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Overview

Recent political developments in Egypt have thrown the already confused post-Mubarak governing arrangements into even greater disarray.¹ The Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) dissolved parliament following a 14 June Supreme Constitutional Court (SCC) ruling that parliamentary elections were unconstitutional. On 17 June, on the final day of voting in the first presidential elections of the post-Mubarak period, the SCAF unilaterally announced an addendum to the interim constitution (the 2011 Constitutional Declaration). Soon after, the Muslim Brotherhood's Mohammed Morsi won the presidential elections and on 8 July issued a decree calling for parliament to reconvene. On 10 July the SCC overturned the decree. Meanwhile, the constituent assembly tasked with drafting the new constitution continues its work under threat of dissolution after the SCAF's constitutional amendment empowered the military to replace the body. The transition to civilian rule remains elusive and volatile with political manoeuvring subject to ongoing contestation, both in the courts and in the streets.

This brief provides a summary of the major political events in Egypt over the past month. It encapsulates the key legal and political developments, including:

- **14 June 2012** SCC decision that parliamentary elections were unconstitutional
- **15 June 2012** SCAF decree dissolving the Islamist-dominant parliament
- **17 June 2012** SCAF Constitutional Addendum
- **8 July 2012** President Morsi's presidential decree reconvening parliament
- **10 July 2012** SCC ruling on Morsi's decree

The Dissolution of Parliament

On 14 June 2012, the SCC ruled that the law regulating the parliamentary elections in late 2011 and early 2012 was unconstitutional. The Muslim Brotherhood had dominated the parliamentary elections, winning 43 percent of seats in the People's Assembly (lower house).² The SCC ruling came just two days before voting commenced for the presidential elections. The court's decision was based on the constitutional inequality arising from an electoral law that sets out that two thirds of members are chosen from political parties and

¹ Brown, Nathan. J, 2012, *The Egyptian Political System in Disarray*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 19 June <<http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2012/06/19/the-egyptian-political-system-in-disarray>> Accessed 9 July 2012

² Carnegie Endowment for International Peace 2012, *Results of Egypt's People's Assembly Election*, 25 January <<http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2012/01/25/results-of-egypt%e2%80%99s-people%e2%80%99s-assembly-elections>> Accessed 23 March 2012

one third should be independents.³ For the SCC, the constitutional inequality resulted from the fact that independents are not allowed to run on political parties' list, but members of political parties can run as independents.⁴ The SCC passed a similar judgement in 1987 and in 1990 ruled that the law regulating parliamentary elections was unconstitutional for reasons identical to the present ruling.⁵ The Muslim Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party (FJP) had won about 100 of its 235-seat plurality (nearly half the chamber) by running candidates as independents.⁶

The SCC ruling was condemned as a "coup" by many Islamists, liberals and scholars.⁷ News sources covering the ruling have referred to the judges of the SCC as Mubarak appointees, implying a lack of judicial independence.⁸ The *New York Times* reported that 'many analysts and activists ... feared the decision was a step toward re-establishing a military-backed autocracy'.⁹ According to the same report, 'the timing of the ruling seems like a transparent attempt to undermine the Islamists' just two days before the presidential elections.¹⁰ Cairo

³ Mallat, Chibli 2012, 'Saving Egypt's Supreme Constitutional Court from itself', *Ahram Online*, 15 June <<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContentP/4/45009/Opinion/Saving-Egypt%E2%80%99s-Supreme-Constitutional-Court-from-i.aspx>> Accessed 9 July 2012

⁴ Mallat, Chibli 2012, 'Saving Egypt's Supreme Constitutional Court from itself', *Ahram Online*, 15 June <<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContentP/4/45009/Opinion/Saving-Egypt%E2%80%99s-Supreme-Constitutional-Court-from-i.aspx>> Accessed 9 July 2012

⁵ Brown, Nathan. J, 2012, *Cairo's Judicial Coup*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 18 June <<http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2012/06/18/cairo%E2%80%99s-judicial-coup>> Accessed 10 July 2012; Mallat, Chibli 2012, 'Saving Egypt's Supreme Constitutional Court from itself', *Ahram Online*, 15 June <<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContentP/4/45009/Opinion/Saving-Egypt%E2%80%99s-Supreme-Constitutional-Court-from-i.aspx>> Accessed 9 July 2012

⁶ Kirkpatrick, David 2012, 'Blow to transition as court dissolves Egypt's Parliament', *New York Times*, 14 June <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/15/world/middleeast/new-political-showdown-in-egypt-as-court-invalidates-parliament.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all> Accessed 4 July 2012

