

The domino effect: Tunisia, Egypt – Who is next?

It started in Tunisia when one young unemployed man set himself on fire in a stance against unemployment, price rises and poverty. Sidi Bouzid's death created a revolution in the country that forced regime change. In fact, the sudden flight of President Ben Ali revealed how weak his dictatorship was. Tunisia, known for its tourism, had been slammed by the UN for its state brutality of beatings and sleep deprivation. Interim control has now passed to Rachid Ghannouchi who returned from exile in London. The Tunisian revolution marked the start of a new era in the Arab world.

The idea rapidly spread to Egypt where millions have been protesting against President Hosni Mubarak. So far, he has resisted countless demonstrations that have brought the country to a virtual standstill. Whilst he has promised change, the vast majority of his people want him to go now. The question is who will replace him and when? No one wants his son as a replacement and because of the political repression the opposition is small and splintered. The crowd demonstrations represent the people as a whole rather than one or two political parties. The Islamic Brotherhood, though outlawed, is still an outside threat.

Egypt is vital to the West because of the Suez Canal. The crisis is losing Egypt US\$310m a day. Tourism is collapsing. Mubarak meanwhile is trying to contain the situation. Many of his countrymen want him to go now, not in September when the Presidential elections take place. Mubarak has ruled Egypt with an iron fist for more than 30 years, using the despised secret police force to control and repress its people ruthlessly. Cairo and Alexandria together with many other Egyptian cities have seen violence on the streets but Mubarak has hung on. The army has allowed the people to demonstrate peacefully against the Mubarak regime. They have refused to fire on the protesters. Less of Mubarak's protesters are now on the streets but anything could happen.

The Americans are desperate for the country not to fall into Islamic hands like Iran did. Hilary Clinton has been using coded diplomatic language to calm the situation. She changes her stance daily. Ms Clinton now says the situation in the region is 'simply not sustainable'. Yet the Americans have

Category: North Africa / Arab countries / Regime change

Level: Intermediate / Upper intermediate

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been quietly financing the regime for years! Naturally Israel is very worried. It should be. Without American support it would collapse.

So what other regimes in the Arab world could collapse? The answer is many. Their dictators are hanging on; though they know their time may come sooner rather than later. Libya is ruled by Colonel Gaddafi. He is the Arab world's longest ruling leader. He seized control in 1969, yet because of its vast oil and gas reserves he will probably survive any form of opposition from the Libyan people. There is a strong military dictatorship. Any dissidents are either beaten, tortured or hung! Yet the Americans and the West need the oil so they will support him. Likewise Saudi Arabia is another oil rich Arab state that brutally represses its people. Public executions are common. Once again the Americans and the West need its oil.

Jordan saw its Prime Minister and cabinet sacked by King Abdullah II following large street protests. The country is again propped up by the Americans. Then there's Algeria with its vast oil and gas reserves, vital for the West. It is said that if the grip of the secret police is loosened in Algeria the Islamic fundamentalists will take power. A situation the Americans wouldn't want.

Yemen has seen students and, more recently, 20,000 anti government protestors demonstrating against their leaders. This is the poorest and least developed Arab country. State brutality on its people is rife. Yemen houses many extremists, and is a training ground for Osama Bin Laden's Al Qaeda. President Ali Abdullah Saleh has announced he will not seek re-election in 2013. Syria though, has through President Bashar Assad managed to steer itself towards some reform. Former President Bush did once describe it as one of 'the Axis of Evil'. Palestine, thanks to Israel, is a messed up country. Gaza is now ruled by Hamas, the extremist Islamist group. Iran has its own regime; its secret police took terrible revenge on its people when they tried to revolt. Morocco however, is the one country in the region that does have some form of democracy.

In all these Arab countries many people are poor. There is corruption, inflation and a lack of jobs. In many of these states there is repression and control of the people who now desire political reform. Will the domino effect of change now follow? Will the American influence in the region fade? It's doubtful. The American desire for oil allows them to quietly support these regimes. When will China step in?

EXERCISES

1. **The Egyptian crisis:** Briefly, what three things do you know about the Egyptian crisis? Go round the room swapping details.

2. **Geography: North Africa, Middle East:** Draw a map on the board to show North Africa and the Middle East. Label the main Arab countries where demonstrations have taken place against their regimes. Then **look on Google maps** to help you.

3. **Dictation:** The teacher will read four to six lines of the article slowly and clearly. Students will write down what they hear. The teacher will repeat the passage slowly again. Self-correct your work from page one - filling in spaces and correcting mistakes. Be honest with yourself on the number of errors. Advise the teacher of your total number of errors. Less than five is very good. Ten is acceptable. Any more is room for improvement! More than twenty - you need to do some work!

4. **Reading:** The students should now read the article aloud, swapping readers every paragraph.

5. **Vocabulary:** Students should now look through the article and underline any vocabulary they do not know. Look in dictionaries. Discuss and help each other out. The teacher will go through and explain any unknown words or phrases.

6. **The article:** Students should look through the article with the teacher.

