

# Large-Scale Upheaval in the Middle East and China's Diplomatic Reactions

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**Abstract:** *Arab countries have been faced with a large scale Middle Eastern upheaval, which has attracted the attention of all the Middle Eastern countries and international community. The current situation is primarily related to the important location of the Middle East. Nearly all the Arab countries are involved in the upheaval. Omnifarious appeals are claimed by the people, including political, economic and social aspects. The problems have been accumulating for years, and the Middle East upheaval in 2011 was an overall outburst of people's dissatisfaction. The cost of the unrest is high despite the social progress it may promote. At present, a fragile peace is realized in Syria though the prospect of future development is unclear. Since the outbreak of the Middle East upheaval, China has adopted a principle of "non-intervention in other's internal affairs" and "mediating for peace while promoting talks" policy, which is appropriate and proactive. China should adhere to this practice in the future despite the voices of opposition and temporary misunderstanding.*

**Key Words:** *Middle East Upheaval; Foreign Intervention; Syria; China's Diplomacy; Middle East Politics*

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## **I. The Location of Middle East Matters**

During the situation change over the last year, not only did Arab countries suffer considerable impacts and experience a huge challenge, high degree of concern was also aroused in all the Middle Eastern countries and the international community. All parties were tenacious to exert their own influence on the situation in different forms. If the Middle East is to be described in digits, we might say it is an ancient and fertile region, where two out of the world's four ancient civilizations were born, which are the Nile civilization and Mesopotamian civilizations. The Middle East possesses two of the world's strategic resources, namely energy and waterways. And so does it boast the holy sites of the three religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam, as well as the gathering place of the four ethnic groups: Arabs, Persians, Turks and Jews. The above factors explain the importance and complexity of this region.

The Middle East sits on top of nearly two-thirds of the oil reserves in the world. The development of the world economy, people's lives and the rotation of car's wheels are all connected with the region's oil. A Western politician once said "control the oil and you will control nations". The Suez Canal transports 14% of the total world trade; and as many as 155 million barrels of oil pass through the Strait of Hormuz each day, accounting for nearly 40% of world oil exports, the destinations of which are mainly developed countries like Europe, America and Japan, as well as some Asian countries. In addition, the troops and military bases of the United States in the Gulf make the Strait of both the military and economic significance. In considering the above, it's not hard to explain why the United States, Europe and other Western countries have spared no effort to intervene in the Middle East's affairs, including this large-scale unrest. For this reason, we also know that it would be impossible for the United States to give

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up the Middle East, neither its presence in the region, nor its initiative and dominance in regional affairs even when the United States is shifting its strategic focus to the Asia-Pacific regions.

As mentioned above, there are four ethnic groups residing in the Middle East. The Arab-Israeli contradiction is an old problem that has lasted for more than a half century, and so far there is still no prospect of reconciliation. As for the other ethnic groups of the Middle East, in addition to historical grievances, they are more often haunted by political and sectarian issues. Iran is an Islamic country where Muslim Shiites account for more than 90% of the population, so it naturally stands together with other Shiite countries and sympathizes for the Muslim Shiites living in countries where Sunnis rule, which was the fundamental intention of Iran when it took its stand on the Middle East's upheaval. Iran is pleased with the upheaval in the Middle East. After Mubarak stepped down, the Iranian Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said that the event in Egypt was a sign of an "Islamic awakening" in the Middle East (Huang, 2011: February 24).

The origins of Turkey and Arab countries are intertwined. For instance, the Ottoman Empire had ruled over the Middle Eastern countries. During the recent upheavals, Turkey is active and has repeatedly expressed support for the anti-government movement of the Arab people. In the unrest in Syria, as a close neighbor, Turkey is even more active in supporting the Syrian opposition and allowed the opposition group to set up their National Committee in Turkey. The second "Friends of the Syrian People" summit was held in Istanbul on April 1, 2012, which acknowledged the Syrian National Council as the "legitimate representative" of all Syrians. Playing such an active role, apart from holding grudge for its territorial dispute with Syria, Turkey seems to intend to promote its "Turkey model". However, in fact, this is not possible, for any model cannot be replicated. Or it could be the dreams of the Ottoman Empire that Turkey wants to relive, which is

also quite improbable, because that has now become history which will not repeat itself. Turkish rulers are Sunnis, so that being against the Shiite rule in Syria can be used as an excuse. However, Turkey also seemed to oppose some Sunni rulers of other countries. Therefore, people can only understand that Turkey wishes to promote Western-style democracy and use it as a way to move closer to the EU. In short, Iran and Turkey can only achieve part of their ambitions during the Middle East's upheaval, while it is impossible for them to take the opportunity to enter the Arab world, or to influence Arab affairs.

