

THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD'S GLOBAL THREAT

HEARING

BEFORE THE
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OF THE

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT
AND GOVERNMENT REFORM
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THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD'S GLOBAL THREAT

Wednesday, July 11, 2018

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY,
COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM,
Washington, D.C.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 10:06 a.m., in Room 2154, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Ron DeSantis [chairman of the subcommittee] presiding.

Present: Representatives DeSantis, Duncan, Gosar, Hice, Comer, Lynch, and DeSaulnier.

Also Present: Representative Grothman.

Mr. DESANTIS. The Subcommittee on National Security will come to order. Without objection, the chair is authorized to declare a recess at any time.

The Muslim Brotherhood is a militant Islamist organization with affiliates in over 70 countries, including groups designated as terrorist organizations by the U.S.

Whether the Muslim Brotherhood writ large should be designated as a foreign terrorist organization has been the topic of debate here in Congress in recent years and has been under consideration by the Trump administration.

Thankfully, the Trump administration has discarded the Obama era policy of treating the Brotherhood as a potential ally. Now the questions are focused on how expansive to make the terror designation and whether it should be done through the State Department or Treasury Department.

The Muslim Brotherhood has been militant from its very beginning. Its founder, Hassan al-Banna, who started the group in 1928, said that, quote: "Jihad is an obligation from Allah and every Muslim and cannot be ignored nor evaded."

And in a book titled "The Way of Jihad" he wrote: "Jihad means the fighting of the unbelievers and involves all possible efforts that are necessary to dismantle the power of the enemies of Islam, including beating them, plundering their wealth, destroying their places of worship, and smashing their idols," end quote.

This belief was put into action in the decades that followed as the Muslim Brotherhood's members committed numerous acts of terrorism, including the assassination of Egypt's Prime Minister in 1948.

This jihadist ideology continues to fuel the Muslim Brotherhood today. The Brotherhood mourned the death of Osama bin Laden and its leaders developed teachings justifying revolutionary vio-

lence under sharia law. The Brotherhood has preached hatred towards Jews, denied the Holocaust, and called for Israel's destruction. The Brotherhood has incited violence against Coptic Christians in Egypt amidst a wave of church bombings and other attacks by terrorist groups, including ISIS.

Yusuf al-Qaradawi, perhaps the Brotherhood's preeminent cleric, issued a fatwa legitimizing terrorist attacks against American troops in Iraq. And he's also deemed the Holocaust to be a, quote, "punishment for Jews," and expressed hope that another Holocaust would someday be carried out by his fellow Islamists.

The Muslim Brotherhood's Supreme Guide, Mohammed Badie, has said that the organization's goal is to establish a new Islamist caliphate, including the imposition of sharia law, which is the totalitarian Islamic legal code. We saw what happens when the Brotherhood takes control of a country in Egypt from 2012 to 2013, and the results were chilling, that then-President Mohamed Morsi defied the rule of law and granted himself near absolute power. As Egyptian leader Mohamed El Baradi put it, Morsi usurped all state powers and appointed himself Egypt's new pharaoh.

The Brotherhood's legislators enshrined the principles of sharia as the main source of law in Egypt's Constitution, while the Morsi government used state institutions to promote Islamic radicalism, roll back freedom of the press, and launched a wave of blasphemy prosecutions.

The Morsi Muslim Brotherhood government is no more, but the Brotherhood and its affiliates continue to advance their agenda across the Middle East and throughout the world.

There's no question that the Muslim Brotherhood affiliates are involved in terrorism. Former FBI Director Robert Mueller confirmed as much in testimony before Congress when he said that elements of the Brotherhood, both here and overseas, have supported terrorism.

A number of these Brotherhood affiliates have been designated as terrorist organizations by the United States Government. The Muslim Brotherhood's Palestinian branch Hamas has been a designated foreign terrorist organization since 1997. Hamas has taken control of the Gaza Strip, launched thousands of rockets against Israeli civilians, and committed suicide bombings and other terrorist attacks that have murdered numerous Israeli and American civilians.

Muslim Brotherhood networks raise money here in the U.S. to support Hamas' terrorist activities in the Middle East. According to the Department of Justice, in the early 1990s, Hamas' parent organization, the Muslim Brotherhood, planned to establish a network of organizations in the U.S. to spread a militant Islamist message and raise money for Hamas.

And the Texas-based Holy Land Foundation became the chief fundraising arm for the Palestine Committee in the U.S., created by the Brotherhood to support Hamas. In 2008, the Holy Land Foundation leaders were convicted of crimes, including providing material support for Hamas.

Most recently the State Department designated two offshoots of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, HASM and Liwa al-Thawra, as terrorist organizations under Executive Order 13224. The State De-

partment noted that these groups are responsible for bombings and assassinations of senior Egyptian officials.

This hearing is an opportunity to discuss what the United States' next step should be in combating the Muslim Brotherhood's threat. Countries including Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates have all designated the Brotherhood as a terrorist organization.

I know there's disagreement among experts on how best to use terrorist designations to address the threat posed by the Brotherhood and its affiliates, and we have different perspectives on this issue represented within our panel today, and I look forward to hearing the witnesses' recommendations.

Between the radicalism of its hateful ideology, the danger of its theocratic rule, as seen in Egypt, its networks, including Hamas and HASM, and its powerful state sponsors, it is clear that the Brotherhood constitutes a real threat for the national security interests of the United States. We can debate the best way to counter this threat, but simply ignoring the threat is not an acceptable answer.

We do have a distinguished panel of witnesses here to discuss these issues. I want to thank all of them for taking their time to come and provide testimony.

And it is my pleasure to now recognize the ranking member, Mr. Lynch, for 5 minutes.

Mr. LYNCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd also like to thank you for holding this hearing to examine the multinational, religious, political, and social movement known as the Muslim Brotherhood. I'd also like to thank our witnesses for their willingness to help this subcommittee with its work.

The Independent Program on Extremism at George Washington University describes the Muslim Brotherhood, founded in 1928 in Egypt, as, quote, "the world's oldest and arguably most influential contemporary Islamist movement," close quote.

While the Muslim Brotherhood spans the Middle East and Africa and has spread into Southeast Asia and the West, it has manifested itself globally in very varied forms, ranging from nonviolent political actors to groups that have resorted to terrorism.

According to the Program on Extremism, some affiliated groups, chapters, and radical offshoots inspired by the Brotherhood's Islamic ideology are marked by their adaptability to the local politics in a given country, their pursuit of individual organizational goals and their complete operational independence.

While at one point the central Brotherhood body in Egypt officially renounced terrorism and violence under the Sadat regime in the 1970s, there is no doubt that certain affiliated organizations and spawn groups continue to espouse and engage in violent terrorist activity.

Chief among them is Hamas, which has been designated as a foreign terrorist organization by the United States State Department since 1997. The original charter issued to establish Hamas in 1988 identified the terrorist group as the Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood.

Muslim Brotherhood splinter groups such as Liwa al-Thawra and HASM also continue to engage in violence in Egypt. These organi-

zations have perpetrated assassination attempts against Egyptian defense and security officials and bombings against government sites, including attacks against the police training center in the city of Tanta and the Myanmar Embassy in Cairo in 2017.

Meanwhile, democratically elected political parties that also fall within the Muslim Brotherhood umbrella represent a significant voting bloc in the parliaments and governing coalitions of some of our key counterterrorism allies in the Middle East and North Africa.

In Jordan, which has served as the most critical regional ally in our coalition efforts to degrade and destroy the Islamist State, Brotherhood-affiliated opposition parties, such as the Islamic Action Front, hold several seats in the national assembly.

In Morocco, which remains a reliable regional partner in U.S. efforts to counter extremism and combat the Islamic State, the Islamist Justice and Development Party leads the coalition government.

Ennahda, the main Islamic party in Tunisia, similarly leads the coalition government and has overseen the country's democratic transition since 2011.

The State Department lists Tunisia, along with Jordan and Morocco, as our committed partners in the coalition to defeat the Islamic State.

In light of the multifaceted composition of the Muslim Brotherhood, our national security strategy under Republican and Democratic administrations alike has focused on identifying the terrorist threats posed by individual affiliates and leaders.

Most recently, the State Department listed the president of Hamas' political bureau as a, quote, "specially designated global terrorist," close quote, in January of 2018, stemming from his ties with Hamas' military wing. The two Brotherhood branches involved in the 2017 terrorist attack in Egypt also received this designation.

It's my understanding that some of my colleagues in Congress have called for the Trump administration to go further and to designate the entire Muslim Brotherhood as a foreign terrorist organization, just as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Russia, and the United Arab Emirates have done.

The effectiveness of our counterterrorism and force protection operations in the Middle East and North Africa demand that we approach this issue with caution. A wholesale designation would severely complicate our relationship with the regional security partners, including Jordan, Tunisia, Morocco, Turkey, and Kuwait, where the Muslim Brotherhood functions within mainstream government and society.

Former Secretary of State Tillerson underscored this challenge during his congressional testimony last year. His statement was, and I quote: "I think you can appreciate the complexities this enters into our relations with governments where the Muslim Brotherhood has matriculated to become participants, and in those elements they have done so by renouncing violence and terrorism," close quote.

It could also further escalate the tension in the Middle East, which is already operating in a heightened state of conflict, where

we still have 2,000 U.S. troops on the ground in Syria, an estimated 6,000 troops deployed in Iraq.

Just last month, Mr. Issa of California and I led a bipartisan congressional delegation to the Middle East to assess regional security and stability amidst the 8-year civil war in Syria and the fourth year of civil war in Yemen. As we discussed during bilateral meeting Sing Abdullah of Jordan, President el-Sisi of Egypt, Prime Minister Netanyahu of Israel, and other allied leaders and military officials, national security currently demands that we deconflict the chaos coming from these multilayered conflicts.

The Muslim Brotherhood is experiencing significant decline in many countries in the Middle East. It is social conservatism that is being rejected by a younger generation that is leading to that and accelerating that decline.

It would be counterintuitive if we lumped political actors, non-violent, nonterrorist, in with the groups that we wish to designate for their violent and terrorist activities.

I would hope that our witnesses would give us direction on how best to isolate those who engage in unacceptable terrorist activity and not inadvertently give support to those very same individuals.

I yield back.

Mr. DESANTIS. The gentleman yields back.

I'm pleased to introduce our witnesses. We have

Dr. Hillel Fradkin, senior fellow at the Hudson Institute; Dr. Jonathan Schanzer, senior Vice President for the Foundation for Defense of Democracies; Dr. Zuhdi Jasser, president and founder of the American Islamic Forum for Democracy; and Ambassador Daniel Benjamin, director of the John Sloan Dickey Center for International Understanding at Dartmouth College.

Welcome to you all.

Pursuant to committee rules, all witnesses will be sworn in before they testify. So if you could please stand and raise your right hand.

Do you solemnly swear or affirm the testimony you're about to give is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Please be seated.

All witnesses answered in the affirmative.

In order to allow time for discussion, please limit your testimony to 5 minutes. Your entire written statement will be made part of the record.

As a reminder, the clock in front of you shows the remaining time during your opening statement. The light will turn yellow when you have 30 seconds left and red when your time is up. Please also remember to press the button to turn on your microphone before speaking.

And with that, Dr. Fradkin, you're up for 5 minutes.

WITNESS STATEMENTS

STATEMENT OF HILLEL FRADKIN

Mr. FRADKIN. First, I'd like to begin by thanking Chairman DeSantis and Ranking Member Lynch and their colleagues for the invitation to address this hearing. It's a privilege to participate in

this hearing and its discussion of a most important subject, the Muslim Brotherhood's global threat.

After listening to the opening statements, it's a particular privilege because I can see from the statements that both the chairman and the ranking member are extremely well informed about the subject. But that leads to a problem: I'm not sure what I may reasonably add to what has already been said. I will give it a go and probably go over some of the same points that you enunciated and maybe flesh out a few things along the way.

Generally speaking, this subject entails three general questions. First, is the Muslim Brotherhood a global threat? Second, if it is a global threat, how successful has it been or might be? Third, what can be do address this threat? And I do understand that's one of the principal objectives here.

I'm going to principally address the first two questions in the prepared remarks and then I expect we'll discuss the third question more generally during the discussion period.

Is the Muslim Brotherhood a global threat? Part of the answer is clear. The Brotherhood certainly means to be global and it means to be a threat.

More specifically, the Muslim Brotherhood is devoted to a political and religious project that in principle, in its essential character and goals, is hostile to other forms of politics, including our own. And it means for this project to be global in extent. And both of these things have been true for a long time, since the founding of the Brotherhood some 90 years ago by Hassan al-Banna.

This had to do with the nature of the project itself. What was that project? In response to this question, Banna offered a simple fivefold formulation that has remained the model slogan of the Brotherhood ever since. Quote: "Allah is our objective, the Prophet is our leader, the Koran is our constitution, jihad is our way, dying in the way of Allah is our highest hope."

Banna proposed this political-religious goal as the alternative to the new nation-state politics of his native Egypt. More emphatically, he proposed this as the only legitimate form of Muslim politics. Simply, its virtue was to renew and embody the authentic Muslim way of life, the way of life constituted, as he put it, by the Koran and the example the Prophet.

As such, it applies to all Muslims everywhere. Hence, his project was necessarily global in principle. To use a term that has recently become familiar, it was to be—wind up establishing the Islamic State.

In accord with this, Banna sought to establish branches of the Brotherhood in other countries and over time partially succeeded. Banna was murdered in 1948, but the essential tenets he prescribed for the Brotherhood have never been repudiated. And this, I believe, is not controversial nor should it be, that there has been no real change in the essential principles.

And this, I may add, this was enunciated very, very clearly by a man named Khairat al Shater, who was the deputy guide of the Egyptian Brotherhood, in the spring of 2011 after the revolt had started, in a very, very interesting speech, which I might reference again later, in which he insisted that nothing that they were doing

was inconsistent with or in violation of what the original vision was.

What has been controversial is what the Brotherhood project practically means and where it falls within the universe of other radical Islamic organizations. The controversy is—put it this way—there was the suggestion, especially beginning after 9/11, that by comparison with al-Qaida and other similar organizations the Brotherhood was moderate and could be a force for moderation. It was argued that it no longer seriously embraced the radical vision Banna had enunciated. Rather it was ready to participate in ordinary politics and through that participation would further moderate.

As Chairman DeSantis mentioned, we have now had one important test of those hopes and they have proven to be false. The form of this test was the Brotherhood's sudden if brief rise to power in Egypt after the revolt of 2011. While in power it attempted to establish a new regime in Egypt that would more or less conform to its founding radical vision. And I want to stress that this was by intention. Well, Shater thought that the time of the final stage of the Muslim Brotherhood project had arrived. He was wrong and the project failed.

Where does that leave the Brotherhood today? I know my time is up, but I will conclude with a couple of sentences.

Mr. DESANTIS. Just wrap it up if you can.

Mr. FRADKIN. Certainly within Egypt the Brotherhood is for the present a broken organization. But it has sustained defeats before, partially by finding bases elsewhere. In the 1960s this meant Saudi Arabia; today it means Turkey and Qatar. What it will attempt to do from these bases remains to be seen.

I also want to add one final thing. It is often thought that al-Qaida is hostile to the Brotherhood and that's been certainly true. Very recently, I think within the last month or so, the present head of al-Qaida, Ayman al-Zawahiri, made a speech in which he referenced the old ties, the old roots between the Brotherhood and al-Qaida with great nostalgia and welcomed the Brotherhood members to his own project or to a reconciliation of sorts.

Thank you for your attention, and thank you for your permission to go over.

[Prepared statement of Mr. Fradkin follows:]

The Muslim Brotherhood's Global Threat

Dr. Hillel Fradkin

Hudson Institute

Testimony Prepared For

A Hearing of the Subcommittee on National Security

Congressional Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

July 11, 2018

I would like to thank Chairman DeSantis and Ranking Member Lynch, as well as their colleagues, for their invitation to address this hearing. It is a privilege to participate in this hearing and its discussion of a most important subject: The Muslim Brotherhood's Global Threat.

This subject entails 3 general questions:

First: Is the Muslim Brotherhood a global threat?

Second: If it is a global threat, how successful has it been or might be?

Third: What can be done to address this threat?

In these remarks I will principally address the first two questions.
I expect we will address the third in the discussion.

Let me begin with the first and primary question:

Is the Muslim Brotherhood a global threat?

Part of the answer is clear: The Brotherhood certainly means to be global and it means to be a threat. More specifically the Muslim Brotherhood is devoted to a political and religious project that in principle, in its essential character and goals, is hostile to other forms of politics, including our own. And it means for this project to be global in extent.

The global intent has been true of the Brotherhood from the time of its founding some 90 years ago by a school teacher named Hassan al Banna. Although an Egyptian, Banna looked to transcend his Egyptian base and establish his organization elsewhere in the world. This was not simple personal ambition. It followed from the character of the project. What was that project?

In response to this question, Banna offered a simple five-fold formulation that has remained the motto of the Brotherhood:

“Allah is our objective. The Prophet is our leader. The Qur’an is our constitution. Jihad is our way. Dying in the way of Allah is our highest hope.”

Implicitly this rejected the contemporary political arrangements of his native Egypt that was in the process of becoming a modern nation state. But he also understood his project to apply to all Muslims and the forms of governance under which they lived. That is he rejected as such the nation state as a legitimate form of Muslim governance; he rejected it as a form of governance of alien origin and at variance with the traditional forms and ideals of Muslim governance that were imperial and ultimately global in character. But he also rejected the nation state because it was intimately connected with new modern ways of life that violated a proper Muslim way of life, a way of life, as he put it, constituted by the Qur’an.

Banna’s ultimate goal was a new Muslim state that would embrace all Muslims and would restore the authentic Muslim way of life as well as

restore Muslim political power, military power, and Muslim prestige. To use a term that has recently become familiar it was to be an Islamic and not a national state, or rather The Islamic State.

In accord with this, Banna sought to establish branches of the Brotherhood in other countries and over time partially succeeded. Since Banna's Brotherhood was based in an Arab country he had to expect some limits to its expansion to other non-Arab Muslims. But he found de facto partners in the form of analogous movements elsewhere – initially in South Asia; subsequently in Turkey.

Banna was murdered in 1948. But the essential tenets he prescribed for the Brotherhood have never been repudiated. They are reaffirmed in its instruction of new members. This is, I believe, not controversial or should not be.

What has been controversial is what the Brotherhood project practically means and where it falls within the universe of other radical Islamic organizations that have arisen since its founding, for example Al

Qaeda and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant. This controversy has a lot to do with two things: first, Banna's original calculations about the best way to proceed with his project; second, the successes and failures of his project after his death and the calculations of the Brotherhood leaders who succeeded him.

First, as for Banna, despite the celebration of jihad and the immediate results it might provide, Banna thought that his project required a long period of implementation that required what came to be called the "gradualist" approach. This approach entailed the gradual transformation of society to Brotherhood principles before the seizure of political power, in Egypt and elsewhere. Indeed, he seems to have thought that through such a transformation the fruit of power would drop into the Brotherhood's hands.

The main exception to the deferral of jihad during his lifetime was the mass participation of Brotherhood members in the general Arab attempt to destroy Israel in the 1948 War.

As for his successors, they had to deal with a series of successes and failures, especially failures. In the 1950's and 1960's Gamal Abdul Nasser, the president of Egypt, brutally suppressed the Brotherhood and executed its most charismatic figure, the ideologist Sayyid Qutb.

This led to three different results: first, some Brotherhood members were energetic in the reaffirmation of the gradualist approach; second, other Brotherhood members emigrated from Egypt, especially to Saudi Arabia but also to more foreign parts, for example Europe and the United States; but third, some Brothers repudiated the gradualist Brotherhood approach and went on to establish new radical organizations that put the stress on violent jihad, for example Al Qaeda.

This new situation has occasioned, especially since 9/11, a controversy about the Brotherhood and how to understand the threat it represents. The crux of this controversy was the suggestion that by comparison with Al Qaeda and other similar organizations, the Brotherhood was moderate and could be a force for moderation. It was argued that it no longer seriously embraced the radical vision Banna had enunciated and the establishment of an Islamic State. Rather it was

ready to participate in ordinary politics and through that participation would further moderate. The alleged model of its new destination was something like the Christian Democratic parties of Europe.

We have now had one important test of these benign hopes and they have proven to be false. The form of this test was the Brotherhood's sudden, if brief, rise to power in Egypt after the revolt of 2011. While in power it attempted to establish a new regime in Egypt that would more or less conform to its founding radical vision. This story has predictably some complicated twists and turns. But I want to stress that it was not an accident that it tried fully to implement its project as one can see from the views of Khairat al Shater expressed in the spring of 2011. Al Shater was the deputy guide of the Brotherhood and de facto the real director of its policy. In a speech to Brotherhood faithful he declared that the hour Banna had predicted, the hour that they had been waiting for and toiled for had arrived.

Well it turned out he was wrong. Where does that leave the Brotherhood today? Let me conclude with a few words on this subject.

Certainly within Egypt the Brotherhood is for the present a broken organization. But it has sustained defeats before, partially by finding bases elsewhere. In the 1960's this meant Saudi Arabia; today it means Turkey and Qatar. What it will attempt to do from these bases remains to be seen. But I should note that recently Aymen al Zawahiri, the present head of Al Qaeda, reached out to the Brotherhood expressing nostalgic appreciation for the fact that Al Qaeda had been born out of the Brotherhood project and welcomed its members to join his own.

Thank you for your attention.

Mr. DESANTIS. Appreciate it.
Dr. Schanzer, 5 minutes.

STATEMENT OF JONATHAN SCHANZER

Mr. SCHANZER. Chairman DeSantis, Ranking Member Lynch, and members of the subcommittee, on behalf of FDD, thank you for the opportunity testify this morning.

In 2011, President Barack Obama's Director of National Intelligence, James Clapper, famously sparked an outcry when he said that the Muslim Brotherhood was a, quote, "heterogeneous group, largely secular, which has eschewed violence and has decried al-Qaida as a perversion of Islam," end quote.

