ATLANTIC COUNCIL

A New Deal:
Reforming US Defense Cooperation with Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia

George Casey and Jim Kolbe, Task Force Co-Chairs
Jeff Lightfoot, Rapporteur

Members of the North Africa Task Force

The Atlantic Council assembled a task force of leading experts in regional security and defense cooperation to inform the work of this report. The members of the task force helped shaped the report's scope, findings, and recommendations, but do not necessarily agree with all of its conclusions or recommendations.

Co-Chairs

Gen. George W. Casey, Jr., USA (Ret.)
Former Chief of Staff
United States Army

The Hon. Jim Kolbe
Senior Adviser
McLarty Associates
Former Member of Congress (R-AZ)

Task Force Members

Kevin J. Cosgriff*
Senior Vice President, International Business and Government
Textron Systems

Jim Dubik
Senior Fellow
Institute for the Study of War

Michele Dunne
Director, Rafik Hariri Center for the Middle East
Atlantic Council

Michael Eisenstadt
Director, Military and Security Studies Program
Washington Institute for Near East Policy

Peter Flory*
Vice President, International, Technology Solutions Group
Qinetiq

Danya Greenfield
Deputy Director, Rafik Hariri Center for the Middle East
Atlantic Council

Mara Karlin***
Principal Director, Strategy
United States Department of Defense

Eric Knecht
Research Assistant, Rafik Hariri Center for the Middle East
Atlantic Council

Franklin D. Kramer**
Distinguished Senior Fellow
Atlantic Council

Ellen Laipson
President and CEO
Stimson Center

Jeff Lightfoot
Deputy Director, Brent Scowcroft Center on International Security
Atlantic Council

Karim Mezran
Senior Fellow, Rafik Hariri Center for the Middle East
Atlantic Council

Eric Olson
Former Commander
United States Special Forces Command

David Ottoway
Senior Scholar for Middle East
Woodrow Wilson International Center

Barry Pavel
Director and Arnold Kanter Chair, Brent Scowcroft Center on International Security
Atlantic Council

Matt Sherman
Senior Adviser
The Scowcroft Group

Walt Slocombe**
Senior Counsel
Caplin & Drysdale

Larry Velte
Faculty, Near East South Asia Center
National Defense University

Ross Wilson
Director, Dinu Patriciu Eurasia Center
Atlantic Council

Brian Winski
US Army Fellow
Washington Institute

* Atlantic Council Member
** Atlantic Council Board Director
***Ms. Karlin served on the task force prior to her entry into government in November 2012.

A New Deal:
Reforming US Defense Cooperation with Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia

George Casey and Jim Kolbe, Task Force Co-Chairs
Jeff Lightfoot, Rapporteur

© 2013 The Atlantic Council of the United States. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means without permission in writing from the Atlantic Council, except in the case of brief quotations in news articles, critical articles, or reviews. Please direct inquiries to:

Atlantic Council
1101 15th Street NW, 11th Floor
Washington, DC 20005

ISBN: 978-1-61977-028-7

April 2013

About the Co-Chairs

General George W. Casey, Jr., USA (Ret.) is an accomplished soldier and an authority on strategic leadership. As the 36th chief of staff of the United States Army from 2007 to 2011, General Casey led more than 1.1 million people with a $200+ billion annual budget during an extraordinary period in military and global political history. During his career with the United States Army, General Casey held command positions from platoon to division level and beyond and served in operational assignments in Germany, Italy, Egypt, Bosnia, Iraq, and the United States. He has extensive command experience. Prior to his appointment as Army chief of staff, he served for three years as the senior commander of coalition forces in Iraq. General Casey is a graduate of Georgetown University's Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service and earned his Master of Arts in international relations at the University of Denver.

The Hon. Jim Kolbe currently serves as a strategic consultant with McLarty Associates. Congressman Kolbe served in the United States House of Representatives, elected in Arizona for eleven consecutive terms, from 1985 to 2007. While in Congress, he served for twenty years on the US House Appropriations Committee; was chairman of the Treasury, Post Office, and Related Agencies Subcommittee; and chaired the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Agencies Subcommittee. Congressman Kolbe graduated from Northwestern University with a Bachelor of Arts in political science and from Stanford University with a Master of Business Administration and a concentration in economics. Among his many honors, Congressman Kolbe received the United States Agency for International Development Distinguished Service Award.

About the Rapporteur

Jeff Lightfoot is a deputy director of the Brent Scowcroft Center on International Security at the Atlantic Council, where he works on transatlantic security and the Center's Middle East Peace and Security Initiative. Lightfoot earned his master's degree in European and Eurasian studies from the Elliott School of International Affairs at The George Washington University; his Bachelor of Arts in international studies and French from Indiana University Bloomington; and his Bachelor of Science from the Kelley School of Business at Indiana University. Prior to joining the Atlantic Council, Lightfoot interned at The Scowcroft Group and State Farm Insurance.

Foreword

It has been more than two years since protests began in Tunisia, unleashing a wave of political change across North Africa and the Middle East. The transitions that have followed in Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia have changed the political map of the region and have required the United States to rethink how it engages with those three states. This includes reassessing traditional US security interests and relationships in the region, with an eye to supporting constructive democratic change.

One of the most overlooked aspects of the transitions in North Africa is the critical but contrasting role the armed forces of Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia have played during this period of upheaval. This Atlantic Council report draws attention to the important role the armed forces have played and encourages the Obama administration and the Congress to adapt defense cooperation arrangements to changing circumstances. Its authors argue that the goal of defense cooperation going forward should be to promote full civilian control of the armed forces and reform foreign military sales and training to prepare the armed forces for new threats. The report's findings reflect the fragility of democratic gains in North Africa and the need for security institutions that can address evolving threats, particularly of a domestic nature, without interfering in politics or violating the rights of free citizens.

I am particularly pleased that this report has served as a collaborative effort between the Atlantic Council's Brent Scowcroft Center on International Security and its Rafik Hariri Center for the Middle East. I am especially grateful for the leadership and extensive engagement in this project of its distinguished co-chairs, General George Casey and Congressman Jim Kolbe. They have brought unparalleled expertise and wisdom to this effort and were indispensible in shaping this report and its findings. I thank all of the members of the task force who have contributed with their time and intellect to this project. Their names are listed on the inside front cover.

The work of this project was guided by its co-chairs and task force, but was also richly informed by a visit of the co-chairs and Atlantic Council staff to Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia during the summer and fall of 2012. I am appreciative of all of those who generously shared their time and expertise with the task force during their trip.

Finally, I am grateful in particular for the work of Hariri Center director Michele Dunne and Scowcroft Center director Barry Pavel in overseeing this project and Scowcroft Center deputy director Jeff Lightfoot for leading this effort. Hariri Center deputy director Danya Greenfield made important contributions to the drafting of the report, as did senior fellow Karim Mezran and research assistant Eric Knecht. A special thanks to Duncan Pickard, Tarek Radwan, HuiHui Ooi, and Tuqa Nusairat for their assistance with trip coordination.

I hope you find this report to be thoughtful and a useful contribution to the literature on the transitions occurring in North Africa.

Frederick Kempe
President and CEO
Atlantic Council

Executive Summary

The democratic transitions in Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya will remain reversible unless and until their security agencies are reformed to carry out their functions without abusing citizen rights or interfering in politics. This is true of both internal security forces and armed forces; this report focuses on the latter. The future role of the armed forces is vital to the outcomes of the transitions and to the attainment of US political and strategic interests in the region.

President Barack Obama affirmed in his second inaugural address that the United States would support democracy in the Middle East "because our interests and our conscience compel us to act on behalf of those who long for freedom." Traditional US strategic, energy, and counterterrorism interests are now complemented by a US interest in the successful democratization of the countries in transition, particularly those in North Africa.

It should be a goal of US policy that the armed forces in Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia come under the control of democratically-elected civilian leaders and that they are properly equipped and trained to address modern threats. To achieve these aims, the United States should adapt existing defense cooperation arrangements. Even as the United States seeks the same outcome for all three militaries, it will have to tailor its defense cooperation with each to address their divergent defense needs, challenges, and historical narratives.

In Egypt, for example, the military has long played an important role in the country's political and social fabric, including during the transition period. The military played a critical role in forcing former President Hosni Mubarak to resign, assuming executive and legislative authority in Egypt during much of the transition to civilian rule. The United States' annual $1.3 billion in military assistance has served as the backbone of the bilateral relationship and a cornerstone of regional security, while incentivizing peaceful Egyptian-Israeli relations. The challenge for US policy is to ensure that American military assistance helps the Egyptian military to meet actual defense threats while also undergoing a shift in civil-military relations. It is in the US national interest to see the military play a constructive role in the transition, to accept the authority and oversight of democratically-elected civilian officials, and to transform its capabilities to address threats from non-state actors, particularly in the Sinai.

The Tunisian military has played a far different role in the country's society and history. Since independence, the Tunisian military has been relatively small, under-resourced, and subordinate to civilian authority. As in Egypt, the Tunisian military played a critical role in the transition by refusing former President Ben Ali's orders to fire on protesters. Unlike Egypt, however, the Tunisian military refused to assume a political role in the transition that followed, handing power immediately to interim civilian authorities. The Tunisian military has long enjoyed a strong relationship with its US counterpart, but is far less dependent on US assistance than Egypt. US policy should aim to strengthen the capacity of Tunisia's civilian defense officials, while improving the military's capability to secure its borders and protect the country's fragile democracy from terrorists and Islamic militants.

Unlike Egypt and Tunisia, Libya suffers from the fact that its state institutions crumbled with the fall of the Qaddafi regime. The fundamental challenge for Libya is to build a centralized security force capable of bringing order to the country. This will require integrating various militias into a common national force, as well as developing a cadre of civilian experts capable of leading and administering an eventual national armed force. Fortunately, Libya possesses the resources to finance its defense transformation independently. However, it cannot achieve these goals

without western assistance. Libya will need the training, equipment, and support of the United States and other allies and partners.