## **II. Huge Impact on Arab Countries**

The Middle East upheaval almost spreads to all Arab countries, demonstrating a wide range of demands and appeals from people, including political, economic, social, and many others. These problems have accumulated for many years and have long aroused dissatisfaction of the people. Despite the unanimous criticism and strong condemnation of the Arab world against the Greater Middle East Initiative proposed by the US in 2004, the Arab world was not against reform, but was only dissatisfied with the United States' wanton intervention. Therefore, among the voice of condemnation, people also claimed that reform must be implemented and the current situation should no longer continue. The 2011 upheaval was the outbreak of these sentiments. The cost of the unrest is high even in light of the social progress it may bring about.

Firstly, all the political systems in the Arab countries are stereotyped to some extent, showing evidence of family heritage and gerontocracy, the consequences of which were the formation of interest groups and the ruling family. These groups and families stay within the beaten track of status quo, refuse innovation and protect

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only their vested interests. The reform after the upheaval did not constitute a fundamental change in regimes. Monarchies and republics each continued to develop. In many countries, political parties, elections and the parliament have existed for a long time and what was achieved in the reform was further improvement. The banned Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt is allowed to participate in political activities as a party, and has already won the parliamentary elections. In Syria, a new constitution was passed by referendum on February 26, 2012, of which the two main clauses are the introduction of political pluralism through the replacement of the one-party system with a multi-party system and restrictions on the duration of the presidency to two consecutive terms. This has changed the maladies of the one-party dominance, family heritage and gerontocracy. This should be the choice of all Arab countries after the upheaval, and has been requested by the people for a long time. This is a legacy of the upheaval that has a positive effect on the Middle East's political ecology and it is likely to be kept up in the future.

Secondly, from another perspective, the negative impacts brought about by the unrest cannot be ignored. In the first place, the masses were continuously making appeals, and were later disappointed, and they then took to the streets and squares, making it difficult to calm social order. For example, on November 18, 2011, the masses in Egypt went to Tahrir Square to demonstrate which was directed at the Supreme Council of the armed forces, and the military was asked to hand over power. This touched on the bottom line of the military, so the masses clashed with the police, resulting in 41 deaths and 3250 people injured (Jiao, 2011: November 26). To make ones demands heard in a square seems to have become the norm. Moreover, the influence and contradictions derived from religions and tribes have become prominent and have led to an unstable situation. In North Africa, religious people from Tunisia and Morocco have already

seized power. Similarly, religious parties in Egypt have occupied the majority of seats in parliament. On March 31, 2012, the Muslim Brotherhood nominated its vice chairman Chartres to run for president, which is unlike its common practice. The tribal and military leaders of eastern Libya declared autonomy of the region on March 6, 2012 with its capital in Benghazi, calling for a federal system in the country (*Semi-autonomous Region Declared in Oil-rich Eastern Libya*, 2012: March 8). Mr. Abdel-Jalil, the chairman of the National Transitional Council strongly condemned this separatist action and said the problem should be solved even with force if needed. Meanwhile, the Tubu tribe living in Sabha of Southern Libya also announced independence from Libya at the end of March (*Southern Libya for Independence*, 2012: March 29). The situation in Libya, along with the chaotic situation in Afghanistan and Iraq, has shown once again that when dealing with disputes, the peaceful means may take longer, but the after-effects will be less. In contrast, the use of force, especially foreign military intervention and invasion with no understanding of the region, may be faster to resolve the dispute, but will lead to more sequels and no end of trouble. This is why the peaceful settlement of disputes has always been stressed in Chinese diplomacy. Last of all, the economy has suffered a downturn and sluggish growth. Except for the oil-producing countries, the economy was affected in all the other countries where turbulence took place. Egypt, which used to maintain a growth rate of about 5%, only saw 1% growth of its economy in 2011. The aid commitments are delayed, and the unaided development has become rather difficult. Prime Minister Ganzouri held a press conference on December 22, 2011 to address the complaint. He claimed that Tunisia and Egypt have so far received none of the \$ 35 billion promised by the G8 countries during the summit meeting in Deauville France, and that the country's Arab "brethren" have delivered only \$ 1 billion of the \$ 10.5 billion in aid and loans that they

