

The Arab Spring in Tunisia:

A study about the revolutions in the Arab World and the role for the Netherlands and The Hague as city of Peace and Justice

Rogier David van Voorden

Student number: 08045445

Class: ES4-4E

Supervisor: J. J. C. Voorhoeve

Bachelor of European Studies

The Hague University of Applied Sciences

The Hague, the Netherlands

25th of June, 2012

Executive Summary

After several revolutions in the Arab world, the question raised what the Netherlands and in particular The Hague as city of Peace and Justice could do to help reforms in the Arab region. This dissertation outlines the various reasons which have led to several revolutions in the Arab world, also known as Arab Spring. It describes the political changes in the Arab world since the beginning of the 20th century. As an example of the difficulties Arab countries faced during the Arab Spring, the development related to the Arab Spring in Tunisia are researched. After a historic overview, the current situation in Tunisia is discussed.

The Tunisian government is working hard to improve the situation in the country; the main reasons which have led to the Arab Spring in Tunisia have not changed much. The unemployment rate and economic situation are almost the same as before the revolution. The Tunisian population is demonstrating against the current transition government. In this process, the Netherlands and The Hague as city of Peace and Justice can offer some help in order to resolve specific problems.

The Netherlands, in collaboration with other economic developed countries, should support Tunisia during its transition. The Netherlands should invest in the Tunisian economy. The Royal Dutch Embassy in Tunisia already organised some events in order to promote the Tunisian economy. Furthermore, the Netherlands could advise the transition government of Tunisia. The current government will need some support in order to regain trust from its own population. Expert advice may encourage the completion of the new Tunisian constitution.

Besides the role of the Netherlands, The Hague as city of Peace and Justice can also make a contribution. The Hague and its International Organisations can advise the judicial system to become more transparent and less corrupt. Since the judicial system is not impartial and objective in Tunisia at this moment, important judicial decisions are not accepted by the Tunisian population. With support from The Hague, Tunisia's judicial system can become one of the pillars of the new Tunisia. In addition, the NGOs which are situated in The Hague should assist with creating a new civil society. NGOs here in The Hague should find suitable partners in Tunisia, which will lead to more support for a reformed Tunisian government on the long term. Tunisia has a chance to become an Islamic country with a democratic system of government.

Table of Contents

Introduction	5
<i>Central Question</i>	5
<i>Sub-questions</i>	6
<i>Argumentation of dissertation</i>	6
<i>Methods of Research</i>	7
Chapter I: What is the Arab Spring?	8
<i>1.1 Economic situation in the Arab World</i>	8
<i>1.1.1 Price of Food in the Arab World</i>	9
<i>1.2 Level of Education in the Arab World</i>	9
<i>1.3 Role of Social Media</i>	10
<i>1.4 Conclusion</i>	10
Chapter II: Political reform in the Arab World.	11
<i>2.1 Historical Background</i>	11
<i>2.1.1 The Colonial period</i>	12
<i>2.2 Introduction of Islam around the world</i>	12
<i>2.3 Globalisation and Islam</i>	13
<i>2.4 Failure of Political Islam</i>	14
Chapter III: Tunisia before the Arab Spring	15
<i>3.1 French Colonial period</i>	15
<i>3.2 Habib Bourguiba period</i>	16
<i>3.3 Zine El Abidine Ben Ali period</i>	18

<i>3.4 Conclusion</i>	19
Chapter IV: Tunisia during and after the Arab Spring	20
<i>4.1 Start of the Revolution</i>	20
<i>4.2 Resignation of Ben Ali</i>	20
<i>4.3 Mohamed Ghannouchi as president</i>	21
<i>4.4 Return of Political opponents</i>	22
<i>4.5 The Tunisian Higher Election Authority</i>	22
<i>4.6 Democratic Elections in Tunisia</i>	23
<i>4.7 Tunisia and its transition government</i>	24
<i>4.8 Conclusion</i>	25
Conclusion	27
Recommendations	29
References	30
Appendix	34

Introduction

In the past one and a half year, several important changes took place in several Middle East and North African countries. It became clear that if the population of a country would protest for several weeks, it could overthrow their government. After the first government was fallen in Tunisia, other demonstrations had begun in countries in the Middle East and North African region. There were revolutions and demonstrations in Algeria, Jordan, Mauritania, Sudan, Oman, Saudi-Arabia, Egypt, Yemen, Bahrain, Libya, Kuwait, Lebanon and Morocco. These protests and demonstrations against the government are also known as “The Arab Spring”.

Not in every country the protest and demonstrations against the ruling power succeeded. There have been successful revolutions in Tunisia, Yemen, Egypt and Libya. It is hard to determine whether more governments will collapse in the region. In order to describe a complete story, the dissertation will focus on the Arab Spring in Tunisia. At this moment, Tunisia is the only country which has had successful elections. In the previous year, Tunisia has undergone several changes due to the Arab Spring. Because Tunisia is the country with the best progress, it is evident that a research of the whole process before, during, and after the Arab Spring in Tunisia is made.

When the demonstrations and protests began, it became clear that the population of these countries could not handle everything alone. The population from countries in the Middle East and North Africa needed support from outside the country. The Western world has helped, and continues supporting many social movements in the Middle East and North African region who are protesting against the current powers. Also the Netherlands have supported multiple operations. The Netherlands have assisted the NATO mission in Libya, and have spent several millions on development and rebuilding the nation states in the Middle East. However, most Western countries have the assumption that after a successful revolution, the country can handle its own problems. This is a short-sighted assumption. The revolution was just the beginning of the process of rebuilding an entire country.

Central Question

In order to rebuilt Tunisia, the Western world should support and assist Tunisia by making the right choices. In this process, there are several opportunities where the Netherlands, and in more detail, The Hague as city of Peace and Justice, can encourage and advice in Tunisia. This dissertation will describe the role the Netherlands and The Hague as city of Peace and Justice could play during the Arab Spring in Tunisia. Therefore, the central question of this dissertation is: *What role can The Netherlands and The Hague as City of Peace and Justice play during and after the Arab Spring in Tunisia?*

Sub-questions

In order to answer the central question properly, several sub-questions will need to be investigated first. It is necessary to investigate the causes of the Arab Spring in general. The revolutions did not only influence Tunisia, also in other countries in the Middle East and North African region demonstrations and riots broke out.

In addition, it is recommended to interview several experts on the Middle East. In this dissertation, a complete chapter will be used to describe the influence of globalisation, political reform and democratisation in the Arab world. Key-experts such as Olivier Roy and Jeffrey Haines will provide important answers concerning the change in the Arab world.

Furthermore, the situation before, during, and after the Arab Spring in Tunisia has to be investigated. It is important to describe the situation before the uprisings started in Tunisia. The view of some Dutch experts will be necessary to determine opportunities for the Dutch government and The Hague as City of Peace and Justice. By doing this, the perspectives and changes for the Netherlands will become clear. In order to determine the role of the Netherlands and The Hague as city of Peace and Justice, sub-questions have been made. The sub-questions of this dissertation are given below.

- What is the Arab Spring?
- How the political reform and democratisation changed the Arab world
- Tunisia before the Arab Spring
- Tunisia during and after the Arab Spring

Argumentation of dissertation

Tunisia and the Netherlands could benefit from the Arab Spring. First, Tunisia can acquire information from several International Organisations who are situated in The Hague. Furthermore, there are several Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in The Hague, who could provide aid in Tunisia.

On the other hand, the Netherlands should take this opportunity and become aware of the fact that Tunisia is a niche (WRR, 2010, 55). When a niche has been found, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the municipality of The Hague should collaborate. Since the municipality of The Hague is always in close contact with the international institutes in the city, the municipality has to seek for NGOs, institutions, embassies and other international institutions that would like to collaborate in the same field of interest.

As stated in the WRR (Scientific Council for Government Policy) (2010), the Netherlands should investigate in which situations they can provide the best solution. In an ever changing world, the role of the Netherlands is decreasing rapidly. As Maundelbaum (quoted by Friedmann in 1992)

stated: “We have a foreign policy today in the shape of a doughnut – lots of peripheral interests but nothing at the centre”. The Dutch government has a lot of opinions, suggestions and assumptions for nations and international organisations, but there is no cohesion between these different policies (WRR, 2010, 47).

Also, the municipality of The Hague and these institutes will need to collaborate on the topics they find relevant. The Hague should not focus on just any institute in the city, only the ones they find useful for sharing the same interests. The city of The Hague has earned the title ‘International City of Peace and Justice’. Former Secretary General of the United Nations Mr. Boutros-Boutros Ghali named The Hague “legal capital of the world”. Therefore, the municipality should focus on international law and order. Since there is no clear hierarchical structure within the foreign policy arena, institutions seated in The Hague, can reinforce the role of the Netherlands within the policy process.

In order to remain an international city, the municipality of The Hague should seek for opportunities to maintain strong. Not only by close collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, also the city of The Hague should seek for their own opportunities. The new hybrid form of foreign policy has opened new doors for The Hague and for the Dutch government. Therefore it is recommended that Tunisia can be an interesting niche for the Netherlands.

Methods of Research

In this dissertation both desk – and field research will be used to answer the central question. In chapter two, some theories from experts about globalisation, political reform and Islam will be discussed. By doing this, the current Arab Spring can be put in perspective of the changes the Middle East and North African countries have undergone. Second, Dutch experts will give their opinions about the Arab Spring in Tunisia. In that way, the Netherlands and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs can support Tunisia. The Hague as city of Peace and Justice and its International Organisations and Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) can assist in this difficult task. Finally, using literature from articles in leading newspapers from all over the world, the current situation in Tunisia will be described.

Chapter I: What is the Arab Spring?

On 17 December 2011, a man who was selling fruits and vegetables on the streets in Tunisia was captured by the police. The man, Mohamed Bouazizi, was a poor man, who could barely make enough money to support his family. The corrupted police forced Mohamed to donate some fruits and vegetables as a fine. Mohamed paid the police and they left him alone. However, Mohamed Bouazizi was upset and felt humiliated by the bribe. In order to attract some attention, he sets himself on fire in his hometown Sidi Bouzid in Tunisia (Clingendael, 4, 2011).

His act became an immediate hit on social media (You Tube, Facebook and Twitter) which attracted much attention. Due to the act of Mohamed Bouazizi, Tunisians began to protest against the regime of president Zine el Abidine Ben Ali. This peaceful protest was roughly interrupted by the Tunisian police. The hard-handed response by the police led to more demonstrations and protests the next day in Sidi Bouzid. In order to restore the peace, president Ben Ali visited Mohamed Bouazizi in the hospital in order to calm the protests in his country (BBC, Africa, par. 1, 2011).

However, the demonstrations and protests against the government intensified, and riots broke out in other Tunisian cities. These riots and demonstrations marked the beginning of a period where several countries in the Middle East and North Africa encountered (political) changes. This revolution in the Middle East and North African region is better known as the Arab Spring. In order to understand the uprisings in Tunisia, it is necessary to describe the general causes and reasons of the Arab Spring first. After these reasons, a short conclusion will be provided.

1.1 Economic situation in the Arab World

One of the most important reasons which started the demonstrations is the economic development in the Middle East. In many countries, the economic situation is disturbing. According to the World Bank (Data, par. 1, 2012), the unemployment rate of the total workforce is the highest in the Middle East and North African region, namely 10.7 percent. This is the highest unemployment rate in the world. Furthermore, the World Bank (Data, par. 1, 2012) describes the unemployment amongst women and children. This vulnerable unemployment is quite high in the Middle East and North African region namely 36 percent (appendix 1.1). However, the most disturbing fact from the World Bank (Data, par. 1, 2012) is the information about the GDP per capita. The figure is showing that the GDP per capita in the Middle East and North African region is one of the lowest in the world (World Bank, Data, par. 1, 2012). Populations cannot earn enough to feed themselves.

In addition to this high number of unemployment, the World Bank (Countries, par. 13, 2011) mentioned that the disguised unemployment is also considered high. Most of the working force in the

Middle East and North African region do not earn enough money to support their families (appendix 1.2). The most vulnerable within the society, youngsters and women, are not receiving any opportunities to get a job (appendix 1.3). The World Bank (Countries, par. 13, 2011) mentioned that countries should protect their workers instead of their jobs. Within the Middle East and North Africa region, countries should support their populations. Governments should reduce their high labour taxes for businesses. By doing this, businesses will have the opportunity to hire more employees (World Bank, Countries, par. 13, 2011).

1.1.1 Price of Food in the Arab World

Besides this low GDP, food prices in the Middle East and North African region are very high. It can be stated that over the past years, food prices have increased every year (appendix 1.4) Due to the bad economic situation in many Middle East and North African countries, food prices will rise even more. If the population cannot earn enough money to fulfil their basic needs, it is understandable that they will protest and demonstrate against their economic situation.

1.2 Level of Education in the Arab World

However, the school enrolment is quite high in Middle Eastern countries, even higher than in Europe and Central Asia (appendix 1.5). The school enrolment is another reason why revolutions broke out in the Middle East and North African region. The population is willing to educate themselves, and succeeds most of the times. However, after a proper education, it is impossible to find a job. Therefore, most of the protests and riots were organised by students (Roy, World Politics, par. 2, 2011). Many of these students learned from the revolutionary movements in the 1970s and 1980s, where their parents fought for their ideology. In addition, students, rejected corrupt dictatorships and focused on democracy and human rights (Roy, World Politics, par. 7, 2011).

Besides the knowledge of earlier revolutionary movements, students also based their ideas on the rise of the middle class in the Middle East (Roy, World Politics, par. 3, 2011). This new upcoming class would benefit from the liberalisation of the economies in the Middle East. This new middle class, has strong relations with Western and modern values. According to Roy (World Politics, par. 7, 2011), this middle class is not motivated by religion or ideology, like in the 1970s and 1980s, but favours a peaceful and democratic government. They would like to profit from the globalisation which supported them to begin with new businesses.

1.3 Role of Social Media

Another important reason which supported the Arab Spring was the use of social media. Because most of the demonstrations were planned online, protesters could be informed quickly. Also, due to the modern communication tools, the population was updated about the current situation in other parts of the country (Clingendael, 4, 2011). The Economist (Arab League Map, par. 1, 2011) provided information about the press freedom in Middle Eastern countries. Out of 196 countries, most of the Middle Eastern countries are between the 140th and 160th place. During the Arab Spring, press freedom and social media have had some influence, but to state it had a major influence in favour of the revolutions would be exaggerated (Economist, Arab League Map, par. 1, 2011).

1.4 Conclusion

The reasons that are stated above, gave rise to the Arab Spring in many Middle East and North African countries. However, not in every country the population fought for the same rights and values. In order to combine both internal and external reasons the Global Peace Index can be implemented (Voorhoeve, 40, 2007). This index provides a mix of factors which describes whether the country is safe or not. These factors are:

- Number of violent conflicts (internal and external)
- Societal security
- Political instability
- Access to small arms
- Military expenditures as a percentage of GDP

(Voorhoeve, 40, 2007)

In order to measure all indicators, the domestic factors and peace scores from countries in the same region are combined. Although most of the data is correct, the Global Peace Index (2011) have data from 95 percent of the world's population. Also, the Global Peace Index (2011) describes an overall conclusion per region. It is no surprise that the Middle East and North African region have the lowest score in the world, according to the Global Peace Index (2011). From the 18 countries which have been selected by the Global Peace Index, the average score for a country in the Middle East or North Africa is 92 out of 152. This number is rather positive because countries such as Qatar, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates have high scores. According to this data, it is no surprise that the Arab Spring did occur in this area. Both internal and external reasons supported the uprisings in various countries (Global Peace Index, 2011).

Chapter II: Political reform in the Arab World.

2.1 Historical Background

Since the beginning of the Arab Spring, political scientists are investigating the causes of this process. Many of them suggests that there is a link between the growing globalisation and the Arab Spring. The problems due to the terrorist attacks on 9/11 have worsened the tensions. Although the current situation between the West and the Middle East region is unstable, it is necessary to investigate the history of these tensions first before we can make any conclusions.

According to Haynes (13, 2010), there are three periods of time where political changes influenced the Middle East and North Africa. During the first phase (1860- 1930), the Ottoman empire controlled the region until the end of World War I. Afterwards, the Middle East region became more democratic. National assembly's were established and led to more political freedom. After the World War I, the Western countries (France, Great Britain) supported further political freedom by creating parliamentary systems (Haynes, 13, 2010).

During the second phase of political change (1950-1960), governments which were supported by the French and the British were overthrown and replaced by radical, often young, military officers. Examples of these newly established governments can be found in Libya, Egypt, Iraq and Syria (Haynes, 13, 2010). These governments started collaborating with the Soviet communist bloc in the East. In a few years, parliamentary based political systems changed towards more authoritarian regimes. These regimes shifted from a Western oriented system towards a system which was influenced by the Soviet regime (Haynes, 13, 2010).

Although the first two phases had a large influence on the political system in Middle East, the third phase is the most important one. Not only Haynes (14, 2010), but also Roy (2004, 1) are mentioning that between the 1970s and 1980s Islamic extremist groups, or as Roy (2004, 1) states, neo-fundamentalists (a group of closed, scripturalists and conservative viewers of Islam that rejects the national and statist dimension in favour of the ummah, the universal community of all Muslims, based on sharia, the Islamic law). These extremists have abandoned their transnational militant solidarity and focused on domestic politics. Also, the extremists replaced the corrupt ruling élites, and established a conservative socio-cultural agenda which supported nationalism (Roy, 2004, 58).

