Arab Spring of Nations

Konrad Pędziwiatr, PhD
Tischner European University and Arabia.pl
CONTENT OF THE PRESENTATION

- Arab Spring of Nations (hereafter ASN) as it unfolded across the region *(What happened?)*
- Key reasons behind the ASN *(Why did it happen?)*
- ASN in Egypt with particular emphasis on the role of the new media in the revolution *(How did it happen?)*
- Consequences of the ASN *(What are the outcomes of the ASN* for the countries affected and the region at large?)*
Arab Awakening

- BROWN – civil war
- BLACK – successful revolution
- DARK BLUE – sustained civil disorder
- LIGHT BLUE – mass protests
- RED – minor protests
Tunisia

17 December 2010 – self-immolation of Mohammed Bouazizi (inhabitant of the town of Sidi Bouzid) in protest against the authorities – 18 days later he dies.

14 January 2011 – President Ben Ali escapes to Saudi Arabia

17 January 2011- Creation of the Government of National Unity

Death toll - 223

Elections to a new Constituent Assembly are to be held on 23 October 2011
Egipt

- 25 January 2011 – begining of mass protests
- 11 February 2011 – President Hosni Mubarak steps down – new government and vice-president
- Death toll 846
- Injured - above 6000
- Presidential elections are to be held in October or November 2011 (key candidates: Mohamed ElBaradei, Amr Moussa, Abdel Moneim Aboul Fotouh, Mohammed Salim Al-Awa)
Yemen

- 18 January 2011 - first mass protests
- 4 June 2011 - President Ali Abdullah Saleh is injured in an attack on a mosque in his compound - Vice President Abd al-Rahman Mansur al-Hadi takes over as Acting President
- Death toll – around 1000
Libya

- 15 February 2011 – anti-government protests mainly in Banghazi and then spreading across the country
- 26 February 2011 – formation of the National Transitional Council in Benghazi
- 17 March 2011 – UN Security Council Resolution establishing a no-fly zone over Libya
- Death toll – above 12 000
Syria

- 26 January 2011 – first protests, self-immolations, attacks on official buildings – demands to free political prisoners and to end the state of emergency (declared in 1963)
- 22 April 2011 – official end of the state of emergency and more protests as well as increasing brutality of the security apparatus (Military action in Daraa and other areas)
- Death toll – Around 2000 dead and many in prisons
Algieria

- 28 December 2010 - first protests and self-immolations
- Outcome of the protests – decrease of the food prices as a result of increased state subsidies
- 22 February 2011 – official end of the 19-years old state of emergency
- Death toll – around 10
Marocco

- 30 January 2011 – first protests and self-immolations
- 20 February 2011 – mass protests in the capital and in other cities demanding constitutional reforms, freeing of political prisoners, respect of civil rights and an end to corruption
- 9 March 2011 – King Mohammed VI promises constitutional reforms and referendum on them
- 1 July 2011 – referendum on constitutional reforms (approved by 98.49% of voters?)
- Death toll – around 10
Common Elements

- Corruption and nepotism (exposed among others by Wikileaks)
- The Youth Revolution (youthquake) – demographic stimuli
- Dissolution related to the economic situation – growing unemployment, prices of food and costs of life
- Growing social divisions
- Lack of freedoms - authoritarianism
- Rising aspirations (growth of HDI – life expectancy, literacy, education and standard of living) and lack of reforms
- New media
Corruption among others …

“... has been ruled by the same president for [...] years. He has no successor. His regime has lost touch with the [...] people. They tolerate no advice or criticism, whether domestic or international. Increasingly, they rely on the police for control and focus on preserving power. And, corruption in the inner circle is growing..... As a consequence, the risks to the regime’s long-term stability are increasing.”

The Guardian, December 7th, 2010
ASN as the „youthquake”

Demographics of Egypt and Tunisia

- Egypt
- Tunisia
Unemployment especially among the young
Percentage of women (K) and men (M) among married between the age of 25-29
Avarage Age at Marriage

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The Egyptian equivalent of Bouazizi was Khaled Said, a 28 year old Egyptian man from Alexandria who was beaten to death on June 6, 2010, after being arrested by Egyptian police.
In January 2011, there were 54 Egyptian television channels, of which 31 channels are privately owned satellite channels, and 23 are state owned, including both terrestrial and satellite channels.

Radio in Egypt is almost all government-controlled and uses 44 short-wave frequencies, 18 medium-wave, and four FM stations.
Misinformation 1

The same day (1 February)

The same place

Different channel
The same day (26 January)
The same place
Different newspaper
New media in Egypt

- May 2011 - 23 million internet users – 27% of the total population
- January 2011 - 71.5 million mobile phone subscribers – 91% mobile penetration

Social media, mobile phones, and international satellite channels were the media heroes, while Egyptian traditional media were complacent. Most were openly against the revolution.
Facebook Revolutions

- Facebook, blogs, wikileaks ... ensure people that they are not alone thinking critically about the regime.
- Alternative knowledge becomes increasingly widespread – popularisation of the critique of the regime.
- Decision of to take a common action becomes easier since it is moved to the virtual world (this was the case of protests on 25 January 2011).
War on new media

27 January: The government imposed internet blackout
28 January: phone networks were blocked.
29 January: mobile phone service was restored, but without
text messaging and the Internet remained blocked
31 January: Al Jazeera was banned by the Information Minister
2 February: the internet service was restored, and the ruling
party internet unit employees suddenly acquire
new accounts on twitter and facebook and post
actively against the revolution
3 February: Foreign journalists, including Arab ones, become
targets of an organized campaign of violence,
 promoted by state media
Tahrir Square Media
Comments on Mubarak’s speech

@asadbukhalil
This speech will go down in history as the dumbest speech ever delivered by a dictator.

@AdamSerwer
Mubarak says he’s staying to help Egypt through “the current crisis.” dude, you ARE the current crisis.
#reasonsmubarakislate

Revolution 2.0 meets Dictator 1.0
(10 February 2011)

@iDiplomacy: Police mistook him for a journalist and he's locked up in prison #reasonsmubarakislate

@kmokhtar: Crying to Dr. Phil. #ReasonsMubarakIsLate

@lehan: Because his staff, servants and pets wont mummify themselves #ReasonsMubarakIsLate

@PVVVenlo: The swiss bank is closed #ReasonsMubarakIsLate

To bloody true! RT @GiaNt: #ReasonsMubarakIsLate Uninstalling dictator ... 99% complete

RT @drfessel: Have you ever tried to pack up 70 billion dollars? #ReasonsMubarakIsLate
Alia

#ReasonsMubarakIsLate listing his chair on e-bay!

Leila

#ReasonsMubarakIsLate He opened a can of Pringles....once you pop you just can't stop!!!

msofia7

RT @thesadredeath: Can't remember if it's a Swiss or Swedish bank account. #ReasonsMubarakIsLate

Stefano Boulos

RT @SeifSalama: Downloading Skype. #ReasonsMubarakIsLate

Hosni Mubarak

#reasonsmubarakislate: I'm aiming for an Oscar for the best suspense movie. #Jan25 #Egypt
Unique Features of the Egyptian Revolution
Outcomes of the ASN

- Political reconfigurations in the region (among others change of the policy towards Israel – Palestinian reconciliation?)
- End of the rule of Arab dictators – wave of democratisation through the region
- New role for the political Islam in the region as well as new challenges (among others challenge of political pluralism)