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promised. Meanwhile, although the United States agreed to provide \$ 2.25 billion, Egypt had seen nothing. When hit by the economic crisis in 2008, the United States called on the world to help, but did not give back a single dollar after the crisis. Yet Egypt suffered the loss of \$ 9 billion in a matter of months without seeing a single investor (*Ganzouri Held A Press Conference, 2011: December 22*). Because of the EU embargo, Syrian oil exports suffered an annual loss of about \$ 3 billion to \$ 4 billion. The tourism industry also stopped growing, the annual loss being over \$ 20 billion, which is not insignificant to Syria. Tourism and remittances are major sources of foreign exchange earnings of many Arab countries affected by the upheaval. From external factors, the world economy has not yet fully recovered, and the debt crisis is still fermenting. European countries could hardly look after themselves, which would affect the realization of their commitment, and affect their imports from the Middle East. This would trap its traditional trading partners in the Middle East in difficult circumstances. And in turn, the economic difficulties of the Arab countries will lead to the dissatisfaction of the people, forming a vicious cycle.

Thirdly, the split of Arab countries is aggravated. The long-term disunity phenomenon in Arab World is worrying. There are both moderates and extremists in Israeli-Palestinian conflict, both republics and monarchies in political systems, both Islam and Christianity in religion, and both Sunni and Shiite in denominations. These are existences of the differences. However, tolerance and mutual respect will bridge the differences, not to mention the Arab World within which exist the same ethnicities and the same religions. This basic common ground is far greater than the differences, which should be the foundation of the unity of the Arabia world. Unfortunately, different forces have been fighting against each other for a long time, which has remained unabated in the upheaval.

The Arab League tried to intervene after the Libyan unrest occurred, but the members failed to reach a unanimous agreement, and eventually sent Lebanon as the deputation of the Arab League to call on the Security Council to set up the no-fly zone in Libya. The United States and other NATO countries made a lot of efforts to help the opposition to overthrow the Gaddafi regime, including the abuse of Resolution 1973, the dispatch of military personnel, the provision of weapons, equipments and intelligence, as well as the act of partiality. These had nothing to do with the resolution to set up the no-fly zone for the protection of civilians. Even the Arab League Secretary-General Amr Moussa said their approach has gone far beyond the authorization of the resolution. In the Syrian crisis, the Arab League again proposed the draft resolution through Morocco that contains requirements for Bashar to hand over power and "regime change" in the Security Council. In order to avoid repeating the Libyan event, the draft was denied. The person in charge of the Arab League has repeatedly said Syrian issues should be resolved within the Arab League framework, but because of internal differences, they can only seek international solutions.

The national strength of the original regional power Egypt is on the decline. The importance of the Gulf countries in the Arab League is growing. On the Libyan issue, they advocated striking Gaddafi and became the driving force within the Arab League to internationalize the issue. They came up with a solution to Yemen's problems, which Saleh has signed and handed over power to the Vice President. So the situation has been eased. In Syria, they once again proposed that Bashar hand over power to the Vice President, but this was rejected this time because Syria and Yemen have different domestic situations and surrounding environments. After this, they pushed the Arab League to make the Syrian crisis international. When the draft resolution was vetoed in the Security Council, the Gulf States



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provided great support for the Syrian opposition and wanted to supply weapons to them, but a number of other Arab countries disagreed with the Gulf countries. The two different opinions are often seen in the media, exposing the internal contradictions of the Arab world to the public. Coupled with external factors, we see that, Turkey and the Gulf countries stand together, and Iran huddles with Iraq, Syria and Hezbollah in Lebanon, while other countries have their own stand.

