ALMA MATER STUDIORUM
UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA

ARCHIVIO ISTITUZIONALE
DELLA RICERCA

Alma Mater Studiorum Università di Bologna
Archivio istituzionale della ricerca

The politics of security reform in post-2011 Tunisia: Assessing the role of exogenous shocks, domestic policy entrepreneurs and external actors

This is the final peer-reviewed author’s accepted manuscript (postprint) of the following publication:

Published Version:
Santini R.H., Cimini G. (2019). The politics of security reform in post-2011 Tunisia: Assessing the role of exogenous shocks, domestic policy entrepreneurs and external actors. MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES, 55(2), 225-241 [10.1080/00263206.2018.1538971].

Availability:
This version is available at: https://hdl.handle.net/11585/733174 since: 2023-05-18

Published:
DOI: http://doi.org/10.1080/00263206.2018.1538971

Terms of use:

Some rights reserved. The terms and conditions for the reuse of this version of the manuscript are specified in the publishing policy. For all terms of use and more information see the publisher's website.

This item was downloaded from IRIS Università di Bologna (https://cris.unibo.it/).
When citing, please refer to the published version.

(Article begins on next page)

19 September 2024

This is the final peer-reviewed accepted manuscript of:

Ruth Hanau Santini, Giulia Cimini (2019): The politics of security reform in post-2011 Tunisia: assessing the role of exogenous shocks, domestic policy entrepreneurs and external actors, Middle Eastern Studies, 55 (2): 225-241

The final published version is available online at:

https://doi.org/10.1080/00263206.2018.1538971

Terms of use:

Some rights reserved. The terms and conditions for the reuse of this version of the manuscript are specified in the publishing policy. For all terms of use and more information see the publisher's website.

This item was downloaded from IRIS Università di Bologna (https://cris.unibo.it)

When citing, please refer to the publisher version.

The politics of security reform in post-2011 Tunisia: assessing the role of exogenous shocks, domestic policy entrepreneurs and external actors

Ruth Hanau Santini

Giulia Cimini

Universita L'Orientale, Naples, Italy

Abstract

In post—2011 Tunisia, the reform of the security sector has proceeded haphazardly, hindering security efficiency and lowering the overall effectiveness in countering threats. Since 2015, the combination of three factors — external shocks, international actors' pressures and domestic configurations of political power — have paved the way for a progressive overhaul of the efficiency of security agencies. Following the 2015 terrorist attacks, that destabilized the political system and risked derailing the trajectory of democratic consolidation, European powers exerted pressure to improve efficiency in the security sector. Lastly, these push factors needed an enabling condition, a strong presidency of the republic, to make the changes happen. The measures adopted reflect a technical and supposedly depoliticized view of reforms, in line with a broader post-interventionist trend in Security Assistance. Based on process-tracing, the analysis of primary documents and several in-depth interviews carried out between 2015 and 2017, the article illustrates the workings of the policy process in the security arena. It sheds light on the conditions that made possible the adoption of reforms, the role external actors played in pushing for change and in creating a new multilateral mechanism, the G7+, which produced an unintended set of domestic consequences.

Keywords: security assistance; Tunisia; external actors; presidentialization

Introduction

Tunisia has undergone two legislative elections, presidential and municipal elections, it has completed a constitutional reform process, and a slow but ongoing implementation process of that new constitution has defined the post-2014 political trajectory. In stark contrast, the security field has remained on the sidelines of policy change, despite societal demands for the overhaul of the traditional practices of the security forces.

From the 1990s, under the watchful eye of President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali, the security sector had developed increasingly authoritarian practices in its modus operandi. More specifically, it had evolved into community policing without proper oversight, decentralization and participation mechanisms, thereby amounting to little more than a hyper-localized form of surveillance.[1] Unsurprisingly, in the wake of the revolution, both the general public and opinion-makers demanded rule-law abiding operating procedures for the security forces as well as increased accountability. However, when successive waves of terrorist attacks struck the country between 2013 and 2015, public opinion shifted the focus away from greater transparency and respect for the rule of law on to the need for greater effectiveness in the performance of the security forces.

In 2013, the country suffered from major setbacks in its perception of stability and safety, when two prominent politicians, Choukri Belaid and Mohamed Brahmi, were assassinated. These tragic events threatened to derail the country's fragile trajectory towards democracy, increased domestic political polarization and mistrust vis-a-vis the Islamist party Ennahda, thereby stalling potential reforms in the security arena, which in turn rendered the country more vulnerable to security threats. The ensuing lack of reform in the security sector, delayed until 2015, hindered security efficiency and lowered the overall effectiveness in countering threats.

The targeted political violence morphed into wide-scale terrorist attacks in 2015, first at the Bardo national museum in Tunis and few months later at the beach of a hotel resort in Sousse, and in the autumn, against a bus of the Presidential Guard in the capital. It was only then that the political system carried out sweeping changes in the security sector. Despite the looming return of thousands of radicalized young Tunisians from Syria and Iraq,[2] especially since the fall of the Islamic Caliphate in October 2017, terrorist attacks have not occurred since late 2015, and popular perceptions of security have continued to improve.

Since mid-2015, the combination of three factors significantly strengthened the capacity of the Tunisian state in the security domain: the shock caused by the Sousse attacks, the ensuing pressures of key European countries and the centralization of security decision-making in the Essebsi Presidency. Together they led to the creation of an ad hoc multilateral framework facilitating Security Assistance (SA).

The exogenous shock was capitalized on both by key European states as well as by key Tunisian policy entrepreneurs (the President of the Republic Beji Caid Essebsi and his Security Advisor, Kamel Akrout) who used the crisis as a catalyst to promote new security initiatives premised on the centralization of power in the hands of the executive. The G7+ mechanism[3] facilitated intra-Tunisian security cooperation as well as relations with external donors. Security Assistance replaced Security Sector Reform (SSR): even though

part of the SSR agenda got lost in the process (the normative focus on human rights and democratic accountability as the linchpin of the reform effort), the security performance of the Tunisian security forces improved. This positively impacted on the legitimacy of the political establishment and thereby contributed to overall political stability.[4]

Despite contributing to the country's political stabilization, however, the post-2015 changes in the security governance and improvements in the security performance failed to be part and parcel of the democratization process, as they did not take the shape of comprehensive reforms of the security sector.

The article investigates the conditions that made possible the adoption of security reforms in post-2011 Tunisia, by carrying out an in-depth analysis of the policy process in the security field, the role external actors played and assessing the framework within which these changes were carried out.

The first section sets out a brief historical account of the measures taken in the security sector since the first transition government in early 2011, focusing in particular on how the mistrust between the Ministry of the Interior (MoI) and the Islamist party Ennahda, in power since October 2011, slowed down reformist efforts. The second section investigates the key actors of the security arena and their remit according to the 2014 Constitution. A combination of procedural and charismatic legitimacy enabled the Presidency of the Republic to play an assertive role in security matters since the adoption of the Constitution and the election of President Beji Caid Essebsi. The third section explores the key differences between SSR and SA, and the way in which they were conceptualized and pushed for in post-2011 Tunisia. The process of post-revolutionary change of the security sector ended up hardly resembling textbook cases of Security Sector Reform, as the only actor openly advocating for the normative side of reform was the European Union (EU), which failed to play a significant role. The politically-laden and demanding agenda of SSR subsided vis-a-vis a more modest and yet effective Security Assistance approach shared by European states and the USA. The final section deals with post-Sousse changes in the security sector and the role external actors played in improving security coordination and performance. It deals with the policy innovation represented by the G7+ format for improving coordination, both among Tunisian Ministries and security agencies and with external donors. We conclude by assessing the merits in terms of increased efficiency brought about by this new coordination mechanism, while at the same time stressing the shortcomings in terms of failed reforms to enhance the accountability of the security sector.[5]

Between a rock and a hard place: the challenges of reforming the security sector between 2011 and 2014

Between January and October 2011, when the first democratic elections for the National Constituent Assembly (NCA) took place, two interim governments ruled the country. Parties bloomed, some completely new, others already established, albeit in clandestine conditions. Among the latter was Ennahda, legalized in March after more than 30 years of repression, a period during which most of its leaders and active members had been jailed or forced either underground or abroad.