In light of these challenges and opportunities, the United States needs to reform its defense cooperation arrangements with Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia. The Obama administration and Congress should adopt the following general recommendations:

- **Reshape US Security Policies:** The United States should reshape its security policies toward these transitioning states. It should recalibrate these relationships to ensure they advance priority US interests, meet the changing defense needs of the transitioning countries, and help rather than hurt the prospects for successful democratic transitions.
- **Stay Engaged:** The United States must remain engaged in supporting these transitions, which are sure to be protracted and messy. This includes providing military assistance to meet changing defense needs, but should also include an interagency approach that incorporates economic and political support.
- **Prioritize Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia:** The United States should focus its resources on supporting the transitions well under way in North Africa. Ensuring that these transitions succeed will set a powerful example to other transitioning countries that democracy can exist in the heart of the Arab world.
- **Introduce an Enhanced Security Dialogue:** The United States should begin a structured dialogue with each of these countries that incorporates both military and civilian officials. The purpose of these dialogues should be to sharpen thinking on defense requirements during the transitional phase, focusing on threats, capabilities, defense agreements, and the role of the military in society.
- **Build Relationships:** The United States should expand its support for International Military Education and Training (IMET), exercises, and civilian exchange programs to strengthen US relationships with military and civilian officials in all three countries.

A New Deal:
Reforming US Defense Cooperation with Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia

Introduction

While Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia face markedly different challenges as they undergo their post-revolutionary transitions, they share some problems in common. Politically, all of them face secular and Islamist elements engaged in a competition for the future of their societies. Economically, all are having difficulty resuming economic growth in the face of ongoing political turmoil. And all are experiencing strong internal security challenges and the need to reform and depoliticize security institutions. It is an important national security interest of the United States that these transitions produce democratic, moderate, pluralistic governments that cooperate with the West.

The competing political factions in these countries mistrust each other, which will complicate and lengthen the transitions. The resulting political instability has impeded the economic growth necessary for the transitions to succeed. Greater political and economic development will be required for the countries to move forward, which only will be possible with a sufficient degree of security and political stability.

The most significant security challenges facing Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia are internal threats from extremists, terrorists, and smugglers who also are able to move easily across porous borders and thousands of kilometers of ungoverned spaces. In all three countries, the intelligence, justice, and internal security services need major reform to address these security challenges while improving respect for human rights. However, broad Security Sector Reform issues are beyond the scope of this project.

Instead, this report focuses on how the transitioning countries will benefit if their militaries emerge from the transitions subordinate to democratically-elected civilian leaders, capable of protecting the transitions from internal and external threats, and serving as an even-handed guardian of the state.

Fortunately, in all three countries, the militaries are open in principle to the concept of civilian control. However, there is little to no consensus among the parties as to what this means or entails. This report's reference point for the definition of democratic control of the armed forces comes from the Geneva Center for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces. Their framework, reflected in the chart below, usefully provides a list of the "essential and desirable elements of civil-military relations in a democracy." It makes the point that democratic control of the armed forces requires well-defined institutions, strong and clear legal frameworks, and robust civilian defense expertise. Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia will not achieve all of these elements very soon, but it should be a central goal of US defense cooperation to assist these countries in moving toward these ends in ways that suit their culture and histories.

The Obama administration should reinvigorate US defense cooperation with Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia to support the democratic transitions underway and work collaboratively with them to address their evolving defense needs. Its policies should be informed by an analysis of the histories of the revolutions and the democratic transitions in the three countries, and the role the militaries played in shaping them.

Geneva Center for the Democratic Control of the Armed Forces (DCAF)

DCAF definitions of essential and desirable elements of civil-military relations in a democracy:

1. **Civilian Control**
   Civilian authorities have control over the military's missions, composition, and budget and procurement policies. Military policy is defined or approved by the civilian leadership, but the military enjoys substantial operational autonomy in determining which operations are required to achieve the policy objectives defined by the civilian authority.

2. **Democratic governance**
   Democratic parliamentary and judicial institutions, a strong civil society and an independent media oversee the performance of the military. This ensures its accountability to both the population and the government, and promotes transparency in its decisions and actions.

3. **Civilian expertise**
   Civilians have the necessary expertise to fulfill their defense management and oversight responsibilities. This is tempered by respect for the professional expertise of the military, in particular as civilians often have limited operational experience.

4. **Non-interference in domestic politics**
   Neither the military as an institution nor individual military leaders attempt to influence domestic politics.

5. **Ideological neutrality**
   The military does not endorse any particular ideology or ethos beyond that of allegiance to the country.

6. **Minimal role in the national economy**
   The military may be the largest national employer and have links to defense-related economic sectors. This does not, however, dilute the military's loyalty to the democratic civilian leadership, undermine its primary mission or lead to disproportionate competition or interference with the civilian industrial sector.

7. **Effective chain of command**
   There is an effective chain of command within the military that ensures accountability to society and its oversight institutions, promotes respect for all relevant laws and regulations, and seeks to ensure professionalism in the military.

8. **Respect for the rights of military personnel**
   Members of the armed forces are free to exercise their rights.

9. **A clear legal framework** that incorporates the main principles of democratic control.

10. **Institutional mechanisms** that guarantee the rule of law.

Egypt

The Egyptian Military in Politics and the Transition

No country will prove more important in influencing the future direction of the Arab awakening than Egypt. Egypt is by far the largest of the transitioning democracies in the region, with a population of 88 million and 450,000 men in the armed forces. Moreover, few players have more weight in determining the ultimate success or outcome of the political transition in Egypt than the military, which has been a dominant force in Egyptian politics over the last six decades. For this reason, the most important issue facing US policymakers seeking to reframe the defense relationship with Egypt is to ensure that policies better incentivize the transition to civilian control of the military.

Egypt's military is a proud institution that sees itself as an anchor of security and stability in Egypt and the broader Arab world. The military has long enjoyed significant popularity among the Egyptian people, which was enhanced by its general support of the revolution against former President Hosni Mubarak. Sensing that Mubarak's offer of reforms was inadequate to quell unrest and that military cohesion would be threatened should troops be forced to fire on protestors, the senior military brass exerted sufficient pressure on Mubarak to step down from power on February 11, 2011. Following Mubarak's ouster, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF)—led by its chairman Field Marshal Muhammad Tantawi—assumed executive and legislative authority in Egypt. The eighteen months of SCAF rule was a difficult period for the SCAF and Egypt. As its tenure in office continued, the SCAF faced mounting public dissatisfaction, allegations of human rights abuses, and tensions with international partners like the United States.

The SCAF and Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood, which won a near-majority in parliamentary elections in early 2012, entered a complex battle for power. The Brotherhood reversed a public pledge not to run for the presidency, and the candidate of its Freedom and Justice Party, Mohammed Morsi, won the presidential election in June 2012 in a runoff with former military officer Ahmed Shafik. On the eve of Morsi's victory, the SCAF used its legislative power to issue a "Supplemental Declaration to the Constitution" that challenged the power of the presidency, particularly in security and military affairs, and gave the SCAF an ongoing political and constitutional role. At the same time, the Supreme Constitutional Court dissolved the Islamist-dominated parliament.

The SCAF's Supplemental Declaration did not stick for long. After a terrorist attack in the Sinai in August 2012 by Islamic militants, the democratically-elected Morsi repealed the Supplementary Declaration and removed the top leadership of the SCAF, including the 76-year-old Tantawi and Chief of Staff Sami Anan. In Tantawi's place, Morsi promoted 57-year-old General Abdul Fattah al Sissi, the SCAF's youngest member, to the top of its ranks. The repeal of the Supplementary Declaration returned the SCAF's powers (legislative as well as executive) to Morsi until a new constitution for Egypt was ratified. While Morsi's move against the SCAF created concern among Egyptians that too much power was now placed in the hands of one man—which has proved to be a valid concern—at that time the public supported the step as a needed signal that elected civilians would, henceforth, supervise the military.

Egypt's new constitution has answered some of the key questions regarding civilian control of Egypt's military, at least for the near future. It establishes civilian oversight of the military in the sense that the elected president is supreme commander of the armed forces and makes the senior military appointments. On the other hand, it does not provide for parliamentary oversight of the military budget, specifies that the defense minister must be a military officer, and allows military trials of civilians accused of crimes that "harm the armed forces."

In the preamble, the constitution credits the military with supporting the revolution and describes the armed forces as "a professional and neutral institution that does not interfere with politics. It is a protective shield of the country." The constitution's main text establishes a National Security Council as the ranking political body to determine security policy and strategy, and a National Defense Council as the political-military body to determine the appropriate implementation of policy and strategy, including oversight of the military budget. The latter Council, chaired by the president, will include seven uniformed members of the military among its fifteen participants, and will also include the speakers of both houses of parliament. The constitution requires the president to consult with the National Defense Council and a majority of the House of Representatives before declaring war or deploying troops outside Egyptian territory.

Egypt's Major Security Challenges and Needs

The greatest challenges to Egyptian security today are internal and on the country's borders: militants in the Sinai Peninsula; the flow of weapons, goods, and people emanating from Libya, Gaza, and Egypt's other borders; and personal insecurity and crime.

The Egyptian military is responsible for border security, but this task is far more complex than before the Arab spring as security conditions have worsened in Egypt's neighborhood. Addressing internal stability and crime has historically fallen under the purview of the police and internal security forces. Yet these forces largely collapsed in the aftermath of the revolution. Their sudden absence plunged parts of the country into lawlessness, forcing the Egyptian military to maintain order in certain parts of the country, despite their antipathy toward taking on an internal security function. Given that serious reform of the Egyptian interior ministry is yet to take place, the military is likely to have to maintain at least some responsibility for internal security in the near future.

Insecurity in the Sinai Peninsula is Egypt's most pressing security challenge. Militants in the Sinai have not only shown their ability to unleash lethal attacks on the Egyptian military—which is responsible for security in the peninsula—but also to threaten the longstanding peace between Egypt and Israel that serves as a cornerstone of Middle East security. In the interest of increasing Sinai security, Israel has agreed to a temporary addition of Egyptian troops in the peninsula, above the level of forces allowed by the Camp David accords, but extremists continue to function and proliferate.

