



## In the Picture: the Brotherhood camps

By: Siona Jenkins, Catherine Contiguglia and Amie Tsang - August 14, 2013

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Egypt's security forces on Wednesday launched a much-anticipated operation to clear supporters of ousted president Mohamed Morsi from two protest camps in the capital, leaving scores dead and prompting protests around the country from Mr Morsi's Islamist sympathizers, who clashed with police and attacked churches in southern Egypt.

Polarisation between opponents and supporters of the president increased dramatically in the wake of the popularly-backed coup that removed Mr Morsi, Egypt's first democratically elected president, from office on July 3. He has languished in detention since, prompting his supporters to accuse the security forces of undermining democracy. Opponents of the former president accuse him of trying to impose an Islamist vision on Egypt and say the military coup was needed to 'save' the country. International efforts to mediate between Mr Morsi's Muslim Brotherhood group and the interim government, backed by the powerful defence minister Gen Abdel Fattah Sisi, failed as neither side showed willingness to compromise.

As the Islamist protest camps became increasingly disruptive in the traffic-choked capital and leaks of an imminent operation to clear them grew, the protesters vowed they would remain until Mr Morsi was restored to power, with some claiming they would rather die as martyrs than give up their protest. Warnings by activists, rights groups and some politicians that their forcible removal could ignite a cycle of violence were ignored and the Arab world's most populous nation is once again riven by unrest.

Here is our pick of background reads on the latest episode in Egypt's turbulent transition.

### In the FT

- Egyptian liberals should stop riding on the military's coat-tails and engage with the Islamists before it is too late, writes David Gardner. "Driving the Brotherhood back underground, alongside harder-line Islamist activists still trying to outflank them, is an assured recipe for prolonged bloodshed."
- Last month he said that the army's crackdown on Islamists would create a "martyrdom premium," and that their criminalizing of democratically elected president Mohamed Morsi contrasted sharply with their claims of being a caretaker government to guide the country to inclusive democracy.
- The Islamists have much of the share of the blame in the downfall of Mohamed Morsi, writes FT Cairo correspondent Borzou Daragahi. They overestimated their popularity, and made unwise coalitions against the liberals and leftists – first with the army, then with the hardline Islamists – which drove the left to the pro-army camp.

- The sweeping power of security forces that were an impetus for the 2011 uprising against Mubarak will have to be reigned in to rebuild Egypt, writes Borzou Daragahi. However, the window for reform looks to be quickly closing as the security forces and interior ministry creep back into their powerful roles and human rights abuses mount.

#### Best of the Rest

- Foreign aid entering Egypt has not only been wasted but has flowed into the Egyptian military's coffers since the coup, writes Dalibor Rohac of the Cato Institute. This aid, he argues, is also providing harmful stimulus that will result in bloated bureaucracy and increasing deficits that will not help Egypt's growth or reforms.
- The sit-ins being held by those in favour of reinstating President Mohamed Morsi around Egypt will likely not work, according to an analysis by Foreign Policy's Erica Chenoweth, as studies show that nonviolent campaigns must follow a strategy of carefully sequenced moves, or they can end in catastrophe.
- The west's restrained reaction to the killing of supporters of the deposed president Mohamed Morsi by Egyptian security forces "betrays not only a lack of moral courage, but also a poor sense of where Egypt's – and the West's – real interests lie," the Economist writes. The silence from the United States gives the impression that they are only bothered by the killing of secular protestors, and that their foreign policy is riddled with hypocrisy.
- Free elections in Egypt will only bring about more instability if the factions in Egypt keep trying to find non-democratic ways around election results, writes Mohamed Elmenshawy of the Middle East Institute. Rather than staging a coup, liberals should work to be elected on a platform of social justice and democratic values and distance themselves from military leadership.
- Both those against and for deposed president Mohamed Morsi are feeding their movements with "fictitious facts," The Economist writes, further fuelling divisions and making any consensus more out of reach.
- Egypt's security forces will not convince supporters of deposed president Mohamed Morsi to abandon their cause by dispersing them, it "just means they go to a different place" Sid Heal tells Foreign Policy. Heal, who has experience with protests as part of the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department, says by acting violently towards protestors, Egypt's security forces are turning onlookers into activists.
- H.A. Hellyer, a Brookings fellow, looked at how the Brotherhood is being portrayed and thinks the "current vitriol that is being promoted across Egypt's airwaves seeks to redefine Egyptian history in a way that bears little or no resemblance to the truth". However, he warns against turning Morsi into any kind of hero saying he was "no 'father of the nation.'" "
- Shadi Hamid, director of research at the Brookings Doha Center, thinks Egypt's liberals have given way to fears about Islamists and embraced a "military hungry for control". He says, "This is already backfiring. The new order has quickly proved more repressive than the Morsi government ever was during its one year in power."
- Jerome Drevon, a PhD candidate in international relations at Durham University, considered the likelihood of a violent Islamist insurgency. He considers it unlikely, but

noted that “the opposition or the army could arrive at the view that they have a blank check from the population to suppress Islamist movements and exclude them from the political process; this development alone could trigger a violent reaction among Islamist supporters who fear potentially facing the same repression they experienced under past regimes.”