In a first phase after the fall of Ben Ali, the interim government under prime minister Beji Caid Essebsi, in place since end of February 2011, adopted swift measures to purge

the security bodies from their most compromised officials and injected new life in the security apparatus. However, the juxtaposition of an unsystematic security reform and the mistrust vis-a-vis Ennahda both by the Ministry of the Interior and most other political parties hindered change. These factors only made possible the adoption of a series of ad hoc initiatives, falling short of reforming a widely discredited repressive apparatus. In an extremely fluid environment, different political forces attempted to expand their influence on the system through recruitment, promotions and dismissals.[6]

Between January and March 2011, the Interior Minister, the independent Farhat Rajhi, dismissed the security commanders more closely associated with the Ben Ali regime, forced 42 senior Ministry of the Interior officials into mandatory retirement – including all 26 members of the General Directorate for National Security – and disbanded the Directorate for State Security, which had been accused of the majority of torture allegations.[7] Overall, a hundred officers left, although none went on trial for human rights abuses.

Several ministers and secretaries of state for security affairs, regardless of their political affiliation, tried to follow the steps of Rajhi and dismissed staff at the Ministry of the Interior. This sometimes translated into early retirement, or into recruiting and transferring personnel.[8] Between March and December 2011, the Interior Minister Habib Essid, supposedly pushed more than a dozen high ranking officers into early retirement. Between December 2011 and March 2013, under the Jebali government, Ali Laarayedh, long imprisoned and tortured under Ben Ali, headed the Interior Ministry. In this capacity, he fired between 80 and 130 employees, while Lotfi Ben Jeddou, who succeeded him until February 2015, sacked between 45 and 50.[9] However, as a number of those ousted were later reintegrated, the impact of the purges was limited.[10]

For its part, the top leadership of the armed forces underwent critical changes in the summer of 2013, after the Chief of Staff of the armed forces, General Rachid Ammar, decided to resign.[11] The army experienced some high rank replacements, mostly in favour of officers whose origins were from outside the historically privileged regions of the country. The country's volatile security situation and the fear of a military-led coup, as in the Egyptian scenario, led the Troika government to adopt some coup-proofing measures, such as new appointments to key military positions.[12]

In the build-up to the October 2011 legislative elections, the Ministry of the Interior was stripped of its electoral role, following the establishment of an independent High Electoral Commission in charge of supervising the electoral process. With over 37 per cent of the votes, the Islamist party Ennahda formed a so-called Troika coalition government with the centre-left Congress Party of the Republic and the leftist Ettakatol. Growing tensions and episodes of violence marked the Troika government, culminating in the 2013 political crisis.

In the reigning atmosphere of polarization between secularists and Islamists, criticism of Ennahda grew following the new hundreds of recruits within the police, which represented an attempt to modify the balance of power within the security sector while also asserting major control over it. At the time, Ennahda was accused of trying to assert partisan control over the police, instrumentally using massive hiring, within the public administration and the security forces, as an electoral propaganda tool. The dismissal of a White Paper – discredited because of the old regime figures who produced it[13] – by Interior Minister Laarayedh is an example testifying to this tension. The White Paper – drafted in

October 2011 by a team of experts led by Mohamed Lazhar al-Akremi, a delegate minister for the reform of security, with the support of the Ministry of the Interior – supposedly dealt with the transformation of the security sector's institutions and organizational culture.[14]

This document acknowledged and addressed several challenges within the Ministry of the Interior from both an institutional and 'cultural' dimension.[15] Despite that, it seems to have been considered, and thereby rejected, as a legacy of the 'old regime'.[16] For instance, N. Jebnoun stresses how this document endorsed a depoliticized view of reform, by focusing on single technical aspects to be changed in order to improve the dysfunctionality of the security apparatus, rather than addressing the overly state-centric focus of security and shift it towards a human-citizen security approach.[17] Accordingly, while the document raised basic principles of oversight, Jebnoun argues it prioritized the strengthening of operational capabilities and the need for foreign assistance, at the expense of democratic control, accountability, transparency and oversight.[18] At the time, Ennahda was under scrutiny for its supposedly ambivalent position on security.[19] On the one hand, the party was accused of underestimating threats associated with the rise of domestic Salafism by attempting to politically include extremist elements. On the other, it was criticized for having contributed to the flow of Tunisians joining jihad in Syria. For several months, Ennahda's leadership hesitated to ban Ansar al-Sharia (AST), a Salafi movement officially founded in May 2012 but operating since at least 2011. Ansar al-Sharia stayed out of the political fray and challenged 'official' political Islam from the margins of society, mostly through dawa.[20] Salafi groups were deemed responsible for a number of security incidents in the country, among them the attack on the headquarters of the Nessma television station, guilty of having broadcasted the movie 'Persepolis', allegedly offensive to Islam; they were also behind the attack on the US embassy in September 2012. The latter attack exposed the existing security vacuum and it revealed the disarray of the Tunisian security forces. The failure to respond effectively demonstrated gaps in institutional capacity, from situational awareness, command and control to coordination between security forces and senior government officials.[21] However, it was only in May 2013, after violent clashes erupted between AST supporters and security forces in various areas of the country,[22] that Ennahda Prime Minister Laarayedh labelled Ansar al-Sharia a terrorist network.

By then, however, Ennahda had lost its credentials as a serious actor in ensuring the country's security. Namely, Ennahda was not just criticized over its inability to keep the country safe or failing to train the over 10,000 security personnel it had recruited, but it was accused of building parallel security forces. In particular, Ennahda was associated with the League for the Protection of the Revolution (LPR),[23] which behaved as a moral police force vis-a-vis the population and was politically unaccountable.[24]

However, partly because of the distrust between Ennahda and the Ministry of the Interior, the security forces remained insulated from the political establishment. The Ministry of the Interior justified its uncooperative attitude by suggesting that Ennahda was an illegitimate political force operating against the interests of the state and pursuing a partisan, Islamist security agenda and not a national one.[25]

In this context, unsurprisingly, only timid structural reforms were passed in the early postrevolutionary period in the security sector. These included a procedural guide on human rights for internal security forces, the revision of laws governing arrest and detention, as well as the October 2013 Torture Commission Law, which subjected

detention facilities to control by human rights monitors.[26] As previously argued, the staunch opposition of the security forces against Ennahda ministers made it impossible to modify any of their operating procedures. At the domestic level, this was set to change, albeit to a limited extent, first, with the 2014 technocratic government and then with the rise to power of Ennahda's competitor, Nidaa Tounes, in late 2014.

