



AFRICA/EGYPT - Patriarch Tawadros: the so-called "Arab Spring" was actually a winter

Cairo (Agenzia Fides) - The so-called Arab Spring in reality "was not a spring or even an autumn, it was a winter". With this judgment without appeal Coptic Orthodox Patriarch Tawadros II rejected any globally positive interpretation regarding the results caused by rebellions and conflicts that have devastated most of the Middle Eastern and North African countries, including Egypt since the end of 2010. In an interview broadcast on Saturday evening, March 22 from Kuwaiti satellite channel al-Watan, the head of the largest Christian community in an Arab Country added that the wave of uprisings was encouraged by Western powers with the intention of dividing the Arab world "into smaller countries".

Tawadros also acknowledged that General Abdel Fatah al-Sisi had sweeping popularity in Egypt as "the hero of the June Revolution who had saved Egypt", overthrowing Islamist President Mohamed Morsi, and added that the nomination of al-Sisi for the next presidential election would be a "patriotic action". In the interview, the Coptic Patriarch criticized Morsi's presidency, saying he ruled "in the name of religion" while distorting the image of Islam. Pope Tawadros also rejected the idea of the Coptic Church nominating Christian members of the government, saying the task was better suited for the government which could appoint ministers based on efficiency and regardless of their religious faiths.

In the interview, Patriarch Tawadros also criticized the tendency of some Western media to dramatize in some cases the news about secondary episodes of assaults against church property, with the desired effect of spreading a "distorted image" of Egypt. (GV) (Agenzia Fides 24/3/2014)