Egypt Elections Roundup

2 April 2012

Australian Government
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Contents

Overview

On 28 November 2011 Egyptians went to polls in the first of several rounds of parliamentary elections. They were the first parliamentary elections held since the 2011 revolution and resignation of President Hosni Mubarak. Islamist parties have performed well in the elections, winning a majority of seats in both houses of parliament. Egyptians will go to the polls for presidential elections on 23-24 May 2012. Egypt continues to be governed by the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) headed by Muhammad Hussein Tantawi, Mubarak's Defense Minister.[1] The SCAF has installed a cabinet led by Prime Minister Kamal al-Ganzouri, who held several high-profile positions in 17 years of service under Mubarak.[2] The SCAF has said that it will transfer power to civilian rule by the end of June 2012.[3]

Egypt has a bicameral Parliament consisting of the People's Assembly (*Majlis Al-Sha'b*) with 498 seats and the Advisory Council (*Majilis Al-Shura or 'Shura Council'*) with 264 seats.

In the People's Assembly (the lower house) 166 members are elected by absolute majority vote through a two-round system to serve 5-year terms and 332 members are elected through a closed-list proportional representation system to serve 5-year terms.[4] The SCAF appoints 10 seats.[5]

Of the 264 seats in the Shura council (upper house), 180 are elected; while the rest will be appointed by the next president after presidential elections are held.[6] The Shura council has limited powers and cannot block legislation in the lower house.[7]

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[1] International Foundation for Election Systems 2011, *Election Guide – Egypt*, 7 December <http://electionguide.org/country.php?ID=65> Accessed 22 March 2012; Knell, Yolande 2011, 'Egypt after Mubarak: Mohamad Hussain Tantawi profile', *BBC News*, 22 November <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-12441512> Accessed 22 March 2012

[2] Galal, Ola, Ahmed A Namatalla and Abdel Latif Wahba 2011, 'Cairo demonstrator dies in police clash as Ganzouri seeks to form cabinet', *Bloomberg*, 27 November <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-11-25/egypt-military-asks-ganzouri-to-form-government.html> Accessed 26 March 2012

[3] Abdoun, Safaa 2012, 'SCAF reiterates June date as activists call for Tahrir sit-in', *Daily News Egypt*, 25 January <http://www.thedailynewsegypt.com/scaf-reiterates-june-date-as-activists-call-for-tahrir-sit-in.html>; See also Carnegie Endowment for International Peace 2012, *The SCAF: an overview of its actions*, Guide to Egypt's transition, 5 January <http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2012/01/05/the-scaf-an-overview-of-its-actions> – Accessed 22 March 2012

[4] International Foundation for Election Systems 2011, *Election Guide – Egypt*, 7 December <http://electionguide.org/country.php?ID=65> Accessed 22 March 2012

[5] 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

[6] Carnegie Endowment for International Peace 2012, *Results of Shura Council elections*, 29 February <http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2012/02/29/results-of-shura-council-elections> Accessed 23 March 2012

The People's Assembly elections were held prior to Shura Council elections. They were staged over three rounds (staggered across Egypt's 27 governorates) on the 28 November 2011, 14 December 2011 and 3 January 2012. The Shura Council elections were held over two rounds on 29 January 2012 and 14 February 2012.

Results of People's Assembly Elections

The People's Assembly elections were staged over three rounds (staggered across Egypt's 27 governorates) on the 28 November 2011, 14 December 2011 and 3 January 2012. The vote was widely viewed as the freest in the nation's history.[8]

The Muslim Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party (*Ḥizb al-ḥurriya wa al-'adala*) dominated the vote, winning 216 seats in the People's Assembly (43.4 % of seats).[9] The Freedom and Justice Party (FJP) is a member of the **Democratic Alliance**, which includes the less successful parties Al-Karama (which won 6 seats), Al-Hadara (2 seats) and Labor (1 seat).[10]

The Salafi Al-Nour Party (*ḥizb al-nūr* meaning 'Light') also performed well in the elections, winning a total of 102 seats (21.8% of the People's Assembly). It was the big surprise of the elections given the Salafis' hitherto aversion to engaging in politics.[11] Al Nour has formed a

[7] Moore, Heather 2012, 'Experts debate future of Shoura Council', *Daily News Egypt*, 27 February <http://www.thedailynewsegypt.com/experts-debate-future-of-shoura-council.html> Accessed 22 March 2012; 'Tantawi: Egypt's SCAF committed to fair presidential vote' 2012, *Bikya Masr*, 1 March <http://bikyamasr.com/59911/tantawi-egypts-scaf-committed-to-fair-presidential-vote/> Accessed 22 March 2012

[8] Hendawi, Hamza 2012, 'Egypt's Islamists win majority on constitutional panel', *Associated Press*, 25 March, *The Globe and Mail* website <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/egypts-islamists-win-majority-on-constitution-panel/article2380698/?utm_medium=Feeds%3A%20RSS%2FAtom&utm_source=Home&utm_content=2380698> Accessed 26 March 2012