The 2014 constitution and the new balance of power in the security arena

The consolidation of the democratic trajectory was the product of a combination of factors, among them the compromising attitude shown at several key junctures by the post-2011 political elites, as Rory McCarthy notes in his contribution to this special issue. While the post-revolutionary path does not necessarily correspond to a pacted transition a la Schmitter and O'Donnell,[27] whereby the reformist section of the regime's elite gives up power to revolutionary forces in exchange for its survival, and allows for a swift and bloodless transition, a 'twin toleration'[28] pact was nevertheless struck between the two ideological poles – nationalist and Islamist – ensuring democratic progress, to the detriment of disenfranchised lower classes,[29] what G. Parolin depicts as the most revolutionary voices.[30] In the Tunisian case, a 'pacted' transition refers to an informal agreement between the leadership of the two main parties, Ennahda and Nidaa, which have, at several key critical junctures, shown a consensus-driven attitude and the ability to accept compromises for the greater good of the country's stability.[31]

In order to avoid further social and political polarization, they have partially extended the consensus-driven constitutional politics phase into ordinary politics. As the International Crisis Group stated in a 2017 report, the political consensus is 'based on a gentlemen's agreement aimed at preventing the re-emergence of political polarization between Islamists and anti-Islamists, but resulting, at best, in the clientelistic sharing of state resources'.[32] Others argue that this is evidence of a double caution: a strategy of 'risk avoidance' by Ennahda and of 'containment' by Nidaa Tounes, opting to sidestep differences rather than confronting them.[33]

In a number of policy areas, this has led to slow progress, as the two main political forces have refrained from dealing with and clashing over potentially explosive issues.[34] Often, progress has stalled also given the role several veto players have. This has been the case with socio-economic reforms, where strong social forces, such as the main workers' union (UGTT) have reduced the capacity of both parties to translate their political capital into actual policies. This also occurred in the security arena, where only a clear attribution of powers to the President of the Republic in the 2014 constitution paved the way for more effective policy-making. As Sheran Grewal argues, the management of the military had become more decentralized and rather than being a 'domaine reserve', it was a responsibility shared among multiple actors.[35] Similarly, Florence Gaub maintains that 'the responsibility for military matters (had become) increasingly dispersed' amongst the executive, the parliament and civil society under the 2011-2013 Troika government.[36]

We argue that the same applied to security matters more broadly, not only to military issues. Rather than stressing the positive byproduct of power dispersion among a plethora of policy actors in terms of greater inclusiveness in the decision-making process, the unclear definition of tasks among security actors and the ensuing lack of effectiveness

risked derailing the early transition phase.[37] The new Constitution, by clearly defining the remit of all policy actors in the security arena, enabled the emergence of a functioning division of labor and the setting up of effective coordination mechanisms. According to article 77 of the Constitution, the President of the Republic is 'responsible for determining the general orientations in the domains of defense, foreign relations and national security in relation to protecting the state and the national territory from all internal and external threats, after consulting with the Head of Government'.[38] Furthermore, he/she chairs the National Security Council – to which the Head of Government and the Speaker of the Assembly of the Representatives of the People (ARP) are invited – and is the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces. As Head of State, he/she is allowed to undertake emergency provisions (art. 77 and 80) and, through presidential orders, to appoint and dismiss individuals in senior military and diplomatic positions, and positions related to national security, after consultation with the Head of Government (art. 78). The latter selects the members of his/ her cabinet, but in the case of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defense, the choice must be made in consultation with the President of the Republic (art. 89). The Head of Government defines and implements the state's general policy, with the exceptions of defense, foreign affairs and national security (art. 91). At the same time, when it comes to these three areas – defense, foreign policy and national security – the President of the Republic presides over the Council of Ministers (art. 93).

The Head of State enjoys decision-making powers in all exceptional matters and provides an overall strategic direction, while the Head of Government is in charge of day-to-day affairs. However, besides the 'formal' constitution, a material constitution has already shown a partially different reality.[39] Between January 2014 and February 2015, under the technocratic Jomaa government, President Moncef Marzouki (who had been in power as interim President of the Republic from December 2011) was politically marginalized and, especially in security matters, enjoyed limited power. Marzouki, who enjoyed Ennahda's support, had not welcomed the creation of the National Dialogue, and as a consequence his cohabitation with Prime Minister Jomaa proved difficult. Despite officially presiding over the National Security Council (NSC) within the Presidency of the Republic, in a typical case of inter-institutional competition, this body lost ground to the crisis cell Jomaa set up within the government.[40] In 2014, the Jomaa government produced an elaborate strategic document, left unpublished, which illustrated in great detail the nature of the terrorist threat in the country. Several ministries had contributed to its drafting process in a highly inclusive way. In 2015, President Essebsi – successful both at the October 2014 legislative elections and the December presidential ones – reconvened and revived the National Security Council.[41] Despite the semi-presidential[42] nature of the post-2014 political system, many agree that President Essebsi has centralized decision-making and strengthened the executive, especially in security matters, by over-extending the label of 'national security'.[43] The NSC has been instrumental in the attempt Essebsi made to reinforce the Presidency without pushing for constitutional amendments towards a presidentialization of the regime.[44] This effort has been facilitated by Essebsi's defense advisor, Rear-Admiral Kamel Akrout, who presides over all G7+ meetings and is, in the words of several European diplomats, the real kingmaker. Akrout coordinates the Tunisian security decision-making process, eases tensions among different ministries' bureaucracies, facilitates compromise and reports back to the President. Finally, he feeds back in the decision-making process presidential inputs.[45] This is made possible also by the

role the President has in chairing the NSC,[46] whose members are the Prime Minister, the President of the Parliament, the Ministers of Justice, Defense, Foreign Affairs and Finance, as well as the President of the National Intelligence Center. It ensures 'the safeguard of the state's vital interests within the framework of a strategic vision whose aim is the preservation of the sovereignty of the State, its independence and the guarantee of the integrity of its territory, the security of its people and the protection of its natural resources' (art. 1).[47] The NSC deliberates on public policies, national security strategies and information management. It is in charge of implementing the national strategy for fighting extremism and terrorism –in coordination with the National Counter-Terrorism (CT) Commission. Lastly, the NSC also assesses internal and external challenges and responses to potential threats, and orients foreign policy according to national security priorities.

Under Essebsi, the NSC provided the impetus for the drafting of a new national strategic document. Since it was a legitimate and strong presidency that initiated the drafting process, two things happened. First, the process benefited from centralization and a strong goal-oriented bent. Second, inter-ministerial cooperation and inclusivity suffered as a result.[48] This document was eventually adopted as the National Strategy Against Terrorism and Violent Extremism in November 2016. While the document has not been published, the takeaway point is the identification of four pillars for countering the terrorist threat which neatly correspond to the EU's 2005 Counter-Terrorism (CT) strategy: Prevent, Protect, Pursue and Respond. In March 2016, in order to have a dedicated body overseeing the implementation of the country's counter-terrorism action, the government created an ad hoc body, the National Counter-Terrorism Commission. The commission approved the counter-terrorism strategy and strove to implement the July 2015 counter-terrorism law. The CT Commission has a similar but lower-ranking composition compared to the NSC. Its main goal is to facilitate information and intelligence sharing and improve inter-agency coordination. In addition to that, however, the Commission has a consulting role on judicial texts, it supports policy implementation, raises awareness, and collects statistically relevant data. As far as the external dimension is concerned, the CT Commission is also in charge of following the United Nations (UN) resolutions related to the fight against terrorism, within the framework of Tunisia's international obligations. Compared to the CT Commission, the National Security Council has a wider mandate, and does not limit itself to terrorism but deals with security at large.

The post-2014 system of government is a semi-presidential one, where 'the president and the parliament both have significant power over the government formation and dismissal processes, and in which neither the parliament or the president can fully dominate the other'.[49] In any case, on security matters the parliament has a residual role. Assessing the system as a 'threeheaded executive'[50] overestimates the parliament's prerogatives in security and defense matters. These claims cannot be substantiated in terms of legal provisions, and even less in terms of post-2011 practices. The parliament has two committees dealing with foreign and security matters: the Committee on the Organization of the Administration and the Affairs of the Armed Forces, and the Committee on Security and Defense. The former is permanent and is in charge of examining projects, proposals and questions related not only to the armed forces, but also to the general organization of the public administration, as well as decentralization and local communities. The wide remit of the mandate, coupled with a chronically under-resourced and underfunded parliament, has narrowed the focus of the committee mostly

to decentralization and local communities.[51] The Committee on Security and Defense, meanwhile, is an ad hoc committee: it can follow up on issues with a security and defense component, inquire about the government's implementation of security strategies, and can consult experts on security matters. The activities of this ad hoc committee have mostly revolved around monitoring, inviting experts, encouraging topics of discussion and promoting analysis.[52]

In general, the working environment of all parliamentary security-related committees is highly complex, due both to the number of institutions involved, with a particularly strong engagement of the executive, and the sensitive nature of the issues addressed. More specifically, members rotate each year and are simultaneously members of other committees. They often lack expertise and the support of technical staff, as well as financial independence, which, although guaranteed in the new constitution, has not been implemented yet.[53]

While the description of the post-2014 institutional set up offers a complex and multifaceted picture of security policy-making, we have argued that in practice, since the election of President Essebsi, security policy-making has become more centralized and less consensual than foreseen in the constitutional text, and yet increasingly efficient. This would point to the divide between a formal and a material Constitution and to the importance of scrutinizing how powers are empirically exercised in the policy arena under study. Despite the existence of several bodies dealing with security and defense issues both within the parliament and the government, we have shown how the presidency has centralized decision-making, using the NSC and the President's security advisor, facilitating coordination but, as compared to the 2011-2013 period, diminishing debate and a more collegial attitude.

