

Mr Taïeb Baccouche, Education Minister gives a news conference



Education Minister Taïeb Baccouche gave on Saturday January 22nd 2011 in Tunis, a news conference, during which he underlined that he has entered the transitory government because he was convinced that Tunisia was threatened internally and externally.

During the meeting, which started by a minute of silence observed in memory of martyrs of the revolution, the Minister called upon Tunisians for further vigilance towards those who attempt to transform the people's peaceful revolution in uncontrollable anarchy and trust the present transitional government.

He also said that no individual whose involvement is proven in bad management or corruption will be exempt from sanctions, even if he is member of the transitory government, noting that decisions taken by the first Cabinet meeting are "crucial and revolutionary".

He also explained that the decision pertaining to the separation between the State and the ruling party tops the people's demands, in such a manner as to guarantee non appropriation of power by only one person, category or group and put an end to the hegemony of the executive power as well as traditions that restrict freedom of opinion.

Mr. Baccouche added that the people's revolution was peaceful and that shooting that resulted in victims were ordered by the ousted President, placing emphasis on the Government's commitment to compensate the victims.

He noted that the commission entrusted with inquiring into the recent events started its investigations from Friday January 21st, 2011.

The Minister pointed to the issue of embezzlement and corruption concerning the CAPES exam, specifying that individuals close to the families of the former regime intervene at the level of this exam to receive bribes and that an investigation is underway.

In this connection, he said that files of all those who were victims of this exam will be settled and that persons linked to this affair will be prosecuted.

As regards the resumption of courses announced by the Education Ministry for Monday, January 24th, journalists' questions focused on guarantees provided by the Government to secure the success of resumption of courses while the curfew is still enforced and the way the Ministry plans to settle issues with Trade Unionists who maintain their strikes in protest of the transitory government, as well as on the Ministry's plan to revise the pedagogical methods and curricula adopted by the former regime.

In this connection, Mr. Baccouche said the decision to resume courses is a political decision given the improvement of the security conditions and meets the will of parents to see their children return to schools.

"No to discord, dialogue is the choice and strikes are a legitimate right," he specified.

Mr. Taieb Baccouche reviewed the mission of the Education Ministry in this transitory period which consists in the management of the department's affairs and carrying on projects of important

reforms initiated by the former Education Minister, in addition to the promotion of the level of education, the consolidation of educators' training and the promotion of the spirit of patriotism and free expression.

In another connection, he said that an investigation has started within the Tunisian Television following the broadcast, on Thursday, of an old video showing a meeting of the Tunisian-Libyan joint committee containing images of the ousted president, confusing it with the NUG meeting of the same day.

It is to be noted that a group of teachers, recruited as primary school teachers, despite the fact they had passed the CAPES exams since 2007, are observing a sit-in in front of the Education Ministry, calling for a meeting with the Minister.

Several among them said that they were compelled by the local education authorities to accept their recruitment as primary education teachers, in the time Sadok Korbi was Minister of Education.