

**Prepared Testimony to the
UNITED STATES SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON
INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS, HUMAN RIGHTS,
DEMOCRACY, AND GLOBAL WOMEN'S ISSUES SUBCOMMITTEE ON NEAR
EASTERN AND SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIAN AFFAIRS**

November 2, 2011

WOMEN IN THE ARAB SPRING

**Professor Dr. Sandra L. Bunn-Livingstone, Esq.
President and CEO
Freedom³**

Chairman Boxer, Ranking member DeMint, and Distinguished Members of the Subcommittee, it is an honour to be invited to address you and to represent Freedom³. I would like to thank you and your staff for all your efforts to advance the cause of human rights, democracy, and global women's issues.

Freedom³ is an international non-profit committed to supporting human rights for each and every human being across the globe. Its mission is to mobilize leaders in government, industry, law and education to promote freedom of thought, conscience, and religion or belief for each and every human being in the world. Its vision is to see that every human being in the world is able to exercise their fundamental right of freedom of thought, conscience and religion or belief. Across the globe, where human rights are fettered, women and children are often the most vulnerable members of this disadvantaged sub-group of discrimination, hostility, and obloquy. And it is for this reason that so many women took part in the Arab Spring across the Middle East and North Africa, and were in fact, central actors in the revolutions of Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya. Yet, given the events of the recent fortnight, this Subcommittee is to be commended for examining the issue, "Women in the Arab Spring."

This focus of this testimony will be twofold: First, recent events in Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya provide us with reason to pause and ask whether the Arab Spring for women, and indeed vulnerable minorities will give rise to an Arab Summer, or if an Arab Winter seems far more likely? This portion of the testimony includes concerned voices from each country; and, secondly, what should the United States Government be doing to support true women's rights, human rights, and religious freedom in Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya?

I. Recent Events

A. Egypt:

On October 9, 2011 riots in Cairo led to the death of at least 27 people and the injury of over 300, mostly from Egypt's Coptic Christian community. The conflict followed a peaceful march from the neighborhood of Shubra, with its high percentage of Coptic residents, to the Radio and TV Building in Maspero, which has become the location of choice for Coptic protests following the revolution. Early on in the coverage state media announced Coptic protestors had assaulted the army assigned to guard the Maspero building with stones, Molotov cocktails, and live ammunition,

killing at least three. Yet after the violence, nearly all the dead were Copts, with many witnesses laying blame upon the military for the entire event. Since then, speculation has posited the presence of a third party, which may have set the two sides upon each other. The investigation is still ongoing, undertaken by the military prosecution.¹ The events at Maspero represent a terrible devolution of relations between Coptic Christians and the army, the de facto government of Egypt. The common cries in Tahrir Square not so long ago of “Muslims and Christians are all Egyptians,” as well as calls for equality of men and women, freedom, opportunity, and solidarity became imperceptible on that Sunday three-weeks’ ago.

And yet, juxtaposed against these tensions, just three days’ later, Egyptian leaders from the House of the Family,² Muslim and Christian, along with human rights activists, renowned scholars, and youth leaders of the Social Media revolution, gathered in Cannes, France at the invitation of Freedom³, and signed the Cannes Peace Accord and Plan of Action (Appendix B) which vowed to support the Egyptian Bill of Rights and Freedoms³ (Appendix A) as a normative, guiding legal and policy structure for Egypt. This Bill of Rights, the first of its kind in the Arab world, provides eleven principles including, equality for women and men, prohibition of discrimination based on religion, gender, ethnicity, language or belief, freedom of religion, popular sovereignty, rule of law, separation of powers, independence of the judiciary, and human dignity. Nobel Laureate Emeritus Archbishop Desmond Tutu praised the Cannes Peace Accord, stating:

My Dearest Egyptian Leaders, Muslim and Christian, young and old, women and men: I would like to congratulate you all on your outstanding commitment to peace, unity, and a bright future for Egypt. Always go forward, never look back, and build upon every positive step you take. The Bill of Rights and Freedoms which you have constructed and committed yourselves to is the first of its kind in the Arab world, and a fabulous step toward freedom. The Cannes Peace Accord and Plan of Action is a huge achievement, and I congratulate you, your host Freedom³, and its President, Professor Dr. Sandra Bunn-Livingstone for your joint commitment to the Egyptian people. God Bless you.