Due to the large support of Western countries towards the ruling governments, the Islamic extremist movements created anti-Western tendencies. The Western countries, especially The United States of America and Great Britain, were seen as nations who supported the previous authoritarian

regimes (Haynes, 2010, 13). This is one of the examples which caused tensions between The Western and Arab World.

2.1.1 The Colonial period

Another phenomenon which caused tensions between the West and the Middle East was the colonial suppression by the West. During this period, the Western colonialism introduced Western culture in Muslim and Islamic countries. Furthermore, it was quite normal for Western scientists to criticise the Arab history, politics and culture (Haynes, 2010, 8). Scientists felt the obligation to support Arab countries with political pluralism, liberal democracy and Western values and norms. In addition to this support, scientists often openly criticised the Arab culture. Lord Cromer, the British governor of Egypt from 1882 to 1907 stated: 'the Oriental generally acts, speaks and thinks in a manner exactly opposite to the European. While the European is a close reasoner and a natural logician, the Oriental is singularly deficient in the logical faculty' (Haynes, 2010, 8).

This perception about the Arab and Muslim culture might have had some impact about our current opinions on the Middle East. Due to the ever increasing globalisation, a new platform has been created where the Western and Arab world have become interdependent. Nowadays, it is normal that not only Western – but also Arab and Muslim culture can be found around the globe. This phenomenon is interesting for the perceptions about the Islam, but also about Muslims who practice Islam in a Western society (Roy, 2004, 17).

2.2 Introduction of Islam around the world

According to Roy (2004, 18), there is a clear link between the deterritorialisation of Islam and the ongoing globalisation. Due to the migration of people towards different countries all over the world, the Muslim and Arab culture have been introduced in other societies. By doing this, Muslims are creating their own version of Islam in different countries (Roy, 2010, 18). Although in many countries, the Muslim culture is a minority culture. Muslims are aware of this and will protect their culture against influences from other cultures. Especially the influence from globalisation, or westernisation according to Roy (2004, 19).

In addition to the protection of their Muslim culture, Muslims are also reconstructing their own Islam. Muslims are currently spread all over the world because of the globalisation. Before the globalisation, Muslims had only one or two theologians in every city who explained the Koran to them. Nowadays, there is no clear censorship anymore. Due to phenomena such as Internet, Facebook and Twitter, multiple theologians can be reached. Roy (2004, 29) states that these theologians are not even academics anymore. Every Muslim can post their opinions on the Internet,

who are available for everyone. These new, ready – made, easy accessible set of norms and values can be interpreted by every Muslim. This religiosity, the way the believer experience his or her faith, has changed as a result of globalisation (Roy, 2004, 29).

This new religiosity can be seen as a link between democratisation and Islam. Muslims can interpret their personal norms and values, without losing their original heritage. Young Muslim believers often criticise the generation of their parents. Young Muslims promote an Islam where everyone can create their own personal Islam. This new form of Islam can be found all over the internet. Every Muslim can browse and find a theologian, academic or not, which suits their opinion about Islam. This phenomenon has lead to several minority groups, who interpreted Islam in a different ways (Roy, 2004, 29).

2.3 Globalisation and Islam

Although Roy's views are mostly positive, Haynes (2010, 3) indicates besides a positive also a negative form of globalisation for the Islam. This negative globalisation not only influences the Middle East, but also other parts of the world. As a result of economic liberalisation, (Arab) countries are focussed on economic growth and political power, instead of more protecting weak communities. Furthermore, Middle East and African countries have been exploited by the West due to increasing globalisation. Because of this exploitation, the hatred against the Western imperialism and the westernisation of culture has been increased (Haynes, 2010, 5).

Besides this negative globalisation Haynes (2010, 4) mentions also positive globalisation. Positive globalisation has led to several consequences which were useful for everyone. First the institutions are better organised, both regional and global. Second, due to the globalisation, markets are now more diverse than before. Therefore, the economic efficiency has increased in order to meet the demand. Third, because of the globalisation, problems can be solved quick and peacefully. Nowadays, the systems are more organised and can prevent the outbreak of a war. Last, globalisation has led to an increased openness of political choices. Due to these political choices, democracy has increased around the globe (Haynes, 2010, 4).

Furthermore, globalisation changed the view of how Muslims interpreted their religion. Because of the deterritorialisation, Islam as a religion and culture no longer have a clear relationship. Islamists parties have attempted to create one Islamic State to reunite the whole Middle East, but this has never worked or will work according to Roy (2004, 61). The political arena has changed, also due to the globalisation. The Arab countries in the Middle East have more national than transnational interests. Roy (2004, 61) states: 'Political logic won over the religious, instead of promoting it'. In the

Middle East, countries encourage Islamists parties to join the political debate in order to promote Islam.

2.4 Failure of Political Islam

However, these movements hesitate to join the national debate because they protect their transnational interests. Due to the nationalisation of Islam, the Islam as a religion will never play a dominant role in transnational interests. Also, the ethnicity plays an important role in the Islam. Most Muslims are Sunnis, roughly 90 percent; the other 10percent consists mainly of Shiites and some minority groups. These different ethnic groups can only collaborate together when they share the same interests. This has led to the diminution of the international Islamic militants, who supported a global jihad, or holy war against the non-believers or infidels (Roy, 2004, 71).

As stated by Roy (2004, 74): ‘most Islamist movements have become involved in processes of political integration, which have been triggered by a complete mix of failure, repression, isolation, empowerment, war-weariness, self-criticism and political praxis. It was their political practice and experience, not ideology that pushed them to negotiate and to enter a multiparty political space’. By doing this, the Islamists embodied other values which are against Western imperialism. They turned even to non-Muslim opinions like the Vatican, who, for example also openly discriminate homosexuals. Islamists conservatives have attempted to oppose Western values, culture and civilisation, but by opposing these norms and values they superseded sharia and Islamic law. Many Islamists, like Sheikh Ghannouchi from the Tunisian Ennahda party combines both worlds. Ghannouchi (Roy, 2004, 78) claims: ‘a modern society can be built with Islamic influences, based on personal commitment by inhabitants. Not the government but the voluntary commitment to fulfil religious precepts can be done, in close collaboration with common western values and culture’ (Roy, 2010, 78).

The failure of the conservative Islam in politics has also a link with the attitude of the (political) parties themselves. The conservatives state that they are the only representatives of Islam. The other political parties do not have the same legitimacy as they do (Roy, 2004, 78). The conservatives do not support the new established form of Islam; the personal commitment to Islam. They believe that only true academic theologians can interpret the Koran and therefore oppose the personal commitment which is going hand in hand with modern society.

Chapter III: Tunisia before the Arab Spring

The revolution in Tunisia did not occur in one night. The Tunisian population have suffered for several decades under the regime of president Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. In order to understand the revolution in Tunisia, the situation before the revolution has to be described first. In this chapter, three historical periods will be described: the French colonial rule, the regime of president Bourguiba, and the period of the former president Ben Ali.

3.1 French Colonial period

The first period which is important to describe, is the colonial period between 1878 and 1956. Tunisia was under French control. French rule started with the Congress in Berlin of 1878. During this meeting, European powers such as France, Great Britain and Germany negotiated to divide the African continent into colonies. These colonies were first under the regime of the Ottoman Empire. Since the Ottoman Empire was weakened by the Russian invasion, the Ottoman Empire became the 'Sick man of Europe'. It 'sold' several colonies to France (Cyprus) and Great Britain. Since most of the African countries were under the control of Great Britain and France, both countries had the most influence during the negotiations (Tunisie, 42, 2001).

After the Convention of Berlin, France did not invade Tunisia immediately. France controlled Algeria, and Libya was under Italian rule. Although both France and Italy claimed Tunisia several times, the country remained relatively free until 1881. In 1881, France chased a rebel movement into Tunisia which caused problems in Algeria. However, the French military immediately took the opportunity to invade Tunisia and marched to Tunis. With the 36,000 soldiers under French control, the ruler of Tunisia, Sedik Bey, had to sign several treaties under pressure. According to the Treaty of Bardo (suburb of Tunis) in 1881, Tunisia became a French protectorate. The French installed several ministers on key-posts to control the country, while most other institutions remained under Tunisian control. Paul Gambon became the first Resident-Minister in Tunisia (Tunisie, 42, 2001).

During the French protectorate, the Tunisian economy thrived as never before. Within the five decades France controlled the country, Tunisia had continuous (economic) growth. The French government constructed 13,000 kilometres of new roadways and almost 2000 kilometres railway. Not only the infrastructure was improved, the French established hospitals, schools, universities and new sources of water were built. Due to these improvements, population grew from 1 to 4 million rather quick (Tunisie, 42, 2001). However most of these civil improvements were available in the major cities in the North and accessible for the (French) elite only. Also, the French established a new judicial system which could only convict Europeans. European citizens had different rights and were

punished differently than the ordinary Tunisian citizen.

Besides the improvements made by the French, France itself profited from the rich natural resources Tunisia had. Roughly 20 percent of Tunisia, mainly the profitable areas, were under the control of French colonists. The Tunisian farmers, who had lost their ground, became later on fierce opponents of the French protectorate, and supported the independent movements (Tunesie, 43, 2001). Also the suppression of local tribes by French colonists, mainly in the Southern part of Tunisia, further de-stabilised the Tunisian population.

Another phenomenon which had great impact on the Tunisian population were the two World Wars. In the first World War, almost 60,000 Tunisian soldiers fought in Europe under French control. From the 60,000 soldiers, 10,000 were killed or disappeared. During the second World War, Tunisia felt under control of the German occupier. Although France closed the harbours of Tunis and Bizerte, German troops succeeded to invade Tunisia in 1941. Between 1941 and the end of the war, Germany fought a two front war on Tunisian soil. From Algeria the allies came with a large invasion in 1942, while British general Montgomery invaded Tunisia from Egypt. The German and Italian forces profited from the uneven landscape and remained relatively long in control. However, in May 1943 the Germans lost the war in the North African region and surrendered (Tunesie, 43, 2001).

3.2 Habib Bourguiba period

Although there had been some resistance from the Tunisian population in the beginning of French colonial rule in 1881, a real revolution did not occur at the start of the inauguration. Some minor resistance movements tried to mobilise the country, but without success. This changed in the beginning of the 20th century when an independence movement was founded (Tunesie, 44, 2001). Due to the First World War the independence movement remained relatively calm. However, in 1920 the Destour party was founded. Supporters of this party were young and ambitious. Due to the great diversity of people and opinions, a division of the party was inevitable (Tunesie, 44, 2011).

The party was originally founded to fight against French occupation and domination of the Tunisian population. Because there were many different opinions, radicals versus moderate, the Néo-Destour party was founded in 1934. This new party was much more radical than the Destour party which was formed in 1920. The leader of this new political party was Habib Bourguiba. When Bourguiba became the leader of the Néo-Destour party, he was 33 years old. He had studied law in France and returned back to Tunisia in 1928 (Tunesie, 45, 2001). Between 1928 and 1934, Bourguiba had several encounters with the French police during political protests.

When Bourguiba became the leader of the Néo-Destour party, he became a problem for the French protectorate. In order to control the power of the new independent party, the French protectorate detained Bourguiba multiple times between 1938 and 1955, both in France and Tunisia (Tunesie, 45, 2001). Although the leaders of the Néo-Destour party were detained quite often, Néo-Destour succeeded in being attractive for everyone in Tunisia. Even the Tunisian élites became supporters of the independent party (Moore, 3, 1962). The French protectorate who were afraid of a revolution in Tunisia remained calm and did not forbade the party in the years between 1940 and 1955. In addition, most activities that were organised by the Néo-Destour party were allowed by the French protectorate (Moore, 3, 1962).

Although the Néo-Destour party had some liberties, it remained a political party within in country which was colonised by a European country. Between 1934 and 1954, the party did not have any political influence, since it had been excluded from the general elections. This all changed when more North-African countries had formed independence movements against the French colonial domination (Tunesie, 45, 2001) The French government, which was lead by General de Gaulle, agreed with Bourguiba to appoint a French-Tunisian government in 1950. Soon, it became clear that France could not intervene in the mass protests and riots against their government. Bourguiba was arrested and removed from Tunisian soil in order to calm down the situation. When the riots did not stop, the French government surrendered. Habib Bourguiba returned back to Tunisia on the first of June, which is still a national holiday. He became the leader of independent Tunisia in 1956. In 1957 he became the first president of the Tunisian republic (Tunesie, 45, 2001).

During his period as president of Tunisia (1956 – 1987), Bourguiba enjoyed a large support from the Tunisian population. Although his governmental period resembled in a way with the French protectorate, the Tunisian population largely supported Bourguiba. During presidential elections, Bourguiba was re-elected with often 99 percent of the votes. If there were minor opposition parties during the Bourguiba regime, he forbade most of them. In addition, many Tunisians kept supporting the Neo-Destour party of Bourguiba, since he ensured that Tunisia became independent. Usually national parties which seize control after colonial domination, like the Neo-Destour party, will in power for a long time (Moore, 5, 1962).

In his time as president, Bourguiba made some drastic reforms. First, Bourguiba reformed the economy to be more open and liberal. During the 1960s and 1970s several plans to modernise the economy and the infrastructure had been accepted by Bourguiba. Besides the economy, the secularisation of Tunisia was another decision taken by Bourguiba. By doing this, Bourguiba cleared the way for further reforms about the position of women in the Tunisian society. In the beginning of

his time as president of Tunisia, he gave women the same rights as men. Polygamy was forbidden and women could not marry to a man under the age of 17 (BCC, Obituaries, par. 14, 2000). Bourguiba's foreign policy was based on a good relationship both with the West and other Arab countries. His remarkable position in the Palestine-Israeli conflict gave Bourguiba international appreciation (BBC, Obituaries, par. 14, 2000)

During the time Bourguiba was president, opponents from the regime were suppressed. In the beginning of the 1980s, economic decline and a conflict within the trade union led to the end of the Bourguiba period. In November 1987, Bourguiba was replaced after a coup d'état, initiated by his former Prime Minister, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. According to Ben Ali, Bourguiba's health and age were the official reasons of its retreat. Habib Bourguiba died in Monastir on the 6th of April 2000 (BBC, Obituaries, par. 16, 2000).

3.3 Zine El Abidine Ben Ali period

When Zine El Abidine Ben Ali seized power in 1987, he continued the anti-Islamic line of former president Bourguiba. Although Ben Ali also made some democratic reforms in the beginning, he strengthened the position of his own political party, the RCD (Rassemblement Constitutionel Démocratique) (Tunesie, 12, 2001). The RCD was the only political party which could legally compete in the elections until 1981. After 1981, more political parties were allowed to enter the political arena. However, in most of the election results, the RCD won with 99.9% percent of the votes (BBC, Africa, par. 7, 2011).

Many political parties have criticised the Ben Ali regime and the RCD party. One of the political parties which had much criticism about the Ben Ali government was the Ennahda party. This Islamic political party was forbidden during the entire Ben Ali regime. Although Ennahda was forbidden, many Tunisians secretly supported the party during the Ben Ali regime (Tunesie, 13, 2001).

During his time as president, Ben Ali have played an important role in establishing the Union du Grand Maghreb in 1988, which had to compete with the European Union. The Arab Maghreb Union consist of Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia. Due to tensions between Morocco and Algeria about the Western Sahara area, the Arab Maghreb Union is inactive since 1994 (Tunesie, 13, 2001). In line with his predecessor Bourguiba, Ben Ali followed a pro Western policy. Especially the relationship with France and Italy was remarkable. Partly due to these good European relations, Tunisia became the first North-African country which signed a cooperation treaty with the European Union in 1995 (Tunesie, 13, 2001). By signing this treaty, Ben Ali allowed the Tunisian economy to develop even further.

However, the Ben Ali regime was also characterised as an authoritarian regime. Because the RCD was the only legal political party, Tunisia was mentioned as undemocratic by various International - and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). Tunisian police and military did not accept any human rights. According to Freedom House, Tunisia was ranked “not free” in 2008, 2009 and 2010 (Freedom House, Regions, par. 7, 2012). Opposition candidates who criticize the Ben Ali government were beaten or arrested by the police. Due to ongoing protests which started at the end of 2010, president Ben Ali fled to Saudi Arabia in order to avoid a political process.

3.4 Conclusion

This brief look into the history is showing a Tunisia which faced many difficulties. In the first place when it became a French protectorate in 1881. Due to this protectorate, the Tunisian population got introduced in the European style of living. Whereas most colonised countries had many difficulties with their (European) aggressor, the Tunisian population remained relatively calm and peaceful. This all changed when the first big independence party was founded in 1920.

After the First World War, France tried to actively intervene in its North African colonies to keep them under control, but after the Second World War, independence was inevitable. Due to the Néo-Destour party with Habib Bourguiba as its leader, Tunisia became independent in 1956. Big economic and social reforms has made Bourguiba popular, even today. Furthermore, Tunisians see Bourguiba as their leader who saved them from their coloniser. In 1987, Bourguiba was replaced by his Prime Minister, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. Under the rule of Ben Ali, Tunisia flourished as one of the few countries in the Middle East and North African region with a relatively high standard of living. Ben Ali introduced more liberties on social and economical areas. However, Ben Ali forbade all political parties except its own. He suppressed his own population by not respecting human rights. Due to economic downfall and social protests Ben Ali was forced to leave Tunisia at the beginning of 2011.

