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Mediterranean Politics

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Issues in Egypt through diversity

Throughout the years, Egypt has become an immense diversity due to the fact that the land of Egypt belonged to different Empires: Ottoman Empire, British Empire, and Egypt. Egypt is geographically surrounded by countries with complex political situations: Syria, Libya, Israel – Palestine. Egypt has a turbulent historical context with: Daesh/Isis and other jihadist movements outside and inside Sinai, Eternal demands, revolts, and counter revolts provoked by growing domestic repression from the government. Even though the nation has a population of 100 million inhabitants approximately, (a considerable percentage from other countries) only five percent of the land is suitable for living. Situations like this generate economic disparities and lead to scarcity.

Egypt has become a religious and ethnic diverse country, with a population of 90% Muslim and 10% Coptic Christians. Among Muslims there is a big majority of Sumni and a small minority of Shia creating certain tensions. Also, they have a growing population of Bedoins and Sub Saharan Africans, and refugees who remain in Egypt until they reach their final destination of migration. This situation enables human trafficking. As a consequence

of these internal turbulences, Egypt is losing its human capital and its investments, and the government is not applying any incentives to make the situation better.

According to Javier Albarracin from last week, he discusses “socioeconomic diversity” and “food security” by connecting them the challenges of subsidies, also relating it to food policy and food prices. Declining real wages, increasing poverty, inefficiencies in the social safety net, and increasing media attention, placed pressure on the government to focus on food policy. Nonetheless, the increasing emergence of opposing parties and opinions represented a real threat. Other factors also forced the governing regime and the party to pay attention to food policy, and the institutional setup governing domestic food trade was fragile. Reactions to the food price crisis were deeply embedded in Egypt’s socioeconomic context, where the food subsidy system centers on bread availability and prices. Given that a large number of poor people in Egypt are vulnerable to any increase in food prices, the government rapidly took steps to make bread available and control its price. It also changed the commodity mix in the ration card system and increased the number of ration card beneficiaries, to reduce the vulnerability of the poor to price increases.

On the other hand, Egypt is experiencing a growing tendency of Egyptian Diaspora, where the most talented inhabitants leave the country and work in the USA and Gulf countries mainly. Many Egyptians left the country in search of opportunity in nearby oil-rich countries, whose economies generated substantial new demand for workers. Saudi Arabia and Libya, both neighboring countries, were especially popular destinations for

Egyptian emigrants during these years, where they filled rising demand for teachers, laborers, and service workers. Arab countries were especially attractive to migrants from Egypt due to common national languages, cultures, and customs. According to his discussion on the impact of immigration in Egypt, Albarracin discusses all the roles, which are Egyptian emigration, African and Arab immigration.

The nation also experiences a dramatic economic polarization with a total of 40% of the Egyptian population and critical risk of exclusion. It is extremely hard for Egypt to make needs affordable for their citizens. Food access is a challenge for the 40% of the population, but also, for the whole population, its availability and affordability needs to be regulated. As a consequence of poverty, the government has to assign 25% of the national budget to subsidies.

In conclusion, I personally believe it is going to be hard for Egypt to change their economic and social uncertainty. After reading and comprehending the actions that happen in Egypt, it diminishes their chances of becoming a more sustainable country, due to the lack of usable resources, increasing population pressure, talent emigration, and political religious tensions. In order to reverse the situation appropriately, I think it would be necessary for the Egyptian government to make some reforms of their internal policies.