



إقليم الكنيسة الأسقفية / الأنجليكانية القدس والشرق الأوسط  
The Episcopal / Anglican Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East

أبروشية الكنيسة الأسقفية / الأنجليكانية بمصر وشمال أفريقيا والقرن الأفريقي  
The Episcopal / Anglican Diocese of Egypt with North Africa and the Horn of Africa



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## Voting and Dancing: Egyptians write their Future

Once again, the Egyptian people have surprised the world. Yesterday was the first day of the Referendum on the new Constitution of Egypt. The supporters of the former President Mohammed Mursi called people to boycott the Referendum. Surprisingly enough, yesterday millions of people went to the polls to vote and they are still voting today! Going to the polls was risky because of those who were trying to use violence to scare people from voting, but the army and the police exerted a great effort to protect the polls and to give assurance to the people who would like to vote.

Unlike the previous Constitution that was written under the rule of the Muslim Brotherhood, the new Constitution affirms equality and the rights of women within the Egyptian society. It was a phenomenon to see crowds of women at each poll, many of whom queued for hours to vote. Some of them were singing and rejoicing, and even dancing, before and after they cast their vote. There was a general spirit of joy among the people of Egypt who voted, in a way that never happened before. We, alongside other Christian denominations, encouraged the people of Egypt to fulfill their civil duty to vote and to pray for the future of Egypt.



All of this is a message to those who called the 30 June 2013 Revolution a “military coup.” The same millions of people who went out in the streets that day, also went to vote yesterday and today. It is also an indirect support of the Road Map that was announced on 3 July, the day of the removal of the former President.



The Road Map, designed by different streams of politicians as well as the Grand Imam of Al Azhar and Pope Tawadros II of the Coptic Orthodox Church, formed an interim government and appointed a Committee of 50 (representatives of all sectors of the society) to write the new Constitution. The interim government, after the Referendum on the Constitution, will prepare for Parliamentary and Presidential elections. Many voters carried the photos of Field Marshall al-Sisi, the Minister of Defense, in an attempt to persuade him to run for the presidency. This is because al-Sisi was the one who responded to the request of the millions of demonstrators on 30 June who called for early Presidential elections and the removal of the former President.



The new Constitution affirms the rights of citizenship, and prohibits all forms of discrimination. It has clauses that ensure the development of education and health care for every citizen. It allows the freedom of worship and the building of churches, and Article 3 gives the right for non-Muslims (Christians and Jews) to resort to their canon laws in regard to civil issues.

I can see my beloved country standing on the doorstep of a new day. Do pray that the hopes and dreams of millions of people, of a more settled, secure and democratic country, will be fulfilled.

May the Lord bless you!

+ Mouneer Egypt

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