

overview

Dear Friends of the ITPCM, I really hope that this new issue of our Newsletter finds all of you well at a time in which peace, justice and human rights are facing new challenges.

The ITPCM and the Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna continue to be fully committed to do their utmost to contribute, through our educational, training and research activities, to conflict prevention and to the

diffusion of a new culture of peace, and respect of human rights.

In the last months we have been busy organising various training activities and several capacity

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building initiatives in various part of the world. Let me just quote the recently concluded two weeks Training Course for East African Human Rights officers which we delivered in Bujumbura in cooperation with Eastern African Standby Force.

We have been, as well, very active in contributing to the success of the European New Training Initiative for Civilian Crisis Management (ENTRI) which, as you may know, is a major EC supported project whose goal is to duly train a pool of EU citizens ready to be deployed in future EU field operations. Within this framework, we will deliver here in Pisa at the end of May 2011 a EULEX Kosovo pre-deployment Course and later in July we will be delivering Training Course for Human Rights Field Officers. In the meanwhile we have been requested, in the framework of the ENTRI project, to continue the EGT Certification Mechanism of Training Courses which has been quite successful so far as we have about 20 Courses already certified according to EU standards.

As far as our research activity is concerned I am very pleased to inform you that we did launch a major research project, involving more than 20 researchers and various Universities, on International Disaster Response Law. We are convinced that several legal aspects related to the prevention and management of disasters need to be better clarified and spelled out and for this reasons we started this new challenging project.

As Easter is approaching, I would like to take this opportunity to send to all of you my warmest wishes for a pleasant and peaceful Easter

Andrea de GUTTRY
ITPCM Director

Contributions

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by Emanuela Muscarà

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THE GAZA YOUTH BREAKS OUT

The first time I heard about the Gaza Youth Breaks Out (GYBO) Manifesto I was sipping a coffee in the centre of Jerusalem. A young, British-educated Palestinian from the Holy City was enthusiastically praising the initiative. He told me he had never been to Gaza, a mere two hours car-drive from the capital. This was a couple

of months before the wave of unrest shook the Arab World. In December 2010 eight young students in their 20s published this short Manifesto online, whose opening words, which are a summary of the content, consist of an afflicted series of accuses: “We, the youth in Gaza, are so fed up with Israel, Hamas, the occupation, the violations of

human rights and the indifference of the international community!”¹. Sometimes the tones are heated and abusive, but they managed to win a sympathetic response by the Palestinians and a great deal of attention by the interna-

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about/

<http://gazaybo.wordpress.com/>

tional community. As of today their cause on Facebook has almost collected 21.000 supporters.

The situation in the Strip for young people is indeed very dire. More than 50% of 1.6 million population is under 18. There are four major universities in Gaza and several smaller colleges. Yet, unemployment rates rose to 45% at the beginning of this year, according to UNRWA². The blockade enforced after the rise of Hamas in 2007 makes the future prospective even more dim: in 2009 more than 70 % of Gazans lived with an income of less than \$250 a month for a family of up to nine people³. *"We're sick of the wall of shame that separates us from the rest of our country and keeps us imprisoned in a stamp-sized piece of land"* the Manifesto states. Criticisms do not spare Hamas: *"We're sick of bearded guys walking around with their guns abusing their power, beating up or incarcerating young people demonstrating for what they believe in"*. The sectarian rivalry is pointed out as well.

The personal encounter I had in Jerusalem is yet highly symbolic: it shows the mobilizing and connecting power that Internet and social networks have on a population which is now scattered and dispersed around the Occupied Palestinian Territories. One of the main results of the 1994 Oslo Agreements and the closure of Gaza is not only the division of the Palestinian land in an archipelagic territory, and the prevention of any viable future Palestinian State, but also the loss of contact among Palestinians themselves which are uprooted and become alienated from their own shared Palestinian identity. Thanks to Internet and the social networks such barriers can be pulled down, at least virtually.

The Youth in Gaza has been mesmerized by the Egyptian Revolution, glued to Al Jazeera live streaming but still very quiet on the streets. At least for the moment.

"[The Revolution in Egypt] has stirred our sentiments and has moved us to take to the streets to show our solidarity

² <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=37506&Cr=palestin&Cr1=>

³ UNICEF, *At a Glance, Occupied Palestinian Territories, Visited on December 30, 2010* http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/oPt_50318.html

with our neighbours in Egypt" writes a blogger from Gaza⁴. It is not only the thirst for democracy that galvanized the Gazans, but the Palestinians have never forgiven the Egyptian Government for having first signed in 1978 and then stringently abode by a friendship treaty with Israel, thus giving up their role of Palestinian protectors⁵. The Treaty will be repudiated and the closure of the border lifted, many hoped⁶. Instead the new Egyptian Military Junta quickly reassured the worried Israeli Government that their friendship remains strong and solid.