⁷ Kirkpatrick, David 2012, 'Blow to transition as court dissolves Egypt's Parliament', *New York Times*, 14 June <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/15/world/middleeast/new-political-showdown-in-egypt-as-court-invalidates-parliament.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all> Accessed 4 July 2012; 'Egypt supreme court calls for parliament to be dissolved' 2012, *BBC News*, 14 June <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-18439530>> Accessed 4 July 2012

⁸ Kirkpatrick, David 2012, 'Blow to transition as court dissolves Egypt's Parliament', *New York Times*, 14 June <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/15/world/middleeast/new-political-showdown-in-egypt-as-court-invalidates-parliament.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all> Accessed 4 July 2012; 'Tahrir fumes after constitutional court ruling on Egypt People's Assembly' 2012, *Ahram Online*, 10 July <<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContentPrint/1/0/47384/Egypt/0/Tahrir-fumes-after-constitutional-court-ruling-on-.aspx>> Accessed 11 July 2012

⁹ Kirkpatrick, David 2012, 'Blow to transition as court dissolves Egypt's Parliament', *New York Times*, 14 June <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/15/world/middleeast/new-political-showdown-in-egypt-as-court-invalidates-parliament.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all> Accessed 4 July 2012

¹⁰ Kirkpatrick, David 2012, 'Blow to transition as court dissolves Egypt's Parliament', *New York Times*, 14 June <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/15/world/middleeast/new-political-showdown-in-egypt-as-court-invalidates-parliament.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all> Accessed 4 July 2012

University law professor Tharwat Badawy reportedly stated that the SCC ‘includes remnants of the old regime’.¹¹ Marina Ottaway, Senior Associate at the *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, wrote of the SCC rulings that:

The court’s decisions were highly political, even if carefully couched in legal language. They amount to an announcement by the guardians of the old order that regime change is not allowed. The court did not shrink from the irony of judging the acceptability of the new laws against the standards of an abrogated constitution. For Egyptians favoring change, the lesson is that they cannot get change by political means; that they will have to take to the streets once again.

The most immediate consequence of the SCC’s decision will be the return of all power to the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces.¹²

However, Nathan Brown, Professor of Political Science at George Washington University and analyst with the *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, noted that the SCC is ‘diverse enough in its composition that it is not anybody’s tool’.¹³ Brown does note, however, that the timing (i.e. just before presidential elections) and speed of the ruling was a surprise.¹⁴ Regarding the SCC, Brown provides the following:

The justices of the SCC have been referred to in press accounts as “Mubarak appointees,” something that is accurate but sometimes misleading. There is no doubt that the current court was fully formed under the old regime, but its autonomy varied considerably over time and it was never a direct creature of the president. It is true that its reputation and record for independent action has declined over the past decade.

¹¹ El Gundy, Zeinab 2012, ‘Egypt’s legal community divided over HCC ruling rejecting Morsi’s decree’, *Ahram Online*, 11 July <<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/47406/Egypt/Politics-/Egypts-legal-community-divided-over-HCC-ruling-rej.aspx>> Accessed 12 July 2012

¹² Ottaway, Marina 2012, *Egypt’s Regime Fights Back*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 18 June <<http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2012/06/18/egypts-regime-fights-back>> Accessed 11 July 2012

¹³ Brown, Nathan. J 2012, *Cairo’s Judicial Coup*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 18 June <<http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2012/06/18/cairo%e2%80%99s-judicial-coup>> Accessed 10 July 2012

¹⁴ According to Brown, in the past, the SCC has been rather more deliberate in its rulings. In 1987, the SCC dissolved a parliament elected in 1984. In 1990, it dissolved a parliament elected in 1987. In 2000, it struck down a parliamentary election law just as the parliament elected under that law was completing its term. The court delayed ruling on a constitutional challenge of trials of civilians in military courts until an amendment removed the constitutional basis for the challenge in 2007. The present rulings, by contrast, dissolved a parliament elected earlier the same year and it ruled on a case involving a presidential candidate on the same day it heard the case. Brown, Nathan. J 2012, *Cairo’s Judicial Coup*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 18 June <<http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2012/06/18/cairo%e2%80%99s-judicial-coup>> Accessed 10 July 2012

The current composition of the court is a bit mixed. The SCC chief justice was a direct presidential appointee... The other justices were generally nominated by the court itself and then approved by the president. That has made for some variety and independence in the past. My general impression is that the current court is actually a very diverse body.¹⁵

