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Article 1.

The Daily Star (Lebanon)

The Arab Spring represents a leap backward for women

Hoda Badran

August 27, 2012 -- This summer, as the dust of the Arab Spring revolutions begins to settle, women - who stood shoulder to shoulder with men in defying tyranny.

This summer, as the dust of the Arab Spring revolutions begins to settle, women - who stood shoulder to shoulder with men in defying tyranny - are finding themselves marginalized and excluded from decision-making. Despite the new freedoms championed by the revolutionaries, women continue to be regarded as subordinate to men. In Tunisia, a mass protest called for all women to be veiled, which led to unveiled female professors being hounded off campuses. Mobs shouted at Tunisian women demonstrators to go back to the kitchen "where they belong." In Egypt, conservative forces are on the rise, demanding the imposition of policies - particularly reforms of family legislation - that would represent a step backward for women.

Angered and alarmed by these developments, Arab women have been forced to defend their rights. In April 2011, Tunisian women successfully pressed for an electoral-parity law, thanks to which they won 49 of 217 parliamentary seats in last October's elections. In Egypt, however, the prospects for women seem gloomier, because they failed to retain the pre-revolution quota system that had given them 64 parliamentary seats.

That system was replaced by a new electoral law that obliges political parties to include at least one woman on their candidate lists. But almost all of the parties put female candidates at the end of their lists; as a result, only nine women were elected to the parliament. The Senior Council of the Armed Forces, the ruling junta, appointed two more women, bringing the share of women parliamentarians to about 2 percent.

Islamist groups won majorities in both the Tunisian and Egyptian parliaments. Draft legislation that reflects a restrictive interpretation of Shariah, or Islamic law, particularly concerning women's status, is now being submitted for debate in Tunisia. And there seems to be a clear intention in many Arab countries to allow unrestricted polygamy, for example, even where it was prohibited prior to the Arab Spring.

In Egypt, matters are more complicated. SCAF, fearing an Islamist takeover ahead of the presidential election, dissolved the parliament in June, following a judicial decision that the council (and the judiciary) insist must be upheld. But the new president, the Muslim Brotherhood's Mohammad Mursi, has ordered the parliament to reconvene.

Previously, the parliament's legislative committee received a proposal to lower the age of marriage for girls from 18 years to 12. Needless to say,

this would cut short girls' education, not to mention other harmful implications.

A powerful feature of the Egyptian revolution was the equality between the very different actors who initiated it. None tried to seize a leadership role. The power struggle pitted the forces of President Hosni Mubarak's regime against the people, including women, who were on the streets and in the squares demanding freedom, dignity, and social justice.

But now things are strikingly different. The once unified opposition to the Mubarak regime has become fragmented, with each faction defending its own interests and advocating its own version of the revolution's goals.

The two most prominent actors in the new power spectrum - the military, represented by SCAF, and the Islamists, who include the Muslim Brotherhood and the Salafists - are surrounded by lesser political parties, youth coalitions and others.

Unfortunately, the political position of women is weak. The National Council for Women has been restructured; there is a new Egyptian Feminist Union, and a number of coalitions made up of feminist nongovernmental organizations have been created. But they are far from being sufficiently organized to work together effectively.

There now seem to be two scenarios for women's future status in Egypt, neither of which is very hopeful. In the first scenario, SCAF - which, aside from dissolving the parliament, stripped the presidency of most powers in order to weaken its rivals - continues to rule the country under the military system introduced in 1952 when Mohammad Naguib and then Gamel Abdel-Nasser seized power.

Militarism and patriarchy are inextricably linked, and both view masculinity as the opposite of femininity. If soldiers - and, by extension, all "real" men - are strong and daring, then real women should be the antithesis: passive, obedient and in need of protection as "good" wives, sisters and mothers.

The second scenario is an Islamist regime: Mursi negotiates with SCAF a transition to civilian rule; Islamists continue to dominate a restored parliament; and the new Constitution establishes a theocratic state. Most of Egypt's Islamists, particularly those who returned from exile in Saudi Arabia, adhere to the Wahhabi sect, with its severe restrictions on women,

implying that women's status would be much worse than it was before the revolution.

