



CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION OF EGYPT 2012

Esteemed Delegates,

My name is Melissa Neadle, and as the director for the Constitutional Convention of Egypt 2012, I would like to welcome you to Gator Model United Nations IX. Along with my crisis staff and assistant director, I will be working to make this committee an extremely exciting and interesting experience! I am a fourth year student at the University of Florida and I am majoring in both economics and political science, as well as pursuing a minor in Hebrew. I joined the Model United Nations team at UF my second year and I have been extremely involved ever since, including acting as crisis staff for the Truman Administration in GatorMUN VII and the assistant director for Reagan's Cabinet 1986 in GatorMUN VIII.

I have an intense interest in the Middle East. It is an area of diverse culture and influence. Events in the Middle East have the potential to affect the rest of the world because the region questions the perception of key issues such as obtaining natural resources and understanding the impact of culture and perception in our political climate. This can especially be seen since the revolutions of 2011 began in the area in multiple countries, including Egypt. The Egyptian revolution was successful in ousting the previous government and ushering in the opportunity for change and democracy. As delegates, you will be given the opportunity to act as some of the most influential people in the new Egyptian government and its military. As such, you will be writing a new, democratic constitution that must gain approval from the Egyptian people, as well as working to run the Egyptian country. As a note, this committee is interesting because the events affecting it are still occurring. As such, you will need to keep up to date on events in Egypt and the Middle East. I will expand on this issue later in the background guide.

Another thing to note about this committee is that it will be run as a crisis. This means that it will be significantly less formal than a traditional Model United Nations Committee. There will be no speakers' list; rather, we will run in a mix of moderated and unmoderated caucuses. It will be fast-paced and very interesting. Furthermore, you will be required to write a short position paper showing the research you have done for this committee. Position papers should be 1-2 pages and single-spaced. Further instruction on writing these papers is available on the GatorMUN website. These papers should detail your character's position, any further background on the topics you deem important, and ideas about solutions and topics that debate should focus on. I strongly encourage you to do as much research for these papers and your positions as possible as this background guide is primarily meant to be a guide and a starting point, not a comprehensive view of the topics.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns that I can address about this committee, please feel free to contact me through e-mail at gatormun@gmail.com, and be sure to specify that you are a delegate in the Constitutional Convention of Egypt 2012. I look forward to meeting you all soon for this historic committee.

Sincerely,

Melissa Neadle
Director, The Constitutional Convention of Egypt 2012



Committee History

On January 25, 2011, Egyptians began an historical event when they took to the streets on what has become known as the “Day of Rage.” They were protesting a corrupt government that no longer invested in the interest of its citizens. Hosni Mubarak had been the President of Egypt for three decades and the people decided it was time for someone new. These protests, which began in Cairo, continued developing across the entire country. They used technology such as Facebook and Twitter to make these protests especially organized and effective. The leaders were arrested and communications were interrupted by the government, but the protests continued in spite of the difficulties. On January 29, 2011, Mubarak dismissed his cabinet, but refused to step down himself. This was not enough for the protestors and their demands continued. Within days, countries all over the world were calling for Mubarak to step down and for Egypt to hold true democratic elections. These protests continued for multiple weeks, becoming more and more violent. Finally, on February 11, 2011, Hosni Mubarak stepped down as the President of Egypt and handed power over to the military. However, there was still much to do in the country. The military disbanded the Egyptian constitution as well as the Egyptian parliament. They appointed a provisional cabinet of ministers to oversee the transition to a democratic government. This provisional government then created a temporary constitution that was adopted on March 30, 2011. It consists of 63 articles dedicated to creating democracy in Egypt. It also specified that democratic elections for a new parliament would take place in September of 2011 with a presidential election to follow that November. This new government will form a group of its most influential and respected members to form this constitutional convention. These governmental members will be joined by key military personnel who played key parts in the provisional government and the end of the revolution. Together, you will write a new and democratic constitution for Egypt while simultaneously dealing with the issues of running a country just out of a revolution. Your actions will change the future of Egypt, the Middle East, and the world.

Delegate Positions

Speaker

The Speaker of the People’s Assembly of Egypt is the leader of the lower, but more influential, house in the Egyptian Parliament. He is the leader of the discussions in the house and so has the power to exert much influence on decisions made. As one of the main representatives of the people of Egypt, his opinion on their interests should be carefully considered.

Deputy Speaker 1

The deputy speakers are second only to the Speaker in the People’s Assembly of Egypt. At least one of them must serve on the various sub-committees to oversee actions and discussions in that committee. This, combined with their position as one of the primary representatives of the people of Egypt means that their ideas and opinions hold a significant amount of sway in the Egyptian government.