Egypt's second major security challenge is the inability of its military to secure its borders with Libya and Gaza. The long border shared with Libya has become a major concern for Egyptian officials due to the trafficking of weapons and illegal goods and the presence of extremists in the eastern part of that country. Over the past year, there have been numerous reports of weapons crossing from Libya to Sinai, which further destabilizes an already troubled area. The inability to control the entry of illicit goods to Egyptian territory facilitates terrorism and causes problems for Egypt, Libya, and the region.

The ongoing conflict between Gaza and Israel touches on both regional security and border control as the constant flow of goods, people, and weapons through tunnels to and from Egypt and Hamas-controlled territory fuels terrorism and regional conflict. The smuggling problem that exists between Gaza and Egypt is more a political, rather than military, challenge. However, the infiltration of militants from Gaza into Egyptian territory targeting and killing Egyptian soldiers demonstrates that weak border control and the unresolved political conflict will continue to be a headache for any Egyptian government. The November 2012 flare-up between Hamas and Israel, and Morsi's role in brokering a cease-fire, is another reminder that Gaza remains an Egyptian, as well as an Israeli, problem.

The lack of civilian expertise in defense matters is a third challenge facing Egypt and will be an obstacle to ensuring civilian control of the military. For decades, defense policy has been dominated by the uniformed military. The ministry of defense has been—and remains—headed by a uniformed officer. Civilian defense officials have traditionally deferred to their military counterparts to set the strategic objectives and define the country's defense policy. Moreover, civilian defense professionals and their uniformed counterparts do not communicate well professionally and do not mingle socially. As the military has not been subject to civilian oversight in the past, parliamentary staff lacks the expertise and stature to properly monitor the budget and activities of the military.

A transition to full civilian control of the military will take time as it will require a reversal of a decades-long status quo, a change of culture, and civilian defense bureaucrats with sufficient experience, expertise, and stature to address their military counterparts as equals. The United States should work with the Egyptian government and military to help develop the modalities of a system for the military to operate effectively under competent civilian control—a concept generally accepted, but not clearly understood by the parties. For civilians and policymakers to gain the experience and expertise necessary to play this role, the United States and its allies could provide valuable training and technical assistance to help instill internationally-accepted best practices and democratic norms.

US-Egyptian Military Assistance and Training

The United States' annual military assistance to Egypt is the cornerstone of the US-Egypt strategic relationship. Since the Reagan administration, the United States has provided Egypt with an annual $1.3 billion in military aid as a means of incentivizing Egypt to keep its long-standing peace with Israel. The vast majority of this assistance is Foreign Military Financing (FMF), which offers financing or grants for the purchase of US military equipment. The assistance also helped to convert the Egyptian military from Soviet to American military equipment and doctrine, increasing the ability of US and Egyptian forces to operate together, as demonstrated in the biannual Bright Star exercise. As a result of the military-to-military relationship, the United States has privileged access to overflights and refueling by US military aircraft, as well as expedited transit of the Suez Canal by US warships, a great benefit—particularly over the last decade. The military aid at one time ran parallel with economic assistance, but has since come to dwarf the $250 million in economic aid that the United States has given Egypt for the past several years and requested for Fiscal Year 2013 by the Obama administration.

The Egyptian military uses US assistance primarily to procure new equipment and to maintain previously purchased equipment. According to the SCAF, US assistance accounts for 90 percent of Egypt's procurement budget, a percentage that has increased over previous decades as increasing equipment and maintenance costs have occupied a greater share of a static amount of US assistance. Egypt and Israel are the only two countries that receive their military assistance from the United States under what is known as cash-flow financing, a means of assistance that allows countries to commit to multi-year financing of purchases larger than their annual appropriation. The upside of cash-flow financing is that it allows Egypt to secure expensive, sophisticated US equipment and make significant purchases that provide stable production runs and predictability to American defense industry. The downside is that it locks the United States government into obligations to pay industry for the equipment in the event the United States wishes to reduce, change, or stop the military assistance to Egypt.

This issue emerged at the forefront of the assistance debate in 2012, when the US Congress threatened to cut off military aid to Egypt over a dispute concerning the Egyptian government's prosecution of American and Egyptian staffers of US-based nongovernmental organizations delivering civil society assistance and democracy support. In the aftermath of this incident and concerns about the lack of progress toward democracy in Egypt, Congress took the decision to condition its assistance on Egypt's maintenance of peace with Israel and movement toward a transition to civilian government. This move raised concerns within the administration, since the US government would be legally obliged to pay contractors for commitments made several years prior, even if Congress mandated that the assistance be halted. As it happens, this particular issue was avoided because the Obama administration took a decision to override congressional action and waived the conditions on national security grounds.

Another dynamic that plays an important role in shaping US military assistance to Egypt are the defense industrial interests in both countries. Co-production of the M1A1 tank—manufactured by General Dynamics in Ohio before being assembled in Egypt—is a cornerstone of the bilateral defense relationship. The strong relationship between US defense industry and the Egyptian military extends beyond co-production. Egypt is also one of the world's largest operators of Lockheed Martin's F-16 fighter aircraft. In the coming years Cairo may spend as much as $3.2 billion buying and upgrading additional aircraft.[1] To succeed in reforming its military assistance to Egypt, the US government will need to work collaboratively with US defense industry and its supporters in Congress.

Officer exchanges form a very important—and vastly less expensive—second pillar of the US-Egypt military relationship. As of 2012, the United States provides $1.4 million annually to Egypt through the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program. This is a small amount compared to other militaries in the region. For example, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Iraq, Jordan, and Tunisia all received more IMET funding than Egypt in 2011.[2] Funded separately from FMF, IMET is focused primarily on hosting Egyptian military officers in command, staff, and war colleges in the United States. This is an enormously worthwhile and cost-effective program that has paid great dividends over the years but is proving particularly valuable during the transitions. Hosting Egyptian officers in the United States permits them not only to build relationships with their US counterparts, but also to be socialized to western democratic values and civil-military relations. These exchanges are a major factor in professionalizing the participating militaries. A majority of the members of the SCAF trained in the United States, including two of its current top officers, General al-Sissi and General Sobhi.

Joint training and exercises form the third major element of the US-Egypt military relationship. Egypt and the United States participate in a number of joint exercises, most notably Bright Star. First launched in the aftermath of the Camp David accords, Bright Star is a biennial exercise designed to forge interoperability among the United States, Egypt, and other nations' armed forces. While the operation was canceled in 2011, it is scheduled to resume in the fall of 2013, with a greater focus on asymmetric threats.

[1] Defense Industry Daily, "Egypt to spend up to $3.2B adding to F-16C/D fleet," http://www.defenseindustrydaily.com/Egypt-to-Spend-32B-in-Updating-F-16CD-Fleet-05860/.

[2] US Department of State, "International Military Education and Training Account Summary," http://www.state.gov/t/pm/ppa/sat/c14562.htm.

Strengths and Shortcomings of the US-Egypt Defense Relationship

The US-Egypt defense relationship offers strategic benefits to both parties, but also faces significant limitations and shortcomings. US officials believe the Egyptian military is improperly equipped and trained to confront the kind of modern security challenges most likely to confront Egypt over the coming decades. Meanwhile, the Egyptian military—at least under Tantawi's leadership—resisted changing its doctrine or procurement priorities to address the new challenges. Rather, say US officials, senior Egyptian military officers prefer to use US assistance to buy heavy weapons that they believe enhance the country's regional clout and provide it a deterrence capability against traditional conventional threats. US officials are frustrated by Egypt's preference to use US military assistance to buy "big toys" that are less relevant in the face of non-traditional threats.

The Egyptian military views the annual $1.3 billion in military assistance provided by the United States as "earned" in exchange for Egypt's adherence to the Camp David accords and transit and overflight priorities. Proud of its sovereignty, the Egyptian military feels insulted by American conditions on the assistance and has resisted Washington's entreaties to use the military assistance to purchase equipment that would address the non-state threats that represent their most pressing security challenges.

However, Egyptian officials are aware that changes are likely in store for the US military assistance package in the coming years. They understand that austerity in the United States may result in a reduced appetite to continue the military assistance package. This would have major implications for the Egyptian military, which is currently dependent on US military assistance for its equipment purchases and maintenance. That said, not all parties in Egypt share the military's status quo point of view on US military assistance. While Egyptians generally do not like the idea of foreign assistance being used as leverage against their government, many liberal politicians and leaders in the Muslim Brotherhood are open to new formulations of military and economic aid from the United States, provided it is agreed upon with their government and not unilaterally imposed by Washington.

The US view on military assistance to Egypt also has shifted over the years. While there is an understanding that the $1.3 billion annually is the price of maintaining the status quo of peace between Israel and Egypt, the US administration and many members of Congress are eager that it not unintentionally impede the democratic transition in Egypt. Congressional leaders have become more skeptical of the value of US military assistance to Egypt in light of the election of an Islamist government and concerns about rights abuses during the SCAF's transitional rule. Indeed, in the weeks following the Islamist protests at the US Embassy in Cairo in September 2012, the chairwoman of the US House Appropriations Committee blocked the release of $450 million in economic assistance to Egypt.[3]

Moreover, US assistance to Egypt is today contingent on Cairo meeting conditions to protect minority rights, maintain its peace with Israel, and demonstrate progress toward democratization. These conditions are reasonable, as are US demands that the Egyptian government protect American citizens and property in Egypt. By issuing conditions, the Congress hopes its military assistance will incentivize Egypt's military to remain committed to the democratic transition and ensure that it respects human and minority rights.

Obama administration officials are open to reforming the military relationship with Egypt to better equip and prepare the Egyptian military for non-traditional security threats. But despite providing over $40 billion in assistance since Camp David, the military-to-military relationship is notably lacking in depth. The political turmoil in Egypt has strengthened ties among the top US and Egyptian military leaders, but the relationship has historically been highly transactional. Moreover, mid-level US officers lack access to Egyptian military personnel and bases, which impedes transparency and the formation of lasting relationships based on information exchange, knowledge-sharing, and trust.

