

Long Live the Egyptian People's Struggle!  
Long Live the Tunisian People's Struggle!  
Long live the Struggle of the People of  
Yemen, Jordan & Algeria!  
U.S. Hands Off North Africa & the Middle East!

International Action Center statement -- Jan. 28, 2011

A seemingly all-powerful military, police and media apparatus, that has had the support of the U.S. superpower for decades, is crumbling before the even greater strength of a united people who have first conquered fear and may now push the dictator's regime into the dustbin of history.

This struggle began in Tunisia in December when a young street vender chose to burn himself rather than face humiliation. It has spread to Algeria, to Yemen, to Jordan and now to the largest and most central state in the Arab world, Egypt. This country, with its rich ancient history and its impoverished population -- with more than 80 million people it is the largest of the North African states -- is now finding its way back into center stage of world events.

Ever since the Camp David agreements, Egypt has been a client state of U.S. imperialism. The U.S. has supplied Egypt with \$1-2 billion in military aid over the years since the 1979, second only to the aid the U.S. gives to the Israeli settler state. This aid includes the tear gas, rubber-coated bullets and live ammunition supplied the Egyptian riot police.

In turn, Hosni Mubarak's Egypt supported the U.S. war against Iraq in 1991; it blocks the entrance to embattled Gaza today. Because Egypt is the lynchpin of U.S. imperialist foreign policy within the Arab countries, the current revolutionary crisis

in Egypt raises the possibility -- even the likelihood -- that Washington will attempt to intervene in Egyptian internal affairs, with a good chance that this will mean military intervention.

Tonight (Jan. 28) President Barack Obama -- realizing the Mubarak dictatorship's days were numbered, made some statements distancing the U.S. from the 30-year-old regime in Egypt. We should remember, however, that in his State of the Union message, President Obama spoke of the U.S.'s alleged role spreading 'democracy,' but he pointedly avoided mentioning Egypt.

As an anti-war and anti-imperialist solidarity group working within the United States, the International Action Center pledges to help build actions in solidarity with the people of Egypt and of all of those countries where people are struggling for democracy and freedom from imperialist domination. Thus the IAC will join the actions of the Egyptian community in the United States protesting the Mubarak regime, and it will build actions to demand that the U.S. desist from intervening in Egyptian affairs and especially that there be no military intervention against the Egyptian people.

Over the next days there are demonstrations planned in cities around the U.S. to show solidarity with the Egyptian people's struggle. The IAC calls on its supporters to join these actions.

LONG LIVE TUNISIA!

Tunisia at the Crossroads

Mass Movement - Uprising - the Lessons

MAWO Discusses and Celebrates Departure of Tyrant Ben Ali from Tunisia

Responding to a historic sequence of events in Tunisia, where a mass movement has emerged within the space a few weeks and has forced dictator Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali to flee after a repressive rule of 24 years, Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO) called for a forum to discuss the issues titled, "Tunisia at the Crossroads". Although organized in less than three days, the forum saw more than 50 people from many different communities, including Tunisians living in Vancouver, attend to discuss these important developments and their consequences.

The program included a compilation of news and video footage which began with clips of Western analysts doubting the impact or longevity of the initial Tunisian protests focused on unemployment and rising prices, and then moved onto video after video of the huge mass protests which rocked Tunisia's ruling elite and their imperialist backers.

The forum also featured two speakers, Azza Willow, a young Tunisian social justice activist, and Ali Yerevani, the political editor of the Fire This Time Newspaper and an organizer in the 1979 Iranian Revolution.

Azza gave a very moving presentation about the differences between the outside image of Tunisia as a stable tourist paradise portrayed by the majority of Western media, and the reality of growing up in a country where freedom of expression, association, and political participation were all stifled and suppressed by a tiny and brutal ruling elite. She said, "I'm so proud of Tunisians for standing up and showing to everyone that it's possible to change things and to be united." She ended by pointing out that Tunisians are not out on the streets celebrating the ouster of Ben Ali, but are continuing to protest against an interim government which includes the elements of the old ruling elite.

Ali Yerevani, the next speaker, began by asking the audience to stand up for applause in appreciation for the heroic struggle of the people of Tunisia for opening a new era of mass struggle against imperialism. After a few minutes of standing ovation, he opened his talk by comparing the 1979 Iranian Revolution, which itself was also a huge mass movement that overthrew another imperialist backed dictator, to the current situation in Tunisia. "You see those neglected in history become leaders...not dozens, but hundreds

of thousands of people. You see their creativity, their initiative, their leadership. All the people you didn't expect to be like this, because revolution speeds up the whole process of life and releases the true energy of masses, therefore it brings out all the great potential of masses of people that under tyrannical regimes is suppressed. This is what we see today in Tunisia."

In the current context of massive destruction and suppression caused by the new era of war and occupation, he said that Tunisian people gave a great gift to the people of the world, "They brought the sweetest thing, the victory of human beings, the victory of people." He emphasized the duty of people around the world is to support the mass movement in Tunisia, which is becoming increasingly organized, but that the most difficult part is yet to come: what to do now, and how to create a process which reflects the interests and desires of millions of Tunisians fighting for their dignity and self-determination.

He placed particular importance on the current struggle by people of Tunisia to remove all people associated with the previous regime from any new government. If Tunisians are successful in breaking these last links between their former rulers and their imperialist backers, they will have made a big step forward for oppressed people around the world, and will have caused a big setback for imperialist powers like the United States, France, England and Canada. Ali emphasized that "the overthrow of the tyrant Ben Ali and continuing mass movement and revolutionary process is indeed a great victory for the oppressed people of the world within the set back imposed on them by imperialists in the last 10 years by the brutal and criminal war and occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq. This is a great breeze of change in resisting colonialism and their proxy regimes for a better world for all."

Discussion after the speakers focused on the importance of events in Tunisia, and their effect on other Western-backed regimes in Northern Africa and the Middle East. Others also pointed out the important lessons people around the world and in Canada can learn from a people who stood up to a government which refused to represent them and united to change it. MAWO will continue to follow closely how events in Tunisia unfold, and continue to organize in solidarity with masses of Tunisian people making their own history.

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