THE ROLE OF THE INTERNET IN THE ARAB SPRING

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The article discusses the influence of the Internet as one of the most critical information infrastructures to facilitate social networking for planning, inducing and enhancing coherent effects of the protests in states located in North Africa and the Middle East, during the so-called "Arab Spring" revolutionary social movements. The first part summarizes the political events in the region since the end of 2010 to the present with emphasis on the social impact in Tunisia and Egypt, where the role of the internet has been shown as strongly related to the population turmoil.

The essay further analyzes the impact of network use in correlation with the statistical distribution of users based on geographic and population layout. Some assumptions are made on how the Internet has been evolving in a "key enabler" sparking the riots in the Arab world, delivering appropriate support to the actions and responses of the parties involved in the street conflicts.

The authors highlight a number of consequences caused as the result of using the Internet technology by the socio-political actors during the Arab Spring demonstrations, including the most important point as the most active of the social networks in the development of the relationship between the individual and the state - formally recognized by the international community.

Keywords: *Internet; Arab Spring; social networks; Twitter; Facebook; YouTube.*

S tarting on December, 17th 2010, when the Tunisian Mohamed Bouazizi set himself on fire in a supreme protest against the ultra rigid autocracy in power, the international community was shocked by the news of what came to be later known as the "Arab Spring". The Arab world erupted in outrage

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