- a) What is the article about?
- b) What do you think about the article?
- c) **What's the latest on this story?**

7. **Let's think!** Think of five Arab countries where demonstrations have taken place. Then add five issues the demonstrators are demonstrating against. Write them below. Explain to your partner why you chose these. What are your conclusions?

Five Arab countries under threat	Five of the issues
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5

The teacher will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

8. **Let's talk! Radio Free Egypt:** *In pairs.* You are in the Radio Free Egypt studio. One of you is the presenter; the other student is the guest. Today's interview is: **The Egyptian crisis**. Try to get a balanced interview. *5 minutes.*

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9. **Let's discuss:** In pairs. Think of two positive and negative things you know about the situation in Tunisia and Egypt. Discuss together.

	Positive		Negative
1		1	
2		2	

The teacher will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

10. **Let's think!** In pairs. On the board write as many words as you can to do with the '**Egyptian crisis**'. *One-two minutes*. Compare with other teams. Using your words compile a short dialogue together.

11. **Let's do 'The Article Quiz':** Have the students quiz each other in pairs. They score a point for each correct answer and half a point each time they have to look at the article for help. See who can get the highest score!

Student A

- 1) Who started the revolution in Tunisia? Why?
- 2) What country does the Suez canal pass through?
- 3) Name the former president of Tunisia.
- 4) How much is Egypt losing a day?
- 5) Who is Hilary Clinton?

Student B

- 1) What happened in Jordan?
- 2) What happened in Yemen?
- 3) Who was once known as 'an axis of evil'?
- 4) Who is the leader of Libya?
- 5) Who needs oil more than anybody?

12. **Egypt:** In pairs/groups. Choose to be one of the following people. You are in Cairo. Create a short story about the demonstrations taking place against its president. Tell it to your partner/group. Try to make it interesting! Students try to interlink **or** interact student storylines!

1	Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak	3	An Egyptian
2	A tourist	4	A journalist

The teacher will choose some pairs to tell their stories in front of the class.

13. **Let's write an e-mail:** Write and send a 200 word e-mail to your teacher about: **The domino effect: Tunisia, Egypt – Who is next?** Your e-mail can be read out in class.

14. **Sentence starters:** Finish these sentence starters. Correct your mistakes. Compare what other people have written.

- a) Tunisia _____
- b) Egypt _____
- c) The Arab world _____

DISCUSSION

Student A questions

- 1) Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- 2) What do you think about the American influence in the Arab region?
- 3) What do you think about the secret police operating in these countries?
- 4) Will the Arab world change now?
- 5) What will happen to Egypt's tourist industry?
- 6) Will you be booking a holiday to Egypt shortly?
- 7) How do you think the people in these Arab countries feel about what's happened in Tunisia and Egypt?
- 8) Which Arab country will be next to collapse?
- 9) Why is America supporting these regimes?
- 10) When will China step in?

Student B questions

- 1) What do you think about what you read?
- 2) Do you have a solution for what is happening in the Arab world? What is it?
- 3) Is Israel worried by events?
- 4) Why does America support Israel?
- 5) What will happen in Palestine?
- 6) Will the domino effect of change continue?
- 7) Will we see any of these Arab countries fall to Islamic fundamentalists?
- 8) What do you think about the situation?
- 9) Which countries in the Arab world have you visited? Why?
- 10) Did you like this discussion?

SPEAKING

Let's debate! North Africa, the Arab world & regime change

Allow 10-15 minutes – As a class / small groups / pairs / 1 to 1

North Africa, the Arab world & regime change
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The teacher can moderate the session.

GAP FILL: READING:

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

The domino effect: Tunisia, Egypt – Who is next?

It started in Tunisia when one young unemployed man set himself on fire in a (1)_____ against unemployment, price rises and (2)_____. Sidi Bouzid's death created a (3)_____ in the country that forced regime change. In fact, the sudden flight of President Ben Ali revealed how weak his (4)_____ was. Tunisia, known for its tourism, had been slammed by the UN for its state brutality of beatings and sleep deprivation. Interim (5)_____ has now passed to Rachid Ghannouchi who returned from (6)_____ in London. The Tunisian revolution marked the start of a new era in the Arab world.

The idea rapidly spread to Egypt where millions have been protesting against President Hosni Mubarak. So far, he has resisted countless demonstrations that have brought the country to a virtual (7)_____. Whilst he has promised change, the (8)_____ majority of his people want him to go now.

The question is who will replace him and when? No one wants his son as a replacement and because of the political (1)_____ the opposition is small and (2)_____. The crowd demonstrations represent the people as a whole rather than one or two political parties. The Islamic Brotherhood, whilst (3)_____ is still an outside threat.