[9] 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

[10] 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

[11] Brown, Jonathan 2011, *Salafis and Sufis in Egypt*, *The Carnegie Papers*, December, p.1-4 <http://www.ciaonet.org/wps/ceip/0023950/f_0023950_19493.pdf> Accessed 26 March 2012; El Deeb, Sarah 2011, 'Egypt's ElBaradei: Liberals 'decimated' in vote', *Associated Press*, 4 December, *Guardian* <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/feedarticle/9979067> Accessed 27 March 2012

coalition with two other Islamist parties; the Building and Development Party (13 seats) and Al-Asala (3 seats). Together they comprise the **Islamist Alliance**. [12]

Al-Wafd, an old, established party, was the most successful of the liberal parties, winning 41 seats in the People's Assembly (8.2 % seats). It is separate to the **Egyptian Bloc**, the main liberal alliance, which won a total of 34 seats (6.8% seats). The Egyptian Bloc consists of three parties: Al-Tagammu Party (3 seats), Egyptian Social Democratic Party (16 seats) and the Free Egyptians Party (15 seats).[13]

Women won only 12 seats in the People's Assembly. Christians won 13 seats. This includes 3 women and 5 Christians appointed by the SCAF.[14]

While the Freedom and Justice Party performed well in the elections, it was unable to win an absolute majority in the People's Assembly. As such, it will need a coalition partner. Whether this will be the Islamists Al Nour, or alternatively, a partner with a liberal orientation, remains a matter of speculation and conjecture.

The following graph from *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace* provides a breakdown of the seats won in the 2011-2012 elections.
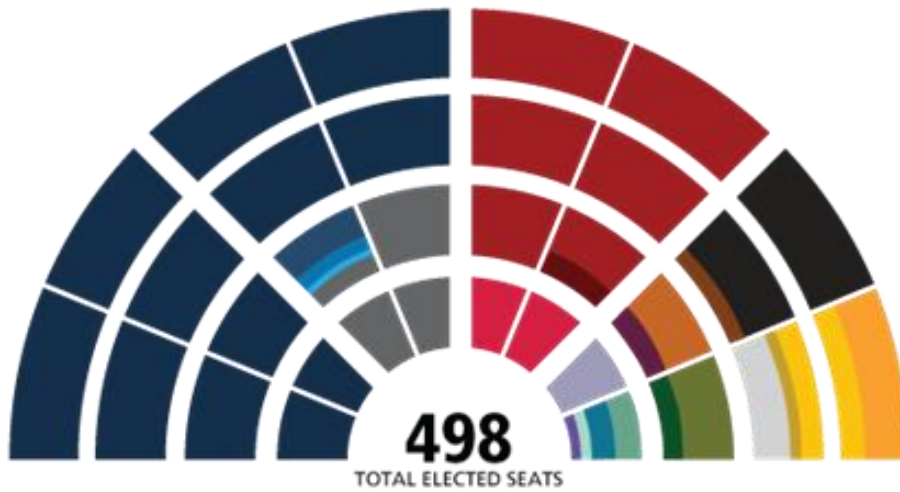
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[12] Carnegie Endowment for International Peace 2012, *Results of Egypt's People's Assembly Election*, 25 January <http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2012/01/25/results-of-egypt%e2%80%99s-people%e2%80%99s-assembly-elections> Accessed 23 March 2012

[13] 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

[14] 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

SEATS IN EGYPT'S PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY 2012

498
TOTAL ELECTED SEATS

DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE
- 216 Freedom and Justice Party
- 6 Al-Karama
- 2 Al-Hadara
- 1 Labor

ISLAMIST ALLIANCE
- 109 Al-Nour
- 13 Building and Development
- 3 Al-Asala

EGYPTIAN BLOC
- 3 Al-Tagammu Party
- 16 Egyptian Social Democratic Party
- 15 Free Egyptians Party

- 41 Al-Wafd
- 10 Reform and Development Party
- 9 Al-Wasat Party
- 8 Revolution Continues Alliance
- 5 Egypt National Party
- 4 Egyptian Citizen Party
- 3 Union Party
- 3 Freedom Party
- 2 Al-Adl Party
- 2 Democratic Peace Party
- 1 Arab Egyptian Union Party
- 1 Nasserite Party
- 25 Independents

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Figure 1: Seats in Egypt's People's Assembly 2012.[15]

Results of Shura Council Elections

[15] 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

Shura Council elections took place in two stages on 29 January 2012 and 14 February 2012. According to Abdel Moez Ibrahim, head of the Egyptian Electoral Commission, the turnout for Shura Council elections did not exceed 10% (or a total of 6.4 million votes cast).[16]

Of the 264 seats on the Shura council, 180 were up for election. The rest will be appointed by the next president after presidential elections are held in May/June 2012.[17]

The Muslim Brotherhood's FJP was again dominant, winning 105 of a possible 180 seats. The FJP now holds over 58% of the elected seats in the Shura Council. The Salafi Al Nour party also did well, winning 45 seats (25% seats).

Similar to the People's Assembly elections, the main liberal parties were decimated in the vote for the upper house. Al-Wafd won 14 seats (7.7%) and the Egyptian Bloc won 8 seats (4.4%).