In response to the SCC decision, on 15 June 2012 the SCAF issued an executive order dissolving the People's Assembly (lower house) in its entirety.¹⁶ Legal debates are ongoing concerning whether the SCC ruling should be applied to the whole of the People's Assembly or just the relevant one-third reserved for Independents, and several MPs are contesting the dissolution of the entire parliament at the Supreme Administrative Court.¹⁷ Following the SCAF's order to dissolve parliament, security forces were deployed to prevent MPs from convening in the parliament.¹⁸ On 17 June 2012 (the final day of voting in the presidential elections), the SCAF passed a constitutional addendum claiming legislative power and decreed that new parliamentary elections would only be held once a new constitution is drafted and passed by popular referendum (see below section on SCAF constitutional addendum).

Presidential Decree Reconvening Parliament

The struggle for legislative power entered a new phase on Sunday 8 July 2012 when the newly-elected President (and former Chairman of the Muslim Brotherhood's FJP), Mohamed Morsi, passed presidential decree 11 of 2012 withdrawing the SCAF's earlier decree dissolving parliament and authorising its re-establishment.¹⁹ The decree also called for fresh

¹⁵ Brown, Nathan. J 2012, *The Egyptian Political System in Disarray*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 19 June <<http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2012/06/19/the-egyptian-political-system-in-disarray>> Accessed 9 July 2012

¹⁶ 'Egypt's leftist, liberal MPs to boycott Tuesday's parliament session' 2012, *Ahram Online*, 9 July <<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/47254/Egypt/Politics-/Egypts-leftist,-liberal-MPs-to-boycott-Tuesdays-pa.aspx>> Accessed 12 July 2012

¹⁷ Carnegie Endowment for International Peace 2012, *Major court cases in Egypt's transition*, 2 July <<http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2012/07/02/major-court-cases-in-egypt%e2%80%99s-transition>> Accessed 10 July 2012

¹⁸ 'People's assembly receives dissolution order from SCAF' 2012, *Egypt Independent*, 15 June <<http://www.egyptindependent.com/news/peoples-assembly-receives-dissolution-order-scaf>> Accessed 10 July 2012; 'Parliament opens its doors to MPs following Morsi's decree' 2012, *Ahram Online*, 9 July, Egypt.com <<http://news.egypt.com/english/permalink/130187.html>> Accessed 10 July 2012

¹⁹ Assy, Ivana 2012, 'Presentation and full English text of Morsi's decree reestablishing Parliament', *Right to Nonviolence*, 9 July, Ahram Online <<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/0/47250/Egypt/0/Presentation-and-full-English-text-of-Morsis-decre.aspx>> Accessed 10 July 2012

parliamentary elections to be held within 60 days of ratification of a new constitution.²⁰ The controversial move sparked a legal debate about the relative powers of the SCAF and the Presidency, a matter of considerable confusion after the 17 June 2012 SCAF constitutional addendum (see below).²¹ Sharp divisions reportedly emerged among the country's political factions in reaction to Morsi's decree. Some hailed it as an audacious stroke to restore civilian power, while others faulted Morsi for setting a dangerous precedent by overruling the SCC.²² The decree also stoked fears that the Muslim Brotherhood and its FJP were seeking to monopolise power through control of both the presidency and parliament.²³ MPs from various political parties reportedly stated they would boycott assembly meetings or resign.²⁴

²⁰ 'SCAF defends dissolution of Egypt's parliament, denies 'deal' with presidency' 2012, *Ahram Online*, 9 July <<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/47296/Egypt/Politics-/SCAF-defends-dissolution-of-Egypt-parliament-den.aspx>> Accessed 10 July 2012

²¹ One of the main debates surrounding Morsi's decree is whether the president has, in fact, assumed full executive powers, as this is not clearly spelt out in last year's Constitutional Declaration. According to a partner at a Cairo-based law firm, if the SCAF issued its resolution dissolving parliament using its legislative authority, Morsi's decree would not stand, since legislative authority is not within the president's mandate. Michael Wahid Hanna, a scholar at the Century Foundation, said Morsi's decree disregarded the rule of law, even though the constitutional court was seen as politicized: 'We don't have to agree with its [SCC] decisions... he's reinstating an unconstitutional Parliament. I think it's got disastrous consequences'. However, constitutional expert Atef El-Banna has said that the presidential decree did not conflict with the HCC ruling: 'the SCAF was practicing its authority when it dissolved parliament, and Morsi practiced this same authority as the new president. The dissolution of parliament was not included in the Constitutional Declaration as part of the SCAF's mandate'. See Fahim, Kareem and Mayy El Sheikh 2012, 'Egyptian court affirms ruling cited to oust Parliament', *New York Times*, 9 July <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/10/world/middleeast/egypt-tension-after-order-to-reconvene-parliament.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all> Accessed 10 July 2012; Shukrallah, Salma and Bel Trew 2012, 'Return of Egypt People's Assembly dogged by legal, constitutional ambiguity', *Ahram Online*, 8 July <<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/0/47196/Egypt/0/Return-of-Egypt-Peoples-Assembly-dogged-by-legal-.aspx>> Accessed 10 July 2012; Brown, Nathan. J, 2012, *The Egyptian Political System in Disarray*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 19 June <<http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2012/06/19/the-egyptian-political-system-in-disarray>> Accessed 9 July 2012

