

# Arab Spring



**THE ARAB SPRING IS A TERM  
USED TO DESCRIBE THE SERIES  
OF DEMONSTRATIONS AND  
REVOLUTIONS THAT ROCKED  
THE ARAB WORLD BEGINNING  
IN DECEMBER, 2010**

The Ottoman Empire controlled the area for over 500 years until the end of WWII.

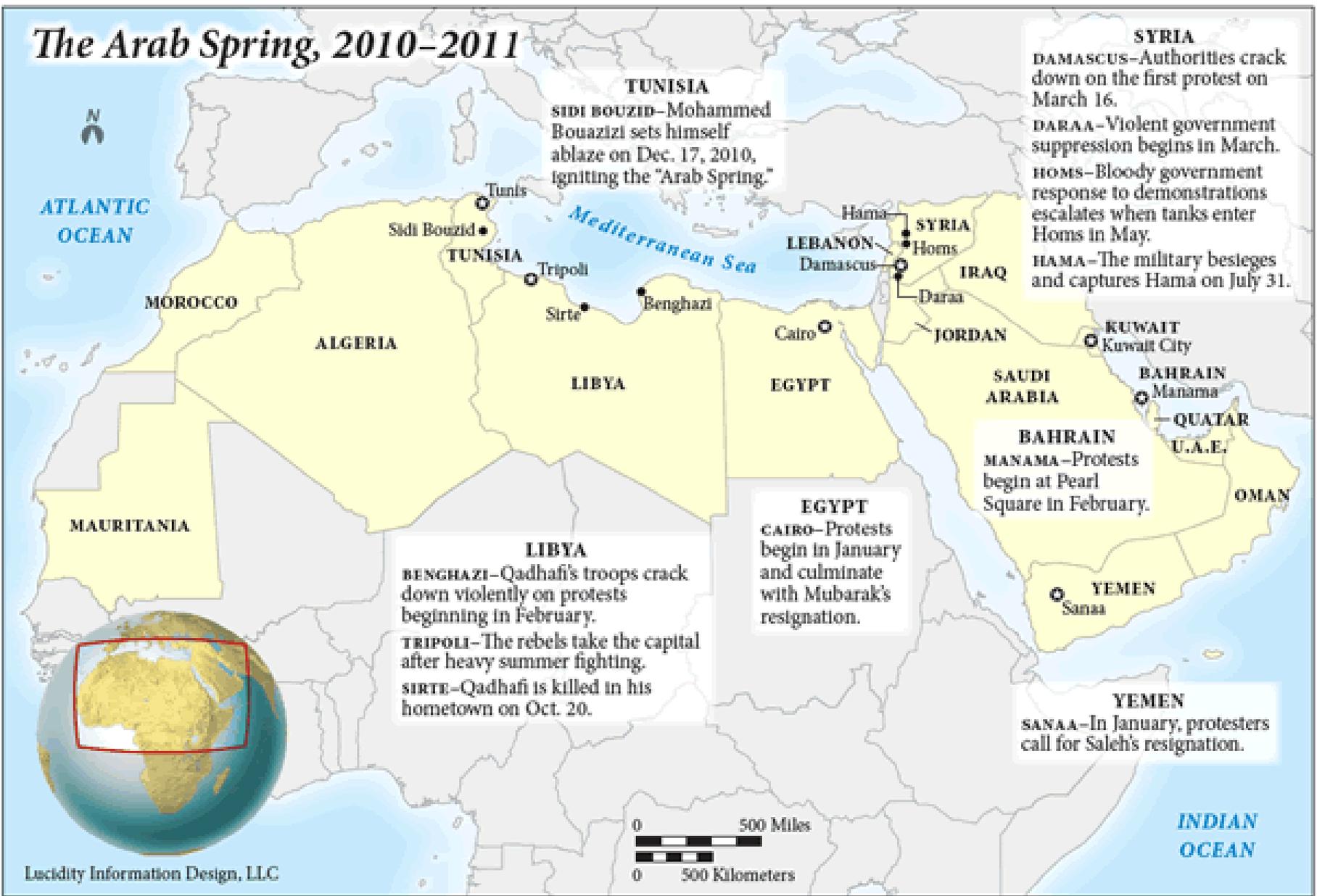
The Europeans colonized the area before and after WWII.

