. The security bodies were harsh to the students; arresting and torturing them which triggered protests demanding their release. The protests then called for bringing down the regime and regaining freedom<sup>(1)</sup>.

As the security bodies in Syria used fire against the protestors, several army leaders resigned and revolutionary committees were formed to use weapons against the regime’s forces. Militarizing the revolution led to the death of over 380,000 Syrians<sup>(2)</sup>.

## Contained Revolutions

Other countries witnessed revolutions and protests through which people demanded social and political reforms. However, the regimes managed to contain the rebels whether with force or through making political reforms, raising wages and handling some life issues.

In Bahrain, protests were started in Pearl Roundabouts in February 2011 demanding political reforms. However, the authorities used force, killed 4 protesters and wounded 200 others. A state of emergency was declared for three months, and the authorities received assistance from Saudi and Emirati forces to oppress the revolution<sup>(3)</sup>. In Morocco and Algeria, the protesters were offered governmental grants and promised of ministerial reforms<sup>(4)</sup>.

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<sup>(1)</sup> Ibid: Most Prominent Arab Spring Stops, Euronews Network.

<sup>(2)</sup> Ibid.

<sup>(3)</sup> Ibid: What is Left of the Arab Spring after Ten Years? Swissinfo.

<sup>(4)</sup> Ten Years Since the Arab Spring ‘the Unrealized Dream’, France 24, November 24, 2020.



## Second: Features of the Arab Spring Revolutions

The Arab Spring revolutions were characterized for the following:

1. **Spontaneity:** The revolutions were the result of living under great pressure and overcoming fear. The peoples realized they were strong and jointly capable of confronting the totalitarian regimes.
2. **Absence of Specific Mature Visions or Objectives:** The revolutions did not have a specific and clear strategic program to make real changes, and this is probably due to the fast-paced events and quick results of the revolutions.
3. **Absence of Comprehensive Leadership:** The oppressive measures in the Arab Spring countries resulting in eliminating opposition or powers to handle the stage that follows the fall of the regimes. The political conditions did not produce any inspiring leaders who could be accepted and followed by the rebels.
4. **Short-term Objectives without Strategic Goals:** The spontaneity of the revolution and absence of leadership led to the preparation of short-term objectives. The demands were justice, dignity, freedom, social justice and dignified living<sup>(1)</sup>.

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Initiatives Centre

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<sup>(1)</sup> Ibid: Waddaj, the Impact of the Arab Spring on the Occupational Role of 'Israel'.

## Topic Three: International and Regional Positions on Arab Revolutions

The international and regional position on the Arab Spring revolutions varied. While some perceived the Arab Spring as prestigious transformation in the Arab societies which longed for freedom and social justice, others saw it as a divergence from the designed path for the Arab peoples who are supposed to be under control and pressure. A third perception was seeing the revolutions as the achievement of foreign ambitions and agendas at the expense of Arab countries<sup>(1)</sup>.

### The American and Western Position

At first, the westerns decided to remain silent and observe the events of the first wave of revolutions. It even turned a deaf ear to the peoples' revolutions and demands, and was not brave enough to support them and help them achieve their rightful demands<sup>(2)</sup>.

Their silence was soon turned into action against the revolutions. The western regimes recognized the military-coup in Egypt and accepted the rule of Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi after the death of over 1000 protesters. The American Administration approved and supported Al-Sisi's regime<sup>(3)</sup>. France played a key role in legitimizing Khalifa Haftar, the Libyan criminal, and President Macron presented the Legion of Honor to Al-Sisi last year<sup>(4)</sup>.

Generally, the most notable part about the western behavior is their immoral hypocrisy as they presented themselves as protectors of democracy and human rights yet did not support the democratic transformation in the Arab Spring countries. In fact, some western governments supported the totalitarian Arab regimes<sup>(5)</sup>.

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<sup>(1)</sup> Al-Zein, Hassan, the Arab Spring: Most Recent Middle East Operations, Dar Alklem Aljadid, Beirut, 2013, pp. 28-30.

<sup>(2)</sup> 10 Years Since the Arab Spring: How the West Wasted the Chance to Support Region's Aspirations, Arabic Post website, December 8, 2020.

<sup>(3)</sup> Al-Anani, Khalil, Insights on the Arab Spring, Al-Jazeera, December 20, 2020.

<sup>(4)</sup> 10 Years since the Arab Spring: American Magazine Exposes Westerns' Involvement and Siege on the Arab World, Orient News Network, December 19, 2020.

<sup>(5)</sup> Ibid: Al-Anani, Insights on the Arab Spring.

Europe also failed to contribute effectively to the victory of the revolutions. It stood by and observed from a distance giving minor aids that could not prevent the collapse of economy nor bridge the social gaps. The countries' encouraging statements were never translated into actual work<sup>(1)</sup>.

