

On Its 15th Anniversary: The Tunisian Revolution between Foreign Polarization and Domestic Conflict

(Translated)

Al-Rayah Newspaper - Issue 581 - 07/01/2026

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At the peak of its stages of weakness, the Islamic Ummah was subjected to a fierce Western attack that ended with the entry of the hateful French colonialism into the Ottoman province in Tunisia in the year 1881. This occupation was the result of a silent European consensus or an exchange of colonies following the Berlin Conference in 1878, where the German Chancellor Bismarck expressed, on more than one occasion, that Tunisia was weak, bankrupt, and without real protection, and that France could take it without a European clash.

After the establishment of security and the quiescence of the resistance movement, the ill-fated La Marsa Convention came in 1883 CE, between the French Resident General and Ali Bey to entrench Western influence and complete submission to colonialism with all its intellectual, political, and legal settlements.

The declaration of independence document in 1956 did not change the ugly colonialist face except in its form, as the nation-state was born throughout the Arab Maghreb, which is Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, with a deformed birth, since it did not arise as a result of a domestic societal contract, but as an administrative disaster of the colonialist state, within nationalistic borders drawn by colonialism and elites who absorbed the logic of the centralized, controlling state. This birth produced a formally strong state with a weak political society, deriving its legitimacy from unilateral pillars: liberation in Algeria, historical monarchy in Morocco, and bureaucratic modernization in Tunisia.

The accumulations caused by the corruption of the state of modernity project in Bourguiba's regime, which caused a sharp clash with the Ummah's identity and way of life, followed by the policy of drying up the sources of religiosity during Ben Ali's rule, which generated resentment among the generations, not to mention the economic and political crisis, where the looted funds at the time of the revolution were estimated at 49 billion dollars, so the situation was sufficient to ignite the fuse of a massive revolution. The people rose up against the regime that produced all these disasters, and their demand was clear in what became known as the icon of the Arab people, "The people want to overthrow the regime," to break with the old regime in favor of a new one, even if its form had not crystallized in minds.

The Tunisian example is not an exception to the rest of the regimes in the lands of the revolutions. It is a civilizational conflict that the Ummah expressed at all stages and confronted all Westernization projects, and the state of instability we are experiencing is nothing but a sincere expression from the Ummah of its refusal to hand over its leadership throughout 15 years of the revolution to those who do not represent its aqeedah (creed) and lead its civilizational struggle with colonialism.

The Power of Foreign Polarization and Its Plans:

It is obvious that the colonialist will not leave the country to its people merely because of popular protests. The West's accommodation of the revolutions was reluctant, and within a clearly defined area; for it does not support change against the existing state, but within its ceiling, and does not accept redefining or dismantling it. Even Western democracy, when it threatens the sovereignty of the state or the centrality of decision-making, prefers stability.

After the fall of Ben Ali, Western powers worked to direct the revolutionary path from the beginning, through clear mechanisms. The Deauville Summit in May 2011 represented the general framework for this direction, where the promised financial support for managing the transitional and constituent phase was linked to strict conditions, the most important of which was commitment to the inherited international agreements and the programs of international financial institutions. Moreover, the structural reform of the Tunisian economy had its directions drawn from Western circles as the Central Bank admitted the presence of foreign representatives in its supreme strategic committee.

Engineering the Political System from Outside and Inside:

The new Tunisian political scene was engineered with design mechanisms in which foreign actors, and local elites loyal to them, participated. From the constitutional side, international

parties had a direct role, as we recall the presence of Noah Feldman, the chief constitutional advisor to the United States-led coalition in Iraq, during the drafting of the 2014 constitution, as Azad Badi, deputy general rapporteur for the constitution in the Constituent Assembly, confirmed that the constitution's articles were coming from the guest palace in La Marsa. From the electoral side, the complex proportional representation list system was adopted in 2011 to ensure broad representation, then the system changed in 2014 in favor of lists of large parties, which enabled the rise of Nidaa Tounes and Ennahda, a transformation that came after the famous consensual meeting in Paris between Beji Caid Essebsi and Rached Ghannouchi, in addition to what happened in clouding the atmosphere with terrorist acts and political assassinations throughout the constituent process.

The national consensus between the major forces did not lead to stability. Instead, the country entered a dead end under the slogan "I do not rule, nor do you rule," amid domestic conflict and foreign pressure to sign agreements such as ALECA (Accord de Libre-échange Complet et Approfondi), which is known as the EU-Tunisia Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) agreement.

The people's discontent with the failure of the political elite and the blatant compromises paved the way for Kais Saied, who ended the consensual path after July 25, 2021 and returned the state to a model of a unilateral actor with a populist sovereign discourse. This authoritarian return did not face real Western opposition. Instead, it was met with realistic acceptance, especially from France and the United States, because it ensured stability and preserved the basic structure of the state and geopolitical interests.

What is Required to Exit the Crisis:

The situation has not changed as long as colonialism itself remains in place and in control. Change must be radical, targeting the intellectual, political, and legal settlements that the colonialist placed in the lands of the Muslims, which generated suffocating political crises of division, prisons, persecution of opponents, and societal crises that Muslims have not witnessed throughout their history, and categorically fail to resolve. All this burden requires a prepared project expressing the Ummah's thought and sensibility, starting from its Aqeedah and its viewpoint on life.

The project of change is heavier than the nation-state, and this is what the revolutions and their extensions in most Arab countries expressed. This requires a new idea about the concept of ruling governance and the state emanating from Islam, the complete and self-sufficient Deen, and a distinguished leader in whom the conditions of leadership are met. Otherwise, the fate of the process would be failure, as happened to the Tunisian revolution when it was taken over and led by parasitic, treacherous opportunists.

Likewise, the process of change needs to be led by an ideological political structure based on the Ummah's Aqeedah, digesting its thought, and aware of its goal. To avoid the fate of the rest of the experiences that the Ummah has gone through, two things must be present in it:

1. That this structure be a Hizb based on the people's Aqeedah, i.e., the Aqeedah of Islam, undertaking the process of culturing the Ummah with Islamic culture to fuse it with Islam, and purifying it from corrupt beliefs, wrong thoughts, erroneous concepts, and from being influenced by the thoughts of disbelief and its opinions.
2. That this Hizb works to make Islam the one implemented, and its Aqeedah the basis of the state, and the basis of the constitution and laws therein.

This is because the Aqeedah of Islam is a rational doctrine and it is a political doctrine from which a system emerged that addresses all human problems: political, economic, cultural, and social.

These specifications are available today only in **Hizb ut Tahrir**, which has dedicated itself and its members to bringing Islam to power, not bringing Muslims to power alone. For how many a Muslim has ascended to the seat of power, yet fought Islam and aligned with its enemies! So, the obligation today is to resume the Islamic way of life, and that can only be achieved by establishing the Khilafah (Caliphate) on the Method of the Prophethood.

Allah (swt) said, ﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اسْتَجِيبُوا لِلّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ إِذَا دَعَاكُمْ لِمَا يُحِبِّيكُم﴾ "O you who have believed, respond to Allah and to the Messenger when he calls you to that which gives you life." [TMQ Surah Al-Anfal:24].