Among other things, new legislation would make polygamy the rule, rather than the exception, and would deprive women of an equal right to divorce. The Islamists could impose the veil and then the niqab. An immense effort would be required of women's rights activists to be prevent a reign of injustice.

Unfortunately, neither SCAF nor Mursi espouses the type of liberal regime that would provide women with opportunities to take on the leadership roles that have traditionally been denied to them.

Indeed, the only glimmer of hope remaining for women's equality and dignity in Egypt is the willingness of all who seek such a regime to unite and try yet again to fulfill the democratic promise of Egypt's revolution. Hoda Badran is president of the Egyptian Feminist Union.

Article 2.

AL-MONITOR

Is Morsi Just a New Brand of Autocrat For Egypt?

Alaa al-Aswany

Aug 26, 2012 -- If you supported and participated in the Egyptian revolution, or even if you simply understood its cause, then President Morsi's latest decisions will doubtless have left you pleased. Despite all of the old regime's attempts to stifle the revolution, the people were able to bring a duly elected civilian president into office for the first time in 60 years. This elected president was, in turn, able to satisfy a principal demand of the revolution. Namely, to bring the military's rule over the country to an end by [dismissing Field Marshal Tantawi](#) and Gen. Anan, and by annulling the Complimentary Constitutional Declaration. Morsi has now become an elected president, as much in fact as in theory, one who possesses all the power and authority needed to establish a second republic in Egypt. Moreover, he is now able to begin building the very democratic state that thousands of wounded and martyred Egyptians

dreamed of.

President Morsi's decisions elicited joy from all who witnessed them. However, for many, a [sense of fear also prevailed](#). Many Egyptians wondered: “Should we be happy that the military rule, whose downfall we have demanded for so long finally, after so much effort, been toppled? Or should we be worried because the Muslim Brotherhood had effectively been empowered to seize control of the Egyptian state?” In a way, these fears are legitimate, and they can be summed up as follows:

First: Despite the fact that he was legitimately elected, President Morsi is nevertheless a member of the Muslim Brotherhood. The concerns swirling around that organization as a whole, including the ambiguous nature of its behavior, organizational structure, and sources of funding also bear upon him as an individual. The Muslim Brotherhood is neither registered nor licensed, and its massive budget is not subject to any form of oversight by the Central Auditing Organization. I believe that the president must persuade or compel the Brotherhood's leaders to open their organization's black box, document its current state of affairs, and consent to subject it to governmental oversight. This would go a long way toward allaying the fears and concerns of millions of Egyptians.

Second: By annulling the Complimentary Constitutional Declaration, President Morsi gave himself the right to form a new constitutional committee should any obstacle arise — for whatever reason — effectively preventing it from completing its work. This right which the president has accorded to himself is undemocratic and unacceptable; the constitutional committee must represent the will of the people, not the desires of the president (even if he was legitimately elected). We expected President Morsi to return this right to the people, the true holders of authority, since it is their right to choose a constitutional committee in free elections. We also expected him to fulfill his promise and reform the current committee so that the Islamist movement may not exert control and direct the committee's activities in accordance only with its own ideology.

Third: It is known throughout the world that ministries of information are failed tools of oppression that exist only under totalitarian regimes. Only despotic regimes seek to manipulate public opinion by founding ministries of information tasked with spoon-feeding the masses [with] lies meant to glorify the tyrant and justify his every action, no matter what

crimes he perpetrates. The revolution demanded the dissolution of the Ministry of Information and the creation of a Supreme Media Council to monitor professional standards in the media. Yet, lo and behold, we find out now that the president preserved the Ministry of Information, installing a prominent member of the Muslim Brotherhood at its head.

The only explanation is that the president in reality merely sought to tame the media, not liberate it. His Excellency the Minister of Information began his work as if he were the head of the security services, launching a campaign scrutinizing the statements of some broadcasters who work for privately owned TV channels. He then proceeded to issue an administrative edict on behalf of the government closing the Al-Faraeen TV station.

Of course, I cannot defend Al-Faraeen's perverse media coverage. Tawfiq Okasha, the channel's owner, used it to assail and slander most of the figures associated with the revolution, myself among them. I even lodged a complaint with the prosecutor-general against the insults which Okasha leveled against me during his program. However, the complaint was received months ago, and, as usual, nothing came of it.