After independence, most countries had monarchies established by the Europeans which were quickly “overthrown” with authoritarian leaders taking power!



**Remember... these are “young, recently independent countries”**

# The Arab Spring, 2010-2011



**TUNISIA**  
SIDI BOUZID—Mohammed Bouazizi sets himself ablaze on Dec. 17, 2010, igniting the "Arab Spring."

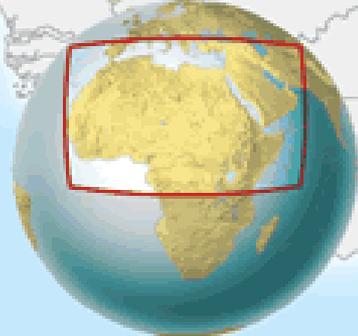
**SYRIA**  
DAMASCUS—Authorities crack down on the first protest on March 16.  
DARAA—Violent government suppression begins in March.  
HOMS—Bloody government response to demonstrations escalates when tanks enter Homs in May.  
HAMA—The military besieges and captures Hama on July 31.

**EGYPT**  
CAIRO—Protests begin in January and culminate with Mubarak's resignation.

**LIBYA**  
BENHAZI—Qadhafi's troops crack down violently on protests beginning in February.  
TRIPOLI—The rebels take the capital after heavy summer fighting.  
SIRTE—Qadhafi is killed in his hometown on Oct. 20.

**BAHRAIN**  
MANAMA—Protests begin at Pearl Square in February.

**YEMEN**  
SANA'A—In January, protesters call for Saleh's resignation.





# Mohamed Bouazizi- in Tunisia!

Self- Immolation!

Mohamed actions  
spark revolutions  
throughout North  
Africa.



**Spark that started the revolutions!  
Tunisian street vender..  
Who was the leader in Tunisia?**



Why did  
he set  
himself  
on fire?



**Mohamed's actions spark massive protests throughout Tunisia and the Middle East!**

# Tahrir Square, Egypt

## Who was the Egyptian Leader?



# Who was the leader of Libya?



# Many causes... discontent with autocratic leaders

## ANATOMY AUTOCRACY INDEX

World Policy Journal ranks the world's top 10 most authoritarian leaders based on a weighted series of criteria including time in power, prison population, military expenditures, freedom of the press, and the opinions of experts. Kim Jong Un sets the curve.



- Years in Power  
(+5 "bonus" if the leader inherited power from a relative)
- Percentage of GDP spent on military  
(GlobalSecurity.org)
- Prison population per 100,000 people  
(International Centre for Prison Studies)
- Press Freedom  
(per Freedom House) 1-100 score)
- Expert Score  
(based on a World Policy Journal panel of experts)

To read a detailed analysis of the Autocracy Index, visit <http://www.worldpolicy.org/journal/fall2012/autocracy>



# Corruption & Authoritarian Leaders



- **Lack of Liberties**

- *basic freedoms of political expression, speech, press and due process.*
- Repression by government
- Internet censorship
- Humiliation and lack of respect to citizens!
- political rights of all their citizens, men and women.