²² Fahim, Kareem and Mayy El Sheikh 2012, 'Egyptian court affirms ruling cited to oust Parliament', *New York Times*, 9 July <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/10/world/middleeast/egypt-tension-after-order-to-reconvene-parliament.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all> Accessed 10 July 2012

²³ Tarek, Sherif 2012, 'President's reinstatement of Egypt parliament met with praise, indignation', *Ahram Online*, 8 July <<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/47188/Egypt/Politics-/Presidents-reinstatement-of-Egypt-parliament-met-w.aspx>> Accessed 10 July 2012

²⁴ *Ahram Online* reported that MPs for the Wafd Party, the Egyptian Democratic Party, the Free Egyptians, the Revolution Continues and the Tagammu Party all said they had received orders from their respective party leaderships not to attend assembly meetings. Additionally, members of NDP-offshoot parties announced plans to boycott. Some independent deputies, such as journalist Mostafa Bakri and political activist Mohamed Abu-Hamed, said they had decided to resign and would not attend assembly meetings. Other liberal and leftist deputies, by contrast, said they planned to attend. El-Din, Gamal Essam 2012, 'Egypt restored People's Assembly to convene Tuesday amid boycott threats', *Ahram Online*, 9 July

In response to Morsi's decree, the SCC declared on Monday 9 July 2012 that its decisions 'are final and not subject to appeal, and that its provisions in cases of constitutional interpretation and decisions are binding on all state authorities'.²⁵ On Tuesday 10 July 2012 the SCC overturned Morsi's decree.²⁶ Members of parliament had gathered for a brief session earlier in the day before the SCC ruling was announced.²⁷ Thousands reportedly gathered in Tahrir Square to protest against the SCC decision.²⁸ The *BBC News* reported that the ruling leaves unresolved the question of who holds the power usually vested in parliament and many months of legal wrangling over what happens next could now follow.²⁹ Analysts say it is unclear how events will unfold as the situation, with the new president elected without a new constitution having been drafted, is unprecedented.³⁰

SCAF Constitutional Addendum

On 17 June 2012, as polls were closing in the presidential elections, the SCAF issued an addendum to the interim constitution, commonly known as the 2011 Constitutional Declaration. The addendum grants the military full legislative and budgetary control until the election of a new parliament.³¹ It also gives SCAF the right to veto wars and outlines a

<<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/47267/Egypt/Politics-/Egypts-restored-Peoples-Assembly-to-convene-Tuesda.aspx>> Accessed 10 July 2012

²⁵ 'In response to presidential decree, Egypt's High Constitutional Court calls its decisions 'final, binding'', *Ahram Online*, 9 July <<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/0/47248/Egypt/0/In-response-to-presidential-decree,-Egypts-High-Co.aspx>> Accessed 10 July 2012; 'Egypt's military 'warns' President Mursi over parliament decision' 2012, *BBC News*, 9 July <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-18777150>> Accessed 10 July 2012

²⁶ 'Egypt court overturns President Mursi parliament order' 2012, *BBC News*, 10 July <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-18789992>> Accessed 11 July 2012

²⁷ 'Egypt court overturns President Mursi parliament order' 2012, *BBC News*, 10 July <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-18789992>> Accessed 11 July 2012

²⁸ 'Egypt court overturns President Mursi parliament order' 2012, *BBC News*, 10 July <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-18789992>> Accessed 11 July 2012; 'Tahrir fumes after constitutional court ruling on Egypt People's Assembly' 2012, *Ahram Online*, 10 July <<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContentPrint/1/0/47384/Egypt/0/Tahrir-fumes-after-constitutional-court-ruling-on-.aspx>> Accessed 11 July 2012