Although attempts have been made by proponents of the Bill of Rights and Freedoms to get the Military Government to put this document in place ahead of parliamentary and presidential

¹See Video testimony. Accounts filmed by eyewitnesses, television channels, and State TV. In all, the following report has collected 37 videos, beginning with initial march from Shubra, the onset of violence, the ensuing chaos, media coverage, and death.

<<http://click.icptrack.com/icp/relay.php?r=13505088&msgid=402427&act=T1JM&c=196810&destination=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.arabwestreport.info%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fpdfs%2Fpaper34.pdf>>

<<http://click.icptrack.com/icp/relay.php?r=13505088&msgid=402427&act=T1JM&c=196810&destination=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.arabwestreport.info%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fpdfs%2Fpaper34.pdf>> A

<<http://click.icptrack.com/icp/relay.php?r=13505088&msgid=402427&act=T1JM&c=196810&destination=http%3A%2F%2Farabwestreport.info%2Fyear-2011%2Fweek-34%2F14-hulsman-internal-and-external-pressures-make-it-hard-egypt-regain-stability>>

<<http://click.icptrack.com/icp/relay.php?r=13505088&msgid=402427&act=T1JM&c=196810&destination=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.arabwestreport.info%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fpdfs%2Fpaper34.pdf>>

² The House of the Family is a group formed after the Egyptian Revolution to represent all the people of Egypt. It includes such notable religious leaders as Grand Imam, Sheik Al-Azhar, Ahmed Mohamed el-Tayyeb, Grand Mufti, Sheik Ali Gomaa, Professor Dr. Hamdi Zakzouk, Secretary General House of the Family, Former Minister of Endowments, Pope Shenoudah III of Alexandria, President of the Protestant Evangelical Churches of Egypt, Pastor Professor Dr. Safwat El-Baiady, and Archbishop Antonious Naguib, Patriarch of the Coptic Catholic Church of Alexandria.

³ The Egyptian Bill of Rights and Freedoms is a document that took 90 days and nearly 100 people to draft, negotiate, and agree upon (the committee represented every facet of Egyptian society, including Religious Leaders, civil society leaders, youth activists, community representatives, women, minorities, etc.). This Bill of Rights is the first of its kind in the Arab world, and includes principles of human dignity, human rights, women’s rights, equality, civil and political rights, separation of powers, democracy and governmental transparency.

elections, in order to ensure the long-standing nature of these legal and policy structures, opposition from the Muslim Brotherhood and Salafist Groups have prevented this. Likewise, the international community has stayed largely silent on the matter.

Irini, an Egyptian woman from Cairo, recently described her concerns with the future given recent events:⁴ "I believe both Muslim and Christian women will face a tough time with the looming fundamentalist Islamic (Muslim Brotherhood and, to a lesser extent, Salafi) majority or near-majority in the upcoming parliamentary elections in Egypt. The promotion of the rights of women was a pet project of Mrs. Mubarak's. Now, everything that she promoted is being rejected and discredited—a classic throwing out of the baby with the bath water, so no one with a high level of influence will pick up the cause for a while.

The subjection of women to open physical, sexual and verbal harassment during their post-revolution march on International Women' Day was a telltale sign of where we are as a society. These are the same women who, only weeks earlier, stood side by side with men to demand the end of an oppressive regime. They were called names, shoved around, groped and yelled at to 'go home and cook.' What they were calling for were basic rights to engage in Egypt's political future.⁵ The fact that some women in Tahrir square were rounded up and subjected to virginity tests is frightening.⁶ This is criminal, and it happened with impunity.

A recent article by Khaled Montasser, a prominent Muslim commentator in *El Masry El Youm* centered around the premise that the three targets for persecution in Egypt are: Women, the poor, the Christians. And a woman who is poor and Christian embodies that trifecta of doom.

The most serious problem facing Egypt right now is lawlessness and the incapacity to bring criminal offenders to justice. This is why so many churches have been burned and Christians killed without retribution. The growing trend of declaring that someone is an infidel or not observant enough (moderate Muslims) puts Christians first in the line of fire. The fundamentalist rhetoric is unlike anything we've seen in the past, same with the hatred and intolerance. Combine that with an absence of due process and you have a mixture that is very dangerous to Christians, especially Christian women.⁷

The other testimonies appended to this one clearly show two facets of concern for women: lawlessness and uncontested violence against them, and discrimination, be it gender or religion-based. It is also obvious that extremist policies, sectarian strife, and lack of human rights protection put all individuals and minorities at risk in the "new Egypt."