Clapper was way off the mark. For one, the Muslim Brotherhood is a gateway to jihadism, as we have already noted this morning. It's also a hate group. Its ideology is xenophobic, bigoted, and totalitarian.

And the Brotherhood is not exactly heterogeneous either. Many branches subject their members to rigid indoctrination and demand unwavering commitment to the Brothers' deeply intolerant interpretation of Islam.

Still, the Brotherhood's branches do differ tactically. In Tunisia and Morocco it is part of the ruling elite. In Jordan and Malaysia it's the loyal opposition. In Egypt, Saudi Arabia and UAE it is banned outright, forcing the group to work underground. And the fact that the various factions do not all engage in violence makes it difficult to designate the movement in its entirety.

But that does not mean that Washington is without recourse. The Treasury and State Department designated two suspected Egyptian Brotherhood offshoots, HASM and Liwa al-Thawra, earlier this year. Both groups carried out deadly attacks against the army, the judiciary, and the police since 2016.

In making the case for the designations, the Brotherhood links to these groups were actually inconsequential. What mattered was the legal criteria, their track records of violence and support for terrorism.

The goal now is to find others that meet this criteria, and to that end I have two suggestions. One is the Libyan Hizb al-Watan, led by Abdelhakim Belhaj, who previously led the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group, a designated terrorist group here in the U.S. Belhaj was also believed to be training members of Ansar al-Sharia in Tunisia, another U.S.-designated terrorist group.

Another is al-Islah, which is Yemen's affiliate. One cofounder of Islah is Abdul Majid al-Zindani, who allegedly helped to coordinate the 2000 attack on the USS Cole. In 2013 the Treasury noted that Zindani issued religious guidance in support of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula. Islah figures also reportedly harbored archterrorist Anwar al-Awlaki prior to 2011 death by a U.S. drone strike.

Do these groups meet criteria? I don't know. Ask the intelligence community.

In the meantime, we must also look at the Brotherhood's state sponsors, namely Turkey and Qatar. Turkey's ruling AKP party is effectively the Turkish arm of the Muslim Brotherhood. Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdogan famously dispatched a Turkish

campaign strategist to Egypt to help Mohamed Morsi win the election, then sent billions of dollars to keep his regime afloat.

After Morsi's ouster in July 2013, Turkey became a home for exiled Brotherhood. Hamas operatives have also made their home there, including Saleh Arouri, the head of the West Bank military wing, who ordered a triple murder in 2014 that sparked a massive rocket war with Israel.

Turkish support for the Brotherhood-linked military activity also appears to extend to Libya. Press reports suggest that Turkey has been shipping arms to Libyan Brotherhood factions. And Turkey now hosts several Brotherhood affiliate TV channels as well.

And speaking of TV channels, we can't forget Qatar. Qatar is owner of the pro-Brotherhood TV channel Al Jazeera, but its support extends far beyond that.

After Morsi was elected, Doha gave the Egyptian regime billions in aid. Qatar today provides safe haven for many exiled Brotherhood figures. Other factions that enjoy Qatari support include Tunisia's Ennahda movement, Yemen's Islah, Libya's Hizb al-Watan, and of course Hamas.

Chairman DeSantis, Ranking Member Lynch, I offer four recommendations today:

One, do not waste valuable Federal resources trying to designate the entire Brotherhood. Focus on the factions that have a record of violence and terrorism finance.

Number two, use Treasury's tools to reinforce existing designations. For example, Hamas, HASM, Liwa al-Thawra are already designated. Treasury should sanction the support networks. These derivative designations are bureaucratically easier to achieve, while designations of new entities can often get caught up in the red tape of the interagency process.

Number three, confront Turkey and Qatar. Their support to the Brotherhood is undermining our efforts in that crucial battle of ideas.

And four, support the House NDAA provision calling for a report on the Muslim Brotherhood. It is important that we here in the U.S. conduct our own assessment of this organization and formulate a strategy to address this important challenge.

On behalf of FDD, thank you again for the opportunity to testify, and I look forward to your questions.

[Prepared statement of Mr. Schanzer follows:]

Chairman DeSantis, Ranking Member Lynch, and distinguished members of the committee, on behalf of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, thank you for the opportunity to testify.

The Muslim Brotherhood is often correctly described as a gateway to extremism and jihadism. Its ideology is xenophobic, bigoted, and totalitarian. And although its various branches all seek to promote this ideology, they differ in terms of their preferred tactics. Specifically, some of its branches are violent and some are not. This, in short, is the challenge in targeting the entire Brotherhood under the current system.

But my testimony will also explain that there are still opportunities for designating some of the worst factions of the Brotherhood. In addition to being less controversial, such a piecemeal approach is more suitable to the current U.S. system. I will suggest some possible targets in my testimony today.

Finally, I will argue today that if U.S. policymakers truly wish to undermine the global reach of the Muslim Brotherhood, it must take a hard look at the group's state sponsors. Qatar and Turkey, often referred to as U.S. allies, are the primary state backers today of the Brotherhood. Congress must craft thoughtful policies on how to deter this support.

Background

The Muslim Brotherhood – *al-Ikhwān al-Muslimīn* in Arabic – was founded in Egypt by Hassan al-Banna in 1928.¹ Al-Banna famously established the “secret apparatus” within the Brotherhood, a paramilitary outfit that “represented the organization’s commitment to jihad” and engaged in political violence.² In 1948, the group assassinated a judge, a police chief, and Prime Minister Mahmud Fahmi al-Naqrashi. The Egyptian government responded with a crackdown on Muslim Brotherhood activity, including the assassination of al-Banna.

Through the 1950s and 1960s, the group became increasingly militant under the influence of one of the Brotherhood’s most prominent ideologues, Sayyid Qutb, who argued that most Arab rulers were heretics, and that their governments were un-Islamic. He suggested holy war, or *jihad*, as the answer. In 1966, he was tried and hanged for opposing the regime.

Today, the group operates in as many as 92 countries.³ Its ideology is widely viewed to be the gateway to jihadist violence. Indeed, the leaders and adherents to al-Qaeda and the Islamic State have drawn inspiration from al-Banna, Qutb, and other Muslim Brotherhood thinkers.

Interestingly, as scholar Mokhtar Awad notes, “soldiery and violence is not central to the Muslim Brotherhood’s stated methodology for social and political change,” but it did feature in “Muslim

¹ For the authoritative history of the Muslim Brotherhood’s early years, see: Richard P. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969).

² Eric Trager, “The Muslim Brotherhood: From Opposition to Power,” *Washington Institute for Near East Policy*, Summer 2013. (<http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/the-muslim-brotherhood-from-opposition-to-power>)

³ Jane Arraf, “Muslim Brotherhood, Mainstream in Many Countries, May Be Listed as Terrorist Group,” *NPR*, February 22, 2017. (<https://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2017/02/22/516437938/muslim-brotherhood-mainstream-in-many-countries-may-be-listed-as-terror-group>)

Brotherhood founder Hassan al-Banna's writings and vision for an ideal Muslim society."⁴ Today, the Brotherhood's creed is unambiguous: "Allah is our goal. The Prophet is our leader. The Quran is our constitution. Jihad is our way. Death in the service of Allah is the loftiest of our wishes. Allah is great, Allah is great."⁵

And while al-Banna extolled the virtue of violent armed struggle to further the global Islamic cause, it was his successor, Sayyid Qutb, who blamed the Christians and the Jews for the Muslim world's crisis. In his most influential book, *Milestones*, Qutb alludes to "one of the tricks played by world Jewry so that the Jews may penetrate into body politic of the whole world and then may be free to perpetuate their evil designs."⁶

Christian principles and teachings, according to Qutb, were "absolutely incomprehensible, inconceivable and incredible."⁷ He contended, "it would be extremely short-sighted of us to fall into the illusion that when the Jews and Christians discuss Islamic beliefs or Islamic history ... they will be doing it with good intentions."⁸ Modern-day Brotherhood leaders like Gemal Heshmat, whom Turkey now hosts, similarly believe that "Jewish and Christian religious extremists" are culpable for attempts to destabilize Islamist-led governments. After the overthrow of Islamist President Mohammed Morsi, a prominent Muslim Brotherhood figure warned that the country's Christians should "reconcile with Muslims or their blood will continue to run like rivers and nobody will care."⁹

The Brotherhood also vilifies secular democracy. Al-Banna founded the Brotherhood out of a conviction that "Westernization" and, in particular, the West's modernity, had caused the decline of Muslim societies.¹⁰ Qutb was even more anti-Western, finding Western values abhorrent after he had spent a short time in the United States. In his book *The America I Have Seen*,¹¹ Qutb offered a distorted chronology of American history and condemned America as a soulless, materialistic place that no Muslim should aspire to live in.¹² He believed that the Western world's

⁴ Mokhtar Awad, "The Rise of the Violent Muslim Brotherhood," *Hudson Institute*, November 6, 2017. (<https://www.hudson.org/research/13787-the-rise-of-the-violent-muslim-brotherhood>)

⁵ Thomas Joscelyn, "The Muslim Brotherhood" Understanding its Roots and Impact," *Foundation for Defense of Democracies*, accessed July 5, 2018. (<http://www.defenddemocracy.org/the-muslim-brotherhood-understanding-its-roots-and-impact/>)

⁶ Sarah Schlesinger, "A History of Hatred: The Muslim Brotherhood and Anti-Semitism," *Hudson Institute*, December 19, 2011. (<https://www.hudson.org/research/8596-a-history-of-hatred-the-muslim-brotherhood-and-anti-semitism>)

⁷ Paul Berman, "The Philosopher of Islamic Terror," *The New York Times*, March 23, 2003. (<https://www.nytimes.com/2003/03/23/magazine/the-philosopher-of-islamic-terror.html>)

⁸ Robert Irwin, "Is this the man who inspired Bin Laden?" *The Guardian* (UK), October 31, 2001. (<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2001/nov/01/afghanistan.terrorism3>)

⁹ Eric Trager, "The Cynical Conspiracy War on Egypt's Christians," *Foreign Policy*, May 27, 2017. (<https://foreignpolicy.com/2017/05/27/the-cynical-conspiracy-war-on-egypts-christians/>)

¹⁰ "World Almanac of Islamism," *American Foreign Policy Council*, accessed July 3, 2018. (http://almanac.afpc.org/sites/almanac.afpc.org/files/Muslim%20Brotherhood%20Website_0.pdf)

¹¹ Sayyid Qutb ash-Shaheed, "'The America I Have Seen': In the Scale of Human Values (1951)," *part of the CIA's November 2017 Release of Abbottabad Compound Material*, accessed July 6, 2018. (https://www.cia.gov/library/abbottabad-compound/3F3F56ACA473044436B4C1740F65D5C3B6_Sayyid_Qutb_-_The_America_I_Have_Seen.pdf)

¹² "Sayyid Qutb's America: Al Qaeda Inspiration Denounced U.S. Greed, Sexuality," *NPR*, May 6, 2003. (<https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1253796>)

separation of religion and state was “hideous schizophrenia.” He thus believed Muslims had a duty to return Islam to public life.¹³ And for those Muslims who did not agree, he endorsed *takfir* – the process of declaring a Muslim an apostate.¹⁴

The ideas of al-Banna and Qutb continue to echo within today’s Muslim Brotherhood. In 2015, for example, a group of Brotherhood and allied Islamist scholars published a book titled *The Jurisprudence of Popular Resistance to the Coup*, in which they claimed that the “goal of Egyptian army operations in the Sinai is ... for the benefit of the Jews.”¹⁵ A series of articles posted to the Brotherhood’s Arabic-language website in October 2010 feature titles such as “Authenticity of Perversion and Corruption in Jewish Personality.”¹⁶ *Jurisprudence* also claims that “enemies of Muslim peoples,” a thinly veiled reference to the West, have “long harmed Muslims” and rendered them incapable of retaliation.¹⁷

Finally, the Brotherhood has not forgotten the call to jihad. In recent years, Brotherhood members continued to extol “the Jihadi tendency settled as a doctrine in the foundation of Imam al-Banna’s methodology and the acculturation of the Muslim Brotherhood.”¹⁸

Muslim Brotherhood Offshoots in Focus

President Barack Obama’s director of national intelligence, James Clapper, in 2011 sparked an uproar in Washington when he declared that, “The term ‘Muslim Brotherhood’ ... is an umbrella term for a variety of movements, in the case of Egypt, a very heterogeneous group, largely secular, which has eschewed violence and has decried Al Qaeda as a perversion of Islam.” Clapper eventually retreated on this point, and for good reason.¹⁹ The Brotherhood is not a patchwork of disparate groups, and nor is it secular. It is not exactly heterogeneous, either. Many Muslim Brotherhood branches subject their members to rigid indoctrination processes and vet their members for their commitment to the organization’s ultimate goal, which is to empower the Brotherhood’s politicized and deeply intolerant interpretation of Islam.

Still, the Brotherhood’s various branches differ in terms of the tactics that they use to spread and empower the organization’s totalitarian ideology. In places like Tunisia and Morocco, the group has become an accepted element of the ruling elite. In places like Jordan, it has an uneasy modus

¹³ Paul Berman, “The Philosopher of Islamic Terror,” *The New York Times*, March 23, 2003.

(<https://www.nytimes.com/2003/03/23/magazine/the-philosopher-of-islamic-terror.html>)

¹⁴ “Qutubism,” *Counter Extremism Project*, accessed July 6, 2018.

(<https://www.counterextremism.com/threat/qutubism>)

¹⁵ Mokhtar Awad, “The Rise of the Violent Muslim Brotherhood,” *Hudson Institute*, November 6, 2017.

(<https://www.hudson.org/research/13787-the-rise-of-the-violent-muslim-brotherhood>)

¹⁶ Sarah Schlesinger, “A History of Hatred: The Muslim Brotherhood and Anti-Semitism,” *Hudson Institute*, December 19, 2011. (<https://www.hudson.org/research/8596-a-history-of-hatred-the-muslim-brotherhood-and-anti-semitism>)

¹⁷ Mokhtar Awad, “The Rise of the Violent Muslim Brotherhood,” *Hudson Institute*, November 6, 2017.

(<https://www.hudson.org/research/13787-the-rise-of-the-violent-muslim-brotherhood>)

¹⁸ Mokhtar Awad, “The Rise of the Violent Muslim Brotherhood,” *Hudson Institute*, November 6, 2017.

(<https://www.hudson.org/research/13787-the-rise-of-the-violent-muslim-brotherhood>)

¹⁹ Josh Gerstein, “DNI Clapper retreats from ‘secular’ claim on Muslim Brotherhood,” *Politico*, October 2, 2011.

(<https://www.politico.com/blogs/under-the-radar/2011/02/dni-clapper-retreats-from-secular-claim-on-muslim-brotherhood-033259>)

vivendi with the government, fulfilling the role of the loyal opposition. In Egypt, the Brotherhood won elections following a dramatic popular revolution, but was soon the target of a second mass uprising and a subsequent military coup. In the Gulf monarchies, the Brotherhood is viewed as an existential threat to the ruling regimes that forbid the admixture of religion and politics.²⁰ It is for this reason that Saudi Arabia and the UAE designated both the Muslim Brotherhood and local affiliates as terrorist groups in 2014.²¹

For the purposes of this testimony, there are simply too many offshoots to cover all of them. And I will not engage today on the issue of U.S.-based charities that maintain close ties to the Brotherhood. If there are ties to terrorism, that is for the FBI to discover.

Below are three case studies to demonstrate the three basic categories of Brotherhood offshoots that can be found today: Politically Viable, Active in Opposition, and Outlawed.

Morocco's PJD: Politically Viable

Morocco's Party of Justice and Development (PJD) is one of the more successful Brotherhood offshoots, as evidenced by its achievements in Moroccan politics. The PJD's Abdelilah Benkirane was prime minister of the country from 2011 to 2017. The PJD still plays an active role in the current government through the new prime minister, Saadeddine Othmani.

Morocco is not the only Brotherhood faction to have reached these heights. In 1989, the Islamic Action Front (IAF) forged a government in Jordan before the monarchy altered the elections laws to diminish their power. In Tunisia, the Ennahda movement ruled following the revolution that toppled Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali in 2011. Similarly, in Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood rose to power under Mohammed Morsi after it won the elections following the 2011 "Arab Spring."

For the PJD, it was undeniably the Arab Spring that paved the way. King Mohammed VI was forced to enact constitutional reforms in response to the biggest anti-establishment protests the country had witnessed in decades. This opened up the political space and provided a chance for Islamist parties to play a greater role in leading the country.²² The PJD won the majority of votes in the 2011 general election. It also won the parliamentary elections in October 2016.²³

Even as it was thrust into the world of politics, the PJD remained active on campuses and among the grass roots, namely the Movement of Unity and Reform (MUR), a large *da'wah* (outreach) institution that is often considered the religious arm of the PJD with a presence across the kingdom. This effort was further buttressed by an external network of loosely affiliated schools, health

²⁰ Eric Trager, "The Muslim Brotherhood is the Root of the Qatar Crisis," *The Atlantic*, July 2, 2017.

(<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/07/muslim-brotherhood-qatar/532380/>)

²¹ "UAE lists Muslim Brotherhood as terrorist group," *Reuters*, November 15, 2014.

(<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-emirates-politics-brotherhood/uae-lists-muslim-brotherhood-as-terrorist-group-idUSKCN0I200M20141115>)

²² "Morocco's King Mohammed unveils constitutional reforms," *BBC News* (UK), June 18, 2011.

(<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-13816974>)

²³ "Moderate Moroccan Islamists win election, coalition talks seen tough," *Reuters*, October 8, 2016.

(<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-morocco-election-tally/moderate-moroccan-islamists-win-election-coalition-talks-seen-tough-idUSKCN1280EP>)

centers, and other professional organizations. Although MUR and PJD members insist there is a firewall between the two, the links between them remain strong and have been characterized as “strategic cooperation.”²⁴

However, the palace – which is still the ultimate decision-maker in Morocco – began to view the party as a threat. When the PJD won a plurality in the 2016 parliamentary elections but proved unable to form a coalition,²⁵ the king replaced Benkirane in March 2017 and appointed the more submissive PJD figure Saadeddine Othmani, who was foreign minister from 2012-2013 and had most recently served as the head of the PJD’s parliamentary group.²⁶ On March 17, 2017, Othmani officially became Morocco’s prime minister.²⁷

The PJD today serves as a good example of a local Brotherhood affiliate participating in electoral politics. And it serves as a warning to those seeking to designate the Muslim Brotherhood in its entirety. Indeed, the designation of the PJD would be tantamount to the designation of the Moroccan government – a move that would be unwise, to the say the least.

Malaysia’s PAS: Active in Opposition

The Malaysian Islamic Party (Parti Islam seMalaysia, or PAS) is Malaysia’s oldest and largest opposition political party. It plays an important role in the political system, particularly in countering the ruling coalition. Yet, the party also stands for some deeply troubling ideas. Indeed, PAS advocates for establishing Malaysia as an Islamic state.²⁸ PAS has even advocated for the harsh Islamic penal code called *hudud*.²⁹ Nevertheless, Malaysian politicians court the Islamist faction, which is widely viewed as an important political constituency.

Other Muslim Brotherhood factions that are openly recognized by their governments and are active in opposition currently include the aforementioned Islamic Action Front in Jordan and al-Eslah in Kuwait. They are not likely to gain much ground, but are also not likely to be dispatched by the ruling regime.

