

ABSTRACTS

PROGRAM ON ARAB REFORM AND DEMOCRACY (ARD)**ANNUAL CONFERENCE, 26 & 27 APRIL 2012***DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE ARAB WORLD*

DAY ONE – APRIL 26, 2012**9:15-10:30am International & Domestic Frameworks for Development*****George Kossaiji, Dar Al-Tanmiyah: Towards an Integrated Social Policy of the Arab Youth***

Abstract: One should note the main role played by the Arab Youth in the present Arab Spring. This presentation will focus on the "Arab Youth Bulge": Its characteristics, social policies affecting the youth and the recommendations to address its present marginalization. It will start with addressing the main social characteristics of the Arab youth, reviewing: (a) demographic characteristics (b) education characteristics and (c) employment characteristics, with special emphasis on unemployment. It will then review the evolution of the youth percent (15 – 24) out of the total population during the past, and will project this age group in the future, before looking at the history of education achievement of the total and youth populations. Special emphasis will be put to review the poor quality of the educational outputs. Following this, the presentation will review the employment characteristics of the total and youth populations. It is known that the majority of unemployed are young, and that presently, a high percent of unemployed are highly educated. It is to be noted, that all statistics will be gender based, and that statistics in the Arab Gulf countries should refer mainly to the "National Population" and not the total population. The presentation will then examine the above from the perspective of policy, namely, major (a) demographic (b) education and (c) employment policies and their impact of the youth welfare. It will examine the formulation of an integrated social policy, if any, and the consequence of its absence. This will be used as the basis to offer policy recommendations. Recommendations will be formulated at four main levels: (a) national (b) Arab (c) international and (d) specialized UN agencies. At the national level, recommendations will stress the importance of formulating sectoral policies in the areas of: (a) population (b) education and (c) employment. In addition an integrated social policy will be stressed. At the Arab level, a policy should be put in place to streamline labor migration from sending countries to the Arab Gulf countries. Recommendations will be addressed specifically to the World Bank and IMF in order to assess the impact of "Structural Adjustment Policies" advocated by these two Institutions in the late eighties in the Arab countries, and to which

extent these policies are at the origin (or contributed) of the youth marginalization. Finally, recommendations to Specialized UN agencies (ESCWA, Arab ILO Bureau and Arab UNESCO Bureau) in order to follow up, at a medium and long term basis, and assist Arab countries to formulate sectoral social

11:00-12:30pm Session 1: Political Economy of Reform

Mongi Boughzala, University of Tunis El-Manar: Economic Reforms in Egypt and Tunisia, Revolutionary Change and an Uncertain Agenda

Abstract: The ongoing political change in Egypt and Tunisia is deeply impacting their Economic Development Prospect. It may be expected to unlock an enormous economic development potential but the prospects remain highly uncertain.

1. Political change in Egypt and Tunisia
 - 1.1. In spite of their apparent stability, Egypt and Tunisia's autocratic political systems have, over the last two decades, become increasingly unsustainable and have ended up cracking quite visibly. They were highly repressive and unable to cope with the deteriorating socioeconomic conditions, to provide jobs and a decent life to their angry youth. They were also weakened by their open corruption and by their people yearning for freedom.
 - 1.2. Although these autocratic regimes were under big threat their rapid downfall was a surprise, including for those who are expected to lead the transition.
 - 1.3. The challenges of unlocking the potentials and of building a strong consensus over a new vision
 - 1.4. Political transformation is ongoing and irrevocable both in Egypt and Tunisia: similarities and differences
 - 1.5. Is the political landscape shifting the right way? Islamist vs. secular regimes: is there a trade-off? The unfinished and uncertain transformation.
2. Short- term needs and challenges: the risky management of the transition period
 - 2.1. The fragile current situation: the security issue, the angry youth, hopes and frustration,
 - 2.2. The disruption of production, more unemployment and less income
 - 2.3. Budget deficit, public debt and macroeconomic stability: the economics of historic transformation!
 - 2.4. What should the short-term strategy be?
3. The agenda for structural economic reforms in Egypt and Tunisia
 - 3.1. Consensus over broad objectives: pro-poor growth, fighting corruption, more jobs
 - 3.2. The key debates:
 - Role of the State and social and regional justice,
 - Industrial policy
 - Fiscal policy and public debt

- Economic integration and trade policy
- Self determination and foreign assistance
- The education system

Abdulwahab Alkebsi, Center for International Private Enterprise: Answering Calls for Economic Dignity

Abstract: During the past year, Arabs throughout the region have sacrificed much in pursuit of societies that might grant more broadly and robustly opportunities for dignity. Thus far, countries in transition have focused on political reform that delivers dignity through increased political participation, allowing for the formation of political parties and allowing them to compete in free and fair elections. While this is a critical step towards answering the demands of the Arab Spring, political reform alone cannot deliver the dignity Arabs seek. Rather, it must be supplemented by economic reform that allows Arab citizens to enjoy more broadly the dignity of high-value employment. Because Arab states cannot guarantee this employment, Arab societies must make sure their private sectors can. In order to do so, countries throughout the region must embark on economic reform that increases opportunities for dignity by

- Reforming the regulatory environment to facilitate greater investment in Arab businesses,
- Lowering barriers to entry into the formal economy,
- Reducing corruption,
- And reforming the education system to better prepare students for success in the private sector.