Irini's account, coupled with the past difficulties with Egypt's tremendous need for religious freedom, as outlined in Article 18 of both the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights is highlighted by this sectarian strife. Egypt has ratified the Covenant and is of course bound by the Universal Declaration in customary international law. As House of the Family Member, Grand Mufti Ali Gomaa states, "The recent wave of sectarian violence...made my heart ache in a country where Christians and Muslims have lived together in peace for centuries. It is vital for the peace of the region and wider world that the place of all religious communities and their full participation in society should continue to be fully

⁴ See Appendix C for testimonies submitted to Freedom³ from Egyptian women.

⁵ See: <http://blog.amnestyusa.org/iar/egyptian-revolution-sidelining-women/> and http://voices.washingtonpost.com/blog-post/2011/03/international_womens_day_march.html.

⁶ See: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/egyptian-women-protesters-forced-take-‘virginity-tests’-2011-03-23>.

⁷ See also: <http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/christian-women-in-egypt-increasingly-converted-to-islam-by-force-witness-says/>

protected and assured...we feel duty-bound to stress that any group must not claim to monopolize the interpretation of Islam as if they hold the unquestionable and divine truth, thereby precluding other interpretations and understanding of the role Islam is to play in the new Egypt.”⁸

B. Tunisia

The Tunisian revolution resulted in widespread calls for political reform, including the demand for a new constitution, to be drafted by an elected Constituent Assembly. The previous parliament was suspended in late January 2011 following the fall on January 14, 2011 of former President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali (a secularist regime) and a decision by the Supreme Council which broke up and outlawed the Democratic Constitutional Rally (RCD). The Elections of October 23, 2011 led to a big win for Islamist party, An-Nahda and long-time head, Rached El Ghanouchi. During the Ben Ali era Islamist opposition party Nahda was deemed a "terrorist organization" and outlawed in 1991. Nahda operated in exile in London until it was legalized by the post-Ben Ali government. The 218-seat Constituent Assembly will draft a new constitution and name a new interim government. Current provisions will most likely change in the new constitution.

According to the Department of State, since January 14, the U.S. Government has contributed close to \$40 million in assistance to help Tunisians prepare for elections; develop a pluralistic, competitive political culture; promote transparency and accountability; support indigenous transitional justice processes; support youth employment initiatives; and advance private-sector development.

Despite broad opposition to the Ben Ali government, Tunisia under his regime had legal equality for women and outlawed polygamy (the only Arab government to do so). Tunisia had also had an enlightened and tolerant education system which was one of the best in the Arab world. Ghannouchi has pledged to support women's rights, even though in his past, he threatened to hang Raja bin Salama for her criticism of Islamic extremism and the subjugation of women. She had also called for Tunisian law to be based on the Universal Declaration. Likewise, Ghannouchi also stated that he wanted Lafif Lakhdar to be hanged with Salama for her Tunisian reform suggestions. Allegations have also been made of his condemnation of the United States, support for Hamas, and condemnation of Israel.

An-Nahda, however, has said that it is not seeking to monopolize power nor to impose a fundamentalist agenda. And the largely outstanding nature of its free and fair elections has been lauded.⁹

Concerns for Women's Rights

Tunisia became the first Arab state to formally abolish polygamy in 1956. Although in current times, Tunisia is still one of the very few predominately-Islamic nations that have legally banned polygamy, An-Nahda has made statements concerning the legalization of polygamy. In comparison to many Arab countries, prior to the revolution, women in Tunisia are considered to have had major victories in obtaining rights in political, social, and religious spheres for themselves. Thus, it was

⁸ *What Role will Islam play in the new Egypt?* Grand Mufti Sheik Ali Gomaa, http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/guest-voices/post/what-role-will-islam-play-in-the-new-egypt/2011/05/10/AFz3nrgG_blog.html

⁹ http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/tunisia-again-points-the-way-for-arab-democracy/2011/10/24/gIQAYubeDM_story.html

expected that after the revolution, the rights of women would advance and not be hindered. Yet, An-Nahda has also influenced many young males and females to force unveiled women to be veiled.

