



Global Nonviolent Action Database

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Egyptians bring down dictatorship of Hosni Mubarak, 2011

• Arab Awakening (2011)

January 25,
2011

to: February 11,
2011

Country: Egypt

Location City/State/Province: *Cairo, Alexandria, and other cities*

Location Description: *The core of the protests were located in Tahrir Square in Cairo*

Goals:

For the purpose of this case study, the goal is the resignation of the autocratic president, Hosni Mubarak.

However, protesters had numerous other demands, and their struggle to have more of these demands met continues. Below is a list of demands, from a document circulated at Tahrir Square. This case study will be updated as the political situation in Egypt evolves, and the final outcome of the revolution becomes apparent.

* Dissolving of the national assembly and the senate

* Establish a “national salvation group” that includes all public and political personalities, intellectuals, constitutional and legal experts, and representatives of youth groups who called for the demonstrations on the 25th and 28th of January. This group is to be commissioned to form a transitional coalition government that is mandated to govern the country during a transitional period. The group should also form a transitional presidential council until the next presidential elections.

* Drafting a new constitution that guarantees the principles of freedom and social justice.

* Prosecute those responsible for the killing of hundreds of martyrs in Tahrir Square.

* The immediate release of detainees

Methods

Methods in 1st segment:

- 003. Declarations by organizations and institutions
- 005. Declarations of indictment and intention
- 007. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols

- 008. Banners, posters, and displayed communications
- 009. Leaflets, pamphlets, and books
- 018. Displays of flags and symbolic colors
- 019. Wearing of symbols
- 020. Prayer and worship
- 023. Destruction of own property › Burning portrait of Mubarak
- 025. Displays of portraits
- 026. Paint as protest
- 038. Marches
- 043. Political mourning › for Khaled Said
- 047. Assemblies of protest or support
- 122. Literature and speeches advocating resistance
- 137. Refusal of an assemblage or meeting to disperse
- 173. Nonviolent occupation
- 174. Establishing new social patterns
- 180. Alternative communication system › Social media

Methods in 2nd segment:

- 001. Public speeches
- 003. Declarations by organizations and institutions
- 005. Declarations of indictment and intention
- 007. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
- 008. Banners, posters, and displayed communications
- 009. Leaflets, pamphlets, and books
- 011. Records, radio, and television
- 018. Displays of flags and symbolic colors
- 019. Wearing of symbols
- 020. Prayer and worship
- 023. Destruction of own property › Burning portrait of Mubarak
- 026. Paint as protest
- 033. Fraternalization › Socialized with soldiers to gain their support
- 038. Marches
- 045. Demonstrative funerals
- 047. Assemblies of protest or support
- 122. Literature and speeches advocating resistance
- 137. Refusal of an assemblage or meeting to disperse
- 141. Civil disobedience of "illegitimate" laws › Defiance of curfew
- 147. Deliberate inefficiency and selective noncooperation by enforcement agents › Military refused to fire on demonstrators
- 172. Nonviolent obstruction › Barricades around Tahrir Square
- 173. Nonviolent occupation
- 174. Establishing new social patterns
- 179. Alternative social institutions › Neighborhood patrols
- 192. Alternative economic institutions › Food sharing in Tahrir Square

Methods in 3rd segment:

- 001. Public speeches
- 003. Declarations by organizations and institutions
- 005. Declarations of indictment and intention