The role of external actors in reforming security in post-2011 Tunisia and the shift to upgraded security assistance

Predictably, one of the strongest demands after the fall of Ben Ali revolved around the transformation of the security forces into democratic and accountable bodies within a post-revolutionary polity in the search for greater legitimacy. As already mentioned, with the exception of ad hoc limited measures, post-revolutionary transition governments and the first democratically elected one – after October 2011 – ignored these demands. It was not long before public opinion turned its attention towards the other aspect of security, namely performance.[54]

As M. Kartas argues, demands for democratic reform of the security sector subsided after the two political assassinations in 2013 risked derailing the fragile political transition and they concentrated instead on requesting a better performance by the security forces in countering threats.[55]

The debate focused on the ability or lack thereof of the various security bodies – the Army, the National Guard, and the Police – to effectively coordinate among themselves as well as on the quality of the training received. The shift from legitimacy to efficiency is far from a neutral or an inevitable one in post-revolutionary contexts, where issues of increased security become necessarily intertwined with the legitimacy of the new political system. On paper, strengthening both legitimacy and efficiency of the security sector is

the first and foremost goal of Security Sector Reform. This is premised on good governance in the security arena. In light of this, it reflects conceptual coherence with the liberal state-building paradigm, which is what makes Security Sector Reform a normative agenda. SSR is a recent endeavor, dating back to the late 1990s, and is associated with post-conflict peace building and, more recently, state building.[56] Both goals of SSR, the improved effectiveness and legitimacy of the sector, are premised on the subjugation of security forces to civilian control, an aspect deemed crucial in strengthening statehood. In its standard definition, SSR is understood as a transformation of security institutions towards greater democratic accountability, transparency and effectiveness.[57]

The debate over SSR did not penetrate the Arab world in the 1990s and 2000s,[58] and, so far, the EU has only implemented an SSR agenda in Palestine.[59] Not unlike the way that transitology has come under scrutiny in the past few years,[60] SSR has been increasingly criticized for either its normative orientation or the marginalization of local needs and agendas.[61] Most notably, there are concerns about its rather open assumptions concerning the interpretation of the state monopoly of violence, its confines, and rationale, all of which are premised on Western liberal – and historically contingent – experiences of state development.

Some, however, have salvaged specific aspects of the SSR agenda,[62] and in this line of thought, the focus on the notion of a 'security sector' deserves merit, as it is meant to include not just the military dimension of security but its social one. The notion of security sector implies the application of good governance principles across all state agents wielding coercive power, including the judicial sector. This enables us to conceptually move away from the typical concerns of authoritarian regimes for their security, and to widen security referents.[63]

In a post-authoritarian setting, it is expected that SSR will go hand in hand with political reform, undergoing the same democratizing process as all other policy areas. This should follow the logic of moving away from regime security towards societal security. The 'security for whom?' question, which characterizes much of the critical security studies literature, lies at the heart of post-authoritarian security sector reforms. SSR is in principle not limited to respect for the rule of law, good governance and human rights, but also greater transparency and accountability of the armed and security forces, and a more straightforward access for civil society to the security arena. The more the rationale of the security forces shifts from ensuring the survival of the political regime to safeguarding citizens, the deeper democratic ideals permeate the logic and inner workings of the security sector.

In post-2011 Tunisia, challenges to the adoption of an SSR agenda have revolved around an under-conceptualization of new security orientations and intra-institutional competition among security bodies. On a strategic level, what hampered increased efficiency was the lack of coordination among different institutional bodies, each of them drafting White Papers or National Security Strategies without previously consulting the other security bodies. Unsurprisingly, only very few strategic documents have come to fruition. At the operational level, the lack of coordination and cooperation among the ministries of Defense, Interior and Justice continued unabated until 2015.[64]

It is not an exaggeration to argue that in the security arena, the obstacles to carrying out deep reforms have been mostly endogenous, i.e. within the political system, and

mostly linked to the early post-revolutionary phase,[65] whereas the triggers for reform have been mostly exogenous, i.e. security threats and external actors' pressures.

From mid-2013, the terrorist threat increasingly replaced political violence in security discourse: counter-terrorism became the new mantra around which security forces coalesced in unanimously pushing for improved security management at the expense of reform and accountability. If the era of security vacuum was over, this did not mean fully coordinated security forces with improved security performance. It did however represent the suspension of the reformist security discourse, under the securitization mantra. Counter-terrorism became the one and only priority and raison d'^etre of the security establishment, and was accompanied by the demonization of those political forces that had tried to rein in the debatable practices of the past, as these actors were now accused of having weakened the overall performance of the security sector, making them indirectly responsible for terrorist attacks. In other words, a wider security agenda, beyond CT purposes, seemed to have disappeared for good, until it resurfaced in mid-2015 under the guise of upgraded Security Assistance. SSR, in sum, subsided after only an initial parenthesis of tentative reforms in 2011 and of EU-led attempts to bring it back to the table. In October 2011, the transitional government in Tunisia had requested the EU to engage in a structured security cooperation, but due to bureaucratic dynamics, mostly on the part of the Tunisian authorities, the stock-taking exercise and peer-review process of the security sector in the country carried out by security experts took until December 2013 to be finalized and until January 2015 for a more precise identification of milestones to be achieved.[66]

The 2015 terrorist attacks accelerated EU-Tunisia political dialogue and in November 2015, the Tunisian government signed the EU Commission's proposal for an SSR programme with a financial agreement of e23 million.[67] In accordance with the overall European Agenda on Security,[68] the EU's SSR insists on security and respect for fundamental human rights as complementary policy objectives of a 'new doctrine,' while enhancing transparency, accountability and democratic control.[69] Priority axes, beside the support to integrated borders management and intelligence service, include reforming and modernizing the internal security forces according to international standards in terms of oversight of activities, recruitment and training, as well as restoring citizens' trust in security services by fighting corruption and police's abuses.[70] The EU's SSR programme has had a very slow implementation: the first contracts were signed only in mid-2017, after a lengthy procedure both on the EU and the Tunisian sides.[71]

Domestic reasons also hindered the process, and in particular the volatile Tunisian political environment, its bureaucratic politics and the emergence of a double charismatic leadership. Since 2014, two political personalities have dominated the political scene: the leader of Nidaa Tounes, Beji Essebsi, and the leader of Ennahda, Rachid Ghannouchi, representing the largest political parties in parliament. Both leaders enjoy charismatic power and a high degree of legitimacy, partly as a consequence of an increased appreciation of strong leaders on the part of public opinion.[72] The consensus-driven and compromise-prone attitude of both leaders has secured the country's progress in the security arena. This was facilitated once the new President of the Republic, Beji Caid Essebsi, was sworn in early in 2015. The personal legitimacy of the President, his institutional role and external powers' strong demands for security changes further

strengthened the presidency, and paved the way for more accountable and collaborative interministerial procedural practices.