The seats in the Shura Council are distributed as follows:

Party	Total Seats	% of total seats
Freedom and Justice Party	105	58.3
Nour Party	45	25
Wafd Party	14	7.7
Egyptian Bloc	8	4.4
Freedom Party	2	1.1
Democratic Peace Party	2	1.1
Independents	4	2.2

Figure 2: Seat Breakdown of Shura Assembly.[18]

The following graph from *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace* provides a breakdown of the seats won in the 2012 Shura Council elections.

[16] Carnegie Endowment for International Peace 2012, *Results of Shura Council elections*, 29 February <http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2012/02/29/results-of-shura-council-elections> Accessed 23 March 2012

[17] Carnegie Endowment for International Peace 2012, *Results of Shura Council elections*, 29 February <http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2012/02/29/results-of-shura-council-elections> Accessed 23 March 2012

[18] Carnegie Endowment for International Peace 2012, *Results of Shura Council elections*, 29 February <http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2012/02/29/results-of-shura-council-elections> Accessed 23 March 2012
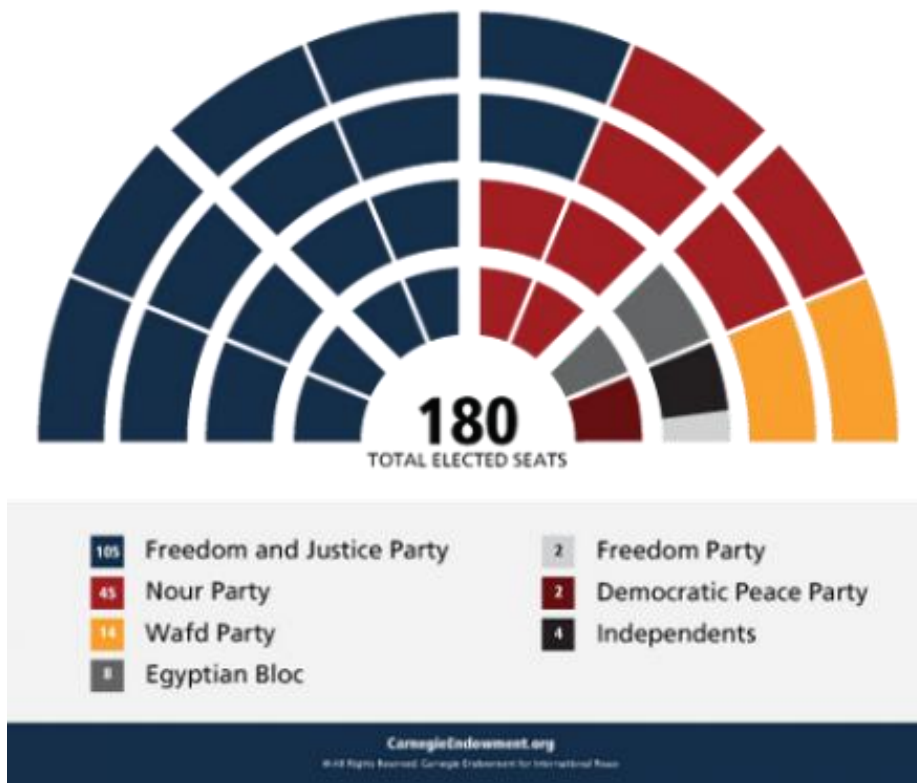
Figure 3: 2012 Shura Council Election Results.[19]

MAIN PLAYERS

The Freedom and Justice Party (Muslim Brotherhood)

In May 2011 the Muslim Brotherhood formed the Freedom and Justice Party. Although the registration of political parties with a religious identity is still banned in Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood was able to register the Freedom and Justice Party, presenting it as a "civil" party.[20] The Freedom and Justice Party is the dominant Islamist party in Egypt.[21]

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[19] Carnegie Endowment for International Peace 2012, *Results of Shura Council elections*, 29 February <http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2012/02/29/results-of-shura-council-elections> Accessed 23 March 2012

[20] Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (undated), *Al-Hurriyya wa al-'Adala (Freedom and Justice Party)*, <http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2011/09/22/al-hurriyya-wa-al-%e2%80%98adala-freedom-and-justice-party> Accessed 27 March 2012

[21] Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (undated), *Al-Hurriyya wa al-'Adala (Freedom and Justice Party)*, <http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2011/09/22/al-hurriyya-wa-al-%e2%80%98adala-freedom-and-justice-party> Accessed 27 March 2012

Party platforms include:

- Supporting a civil state, defined as one that is neither run by the military nor a theocracy, with Islam as the state religion and Islamic law as the source of legislation covering all aspects of human life

- Granting the Supreme Constitutional Court the right to oversee legislation in order to ensure its compatibility with Islamic principles of justice

- Supporting the goals of Islamic law in governance with the understanding that non-Muslims will be under their own laws in terms of personal status and religious worship

- Affirming the belief in non-discrimination among citizens in rights and duties

- Protecting the freedom of belief and worship for Muslims and non-Muslims.[22]