## **Qatar, Turkey and the Muslim Brotherhood**

The westerns' behavior paved the path for some people's perception of the Arab Spring as an American scheme backing their argument with the conspiracy theory and America's supposed support to the Muslim Brotherhood and its regional wings. The rebels were also accused of exploiting the people's demands in inciting chaos, violence and destruction. Accusations are currently being directed at Qatar and Turkey which still embrace the opposition who had fled their countries to escape imprisonment and torture<sup>(2)</sup>.

## **Russia and the Shia**

The Syrian regime aligned itself with its Shia origin in Iran calling for a sectarian war and paving the road for a deep division among the groups of the Syrian people. It resulted in the displacement of half of the Syrian population to the countries surrounding Syria. Syria became an open space for regional and international powers related to Iran, be it Russia, the Iranians or the Iraqis with Shia origins<sup>(3)</sup>.

Al-Assad's call for protection provided Russia with a huge opportunity to restore its regional and international position. It became a powerful player in the Syrian arena, among other powers such as Turkey and the USA<sup>(4)</sup>.

The Syrian revolution proved itself as the biggest loser in the Arab Spring. The revolution that started by the people against the dictatorial regime ended with the martyrdom of hundreds of thousands and displacement of millions. The sectarian regime of Syria made Syria the home of everyone except for its citizens. Syria became

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<sup>(1)</sup> Assburg, Muriel, the EU and the Arab Spring: Rhetoric Vs. Politics, *Siyasat Arabiya*, (26), May 2017, p. 49.

<sup>(2)</sup> Khouri, Rafik, From the Arab Spring to Regional Winter, *Amad Media*, August 7, 2020.

<sup>(3)</sup> A Decade Since the Arab Spring: What Changed? *Noonpost*, December 26, 2020.

<sup>(4)</sup> Ibid.

hostage to the politics of the regional powers, and lost its independent identity and sovereignty<sup>(1)</sup>.

## **Gulf Regimes and Counter-Revolution**

The Arab Spring revolutions directly threatened the Gulf crowns that have been in rule for decades. These oil countries feared the spread of the revolutions in their territories as well. They immediately carried out counter-campaigns against any opposition that would threaten the singular rule of their regimes. However, such measures were not enough. The revolutions continued to inspire the peoples of these countries which led to the attempt of bringing them down in their environments<sup>(2)</sup>.

The UAE and Saudi Arabia were clearly present in Egypt and showed their support to Al-Sisi's regime at the expense of the revolution and rebels. They even, one way or another, intervened in the sovereign decision of Egypt, supported the war criminal Khalifa Haftar who led the counter-revolution in Libya<sup>(3)</sup>. In addition, they focused their efforts on destroying any accomplishments of the Tunisian revolution through supporting the opposition and officials in the former regime<sup>(4)</sup>.

## **'Israel': Closely Observing**

The occupation observed the Arab Spring closely. The Zionist leaders did not fear any sudden accomplishments of the revolutions nor their fast pace. The occupation's estimations show the path of the Arab Spring revolutions as temporarily hindered but not permanently. The revolutions may once again break out unexpectedly and could be even more powerful than before<sup>(5)</sup>.

The occupation dealt with the revolutions wisely and calmly. After 10 years of the Arab Spring, the occupation concluded official normalization agreements with the

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<sup>(1)</sup> The Revolution Proved Everything Was Possible: 10 Years Since the Arab Spring, Irfaa Sawtak network, December 19, 2020.

<sup>(2)</sup> Harb, Ali, War on Revolutions in the Arab World: From System to Network, Arab Scientific Publishers, Beirut, 2012, pp. 59-60.

<sup>(3)</sup> Ibid: A Decade Since the Arab Spring: What Changed? Noonpost.

<sup>(4)</sup> Ibid: Al-Nweishi, the Arab Spring Revolution: Reality and Expectations, TRT Arab.

<sup>(5)</sup> Abu Amer, Adnan, How 'Israel' Celebrates Tenth Anniversary of the Arab Spring, the Palestinian Information Center, December 26, 2020.

UAE, Bahrain and Morocco; and semi-official agreement with Sudan. Other countries may follow<sup>(1)</sup>.

The Arab Spring revolutions revealed the strategic importance of Africa. The occupation made its new calculations and activated its activities in that area to prevent it from becoming a backing arena for the resistance. This is similar to what happened with Sudan that had recently supported the Palestinian resistance<sup>(2)</sup>.