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Chair of the Committee on Legislative and Constitutional Affairs

This person is the head of the committee that is actually responsible for the writing of constitutions and amendments and therefore has a significant amount of power over what is written. He is responsible for ensuring that a full constitution is written and passed. This means he should be willing to compromise among the various parties involved to ensure a successful constitution.

Chair of the Foreign Relations Committee

This person is the head of the committee that deals with ensuring relations with other states. They are there to serve the people and government of Egypt and to ensure that Egypt's interests are served in dealings with the leaders of other states.

Chair of the Committee on Arab Affairs

This person is the main advocate on Arab Affairs in Egypt. They are there to examine Egypt's actions or needed actions in terms of the rest of the Arab nations. Their primary goal is to ensure that Egypt's best interests are served in this group.

Minister of Foreign Affairs

This man is responsible for Egyptian Foreign policy. He has an extreme influence on foreign policy and so on the rest of the world. He works to serve Egypt's interests, but must also take into account world opinion. He also has a large influence on the economy of Egypt as foreign investment falls under his jurisdiction.

Minister of the Interior

He is in charge of the ministry that controls the police in Egypt. As such, his decisions greatly affect Egyptian society.

Minister of Justice

The Minister of Justice is responsible for justice and the court system in Egypt. This is especially pertinent in recent times considering the calls for justice following the Egyptian revolution of 2011. He also has an important opinion regarding the set-up of the justice system in the constitution to be created.

Minister of Social Solidarity and Justice

This minister is in charge of the care of the people of Egypt. He is concerned with the standard of living of the people and attempting to improve it. One of these duties includes being in charge of foreign aid to Egypt and its distribution. This role is especially important after the revolution based on the demands of the people and the amount of foreign aid pouring into Egypt.

Minister of Religious Endowment

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He is in charge of the Mosques of Egypt as well as any legal issues concerning them. This concept was first nationalized in an attempt to moderate the mosques, especially as their tone affects foreign affairs. He has the power to greatly affect religion in Egypt.

General Omar Suleiman

General Suleiman is the Vice President of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces. He is also a former intelligence chief and retains many of his intelligence contacts. After the council took power following the leaving of Mubarak, his role significantly grew in power. He now is one of the primary representatives of the Armed Forces of Egypt and the revolution.

Field Marshal Mohamed Hussein Tantawi

Field Marshal Tantawi is the leader of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces and is also serving as a deputy prime minister of Egypt. He is the Commander in Chief of the Egyptian armed forces, a role that is extremely significant following the revolution. His thoughts and opinions should be considered with great care by the rest of the constitutional convention.

Lieutenant-General Sami Anan

The Lieutenant-General is the armed forces Chief of Staff as well as the leader of almost 500,000 troops. He has played a critical role in the interim government of Egypt. His ability to co-ordinate among the military and the people, as well as his mediation abilities as seen by the United States, make him invaluable to this convention.

Air Marshal Reda Mohamoud Hafez Mohamed

Air Marshal Mohamed is the Air Forces Chief. This role is crucial from a military and defense standpoint. Due to his past serving as a liaison officer to the United States, as well as his position on the Council, his opinions about the constitution and Egyptian foreign affairs should be well heeded by the other members.

Committee Description

As a crisis committee, the rules of procedure will differ considerably from the standard Model United Nations General Assembly that most of you are familiar with. This type of committee is significantly faster paced in that the committee will take actions or pass directives and communiqués, which will receive a swift response from the necessary party. Therefore, the rules of debate will be more relaxed than what would occur in a General Assembly.

The first thing to note is that there will be no speaker's list in this committee; rather, debate will be carried out through either moderated or unmoderated caucuses, the lengths of which the committee will vote upon. Speaking times for moderated caucuses will be voted on at the beginning of the caucus when the length of the caucus is also chosen. Either the assistant director or I will choose each speaker. This type of caucus is excellent for discussing issues at large with the committee and making opinions and ideas known. The committee members may also vote on different lengths of unmoderated caucuses for the purpose of working on directives, writing the constitution, and working on issues not relevant to the entire committee. Along with these caucuses, the committee will often feature guest speakers who will be brought in at my discretion to further the committee. However, I will entertain requests for particular speakers in the form of a note to the dais.



Another main difference found in a crisis committee is the use of directives rather than resolutions to create committee policy. Directives are short, but specific messages that explain a course of action the delegates wish to take, such as movement of a police force. These directives must be submitted to the dais and then must receive the approval of 50 percent plus one of the committee members in a vote. When a directive is received, there must be a motion to introduce the directive, after which it shall be read, discussed and amended if necessary, and then voted upon by the committee. As the President of Egypt, I have the final say in all directives; however, I will respect the advice given to me and not veto a directive unless it is truly necessary.