The terrorist attacks at the Bardo museum, where 21 people lost their lives on 18 March, the great majority of them European citizens, and at a beach resort in Sousse where, on 26 June, an ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) gunman killed 38 people – out of whom thirty were British citizens – sent shockwaves across the entire political establishment and society at large. The large number of European victims in both attacks reverberated across European capitals, leading their leaders to advance bolder proposals for more structured Security Assistance.

The pathologies of ad hoc, un-coordinated and under-funded Security Assistance by external actors – duplication, lack of coordination, diverging rationales and agendas, the recipient country's shopping list attitude vis-a-vis donors – radically changed in the wake of the Sousse attacks. That an external shock sent shockwaves across European capitals and in Tunis, leading policymakers to create a new policy format and an enlarged G7 mechanism responsible for coordinating efforts to support Tunisian security sector reforms, should not come as a surprise. The cognitive uncertainty on how to respond to the twofold challenge of increasing security for European citizens in Tunisia and saving the country's stability and democratic trajectory led to the adoption of a new policy response under the guise of a G7 þ 6 mechanism, formally inaugurated in June 2016.[73]

In 2015, the deterioration of the security context in Tunisia led to key policy reversals in the security domain, first with the adoption of a Counter-Terrorism law and then with the creation of the G7+ mechanisms.

Domestically, as an immediate reaction to the attacks, the Tunisian parliament, despite some heated debate, endorsed the new counter-terrorism law on 24 July 2015, with a majority of 174 votes out of 217. It replaced the 2003 Anti-Terrorism Act, approved during a favorable international conjuncture after the attacks of September 11, and constantly under severe criticism for being used, given its broad definitions of terrorists and terrorism, by the Ben Ali regime against political dissidents.[74] Interestingly, immediately after the 2011 uprisings, the law was neither abrogated nor amended. In May 2013, then-Minister of Human Rights and Transitional Justice, Samir Dilou (from the party Ennahda), announced the creation of a commission to amend the law no. 2003-75 of 10 December 2003. In November 2013, the minister aupres du gouvernement, Noureddine Bhiri chaired a ministerial working session discussing a draft law on the fight against terrorism and money laundering.[75] In January 2014, the Laarayedh government submitted to the NCA a first draft of the law.[76] The law was only approved in July 2015, when a revised version was submitted to the parliament by the technocratic government of Mehdi Jomaa.

The law improved the 2003 text, as the words 'reparation damages to victims,' and 'an exception to extradition or deportation'[77] appeared, together with the requirement that the judiciary exercise greater oversight of surveillance and other activities.[78] Despite these changes, however, the new text has been referred to as a return to a 'police state', with regard to those provisions related to the extension of the period of detention and the (re)introduction of the death penalty.[79]

Externally, three days after the attacks in Sousse, the British Home Secretary and the Interior Ministers of France and Germany visited the country and pledged enhanced support. The informal E3 – France, Germany and the UK – joined the other members of the G7 at the meeting in Schloss Elmau in June 2015. While Tunisia had been at the heart

of the 2011 Deauville initiative, the security cooperation dimension had received scant attention. In the wake of the Bardo killing, however, the G7 decided to include Security Assistance on the agenda of its June meeting. There, the Tunisian government asked to enlarge the G7 to include Spain, Belgium, and the EU, and to step up the efforts of the wider international community. A new Security Assistance format was devised, the G7+, and rapidly implemented.

The G7+: same format, different agendas?

As a coordination framework, the G7+ was not a transformative mechanism because it was mainly aimed at sharing information among partners on the ongoing security-related bilateral initiatives with Tunisia. The G7 would operate with an executive committee, meeting every three months and providing strategic guidelines, sharing the state of the art of Security Assistance and reforms, and organizing a number of operational working groups. The G7 framework increased the visibility of the United States – Tunisia's biggest donor for SA – in the security sector. It also permitted a coordination of efforts among international donors without losing national control of bilateral action, as would have been the case with an EU-only mechanism. In addition, it obliged the Tunisian authorities to come together, formulate shared demands, design an overall strategy upon which specific requests could be formulated, thereby avoiding the duplications that had been frequent since 2011.[80] The Ministry of the Interior, for example, had until 2015 relied on the Directorate-General for External Relations and International Cooperation for security cooperation with external partners on a purely bilateral basis.

The G7+ operates across four different working groups: the protection of tourist/sensitive sites, co-led by Tunisia and the UK; borders, co-led by Tunisia and Germany; ports and airports, co-led by Tunisia, France and the UK, and counter-terrorism, co-led by Tunisia, France and the EU. On the Tunisian side, the lead was within the Ministry of the Interior until the end of 2016, and has been within the Ministry of Defense from January 2017. Several international donors lament the somewhat more rigid, hierarchic and bureaucratic operating procedure of the Ministry of Defense as compared to the Ministry of the Interior.[81]

Different views over the identification of working groups have emerged. While for the UK terrorism was a crosscutting theme, the Germans insisted on having a separate working group, with a narrow military outlook and a focus on intervention. This, however, has failed to substantiate its output as effectively as other working groups have. In light of the recurring issue of Tunisian foreign fighters scattered across the region, a new working group on counter- and deradicalization is currently under discussion and will likely see the light before the end of 2017.[82]

The G7+ could be characterized as a bureaucratic exercise, where states fill in a matrix in which they include all security-related projects and activities. The voluntary nature of the scheme implies that highly confidential information or projects can be omitted and not shared among participants. The expected added value which the G7+ is supposed to deliver consists of a more proactive approach by the Tunisians, which could, and should, in the eyes of the G7+ members, provide more detailed inputs on the security evolution on the ground in terms of challenges and actual needs, impact assessment and

formulation of specific reform demands. So far, however, the format has mostly consisted in European and international actors using the G7+ scheme to avoid duplications of training, equipment and funding, as well as getting a sense of what other countries are doing/offering in terms of SA. The existence of different agendas among donors has not been solved by the G7+, and secrecy over some security initiatives remains high even between partners, given the sensitive nature of this issue area.

While most commentators agree on the increased performance and efficiency of the Tunisian security forces from 2016,[83] good governance and human rights mainstreaming across all security-related legislation and practices – the backbone of SSR – have been slower in getting addressed, let alone implemented. Whereas these provisions figure less prominently in the G7+ format, they are indeed part and parcel of the EU SSR package agreed with the Tunisian government, but which is yet to be implemented. As previously argued, domestic pressures for efficiency in the security sector became more vocal since late 2013, and received a boost by European countries after the Bardo and especially Sousse attacks in 2015. The rule of law and the human rights component that the EU strategy focused on got somehow lost in the framework of the G7+. This was devised as a format enabling better coordination among security forces thanks to tailor-made external Security Assistance, which incorporated individual initiatives of the European member states, watering down the aspect of accountability and rule of law.

Having suffered the most casualties in Sousse, the British government immediately offered assistance in training Tunisian security forces to better protect tourist locations, and has co-led the ports and airports security group. Overall, the UK has supported Tunisia, in terms of development assistance between 2011 and 2017, with over £24 million.[84] From 2018, having positively assessed Tunisian progress in the sensitive sites working group, the British will carry out more projects in the border working group. In the wake of the attacks, the British had formally discouraged their nationals from traveling to Tunisia. In that context, in order to reassure them and have their travel warning canceled, the Tunisian authorities tasked the UK with mapping critical aspects in the tourism infrastructure and helping them improve these.