- 007. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
- 008. Banners, posters, and displayed communications
- 009. Leaflets, pamphlets, and books
- 011. Records, radio, and television
- 018. Displays of flags and symbolic colors
- 019. Wearing of symbols
- 020. Prayer and worship
- 023. Destruction of own property › Burning portrait of Mubarak
- 026. Paint as protest
- 030. Rude gestures
- 033. Fraternalization › Socialized with soldiers to gain their support
- 038. Marches
- 045. Demonstrative funerals
- 047. Assemblies of protest or support
- 122. Literature and speeches advocating resistance
- 137. Refusal of an assemblage or meeting to disperse
- 141. Civil disobedience of "illegitimate" laws › Defiance of curfew
- 147. Deliberate inefficiency and selective noncooperation by enforcement agents
- 172. Nonviolent obstruction › Barricades around Tahrir Square
- 173. Nonviolent occupation
- 174. Establishing new social patterns
- 179. Alternative social institutions › Neighborhood patrols
- 180. Alternative communication system › "Speak2Tweet" technology
- 192. Alternative economic institutions › Food sharing in Tahrir Square

Methods in 4th segment:

- 003. Declarations by organizations and institutions
- 005. Declarations of indictment and intention
- 007. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
- 008. Banners, posters, and displayed communications
- 009. Leaflets, pamphlets, and books
- 018. Displays of flags and symbolic colors
- 019. Wearing of symbols
- 020. Prayer and worship
- 026. Paint as protest
- 037. Singing
- 038. Marches
- 047. Assemblies of protest or support
- 120. Withholding or withdrawal of allegiance
- 137. Refusal of an assemblage or meeting to disperse
- 141. Civil disobedience of "illegitimate" laws › Defiance of curfew
- 173. Nonviolent occupation
- 174. Establishing new social patterns
- 179. Alternative social institutions › civilian-run security checkpoints at Tahrir square
- 179. Alternative social institutions › metro turned into holding cell

Methods in 5th segment:

- 001. Public speeches
- 003. Declarations by organizations and institutions

- 005. Declarations of indictment and intention
- 007. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
- 008. Banners, posters, and displayed communications
- 009. Leaflets, pamphlets, and books
- 018. Displays of flags and symbolic colors
- 019. Wearing of symbols
- 020. Prayer and worship
- 026. Paint as protest
- 037. Singing
- 038. Marches
- 045. Demonstrative funerals
- 047. Assemblies of protest or support
- 120. Withholding or withdrawal of allegiance
- 137. Refusal of an assemblage or meeting to disperse
- 172. Nonviolent obstruction › Barricades around Tahrir Square
- 173. Nonviolent occupation
- 174. Establishing new social patterns
- 179. Alternative social institutions › 'celebratory greeting crews' at Tahrir Square

Methods in 6th segment:

- 003. Declarations by organizations and institutions
- 005. Declarations of indictment and intention
- 007. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
- 008. Banners, posters, and displayed communications
- 009. Leaflets, pamphlets, and books
- 018. Displays of flags and symbolic colors
- 019. Wearing of symbols
- 020. Prayer and worship
- 026. Paint as protest
- 034. Vigils
- 037. Singing
- 038. Marches
- 047. Assemblies of protest or support
- 097. Protest strike
- 119. Economic shutdown
- 120. Withholding or withdrawal of allegiance
- 137. Refusal of an assemblage or meeting to disperse
- 172. Nonviolent obstruction › Barricades around Tahrir Square
- 173. Nonviolent occupation
- 174. Establishing new social patterns

Classifications

Classification:

Change

Cluster:

Democracy

Group characterization:

- Christians
- Men
- Muslims
- Women
- middle-class people
- working-class people
- youth activists

Leaders, partners, allies, elites

Leaders:

April 6 Movement, We Are All Khaled Said, Wael Ghonim

Partners:

Mohammed El-Baradai, National Association for Change, Youth for Justice and Freedom, Popular Democratic Movement for Change, Kefaya Movement, Muslim Brotherhood, and the Ghad, Karama, Wafd and Democratic Front political parties

External allies:

Human rights lawyers provided legal support for jailed protesters and documented the abuses of the police forces.

The Al Jazeera news network provided excellent coverage that was favorable to the revolutionaries, despite intimidation and detainment of its reporters by the regime.

Solidarity activists in United States, Europe and elsewhere marched and rallied in support of the campaign.

