



Written by [Thomas R. Eddlem](#) on February 12, 2011

Mubarak Resigns, Egyptian Military In Control

Vice President and former Intelligence chief Omar Suleiman [announced](#) the resignation on Egyptian state television February 11: "President Muhammad Hosni Mubarak has decided to waive the office of the president of the republic, and instructed the supreme council of the armed forces to run the affairs of the country. May Allah guide our steps."

President Obama gave what may have been his most [eloquent speech](#) as President in a brief statement after Suleiman's announcement, describing the protests against the Egyptian dictator this way:



It was the moral force of nonviolence — not terrorism, not mindless killing — but nonviolence, moral force that bent the arc of history toward justice once more.

And while the sights and sounds that we heard were entirely Egyptian, we can't help but hear the echoes of history — echoes from Germans tearing down a wall, Indonesian students taking to the streets, Gandhi leading his people down the path of justice.

As Martin Luther King said in celebrating the birth of a new nation in Ghana while trying to perfect his own, "There is something in the soul that cries out for freedom." Those were the cries that came from Tahrir Square, and the entire world has taken note.

The impact of Obama's eloquence is diminished by the unfortunate and extreme tardiness in which his State Department abandoned its "ally" Mubarak. Hillary Clinton and her State Department [pledged to continue to work with Mubarak](#) late into the protests, long after it became apparent Mubarak would no longer remain in power. Even Obama's Vice President Joe Biden ridiculously [pronounced](#) January 27 that Mubarak "is not a dictator."

Biden said this despite a WikiLeaks-revealed U.S. State Department cable even [labeled](#) Suleiman a "consigliere" in a May 5, 2007 cable to Washington: "EGYPTIAN INTELLIGENCE CHIEF AND MUBARAK CONSIGLIERE, IN PAST YEARS SOLIMAN WAS OFTEN CITED AS LIKELY TO BE NAMED TO THE LONG-VACANT VICE-PRESIDENTIAL POST." (Capitals in original.) A "consigliere" is a high-ranking Mafia official who helps to mediate disputes between mob bosses.

And the diplomatic cable did not label Suleiman a mafia-style leader without reason. Other State Department cables — also [revealed by WikiLeaks](#) — documented: "Torture and police brutality in Egypt are endemic and widespread. The police use brutal methods mostly against common criminals to extract confessions, but also against demonstrators, certain political prisoners and unfortunate bystanders."

President Obama went on to [say](#) of the protesters:

We saw protesters chant "Selmiyya, selmiyya" — "We are peaceful" — again and again.

We saw a military that would not fire bullets at the people they were sworn to protect.



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And we saw doctors and nurses rushing into the streets to care for those who were wounded, volunteers checking protesters to ensure that they were unarmed.

We saw people of faith praying together and chanting - "Muslims, Christians, We are one." And though we know that the strains between faiths still divide too many in this world and no single event will close that chasm immediately, these scenes remind us that we need not be defined by our differences.

While the Egyptian police were not as restrained as the Egyptian military — at least [300 peaceful protesters were murdered](#) in [government-inspired pogroms](#) — the protesters were almost universally peaceful and non-violent (with [some exceptions](#)).

The protests began as Internet-connected youth seeking more economic and political freedoms rallied using Internet-based social media, and were much later joined by other segments of Egyptian society, including unsavory groups such as the banned and relatively fundamentalist Islamic [Muslim Brotherhood](#) and the [Egyptian Communist Party](#) and its affiliates. Fortunately, the Egyptian Communist Party has little support or political connections and the Muslim Brotherhood — while a powerful political opposition force — does not appear to have the widespread support among protesters.

The most encouraging part of the Egyptian protests is that no single strongman has emerged; there is no apparent dictator-in-waiting to replace Mubarak. Many of the heroes of the peaceful "revolution" at Cairo's Tahrir Square — such as Google Marketing Executive [Wael Ghonim](#), who was imprisoned by Egyptian police for 12 days — have deferred political leadership. While Egypt does not have the legacy and culture of political liberty that the United States has, a distrust of government — and a strong urge to limit the powers of those who enjoy public office — seems to be the theme coming out of the protests thus far. But this does not mean that dark forces could not exploit the upheaval to again suppress the freedom the people who yearn for freedom — while, of course, promise freedom and liberation. Certainly they will try. The enemies of freedom never sleep and often operate under false flags — which of course is why the price of freedom is always eternal vigilance.

Many of the protesters appear not to be satisfied with the resignation of the dictator and the installation of a military government, and plan to continue protesting. "We're staying put. We're not leaving until the regime is gone," one young protester at Tahrir Square, Issa Adel Issa, [told](#) the *Washington Post* February 11. "We don't want a military government. We want a democracy with civilians in charge."

Photo of Egyptians celebrating after Mubarak resigns: AP Images

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