Mutual mistrust and Egyptian concerns about violations of sovereignty can impede the US-Egypt military relationship. For example, the United States requires that certain security measures be taken for US forces to engage in particular military activities with Egypt. The Egyptian military views these conditions as an affront and refuses to accede. As a result, the United States Navy does not conduct any port calls in Egypt, and the US military is unable to engage in certain secure communications with the Egyptian military. In addition, another requirement, known as the "Leahy Law," requires that any nation that wishes to engage in Joint/Combined Exchange Training activities (JCETs) must submit information about the unit to be trained to verify that no human rights abuses exist. The ministry of defense views this process as an infringement on national sovereignty, and therefore JCETs are not conducted. Although other

[3] Steven Lee Myers, "US Move to Give Egypt $450 Million in Aid Meets Resistance," *New York Times*, September 28, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/29/world/middleeast/white-house-move-to-give-egypt-450-million-in-aid-meets-resistance.html.

training is currently underway, JCETs would be a useful tool in the US-Egypt military relationship. As a result, the US government is currently discussing how to overcome this impasse with the Egyptians.

Restrictions regarding what US military equipment can be sold to Egypt also add friction to the relationship. For example, the United States limits the sale of certain equipment to Egypt to maintain Israel's Qualitative Military Edge (QME) with regard to its neighbors, and so certain equipment or systems may not be available to Egypt. For example, there are systems, including the TOW2-B and Javelin missiles and a more capable version of the F-16 fighter aircraft, that the United States refuses to sell to Egypt but will sell to other countries in the region—even those without a peace treaty with Israel. This is an irritant for the Egyptians.

Despite these numerous shortcomings and obstacles to strengthened military-to-military cooperation, there are many opportunities to secure US interests and advance Egypt's democratic development. The change in Egyptian military leadership brought about by Morsi's removal of Tantawi and Anan has ushered in a new generation of military leaders who may be more open to ideas and concepts that would further democratic accountability, such as civilian control of military activities and policies and parliamentary oversight on budget issues. Moreover, increased violence in the Sinai demonstrates the need for Cairo to be more open to rethinking US assistance to focus it on the most acute threats that Egypt faces, which are also of concern to the United States.

The Egyptian military readily recognizes the benefits of training with the United States, and its top leadership has expressed openness to additional IMET support and interaction with US forces. Cairo's willingness to increase its engagement and training with US forces is an opportunity that should not be missed. Finally, the resumption of Bright Star in 2013 is also an opportunity to both enhance the relationship and to focus the exercise on more relevant challenges for Egypt's security.

Perhaps most importantly, there is a broad consensus in Egypt among the major political forces that civilian control of the military is an important outcome for the revolution—and most anticipate that the civil-military relationship will ultimately move in that direction. The issue is ripe for a dialogue among US, European, and Egyptian political and military leaders.

The full story has yet to be written; for example, it is unclear whether civilians will be able to exert effective supervision of military appointments and budget, if and when they will begin to challenge the military's economic perquisites, and whether the military will attempt to reassert itself in political affairs at some point. These questions are unlikely to be resolved in the short term, and are for Egypt to decide. Yet Cairo's decisions can and should have consequences for the US-Egypt bilateral defense relationship. An important partner of Egypt and a provider of very substantial assistance to the Egyptian military, the United States has an obligation to ensure that its military assistance to Egypt expedites, rather than impedes, that transition to civilian, democratic rule.

Bridging these differences and forging a common vision for the future will be a major challenge for the Obama administration and the Morsi government. Failure to better meet Egypt's pressing defense needs and to facilitate the transition to civilian democratic rule will impede Egypt's security, cause long-term strain in the US-Egypt relationship, and worsen the Egyptian military's ability to address real security threats.

Tunisia

The Tunisian Military in Politics and the Transition

If Egypt is the most strategically important of the transitioning states, Tunisia—where the popular uprisings began—is an important symbol of the Arab awakening and long-standing security partner of the United States. Tunisia did not endure a struggle for power between the military and politicians as did Egypt, did not require foreign military intervention as did Libya, and did not suffer from a significant extremist threat as did Egypt in the Sinai. Unique among its neighbors, Tunisia is blessed with many characteristics that will aid in its political transition, including a relatively small, well-educated population, orientation toward Europe and moderation, and the active participation of women in society. Because Tunisia can serve as such a powerful example for other transitioning Arab states, it is imperative that the US defense relationship reinforces a strong civil-military relationship and strengthens Tunisia's ability to address its current defense needs.

The historically small size and apolitical role of the Tunisian military is also an asset in the country's transition to democracy. Unlike most Arab countries, Tunisia has an

established tradition of a civilian minister of defense and a military notionally under civilian control. Part of this is by design, as former presidents Bourguiba and Ben Ali purposely kept the military weaker than the internal security services to stave off military coups. Part of this may also be due to the fact that the Tunisian military was oriented toward the United States and Europe, even as other Arab militaries built links with the Soviet Union during the Cold War. According to former Tunisian military officers interviewed during this project, these links to the West were important in the acculturation of the military to Western norms and standards regarding human rights and civilian control of the military.

As a result of its modest size and funding, the Tunisian military has modest ambitions for itself. Tunisia's armed forces are but one-tenth the size of Egypt's and are responsible for a far smaller territory than those of Egypt or Libya. Today, the military sees its primary missions as border protection, counterterrorism, and protection against smuggling from Libya, a role it has been forced to assume as the internal security services crumbled after the fall of the Ben Ali regime. Despite this temporary role, the military does not seek a major role for itself in domestic security.

The Tunisian military has long been held in high regard by the people, a perception that was only strengthened by the army's limited, yet decisive role in the revolution. General Rachid Ammar, chief of staff of the Tunisian Army, refused President Ben Ali's order for his troops to fire on protesters in January 2011, facilitating the crumbling of the regime. The president subsequently fled to Saudi Arabia, and in the immediate aftermath of his departure, Ammar pledged that the military would support the ideals of the revolution. Indeed, according to most sources in Tunisia, Ammar could have taken control of Tunisia in January 2011, but he chose not to do so and turned over the reins to civilian politicians. Throughout the transition, the Tunisian military has remained subordinate to transitional civilian leadership and has demonstrated no desire to interfere in the country's political transition.

The Tunisian military is conscious of its strong standing among the Tunisian people and has not sought to exploit its status. There is agreement across the entire political spectrum that maintaining and strengthening civilian control of the military is an essential outcome of the transition. Senior officials in the ministry of defense openly advocate for civilian oversight and parliamentary budgetary control.

While there is mistrust between secularists and the Islamist Ennahda party, the military is not involved in the struggle for power between the two camps. The constitutional process is underway and will play an important role in determining the rules governing civil-military relations in a changing Tunisia. Compared with the Egyptian military, the Tunisian military has far fewer economic interests to protect and is likely to prove less resistant to budgetary oversight. At present, the transitional government has decided not to contest the military's budget requests and personnel choices. Moving forward, it is likely that military leaders would not resist reasonable arrangements introducing greater civilian oversight.

Tunisia's Major Security Challenges and Needs

Just as in Egypt, the greatest threat to the success of the transition to democracy in Tunisia is economic—unemployment at 18 percent of the population eligible for work and weak economic growth after a 1.8 percent contraction of GDP in 2011.[4] Nevertheless, Tunisia faces three important security challenges for which the military finds itself responsible: domestic instability, border security (especially the porous border with Libya), and the threat of terrorism during the democratic transition.

As in Egypt, the Tunisian military had no choice but to assume additional duties due to the sudden fall of Ben Ali. Internal security is normally the purview of the police and other domestic security forces. Yet since these entities were severely discredited due to their close association to the former regime, the military was compelled to assume some of their responsibilities. In part due to the military's history of professionalism and participation in UN peacekeeping missions, the armed forces effectively took on this role while still respecting human rights. The military supported the early transitional government without question and then provided security and logistical support for the Constituent Assembly elections of October 2011.

Ultimately the responsibility for internal security rests with the ministry of interior, not the military. While the army may continue to take on some of these responsibilities in the short term out of necessity, high-ranking military leaders clearly indicated that they do not want to assume this role over the long term. Re-calibrating their efforts depends upon effective structural reform of the ministry of interior and its various bodies so that the military can go back to performing its core mission and not get drawn into assuming the tasks of the police and intelligence services. The

[4] Neil MacFarquhar, "Economic Frustration Simmers Again in Tunisia," *New York Times*, December 1, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/02/world/africa/economic-frustration-simmers-again-in-tunisia.html?pagewanted=all.

government has started the reform process but it will be a long-term effort that will require political leadership at all levels and a commitment to changing the culture of impunity within the police and intelligence services.

Domestic unrest and instability is perhaps the greatest security challenge facing Tunisia, particularly from the country's Salafist minority. This threat reared its head in a particularly ugly fashion on September 14, 2012 when several thousand protestors converged on the US embassy on the outskirts of Tunis and burned an American school just across the street. The Tunisian police have been heavily criticized for failing to better protect the embassy, even after protests had begun days earlier in Cairo and Benghazi. A lack of coordination among the various security services is partially to blame for the lack of protection at the embassy, which is now guarded by the army. Perhaps out of a lack of confidence in the police and the military, President Moncef Marzouki dispatched the elite presidential guard to disperse the protestors and restore security to the embassy.[5]

In addition to these internal challenges, Tunisian officials emphasize that border security is another key security challenge. Tunis is particularly concerned about instability in Libya and northern Mali and the continuing presence of well-armed militias that cross its borders and may seek to destabilize Tunisia as well. Tunisian officials expressed concern about smuggling, particularly the illegal transport of food into Libya, which leads to shortages and price destabilization in Tunisia. The illicit trafficking of drugs and weapons and the movement of Islamic militants are even greater concerns.

Finally, Tunisian officials worry that the threat of terrorism could disrupt the success of the revolution. They are aware that even a few small terrorist attacks could deter European tourists from bringing much needed cash to Tunisia's stagnant economy. Marzouki warned that there are some 3,000 Islamic militants in Tunisia, and he expressed fears that militants are moving to the Maghreb from Pakistan and Afghanistan.[6] Tunisia's politicians are aware of the need to strike a balance between security and preserving human rights protections. They also understand that while internal security is best left to the police, they may need to continue to rely on the military for a period of time as the internal security forces continue the process of reform.