The “disunity among brothers” has weakened the strength of the Arab countries themselves. On March 29, 2012, the presentation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was simply repeated on the Arab League Summit in Baghdad. An Arab commentator pointed out that if the date is not displayed, it could not be told which file was from which session. It can only be explained by the fact that everyone was busy with the Syrian crisis and did not have time. As early as March 30, 2009, the Doha Declaration called on Arab countries to continue to maintain their unity, respect for sovereignty, safeguard national independence and insist on non-intervention in each other's internal affairs. The earlier this goal can be achieved, the better.

### **III. Syria Is Not Yet Out of the Crisis**

Since March 15, 2011, it's been more than one year since the Syrian upheaval took place, which made Syria the country where the Middle East unrest has lasted the longest. During this period, Syria, like other Arab countries affected by the turmoil, has seen mass demonstrations, confrontations between military police and demonstrators, armed conflicts between government forces and the opposition, more and more casualties, as well as increasing internal and external intervention. During the long-term instability, the government held a referendum to modify the constitution and prepare

for parliamentary elections.

According to the media reports, the conflict has resulted in thousands of deaths. Tens of thousands of people have fled to neighboring countries as refugees. With the domestic unrest and the huge foreign pressure, how can Bashar persist to this day? The reason seems to be the following: First, the role of the Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party. The Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party was founded in 1947 as a pan-Arab nationalist party, the goal of which is the revival of the Arab nation. Syrian Ba'ath Party has been in power since 1963. The party has tight organizations, deep roots, strict membership and a long inspection period. Government officials and social elites are likely to be the members of the party. Basically the high level of the party has been united into a group faced with the turmoil since the beginning, which could be attributed to self-interest factors as well as the factors of the party itself. Second, the people's support is still high. Governing ideas of the Ba'ath Party include taking care of the general public, which is popular. During the Referendum of February 26, 2012, millions of people voted, representing 57.4% of the total number of voters, 89.4% of which support the new constitution, and there may also have been some supporters who did not vote. Third, the armed forces have guaranteed the stability of the regime. Syria has 400,000 well-equipped troops, which is what the Soviet Union focused on during the Cold War, and its edge has continued ever since. The armed opposition "Free Syrian Army" claims to have 20,000 to 30,000 people, including defected regular army, and more often, untrained armed personnel. So its military capacity falls far behind the government forces. Some countries are trying to arm the anti-government forces, but as long as they don't engage themselves in the fighting overtly or covertly as they did in Libya, the "Free Syrian Army" is still no match for the regular arm. Fourth, external factors should be taken into account. On February 4, 2012, the draft

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resolution on Syria was voted down in the Council, which blocked the direct foreign military intervention in Syria and avoided the recurrence of what happened in Syria. Although the outside world has made continuous efforts to support the opposition, there is no legal basis for them to do so, and thus the effect of their efforts is bound to be greatly reduced.

Since the UN Security Council appointed Annan as the special envoy for the Syrian crisis, the international community has had high hopes for him and wished him success. Currently, the problems facing us include the following. The first issue to be defined is the purpose of the mediation: should the solution of the Syrian crisis result in the end of violence, the start of dialogue and the realization of reform, or in the resignation of Bashar and regime change. It was the public demand for reform that caused the turmoil, which now seems to focus on one thing in that the resignation of Bashar is the precondition for everything. On the Friends of the Syrian People conference held on April 1, 2012, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton explicitly said "We think Assad must go" (*Western Allies Have Serious Differences*, 2012: April 3), which does not meet the original intention of the people's movement in Syria. Second, Syria is now past the phase of mass demonstrations and has entered a period of armed confrontation between the two sides. So in order to terminate the violence and reduce casualties, both sides should be prepared to stop military operations to show justice and to encourage all parties to work towards the peaceful settlement of the problem. However, some countries did not move in this direction. Instead, they vigorously supported the growth of the opposition, and made them able to continue the confrontation with the government forces, by which the confrontation between them can only be worsened. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton also announced at the Friends of the Syrian People conference that the US would add approximately \$ 12 million in