Before the revolution spread in the MENA region, the anonymous authors of the GYBO Manifesto saw their Facebook page becoming very popular in the blink of an eye among Palestinians and foreigners, and similar initiatives spread out over the net. "Stop the Divide Now", "Another Voice for Palestine", "Thawrat Al-ahrrar-the Liberation Revolution", "End the Occupation" are just some of the pages calling for the end of the Palestinian divide. The identity of the GYBO authors is still a mystery. Showing dissent against the Palestinian Authority, being Fatah-Led or Hamas-led, is a very risky business in the oPt. Unlike the other Arab countries where unrest took place, Palestinians have to face a twofold oppression: internally the one deriving from the division among Fatah and Hamas and their often non-democratic rule, and externally the Israeli occupation. Criticizing the internal divisions often entails being labelled as collaborators. Denouncing human rights abuses committed in Gaza by Hamas or other armed groups could lead to stigma and reprisals, an officer from a famous grassroots human rights or-

⁴ Mohammed Rabah Suliman, *Egypt's revolution inspires Gaza's youth*, *The Electronic Intifada*, 1 February 2011

⁵ Menachem Klein, *Jerusalem, the contested city*, London, Hurst & Company, 2001

⁶ Currently the border between Gaza and Egypt has only one crossing point (Rafah). The crossing is very important for the import of wheat (25% of the need) and from power supply. There are many illegal underground tunnels that cross the borders that gave birth to an ever-thriving black economy: even in the days of unrest smuggle of goods and people continued unabated.

ganization told us in Gaza City. One of the most renewed blogger, Asma al Ghouli, who dared publicly criticizing the misbehaviour of Hamas authorities as well as the restrictive social rules oppressing women, has been receiving death threats and beaten on few occasions. Her Brother Mustafa was jailed in December last year for having protested against the Hamas imposed shut down of a youth centre, Sharek. The centre was not Hamas-aligned, and its youth activities which were not only averting youth from the Hamas ones, but, worse, "promiscuous", engaging young people of both sexes together and women not wearing hijabs. In the North of the Strip the director of a small community based organization (CBO), which offers educational, psychosocial and recreational activities to children, had his CBO shut down twice and its material confiscated after refusing to have government-affiliated people in the management. Apart from the internal threats, the population wants to avoid that reports on internal abuses are exploited by the hostile Israeli propaganda which, in turn, could strengthen the already heinous occupation measures. In a similar vein, the critiques of the Palestinian ruling cliques contained in the GYBO manifesto have been publicly praised by many Israelis. The authors rushed to decline all this appreciation by biased supporters, making clear that their struggle is first and foremost against the Israeli occupation.

No surprise that the motto of the mobilization planned by the youth for last 15 of March, on the footsteps of their Arab peers, was a very cautious one and, admittedly, one that cannot raise criticisms from either Hamas nor Fatah. There is a call for unity, whereas the typical motto of the other revolution has been *Al sha'ab yurid isqat al nizam* (the people demand an overthrow of the regime). Thus, it seems that several overlapping claims informed the protests, without a common enemy to exorcize. In the end the revolt was against the PNA and its acquiescent leadership, against the internal divisions, against the occupation and the siege in Gaza, against the idleness of the International community and the US-Israeli complicity. The attitude of the PA in both Gaza and the West Bank is very cautious:

the PA has wittingly exploited the momentum to organize a carefully controlled 'day of rage' on the 25th of February to protest against the USA veto on the umpteenth resolution denouncing the Israeli settlement activity. During the Egyptian unrest, in the West Bank the Government tried to avert popular protests in the streets by offering a cabinet reshuffle and promising presidential and parliamentary elections in September. Prime Minister Fayyad asked Hamas to join his government, and the PA said it would resume unity talks. Fayyad went even further, trying to mobilize youth and opening nomination forms on Facebook⁷. These moves came also as a result of the undermined trust in the PA following Al-Jazeera's release of the leaked "Palestine papers" in January, revealing the collusion of the Palestinian leadership with Israeli counterpart. Dana and Rosenfeld⁸ reported that: "On 17 February, hundreds took to the streets of Ramallah demanding that Abbas and

the deposed Hamas prime minister, Ismail Haniyeh, reconcile immediately"⁹.

In Gaza the Hamas leadership is more severe. Popular protests are restricted unless they have received the needed approval granted upon compliance with the official party lines. Not all the young people were aware of the planned turmoil in the Strip. M. A. Director of a youth CBO in a Refugee Camp in the Deir EL Balah district told us he did not know about the 15 of March protest. Almost all Gazans belong to a political faction and their fate is intrinsically linked to the party's one. He estimates that more than half of the residents, around 800.000 people, actively support Hamas. "People here have a commitment to their parties' orders" he told me "Most of them have a job through these parties". Yes, there is a desire for unity but it is filtered through each party's vision and conditions, M.A. continues, "so if the other side is not accepting this, he is [held] responsible for the fail". He believes that the key factor in the Egypt-

tian revolution, namely youth, will not play the same pivotal role in Gaza because youth here relies on their political affiliation to get a job: "Everyone's looking to his personal good and not to his country's good, which means we need to work on increasing citizenship first". It is not hard to believe it, since unemployment rates skyrocketed in the aftermath of Operation Cast Lead: a comprehensive survey performed by the Gaza Private Sector Council indicates that 268 establishments were totally destroyed and 432 were damaged, resulting in a combined loss estimated at US \$139 million¹⁰. Additionally, since 2005 Gazans are not allowed to work in Israel. There still is a long way to go.