- **One Party Rule**

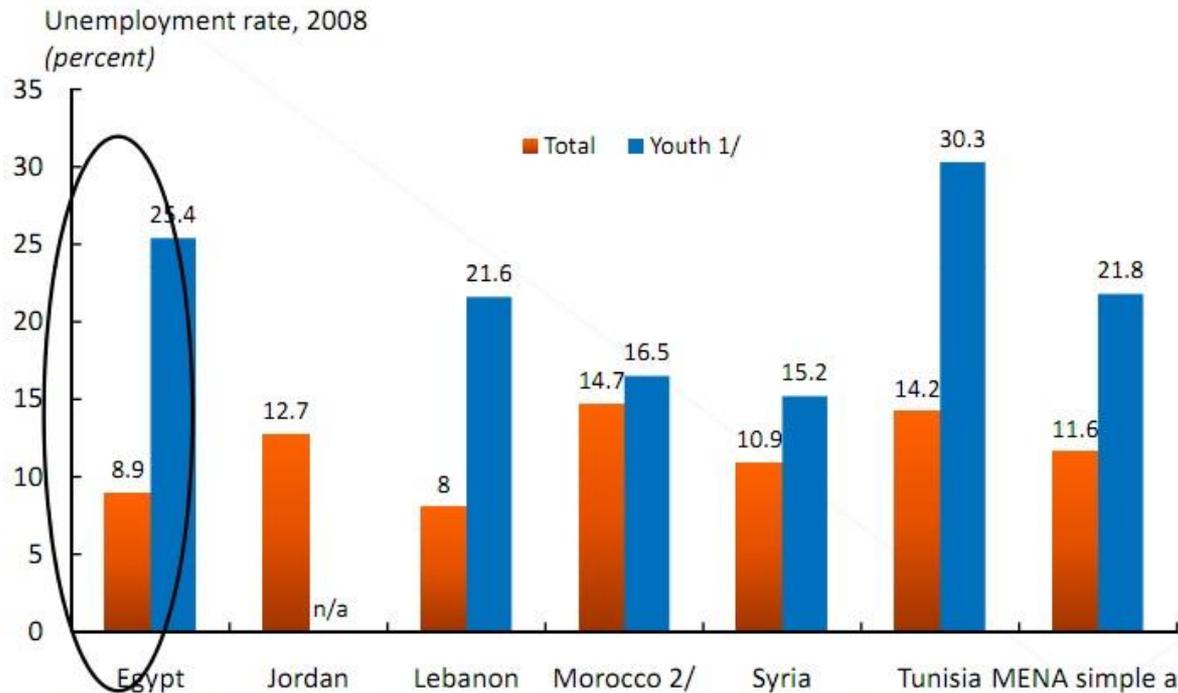
- Leaders in power for decades,
- Police Brutality,
- State of emergency laws,
- Electoral fraud,
- Political censorship,
- Widespread corruption,

# Causes...poverty and unemployment

## Lack of opportunities & economic crisis



### High unemployment: even higher for youth



Sources: National authorities; IMF, World Economic Outlook; staff estimates; and International Labor Organization.

1/ 2008, or most recent year for which data are available.

2/ Unemployment rate reflects data from Urban Labor Force survey.

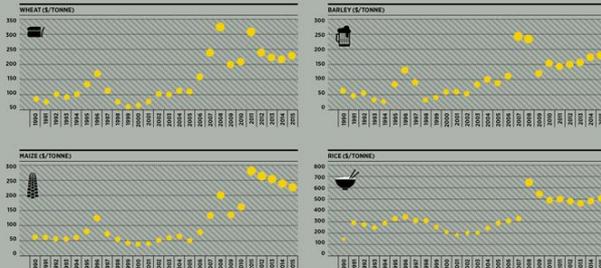


# Causes ... Rising Food Costs

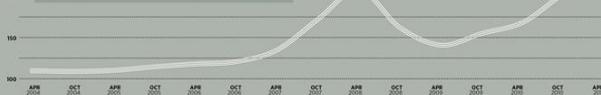
Source: CIA World Factbook, UN and Economist Intelligence Unit.



## AGRICULTURAL STAPLES PRICES 1990-2015



## WORLD FOOD PRICE INDEX BASE IS 100, AT 2003 PRICES



## PRICE, POPULATION AND THE SEEDS OF A REVOLUTION

**POLITICS** Across the Middle East and North Africa food prices have been a huge issue for a generation, and the rising costs of staples was one of the pressures that led to the Arab Spring revolts. Far from being a one-off, it's something that we will see more and more in coming years in the world's poorer regions, writes Mike Scott

One of the key triggers for the protests that have since evolved into the "Arab Spring" was the recent sharp increases in the price of food. The protests that toppled the Ben Ali regime in Tunisia in January 2011, for example, began as demonstrations against escalating food prices and unemployment.

The World Bank estimates that food prices are 56 per cent higher than last year and these increases have pushed 44 million people worldwide into poverty and hunger since June 2010. While no-one would suggest that food prices were the sole, or even the main, cause of the outpouring of anger against the repressive regimes of countries from Morocco to Bahrain, they were one of the issues that fed into a perfect storm of hardship and civil unrest in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, according to the aid agency Oxfam.

