

2011 Egyptian protests / Hosni Mubarak should step down

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Position: Hosni Mubarak should step down

This position addresses the topic 2011 Egyptian protests.

For this position

“ Third, for all the pessimism and nervousness that accompanies change, most countries that have experienced uprisings end up better off. We can all think of exceptions, like Iran, but we should greet these events with eagerness and hope. ”

From *The Quest for Dignity*, by David Brooks (*The New York Times*, January 31, 2011) ([view](#))

“ No one knows how the Islamists would fare in a free election, since one has not been held in Egypt during the past half-century. But many Egyptian analysts believe an Islamist party would attract a minority of voters and would be unlikely, in the short term, to come to power. In the longer term, the best defense against it is well-organized and dynamic secular parties - which will only be possible if the current authoritarian regime is dismantled. ”

From *Misconceptions about the Egyptian crisis*, by The Washington Post editorial board (*The Washington Post*, January 31, 2011) ([view](#))

“ To many Egyptians, the U.S. is conspiring with the regime to push only cosmetic reforms while keeping the basic structure in power. That's creating profound ill will. In Tahrir Square, I watched as young people predisposed to admire America — the Facebook generation — expressed a growing sense of betrayal. In a country where half the population is under 24, we are burning our bridges. ”

From *Obama and Egypt's Future*, by Nicholas D. Kristof (*The New York Times*, February 9, 2011) ([view](#))

“ "Nor is it a sign of health when other American conservatives are so fearful of a popular awakening that they side with the dictator against the democrats. Rather, it's a sign of fearfulness unworthy of Americans, of short-sightedness uncharacteristic of conservatives, of excuse-making for thuggery unworthy of the American conservative tradition." ”

From *Stand for Freedom*, by William Kristol (*The Weekly Standard*, February 7, 2011) ([view](#))

“ Putting trust in leaders such as Hosni Mubarak is not a mark of strategic caution, but a reckless gamble and a guarantee of future instability. Trusting people to choose their own leaders in free elections is also something of a gamble. But that approach has a better chance of preserving the west's moral authority and retaining some popular goodwill in the Arab world. Those are far more reliable guarantors of stability and security. ”

From Cairo protests: The west has a duty to nurture democracy, by The Observer editorial board (*The Observer*, February 6, 2011) (view)

“ It is in the nature of revolutions to be unpredictable [...] Having conceded that to the so-called "realists", we must then ask them a question. Are they saying that Arabs are never allowed to aspire to democracy for fear that revolution might go the (highly country, culture and time-specific) way of Iran after 1979? That is a counsel of utter despair and racist condescension which consigns millions of people to the dead end of indefinite dictatorship. ”

From The west should cheer, not fear, this cry for freedom in Egypt, by Andrew Rawnsley (*The Observer*, February 6, 2011) (view)

“ "What we are likely to see in Egypt is not a repeat of Iran, where fundamentalists took undisputed power, but a repeat of Iraq, where Sunni religious parties did well initially but started to fade, divide and evolve as the powerful Sunni preference for laymen of no particular religious distinction comes to the foreground. Sunni Islam has no clerical hierarchy of the holy — it's tailor-made for nasty arguments among men who dispute one another's authority to know the righteous path. If the Brotherhood can be corralled by a democratic system, the global effect may not be insignificant." ”

From How Democracy Became Halal, by Reuel Marc Gerecht (*The New York Times*, February 6, 2011) (view)

“ As our thugs go, Mubarak's been solid. But such views have endured through a persistent blindness: The unwillingness to see that the Middle East has evolved; that American hypocrisy is transparent to everyone; that Islamic parties can run thriving economies and democracies like Turkey's; that popular rage over cronies' green gardens feeds the jihadist cause; and that the most effective support of Israel is not one that leaves Israel locked in a defensive crouch but one that encourages it to reach out to the modernizing forces in the Middle East, not least in the West Bank. ”

From We the Egyptian People, by Roger Cohen (*The New York Times*, February 5, 2011) (view)

“ "Mubarak's desperate attempts to hold on to power have made the choice facing the people of Egypt all the more clear, and have made it obvious -- if it wasn't already -- that incremental reform under the old regime is unlikely." ”

From Mubarak's true colours, by Ottawa Citizen editorial board (*Ottawa Citizen*, February 5, 2011) (view)

“ Remember, however alarming their ideas about women and Israel, the Muslim Brotherhood and its neighbouring parties represent the people who explicitly rejected the violent option (and were shunned and sometimes attacked for this by the jihadists) because they wanted a place in a legitimate government. There's zero chance of Egypt's uprising turning into the 1979 Iranian revolution or the terrorist violence of Hamas; there are no parties, and no Egyptian constituency of any size, seeking a theocracy. ”

From Who's afraid of the Muslim Brotherhood?, by Doug Saunders (*The Globe and Mail*, February 5, 2011) (view)

“ Some have articulated fears of adverse consequences of free elections, suggesting that the Egyptian military may seek to falsify the results; that Israel may be adamantly opposed to a regime change; that the domino effect of extremist politics spreading to other countries must be avoided; and that the supply of oil from the region could be disrupted. These notions constitute the old conventional wisdom about the Middle East - and need to be changed, lest Washington incorrectly put up resistance to or hesitate in supporting transition in Egypt.”

From Why Obama has to get Egypt right, by George Soros (*The Washington Post*, February 3, 2011) (view)

“ There's a small jail in Tahrir Square for pro-Mubarak thugs who are captured, and their I.D. cards indicate that many are working for the police or the ruling party. Mr. Mubarak may claim that he's unhappy about the violence in Cairo, but he caused it — and the only way to restore order in Egypt and revive the economy is for him to step down immediately.”