US-Tunisian Military Assistance and Training

The United States has a longstanding and productive relationship with the Tunisian military. Assistance is modest when compared to US assistance to Egypt, but is an essential lifeline for the Tunisian military. The United States provides procurement assistance, training, and counterterrorism assistance to Tunisia as part of its package of military aid. There is widespread support across the political spectrum in Tunisia and within the military for continued and enhanced engagement and cooperation with the US military.

The Tunisian military has a long history of purchasing US military equipment (currently 70 percent is US origin), due to the $1.2 billion in combined foreign military financing and foreign military sales it has received from the United States since independence in 1956. In recognition of the importance of advancing the transition process, the United States has provided $32 million in military assistance since the fall of the Ben Ali regime, double the amount received prior to the revolution.[7] Tunisia also received $13 million in 'Section 1206' financing to support maritime and border security in FY 2011.[8] In a July 2012 visit to Tunisia, the US Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta pledged additional US assistance to enhance Tunisia's counterterrorism capacity and the ability of its civilian defense bureaucracy.[9]

Joint training and education is another important element of US assistance to Tunisia. Tunisia has placed a high value on the IMET support it has received from the United States, which has been important in establishing professionalism in the Tunisian military. Since 1994 Tunisia has been one of the top twenty recipients of IMET funding, which has trained more than 3,600 Tunisian military officers since the mid 1980s. Tunisia is also one of ten nations to participate in the US Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership, which features joint exercises and training.

---

[5] Vivienne Walt, "Political Battles in Tunisia Shade Attacks on US Embassy," *Time*, September 12, 2012, http://world.time.com/2012/09/16/political-battles-in-tunisia-shade-attacks-on-u-s-embassy/.

[6] "Mahgreb Becoming a Terrorist Hub," *Agence France-Presse*, October 2, 2012, http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5htKE1OYVnZCMG19ZZ7KyK7TjMT1g?docId=CNG.f31358aea7c19f04d766f5c6c315e488.541.

[7] Embassy of the United States, Tunisia, "Fact Sheet on US Military and Political Assistance for Tunisia," http://tunisia.usembassy.gov/fact-sheet-u.s.-military-and-political-assistance.html.

[8] Alexis Arieff, "Political Transition in Tunisia," Congressional Research Service, June 18, 2012, http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RS21666.pdf.

[9] Leon Panetta, "Secretary of Defense Leon E. Panetta Delivers Remarks at the North Africa American Cemetery and Memorial in Tunis, Tunisia," speech delivered at the North Africa American Cemetery and Memorial in Tunis, Tunisia," July 30, 2012, http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=5091.

Strengths and Shortcomings of the US-Tunisia Defense Relationship

The US-Tunisian military relationship has greatly benefited the Tunisians, particularly in the development of its officer corps, and both US and Tunisian officials generally express satisfaction with the nature of the military cooperation. Based on interviews conducted for this report, there are numerous opportunities to expand these ties.

While Tunisia may not have the same strategic importance for US regional policy as Egypt, the outcome of its transition remains of substantial interest to US objectives in the region. Indeed, some in Tunisia expressed concern that the challenges facing their government in transition are downplayed or forgotten when compared to the much greater challenges facing Egypt and Libya. Fortunately, US military ties to Tunisia are far less tense and far more predictable than with either of its neighbors. Such relationships are extremely valuable for the United States, and having ties based on trust and respect should not be underestimated in a region where both are in short supply.

The United States has a clear interest in building upon its close relationship with the Tunisian military, partly to help ensure the success of a nascent democratic transition that could be an example for others, and partly because it is located in a region with a significant terrorist presence. In light of the security challenges in northern Mali—as the ongoing French-led operation demonstrates—and the resurgence of al-Qaeda in North Africa, it is increasingly important for US security interests that the Tunisian military be trained and equipped to effectively secure its borders and combat extremist networks. Today, Tunisian politicians and defense officials express a need for additional equipment for their military, especially to assist in securing their borders against smuggling and terrorism. They expressed a particular need for helicopters, speedboats, and enhanced communication equipment.

Tunisia needs more than hardware, however. The most significant shortcomings identified in the US-Tunisian defense relationship relate to the capacity of Tunisia's civilian defense officials. Officials in the ministry of defense are adjusting to the fall of the Ben Ali regime and the absence of presidential dominance over all aspects of the country's security. Tunisia's civil servants in the ministry of defense will need to be more assertive and to play a bigger role in the formulation of national strategies and policies, rather than deferring to their military counterparts. Western diplomats also have noted that their Tunisian counterparts in the defense ministry have difficulty articulating their defense needs successfully to other governments, making the provision of appropriate assistance a challenge. Overcoming these deficits will require substantial training for Tunisia's civilian and military leaders.

Libya

The Libyan Military in Politics and the Transition

The 2011 Libyan revolution left Libya in a starkly different situation than Egypt and Tunisia. While the Egyptian and Tunisian revolutions were primarily characterized by peaceful, popular resistance, Libya's initially nonviolent revolution transformed into a protracted and bloody armed confrontation between the regime and the opposition. This conflict created additional long-term obstacles on Libya's road to democracy, weakening an already fragmented military apparatus and complicating efforts to promote stability throughout the country. The fundamental issue in the US defense relationship with Libya is creating a professional military subject to government control and loyal to the state. This problem must be the major priority for US policy toward Libya.

Military developments during the 2011 uprising were key in shaping the armed forces and militias that dominate Libya today. At the onset of the conflict, much of Libya's national army, particularly garrisons in the east, defected immediately. In the west, many officers and their troops simply opted out of the conflict entirely. The Qaddafi regime was thus forced to turn to special brigades formed by loyal tribes and hire mercenaries to defend itself. Thus, unlike in Tunisia or Egypt, there was no unified Libyan military leadership to play its part in the revolution.

The army's weakness as an institution during the revolution, much like its lack of capacity today, is largely a product of its history under the Qaddafi regime. When he first came to power, Qaddafi expanded the military rapidly.[10] Any prospect for a strong and professional force came to a halt, however, following a 1975 coup attempt. In its aftermath, Qaddafi began a long process of personalizing and fragmenting the armed forces to protect himself from further threats. Members of Qaddafi's tribe, and later his actual family, were increasingly chosen for prominent positions within the army and security apparatus.[11]

[10] Dirk Vandewalle, A History of Modern Libya (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006).
[11] Ibid.

By the decade leading up to the 2011 uprising, Qaddafi had constructed a highly divided military apparatus. Rather than unifying the armed forces under a single defense ministry, each of the army's many branches reported to the Interim Defense Committee, which, in turn, reported directly to Qaddafi. In this way, the army's various brigades had mutually exclusive chains of command and were kept isolated from one another. Moreover, the country's official National Army was mostly deployed only in the east, even though there were elements of the regular army in the west as well. Nevertheless, most army units existed in name only. In fact, most of the resources and equipment were given to a patchwork of brigades, such as the 32nd Enhanced Brigade, commanded by Qaddafi's son Khamis, which was responsible for the personal protection of Qaddafi and the regime.

During the uprising the National Transitional Council (NTC), the de facto opposition government, and its allied revolutionary brigades encouraged liberated towns to set up their own military councils. The councils oversaw and added a modicum of structure to whichever armed groups were locally active; they also, in theory if not always in practice, organized local groups for basic police activity in the absence of the state.[12] Some of these groups, however, used newly-sanctioned authority for less benign purposes, engaging in smuggling and drug trafficking, taking control of major industries, and even started conflicts with neighboring communities. Thus, in many cases armed groups were beyond the control of the security councils entrusted to oversee them, which were themselves only loosely tied to the state.

In October 2011, the interior ministry formed the Supreme Security Committee (SSC) as a temporary solution to the long-term challenge of building a stable police force. By offering lucrative salaries the SSC rapidly attracted new recruits, and by spring 2012 there were upwards of 85,000 individuals serving.[13] The ministry of defense used a similar tactic a few months later, bringing together various armed brigades to form the Libyan Shield Force (LSF) to supplement the weak national army.

Running through each of these NTC security solutions—whether the formation of military councils, the SSC, or the LSF—was a common theme: these parallel institutions were formed via the wholesale adoption of extant revolutionary military brigades. As a result, the units remained tied to specific communities and not to the central government, which was too weak and simply too understaffed to bring all militia members together in such a way as to build national loyalties and command structures.[14]

Libya's Major Security Challenges and Needs

The most significant challenge facing Libya's transition concerns the poor state of its security environment. The most daunting obstacle is that the state lacks a strong, centralized security apparatus capable of establishing stability, and is thus faced with the task of integrating disparate brigades and militias into a single national force. As long as quasi-independent militias play the role of army and police, the country will continue to face a series of grave security issues—as evidenced by the attack on the US mission in Benghazi on September 11, 2012.

One key issue arising from this decentralization is that, contrary to promoting Libya's stability, regional militias have frequently exacerbated local conflicts as a result of entrenched tribal biases. When dispatched to the south for peacekeeping between warring tribes, for example, government-sanctioned brigades were often seen as acting unfairly, even escalating the conflict, against their historic rivals.[15]

Even more problematic is the high degree of autonomy enjoyed by a number of cities across the country. The case of Misrata is emblematic; its local council often engages in activities far beyond its purview, entertaining foreign relations, maintaining its own defense forces, and generally functioning as a de facto city-state. Other cities in Libya, though to a lesser extent, have at times adopted similar behavior.

The emergence of Salafi groups also poses a threat to Libya's internal stability. While Islamic extremism is not a new phenomenon in Libya, Salafism itself is. Anecdotal evidence suggests that through the end of 2011 the number of active Salafis was very low, while an unofficial recent estimate numbered them at 50,000-80,000. The League of Libyan Ulema, a group of leading Libyan Islamic scholars, as well as Libyan government officials have expressed concern that Saadi Qaddafi and certain Saudi individuals have provided the funding and organization necessary to spur the Salafi movement's recent growth.[16]

[12] These councils and the armed groups they presided over existed separately from the revolutionary brigades engaged in active combat with Qaddafi's forces. In other words, many of these local groups never fought in the war and should thus be thought of more as rogue police forces.