²⁹ 'Egypt court overturns President Mursi parliament order' 2012, *BBC News*, 10 July <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-18789992>> Accessed 11 July 2012

³⁰ 'Egypt court overturns President Mursi parliament order' 2012, *BBC News*, 10 July <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-18789992>> Accessed 11 July 2012

³¹ Kirkpatrick, David 2012, 'Judge helped Egypt's military to cement power', *New York Times*, <<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/04/world/middleeast/judge-helped-egypts-military-to-cement-power.html?pagewanted=1&src=un&feedurl=http://json8.nytimes.com/pages/world/middleeast/index.jsonp>> Accessed 4 July 2012

timetable for new legislative elections.³² According to Article 60B of the addendum, parliamentary elections will take place one month from the day the new constitution is approved by national referendum.³³ The SCAF had previously pledged to transfer power to civilians by 1 July 2012, however the timeline provided in the constitutional addendum could potentially leave the generals in charge until 2013.³⁴

The addendum also grants SCAF the authority to dissolve the constituent assembly tasked with drafting Egypt's new constitution and to select a new panel should the assembly 'encounter an obstacle that would prevent it from completing its work'.³⁵ It grants the President, the head of the SCAF, the Prime Minister, the Supreme Council of the Judiciary or a fifth of the assembly the power to refer to the SCC any article of the new constitution that 'conflict with the revolution's goals and its main principles or which conflict with any principle agreed upon in all Egypt's former constitutions'.³⁶ The provision effectively gives the SCC the power to veto articles of the new constitution.³⁷ Professor Brown of the *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace* labelled the move a 'constitutional obscenity' referring to 'the extreme vagueness of these standards, the absurdity of holding a new constitution accountable to older ones, and the assignment of final and absolute interpretive authority to an unelected judicial body formed under the old regime'.³⁸

The controversial document reportedly triggered mass protests across Egypt.³⁹ Eliminated presidential contender Abdel-Moneim Abul-Fotouh labelled the move a 'military coup' and

³² Revkin, Mara 2012, *SCAF Constitutional Amendments Legitimize Martial Law*, The Atlantic Council, 18 June <<http://www.acus.org/egyptsource/scaf-constitutional-amendments-legitimize-martial-law-full-text>> Accessed 10 July 2012

³³ 'English text of SCAF amended Egypt Constitutional Declaration' 2012, *Ahram Online*, 18 June <<http://english.ahram.org.eg/News/45350.aspx>> Accessed 10 July 2012

³⁴ Awad, Marwa and Yasmine Saleh 2012, 'Egypt rivals claim presidency as army tightens grip', *Reuters*, 18 June <<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/06/18/us-egypt-election-idUSBRE85G01U20120618>> Accessed 11 July 2012

³⁵ Trew, Bel and Salma Shukrallah 2012, 'Morsi in power: a time-line of diminishing presidential prerogatives', *Ahram Online*, 24 June <<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/0/45982/Egypt/0/Morsi-in-power-A-timeline-of-diminishing-president.aspx>> Accessed 10 July 2012

³⁶ 'English text of SCAF amended Egypt Constitutional Declaration' 2012, *Ahram Online*, 18 June <<http://english.ahram.org.eg/News/45350.aspx>> Accessed 10 July 2012

³⁷ Brown, Nathan J 2012, *An instant analysis of Egypt's new constitution*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 18 June <<http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2012/06/18/an-instant-analysis-of-egypts-new-constitution>> Accessed 10 July 2012

³⁸ Brown, Nathan. J 2012, *The Egyptian Political System in Disarray*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 19 June <<http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2012/06/19/the-egyptian-political-system-in-disarray>> Accessed 9 July 2012

³⁹ Trew, Bel and Salma Shukrallah 2012, 'Morsi in power: a time-line of diminishing presidential prerogatives', *Ahram Online*, 24 June <<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/0/45982/Egypt/0/Morsi-in-power-A-timeline-of-diminishing-president.aspx>> Accessed 10 July 2012

opposition figure Mohamed ElBaradei described the addendum as a serious ‘set back for democracy and revolution’.⁴⁰

The Supreme Administrative Court is set to rule on the constitutionality of the SCAF Constitutional Addendum on 17 July 2012.⁴¹

The text of the SCAF addendum is as follows:

Article 30: In situation that parliament is dissolved the president will be vowed into office in front of High Constitutional Court’s General Assembly.

Article 53: The incumbent SCAF members are responsible for deciding on all issues related to the armed forces including appointing its leaders and extending the terms in office of the aforesaid leaders. The current head of the SCAF is to act as commander-in-chief of the armed forces and minister of defense until a new constitution is drafted.