7 Alaa Tartir, Will the Palestinians keep silent?, Maan News Agency, 6 March 2011, <http://www.maannews.net/eng/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=364183>

8 Israel-Palestine peace activists.

9 Joseph Dana and Jesse Rosenfeld, West Bank wind of change, Le Monde Diplomatique, <http://mondediplo.com/2011/03/07westbank>

10 Forty per cent of the affected establishments (297) were industrial - small and medium size enterprises mainly in the manufactured food, textile, garment, furniture and plastic sectors, while the remaining 60% were commerce, contracting, and fuel establishments. OCHA oPt, Locked in: The Humanitarian Impact of two years of Blockade on the Gaza Strip, August 2009, http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/Ocha_opt_Gaza_impact_of_two_years_of_blockade_August_2009_english.pdf



IS ANOTHER AFRICA POSSIBLE?

AFRICAN CIVIL SOCIETY'S STRENGTH FROM SENEGAL TO EGYPT AND MORE

by Luca Raineri

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2011 has not begun peacefully as usual for African dictators. The 11th World Social Forum has occurred in Dakar – for the second time in Africa – amidst dramatic changes undergoing in the north of the continent. The right event in the right place at the right moment: while Mubarak and Ben Ali's colleagues throughout the continent are getting nervous, dangerous ideas spread out from world's civil society gathered in Dakar. And sometimes, good ideas and brave people can contribute dramatically to make the world change.

Until late 2010, African social movements were generally considered too timid, poorly vocal, superficially rooted and unable to effectively influence the politic agenda of their

respective governments. Despite the fact that the most tragic consequences of neoliberal policies are experienced in Africa, this continent's harsh soil seemed unsuitable to grow anything

comparable to the widespread mobilization for social justice and alternative development policies existing in South America, India and other parts of the world. Analysts and observ-

ers, including Cheikh Anta Diop and Gandhi, tried to give account of this apparently inexplicable specificity, providing sharp intellectual justifications and theories. In 2007, the World Social Forum, gathering all the people, civil society organizations, NGOs and social movements struggling for global justice, took place in Nairobi, attempting to challenge this belief: but according to all the participants it was a major failure.

For all these reasons the choice of holding a WSF in Dakar in February 2011, for the second time in Africa, was a big challenge. Low participation, weak impact, and the impression of a mainly “white” lead were among the fears of the organizers at the WSF’s eve. However, these non-optimistic expectations proved to be unjustified. As a matter of fact, the 11th WSF, held in Dakar from 6th to 11th February 2011, couldn’t occur in a more propitious moment. Just a few hundreds miles away, in the same continent, the Tunisian people shook up the long-standing dictatorship ruling the country a few days before the beginning of the WSF. Similarly, the Egyptian revolution (as everybody called it in Dakar) started one week before the beginning of the WSF, and it resulted in Mubarak’s removal from power on February 11th, in coinci-

dence with the closing ceremony of the WSF.

As a matter of fact, the uprisings in North Africa contributed to radically question this long-standing myth, proving that well determined social movements, rooted in civil society and referring to their inalienable human rights do have the strength required to provoke major political changes, also in Africa.

This is somehow a première in this continent, where political changes, even when they’re inspired by a social agenda, generally stem from a tiny “enlightened” elite, or a self-nominated avant-garde, and result in a military driven coup d’état (as it was the case in Sankara’s Burkina Faso) or in a high-level and poorly inclusive political compromise (like in Guinea), when they don’t merely wait until the dictator in question dies. Moreover, the role of foreign powers, namely the US, and former colonial powers, like France, in “stabilizing” the region, has often been accounted among the factors that would impair any major political change coming from the bottom and from civil society. Now, the truthfulness of this conjecture needs to be questioned in view of the latest developments, at least with regard to Northern Africa. Another novelty is

represented by the essentially non-violent nature of the social movements struggling for political change and social progress in Northern Africa. Once again, this contributed to dismantle a long-standing myth, according to whom no change, especially a “popular” one, can occur in Africa without weapons, and this would invariably lead to disastrous conclusions.

This evidence dramatically influenced, in opposite directions and symmetric way, the self-reliance both of African dictatorships and social movements. The former feared and the latter hoped a domino effect.

The WSF offered a clear insight of the new framework resulting from the above mentioned major shift in the balance of power in Africa. In almost any assembly and workshop of the WSF, Tunisian and Egyptian participants were hailed as “heroes” and braves, thus proving the enthusiasm that accompanied their uprisings on the other side of the Sahara. Several meetings were organized to share first-hand information on the Northern African “revolutions” from the very same persons that participated and tremendously contributed to the mobilization and organization of the protests, because of their political experience reinforced during years of



militancy within the WSF. Particularly the Brussels-based network CADTM (Comité pour l'annulation de la dette au tiers monde), offered some very useful insights of the ongoing Northern African uprisings: first, the major role of women was highlighted, in order to tackle a widespread idea of an Islamic driven mobilization; and, secondly, activists from the CADTM Tunisia and CADTM Maghreb clarified the major social, and not merely political, goal of the revolution; according to them, widespread poverty, combined with unemployment and soaring food prices, must be accounted among the core drivers of the popular surge; as a matter of fact, they said, the revolution would be a failure whereas the former rulers would be replaced by bureaucrats and technocrats parachuted from the global financial institutions (namely the World Bank and the IMF), in compliance with a typical "shock therapy" paradigm, simply to pursue the former economic agenda against the popular will.