[13] International Crisis Group, "Divided We Stand: Libya's Enduring Conflicts," September 14, 2012, http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/Middle%20East%20North%20Africa/North%20Africa/libya/130-divided-we-stand-libyas-enduring-conflicts.pdf, p. 12.

[14] A notable attempt to centrally train and employ former and active militia members did occur under the Warrior Affairs Committee (WAC), which held several training sessions for former brigade leaders throughout early 2012 before being shut down.

[15] LSF mistreatment of Tebu in Kufra is the most prominent example.

[16] "League of Libyan Ulema Draws Links between Salafists, Saadi Qaddafi and SSC," *Libya Herald,* August 30, 2012, http://www.libyaherald.com/2012/08/30/league-of-libyan-ulema-draws-links-between-salafists-saadi-qaddafi-and-ssc/.

Lesser-understood jihadist organizations also have been blamed for ongoing attacks and assassinations of military and police officers. Over the last nine months at least twenty officers have been killed, and foreign consular offices and security buildings have been attacked with car bombs and explosives in Tripoli and elsewhere.[17] A majority of the targets have been individuals who defected from the former regime. This has led to the hypothesis that powerful exiled members of the former regime have used jihadist organizations, often unbeknownst to them, to carry out some of the attacks. Libyans see these actions as part of a larger plan to destabilize the country.

The increased strength of criminal organizations has also contributed to instability. After the collapse of the regime, criminal organizations took direct charge of drug and human trafficking activities from the collapsed secret police, profiting from them and establishing fiefdoms beyond the control and monitoring of the new government. Libyan officials have attributed some attacks on state security buildings in Tripoli to these organizations' attempts to intimidate the state's fledgling security institutions.

The inability of the central government to control the border is a separate but related concern. Forces tied to the national army have been dispatched to work as border control, but this tactic has seen limited results, as weapons, drugs, and people continue to pass through the country's porous boundaries. The importance of border control and security has only been reinforced by the worsening case of Islamic militancy in Mali and Algeria. In some areas, the government has entrusted specific tribes with border control duties; this, however, has merely allowed the tribes to control smuggling routes, turn profits, and in some cases leverage this power to punish communal rivals, thus ultimately proving counterproductive to the goal of exerting central authority.[18]

Given the existing situation, civilian versus military control over armed forces has yet to be addressed. Personal and political rivalries complicate this process and a clear command structure and basis for a civilian-military relationship has not been developed. Poor command structure is only part of a larger systemic problem within Libyan institutions at present, which is best summarized as a lack of "capacity to act."

Even beyond security issues, Libyan institutions are also unable to handle basic administrative duties; Tripoli and other cities are still without proper garbage collection, electricity remains rationed, and water is often inadequately supplied. These issues cannot be explained by lack of public financing, as the government has maintained a steady stream of oil-based revenue, but rather a general incapacity to perform basic governance. This lack of capacity is the result of many factors, but has led to near paralysis in which the government is not only inadequately prepared to perform essential functions, but also unclear on what type of specific assistance to request.

US-Libyan Military Assistance and Training

The United States and Libya were close allies during the 1950s and 1960s; during this time the United States supplied nearly one third of all Libyan arms, and Tripoli's Wheelus Air Base served as a crucial landing point for US military operations both in the region and in Europe. By 1962 Wheelus and its support facilities totaled 27,245 acres and 10,536 military and civilian personnel.[19] Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, and amidst the backdrop of burgeoning Arab nationalism, the base proved controversial for the Idris monarchy, which was increasingly seen as a puppet of the West.

One of Qaddafi's first moves following his 1969 coup was to negotiate the closure of US military facilities, including Wheelus. This move marked the beginning of a decline in US-Libyan relations that would accelerate in the 1970s and 1980s. Libya-US relations would only begin to improve when the Qaddafi regime agreed to take responsibility for the infamous 1988 Lockerbie bombing and offered compensation to families of the victims. In 2006 the Bush administration removed Libya from its list of state sponsors of terrorism and full diplomatic relations were restored for the first time in more than thirty years. Of note, the US ban on export of defense articles to Libya was allowed to lapse on June 30, 2006.[20]

Despite Libya's emergence from international isolation, the United States remained cautious about supplying arms and equipment to a regime that had sponsored terrorism against US citizens in the recent past. Given US reservations about retooling Libya and the country's lack of highly skilled officers, much of the US military assistance during

[17] "Cars Bombed in Benghazi," ***Libya Herald***, November 7, 2012, http://www.libyaherald.com/2012/11/07/a-second-car-bomb-in-benghazi/.

[18] The Tebus of Kufra attempted to seize control of the southern border following the country's liberation. This escalated their conflict with the Zawaya, who previously held border control privileges and thus saw a considerable decline in income made through smuggling and bribes.

[19] Ronald Bruce St. John, ***Libya and the United States:*** *Two Centuries of Strife* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), p. 78

[20] Christopher M. Blanchard, "Libya: Background and US Relations," Congressional Research Service, September 17, 2008, http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/110763.pdf.

this period—and up through the 2011 uprising—focused on the International Military and Education and Training (IMET) program; $319,000 was allocated for IMET in 2010. In Congress' FY13 budget, a relatively modest $1.45 million was allocated, primarily to assist in providing border security and stopping the flow of weapons across Libya's borders.[21]

Following the country's formal liberation, Libya's efforts to rebuild its army and train new soldiers and police largely took place in conjunction with Arab and European countries, not with the United States. Despite Libya's initial orientation toward Europe and the Middle East for security assistance, the United States has expressed interest in taking a more active role in helping Libya address its security challenges. Here the fundamental challenge for the United States is building a military-to-military relationship from scratch, since none had existed for decades. Some initial conversations and consultations have started between civilian and military counterparts in Washington and Tripoli to identify ways that the United States could be helpful, emphasizing training, exchange programs, education, and border control.

Following the attack on the US consulate in Benghazi, the Obama administration's plans to provide security assistance took on greater urgency. To this end a plan reportedly in place earlier to train a small commando force in Libya was expedited; in September 2012, the Pentagon shifted $8 million from its counterterrorism budget for Pakistan and reallocated it towards building an elite commando force of approximately 500 troops in Libya.[22] The plan is not finalized, though a small team of Americans have carried out preliminary vetting to identify potential recruits.[23] While modest in size, the success of this program is crucial in building the core of a credible and competent Libyan military that can gradually assume control of the country and its disparate militias for the democratically-elected civilian leadership.

Strengths and Shortcomings of the US-Libya Defense Relationship

Post-Qaddafi Libya stands as perhaps the most pro-American Arab country in the region. The population remains largely appreciative of US efforts during the NATO intervention; a Gallup poll conducted in April 2012 found that 77 percent of Libyans approve of Western governance assistance and 68 percent the use of Western military trainers. This should allow for the newly-formed government of Prime Minister Ali Zidan to entertain a dialogue with the United States that would better define the relationship and how it can help resolve ongoing security issues. Forging a positive civil-military relationship in Libya through US assistance can only be done in conjunction with the successful creation of other civilian institutions in Libya. The United States and Europe should be part of this process and should be actively engaged in helping to shape Libya's institutional development. Fortunately, thanks to Libya's vast oil wealth, this will not require US financial assistance.

As noted above, there has not yet been a debate—much less a decision—on how the new security apparatus in Libya should be constructed. Fortunately, the Libyan military has modest ambitions for itself. The military has expressed reluctance to engage in border control operations and would like to limit its role to the defense of the country, defense of the constitution, and participation in international peacekeeping operations. The Libyan military remains particularly concerned about the institution's future structure; in the absence of a model or civilian expertise within the ministry of defense, it is seeking to balance military and civilian control in a way that would promote both a healthy democracy and strong military management. This should be the top priority for the United States in its dialogue and joint programs with Tripoli. Indeed, unlike many other countries in the region, Libyans recognize the long road they must travel and are eager to accept all the help they can get.

A second priority of the United States and its allies should be to build on the training efforts currently underway to develop the Libyan armed forces. Among the first requests of the new Libyan government will likely be assistance in training a special force of about 3,000-4,000 well-equipped soldiers. The above-noted US-sponsored program to train a small force of 500 may be the starting point for such an initiative. An army focused on core tasks related to the defense of the country, and not internal policing, need not exceed 80,000-100,000 soldiers. Given Libya's lack of institutional capacity, however, even a small army would require extensive equipment and training, both of which could be provided by NATO countries.

---

[21] Stephen McInerney, "The Federal Budget and Appropriations for Fiscal year 2013," Project on Middle East Democracy, July 2012, http://pomed.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/FY2013-Budget-Report-web.pdf

[22] Eric Schmitt, "US to Help Create an Elite Libyan Force to Combat Islamic Extremists," *New York Times*, October 15, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/16/world/africa/us-to-help-create-libyan-commando-force.html?pagewanted=2&_r=1&ref=ericschmitt&&pagewanted=all.

[23] Hadeel Al Shalchi, "American Tour Base to Recruit for Libya Army," Reuters, November 7, 2012, http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/11/07/us-libya-usa-training-idUSBRE8A626Q20121107.

Similarities and Differences among the Three Countries

The transitions in Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya share much in common, despite the discrete challenges facing each country. As can be seen from the chart below, there are significant demographic and geographic differences among these countries; however, their transitional governments share a common challenge: generating economic growth. Even in Libya, where there is substantial oil wealth, the prospect for a successful transition to democracy is tied to the government's ability to create employment and hope for a more prosperous future. Moreover, North Africa's newly empowered citizens expect more from their fledgling transitional governments than they are able to provide. Having spent decades in opposition, the transitional leaders are ill-equipped to handle the massive challenges on the agenda and will need to grow into their new duties.

Yet, security problems also threaten to undermine the green shoots of democracy taking hold in all three countries. Here, extremists and terrorists seek to undermine the political debate taking place between moderate secularists and Islamists. This challenge is exacerbated by the fact that in all three countries, the dreaded internal security services that backed up the former regimes have crumbled, leaving a security void that must be filled for the transitions to proceed. Moreover, resources available for the armed forces remain below 2 percent of GDP in Egypt and Tunisia, even as the need to secure vast ungoverned spaces poses a challenge to all three countries in transition.