²⁴ “Morocco’s Islamist Party: Redefining Politics Under Pressure,” *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, December 28, 2017. (<http://carnegie-mec.org/2017/12/28/morocco-s-islamist-party-redefining-politics-under-pressure-pub-75121>)

²⁵ Mohamed Daadaoui, “In Morocco’s election last week, the major Islamist party won again. Here’s what that means,” *The Washington Post*, October 13, 2016. (https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/10/13/what-moroccos-election-results-tell-us-about-islamist-parties/?hpid=hp_hp-top-table-main-monkey-cage%3Awhat-moroccos-election-results-tell-us-about-islamist-parties%3Ahomepage%2Ftcm=ecce46f88772b)

²⁶ “Morocco’s king replaces PM Benkirane amid post-election deadlock,” *Reuters*, March 15, 2017. (<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-morocco-politics/moroccos-king-replaces-pm-benkirane-amid-post-election-deadlock-idUSKBN16M3A9>)

²⁷ “Morocco’s king names PJD’s Othmani as prime minister,” *Reuters*, March 17, 2017. (<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-morocco-politics/moroccos-king-names-pjds-othmani-as-new-prime-minister-idUSKBN16Q1WU>)

²⁸ Amy Chew, “The rising force in Malaysia’s opposition,” *Al-Jazeera* (Qatar), February 10, 2013. (<https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2013/02/201321092433869462.html>)

²⁹ Asrul Hadi Abdullah Sani, “Break up of Malaysia’s opposition bloc Pakatan Rakyat: What happened and what’s next?” *The Straits Times* (Singapore), June 18, 2015. (<https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/break-up-of-malaysias-opposition-bloc-pakatan-rakyat-what-happened-and-whats-next>)

In the case of Malaysia, the PAS has a history of strong ties to the broader Muslim Brotherhood movement dating back to its early years.³⁰ Even today, Malaysia plays host to some of the movement's top figures.³¹ And not unlike the Moroccan PJD's Movement of Unity and Reform (MUR), the PAS maintains an outreach capability in the form of the Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia (ABIM).³²

But unlike the PJD, the PAS has some troubling ties to terrorism. Specifically, the group may be providing in-country assistance to the Palestinian terrorist group Hamas, which is itself a splinter of the Muslim Brotherhood.³³ Ties date back to at least 2002.³⁴

In 2012, at least ten members of Hamas traveled to Malaysia for training to prepare for a cross-border attack against Israel. The group reportedly trained for kidnapping soldiers, anti-tank ambushes, and sniper attacks.³⁵ In 2014, Israel conducted a sweeping raid in the West Bank, during which it captured Majdi Mafarja, who admitted to training in message encryption and computer hacking for Hamas in Malaysia. Israeli security services arrested him for having served as courier for encoded messages on behalf of the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades – the so-called military wing of Hamas.³⁶

Also in 2015, the Israeli press reported that at least two senior Hamas officials were operating out of Malaysia: Ma'an Hatib and Radwan al-Atrash. Hatib was described as "responsible in Malaysia for the Hamas foreign desk," while Atrash was seen as "a senior figure in the Shura [consultative] council" for the organization.³⁷ Hamas also operated a cultural organization in Malaysia called Rabitat Bilad al-Sham (Greater Syria Association).³⁸

In 2015, Israel alleged that a group of Palestinian students had been sent to Malaysia back in 2010 to learn how to use hang gliders to infiltrate Israel for an attack. This came after the Israel security services arrested Waseem Qawasmeh, a 24-year-old student who had studied in Malaysia. He was

³⁰ Zulkifly Abdul Malek, "From Cairo to Kuala Lumpur: The Influence of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood on the Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia (ABIM)," *Thesis submitted to Georgetown University*, April 26, 2011. (<https://docplayer.net/23844562-From-cairo-to-kuala-lumpur-the-influence-of-the-egyptian-muslim-brotherhood-on-the-muslim-youth-movement-of-malaysia-abim.html>)

³¹ "Expelled Muslim Brotherhood leaders may head to Malaysia, says report," *The Star*, June 4, 2018. (<https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2014-09-17-muslim-brotherhood-leaders-expelled-from-qatar-malaysia>)

³² "Anwar Ibrahim: Malaysia's leader-in-waiting," *BBC News* (UK), May 16, 2018. (<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-16440290>)

³³ See: Jonathan Schanzer, "How Malaysia Became a Training Ground for Hamas," *Tablet*, May 4, 2018. (<https://www.tabletmag.com/scroll/261464/how-malaysia-became-a-training-ground-for-hamas>)

³⁴ "Hezbollah, Hamas Speakers Address Malaysian Opposition Conference," *Associated Press*, May 30, 2002. (<https://www.haaretz.com/1.5179792>)

³⁵ Adam Sterman, "Malaysia Denies it Trained Hamas Operatives," *The Times of Israel*, July 31, 2014. (<https://www.timesofisrael.com/malaysia-denies-it-trained-hamas-operatives>)

³⁶ Mitch Ginsburg, "Ababs Orders Probe into Hamas Coup Plot Revealed by Israel," *The Times of Israel*, August 19, 2014. (<https://www.timesofisrael.com/abbas-orders-investigation-into-hamas-coup-plot-revealed-by-israel>)

³⁷ Amos Harel, "Shin Bet: Hamas training Palestinian Students in Malaysia," *Haaretz* (Israel), April 28, 2015. (<https://www.haaretz.com/premium-shin-bet-hamas-training-palestinian-students-in-malaysia-1.5355790>)

³⁸ "Hamas Activity in Malaysia," *Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center* (Israel), June 5, 2015. (<http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/en/20805/>)

charged with belonging to Hamas and receiving funding from the terrorist group. Both Malaysia and Hamas denied this accusation.³⁹

In 2013, a Hamas delegation led by then-Politburo chief Khaled Meshaal visited Kuala Lumpur. Meshaal returned in 2015, when he openly advocated for violence against Israel.⁴⁰

A terrorism designation of the PAS in Malaysia would be highly controversial, particularly given its longstanding role in the political system. But the growing suspicion of ties with Hamas is an important issue to watch, and could open the door for U.S. action.

Egypt: Outlawed

Egypt was the cradle of the Brotherhood, but it now appears the group is in a grave. In 2011, it made up a large part of the protests that forced Hosni Mubarak out of office. Upon Mubarak's departure, the Brotherhood created the Freedom and Justice Party (FJP) and won nearly half of the seats in parliament alongside fellow Islamists in the country's first post-Arab Spring political contest.⁴¹ Its presidential candidate, senior leader Mohamed Morsi, then won the June 2012 presidential elections. However, Morsi's autocratic behavior – specifically, his attempts to seize unchecked executive power and ramming a theocratic constitution to ratification – sparked new protests against his rule, which intensified as the economy tanked thanks to the Brotherhood's inexperience in government.

Nearly one year into Muslim Brotherhood rule, Egypt's military responded to a second mass uprising – this one against the Brotherhood – by ousting Morsi on July 3, 2013. Abdel Fatah al-Sisi then led a massive crackdown, culminating in the killing of hundreds of Brotherhood protestors in August 2013.⁴² In December 2013, the government designated the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist group.⁴³ It authorized punishment for membership, funding, activities, or other support – even through writing or speaking positively about the group.⁴⁴ The government also froze the assets of 132 Brotherhood leaders.⁴⁵ The Supreme Administrative Court then

³⁹ Shaul Shay, "Malaysia-Hamas Military Cooperation," *International Institute for Counter-Terrorism* (Israel), May 13, 2015. (<https://www.ict.org.il/Article/1394/Malaysia-Hamas-Cooperation>)

⁴⁰ Stuart Winer, "Hamas Political Leader: Stabber are the most exalted, noblest of people," *The Times of Israel*, December 15, 2015. (<https://www.timesofisrael.com/hamas-political-leader-urges-more-stabbing-attacks/>)

⁴¹ "Egypt's Islamist parties win election to parliament," *BBC News* (UK), January 21, 2012. (<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-16665748>)

⁴² Ian Black and Patrick Kingsley, "Egypt: resentment towards Brotherhood fuels crackdown support," *The Guardian* (UK), August 16, 2013. (<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013-aug-16/egypt-nationalism-muslim-brotherhood-crackdown>)

⁴³ "Egypt designates Muslim Brotherhood as terrorist group," *Reuters*, December 25, 2013. (<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-egypt-explosion-brotherhood/egypt-designates-muslim-brotherhood-as-terrorist-group-idUSBRE9BO08H20131225>)

⁴⁴ Kareem Fahim, "Egypt, Dealing a Blow to the Muslim Brotherhood, Deems It a Terrorist Group," *The New York Times*, December 25, 2013. (<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/12/26/world/middleeast/egypt-calls-muslim-brotherhood-a-terrorist-group.html>)

⁴⁵ "Egypt freezes assets of 132 Brotherhood leaders," *Al-Ahram* (Egypt), December 27, 2013. (<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/3/12/90203/Business/Economy/Egypt-freezes-assets-of--Brotherhood-leaders.aspx>)

dissolved the FJP and confiscated its assets.⁴⁶ Most of the Brotherhood's leaders are now either in prison⁴⁷ or have fled abroad (mostly to Qatar, Turkey, and the UK).⁴⁸

The Egyptian Brotherhood is not the only outlawed branch in the Middle East. The United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and others have banned their branches, too. And while it is not hard to understand the motivations of these authoritarian states seeking to isolate a mobilized Islamist opposition, doing so sometimes backfires. It engenders sympathy for the groups they seek to banish, and certainly makes U.S. designation less likely, if only for fear of the optics.

Egypt is a prime example. Sisi has used a combination of arrests, asset seizures, and forced dissolutions to dilute the Brotherhood. His government has introduced laws to dry up the Brotherhood's sources of income, including its vast network of charities, clinics, and other social services. The government in December 2013 froze the assets of 1,055 organizations for belonging to the Brotherhood or merely being sympathetic with it.⁴⁹ It further seized the assets of 1,345 Brotherhood members, including 103 schools run by the group.⁵⁰ According to one report, by year-end 2015, the government shuttered over 480 NGOs due to alleged Brotherhood links.⁵¹

While Cairo has come under fire for these policies, Egypt still faces a legitimate threat from violent Brotherhood-linked groups. The group has a history of violence dating back to its early days and its "secret apparatus." In the 1990s, it was a breeding ground for two al-Qaeda affiliate groups: Gama'a al-Islamiyya and al-Jihad. The head of al-Qaeda, Ayman al-Zawahiri, is a former Muslim Brother.⁵² And while he has not put Cairo in his crosshairs, many other Brotherhood splinter groups have. These include Hasm, Liwa al-Thawra, Kata'ib Helwan, Revolutionary Punishment, and Afnad Misr.

Muslim Brotherhood Designation Targets

Hasm and Liwa al-Thawra were designated as terrorist groups by the State and Treasury Departments in January of this year.⁵³ The designations were well deserved. Hasm (Harakat

⁴⁶ "The Supreme Administrative Court dissolves the Freedom and Justice party and confiscates its funds and properties," *Al-Ahram* (Egypt), August 9, 2014. (<http://gate.ahram.org.eg/News/523329.aspx>)

⁴⁷ "Muslim Brotherhood leaders sentenced to life in prison," *Associated Press*, February 28, 2015. (<http://www.timesofisrael.com/muslim-brotherhood-leaders-sentenced-to-life-in-prison/>)

⁴⁸ Abigail Hauslohner, "Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood finds havens abroad," *The Washington Post*, November 6, 2013. (https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle-east/egypts-muslim-brotherhood-finds-havens-abroad/2013/11/05/438f2dfe-463a-11e3-93a9-3f15b5618ba8_story.html?utm_term=.b30c8c86bdf4)

⁴⁹ "The government notifies the Central Bank of freezing the assets of 1,055 charitable organizations belonging to the Muslim Brotherhood or being sympathetic with it," *Al-Masry al-Youm* (Egypt), December 23, 2013. (<http://www.almasryalyoum.com/news/details/360135>)

⁵⁰ "Assets of 1,345 Brotherhoods confiscated: Justice Ministry," *Egypt Independent*, December 15, 2015. (<http://www.egyptindependent.com/assets-1345-brotherhoods-confiscated-justice-ministry/>)

⁵¹ "Amnesty International Report 2015/16: The State Of The World's Human Rights," *Amnesty International*, May 16, 2016. (<https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/POL1025522016ENGLISH.PDF>)

⁵² "Profile: Ayman al-Zawahiri," *BBC News* (UK), August 13, 2015. (<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-13789286>)

⁵³ U.S. Department of State, Press Release, "State Department Terrorist Designations of Ismail Haniyeh, Harakat al-Sabireen, Liwa al-Thawra, and Harakat Sawa'd Misr (HASM)," January 31, 2018. (<https://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2018/01/277792.htm>); U.S. Department of the Treasury, "Counter Terrorism Designations," January 31, 2018. (<https://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/OFAC->

Sawa'id Masr, or the Arms Movement of Egypt) had executed deadly attacks against the army, the judiciary, and the police in Egypt since 2016. Liwa al-Thawra (Brigade of the Revolution), founded roughly the same time as Hasm, has also targeted the military and law enforcement. While Egypt asserts a Brotherhood link to these two groups, the connection is unclear.⁵⁴

What is important to note here is that the Brotherhood links to Hasm and Liwa al-Thawra mattered not one iota to the U.S. Treasury and State Departments. They designated the two groups based on the legal criteria – their track records of violence and support for terrorism.

Sanctioning the entire Muslim Brotherhood – as some have called for – would be difficult, if not impossible. As I have noted above, the Brotherhood appears homogenous in its adherence to a hateful, bigoted, and radical ideology, but it remains heterogeneous when it comes to violence. The right move is for the U.S. Treasury to take the lead in targeting overtly violent factions and those that finance terrorism pursuant to Executive Order 13224. I would not recommend trying to pursue this process via the State Department's Foreign Terrorist Organization list, which is a bit more political in nature.

Factions of the Brotherhood without a history of violence or terrorism finance do not warrant scrutiny. But, as we have seen in the past, the intelligence does sometimes support terrorist designations for Brotherhood factions. For example, Hamas was an obvious target after it began its campaign of suicide bombings and other gruesome acts of violence in the 1990s.⁵⁵ More recently, Hasm and Liwa al-Thawra were the most obvious designation candidates among suspected or known Muslim Brotherhood factions because of their violent track records. Next in line, based on the Treasury Department's criteria, should probably be Libya's Hizb al-Watan and Yemen's al-Islah Party. The following summaries explain the known terrorist ties. But only an intelligence review can determine whether designations are warranted.

Libya's Hizb al-Watan

Under strongman Muammar Gaddafi, the Muslim Brotherhood was not allowed to operate openly in Libya. In fact, Brotherhood members faced imprisonment and torture. But after the fall of the Gaddafi regime in November 2011, the Libyan Muslim Brotherhood held its first public conference in decades. The conference included guests from Tunisia's Brotherhood-linked Ennahda party, Syria's Brotherhood branch, and others.⁵⁶ While some Brotherhood offshoots – like the Justice and Development Party – joined Libya's political scene, others took a militant turn. Foremost among these is Hizb al-Watan.

Enforcement/Pages/20180131.aspx); Romany Shaker, "US designated Egypt-based HASM and Liwa al-Thawra as terrorist groups," *FDD's Long War Journal*, January 31, 2018. (<https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2018/01/us-designates-egypt-based-hasm-and-liwa-al-thawra-as-terrorist-groups.php>)

⁵⁴ Jonathan Schanzer, "Stand up against these terror groups to bolster the US-Egypt alliance," *New York Post*, September 22, 2017. (<https://nypost.com/2017/09/22/stand-up-against-these-terror-groups-to-bolster-the-us-egypt-alliance/>)

⁵⁵ U.S. Department of State, "Foreign Terrorist Organizations," accessed July 6, 2018. (<https://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/other/des/123085.htm>)

⁵⁶ Francois Murphy, "Muslim Brotherhood goes public with Libya summit," *Reuters*, November 17, 2011. (<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-muslim-brotherhood-idUSTRE7AG2OY20111117>)

Translated as either the Homeland Party or the National Party, Hizb al-Watan is led by Abdelhakim Belhaj and Salafi cleric Ali al-Sallabi.⁵⁷ Prior to 2011, Sallabi had lived in Qatar and had studied under Yusuf al-Qaradawi,⁵⁸ who is regarded as a spiritual leader of the Muslim Brotherhood. Belhaj, also known as Abu Abdullah al-Sadiq, previously led the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG), a designated terrorist group in the United States.⁵⁹

The LIFG staged three failed assassination attempts on the life of Gaddafi in the 1990s.⁶⁰ Belhaj then fled to Afghanistan where he reportedly “developed ‘close relationships’ with Al-Qaeda leaders and Taliban chief Mullah Omar, according to an arrest warrant issued by the Libyan government in 2002.”⁶¹ In 2007, Ayman al-Zawahiri announced that a wing of the LIFG had officially joined al-Qaeda.⁶²

The U.S. Treasury Department designated the LIFG on September 23, 2001,⁶³ and the UN Security Council added the LIFG to its consolidated list of entities associated with al-Qaeda on October 6, 2001.⁶⁴ Belhaj was arrested in 2004 by the CIA, and then sent back to Libya where he was imprisoned until 2010.⁶⁵ While incarcerated, he was part of the LIFG faction that released a series of “revisions” rejecting its ties to al-Qaeda.⁶⁶ These “revisions” clearly were not binding, as the LIFG’s imprisoned men also foreswore violence against Gaddafi – a vow they reneged on as soon as they were given the opportunity to take up arms in 2011. Sallabi, who had been negotiating with Gaddafi’s son Saif al-Islam for the release of imprisoned Islamists since 2007, was also party to these revisions.⁶⁷

⁵⁷ “Libya’s political parties,” *Al-Jazeera* (Qatar), July 3, 2012.

(<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2012/06/2012626224516206109.html>)

⁵⁸ Guido Steinberg, “Qatar and the Arab Spring: Support for Islamists and New Anti-Syria Policy,” *German Institute for International and Security Affairs*, February 2012, page 5. (https://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/comments/2012C07_sbg.pdf)

⁵⁹ U.S. Department of the Treasury, Press Release, “Treasury Designates UK-Based Individuals, Entities Financing Al Qaeda-Affiliated LIFG,” February 8, 2006. (<https://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/js4016.aspx>)

⁶⁰ Sam Dagher, Charles Levinson, and Margaret Coker, “Tiny Kingdom’s Huge Role in Libya Draws Concern,” *The Wall Street Journal*, October 17, 2011.

(<https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052970204002304576627000922764650>)

⁶¹ “Profile: Libyan rebel commander Abdel Hakim Belhadj,” *BBC News* (UK), July 4, 2012.

(<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-14786753>)

⁶² Inal Ersan, “Zawahri says Libyan group joins Al-Qaeda,” *Reuters*, November 3, 2007.

(<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-qaeda-idUSL032828220071103?sp=true>)

⁶³ U.S. Department of the Treasury, Press Release, “Treasury Designates UK-Based Individuals, Entities Financing Al Qaeda-Affiliated LIFG,” February 8, 2006. (<https://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/js4016.aspx>)

⁶⁴ United Nations Security Council, “Consolidated United Nations Security Council Sanctions List,” accessed August 1, 2017, page 146.

(<https://sanctions.un.org/fop?xml=htdocs:resources:xml.en:consolidated.xml&xslt=htdocs:resources:xsl.en:consolidated.xsl>)

⁶⁵ Michael Holden, “UK top court says ex-Libyan rebel commander can sue former minister,” *Reuters*, January 17, 2017. (<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-britain-libya-belhadj-idUSKBN1511D2>)

⁶⁶ Daveed Gartenstein-Ross and Luke Lischin, “Doha’s Dangerous Dalliance,” *The Journal of International Security Affairs*, Fall/Winter 2014. (http://www.defenddemocracy.org/content/uploads/documents/Ross_Lischin.pdf)

⁶⁷ Sam Dagher and Charles Levinson, “Tiny Kingdom’s Huge Role in Libya Draws Concern,” *The Wall Street Journal*, October 17, 2011. (<https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052970204002304576627000922764650>)

During the 2011 uprising against Gaddafi, Sallabi's cadres received assault rifles, rocket-propelled grenade launchers, other small arms, and military training from Qatar. At least three shipments went to the Western Mountains where Belhaj led a brigade of rebel fighters.⁶⁸

After overthrowing Gaddafi, Sallabi formed the National Gathering for Freedom, Justice and Development party⁶⁹ – a name similar to both Turkey's Justice and Development Party and the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party. This political party aimed to make Islamic law the basis of Libya's constitution.⁷⁰

Belhaj, for his part, announced the launch of Hizb al-Watan.⁷¹ Belhaj, however, failed to win any seats in both 2012⁷² and 2014.⁷³ All the while, Belhaj was believed to be training members of Ansar al-Sharia in Tunisia, a U.S.-designated terrorist group, and of sheltering the group's leader Abu Iyadh al-Tunisi.⁷⁴ Belhaj's social media account contains some evidence of his active ties to other al-Qaeda-linked actors inside Libya, as well. For example, in June 2015, a Twitter account attributed to Belhaj honored two fallen jihadists, Nasir Atiyah al-Akar and Salim Derbi, both senior leaders in the Derna Mujahideen Shura Council (DMSC).⁷⁵ Akar and Derbi were killed by Islamic State loyalists, but their opposition to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi's caliphate did not make them moderates. Indeed, DMSC had ties to al-Qaeda.⁷⁶

Hizb al-Watan joined other Islamist militias in the "Libya Dawn" operation in 2014, which drove the elected and internationally recognized government from Tripoli. The government now ruling

⁶⁸ Sam Dagher and Charles Levinson, "Tiny Kingdom's Huge Role in Libya Draws Concern," *The Wall Street Journal*, October 17, 2011. (<https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052970204002304576627000922764650>)

⁶⁹ Marc Fisher, "Meet the architect of the new Libya," *The Washington Post*, December 9, 2011.

(https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/meet-the-architect-of-the-new-libya/2011/12/06/gIQAfPm8hO_story.html?utm_term=.f0b83847ec0c)

⁷⁰ Richard Spencer, "Libyan cleric announces new party on lines of 'moderate' Islamic democracy," *The Telegraph* (UK), November 10, 2011.

(<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/libya/8879955/Libyan-cleric-announces-new-party-on-lines-of-moderate-Islamic-democracy.html>)

⁷¹ "Libya's Belhaj quits military to enter politics," *Agence France Presse* (France), May 15, 2012. (<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-18078436>)

⁷² UK House of Commons Library, "Libya's General assembly election 2012," July 18, 2012, page 5.

⁷³ Ann Marlowe, "The Next Dangerous Move in Libya," *The Daily Beast*, February 22, 2016. (<http://www.thedailybeast.com/the-next-dangerous-move-in-libya>)

⁷⁴ Daveed Gartenstein-Ross, "Abdelhakim Belhadj and Ansar al-Sharia in Tunisia," *Foundation for Defense of Democracies*, October 8, 2013. (<http://www.defenddemocracy.org/media-hit-abdelhakim-belhadj-and-ansar-al-sharia-in-tunisia/>)

⁷⁵ @4belhaj, "الفقيد رحمه الله على اليمين من الصورة (The deceased, may God have mercy on him, is on the right of the picture)," *Twitter*, June 9, 2015. (<https://twitter.com/4belhaj/status/608338858716069889>); @4belhaj, "ويلتحق البطل، سالم دربي بقافلة شهداء الحق، ونصرة العدل والاعتدال، ولا نقول إلا ما يرضي ربنا، إنا لله وإليه راجعون (The hero Salim Derby joins the convoy of the martyrs of truth in support of justice and moderation. I only say what pleases my Lord. 'Indeed we belong to Allah, and indeed to Him we will return.').", *Twitter*, June 10, 2015. (<https://twitter.com/4belhaj/status/608573991272521729>)

⁷⁶ Thomas Joscelyn, "Veteran jihadists killed by Islamic State's 'province' in Derna, Libya," *FDD's Long War Journal*, June 12, 2015. (<https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2015/06/rival-jihadists-battle-derna.php>)

from Tripoli is supported by Libya Dawn, Qatar, and Turkey.⁷⁷ Belhaj, according to one Arab intelligence agency, is accused of running weapons to the Tripoli government through an aviation company called Libyan Wings.⁷⁸ This has not been confirmed, but has been reported elsewhere.⁷⁹

Sallabi and Belhaj now appear on a list of 59 people that Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Egypt, and Bahrain accuse of having links to terrorism and enjoying Qatari support.⁸⁰ Also on the list is Nabaa TV, a Libyan media outlet Belhaj controls and uses to publish militia statements and ideologies.⁸¹ Nabaa is broadcast from Turkey,⁸² where Belhaj resides.⁸³

Yemen's al-Islah

Al-Islah is Yemen's local Brotherhood affiliate, its membership consisting of both Brotherhood supporters – who enjoy influence in urban centers and universities – but also Salafists and tribal figures, who have more reach and influence with the rural Yemeni population.⁸⁴ The group believes that Islamic law should be the basis of legislation and reform.⁸⁵

Al-Islah's recent history is filled with ties to terrorism. One co-founder of al-Islah is Sheikh Abdul Majid al-Zindani.⁸⁶ A federal lawsuit identifies Zindani as a coordinator of the 2000 attack on the USS COLE that killed 17 U.S. Navy sailors.⁸⁷ The United States designated Zindani in January 2004 as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist for being a "spiritual leader" to Osama bin Laden

⁷⁷ Cameron Glenn, "Libya's Islamists: Who They Are – And What They Want," *Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars*, March 8, 2016. (<https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/libyas-islamists-who-they-are-and-what-they-want>)

⁷⁸ Interview with Arab intelligence agency officers, July 2, 2017.

