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CITE OSC RESTON VA 312487

WARNING: TOPIC: DISSENT, INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL, LEADER  
SERIAL: PLN2013102567384073

**BODY**

COUNTRY: EGYPT, GAZA STRIP, TUNISIA, WEST BANK

SUBJ: (U) TUNISIA: GHANNOUCHI ARTICLE REFUTES 'CLAIMS' OF 'FAILURE  
of Political Islam,' Attacks Egypt 'Coups'

SOURCE: Doha Al-Jazirah.net in Arabic 25 Oct 13 (U)

TEXT:

[ (U) Article by Rachid Ghannouchi: "How True is the Claim of the  
Failure of Political Islam?"]

[INTERNET]

[OSC Translated Text]

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Whenever Islamists here or there suffer a setback or even a mere  
retreat in elections, no matter how slight, Western thinkers, who  
follow the progress of the Islamic movement, are accustomed to  
shouting out to the public from their loudest speakers announcing the  
failure or the collapse and end of political Islam. This is what is  
being reiterated in their forums and statements to the media that  
interview them, being experts whose words are wisdom and who hold the  
final say.

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No sooner than their likes in our Islamic countries and employees in our media take them for granted and say that they cannot be mistaken.

The Egyptian events in recent months constituted rich material for those studies, forums, and assurances. Thus, their market flourished and their goods became in demand.

How true are these claims? Is the so-called political Islam in a major retreat in the direction of final failure and certain collapse?

Or is the matter no more than a reverse movement here or there prior to taking off anew in an upward movement in the general direction, which proves that even the points of retreat soon follow the general movement in an upward direction?

1. The Islamic movement is the term preferred by the Islamists to the so-called political Islam. By it, we mean all activities that call for Islam, being God's final word to mankind, a comprehensive way of life, and a discourse to the worlds. All statistics today confirm that Islam is the most widespread religion and ideology. It has expanded to win the minds and wills, and its followers are absolutely ready to sacrifice everything precious for its sake, out of zeal and commitment to it.

The so-called political Islam (the Islamic movement) is moving on a religious carpet, which is the widest today in the world. Modern communication technologies have enabled it to reach unprecedented speeds in history, especially since it barely meets with any worthwhile resistance in its way, in view of the state of

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ideological  
emptiness, existential anxiety, and the collapse of the warm  
incubators that harbor the human being in contemporary  
civilization,  
such as the family and the tribe.

This is taking place at a time of a crisis, represented by the  
government s' trend toward quick resignation from the duties of  
welfare. This has increased the cases of anxiety, isolation, and  
loss  
of close friends, as one of the effects of the rapid globalization.  
It has also pushed individuals to the search for warm incubators  
and  
systems, where the demands of the body and the soul, the individual  
and the group, the religion and the world, and nationalism and  
internationalism, meet. This is where the individual finds  
everything  
he is looking for in Islam, which is viewed by its comprehensive  
principles and known centrism.

This explains why outstanding elites from different creeds and  
cultures embrace it despite the war of hatred and demonization that  
it is being waged on it and its movements and minorities.

2. The Islamic movement in its broad outlines--forget the small  
extremist groups that exist in every ideology and nation--has  
introduced Islam as the culmination of the accomplishments and  
moralities of civilizations, and not as the opposite of every  
aspect  
of modern accomplishments, such as education for all, males and  
females, and the values of justice and equality in rights and  
freedoms, without discrimination on the basis of creed, race, and  
color, to guarantee for all the rights of citizenship, humanity,  
and  
religious and political freedoms, as is known in modern  
democracies,  
given that equality in rights and freedoms is an essential part of  
the divine honoring of the human being. "We have honored the sons  
of  
Adam." [Koranic verse; Al-Isra, 17: 70]

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3. The Islamic movement, which stems from the authority of Islam, the natural religion, to search for solutions to the problems of its societies and to help in solving the problems of mankind, benefiting from all cultural experiences that agree with the values and aims of Islam in achieving people's interests, is the closest to the conscience of our peoples. It addresses them by their familiar values, concepts, and language that cannot be contested by the public if the Islamic preachers grasped people's problems and formulated them according to people's mentality and belief.

4. For more than half a century, the Islamic movements have faced an episode of suppression, which barely calms down a bit when it is inflamed more than before.

This continuous suppression has led to many results, such as instilling in Muslims a struggle legacy that they inherited and that strengthened them, and a common history among at least three generations.

The savage suppression has generated public sympathy for them that provided them with additional gains, the likes of which have not happened to any other political rival, as you can only go as far as you push, and peoples preserve for the strugglers their virtues.

5. The Islamists today occupy, more than at any time before, the noblest and strongest position. They are close to understanding people's ideological, conceptual, and cultural stands. They stand, as they do in Egypt, carrying the noblest of slogans, such as the

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defense of people's will and the resort to the ballot boxes. They are leading a brilliantly peaceful revolution that defends the values of the revolution: freedom of the media, which their rule preserved and which the coup wasted. They are also defending political pluralism and the nation's great causes, such as the Palestine question.

