

Unity from Egypt's Revolution Short-Lived

At least a dozen people were killed and roughly 140 wounded in violence between Christians and Muslims in Cairo on Tuesday night.

Carl Moeller with Open Doors says, "A local imam called out their people of the village to 'kill all the Christians.' It is disappointing that so close on the heels of a grand sweep of democracy and good feeling between Christians and Muslims in that country, we see such a quick turn back to the extremism."

The mob formed quickly as anger rose over last week's burning of a church in a Cairo suburb—the result of a relationship and a feud between the families. It was the second burst of religious fighting in a week, adding to the sense of chaos growing in a leaderless country.

The concern is that this could give rise to more reprisal violence. Moeller agrees: "The situation is, unfortunately, not much different than the situation in some of these villages that was happening under Mubarak. In fact, in some ways, the fears are that the situations are worse because of the lack of centralized governmental control."

Although the military was supposed to be in control after Mubarak stepped down, there aren't enough troops to keep every street from erupting. Still, there's an expectation brimming with hope. "Our brothers and sisters in Egypt have had the most optimistic view on this because, frankly, their situation was bad," Moeller says. "Any change put forth the promise of a better Egypt and a better life."

The transitional period is key to the freedoms minorities will experience. The Muslim Brotherhood is taking a pro-democracy

stance. What that means in practice could be very different from “freedom.” Moeller explains, “Unfortunately, as is often the case in revolutions, the ones that emerge as the most organized and the strongest on these things are the ideological committed. In this case, these are the extremists groups that are calling for a more radicalized Sharia law based Egypt in the future.”

“Our prayer is that it doesn’t take a violent turn, as these indicators [predict]. However, we recognize that the church will be under pressure in the next few months—and maybe more pressure than ever before,” Moeller says.

Right now, it’s hard to anticipate what the future holds for believers. Pray for those facing economic and social challenges because of their Christian faith. Pray that the new government will uphold the constitutional freedom of religion. Pray that the ministry of churches in Egypt will continue and that the Gospel will be preached throughout this nation.