Chapter IV: Tunisia during and after the Arab Spring

4.1 Start of the Revolution

The official start of the Jasmine revolution according to most (international) newspapers was the self-immolation of Mohamed Bouazizi, a fruit seller on the streets of Sidi Bouzid (Clingendael, 4, 2011). Because of his act, Tunisian population began to demonstrate against the Ben Ali regime. However, according to other data, people who lived in the Southern part of Tunisia began protesting even sooner. Because of the poor living conditions of the Tunisian population in the southern part of Tunisia, nationwide protests were impossible (Rosenmöller, 2012). Due to poor living conditions and the bad economic situation of Tunisia, nationwide protests began in December 2010.

Not only the Tunisian population supported the revolution, also bloggers and international organisations who have close connections in Tunisia claimed more rights and freedom for the Tunisian population. From the start of the riots, which started on 18 December 2010, till the weekend of 8 and 9 January 2011, the situation remained explosive and the police and military kept using brutal force. In the weekend of 8 and 9 January, the protests also began in the capital of Tunisia, Tunis. The demonstrations and riots against the Ben Ali government were no longer at the regional level; the revolution became a national problem (BBC, Africa, par. 6, 2011).

Within a few days, on 13 January, Ben Ali attempted to end the demonstrations by announcing concessions to the Tunisian population. In his speech broadcasted by national television, Ben Ali described the changes in his government and promised that he would not be electable for the presidential elections in 2014. However, in this newly formed government, nine out of twelve ministers remained in the same position. Ben Ali mentioned more freedom and rights for the Tunisian population, including more rights on the internet, and an extensive investigation on the casualties which felt during the riots and demonstrations in December 2010 and January 2011 (Al Jazeera, Africa, par. 30, 2011).

4.2 Resignation of Ben Ali

However, on 14 January it became clear that these reformations were not in time to save the Ben Ali government. President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali fled the country and went to Saudi Arabia by plane. The fact that Ben Ali could leave is remarkable, since the military controlled all airports in the country. France attempted to seize Ben Ali before he entered Saudi-Arabia, in order to provide an honest and safe trail for the former president. Saudi officials denied this request and granted amnesty to Ben Ali and his family (Al Jazeera, Africa, par. 36, 2011).

Within 24 hours, the government which was established to avoid further bloodshed was fallen. This due to the fact that three ministers which had been elected the day before, resigned because they did not want to collaborate with ministers from the former government party RCD (Constitutional Democratic Party) By resigning within one day, not only the ministers but also the interim president and prime minister (both from RCD), had to resign. The three ministers, who resigned, could not cooperate with ministers from the RCD party (Al Jazeera, Africa, par. 3, 2011).

According to prime minister Mohamed El Ghannouchi, he had to appoint members from the RCD party because, “We need them in this phase” (Al Jazeera, Africa, par. 11, 2011). Furthermore, he said that the ministers who were selected “have clean hands, in addition to great competence .Give us a chance so that we can put in place this ambitious program of reform” (Al Jazeera, Africa, par. 12 2011). Besides the ministers who immediately resigned, the Tunisian population also did not accept the denomination of many members from the RCD party. The population largely rejected the idea that reforms could be achieved with members from the former government party of president Ben Ali (Al Jazeera, Middle East, par. 1, 2011).

4.3 Mohamed Ghannouchi as president

During the time of the transition government, Mohamed Ghannouchi faced difficult times as president. According to the Tunisian population Ghannouchi had to resign as well, since he collaborated with former president Ben Ali. In addition, in the Tunisian constitution article 57 described the role of the speaker of the parliament. “Article 57 states that when the post of the president of the republic falls vacant due to his demise, resignation or total incapacitation, the constitutional council shall forthwith convene and declare the definitive vacancy under the absolute majority of its members, which matter shall be expressly made known to the chairman of advisers council and speaker of the parliament, where the latter (speaker) shall immediately undertake the presidential duties on temporary basis for not less than 45 days; and not more than 60 days” (Al Jazeera, Africa, par. 12, 2011).

Due to heavy protests and article 57 of the Tunisian constitution, Mohamed Ghannouchi was replaced by the speaker of the parliament, Faoud Mebazaa. Although Ghannouchi resigned as president, he and other members from the RCD party were still holding some positions in the Tunisian government (BCC, Africa, par. 27, 2011). Due to riots and further mass protests, Ghannouchi left the transition government in order to stop the demonstrations. Ghannouchi was replaced by Beji Caid-Essebsi, a former foreign minister from the Bourguiba government. (BBC, Africa, par. 8, 2011).

4.4 Return of Political opponents

Another triumph earned by the Tunisian population was the return of two political opponents from Europe. At the end of January 2011, an exiled leader from the forbidden Islamist party Ennahda (Renaissance in English) returned to Tunisia to support the Jasmine revolution. The Ennahda party was forbidden because no religious parties were accepted during the regime of former president Ben Ali. Rashed Ghannouchi, no family link with Mohamed Ghannouchi, lived in Europe as a political exile during the Ben Ali regime.

Due to the Tunisian constitution, elections should be held within 60 days after a president resigned (BCC, Africa, par. 27, 2011). Besides the return of Rashed Ghannouchi, also Mouncef Marzouki, another political opponent from Ben Ali returned after a decade of living and working in France. Marzouki was the founder of the in 2001 established political CPR (Congress for the Republic) party. Since both political leaders were opponents from Ben Ali, the Tunisian population had more trust in the them, and the upcoming elections (BCC, Africa, par. 32, 2011).

By the fall of the regime of president Ben Ali, the economic situation in Tunisia had been worsened. Also because Ben Ali and his family controlled 30 till 40 percent of the Tunisian economy. When the Ben Ali regime started in 1987, Ben Ali appointed family and relatives on high positions in all sectors within the Tunisian economy (appendix 2.1). Furthermore, US intelligence knew that Ben Ali frequently used his position as president in a corrupted way. Due to the WikiLeaks, the US Ambassador stationed in Tunisia called Ben Ali the “nexus of Tunisian corruption” (BBC, Africa, par. 12, 2011).

However, during the regime of Ben Ali, Tunisia advanced and strengthened its economic position. According to the BCC (Africa, par. 16, 2011), the population could have benefitted more from this. All the wealth and money were distributed amongst Ben Ali and his extensive family. In Tunisia, the situation economically is one of the best in the Middle East and North African region. Since the economic situation in this region is the worst of the world, the Tunisian population suffered for a long time under the Ben Ali regime (World Bank, Data, par. 1, 2012).

4.5 The Tunisian Higher Election Authority

In order to promote democracy and transparent elections, the Tunisian Higher Election Authority was established. The ISIE (by its French acronyms), was founded in order to accompany and prepare Tunisia and its politics for the first democratic election in its history. Although the election date was determined within 60 days after the a president resigned, the ISIE postponed the election date. The

ISIE planned the election for a new government date on 23 October 2011. The political parties who had won these elections faced a crucial task. The newly formed government had to write a new constitution and decide how the political system had to be improved.

The ISIE had valid reasons to postpone the election date twice. If the elections were held in July not every Tunisian inhabitant could register for the elections. In addition, many new (political) parties who would participate during the elections required time to subscribe themselves to the ISIE. These parties also required time to plan their election program and promote their political views to the Tunisian population (Al Jazeera, Spotlight, par. 6, 2011).

4.6 Democratic Elections in Tunisia

In Tunisia, before the election date of 23 October, 81 political parties and hundreds of individual candidates registered themselves to compete during the elections. From all 81 parties, Ennahda had the biggest support from the Tunisian population. Ennahda competed before with the RCD party from Ben Ali in 1989, but was banned right after these elections. Rashed Ghannouchi is the leader of this Islamist political party. Besides the large support, Ennahda also has fierce opponents, especially amongst Tunisian women. These women are worried about the fact that the sharia, the Islamic law, could be imposed when Ennahda controls Tunisia (Al Jazeera, Features, par. 3, 2011).

Another political party which played a vital role in the 23 October elections is the Progressive Democratic Party (PDP) led by Ahmed Najib Chebbi. PDP was one of the few political parties which was legal during the Ben Ali regime. PDP can be seen as the rival of the Ennahda party. Whereas Ennahda promotes Islam and the link between religion and politics, PDP supports large reformatations and democracy in Tunisia (Al Jazeera, Features, par. 6, 2011).

Besides Ennahda and PDP, the Ettakatol Party, a centre left party, led by Mustafa Ben Jaafar is joining the elections. The core values of PDP are based on transparency and the equality between men and women. Like Ennahda, the party was also banned, but only between 1992 and 2002. Furthermore, Ettakatol strives for more (press) freedom and human rights.

The Congress Party for the Republic (CPR) is the last big political party. Its founder and leader, Mouncef Marzouki, lived in exile in France for over a decade. Although he kept the control over CPR, Marzouki focuses on human rights and civil liberties. CPR refuses to accept any donations from businesses or external resources in order to avoid corruption and remain impartial. Together with Ennahda, PDP and CPR, the four parties are representing almost 70 percent of the votes (Al Jazeera, Features, par. 10, 2011).

In addition to these four parties, 77 smaller political parties competed during the election on

23 October. From these 77 parties, the Free Patriotic Union, the Tunisian Workers Communist Party, The Democratic Modernist Party and Afek Tournes represents most of the other 30 percent votes. The political party from former president Ben Ali has been separated in four different political parties. All four of them competed in the election. However, these four parties are not large enough to play any significant role. One political party was banned from the election held in October, namely the Salafist party Hizb ut-Tahrir. This conservative and Islamist party did not recognise the political reforms in Tunisia and therefore could not compete during the elections (Al Jazeera, Features, par. 24, 2011).

On 23 October 2011, the first democratic election in the history of Tunisia was held (appendix 2.2). Seven million voters received the opportunity to decide what party or movement should have the chance to reform the Tunisian constitution and organise the presidential election campaign. The outcomes of the election was not surprising (Al Jazeera, Africa, par. 3, 2011). During the relative short promotion campaign, it became clear that Ennahda had the best opportunity to seize control, since it was already better organised and prepared for the elections. Roughly 40 percent of the 217 seats in the Tunisian constituent assembly went to Ennahda, which represents 89 seats in the assembly.

Furthermore, CPR (29 seats), Ettakol (20 seats) and PDP (16 seats) received a large amount of seats in the constituent assembly. The election revealed one surprise; the Popular Petition, won 26 seats in the assembly, making it the 3rd party in the country (Al Jazeera, Africa, par. 3, 2011). Not only Tunisians in Tunisia could vote, Tunisian inhabitants in France, Germany and Italy had the opportunity to vote for their political party (appendix 2.3). From the 217 seats in the constituent assembly, 18 seats are represented by Tunisians who live abroad. In order to control that the elections were transparent and honest, both national and international observers verified and randomly controlled the polling stations. In total more than 14.000 observers inspected the polling stations in whole Tunisia. This under close watch of the ISIE (appendix 2.4).

Afterwards, the leader of the Ennahda party, Hamadi Jebali, was elected by the constituent assembly as interim prime minister of Tunisia. The other two left wing parties, Ettakatol and CPR completed the coalition. Mustapha Ben Jaafar from the Ettakatol was appointed to rewrite the Tunisian constitution and became president of the constituent assembly. Mouncef Marzouki, leader of the CPR, was elected as president (appendix 2.5) (Al Jazeera, Africa, par. 3, 2011).

4.7 Tunisia and its transition government

Although the elections were held transparent and honest, the challenging part of the newly established democracy started after the elections. Many parties in the constituent assembly lost voters or were corrected by the ISIE after an investigation (ISIE, Arrêtés, par. 1-10, 2011). Furthermore, the three

party coalition had to take some difficult decisions in the future.

First, the constituent assembly has to reform and rebuild the economy. Since Ben Ali and his relatives controlled 30 till 40 percent of the Tunisian economy, great reforms have to be made (BBC, Africa, par. 4, 2011). Also, the high unemployment rate of the (young) Tunisian population needs urgent attention. The position of the women in Tunisian society has to be improved. Since Ennahda is a moderate Islamist party, it is difficult to predict what role women will have in the future. However, both coalition parties are supporting an equal role between men and women in Tunisia. External relations with other countries have to be strengthened. All Western countries, including the United States, acknowledge the new Tunisian government. Besides these countries, neighbouring countries are of equal importance. Most countries in the Middle East and North African region faced national demonstrations and protests. Stabilisation is of great importance. Finally, the constituent assembly will need time and patience to rewrite the Tunisian constitution and to organise new elections. Although the first date when the assembly could present his new Tunisian constitution has been postponed, the growth towards democracy is more and more visible.

On June 6 2012, the coalition government presented a preamble of the new Tunisian constitution. In this preamble a temporary basis of the constitution is described. It is interesting that in this preamble nothing is mentioned about if the constitution will be based on sharia-law. The preamble only describes and protects the Arab-Muslim identity which is one of the foundations of Tunisia (Tunisia Live, National, par. 4, 2012). The preamble suggests a political system which is based on a “participatory democratic republic”. Freedom of speech, a honest and transparent judicial system and separation of powers are other key-opponents in the preamble. In the future it will be clear if the new constitution will be accepted by the Tunisian population.

According to the Royal Dutch Embassy in Tunisia, a constitutional amendment is only legitimate, if first the approval of the constitutional article has a two-third majority in the constituent assembly. Second, the entire new constitution has to be approved by a two-third majority of the constituent assembly. Finally, a referendum has to be organised to determine whether or not the Tunisian population agrees with the new constitution. It is still unclear how high the majority has to agree with the referendum (Marmouri, 2012).

4.8 Conclusion

After the fall of the Ben Ali regime, Tunisian population requested political and economic changes. In one – and a half year, Tunisia faced difficult times and challenges. It became clear that with massive protests and nationwide demonstrations, it is possible to remove an authoritarian regime. Moreover,

this revolution marked the beginning of protests in the whole Arab world.

In the time between Ben Ali and the new transition government, several attempts to seize power failed miserably. The Tunisian population remained in power and cleared the way for the return of several politicians. Charismatic leaders such as Marzouki and Ghannouchi has given Tunisia new political stability and hope. These new political leaders should repay this trust with economic and social recovery for Tunisia. However, the current situation in Tunisia is disturbing.

Since 6 June, the first document, the preamble, from the new constitution was presented. The challenging part is how the Tunisian transition government will describe the role of the sharia in the new constitution. Besides the discussion about the role of the Islam in the Tunisian society, the economy is the other major challenge. The economic situation remained almost the same for the Tunisian population. Due to this current economic situation, people are demonstrating are protesting against the government again. In order to regain trust and time from the Tunisian population, the transition government has to introduce new economic plans which leads to social stability. Furthermore, the process of the constitutional amendment has to be accelerated.

Conclusion

This dissertation described the revolution which started at the end of December 2010 in Tunisia. The possible contribution of the Netherlands and especially The Hague as city of Peace and Justice encourage further reforms in Tunisia, was also investigated. Both Western and Arabic sources were used in this research. Through interviews and opinions from several political scientists who are specialised in the Arab world, the situation in Tunisia became more clear. The decisions Tunisia will make the upcoming months, will determine if the revolution initiated by the Tunisian population will be a success.

The revolution in Tunisia was initiated by the whole Tunisian population. Since Tunisia was the first Arab country where these massive protests began, no-one knew if they could be successful. After one month, former president Zine El Abidine Ben Ali left the country after an authoritarian regime of 23 years. There are mainly economic and social reasons which led to this revolution in Tunisia. Poor living conditions, no possibilities for a job and a young and educated population created the mix for an uprising and eventually a revolution.

The shift in political systems in the Arab world started with the increasing globalisation around the globe. This globalisation has created a new platform where the Arab and Western have become more interdependent. More and more Muslims are living in the Western world, establishing their own Islamic values. This leads to misunderstanding and generalisations in the West about the Muslim world, but in the future it can become a valuable source of information about development in Islam. Resentment against Western countries has increased recently. It is recommended to support the revolution not only in Tunisia, but in several Arab countries and clearly opt for support of democracy.

Due to the globalisation, the role of the Netherlands in the world has diminished over the years. It is understandable that the Netherlands cannot support each revolution in the Middle East and North African region. Therefore, the Netherlands should help only in the areas which are promising. One of these areas is the support of the current Tunisian transition government. The Netherlands can advise in order to encourage the Tunisian government become more democratic. Although corruption and political games are common in Tunisia, the reformist signal the Tunisian population has given may not be forgotten.

The process of the new constitution needs also some assistance. Due to bad communication and the slow political process, the most important task of the current Tunisian government, rewriting the constitution, is taking too much time. More and more demonstrations are organised against the slow political process. The entire position of Tunisia in social, economic and political perspective is changing due to this delay. Simultaneously, the Netherlands could assist Tunisia economically.

Since the economic situation was one of the main reasons for the revolution in Tunisia, the Netherlands can invest in the Tunisian economy. One of these initiatives is the “Holland Month” which was organised by the Royal Dutch Embassy in Tunisia. This initiative has introduced Dutch investors and companies in the Tunisia after the fall of president Ben Ali. Also, the bilateral relations between the Netherlands and Tunisia were strengthened.

