

MEPI MEDREGION UPDATE

Regional Office Tunis

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MEPI *Medregion Update* Newsletter is produced by the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) Regional Office at the U.S. Embassy in Tunis, Tunisia.

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We welcome your comments and suggestions.

MEPI joins President Obama in saying: "The United States will continue to be a friend and partner to Egypt. We stand ready to provide whatever assistance is necessary—and asked for — to pursue a credible transition to a democracy. I'm also confident that the same ingenuity and entrepreneurial spirit that the young people of Egypt have shown in recent days can be harnessed to create new opportunity —jobs and businesses that allow the extraordinary potential of this generation to take flight. And I know that a democratic Egypt can advance its role of responsible leadership not only in the region but around the world." President on Egypt, February 11, 2011.

The Seventh Edition of the Forum for the Future

"So, here at the Forum for the Future, let us face honestly that future. Let us discuss openly what needs to be done. Let us use this time to move beyond rhetoric, to put away plans that are timid and gradual, and make a commitment to keep this region moving in the right direction." — Secretary Clinton, January 13, 2011,

Qatar hosted the seventh edition of the Forum for the Future (FFF) on January 11-13, 2011 in Doha. The FFF was co-chaired by Canada and Doha and brought together representatives of governments of the region and the G8, as well as representatives of international organizations, civil society and the private sector.

The Forum for the Future is a cooperative effort to advance the universal values of human dignity, democracy, economic opportunity, and social justice by the states of the Broader Middle East and North Africa (BMENA) region, the industrialized nations, and other partners. These partners seek to promote and develop political, economic, and social reform in the region.

The Secretary of the State Mrs Clinton, who attended the FFF, reiterated the important role civil society plays and she called for the need to further strengthen the partnership spirit between the governments and representatives of civil society. "It is time to see civil society not as a threat, but as a partners" said Secretary Clinton.

"I am here to pledge my country's support for those who step up to solve the problems



Secretary Clinton meets with civil society activists



Participants in the seventh edition of the FFF

that we and you face. We want to build stronger partnerships with societies that are on the path to long-term stability and progress business, government and civil society, as represented on this panel, must work together, as in our new regional initiative called Partners for a New Beginning.

We know that what happens in this region will have implications far beyond." — Secretary Clinton, January 13, 2011.

To learn more about the seventh edition of the Forum for the Future please visit: [www. forumfuture.qatar-conferences.org](http://www.forumfuture.qatar-conferences.org) ■

Welcome to New MEPI Staff



Elizabeth Hattingh

MEPI Regional Office Tunis is very pleased to welcome Elizabeth Hattingh, the new MEPI Coordinator in the political and economic section of U.S. Embassy Algiers.

Local and regional MEPI programs support post's efforts to bolster Algerian civil society, promote human rights, and encourage entrepreneurship and small business development. Elizabeth joined the State Department in 2006, after several years working in the private sector, and has served as an economic officer in Singapore and a consular officer in Riyadh. She speaks French and Arabic. ■

MEPI Medregion Office News

MEPI Medregion Office is pleased to announce the launch of its **YouTube** Channel and invites MEPI Alumni and implementers to share with us any MEPI activities-related videos. The YouTube channel highlights MEPI Alumni activities, and MEPI funded-project across the region.

www.YouTube.com/user/MEPIROTunis

Check us out on



Submit Your Grant Applications Now!

Funding is available now for Local Grants. Please contact your country's U.S. Embassy MEPI Committee and see the guidebook available on our [website](http://www.medregion.mepi.state.gov) for step-by-step instructions in English and Arabic.

www.medregion.mepi.state.gov



Direct DEPOSIT Sign Up Form

By MEPI Grants Unit

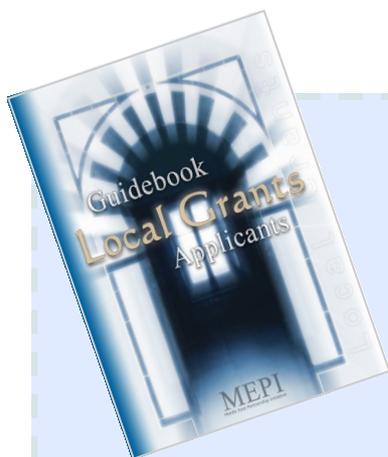
Last month we discussed "Payment Requests." As a follow-on to that topic, this article will address the Direct Deposit form.

The Direct Deposit Sign-Up form is sent to the grantee once the grant is approved, signed, and the money for the award is set aside or "obligated."

The Direct Deposit form simply provides us the banking information we need in order to send you your money. This form stays in your files for the duration of the grant and only needs updated if your banking information changes.