As noted above, the FJP has done extremely well in both the People's Assembly and the Shura Council elections. The Muslim Brotherhood is well-known throughout the country, for many years providing healthcare and other social services to the poor when the government failed to deliver.[23] According to Nathan Brown, Carnegie Scholar and Professor of Political Science and International Affairs at George Washington University, 'the ability of the FJP to reach for a parliamentary majority became a natural consequence of its own deep experience and nationwide presence as well as of the weakness of almost all its rivals'.[24]

Notwithstanding the party's electoral success, controversy continues to surround the FJP. Carnegie notes that a controversial platform for a political party floated by the Muslim Brotherhood in 2007 alarmed many by proposing the creation of a clerical committee to review legislation for compliance with Islamic law and another to prohibit women and non-Muslims from running for president. Although the Muslim Brotherhood later repudiated the most extreme features of the platform, doubts still remain about the new party's real intentions.[25]

Aware that the election of an Islamist parliament has induced fear among liberals, particularly in light of the success of the hardline Al Nour party,[26] the Muslim Brotherhood

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[22] Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (undated), *Al-Hurriyya wa al-'Adala (Freedom and Justice Party)*, <http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2011/09/22/al-hurriyya-wa-al-%e2%80%98adala-freedom-and-justice-party> Accessed 27 March 2012

[23] El Deeb, Sarah 2011, 'Egypt's ElBaradei: Liberals 'decimated' in vote', *Associated Press*, 4 December, *Guardian* <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/feedarticle/9979067> Accessed 27 March 2012

[24] Brown, Nathan 2012, *When victory becomes an option: Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood confronts success*, *The Carnegie Papers*, January, p.5 <http://carnegieendowment.org/files/brotherhood_success.pdf> Accessed 26 March 2012

[25] Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (undated), *Al-Hurriyya wa al-'Adala (Freedom and Justice Party)*, <http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2011/09/22/al-hurriyya-wa-al-%e2%80%98adala-freedom-and-justice-party> Accessed 27 March 2012

[26] El Deeb, Sarah 2011, 'Egypt's ElBaradei: Liberals 'decimated' in vote', *Associated Press*, 4 December, *Guardian* <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/feedarticle/9979067> Accessed 27 March 2012

has insisted that assumptions that there will be a natural Brotherhood-Salafi alliance are unfounded.[27] According to Nathan Brown:

> They may be telling the truth because on a societal level, the Brotherhood and the Salafi movements regard each other as rivals rather than partners. A Brotherhood attempt to align with non-Islamist forces (an approach leaders probably prefer for now) may be a good way to send reassuring signals, but the polarization in Egyptian politics that has set in over the past year coupled with some liberals' and leftists' strong fear of Islamists… would make such a task much more difficult.[28]

High-profile reform leader and Nobel Prize laureate Mohamed ElBaradei predicted that the FJP will prefer to form an alliance with the liberals rather than the Salafis, proposing that the Egyptian Bloc could counterbalance hard-line elements. However, Nathan Brown notes that an assertive Salafi bloc in Parliament may place the FJP in an awkward position, forcing them 'to choose between competing with the Salafis for the Islamist base and reassuring non-Islamist political forces at home and abroad'.[29]

The Freedom and Justice Party includes a Coptic Vice President and more than 100 Copts among its more than 10,000 members.[30]

Major Party Figures:

Mohammed Morsi: President
Rafiq Habib: Vice president (Coptic Christian)
Essam al-Arian: Vice president and spokesman
Saad al-Katatny: Secretary-General

The Salafi Al-Nour (Light Party)

Al-Nour is a Salafi political party founded after the 2011 revolution. It was the first Salafi organisation to submit a request to be recognised as an official political party. Al Nour was originally a member of the Democratic Alliance, but left the alliance in September 2011, becoming the founding member and largest party in the Islamist

[27] Brown, Nathan 2012, *When victory becomes an option: Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood confronts success*, *The Carnegie Papers*, January, p.9 <http://carnegieendowment.org/files/brotherhood_success.pdf> Accessed 26 March 2012

[28] Brown, Nathan 2012, *When victory becomes an option: Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood confronts success*, *The Carnegie Papers*, January, p.9 <http://carnegieendowment.org/files/brotherhood_success.pdf> Accessed 26 March 2012

[29] Brown, Nathan 2012, *When victory becomes an option: Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood confronts success*, *The Carnegie Papers*, January, p.17 <http://carnegieendowment.org/files/brotherhood_success.pdf> Accessed 26 March 2012

[30] International Foundation for Electoral Systems 2011, *Elections in Egypt: Analysis of the 2011 Parliamentary Electoral System*, 1 November, p.11 <http://www.ifes.org/~/media/Files/Publications/White%20PaperReport/2011/Analysis_of_Egypts_2011_Parliamentary_Electoral_System.pdf> Accessed 22 March 2012

Alliance. The party advocates gradual reform under the slogan: "The only reform we desire is the reform we can achieve". This slogan is based on a view of the principles of Islam as a comprehensive framework for religion and state.[31]

The term Salafism refers to an interpretation of Islam that seeks to restore Islamic faith and practice to the way they existed at the time of Muhammad and the early generations of his followers (known as the Salaf). Since this early period represented the golden age of Islam in its pure form, Salafis believe it should be the example followed by all Muslims today.[32]