Besides the Netherlands, the Hague as city of Peace and Justice can support several Dutch initiatives. First of all, the independence of the judicial system is a problem in Tunisia nowadays. Due to increasing corruption, the judges cannot be objective and honest. In order to regain trust from the Tunisian population, the Hague could give Tunisia advice about an independent judicial system. International Organisations such as the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court could support this independent system by offering to train judges to become more objective. The International Organisations in The Hague have the international status and power which could pressure the Tunisian government to provide a transparent and independent judicial system.

If this judicial system can be improved, this may lead to honest and transparent judicial decisions. In time, even supporters of the old Ben Ali regime, who are still in power in several areas, can be convicted. In this way, the judicial system can prove to the Tunisian population that it can be independent and powerful. The judicial system is currently based on the old constitution of 1959. It is recommended that the current transition government presents the new constitution in time, in order to modernise also the judicial system.

Also, the Hague can play a role not only with its International Organisations, but also with its Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs). NGOs can support local projects in Tunisia which are especially beneficial for the Tunisian population. NGOs can support the rise of civil society in Tunisia. If NGOs can find local partners, a bilateral relationship can be established. Due to the rise of the civil society in Tunisia, more understanding will be created for the difficult time the Tunisian transition government is in. If The Hague can play a part in establishing a strong and broad civil society, Tunisia will improve its chances to become a democratic political system in an Arab country.

Recommendations

The current situation in Tunisia shows how strong a population can be in demanding reforms from its government. In the conclusion, several opportunities were shown for the Netherlands, in particular to influence the Arab Spring in Tunisia in a positive way. However, important changes are necessary if Tunisia would like to become a stable country in the Middle East and North African region. These general challenges are described below.

According to several experts, the unequal situation between the Northern and the Southern part of Tunisia can lead to new uprisings and even to a possible revolution. Many scientists agree with the observation that the revolution did not begin on December 2010, but much earlier. In the Southern part, Tunisians have been protesting against the government for years. Due to bad economic prospects most of the jobs were available only in the Northern part of Tunisia. Since the Southern part of Tunisia is more based on a traditional tribal society, this unequal treatment can lead to more tensions between North and South Tunisia. In order to regain trust, the Tunisian government has to determine an economic solution for the entire Tunisian population.

Another part which needs to be changed is the current role of the media. The press in Tunisia cannot write everything without being followed by the Tunisian government. According to Freedom House (Regions, par. 7, 2012), the use of social media played a minor role in the revolution. Tunisia is only “partly free”. Without respecting the civil liberties of the Tunisian population, the current transition government will remain undemocratic. If the Tunisian government respects the role of the media, it can contribute to a transparent society. In a society where the media has its freedoms, it can describe and express issues which need more attention.

A final remark about the social commotion is necessary. Since the appointment of the new transition government, the situation in Tunisia on the streets has worsened by the day. The Tunisian population is protesting against the long time it takes to rewrite the constitution. Former supporters of the Ben Ali regime are still in power or retaking their position. In addition, the hatred against the Western countries and Israel has increased. This radicalisation of Tunisian society may be dangerous for the political process. Tunisia stands on a crossroads now between a path towards democratisation and respecting human rights, or reforming into an Islamic society with sharia –based laws. According to many scientists, Tunisia can be seen as one of the first countries where democracy and Islam as a national religion can collaborate together. The future has to show if this revolution is enough in order to create a stable, safe and democratic country.

References

- AIV (2011) Hervormingen in de Arabische regio, *kansen voor democratie en rechtstaat?* Number 75, May, 2011.
- Al Jazeera (2011) Tunisian parties agree over power-sharing deal, *Al Jazeera Africa*, retrieved on 24 March, 2012, from the website:
<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2011/11/20111121202513273979.html>
- Al Jazeera (2011) Final Tunisian election results announced, *Al Jazeera Africa*, retrieved on 24 March, 2012, from the website:
<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2011/11/20111114171420907168.html>
- Al Jazeera (2011) Who are Tunisia's political parties? *Al Jazeera Features*, retrieved on 24 March, 2012, from the website:
<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2011/10/201110614579390256.html>
- Al Jazeera (2011) Background: Tunisian elections, *Al Jazeera Spotlight*, retrieved on 24 March, 2012, from the website:
<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/spotlight/2011/10/20111089246280661.html>
- Al Jazeera (2011) Ben Ali allies dropped from cabinet, *Al Jazeera Middle East*, retrieved 16 March, 2012, from the website:
<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/01/201112720356405308.html>
- Al Jazeera (2011) Timeline: Tunisia's uprising, *Al Jazeera Africa*, retrieved on 16 March, 2012, from the website:
<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/spotlight/tunisia/2011/01/201114142223827361.html>
- Al Jazeera (2011) Tunisia's new government in trouble, *Al Jazeera Africa*, retrieved on 16 March, 2012, from the website:
<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2011/01/2011118194731826312.html>
- Al Jazeera (2011) Constitutional Debate, *Al Jazeera Africa*, retrieved on 16 March, 2012, from the website: <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2011/01/2011114204942484776.html>
- BBC (2011) Tunisia Profile, *BBC Africa*, retrieved on 16 March, 2012, from the website:
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-14107241>

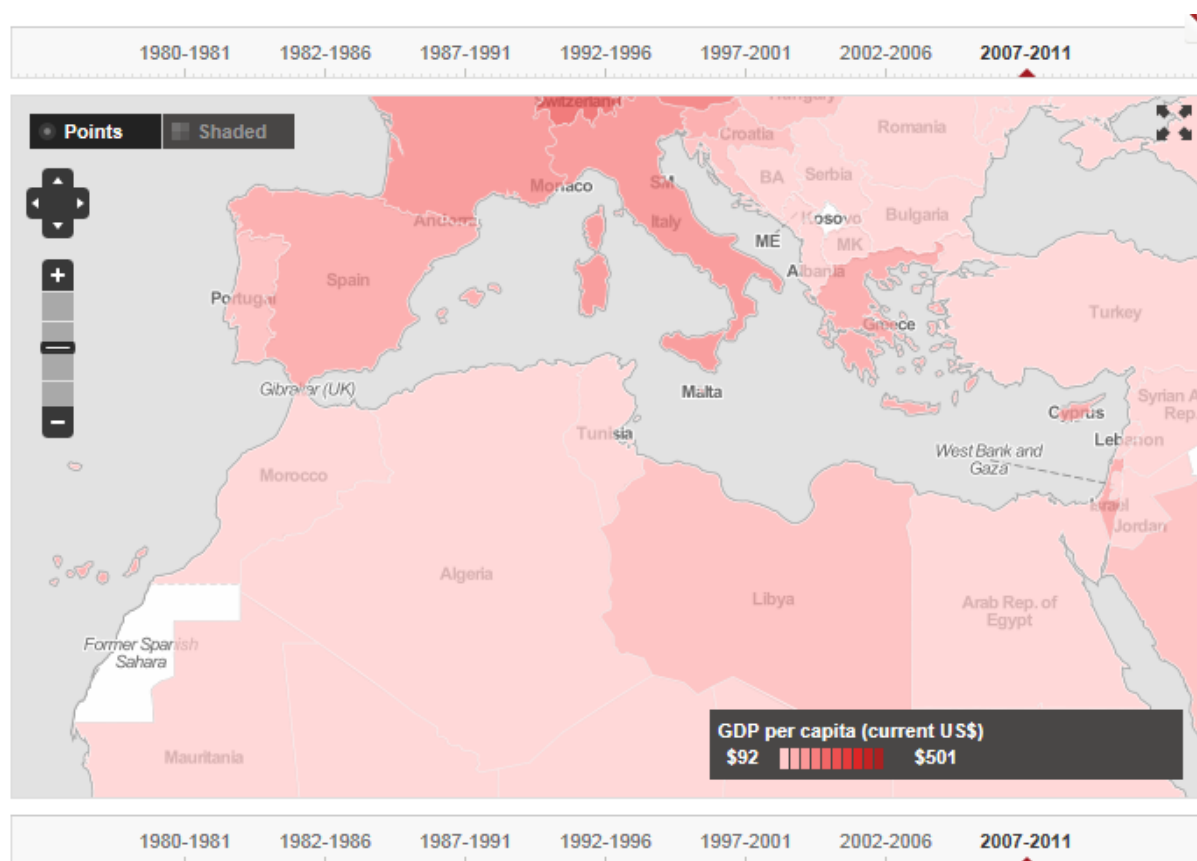
- BBC (2011) Tunisia legalizes Islamist group Ennahda, *BBC Africa*, retrieved on 16 March, 2012, from the website: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-12611609>
- BBC (2011) Tracking down the Ben Ali and Trabelsi Fortune, *BBC Africa*, retrieved on 16 March, 2012, from the website: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-12302659>
- BBC (2011) Mohamed Bouazizi: Memories of a Tunisian martyr, *BBC Africa*, retrieved on 16 March, 2012, from the website: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-12241082>
- BBC (2011) Q&A: Tunisia crisis, *BBC Africa*, retrieved on 16 March, 2012, from the website: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-12157599>
- BCC (2000) Habib Bourguiba: Father of Tunisia, *BBC Obituaries*, retrieved on 15 April, 2012, from the website: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/obituaries/703907.stm>
- Brown, G. W. & Held D. (2010) *The Cosmopolitanism Reader*, Polity Press, Cambridge.
- Clingendael (2011) Clingendael Policy Brief, *De hernieuwde Arabische lente: tussen revolutie en revolutie*, The Clingendael Institute, retrieved on 3 February, 2012, from the website: http://www.clingendael.nl/publications/2011/20110200_Clingendael_Policybrief_februari_no1.pdf
- Economist, the (2012) Mapping the Arab World, *A statistical hub containing key data from all the countries of the Arab League*, retrieved on 16 March, 2012, from the website: http://www.economist.com/blogs/dailychart/2011/02/arab_league_map
- Freedom House (2012) Tunisia's Electoral Process Severely Damaged by Pre-Election Rights Violations, retrieved on 15 April, 2012, from the website: <http://www.freedomhouse.org/article/tunisia%E2%80%99s-electoral-process-severely-damaged-pre-election-rights-violations>
- Friedman, T.L. (1992) 'Rethinking foreign affairs: are they still a U.S. affair?', *The New York Times*, 17 May 2011.
- Ghiles, F. (2011) Tunisia's economic fall-out, *The propagator from which the Arab Spring blossomed stands to lose more from Libya's descent than from its own uprising*, retrieved on 16 March, 2012, from the website of Al Jazeera Opinion: <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2011/07/201173173636360487.html>

- Haynes, J. (2011) Democratisation in the Middle East and North Africa: What is the Effect of Globalisation, retrieved on 1st of March, 2012 from the website: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/14690764.2010.511463>
- ISIE (2011) Arrêté du 13 novembre 2011 relatif à la proclamation des résultats définitifs des élections de l'Assemblée Nationale Constituante, retrieved 15 April, 2012, from the website : <http://www.isie.tn/Fr/image.php?id=754>
- Kaberuka, D. (2011) North Africa's battle for economic revolution, *The uprisings are not solely about ideology, but social and economic change, and achieving that will require creativity*, retrieved on 16 March, 2012, from the website of Al Jazeera Opinion: <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2011/05/2011513111949591630.html>
- Linz J. & Stepan A. (1996) Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation, John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore.
- Marmouri, S. (2012) Constitutional amendment in Tunisia, Royal Dutch Embassy in Tunisia, 23 May, 2012, The Hague.
- Moore, C. H. (1962) The Neo-Destour Party of Tunisia: A Structure for Democracy?, retrieved on 15 April, 2012, from the website John Hopkins University Press: http://chenry.webhost.utexas.edu/public_html/WP1962/0.pdf
- Post, W. (2011) Fruitvliegje teistert Arabische dictators, retrieved on 3 February, 2012, from Het Financiële Dagblad.
- Rosenmöller, P. (2012) Paul Rosenmöller en... , *Verdampte euforie*. Nederland : Interkerkelijke Omroep Nederland (IKON).
- Roy, O. (2011) The paradoxes of the re-Islamisation of Muslim societies, retrieved on 15 February, 2012 from the website of the SSRC: <http://blogs.ssrc.org/tif/2011/09/08/the-paradoxes-of-the-re-islamization-of-muslim-societies/>
- Roy, O. (2011) A new generation of political Islamists steps forward, retrieved on 15 February, 2012 from The Washington Post, *World Politics*.

- Roy, O. (2011) This is not an Islamic Revolution, retrieved on 15 February, 2012 from the New Statesman, *Politics*.
- Roy, O. (2011) Where were the Tunisian Islamists?, retrieved on 15 February, 2012 from The New York Times, *World Politics*.
- Roy, O. (2004) Globalized Islam, *The search for a new Ummah*, Columbia University Press, New York.
- Stephan, A. (2011) Tunisia's election: counter-revolution or democratic transition? Retrieved on 15 February, 2012 from the website of the SSRC: <http://blogs.ssrc.org/tif/2011/12/17/tunisia%e2%80%99s-election-counter-revolution-or-democratic-transition/>
- Tunisia Live (2012) Final draft of preamble to 2012 Tunisian Constitution, *English Translation provided by Tunisia Live*, retrieved on 10 June, 2012, from the website of Tunisia Live, *National*: <http://www.tunisia-live.net/2012/06/08/final-draft-of-preamble-to-2012-tunisian-constitution-english-translation-by-tunisia-live/>
- Voorhoeve, J. (2008) Rechtsstaat in Ontwikkelingslanden?, Amsterdam University Press, Amsterdam
- Voorhoeve, J. (2007) From War to the Rule of Law, Amsterdam University Press, Amsterdam
- Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid (2010), Aan het buitenland gehecht, rapporten aan de regering nr. 85, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 16 May 2011.
- World Bank (2012) GDP per capita, *Data*, retrieved 3 March, 2012, from the website: <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD/countries/1W?display=map>
- World Bank (2012) Unemployment, total (% of total labour force), *Data*, retrieved on 3 March, 2012 from the website: <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.TOTL.ZS>
- World Bank (2011) Unfolding Developments in the Arab World and its Implications for the region, *Middle East and North Africa, Countries*, retrieved on 15 April, 2012, from the website: <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/MENAEXT/0,,contentMDK:22865708~pagePK:146736~piPK:146830~theSitePK:256299,00.html>

Appendix

Appendix 1.1 GDP per capita in the Middle East and North African region



Source: World Bank 2012

Appendix 1.2 Unemployment, total (% of total labour force)

Arab World	9.7% 2008	
Caribbean small states	8.5% 2008	
East Asia & Pacific	4.7% 2009	
Euro area	10.0% 2010	
European Union	9.6% 2010	
Europe & Central Asia	9.5% 2009	
Latin America & Caribbean	7.8% 2009	
Middle East & North Africa	10.6% 2008	
OECD members	8.3% 2010	

Source: World Bank 2012

Appendix 1.3 Vulnerable employment, total (% of total employment)

Caribbean small states	27% 2009	
Euro area	11% 2010	
European Union	12% 2010	
Europe & Central Asia	19% 2010	
Latin America & Caribbean	31% 2010	
Middle East & North Africa	36% 2010	
OECD members	16% 2010	
South Asia	81% 2010	

Source: World Bank 2012

Appendix 1.4 Consumer prices in Tunisia, May 2012

Household consumer price index: CPI
Indicator : Household Consumer price index monthly rates
 (base 100 in 2005)

Reference period : May 2012



Click on the Modality to display the series.



