

NEW YORK, October 9, 2015 — The International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) welcomes the award of the 2015 Nobel Peace Prize to Tunisia's National Dialogue Quartet for helping the country transition to democracy. With the award, the Nobel committee acknowledges the "decisive contribution" made by the group of civil society organizations after Tunisia's 2011 revolution.

"The energy and courage of the civil society, of the people of Tunisia were absolutely key to the tectonic changes this country has seen, to its effort to address the past abuse and move the country forward," said **David Tolbert**, president of ICTJ. "At the same time, this is a recognition of civil society's crucial role in reckoning with legacies of massive human rights abuse in all corners of the world, as it is these active social forces who are at the forefront of the struggle for truth and justice everywhere."

ICTJ has always recognized that civil society organizations, including victims' groups, have played a critical role in fostering social change in Tunisia — before, during, and after the revolution. It was they who steered the only successful transition to democracy in the region.

According to a recent ICTJ [paper](#), Tunisian civil society groups have helped to raise awareness about transitional justice and advocated and lobbied for transitional justice measures as a cornerstone of a successful transition. They made a significant contribution to the 2012 National Transitional Justice Consultation Process, with a number of groups helping to supervise the national dialogue and write a first draft of Tunisia's historic Transitional Justice Law.

Yet today, we can see that Tunisian civil society groups are being marginalized from the post-revolutionary transition.

"While the peace prize affords welcomed international recognition of civil society's important role in helping to bring peace and stability to Tunisia, it also reminds us that this role needs to be recognized by the Tunisian government," remarked Tolbert.

In the new [paper](#), ICTJ calls on the government to "establish opportunities for meaningful participation of victims and civil society in crafting and implementing transitional justice policies, and ensure transparency in the process."

In particular, it calls for the national Truth and Dignity Commission to strengthen its relationships with civil society groups as natural partners, in order to capitalize on this historic opportunity to reveal the truth about Tunisia's past and make a firm contribution to the country's future.

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