⁷⁹ "What you need to know about the five Libyans on the terror list," *Al-Arabiya* (UAE), June 9, 2017. (<https://english.alarabiya.net/en/features/2017/06/09/What-you-need-to-know-about-the-Five-Libyan-names-on-the-terrorism-list.html>); "Private Libyan airline Libyan Wings on track to commence operations between Malta and Mitiga," *The Independent* (UK), December 27, 2014. (<http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2014-12-27/local-news/Private-Libyan-airline-Libyan-Wings-on-track-to-commence-operations-between-Malta-and-Mitiga-6736127939>)

⁸⁰ "Qatar-linked people, groups on terror list," *Reuters*, June 9, 2017. (<http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/qatar/qatar-linked-people-groups-on-terror-list-1.2040686>)

⁸¹ "Saudi, allies release complete list of terror-linked individual, entities," *Khaleej Times* (UAE), July 26, 2017. (<http://www.khaleejtimes.com/region/qatar-saudi-allies-release-complete-list-of-terror-linked-individual-entities->)

⁸² "Sources: Spies of the 'Two Hamads' support a militia to attack the Libyan army," *Al-Bayan* (UAE), June 16, 2018. (<https://www.albayan.ae/one-world/arabs/2018-06-16-1.3293015>)

⁸³ Ian Cobain, Owen Bowcott, Pippa Crerar, and Kareem Shaheen, "Britain apologises for 'appalling treatment' of Abdel Hakim Belhaj," *The Guardian* (UK), May 10, 2018. (<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/may/10/britain-apologises-for-appalling-treatment-of-abdel-hakim-belhaj>)

⁸⁴ Stacey Philbrick Yadav, "Yemen's Muslim Brotherhood and the perils of powersharing," *Brookings Institution*, August 2015. (https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Yemen_Yadav-FINALE.pdf)

⁸⁵ Amr Hamzawy, "Between Government and Opposition: The Case of Yemeni Congregation Reform," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, November 2009, pages 3-4. (http://carnegieendowment.org/files/yemeni_congregation_reform.pdf)

⁸⁶ Steven Erlanger, "At Yemen College, Scholarship and Jihadist Ideas," *The New York Times*, January 18, 2010. (<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/19/world/middleeast/19yemen.html?mcubz=1>)

⁸⁷ Muslim Brotherhood Terrorist Designation Act of 2015, H.R. 3829, 114th Congress (2015). (<https://www.congress.gov/114/bills/hr/3892/BILLS-114hr3892ih.pdf>)

and playing “a key role in the purchase of weapons on behalf of Al-Qaeda and other terrorists,”⁸⁸ and the UN followed suit a month later.⁸⁹ As recently as 2013, the U.S. Treasury Department noted that Zindani, along with another designated terrorist, had “issued religious guidance in support of AQAP [Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula] operations.”⁹⁰

In 2006 – two years after being designated – Zindani led a fundraising campaign for Hamas in Yemen, collecting over \$279 million from 50,000 mosques for the terrorist group.⁹¹ He is a board member of the Union of Good, an umbrella organization the U.S. designated for financing Hamas.⁹² Zindani also founded al-Iman University, which has served as a jihadist recruiting hub.⁹³ According to a recent UN report, AQAP’s “new sharia official” is Abdullah Mubarak, “a Yemeni national and graduate of Iman University in Sana’a.”⁹⁴

Major General Ali Mohsen al-Ahmar, one of Yemen’s most important military figures, is also reportedly aligned with al-Islah.⁹⁵ He is purported to have overseen \$20 million given by Osama bin Laden to resettle Arab Afghan fighters in Yemen, and reportedly “oversaw the deployment” of Islamic groups in the 1994 civil war.⁹⁶ He is married to the daughter of Tariq Nasr al-Fadhli, who the FBI says was behind the failed 1992 bombings of two Aden hotels housing more than 100 U.S. troops.⁹⁷

⁸⁸ U.S. Department of the Treasury, Press Release, “United States Designates bin Laden Loyalist,” February 24, 2004. (<https://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/js1190.aspx>)

⁸⁹ United Nations Security Council, “Narrative Summaries of Reasons for listing: Qdi.156 Abd-al-Majid Aziz al-Zindani,” accessed August 23, 2017. (https://www.un.org/sc/suborg/en/sanctions/1267/aq_sanctions_list/summaries/individual/abd-al-majid-aziz-al-zindani)

⁹⁰ U.S. Treasury Department, press Release, “Treasury Designates Al-Qa’ida Supporters in Qatar and Yemen,” December 18, 2013. (<https://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/jl2249.aspx>)

⁹¹ Amani al-Safoni, “Yemen collects donations for Hamas via official accounts,” *Elaph* (Saudi Arabia), March 22, 2006. (<http://elaph.com/Web/Politics/2006/3/136831.htm?sectionarchive=Politics>)

⁹² U.S. Department of the Treasury, Press Release, “Treasury Designates the Union of Good,” November 12, 2008. (<https://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/hp1267.aspx>)

⁹³ Thomas Joscelyn, “Resolving the Conflict in Yemen: U.S. Interests, Risks, and Policy,” *Testimony before Senate Foreign Relations Committee*, March 9, 2017. (http://www.defenddemocracy.org/content/uploads/documents/030917_TJ_Resolving_Conflict_Yemen.pdf)

⁹⁴ Thomas Joscelyn, “Analysis: AQAP remains under pressure,” *FDD’s Long War Journal*, May 26, 2018. (<https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2018/05/analysis-aqap-remains-under-pressure.php>)

⁹⁵ Kareem Fahim, “Yemen’s Opposition May be Caught by Its Own Double Game,” *The New York Times*, December 2, 2011. (<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/03/world/middleeast/yemens-opposition-party-islah-faces-credibility-gap.html?mcubz=1>); Stacy Philbrick Yadav, “How war is changing Yemen’s largest Islamist coalition,” *The Washington Post*, March 22, 2017. (https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2017/03/22/how-war-is-changing-yemens-largest-islamist-coalition/?utm_term=.488b6be79664)

⁹⁶ John F. Burns, “Yemen Links to bin Laden Gnaw at F.B.I. in Cole Inquiry,” *The New York Times*, November 26, 2000. (<http://www.nytimes.com/2000/11/26/world/yemen-links-to-bin-laden-gnaw-at-fbi-in-cole-inquiry.html?mcubz=1>)

⁹⁷ John F. Burns, “Yemen Links to bin Laden Gnaw at F.B.I. in Cole Inquiry,” *The New York Times*, November 26, 2000. (<http://www.nytimes.com/2000/11/26/world/yemen-links-to-bin-laden-gnaw-at-fbi-in-cole-inquiry.html?mcubz=1>)

Senior al-Islah Party members reportedly harbored Anwar al-Awlaki prior to his 2011 death in a U.S. drone strike.⁹⁸ The U.S. Treasury labeled Awlaki a terrorist in 2010. As Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence Stuart Levey stated, Awlaki was involved in “every aspect of the supply chain of terrorism – fundraising for terrorist groups, recruiting and training operatives, and planning and ordering attacks on innocents.”⁹⁹

Interestingly, the Saudi-led war in Yemen may be forcing al-Islah to change. The Islah leadership met with Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in late 2017. This was a remarkable moment given the Saudi and Emirati antipathy for the Brotherhood. But they were drawn together in opposition to Iran and the Houthis.¹⁰⁰ Al-Islah subsequently announced it was distancing itself from the Brotherhood.¹⁰¹

Whether or not al-Islah moves away from the Brotherhood, again, is irrelevant to the process of targeting a terrorist group. The Treasury and State Departments should simply assess the available intelligence on Islah to determine whether the group remains supportive of al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups.

State Sponsors of the Muslim Brotherhood

In addition to targeting groups that have a clear connection to terrorism, the U.S. should also engage the Brotherhood’s two top state sponsors: Turkey and Qatar. Both countries are understood to be U.S. allies. Yet, both continue to support a movement that is anti-American and extremist at its core.

Turkey

Turkey’s Islamist Justice and Development Party (AKP) is effectively the Turkish arm of the Muslim Brotherhood. Turkish President and AKP founder Recep Tayyip Erdogan publicly supports the movement. That support was most evident during the height of the Arab Spring, when Erdogan apparently believed he could harness the growing political power of the movement under his leadership.

⁹⁸ Bill Roggio, “Anwar al-Awlaki sheltered in homes of senior Islah party members,” *FDD’s Long War Journal*, October 6, 2011. (https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2011/10/anwar_al_awlaki_shelter_in_hom.php)

⁹⁹ U.S. Department of the Treasury, Press Release, “Treasury Designates Anwar Al-Aulaqi, Key Leader of Al-Qa’ida in the Arabian Peninsula,” July 16, 2010. (<https://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg779.aspx>)

¹⁰⁰ Ali al-Mujahed and Sudarsan Raghavan, “Yemen’s war is so out of control, allies are turning on one another,” *The Washington Post*, February 3, 2018. (https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/yemens-war-is-so-out-of-control-that-allies-are-turning-on-one-another/2018/02/03/50d26426-05fe-11e8-aa61-f3391373867e_story.html?utm_term=.6e2338cd39e9)

¹⁰¹ Abdul Hadi Habtoor, “Yemen’s Al-Islah Party to Reintroduce New Administrative Framework,” *Asharq al-Awsat* (UK), January 7, 2018. (<https://aawsat.com/english/home/article/1135986-yemen%E2%80%99s-al-islah-party-reintroduce-new-administrative-framework>)

Erdogan dispatched Turkish campaign strategist Erol Olcok to Egypt to help with Morsi's campaign. Olcok helped Erdogan's AKP party win eleven elections in Turkey.¹⁰² On September 30, 2012, after Morsi's victory was secured, Erdogan invited the Egyptian president, along with the Brotherhood-linked Palestinian Hamas leader Khaled Meshaal to the AKP convention in Ankara. After Morsi delivered a speech at the convention praising Erdogan and the AKP, he announced a \$1 billion loan from Turkey to Egypt.¹⁰³ In February 2013, Turkey's then-President Abdullah Gul became the first foreign leader to visit Egypt under Morsi's government.¹⁰⁴ In 2015, Erdogan further admitted that he provided \$2 billion to Morsi at a time when no one else was helping Egypt.¹⁰⁵

Turkey's support became increasingly strident after the collapse of Brotherhood rule in Egypt. The AKP organized public demonstrations in Turkey in support of Morsi following the coup,¹⁰⁶ and at least 1,500 members of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood found refuge in Turkey.¹⁰⁷ On August 23, 2013, a month after Morsi's ouster, then-Prime Minister Erdogan fired up his base with a "Rabia" four-finger salute in commemoration of the Egyptian government's crackdown on the Brotherhood at Rabaa Square.¹⁰⁸ His salute became a global symbol of solidarity with the Muslim Brotherhood.

Last summer, Erdogan coopted the Rabia sign to signify the "four principles" of the AKP: "one homeland; one state; one flag; one nation." The AKP added the principles to Article 4 of the party's bylaws in May 2017.¹⁰⁹

After Morsi's ouster in July 2013, Turkey became the hub for both the Egyptian and international Brotherhood.¹¹⁰ Numerous Egyptian Brotherhood figures have relocated to Turkey to escape Sisi's

¹⁰² Vahap Munyar, "AK Parti'nin reklamcısı Mısır'a 'iş' için gidiyor (AK Party's publicist is going to Egypt for 'business')," *Hürriyet* (Turkey), September 8, 2011. (<http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ak-parti-nin-reklamcisi-misir-a-is-icin-gidiyor-18675600>)

¹⁰³ "Egypt signs \$1 billion Turkish loan deal," *Reuters*, September 30, 2012. (<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-egypt-turkey-loan-idUSBRE88T0G920120930?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews>)

¹⁰⁴ Senem Aydin Duzgit, "The Seesaw Friendship Between Turkey's AKP and Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, June 24, 2014. (<http://carnegieendowment.org/2014/07/24-seesaw-friendship-between-turkey-s-akp-and-egypt-s-muslim-brotherhood-pub-56243>)

¹⁰⁵ The Presidency of the Turkish Republic, "TRT - 'Cumhurbaşkanı Özel Yayını' (Transcript: TRT - Special Presidential Program)," June 1, 2015. (https://www.tecb.gov.tr/mulakatlar/1709_32485.trt-cumhurbaskani-ozel-yayini)

¹⁰⁶ Senem Aydin Duzgit, "The Seesaw Friendship Between Turkey's AKP and Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, June 24, 2014. (<http://carnegieendowment.org/2014/07/24-seesaw-friendship-between-turkey-s-akp-and-egypt-s-muslim-brotherhood-pub-56243>)

¹⁰⁷ Patrick Kingsley, "Decimated Muslim Brotherhood Still Inspires Fear. Its Members Wonder Why," *The New York Times*, July 15, 2017. (<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/15/world/europe/muslim-brotherhood-qatar-egypt-turkey-saudi-arabia.html>)

¹⁰⁸ "Başbakan Erdoğan'dan Rabia işareti (Rabaa sign from Erdogan)," *Aksam* (Turkey), August 23, 2013. (<https://www.aksam.com.tr/siyaset/basbakan-erdogandan-rabia-isareti-haber-238098>)

¹⁰⁹ "Turkey's AKP adopts Muslim Brotherhood's Rabia sign in its bylaws," *Birgun* (Turkey), May 20, 2017; (<https://www.birgun.net/haber-detay/turkey-s-akp-adopts-muslim-brotherhood-s-rabia-sign-in-its-bylaws-160493.html>); "Erdogan slams CHP leader Kılıçdaroğlu over Rabia sign," *Hürriyet* (Turkey), June 8, 2017. (<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/erdogan-slams-chp-leader-kilicdaroglu-over-rabia-sign-114082>)

¹¹⁰ Mohammad Abdel Kader, "Turkey's relationship with the Muslim Brotherhood," *Al-Arabiya* (UAE), October 14, 2013. (<http://english.alarabiya.net/en/perspective/alarabiya-studies/2013/10/14/Turkey-s-relationship-with-the-Muslim-Brotherhood.html>)

crackdown, including Mahmoud Izzat, Mahmoud Husayn, Muhammad Jamal Hishmat, Salah Abd-al-Maqoud, Amr Darrag, Majdy Salim, Khalid al-Sherif, Murad Ghurab,¹¹¹ and Wagdy Ghoneim.¹¹² According to Emirati officials, Turkey is also home to nine Brotherhood-linked UAE citizens.¹¹³

Hamas operatives have also made their home there, including Saleh Arouri, the head of the West Bank military wing, who notoriously ordered the kidnapping of three Israeli teens in the summer of 2014.¹¹⁴ Arouri, who officially lives in Lebanon now but visits Turkey frequently, is a designated terrorist in the United States.¹¹⁵ Mahmoud Attoun and Taysir Suleiman, both Hamas operatives sentenced to life terms in Israel, are based in Turkey and are actively involved with HIKMET,¹¹⁶ a Turkish NGO associated with the Muslim Brotherhood.¹¹⁷

Erdogan is an unabashed supporter of Yusuf al-Qaradawi, the Qatar-based spiritual leader of the Brotherhood known for his *fatwas* permitting use of suicide bombings against Israel.¹¹⁸ Erdogan defended Qaradawi after Interpol issued an arrest warrant for him in 2014.¹¹⁹ Moreover, in the midst of the 2014 Gulf spat between Qatar and Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Bahrain, Erdogan stated that Turkey would welcome Brotherhood figures who were asked to leave Qatar under pressure from other Gulf States.¹²⁰

Turkey now hosts a number of media outlets to support the Brotherhood. For example, the Egyptian Institute for Political and Strategic Studies (EIPSS) was established in Istanbul in 2014 and is chaired by Amr Darrag, a prominent Muslim Brotherhood figure who served as Egypt's Minister of Planning and International Cooperation under former President Morsi's government.

¹¹¹ بالأسماء. القيادات الإخوانية الهاربة إلى تركيا. (Names of MB leaders who fled to Turkey). *Veto Gate*, July 16, 2016. (<http://www.vetogate.com/2277925>)

¹¹² بعد هجومه على تونس.. تركيا تقاضي وجدي غنيم. (After attacking Tunisia, Turkey to file lawsuit against Wagdy Ghoneim). *Al-Arabiya* (Saudi Arabia), August 25, 2017. (<https://www.alarabiya.net/ar/north-africa/2017/08/25/بعد-هجومه-على-تونس-تركيا-تقاضي-وجدي-غنيم.html>)

¹¹³ Kenan Akin "BAE: Turkiye'nin Katar'da Ussu Olmasina Itirazimiz Yok (UAE: We Don't Object to the Turkish Base in Qatar)." *Yenicag* (Turkey), July 17, 2017. (<http://www.yenicaggazetesi.com.tr/bae-turkivenin-katarda-ussu-olmasina-itirazimiz-yok-43553yy.htm>)

¹¹⁴ Jonathan Schanzer, "Hamas Still Finds Harbor in Turkey," *The Weekly Standard*, June 8, 2016. (<https://www.weeklystandard.com/jonathan-schanzer-hamas-still-finds-harbor-in-turkey>)

¹¹⁵ U.S. Department of the Treasury, Press Release, "Treasury Sanctions Major Hamas Leaders, Financial Facilitators and a Front Company," October 9, 2015. (<https://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/j10159.aspx>)

¹¹⁶ Jonathan Schanzer and Michael Argosh, "Lying Down With Dogs," *Foreign Policy*, August 20, 2014. (<http://foreignpolicy.com/2014/08/20/lying-down-with-dogs/>)

¹¹⁷ Steven G. Merley, "Turkey, the Global Muslim Brotherhood, and the Gaza Flotilla," *Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs* (Israel), 2011, page 24. (http://www.jcpa.org/text/Turkey_Muslim_Brotherhood.pdf)

¹¹⁸ Hassan Hassan, "Hatred, violence and the sad demise of Yusuf Al Qaradawi," *The National* (UAE), January 28, 2014. (<http://www.thenational.ae/thenationalconversation/comment/hatred-violence-and-the-sad-demise-of-yusuf-al-qaradawi>)

¹¹⁹ Tulin Daloglu, "Erdogan defends Brotherhood's Qaradawi after arrest warrant," *Al-Monitor*, December 12, 2014. (<https://web.archive.org/web/20141213092030/http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2014/12/qaradawi-egypt-turkey-interpol-arrest-warrant-brotherhood.html>)

¹²⁰ Tulay Karadeniz and Elif Karaca, "Turkey would welcome Muslim Brotherhood figures who leave Qatar: Erdogan," *Reuters*, September 16, 2014. (<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-egypt-brotherhood-turkey-idUSKBN0HB0FT20140916>)

Darrag was previously an executive board member of Morsi's Freedom and Justice Party (FJP), as well as the chairman of the party's Foreign Relations Committee.¹²¹

Turkey hosts several Egyptian Brotherhood-affiliated TV channels,¹²² including El-Sharq TV, Mekameleen TV, and Watan TV. Two other channels, Misr al-Aan TV and Rabaa TV,¹²³ launched in Istanbul in late 2012-early 2013, have been shut down. There are allegations that the Turkish intelligence service was behind the launching of Rabaa TV.¹²⁴ Brotherhood-affiliated channels¹²⁵ have advocated for the killing of Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah al-Sisi¹²⁶ and other Egyptian security officials.¹²⁷

Ankara has not shied away from military support for the Brotherhood, either. Turkish intelligence officer Irshad Huz was arrested in Egypt for allegedly funneling weapons and activists to the Egyptian Brotherhood.¹²⁸ On July 12, 2015, the Egyptian military spokesman announced that a recently uncovered "terrorist cell" with a mission to destabilize Egypt received instructions from the Brotherhood headquartered in Turkey.¹²⁹

Turkish support for Brotherhood-linked military activity also appears to extend to Libya. In January 2013, Turkey's *Hurriyet* newspaper reported that Greek authorities found Turkish weapons aboard a ship headed for Libya.¹³⁰ In December of that year, the Egyptian press also reported that the Egyptian customs intercepted four containers of weapons from Turkey believed destined for Libyan militias.¹³¹ In November 2014, Greek authorities found 20,000 AK-47s in a ship captained by a Turk heading from Ukraine to Libya. The captain said

¹²¹ "من نحن" (About Us), *Egyptian Institute for Political and Strategic Studies* (Turkey), accessed June 4, 2018. (<https://eipss-eg.org/about-us/>)

¹²² "'İhvan medya' Bağcılar'da! ('İkhwan Media' at Bağcılar!)" *Radikal* (Turkey), February 3, 2015.

