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Egypt has been experiencing an unprecedented political crisis since the July 3-2013 coup, which has led many politicians, academics, and party leaders in recent years to present initiatives and proposals to solve the crisis. However, with every proposal or initiative, disputes used to arise between supporters and opponents of effort to settle the conflict.

On the one hand, opponents see that acceptance of any political settlement with a regime that came after the military coup in 2013 is tantamount to surrender and acquiescence to this regime that has killed and arrested hundreds of thousands of opponents, in addition to the violations it has committed since the beginning of the crisis until now. On the other hand, supporters to passing any political settlement of the crisis see that the situation has become so difficult for everyone and that something must be done to resolve the current stalemate and end the suffering of detainees.

Supporters of a political settlement emphasize the need to focus on the future rather than evoke the tragedies of the past, citing as an example the success of South Africa's initiatives to end hostility between whites and blacks, close files of the past, and achieve transitional justice; and the success of King Hassan II of Morocco to close files of the past and compensate more than twenty thousand victims of enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention, torture and ill-treatment in the context of the conflict in Western Sahara.

Despite the endless differences between different parties, many forget that the current ruling regime in Egypt has not shown desire to allow passage of any initiative or attempt for political reconciliation over the past years. In fact, the current regime does not believe that it needs to make any concessions or accept any initiatives. Rather, it pursues those who present such initiatives, whether in courts or via security forces, some of whom are still behind bars only for attempting to throw a stone in the stagnant waters.

Political settlement opportunities

Since the military coup of July 3, 2013, Egyptian opposition forces across the political spectrum have lived several setbacks and defeats, in addition to failure to achieve any of their objectives, while the military regime completely controlled joints of the Egyptian State.

Anyway, the past years witnessed many political initiatives, most notably the initiatives of Kamal Al-Hilbawi, Ma'soum Marzouk, Dr. Hassan Nafaa, former ambassador Abdullah Al-Ashal, Dr. Saadeddin Ibrahim, and MP Ahmed Tantawi; and most recently the national consensus document announced by the actor and contractor Mohamed Ali.

However, the political horizons in Egypt have remained completely blocked, which suggests that it is impossible to pass any political settlement to solve the Egyptian crisis under the current regime; considering that all international mediations, regional calls, and national initiatives over the past years have failed to organize a meeting or bring together regime opponents, including the Muslim Brotherhood, and military leaders, not to mention agreement on principles for political reconciliation.

In fact, the crisis in Egypt has coincided with a state of regional conflict between two camps: the first includes the Turkish-Qatari alliance, and the second includes the UAE-Saudi alliance; which has made success of any opportunities for a political settlement in Egypt almost impossible at the present time.

Egyptian regime's strategy to thwart initiatives

The Egyptian regime has followed a policy of thwarting any initiative or call for national alignment, by launching media campaigns under supervision of security services in addition to adopting an offensive political rhetoric aimed at distorting anyone seeking to settle the political crisis in Egypt and accusing him of treachery.

At the same time, the regime has always promoted, with every electoral entitlement or security incident, initiatives from within prisons under supervision of security services, through which it seeks to raise more differences and disagreement between opponents inside and outside prisons, targeting the psychological state of families of detainees that have been in prison for long years. Although this is a well-known strategy run by national security offices in Egyptian prisons, however there are some

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real leaked messages and initiatives from within prisons addressing the suffering of detainees and expressing their aspiration to find solutions to save them from the hardships they endure there.

Of course, the method of passing initiatives under the supervision of security services is an old conduct in Egyptian prisons, as it is considered a means on the part of security services to engage opponents of the regime in contrived differences (between supporters and opponents of these initiatives), or even in controversy over the principle of political settlement itself, especially that these proposals have always come from one side.

Since January 2014, specifically after the bombing of the Cairo Security Directorate building, the Egyptian regime has followed a policy of separating and isolating Brotherhood leaders inside the notorious Scorpion Prison from other detainees; and after the assassination of the former Prosecutor General Hisham Barakat on 30 June 2015, the prison administration further isolated Brotherhood leaders and separated them from each other in prisons, locking them in solitary confinement cells and depriving a large number of them of the right to family or lawyer visits, with the aim of preventing any form of communication among them, thus ensuring that the situation remains as it is both inside and outside prison.

Conclusion

Despite all the initiatives that have been put forward – which in fact legitimize the Sisi regime that has come after a military coup, except for the national consensus document announced by the actor and contractor Mohamed Ali – I can confirm that after seven years of suffering, no one in Egypt has a practical vision or a real way out of the crisis, in light of the tight security grip imposed on the Egyptian people, through which Abdel Fattah el-Sisi controls the country, and amid the regime's continued tendency to thwart any initiative or proposal to resolve the current stagnant political situation in the country.

Many observers believe that there is no hope for correcting the political path in Egypt under the current regime, led by Abdel-Fattah al-Sisi, which has intentionally destroyed and demolished partisan and political life, in addition to the human rights violations it has committed since the July 3 coup (2013) until now.

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The regime believes that maintaining the current political situation is in its interest, as it enables it to pass its internal and external policies. Therefore, the regime demonizes everyone that opposes his policies and accuses opponents that try to expose its corruption and dictatorship of treachery, dubbing them "evil people" or even "terrorists", as it is keen to keep this painful reality, not caring about any proposed political settlement.

To face this situation, all concerned parties both at home and abroad must develop a future vision based on common rules and foundations in preparation for the post-Sisi regime.

They have to stop wasting time and effort on initiatives and debates have been proven unsuccessful so far, and search for real projects to save the country, including preparation of future solutions to save the Egyptian economy, in light of the accumulated foreign debts the regime has caused, thinking about ways to retrieve the Egyptian Tiran and Sanafir islands that Sisi waivered to Saudi Arabia, and providing solutions to all other catastrophes that the Sisi regime has caused.

Opponents of the Sisi regime are also required to have a high degree of tolerance and consensus with others, given that there is no time to waste in disputes that will only benefit the regime; and that crying and wailing over the past without undertaking real action to change the current reality is tantamount to contribute to destroying the future of the nation.