From We Are All Egyptians, by Nicholas D. Kristof (*The New York Times*, February 3, 2011) (view)

“ Humiliation is the single most powerful human emotion, and overcoming it is the second most powerful human emotion. That is such a big part of what is playing out here.”

From Out of Touch, Out of Time, by Thomas Friedman (*The New York Times*, February 10, 2011) (view)

“ Once a terrorist organization, the Muslim Brotherhood has moderated its position in recent years, accepting the principle of democracy. Nonetheless, its inclusion in a new Egyptian government would arouse substantial concern in the United States and especially Israel, given its support for the Palestinian militant group Hamas. But the answer to fears of the Brotherhood should be to encourage the rise of secular parties. Any more heavy-handed attempt to produce a favorable result for the United States in an Egyptian election is bound to backfire.”

From Back democracy, not Mubarak; US must help spur change, by The Boston Globe editorial board (*The Boston Globe*, February 1, 2011) (view)

Against this position

“ today, the choice is not between the pro-American Mubarak and Egyptian freedom; it is a question of whether to offer tepid support to a pro-American dictator or encourage swift transition to a different kind of tyranny — one certain to be a lot worse for us, for the West at large, and for our Israeli ally: the Muslim Brotherhood tempered only, if at all, by Mohamed ElBaradei, an anti-American leftist who willfully abetted Iran's nuclear ambitions while running the International Atomic Energy Agency.”

From Fear the Muslim Brotherhood, by Andrew C. McCarthy (*National Review*, January 31,

2011) (view)

“ Other facts Americans should know: Mubarak outlawed the Brotherhood because it assassinated his predecessor, Anwar Sadat, and plotted to kill him, too; the Brotherhood gave birth to Hamas and al-Qaida and still finances the terror groups; and Brotherhood alumni include Osama bin Laden, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, Ayman al-Zawahiri (who was jailed for the Sadat murder) and blind Sheik Omar Abdel-Rahman (who issued a fatwah blessing it). ”

From *Terror In Waiting*, by Investor's Business Daily editorial board (*Investor's Business Daily*, January 31, 2011) (view)

“ "Mubarak's greatest difficulty has been securing reforms which have included the gradual replacement of incompetent (and usually army-managed) state enterprises with free markets, and the "normalization" of relations with Israel, from behind a rhetorical cover. His very survival in office has been an extraordinary accomplishment, to which Egypt owes what peace and prosperity it has had." ”

From *Don't malign Mubarak*, by David Warren (*Ottawa Citizen*, February 7, 2011) (view)

“ Regarding the “illusion of stability,” as the successful American policy of the past 30 years has been described sneeringly by those waiting expectantly for democracy: It was no illusion. For 30 years it was a reality, and the reality was good for us and the world. One can't expect much more value from a foreign policy. If we can perpetuate anything like it for another month, year, decade or generation, we and the world will be better off. ”

From *Shariah and democracy are incompatible*, by Tony Blankley (*The Washington Times*, February 7, 2011) (view)

“ Egypt certainly resembles an untamed fire right now, but is it a fire of freedom? Egypt's President Mubarak is reviled by protesters as a tyrannical modern-day pharaoh, yet the great beneficiary of his waning power right now is the jihadist Muslim Brotherhood. ”

From *Mideast Dominoes Near Tipping Point*, by Investor's Business Daily editorial board (*Investor's Business Daily*, February 4, 2011) (view)

“ "n the 1970s, when Yasser Arafat attempted to overthrow King Hussein in the Black September revolt, the Jordanian monarch responded by killing and expelling thousands of Palestinians. Without US backing, there is every likelihood that the current generation of Arab autocrats will resort to similarly violent measures if they come under serious threat from pro-democracy campaigners. If that happens, Obama's hopes for an orderly transition to real democracy throughout the Arab world will end in nothing more than bloodshed." ”

From *Barack Obama may rue the day he decided to abandon Mubarak*, by Con Coughlin (*The Daily Telegraph*, February 3, 2011) (view)

Mixed on this position

“ "The United States has found a way to maintain close relations with the hard-line Islamic fundamentalist regime in Saudi Arabia and with the "soft" Islamists now in power in Turkey. It won't be easy or comfortable, but we probably can find a similar accommodation with Egypt — particularly because there isn't any choice." ”

From Beware the Islamists in the wings, by Tim Rutten (*Los Angeles Times*, February 5, 2011) (view)

“ "All revolutions are blissful in the first days. The romance could be forgiven if this were Paris 1789. But it is not. In the intervening 222 years, we have learned how these things can end. The Egyptian awakening carries promise and hope and of course merits our support. But only a child can believe that a democratic outcome is inevitable. And only a blinkered optimist can believe that it is even the most likely outcome." ”

From Egypt's dangerous road ahead, by Charles Krauthammer (*New York Daily News*, February 4, 2011) (view)

“ I commend the people of Egypt and Tunisia for their courage, and I wish them freedom and democracy. I encourage them to continue their movement, but I also urge them to be alert and to learn from history. In 1982, only three years after the success of the Islamic revolution in Iran, I was arrested at the age of 16 for speaking up against the new regime. I was tortured and raped, and many of my friends were executed, so I hope the people of Egypt and Tunisia forgive me for being cautious. ”

From Lessons from a revolution (Iran's, that is), by Marina Nemat (*The Globe and Mail*, February 1, 2011) (view)

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