Long series



Methodological note

	Data of the reference period	Data of the previous period	Same period of the previous year
Food and drinks	139.9	140.5	129.9
Tobacco	130.8	130.8	119.2
Clothing and footwear	129.7	128.3	119.8
Housing, water, gas, electricity and other	132.5	132.3	128.9
Furniture, household equipment and routine home maintenance	126.7	126.1	119.5
Health	117.0	116.7	115.1
Transport	136.9	136.2	134.1
Communications	93.5	93.5	93.4
Leisure and culture	105.4	104.8	103.6
Education	136.0	136.0	123.9
Restaurants and hotels	142.3	141.7	132.1
Miscellaneous goods and services	129.5	129.2	124.1
Aggregate	132.2	132.0	125.2

Source : National Institute of Statistics (INS)

Last updated on :04-06-2012

Appendix 1.5 School enrolment, primary (% gross)

Arab World	95%	
Caribbean small states	96%	
East Asia & Pacific	111%	
Euro area	105%	
European Union	104%	
Europe & Central Asia	98%	
Latin America & Caribbean	117%	
Least developed countries: UN classification	102%	
Middle East & North Africa	102%	
OECD members	104%	
Other small states	100%	
Pacific island small states	108%	
South Asia	110%	
Sub-Saharan Africa	100%	
World	107%	

Source: World Bank 2012

Appendix 2.1 Businesses of Zine El Abidine Ben Ali and his wife Trabelsi

Ben Ali and Trabelsi business network		
Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali's children by his first wife		
Name	Relationship	Business interests
Dorsaf, married to Slim Chiboub	Daughter	Pharmaceuticals; Property; Distribution; Supermarkets
Cyrine, married to Marouane Mabrouk	Daughter	Mercedes dealership; Arab International Bank of Tunisia; Charms FM; Supermarkets Geant and Monoprix; Internet; Telecoms
Ghazoua, married to Slim Zarrouk	Daughter	Plastics; Finance; Management of Tunis airport services
Leila Trabelsi's family		
Name	Relationship	Business interests
Belhassen Trabelsi	Brother	Bank of Tunisia; Hotels; Karthago Airlines; Radio, TV companies; Cement; Sugar refinery; Ford dealership
Mourad and Moncef Trabelsi	Brothers	Tuna exports; Fishing rights in Lake of Tunis; Hydrocarbons
Imed	Nephew	Construction; Household store Bricorama; Transport
Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali and Leila Trabelsi's children		
Name	Relationship	Business interests
Nesrine, married to Sakhr el-Materi	Daughter	Zitouna Bank; Ennakl car dealership; Media holdings; Tourism; Construction; Telecoms; Agriculture
Daughter: Halima, engaged to Mehdi Ben Gaied	Daughter	Stafim car dealership (Peugeot imports)
Mohamed (aged six)	Son	Long-awaited male heir for whom fortune was reportedly being built

SOURCES: LE MONDE; LE FIGARO; SWISS ORDER FOR ASSET FREEZE

Source: BBC 2012

Appendix 2.2 Tunisian voting paper for the elections in 2011

انتخابات المجلس الوطني التأسيسي 2011
Elections de l'Assemblée Nationale Constituante 2011

يختار الناخب قائمة واحدة ويضع علامة (X) داخل المربع المخصص لها
 L'électeur choisit une seule liste et appose le signe (X) dans la case qui lui est réservée

CIRCONSCRIPTION 1

العلامة Signe	القائمة Liste	الرمز Logo	الرقم N°	العلامة Signe	القائمة Liste	الرمز Logo	الرقم N°	العلامة Signe	القائمة Liste	الرمز Logo	الرقم N°	العلامة Signe	القائمة Liste	الرمز Logo	الرقم N°
<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة الحزب الديمقراطي التقدمي Liste PDP		38	<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة حرية والتزام Liste Liberté et Engagement		26	<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة تونس افق جديد Liste Tunisie Nouvel Horizon		14	<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة الجبهة الديمقراطية الحديثة Liste du Pole Démocratique Moderniste		1
<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة دوستورنا Liste Doustourna		39	<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة الاتحاد الديمقراطي الوحدوي Liste de l'Union Démocratique Unioniste		27	<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة مواطنون تونس الحرة Liste Citoyens de la Tunisie libre		15	<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة الحزب الليبرالي المغربي Liste du Parti libéral maghrébin		2
<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة العربية الشعبية للتحرير والعدالة والتنمية Liste Al Aridha Populaire pour la Liberté, la Justice et le Développement		40	<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة مع الحركة الديمقراطية والمساواة Liste Avec le Mouvement Démocratique et l'Egalité		28	<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة الاتحاد الوطني الحرة Liste UPL - Union Patriotique Libre		16	<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة صوت المستقلين الأحرار Liste de la Voix des Indépendants Patriotes Libres		3
<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة حزب العمل التونسي Liste du Parti du Travail Tunisien		41	<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة حركة الوطنيين الديمقراطيين Liste Mouvement des Patriotes Démocrates		29	<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة الوحدة الوطنية Liste de l'Union Nationale		17	<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة صوت مستكمل Liste Sawt Mostakel		4
<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة التكتل Liste Ettakatol		42	<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة حزب المجاهد Liste Al Majd		30	<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة حرية كرامة عدالة Liste Liberté Dignité Justice		18	<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة العدالة الاجتماعية Liste de la Justice Sociale		5
<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة الاتحاد التونسي العمومي Liste UPR		43	<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة حركة الشعب الوحدوية التقدمية Liste du Mouvement du Peuple Unioniste Progressiste		31	<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة تونسنا الكل Liste Tounesna Elkoll		19	<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة مناهج الهجرة التونسية Liste des Associatifs de l'Immigration Tunisienne		6
<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة أمل تونس الحديثة Liste de l'Espoir de la Tunisie Moderne		44	<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة حركة النهضة Liste Mouvement Ennahdha		32	<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة البديل الثوري Liste l'Alternative Révolutionnaire		20	<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة الأمل في الحرية والديمقراطية Liste de l'Espoir pour la Liberté et la Démocratie		7
<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة الحرية الوطنية Liste Erraya Al Wataniya		45	<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة تسانتي Liste Fraternité		33	<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة حزب التقدم من أجل الجمهورية Liste CPR		21	<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة طريق السلام Liste Tariq Essalama		8
<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة حركة الوحدة الشعبية Liste du Mouvement de l'Unité Populaire		46	<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة الوطنية والكرامة Liste Al Wataniya Wal Karama		34	<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة السرباط Liste du Rempart		22	<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة أصوات مستقلة Liste Aswat Mostakella		9
<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة المستقلة Liste Elmostakella		47	<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة شمس بلادي Liste Shams Bledi		35	<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة حزب الأفق تونس Liste Afek Tounes		23	<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة كلنا متحدون في كل خطوة Liste Tous unis à chaque pas		10
<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة البديل من أجل الوطنية التونسية Liste de l'Alternative Citoyenne Tunisienne		48	<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة تونسيس خضر Liste Tunisie Verte		36	<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة الديمقراطية المباشرة Liste de la Démocratie Directe		24	<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة حزب التحالف الوطني للسلام والرخاء Liste Alliance Nationale pour la Paix et la Prospérité		12
<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة وفاء Liste Wafa		37	<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة كلنا من أجل تونس Liste Tous ensemble pour la Tunisie		25	<input type="checkbox"/>	قائمة صوت التونسي المقيم بفرنسا Liste la Voix du Tunisien, Résident en France		13

Source: ISIE 2012

Appendix 2.3 Election results in Tunisia

Standings in the 2011 Tunisian National Constituent Assembly			
Affiliation	Members		
	2011 Election Results	As of December 24, 2011	As of April 9, 2012
Ennahda Movement		89	
Congress for the Republic		29	
Democratic Forum for Labour and Liberties		20	
Republican Party ¹			20
Progressive Democratic Party		16	–
Afek Tounes		4	–
Popular Petition	26	14 ^[15]	
The Initiative		5	
Democratic Modernist Pole ¹		5	
Tunisian Workers' Communist Party		3	
People's Movement		2	
Movement of Socialist Democrats		2	
Free Patriotic Union		1	
Democratic Patriots' Movement		1	
Maghrebin Liberal Party		1	
Democratic Social Nation Party		1	
New Destour Party		1	
Progressive Struggle Party		1	
Equity and Equality Party		1	
Cultural Unionist Nation Party		1	
Independent lists	8	20	
Total members		217	
vacant		0	
Total seats		217	

Source: TunisiaLive 2011

Appendix 2.4 Number of (international) observers during the elections in 2011

Accueil | Actualités | Contact | Plan du site | عربي | Français |  Centre d'appel 1814 | Rechercher sur le site 60

[L'ISIE](#) | [Le rapport de l'ISIE](#) | [Cadre juridique](#) | [Instances régionales](#) | [Accréditation](#) | [Tunisiens à l'étranger](#) | [Publications](#) | [Statistiques](#)

▶ Statistiques

Statistiques sur l'accréditation des observateurs nationaux et internationaux

Les observateurs nationaux
 Nombre total des observateurs nationaux accrédités : **13422**
 Les observateurs indépendants : **30**
 Les observateurs membres dans des organismes : **13392**
 Nombre total des organismes accrédités : **43**

Les observateurs internationaux
 Nombre total des observateurs internationaux accrédités : **661**
 Nombre total des observateurs américains et européens accrédités : **609**
 Nombre total des observateurs arabes accrédités : **52**
 Nombre total des organismes accrédités : **23**

Nombre total des observateurs accrédités : 14083

< Mai 2012 >

Lun	Mar	Mer	Jeu	Ven	Sam	Dim
	01	02	03	04	05	06
07	08	09	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

> Voir tous les événements

Source: ISIE 2012

*Appendix 2.5 Composition of the Tunisian government***Hammadi Jebali, Chef du Gouvernement****Ministre auprès du Chef du Gouvernement :**

- Mohamed Abbou, chargé de la réforme administrative
- Abderrahmane Ladgham, chargé des affaires de malversation
- Ridha Saïdi, chargé du dossier économique
- Abderrazak Kilani, Chargé des relations avec l'Assemblée Constituante
- Ministre de la Défense: Abdelkarim Zbidi
- Ministre de l'intérieur : Ali Laârayedh
- Secrétaire d'Etat auprès du Ministre de l'Intérieur chargé de la réforme : Saïd Mechichi
- Ministre des Affaires étrangères : Rafik Ben Abdesslem
- Secrétares d'Etat auprès du ministre des Affaires étrangères :
- - Chargé des affaires africaines et arabes : Abdallah Turki
- - Chargé des affaires de l'Amérique et de l'Asie : Hédi ben Abbès
- - Chargé des affaires européennes : Touhami Abdouli
- Ministre de la Justice : Nouredine Bhiri
- Ministre des droits de l'Homme et de la justice transitoire et porte-parole du gouvernement : Samir Dilou
- Ministre des affaires religieuses : Nouredine Khadmi
- Ministre des Finances : Houcine Dimassi
- Secrétaire d'Etat auprès du ministre des Finances: Slim Besbès
- Ministre de l'Industrie, et du Commerce : Mohamed Lamine Chakhari
- Secrétaire d'Etat auprès du Ministre de l'Industrie, du Commerce et de l'Artisanat : Béchir Zaâfour
- Ministre du Tourisme : Elyes Fakhfekh
- Ministre des Affaires sociales : Khalil Zaouia
- Secrétaire d'Etat auprès du Ministre des affaires sociale chargé de l'immigration : Houcine Jaziri
- Ministre de l'Education : Abdellatif Abid
- Ministre de la Santé : Abdellatif Mekki
- Ministre de l'Investissement et de la coopération internationale : Riadh Bettaïeb
- Secrétaire d'Etat auprès du Ministre de l'Investissement et de la coopération internationale : Alaya Bettaïeb
- Ministre de la Formation professionnelle et de l'Emploi: Abdelwahab Maâter
- Ministre des Transports : Abdelkarim Harouni
- Ministre des Technologies de la Communication : Mongi Marzouk
- Ministre de l'Equipeement : Mohamed Salmane
- Secrétaire d'Etat chargé de l'Habitat : Chahida Fraj Bouraoui
- Ministre du développement régional et de la Planification : Jameleddine Gharbi
- Secrétaire d'Etat auprès du Ministre du développement régional et de la Planification : Lamine Doghri
- Ministre de la Jeunesse et des sports : Tarek Dhiab
- Secrétaire d'Etat auprès du Ministre de la Jeunesse et des sports : Hichem Ben Jamaâ
- Ministre de la Culture : Mehdi Mabrouk
- Ministre de la femme : Sihem Badi
- Ministre de l'enseignement supérieur : Moncef Ben Salem
- Ministre des Domaines de l'Etat et des Affaires foncières : Slim Ben Hmidène
- Ministre de l'Agriculture : Mohamed Ben Salem
- Secrétaire d'Etat auprès du ministre de l'agriculture : Habib Jamli
- Ministre de l'Environnement : Mamia Elbanna

Source: DirectInfo 2011

Appendix 3.1 Interview with Maaïke Voorhoeve, researcher from the Harvard University in Boston

Rogier van Voorden: Good afternoon, Welcome to the interview between Mrs. Voorhoeve and Rogier van Voorden about the Arab Spring in Tunisia. Mrs. Voorhoeve, my first question will be about the reason of your current visit in Tunisia. Why you are there at the moment

Maaïke Voorhoeve: Let me think, from September first I am connected to the Harvard University in Boston. They are organizing several discussions about Tunisia. Furthermore, I am busy writing an article about the transitional justice in Tunisia. Moreover, I am collecting data for this article in Tunisia.

Rogier van Voorden: Transitional Justice in Tunisia, can u tell me something more about this specific topic?

Maaïke Voorhoeve: Yes of course, I do not know what you know about transitional justice in general. There are several studies about transitional justice, but none of these studies are being held in the Muslim World. Only in Iraq and Afghanistan. And in Tunisia the debates, you have to think by yourself, the last regime was not only characterized by large violations of human rights, but also a large degree of corruption. And right at this time, they focus about the corruption during the old regime and also about the month when the revolution began namely, December 2010 / January 2011 in Tunisia. During these demonstrations 130 people were killed. These discussions are currently focused on these murders, instead of, what is surprising my by the way, the tortures and that kind of things which happened during the 23 year old regime.

Rogier van Voorden: Right right. That is surprising me. Is the current situation safe in Tunisia? There are no demonstrations, and is it quiet on the streets?

Maaïke Voorhoeve: No no, it is very unsafe at this moment. It is much more unsafe than before the revolution.

Maaïke Voorhoeve: I have lived in Tunisia between 2009 and 2011, 1.5 years. In September 2011 I left Tunisia. During that time, in September the situation was already very unsafe. The situation in Tunisia is worsened by the day. This due to the absence of the police force.

Rogier van Voorden: Hmmm

Maaïke Voorhoeve: Also the absence of the government, the government does not seem it has strength anymore. And now I am talking about the unsafe situation for the Tunisian population.

Rogier van Voorden: Yes yes yes, I understand that.

Maaïke Voorhoeve: And the situation is much more unsafe, due to the development of radicalization of the population. People are very upset on the Western countries and also about Israel. And you can see this in the reactions towards the Western people. That is for me personally very disturbing to notice. Furthermore, there is an unsafe situation in general due to the absence of the police force and for people who are in one way or the other, show that they are not following this development of radicalization and for example people who drink alcohol or people who are going to theatres. Those kinds of things.

Rogier van Voorden: Yes.

Maaïke Voorhoeve: Those people are feeling very unsafe and are outlawed by the other people.

Rogier van Voorden: Right. And what is the reason why the police force and the government are absent? I can understand that there are some difficulties. At this moment, there is a transition government, but the transition government; the coalition government does not have enough political power? Or, do they need more power? Or does the government nothing about the unsafe situation for the Tunisian population?

Maaïke Voorhoeve: I think that there are several reasons why the government lacks the power. First, Tunisia was a police state before. The revolution has changed the role of the police force completely. Due to the revolution, the police force was threatened for a long time. Because the revolution was initiated against the police state and against the police.

Rogier van Voorden: Right.

Maaïke Voorhoeve: There was, for a long time, no police force on the streets because police men were too much afraid. Also, it is difficult to understand for police men what kind of role they play nowadays. Because there are no big transformations within the Ministry of Interiors, which governs the police force.

Rogier van Voorden: Hmm.

Maaïke Voorhoeve: And so, it seems that the police force no longer has a mandate. Because before the revolution the function of the police force was to protect the government. Not the protection of civilians. But now it is requested that the police force should protect the population. But since they do not know how, the police force does not know what to do anymore. There is no police on the streets at all. That is one thing.

Rogier van Voorden: Yes.

Maaïke Voorhoeve: Another reason is that the current government is not functioning properly, but no-one knows why it is not working. For many people it is difficult to determine which parts of the government is working and what parts do not. Or that the old government before the revolution still has all the power. There is a power struggle, which says that no-one has political power at this moment.

Maaïke Voorhoeve: And the third reason of the violence is the radicalization of the Tunisian people. This radicalization is being blown up by the fact that there are some many things not sure to deal with people who are radicalized. But on the other way, according to some people, the government is deliberately instigating people against each other. And this has to do with the composition of the government, which is dominated by the Islamite party.

Maaïke Voorhoeve: The radicalized people voted on the Islamite party during the elections. However, these people are far more radicalized than the political party. The Islamite party has always been relatively quiet. But because the Islamite party and the current government, does not convict the crimes of the radicalized people, or put them in jail. By doing this, it seems that they are supporting these radicalized people.

In one way, the Islamite party state: we are not radical. But on the other way, because they do not convict the radicalized people, a large part of the Tunisian population is radicalizing.

Rogier van Voorden: And why is the radicalization pointed against the Western countries and also Israel? Because first the revolution began because people started demonstrating against the police

state, the corruption and the dictatorial regime. The Tunisian population wanted more freedom, more democracy. It does seem that you are saying that, the radicalization is opposing the Western way of living. Is this the work of Ennahda, the Islamite political party, who is currently in the government?

Maaïke Voorhoeve: No. Because there are also many anti-Western opinions about Ennahda. Many radicalized people claim that Ennahda is too much in favour of the Western countries. Also Ennahda is pro Israel, but since Israel is one of the countries who are supporting Tunisia the most with the economic development, Ennahda will never boycott Israel.

Maaïke Voorhoeve: I think that the anti-Western feelings... In one way, you will have to deal with anti-Western feelings among the whole Arab world. Also among Muslims who live in Western countries. In the recent years, this development has increased among all Muslims. There are several causes for this, one of them, 11 September 2001. And the idea that all Muslims are...

Rogier van Voorden: Treated the same way?

Maaïke Voorhoeve: Yes, indeed. All the Muslims think that they are the victims and it is unreasonable that every Muslim is treated the same way. Radicalized Muslims in Tunisia are talking about this all the time. And furthermore, the current situation between the Palestine's and Israel is also unacceptable according to them.

Maaïke Voorhoeve: After the revolution, the accent about the situation in Israel and the relationship with Western countries has to do with Ben Ali, and its good relation with the Western countries. He had close ties with France, Italy and of course Israel. During the Ben Ali regime you could not mention anything bad about the Western countries or Israel, because then you were put in jail.