In the audience, apart from curious and supporters, the most interested were doubtlessly the Moroccans and the Algerians, who attended the special meeting of the Maghreb Social Forum in Dakar as a young Nelson Mandela would have listened to Martin Luther King 40 years before (and among them, some less enthusiastic observers could easily be identified, with big black sun-glasses and black coats: not the smartest camouflage for the Royal Moroccan Security Service, but - again - a heightened control

proves that social movements influence is growing in Africa).

It has been observed, however, that the civil societies mobilized in North Africa, and especially in Tunisia and Egypt, made no reference to the WSF, and didn't explicitly framed their claims within the global justice movement's lexicon. Inside the International Council of the WSF someone called for the necessity of a political "requalification" of the space provided by the WSF. Nevertheless, it must be recognized that Egyptian and Tunisian civil society movements, despite apparently neglecting the WSF, implemented a political approach owing more than it declares to the WSF discourse and practice. A spontaneous grass-root movement, with no centralized leadership nor unified direction, the choice of a non-violent struggle, the harsh critique against imperialism and a stance in favour of the people's right to self-determination, the role of women and the goal of social justice, work and food clearly rank these movements in line with the WSF agenda. Naming or not the WSF is of secondary importance, especially when one considers that the WSF is not aimed to take the power, but rather to disperse it. In this view, civil society uprisings in Northern Africa and social movements gathering in Dakar for the World Social Forum must not be understood as competing, but rather as mutually reinforcing.

The Senegalese government, for instance, adopted since 2009 a clear critic stance to confront the WSF and nearly attempted to sabotage its organizations. But when the news coming from Tunisia and Egypt began to flow, suddenly the government changed its approach and proved to be much more accommodating. And still, Senegal worries were limited compared with those of many surrounding countries in West Africa, whose records in human rights are much poorer. Mauritania, Burkina Faso, Niger, Guinea, Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia: in all these countries democracy and civil and political rights are far from being an everyday evidence. Most of the semi-clandestine social movements working in these contexts took Dakar's WSF as a major opportunity to gather, exchange ideas and practices, and benefited from a global platform to foster their claims and tie international alliances. But, unlike most of the previous WSFs, this time the coincidence with major political changes pushed by popular discontent and determined social movements taking place in the same continent has provided the WSF claims and political goals with sharp teeth. In other words, this time the traditional demands for social justice, access to food, land and resources, inclusive processes, recognition of women's rights, freedom of association and press, came alongside with a clear warning: rulers are not adamant. Even if they dispose of a well equipped army. Even in Africa.





by Urte Leopold

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IN QUEST OF DEMOCRACY THE PALESTINIANS BETWEEN HAMAS & FATAH

Revolution is the self-defense of a nation who is offended in its basic and dearest rights. This sentence from the Prussian Journalist and Politician Lothar

Bucher¹ seems tailored to the upheavals occurring from Tunis till al-Manama that, although in alleviation

in these days or just receiving less attention from the media, are still ongoing. People from all walks of life came together and are still gathering in the streets calling for democracy, human

¹ 1817-1892.

rights and political participation. But is it really the demand for democracy and human rights or only the deposition of dictators like Ben Ali, Hosni Mubarak and Ali Abdullah Saleh that unite the insurgents? Do they want real reforms and structural changes or just a displacement of leaders who didn't keep their promises, oppressed every flashing of requests for more political participation to the point of disposing of their citizens? Unnecessary to say that the desire of living in dignity and peace is rooted also in the people in the MENA region and revolutions are not limited to the "western hemisphere" as can be seen from the uprising of the Egyptians first against the French and subsequently the British occupation or the Libyan resistance against the Italian foreign regime. On the other hand one should not forget that the so-called "Facebook generation" is not representative for whole Egypt or Libya. In the last decade of Mubarak nearly half of

the Egyptian population lived with less than 2 USD per day. Demonstrations for political and social as well as economic rights surely reflect the will of a part of the population to build a functioning democratic system. On the other hand, many Egyptians are on the streets carrying their "reason" for protest involuntarily with them, a terrible and at the same time simple feeling which cares less about checks and balances: hunger. And what is meant by the claim for democracy? Would the majority of the citizens in the revolting countries accept and implement finally fundamental rights and equal treatment of half of their populations – women? Would tribes and clans abstain from their powerful positions?

While wondering about and questioning the intentions of the insurgents which are surely varicolored as the colors and flavors of the traditional *shuk*, one can notice that a small but hard-fought piece of land in the

MENA region seems to remain silent in front of the surrounding upheavals. What happens in the place which usually makes a name for itself, either regarding the human rights violations its inhabitants are exposed to or attacks prepared by a small number of the latter against its neighbor Israel: What happens in Palestine?