humanitarian aid to the international organizations that help the Syrian people, which makes the total US aid \$ 25 million. It was also the first time that she had confirmed that the United States would provide the opposition parties with the satellite communications equipment and night vision equipment (*Only Willing to Provide Financial Support*, 2012: April 3). According to the report of *New York Times* on April 1, 2012, Molham Al Drobi, a member of the Syrian National Council, said the opposition had pledges of \$176 million in humanitarian assistance and \$100 million in salaries for the fighters (*Only Willing to Provide Financial Support*, 2012: April 3). Third, the efforts should be made in line with Annan's efforts, rather than the opposite. The Friends of the Syrian People conference decided to recognize Syria's largest opposition group, the Syrian National Council as the legitimate representative of the people and the opposition in Syria (*Refused to Provide Weapons Assistance*, 2012: April 3). The purpose of this decision is to support the opposition and give it encouragement, which, at the moment when Annan called on both sides to a cease-fire, was not in tune with Annan's voice. In addition, it cannot be justified according to logic in that if the Syrian National Council is the legitimate representative of the people of Syria, then what about the millions of voters that supported the government in the referendum. Since the upheaval in the Middle East, it's often heard from foreign countries that so and so has lost legitimacy, which are behaviors out of political purposes that ignore the norms in international relations and national sovereignty, since whether or not a leader of a country has legitimacy should be up to their own people to decide. The outside world has no right to make improper comments.

#### **IV. China's Attitude**

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Arab countries have maintained friendly and long-term relations with China. Since the turmoil in the Middle East by the end of 2010, China has been closely concerned about the situation and hoped that the turmoil would pass as soon as possible so that stability could be restored. On the basis of adhering to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the UN, China has played a responsible role.

China's general attitude towards the turmoil-inflicted countries is as follows. China respects the people's legitimate demands and desires for reform. Also, China insists on mediating for peace and promoting talks to urge the two sides, the government and the opposition, to sit down and resolve disputes through peaceful means. Besides, China opposes the use of force to avoid casualties, and opposed foreign intervention in that intervention will only create more complexity of the problem and make the problem more difficult to solve. China has never been for or against either side based on the likes or dislikes of a leader, has never provided weapons to either side to intensify contradictions, nor has China ignored another country's sovereignty, inappropriately accusing a leader has lost his legitimacy. Instead, China has always respected the people's choice.

According to the purposes and guiding principles of the Charter of the United Nations and learning from the lessons of Libya, China voted against the resolution on Syria. After the veto, on March 4, 2012, China put forward a six-point proposition on the political settlement of the Syria issue, the main content is as follows. China calls on the Syrian government and all the parties concerned to immediately cease all acts of violence and launch an inclusive political dialogue. China supports the United Nations to play a leading role in coordinating humanitarian relief efforts. All concerned parties of the international community should fully respect Syria's independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity, respect for the rights of the Syrian people to freely choose the political system and development path.

Besides, they should also create the conditions for Syrian political factions to start a dialogue, provide constructive assistance necessary as well as respect the results of their dialogue. China is not in favor of the implementation of military intervention or forcing a so-called "regime change" in Syria, and believes that sanctions or threat of sanctions will not help in the proper settlement of the problem. China welcomes the jointly appointed special envoy of the Syrian crisis by United Nations and the League of Arab States, and supports him to play a constructive role in promoting a political settlement of the crisis. Last but not least, the UN Security Council members should abide by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the basic norms of international relations. The introduction of China's six-point proposition was before Annan came up with his six-point plan when he started mediation activities. In a careful comparison, a lot of similarity of the two will be found. However, China's veto in the Security Council still caused a considerable reaction.

Firstly, China did not veto for its own interest, but for principles. From an international perspective, it has obeyed the principles of national sovereignty and non-intervention in other's internal affairs of the Charter of the United Nations. And from a domestic perspective, China has also stood by the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence as well as the independent and peaceful foreign policy that it has always stressed, including the two principles of the Charter mentioned above, as well as what China has always advocated, such as the settlement of disputes by peaceful means and the opposition against the use of force, the threat of force and arbitrary imposition of sanctions. China's behavior cannot be interpreted as to protect the Bashar regime, because China has always held that a country's internal affairs should be up to the people of the country to solve. It is reasonable for China to adhere to the principle of non-intervention in other's internal affairs, for it is both in line with the Charter provisions, has the legal basis,

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and also has consistency: China has done so in the past, does so in the present, and will do the same in the future. To adhere to the principle of non-intervention in other's internal affairs it has safeguarded the interests of developing countries in practice, since the countries that impose intervention are all big, strong or rich.