The form must be signed by someone in the organization who has signature authority for the bank account. To avoid any problems with the transfer, we recommend that you review the data in this form with your bank branch, as wrong or incomplete banking information can create unnecessary payment delays.

We encounter two frequent problems when processing payment requests. The first issue is missing or incorrect IBAN numbers. Not all countries use IBAN numbers, but some countries require it. Please check with your bank. Secondly, boxes 13 "Will transfer be made in local currency or US Dollar?" and 14 of the form "Is the account on local currency or US Dollar?" must match. For example, if you request a payment in US dollars, your account must accept U.S. dollars. If your account accepts both U.S. dollars and Local Currency, you may mark both boxes. [Direct Deposit Sign-up Form.](#)



Vision 2040 for Tunisia



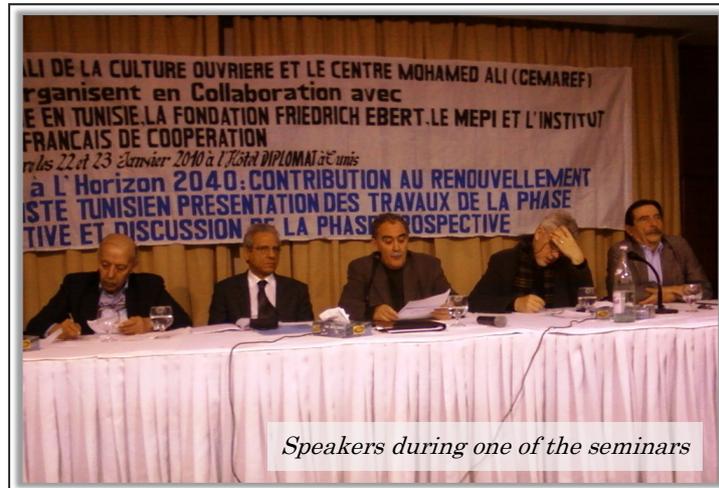
Through the MEPI Local Grant “Vision 2040 for Tunisia,” the Association Club Mohamed Ali for Labor Culture (ACMACO) conducted a series of seminars that brought together eminent figures from a wide spectrum of Tunisian society including scholars, journalists, former ministers, and intellectuals to discuss and assess Tunisia’s reform movements starting in the 19th century, including two crucial periods: the aftermath of independence in 1956 and the “*Changement*”, which brought Ben Ali to power in 1987.

The first two-day seminar organized by ACMACO was attended by 150 participants including: foreign experts, decision makers, scholars, intellectuals, trade unionists, NGO’s, youth, women, representatives of government and parliamentarians.

During the seminar participants discussed the role of think tanks in the Maghreb; the evolution of the relationship between the religious and the political in Tunisia since the nineteenth century; the problematic of the prospective vision and transversal questions; the future of the Tunisian culture in 2040; defining a Tunisian modern society; and gender

“The Tunisian modernization movement is now faltering and renewal is necessary if it is to move forward.”

and family. They also identified major achievements questioning why some of these successes were sustained and others were not. Based on the outcome of the debates, ACMACO is making recommendations on ways to build on these successes as well



Speakers during one of the seminars

as expand the scope of progressive political, social and economic reforms in Tunisia on a sustainable basis by the year 2040.

These recommendations will be presented and disseminated

to civil society and legislators for input and instruction.

In an interview published by the Tunisian Daily newspaper Assabah, Mr. Habib Guiza, the director of ACMACO, and the project Director of Vision 2040 for Tunisia, said this “project involves civil society actors creating a pluralistic space for a better future for Tunisia.”

Mr. Mahmoud Ben Romdhan, a Tunisian researcher and a participant in the seminar asserted that the Tunisian modernization movement, which started in the mid nineteenth century, has

“This project involves civil society actors creating a pluralistic space for a better future for Tunisia.”

now faltering and renewal is necessary if it is to move forward.

As part of the Vision 2040 in Tunisia project, ACMACO launched a website www.tunisia2040.org, which contains information on the project and its activities.

The activities of the project were covered by different Tunisian media outlets.