Dr. Khadija Moalla, a Tunisian woman and UN worker on HIV-Aids in the Middle East and North Africa, expressed her concern with the division and friction among Tunisian citizens. She has found that although the aspirations of starting the revolution are admirable, unity and solidarity among citizens does not exist any longer. In fact, the majority of constituencies are headed by self-interest and power. Such a deficit of unity is what brought the gulf-funded group, "Nahda" a victory as the October 23, 2011 elections gave 41% of all votes to the Nahda group. As a result, the well-organized extremist group may very well contribute to the decrease of women's rights in Tunisia.

Tunisian Women have submitted testimonies (Appendix D) to Freedom³, which include the following account:

Dr. Fatima of Medina, in the city center of Tunis, Tunisia in Zaytouna Mosque University states:

"I am a Professor at Zaytouna University which is the sharia (Islamic law) school of the university of Tunis and I teach Islamic studies. I am an unveiled woman and I believe that it has to be a free choice of a woman to decide whether or not she wants to be veiled. It should never be forced upon her. In Tunis, it has always been the free choice of a woman and, in fact, the teaching on the veil is left open to much interpretation and discussion. I taught this to many of my students and I believed that free will is crucial in the Muslim faith. Yet, to my shock, after the revolution, I came to campus to give my class lectures and was confronted by students and professors who demanded that I veil myself on campus. I refused to submit to their requests. As a result, they banned me from teaching unless I wore the veil. It was a battle everyday as I walk on campus. Unfortunately, due to the ridicule and discrimination I have suffered on this issue, I have now begun to wear the veil as I teach my classes so I can keep my job and continue to educate my students."

Some may say this is a relatively mild step against women's rights in Tunisia, and that legalizing polygamy still gives individuals a choice of whether or not to be polygamous. But remember that choice is not a woman's choice, and certainly being forced to wear the veil when your own Muslim beliefs do not require the same, is a violation of both freedom of religion and freedom of expression. These small hints of what Tunisia could be like under Islamist rule are harbingers of the future Constitution, legal, and policy structure the world and women in Tunisia await.

C. Libya

The death of Muammar Qaddafi, and the fall of his 4+ decade repressive regime led to the declaration of polygamy and Sharia law by the leader of the Transitional Council.

As was shown in the media women played a big role in Libya's revolution. Out of this several women's advocacy groups have sprung up. This is how one such woman advocate lamented over recent events:

"I am quite disappointed in the Liberation speech yesterday by Mustafa Abdel Jalil. He had so many more important issues to address however he focused on polygamy, and not only that but thanked women for their role as "mothers, sisters and wives" - need we remind him of the countless women who got arrested, killed and raped during this revolution? The women who fed & clothed our troops? The women who smuggled weapons in their cars? The women who hid soldiers in their homes? The women who allowed and encouraged their sons, husbands, brothers and even fathers to go and fight? Women make up more than half of the Libyan population - would it not make sense

then, on Liberation day, to have a woman speak? We are completely shocked and unimpressed by the NTC & believe it is time for them to understand that simply because women did not have the same job as men in this revolution, it was not a lesser job. This was a Libyan revolution - made by the Libyan men AND women, and trying to define it as anything less is a joke.”¹⁰

Jalil has said Libya will be a moderate Sharia country. What that looks like remains to be seen. But under Gaddafi, fundamentalism was held down. Very few were mosque-going Muslims under Gaddafi. It was illegal to go to mosque too many times a week, and men could not have beards. That is why all the men had beards during the revolution. But Libya has also been advocating freedom, so how that looks with a declaration of polygamy and Sharia—and what interpretation of Sharia, remains to be seen. The first indications give legitimate cause for concern to women and women’s rights’ activists.

II. Recommendations:

A. Egypt

Egypt is the most populous country in the Arab world and the second-most populous on the African continent. Its central importance therefore to U.S. Foreign Policy is obvious.

Assistant Secretary of State Posner (Bureau of Human Rights, Democracy, and Labor) has stated, concerning the Arab Spring, “The Obama administration believes that democratic transitions must be home grown. The challenge falls to the people and the leaders of the region to achieve the brighter future they desire – a future in which governments respond to the aspirations of their people and view it as their duty to protect human rights, fundamental freedoms and the dignity that all people desire and deserve. But the United States has a keen interest in their success, and we can play a key supporting role. We have done and will do this by acknowledging, supporting and empowering the democratic and reformist voices from the region. And we will continue to do this by speaking honestly about the need to respect human rights and shun violence.”