No doubt Okasha and those like him deserve to be held legally accountable for their actions. In a democracy, however, TV channels are not closed by arbitrary administrative edicts, but rather by uncontested judicial rulings. If today we accept the closing of Al-Faraeen by administrative order, then any channel that chances to anger President Morsi in the future may likewise be closed. Furthermore, Okasha is not the only person who launches attacks and levels slanderous insults on the air. There is an individual like Okasha named Sheikh Khalid Abdallah, who is affiliated with the Islamist movement and appears on the Al-Nas Channel. He levels slanderous and libelous insults against anyone who happens to hold an opinion that differs from his own. I was also targeted by him, and so, again, I filed a complaint with the prosecutor-general. As before, nothing came of the complaint. And so the question arises: Is Okasha being charged because of his disreputable activity in the media and his unjustified attacks on the people in general, or because these attacks were directed at President Morsi? If it is the former, then Abdallah must also be held accountable, for his transgressions are no less dangerous

than those of Okasha. But if the latter is the case, then we must be wary of the dangers posed by a president who can have his government punish and malign his opponents while at the same time allow those from the Islamic movement free rein to commit similar acts without fear of punishment. Fourth: in every democratic system, the media devotes itself to criticizing the head of state. But the law does not punish anyone for leveling such criticism, no matter how harsh or excessive it might be. In such democratic systems, slander and libel laws do not tolerate attacks against average citizens, but permit attacks against ministers and heads of state without reservation. In other words, if you were to libel your neighbor or co-worker as a liar or a thief, they could pursue legal action and win a court ruling against you. On the other hand, if you were to write in a newspaper that the president of the republic was a liar and thief, then the law protects you from any punishment. This is because criticism of the president, even harsh criticism, is nevertheless intended to serve the public interest.

The well-known French satirical newspaper *Le Canard Enchaîné*, which has been published every Wednesday since 1915, lampoons the French president and high-ranking officials by means of biting sarcasm and comical caricatures. The average citizen would never consent to being treated this way, yet the public official must do so. Theodore Roosevelt (1858-1919), former president of the United States, gave expression to this sentiment when one of his cabinet secretaries came to him complaining about the harsh attacks leveled against him by the press. Smiling, he replied sardonically, "Those who work in the kitchen can't complain about how hot the stove is." [The well-known version of the saying is typically attributed to President Truman.]

Roosevelt's point was that enduring harsh and hurtful criticism is one of those duties that goes part and parcel with holding public office in a democracy. Indeed, this is the kind of democracy that we want to foster in Egypt. Yet, unfortunately, we were surprised to see the government confiscate a recent edition of the *Al-Dustour* newspaper and put its editor-in-chief on trial on charges that he had insulted the president, in addition to the usual trumped-up charges such as 'inciting sectarian strife' and 'incitement' in general. Charges like these might be leveled against anyone

who displeases President Morsi. I hope that this president will refrain from prosecuting journalists, so that the Egyptian people may be convinced that he truly desires to build an authentic democracy.

Fifth: Most state-owned newspapers in Egypt are corrupted and failed institutions, both in terms of management and journalistic integrity. They are all funded by the hundreds of millions of Egyptian pounds pilfered from the Egyptian people. By law, it is the Shura Council which owns these journalistic institutions. It used to appoint their chief editors with support from the security services, and the result was that most of these editors rivaled the president himself in their hypocrisy. At the same time, many journalists grew accustomed to selling out their journalistic integrity and playing ball with the state's security services as a means of securing promotions, regardless of their qualifications.

After the revolution, journalists demanded an end to the Shura Council's ownership of these journalistic bodies, so that they might become fully independent from the state. Sound and comprehensive proposals were prepared in order to advance and promote the independence of national periodicals. Yet again we were surprised to see the Shura Council (in which the majority of seats are controlled by the Muslim Brotherhood) rush to announce that there would be a contest to select new chief editors. This contest, along with the committee that oversaw it, stirred many objections and raised many questions.

