Dear Editor,

In many countries, both majority vote referendums and single-preference electoral systems are little more than sectarian headcounts.  The latest victim is Egypt.  (Egyptian army threatens to act... 2nd July).

The majority vote, however Orwellian in its simplicity – ‘this’ good, ‘that’ bad – is the most inaccurate measure of collective opinion ever invented.  Elections based on first-past-the-post (as in Kenya), the two-round system (Egypt), or simple PR-list systems (as now used in the Balkans) are also often inappropriate.

Majority rule is fine, in so far as it goes.  But majority rule by majority vote – majoritarianism – is inadequate.  Accordingly, in today’s high-tech world, majority opinions should be identified on the basis of the voters’ (and/or their elected representatives’) preferences.

Nations need not divide into two.  Where such a danger exists, power should be shared; so presidencies should be plural, ministerial posts should be all-party, and any new constitution should be based on a preferential choice of about 4 or 5 options.

Yours