Now is the time for the US Government, who gives some \$1.3 billion in foreign aid to Egypt, to closely assess human rights compliance, including the protection of women’s rights, minorities, and all Egyptian citizens vis-à-vis the current military government, and to encourage adherence to rule of law, free and fair elections, and accountability for its actions. But there is another step our government can take:

- 1) In its “key supporting role,” the US Government should be supportive of human rights provisions of the Bill of Rights and Freedoms drafted, negotiated, and agreed-upon by a broad swathe of Egyptian leaders, representing an overwhelming majority of Egyptian people;
- 2) Strongly support women’s rights and the rights of the minorities in Egypt, and speak out against violations of women and minorities in the name of the majority, political party, or non-state actors;
- 3) Review and support the Cannes Peace Accord and Plan of Action;

¹⁰ The Voice of Libyan Women (VLW)

- 4) Do everything in its power to encourage both the current military government, and future parliamentary and presidential leaders to respect, uphold, enshrine, and protect the human rights of women, minorities and the poor.
- 5) Encourage all efforts to hold free, fair, and transparent democratic elections.
- 6) Support inclusion of Article 18 in both the UDHR and ICCPR in Egypt's Constitution, in order to provide religious freedom for all Egyptians, and to halt sectarian violence based on religion.

B. Tunisia

Lack of political freedom characterized the Tunisian landscape under the former regime, and governmental insensitivity to economic equality led in part to the revolution which began in December 2010. Yet, at the same time, Tunisia has been a leader in the Arab world in promoting the legal and social status of women. A Personal Status Code was adopted shortly after independence in 1956, which, among other things, gave women full legal status (allowing them to run and own businesses, have bank accounts, and seek passports under their own authority). It also, for the first time in the Arab world, outlawed polygamy. The government required parents to send girls to school, and today more than 50% of university students are women and 66% of judges and lawyers are women.

Tunisia has also long been a voice for moderation and realism in the Middle East. Yet, post-revolution developments have raised questions about An-Nahda's commitment to women's rights, human rights, and non-discrimination in the new Tunisia.

Recommendations for this Committee concerning Tunisia are:

1. Strongly support statements made by An-Nahda and its leader, Ghannouchi which endorse, women's rights, minority rights, and fundamental freedoms—then keep the new Tunisian government accountable for such statements.
2. Support a new Constitution which reflects the cries of the Tunisian people who sacrificed so much for their future.
3. Engage in Multilateral Efforts to assist Tunisia in its new nation-building capacity, focusing particularly on women and all economic infrastructures to increase potential for prosperity.
4. Condition US economic support for Tunisia on women's rights, human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

C. Libya

The US and NATO have invested a tremendous amount in working with the Libyan Transitional Council to liberate the country. Gaddafi is dead. The new leaders are in place. But the messages coming out of Libya give us cause for concern. Freedom³ gives the following recommendations for the Committee on the situation for women's rights, human rights, and freedom in Libya:

1. Seek clarification from the new leaders what the legal system in the new Libya will be based on.

2. Determine whether other unpalatable forces are involved with this new leadership, and encourage transparency, rule of law, and women's/human rights as the basis for the new Constitution.
3. Work to build new infrastructure based on good governance, unity, equality, and non-discrimination.
4. Help to assist with the establishment of security forces who are able to keep violence at a minimum and provide stability in what has been a very unstable environment.
5. Work multilaterally to encourage adherence to international legal standards of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

III. Conclusion

At this point at the juncture of Arab Spring and its aftermath, Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya, their people and the (in two cases transitional) governments need encouragement in their efforts toward human rights, including of course women's rights and protection of extremely vulnerable minorities.

At the 12th Annual Center for Islam and Democracy Conference former U.S. Ambassador to Iraq, Afghanistan, and the United Nations. Zalmay Khalilzad stated, "as much as would like to see multilateral responses to these things, we also have to recognize that sometimes *effectiveness* in carrying out the mission in a timely manner has to be the criterion."¹¹ While multilateral support for human rights, including women's rights, and those of minorities and the poor in these three countries should be pursued and is in the best interests of those who should be protected, the United States government also needs to act strongly, if needs be unilaterally, to support international human rights, including women's rights, minority rights, and religious freedom in Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya in its foreign aid decisions, diplomatic relations, and at the Executive Level so that our own actions lend credence to those many brave men and women who risked everything for Spring—and whose expectations, like nature, look to Summer next—not Winter as the logical next step in their quest for equality, dignity, freedom, human rights, and the potential for holistic prosperity.