The results of the competition were announced, and new editors-in-chief were appointed for all of the national newspapers, and some of the individuals who won positions in this competition did indeed possess the requisite qualifications: men such as professors Sulaiman Qanawi and Thuna Abu al-Hamid, among others. However, our grievances here are not directed toward individuals, but rather toward the regime that preserved the Shura Council and its control over the editors. No matter how qualified one of these new editors may be, it cannot be forgotten that his appointment came only after receiving the consent of the Muslim Brotherhood, which controls the Shura Council. It also cannot be forgotten that this editor could lose his position at any moment should he oppose the Brotherhood. As a result, he will naturally be cautious about broaching any subject concerning the Brotherhood or the Islamists. Thus we see that, far from satisfying the aims of the revolution to establish a

respectable and independent press by liberating journalistic institutions from the control of the Shura Council, the Muslim Brotherhood only abolished the security services' control over these institutions to impose its own control through the vehicle of the Shura Council.

In the face of all of these troubling facts, the same question arises once again: Are we really dealing with a president determined to dismantle the machinery of tyranny and return power to its legitimate owner, the Egyptian people? Or are we dealing with a president who is merely subverting this mechanism to serve his own interests, stripping power from the military in order to vest it in the Brotherhood? If this president's plan is to spread the Muslim Brotherhood's influence over every facet of the Egyptian state, then it is a plan doomed to failure. And that is simply because the people will stoutly resist any such a plan; will never allow it to succeed.

The people that defied Mubarak's rule, toppled his regime, and prosecuted him in court will never allow Egypt to be transformed into a state of the Muslim Brotherhood. If the president really wants to eliminate dictatorship and establish true democracy, he must rectify all of these troubling errors. It is through deeds that he must affirm that he is the president of all Egyptians. He must release all of the currently imprisoned revolutionaries just as he released the imprisoned Islamists.

Were it not for the sacrifices of the youths of the revolution now in the Al-Harbi Prison, Morsi would never have set foot in the presidential palace. He must make good on his promises to [reassure the Copts](#) and appoint them to legitimate and influential posts, to prove that he respects the principle of equality among citizens. He must make good on his promises to alter the composition of the constitutional committee so that it truly represents all sectors of society, without being dominated by the Islamist movement. Should this committee stumble, the president must reconstitute it by holding free elections, not by choosing its new members at his own discretion.

President Morsi must be congratulated for his courageous decision to end military rule. However, we still await other decisions on his part, decisions that will prove to us that he is the president of all Egyptians and that he truly wants to eliminate the military's dictatorship without simply replacing it with a religious dictatorship. We await decisions that will

create a true democratic regime that will bring Egypt the future it deserves. Democracy is the solution.

Alaa Al-Aswany is an Egyptian writer, and a founding member of the political movement Kefaya.

Article 3.

NYT

Has 'Europe' Failed?

Nicholas Sambanis

August 26, 2012 -- LAST week, European leaders met in Berlin amid new signs of an impending recession and an emerging consensus that Greece could leave the euro zone within a year — a move that would have dire consequences for the currency's future.

There are many reasons behind the crisis, from corruption and collective irresponsibility in Greece to European institutional rigidities and the flawed concept of a monetary union without a fiscal union. But this is not just a story about profligate spending and rigid monetary policy. The European debt crisis is not just an economic crisis: it is an escalating identity conflict — an ethnic conflict.

The European Union was a political concept, designed to tame a bellicose Germany. Strong economic interdependence and a common European identity, it was thought, would be cultivated by the institutions of the union, as Europeans benefited from the economic prosperity that integration would create.

Elites could sell that concept to their publics as long as Europe prospered and had high international status. But the union has lost its shine. It is slowing down and aging. Its longtime ally, the United States, is shifting attention to East Asia. Its common defense policy is shallow.

As Europe's status declines, the already shaky European identity will weaken further and the citizens of the richer European nations will be more likely to identify nationally — as Germans or French — rather than as Europeans. This will increase their reluctance to use their taxes for bailouts of the ethnically different Southern Europeans, especially the culturally distant Greeks; and it will diminish any prospect of fiscal integration that could help save the euro.