1:30-3:00pm Session 2: Oil-Dependent Economies and Social and Political Development

Hedi Larbi, World Bank: Development and Democracy in Transition Oil-rich Countries in MENA

Abstract: This presentation will focus on key development challenges and opportunities facing oil-rich countries in MENA which are currently undergoing a democratic transition, with special emphasis on the experiences of Iraq and Libya. In particular, the economic consequences of these countries' deep dependence on oil exports - such as vulnerability to oil price and volume shocks, as well as Dutch Disease - are examined. The presentation also discusses the policies and institutional reforms needed to mitigate the adverse effects of oil dependence - including de-linking public spending from short-term fluctuations in oil revenues as well as adopting a medium-term approach to oil revenue management through e.g. a sovereign wealth fund when appropriate (as in the Libyan case). The presentation concludes that enhancing transparency and accountability in the oil sector is critical for the credibility of any oil-related fiscal policy as well as for the overall country governance, especially in the context of a democratic transition, and notes that there is much to learn from Iraq's positive experience with the Development Fund for Iraq (DFI) and as well as the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI).

Ibrahim Saif, Carnegie Middle East Center: Lessons From the Gulf's Twin Shocks

Abstract: The oil-rich economies of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), are facing twin challenges to their stability. To the north, the eurozone sovereign debt crisis has depressed the price of oil and presents the risk of contagion to Gulf financial markets. In the region itself, the events of the Arab Spring have triggered a massive wave of domestic spending, which is straining fiscal balances and threatens to reignite inflation. These factors—along with the GCC's responses to them—raise tough questions about the Gulf economies.

3:30-5:00pm Session 3: Youth, ICTs, and Development Opportunities

Loubna Skalli-Hanna, American University: Youth and ICTs in MENA: Development Alternatives and Possibilities

Abstract: Ongoing Arab revolutions have revealed that youth have been/are using information and communication technologies (ICTs) in ways that have profound and lasting implications for their lives and larger communities. Drawing on my research on youth and ICTs prior to, during and after the revolutions, I organize this presentation around three main goals. First, I highlight what the Arab revolutions have confirmed and/or disconfirmed about the uses of ICTs by young men and women in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). This provides the basis for identifying significant trends in youth's uses of ICTs –some of which have not been sufficiently recognized or appreciated prior to the revolutions. Second, I examine some of the main implications of these trends (the uses of ICTs by youth) for the socio-political and economic development in MENA. In doing this, I seek to establish important links between the micro and macro processes of change facilitated by ICTs, and I argue that it is through these linkages that we can anticipate development alternatives and opportunities. In the final section of the presentation, I turn to inter/national development communities and national governments to discuss the nature/scope of their engagement with youth and technologies in MENA. The purpose here is to discuss ways in which they have engaged youth and ICTs for development purposes and make suggestions about how these communities can harness the power of technologies to assist youth in meeting their development goals and ambitions.

Hatoon Al-Fassi, King Saud University: Social Media in Saudi Arabia, an Era of Youth Social Representation

Abstract: The year 2011 has been a year of change for the whole Arab World. In Saudi Arabia, that year bore many changes mainly on the social and economic levels in its own way. One of the major changes that Saudi Arabia had was the indulging in social media, including, blogging, YouTube, Twitter and Face Book, as a medium of communication, expression and socio-political mobilization. The first and main actors were and still are the Saudi youth, female and male, however, little by little, the older generation discovered the arena and is developing its tools to use it for different causes. In this paper, I examine youth participation in social media, how they are shaping it to fulfill their needs, ideas, challenges, fears and hopes. On another level, this paper will also explore their ways of political involvement and to what extent they have been politicized, however, assessing the experience is still early as it expands as we speak, positively and negatively.



DAY TWO – APRIL 27, 2012

9:00-10:30am Session 1: Civil Society Development

Laryssa Chomiak, Centre d'Etudes Maghrebines a Tunis (CEMAT): Civic Resistance to Civil Society: Institutionalizing Dissent in Post-Revolutionary Tunisia.