¹¹ https://www.csidonline.org/pdf/CSID_12th_Annual_conference_report.pdf. Pg.19. CSID's Conference was entitled, Tunisia's and Egypt's Revolutions and Transitions to Democracy: *What is the impact on the Arab World? What Lessons can we learn?* Friday, April 15, 2011

Appendices

APPENDIX A

The Egyptian Bill of Rights and Freedoms

EGYPTIAN BILL OF RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS

The proposed consensual theory concerning the first type of proposals, designed to be issued in the forthcoming constitution, and to protect them against cancelation, alteration, or constraint, are as follows:

We, the free people of Egypt—on this good land since the dawn of history, being proud of our struggle for freedom, justice, equality, and the peace of humanity throughout our majestic history, and inspired by what we have offered to human civilization—realize the challenges we face as we build and fortify a state of law, with its new civil and democratic characteristics, as an assurance to achieving the goals of the Egyptian revolution of January 25th, 2011, and motivated by its spirit, and out of respect and loyalty to the spirits of its martyrs, and the sacrifices and struggles of our great people in their successive revolutions—declare a document for the basic governing principles which are irrevocable, unamendable and unrestricted, after they ought to be placed in the coming constitution through the founding committee, which will be formed by the new bicameral parliament: the People’s Assembly and the Shura Council, as follows:

1 – The Arabic Republic of Egypt is a civil, democratic, and united state based on political and cultural diversity, and the Egyptian people are a part of the Arab nation that seek its comprehensive unity, and are proud of their African affiliation, their Pharaonic, Coptic, and Islamic history, and of their distinguished role in human civilization.

2 – Islam is the state’s religion and Arabic is its official language, and the principles of the Islamic Sharia are the main source of legislation for Muslims and the principles of the laws of Non-Muslims are the main source of laws related to their civil status and religious matters. [The principles and not the rulings.]

3 – The political system is republican and democratic, and is based on the principles of patriotism and equality between citizens, male and female,

without any kind of discrimination based on religion, gender, ethnicity, language or belief.

4 – Sovereignty is for the people alone, and they are the source of all authority.

5 – The rule of law is the basis of all government, and all of the authorities of the state, the citizens, and people in the public or private sector must submit to it.

6 – The State system is based on the principle of separation of powers, to allow the mutual supervision of checks and balances, and to set up the mechanisms of accountability, transparency and devolution of power in a peaceful way, and insure the democracy of the regime.

7 - Independence of the judiciary is essential to guarantee the principle of the rule of the state by the law, and to guarantee justice for the citizens in all its forms.

8 – The assurance of the continuation and preservation of public ownership of strategic facilities and other natural wealth and resources of the Egyptian state, particularly the protection and management of the Nile River, because it is a vital geographical and historical entity in Egypt, and the assets of the national heritage, of both material and moral significance.

9 - The national economy is based on comprehensive and sustainable development, and its aims are social welfare, and ensuring an equitable distribution of national wealth and growth revenue to all citizens.

10 - Human dignity is a natural right of each human being. The State must respect it and protect it.

All citizens have the following specific rights and freedoms:

- a- Freedom of religion and belief. The state is charged with ensuring the free exercise of religion, including worship and religious rites and with the protection of places of worship.
- b- Social justice in all areas.
- c- The right to hold public office, on the basis of merit.
- d- Freedom of opinion, expression, creativity and innovation.
- e- Freedom of private life.
- f- The right to property and inheritance.

