



Commentary, July 4, 2013

IN EGYPT IT IS NOT A COUP: EGYPTIANS RESTORE THEIR DESTINY

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In an admirable show of determination, the Egyptian youth through the rebel movement, "Tamarod," mobilized tens of millions of Egyptians to restore their freedom and preserve their national character. After only one year of entrusting the Brotherhood to lead Egypt, the Egyptian people became extremely frustrated with a leadership that not only did not deliver on the economic front, but more importantly polarized the country, undermined social cohesion, diluted democratic transformation, and acted irresponsibly in regards to the various facets of Egypt's national security. The totalitarian practices and political terrorism exerted by the Brotherhood – or rather, their representative in the presidency, Mohammed Morsi – have overridden any of the legitimacy that Egypt's first democratically-elected president claimed to have. In perhaps the most massive demonstration that the world has ever seen, the Egyptians once again made it clear that the source of legitimacy comes from the people. June 30's massive demonstrations were therefore a continuation of the first mass protests in January, 2011.

However, these protests would not have yielded any substantive outcome without a patriotic stance from Egypt's Military in confronting a regime that is supported by irregular militias and is not shy about intimidating the Egyptians with militant jihadists and ex-terrorists. There is no doubt that General Abdul Fatah al-Sisi, Egypt's Defense Minister, played a decisive role in securing not only the mass protests, but more importantly Egypt's national integrity and security, which appeared to be on the brink of collapsing. The cohesiveness of the military institution and the high professionalism that the military exhibited under al-Sisi's patriotic leadership, especially during the past week, will not be forgotten in Egypt's history. The Military's patriotic role was further strengthened by the pressures exerted by the Obama administration in Washington and the U.S. Ambassador, Anne Patterson, in Cairo on the Military in support of Mohammed Morsi. When this news of U.S. support of Morsi swept through Egypt, even more masses poured into the streets in support of the Military. The people and the

Military were once again hand-in-hand; the Military supported the mass protests and the masses supported the military in its bargaining with the Americans. It was not by any means a coup d'état; it is a magnificent scene of patriotism.

The keenness of the military to partner with Tamarod and leaderships of Al-Azhar, the Coptic Church, the National Salvation Front, as well as Salafi's – who renounced Morsi's invitation to violence in his statement in the early hours of July 3 – added much legitimacy to the military's role. The military are not planning to rule as announced in the agreed roadmap, shown by handing over power

this morning to the Constitutional Court Chief, Adli Mansour, as an interim president in charge of leading a hopefully true transition.

The immediate challenges that face Egypt at the moment are numerous, but the most persisting of which is the need to achieve broad national conciliation and avoid bloodshed in order to initiate a democratic and pluralistic transition that will not exclude any group. Much of the burden in achieving this process remains on the shoulders of the Military, who are expected to play a key role in the coming months even if they are eager to step back and leave the political scene to civilian forces.