Party platforms include:

- Supporting Article 2 of the Egyptian Constitution which states that Islam is the religion of the state and the Islamic law is the main source of legislation

- Preserving fundamental rights and public freedoms in the framework of Islamic law

- Calling for Islamic law to serve as the guiding principles for all political, social and economic issues

- Supporting separation between the legislative, judicial and executive powers and independence of the judiciary

- Supporting religious freedom for the Copts and separate personal status laws for non-Muslims.[33]

The popularity of the Salafi parties in Egypt is worrisome for secular Egyptians and policymakers in the United States and Europe.[34] In the past, Salafis refrained from participating in political activity. The rise of these parties thus represents a sharp break with Mubarak-era Egypt, when most Salafis considered participation in politics to be religiously forbidden.[35]

Until recently, Salafism has been neither centralised nor hierarchical at the local or national level. It has revolved around the lessons and sermons of acclaimed Salafi scholars and preachers in the Nile Delta.[36] According to Jonathan Brown, Assistant Professor of Islamic Studies and Muslim-Christian Understanding at Georgetown University, Salafis have claimed that they could muster more votes on the ground than the Muslim Brotherhood. A former Muslim Brotherhood leader and now independent presidential candidate Abdel Moneim

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[31] Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (undated), *Al-Nour (Light Party), Guide to Egypt's transition* <http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2011/09/21/al-nour-light-party> Accessed 27 March 2012

[32] Brown, Jonathan 2011, *Salafis and Sufis in Egypt*, *The Carnegie Papers*, December, p.3 <http://www.ciaonet.org/wps/ceip/0023950/f_0023950_19493.pdf> Accessed 26 March 2012

[33] Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (undated), *Al-Nour (Light Party), Guide to Egypt's transition* <http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2011/09/21/al-nour-light-party> Accessed 27 March 2012

[34] Brown, Jonathan 2011, *Salafis and Sufis in Egypt*, *The Carnegie Papers*, December, p.3 <http://www.ciaonet.org/wps/ceip/0023950/f_0023950_19493.pdf> Accessed 26 March 2012

[35] Brown, Jonathan 2011, *Salafis and Sufis in Egypt*, *The Carnegie Papers*, December, p.3 <http://www.ciaonet.org/wps/ceip/0023950/f_0023950_19493.pdf> Accessed 26 March 2012

[36] Brown, Jonathan 2011, *Salafis and Sufis in Egypt*, *The Carnegie Papers*, December, p.4 <http://www.ciaonet.org/wps/ceip/0023950/f_0023950_19493.pdf> Accessed 26 March 2012

Abouel Fotouh publicly estimated that Salafis outnumber Muslim Brotherhood members by twenty to one.[37] The surprisingly successful showing for the Salafi al-Nour party attests to the movement's popularity, but in key contests Muslim Brotherhood candidates beat those of Al-Nour.[38]

The Al Nour party program supports religious freedom for Copts including separate personal status laws. However, Copts are suspicious about Salafist intentions to apply Islamic Sharia.[39] Al-Nour calls for a Muslim male to be the president of Egypt because it is a Muslim state.[40] Moreover, following the fall of Mubarak there was a series of violent acts committed by or attributed to Salafis, including attacks against Copts and their places of worship.[41]

Major Party Figures:
Emad ad-Din Abd al-Ghofour: President

Al-Wafd (Delegation Party)

Al-Wafd is one of the old, established political parties seeking to find their place in post-uprising Egypt.[42] It is a liberal party that emerged from the old Wafd party, which played an important role during the 1923-1952 period. It has branches all over the 27 governorates in Egypt.[43]

According to *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, ever since Al-Wafd was revived it has struggled with internal divisions, aging leaders, and lack of dynamism. It is competing

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[37] Brown, Jonathan 2011, *Salafis and Sufis in Egypt*, *The Carnegie Papers*, December, p.5-6 <http://www.ciaonet.org/wps/ceip/0023950/f_0023950_19493.pdf> Accessed 26 March 2012

[38] Brown, Jonathan 2011, *Salafis and Sufis in Egypt*, *The Carnegie Papers*, December, p.5 <http://www.ciaonet.org/wps/ceip/0023950/f_0023950_19493.pdf> Accessed 26 March 2012

[39] Shehata, Said 2011, 'Profiles of Egypt's political parties: Al Nour', *BBC News*, 25 November <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-15899539> Accessed 27 March 2012

[40] Shehata, Said 2011, 'Profiles of Egypt's political parties: Al Nour', *BBC News*, 25 November <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-15899539> Accessed 27 March 2012

[41] Brown, Jonathan 2011, *Salafis and Sufis in Egypt*, *The Carnegie Papers*, December, p.7 <http://www.ciaonet.org/wps/ceip/0023950/f_0023950_19493.pdf> Accessed 26 March 2012; Nasira, Hani 2011, 'Perspectives on the Islamist and Salafist parties in Egypt: Similarities and dissimilarities', *Terrorism Monitor: The Jamestown Foundation*, Vol. 9, Issue 38 <http://www.jamestown.org/programs/gta/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=38552&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=26&cHash=64e7ec0a2e4485f2c6e8d981d243f014> Accessed 27 March 2012