A, compared to the ones in Egypt or now Syria, Yemen and Bahrain, very small attempt to challenge the existing order in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) – the political internal division between Hamas in the Gaza Strip and Fatah in the West Bank - can be seen in the demonstrations organized by mainly youth organizations demanding the political unity of the oPt on the 15th of March 2011. What at a first glance might not seem to be an uprising or questioning of the political legitimacy of their current leaders was in reality a very sophisticated way to speak up against not only the in-fighting of both political parties but first



and foremost the demand for political participation and democracy. The intention of the protesters was dual and if not been understood directly but suspected though from the PA's side, subsequently Fatah in the West Bank and Hamas in the Gaza Strip tried to use the protests, mixing with the protesters and trying to make them and the outside world believe that the protests are in line with their own will, namely to end the internal political division. But not only members of Fatah and Hamas were present at the demonstrations. Also the Palestinian Authority security forces in the West Bank who even prevented some of the protestors to reach al-Manara square, the central place in Ramallah where the demonstrations took place, were ready to do "their part". This comparatively modest event shows how difficult it still is for Palestinians to stand up for their rights. But it has to be stated as well that Palestinians have a big advantage compared to countries like Egypt or Tunisia, Yemen or Syria, also due to their own sad history of the last 63 years: Palestinians learned to organize themselves at the grassroots level - in first place against the foreign occupier - a fact which in uprisings as witnessed now in many countries of the MENA region is a clear advantage. This level of organized resistance has been very weak or totally absent in many of the Arab countries for decades, as Sam Bahour rightly points out.² He compares the second intifada to the current upheavals in Egypt and Tunisia, stating that the former Palestinian President Yasser Arafat managed to turn the rage of his people against Israel while the actual protests were first and foremost directed at that time against a *Palestinian leadership that was seriously corrupt and refused to shift gear politically (after the failed Camp David II talks), opting instead for a never-ending U.S.-sponsored peace process*³. And as my

² A Palestinian-American businessman and entrepreneur, a sharp observer and connoisseur of Palestinian politics and developments, living in the West Bank.

³ *Palestine is the key to Arab democracy* (by Sam Bahour), guardian.co.uk, 7 February 2011.

former teacher of history said: "History repeats itself" one could make the assumption that the latest attacks from Gaza on Israeli villages right after the 15th of March might not be a mere coincidence but maybe a new attempt of the leading power in Gaza to divert from its internal problems and decreasing support among the population, and to use the anger for its own political aims. Nevertheless, it is unquestioned that Palestinians do not face only an internal problem, represented by a highly corrupt and inefficient government. An obscure regime in Gaza is ruling over people living in inhuman conditions, mixing them up with fanatical, reputed religious, calls for violence. An approach that contributed so far only to further isolate the 1.5 million people living in the Strip. On the other hand, Palestinians are also exposed to the persisting occupation by Israel and all the inhuman conditions that comes along with it. Those who thinking now that the (apparently) democratic developments in the neighboring countries will positively influence the so-called peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians and possibly lead finally to a Palestinian state building process, might be convinced otherwise. As stated by Henry Siegman, President of the U.S./Middle East Project and consultant to the Norwegian Peacebuilding Centre, so far many of the Israeli governments have expressed their resistance to a Palestinian statehood justifying it by pointing out the *"democracy deficit"* of both the Palestinians and the Arab countries. Now that democratic intentions of a part of the citizens in the Arab countries in the region who risk their lives in order to obtain fundamental rights should actually contribute to enhance the Israeli government's willingness to acknowledge the right of Palestinians for an own state, *we are now told by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his government that the overthrow of Tunisia's and Egypt's rulers and the challenges to other regional autocrats, whose regimes provided Israel with a certain stability by repressing forcefully popular*

February 2011.

*Arab anger over Israel's occupation policies, no longer allows Israel to accede to risky "concessions" that a peace accord entails.*⁴

This shows that feelings of hopelessness and resignation might prevail in these days in Palestinian society rather than the believe to experience what Egyptians and Tunisians have achieved so far. Israel, the U.S. and surely the Palestinian governing regimes in the West Bank and Gaza Strip keep an eye on the Palestinians and their reactions to the new Arab Spring. Israel will surely oppress every move (even if democratic) that in its own understanding could challenge the security of the Jewish state. The U.S. has demonstrated that, in order to preserve its own interests, it keeps supporting *the old model of Arab world governance - policy states and banana republics*⁵. Therefore it equipped, trained and led a new generation of Palestinian security services. This kind of police state will do everything to maintain its current status. In the unlikely situation of an overthrow, the PA security forces will probably turn their arms against their fellow citizens. The case of Egypt clearly shows that the deposition of the tyrant does not bring automatically democratic structures and transform former loyal servants into advocates of human rights. And Fatah and Hamas? Why should they be different from a Ben Ali or a Hosni Mubarak, counting on the U.S.' support to "defend" them against their own people? Difficult times for a revolution in Palestine.

⁴ *The Democracy Revolutions and the Israel-Palestine Conflict* (by Henry Siegman), Huffington Post, 22 March 2011.

⁵ Sam Bahour's Article.



by Eljona Sadiku

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MIGRANTS FROM AFRICA TO ISRAEL AND EUROPE

Introduction

The riots in MENA countries in the last 3 months have completely changed the political situation in the Arab countries and as a result media, politicians and public opinion too, seems excited about this. They all welcomed the fights for liberty,

freedom and rights of people in these countries, but their excitement unfortunately did not last too long. Now Europe seems to be more worried about the migration flows these events produced rather than the outcome of the riots in these countries.