(<http://www.radikal.com.tr/turkiye/ihvan-medya-bagcilarda-1285334/>)

¹²³ "Muslim Brotherhood 'Rabaa' channel launched, airing from Turkey," *Al-Ahram* (Egypt), December 21, 2013. (<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1-64-89647-Egypt-Politics-Muslim-Brotherhood-Rabaa-channel-launched-airing.aspx>)

¹²⁴ "Turkish Intelligence Service MIT behind New Egyptian Islamist TV Channel," *nsnbc.me*, December 9, 2013. (<https://nsnbc.me/2013/12/09/turkish-intelligence-service-mit-behind-new-egyptian-islamist-tv-channel/>)

¹²⁵ Duygu Guvenc, "Ölüm emirleri İstanbul'dan (Death Orders From Istanbul)," *Cumhuriyet* (Turkey), February 1, 2015. (http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/dunya/203813.Olum_emirleri_istanbul_dan.html)

¹²⁶ "Calls to Kill President Al-Sisi and Egyptian Journalists on Muslim Brotherhood TV Channels," *Middle East Media Research Institute*, January 26, 2015. (<https://www.memri.org/tv/calls-kill-president-al-sisi-and-egyptian-journalists-muslim-brotherhood-tv-channels-transcript>)

¹²⁷ "Muslim Brotherhood Operatives in Turkey Call For Killing Egyptian Officials, Threaten Egypt; Turkish MP: Turkey Shelters 'Many MB And Hamas Members,'" *Middle East Media Research Institute*, February 6, 2015. (<https://www.memri.org/reports/muslim-brotherhood-operatives-turkey-call-killing-egyptian-officials-threaten-egypt-turkish>)

¹²⁸ Mohammad Abdel Kader, "Turkey's relationship with the Muslim Brotherhood," *Al-Arabiya* (UAE), October 14, 2013. (<http://english.alarabiya.net/en/perspective/alarabiya-studies/2013/10/14/Turkey-s-relationship-with-the-Muslim-Brotherhood.html>)

¹²⁹ Jacques Neriah, "Egypt Accuses Turkey of Subversion," *Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs* (Israel), July 14, 2015. (<http://jcpa.org/pdf/Egypt-Accuses-Turkey-of-Subversion-Jacques-Neriah-Vol15No21.pdf>)

¹³⁰ "O gemi AB yasağına takıldı (That Ship Encounters EU Ban)," *Hurriyet* (Turkey), January 31, 2013. (<http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/o-gemi-ab-yasagina-takildi-22481275>)

¹³¹ Mona Zia, "الجمارك ضبط 4 حاويات قادمة من تركيا تحمل أسلحة وذخيرة حية" (Customs: 4 shipments carrying weapons and live ammunition from Turkey seized)," *Youn Sabi* (Egypt), December 28, 2013. (<https://www.youn7.com/story/2013/12/28/1422258-الجمارك-ضبط-4-حاويات-قادمة-من-تركيا-تحمل-اسلحة-وذخيرة-حية>)

the ship was bound for Turkey's Alexandretta port, but the maritime traffic data reportedly indicated that it was bound for Libya.¹³² According to a press report from Saudi-owned *Al-Arabiya* a month later, Libyan authorities intercepted a Korean steamer headed to the embattled port city of Misrata that reportedly embarked from Turkey. The ship was carrying containers of weapons and ammunition allegedly intended for Islamist militias.¹³³ These are just a few examples of what has been reported out of Libya.

In the meantime, Arab intelligence officials allege that Turkey provides financial support to Hamas.¹³⁴ Open source reports suggest the same.¹³⁵ Israeli intelligence has further suggested that Turkey, through a private intelligence firm, provides military training to the Gaza-based arm of the Muslim Brotherhood.¹³⁶

Qatar

Qatar is undeniably the world's most welcoming and generous jurisdiction for the Muslim Brotherhood. The relationship began in the early 1950s when the tiny emirate "provided a lucrative, stable and welcoming platform where Brotherhood members could safely base themselves, recruit fellow members and prosper." In the 1960s, the Brotherhood began to use Qatar as a "launching pad" for expansions into other jurisdictions, like the United Arab Emirates. Qatar tacitly approved those activities, so long as the Brotherhood continued to be "outward-facing" and did not pose a threat to Doha.¹³⁷

As scholar David Roberts notes, "only Qatar has as small, as rich and as cohesive a local population and can host a group like the Brotherhood, confident that its own security will not be undermined." Blessed with enormous gas reserves that have generated significant wealth, the Qatari state saw to its citizens' every need, which meant the Brotherhood could not penetrate Qatar by providing social services as they had done in Egypt.¹³⁸

As former FDD senior fellow David Weinberg observed, it was Saddam Hussein's 1990 invasion of Kuwait that inspired Qatar's strategic support for the Brotherhood. "Saudi Arabia's powerlessness in the face of the Iraqi invasion was a lesson to key Qatari leaders that their nation's

¹³² "20 bin kalaşnikof taşıyan geminin kaptanı Türk çıktı (The captain of the ship carrying 20,000 Kalashnikovs turns out to be a Turk)," *T24* (Turkey), November 10, 2013. (<http://t24.com.tr/haber/20-bin-kalasnikof-tasivan-geminin-kaptani-turk-cikti.243671>)

¹³³ "ضبط باخرة محملة بالأسلحة قادمة من تركيا لمصراته" (Steamer carrying weapons from Turkey to Misrata seized)," *Al-Arabiya* (UAE), December 27, 2014. (<https://www.alarabiya.net/ar/north-africa/libya/2014/12/27/ضبط-باخرة-محملة-بالاسلحة-قادمة-من-تركيا-لمصراته.html>)

¹³⁴ Interview with Arab intelligence agency officers, July 2, 2017.

¹³⁵ Jonathan Schanzer, "Terrorism Finance in Turkey: A Growing Concern," *Foundation for Defense of Democracies*, February 2014.

(http://www.defenddemocracy.org/content/uploads/documents/Schanzer_Turkey_Final_Report_3_smaller.pdf)

¹³⁶ Judah Ari Gross, "Shin Bet accuses Turkey of allowing Hamas to raise, launder money," *The Times of Israel*, February 12, 2018. (<https://www.timesofisrael.com/arab-israeli-man-turkish-citizen-arrested-for-helping-to-fund-hamas/>)

¹³⁷ David Roberts, "Qatar and the Muslim Brotherhood: Pragmatism or Preference?" *Middle East Policy Council*, Fall 2014. (<http://www.mepec.org/qatar-and-muslim-brotherhood-pragmatism-or-preference>)

¹³⁸ Ibid.

survival required building influence with great powers, and perhaps even non-state actors, beyond the Arabian Peninsula.” Qatar soon became the Brotherhood’s biggest backer.¹³⁹

After Morsi was elected, Doha gave the Morsi regime \$2.5 billion from August 2012 until early 2013. In January 2013, it announced another \$2.5 billion in aid, sending \$2 billion in loans and a \$500 million grant. The emirate also pledged to invest \$18 billion in Egypt over the next five years, while QInvest, a Qatari investment group, sought to buy a majority stake in Egyptian investment bank EFG Hermes.¹⁴⁰ Also part of the package was free liquefied natural gas.¹⁴¹

As of July 2013, when the Morsi regime collapsed, Qatar had pumped \$8 billion in financial aid to Egypt, according to the *Financial Times*.¹⁴² Qatar today serves as a safe haven for many Egyptian Brotherhood figures. It hosts the Brotherhood’s *de facto* spiritual guide, Yusuf al-Qaradawi, along with other figures like Asim Abd-al-Majid, Wagdy Ghoneim, Ehab Shihah, Ashraf Badr al-Din, and Hamzah Zawbaa.¹⁴³ The fact that Doha hosts these figures became one of the main complaints against Qatar from its Gulf neighbors.¹⁴⁴

Al-Jazeera, also an object of GCC derision, was undeniably a tool to advance Qatar’s pro-Muslim Brotherhood foreign policy. Signs that the network was purposefully favoring the Brotherhood were evident when Egyptians were protesting against Muslim Brotherhood rule in early 2013. Al-Jazeera was critical of them – reflecting the political leanings of the government in Doha.¹⁴⁵ But the real tipping point, notes former Al Jazeera English employee Gregg Carlstrom, was the summer of 2013, when the Egyptian army ousted Mohammed Morsi.¹⁴⁶ Al-Jazeera effectively became the Morsi network. The Al-Jazeera Mubasher Misr channel devolved into an outlet whose goal was to present “local news with a clear pro-Brotherhood bias.” The Al-Jazeera website featured pieces similar in tone. In late 2013, one article falsely claimed Morsi achieved positive economic results while decrying “the war that was waged against him in other media outlets.” With the headline

¹³⁹ David Andrew Weinberg, “Qatar vs. Saudi Arabia: How Iran and the Brotherhood tore the Gulf Apart,” *The National Interest*, June 8, 2017. (<http://nationalinterest.org/feature/qatar-vs-saudi-arabia-how-iran-the-brotherhood-tore-the-gulf-21068>)

¹⁴⁰ “Qatar Doubles Aid to Egypt,” *Associated Press*, January 8, 2013. (<https://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/09/world/middleeast/qatar-doubles-aid-to-egypt.html>)

¹⁴¹ David Roberts, “Qatar and the Muslim Brotherhood: Pragmatism or Preference?” *Middle East Policy Council*, Fall 2014. (<http://www.mepec.org/qatar-and-muslim-brotherhood-pragmatism-or-preference>.)

¹⁴² Simeon Kerr, “Fall of Egypt’s Mohamed Morsi is blow to Qatari leadership,” *Financial Times* (UK), July 3, 2013. (<https://www.ft.com/content/af5d068a-e3ef-11e2-b35b-00144feabdc0>)

¹⁴³ “!!الاسماء.. الإخوان الهاربون من مصر لأحضان قطر راعية الإرهاب” (Names of Brotherhood members who fled Egypt to Qatar, the state sponsoring terrorism), *El-Fagr* (Egypt), April 25, 2017. (<http://www.elfagr.com/2564320>)

¹⁴⁴ Eric Trager, “The Muslim Brotherhood is the Root of the Qatar Crisis,” *The Atlantic*, July 2, 2017. (<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/07/muslim-brotherhood-qatar/532380/>.)

¹⁴⁵ Alexander Kuhn, Cristoph Reuter, Gregor Peter Schmitz, “Al-Jazeera Losing Battle for Independence,” *Der Spiegel* (Germany), February 15, 2013. (<http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/al-jazeera-criticized-for-lack-of-independence-after-arab-spring-a-883343.html>)

¹⁴⁶ Gregg Carlstrom, “What’s the Problem with Al Jazeera?” *The Atlantic*, June 24, 2017. (<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/06/al-jazeera-qatar-saudi-arabia-muslim-brotherhood/531471/>.)

“Morsi’s economic successes and the coup government’s failure,” the article did not even attempt even-handed reporting.¹⁴⁷

Al-Jazeera also voiced full-throated support for other Brotherhood branches during the Arab Spring, such as Tunisia.¹⁴⁸ Qatar is, not surprisingly, presumed to be the main sponsor of Tunisia’s Ennahda party. As one author notes, “the fact that Prime Minister Rashid al-Ghannouchi’s first post-election international visit was to Qatar—and that his son-in-law, formerly a researcher for Al Jazeera in Doha, became his Foreign Minister—has further stoked suspicions about ties between the Gulf emirate and the Ennahda party.”¹⁴⁹ A 2012 report from the Tunisian Court of Auditors even raised “pointed questions” about the provenance of Ennahda’s funding – suggesting Qatari support.¹⁵⁰

Cooperation between Qatar and Tunisia grew between 2011 and 2013, when Tunisia was ruled by the Ennahda-led coalition. Former Emir Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani inked ten agreements with Tunisia, spanning investments, construction, oil and gas, and more.¹⁵¹ The Tunisian Ministry of Defense even sent its armed forces to join military drills in Qatar, and Qatar gave vehicles to Tunisia’s army. Qatar’s standing in Tunisia grew somewhat wobbly after the Ennahda party’s prime minister resigned in 2014. But in 2016, Qatari Emir Tamim bin Hamad was the only foreign head of state to attend the Tunisia 2020 investment conference, where he pledged an aid package of \$1.25 billion to Tunis while Qatar’s ambassador to the country signed an extra \$2.2 million check to cover the conference’s costs.¹⁵²

Likewise, Doha has been a longtime supporter of Yemen’s al-Islah. Anti-government protests supported by al-Islah in 2011 often featured signs thanking Qatar for its backing of Yemen’s Arab Spring movement.¹⁵³ Former President Ali Abdullah Saleh famously took a shot at Qatari support for al-Islah in a 2011 speech, in which he declared, “We derive our legitimacy from the strength of our glorious Yemeni people, not from Qatar.”¹⁵⁴

¹⁴⁷ إنجازات مرسى الاقتصادية وفشل حكومة الانقلاب (Morsi’s economic successes and the failure of the coup government),” *Al-Jazeera* (Qatar), September 10, 2013. (<http://www.aljazeera.net/news/economy/2013/9/10/انجازات-مرسى-الاقتصادية-وفشل-حكومة-الانقلاب>)

¹⁴⁸ Mohammed Osman, “Qatar partner in Tunisia’s democratic transition, says Rachid Ghannouchi of Ennahda,” *The Peninsula* (Qatar), December 3, 2016. (<https://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/03/12/2016/Qatar-partner-in-Tunisia-s-democratic-transition,-says-Rachid-Ghannouchi-of-Ennahda>)

¹⁴⁹ Giorgio Cafiero, “Saudi Arabia and Qatar: Dueling Monarchies,” *Foreign Policy in Focus*, September 26, 2012. (<https://fpif.org/saudi-arabia-and-qatar-dueling-monarchies/>)

¹⁵⁰ David Roberts, “Qatar and the Muslim Brotherhood: Pragmatism or Preference?” *Middle East Policy Council*, Fall 2014. (<http://www.mepec.org/qatar-and-muslim-brotherhood-pragmatism-or-preference>)

¹⁵¹ التوقيع على عشر اتفاقيات تعاون بين قطر وتونس (Ten cooperation agreement signed between Qatar and Tunisia),” *Al-Masdar* (Tunisia), January 16, 2012. (<http://ar.webmanagercenter.com/2012/6/3547-عشر-اتفاقيات-تعاون-بين-قطر-وتونس-01/1>)

¹⁵² Youssef Cherif, “Tunisia’s Fledgling Gulf Relations,” *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, January 17, 2017. (<http://carnegieendowment.org/sada/67793>)

¹⁵³ Adam Baron, “Qatar’s Dispute with Neighbors Reverberates in Yemen,” *Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington*, July 19, 2017. (<http://www.agsiw.org/qatars-dispute-with-neighbors-reverberates-in-yemen/>)

¹⁵⁴ Manuel Almeida, “What Qatar’s role in Yemen tells about the Gulf crisis,” *Arab News* (Saudi Arabia), June 16, 2017. (<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1116206>)

Qatari backing for Libya's Islamists is also well documented. During the Libyan revolution, Qatar sent hundreds of troops to the frontlines.¹⁵⁵ This may explain, in part, why rebels raised the Qatari flag in Tripoli after the fall of the Gaddafi regime.¹⁵⁶ According to Kristian Coates Ulrichsen of the Baker Institute for Public Policy, "Qatar developed close links with key Islamist militia commanders [in Libya] such as Abdelhakim Belhadj, once the head of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group and, in 2011, the commander of the Tripoli Brigade."¹⁵⁷ A March 2013 UN report noted that in 2011 and 2012, Qatar violated the UN arms embargo by "providing military materiel to the revolutionary forces through the organization of a large number of flights and the deliveries of a range of arms and ammunition."¹⁵⁸ And according to another report in the Egyptian *al-Masry al-Youm*, Doha has provided more than 750 million euros (\$890 million) to extremist groups in Libya since 2011.¹⁵⁹ Arab intelligence officials believe that this assistance arrives in Western Libya by way of a commercial airline bankrolled by Qatar.¹⁶⁰

In June of last year, the Libyan National Army (LNA) held a press conference alleging proof of Qatar's malign role in Libya. The LNA charged that Qatari intelligence services supported al-Qaeda, the Islamic State, and the Muslim Brotherhood by transferring \$8 billion from the Qatari Tunisian National Bank to the Housing Bank of Tataouine Governorate in southern Tunisia.¹⁶¹

And while that may be difficult to prove, Qatar's funding of Palestinian Hamas is well known. Former Emir Hamad pledged \$400 million to the group in 2012.¹⁶² His son, Emir Tamim, pledged \$100 million in 2017.¹⁶³ Hamas' former leader, Khaled Meshaal, calls Doha home, as well as Hamas spokesman Ezzat Rishq and others.¹⁶⁴ Qatar served as Hamas' primary advocate, alongside Turkey, during the 2014 rocket war with Israel.¹⁶⁵

This is just a sample of the support that Qatar provides to Muslim Brotherhood-affiliated groups.

¹⁵⁵ Ian Black, "Qatar admits sending hundreds of troops to support Libya rebels," *The Guardian* (UK), October 26, 2011. (<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/oct/26/qatar-troops-libya-rebels-support>)

¹⁵⁶ Habib Toumi, "Raising of Qatar's flag in Libya was an eerie moment," *Gulf News* (UAE), June 12, 2017. (<https://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/qatar-raising-of-qatar-s-flag-in-libya-was-an-ecr-2042345>)

¹⁵⁷ Kristian Coates Ulrichsen, *The United Arab Emirates: Power, Politics and Policy-Making*, (New York: Routledge, 2017). (<https://tinyurl.com/ya3hvsj7>)

¹⁵⁸ United Nations Security Council, "Final report of the Panel of Experts established pursuant to resolution 1973 (2011) concerning Libya," S/2013/99, March 9, 2013. (http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D_s_2013_99.pdf)

¹⁵⁹ "Qatar's support to terrorist groups in Libya 'will not pass without charge,' Haftar," *Al-Masry al-Youm* (Egypt), June 1, 2017. (<http://www.egyptindependent.com/qatar-support-terrorist-groups-libya/>)

¹⁶⁰ Interview with Arab intelligence agency officers, July 2, 2017.

¹⁶¹ "Libyan army provides documentary proof of Qatar's crimes in country," *Al-Arabiya* (UAE), June 9, 2017. (<https://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/north-africa/2017/06/09-Libyan-army-provides-documentary-proof-of-Qatar-s-crimes-in-country-.html>)

¹⁶² Jodi Rudoren, "Qatar's emir visits Gaza, pledging \$400 million to Hamas," *The New York Times*, October 23, 2012. (<https://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/24/world/middleeast/pledging-400-million-qatari-emir-makes-historic-visit-to-gaza-strip.html>)

¹⁶³ Kate Harvard and Jonathan Schanzer, "By hosting Hamas, Qatar is whitewashing terror," *Newsweek*, May 11, 2017. (<http://www.newsweek.com/qatar-hosting-hamas-whitewashing-terror-606750>)

¹⁶⁴ Richard Minitier, "Why is our ally Qatar hosting terrorists like Hamas?" *Forbes*, April 28, 2017. (<https://www.forbes.com/sites/richardminter/2017/04/28-why-is-our-ally-qatar-hosting-terrorists-like-hamas/#2db3757e21bd>)

¹⁶⁵ Ron Kampeas, "Israel's spat with Kerry Fueled by Turkey, Qatar," *Haaretz* (Israel), July 29, 2014. (<https://www.haaretz.com/israel-s-spat-with-kerry-fueled-by-turkey-qatar-1.5257245>)

Jonathan Schanzer

July 11, 2018

I testified last year about the overt and tacit support that Doha has provided to terrorist groups like al-Qaeda, the Taliban, and others.¹⁶⁶

Recommendations

Chairman DeSantis, Ranking Member Lynch, crafting a sensible policy to address the challenge of the Muslim Brotherhood is not easy. The factions vary in their ties to violence and terrorism. And their backers are U.S. allies. I offer four recommendations to this committee:

1. **Designate the violent actors while keeping a close eye on non-violent ones:** Do not waste valuable U.S. government resources trying to designate the entire Brotherhood or its more political factions. Focus on the factions that have a demonstrable record of violence and terrorism finance. Successful individual designations should be seen as pragmatic steps toward the larger goal of both blocking the terrorism finance intermingled within the broader network, and messaging to the broader Muslim world that the Brotherhood remains a breeding ground for extremism. In the meantime, keep an eye on the other factions. The makeup of these groups can change quickly, presenting new opportunities for designation.
2. **Use Treasury's financial warfare tools to reinforce existing designations:** Hamas, Hasm, and Liwa al-Thawra are already designated. So are a number of Hamas officials, as well as al-Islah's Abdul Majid al-Zindani. Treasury should continue to monitor the groups and designated entities that provide support to their terrorist operations. Such designations are bureaucratically easier to achieve, given that they are already in the system. Designations of new entities can often take longer, and get caught up in the red tape of the inter-agency process.
3. **Deter Turkey and Qatar:** Financial and logistical support funneled to various Brotherhood figures and local branches undermine the work of the U.S., our European allies, and other actors in the battle of ideas. The U.S. should emphasize this to Doha and Ankara. Washington should make it clear to both countries that investment ties, military sales, and security benefits could be in jeopardy if such support continues.
4. **Support the House NDAA Provision Calling for a Report on the Muslim Brotherhood:**¹⁶⁷ It is important for the U.S. government to conduct its own assessment of the organization, and to assemble a strategy for addressing an influential global movement whose various branches promote a radical and ultimately violent ideology, even when some are not directly engaged in terrorism.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today, and I look forward to your questions.

¹⁶⁶ Jonathan Schanzer, "Assessing the US-Qatar Relationship," *Testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa*, July 26, 2017.
(<https://docs.house.gov/meetings/FA/FA13/20170726/106329/HHRG-115-FA13-Wstate-SchanzerJ-20170726.pdf>)

¹⁶⁷ John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019, H.R. 5515, 115th Congress (2018).
(<https://www.congress.gov/bills/115th-congress/house-bill/5515/text/eh?r=1#toc-I1ED7BF67CE6F54687BB3E751FAB980E68>)

Mr. DESANTIS. Thank you.
Dr. Jasser, you're up for 5 minutes.