Google developed technology that allowed people to post to twitter without internet access, and set up a resource page to provide information to citizen activists.

Involvement of social elites:

The Egyptian military remained mostly neutral in the conflict between Mubarak and the people. It publicly announced that it would not fire on Egyptian citizens, and worked to keep the peace in Tahrir Square and elsewhere.

Some judges in Egypt gave their support to the Tahrir Square protesters.

United States President Barack Obama said on February 1 that Mubarak should not run for another term (though the U.S. continued to provide financial support to Mubarak's regime). Many other heads of state advocated for Mubarak to step down.

After he was released from custody, Google executive Wael Ghonim became a fairly prominent figure, both in his involvement with the Facebook page 'We Are All Khaled Said' and his moving interview on the TV which reinvigorated the Tahrir protests.

Joining/exiting order of social groups

Groups in 1st Segment:

- April 6 Movement
- Democratic Front Party
- Ghad Party
- Karama Party
- Kefaya

- Mohammed El-Baradai
- Muslim Brotherhood
- National Association for Change
- Popular Democratic Movement for Change
- Wafd Party
- We Are All Khaled Said
- Youth for Justice and Freedom

Groups in 2nd Segment:

- Al Jazeera
- Solidarity activists

Groups in 3rd Segment:

- Google

Groups in 4th Segment:

Groups in 5th Segment:

Groups in 6th Segment:

Segment Length: 3 days

Opponent, Opponent Responses, and Violence

Opponents:

President Hosni Mubarak, his cabinet, and his National Democratic Party

Nonviolent responses of opponent:

Not known

Campaigner violence:

Campaigners engaged in many clashes with police forces, with rocks being the main weapon. Activists threw rocks at pro-Mubarak forces who were trying to forcefully surpass the barricades around Tahrir Square.

Repressive Violence:

Significant repressive violence occurred in this campaign. Police forces shot and beat large numbers of protesters, and used tear gas to disperse crowds. After January 28, the police forces left the city, but later returned in plain clothes, posing as pro-Mubarak civilians. On February 2, pro-Mubarak forces, including plainclothes police officers, rode into Tahrir Square on horses and camels to beat demonstrators. In total, between 800 and 1100 civilians were killed in the 18 days of the anti-Mubarak protests. Police brutality, sexual and gendered violence, use of rubber bullets, tear gas, and live ammunition were all reported.

Success Outcome

Success in achieving specific demands/goals:

6 points out of 6 points

Survival:

1 point out of 1 points

Growth:

3 points out of 3 points

Notes on outcomes:

The "6" rating for success is only for the goal of ousting Mubarak. Success of the broader goals of the revolution is not yet determined.

Beginning in 1981, Hosni Mubarak ruled Egypt for over twenty-nine years. Though he ran for presidential reelection several times, elections were marked by widespread fraud, and opposing politicians were legally prohibited from running against Mubarak until 2005. Virtually all key officials in government were from Mubarak's National Democratic Party (NDP). Mubarak constructed a vast security apparatus to control public dissent; in the 1990s, citizens would only whisper his name for fear of reprisal. For his entire tenure as president, Egypt was in a legalized "state of emergency," which legalized censorship, expanded police powers, and curtailed constitutional rights. The regime severely limited freedom of the press, and the state-run media were no more than a propaganda machine. Rumors abounded that Mubarak would eventually be replaced by his son Gamal, transforming Egypt's supposedly electoral government into a de facto monarchy.

Egyptian activists began to push the boundaries of the state's tolerance for dissent in the 2000s. In 2004, a group of activists opposed to the Israeli occupation of Palestine and the United States war in Iraq formed a new campaign called the Kefaya (Enough) Movement, which targeted Mubarak and his family, and sought to prevent succession of the presidency to Gamal. Then, textile workers frustrated by Mubarak's neoliberal policies launched a wave of strikes in 2006 and 2007, beginning in Mahalla and spreading across the country. From this point forward, public displays of dissent were not unusual, as they once were. Though there were often ten times as many police as protesters, workers and activists felt more confident taking to the streets to voice their concerns. The majority of the population, however, remained fearful of the regime.