Furthermore, this is a constitutional convention. Creating this constitution will work much like creating directives. Articles, amendments, and other statements the committee wishes to be included in the constitution should be submitted in writing to the dais. Then, there must be a motion to introduce the article, etc. after which it will be read, discussed, and voted upon by the committee. These must also receive a 50 percent plus 1 approval vote to be put into the constitution, which the dais will be typing for the committee members. When the committee feels the constitution is complete, they may move to vote on it. To pass the constitution, I am requiring a 2/3 approval vote by the committee since this will be a document of great importance. Keep in mind, however, that writing the constitution will not be the only issue this committee must deal with; they are tasked with simultaneously dealing with the affairs of Egypt and so must be prepared to handle other issues as they occur.

Finally, I will review all the committee rules and procedures, especially those specific to this committee at the beginning of the first committee session. Therefore, if there is something you do not understand now, you may either send an e-mail to the account I provided above, or ask for clarification before debate starts.

Topics

This committee will have three primary topics, which are described below. However, delegates should also be prepared to discuss other topics that may arise due to the nature of a crisis committee.

I. Incorporating Protestors' Demands into the Constitution and Policy

The protestors of the 2011 Egyptian revolution succeeded in ousting the Mubarak-led government. However, this was not the only demand they issued. The demands of the revolution were most clearly stated by the April 6 Youth Movement, one of the main protest groups of the revolution: this committee must take these demands into account if they want Egypt to prosper, the constitution that they write to gain the support of the people, and the government of Egypt to gain legitimacy. First and foremost of the demands this committee must meet is guaranteeing the principals of freedom and social justice for the people of Egypt, especially within the new constitution. Although there is a provisional constitution in place that provides an excellent basis for the constitution to be written, there is still much to be done to ensure a democratic Egypt that gives citizens their full rights. If this demand is not met, Egypt will become increasingly unstable and may even break into a second revolution.



The April 6 Youth Movement further demanded that those who killed the hundreds of protestors in Tahrir Square during and in the aftermath of the revolution be appropriately punished. This demand has become increasingly important in the months following as protestors have taken to the streets again to question the lack of response to this issue. On July 5, 2011, some police officers charged with these killings were acquitted by Egyptian courts, further inflaming anger over this issue. This committee desperately needs to find some way to ensure justice for the victims of the revolution if they are to gain legitimacy and effectively represent the demands of the people of Egypt.

II. Reacting to International Pressures from Western Powers and the Middle East

The new government of Egypt, acting through this committee, will have the opportunity to define a new stage of foreign policy for Egypt. However, this will not be easy or simple due to the many international pressures being brought to focus on Egypt. When the military was given the power of governance in Egypt, they ensured the world that all treaties entered into by the previous government would be honored. This included the peace treaty with Israel, the blockade on Gaza, their various agreements with the United States of America, and many others. However, already the new government of Egypt has shown that it means to adjust its foreign policy. In late May of 2011, Egypt reopened the Gaza border, against the express wishes of Israel. This committee will need to examine its agreements, consider international pressures, and then decide whether these treaties and agreements will continue to be honored in the new constitution, be renegotiated, or simply dismissed. Any of these decisions will have lasting consequences the committee should consider beforehand and be well prepared to handle.

Furthermore, this new government of Egypt needs to prove that they are legitimate and can be effective on all levels, including international and domestic. This committee should consider examining known issues of Egypt on the international scale, such as drug smuggling, and effectively deal with them in order to show the world and the Egyptian people that this is indeed a new era for Egypt.

III. Addressing Domestic Resistance and Living Conditions

As this committee will be composed of many of the most influential members of the government and military of Egypt, they will also have the vital responsibility of handling the domestic issues of Egypt, including any that may arise during the course of the convention. Primary among these issues is the extremely poor living conditions in the post-revolution Egypt. The minimum wage is low, salaries are low, and the economy is very unstable. These poor conditions have already caused Egyptians to once again take to the streets in protest. If the new government, through this committee, does not find a solution to improve the Egyptian economy and overall living conditions in Egypt, the people will be forced to do what they feel is necessary to ensure their ability to prosper.

The government must also consider the influence of religion on Egyptian society, which is exceptionally large. The committee, therefore, should be sure to consider the wishes

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of religious leaders when writing the constitution and running Egyptian affairs. However, this may not be as simple as it seems. The members of the different religions found in Egypt do not always get along nor agree on what should be Egyptian policy. In late May of 2011, this issue became extremely prominent as the Egyptian Christians were victimized by Islamists. This committee, while considering religious influences, must also be careful to balance opposing religious forces and work to keep the peace among the various members of the Egyptian religious society in order to prevent violence or even civil war.

This committee may also be forced to acknowledge and deal with opponents of the election outcomes. Whether liberals, moderates, or conservatives win the majority in the elections, there will be those who are decidedly unhappy with the outcome and may cause trouble as a result. The committee must deal with these people justly and quickly if they are to remain the legitimate government of Egypt.