On February 1, 2011, Mr. Guiza, the project director, announced the launch of the “Tunisian General Labor Confederation (CGTT)”. CGTT, which is only the second umbrella labor union in the history of Tunisia, and breaks with the single-labor model represented by the Union Générale des Travailleurs de Tunisie (UGTT) that has dominated the Tunisian labor landscape since 1946. Guiza stated that the CGTT is part of the reform efforts as it reinforces the pluralism of labor unions in the country. ■

Civic Education Request for Applications

MEPI seeks applications that promote quality civic education, so that children and youth (between ages 15-30) across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region have a strong foundation on which to become active and engaged participants in social, political, and economic life. Proposals should support MEPI’s goal of fostering pluralistic societies where a civic culture exists that supports democratic values and the active participation of

all individuals in social and political life. Proposed projects should also help to advance the MEPI goal of building prosperous societies where education, specialized skill training, and an environment conducive to business development inspire innovation. To view the full announcement, please [click here](#). To apply for this announcement, please visit www.grants.gov and search for CFDA number 19.500. ■

from MEPI alumni





Sana Abdeljalil

Tunisian Youth are very excited about the Revolution and so thrilled about the change. Still, they, sharing thoughts, videos or comments on FB or twitter, young people still have no serido lack a deep perspective on the legal, political & economic aspects of it & the process to reinstall stability at all levels.

Besides the "dégage" attitudeous involvement in that difficult process.

I find this quite alarming since what happened is great, it's a milestone in Tunisia's history so we have all to be aware of its impact on the future.



Nidhal Kefi

I totally agree with you Sana , young and older people are ecstatic about the change. I will never forget my mother's call on January 15th in the morning yelling "good morning free Tunisia"! Yet, my happiness was mixed with a lot of anxiety, I was already thinking of the cons-revolution and how hard is the process of setting a very democratic regime. Especially that most Tunisians became apolitical during all those years of repression, and many of them took religion as a hiding place from a rude reality. Surprisingly, my teenage cousin who's 13 years old, was already aware of the issue of the articles 56 and 57 of the constitution, and as soon as she heard about the change, she called me to say: "hey Foued M'bazzâa will be the temporary president!" It was amazing to hear that young girl who we thought, for long, do not care about anything else but being pretty and up to date in fashion and hair cut! That revolution made us realize how we were underestimating the capabilities of those teenagers we were criticizing so much. The way will be long and tough to reach our final objective, and there is a lot to do to acculturate people to all those political, social, legal and economic aspects that would allow us to build a democracy. Our Revolution is still doing its first step.



Samia Nasri

Yes, as you said girls, from "Jasmin Revolution" (as dabbed outside Tunisia) or "Freedom and dignity Revolution" (as called inside Tunisia), two strong and "clashing" feelings were born: an extreme happiness since finally we succeed to end decades of corruption, repression, lack of freedom.. and fear of what will be next, will we succeed to "make" a new Tunisia : free and democratic?

Yet, I'm not with you Sana on the idea that "besides "degage" attitude, sharing thoughts, videos or comments on FB or twitter young people have no serious involvement" in the process of reinstallation of stability, because young people have played from the beginning an eminent role in the Revolution, the Revolution itself was an unconscious and spontaneous "creation" of a youth of 26 years from a long-time margined Tunisian province "Sidi Bouzid" who set himself on fire as an extreme solution to end a short life but full of, disappointment, hopelessness and unemployment psychological impacts.

From Bouazizi's self-immolation event, demonstrations, riots, social and political unrest,.. mostly led by Tunisian youth had been started and succeeded to oust the ex president.

Even young people who have not participated in the "real" social movement, have taken part to the "virtual" one, they have not hesitated to use the only means that they have as simple as Facebook, tweeter, blogs but in so efficient way that they made the whole world be informed about reasons, progress, impacts and results of the Revolution and have defended the Tunisian cause to the end!

Youths still use the same means and tools to make changes: reshuffles in the interim government, resignation of inefficient or corrupt ministers, governors, public establishments' managers, ...

And "chants" continue to reinstall stability, to defend principles as freedom of speech and religion. Young people's movements, opinions and thoughts have sparked this revolution so we should have faith in ourselves as young Tunisians to be totally able to save Tunisia from instability and anarchy and plan its future along with competent politicians, sociologists, jurist,



Middle East Partnership Initiative

The Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), located within the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs at the U.S. Department of State, is a unique program designed to engage directly with and invest in the peoples of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). MEPI works to create vibrant partnerships with citizens to foster the development of pluralistic, participatory, and prosperous societies throughout the MENA region. MEPI partners with local, regional and international non-governmental organizations, the private sector, academic institutions, and governments.

MEPI Regional Office, Tunis

Housed in the U.S. Embassy in Tunis, the MEPI Regional Office Tunis administers MEPI local projects in Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia and West Bank/Gaza and accounts for more than \$5 million in program funding in 2010. In addition to coordinating with U.S. Embassies throughout the region, Tunis RO provides a variety of funding opportunities (such as the MEPI Local Grants program and Civil Society Grants) as well as supporting visits, seminars and training programs to advance the formation of communities for tomorrow.

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