[42] Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (undated), *Al-Wafd (Delegation Party),* <http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2011/09/20/al-wafd-delegation-party> Accessed 27 March 2012

[43] Shehata, Said 2011, 'Profiles of Egypt's political parties: Al-Wafd', *BBC News*, 25 November <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-15899546> Accessed 27 March 2012

with new liberal parties that cannot claim a historical name and legacy but have younger and more dynamic leaders.[44]

Party platforms include:

- Imposing a two-term limit on the presidency and decreasing the power of the president

- Enforcing separation of powers between the three branches of government and ensuring the independence of the judiciary, particularly of the Supreme Constitutional Court

- Ensuring human rights and democracy

- Abolishing all special security courts and repealing the emergency law

- Repealing all laws that restrict the exercise of civil liberties.[45]

Although Al-Wafd is a liberal party, it supports Sharia being the main source of legislation and does not seek the separation of religion and state.[46] Indeed, as *Carnegie Endowment* notes, all major non-Islamist parties have affirmed their belief in Islam as the state religion and source of legislation, and call for a relationship between Islam and the state.[47]

Major Party Figures:
Sayyid al-Badawi: Chairman
Fouad Badrawi: Deputy chairman
Ahmed 'Auda: Secretary-general

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[44] Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (undated), *Al-Wafd (Delegation Party),* <http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2011/09/20/al-wafd-delegation-party> Accessed 27 March 2012

[45] Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (undated), *Al-Wafd (Delegation Party),* <http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2011/09/20/al-wafd-delegation-party> Accessed 27 March 2012

[46] Shehata, Said 2011, 'Profiles of Egypt's political parties: Al-Wafd', *BBC News*, 25 November <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-15889546> Accessed 27 March 2012

[47] These parties prefer to be called "civil" parties and believe in a civil state which respects all religions and respects the freedom to practice or not practice religion, positions which would be termed "secular" in the West. Note also that the FJP also calls itself a civil party and supports the concept of a civil state. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace 2012, *Who are the non-Islamists in Egypt's new People's Assembly*, 26 January, (footnote) <http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2012/01/26/who-are-the-non-islamists-in-egypts-new-parliament> Accessed 27 March 2012

The Egypt Bloc

The Egypt Bloc is the main liberal alliance in the Egyptian parliament. It consists of three parties: the Egyptian Social Democratic Party (16 seats), the Free Egyptians Party (15 seats) and al-Tagammu (3 seats).[48]

The Egypt Bloc was formed in August 2011 as a coalition of fourteen liberal and leftist parties. However, the coalition broke up over disagreement on the number of places each party would get on the list and because some parties were concerned that members of the former ruling National Democratic Party were included on the lists.[49]

The Egypt Bloc is often portrayed as a "secular-leaning" alliance that seeks to counterbalance the influence of the Muslim Brotherhood in the elections, specifically the FJP-led Democratic Alliance.[50] According to Osama al-Ghazali Harb, a leader of the Democratic Front Party (now withdrawn), the Bloc's goal is 'to say very clearly that we believe that [the] new Egypt has to be a civil democratic state'.[51] The Egypt Bloc's platform includes realising the revolution's ideals of liberal democracy and universal citizenship.[52]

Although the Egypt Bloc promotes a civil state, the coalition has endorsed the al-Azhar statement of constitutional principles, which declares Islam to be the official religion and the main source of legislation. However, the Egypt Bloc opposes what it calls the 'exploitation of religion for political purposes' and the transformation of Egypt into an Islamic state.[53]

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[48] 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

[49] Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (undated), *Al-Ketla al-Masriyya (The Egypt Bloc)*, <http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2011/09/26/the-egypt-bloc> Accessed 27 March 2012

[50] 'The Egyptian Bloc' 2011, *Ahram Online*, 18 November <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/33/103/26718/Elections-/Electoral-Alliances/The-Egyptian-Bloc.aspx> Accessed 27 March 2012

[51] Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (undated), *Al-Ketla al-Masriyya (The Egypt Bloc)*, <http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2011/09/26/the-egypt-bloc> Accessed 27 March 2012

[52] Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (undated), *Al-Ketla al-Masriyya (The Egypt Bloc)*, <http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2011/09/26/the-egypt-bloc> Accessed 27 March 2012

[53] Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (undated), *Al-Ketla al-Masriyya (The Egypt Bloc)*, <http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2011/09/26/the-egypt-bloc> Accessed 27 March 2012

NEXT STEPS

Constitution

The 1971 Egyptian constitution was annulled by the SCAF following the 2011 revolution. On 24 March 2012 the Islamist-dominated Egyptian parliament selected a 100-member panel to draft the country's new constitution. The selection of the panel, called the Constituent Assembly, has ignited strong criticism from secular and liberal Egyptians, precipitating a new phase of political instability.