Abstract: How are loosely organized contentious and revolutionary movements institutionalized in the form of civil society organizations? This presentation will examine civil society development in Tunisia and the explosion of a new associational space after the 2011 Tunisian Revolution. The focal point of the talk will compare different efforts to establish an independent and robust civil society across Tunisia. The blossoming of civil society organizations from 8000 under Ben Ali to over 20,000 just six months after the Tunisian Revolution (according to Ministry of Interior figures) does not capture the variation in civil society building efforts or barriers across the country. Based on primary fieldwork conducted in Southern mining towns (Gafsa, Redeyef, Melares, Metlaoui, where unemployment is the highest in the country), Le Kef in the North and the capital of Tunis, I will compare recent and effective bottom-up civil society building efforts to some larger initiatives that have been less successful. In particular, I will show how actors who have previously sought to negotiate with the ancient regime have been particularly successful at establishing new associations and new channels of negotiation between society and state. I will end the presentation with a set of recommendations for sustaining post-revolution civil society development within a framework of democratization specific to the Tunisian case.

Rihab Elhaj, New Libya Foundation: Building Libyan Civil Society

Abstract: In late November, the NLF conducted 51 in-depth interviews in Libya during our first civil society research study. My presentation will be based on our findings and observations, namely about the apparent homogeneity of Libyan society, and the impact of the strict socialist policies of the previous regime on Libyan civil society including how this may impact political and economic development. The presentation will follow with recommendations on approaches and policies that can promote positive development in all key sectors in the near future.

11:00-12:30PM Session 2: Democratic Transition and the Political Development of Women

Valentine Moghadam, Northeastern University: *The Gender of Democracy: Why It Matters*

Abstract: In this paper I make a four-fold argument. First, I argue for a strong relationship between women's participation and rights, on the one hand, and the building and institutionalization of democracy on the other. Evidence from Latin America, southern Africa, the Philippines, and Northern Ireland shows that women's participation was a key element in the successful transitions; that outcomes could be advantageous to women's interests; and that women's political participation reflects and reinforces democracy-building. Second, I draw attention to the paradoxes and deficits of democracy, including the possibility of female political marginalization, and the dangers posed to sex equality of the opening up of political space to fundamentalist forces. Democracy is assumed by many commentators to serve women well, but the historical record shows that democratic transitions do not necessarily bring about women's participation and rights (e.g., Eastern Europe in the early 1990s; Algeria and the FIS electoral victory in 1990/91; elections in Iraq and the Palestine Authority, which did not bring to power governments committed to citizen or women's rights). Third, if the longstanding exclusion of women from political processes and decision-making in the Middle East and North Africa is a key factor in explaining why the region has been a "laggard", compared with other regions, in democratization's third wave, then women's participation and rights could not only speed up the democratic transition in the region but also enhance its quality. Fourth, the mass social protests in MENA were as much a call for social justice as for civil and political rights. Attention to the social and economic rights of citizens, and the full citizenship of women, will ensure a more stable democracy and democratic consolidation. The paper reviews different models of democracy and their gender effects; examines the cases of on Egypt, Tunisia, and Morocco; and assesses the prospects for an "Islamic democracy" attentive to women's rights.

Amaney Jamal, Princeton University: *Reforms in Personal Status Laws and Women's Rights in the Arab World*

Abstract: Although there is significant diversity in the level and types of rights that women enjoy in different Arab countries, women's status across the region as a whole is quite low. This can be seen in several easily quantifiable cross-national indicators, such as percentage of women in parliament and in the workforce, where the Arab world scores lowest in the world. It can also be seen in less easily measured factors that affect women's lives equally if not more deeply, such as personal status laws (PSLs), which in almost all countries give women significantly fewer rights than men in marriage, divorce, and other family matters. But while Arab women face many problems, significant improvements are also occurring; Freedom House's 2010 *Women in the Middle East Report* noted important advances in women's rights since 2005 in all but three countries, and several governments have passed key PSL changes over the last decade. This paper will examine the politics behind reforms in Personal Status Laws in the Arab World.

1:30-3:00pm Session 3: Minority Rights as a Key Component of Development

Mona Makram-Ebeid, American University in Cairo

*Nadim Shehadi, Chatham House: **The Other Turkish Model: Power Sharing and Minority Rights in the Arab Transitions.***

Abstract: The debate over the Turkish model concentrates on the secularism of the system adopted by Ataturk after the first world war and the manner in which it developed since. It is considered as one that adapts moderate Islamism with modernity and capitalism. The presentation will argue that this is the model that is now failing in the region and will examine the pros and cons of power-sharing and its impact on minorities especially in the Levant and the Arabian peninsula.