Maaïke Voorhoeve: People can finally state whatever they want. And the third point has also something to do with the fear for colonization. Not in a fear that Tunisia would be colonised, but because Ben Ali left, the last piece of the colonization disappeared in Tunisia. As if Ben Ali, in some sort of way, was seen as a colonizer. The whole idea of anti-colonization, anti-France and anti-United States of America and anti-Israel perfectly fits in the ideology of Islamists. You cannot talk normally with anyone here about Israel. People are getting upset, also intellectuals. However, with the majority of the people, they do not sympathize with the Palestine's, but it is more a feeling of us against the others. This feeling is fierce and violent.

Rogier van Voorden: These feelings of violence are also used against Western tourists or against you in particular?

Maaïke Voorhoeve: Against me, absolutely. I am not sure if these feelings are expressed against Western tourists. I think so. If you ask me, we can expect something nasty before the end of the year. People will plan a terrorist attack against Western tourists.

Rogier van Voorden: This frightens me a bit. In the Netherlands, you do not have any information about Tunisia on the news. Also not in other parts of Western Europe. What I am wondering, is the revolution completely done, or does it need one more extra boost? How do you see this?

Maaïke Voorhoeve: That depends on which side you support. In Islamists perspective, the revolution is still going on. The revolution is only completed, when all Western people leave Tunisia and Tunisia becomes an Islamic state with the sharia as its law. For people who are opposing the radicalized people, they state: we need a second revolution.

Rogier van Voorden: To what extent former supporters of the Ben Ali regime are still in power? Are they present inside the government, or inside other important Tunisian institutions? According to you, or you cannot mention anything about this?

Maike Voorhoeve: I think, more and more former people are retaking power in Tunisia. It is also more accepted amongst the Tunisian population, in a way against the radicalization. People, who would like to advance in their professional career, are being surpassed by supporters of Ben Ali.

Rogier van Voorden: Yes. Yes. Yes.

Rogier van Voorden: But, right at this moment, the social commotion due to the radicalization of the population and the current political situation is worsening the situation?

Maike Voorhoeve: Yes and there is a politic game going on. In the government, also in Ennahda, demonstrations are being ended with violence and people who support extreme left political parties are put to prison. Especially people who support extreme left political parties. Those people who openly criticize the government and Ennahda are being convicted, just like in the days of the old regime. People are afraid to openly mention which political party they support.

Rogier van Voorden: What about the convictions during this government? What can you tell about the judicial system? Is the judicial system still based on the constitution from 1957?

Maike Voorhoeve: 1959?

Rogier van Voorden: Eh yeah, 1959 I am sorry.

Maike Voorhoeve: The constitution did not mention that much about the judicial system. The law in 1967 does. This law has to be rewritten. This law, in collaboration with the reforms in 2005, is stating that judges are not independent. That is one thing. That can be seen as a fact. Judges will do everything what the government want. And even if they were independent from the government, then judges will choose the side which pays the most. Corruption can be found everywhere here. There are no independent judges.

Rogier van Voorden: In the beginning of the interview, you mentioned that you were busy with the transitional justice. How can you make sure that the judicial system will be honest and independent?

Maike Voorhoeve: I am not doing anything at all. I am just a researcher. My research is focused on describing the situation that is all. In the transitional justice field, many people are activist and researcher at the same time. However, I am not an activist.

Rogier van Voorden: Oh ok. So, the problem, the corruption, is anchored deeply in the Tunisian society. You cannot simply resolve this problem quickly.

Maike Voorhoeve: Yes. The corruption is everywhere. Just everywhere.

Rogier van Voorden: Ok. Thank you. I do not know if you know anything about the civil society. They were responsible, in my view, for the start of the Tunisian revolution. They began protesting against the social and economic problems. Does the civil society still play that same role nowadays? Or are they completely gone?

Maike Voorhoeve: It is difficult to answer this question. The situation is very complicated. In the beginning the revolution was mainly supported by unemployed people and people who demonstrated against the old corrupt regime.

Rogier van Voorden: Yes.

Maike Voorhoeve: Although there revolution is being “kidnapped” by human rights activists who live in the rich suburban neighbourhoods of Tunis. And those people changed the whole revolution into a revolution against human rights and democracy. Many Tunisian people think that is unfair. People are getting more and more upset about the causes of this whole situation, namely, a government who is now in power who does not have any power and cannot do anything. A government who cannot respond to the bad economic situation and the large corruption inside the country.

Maike Voorhoeve: However, these reasons, the poor economic situation for the Tunisian population and the enormous corruption in Tunisia are the main reasons for the revolution.

Rogier van Voorden: Yes, that is completely true.

Rogier van Voorden: And what can you tell me about the difference between North and South Tunisia. In the North, along the coast, there are major cities, like Tunis. Is there a difference between those regions? I am referring to the program made by Paul Rosenmoller about the Arab Spring, I do not know if you have seen the specific episode when he visited the cities in the Southern part of Tunisia?

Maike Voorhoeve: Yes, I know this episode, and it is absolutely true what you are saying. The revolution started in the South of Tunisia, not in the North. The revolution did not began in 2010, the revolution started much earlier. People who are living in the Southern part of Tunisia are resisting **Maike Voorhoeve:** against the Northern part / cities. The people who are living in the South are supporting for a large part the Tunisian population. However, they do not receive any support from the North. There is a lot of profitable soil in South Tunisia, but there is no-one who is investing in this for example. People were getting more and more frustrated and the difference with the situation before the revolution is, that the Tunisian people who live in the North know that the Tunisian people who live in the South are protesting a struggling to survive.

Rogier van Voorden: That is very strange, if you think about it.

Maike Voorhoeve: I do not know. There is no money, and you hear that there is a lot of violence nowadays. From the North Western part in Tunisia till the South, violence is very common. Before the revolution people were also fighting and committed crimes, but nowadays everyone in Tunisia knows that in the Southern part of the country, people are fighting. In the South, you still have that tribal society. Tribes will fight against each other for power.

Maike Voorhoeve: Yes. And in the Northern part of Tunisia the situation is different. In the Northern part is much more prosperity.

Maike Voorhoeve: Yes and this difference are frustrating the Tunisian society.

Rogier van Voorden: I can understand that Tunisians are struggling at this moment. Also because the government is like toothless tiger, it does not intervene and support the population in the North, but especially in the South.

Maike Voorhoeve: I do not know if the government cannot really do anything. Or that the government is not capable of supporting the population. This government... Ennahda did not have an economic program when the elections started. And today, they still do not have an actual economic program. You can understand that very little is happening then.

Rogier van Voorden: In a conversation which I had with the Royal Dutch Embassy in Tunisia earlier this month, the Embassy is referring towards the political games that are currently played by Ennahda. Because the new mini-constitution, who should have been written by the government, is taking too much time. Ennahda is only trying to draw time to stay in power as long as possible. Do you notice this same problem?

Maike Voorhoeve: In my opinion, I think that we cannot know if Ennahda is deliberately drawing time. Furthermore, it is not only Ennahda who are playing this political game. Marzouki can also be one of the actors in this political game. He would like to be president as long as possible.

Maike Voorhoeve: If we take a look at Ennahda specifically. I can imagine that Ennahda is drawing time. It is a good strategy. If there would be elections today, Ennahda would lose a lot of seats in the constituent assembly. People who voted on Ennahda have serious regrets about this. And the new extremists do not vote on Ennahda either, because they are much too liberal. Ennahda can benefit if the elections are postponed.

Rogier van Voorden: Are there new movements or parties, political parties, in Tunisia who are more extreme like some extremists prefer?

Maike Voorhoeve: There are of course, Islamists movements, but they do not want to form a political party. They just want an Islamic state, and elections cannot help to achieve this goal. But since a month, an Islamist party is legalized by the government. This was the first sign that extremists parties were allowed to participate in the next general elections.

Rogier van Voorden: And what is the name of this political party?

Maike Voorhoeve: I do not know exactly, but I can e-mail you the name if you want.

Rogier van Voorden: That would be great, thank you.

Rogier van Voorden: This party would take the votes from the Islamists, which voted first on Ennahda?

Maike Voorhoeve: No, no, no. Absolutely not. People, who voted on Ennahda, did not want that Tunisia would turn into an Islamic state. Right in front of the elections, I did do a little research about the elections. I asked roughly 200 people on what party they would vote. Almost everybody told me, that they would vote on Ennahda. I expected more seats in the constituent assembly for Ennahda actually. Finally only 1 out of 5 people did vote on Ennahda, whereas 50% of Tunisian people did not vote at all. The reason why people voted on Ennahda was because this political party was the only party they trusted.

Maike Voorhoeve: Because Ennahda was the only political party which was forbidden during the Ben Ali regime. Ennahda always fought against Ben Ali that is one reason. People were convinced that if Ennahda would be in power, the revolution would be useful. Another reason why people voted on Ennahda is that Ennahda would not prohibit alcohol, or sexuality outside the marriage. So, Ennahda

would not be corrupt like all the other parties. Everything has to do with the political power and the dangers of the political power. Not so much with the Islam.

Maike Voorhoeve: The people who voted on Ennahda are very disappointed, they would definitely not vote on Ennahda the next time there are elections. People will choose a more secular political party instead. A political party who is promising, in a reasonable way, that economy has to be improved.

Rogier van Voorden: According to you, which political party can help Tunisia with these economic problems?

Maike Voorhoeve: A party who would make a good chance is... There are some new parties; I am not sure about them. The party of Moncef Marzouki definitely not. The Ettakatol political party would also lose a lot of votes I think. Maybe the PDP.

Rogier van Voorden: This party did not win a lot of seats in the constituent assembly during the last elections, if I am not mistaken?

Maike Voorhoeve: Yes that is correct. Very strange. Because this party has been much in the news, people do know the PDP and their party's general, Maya Jribi. However, Maya Jribi joined another movement lately which can also receive a lot of votes. In my opinion, especially political parties who are not extreme left or too secular will attract more voters.

Maike Voorhoeve: I do hear a lot of people nowadays who hope that Maya Jribi will be the next president. That would be something special.

Maike Voorhoeve: If I understand everything correctly, the new elections are not the most important thing which has to be arranged in Tunisia. First of all, the situation in Tunisia has to be peaceful again. That the government and the police force are taking back their power.

Rogier van Voorden: Also the position of women during the Ben Ali regime was quite special in the Arab world. Do you see more and more women who are wearing headscarves again?

Maike Voorhoeve: Yes, absolutely. The radicalization is returning in Tunisia.

Maike Voorhoeve: Yes, but the women do not wear headscarves because of their ideology, it is also forbidden to wear nothing. Furthermore, the headscarf is also a fashion item, but also the life on the streets is getting harder and harder for a woman. You have multiple reasons why you should wear a headscarf and this goes beyond the ideological belief.

Maike Voorhoeve: This also affects me personally. I will not go outside unless I have to. You notice that the situation on the streets is getting more and more unsafe by the day. And this is not only because of the radicalized people; also the entire society is getting more and more radicalized.

Maike Voorhoeve: In addition, I do think that people are strengthened in a way, because the party on which they voted, Ennahda, has won the elections. Both men and women voted on Ennahda.

Maike Voorhoeve: But nowadays, Tunisians are whistling towards women, they will tell you that you need to wear a headscarf. You are not treated like any other normal person on the streets. And among these people, there are also adolescents who drink alcohol and will not go to the Mosque. It is getting more and more normal to discriminate women in one way or another.

Maike Voorhoeve: If I am going to a restaurant where people drink alcohol... First of all, there are only men who are allowed there. That is not new. Before the revolution women could not drink alcohol also. When I was ordering a beer, and afterwards another. The waiter is telling me in a gentle way that I have had enough alcohol. Women should not drink so much alcohol. And of course this is a joke, and the waiter is not serious. Back in the old days, he would not say this at all. The ethics in the Tunisian society are changing.

Rogier van Voorden: Do you have other examples, except the position the women, where you can see that these ethics are changing?

Maike Voorhoeve: Yes. Yes. In so many things.

Rogier van Voorden: Actually, you could state that the entire Tunisian ethic has changed in general?

Maike Voorhoeve: Yes and the government are participating also. I will give you an example. I do not know if you heard the stories about blasphemy?

Rogier van Voorden: No, sorry?

Maike Voorhoeve: Oh, oh. That was very disturbing. There were two boys, around 25 years old, who made some cartoons about the prophet Mohammed and putted them on Facebook. Several people have accused them. One of them fled to a foreign country, but the other one was arrested. He was sentenced to prison for 7.5 years. The public prosecutor did not accept this and went in appeal. The public prosecutor demanded for 14 years of imprisonment. This appeal is now being treated by the Court, but since there are no independent judges, the change that he will receive 14 years of imprisonment is rather big. And people are very frustrated about this. If you ask people about these situations, they will often lie against you, because they are ashamed of their country.

Rogier van Voorden: Ok. It is hard to understand that these things are happening for me. I am trying to follow what is happening in Tunisia back in the Netherlands, but I cannot find anything.

Rogier van Voorden: I have come a bit to the end of this interview. What do you think; I do not know if you would be able to answer this question. Except that the government and the police force should regain power, what other things should happen to change the situation for the Tunisian population in a positive way?

Maike Voorhoeve: I think it is easy said, but according to me, the government should retake all power and should govern Tunisia. They will have to show thoroughness. The reason why they are not responding has also something to do with their inexperience. Maybe the Netherlands could support the Tunisian government with this problem. They are probably already supporting them I think. But you know more about this I think.

Rogier van Voorden: Yes I do. They are definitely trying to support the government, but it is difficult to discuss these things with the government because they are very busy with rewriting the new constitution. When I talked with the Royal Dutch Embassy in Tunisia, they told me that especially article one of the constitutions, which states that the Islam is the religion of the state, takes a lot of time to rewrite.

Maike Voorhoeve: I think that they did take a decision about these two weeks ago. I thought that they decided that they would not change this article. There are only some problems with the question, whether Tunisia should get a presidential or parliamentary system.

Rogier van Voorden: Oh. I did not know that this decision was already been taken. I will try to contact the Royal Dutch Embassy in Tunisia again and ask if they could tell me something more about this.

Maike Voorhoeve: Besides the fact that the government is inexperienced. I also think that within the government there is a power struggle between different forces. Within Ennahda for example. Ennahda both has a conservative and progressive fraction. This creates a lot of tensions. I personally think that Ennahda is not very progressive.

Maike Voorhoeve: And a third reason which characterized the government is that every day there are scandals in the newspapers about the government. A large part of the Tunisian population is getting more and more upset because the government is negative in the news all the time. People are demonstrating and striking all the time because they want a change.

Maike Voorhoeve: And the government feels attacked by all these demonstrations and strikes. People who support the current government mention that these strikes are the work of extreme left parties. These demonstrations and strikes will make sure that the government cannot do anything. I would say that the government should act and should show everyone that they are working on a plan against the bad economic situation. Than the demonstrations and strikes will automatically stop.

Rogier van Voorden: You could say that Tunisia is in a virtuous circle. The government is blaming extreme left parties. And extreme left is blaming the government. Furthermore, there are protests and strikes about the fact that there is no change, but since the police force has no power, they cannot intervene. Within the government there is an internal struggle for power, also within Ennahda. And because of this internal struggle for power, more and more time is needed to act as one government. Because there is no clear governmental strategy, demonstrations and protests are organised by extreme left parties.

Maike Voorhoeve: Yes. It keeps going on and on. Something else what is also problematic, is the fact that the mandate of this government is too limited. Their current mandate, in my opinion, is limited in a way that they can only write a new constitution. When you only have to write a new constitution, you do not have the political power to govern the country. There are far more important things which need the government's attention. Maybe it is a bad decision that the new government only had to write a constitution.

Rogier van Voorden: Good afternoon, Welcome to the interview between Mrs. Voorhoeve and Rogier van Voorden about the Arab Spring in Tunisia. Mrs. Voorhoeve, my first question will be about the reason of your current visit in Tunisia. Why you are there at the moment

Maike Voorhoeve: Let me think, from September first I am connected to the Harvard University in Boston. They are organizing several discussions about Tunisia. Furthermore, I am busy writing an article about the transitional justice in Tunisia. Moreover, I am collecting data for this article in Tunisia.

Rogier van Voorden: Transitional Justice in Tunisia, can u tell me something more about this specific topic?

Maike Voorhoeve: Yes of course, I do not know what you know about transitional justice in general. There are several studies about transitional justice, but none of these studies are being held in the Muslim World. Only in Iraq and Afghanistan. And in Tunisia the debates, you have to think by yourself, the last regime was not only characterized by large violations of human rights, but also a

large degree of corruption. And right at this time, they focus about the corruption during the old regime and also about the month when the revolution began namely, December 2010 / January 2011 in Tunisia. During these demonstrations 130 people were killed. These discussions are currently focused on these murders, instead of, what is surprising my by the way, the tortures and that kind of things which happened during the 23 year old regime.

Rogier van Voorden: Right right. That is surprising me. Is the current situation safe in Tunisia? There are no demonstrations, and is it quiet on the streets?

Maike Voorhoeve: No no, it is very unsafe at this moment. It is much more unsafe than before the revolution.

Maike Voorhoeve: I have lived in Tunisia between 2009 and 2011, 1.5 years. In September 2011 I left Tunisia. During that time, in September the situation was already very unsafe. The situation in Tunisia is worsened by the day. This due to the absence of the police force.