According to rules adopted at separate joint sessions of parliament in March 2012, fifty per cent of the 100-member panel was to be drawn from members of parliament, proportional to election results. The other fifty per cent was to be comprised of respected persons outside parliament, including noted academics, religious leaders, political figures and activists.[54]

The parliament has selected a constitutional assembly heavily dominated by Islamists. According to *AFP*, 39 of the 50 parliamentarians chosen for the panel are Islamists.[55] The Muslim Brotherhood's FJP has the biggest representation on the panel, followed by the Salafi Al-Nour party.[56] Additionally, according to liberal activists, the second half of the panel also includes a large number of Islamist religious and political figures 'and a paucity of constitutional experts, judges and lawyers'.[57]

Only six women and six Coptic Christians were selected for the Constituent Assembly.[58] Additionally, there were only a few names from the revolutionary movement behind the 2011 ouster of Mubarak.[59] In what *Associated Press* termed 'a glaring omission', the

[54] Bradley, Matt 2012, 'Egypt's Islamists set to dominate new constitution', *The Wall Street Journal*, 25 March <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304177104577303820612567042.html?mod=googlenews_wsj> Accessed 26 March 2012

[55] Al-Atrush, Samer 2012, 'Egypt Islamist-dominated panel to draft charter', *Agence France Presse*, 25 March <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jbgKXSOuYFAC_Ez8xQFJYfuiCx1Q?docId=CNG.6c506f03a33f7d465b1584108aefd86a.411> Accessed 26 March 2012

[56] Al-Atrush, Samer 2012, 'Egypt Islamist-dominated panel to draft charter', *Agence France Presse*, 25 March <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jbgKXSOuYFAC_Ez8xQFJYfuiCx1Q?docId=CNG.6c506f03a33f7d465b1584108aefd86a.411> Accessed 26 March 2012

[57] Bradley, Matt 2012, 'Egypt's Islamists set to dominate new constitution', *The Wall Street Journal*, 25 March <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304177104577303820612567042.html?mod=googlenews_wsj> Accessed 26 March 2012

[58] Bradley, Matt 2012, 'Egypt's Islamists set to dominate new constitution', *The Wall Street Journal*, 25 March <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304177104577303820612567042.html?mod=googlenews_wsj> Accessed 26 March 2012

[59] Hendawi, Hamza 2012, 'Egypt's Islamists win majority on constitutional panel', *Associated Press*, 25 March, *The Globe and Mail* website <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/egypts-islamists-win-majority-on-constitution-panel/article2380698/?utm_medium=Feeds%3A%20RSS%2FAtom&utm_source=Home&utm_content=2380698> Accessed 26 March 2012

country's most prominent democracy advocate, Mohamed ElBaradei, was also left out.[60] According to *The Wall Street Journal*, the selection of the constituent assembly:

> … offers the most concrete evidence that the relatively moderate Islamists in the Muslim Brotherhood are willing to partner with the more conservative Salafi Islamist counterparts at the expense of liberal activists and politicians who sparked Egypt's revolution little more than one year ago.[61]

Egypt's liberals and leftists have vowed to boycott the constituent assembly and over a dozen liberal politicians have reportedly pulled out of the panel.[62] They claim that Islamists have too much control over the constitution and that the Muslim Brotherhood is ignoring the interests of minority groups.[63] Egyptian media reported that several members of the SCAF also expressed their disapproval of the makeup of the Constituent Assembly.[64]

Egypt's 1971 constitution, which Islamist leaders and other politicians have said would likely form the basis for the new document, already stipulates that Sharia law should form the basis of all legislation (Article 2). Mubarak's regime interpreted the article loosely during his 30 years in power.[65] However, Nader Bakr, the al-Nour spokesman and Constituent Assembly member, has reportedly stated that al-Nour will seek to alter the wording of Article 2 to make legislation conform to Sharia "judgments".[66]

[60] Hendawi, Hamza 2012, 'Egypt's Islamists win majority on constitutional panel', *Associated Press*, 25 March, *The Globe and Mail* website <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/egypts-islamists-win-majority-on-constitution-panel/article2380698/?utm_medium=Feeds%3A%20RSS%2FAtom&utm_source=Home&utm_content=2380698> Accessed 26 March 2012

[61] Bradley, Matt 2012, 'Egypt's Islamists set to dominate new constitution', *The Wall Street Journal*, 25 March <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304177104577303820612567042.html?mod=googlenews_wsj> Accessed 26 March 2012

[62] 'Egypt's Brotherhood faces backlash from military, liberals over constitutional panel' 2012, Associated Press, 27 March <http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/two-prominent-liberals-quit-islamist-led-panel-tasked-with-drafting-new-constitution/2012/03/26/gIQArdcsbS_story.html> Accessed 27 March 2012

[63] El-Tablawy, Tarek and Abdel Latif Wahba 2012, 'Egyptian parties quit constitutional panel over Islamists', *Bloomberg Businessweek*, 27 March <http://www.businessweek.com/news/2012-03-27/egypt-parties-quit-constitution-panel-citing-islamist-dominance> Accessed 28 March 2012; 'Egypt secularists pull out of constituent assembly' 2012, *AFP*, 27 March <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5gsLQChU61o0L6HvTyZinVelzQRPQ?docId=CNG.e41141fcef353bf7f9d23ca1bca75382.541> Accessed 28 March 2012

