

International Day of Democracy of the UN

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Genuine Democracy or “Dictatorship of the Majority”?

A form of government based on majority decisions alone is not necessarily a democracy; it can be a “dictatorship of the majority”!

In the democratic movements in some countries that have been governed very authoritatively until now, it seems that large sections of the population do not want democracy but rather a “dictatorship of the majority” over the minorities in their country.

A true democracy requires a constitution and an overall political system that also respects and protects the fundamental rights of minorities and women in the state.

Some governments have not clearly differentiated this in their responses to the political processes in the Middle East and North Africa.

It is not right and politically unwise to recognize a new state structure in these countries as democratically legitimate only because it came about through majority decisions if these majority decisions declare injustice to be justice - for example, if it involves votes on a constitution that disregards the fundamental rights of minorities or equal rights for women in that state.

Perhaps it would be possible, within the community of countries that have formulated and implemented the protection of minorities based on human rights - or at the United Nations - to set requirements for a democratic constitution that truly allows a state to call itself democratic.

Call a spade a spade!

It would be very important for public opinion worldwide that politicians, journalists, and other public figures in free countries clearly state that some newly formed state structures are not democracies but “dictatorships of the majority” – and that mere majority decisions do not legitimize an elected government if the constitutional foundations do not respect the fundamental rights of minorities and women in that nation.

Some religious leaders also do not seem to have recognized this problem when they indiscriminately claim that a religion is not a democracy. Here, too, “democracy” is unfortunately understood as a “dictatorship of the majority.” Out of fear of a “dictatorship of the majority,” such religious leaders cling desperately to a monarchist-authoritarian system.

A state constitution that clearly formulates, respects, and protects the fundamental rights of all people contains values that are not provable, thus representing a kind of “belief.” **Because “values” are never provable but always a form of “belief.”**

These fundamental values and the derived fundamental rights must not be questioned or abolished by majority decisions.

A special state body, in the USA and in the United Kingdom it is the Supreme Court, which is independent of other political bodies and solely committed to the fundamental rights of the constitution, has the task of reviewing even parliamentary majority decisions to ensure they conform to these fundamental values. **Otherwise, majority decisions are declared invalid.**