The result is a vicious circle: as ethnic identities return, ethnic differences become more pronounced, and all sides fall back on stereotypes and the stigmatization of the adversary through language or actions intended to dehumanize, thereby justifying hostile actions. This is a common pattern in ethnic conflicts around the world, and it is also evident in Europe today. The slide to ethnic conflict in Europe is not violent, but it can nonetheless be destructive, both economically and politically. Take the roiling tensions between Greece and Germany. A recent survey finds that a majority of Germans want Greece out of the euro if it doesn't reform quickly, even though most analysts say that a Greek exit would have incalculable costs for Germany. Clearly something deeper is motivating the German public. A recent study by the political scientists Michael Bechtel, Jens Hainmueller and Yotam Margalit found that German voters' attitudes toward the bailouts are explained by their degree of "cosmopolitanism," or the extent to which they identify with geographically or culturally distant groups. More cosmopolitan individuals are more likely to support bailing out Germany's southern neighbors.

Unfortunately, cosmopolitanism can be the first casualty of rising ethnic tensions, as populations react negatively to escalating political demagoguery, strengthening the hand of extremists. Examples of such stigmatization in Europe abound, from the disparaging acronym PIGS, used to refer to the troubled economies of Portugal, Italy, Greece and Spain, to the tired medical analogies of an infection of the North by the contagious South. Germans tell the Greeks how to live; the Greeks reply by calling them Nazis.

This is not just the result of economic weariness or fear. It is the predictable re-emergence of hard-edged national identities, which the European Union hoped to banish. True, many Greeks, especially those living abroad, still toe the European line about "taking the medicine" prescribed by the European "doctors," no matter how painful.

Why? Some fear the social upheaval that a transition to the drachma would cause. Others worry that populist politicians would abandon all structural reforms without European oversight. But social psychology suggests that many Greeks might be desperately clinging to the last shreds of their European identity, because that gives them more self-esteem than the alternative — the Near Eastern or Balkan identity they have been

trying to shed for decades. Greece's wounded reputation makes some Greeks cling to their European identity. But even that may not last long. Germans must have a frank public discussion about what it means to be European, how good European citizens should behave toward other Europeans and why a strong Europe is good for German interests in a world dominated by the United States, China and emerging powers like India and Brazil. Without such a discussion, and real concessions to Greece, a Greek exit is inevitable — and with it the triumph of parochialism in Europe.

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Article 4.

Today's Zaman

Europe's 4 percent solution

Kemal Derviş and Javier Solana

26 August 2012 -- This is a momentous summer for Europe, because both the eurozone and the European Union could be in danger of unraveling, despite the important steps toward a banking union and direct recapitalization of Spanish banks taken at the June meeting of eurozone leaders.

Implementation of the proposed reforms is lagging; there may be legal challenges to the European Stability Mechanism in Germany; and the Netherlands and Finland seem to be backtracking on some parts of the agreement.

Even in a worst-case scenario, some degree of intra-European cooperation will surely survive. But it is hard to see how the EU as we know it could survive even a partial disintegration of the eurozone.

Those who argue that one or more countries on the eurozone's periphery should take a "holiday" from the euro underestimate both the economic and political repercussions of such a move. The sense of failure, loss of trust, and the damage inflicted on so many if two or three countries had to leave would shake the entire Union.

One of the key challenges is the negative feedback loop between the weaknesses of many banks and the doubts about the peripheral countries'

sovereign debt. The sovereign-debt and banking crises have become even more closely interlinked as banks bought greater amounts of their home countries' sovereign debt.

That said, Europe's disparities in production costs and competitiveness, reflected in the “problem” countries' substantial current-account deficits, may prove to be an even more difficult problem to resolve. Unit labor costs in Greece, Portugal, Spain, and Italy grew 20-30 percent faster than in Germany in the euro's first decade, and somewhat faster than unit labor costs in northern Europe as a whole.

This disparity reflected some differences in productivity growth but even more so differences in wage growth. Broadly speaking, capital inflows led to real revaluation and a lower domestic savings rate relative to investment in the southern countries, resulting in structural current-account deficits. In Greece, large fiscal deficits accompanied and exacerbated this trend. In Spain, the counterpart to the current-account deficit was private-sector borrowing.