[64] 'Egypt's Brotherhood faces backlash from military, liberals over constitutional panel' 2012, Associated Press, 27 March <http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/two-prominent-liberals-quit-islamist-led-panel-tasked-with-drafting-new-constitution/2012/03/26/gIQArdcsbS_story.html> Accessed 27 March 2012

[65] Bradley, Matt 2012, 'Egypt's Islamists set to dominate new constitution', *The Wall Street Journal*, 25 March <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304177104577303820612567042.html?mod=googlenews_wsj> Accessed 26 March 2012

[66] Bradley, Matt 2012, 'Egypt's Islamists set to dominate new constitution', *The Wall Street Journal*, 25 March <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304177104577303820612567042.html?mod=googlenews_wsj> Accessed 26 March 2012

According to *Carnegie Endowment*, the clearest difference between the FJP and other parties when it comes to the constitution concerns not religion but the relationship between executive and legislative power.[67] The FJP wants to make the prime minister responsible to the parliament, with the elected president controlling security and foreign policy. Secular parties such as al-Wafd, the Free Egyptians Party, and al-Ghad seem to prefer a strong president, apparently assuming that he will not be an Islamist.[68]

The Constituent Assembly is scheduled to meet on 28 March 2012 to begin deliberations on the constitution, however many political analysts expect that the process will take more than three months.[69] Meanwhile, Cairo's Administrative Court is looking into the legitimacy of the constitutional panel after lawsuits were filed by several legal experts arguing that a constitution cannot be drafted by those whose role it will define.[70] It is expected to make a ruling on 10 April 2012.[71]

Presidential Elections

The office of president has been vacant since the overthrow of Hosni Mubarak in February 2011. Muhammad Hussein Tantawi, head of the SCAF, is acting head of state.[72] Presidential elections are scheduled for 23-24 May 2012 with a runoff to be held between the top two candidates on 16 June 2012, if necessary. The winner is scheduled to be announced on 21 June 2012.[73]

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[67] Carnegie Endowment for International Peace 2012, *Who will write the Egyptian constitution?, Guide to Egypt's Transition*, 13 March <http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2012/03/13/who-will-write-the-egyptian-constitution> Accessed 27 March

[68] Carnegie Endowment for International Peace 2012, *Who will write the Egyptian constitution?, Guide to Egypt's Transition*, 13 March <http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2012/03/13/who-will-write-the-egyptian-constitution> Accessed 27 March

[69] Bradley, Matt 2012, 'Egypt's Islamists set to dominate new constitution', *The Wall Street Journal*, 25 March <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304177104577303820612567042.html?mod=googlenews_wsj> Accessed 26 March 2012

[70] 'Egypt secularists pull out of constituent assembly' 2012, *AFP*, 27 March <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5gsLQChU61o0L6HvTyZinVelzQRPQ?docId=CNG.e41141fcef353bf7f9d23ca1bca75382.541> Accessed 28 March 2012

[71] El-Tablawy, Tarek and Abdel Latif Wahba 2012, 'Egyptian parties quit constitutional panel over Islamists', *Bloomberg Businessweek*, 27 March <http://www.businessweek.com/news/2012-03-27/egypt-parties-quit-constitution-panel-citing-islamist-dominance> Accessed 28 March 2012

[72] International Foundation for Election Systems 2011, *Election Guide – Egypt*, 7 December <http://electionguide.org/country.php?ID=65> Accessed 22 March 2012

[73] Hendawi, Hamza 2012, 'Egypt's Islamists win majority on constitutional panel', *Associated Press*, 25 March, *The* Globe *and Mail* website <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/egypts-islamists-win-majority-on-constitution-

Some prominent candidates for president are:

- **Amr Moussa** – Former Arab League chief and Mubarak-era foreign minister

- **Lt. Gen Ahmed Shafiq** – Former prime minister

- **Hazem Abu-Ismail** – Prominent Salafi

- **Abdel Moneim Abolfotoh** – Moderate Islamist and former Muslim Brotherhood leader

- **Omar Suleiman** - Former Mubarak vice-president and long-time head of Egyptian General Intelligence.[74]

Despite assurances from the Muslim Brotherhood that they would not field a candidate for president (and for expelling Abdel Moneim Abolfotoh for joining the race), the organisation announced in late March that they are now considering such a move.[75]

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panel/article2380698/?utm_medium=Feeds%3A%20RSS%2FAtom&utm_source=Home&utm_content=2380698> Accessed 26 March 2012

[74] For more information about these and other prominent candidates please see Carnegie Endowment for International Peace 2012, *Presidential Candidates, Guide to Egypt's Transition* <http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/tag/presidential-candidates> Accessed 27 March 2012

[75] Hendawi, Hamza 2012, 'Egypt's Islamists win majority on constitutional panel', *Associated Press*, 25 March, *The Globe and Mail* website <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/egypts-islamists-win-majority-on-constitution-panel/article2380698/?utm_medium=Feeds%3A%20RSS%2FAtom&utm_source=Home&utm_content=2380698> Accessed 26 March 2012; 'Egypt's Brotherhood mulling run for president' 2012, *Al Arabiya News*, 22 March <http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/03/22/202371.html> Accessed 27 March 2012