A group of activist youth formed the April 6 Movement in spring 2008, to support an industrial protest in Mahalla. After the Mahalla protest ended, April 6 continued to organize, using new tools such as Facebook and Twitter to connect with potential allies and members. The group received training from members of the Serbian group Otpor!, which organized the nonviolent resistance to and eventual removal of Slobodan Milosevic. Despite arrests and harassment of April 6 leaders, the group remained active in its efforts to encourage resistance to the regime.

Under Mubarak, January 25 was Egypt's "National Police Day," a celebration of the country's police. As January 25, 2011, approached, April 6 decided to use this day to their advantage and hold a march in which they would chant creative, anti-police, anti-Mubarak messages. In advance of the date, the group distributed thousands of flyers advertising their rally, and also promoted the event on Facebook. On January 18, April 6 member Asmaa Mahfouz posted a video on YouTube in which she urged people to protest on the 25th, and not to be afraid. The video went viral, gaining over 80,000 hits in less than a week. January 25 protests were also organized and supported by Google executive Wael Ghonim, who used his Facebook group, We Are All Khaled Said, to reach tens of

thousands more Egyptians. Many other groups, including the National Association for Change, Kefaya, and opposition political parties, also endorsed the rallies.

Recruitment efforts

for the day of protest were aided by the recent revolution in Tunisia, where popular nonviolent protests forced long-time President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali to step down on January 14. This stunning victory by Tunisians gave Egyptians the feeling that change might also be possible in their country. By January 25, close to 100,000 people indicated on Facebook that they would attend the day of protest. Mubarak's government promised to strictly suppress any demonstrations, on the grounds that activists had not obtained the required permits.

On Tuesday, January

25, tens of thousands of protesters filled the streets of Cairo, eventually congregating in Tahrir ("Liberation") Square, where they chanted and waved flags. Some protesters burned portraits of Mubarak. Police attempted to disperse protesters with tear gas and water cannons. When this failed, police decided to simply contain the masses, rather than attempt to disperse it. Clashes between protesters and police took place on a number of side streets. Though some protesters threw rocks, the majority of the participants were nonviolent. Police actions were more aggressive, though they limited themselves to non-lethal means such as batons, gas, water cannons, and rubber bullets. In addition to the protests in Cairo, demonstrations occurred in Alexandria, Suez, and other Egyptian cities.

Before Tuesday's

large rallies, the April 6, Ghonim, and other organizers framed the protests as an outcry against torture, unemployment, and corruption, and not as a demand for Mubarak to leave. Many participants in the protests wanted Mubarak to go, however, and the official messaging from organizers quickly changed to reflect that. By the end of Tuesday, organizers were calling for Mubarak to step down, and vowing not to stop agitating until he did.

The next day,

citizens held smaller marches and rallies in Cairo and elsewhere. Police again responded with organized efforts, leading to more clashes. Every time police forced a group of protesters to disperse, protesters regrouped shortly and resumed their chants for Mubarak to step down.

In official

statements, Mubarak's regime claimed that the protests were organized by the Muslim Brotherhood, which in fact was not involved at all. Police violence against mostly peaceful demonstrators attracted the attention of the international community, including United States Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, who encouraged Mubarak to allow peaceful protest.

On Thursday, January

27, small demonstrations continued, but most citizens stayed home. The youth

organizers of the campaign announced that Friday would be an escalation, a "Day of Rage" against the regime. Both the government and the resistance used Thursday to prepare. Spurred by the unexpected size and resilience of the demonstration, the Muslim Brotherhood announced it would be joining the coalition of organizers. In addition, Dr. Mohammed El-Baradei, former head of the International Atomic Energy Agency and a critic of Mubarak, returned to the country to provide a face to the protests. This was a strategic maneuver by the youth leadership coalition, which believed that El-Baradei would help combat the international perception of the protests as somewhat disorganized and spontaneous. For his part, El-Baradei emphasized that the youth were the leaders of the revolution.