11- Constitutional guarantees of the principles, rights and basic freedoms:

- a- The principles, rights and basic freedoms stipulated in this document bind The Establishing Committee of the Constitution to develop a text that dictates that these principles may not be cancelled, waived, modified, or restricted.
- b- Committing a violation against any of the principles, rights, or basic freedoms stipulated in this document, or attempting to change it, or calling for the changing of it, is a violation against the constitution. Any of the political parties, the National Council for Human Rights, civil society organizations, legal professional associations, or unions, can resort to the Constitutional Supreme Court, with a request to stop this violation and to annul its impact.
- c- The Constitutional Supreme Court has the specific jurisdiction over the unity of the Constitution in the event of an amendment of the principles of the Constitution or its philosophy and foundations, and also interprets the Constitution.
- d- It is prohibited to change or interpret any text in this document in a manner that conflicts with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, along with any of the charters, covenants, and international agreements on human rights of which Egypt is a member, or to allow any of the authorities, state institutions, or any groups or individuals, to act in any way that attempts to make futile what is contained in this document of principles, rights and freedoms, or cause them to be diminished or disrupted.

And to consider the principles and provisions that are contained in the conventions and human rights treaties which were ratified by Egypt superseding its national legislation.

APPENDIX B

The Cannes Peace Accord and Plan of Action

Cannes Peace Accord and Plan of Action

WHEREAS, the House of the Family drafted, negotiated, finalized and agreed on A Bill of Rights and Freedoms for Egypt; and

WHEREAS, some Members of the House of the Family have gathered in France, along with renowned scholars and human rights activists;

BE IT HEREBY Resolved that the undersigned have committed themselves to peace and unity for all Egyptian people, regardless of race, gender, religion, national origin or ethnicity; and

FURTHERMORE, the undersigned have agreed to the following PLAN OF ACTION:

- 1) Empowering local leaders to do inter-faith projects;
- 2) Empowering local NGOs to assess training needs regarding human rights and democracy;
- 3) Utilizing media to publicize the Bill of Rights and Freedoms;
- 4) Letting Egyptians speak for Egyptians;
- 5) Providing lawyers to Egyptians whose human rights have been violated;
- 6) Speaking of Unity, life together as Christians and Muslims; Speaking of Values, not persons;
- 7) Reinforcing the values of human dignity, human value, and freedom as universal human rights;
- 8) Utilizing Social media to connect young people and support human rights;
- 9) Media Monitoring Groups to assimilate all media and to suggest a plan of action with daily executive summaries;
- 10) Statements of international support for the Egyptian people;
- 11) Encouraging private government-to-government communication that encourages human rights for all;
- 12) Organizing a Conference following a 3-month Research Project on Social Political Change on different continents, and how examples in such diverse countries as China, India, Russia, etc. can provide a model of what works and what does not work;
- 13) Training of Religious Leaders;
- 14) Finding the best way to defend human rights in the context of Egypt; and
- 15) Freedom3 members should go to Egypt and speak to members of the House of the Family to better assess their needs and future partnership.

Be it hereby notified that on 12 October 2011 the undersigned have committed themselves to this Cannes Peace Accord and Plan of Action:

THINK. KNOW. BELIEVE.



APPENDIX C

Testimonies from Egyptian Women

Name: Faiza Salah; Age: 53; City of Residence: Harem, Cairo and Incident:

About a month ago, I was walking in the street during mid-day headed from my house to my church. I was wearing a cross on my neck as I always do. All of a sudden, this man ran towards me, he tore the cross necklace off my neck, screaming "you infidel, you and your cross need to leave Egypt," then he shoved me to the ground, and began to grab my purse. As I tried to hold on to my purse, he kicked me, took my purse and ran away. I have been walking on this same street all my life. For the first time ever, I am in fear to walk down my own street. I am afraid for myself, for my family and for my children and their future in this country. As a Christian woman, I am the minority of minorities. I no longer feel like an accepted equal citizen of my community. We need help. We need protection. We are afraid for our lives because we were Christian. There are groups of people that are against us and wanting us to leave our own country. Egypt is our home and we will never leave.

Name: Anonymous Age: 52 Sex: Male; City of Residence and Incident: El Minia, Upper Egypt

During the violent eruption of the revolutions, numerous police stations were burnt down by rioters. In front of one these police stations, a beautiful young Muslim twenty-two year old woman was walking on the street during mid-day. All of a sudden, a group of six armed-thugs hold rifles and knives grabbed her, started to undress her and began raping her in public. She was raped by several of the six thugs. To my shock, people who witnessed rape did not try to help her for fear of their own lives. One of the thugs claimed that if any person tried to get near the girl or interfere he would kill him and go after his whole family and kill them too. The poor girl was then abducted and was never seen again. There is so much fear. For the first time, the Egyptians who always protected and helped women on the streets, were afraid to interfere to save a girl's life. There is no police and no one feels protected any more. We are not protected and therefore we are afraid to protect. Everyone is just trying to survive. Now, I don't let my own daughter leave the house alone.

