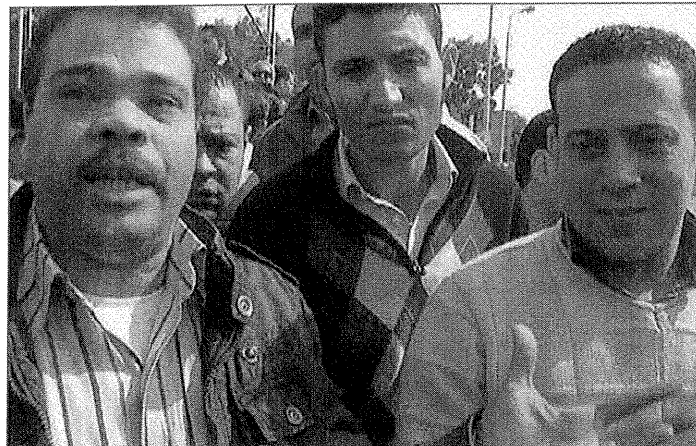


EGYPT UPRISING

SETTING THE STAGE

A dramatic year

Mohammed Morsi's political career went from the best of times to the worst of times in just over a year. Egypt's first democratically elected civilian president won the mandate of the nation in the summer of 2012. A year later, Morsi was sent packing as the military puts its support behind a popular movement that claimed that the president's turbulent first year in office was taking Egypt on a downward trajectory that could ruin the nation.



Morsi's presidency

Mohammed Morsi rose to prominence after the Arab Spring swept through Egypt in 2011. Egyptian protests led to the ousting of President Hosni Mubarak, an authoritarian leader who ruled Egypt for almost 30 years. In the wake of his departure, several politicians emerged to try to fill the power vacuum Mubarak left behind. As the leader of the Muslim Brotherhood, Morsi found himself well positioned to assume the reigns of power. Accomplishing this wasn't easy. By the time, Egypt's national elections took place in June 2012, many different factions were vying for power. Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood eventually set themselves up as front runners, winning a narrow election victory thanks to the backing of many of the nations moderates and liberals.

Morsi's mistakes

Once in power, Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood made the mistake of assuming too much control. Morsi had promised to be a president for all Egyptians but he soon resorted to the unpopular tactic of granting himself powers that were beyond judicial oversight — a move that, for many, harkened back to the

The Arab Spring

Beginning in late 2010 as citizens of many nations in north Africa and the Middle East demanded change; calling for more democratic (and less authoritarian) forms of government.

Mubarak days. He also centralized power among his Muslim Brotherhood colleagues, leaving the rest of the nation to wonder if Egypt was about to become an Islamic state. However, the real straw that broke Morsi's political back came in his inability to deal with the nation's economic woes and to improve the lives of so many impoverished Egyptians.

Tamarod

All these things combined to create a recipe for regime change. A small non-violent, protest group called Tamarod scheduled a mass demonstration on the anniversary of Morsi's election victory. The response was stunning as 800 000 protestors took to the streets in Cairo alone to demand the president's resignation.

Morsi agreed that mistakes had been made but he refused to step down. Eventually, military leader General Abdel Fattah al-Sisi gave Morsi

48 hours to comply with the demands of the protesters and resign. When the president refused, al-Sisi and the army forcefully removed him from office. The majority of Egyptians celebrated the army's bold move.

Definition – TAMAROD

Translated from Arabic, *tamarod* means rebellion.

Tumultuous period

What followed was a tumultuous period that eventually led to a major clash between al-Sisi's armed forces and pro-Morsi protesters six weeks after the crisis began. Weary of two Muslim Brotherhood encampments in Cairo calling for the reinstatement of Morsi, the Egyptian army

was intent on breaking up the camps. They staged two raids that led to deaths of over 600 people (the Muslim Brotherhood put the number of killed closer to 3 000). Even with the camps destroyed, pro-Morsi protests continued to surface well into the fall of 2013.

What's next

Many wonder where Egypt is heading next. The worst-case scenario for Egypt would be a bloody descent into civil war. The best-case scenario would be the emergence of a form of governance that would bring the Egyptian people a degree of peace and prosperity. Which scenario will play out remains a matter of speculation.

To Consider

1. What made the election of Mohammed Morsi a "first" for Egypt?
2. How did Morsi assume power in Egypt?
3. What mistakes did Morsi make that cost him his grip on power?
4. What did General al-Sisi do to capture power? How did the majority of Egyptians respond to his assumption of power?
5. How did General al-Sisi handle opposition from the Muslim Brotherhood?
6. What are the best- and worst-case scenarios for Egyptians going forward?