Rogier van Voorden: Hmmm

Maike Voorhoeve: Also the absence of the government, the government does not seem it has strength anymore. And now I am talking about the unsafe situation for the Tunisian population.

Rogier van Voorden: Yes yes yes, I understand that.

Maike Voorhoeve: And the situation is much more unsafe, due to the development of radicalization of the population. People are very upset on the Western countries and also about Israel. And you can see this in the reactions towards the Western people. That is for me personally very disturbing to notice. Furthermore, there is an unsafe situation in general due to the absence of the police force and for people who are in one way or the other, show that they are not following this development of radicalization and for example people who drink alcohol or people who are going to theatres. Those kinds of things.

Rogier van Voorden: Yes.

Maike Voorhoeve: Those people are feeling very unsafe and are outlawed by the other people.

Rogier van Voorden: Right. And what is the reason why the police force and the government are absent? I can understand that there are some difficulties. At this moment, there is a transition government, but the transition government; the coalition government does not have enough political power? Or, do they need more power? Or does the government nothing about the unsafe situation for the Tunisian population?

Maike Voorhoeve: I think that there are several reasons why the government lacks the power. First, Tunisia was a police state before. The revolution has changed the role of the police force completely. Due to the revolution, the police force was threatened for a long time. Because the revolution was initiated against the police state and against the police.

Rogier van Voorden: Right.

Maike Voorhoeve: There was, for a long time, no police force on the streets because police men were too much afraid. Also, it is difficult to understand for police men what kind of role they play nowadays. Because there are no big transformations within the Ministry of Interiors, which governs the police force.

Rogier van Voorden: Hmm.

Maike Voorhoeve: And so, it seems that the police force no longer has a mandate. Because before the revolution the function of the police force was to protect the government. Not the protection of civilians. But now it is requested that the police force should protect the population. But since they do not know how, the police force does not know what to do anymore. There is no police on the streets at all. That is one thing.

Rogier van Voorden: Yes.

Maike Voorhoeve: Another reason is that the current government is not functioning properly, but no-one knows why it is not working. For many people it is difficult to determine which parts of the government is working and what parts do not. Or that the old government before the revolution still has all the power. There is a power struggle, which says that no-one has political power at this moment.

Maike Voorhoeve: And the third reason of the violence is the radicalization of the Tunisian people. This radicalization is being blow up by the fact that there are some many things not sure to deal with people who are radicalized. But on the other way, according to some people, the government is deliberately instigating people against each other. And this has to do with the composition of the government, which is dominated by the Islamite party.

Maike Voorhoeve: The radicalized people voted on the Islamite party during the elections. However, these people are far more radicalized than the political party. The Islamite party has always been relatively quiet. But because the Islamite party and the current government, does not convict the crimes of the radicalized people, or put them in jail. By doing this, it seems that they are supporting these radicalized people.

In one way, the Islamite party state: we are not radical. But on the other way, because they do not convict the radicalized people, a large part of the Tunisian population is radicalizing.

Rogier van Voorden: And why is the radicalization pointed against the Western countries and also Israel? Because first the revolution began because people started demonstrating against the police state, the corruption and the dictatorial regime. The Tunisian population wanted more freedom, more democracy. It does seem that you are saying that, the radicalization is opposing the Western way of living. Is this the work of Ennahda, the Islamite political party, who is currently in the government?

Maike Voorhoeve: No. Because there are also many anti-Western opinions about Ennahda. Many radicalized people claim that Ennahda is too much in favour of the Western countries. Also Ennahda is pro Israel, but since Israel is one of the countries who are supporting Tunisia the most with the economic development, Ennahda will never boycott Israel.

Maike Voorhoeve: I think that the anti-Western feelings... In one way, you will have to deal with anti-Western feelings among the whole Arab world. Also among Muslims who live in Western countries. In the recent years, this development has increased among all Muslims. There are several causes for this, one of them, 11 September 2001. And the idea that all Muslims are...

Rogier van Voorden: Treated the same way?

Maike Voorhoeve: Yes, indeed. All the Muslims think that they are the victims and it is unreasonable that every Muslim is treated the same way. Radicalized Muslims in Tunisia are talking

about this all the time. And furthermore, the current situation between the Palestine's and Israel is also unacceptable according to them.

Maaïke Voorhoeve: After the revolution, the accent about the situation in Israel and the relationship with Western countries has to do with Ben Ali, and its good relation with the Western countries. He had close ties with France, Italy and of course Israel. During the Ben Ali regime you could not mention anything bad about the Western countries or Israel, because then you were put in jail.

Maaïke Voorhoeve: People can finally state whatever they want. And the third point has also something to do with the fear for colonization. Not in a fear that Tunisia would be colonised, but because Ben Ali left, the last piece of the colonization disappeared in Tunisia. As if Ben Ali, in some sort of way, was seen as a colonizer. The whole idea of anti-colonization, anti-France and anti-United States of America and anti-Israel perfectly fits in the ideology of Islamists. You cannot talk normally with anyone here about Israel. People are getting upset, also intellectuals. However, with the majority of the people, they do not sympathize with the Palestine's, but it is more a feeling of us against the others. This feeling is fierce and violent.

Rogier van Voorden: These feelings of violence are also used against Western tourists or against you in particular?

Maaïke Voorhoeve: Against me, absolutely. I am not sure if these feelings are expressed against Western tourists. I think so. If you ask me, we can expect something nasty before the end of the year. People will plan a terrorist attack against Western tourists.

Rogier van Voorden: This frightens me a bit. In the Netherlands, you do not have any information about Tunisia on the news. Also not in other parts of Western Europe. What I am wondering, is the revolution completely done, or does it need one more extra boost? How do you see this?

Maaïke Voorhoeve: That depends on which side you support. In Islamists perspective, the revolution is still going on. The revolution is only completed, when all Western people leave Tunisia and Tunisia becomes an Islamic state with the sharia as its law. For people who are opposing the radicalized people, they state: we need a second revolution.

Rogier van Voorden: To what extent former supporters of the Ben Ali regime are still in power? Are they present inside the government, or inside other important Tunisian institutions? According to you, or you cannot mention anything about this?

Maaïke Voorhoeve: I think, more and more former people are retaking power in Tunisia. It is also more accepted amongst the Tunisian population, in a way against the radicalization. People, who would like to advance in their professional career, are being surpassed by supporters of Ben Ali.

Rogier van Voorden: Yes. Yes. Yes.

Rogier van Voorden: But, right at this moment, the social commotion due to the radicalization of the population and the current political situation is worsening the situation?

Maaïke Voorhoeve: Yes and there is a politic game going on. In the government, also in Ennahda, demonstrations are being ended with violence and people who support extreme left political parties are put to prison. Especially people who support extreme left political parties. Those people who openly criticize the government and Ennahda are being convicted, just like in the days of the old regime. People are afraid to openly mention which political party they support.

Rogier van Voorden: What about the convictions during this government? What can you tell about the judicial system? Is the judicial system still based on the constitution from 1957?

Maaïke Voorhoeve: 1959?

Rogier van Voorden: Eh yeah, 1959 I am sorry.

Maaïke Voorhoeve: The constitution did not mention that much about the judicial system. The law in 1967 does. This law has to be rewritten. This law, in collaboration with the reforms in 2005, is stating that judges are not independent. That is one thing. That can be seen as a fact. Judges will do everything what the government want. And even if they were independent from the government, then judges will choose the side which pays the most. Corruption can be found everywhere here. There are no independent judges.

Rogier van Voorden: In the beginning of the interview, you mentioned that you were busy with the transitional justice. How can you make sure that the judicial system will be honest and independent?

Maaïke Voorhoeve: I am not doing anything at all. I am just a researcher. My research is focused on describing the situation that is all. In the transitional justice field, many people are activist and researcher at the same time. However, I am not an activist.

Rogier van Voorden: Oh ok. So, the problem, the corruption, is anchored deeply in the Tunisian society. You cannot simply resolve this problem quickly.

Maaïke Voorhoeve: Yes. The corruption is everywhere. Just everywhere.

Rogier van Voorden: Ok. Thank you. I do not know if you know anything about the civil society. They were responsible, in my view, for the start of the Tunisian revolution. They began protesting against the social and economic problems. Does the civil society still play that same role nowadays? Or are they completely gone?

Maaïke Voorhoeve: It is difficult to answer this question. The situation is very complicated. In the beginning the revolution was mainly supported by unemployed people and people who demonstrated against the old corrupt regime.

Rogier van Voorden: Yes.

Maaïke Voorhoeve: Although there revolution is being “kidnapped” by human rights activists who live in the rich suburban neighbourhoods of Tunis. And those people changed the whole revolution into a revolution against human rights and democracy. Many Tunisian people think that is unfair. People are getting more and more upset about the causes of this whole situation, namely, a government who is now in power who does not have any power and cannot do anything. A government who cannot respond to the bad economic situation and the large corruption inside the country.

Maaïke Voorhoeve: However, these reasons, the poor economic situation for the Tunisian population and the enormous corruption in Tunisia are the main reasons for the revolution.

Rogier van Voorden: Yes, that is completely true.

Rogier van Voorden: And what can you tell me about the difference between North and South Tunisia. In the North, along the coast, there are major cities, like Tunis. Is there a difference between

those regions? I am referring to the program made by Paul Rosenmoller about the Arab Spring, I do not know if you have seen the specific episode when he visited the cities in the Southern part of Tunisia?

Maike Voorhoeve: Yes, I know this episode, and it is absolutely true what you are saying. The revolution started in the South of Tunisia, not in the North. The revolution did not begin in 2010, the revolution started much earlier. People who are living in the Southern part of Tunisia are resisting **Maike Voorhoeve:** against the Northern part / cities. The people who are living in the South are supporting for a large part the Tunisian population. However, they do not receive any support from the North. There is a lot of profitable soil in South Tunisia, but there is no-one who is investing in this for example. People were getting more and more frustrated and the difference with the situation before the revolution is, that the Tunisian people who live in the North know that the Tunisian people who live in the South are protesting a struggling to survive.

Rogier van Voorden: That is very strange, if you think about it.

Maike Voorhoeve: I do not know. There is no money, and you hear that there is a lot of violence nowadays. From the North Western part in Tunisia till the South, violence is very common. Before the revolution people were also fighting and committed crimes, but nowadays everyone in Tunisia knows that in the Southern part of the country, people are fighting. In the South, you still have that tribal society. Tribes will fight against each other for power.

Maike Voorhoeve: Yes. And in the Northern part of Tunisia the situation is different. In the Northern part is much more prosperity.

Maike Voorhoeve: Yes and this difference are frustrating the Tunisian society.

Rogier van Voorden: I can understand that Tunisians are struggling at this moment. Also because the government is like toothless tiger, it does not intervene and support the population in the North, but especially in the South.

Maike Voorhoeve: I do not know if the government cannot really do anything. Or that the government is not capable of supporting the population. This government... Ennahda did not have an economic program when the elections started. And today, they still do not have an actual economic program. You can understand that very little is happening then.

Rogier van Voorden: In a conversation which I had with the Royal Dutch Embassy in Tunisia earlier this month, the Embassy is referring towards the political games that are currently played by Ennahda. Because the new mini-constitution, who should have been written by the government, is taking too much time. Ennahda is only trying to draw time to stay in power as long as possible. Do you notice this same problem?

Maike Voorhoeve: In my opinion, I think that we cannot know if Ennahda is deliberately drawing time. Furthermore, it is not only Ennahda who are playing this political game. Marzouki can also be one of the actors in this political game. He would like to be president as long as possible.

Maike Voorhoeve: If we take a look at Ennahda specifically. I can imagine that Ennahda is drawing time. It is a good strategy. If there would be elections today, Ennahda would lose a lot of seats in the constituent assembly. People who voted on Ennahda have serious regrets about this. And the new extremists do not vote on Ennahda either, because they are much too liberal. Ennahda can benefit if the elections are postponed.

Rogier van Voorden: Are there new movements or parties, political parties, in Tunisia who are more extreme like some extremists prefer?

Maike Voorhoeve: There are of course, Islamists movements, but they do not want to form a political party. They just want an Islamic state, and elections cannot help to achieve this goal. But since a month, an Islamist party is legalized by the government. This was the first sign that extremists parties were allowed to participate in the next general elections.

Rogier van Voorden: And what is the name of this political party?

Maike Voorhoeve: I do not know exactly, but I can e-mail you the name if you want.

Rogier van Voorden: That would be great, thank you.

Rogier van Voorden: This party would take the votes from the Islamists, which voted first on Ennahda?

Maike Voorhoeve: No, no, no. Absolutely not. People, who voted on Ennahda, did not want that Tunisia would turn into an Islamic state. Right in front of the elections, I did do a little research about the elections. I asked roughly 200 people on what party they would vote. Almost everybody told me, that they would vote on Ennahda. I expected more seats in the constituent assembly for Ennahda actually. Finally only 1 out of 5 people did vote on Ennahda, whereas 50% of Tunisian people did not vote at all. The reason why people voted on Ennahda was because this political party was the only party they trusted.

Maike Voorhoeve: Because Ennahda was the only political party which was forbidden during the Ben Ali regime. Ennahda always fought against Ben Ali that is one reason. People were convinced that if Ennahda would be in power, the revolution would be useful. Another reason why people voted on Ennahda is that Ennahda would not prohibit alcohol, or sexuality outside the marriage. So, Ennahda would not be corrupt like all the other parties. Everything has to do with the political power and the dangers of the political power. Not so much with the Islam.

Maike Voorhoeve: The people who voted on Ennahda are very disappointed, they would definitely not vote on Ennahda the next time there are elections. People will choose a more secular political party instead. A political party who is promising, in a reasonable way, that economy has to be improved.

Rogier van Voorden: According to you, which political party can help Tunisia with these economic problems?

Maike Voorhoeve: A party who would make a good chance is... There are some new parties; I am not sure about them. The party of Moncef Marzouki definitely not. The Ettakatol political party would also lose a lot of votes I think. Maybe the PDP.

Rogier van Voorden: This party did not win a lot of seats in the constituent assembly during the last elections, if I am not mistaken?

Maike Voorhoeve: Yes that is correct. Very strange. Because this party has been much in the news, people do know the PDP and their party's general, Maya Jribi. However, Maya Jribi joined another movement lately which can also receive a lot of votes. In my opinion, especially political parties who are not extreme left or too secular will attract more voters.

Maike Voorhoeve: I do hear a lot of people nowadays who hope that Maya Jribi will be the next president. That would be something special.

Maike Voorhoeve: If I understand everything correctly, the new elections are not the most important thing which has to be arranged in Tunisia. First of all, the situation in Tunisia has to be peaceful again. That the government and the police force are taking back their power.

Rogier van Voorden: Also the position of women during the Ben Ali regime was quite special in the Arab world. Do you see more and more women who are wearing headscarves again?

Maike Voorhoeve: Yes, absolutely. The radicalization is returning in Tunisia.

Maike Voorhoeve: Yes, but the women do not wear headscarves because of their ideology, it is also forbidden to wear nothing. Furthermore, the headscarf is also a fashion item, but also the life on the streets is getting harder and harder for a woman. You have multiple reasons why you should wear a headscarf and this goes beyond the ideological belief.

Maike Voorhoeve: This also affects me personally. I will not go outside unless I have to. You notice that the situation on the streets is getting more and more unsafe by the day. And this is not only because of the radicalized people; also the entire society is getting more and more radicalized.

Maike Voorhoeve: In addition, I do think that people are strengthened in a way, because the party on which they voted, Ennahda, has won the elections. Both men and women voted on Ennahda.

Maike Voorhoeve: But nowadays, Tunisians are whistling towards women, they will tell you that you need to wear a headscarf. You are not treated like any other normal person on the streets. And among these people, there are also adolescents who drink alcohol and will not go to the Mosque. It is getting more and more normal to discriminate women in one way or another.

Maike Voorhoeve: If I am going to a restaurant where people drink alcohol... First of all, there are only men who are allowed there. That is not new. Before the revolution women could not drink alcohol also. When I was ordering a beer, and afterwards another. The waiter is telling me in a gentle way that I have had enough alcohol. Women should not drink so much alcohol. And of course this is a joke, and the waiter is not serious. Back in the old days, he would not say this at all. The ethics in the Tunisian society are changing.

Rogier van Voorden: Do you have other examples, except the position of the women, where you can see that these ethics are changing?

Maike Voorhoeve: Yes. Yes. In so many things.

Rogier van Voorden: Actually, you could state that the entire Tunisian ethic has changed in general?

Maike Voorhoeve: Yes and the government are participating also. I will give you an example. I do not know if you heard the stories about blasphemy?

Rogier van Voorden: No, sorry?

Maike Voorhoeve: Oh, oh. That was very disturbing. There were two boys, around 25 years old, who made some cartoons about the prophet Mohammed and putted them on Facebook. Several people have accused them. One of them fled to a foreign country, but the other one was arrested. He was sentenced to prison for 7.5 years. The public prosecutor did not accept this and went in appeal. The

public prosecutor demanded for 14 years of imprisonment. This appeal is now being treated by the Court, but since there are no independent judges, the change that he will receive 14 years of imprisonment is rather big. And people are very frustrated about this. If you ask people about these situations, they will often lie against you, because they are ashamed of their country.

Rogier van Voorden: Ok. It is hard to understand that these things are happening for me. I am trying to follow what is happening in Tunisia back in the Netherlands, but I cannot find anything.