It should be little surprise given that in the food price crisis of 2007/2008, 61 countries experienced

protests, with riots in 38. In April 2008, the government of Haiti fell following continued food riots. "If you are poor in a poor country, you spend a significant proportion of your income on food," explains Robert Bailey, head of economic justice policy at Oxfam. "Poor people spend about half of their income on food and that can rise to 80 per cent for the very worst off." As a result, if food prices increase sharply in a short period of time, people are forced into very difficult decisions on how to adjust to this new reality. "Should they take their children out of school, get a second job (if there are jobs available), take on debt or sell off assets?"

When such concerns combine with anger over a lack of jobs and poor living standards, it can create a tipping point that brings people out onto the streets. "Food prices were a definite factor in Tunisia and Egypt," says Jane Kinimont, senior research fellow in the Middle East and North Africa Programme at the think tank

**30**  
THE NUMBER OF YEARS THAT THE PRICE OF BREAD STAYED THE SAME IN EGYPT

**36%**  
RISE IN FOOD PRICES THIS YEAR, ACCORDING TO THE WORLD BANK

**44m**  
NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN FORCED INTO POVERTY AND HUNGER SINCE JUNE 2010

All the MENA countries will take steps to increase food subsidies this year in an attempt to forestall further popular unrest

**30**  
NUMBER OF COUNTRIES THAT EXPERIENCED RIOTS OVER RISING FOOD PRICES IN 2007/8

## RIISING MENA WEALTH

**\$**  
GDP PER CAPITA IN US\$ SINCE 1970



The Middle East and North Africa region, MENA, has seen massive social and economic change over the past decades, as this graphic shows. In all these countries people are getting richer and populations younger. Both of these mean that calls for freedom are unlikely to go away. Food prices have always been a headache for regimes in this ecologically fragile region, where crop-failure and spiking food prices are a constant worry. The graphic to the left, showing food prices, demonstrates that the height of the price of staples cereals exactly coincides with the start of the Arab Spring. As environmental change and increasingly volatile world food markets look likely to become facts of life, price rises are sure to put pressure on governments in the MENA region.



1970		1990		2010	
POPULATION	GDP PER CAPITA	POPULATION	GDP PER CAPITA	POPULATION	GDP PER CAPITA
1 MOROCCO: 15,310	100	1 MOROCCO: 24,761	1,000	1 MOROCCO: 35,544	2,500
2 SAUDI ARABIA: 2,850	100	2 SAUDI ARABIA: 4,500	1,000	2 SAUDI ARABIA: 27,418	2,500
3 ALGERIA: 15,831	100	3 ALGERIA: 25,311	1,248	3 ALGERIA: 36,586	4,800
4 LIBYA: 3,136	100	4 LIBYA: 5,124	1,248	4 LIBYA: 6,480	1,800
5 EGYPT: 3,070	100	5 EGYPT: 5,124	1,248	5 EGYPT: 8,187	1,300
6 SYRIA: 1,994	100	6 SYRIA: 3,416	1,248	6 SYRIA: 5,480	1,300
7 JORDAN: 1,994	100	7 JORDAN: 3,416	1,248	7 JORDAN: 5,480	1,300
8 YEMEN: 1,994	100	8 YEMEN: 3,416	1,248	8 YEMEN: 5,480	1,300
9 IRAQ: 35,923	100	9 IRAQ: 56,443	1,248	9 IRAQ: 81,221	1,262
10 KUWAIT: 212	100	10 KUWAIT: 212	1,248	10 KUWAIT: 212	1,262
11 OMAN: 232	100	11 OMAN: 232	1,248	11 OMAN: 232	1,262
12 BAHRAIN: 125	100	12 BAHRAIN: 125	1,248	12 BAHRAIN: 125	1,262
13 QATAR: 6,145	100	13 QATAR: 6,145	1,248	13 QATAR: 6,145	1,262
14 U.A.E.: N/A	100	14 U.A.E.: N/A	1,248	14 U.A.E.: N/A	1,262

Chatham House. "All of the other Arab governments have taken, or will take, steps to increase food subsidies this year because economic problems are seen as one of the biggest causes of unrest in the region and it is also relatively easy to do when compared to the problems associated with political reform."