Article 53/1: The president can only declare war after the approval of the SCAF.

Article 53/2: If the country faces internal unrest which requires the intervention of the armed forces, the president can issue a decision to commission the armed forces – with the approval of the SCAF – to maintain security and defend public properties. Current Egyptian law stipulates the powers of the armed forces and its authorities in cases where the military can use force, arrest or detain.

Article 56 B: The SCAF will assume the authorities set out in sub-article 1 of Article 56 as written in the 30 March 2011 Constitutional Declaration until a new parliament is elected. **[Note: this provides SCAF with authority over Legislation]**

Article 60 B: If the constituent assembly encounters an obstacle that would prevent it from completing its work, the SCAF within a week will form a new constituent assembly- to author a new constitution within three months from the day of the new assembly’s formation. The newly drafted constitution will be put forward after 15 days of the day it is completed, for approval by the people through a national referendum. The parliamentary elections will take place one month from the day the new constitution is approved by the national referendum.

⁴⁰ Trew, Bel and Salma Shukrallah 2012, ‘Morsi in power: a time-line of diminishing presidential prerogatives’, *Ahram Online*, 24 June <<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/0/45982/Egypt/0/Morsi-in-power-A-timeline-of-diminishing-president.aspx>> Accessed 10 July 2012

⁴¹ ‘Court adjourns Parliament, supplementary declaration lawsuits to 17 July’ 2012, *Almasry Alyoum*, 10 July, Egypt Independent <<http://www.egyptindependent.com/news/court-adjourns-parliament-supplementary-declaration-lawsuits-17-july>> Accessed 11 July 2012

Article 60 B1: If the president, the head of SCAF, the prime minister, the Supreme Council of the Judiciary or a fifth of the constituent assembly find that the new constitution contains an article or more which conflict with the revolution's goals and its main principles or which conflict with any principle agreed upon in all of Egypt's former constitutions, any of the aforementioned bodies may demand that the constituent assembly revises this specific article within 15 days. Should the constituent assembly object to revising the contentious article, the article will be referred to the High Constitutional Court (HCC) which will then be obliged to give its verdict within seven days. The HCC's decision is final and will be published in the official gazette within three days from the date of issuance.

Article 38 of the 30 March, 2011 Constitutional Declaration will be replaced with: "The parliamentary elections will be conducted in accordance to the law".⁴²

Presidential Elections

As noted above, Mohamed Morsi, former Chairman of the Muslim Brotherhood's FJP, was elected president after the 16-17 June 2012 run-off with Hosni Mubarak's former Prime Minister, Ahmed Shafiq.⁴³ On Sunday 24 June 2012, Egypt's Higher Electoral Commission released the election results, confirming that Morsi had gained 51.7 percent of the vote and Shafiq 48.3 percent.⁴⁴ The voter turnout was 51.85 percent.⁴⁵

Morsi has sought to allay fears among liberals, women and Coptic Christians that he will use his presidency to impose Islamic law.⁴⁶ Morsi has reportedly said that he plans to appoint a

⁴² 'English text of SCAF amended Egypt Constitutional Declaration' 2012, *Ahram Online*, 18 June
<<http://english.ahram.org.eg/News/45350.aspx>> Accessed 10 July 2012

⁴³ In the weeks preceding the first round of presidential voting, the Brotherhood-led Parliament passed a law blocking Ahmed Shafik and other top officials of the Mubarak government from competing for the Presidency. However, on the same day that the SCC ruled that parliamentary elections were unconstitutional, the court also ruled that the law excluding Shafik was unconstitutional. Kirkpatrick, David 2012, 'Blow to transition as court dissolves Egypt's Parliament', *New York Times*, 14 June
<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/15/world/middleeast/new-political-showdown-in-egypt-as-court-invalidates-parliament.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all> Accessed 4 July 2012

⁴⁴ Carnegie Endowment for International Peace 2012, *Egyptian Presidential Election Results*, 26 June
<<http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2012/06/26/egyptian-presidential-election-results>> Accessed 10 July 2012

⁴⁵ Carnegie Endowment for International Peace 2012, *Egyptian Presidential Election Results*, 26 June
<<http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2012/06/26/egyptian-presidential-election-results>> Accessed 10 July 2012