On the other hand, the old Egyptian liberalism, including the Wafd Party, stand on the ground of the counter revolution seeking the support of a military coup, while its tanks are crushing the ballot boxes and the will of the people and even their bodies, laying hands on the media and silencing its voices, keeping the doors of prisons wide open, and striking at the defenseless masses in their millions.

As for the nation's major cause, the Palestine question, it has become a big charge. Wasn't the elected president charged with communicating with HAMAS so as to justify his ouster, when he is the first elected president, and to appease the Zionist entity?

Isn't the role being played by the Egyptian "modernity" elite and its Arab likes that applauded the coup a kind of mass suicide? This is contrary to the honorable stand of the Islamic movement in facing tyranny with chests that are bare of everything but faith?

Is it possible, from a historical, strategic, and national viewpoint, to consider support for the savage coup as a liberal, progressive, national, or secular victory and consider what happened as a defeat and an end to political Islam?

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6. We are certain that what happened in Egypt is not a setback for political Islam as much as it is a setback that will unfortunately eliminate what is left of the secular Arab nationalists and liberals and their heritage unless they reconsider their stands and come to their senses.

Meanwhile, the coup will provide opportunities for the Islamic movement to carry out revisions so as to correct its mistakes in rule and to be more open to the opposition forces in Egypt and elsewhere, particularly in a transitional phase that cannot be ruled by one party or one current and whose constitution cannot be written by one trend.

The Islamic movement in Egypt and elsewhere will realize this and will be more open to all the national forces, to not only pave the way for broad participation and alliance with them, but even let them assume leading positions in the Islamic parties. Islam is a common heritage for the whole nation.

7. If the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood [MB] has faced successive tribulations at the hand of Egyptian rulers since the monarchy, and especially under the Nasirite administration, those tribulations cannot be compared qualitatively and quantitatively with what it is facing at the hand of General Al-Sisi. The total number of victims in the past 60 years did not exceed 60 martyrs, which was the first figure they sustained in their encounter with Al-Sisi outside the Republican Palace. No sooner it was followed by thousands of dead, wounded, and detainees, which is a clear indication of the weak legitimacy of the coup and its reckless rush to compensate for this by suppressing the mounting heroic peaceful resistance.

8. There is a big difference between the Nasirite suppression of

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MB and the current suppression in terms of values. Abd-al-Nasir did not only strike the MB with the sword of the state, but he also struck them with big projects that he carried to his people and nation, regardless of the seriousness of at least some of them.

The security and political suppression had a heavy cover of attractive and promising cultural and political projects, such as the agrarian reform project, the spread of education, the expansion of Al-Azhar, the liberation of Palestine, the unification of the Arab nation, the confrontation of imperialism, and the Non-Aligned Movement. In contrast, what does Al-Sisi carry in the form of projects for his people and nation? A cover for the savage suppression that is so intellectually empty that it reached the point of charging the imprisoned legitimate president of communicating with HAMAS.

9. In the age of open space, the crimes of the tyrants take place under the most powerful microscopes and brightest lights, none of which was available to the pharaohs of old times, whose crimes took place under the cover of secrecy. The Pharaoh of Moses said: "I but point out to you that which I see (myself)" [Koranic verse; Ghafir, 40:29], thereby imposing absolute authority on his people through his control of information. That time has gone and the crimes of the tyrants now take place in the open. There is no future for Al-Sisi and his likes in the age of open space.

Conclusion: In light of all the above, I can say with confidence that political Islam has not been defeated in Egypt or anywhere else. The world of ideology is full of the values of Islam in an unprecedented manner since modernity invaded us on the back of tanks and dominated the world of elites, pushing Islam to the sideline and promising

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great projects, most of which have failed, whether on the level of freedom, development, justice, unity, or the liberation of Palestine.

This has renewed the need to think about Islam and search in it for a project for awakening that interacts with and absorbs, and does not reject, the accomplishments of modernity after planting it in the field of Islam.

The so-called political Islam is not in a state of retreat, but is in the process of correcting its mistakes and getting ready for a new phase that is not far from the wise exercise of rule. It does not need decades in order to regain opportunities, which have been awaiting it in the age of open media channels, and in the face of coup projects that are bare of a values-based, civilized, and political cover.

It consists of movements that are deep-rooted in their societies and that carry the values of the peaceful democratic revolution and the values of participation rather the isolation in a successful intermarriage between the values of Islam and the values of modernity. "And Allah hath full power and control over His affairs; but most among mankind know it not." [Koranic verse; Yusuf, 12:21] [Description of Source: Doha Al-Jazirah.net in Arabic -- Doha Al-Jazirah.net in Arabic -- Website of Al-Jazirah Satellite Channel, influential pan-Arab news channel of the Qatari Government-funded Al-Jazirah Media Network; generally critical of US Middle East policy; provides platform to opponents of some Arab governments; says it promotes human rights and political and social reforms; URL: <http://www.aljazeera.net/> ]

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