On borders, Germans have taken the lead. Since late summer 2015, a cell of the German federal police has been installed within the German Embassy in Tunis, so as to provide direct assistance, especially along the eastern border with Libya, to the Tunisian border police (posted at the checkpoints) and the National Guard, (patrolling along the border).[85] In September 2016, a bilateral agreement was signed between the Tunisian Interior Minister, Hedi Madjoub, and his German counterpart, Thomas de Maziere, aimed at increasing intelligence sharing and providing regular and continued training to Tunisian security personnel.[86] Between mid-2015 and June 2017, the German federal police trained 500 officers, 80 per cent of them in the National Guard and the remaining 20 per cent in the border police.[87] Other contingent events have also played a part in rising German involvement in the Tunisian security sector, including the cessation of activities in Egypt as a consequence of the trial against the director of the German Konrad Adenauer Foundation in Cairo, leading several German foundations to halt their work in Egypt between 2013 and 2016.[88]

As far as France is concerned, the focus has been on first intervention training for the National Guard and police units at the entry level – though it is envisaged to progressively extend this to those in further stages of their careers – in order to make low-ranking

officers capable of coping with a sudden threat before the arrival of specialised forces. Once again, the Sousse attack, and the then-chaotic and delayed reaction of police units, reinforced the need to adopt a new approach, and a new 'doctrine' aimed at developing and improving quick reaction capacity, starting from those serving at the forefront even in supposedly safe spaces – and this not only in Tunisia but also in Europe following the dynamics of recent terrorist attacks.[89] More specifically, in terms of CT, France is engaged in supporting two main projects: first, Tunisia's efforts in digitizing an identity database, in order to make information-sharing, on both a national and international level, more efficient and rapid; second, a 'red line' in support of those families whose members have been somehow affected by jihadist propaganda.

Lastly, the external actor who has been devoting the most resources, and who is widely appreciated by Tunisians for its more pragmatic approach and limited red tape, is Washington, as the US tripled its military aid in 2015.[90] In comparison to the e23 million-SSR program by the European Union in 2017, the US earmarked over $86 million for military and police aid and $79 million for humanitarian and development assistance.[91] So far, the bulk of US support in SA to Tunisia revolves around – although is not limited to – two axes: military assistance, both infrastructure and equipment, and training. Assistance to the armed forces focuses especially on those troops along the borders with Libya. Since August 2013, a border buffer zone has been in the far south, and operational command in the region went to the military authorities.[92] There, Germans have also contributed to the Tunisian effort of securing the borders with Libya: while Tunisians have erected a fence aimed at making cross-border traffic more difficult, it is the US and Germany who are in charge of providing electronic surveillance tools.[93]

Out of an overall bilateral cooperation budget of $60 million for Tunisia, a sixth is earmarked for the new Police Academy, to be launched in 2019. The project, supported by the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL),[94] entails a double dimension: the building of modern infrastructure in the vicinity of Enfidha-Hammamet airport; and the development of specific curricula for police officers.[95] The US has adopted an approach of 'training the trainers' in the security sector, so as to multiply the effect and reach the widest possible number of officers the Tunisian Ministry of the Interior selects from both the police and the National Guard, who will then, in turn, train the new trainees within their bodies.

Conclusion

In the wake of the uprising, the mistrust of the population vis-a-vis the police and other security forces translated in widespread demands for a security sector more strictly acting in accordance with the rule of law, within a broader context of a profound overhaul of previous authoritarian practices. The priority attributed to accountability, however, subsided when political violence struck the country and the killing of two prominent politicians seemed to plunge it into further political instability. The imperative quickly became the efficiency of the security sector, through improved coordination, better training and equipment. Domestic pressure for the democratization of the security forces and the international support for a systemic approach to reform, mostly embodied in the EU-sponsored SSR agenda, were cast aside. The 2013 political killings however failed to

generate sufficient pressure for change in the security forces' standard operating procedures and in external actors' assistance. This only changed when, in July 2015, a massacre on a beach in a Sousse resort killed dozens of European tourists. This external shock triggered a strong reaction in key European member states, notably the UK, France and Germany, which offered substantially increased Security Assistance to the Tunisian government. Within a short span of time, European countries and the Tunisian government agreed on a new mechanism of multilateral security cooperation. The creation of an enlarged G7, including also the EU, facilitated coordination, both among external donors and among ministries and security agencies on the Tunisian side. The centralization of decision-making in the security arena occurred thanks to the 2014 Constitution, which acknowledged a key role to the President of the Republic's ability to steer the policy process in the security sector. President Essebsi capitalized on these provisions and on the availability of external donors to rapidly oversee a series of measures significantly improving bureaucratic coordination and overall efficiency. While the country has significantly improved its safety, both in terms of public perception and prevention of terrorist attacks, the good governance aspect of security reforms has lagged behind.

Like most other Arab countries, the Tunisian security sector since 2011 has been open to only one of the two dimensions of SSR, namely the modernization of equipment and the improvement of training standards, rather than increasing accountability, which has so far faced considerable resistance.[96] Despite domestic demands and the EU availability to offer an SSR package in early 2011, which is only slowly seeing the light, the sense of urgency of carrying out deep and structural reforms of the security sector was not a priority, and mistrust between security forces and Ennahda ran high. When terrorism struck and risked derailing political stability and economic growth linked to tourism, the consensus coalesced around the need to open up the security sector also to partial international scrutiny. Accountability was neglected in favor of efficiency: European member states opted for a nominally multilateral but bilateral in nature Security Assistance framework for cooperation with the Tunisian authorities, sharing information on bilateral initiatives which would continue to be earmarked nationally, rather than supporting a more normative and demanding EU effort as a more wide-ranging and more rapidly implemented Security Sector Reform package would have implied.

Notes

1. B. Hibou, La Force de l'Obeissance: Economie Politique de la Repression en Tunisie (Paris: La Decouverte, 2006).
2. See, 'Tunisie: Ghazi Jeribi devoile l'ampleur du phenomene de l'envoi des jeunes dans les zones de conflits', Marsad Observatoire (18 May 2017). Last accessed on 21 June 2017. http://www.observatoire-securite.tn/fr/2017/05/18/tunisie-ghazi-jeribi-devoile-lampleur-du-phenomene-de-lenvoi-des-jeunes-dans-les-zonesde-conflits/.
3. After the attack at the Bardo museum, and following the requests the Tunisian authorities made, the G7 format was enlarged to include Spain, Belgium, and the EU, in order to provide targeted security assistance to the country.
4. According to a survey by Sigma Conseil Institute, at the end of 2016–early 2017, almost 88 per cent of Tunisians expressed a very positive and good assessment of the security situation in the country in comparison with a negative impression of the social and economic improvements. In the meantime, the Army and the National Police enjoy the highest degree of popular confidence. For more details see, Sigma Conseil Institute, 'Political Barometer 2017' (Tunis, February 2017). Available at (in Arabic). http://www.sigma.tn/ upload/1502706773.pdf.