In Egypt, the price of bread remained at the same price for the entire 30-year reign of Hosni Mubarak, Kinimont says, "because it was so important to him." However, in the end it was not enough because other food products were subject to high inflation for years. "One of the reasons for this was that many food suppliers were monopolies and they were perceived to have very close links to the regime - as a result, high prices were seen to be linked to corruption and crony capitalism."

Because the region's economies are so state-dominated, people blame the government when prices rise, even if it is for reasons outside the regime's control.

Another reason for the uprisings is that few countries have significant agricultural sectors. It is notable that Morocco, which does have a significant farming industry, has seen far fewer protests than its neighbours. This may be because its farmers have benefited from the increase in prices.

Protests tend to be seen more often in cities, because there are more people and they are more sensitive to food price movements than those in rural areas, who can often shield themselves by growing food either for themselves or to sell. Urban populations can also mobilise more effectively and once protesters are out on the street voicing their concerns about the price of more grievances can easily be added to the mix.

As a result, it is not just governments in the MENA region that have reason to be worried. We have already seen a sharp crackdown on all forms of dissent in China, and as food and fuel prices approach the

peaks reached in 2008, the impact on the urban poor in many African countries is more severe than that which accompanied the 2007-2008 food crisis, according to risk consultancy Maplecroft. "Upcoming elections make this ominous constellation of factors particularly challenging for incumbent governments to address," says analyst Andy Tock.

In view of the violent demonstrations that food price hikes sparked across much of Africa in 2008 - as well as their role in the MENA uprisings this year - similar unrest may take place in the context of approaching elections in Cameroon, Liberia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), he says.

Some observers highlight the growth in demand for biofuels as a factor that exacerbates food price volatility. "Biofuels increase demand and therefore prices," says Bailey. "About 40 per cent of US corn production goes into the gas tanks of American drivers and that demand is unresponsive to changes in sup-

ply, particularly when oil prices are so high." The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) forecasts that the price of agricultural commodities will remain higher than average over

**Food prices may well spark unrest in Cameroon, Liberia and the DRC as elections approach**

the long term. "The potential for price stabilisation or decline could be severely hampered by many factors, such as those linked to climate change, price of gas and increasing water scarcity," adds a report from CropLife International. Political instability may be a feature of many parts of the world for years to come. ●

# What are the economic causes of the revolutions?



- “The rich becomes richer and the poor poorer is apt for these countries”.
  - No good jobs in country
  - Shortage of food
  - High unemployment rates, (especially young people)
  - Lack of good education or hope for a better life.
  - The wealth is concentrated only in the hands of a few
- You should use statistics to support this information
  - GDP Per Capita
  - Unemployment rates
  - Poverty levels
- Use CIA Fact Book for this information.

# How did technology help the protestors?





Images- Left to Right

Tunisia: **Ben Ali**

Egypt: **Hosni Mubarak**

Libya:

**Muammar Gaddafi**

Syria: **Bashar al-Assad**

Yemen: **Ali Abdullah Saleh**



**Which protests led to the resignations of the rulers that had held power for decades?**

**Which leaders refused to resign leading to armed rebellions?**

In Libya, protests grew into a full-scale rebellion.

With the help of the United Nations and international air support, the rebels toppled and killed Muammar Gaddafi.

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LEADING THE CHARGE



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Tens of Thousands have been killed and hundreds of thousands have become refugees.

**Image:** Azaz, Syria during the Syrian civil war. 16 August 2012, Azaz residents pick up after aerial bombings. Bombed out buildings.

**Date** 3 September 2012



**In Syria, protests developed into a civil war.**



Manoubia Bouazizi, mother of Mohamed Bouazizi, the Tunisian man who set himself on fire in an act of protest which inspired the Arab Spring, gestures after casting her ballot at a polling station in Marsa district.

90 per cent of eligible voters in Tunisia participated in a free election for the first time in 55 years on 23 October.



## Post- Revolution Election in Tunisia

Elections in Tunisia and Egypt have put moderate Islamic political parties in power. Religious minorities and secular Muslims are wary of their new leaders.



**Post- Revolution Elections in Egypt**