## **Topic Four: Revolutions: Their Reality, Accomplishments and Failures**

The Arab Spring spark was triggered to express the emotions of the Arab peoples whose rights had been violated. The peoples' needs were not limited to materialistic issues such as poverty, unemployment and social and economic corruption only. They also called for spiritual rights such as the right to full citizenship, political involvement, and electoral representation<sup>(3)</sup>.

### **Countries of Revolutions: Bad Reality**

The first revolutions were heavily targeted and were faced with attempts to topple them and create chaos. There are still attempts with the purpose of bringing down any attempts of liberation from the totalitarian regimes. Several regional parties, which feared for their thrones, made alliances with the 'Israeli' occupation under international support. At the same time, some parties and countries that supported the Arab Spring countries worked their best to prevent the success of counter-revolutions<sup>(4)</sup>.

### **Tunisia: The Only Success**

Tunisia has a strategic location as it connects Europe with Africa and is relatively far from the occupation's entity. Its people are more homogenous which helped in reaching an agreement among the members of the society and building a democratic system. However, there is still much more before the Tunisians to

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<sup>(1)</sup> Ibid: A Decade Since the Arab Spring: What Changed? Noonpost.

<sup>(2)</sup> Beck, Eldad, the Arab Spring: Late Benefits, the Palestinian Al-Ayyam newspaper, October 26, 2020.

<sup>(3)</sup> Al-Qadimi, Nawaf, the Islamists and Arab Revolutions: Practices Producing Thoughts, Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, Doha, 2012, p.4.

<sup>(4)</sup> Ibid: Al-Nweishi, the Arab Spring Revolution: Reality and Expectations.



overcome the obstacles ahead. The economic and unemployment issues continue the same<sup>(1)</sup>. The political situation is still unstable. One of the reasons behind the success of the Tunisian revolution was that the army did not intervene in the political affairs<sup>(2)</sup>.

Awareness in Tunisia was spread fast as the disparities among the community members became less. The first stage of the revolution was headed by the Islamists under the leadership of Ennahda Movement. This was not well-received across the community<sup>(3)</sup>. Then, the Islamists and secularists along with the other members of the society reached an agreement. Nevertheless, the idea of joint work and partnership requires more work in a country where singular rule had been the norm<sup>(4)</sup>.

## Unsuccessful Attempts

Meanwhile, most of the revolutions of the Arab Spring failed. In Egypt, the revolution led to presidential elections in which Mohammed Morsi had won. However, the deeper part of the country, that was still affiliated with Mubarak's regime, and the army successfully carried out a military-coup and toppled the president using bloody methods that led to the murder of thousands of protesters.

In Syria, the situation was even bloodier. After the civil war, about half a million Syrian had been killed and half of the population displaced<sup>(5)</sup>. The situation was not much different in Yemen which became a ring for competitors' ambitions and interests in its strategic location and the southern Red Sea entrance<sup>(6)</sup>.

In Libya, too, the allies have shaken the legality of the elected through pushing a military coup by Haftar in east Libya. The weakness and unawareness of the

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<sup>(1)</sup> Mende, Claudia, 10 years of Arabellion :The buds of the Arab Spring, Qantara.de Network, 18 Dec. 2020, <https://en.qantara.de/content/10-years-of-arabellion-the-buds-of-the-arab-spring>.

<sup>(2)</sup> The Arab Spring, Ten Years On: What Have We Learned and Where Are We Going?, The Brookings Institution, 17 Dec. 2020, <https://www.brookings.edu/events/the-arab-spring-ten-years-on-what-have-we-learned-and-where-are-we-going/>.

<sup>(3)</sup> Al-Jorshi, Salah Al-Din, Tunisia's Spring: Between Fear and Hope, the Seventh Arab Report: Arabs Between the Present and Dreams of Change in 4 Years, the Arab Thought Foundation, Beirut, 2014, pp. 24-25.

<sup>(4)</sup> Al-Bishtawi, Emad, the Arab Spring After 10 Years, Al-Mayadeen, September 5, 2020.

<sup>(5)</sup> Ibid: The Revolution Proved Everything Was Possible: 10 Years Since the Arab Spring, Irfaa Sawtak network.

<sup>(6)</sup> Ibid: A Decade Since the Arab Spring: What Changed? Noonpost.

revolutionary powers led to further disconnectedness inside Libya as they continued to refuse to become part of the country's institutions and to discredit the power of the law<sup>(1)</sup>.

In other countries such as Jordan and Morocco, the rulers managed to calm the protests through offering slight political reforms. In the Gulf, the people were given more money; for example, the salaries were increased<sup>(2)</sup>.

Ten years since, the Tunisian experience is the only one that reached a high level of democracy while all other countries failed to. Libya now has two governments: A western government recognized by the international community in Tripoli; and an eastern government led by Khalifa Haftar in Benghazi<sup>(3)</sup>.