⁴⁶ 'Brotherhood Mursi sworn in as Egyptian president' 2012, *BBC News*, 30 June
<<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-18656396>> Accessed 10 July 2012; 'Egypt's new leader claims revolution's mantle' 2012, *Associated Press*, 2 July 2012, Long Island Press

woman and a Coptic Christian as his vice-presidents.⁴⁷ In his speech at Cairo University, he said all Egyptians would be equal before the law.⁴⁸ On 24 June 2012, Morsi released his plan for his first one hundred days in office, the focus of which is on five non-religious issues: security, traffic, sanitation, bread, and fuel.⁴⁹

In addition to the decree reconvening parliament, Morsi has passed a presidential decree establishing a committee to investigate the killing and wounding of protesters in Egypt, beginning with the January 2011 uprising against Hosni Mubarak.⁵⁰

On 30 June 2012, the SCAF staged a ceremonial transfer of power to Morsi with a military parade at the Hykestep military base on the outskirts of Cairo.⁵¹ At the ceremony, Field Marshal Tantawi, head of the SCAF, declared that the military had fulfilled their promise to transfer power.⁵² However, the nature and extent of the president's powers remains a point of debate given that Egypt remains without a constitution and the SCAF have granted themselves sweeping powers in the 17 June constitutional addendum (discussed above).⁵³ Sources report that 'virtually all executive and legislative authority' rests with the SCAF and that the president has been 'stripped of any power'.⁵⁴

<<http://www.longislandpress.com/2012/07/02/egypts-new-leader-claims-revolutions-mantle/>> Accessed 10 July 2012

⁴⁷ 'Brotherhood Mursi sworn in as Egyptian president' 2012, *BBC News*, 30 June

<<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-18656396>> Accessed 10 July 2012

⁴⁸ 'Brotherhood Mursi sworn in as Egyptian president' 2012, *BBC News*, 30 June

<<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-18656396>> Accessed 10 July 2012

⁴⁹ Carnegie Endowment for International Peace 2012, *Morsi's one-hundred-day plan*, 26 June

<<http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2012/06/26/morsi%e2%80%99s-one-hundred-day-plan>>

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⁵⁰ Fahim, Kareem and Mayy El Sheikh 2012, 'Egyptian court affirms ruling cited to oust Parliament', *New York Times*, 9 July

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/10/world/middleeast/egypt-tension-after-order-to-reconvene-parliament.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all> Accessed 10 July 2012

⁵¹ 'Brotherhood Mursi sworn in as Egyptian president' 2012, *BBC News*, 30 June

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The full extent of the SCAF's authority is not always clear. Professor Brown wrote that the SCAF's executive authority is strong but not absolute under the emerging system, and it will turn over some significant authority to the president, especially in administrative and domestic affairs.⁵⁵ According to Brown, it is likely that clarity will come only in practice. Moreover, Brown notes that:

Egypt has been dominated by the presidency for so long that there are a whole myriad of structures, commissions, and procedures that run through the presidency and give the president a strong potential role. These are still part of the legal order.⁵⁶

Lina Khatib, head of Stanford University's *Arab Reform and Democracy Program*, provides the following on the extent of the presidential powers:

The stalled process of putting together a Constitutional Assembly means that whoever is elected president would assume this role without knowing the full authorities of the position... [Morsi's] victory would only be a partial one as the SCAF are in control of most state institutions.⁵⁷

Status of the Constituent Assembly

The status of the constituent assembly is uncertain after the dissolution of parliament and the SCAF constitutional addendum. The constituent assembly continues to meet, however it does so under the threat of dissolution by the SCAF and with serious legitimacy issues given its formation by a now unconstitutional parliament.

On 12 June 2012, before its dissolution, the parliament elected a 100-member constituent assembly to draft the nation's new constitution, as required by the 2011 Constitutional

⁵⁵ Brown, Nathan. J 2012, *The Egyptian Political System in Disarray*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 19 June <<http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2012/06/19/the-egyptian-political-system-in-disarray>> Accessed 9 July 2012

⁵⁶ Brown, Nathan. J 2012, *The Egyptian Political System in Disarray*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 19 June <<http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2012/06/19/the-egyptian-political-system-in-disarray>> Accessed 9 July 2012

⁵⁷ Beges, Sarina 2012, 'Q&A: Stanford scholar on Egypt's interrupted revolution', *Stanford Report*, 19 June <<http://news.stanford.edu/news/2012/june/egypt-scholar-qanda-061912.html>> Accessed 3 July 2012; See also International Crisis Group 2012, *Media Release: Egypt*, 25 June <<http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/publication-type/media-releases/2012/mena/egypt-media-release.aspx>> Accessed 3 July 2012