STATEMENT OF M. ZUHDI JASSER

Dr. JASSER. Thank you, Chairman DeSantis and Ranking Member Lynch and other members of the House Subcommittee on National Security, for holding a very important hearing on the Muslim Brotherhood's global threat.

Our American Islamic Forum for Democracy is a counter-Islamist American Muslim think tank and activist based in Phoenix, Arizona.

I ask that my full written testimony be placed into the record.
Mr. DESANTIS. Without objection.

Dr. JASSER. I am here today because as an American Muslim I have dedicated my life to American security and freedom, not only with 11 years in the U.S. Navy, but since 9/11 formally countering the oppressive and radicalizing influence of Islamist groups in the West upon our communities.

No group embodies the threat of the radical Islamists more than Muslim Brotherhood, or in Arabic, Ikhwan al-Muslimin. The Muslim Brotherhood is a terrorist organization. Help us modern-minded, secular, liberal Muslims marginalize their influence by declaring what they are: a terrorist organization. Unfortunately, much of the conversation about the Brotherhood has been obstructed, muted, marginalized, deferred, minimized by the Muslim Brotherhood sympathizers or their allies here in the West.

I have to tell you, in my heart of hearts, I think those who give the Ikhwan excuses—either say they are not monolithic, they are democratic, they are nonviolent, they have branches—must really believe that our entire faith of Islam, my faith, is just shades of oppressiveness of theocracy, so we have to tolerate the nonviolent theocrats.

Somehow, we Muslims are since terminally having to accept the leadership and control of the global network of the terrorists of the Muslim Brotherhood.

In point of fact, nothing would be more pro-Muslim than the marginalization of the Muslim Brotherhood and its direct affiliates. Making the Muslim Brotherhood radioactive would allow the light to shine upon the most potent antagonists in Muslim communities: those who reject political Islamist groups and believe in liberty and the separation of mosque and state.

In my short time I wanted to quick paint two pictures for you. First, this diagram. It may be hard to read. But bottom line, just so we understand what we are talking about, the Muslim Brotherhood, if you look at the top there, 1.6 billion Muslims, I think you can divide them politically into Islamists, who believe in Islamic states, and secularists.

Under the Islamists, you've got Sunni and Shia strains. All Muslims have two major sects, if not more. There are other heterogeneous sects. But 90 percent are Sunni, 10 percent are Shia. Within the Sunni stream of Islam are political Islamist groups, like the Muslim Brotherhood, the Salafis, and Jamaat e-Islami in Pakistan.

The Brotherhood has offshoots of terror groups, and the non-violent group, I believe, gives cover to the Muslim Brotherhood terror groups, if you will.

So that just sort of lays it out as being a strain of Sunni Islam. I think that's important because if we start this project by labeling the Muslim Brotherhood factions in various countries terror groups, I think it also then should not give a pass to the Khomeinists in Iran, to other strains, the Salafi jihadis, ISIS, et cetera. So just so you understand where they fit.

The next slide looks at the logo. And I think it's important to understand what they are. They have not changed their logo. And at the bottom, under those swords, which are not peaceful, that are not violent symbol, it says wei du(ph).

And wei du (ph) is from chapter 8, verse 16 of the Koran, and it says "make ready." And it's not the Boy Scouts' "be prepared, make ready." This is a passage in the Koran that refers specifically to battle and preparing for militancy. This, despite them coming to power in Tunisia and Egypt and elsewhere, they never change the symbol and what they are.

Thank you for those slides.

al-Banna and Qutb, as you've heard before me, put forth the notion that Islam is all-encompassing for society. And if you look at the motto it says, as has been pointed out, that death for the sake of God is their highest aspiration.

So let's define a terror group. Terror group means that the actors use any possible targeting of noncombatants or even combatants outside the rules of war in order to advance their supremacist hegemonic aspirations.

The Muslim Brotherhood has never condemned theologically or ideologically the use of terrorism. And if they have it's been a cover, since they've reverted to that repeatedly.

Now, Muslims are not monolithic. But the Brotherhood, whether it's 1.0 or 9.0, in the last 90 years is monolithic, and trying to say it's not monolithic is dancing on the head of a pin.

Like the Cold War, communism was a cancer, but the war was against Soviet communism. Here, Islamism is the cancer within our faith communities, but the war is against the Ikhwan.

We need to be on the offense, and for too long we've been on the defense worried about what the reactions will be. And ultimately I see that concern, that defensiveness on the American posture about naming the Brotherhood a terrorist organization, as at best a form of bigotry of low expectations when it comes to Muslims.

The common enemy theory, saying that, well, the Brotherhood has a common enemy with us against ISIS and al-Qaida, is offensive to me, not only as an American, but as a Muslim. I hear the same thing in saying that we should support genocidal tyrants like Assad because they have common enemies with us against ISIS.

Many people try to separate the central elements of these parties from the militant terrorist progeny. Recep Erdogan, the head of the Muslim Brotherhood group in Turkey, also known as the AKP, said: Democracy is like a train; we ride it until we get where we want to go and then we get off.

It is time that we made them radioactive. And I detail in my testimony all of the connections, the revolving door between various

al-Qaida groups, humanitarian organizations in the West and in the Middle East.

The Supreme Guide of the Muslim Brotherhood said just in 2010, long after the 1970s in which they supposedly condemned violence, he said: Resistance is the solution against Zio-American arrogance and tyranny. The resistance can come from fighting and understanding—this is from Mohammed Badie, the head of the Brotherhood in Egypt, this is 2010, basically reiterating the declaration of war that Osama bin Laden said in the 1990s. There is no coincidence that there is a revolving door between leaders of al-Qaida and the Muslim Brotherhood.

I think, as has been said before, we begin pegging off various groups, terrorist groups from Syria, to Libya, to Yemen, to Kuwait, and on, and then ultimately that will begin to cut the funneling of money, funneling of ideas into other Muslim Brotherhood groups in the West.

So my final recommendations, Chairman, is to, one, designate the MB a foreign terrorist organizations beginning in Egypt, and then on a country-country basis in Libya, Syria, Kuwait, Jordan, and Yemen.

Call on American Muslim leaders to take a position on the Muslim Brotherhood and its overarching theo-political ideology. I ask my fellow Muslims: Will they be the side of freedom, liberty, and modernity, or will they be on the side of tyranny of the Muslim Brotherhood, Turkey's AKP, the Iranian Khomeinists, or Pakistan's Jamaat e-Islami?

Develop foreign policy mechanisms to disincentivize Qatari and Turkish Government facilitation of the Brotherhood and ultimately think about suspending Turkey from NATO.

Use the MB designation as a template to transition immediately from the currently useless ideological center of CVE, countering violent extremism, to the more practical one of countering Islamism.

And please stop engaging Muslim Brotherhood legacy groups in government, media, and NGOs, and recognize their Islamist terrorist sympathies.

Thank you.

[Prepared statement of Dr. Jasser follows:]

TESTIMONY for Hearing before:

The House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Subcommittee on National Security

“The Muslim Brotherhood’s Global Threat”

Submitted by Dr. M. ZUHDI JASSER

PRESIDENT, AMERICAN ISLAMIC FORUM FOR DEMOCRACY

July 11, 2018

Introduction: Thank you Chairman DeSantis and members of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform Subcommittee on National Security for holding this very important hearing on *“The Muslim Brotherhood’s Global Threat.”* I am Dr. M. Zuhdi Jasser, President and founder of the American Islamic Forum for Democracy (AIFD) based in Phoenix, Arizona. I am here today, because as an American Muslim, I have dedicated my life to countering the oppressive and radicalizing influence of Islamist groups in the West upon our communities. No group embodies the threat of radical Islamism more than the Muslim Brotherhood (MB), and no group runs deeper into the consciousness of global Islamism, especially in our Arab Sunni communities than the Muslim Brotherhood and its global network of affiliates and progeny across the world. Unfortunately, much of the conversation about the Muslim Brotherhood has been obstructed, muffled, marginalized, deferred, or minimized by Muslim Brotherhood sympathizers or their allies.

As a devout Muslim who loves my faith, and loves my nation, the avoidance behavior of confronting the Muslim Brotherhood is a major obstacle to our national security and harmony. This has stemmed from a bigger policy to de-emphasize “radical Islam” and the “Islamist” root cause of global Islamist terror. There is no better place to begin an honest conversation about the Islamist threat imposed upon our nation than a focus on the Muslim Brotherhood. A denial of the truth about the Muslim Brotherhood has actually emboldened extremists on both sides of this debate: both radical Islamists and anti-Muslim fascists. In fact, nothing would be more pro-Muslim than the marginalization of the Muslim Brotherhood and its direct affiliates. Making the Muslim Brotherhood radioactive would allow the light to shine upon their most potent antagonists in Muslim communities—those who reject political Islam and believe in liberty and the separation of mosque and state.

Since 9/11 the discussion of the global security threat of the Muslim Brotherhood has sadly and noticeably demonstrated our national disfunction in addressing the depth of the real threat of radical Islam and more specifically the threat of Islamism (aka, political Islam). Our negligence, ignorance, and distraction has enabled groups like the Muslim Brotherhood to take advantage of our unprecedented freedoms and excessively thrive in a manner frankly often not possible anywhere else in the world. It seems that almost every discussion about Muslims and Islam looks at our communities, organizations, faith, and movements through a binary lens of good or bad, ally or enemy. The reality is that it is far more complicated and yes, at times, nuanced.

As we take a look at the Muslim Brotherhood, I will lay out for you their origins, history, networks, ideologies, and direct connections to terrorism.

Neither Islam nor Muslims are monolithic and should not be treated as such by anyone – much less our government and media. Please understand, it is as equally foolhardy in counter-terrorism and counter-radicalization work to refuse to acknowledge the role of political Islam in the threat as it is to villainize the whole of Islam and all Muslims. The majority of Americans are smart enough to understand that truthfully identifying the Muslim Brotherhood as a radical terror organization does not demonize all or even most Muslims. In fact, identifying the primary cancer cell(s)

¹ TESTIMONY for Hearing before: The House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform Subcommittee on National Security. **The Muslim Brotherhood’s Global Threat.** July 11, 2018

of global radical Islamism will go a long way towards beginning to assuage the fears of concerned Americans. Any gross generalization either way is dangerous.

Stating the House of "Islam has no problems" is just as problematic as declaring that "Islam and all Muslims are *the* problem." I am here to tell you that our national security policy of refusing to say that "Islam currently *has* a problem" is dangerous. This surrender, which began just after 9-11, has chartered a course towards failure. It has hamstrung our homeland security heroes from addressing any of the most central Islamist precursors of militant Islamists. If the agency actually emphasized the central role of radical Islamism and its attendant theo-political ideologies of groups like the Muslim Brotherhood, it would shift the entire axis of our agency apparatus toward once and for all beginning to actually address the root cause of the theocratic strains of Islam (or Islamism), which would begin to make us safer. So-called Violent Extremism (VE) is simply an endpoint of a common supremacist ideology that is innately theo-political and is a radicalization process that occurs over months to years and is far easier to publicly monitor than waiting for guess work on "Violent Extremism". There is no better representative of an organization with global reach that endlessly produces Islamist terror progeny than the Brotherhood.

Almost 17 years after 9/11, it is not too late to begin correcting this wrong-headed policy. The best place to begin this course correction is in our approach towards the Muslim Brotherhood. Those who say that an honest identification of the radicalism behind membership and ideology of the Muslim Brotherhood would enflame Brotherhood sympathizers both ignore the successes of Muslim Brotherhood's global project during the past two decades (if not the last century), and they use the very evidence that the Brotherhood are militant Islamists to argue against us identifying them as a threat. It also presumes that the United States is afraid of facing terror groups and their sympathizers due to their radicalization. It also presumes that the United States national security policy should forever remain in a posture of defense against the Muslim Brotherhood rather than one of an offense.

Background on AIFD, The Muslim Reform Movement and Important Terminology

Our American Islamic Forum for Democracy (AIFD) was founded in 2003 in the wake of the horrific attacks of September 11. For us it is a very personal mission to leave our American Muslim children a legacy that their faith is based in the unalienable right to liberty and to teach them that the principles that founded America do not contradict their faith but strengthen it. AIFD's founding principle is that we as Muslims can best practice our faith in a society like the United States that guarantees the rights of every individual under God but blind to any one faith with no governmental intermediary stepping between the individual and the creator to interpret the will of God. Because of this, our mission is explicitly *to advocate for the principles of the Constitution of the United States of America, liberty and freedom through the separation of mosque and state*. Thus, our mission is directly intended to counter the global Islamist project through the advancement of the ideas of freedom and liberty and deconstruct the ideas of Islamist theocracy much along the lines of America's founding fathers. We believe that this mission from within the "House of Islam" is the only way to inoculate Muslim youth and young adults against radicalization. The "Liberty narrative" is the only effective counter to the "Islamist narrative."

AIFD is the most prominent American Muslim organization directly confronting and attempting to reform against the ideas of political Islam and its global byproducts embodied in groups like the Muslim Brotherhood. We believe Muslims can openly counter the common belief that the Muslim faith is inextricably rooted to the concept of the Islamic state (Islamism). We reject the stranglehold which the Muslim Brotherhood, its establishment, and its affiliates have on our communities. AIFD's mission is derived from a love for America and a love of our faith of Islam. The theocratic "Islamic" regimes of the Middle East and many Muslim majority nations use their interpretations of Islam and 'shari'a' as a way to control Muslim populations. Similarly, Islamist movements and their political parties like the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt, the Khomeinists of Iran, and the Jamaat e-Islami of Pakistan use their liberation theology to repress vulnerable populations and fuel countless militant Islamist offshoots. Many people try to separate the central elements of these parties from their militant terrorist progeny. However, that separation is exactly the deception with which theo-political Islamist movements like the Muslim Brotherhood try to advance. As

Recip Erdogan, the President of Turkey, has infamously said about democracy, "it is a train that we ride until we get where we need to get and then we get off."

AIFD was founded on the premise that the root cause of Islamist terrorism is the ideology of political Islam and a belief in the preference for and supremacy of an Islamic state and its attendant global union in a caliphate. Terrorism is but a means to that end. Most Islamist terror is driven by the desire of Islamists to drive the influence of the west (the ideas of liberty) out of the Muslim consciousness and Muslim majority societies. With almost a quarter of the world's population Muslim, American security will never be sustained until Muslims understand and embrace the ideas of liberty and non-Muslims understand the perils of political Islam. This will happen neither without identifying the enemy: radical Islamism nor without identifying our allies: Muslims who believe in liberty and reject theocracy.

At the American Islamic Forum for Democracy (AIFD), we constantly ask that Americans not just observe what is happening inside the House of Islam but that you take the sides of the reformers, dissidents, and secularists against the theocratic Islamists like the Muslim Brotherhood. There is no better time than now, for the United States to declare its support for freedom loving Muslims by calling out one of the most insidious and dangerous terror threats within global Muslim communities—the Muslim Brotherhood.

AIFD most recently convened and helped launch the **Muslim Reform Movement (MRM)** in December 2015 in Washington D.C.¹ The Muslim Reform Movement is a coalition of over 15 Western Muslim Leaders (from the U.S., Canada, and Europe) whose goal is to actively fight radical Islam from inside by confronting the idea of Islamism at its roots. The MRM has written a Declaration for Muslim Reform, a living document which was presented to all Islamic organizations, leaders and mosques across the U.S. in 2016 (**Appendix 1**), with hopes of using its principles as a firewall to clearly separate radical Islamists (like the Muslim Brotherhood) from Muslims who believe in universal human rights.²

Not one iota of this work is possible in an environment where government agencies and the American public writ large are unwilling to call out influential groups like the Muslim Brotherhood as theocrats and terrorists while engaging other reform minded, modernists with diverse interpretations of core terms, ideas, and movements. Any attempts and policies to protect the Muslim Brotherhood as somehow a group that can evolve within a climate of democracy belies their 90-year history and continues to hand them dominion over Muslim leadership, tribalism, and their 'establishment'.

Islamic ideological Framework and the Muslim Brotherhood

Our founding fathers were able to navigate a war of ideas against theocracy. We can do it again in the 21st century with Islam. It is absurd to assert that just because the Muslim Brotherhood is an Islamist group which uses its interpretation of the faith of Islam as a basis for its rule, that the United States cannot wage a battle against Islamist theocrats while cherishing Muslim liberals, modernists and critical thinkers. We have for too long been playing a "whack-a-mole" program against byproducts of Muslim Brotherhood ideologues rather than directly countering the primary cancer cells of the Muslim Brotherhood operations.

In order to understand the Muslim Brotherhood, the following terms and ideas must become part of the fair domain of our national security agencies. Our agency analysts and government experts are both smart and fair enough to know that each of these terms carries with it a diverse set of interpretations from within the 'House of Islam' and that suppressing this essential debate hands the debate to our Islamist enemies. I submit the following terms and proposed definitions for the record in hopes that other government

¹ Press Conference of the Launch of the Muslim Reform Movement, National Press Club, December 4, 2015: : <https://youtu.be/xlAnr8b1lr8>

² Declaration of the Muslim Reform Movement. Washington, D.C. December 4, 2015. <https://muslimreformmovement.org/first-page-posts/declaration/>

³ TESTIMONY for Hearing before: The House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform Subcommittee on National Security. **The Muslim Brotherhood's Global Threat.** July 11, 2018

agencies follow suit and rather than engaging Islamist apologists who obstruct and deny, that they instead begin engaging honest Muslims who are ready to confront the global radical movements that use them:

- A. **Islam:** the faith tradition, its practice, and scriptures identified by over 1.6 billion Muslims in the world.
- B. **Islamism and Islamists:** the theo-political movement (Islamism) or party and its adherents (Islamists) who seek to establish Islamic states governed by shar'ia law in Muslim majority nations and institutions. Muslim Brotherhood members are Islamists.
- C. **Shar'ia:** Islamic theological jurisprudence as interpreted by Muslim jurists and clerics and practiced by Muslims. The legal instrument of Islamist theocrats.
- D. **Jihad:** a holy war or armed struggle against unbelievers or enemies of an Islamic state. It can also mean spiritual struggle within oneself against sin.
- E. **Wahhabism:** a Sunni Islamist movement based in a puritanical literalism and intolerance of any other interpretations or faith. A revivalist movement originated in the Najd of Arabia in the mid-19th century by Ibn Abdul Wahhab. It is the dominant strain of thought empowered by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Its ideas are central to the Salafi-jihadism of groups like Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS).
- F. **Salafism:** Sunni Islamic fundamentalism which attempts to return normative Muslim practices to the literal ways of the Prophet Muhammad in the 7th century. Salaf literally means "companions of the Prophet". It is often synonymous with Wahhabism but is far more ubiquitous. Salafism, like Wahhabism deplores invention.
- G. **Salafi-jihadism:** The expansionist ideology (a combination of Salafism with militant jihadism) of groups like the Muslim Brotherhood that seek to create Islamic states and a global caliphate.
- H. **Caliphate and Caliphism:** the theo-political ideology or desire by Islamists to re-establish the caliphate, a globally unified Islamic governance of Islamic states which are led by a single caliph.
- I. **Ummah:** the entire Muslim Faith community, but it can also mean the Islamic state
- J. **Islamic reform, *Ijtihad*:** critical interpretation of scripture (exegesis) and Islamic jurisprudence in the light of modernity.
- K. **Takfir:** the rejection ('excommunication') of another Muslim from the faith community. The declaration of another Muslim as an apostate.

Please see the attached diagram to understand where the Muslim Brotherhood fits into various ethnic, sectarian, historic, and ideological divisions within the faith. (**Appendix 2**).

To think that these words and concepts, and others are off limits in the freest nation on earth, censored to our agencies, is just incredulous considering the growing threat we face today from violent Islamism. It smacks of a bizarre invocation of blasphemy laws in America. It is groups like the Muslim Brotherhood that have benefited from our refusal to discuss these elements of Islam and Islamism. Violent manifestations of each of these above ideas is a natural byproduct of the intolerant non-violent underbelly of theo-political autocratic belief systems. Any security apparatus unable or unwilling to connect the dots between the non-violent and violent manifestations of these ideologies is leaving us bare and will continue to miss the signs of radicalization. A designation of the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist organization will necessitate a bring about a long overdue better understanding of these concepts by our security apparatus.

The latest recommendations from the Homeland Security Advisory Council ignorantly state the exact opposite recommending that only "plain American English words" be used and these terms be avoided.³ We cannot functionally address the global threat of the Muslim Brotherhood without understanding these concepts.

³ Interim Report and Recommendations of the Homeland Security Advisory Council Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) Subcommittee of the US Department of Homeland Security. June 2016.

⁴ TESTIMONY for Hearing before: The House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform Subcommittee on National Security. **The Muslim Brotherhood's Global Threat.** July 11, 2018

I hope and pray that my testimony today about the Muslim Brotherhood will open your eyes to the reality our government has been dismissing when it comes to their global threat upon our national security.

Personally, I will add that we are rendered entirely unarmed in our work at AIFD and in the Muslim Reform Movement in America, Canada, and Europe if we cannot engage our own faith community within the House of Islam on these ideas and if agencies are too timid to address the threat of the Muslim Brotherhood and its influence in radicalizing Muslims across the planet into “Violent Islamism”.⁴ All of the Muslim leaders in our Muslim Reform Movement would agree that looking just at “Violent Extremism” (VE) is too nebulous, nonspecific and will result over and over in agency blinders to the attacks we have seen including the radical Islamist attacks at Fort Hood, Boston Marathon, Chattanooga, San Bernardino, and now Orlando. *We cannot hold security agencies accountable to precursor ideologies and warning signs when those precursors and their groups like the Muslim Brotherhood are not identified as real threats.*

History of the Muslim Brotherhood

We hear many denials all over the map about the Brotherhood threat. From dismissals that the Muslim Brotherhood is disorganized, to it is normalized, to it is too weak. We hear “it is not one organization” to “it is nonexistent” to “no one knows what it actually is” to “it is a legitimate peaceful political party that participates in elections in Egypt and Tunisia and elsewhere”. On and on. Essentially, it is imperative that we first agree on what the facts are regarding the Muslim Brotherhood.