The night before the "Day of Rage," the Egyptian government ordered all Internet Service Providers in the country to cut off Internet service. The ISPs complied, and Internet traffic in Egypt immediately dropped to close to nothing. This was the first time in history that a government had cut off all Internet access to its people. In doing so, Mubarak's regime believed it would hinder the organization of the protesters. The regime also hindered cell phone access, although it could not cut it off entirely.

The following day, after midday prayer services, hundreds of thousands of Egyptians streamed into the streets across Egypt. In Cairo, people followed directions printed and distributed by youth organizers, which instructed individuals to gather their neighbors and start marching toward the center city and Tahrir Square. Materials distributed by April 6 and other organizers also stressed the importance of remaining nonviolent and maintaining a positive attitude. Police attempted to obstruct demonstrators in all parts of the city, using live ammunition in some cases. One major confrontation occurred at the Kasr al-Nil Bridge, where police armed with gas, water cannons and truncheons sought to beat back a swelling crowd of demonstrators. For the most part, demonstrators did not engage in hand-to-hand combat with the police, choosing instead to surpass them nonviolently by the strength of their numbers.

The government announced a 6 pm curfew, but almost nobody paid attention to it. When it became clear that protesters were not intimidated into leaving the streets, the regime withdrew the police forces from Cairo. Demonstrators burned abandoned police vans, and also lit fire to the National Democratic Party headquarters. Many Egyptians spoke of a "fear barrier" that had been broken by the day of conflict with the police, in which the numbers and bravery of the protesters prevailed.

After police vanished from Cairo, the national army entered the city. Aware that the army would be an important arbiter of power, demonstrators cheered to welcome the soldiers, gave them hugs, and chanted slogans like "The People and the Army are One Fist." The army announced its intention to protect the people of Egypt, and emphasized that it would not fire on civilians.

Later that night,

Mubarak appeared on state-run television and announced that he would dismiss his cabinet. This statement did not appease the demonstrators. Several hundred remained in Tahrir Square overnight, and vowed to stay until Mubarak stepped down.

On January 29,

police did not return to the capital. Approximately 50,000 people gathered in Tahrir Square again to demand that Mubarak resign. Organizers of the protests encouraged people not to chant slogans supporting any particular party, but to project a message of unity and courage. Official statements by organizers emphasized the diverse nature of the demonstrators, who crossed lines of class, gender, and religion. In Tahrir Square, people took turns sweeping and cleaning up garbage, to prove that the Egyptian people could take care of themselves without the iron hand of the police. People quickly convened "citizens' patrols" in Cairo's neighborhoods to prevent looting or violence.

Meanwhile, the

regime amplified any slight incident involving violence or disorder in order to portray the crowds as dangerous and chaotic. On Saturday evening, Mubarak swore in the Head of Intelligence, Omar Suleiman, as his new vice president. Suleiman made gestures toward the organizers of the resistance, but the organizers said that they would not negotiate with the government until Mubarak was no longer in power.

By this point, the

events in Egypt had captured the attention of people across the world. The Al Jazeera news network provided 24-hour coverage of the protests in Arabic and English, despite intimidation of its reporters by the regime. International allies organized solidarity rallies in many countries, including the United States. American activists called on President Barack Obama to cut off its financial assistance to Egypt. Further aid came from the American company Google, which developed "speak2tweet" technology that allowed activists to post to Twitter over their phones, without Internet access.

On January 31 and

February 1, activists further developed the encampment in Tahrir Square, building a tent city in the center, and barricades around the perimeter of the square. Over two million people filled the square on February 1 to continue to pressure the regime. The square acquired a potent symbolic value—people had the feeling that, as long as there were demonstrators in the square, the revolution was alive.