Declaration.⁵⁸ From the 100 seats, 18 were allocated to the Muslim Brotherhood's FJP, 12 to the Salafist Al Nour Party and three to the moderate Wasat Party.⁵⁹ The rest of the assembly is comprised of various experts and public figures from outside parliament.⁶⁰ A total of 57 MPs reportedly withdrew from the parliamentary session that selected the assembly, in objection to the perceived monopolisation of the process by Islamist parties.⁶¹ The assembly is being challenged in the courts on grounds that members of parliament voted some of their own party members into the body.⁶² The first constituent assembly formed to draft a constitution was disbanded in April 2012 on the basis of a similar argument (See RRT Egypt Elections Roundup of 2 April 2012).⁶³

The legal status of the constituent assembly is further unclear as a result of the SCC ruling that the parliamentary election law was unconstitutional and the resulting dissolution of parliament. The full ramifications of the SCC ruling for the constituent assembly are not yet evident and significant legal questions remain, including whether a constituent assembly elected by an unconstitutional parliament can continue with its work and whether the

⁵⁸ 'Moussa expects return of withdrawn constituent assembly members' 2012, *MENA*, 28 June, Egypt Independent <<http://www.egyptindependent.com/news/moussa-expects-return-withdrawn-constituent-assembly-members>> Accessed 11 July 2012

⁵⁹ Tarek, Sherif and Hatem Maher 2012, 'Egypt's constituent assembly unveiled amid fears over Islamist dominance', *Ahram Online*, 13 June <<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/0/44716/Egypt/0/Egypt-constituent-assembly-unveiled-amid-fears-ov.aspx>> Accessed 11 July 2012

⁶⁰ In addition to the MPs, the constituent assembly consists of 9 constitutional experts, 6 judicial officials, 5 from Al-Azhar, 4 from Egyptian churches, 7 professional syndicates' heads, 4 representatives of labour and farmers, 3 representatives of the executive authority (Armed Forces, the Police and the government), 29 public figures and youth, 4 political parties chairman, 7 representatives of women, 7 representatives of the uprising and the injured, 10 Islamic figures (including those from Al-Azhar), 8 representing the Copts, 28 legal experts, 10 thinkers and writers, 30 university professors, 4 representatives of the labour syndicates, one representatives of the foreign-based Egyptians. Tarek, Sherif and Hatem Maher 2012, 'Egypt's constituent assembly unveiled amid fears over Islamist dominance', *Ahram Online*, 13 June <<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/0/44716/Egypt/0/Egypt-constituent-assembly-unveiled-amid-fears-ov.aspx>> Accessed 11 July 2012

⁶¹ Tarek, Sherif and Hatem Maher 2012, 'Egypt's constituent assembly unveiled amid fears over Islamist dominance', *Ahram Online*, 13 June <<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/0/44716/Egypt/0/Egypt-constituent-assembly-unveiled-amid-fears-ov.aspx>> Accessed 11 July 2012

⁶² Article 60 of the Constitutional Declaration states that Parliament should elect the Constituent Assembly. According to the court, the word "elect" stipulates that MPs cannot elect themselves and all members of the committee have to be from outside Parliament. Khazbak, Rana 2012, 'Questions loom over constituent assembly', *Egypt Independent*, 3 July <<http://www.egyptindependent.com/news/questions-loom-over-constituent-assembly>> Accessed 11 July 2012

⁶³ Brown, Nathan. J 2012, *The Egyptian Political System in Disarray*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 19 June <<http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2012/06/19/the-egyptian-political-system-in-disarray>> Accessed 9 July 2012; 'Egypt court brings forward appeal session challenging Constituent Assembly' 2012, *MENA*, 11 July, *Ahram Online* <<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/47455/Egypt/Politics-/Egypt-court-brings-forward-appeal-session-challeng.aspx>> Accessed 13 July 2012

election of parliamentarians to the body (even if they are no longer parliamentarians) can be used to challenge the body.⁶⁴ Moreover, the SCAF's constitutional addendum of 17 June 2012 empowers the military rulers to dissolve the constituent assembly.⁶⁵ According to Article 60B of the addendum, the SCAF may then form a new constituent assembly to draft a constitution, to be completed within three months of the assembly's formation.⁶⁶

The Supreme Administrative Court is due to rule on the constitutionality of the constituent assembly on 17 July 2012.⁶⁷

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⁶⁵ 'English text of SCAF amended Egypt Constitutional Declaration' 2012, *Ahram Online*, 18 June <<http://english.ahram.org.eg/News/45350.aspx>> Accessed 10 July 2012

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