

EGYPT UPDATE NUMBER 2



CHRONICLES OF THE CONTINUED EGYPTIAN REVOLUTION OF 25 JANUARY 2011

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On this historic day, President Hosni Mubarak resigned, and it was announced by the Military Command Council (equivalent in the U.S to an enlarged Joint Chiefs of Staff.) that the council chaired by Field Marshall Hussein Tantawi will be responsible for national security.

After Mubarak's resignation announcement, which was part of a speech he addressed to the Nation, demonstrations sprung up all over the country with the participation of an estimated 4 million people.

It is too soon to rejoice. It is feared that Mubarak's resignation may just be a maneuver. Mubarak will continue to pull strings behind the scenes through Tantawi. The next battle is to see whether the Revolution takes the path of "legality," which means following the Constitution. That would require having Ahmed Fathi Sorour assuming the role of acting president for 60 days pursuant to Article 84 of the Constitution, or whether an entirely new path develops deriving from the "legitimacy" of the People's revolution, with an entire new structure to deal with the transition.

The present plan of the revolution is to have a Council of the Presidency, consisting of at least two civilians (which ironically would be reminiscent of what Nasser did during the first year of that military coup's assumption of power when a Council of Regence took over the powers of the under-age son of King Farouk). The Council of the Presidency will oversee the work of the cabinet. Separately, there would be a Constitutional Reform Commission consisting of people representing the various popular factions of civil society. It is expected that this work will not require more than 30 days since the 1971 Constitution can be used as a basis. The Council of the Presidency working in concert with the Cabinet and the Constitutional Reform Commission, will decide on the laws that need to be repealed or amended in order to establish political parties, to allow for fair and free election laws, and above all, to eliminate the state of emergency law in existence since 1981.



Figure 1 Egypt TV. (Photo credit AP Photo).

A specific agenda will have to be established for all that needs to be changed in order to turn Egypt into a modern, progressive democratic state where justice for all, without any distinctions, exists. This is not something that can be done instantly. It is a long process and one that needs to become part of popular culture.

As both Egyptian and Chinese proverbs say "the longest journey starts with the first step."