Timeline of Notable Events

Early January 2011: Many activists in Egypt begin to call for a mass protest against the current government of Egypt due to intense poverty and unemployment levels and dissatisfaction with a corrupt government.

January 25, 2011: The Egyptian people begin to protest on the streets in exceptionally large numbers. This day has come to be called the “Day of Rage” as a result. The protests begin in Cairo, mainly in Tahrir Square, but are quickly taken up all over Egypt.

January 26, 2011: Protestors clash with the police for a second day, though the revolution is becoming increasingly bloody.

January 27, 2011: The government halts Facebook, Twitter, and Blackberry Messenger services that have played a primary role in organizing the protests in an attempt to restore order.

January 28, 2011: Internet and text messaging services also see a disruption by the government in response to the continuing protests. A lawyer for the Muslim Brotherhood, a key protest group, reports that at least 20 members have been detained overnight. Troops are ordered onto streets throughout the country, but are not yet given the order to act on the spreading violence.

January 29, 2011: Mubarak announces that he has dismissed his cabinet but will not step down himself. The same day, Mubarak appoints Omar Suleiman as Vice-President in an attempt to appease protestors. This does not work. Many of the countries advise their citizens to leave Egypt.

January 30, 2011: Turkey announces that it is going to evacuate its citizens as the American embassy continues urging its citizens to depart as soon as possible. The protests in Tahrir Square continue.

January 31, 2011: The White House brings its influence to bear by giving a statement that the Egyptian government must negotiate with the protestors. The EU adds its influence by



calling for democratic elections in Egypt. Mubarak names a new cabinet. The military states that it will not harm any protestors.

February 1, 2011: Mubarak agrees to not run for re-election, but still will not step down from his office. This is not accepted by the leaders of the protest.

February 2, 2011: Internet services are partially restored, but Egyptian leaders of Google who were participating in the protests have gone missing.

February 4, 2011: Hundreds of thousands of protestors gather in Tahrir Square. This has come to be known as the “Day of Departure.”

February 7, 2011: Egypt’s government announces a 15 percent raise in salaries and pensions in an attempt to appease protestors. The Google executive that was detained is released by state authorities and rejoins the protest in Tahrir Square.

February 9, 2011: Mass strikes begin throughout the country as multiple Labor Unions join the protests. Human Rights Watch claims that 302 people have been killed in these protests and many more have been injured.

February 11, 2011: Hosni Mubarak resigns as the president of Egypt and the military gains power.

February 2011- present: Protests about the quality of life in Egypt and the state of the Egyptian economy continue.

May 2011: Egypt limitedly reopens the Gaza border against the wishes of Israel. Clashes break out between Christians and Islamists throughout Egypt.

July 2011: More protests against the police occur, demanding the punishment of those responsible for violence against the protestors during the revolution. The courts seem to be ignoring these calls as they acquit multiple police officers on these counts.

September 2011: Democratic elections for a new Egyptian parliament are held.

November 2011: Democratic elections for a new Egyptian president are held.

Research and Preparation

When researching your positions and possible actions in the committee, I recommend that you keep the following questions in mind in order to aid in your decisions of how to act during this crisis simulation:

- What opinions did my persona have regarding the 2011 Egyptian revolution?
- What religious affiliations does my persona have?
- Does my persona have any political or financial connections that must be represented?
- What opinions does my persona have regarding Egyptian foreign policy and what could the consequences of these opinions be?

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- What kind of powers does my persona have, whether they are military, political, or social influence that I can present and utilize within the committee?

The events in Egypt leading up to this convention are very recent and are even still occurring. As such, I suggest that some of your main resources for research on these topics should be newspapers and the internet. Newspapers such as the New York Times and other news sites, such as the BBC News covered the revolution and its continuing aftermath in extremely great detail. I also encourage you to continue watching the news for developments in Egypt. Below, I list the websites that I used in my own research. I suggest you take a look at these websites and others like them as a starting point for your own research.

The other type of resource I believe you should take great advantage of is examining constitutions of other countries. You should look at the provisional constitution of Egypt, but also constitutions of other nations that you believe could be used to further the writing of the new constitution of Egypt. Constitutions of countries with strong democratic governments or similar social situations to Egypt would be especially helpful, such as the United States constitution or the new constitution of Iraq. If you are willing to look deep enough, you will find these examples extremely helpful in committee.

Furthermore, I will be updating this background guide following the September and November 2011 elections. At this time, I will finalize positions and provide an updated timeline and topics section to help guide you in your research. However, this does not mean that you should not begin your research as soon as possible as the events in Egypt continue to unfold. I thank you for choosing to participate in this exciting committee and I look forward to seeing you all in February.



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