Egyptian state

television attempted to convince people to return to their "safe, stable lives," and emphasized the stories of people who were inconvenienced or losing business due to the protests. In addition, Mubarak gave another defiant speech on February 1 in which he refused to step down, but promised not to run for re-election and vowed to enact constitutional reforms. Most of the protesters

were not convinced by his promises.

The next morning,

February 2, pro-Mubarak groups streamed into the city, pledging allegiance to their president and condemning the anti-Mubarak protesters. There is some evidence that many of these counter-protesters were in fact the police forces in plainclothes--pro-democracy demonstrators claimed to find police ID cards on the "pro-Mubarak civilians." What started as a 'war of voices' escalated throughout the day into violent skirmishes. Street battles between uncoordinated vigilante groups were fought with stones, sticks, and gasoline bombs. Pro-Mubarak forces dropped bricks, furniture, and other items from buildings onto opponent protesters below. They also targeted foreign journalists, and beat many with fists and sticks. In the afternoon, pro-Mubarak supporters armed with whips attempted to charge into Tahrir Square on camels and horses, but were largely pushed back by opposition forces

Meanwhile, the

military largely stood by without intervening in the skirmishes. Army officials did confront the Tahrir protesters, asking the demonstrators to return home. Protesters wouldn't move an inch. In the meantime, Internet service was returning to the country. Also, the nationwide curfew, which the public had been defying and the military not enforcing, was reportedly reduced.

The next day,

February 3, as thousands maintained the occupation of Tahrir Square, street battles continued. Pro-democracy protesters stood their ground. A nearby metro station was turned into a makeshift holding cell; it was proved that some of the pro-government supporters were in fact state police in plain clothes. After standing by for so long, the army finally began situating themselves between opposition groups throughout the city, preventing some clashes.

Additional

anti-Mubarak protesters entered Tahrir Square, protecting it from pro-Mubarak agitators. In the afternoon the Square was shook with heavy gunfire. Several people were killed and more injured; many were treated by volunteer doctors in Tahrir Square's makeshift hospital.

On Friday, February

4, hundreds of thousands of anti-Mubarak protesters convened in Tahrir Square for what was called the 'Day of Departure,' renewing the call for the immediate resignation of President Mubarak. Protesters waved flags, sang the national anthem, cheered, prayers, and displayed banners and signs. With the curfew lifted, more were expected to gather at the Square for prayer. Solidarity 'Day of Departure' demonstrations were held in New York and Damascus.

The military was by

now actively mediating between pro and anti-Mubarak protesters. The pro-Mubarak protesters themselves set up and managed security checkpoints and set up several layers of barricades to protect the Square, using secret codes to

communicate and form additional human barricades if necessary. Christians and others not participating in Friday prayer also formed human barricades around those praying to protect them.

On Saturday,

February 5, key leadership of the ruling National Democratic Party resigned including President Mubarak's son Gamal Mubarak and the party secretary-general Safwat el-Sharif. Banks opened for the first time since protest began. Again the army pleaded with protesters to go home, only to be met with the chant, 'we're not leaving, he is!'

The next day,

Egypt's vice president met with a group of leading opposition groups for the first time, offering new concessions regarding freedom of press, the release of detained protesters, and the possible lifting of the Emergency Laws. Opposition groups saw the meeting as a premature step since their central demand had yet to be met: the resignation of Hosni Mubarak.

On Monday, February

7, a symbolic funeral procession was held in Tahrir Square for Ahmed Mahmoud, the first reported journalist casualty of the protests. Later, Wael Ghonim, a Google executive and activist arrested by state authorities was released. His moving appearance on TV after his release revived protesters spirits and reenergized the campaign for thousands; Ghonim would soon play a leading role in Tahrir Square.