As a result of these various challenges, the armed forces in all three countries have played a different role in their transitions. This is in part reflective of the various roles the militaries played in their countries during and before their revolutions. In Egypt, for example, the 450,000-man military pressured Mubarak to leave power and assumed political leadership of the country as well as responsibility for internal security as the hated police melted away. In the case of Tunisia, a smaller and more modest military of 45,000 eschewed a political role and turned over the transition to civilians immediately, focusing instead on protecting internal and border security. And in Libya, which lacked a cohesive and capable military, disparate and competing militias have both provided for and undermined the country's security since the overthrow of Qaddafi. Libya's military will also struggle with the challenge of securing a territory more than ten times larger than Tunisia.

The militaries of Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya will play different roles in their countries based on the nature of their security challenges, their historical traditions, and the balance of responsibility between internal security forces and the military. These differences aside, it should be a goal of US policy to facilitate the development of these militaries to meet their countries' pressing security needs during their transitions. The United States should have two basic goals for the armed forces of North Africa's transitioning democracies. First, the militaries must be able to provide the security needed for democratic development to take place, which will require them to modernize their capabilities and capacities. Second, the militaries must ultimately become subordinate and accountable to democratically elected civilian officials. Absent these outcomes, the transitions will remain reversible.

Country Data for Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya

	EGYPT	TUNISIA	LIBYA
Population July 2012 Estimate	88,688,144	10,732,900	5,613,380
Geographic Area in square kilometers	1,001,450	163,610	1,759,540
GDP Official Exchange Rate – 2011 Estimate	$231.9 billion	$45.25 billion	$35.13 billion
GDP per Capita (PPP) 2011 Estimate	$6,500	$9,400	$14,100
Military Expenditure 2008 Estimate	$4.54 billion	$539 million	$1.1 billion
Military Spending as percent of GDP	1.9 percent	1.1 percent	3.1 percent
Annual US Military Aid 2012	$1.3 billion	$29.5 million	N/A
Size of the armed forces	Approx 450,000	45,000	35,000

General Recommendations:

- **Reshape US Security Policies:** The United States should reshape its security policies toward the transitioning states of the Arab world. It should recalibrate these relationships to ensure they advance priority US interests, meet the changing defense needs of the transitioning countries, and help rather than hurt the prospects for successful democratic transitions. The development of the militaries in Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya into professional forces capable of dealing with existing threats and under the control and supervision of democratically-elected civilians should be an important policy goal for the United States.

- **Stay Engaged:** The United States has profound national security interests in the success of the democratic transitions unfolding across the Middle East, particularly in Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya. It will be important for the United States to remain engaged politically, economically, and militarily in supporting theses transitions, which are sure to be protracted and messy. Support for the armed forces should include assisting the militaries of these countries in meeting their changing defense needs, so they can provide the stability needed for political and economic growth, and foster the principle of civilian control of the armed forces so essential in democratic societies.

- **Prioritize Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya:** These three countries are strategically located astride the major international lines of communication along the southern Mediterranean Sea and are in close proximity to our European and Israeli allies. They are also fairly advanced in their political transitions, with Egypt—the most important of three countries to US interests—having completed and approved a new constitution and the others in the drafting process. It will be important to demonstrate to other Middle Eastern countries that successful democracies can exist in the heart of the Arab world.

- **Introduce an Enhanced Security Dialogue:** The United States and its allies should begin a structured dialogue of military and civilian officials with their counterparts in the three transitioning countries. This dialogue should focus on threats, capabilities, defense agreements, and the appropriate role of the militaries in society to sharpen thinking on defense requirements during this transitional phase.

- **Build Relationships:** The United States has long-term interests in these three countries. It will be important to use this transitional period to establish personal and professional relationships with the current and future civilian and military leaders. The United States should expand the IMET program with all three countries to enhance their exposure to US military methods and culture and to assist in the professionalization of their militaries. The United States should also expand training and exchange programs like the Defense Institution Building Program for civilians in the defense ministries and in parliamentary oversight committees to enhance their ability to provide oversight of military programs and policies. Finally, bilateral and multilateral exercises are also important means of building long-term relationships between militaries.

Enhanced Security Dialogue with Egypt

Potential topics for inclusion:

- Apportioning less money to equipment purchases and more money to exercises, exchanges and training—particularly IMET—that will help inculcate values of transparency, accountability, and civilian control of the military.
- Orienting more foreign military sales toward capabilities that would further the transformation of the Egyptian military to address contemporary threats such as border security and terrorism. This is particularly important if Egypt is to better secure the Sinai Peninsula. It will take a generational shift for the Egyptian military to move away from a heavy footprint military. This will require continued engagement among Egyptian forces and US and regional militaries.
- Phasing out cash flow financing, which ties the hands of US policy makers in adjusting assistance because it enables multi-year contracts for which the United States assumes financial responsibility in case of cancellation.

Enhanced Security Dialogue with Tunisia

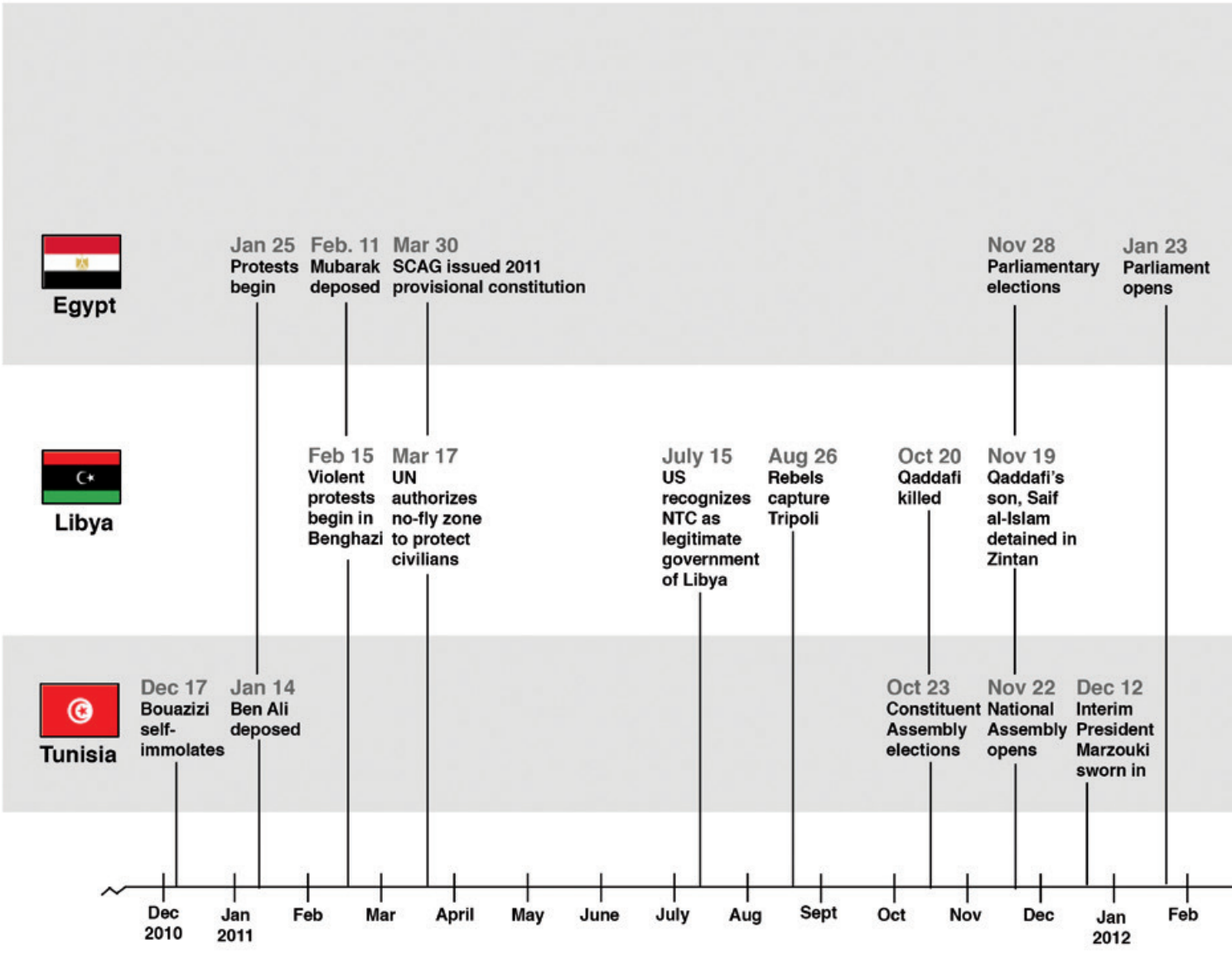
Potential topics for inclusion:

