

New era?

Mubarak's departure must usher in new era for civil liberties

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A month after the fall of Tunisia's Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali, today's resignation by Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak is fuelling hopes for freedom and pluralism in this part of the world. Reporters Without Borders welcomes the news with satisfaction and caution, [after two weeks of violent harassment of both the national and international media](#).

"This symbolic first step must be followed through all the way to the creation of a real democracy in which journalists and netizens are no longer afraid to express their views, in which diversity of ideas and opinions no longer entails any risk of imprisonment, and in which the right to receive and impart news and information is truly respected," Reporters Without Borders secretary-general Jean-François Julliard said.

Mubarak surrendered power to the armed forces supreme council. "We will not forget the attitude of the military, which fortunately refrained from crushing the popular uprising," Julliard added. "Before transferring power to a civilian government after free and transparent elections, the armed forces must help to ensure the profound changes demanded by Egyptian society, including guarantees for media pluralism."

Photo: AFP