5. Methodologically, in addition to historical process-tracing and textual analysis of the key documents produced between 2011 and 2017 concerning the security sector, the authors have carried out twenty-five in-depth interviews with members of parliament, security experts and European and US diplomats (November 2015, April 2017 and June 2017). The article also draws from R. Hanau Santini, Limited statehood in postrevolutionary Tunisia. Citizenship, economy, security (London: Palgrave, 2018), especially pp.83–107.
6. International Crisis Group, Reform and Security Strategy in Tunisia (Tunis/Brussels: Middle East and North Africa Report No.161, 2015).
7. Y. Sayigh, Missed Opportunity: the Politics of Police Reform in Egypt and Tunisia (Beirut: Carnegie Middle East Center, March 2015). Last accessed on 21 June 2017. http://carnegieendowment.org/files/missed_ opportunity.pdf.
8. International Crisis Group, Reform and Security Strategy in Tunisia, p.12.
9. Ibid., pp.4, 13.
10. See 'Reintegration de 350 Agents demissionnaires et de 3700 agents limog es ', Marsad Observatoire (10 December 2011). Last accessed on 27 June 2017. http://www.observatoire-securite.tn/fr/2011/12/10/ reintegration-de-350-agents-demissionnaires-et-de-3700-agents-limoges/; H. Ben Mahfoudh, Security Sector Reform in Tunisia Three Years into the Democratic Transition, (Arab Reform Initiative Research Paper, 2014). Last accessed on 15 June 2017. http://www.arab-reform.net/en/node/602.
11. H. Ben Mahfoudh, Security Sector Reform in Tunisia Three Years into the Democratic Transition.
12. For a more detailed discussion on this point and the symbolic and strategic considerations underpinning the decisions of the Troika government and President Marzouki in particular, see S. Grewal, A Quiet Revolution: the Tunisian Military After Ben Ali (Carnegie Middle East Center, 24 February 2016). Last accessed on 26 May 2018. http://carnegieendowment.org/files/ACMR_Grewal.pdf.
13. Q. Hanlon, Security Sector Reform in Tunisia. A Year after the Jasmine Revolution (United States Institute for Peace, Special Report No.304, 2012). https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/SR304.pdf.; Y. Sayigh, Missed Opportunity; Y. Sayigh, Bringing Tunisian Transition to its Security Sector (Carnegie Middle East Center, Op-Ed 5 February 2016). Last accessed on 26 June 2017. http://carnegie-mec.org/2016/02/05/bringing-tunisia-stransition-to-its-security-sector-pub-62563.
14. Q. Hanlon, Security Sector Reform in Tunisia.
15. Ibid.
16. Q. Hanlon, Security Sector Reform in Tunisia.; Y. Sayigh, Missed Opportunity; Y. Sayigh, Bringing Tunisian Transition to its Security Sector (Carnegie Middle East Center, Op-Ed 5 February 2016). Last accessed on 26 June 2017. http://carnegie-mec.org/2016/02/05/bringing-tunisia-s-transition-to-its-security-sector-pub-62563.
17. N. Jebnoun, Tunisia's National Intelligence: Why 'Rogue Elephants' Fail to Reform (Washington DC: New Academia Publishing, 2017). See chapter 4.
18. Ibid., pp.58–59.
19. Interview with security expert, Tunis, April and June 2017.
20. F. Merone and F. Cavatorta, 'Salafist Movement and Sheikh-ism in the Tunisian Democratic Transition', Middle East Law and Governance Vol.5, No.3 (2013), pp.308–30.
21. Q. Hanlon, 'SSR in Tunisia: A Case of Post-Authoritarian Transition', in Q. Hanlon and R. H. Schultz (eds) Prioritizing Security Sector Reform (Washington DC: USIP Press, 2016), Chapter 4.
22. See 'Les Salafistes font vivre a la Tunisie une journee triste a en mourir', Marsad Observatoire (19 May 2013). Last accessed on 28 June 2017. http://www.observatoire-securite.tn/fr/2013/05/19/les-salafistes-font-vivre-a-latunisie-une-journee-triste-a-en-mourir/.
23. The LPR was created at the end of 2012, and was an unarmed body supposed to ensure security at the community level. Accusations leveled against it emphasized its attempt to Islamize society from below.
24. Y. Sayigh, Missed Opportunity.
25. Ibid.
26. Ibid.
27. P. Schmitter and G. O'Donnell, Transitions from Authoritarian Rule. Tentative Conclusions for Uncertain Democracies (Baltimore and London: JHU Press, 1986).
28. A. Stepan, 'Tunisia's Transition and the Twin Tolerations', Journal of Democracy Vol.23, No.2 (2012), pp.89–103.
29. F. Merone, 'Enduring class struggle in Tunisia: the Fight for Identity Beyond Political Islam', British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies, Vol.42, No.1 (2015), pp.74–87.
30. G. Parolin, 'Constitutions against Revolutions: Political Participation in North Africa', British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies Vol.42, No.1 (2015), pp.31–45.
31. Ennahda was an outlawed political party under the Ben Ali era, and its leadership was scattered abroad, mostly in London. Nidaa Tounes was formed in mid-2012 as a reaction to the October 2011 electoral victory of Ennahda, and

represents a coalition of political forces rather than a cohesive political party. Nidaa Tounes has suffered internal splintering in early 2016, with the creation of the bloc Al Hurra, initially constituted of twenty-two defectors from Nidaa.

32. International Crisis Group, La Transition Bloquee: Corruption et Regionalisme en Tunisie (Tunis/Brussels: Rapport Moyen-Orient et Afrique No.177, 2017), p.2.
33. N. Marzouki, 'Tunisia's Rotten Compromise', MERIP Online (10 July 2015). http://www.merip.org/ mero/mero071015.
34. A. Boubekeur, 'Islamists, Secularists and Old Regime Elites in Tunisia: Bargained Competition', Mediterranean Politics Vol.21, No.1 (2016), pp.107–27.
35. S. Grewal, A Quiet Revolution.
36. F. Gaub, Guardians of the Arab State: When Militaries Intervene in Politics, from Iraq to Mauritania (London: Hurst and Company, 2017), p.133.
37. Gaub describes that the dispersion of the responsibility in military security matters occurred 'in an ultimately constructive way' and allowed the military's inclusion in the post-Ben Ali system: the creation for the first time of the post for a military adviser in the president's office, the revival of the National Security Council and the increase of offices within it, the appointment of eleven officers as governors in regions more vulnerable to security threats (interior and at borders). Ibid.
38. For an English translation of the Tunisian 2014 Constitution, please see https://www.constituteproject.org/ constitution/Tunisia_2014.pdf. The Articles mentioned in this paragraph, unless not stated otherwise, are from the 2014 Tunisian Constitution.
39. For a conceptualization of the difference between 'formal' and 'material' Constitution, please see C. Mortati, La Costituzione in senso materiale, (Turin: Giuffre, 1940).
40. International Crisis Group, Jihadist Violence in Tunisia: The Urgent Need for a National Strategy (Tunis/Brussels: Middle East and North Africa Report No.50, 2016).
41. The National Security Council was indeed created in the 1990s under President Ben Ali, but he rarely convened it (ibid.).
42. Z. Al-Ali and D. Ben Romdhane, 'Tunisia's new constitution: progress and challenges to come', Open Democracy (16 February 2014). Last accessed on 3 February 2018. https://www.opendemocracy.net/north-africa-west-asia/ zaid-al-ali-donia-ben-romdhane/tunisia%E2%80%99s-new-constitution-progress-and-challenges-to-
43. O. Abbes, 'Tunisie: le Conseil de securit e nationale, un outil de "presidentialisation" du regime politique?', Huffington Post (17 May 2017). Last accessed on 21 June 2017. http://www.huffpostmaghreb.com/oussemaabbes/tunisie–le-conseil-de-securite-nationale-un-outil-de-presidentialisation-du-regime-politique-_b_16668304. html?utm_hp_ref¼tunisie.
44. Ibid.
45. Interviews, European Embassies, Tunis, June 2017.
46. Governmental Decree n 2017-70 of January 19, 2017 on National Security Council, Official Journal of the Republic of Tunisia, n° 6 (20 January 2017), pp.244–5. The original text (Arabic) is accessible at: http://www. cnudst.rnrt.tn/jortsrc/2017/2017a/ja0062017.pdf. For a translation (in French), http://www.cnudst.rnrt.tn/jortsrc/ 2017/2017f/jo0062017.pdf.
47. Ibid.
48. International Crisis Group, Jihadist Violence in Tunisia.
49. Z. Al-Ali and D. Ben Romdhane, 'Tunisia's new constitution'.
50. International Crisis Group, Jihadist Violence in Tunisia: The Urgent Need for a National Strategy, p.13.
51. Interview at DCAF, Tunis, April 2017.
52. Interview, President of the Committee on Security and Defense, Tunis, November 2015. For an overview of the activities of all the Committees, see the official website of the ARP (in Arabic). http://www.arp.tn/site/ main/AR/activites/activites.jsp?t¼44, or the page (in French) dedicated to the monitoring of the Assembly by the Tunisian NGO Al Bawsala. http://majles.marsad.tn/2014/fr/assemblee/commissions. Last accessed on 10 June 2017.
53. Interview, President of Committee on Security and Defense, Tunis, November 2015; interviews with security experts, Tunis, April 2017.
54. Tunisian Institutional Reform, 'Security Perception Index' (21 June 2014). Last accessed on 21 June 2017. http://reform.tn/en/2014/06/21/security-perception-index-may-june-2014/. See also, International Republican Institute, 'Survey of Tunisian Public Opinion' (13 January 2017). Last accessed on 19 June 2017. http://www.iri. org/sites/default/files/iri_tunisia_dec_2016_poll_public_1.pdf