It does not matter anymore for them who are the people that reached the Italian and the Maltese coasts or how they are called, migrants or refugees, they are causing agitation between the EU countries and no one wants them.

In the last 10 years the migration drastically dropped in number in Europe, due to the harsh European migration policy. But the EU member countries do not want to speak about this penetration. The only thing they keep on saying is that they already have a lot of migrants/refugees in their countries and do not want others. Migrants and refugees wanted to get to Europe but it proved impossible for them, especially for the African ones. Therefore, they had chosen another "safe" country to go, Israel. They went through many difficulties, passing through many countries leading to a very hard life, before reaching Israel and once they were there things were not like they expected to be. Their right to refuge was not respected and the absence of a national law on refugees made their life more complicated. Despite all these problems the number of African refugees in Israel increased.

Israel: no more "holy land" for migrants?

For many years migrants and refugees, who tried to reach Europe through Libya have been stopped en route, sometimes even in the Libyan desert. Many human rights associations and organizations active in Libya were

concerned about the refugees and migrants situation and the inhuman treatment they were subject by the Libyan police and authorities.

During 2005-2008 UNHCR statistics showed that the flows of migrants in the EU countries, especially in Italy, Greece, Malta and Cyprus, had drastically reduced in number, in contrast with what occurred in Israel during the same years. From 2011, as a result of the events occurring in the MENA, the so called "Arab Spring" the migration route is changing and Europe is becoming the desirable destination for migrants and refugees again.

The migrants arrived in Lampedusa, Italy, and Malta, especially Eritreans - but also from Somalia, Ethiopia and Ivory Coast - confirm route destination changes. Kidane Isaac, an Eritrean guy who works at the Eritrean Committee and cooperates with the African Refugee Development Center (ARDC), said that *"if I had waited a few months more before leaving my country I would be in Italy now, and not in Israel"*.

This a common feeling, shared by many Eritrean refugees in Israel. Every time they hear any news about "lucky" Eritreans who were able to reach Lampedusa's coast all of them are happy and full of joy. They know that Israel was a desperate choice for

all of them but now that the European gate is open everybody wants to enters through it.

When the riots started in the MENA region many of the European countries were happy with it and encouraged demonstrators to fight for their rights, but they did not expect these people to ask for their help and to invade their coasts. African migration flows are creating disagreement among the politicians and in the public opinion too. Politicians in Europe keep on talking about Human Rights and Christian hospitality but the attitude they have with the African refugees/migrants shows the opposite. The European Union had been a fortress for the refugees/migrants for the past 10 years, and unfortunately the situation is not changing. Many of the EU member States, refuse to open their borders. The only exception at the moment seems to be Italy, but it is left alone. France and Germany are at the point of "closing" their borders with Italy and not to let any of the refugees/migrants, who are invading the Lampedusa island coast, to pass through them.

What will happen to thousands of migrants who came to Italy and those who are still expected to come? Will they be sent back or will the European countries change their attitude and



welcome them? Difficult to say, and seems even unlikely that the European attitude will change.

At the moment the African migration flow to Israel has drastically dropped and this seems to make the Israeli government "content". The spokeswoman of the Ministry of Interior said in an interview to Hareetz, in March 1, 2011: *"We don't know for certain why the sudden drop, but believe it is related to events in Egypt....The number of African migrants entering Israel illegally through Egypt has dropped sharply since Egyptian political upheaval began in January"*. Despite the comment of the Israeli Ministry of Interior spokeswoman it is not difficult to guess the reason of the African migration route change. Israel knows that this is due to the "Arab Spring" and to the fact they are invading European coasts, but for them the important thing is that migrants, or "infiltrators" as they use to call the people who pass illegally the Israeli borders, go elsewhere and not "bother" them anymore.

Israeli government does not seem to be worried about what is happening in its Arab neighboring countries and maybe it is right in not being so

concerned. The tourism is flourishing in the country and the migrant flows is drastically dropped. The only concern for Israel is the situation in Egypt, one of the friendly Arab countries it has. There are economic interests, related to the gas supply, as well as military ones, involved with this country. Israel will have to face major difficulties if the Egyptian leader, who will replace Mubarak, will not respect the agreements on gas supplies and will not be able to stop the migration flow – in case it starts again - once Europe adopts restricted measures on migration.

Israel has never had a formal agreement with Egypt related to the border control, but the Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, in 2007, spoke about the existence of an oral agreement with the Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, according to which Egypt is willing to accept asylum seekers detained at the border. In fact Israeli authorities together with Egyptian police have undertaken coordinated borders' patrols and the Egyptian police have often been accused and condemned for shooting refugees/migrants at the Israel-Egypt borders. This is confirmed by many refugees/

migrants, who passed these borders, as well as by numerous reports of the human rights organizations active in Israel.

Israeli policy on migration

Israel was considered the holy land for millions of refugees, especially after the WWII, and for this reason this country developed the most friendly procedure for migrants, but only for those of Jewish origin. In fact the policy Israel has followed and continues to follow encourages Jewish immigration and allows those with Jewish ancestry to immigrate and naturalize despite the fact they are not considered Jewish under the religious law.