The Muslim Brotherhood was founded in Egypt in 1928. It expanded rapidly across Egypt upon the ideas of its founder Hassan Al-Banna on the premise the Islamic world was declining against Western hegemony. From the outset it established a secret apparatus to serve as “defender of the movement against the police and governments of Egypt.” Another founding father of the Brotherhood Islamist movement, Sayyid Qutb authored the primary manifesto of the Muslim Brotherhood’s ideology *Milestones* in 1964. This book argued for the establishment of Islamic political systems with whatever means necessary most particularly using violent jihad. Having been particularly impacted by his impression of freedom in America during his two-year stay at the University of Colorado, referred to any part of the world without an Islamic governance as corrupt and ignorant or “*jahilliyah*”. They both called for the implementation of traditional and theocratic Islamic society.

Al-Banna and then Qutb put forth the notion that Islam is all encompassing for society and their motto became and remains until today, “*Allah is our objective, the Prophet is our Leaders, the Qur’an is our constitution, jihad is our way, and death for the sake of God is our highest aspiration.*”⁵

Al-Banna argues for Islamic liberation theology in a step-wise process from individual, to family, home, education, society, and nation to rid it of foreign domination, political, economic, and spiritual in an Islamic state and its caliphate of states in order to master the world. This process begins with the societal ‘upbringing’ process of children also known as—*tarbiyah*—a program seen in the youth programs of all Muslim Brotherhood indoctrination programs including western Brotherhood organizations like the Muslim American Society (MAS).

For decades the Muslim Brotherhood cut its teeth on its own perennial victimization and repression by severely autocratic Arab regimes like the Egyptian dictatorships of Gamal Abdel Nasser, Anwar Sadat, and Hosni Mubarak as well as other Arab regimes that they conveniently associated with secularism even though the distinction between Western liberal democratic secularism and Arab tyrannical secularism was intentionally dismissed by them as all being *jahilli* (ignorant). It is no coincidence that Qutb was not only the founding father ideologically of the Muslim Brotherhood but also inspired Osama bin Laden, Al Qaeda leaders, and radical jihadists across the planet. There have

⁴ <http://www.muslimreformmovement.org>

⁵ Mustafa Mashhour, “Jihad is the Way” (AR) *IkhwanWiki*, <http://www.ikhwanwiki.com/index.php?title=>

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been many less frontal more supposedly democratically accommodating descendants of Qutbian ideology. However, it's underlying supremacist jihadist mission of its party and secret apparatus never changes.

Their logo and motto has always been the same. Some apologists try to say that jihad is a greater jihad and not a lesser jihad of militant movements. In fact, the founder, Hassan al-Banna, rejected the greater jihad and in his tract "On Jihad" said as: "... *Jihad in its literal significance means to put forth one's maximal effort in word and deed, and Benessa said in an undated speech in the sacred law it is the slaying of the unbelievers and related connotations, such as beating them, plundering their wealth, destroying their shrines and smashing their idols... It is obligatory on us to begin fighting with them after transmitting the invitation to embrace Islam, even if they do not fight against us.*"⁶ Thus, terrorism is appropriate when it suits the MB and its affiliates. Sheikh Yusuf Qaradawi, today's contemporary Al-Banna, in his speeches and books, has enlisted the same thought process on salafi-jihadism.

Moderating the Muslim Brotherhood?

Robert S. Leiken and Stephen Brooke of the Nixon Center tried to bizarrely argue in 2007 that the Muslim Brotherhood could somehow be moderated and be an ally against supposedly more radical groups like Al Qaeda and against other common more radical enemies like Iran.⁷ They famously argued that American policy should be to find the moderates within the Muslim Brotherhood and use them rather than avoid them. As Muslim brotherhood expert, Eric Trager points out in his book, *Arab Fall*, Mark Lynch even "went further to say that the Muslim brotherhood could serve as a 'firewall' against Al Qaeda style radicalism." He further noted that Lynch said its organization "allows it to effectively monitor and control social space through mosques, charities, organizational networks, and widespread networks adding that the brotherhood's presence in religious institutions made it a more effective counter to jihadis than domestic intelligence agencies or non-Islamists neither of which could penetrate the religious sphere."^{8 9}

It is unfathomable that D.C. thought leaders were convincing Americans that the mothership of Sunni Muslim radicalization would be our ally only because it was positioned so centrally within the Muslim theological network of Egypt and other Muslim states and communities. It is a "bigotry of low expectations" that caters only to the existing Islamic establishment at the expense of Muslims and all the vulnerable populations under the boots of Islamists. In fact, in D.C. its very cancerous network became the reported reason for which we should tolerate and turn a blind eye to supposedly "minority radical offshoots" rather than treat the primary cancer of the Muslim Brotherhood itself. Put another way. According to voices of policy makers sympathetic to Muslim Brotherhood Islamists, the alternative to trying to defeat the Muslim Brotherhood is allying with the radical global terrorist group in the hope of somehow sharing some goals. I find that very premise deeply offensive both as an American and as a Muslim.

There was also a growing false premise that the Brotherhood had rejected violence and accepted electoral politics, political parties and nonviolence. Many in the West even wanted to believe that they had rejected Qutbism. However, none of these statements, which were façades, were joined with theological and ideological reform and rejection of core Islamism. Trager summarized that: "*The Brotherhood's autocratic behavior in power (after 2011) discredited the moderate Muslim Brotherhood argument to a great extent and not because the Brotherhood's behavior or goals fundamentally changed once it became Egypt's ruling party as some have argued. Rather those*

⁶ Majmuat Rasail Al-Imam al-shahid Hasan Al-banna. International Islamic Federation of Student Organizations. pp. 238 <https://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/misc/837.pdf#page=239>

⁷ Robert S. Leiken and Steven Brooke, "The Moderate Muslim Brotherhood," *Foreign Affairs* 86, no. 2 (March-April 2007), 108, 113.

⁸ Marc Lynch, "Assessing the MB Firewall" *Abu Aardvark*, May 13, 2008, (<http://abuaardvark.typepad.com/abuaardvark/2008/05/assessing-the-m.html>)

⁹ Eric Trager. *Arab Fall: How the Muslim Brotherhood Won and Lost Egypt in 891 Days*. Georgetown University Press. Washington, D.C. pp. 41.

who touted the Brotherhood's moderation mistakenly privileged the group's political tactics which have shifted over time in their analysis while downplaying the totalitarian and anti-Western goals that have defined the brotherhood since its founding.¹⁰ "In short, the Muslim Brotherhood was never a moderate organization or a democratic one in any sense of that word. It is a rigidly hierarchical, purpose driven vanguard that seeks total control over its members so that they can mobilize them for empowering Hassan al-Banna's deeply politicized interpretation of Islam as an all embracing concept. It accepts electoral institutions as a mechanism for winning power but its ultimate goal is theocratic: it seeks to establish an Islamic state and ultimately establish a global Islamic state that will challenge the West. And following Mubarak's ouster it was the only political group in Egypt with a nationwide political machine. The brotherhood therefore had an unprecedented opportunity to finally transition from spreading its message within Egyptian society to pursuing power outright"¹¹

Simply put: there is no 'moderate' Muslim brotherhood; that is a misnomer. Every arm of the organization goes towards the purpose of supporting its central primary mission of Islamist hegemony and rule.

The Muslim Brotherhood is a terrorist organization

Prior to the Arab Awakening in 2011, the Muslim Brotherhood leadership often made no qualms about supporting the goals of Al Qaeda. In September 2010 the Supreme Guide of the Muslim Brotherhood, Mohamed Badie, delivered a weekly sermon mirroring the ideological themes of Al-Qaeda's August 1996 declaration of war against the United States. Calling on Arab and Muslim regimes to confront not just Israel, but also the U.S., he declared that *"Resistance is the only solution against the Zio-American arrogance and tyranny."* This "resistance" can only come from fighting and understanding *"that the improvement and change that the [Muslim] nation seeks can only be attained through jihad and sacrifice and by raising a jihadi generation that pursues death just as the enemies pursue life."* He also predicted the imminent downfall of the U.S., saying, *"The U.S. is now experiencing the beginning of its end, and is heading towards its demise."*¹² Barry Rubin remarked, *"The Muslim Brotherhood's leader has endorsed anti-American jihad and a view virtually identical to al-Qaida's ideology. Since the Brotherhood is the main opposition in Egypt and Jordan and the most powerful group in Muslim communities of Europe and North America, this is serious stuff"..."it was a declaration of war that went unnoticed. The Muslim Brotherhood recently called for jihad on the U.S. and Israel, adopting a view almost identical to Al-Qaeda's."*¹³

For any naysayers over the years, the Muslim Brotherhood's recent period of rule of the Egyptian government of 17 months that came to an end in June 2013 proved that it was not a functional moderate democratic organization but rather a radical militant Islamist organization which produced and continues to produce many terrorist offshoots in their network of organizations and individuals. At some point every honest analyst will need to recognize that the fruit of the poisoned tree will never be acceptable, and it is the Brotherhood's tree which is the primary problem in the Arab Sunni world and not just its "whack a mole" byproducts.

We have learned many lessons from the revolutions of the Arab Awakening in 2011. Most significant of those is how directly related the Muslim Brotherhood is to almost every Sunni radical Islamist group in the region. There was direct communication between Pres. Mohammed Morsi and Al Qaeda leader Ayman Al-Zawahiri according to a

¹⁰ Erick Trager. *Arab Fall: How the Muslim Brotherhood Won and Lost Egypt in 891 Days*. Georgetown University Press. Washington, D.C. pp. 44.

¹¹ Eric Trager. *Arab Fall: How the Muslim Brotherhood won and lost Egypt in 891 Days*. Georgetown University Press. Washington, D.C. pp. 54.

¹² Dispatch 3274. *Muslim Brotherhood Supreme Guide: 'The U.S. is Now Experiencing the Beginning of Its End'; Improvement and Change in the Muslim World 'Can Only Be Attained through Jihad And Sacrifice*. MEMRI. October 6, 2010.

¹³ Barry Rubin. *The Region: The Declaration of War that went Unnoticed*. JPost. 23:29. October 10, 2010

November 22, 2013 article in Egypt's Al-Watan newspaper. Morsi allegedly agreed to grant a presidential pardon to over 20 terrorists including one of the lotteries childhood friends who was running Ansar Bayt-al-Maqdis, an ISIS branch in the Sinai.¹⁴ Morsi's brother actually mediated the initial contacts between Al-Zawahiri and Morsi himself. In a telling confluence of ideologies and strategies, Al-Zawahiri told Morsi, "*Rule by God's law for us to stand beside you, there is no so-called democracy, then get rid of your opponents*," according to the *El-Watan* transcript. The Al Qaeda militants also even agreed at a remote border area training camps with common personnel to defend the Brotherhood regime. For those who question the veracity of these accounts, there is no doubt that attacks in the Sinai increased following Morsi's fall from power. And Brotherhood leader Mohammed el-Beltagy following Morsi's deposition said that attacks in the Sinai would stop the second president Morsi is reinstated¹⁵ Ansar Beit al-Maqdis, the group responsible for most of the attacks, belonged to al-Qaida before joining the Islamic State (ISIS) in 2014. Reports indicate that Ansar Beit al-Maqdis was "structurally" tied with the MB.

On January 27, 2015, the Muslim Brotherhood published on their official Ikhwanonline.com website an announcement that the organization was entering a "new phase" and calling its followers to prepare for a "*long, uncompromising jihad*" against the Egyptian government. The statement also positively recalled the Muslim Brotherhood's terrorist past, including the operations of the "secret apparatus" terror wing active in the 1940s and 1950s, and the group's battalions organized by Brotherhood founder Hassan al-Banna that fought against Israel during its War of Independence in 1948.¹⁶ Since Aug 2013, Muslim Brotherhood members in Egypt have been killed in firefights during attacks on police and military targets, and during the manufacture and placement of explosives for acts of terrorism. There were innumerable calls for violence in '14-'15 by the leadership of the Muslim Brotherhood including calling for retribution and beheadings from rotten bodies. Coptic Christians faced ongoing violence from vigilante Muslim extremists, including members of the Muslim Brotherhood, many of whom acted with impunity. Attacks included 70 churches and more than 1,000 homes and businesses of Coptic families torched in the ensuing violence. During the Muslim Brotherhood protests, direct incitement towards the Copts was repeatedly reported from leading Muslim Brotherhood figures, and since the protest dispersal this targeting of the Christian community continues in official statements on Muslim Brotherhood social media outlets and from its leadership. As the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) has previously noted, this terror campaign by the Muslim Brotherhood is not a new development. Over the past decade violence by the Muslim Brotherhood has been directed at the Coptic community, as it observed back in its 2003 Annual Report.¹⁷ MB Sheikh Essam Telemeh said if police detain your family you should organize and kidnap their family as hostages.¹⁸ A senior Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood leader, Ashraf Abdel Ghaffar, gave a July 3, 2015 interview where he defended the sabotage of power stations and high voltage pylons targeting Egyptian citizens by the Muslim Brotherhood as punishment for support of the Egyptian government.¹⁹ Then, On May 27, 2015, a group of 159 Muslim Brotherhood-associated scholars from 35 nations announced the publication of a document endorsing violence in Egypt in response to a "war against Islam's principles." Specifically, Article 4 of the "Call to Egypt" calls for "retribution punishment" against government officials, judges, police, soldiers, religious officials, and media personalities backing the government.²⁰ The document was affirmed by the Muslim Brotherhood in an English-language statement published on their official website.²¹

I served on USCIRF from 2012 to 2016 and visited Egypt in 2013 when the Muslim Brotherhood was in control of government. I was not only struck by their inability to rule but by their monocular Islamist lens with which they

¹⁴ John Rossomondo. "Emails show Clinton was Told about MB-AQ Links". *IPT News*. May 2, 2016.

¹⁵ John Rossomondo. "Emails show Clinton was Told about MB-AQ Links". *IPT News*. May 2, 2016.

¹⁶ Adam Kredo. Open Jihad Declared in Egypt Following State Dept. Meeting with Muslim Brotherhood-Aligned Leaders. Muslim Brotherhood call for 'long, uncompromising jihad'. January 30, 2015.

¹⁷ USCIRF Annual Report. Egypt: A Country of Particular Concern (CPC). May 2015.

¹⁸ Patrick Poole. Muslim Brotherhood Steps Up Terror in Egypt, While U.S. Provides Cover. *PJ Media*. June 2, 2015.

¹⁹ Leila Fadel. Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood Divides over Response to Killings. July 11, 2015.

²⁰ Muslim Brotherhood supports call for retribution. Daily News Egypt. May 31, 2015.

²¹ Muslim Brotherhood Statement Reiterates Commitment to January 25 Revolution Goals. May 29, 2015.

viewed Egyptian society, government and the world. I was also struck by the number of American Muslim Brotherhood sympathizers who had gone back to help facilitate the Muslim Brotherhood's governance. Even with that, they were all quite young and not very interested in making the Constitutional process egalitarian and secular. They insisted upon keeping final authority of law with the clerics in determining its adherence to shar'iah. Last, they would have nothing with abandoning their motto, symbol and jihadism.

Furthermore, if not most importantly, the connection between the Muslim Brotherhood, Al Qaeda, ISIS, and other radical Islamist groups was noted in a series of emails between Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and confidant Sid Blumenthal on April 7, 2011. Blumenthal reported at the time that he was directly told by the highest levels that the relationship between the MB, Al Qaeda and other radical groups was "complicated".²²

Muslim Brotherhood's Global Threat

This relationship was also not only limited to Egypt. The Clinton emails describe definitive links between the MB and Al Qaeda in **Libya** as seen for example with Ali Al-Salabi, who founded the Al Qaeda linked Libya national party (LNP). Al-Sallabi is described as Qaradawi's man in Libya (Muslim Brotherhood leader Sheikh Yusuf Al-Qaradawi based in Qatar since exile from Egypt in 1961).²³ The LNP was dominated by former members of Al-Qaeda linked Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG) who maintained al-Qaeda ties during their struggle with forces of former dictator Muammar al-Qaddafi. Militias of the Libyan Muslim Brotherhood joined forces with U.S. designated terrorist organizations, particularly Ansar al-Sharia, as part of the Shura Council of Benghazi Revolutionaries and Libya Dawn forces fighting against the military forces of the internationally recognized Libyan government.²⁴

Similarly in **Tunisia**, Rached al-Ghannouchi, head of Tunisia's Brotherhood affiliated Ennahda Party, was allied with Ansar al-Sharia and its late leader, Abu Iyadh, a former Bin Laden ally sanctioned by the U.S. after 9/11. Abu Iyadh was responsible for al-Qaida's assassination of Northern Alliance leader Ahmed Shah Masood two days before the attacks on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon.²⁵

Yemen's MB also has deep connections to Al Qaeda in the Arab Peninsula through Sheikh Abdul Majid al-Zindani. Treasury Department officials described al-Zindani as a "Bin Laden loyalist" in a 2004 press release. He also helped al-Qaida leader Anwar al-Awlaki, while serving on the board of the Brotherhood-linked Union of Good, which raises funds for Hamas.²⁶ ²⁷ On February 2, 2004, the Treasury Department designated Shaykh Al-Zindani, a leader of the Yemeni Muslim Brotherhood's Al-Islah political party, a terrorist. The Treasury Department's designation states that al-Zindani has a "long history of working with Bin Laden, serving as one of his spiritual leaders," in addition to his activities in support of Al-Qaeda, including recruiting and procuring weapons. Al-Zindani was also identified in a federal lawsuit as a coordinator of the October 2000 suicide attack targeting the U.S.S. Cole in Aden, Yemen that killed 17 U.S. Navy sailors, including personally selecting the two suicide bombers. In September 2012, al-Zindani reportedly called for his supporters to kill U.S. Marines stationed at the U.S. Embassy in Sana'a, Yemen. Zindani is the personification of the link between elements of the Muslim Brotherhood and Al-Qaeda because Zindani has been a leader of the Yemeni Brotherhood's Al-Islah Party, a member of Al-Qaradawi's International

²² John Rossomondo. "Emails show Clinton was Told about MB-AQ Links". *IPT News*. May 2, 2016.

²³ Email (February 27, 2011) from Jake Sullivan to Hillary Clinton. Wikileaks. <https://wikileaks.org/clinton-emails/emailid/28627>

²⁴ Al Arabiya Institute for Studies. *Libyan Dawn: Map of allies and enemies*. *AlArabiya*. August 25, 2014.

²⁵ Top Tunisian Militant killed by U.S. Strike in Libya. AFP. July 3, 2015. <https://tribune.com.pk/story/914209/top-tunisian-militant-killed-by-us-strike-in-libya-report/>

²⁶ U.S. Designates Bin Laden Loyalist. Department of Treasury Press Release. February 24, 2004.

<https://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/js1190.aspx>

²⁷ Abdul Majid Al-Zindani. The Global Muslim Brotherhood Daily Watch. <https://www.globalmbwatch.com/abd-al-majid-al-zindani/> (accessed July 8, 2018).

Union of Muslim Scholars, the Union of the Good Hamas fundraising syndicate, and was identified as a mentor of Osama Bin Laden and an advisor to AQAP in 2013. Additionally, Al-Qaida and the Muslim Brotherhood have also used many of the same funding mechanisms, such as the Lugano, Switzerland based Al-Taqwa Bank.²⁸

And in what was a significant low point in American foreign policy Blumenthal reported to Clinton that "MB leaders were pleased with the results of the discussions with the USG and IMF both of which in the analysis of the MB leaders appear to accept the idea of Egypt as an Islamic state". This sentiment from the U.S. continued and was reinforced at the 2012 World Economic Forum in Davos. Their entire model for rule as expressed by the Supreme Guide Mohamed Badie was that they would use the Turkish model of civilian rather than clerical rule as long as it always was in line with Islamic law as the Egyptian Constitution of 2012 enumerated. This is by definition a theocracy. Gemal Al-Banna, Hassan al-Banna's brother warned prior to his death in January 2013, that shari'ah would then always prevail in such a system.

In **Kuwait**, the Kuwaiti Muslim Brotherhood's Lajnat al-Daawa al-Islamiya ("Islamic Call Committee") was designated by President George W. Bush on September 23, 2001 by Executive Order 13224 and by Secretary of State Colin Powell on January 9, 2003. Reasons cited for the designation included Lajnat al-Daawa being used as a financial conduit for Osama bin Laden and Al-Qaeda, and its funding of terrorist groups in Chechnya and Libya. Both Al-Qaeda operations chief Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and World Trade Center bomber Ramzi Yousef held positions with the organization.²⁹

Last but not least, the designation of Muslim Brotherhood entities as terror organizations is not new. The **Hamas** designation is a Muslim Brotherhood designation. The United States has previously designated global elements of the Muslim Brotherhood. The terrorist group HAMAS, which self-identifies as "one of the wings of the Muslim Brotherhood in Palestine," was designated a terrorist organization by President William Clinton on January 23, 1995 by Executive Order 12947, and later by Secretary of State Madeline Albright on October 7, 1997.^{30 31}

The Muslim Brotherhood in the United States

This all then comes full circle with many obvious connections of American Islamist leaders to the Muslim Brotherhood and its terror apparatus. One glaring example is Esam Omeish, a former president of the Muslim American Society (MAS). The MAS is a well known as the overt arm in the US of the global Muslim Brotherhood as chronicled by an extensive investigative series in the *Chicago Tribune*.³² He remains a prominent figure at Dar al-Hijra mosque in Falls Church, Virginia. Last summer he was labeled by the national security committee of the Libyan House of Representatives as an enemy of the state. He has recently advocated that the U.S. support a group known variably as the "Revolutionary Shura Council," or the "Mujahideen Shura of Derna," despite ties between its officials

²⁸ Matthew Levitt. Untangling the Terror Web. Al Qaeda is not the only Element. Policy 672. October 28, 2002 <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/untangling-the-terror-web-al-qaeda-is-not-the-only-element>

²⁹ Executive Order on Terrorist Financing, Blocking Property and Prohibiting Transactions with Persons Who Commit, Threaten to Commit, or Support Terrorism. White House Press Secretary. September 24, 2001.

