

## EDITORIAL

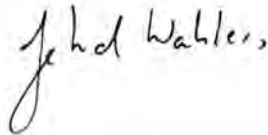
Dear Readers,

If you stand in Tahrir Square, there is no escaping the waves of joy and optimism radiating from the young men and women around you. They are proud of what they have achieved and determined to drive forward the changes they have started. These young people and all those who risked their lives to drive out the old rulers should indeed be proud of what they have done. A police state which had brutally oppressed thousands of people was finally forced to give way. The police no longer dare to show their faces on the streets, for people have not forgotten the cries of torture victims ringing out from the open windows of police stations. Many places of torture and arbitrary violence have gone up in flames, the prisons of the secret police have been stormed. Thousands of piecemeal acts are a strong reminder of the events of 1989.

It is sad to hear despondency being voiced in certain parts of the west in the face of these changes. Of course we are left with a feeling of great uncertainty as to what the future will bring. And we have learned the lesson that those who start a revolution do not necessarily emerge as the victors. But this should not stop us welcoming the changes wholeheartedly and offering energetic support to those who are striving to build a constitutional, democratic and socially just nation.



The challenges are overwhelming. They include outmoded economic structures, high unemployment, low levels of education, an absence of the rule of law, a barely developed civil society and an organised Islamist movement. Of course there is no room for naivety, but we should not miss the chance to celebrate the fact that an Arab people have succeeded in standing up to despotism and to rulers who have for years disregarded basic human rights.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gerhard Wahlers". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial 'G'.

Dr. Gerhard Wahlers  
Deputy Secretary-General

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