The eurozone crisis will not be resolved until this internal imbalance is reduced to a sustainable level, which requires not only fiscal adjustment in the troubled peripheral economies, but also balance-of-payments adjustments across the eurozone as a whole. That, in turn, implies the need for a real exchange-rate adjustment inside the eurozone, with peripheral countries' production costs falling relative to those in the core. Real exchange-rate adjustments inside a monetary union, or among countries with fixed exchange rates, can take place through inflation differentials. The real value of the Chinese renminbi, for example, has appreciated considerably relative to the US dollar, despite limited nominal exchange-rate changes, because China's domestic prices have risen faster than have prices in the United States.

A similar adjustment within the eurozone, assuming similar productivity performance, would require wages in the troubled peripheral countries to rise more slowly than in Germany for a number of years, thus restoring their competitiveness. But, because Germany and the other northern surplus countries remain hawkish on price stability, real exchange-rate adjustment within the eurozone requires actual wage and price deflation in the distressed southern economies.

This pressure on the peripheral countries to deflate their already stagnant economies is turning into the eurozone's greatest challenge. The ECB's provision of liquidity can buy time, but only real adjustment can cure the underlying problem.

That could be achieved with less wage contraction and loss of real income if productivity in the peripheral economies were to start growing significantly faster than in the core, thereby allowing prices to fall without the need for lower wages. But, while structural reforms could undoubtedly lead over time to faster productivity growth, this is unlikely to happen in an environment in which credit is severely constrained, investment is plummeting, and many skilled young people emigrate.

Price deflation is not conducive to bringing about the sort of relative price changes that could accelerate reallocation of resources within the countries under stress and increase overall productivity. Relative prices are much easier to change when there is modest inflation than when nominal price reductions are required. The need for higher productivity in the troubled countries is undeniable; but achieving it in the current climate of extreme austerity and deflation is unlikely, given an atmosphere of latent, or open, social conflict.

These economic adjustments could occur much more smoothly if the eurozone as a whole were to pursue a more expansionary policy. If the target inflation rate for the eurozone were to be set temporarily at, say 3.5 percent, and if the countries with current-account surpluses encouraged domestic inflation rates somewhat above the eurozone's target, there could be real price adjustment within the eurozone without price deflation in the troubled countries. There are finally some signs that Germany will welcome more rapid domestic wage growth and somewhat higher inflation.

This could and should be accompanied by an overall depreciation of the euro, though that would be no panacea. High public-debt levels would still have to be reduced to create fiscal space and keep interest rates low enough to restore long-term confidence. That means that courageous structural reforms must still be pursued in the peripheral countries – indeed, throughout Europe.

Similarly, the eurozone would still need to strengthen its firewalls, as well as its mechanisms for cooperation. But a temporary and modestly higher

inflation rate would facilitate the adjustment process and give reforms a chance to work.

Deflation discourages optimism about the future. Shifting the entire adjustment burden onto peripheral countries with current-account deficits, while core countries continue to run surpluses, obstructs adjustment.

The eurozone's inflation target is not a magic number, and it is irrational to let it determine the overall macroeconomic framework. If lower is always better, why not set the target at 1 percent, or even zero? In fact, there are times when 3-4 percent is better than 2 percent. Europe is at such a moment.

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Article 5.

The New Yorker

Meir Dagan - A notorious spymaster becomes a dissident (an abstract)

[David Remnick](#)

September 3, 2012 -- Earlier this month, the liberal Israeli novelist David Grossman published an op-ed in Haaretz decrying Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's fevered declarations that he might soon order a unilateral strike on Iran and its nuclear facilities. Since early last year, Israelis have witnessed a dissidence of a variety almost unknown since the founding of the state. Even as Netanyahu and his Defense Minister, Ehud