Name: Suma Age: 50 Sex: Female: City of Incident: Alexandria, Downtown

I now live in the United States but I have an Egyptian citizenship and lived in Egypt most of my life. I went back to Egypt a couple weeks ago with my husband. I went everywhere with him because I was afraid to walk alone as a woman. One day, we went out to go shopping and, I was wearing a cross. As we were walking in a very narrow and crowded alley, we saw two men look at me and say take her now. The two men starting running towards me and were about to grab me as if they were ready to kidnap me. Luckily, my husband quickly grabbed me and we ran out of the crowded alley and the two men lost visibility of us. Egypt does not feel safe for a woman anymore. It is not the same Egypt I had lived in.

Name: Orpha Yacoub Age: 72: Sex: Female; City of Incident: Mohandessen, Cairo

I no longer take my purse out with me when I leave the house because I no longer feel safe. A couple months ago I saw a horrific incident. An elderly woman was walking on the street and carrying her purse. Out of nowhere, a thug on a motorcycle drove by her and grabbed her purse.

She was holding on to the purse for her dear life. When the thug realized she not going to let go of the purse, he started driving the motorcycle and dragged her down the street. To save herself, she let go of the purse. However, she had been badly injured, bruised and cut from being dragged from the back of the motorcycle.

Name: Cathy Age: 50 Location: Cairo

1. History will tell us that women should not expect their involvement in the calls for change and revolutions to actually bring them any long term change in terms of their rights. The history of Algeria for example shows this really clearly. Whether our present era has any impact on this with greater news coverage of promised etc will be something only time will tell I would guess. Participation in a revolution has never resulted in women winning more rights in the post revolution world.

2. My personal view is that the reality of any changes post revolutions (the crisis times of revolutions) are yet to take effect, so it is still early to predict what the future looks like for women. There are many promises that the women's rights will be protected, that values of equality will be protected – we see this in Tunisia now past the election, but there remains a lot of concern.

3. Study of the policies for the parties like the Brotherhood party in Egypt and the party that has gained the most seats needs to look through their history and not just their presently stated policies – then we will understand the fears that women feel. It is hard to imagine that a sudden rise to power will change decades of thinking and shaping of the organisation.

4. Egypt has certainly experienced more harassment and random street violence against women since the revolution – including violence by women against women – particularly I know of instances of Christian women being harassed by fully covered women on the metro – because of course the Christian woman is visible by not covering her head.

APPENDIX D

Testimonies of Tunisian Women

Name: Dr. “Fatima”; **Age: 50's;** **Location of Incident: Medina (city center) of Tunis, Tunisia**
in Zaytouna Mosque University.

I am a Professor at Zaytouna University which is the sharia (Islamic law) school of the University of Tunis and I teach Islamic studies. I am an unveiled woman and I believe that it has to be a free choice of a woman to decide whether or not she wants to be veiled. It should never be forced upon her. In Tunis, it has always been the free choice of a woman and, in fact, the teaching on the veil is left open to much interpretation and discussion. I taught this to many of my students and I believed that free will is crucial in the Muslim faith. Yet, to my shock, after the revolution, I came to campus to give my class lectures and was confronted by students and professors who demanded that I veil myself on campus. I refused to submit to their requests. As a result, they banned me from teaching unless I wore the veil. It was a battle everyday as I walk on campus.

Unfortunately, due to the ridicule and discrimination I have suffered on this issue, I have now began to wear the veil as I teach my classes so I can keep my job and continue to educate my students.

Name: “Safeya,” **Age: 21;** **Location of Incident: Manouba, Tunis**

I am a student at a two year technology academy. Students on campus were always given the choice to be veiled or unveiled. I have chosen to be unveiled. Yet, after the revolution, I have received ridicule and judgment by the students and teachers who make comments in class about my appearance. It has been very frustrating. I noticed this change after the revolution. Many of my friends who were never veiled are all of a sudden veiled due to the force and pressure presented by the community. There is a stigma that if you are unveiled you can not be Muslim. This misconception is being spread among young people in town.