By the mid-1990s, the number of non-Jewish migrants increased creating protest on the Israeli public opinion. The solution the government gave to this "crisis" was limiting migrant work permits and increasing the detention period and deportation of migrants. But in the past 10 years Israel has faced an influx of undocumented migrants, many of whom want to apply for asylum and enter the country clandestinely



through its border. Mostly of them are African asylum seekers, who fled persecutions and wars in their countries of origin. Their number increased especially during 2006. The majority of refugees in Israel are from Eritrea and Sudan, who passed through the Egyptian borders. But they come from other countries too, such as: Nigeria, DRC, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Liberia, Kenya, Turkey, Colombia, Georgia, Philippines and so on.

Based on UNHCR statistics the biggest group of asylum seekers in Israel is composed by Eritreans and the second one by the Sudanese. In 2006 there were 1143 cases of asylum; 5559 cases in 2007, (Eritreans 1763, Sudanese 1688); and in 2008 the cases were 6.034 (Eritreans 2.499, Sudanese 1755). UNHCR statistics shows too that in 2009 the Israel's asylum recognition rate was less than 1 percent and the number of estimated asylum seekers is 30,000 by the end of 2010.

Despite the fact that Israel became a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention in 1954, it has never incorporated the provisions of the treaty, related to refugee status determination, into domestic law. Israel, which initially depended

on the UNHCR to handle RSD procedures, assumed responsibility for status determinations in July 2009, delegating refugee claims to the Israeli Ministry of the Interior. The process is complicated by the absence of a clear Israeli asylum policy and by a procedure marred by inconsistencies and ad hoc decisions. The Israeli policy on migration does not include: family reunification, minor application, family joint application, recognition of sexuality gender claims, and refugees' repatriation to Eritrea, due to the lack of diplomatic relations with this country (even though there are evidences of international relation with Eritrea in the military area). Asylum seekers from both Eritrea and Sudan are given "group protection" status by the Israeli State. In the previous years the "temporary group protection" status has been granted to asylum seekers from DRC, Liberia and Ivory Coast. The asylum seekers from these countries cannot pass through an RSD process and the only thing they can do is provide sufficient proof of their nationality to the Israeli State, and very often they find difficulties to prove it due to the fact that they lose all their document en route to Israel.

Despite the fact that migrants and

asylum seekers have no easy life in Israel and their rights are either respected or guaranteed from 2000, and especially from 2005, the flows of asylum seekers increased exponentially. They passed through many difficulties and dangers in their route to Israel. Sudan and Egypt are not easy countries to pass through and migrants and asylum seekers are victims of the Bedouins in Sinai too. They are tortured and subject to inhuman treatment in the Bedouins camps in the desert as many reports, especially by the Hotline for Migrant Workers organization, have documented. These people escaped from wars and dictatorship in their countries of origin and believed that their situation anywhere else would have been better than the one they left. They wanted to go to Europe, but they could not get there and the harsh policy on migration of the EU countries did not help them. Many refugees heard for the first time about Israel once they reached Egypt. Israel was not their first choice, although they decided to go there. They considered it a safe place to go. They hoped for better life conditions and improved freedom. Life in Israel is not easy for refugees but where else they can go?



about the **ITPCM**

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Bethlehem City, by Hazboun, www.sxc.hu

3 - 4 - 5 May 2011

Workshops on the forthcoming Local Elections in Palestine

On the basis of previous training courses organised to the benefit of the Central Elections Commission (CEC) and the preliminary feedbacks of the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), the Scuola Sant'Anna will hold three workshops aiming at:

- raising awareness and understanding of the electoral process;
- exploring and elaborating on relevant Electoral Laws and Models;
- providing technical assistance to elections monitors with a view to next local elections in Palestine.

The workshops will be addressing: the trainers of the different CSOs organizations who have already attended previous training sessions sponsored by the Italian Cooperation; the Directors of the CSOs and, if possible and feasible; a few monitors identified by the CSOs.



organised by the
Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna, Pisa, Italy
Central Elections Commission, Palestine

with the financial support of the
Consulate General of Italy in Jerusalem
Office of Development Cooperation - Italian MoFA



April 4 - 15, 2011
Bujumbura BURUNDI



Scuola Superiore
Sant'Anna
di Studi Universitari e di Perfezionamento



International Training Programme
for Conflict Management

Introductory Training Course for Human Rights Field Officers of the Eastern Africa Standby Force (EASF)



EASFCOM

The overall objective of the course was to provide EASBRICOM field officers with the specialized background, knowledge and skills needed to fulfill their tasks as active members of a human rights operation. Therefore, the training will very much focus on both the theoretical and practical sides of an officer's tasks, so as to equip the trainees with the necessary tools to perform their duties in line with agreed standards.

The training course has been conceived on the assumption that participants have already a basic knowledge of the elements of international human rights and humanitarian law, so as to address the core issues in a more efficient and rational manner.

Il Corso "Lavorare in ambiente ostile: profilo, competenze e strumenti pratici dell'operatore internazionale" è volto a fornire una preparazione e un bagaglio adeguati a coloro che si avvicinano per la prima volta al mondo delle organizzazioni internazionali e delle ONG; obiettivo primario del corso è mettere i partecipanti nella condizione di sapersi orientare tra quelle istituzioni e nei contesti in cui abitualmente operano, sia dal punto di vista teorico che pratico.

