

From Egypt: Jubilation in the streets

Joshua J. McElwee | Feb. 11, 2011



Anti-government protesters gathered in Tahrir Square in Cairo Feb. 11 celebrate the departure of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. (CNS photo/Suhaib Salem, Reuters)

Hosni Mubarak's resignation today after 29 years of rule as president of Egypt has led to jubilation among young people there and newfound faith in the direction of the country, one person involved in the struggle told *NCR* from the city of Alexandria.

"We've achieved what we were looking for, thank God," said Moroug Badawy, a 24-year old graduate student who has been taking part in the demonstrations. "You can hear the sounds of people in the streets beeping, running with the flag. Everyone is just so happy."

Antigovernment demonstrations began in Egypt Jan. 25 as a daylong event, organized with the help of social media. Yesterday, hundreds of thousand of demonstrators expressed frustration across the country after a speech by Mubarak left his position in the government -- and the extent of his power -- unclear.

The mood changed dramatically today when Egyptian Vice-President Omar Suleiman announced in a televised address that Mubarak had quit his office and handed control of the country over to its military.

Speaking to *NCR* over the sounds of people yelling victorious chants from the streets outside her building, Badawy said the demonstrators will now be looking to the Egyptian military to make democratic reforms.

"We trust the military and we know they are the only ones that can take control now until they make the new government. We trust them," said Badawy. "Hopefully [the new government] will happen as soon as possible so the military [can] make it right."

Now that Mubarak has resigned, the Egyptian people can focus on becoming "one of the top countries in the world," she said.

Said Badawy: "We didn't feel how good we are because we'd been robbed by the government. I think after today you'll find Egypt in another position....You will see that. We will be different....We've been suffering with the government before. But now you'll see really clear how good the Egyptian people are."

NCR also made brief contact this afternoon with Phillip Rizk, an Egyptian filmmaker and blogger who is in Tahir Square in Cairo taking part in the celebrations.

Over the sound of chanting and pounding of drums, Rizk, [who NCR interviewed Feb. 3](#) [1], said it would be too hard to speak.

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NCR contributor Claire Schaeffer-Duffy has been conducting interviews with people connected to the unrest in Egypt this week. For her interviews, see:

- [Egyptian uprising 'far beyond what people expected'](#) [2], a conversation with Egyptian expert John Esposito
- [In Egypt, most powerful example of 'people power' in history](#) [3], a conversation with Gene Sharp, a renowned scholar of nonviolent struggle
- [Violence on Cairo streets, Egyptian demonstrators say 'will not be silenced'](#) [4], a conversation with says Philip Rizk, an Egyptian filmmaker and activist
- [Egyptian protester: 'Since we were born, everything had paused'](#) [1], a conversation with Moroug Badawy, a 24-year old Egyptian graduate student
- [Gazan activist: We need democracy and stability in Egypt](#) [5], a conversation with Husam el Nounou, a human rights activist living in Gaza
- [In Israel, Egypt's unrest raises questions](#) [6], a conversation with Adam Keller, a founding member of the Israeli peace organization Gush Shalom
- [Israeli: Mubarak should have cooperated](#) [7], a conversation with Ovadia Keidar, an Egyptian-born Israeli Jew
- [Democratic Egypt 'best thing possible' for US policy](#) [8], a conversation with Stephen Zunes, a professor of politics and international studies at the University of San Francisco

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