Secondly, China and Russia's vetoes upset the United States very much. The US Ambassador to the UN Susan Rice said that Washington was "disgusted" by the vetoes. And US Secretary Hillary Clinton called Russia and China 'despicable'. The veteran Chinese diplomats, who have for decades engaged in diplomatic work, said they have never seen such uneducated and un-cultivated speech, not to mention from the mouth of senior US diplomats. China and Russia's voting shattered the dream of the United States that it can do whatever they want and deterred its overbearing in international affairs, and that's why the US was so flustered and exasperated. China and Russia's official response was strong yet without loss of grace, but academics and media reacted vehemently. Russia's "Pravda" published on February 26, 2012 an article titled "The Despicable is Hillary Clinton", in which Hillary was described as "a trucker-type probably complete with tattoos, insolent, inconsequential and incompetent". "We now understand Bill" (*Syrian Referendum Was Bad-mouthing by the West*, 2012: February 27). The United States has been used to calling the shots and can no longer tolerate opposing opinions. This time China and Russia were against its domineering attitude. Some countries expressed support and also wanted the world to develop in a multilateralism direction, rather than the pattern in which one country rules the rest and has the final say. China is playing an active role in global governance and in the transformation of the current international system.

Thirdly, some Arab countries do not understand why China vetoed, and this even caused some discontent, especially in the Gulf

countries. Gulf States think Syria stands together with Iran and to weaken Syria's equals is to weaken Iran, and another factor to consider is different religious sects. Therefore, they support the Syrian opposition, and thus China's position seems to have undermined their efforts.

As mentioned earlier, China did not support either side, but remained fair and persuaded them to start peace talks. After Annan was appointed the special envoy, he also advised the government and the opposition to bring about a cease-fire. Until April 12, 2012, a fragile relative calm situation had appeared in Syria. The calls for a peaceful settlement of the Syrian crisis had increased in the international society, which proves the correctness of China's position to "mediating for peace and promoting talks". The current problem in Sino-Arab relations is temporary. The overall situation of the Sino-Arab friendship will not be affected. As time goes on, the Arab countries will come to understand that the interactions with China are reassuring, which is unlike the worries they have when dealing with the West. You never know when you are stepping on the red line of the West, and when that happens you will be kicked away.

## **V. Conclusion**

After nearly two years' turmoil, the Middle East is faced with both opportunities and challenges. Speaking from opportunities, the new rulers should first pay attention to and actively respond to the problems raised by the masses in this turmoil, including the problem of the polity, economy, society and others. The masses will continue to supervise them. In this way, there will be a consensus among the top and the bottom, which makes the difficulties smaller in conducting reform. Speaking from challenges, having just entered the post-upheaval period, the Middle East still has many problems. Politically,



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Arab societies may need a process of adaptation towards the rise of religious influence. The Islamists occupying important positions in the Middle East's political arena is an indisputable fact. Tunisia and Morocco's Islamist parties have already come to power. Egypt's Muslim brotherhood has also won the parliamentary election and Mohamed Morsi has been elected President. And the influence of the Islamist political parties of Yemen and Libya is growing as well. Therefore, what kind of policy religious people carry out and how to handle relationships between the religious and the secular, as well as the religious and the military, are worthy of attention. Economically, how to restore economic development is the important topic of the new rulers. If the economic development cannot be improved, the requests put forward by the masses concerning their livelihood at the beginning of the turmoil can not be met. In addition, the problem of Western intervention in the internal affairs must be solved. Egyptian Minister of International Cooperation Abu Naga said that from March to June in 2011, all non-governmental organizations in Egypt had received a total of approximately 175 million US dollars of foreign aid, the purpose of which was to influence elections and the political process. To this end, on February 5, 2012, the Egyptian Government prosecuted 43 NGO staff members, including 19 Americans (*The True Colors of US-funded NGOs*, 2012: February 25). How to safeguard the sovereignty and avoid damaging the relationship with foreign countries at the same time, this is a challenge the new rulers have to face.

Regarding the upheaval in the Middle East, China has adopted a principle of "non-intervention in other's internal affairs" and "mediating for peace and promoting talks" policy, which is appropriate and proactive. China should adhere to this practice in the future despite the voices of opposition and temporary misunderstanding.

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