CORSO 6-15 LUGLIO 2011

LAVORARE IN AMBIENTE OSTILE

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Il corso intende fornire:

- (a) una panoramica sulle maggiori organizzazioni internazionali e ONG attive a livello mondiale e regionale, in termini di strutture, status degli operatori civili e regole d'ingaggio
- (b) strumenti di analisi delle aree di crisi e di azione sul campo
- (c) capacità e competenze in risposta a situazioni di stress, pericolo e altre minacce alla sicurezza e alla salute personale.



THE CIVILIAN PERSONNEL of PEACE KEEPING BUILDING OPERATIONS

SUMMER SCHOOL: 4-16 July 2011

PISA, ITALY
XVII EDITION

BACKGROUND

Over the last decades peacekeeping operations have grown rapidly in number and complexity. These developments have been reflected in the emergence of new doctrinal paradigms (e.g. the UN Capstone Doctrine) but have also been compounded by new ethical and political concerns (such as the concept of Responsibility to Protect). Operationally, 'traditional' peacekeeping has given way to complex, integrated operations which require a combination of political, military and humanitarian action. This evolution has resulted in an increased need for civilian personnel able to interact with an ever-growing number of actors and to perform the specific tasks they have been assigned.

TRAINING OBJECTIVES

The aim of the Summer School is to train participants for some of the tasks usually performed by the civilian component of peacekeeping operations and peacebuilding missions, with a specific focus on Human Rights and International Election Observation. A specific session is devoted to improve participants' capacity to design and pursue their own career path. The curriculum is divided into 4 modules: Context, Activities, Personal Profile, Career Coaching.

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FROM JANUARY 2012 NEWLY LAUNCHED MASTER OF ARTS IN INTERNATIONAL ELECTORAL POLICY & PRACTICE

The Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna and Creative Associates International are pleased to announce the Master of Arts in International Electoral Policy and Practice, a one-year, post-graduate programme that is intended to begin in January 2012. The programme provides advanced learning in electoral system design, administration, and evaluation. The syllabus of the Master Programme includes 440 hours of classroom lectures and exercises, 160 hours of internships, and a final written thesis. The Programme is supported by a global network of universities as sources of students and providing research, guest lecturers and special seminars. The Programme also involves Election Management Bodies (EMBs) as hosts for the internships and employers of the graduates.

There are three strategic objectives that this Programme seeks to fulfill. First, during the recent expansion in electoral governance, election admin-

istrators were often recruited in an unsystematic manner and required on-the-job training. Such circumstances necessitated international electoral assistance to bridge the skills and experience gaps. Based on those gaps, this Programme focuses on the development of the "electoral professional," that is, the chair or top executive position on creating a common set of norms, behavioural standards, and qualifications to assume the professional responsibility of electoral administration.

Second, there is a significant disparity between the number of men and women occupying executive positions at EMBs. Although female representation can be found on most electoral commissions, the chair or top executive positions are dominated by men. This Programme will place a recruitment emphasis on female candidates, designating that over 50% of the total class seats will be reserved for female students.

Third, the current generation of administrators who pioneered a 30 year expansion period are approaching retirement. These changes will produce a generational demand for qualified electoral administrators. Without a systematic approach to the education and recruitment of electoral professionals, these positions risk being filled in the same ad hoc ways as before. This Programme provides a systematic approach to developing the human capital to meet this labour deficit challenge.

There are five key organizational stakeholders in the Programme: (1) Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna; (2) Creative Associates International; (3) international electoral partners; (4) EMB partners; and (5) university partners.

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CREATIVE ASSOCIATES INTERNATIONAL



Scuola Superiore
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EUROPEAN CIVIL PROTECTION TRAINING PROGRAMME

The Community Civil Protection Mechanism was established by the European Commission at the end of 2001. It aims to facilitate, on request, the civil protection response to all types of emergencies, including natural and man-made disasters and environmental accidents occurring inside and outside the Community. By pooling the civil protection capabilities of the participating states, the Community Mechanism can ensure even better protection primarily of people, but also of the natural and cultural environment as well as property.

The Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna in partnership with the Italian Civil Protection Department and the Italian Firefighters, Public Rescue and Civil Defence Department is

In order to enhance coordination of civil protection assistance interventions the Commission set up a training programme for intervention teams and for the experts responsible for assessment and/or coordination. The training programme aims at improving personal response competencies and at ensuring complementarity and compatibility between intervention teams coming from different participating states.

responsible for the design, planning, conduction and evaluation of 8 Community Civil Protection Mechanism courses (8th & 9th cycle).

next courses in agenda (not open for applications)

2 - 8 April 2011

Media and Security Strategy Course
Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna - Pisa

4 - 10 June 2011

Community Mechanism Induction Course
Istituto Superiore Antincendi (ISA) - Roma

18 - 24 June 2011

Community Mechanism Induction Course
Istituto Superiore Antincendi (ISA) - Roma

8 - 14 October 2011

Community Mechanism Induction Course
Istituto Superiore Antincendi (ISA) - Roma

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THE ITPCM

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