Barak, routinely speak of an imminent “existential threat” from Teheran, comparable to that of the Nazis in 1939, a growing number of leading intelligence and military officials, active and retired, have made plain their opposition to a unilateral Israeli strike. They include the Army Chief of Staff, the Commander-in-Chief of the Air Force, the heads of the two main intelligence agencies, the Mossad (Israel’s C.I.A.) and Shin Bet (its F.B.I.), President Shimon Peres, and members of Netanyahu’s cabinet. Apart from Peres, these men are anything but liberals. Recently, the writer met with Meir Dagan, who was the director of the Institute for Intelligence and Special Operations—the Mossad—from 2002 until January, 2011. Dagan is known as a ruthless agent; his career is said to have included operations of all kinds—car bombings, poisonings, cyberwar. He was also the earliest and is arguably the most authoritative of the dissident security chiefs. Dagan was born in 1945, on the floor of a train, as his family was being deported from the Soviet Union to a Nazi detention camp in Poland. In 1950, his family sailed for Israel aboard a cattle boat, and they eventually settled in Bat Yam, south of Tel Aviv. As a soldier, Dagan won the admiration of Ariel Sharon. In 1970, Sharon ordered him to create a special “elimination” unit, dedicated to hunting down suspected terrorists in Gaza. Dagan worked in various military and security jobs until 2002, when Sharon, then Prime Minister, appointed Dagan the director of the Mossad. Under his leadership, the Mossad was credited with a string of high-stakes operations. The singular focus of Dagan’s work was Iran’s nuclear program. Under Dagan’s direction, and in coöperation with Western intelligence agencies, the Mossad is believed to have been involved in all the main efforts to sabotage Iran’s nuclear progress. Just days before stepping down as director of the Mossad, Dagan began what amounted to an extended public denunciation of Netanyahu’s Iran policy. In the months that followed, he became increasingly frank in his opposition to an attack. This was astonishing. “An Israeli bombing,” Dagan said, “would lead to a regional war and solve the internal problems of the Islamic Republic of Iran. It would galvanize Iranian society behind the leadership and create unity around the nuclear issue. And it would justify Iran in rebuilding its nuclear project and saying, ‘Look, see, we were attacked by the Zionist enemy and we clearly need to have it.’” Dagan’s view that a unilateral Israeli

strike would intensify, not diminish, the danger posed by Iran is now the general view of the dissident politicians and security chiefs. Dagan believes that the West and Israel should do all they can to foment regime change in Iran by supporting the Iranian opposition.

Article 6.

[Yale Center for the Study of Globalization](#)

Pakistan's Taliban Nightmare

[Zahid Hussain](#)

August 24, 2012 -- Contrary to the general perception, Pakistan is not pushing for the return of Taliban rule in Afghanistan. Instead, the prospect of the Taliban taking over the war-torn country after the pullout of foreign forces is the biggest nightmare for the Pakistani security establishment.

A major worry is that Taliban control next door would give a huge impetus to Pakistan's own militants seeking to establish retrogressive rule in the northwestern border regions. This would also make fighting local Taliban more difficult for the Pakistani Army.

Thousands of Pakistani troops are battling the militants for control of lawless border regions in northwestern Pakistan. Despite some successes, government forces have yet to establish their writ over the territory that also provides sanctuaries to Afghan insurgents. "If they [NATO forces] are leaving and giving a notion of success to the Taliban of Afghanistan, this notion of success may have a snowballing effect on the threat matrix of Afghanistan," General Khalid Rabbani, Pakistani commander of frontline cops fighting the militants, told Reuters in a recent interview.

The concern stems from the fact that it's ethnic Pashtuns on both sides of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border who have taken the lead in the insurgency - around 27 million Pashtuns live in Pakistan and 14 million in Afghanistan. A distinctive Taliban movement known as Tehrik-e-Taliban

Pakistan, or TTP, has evolved into a formidable insurgent force, presenting a serious threat to Pakistan's own national security. Both the Afghan and the Pakistani Taliban are predominantly Pashtun movements and have close ideological and organizational ties. Despite differences on tactics, the two share an objective of establishing a harsh version of Islam. Moreover, both movements owe their allegiance to Mullah Omar, founder and supreme leader of Afghan Taliban movement. In recent years, the insurgency in Pakistan has grown both in numbers and sophistication as several other Pakistani militant groups forming an interconnected, coordinated web join the Pashtun insurgents in the tribal areas. More alarming is the nexus these groups have formed with Al Qaeda, which despite some setbacks remains deeply entrenched in Pakistani tribal areas.

The threat posed by this terrorist nexus to the Pakistani state was foreshadowed in 2009 when the militants not only established control over the entire tribal regions known as FATA, but also swept control of part of Northwest Frontier Province, since renamed Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the land of Pakhtuns or Pashtuns. At one point the insurgents were 60 miles away from the capital, Islamabad, sending shudders across the country.