55. M. Kartas, 'Foreign aid and Security Sector Reform in Tunisia: Resistance and Autonomy of the Security Forces', Mediterranean Politics Vol.19, No.3 (2014), pp.373–91.
56. F. Chappuis and H. H€anggi, 'Statebuilding through Security Sector Reform', in D. Chandler and T. Sisk (eds) Routledge Handbook of International Statebuilding (London: Routledge, 2013), pp.168–84.
57. D. Lutterbeck, After the Fall: Security Sector Reform in post-Ben Ali Tunisia, (Arab Reform Initiative Research Paper, September, 2012), p.3. http://www.arab-reform.net/en/node/592.
58. A. Luethold, Security Sector Reform in the Arab Middle East: a Nascent Debate, (Geneva: Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, DCAF, 2004); Y. Sayigh, Security Sector Reform in the Arab Region: Challenges to Developing an Indigenous Agenda (Arab Reform Initiative Thematic Papers, 2007). Last accessed on 21 June 2017. http://www.mafhoum.com/press10/312P10.pdf.
59. T. Mustafa, 'Damming the Palestinian Spring: Security Sector Reform and Entrenched Repression', Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding Vol.9, No.2 (2015), pp.212–30.
60. T. Carothers, 'The End of the Transition Paradigm', Journal of Democracy, Vol.13, No.1 (2002), pp.5-21; T. Carothers, 'Does Democracy Promotion Have a Future?', in B. Berendsen (ed.), Democracy and Development (Amsterdam: KIT Publishers, 2008), pp.121–38.
61. A. Luethold, Security Sector Reform in the Arab Middle East: a Nascent Debate; P. Jackson, 'Security Sector Reform and State Building', Third World Quarterly Vol.32 No.10 (2011), pp.1803–22.
62. R. Perito, 'Security Sector Reform in North Africa: Why it's Not Happening', Centre for Security Governance (7 January 2015). http://secgovcentre.org/2015/01/security-sector-reform-in-north-africa-why-its-not-happening/; International Crisis Group, Reform and Security Strategy in Tunisia.
63. F. Chappuis and H. H€anggi, 'Statebuilding through Security Sector Reform', p.168.
64. H. Ben Mahfoudh, Security Sector Reform in Tunisia Three Years into the Democratic Transition.
65. Y. Sayigh, Missed Opportunity.
66. European Court of Auditors, EU Assistance to Tunisia, Special Report No.3, 2017. http://www.eca.europa.eu/Lists/ECADocuments/SR17_3/SR_TUNISIA_EN.pdf
67. Ibid.
68. European Commission, The European Agenda on Security, COM (2015) 185 final (Strasbourg: 28 April 2015). http://www.europarl.europa.eu/cmsdata/125863/EU%20agenda%20on%20security.pdf; European Commission and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Joint Staff Working Document, SWD (2016) 254 final (Brussels: 18 July 2016). http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-11408-2016-INIT/en/pdf
69. European Delegation in Tunis, Rapport d'Activite 2017. https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/rapport_activite_due_2017_fr_20062017.pdf
70. Ibid.
71. Interview, EU Delegation, Tunis, June 2017.
72. Pew Research Center, Tunisian confidence in democracy wanes (15 October 2014). http://assets.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2014/10/Pew-Research-Center-Tunisia-Report-FINAL-October-15-2014.pdf.
73. Interview, Italian Embassy, Tunis, June 2017
74. La Torture et la Loi « Antiterroriste » du 10 Decembre 2003 en Tunisie: faits et temoignages afin que cesse l'impunite (CRLDHT - ALTT, 2008). Last accessed on 8 March 2017. https://www.fidh.org/IMG/pdf/crldht-altttorture-en-tunisie-rapport.pdf.
75. S. Ben Hamadi, 'Tunisie: vers une nouvelle loi anti-terroriste', Huffington Post (20 November 2013). Last accessed on 20 June 2017. http://www.huffpostmaghreb.com/2013/11/20/tunisie-loi-terrorisme_n_ 4308145.html.
76. S. Hichri, and I. Volk,€ 'Tunisia's Security Policy: Threats and Reform Efforts', in T. Abderrahim, L. T. Kruger, S. Besbes and K. McLarren (eds), The Tunisia International Relations since the 'Arab Spring' (London: Routledge, 2017). Forthcoming. See also: Draft organic law no.2014-09.
77. S. Hichri, and I. Volk,€ 'Tunisia's Security Policy; Human Rights Watch, An Analysis of Tunisia's Draft Counterterrorism Law (8 April 2015). https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/related_material/memo.2015.04.08.Tunisia%20Counterterrorism%20Law.eng_.pdf.
78. Ibid.
79. Ibid.
80. Interview, Italian Embassy, Tunis, June 2017; interview, German Embassy, Tunis, June 2017.
81. Interviews, European Embassies, Tunis, June 2017.
82. Interview, British Embassy, Tunis, June 2017.
83. The most significant operation was in Ben Guerdane, on the south-eastern borders with Libya, on 7 March 2016, when a jihadist cell composed by 50-100 terrorists from Libya stormed a police station and an army barracks. The swift

response by the Garde Nationale, police and army succeeded in quelling the attack within two days. The death toll included forty-three armed militants from ISIS and Ansar al-Sharia, thirteen members of the security forces and seven civilians were killed.

84. Interview, British Embassy, Tunis, June 2017.
85. Interview, German Embassy, Tunis, April 2017.
86. 'Signature d'un accord de cooperation s ecuritaire entre l'Allemagne et la Tunisie', Minister of Interior, Republic of Tunisia (Tunis, 26 September 2016). http://www.interieur.gov.tn/fr
87. Interview, German Embassy, Tunis, June 2017.
88. A. Gorzewski 'Naumann Foundation closure leads to political conflict between Berlin, Cairo', Deutsche Welle (18 May 2016). Last accessed on 15 June 2017. http://www.dw.com/en/naumann-foundation-closure-leads-topolitical-conflict-between-berlin-cairo/a-19266935.
89. Interview, French Embassy, Tunis, June 2017.
90. F. Gaub, Guardians of the Arab State, p.134.
91. For more information, see http://securityassistance.org/tunisia.
92. Presidential Decree n 2013-230 of August 29, 2013 on the border buffer zone, Official Journal of the Republic of Tunisia, nº 71 (3 September 2013), pp.2851–52. The original text (Arabic) is accessible at: http://www.legislation.tn/sites/default/files/fraction-journal-officiel/2013/2013A/071/Ta20132304.pdf. For a translation (in French), see: http://www.legislation.tn/sites/default/files/fraction-journal-officiel/2013/2013F/071/Tf20132304.pdf.
93. Das Erste TV, Tunisien: Europa Grenzchutzer€ (2017 Video). Last accessed on 2 June 2017. http://www.daserste.de/information/politik-weltgeschehen/weltspiegel/videos/tunesien-europas-grenzschuetzer-video-100.html.
94. Interview, US Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, Tunis, June 2017.
95. Interview, US Embassy, Tunis, June 2017.
96. F. Gaub, Reforming Arab Security Sectors, (Paris: EUISS Brief No.48, 2013). http://www.iss.europa.eu/ publications/detail/article/reforming-arab-security-sectors/.