By Tuesday, February

8, Tahrir Square was swelling with protesters, which now resembled a tent camp. The largest march of the protest shook Cairo, with parallel demonstrations in Ismailia, Asyut, El-Mahalla El-Kubra, and Alexandria. Flags were displayed as a sign of unity. A Cairo bakery near Tahrir displayed cupcakes with the Egyptian flag. The demonstrators grew in numbers. In addition to the civilian blockades and checkpoints, 'celebratory greeting crews' organized to welcome newcomers to the Square. That night, as with the several before, protesters made music and sang anti-Mubarak songs.

The next day workers

went on strike to join the protests. Private labor unions as well as workers of state-owned companies called for better wages and benefits, for them, longstanding demands that were now put forward. Some also called for the end of Mubarak. Massive strikes spread throughout the country, halting economic life. Other forms of resistance were allowed to come forth. Thousands of farmers from the southern province Assiut blocked highways with flaming palm trees to protest bread shortages. Hundreds of homeless Egyptians set fire to a government office in Port Said in anger over lack of housing.

That night in the

Tahrir Square, a vigil was held to honor the up to 302 people killed in the couple weeks of protest.

The next day, February 10, the Egyptian government showed signs of change. The Prime Minister formed a committee to inspect the 'illegitimate practices' resulting from the recent events. The criminal court endorsed the decision to ban three former ministers from leaving the country. The security chief of Wadi al-Jadid was fired and the police captain who ordered the shooting of protesters was arrested.

Rumors circulated that Mubarak would make an announcement to the public. The streets were flooded with protesters. In the afternoon, 1,000 doctors in white coats entered the Square to huge applause; about 3,000 lawyers joined soon after. The city was buzzing with preliminary excitement. Protesters were sure the time had come. Mubarak appeared on TV to deliver his speech. He reiterated his promise not run in the next election, indicating he planned to remain in power until that time. Protesters were enraged. They took the shoes off their feet and waved them at Mubarak's image. That night, about 1,000 marched onto the state television headquarters, which was guarded by the military. The crowd pleaded with the military to 'save Egypt' claiming, 'we won't leave, they will leave.'

Egypt awoke the next morning to massive demonstrations. It was Friday, February 11. Masses of protesters rallied in front of the state television building in Cairo, the presidential palace in Heliopolis, and of course, Liberation Square. Early in the evening, after a day of intense protest, the vice-president got on air and announced that Hosni Mubarak had resigned as president and handed over political power to the army. Tahrir exploded with joy; Egyptians waved flags, sang, chanted, and honked car horns.

Reports are varied, but hundreds lost their lives in the protests leading to Mubarak's ousting and thousands more were injured. Street battles between opposing protesters at times was brutal and deadly. While the military played largely a mediator role, state repression was not entirely absent. Police brutality, sexual and gendered violence, use of rubber bullets, tear gas, and live ammunition were all reported. While attention should justly be given to the internal dynamics, conflict, and oppressions among the protesters themselves, they displayed impressive solidarity amidst social class, age, and religious diversity. Their determination to hold the square ultimately helped them reach the goal of ousting Mubarak.

Research Notes

Influences:

April 6 organizers received training from Serbia's Otpor!, who ousted Slobodan Milosevic from that country (see "Serbian Students Overthrow Dictator, 2000"). (1)

Tunisian people's overthrow of autocratic President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, earlier in January 2010, helped spark the protests in Egypt (see "Tunisians Overthrow Dictator and Demand Political and Economic Reform (Jasmine Revolution), 2010-2011"). (1)

The massive Tunisian and Egyptian protests sparked democracy campaigns in Yemen, Libya, and Syria, and smaller demonstrations in Iraq, Algeria, and elsewhere in the Middle East and North Africa (see other cases in the wave of Arab Democracy Campaigns (2011)). (2)

In addition, citizens in Wisconsin, United States, protesting the state government's removal of union rights said they were inspired by the Egyptian protests. (2)

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