

Military regime against democracy in Egypt: Analyst

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Press TV has interviewed Edward Corrigan, an international human rights lawyer based in Ontario, to get his views on an Egyptian court's verdict, sentencing the country's first democratically elected president Mohammad Morsi to death.

Press TV: There have been strong reactions against the verdict given to Mohammad Morsi. What is the likelihood of a retrial for Morsi?

Corrigan: Well, it is a difficult question to answer. The military seems to declare total war on the democratic forces in Egypt; not only the Muslim Brotherhood but also people on the left, and have imposed sort of a brutal crackdown. Thousands of people have been killed, I think there is 40 thousand people in jail, and of course the whole coup and the current military regime is in fact illegal. They overthrew the democratically elected president of Egypt with 52 percent of the support of population and I think that is a factor that the military needs to keep in mind. Morsi did have the majority 52 percent of the Egyptian people, people who voted, supported him and these trials have been condemned by the United Nations, by Amnesty in a recent report as farce, as being totally not legitimate and I think that is an accurate assessment. What is notable is that Turkey has ... strongly attacked this condemnation. In fact the whole trial is really a farce; the issue for him [being] condemned to death was because he broke out of prison, but it really was the collapse of the [Hosni] Mubarak regime, the guards abandoned their posts and then Morsi was held only for a couple of days and he even said when they were there, there was no body guarding him and they were not going to hide, and of course Morsi was vetted and approved for running the election, nothing was done, this is a sort of after the fact revenge attack on Morsi for something that really in no circumstances he should even be jailed for... this is very much after the fact where the regime is grasping at straws in order to delegitimize and attack Morsi and 105 other people.

Press TV: And briefly, why do you think the revolution in Egypt was easily hijacked?

Corrigan: Well, there was some authoritarian tendencies in the Morsi regime, there was a lot of concern from the Coptics, from secular and liberal forces in Egypt and I am quite convinced that it was the Egyptian army and maybe other parties that helped stage the protests to try to overthrow the regime. There is also I think a lack of understanding of the Egyptian army for the concept of democracy and having a legitimate opposition and official opposition to the government to criticize. There is an authoritarian stream that was in the Muslim Brotherhood, and Morsi's government, but this is like... we are looking at a totalitarian state, almost fascist state, with the case of the military. There's a question... the West has difficulty with democracy in Middle East, cause we end up having Islamic democracy and then you end up supporting what is basically a fascist totalitarian state crackdown and massive abuse of human rights. But in Egypt this is going to just blow up and there is going to be a terrible bloodbath which would damage the state and probably result in the death of tens of thousands, if not more, people and ultimately I think the military will be pushed out. But you compare what happened with Mubarak; he was sentenced to jail for 4 years and is expected to be released shortly, after 30 years of rubbing the country blind, killing people, arbitrary detention, torture, a whole range of crimes because they are friends of the military and the military was maybe even party to those crimes. They of course are giving Mubarak an easy treatment when in fact he should have been harshly sent to prison and his assets and stuff confiscated. But Morsi? It is unheard of! UN has condemned it, Turkey, Oman, Hezbollah, Hamas... I think other countries should criticize this like a travesty of justice; as

anything but fair trials. There really are charades, a political kangaroo court, and I think it is very dangerous and explosive for the region and the army should back off and there should be some attempt to have some sort of reconciliation between the parties and put Egypt back onto a more democratic stream and protecting the rights of minorities, protecting the rights of secular individuals..., but there needs to be some sort of reconciliation.

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