Rogier van Voorden: I have come a bit to the end of this interview. What do you think; I do not know if you would be able to answer this question. Except that the government and the police force should regain power, what other things should happen to change the situation for the Tunisian population in a positive way?

Maike Voorhoeve: I think it is easy said, but according to me, the government should retake all power and should govern Tunisia. They will have to show thoroughness. The reason why they are not responding has also something to do with their inexperience. Maybe the Netherlands could support the Tunisian government with this problem. They are probably already supporting them I think. But you know more about this I think.

Rogier van Voorden: Yes I do. They are definitely trying to support the government, but it is difficult to discuss these things with the government because they are very busy with rewriting the new constitution. When I talked with the Royal Dutch Embassy in Tunisia, they told me that especially article one of the constitutions, which states that the Islam is the religion of the state, takes a lot of time to rewrite.

Maike Voorhoeve: I think that they did take a decision about these two weeks ago. I thought that they decided that they would not change this article. There are only some problems with the question, whether Tunisia should get a presidential or parliamentary system.

Rogier van Voorden: Oh. I did not know that this decision was already been taken. I will try to contact the Royal Dutch Embassy in Tunisia again and ask if they could tell me something more about this.

Maike Voorhoeve: Besides the fact that the government is inexperienced. I also think that within the government there is a power struggle between different forces. Within Ennahda for example. Ennahda both has a conservative and progressive fraction. This creates a lot of tensions. I personally think that Ennahda is not very progressive.

Maike Voorhoeve: And a third reason which characterized the government is that every day there are scandals in the newspapers about the government. A large part of the Tunisian population is getting more and more upset because the government is negative in the news all the time. People are demonstrating and striking all the time because they want a change.

Maike Voorhoeve: And the government feels attacked by all these demonstrations and strikes. People who support the current government mention that these strikes are the work of extreme left parties. These demonstrations and strikes will make sure that the government cannot do anything. I would say that the government should act and should show everyone that they are working on a plan against the bad economic situation. Than the demonstrations and strikes will automatically stop.

Rogier van Voorden: You could say that Tunisia is in a virtuous circle. The government is blaming extreme left parties. And extreme left is blaming the government. Furthermore, there are protests and

strikes about the fact that there is no change, but since the police force has no power, they cannot intervene. Within the government there is an internal struggle for power, also within Ennahda. And because of this internal struggle for power, more and more time is needed to act as one government. Because there is no clear governmental strategy, demonstrations and protests are organised by extreme left parties.

Maike Voorhoeve: Yes. It keeps going on and on. Something else what is also problematic, is the fact that the mandate of this government is too limited. Their current mandate, in my opinion, is limited in a way that they can only write a new constitution. When you only have to write a new constitution, you do not have the political power to govern the country. There are far more important things which need the government's attention. Maybe it is a bad decision that the new government only had to write a constitution.

Rogier van Voorden: Yes, but writing this new constitution was the most important thing what had to be done.

Maike Voorhoeve: I am not sure about that. Because with the constitution of 1959 is nothing wrong. The part which was added in 1989 is causing for problems now. If they would have removed that part from the constitution everything would be fine.

Rogier van Voorden: That is very easy to say it like that, I think.

Maike Voorhoeve: I am not sure about that. The higher commission for political reforms, lead by Yadh Ben Achour, said in the first time that they would rewrite the constitution. The government should take care of economic and social improvements.

Maike Voorhoeve: However, this decision made by the commission was not legitimate according to many people in Tunisia. Because there was no majority for their plan, they gave their task to the government. Because they did this, you can see that the reforms in Tunisia stagnate in every area. In my opinion, the commission should have taken a whole different decision. They should have acted way sooner and quicker.

Rogier van Voorden: Nowadays, you are waiting for this constitution.

Maike Voorhoeve: Yes, in the first week after the revolution it would have been possible to make some drastic changes in Tunisian politics.

Rogier van Voorden: Ok. I think everything is clear for me. It is clear for me in what phase Tunisia is in now. Thank you very much for your time.

Maike Voorhoeve: No problem. I hope you will use this information in your dissertation.

Appendix 3.2 Interview with the project manager from the Alfred Mozer Foundation (AMS)

Rogier van Voorden: Good morning.

Marianna Tsirelson: Good morning.

Rogier van Voorden: Today I am interviewing Marianna Tsirelson from the Alfred Mozer Foundation (AMS). This Foundation has visited Tunisia from 29 till 31 March 2012. I would like to know why you have chosen to visit Tunisia.

Marianna Tsirelson: There are two reasons why we have chosen to visit Tunisia. First, we have already been in Tunisia last year. The AMS has organised a fact finding mission in Tunisia. As I told you before, the AMS is not actively working in Tunisia for a long time. We do work in countries such as Morocco and Jordan. We have different projects in both countries for over five years now. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who is supporting us financially, is focusing more and more on the Arab region. Especially the countries where there have been democratic transitions.

Marianna Tsirelson: Last year, we went to Tunisia for the first time. We have organised the fact finding mission. The AMS have organised different visits with members of the parliament, NGOs and academics. We are talking about the political situation in Tunisia with them. Last year was a first mission which was connected with a conference about the Arab Spring, which was organised by the PES (the Party of European Socialists). The PES is the socialist political party in the European Parliament. The AMS has participated in this conference.

Marianna Tsirelson: Also, we are working with the PES when we are organizing conferences and fact finding missions. Due to the revolution in Tunisia, the AMS investigated whether it was possible to find suitable partners in Tunisia. That is the main reason why the AMS is organizing these fact finding missions. The AMS is looking for left progressive political parties. The AMS is connected with the PvdA in the Netherlands. Therefore, we are looking for partnerships in the left progressive corner.

Marianna Tsirelson: This year, a follow-up of the conference of last year was organised by the PES, in which the AMS participated again. Besides this conference, the AMS, due to the few connections we have in this region, has established a network of young local reporters in this region. We have brought local reporters from Morocco, Jordan, Tunisia, Egypt, Lebanon and Palestine together for a training seminar in Tunis. These reporters will update us regularly with political news about their countries.

Besides the AMS, we are also the European Forum for Democracy and Solidarity, I do not know if you have read about this forum on the website? We organised the training seminar for local reporters in cooperation with the European Forum.

Rogier van Voorden: No.

Marianna Tsirelson: That is a European platform for cooperation between European social democratic political parties and foundations, which do the same work as the AMS.

Rogier van Voorden: That is quite a story at the start. What I would like to mention first is that the reason why you have chosen for Tunisia is that the AMS would like to find partners in the Arab region. Did you find any suitable partners in Tunisia? Can you tell me something more about this network of young reporters in the Arab region?

Marianna Tsirelson: The training session with these young reporters was a big success. The European Forum and its partners are dedicated to support the transformation and democratisation processes in transition countries. This is impossible to do without knowing the political situation. Therefore, the European Forum tries to analyse, learn and inform its partners about certain countries, thereby improving knowledge and extending contacts. For this reason, the European Forum in cooperation with the AMS saw the need to set up a network of local reporters from the MENA region, which will provide us with the latest news and political developments from their country.

The aim of the seminar was to inform the local reporters about the work they will be doing for the European Forum and the AMS. Besides this, we have spoken with them about the specific political situation in their countries, the role of the media and the current position of women and young people in the Arab region. It was very interesting to notice that on one hand, that there are many similarities between the Arab countries. On the other hand, there are many regional differences.

Rogier van Voorden: Can you mention some of these regional differences?

Marianna Tsirelson: For instance, the role of the media is different in each country. We all know that in Egypt and Tunisia, the social media have played an important role during the revolutions in both countries. However, when you speak with people, and especially adolescents who are very active on social media, the influence of social media on the revolution is limited. It all began online by mobilizing people, but it has played a minor role in the whole revolution.

Also, there is a difference in the use of various social media platforms being used in the countries. In Egypt and Tunisia, Facebook is often used. In Palestine, Twitter is quite popular.

Rogier van Voorden: Do the AMS have appointed one reporter in Tunisia?

Marianna Tsirelson: At this moment, we have three young reporters in Tunisia. Since we did not have any contacts in those countries, we had to find reporters by ourselves, and by contacting foundations active on the ground. This way eventually we have found 3 local reporters in Tunisia. In Algeria for instance, the role of the media is very limited and reserved. Therefore, here we did not manage to establish contacts with a local reporter. Due to this limited role of the media, a large revolution did not occur in Algeria. We have found someone who could be our reporter in Libya. However, he could not attend the seminar we had organised.

Marianna Tsirelson: Ummm, what was your question about?

Rogier van Voorden: How many reporters did you have in Tunisia? You told me that the AMS have three reporters in Tunisia. Are those three reporters living in the same area?

Marianna Tsirelson: They all live in Tunis. One feminine reporter is a true journalist and is working for a newspaper, Tunisia Live. I do not know if you know this newspaper? It is a young and independent online newspaper. The other two reporters are two left progressive men. Both are members of the FDTL party, which is the biggest left-wing political party in Tunisia.

Rogier van Voorden: If I am not mistaken, you have spoken with the FDTL? Can you tell me something more about this political party? What is their opinion about the revolution? What would they like to happen in the near future? Are they positive about the future of Tunisia?

Marianna Tsirelson: As you have probably read yourself, there are complications for Tunisia. However, the situation before the revolution was far worse than the situation is now. During the Ben

Ali regime, no free elections were possible. He always won the elections with a large portion of the votes. A lot of political parties were forbidden during the Ben Ali regime. Furthermore, the whole political side of the Muslim Brotherhood, where Ennahda was founded from, was banned from each election.

Marianna Tsirelson: The unemployment was getting higher and higher, especially amongst adolescents. There is a large part of the Tunisian population who are young and unemployed. Due to these reasons, people were getting more and more frustrated. After the revolution, Ben Ali was gone and the Tunisian population felt liberated. Of course, they are satisfied that Ben Ali is gone. When I spoke with people during our trip, they told me that there are multiple points which dissatisfy people.

Marianna Tsirelson: For instance, in the group with whom we spoke were a lot of women. These women were not happy with the current position of women in the Tunisian society. Before the revolution, Tunisia was the most progressive country of the Arab region towards women, also if you compare Tunisia with Morocco. Morocco is more conservative than Tunisia. Besides the position of women, the availability of alcohol in Tunisia is another reason which can be seen as progressive. All these minor things are contributing to the progressive attitude Tunisia has.

Marianna Tsirelson: What we have heard during conversations with the Tunisian population, that those minor things are not so common anymore. It does say that people are getting more and more religious-minded again. Moreover, a large part of Tunisian adolescents is still unemployed.

Marianna Tsirelson: When you take a look at the position of women in the Tunisian society, you see that there have been some changes. Women would like to take part in rewriting the constitution. Furthermore, there are discussions about the rights of women; those rights should be added in this new constitution. But women are worried about the implementation of the new constitution when it is finished.

Rogier van Voorden: Are women positive about the new constitution? Do women think that the constitution will be done on time?

Marianna Tsirelson: The goal of the Tunisian government is to finish the new constitution before the 23 of October. By finishing the constitution in October, new elections can be held in March 2013. Whether these elections will be presidential or presidential and parliamentary elections, the government does not yet know. They do not know which form of government will be chosen. However, last week it became clear a small first version of the new constitution was presented. If I understood this preamble correctly, the different rights of women and minorities will be protected. In this draft version of the new constitution, a mix of liberal and conservative aspects can be found.

Marianna Tsirelson: If you look for instance at Egypt, and you compare Egypt with Tunisia, you would think that the Tunisian government could finish the constitution in time. Tunisia is a smaller country than Egypt. The constituent assembly was formed rather quickly. I honestly think that it should be done in time.

Rogier van Voorden: You are quite positive about the trip the AMS made to Tunisia in general?

Marianna Tsirelson: Hmm, no. I am very positive.

Rogier van Voorden: Also with the current revolution and the steps Tunisia is taking in the process of democratic transition since the end of 2010? You do see a lot of progress of course. But what I hear and read about Tunisia, is that the population is getting more and more nervous. The Tunisian

population is radicalized in a vast paste. Furthermore, the position of women and the abuse of alcohol are getting out of control. This frightens me of course. Do you think the media is also affected in this?

Marianna Tsirelson: No, no. I think that in Tunisia the press and the role of the media is quite free. Our reporters in Tunisia are positive about the press freedom. Especially the women who is working for the online newspaper. This newspaper can publish whatever they want. Personally, I am following this newspaper and they are writing about every topic. You should visit their website and check out about what they are writing about.

Rogier van Voorden: Maybe you can tell something more about the role of the AMS in Tunisia, and especially the establishment of this network and the relationship with the Foundations inside Tunisia? What are your plans for the future?

Marianna Tsirelson: This year, we would like to organize a pilot training first. For the present, we have participated in different conferences about the Arab Spring. During this pilot training, the AMS will focus on collaboration with the FDTL. The big left-wing political party, who is also seated in the troika, the coalition government. Personally, I am very busy with that project. We have spoken with the FDTL-Ettakatol party several times. I hope we can organize a training before the end of this year. During this training, basic strategies and skills will be thought. Also, we are discussing the role of the media with them.

Rogier van Voorden: In a way that you are giving them some political advice? How you should react towards certain things?

Marianna Tsirelson: Yes, but we are giving just a basic training. They will develop some skills, but we are not giving them any political advice. We are no advisors, just trainers. During this training, people have to learn and develop their skills. Usually the training exists of a half hour of theory, followed by a hour in which the skills can be put in practice.

Rogier van Voorden: Ok, so you will let them take their own decisions?

Marianna Tsirelson: Yes, of course.

Rogier van Voorden: And you are organizing these training sessions only for politicians?

Marianna Tsirelson: Yes. We only give political training sessions to political parties. What can happen is that the AMS is working together with NGOs. These NGOs also have political interests; we do not cooperate with NGOs who fight for the environment for instance. Especially political NGOs who have the interest in turning into a political party. For instance, in Jordan we are working with 2 left oriented political NGOs, due to the fact that the political party system is not well developed and there are no serious left oriented political parties.

Rogier van Voorden: You hope that in the future, this will spread amongst other countries in the Arab region? Maybe even establishing a whole political network inside the Middle East?

Marianna Tsirelson: The goal of the AMS is to find a suitable partner in Tunisia. We do have suitable partners in Morocco and Jordan. After the pilot training we will decide if we continue with each other. Based on the pilot training and on we will organize several events each year with them.

Rogier van Voorden: Besides the FDTL, are you considering to collaborate with other political parties or NGOs in Tunisia?

Marianna Tsirelson: Personally, I have spoken with the Ettajdid party. A small left-wing political party. The Ettajdid merged with two other parties into a bigger social democratic party. However, I do think that the FDTL Ettakatol party will be a more suitable partner for us. Also, I think that there are lots of possibilities with the FDTL. Although the party is quite old and big, there are still many points which could be improved

Rogier van Voorden: Can you mention any concrete examples which could be improved according to you?

Marianna Tsirelson: I do think that every political party in Tunisia do need some improvements. The reason why Ennahda has won so many votes during the last elections had to do with the fact that Ennahda went to every region in Tunisia in order to get votes. The other parties stayed in the Northern part of the country, especially in Tunis. They did not focus on other regions in Tunisia. However, if you want to become a big political party, and get the support from everyone, including women and adolescents, you should campaign in the whole country. You will remain an elite party if you stay only in the capital. A political party can learn from this and about their role in other regions of the country.

Rogier van Voorden: I have heard this before, that because Ennahda was rather good organised, they could address people all over Tunisia. Also, because Ennahda was the only party which was strictly forbidden during the Ben Ali regime, people have voted on Ennahda.

Rogier van Voorden: Do you collaborate with other Dutch NGOs who also have an interest in Tunisia?

Marianna Tsirelson: Do you mean that if we collaborate with Dutch parties in Tunisia?

Rogier van Voorden: No, I think that you do not work together with parties directly in Tunisia. What I would like to know is if you work together with Dutch NGOs in a broad perspective? Do you have the idea that the Arab region is getting more interesting for (European) NGOs?

Marianna Tsirelson: Yes, I do think that this is happening. All Dutch political parties have foundations, just like the AMS. Except the PVV, the Party for the Animals and the SP which do not have foundations. These foundations would like to become more active in the Arab region. And I believe that some of these foundations are also would like to be establish relations and partnerships in Tunisia. However, because the AMS did already have contacts and experience in Morocco and Jordan, we could establish this network quite fast. We are also one of the biggest foundations.

Marianna Tsirelson: Besides these foundations, you have the NIMD, the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy. People from all different political parties are represented in this institute. They collaborate with different parties all over the world. Their goal is to establish a dialogue between different actors, including political parties and civil society, in a country. The NIMD is very active in Tunisia. They have established a school of politics in Tunisia. The purpose of this school is to train and educate young politicians who are in the government or parliament.

Rogier van Voorden: You can notice that the Arab region and especially Tunisia is getting more interesting for Dutch parties/NGOs/foundations.

Marianna Tsirelson: Yes, absolutely. Especially when you take a look at the AMS. Our first projects were focused on Eastern Europe. Nowadays, due to the revolutions, where you can see a shift in democratic transitions, we tend to emphasize in this region. Also in Europe, more and more organisations are focusing on the Arab region and the Middle East.

Rogier van Voorden: I do not have any more questions for you. Thank you for your time.

Marianna Tsirelson: You are welcome.