Egypt is vital to the West because of the Suez Canal. The crisis is loosing Egypt US\$310m a day. Tourism is collapsing. Mubarak meanwhile is trying to contain the situation. Many of his countrymen want him to go now, not in September when the Presidential (4)_____ take place. Mubarak has ruled Egypt with an (5)_____ for more than 30 years, using the (6)_____ secret police force to control and repress its people ruthlessly. Cairo and Alexandria together with many other Egyptian cities have seen violence on the streets but Mubarak has hung on. The army has allowed the people to (7)_____ peacefully against the Mubarak (8)_____. They have refused to fire on the protesters. Less of Mubarak's protesters are now on the streets but anything could happen.

dictatorship

control

standstill

stance

vast

poverty

exile

revolution

splintered

regime

outlawed

demonstrate

despised

elections

repression

Iron fist

GRAMMAR

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

The domino effect: Tunisia, Egypt – Who is next?

It started in Tunisia when one young unemployed man set himself on fire in a stance against unemployment, price rises and poverty. Sidi Bouzid's death created a revolution in the country that forced regime change. In fact, the sudden flight of President Ben Ali revealed (1)___ weak his dictatorship was. Tunisia, known for its tourism, had been slammed by the UN (2)___ its state brutality of beatings and sleep deprivation. Interim control has now passed to Rachid Ghannouchi (3)___ returned from exile in London. The Tunisian revolution marked the start of a new era in the Arab world.

The idea rapidly spread to Egypt where millions have been protesting against President Hosni Mubarak. (4)___ far, (5)___ has resisted countless demonstrations that have brought the country to a virtual standstill. Whilst he has promised change, (6)___ vast majority of (7)___ people want (8)___ to go now.

The question is who will replace him and (1)___? No one wants his son as a replacement and because of the political repression the opposition is small and splintered. The crowd demonstrations represent the people as a whole rather (2)___ one or two political parties. The Islamic Brotherhood, (3)___ outlawed is still an outside threat.

Egypt is vital to the West because of the Suez Canal. The crisis is loosing Egypt US\$310m a day. Tourism is collapsing. Mubarak meanwhile is trying to contain the situation. (4)___ of his countrymen want him to go now, not in September when the Presidential elections take place. Mubarak has ruled Egypt with an iron fist for (5)___ than 30 years, using the despised secret police force to control and repress its people ruthlessly. Cairo and Alexandria together with many (6)___ Egyptian cities have seen violence on the streets but Mubarak has hung on. The army has allowed the people to demonstrate peacefully against the Mubarak regime. (7)___ have refused to fire on the protesters. Less of Mubarak's protesters are now on the streets but anything (8)___ happen.

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SPELLING TEST

The teacher will ask the class individually to spell the following words that are in the article. Afterwards, check your answers with your teacher, using the following ratings: **Pass = 12, Good = 15, Very good = 18, Excellent = 20**

1	naturally	11	doubtful
2	fundamentalists	12	stance
3	likewise	13	executions
4	extremist	14	collapsing
5	domino	15	ruthlessly
6	unemployment	16	dissidents
7	brutality	17	violence
8	deprivation	18	sustainable
9	era	19	standstill
10	repression	20	revolution

LINKS

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1353088/Egypt-protests-Tunisia-Jordan-unravel-West-worried.html>
<http://adujie.wordpress.com/2011/02/>
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-12307698>
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-12372983>
<http://edition.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/africa/02/05/egypt.unrest.standoff/index.html>
<http://thecommmune.co.uk/2011/01/19/revolution-in-tunisia-just-the-beginning/>
<http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/02/04/us-egypt-police-idUSTRE7136ZT20110204>

ANSWERS

GAP FILL: The domino effect: Tunisia, Egypt – Who is next? It started in Tunisia when one young unemployed man set himself on fire in a **stance** against unemployment, price rises and **poverty**. Sidi Bouzid's death created a **revolution** in the country that forced regime change. In fact, the sudden flight of President Ben Ali revealed how weak his **dictatorship** was. Tunisia, known for its tourism, had been slammed by the UN for its state brutality of beatings and sleep deprivation. Interim **control** has now passed to Rachid Ghannouchi who returned from **exile** in London. The Tunisian revolution marked the start of a new era in the Arab world. The idea rapidly spread to Egypt where millions have been protesting against President Hosni Mubarak. So far, he has resisted countless demonstrations that have brought the country to a virtual **standstill**. Whilst he has promised change, the **vast** majority of his people want him to go now. The question is who will replace him and when? No one wants his son as a replacement and because of the political **repression** the opposition is small and **splintered**. The crowd demonstrations represent the people as a whole rather than one or two political parties. The Islamic Brotherhood, whilst **outlawed** is still an outside threat. Egypt is vital to the West because of the Suez Canal. The crisis is losing Egypt US\$310m a day. Tourism is collapsing. Mubarak meanwhile is trying to contain the situation. Many of his countrymen want him to go now, not in September when the Presidential **elections** take place. Mubarak has ruled Egypt with an **iron fist** for more than 30 years, using the **despised** secret police force to control and repress its people ruthlessly. Cairo and Alexandria together with many other Egyptian cities have seen violence on the streets but Mubarak has hung on. The army has allowed the people to **demonstrate** peacefully against the Mubarak **regime**. They have refused to fire on the protesters. Less of Mubarak's protesters are now on the streets but anything could happen. (V3)

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