In a massive operation more than 100,000 troops pushed back the Taliban offensive, but the government's control over the areas has remained tentative. Many insurgency leaders have now taken refuge on the other side of the border among Afghan insurgents and continue to launch cross border attacks on Pakistani security posts.

Pakistan's role is, perhaps, the most critical in determining the course of the Afghan endgame sought by NATO. While Pakistan's cooperation is key to winding down the war, geographical proximity and cross-border ethnic linkages also enable it to play a spoiler's role.

Mired in mutual mistrust, there are substantial differences of opinion between Pakistan and the United States about the appropriate strategy in Afghanistan and how to address the wider insurgency.

Pakistan is reluctant to support any solution that doesn't protect its interests in Afghanistan or fails to provide a non-aligned setup in Kabul with a dominant role for Pashtuns, putting it at odds with Western allies and the Afghan government. The US wants the present setup to continue

until some kind of power-sharing agreement is reached with the Taliban and other insurgent groups.

Pashtuns constitute 42 percent of the Afghan population, and from Pakistan's point of view, absence of adequate Pashtun representation in the future Afghan setup would be detrimental to the interests of both Afghanistan and Pakistan. With little movement in the talks between the United States and the Taliban, Islamabad's worries have increased. The talks, which had started last year, seem to have stalled after both sides stuck to their hardline positions. The Karzai government has also established contacts with the Taliban, but no headway has so far been made as the Taliban want only to talk with the US. The question remains whether the United States has a clear strategy for a political resolution of the Afghan crisis.

Islamabad maintains that ending the war won't be possible without a power-sharing agreement between the Afghan government and the Taliban. A political settlement in Afghanistan could also help Pakistan to deal more effectively with its own Taliban.

But Pakistani ambivalence about cracking down on Afghan insurgents operating from sanctuaries inside its territories - an unwillingness to burn old bridges - also raises questions about Pakistan's cooperation in ending the war in Afghanistan and allowing orderly withdrawal of coalition forces.

Since the start of the war in Afghanistan, remote tribal areas along Pakistan's border have become home for a lethal brew of Al Qaeda operatives, both Afghan and Pakistani Taliban, and other jihadi groups fighting on both sides of the border.

Meanwhile, North Waziristan, the biggest of the seven tribal territories, has turned into a base for the Haqqani network, the most powerful Afghan Taliban faction fighting the coalition forces. Led by legendary former Afghan Mujahideen commander Jalaluddin Haqqani and his son Sirajuddin, the network has been blamed for spectacular attacks on Kabul in the last year.

The group's close links with Al Qaeda have made the network the most dangerous outfit operating in eastern Afghanistan. The US pressures Pakistan to act against the network as violence escalated in the recent

years. More than 1500 coalition troops and more than 2000 ISAF soldiers have been killed in Afghanistan since 2009.

Pakistan's refusal to act against the Haqqani network is a reflection of Islamabad's worries about the events that could transpire after the eventual pullout of foreign forces from Afghanistan. The Pakistani military establishment is convinced that a renewed civil war will break out if the withdrawal takes place without a political settlement in place. There's also fear of arch-rival India expanding its influence in post-withdrawal Afghanistan through a government dominated by members of the former Northern Alliance.

A decade-long war in Afghanistan has turned the country into a new battleground for Al Qaeda-linked militants, with devastating effects on Pakistan's economy and politics, threatening complete destabilization. Thousands of Pakistani civilians and military personnel have been killed in terrorist attacks and fighting against the insurgents in the country's northwestern territories in recent years. Widespread violence has disrupted investment, pushing the economy toward the verge of bankruptcy.

Another serious concern is that withdrawal of NATO forces without a negotiated political mechanism in place could plunge tribal groups and factions of Afghanistan into a fierce contest over territory while also drawing surrounding countries, like Iran and Tajikistan, into the conflict. Under such a scenario, the Pashtun-dominated Haqqani network remains a useful hedge for Pakistan against the uncertain outcome in Afghanistan and Indian influence. This policy of using such a proxy in the civil war could be disastrous for Pakistan's own stability. Civil war in Afghanistan could suck Pakistan deeper into the mire with disastrous consequences for the entire region.

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