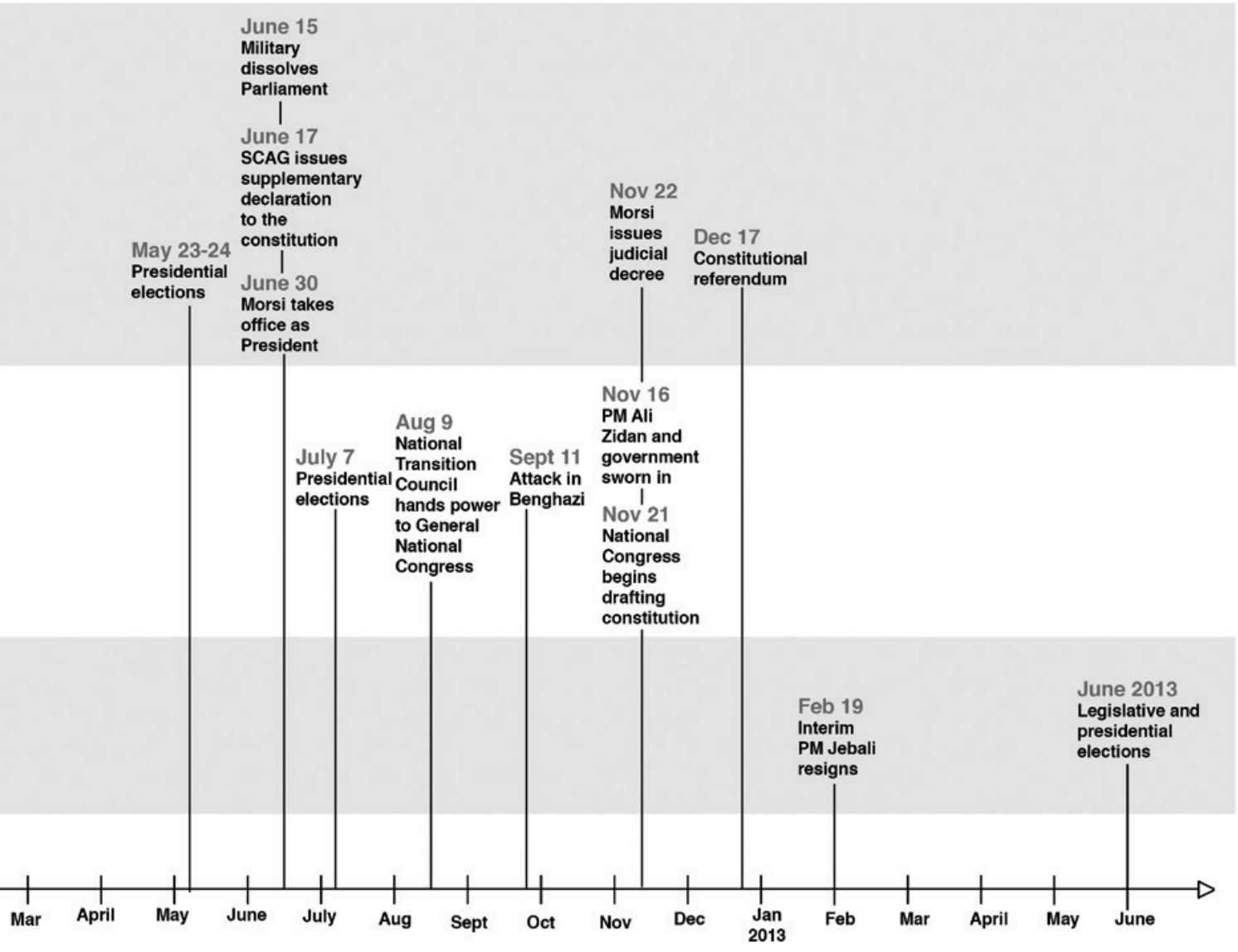
- Bolstering cooperation with the Tunisian military to help it meet border control needs.
- Instituting a training program to help Tunisian military and civilian planners develop and express their security assistance requirements.
- Prioritizing engagement with mid-and high-level civilian and military leadership to address new aspects of democratic governance including civil-military relations, the role of parliamentary committees, budget oversight, rule of law, and human rights through expanded IMET and other training programs.

Enhanced Security Dialogue with Libya

Potential topics for inclusion:

- Assisting Libya's transitional government in building a professional military force loyal to the central government to bring stability to the country and accelerate the demobilization of local and regional militias. The United States should, as a matter of priority, engage the Libyan government in developing an international effort to train and equip such a force as rapidly as possible.
- Developing programs for clearing unexploded ordnance and destroying unsecured conventional weapons, including MANPADS and chemical weapons still in the country.
- Providing technical assistance focused on land border security. This could include support for the French *gendarmerie* or the Italian *carabinieri*.


Egypt
Jan 25 Protests begin
Feb. 11 Mubarak deposed
Mar 30 SCAG issued 2011 provisional constitution
Nov 28 Parliamentary elections
Jan 23 Parliament opens
Libya
Feb 15 Violent protests begin in Benghazi
Mar 17 UN authorizes no-fly zone to protect civilians
July 15 US recognizes NTC as legitimate government of Libya
Aug 26 Rebels capture Tripoli
Oct 20 Qaddafi killed
Nov 19 Qaddafi's son, Saif al-Islam detained in Zintan
Tunisia
Dec 17 Bouazizi self-immolates
Jan 14 Ben Ali deposed
Oct 23 Constituent Assembly elections
Nov 22 National Assembly opens
Dec 12 Interim President Marzouki sworn in
Dec 2010
Jan 2011
Feb
Mar
April
May
June
July
Aug
Sept
Oct
Nov
Dec
Jan 2012
Feb


June 15
Military dissolves Parliament
June 17
SCAG issues supplementary declaration to the constitution
May 23-24
Presidential elections
June 30
Morsi takes office as President
Nov 22
Morsi issues judicial decree
Dec 17
Constitutional referendum
Nov 16
PM Ali Zidan and government sworn in
July 7
Presidential elections
Aug 9
National Transition Council hands power to General National Congress
Sept 11
Attack in Benghazi
Nov 21
National Congress begins drafting constitution
Feb 19
Interim PM Jebali resigns
June 2013
Legislative and presidential elections
Mar
April
May
June
July
Aug
Sept
Oct
Nov
Dec
Jan 2013
Feb
Mar
April
May
June

Atlantic Council Board of Directors

INTERIM CHAIRMAN
*Brent Scowcroft

PRESIDENT AND CEO
*Frederick Kempe

VICE CHAIRS
*Robert J. Abernethy
*Richard Edelman
*C. Boyden Gray
*Richard L. Lawson
*Virginia A. Mulberger
*W. DeVier Pierson

TREASURER
*Brian C. McK. Henderson

SECRETARY
*Walter B. Slocombe

DIRECTORS
Odeh Aburdene
Timothy D. Adams
*Michael Ansari
Richard L. Armitage
Adrienne Arsht
*David D. Aufhauser
Elizabeth F. Bagley
Ralph Bahna
Sheila Bair
Lisa B. Barry
*Thomas L. Blair
Julia Chang Bloch
Francis Bouchard
R. Nicholas Burns
*Richard R. Burt
Michael Calvey
James E. Cartwright
Daniel W. Christman
Wesley K. Clark
John Craddock
David W. Craig
Tom Craren
*Ralph D. Crosby, Jr.
Thomas M. Culligan
Gregory R. Dahlberg
*Paula J. Dobriansky
Christopher J. Dodd
Markus Dohle
Lacey Neuhaus Dorn
Conrado Dornier
Patrick J. Durkin
Thomas J. Edelman
Thomas J. Egan, Jr.
Stuart E. Eizenstat
Dan-Åke Enstedt
Julie Finley
Lawrence P. Fisher, II
Alan H. Fleischmann
Michèle Flournoy
*Ronald M. Freeman
*Robert S. Gelbard
Richard L. Gelfond
Edmund P. Giambastiani, Jr.
*Sherri W. Goodman
John A. Gordon
*Stephen J. Hadley
Mikael Hagström
Ian Hague
Frank Haun
Rita E. Hauser
Michael V. Hayden
Annette Heuser
Marten H.A. van Heuven
*Mary L. Howell
Robert E. Hunter
Robert L. Hutchings
Wolfgang Ischinger
Deborah James
Robert Jeffrey
*James L. Jones, Jr.
George A. Joulwan
Stephen R. Kappes
Francis J. Kelly Jr.
Zalmay M. Khalilzad
Robert M. Kimmitt
Roger Kirk
Henry A. Kissinger
Franklin D. Kramer
Philip Lader
David Levy
Henrik Liljegren
*Jan M. Lodal
*George Lund
*John D. Macomber
Izzat Majeed
Wendy W. Makins
Mian Mansha
William E. Mayer
Eric D.K. Melby
Franklin C. Miller
*Judith A. Miller
*Alexander V. Mirtchev
Obie L. Moore
*George E. Moose
Georgette Mosbacher
Bruce Mosler
Sean O'Keefe
Hilda Ochoa-Brillembourg
Philip A. Odeen
Ahmet Oren
Ana Palacio
Torkel L. Patterson
*Thomas R. Pickering
*Andrew Prozes
Arnold L. Punaro
Kirk A. Radke
Joseph W. Ralston
Teresa M. Ressel
Jeffrey A. Rosen
Charles O. Rossotti
Stanley O. Roth
Michael L. Ryan
Harry Sachinis
William O. Schmieder
John P. Schmitz
Kiron K. Skinner
Anne-Marie Slaughter
Alan J. Spence
John M. Spratt, Jr.
Richard J.A. Steele
James B. Steinberg
Philip Stephenson
*Paula Stern
John Studzinski
William H. Taft, IV
John S. Tanner
Peter J. Tanous
*Ellen O. Tauscher
Clyde C. Tuggle
Paul Twomey
Henry G. Ulrich, III
Enzo Viscusi
Charles F. Wald
Jay Walker
Michael F. Walsh
Mark R. Warner
J. Robinson West
John C. Whitehead
David A. Wilson
Maciej Witucki
R. James Woolsey
Mary C. Yates
Dov S. Zakheim

HONORARY DIRECTORS
David C. Acheson
Madeleine K. Albright
James A. Baker, III
Harold Brown
Frank C. Carlucci, III
Robert M. Gates
Michael G. Mullen
William J. Perry
Colin L. Powell
Condoleezza Rice
Edward L. Rowny
James R. Schlesinger
George P. Shultz
John W. Warner
William H. Webster

LIFETIME DIRECTORS
Carol C. Adelman
Lucy Wilson Benson
Daniel J. Callahan, III
Kenneth W. Dam
Stanley Ebner
Barbara Hackman Franklin
Chas W. Freeman
Carlton W. Fulford, Jr.
Geraldine S. Kunstadter
James P. McCarthy
Jack N. Merritt
William Y. Smith
Marjorie Scardino
Ronald P. Verdicchio
Carl E. Vuono
Togo D. West, Jr.

** Executive Committee Members*
List as of February 26, 2013

Atlantic Council
11th Floor, 1101 15th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005

Address Services Requested

The Atlantic Council is a nonpartisan organization that promotes constructive US leadership and engagement in international affairs based on the central role of the Atlantic community in meeting the global challenges of the 21st century.

1101 15th St. NW • 11th Floor • Washington, DC 20005 • 202-778-4950 • acus.org