## **The Second Arab Spring**

Revolutions have proven that bringing down corrupt regimes is possible, and that peoples have the courage to retrieve their rights. This reflects human nature that believes in freedom, so the revolutions have not disappeared yet. This is clear when examining the second wave of popular riots 8 years later<sup>(4)</sup>.

The collective understanding of the peoples helped them learn from the Arab Spring. The people's revolution in 2019 against Al-Bashir in Sudan, against poverty and political and economic decline in Iraq, and the movement's leaders success in avoiding leading their people to an armed conflict with the government's military bodies are all clear evidence of such awareness<sup>(5)</sup>.

## **Criticism of the Arab Spring**

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<sup>(1)</sup> Ibid: Bin Qaddur, the Other Face of Globalization: the Arab Spring an Example.

<sup>(2)</sup> Ibid: Ten Years Since the Arab Spring 'the Unrealized Dream', France 24.

<sup>(3)</sup> Ibid: Years Since the Arab Spring: How the West Wasted the Chance to Support Region's Aspirations, Arabic Post website.

<sup>(4)</sup> Ten Years Since the Arab Springs: Fading Dreams, DW News Network, December 17, 2020.

<sup>(5)</sup> Al-Faqih, Ihsan, the Arab Spring from 2011-2019, Anadolu Turkey, October 25, 2019.

It is possible to say that the revolutions successfully toppled the dictatorial regimes, or some of their figures, but failed to liberate the Arab communities from the remnants of such regimes<sup>(1)</sup>. These revolutions cost the peoples great losses that are unlikely to be recovered from anytime soon<sup>(2)</sup>.

The Arab Spring countries can still overcome the mistakes that were made in the first wave of the revolution<sup>(3)</sup>. These shortcomings can be listed as:

- Starting a riot without being fully prepared to the stage that follows the collapse of the regime, and unawareness of the requirements for post-revolution procedures.
- The inability of the revolutionary powers, which had been alienated from politics, to present programs that can lead the community on a daily-basis to achieve satisfaction among the different groups of the society.
- The revolutions being influenced by the former state of their countries which were based on excluding others, and delaying the implementation of partnership and containment of opposition which paved the path for conflicts and problems.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the aforementioned, the following can be concluded:

- The difficult conditions in the Arab communities at political, economic, social and security levels enraged the people and led to the breakout of revolutions against the ruling regimes.
- Tunisia is considered the only exception as it managed to successfully cross the bridge. It still faces lots of challenges, but unlike other countries that failed, it managed to make some changes.

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<sup>(1)</sup> Safi, Loay, Did the Counter-Revolutions Succeed in Hushing the Arab Spring? Al-Arabi Al-Jadid, December 23, 2020.

<sup>(2)</sup> Saghiya, Hazim, the Arab Spring: The Last Ten Bitter Years, Asharq Al-Awsat newspaper, December 20, 2020.

<sup>(3)</sup> Hashim, Mohammed, Role of Media in Changing the Arab World: An Analytical Study, Dirasat Journal, Jordanian University, 45(2), 2018, p. 206.

- The Arab Spring revolutions have reflected the immaturity of the mentalities leading the revolutions as the people did not have a comprehensive leadership to lead the transition.
- The revolutions exposed the ugly face of the USA and Europe, and the hypocrisy of the international community as they exerted lots of efforts to prevent the success of the Arab Spring.
- The occupation is considered the biggest beneficiary of the failure of the Arab Spring as it strengthened its ties with the ambitious totalitarian regimes that wish to remain under the American protection.
- The Arab Spring inspired all Arab peoples to free themselves from injustice. This is reflected in the second wave of the Arab Spring in Sudan and Iraq.

## Second: Recommendations

This study recommends:

- Raising awareness among the Arab communities about basic and civil human rights.
- Exploring and developing the idea of political involvement in Arab countries in a way that ensures comprehensive work rather than competitive one.
- Helping the revolutions in succeeding against the totalitarian regimes through financially and spiritually supporting them.
- Not betting on the American or European role for their hypocrisy.
- Exposing the 'Israeli' practices and endeavors to tear the Arab and Islamic communities apart.
- Exposing the corrupt totalitarian regimes that have made themselves and their peoples a toy in the hands of the enemies of the nation.
- Reviving the ideas of revolutions and liberation in the new Arab generations and raising them to accept only dignity as a way of life.

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1. Abdel-Ghaffar, Faisal, the Arab Spring, Dar Ajandaria for Publishing and Distribution, Amman.
2. Al-Afandi, Abdelwahhab, Documenting Televised Revolution Incidents: Presence of Visuals and Absence of Insight in Understanding the Truths about the Arab Spring, Siyasat Arabiya Journal, 18, January 2016.
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