³⁰ The Charter of the Islamic Resistance Movement. August 18, 1988.

<https://fas.org/irp/world/para/docs/880818a.htm>

³¹ Foreign Terrorist Organizations. U.S. Dept. of State. Hamas. October 8, 1997.

³² Noreen S. Ahmed-Ullah, Sam Roe and Laurie Cohen. *Chicago Tribune*. September 19, 2004. <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/watchdog/chi-0409190261sep19-story.html>

and al-Qaida. Egypt's air force bombed the group in retaliation for terror attacks against Coptic Christians in April.³³ Omeish endorsed Libya's Muslim Brotherhood in a 2012 *IRIN News* article, stating that although it came in a distant second in Libya's 2012 elections, it "*may be able to provide a better platform and a more coherent agenda of national action.*"³⁴ After appointment to a statewide immigration commission in 2007 by Virginia Senator Tim Kaine, Omeish was asked to resign after a revelation among others that he praised "*Palestinians who chose the jihad way to liberation*" during a rally in 2000. He has also congratulated Palestinians who gave "*up their lives for the sake of Allah and for the sake of Al-Aqsa*". The connection of the MB motto, mission, militant groups and their American affiliates could not be more obvious. There is no public information that Omeish was directly involved in any terror support. But his advocacy for jihad, the Brotherhood and its affiliates speaks volumes. The common link for many radical Islamist groups regionally and globally is the Muslim Brotherhood.

Another clinic in how American Muslim Brotherhood affiliates serve to water down or misdirect their global connections to terrorism is in the wake of the Syrian Revolution of 2011. Make no mistake. Like other revolutions in the wake of the Arab Awakening, the Syrian Revolution began as a popular attempt at shedding the yoke of Bashar Al-Assad's tyranny and his Ba'ath Party. But in the wake of the regime's genocidal approach to its own citizenry, a vacuum arose which was filled by militant Islamist groups that coalesced into ISIS in 2013. I discuss this evolution in depth at Georgetown University's Religious Freedom Institute in: "*Understanding the Cauldron that Brewed ISIS.*"³⁵ However, all of that does not ameliorate the direct connection between the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood and the host of radical Islamist groups operating in the region including ISIS and Al Qaeda. Because of its Muslim Brotherhood connections and ideologies, the **Syrian American Council (SAC)** became a dominant force among Syrian-Americans lobbying for American influence among anti-Assad revolutionary movements in Syria.

As has been typical, despite our diversity within the Syrian Muslim community, Islamists with a strong mosque and Brotherhood network are able to marginalize the rest of us secular liberal democratic thinkers. The Syrian American Council has repeatedly represented Islamist interests in Syria. They brought Islamist members of the Free Syria Army (FSA) to D.C. to lobby for support only days prior to the FSA working with Turkey to invade the Kurdish enclave of Afrin in Northwestern Syria, an American ally who helped defeat ISIS in Syria and Iraq. As the Investigate Project notes, "*no distinction existed between the FSA, Ahar al-Sham or Jabhat al-Nusra, Anas al-Abdeh, former president of the anti-Assad National Coalition of Syrian Revolution and Opposition Forces (ETILAF)*" told the London based *Al-Hayat* in 2016. The SAC's connection to the MB is apparent. Molham al-Droubi a key leader of the Syrian MB told IPT in 2013 that many of the SAC's members formerly belonged to the Syrian MB. An Arabic post in 2014 notes that its ideology is closer to ISIS than to the West. In fact the Syrian MB stated that American attacks against ISIS and its allies are not the answer. They have openly mourned the death of AlQaeda leader in Ahrar Al Asham.³⁶ Then in Qatar, the global MB leader, Yusuf al-Qaradawi an influential spiritual guide of the Muslim Brotherhood joined in criticizing the American military campaign against ISIS since while he is anti-ISIS, he only wants movements acting in the name

³³ John Rossomando. Islamist Activist Asks Obama to Support Libyan AQ Group. *IPT News*. March 18, 2016.

<https://www.investigativeproject.org/5217/islamist-activist-asks-obama-to-support-libyan-aq>

³⁴ John Rossomando. Libyan Security Committee calls U.S. Muslim Leader a Terrorist. *IPT News*. June 12, 2017.

<https://www.investigativeproject.org/6273/libyan-security-committee-calls-us-muslim-leader>

³⁵ M. Zuhdi Jasser. Understanding the Cauldron that Brewed ISIS. Religious Freedom Institute. Georgetown University. July 12, 2016. <https://www.religiousfreedominstitute.org/cornerstone/2016/7/12/understanding-the-cauldron-that-brewed-isis>

³⁶ Ravi Kumar. Syrian Brotherhood stands nearer to ISIS than to the U.S. *IPT News*. September 16, 2014.

of Islam and jihad to fight in the region.³⁷ According to Kamal al-Labwani a former ETILAF member and secular democratic activist, SAC's lobbying led the U.S. to support extremists who posed as moderates.³⁸

Another illustrative focal point between the Muslim Brotherhood and radical Islamist groups is Mohammed Ghanem. He openly supported MB ideologue, Sheikh Qaradawi saying in a 2012 Facebook post, *"I love this appreciated scholar very much, even I adore his jurisprudence. I consider this a great honor and now I am over the moon."* Ghanem is a central figure in U.S. government and State Department contacts with the Syrian opposition and was in fact was romantically involved with Khulood Kandil the former State Department Syria Opposition Outreach Desk Officer.³⁹ Her uncle, Hisham Kandil, was Egypt's prime minister during the Brotherhood's brief rule in Egypt. Ghanem openly minimized the threat of radical Islamist groups. He stated, *"Americans never felt this insecure when Ahrar al-Sham or other 'extremist' rebels established safe havens inside Syria. This is because when Syrian rebels – whatever their political beliefs – conquer territory from Assad or ISIS, they do so to seek greater opportunity and freedoms for their homeland...contrary to some news reports, rebel fighters are not barbarians."*⁴⁰ He went on to condemn the Obama administration's 2012 labeling of Jabhat al-Nusra (a known Al Qaeda affiliate) a terrorist organization because *"it cooperates closely with the Free Syrian Army and because it has achieved military successes and has delivered critical civilian aid."*⁴¹

SAC also notoriously brought Sheikh Mohammad Rateb Nabulsi, a known terror apologist, to the United States for a speaking and fundraising 17 city tour in early 2014. His website had a April 2001 fatwa fully sanctioning suicide bombing against Israeli civilians. He also is a known homophobe with long screeds against homosexuality appearing for example in April 28, 2011 on Al-Aqsa TV of HAMAS saying *"Homosexuality involves a filthy place and does not generate offspring... that is why brothers, homosexuality carries the death penalty."* He also directly and repeatedly connected what he described with homosexuality to his hate for western free nations. This cleric was clearly responsible for radicalizing countless Muslims.⁴²

The Muslim Brotherhood's network is also bolstered by a direct support by leadership of various humanitarian organizations. **Islamic Relief USA (IRUSA)** is a prime example of this activity in the United States. Khaled Lamada, IRUSA board chairman has been criticized for his connections to the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. A Facebook picture in January 2015 shows him displaying a Muslim Brotherhood salute along with Egyptian MB luminaries like Waleed Sharaby, a leader of the MB-linked Egyptian Revolutionary Council.⁴³ His social media profile is rife with Egyptian MB support. He posed in 2015 with MB Shura council member Gamal Heshmat and exiled pro-Brotherhood Egyptian judge Waleed Sharaby. Heshmat and Sharaby have openly supported terrorism. Heshmat met in 2014 in Qatar with Khaled Meshaal, who was a top Hamas official at the time. He has ridiculed the U.S. designation of Hamas as a terror group.

³⁷ Qatar-based cleric criticizes US role against Islamic State. Reuters. Middle East and North Africa. September 14, 2014.

³⁸ John Rossomando, Syrian American Council Learns How to Pressure Washington. *IPT News*. April 3, 2018.

<https://www.investigativeproject.org/7393/syrian-american-council-learns-how-to-pressure>

³⁹ John Rossomando, Syrian American Council Learns How to Pressure Washington. *IPT News*. April 3, 2018.

<https://www.investigativeproject.org/7393/syrian-american-council-learns-how-to-pressure>

⁴⁰ Mohammed Al-Ghanem. Americans can trust Syrian rebels. *The Hill*. September 12, 2014.

<http://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/foreign-policy/217504-americans-can-trust-the-syrian-rebels>

⁴¹ Mohammed Al-Ghanem. Taking Syria back from extremists. *The Washington Post*. December 27, 2012.

⁴² Kenneth Timmerman. Obama Administration let anti-gay Muslim leader into the U.S. *NY Post*. March 2, 2014.

⁴³ John Rossomando. Photos show IRUSA Chairman's Muslim Brotherhood Support. *IPT News*. May 29, 2018.

<https://www.investigativeproject.org/7468/photos-show-irusa-chairman-muslim-brotherhood>

Lamada is tied closely to the Egyptian Americans for Freedom and Justice (EAFJ) who have endorsed Brotherhood linked terrorists in Egypt. EAFJ connections to MB leadership in Egypt are deep. Lamada spoke at the EAFJ 2016 Ramadan Iftar fundraiser. Lamada for his part denies any of these affiliations. But social media posts also suggest other IRUSA board members Mohamed Amr Attawi and Hamdy Radwan also have deep MB loyalties. Many of their names link back to the 1991 Muslim Brotherhood phone book founded by Palestine Committee of the MB in the U.S. The United Arab Emirates included IRW on a 2014 list of terror groups. They described IRW as 'Islamic Relief of the Global Muslim Brotherhood'. Bangladesh has barred IRW from working with Rohingya refugees from Burma due to concerns it would radicalize them. Israel did the same in Gaza since IRW had been known to employ HAMAS members. These are all claims IRW denies. A number of European banks including Credit Suisse, HSBC, and UBS, have refused to do business with IRW over concerns with their terror financing. IRW is the largest U.S. Muslim charity and provides 25 percent of its annual budget. It is a USAID partner.⁴⁴ A recent comprehensive report by the Middle East Forum lays out the detailed case for IRW's connection to the Muslim Brotherhood and its global militant Islamist network.⁴⁵

The Explanatory Memorandum of 1991 and the US Muslim Brotherhood

Some detractors to Muslim Brotherhood designation have stated that such a designation would be "exploited and manipulated for political gain". Some have dismissed the MB as "non-existent" and that the 1991 Memorandum presented in the Holy Land Foundation Hamas terror financing trial and convictions in 2008 as suspect and "conspiracy theories". The document's veracity has withstood multiple legal challenges during the HLF trial and multiple other circumstances. It was seized from the "archivist" Ismail Elbarasee of the Muslim Brotherhood in the U.S. The network's existence and mission is certainly not only dependent upon this document, but now over the past 27 years since they met in Philadelphia in 1991 and plotted a "civilizational jihadist process" whereby Brotherhood members in America work toward destroying the Western civilization from within" all of the actions of these MB legacy groups in the America have towed the MB Islamist line with little deviation and certainly no open antagonism. From the previously mentioned Muslim American Society, Syrian American Council, to the larger Islamic Society of North America, North American Islamic Trust (NAIT), Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA), and CAIR (Council on American Islamic Relations) to name a few, their agendas are consistent with this global support and theocratic, theo-political activist process and network of the Muslim Brotherhood. For those of us who have grown up in Muslim communities with families from Muslim majority nations, we know who the theo-political advocates for the Muslim Brotherhood are and the leadership of these organizations typically fits that ideological pattern. It is abjectly false to state that the only evidence of the MB in the U.S. is that memorandum.

In the Holy Land Foundation prosecutions - the largest terrorism financing trial in American history - Justice Department officials successfully argued in court that the international Muslim Brotherhood and its U.S. affiliates had engaged in a wide-spread conspiracy to raise money and materially support the terrorist group HAMAS. The Holy Land Foundation (HLF) officials charged in the case were found guilty on all counts in November 2008, primarily related to millions of dollars that had been transferred to HAMAS. During the trial and in court documents federal prosecutors implicated a number of prominent U.S. Islamic organizations in this conspiracy, including the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA), the North American Islamic Trust (NAIT), and the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR). These groups and their leaders, among others, were named as unindicted co-conspirators in the

⁴⁴ John Rossomando. Photos show IRUSA Chairman's Muslim Brotherhood Support. *IPT News*. May 29, 2018.

<https://www.investigativeproject.org/7468/photos-show-irusa-chairman-muslim-brotherhood>

⁴⁵ Islamic Relief: Charity, Extremism, Terror. Middle East Forum. July 2018.

[https://www.meforum.org/MiddleEastForum/media/MEFLibrary/pdf/Islamic-Relief-FINAL-v3-Online-\(002\).pdf](https://www.meforum.org/MiddleEastForum/media/MEFLibrary/pdf/Islamic-Relief-FINAL-v3-Online-(002).pdf)

case. The Justice Department told the court that these U.S. Muslim Brotherhood affiliates acted at the direction of the international Muslim Brotherhood to support terrorism in a July 2008 court filing: *"ISNA and NAIT, in fact, shared more with HLF than just a parent organization. They were intimately connected with the HLF and its assigned task of providing financial support to HAMAS. Shortly after HAMAS was founded in 1987, as an outgrowth of the Muslim Brotherhood (Govt. Exh. 21-61). The International Muslim Brotherhood ordered the Muslim Brotherhood chapters throughout the world to create Palestine Committees, whose job it was to support HAMAS with 'media, money and men.' (Govt. Exh. 3-15). The U.S.-Muslim Brotherhood created the U.S. Palestine Committee, which documents reflect was initially comprised of three organizations: the OLF (HLF), the IAP, and the UASR. CAIR was later added to these organizations (Govt. Exh. 3-78) listing IAP, HLF, UASR and CAIR as part of the Palestine Committee, and stating that their is '[n]o doubt America is the ideal location to train the necessary resources to support the Movement worldwide...'. The mandate of these organizations, per the International Muslim Brotherhood, was to support HAMAS, and the HLF's particular role was to raise money to support HAMAS' organizations inside the Palestinian territories. Govt. Exh. 3-17 (objective of the Palestine Committee is to support HAMAS)."*⁴⁶

The fact that the international Muslim Brotherhood does terrorism financing inside the U.S. was attested to by then-FBI Director Robert Mueller, who testified before the House Select Committee on Intelligence in February 2011, and responded to a question about the Muslim Brotherhood's networks and agenda in the U.S.: *"I can say at the outset that elements of the Muslim Brotherhood both here and overseas have supported terrorism. To the extent that I can provide information, I would be happy to do so in closed session. But it would be difficult to do in open session."*⁴⁷

The lack of a terror designation for the Muslim Brotherhood has given them freedom to operate terror financing indirectly to the MB which then provides support to Al Qaeda. One of the examples cited by Richard Clarke in his U.S. Senate Banking Committee testimony was the case of Soliman Biheiri, who ran an investment firm specializing in Islamically permissible investments, the Secaucus, New Jersey-based BMI Inc. BMI offered a range of financial services for the Muslim community, and invested in businesses and real estate. According to federal prosecutors, among the shareholders of BMI were Al-Qaeda financier Yassin Al-Qadi and top HAMAS leader Mousa Abu Marzook - two specially designated global terrorists. Both Qadi and Marzook operated separate businesses out of BMI's offices that also did business with BMI. Other BMI investors included Abdullah bin Laden, nephew of Osama bin Laden, and Tarek Swaidan, a Kuwaiti Muslim Brotherhood leader. In a Sept. 2003 detention hearing, federal prosecutors described Biheiri as *"the U.S. banker for the Muslim Brotherhood,"* and stating that *"the defendant came here as the Muslim Brotherhood's financial toehold in the U.S."* Biheiri was convicted on federal immigration charges on October 9, 2003.⁴⁸ Even prior to that the connections have been well known. Before the U.S. Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee in October 2003, Richard Clarke, former National Coordinator for Security and Counterterrorism for Presidents William Clinton and George W. Bush, testified to the extent that terrorist organizations continued to operate inside the U.S. and the connection to the Muslim Brotherhood networks: *"Dating back to the 1980's, Islamist terrorist networks have developed a sophisticated and diversified financial infrastructure in the United States. In the post September 11th environment, it is now widely known that every major Islamist*

⁴⁶ CR No. 3:04-CR-240-P. Government's Amended Memorandum in Opposition to Petitioners Islamic Society of North America and North American Islamist Trust's Motion for Equitable Relief, USA vs. HLF et.al.

⁴⁷ House Select Committee on Intelligence, "International Security Threats," C-SPAN, Feb. 10, 2011, <http://c-spanvideo.org/program/InternationalSecuri>

⁴⁸ Glenn Simpson, "The U.S. Provides Details of Terror-Financing Web," Wall Street Journal, Sept. 15, 2003, <http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB106358213631213600>

terrorist organization, from Hamas to Islamic Jihad to Al Qaeda, has leveraged the financial resources and institutions of the United States to build their capabilities. We face a highly developed enemy in our mission to stop terrorist financing. While the overseas operations of Islamist terrorist organizations are generally segregated and distinct, the opposite holds in the United States. The issue of terrorist financing in the United States is a fundamental example of the shared infrastructure levered by Hamas, Islamic Jihad and Al Qaeda, all of which enjoy a significant degree of cooperation and coordination within our borders. The common link here is the extremist Muslim Brotherhood - all of these organizations are descendants of the membership and ideology of the Muslim Brothers."

In court papers, federal prosecutors noted that the Holy Land Foundation trial included "numerous exhibits...establishing both ISNA's and NAIT's intimate relationship with the MB, the Palestine Committee and the defendants in the case."⁴⁹ A 1988 FBI report also identified many of these ideologically obvious Islamist groups ISNA, NAIT and IIIT as members of the "ikhwan model" with the aim for recruiting support for an Islamic revolution in the U.S." The Saudi funded "Bridge Initiative," an arm of Georgetown University's Prince Alwaleed bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding, argued in 2016 that the document was merely "one man's utopian vision". Their response was that if the idea "was central in a Muslim movement one would think more would have taken up the idea and spread it". As is typical of Salafi-jihadi apologists funded by the Saudis, they ignore the vast number of attacks on our soil linked to American Muslim radicalization by Muslim Brotherhood affiliated ideologies and mosques from Fort Hood in 2009 to the Boston bombing of 2013 to San Bernardino and on. Not to mention that from the beginning global MB icons had no qualms in engaging openly as endorsers of their Brothers in the United States.

For example, in 1995, global Muslim Brotherhood spiritual leader Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi confirmed the connections between Muslim Student's Association and the Brotherhood, and said that the goal of the organization was to "conquer" the U.S. through dawa (Islamic proselytizing). In a 1995 speech to an Islamic conference in Ohio, al-Qaradawi, said victory will come through dawa. He said, "conquest through dawa, that is what we hope for." Qaradawi is well chronicled in fatwas justifying Hamas suicide bombings against Israeli civilians. He further said, "We will conquer Europe, we will conquer America, not through the sword but through dawa." He has long been barred from the United States. In his speech, al-Qaradawi further said the dawa would work through Islamic groups set up by Brotherhood supporters in [the U.S.]. He praised supporters who were jailed by Arab governments in the 1950s and then came to the United States to "fight the seculars and the Westernized" by founding this country's leading Islamic groups. He named the MSA [as one such group]. Though many Muslim youth today may reject any association with Qaradawi, good luck finding any denunciations of Qaradawi or the Muslim Brotherhood for that matter by Muslim Student's Association chapters around the United States.

The civilizational argument is made by their continued denigration of western society, government, and the United States by the progeny of these programs. The Explanatory Memorandum, like Qutb's *Milestones*, should serve in their own words to highlight their global threat.

The Cold War Analogy

In the Cold War, Leninist communist principles fueled the Soviet hegemonic global plan for driving communist revolutions. Similarly, Ladan and Boroumand argue in "Terror, Islam, and Democracy" that "Like Mawlana al-Mawdudi and various Western totalitarians Sayyid Qutb identified his own society (in his case, contemporary Muslim politics) as among the enemies that a virtuous, ideologically self-conscious vanguard minority would have to fight

⁴⁹ John Rossomando. Explanatory Memorandum' Detractors Ignore Evidence about MB in America. *IPT News*. March 1, 2017. <https://www.investigativeproject.org/5807/explanatory-memorandum-detractors-ignore-evidence>

by any means necessary, including violent revolution, so that a new and perfectly just society might arise. His ideal society was a classless one where the “selfish individual” of liberal democracies will be banished in the exploitation of man by man would be abolished. God alone would govern it through the implementation of Islamic law (shar’iah). This was Leninism in Islamist dress.”⁵⁰ Qutb may have railed against some aspects of the godlessness of communism and socialism within his works; however, it is clear that he was influenced by them in the formulation of some of his core ideas. Ibrahim Al-Hodaiby writes in an article four decades after Sayyid Qutb’s execution: “*In Milestones Qutb presents a manifesto for change, one heavily influenced by Lenin’s revolutionary “What is to be Done?” with the clear Islamization of its basic notions.*” They even borrowed the term ‘vanguard’ from Lenin.

So in essence for those of us reformists who reject socialism and communism as well as the Muslim Brotherhood’s Islamism and seek liberty, there is nothing more pro-Muslim and pro-modern Islamic interpretations than supporting a Muslim Brotherhood designation as a global terrorist organization. They are today’s equivalent in a liberation theology mantra of the Cold War’s communist parties (Muslim Brotherhood) and communism (Islamism).

Other states have designated the MB an FTO

Multiple states have declared the Muslim Brotherhood a terrorist organization and/or proscribed the group from operating in their countries. An Egyptian court banned the group in October 2013, and the government officially declared the Muslim Brotherhood a terrorist organization in December 2013⁵¹; the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia designated the group on March 7, 2014⁵²; the Cabinet of the United Arab Emirates published a list of terrorist organizations, including the Muslim Brotherhood and its local affiliates⁵³; on March 21, 2014, the Foreign Minister of Bahrain backed the terrorist designations of the Muslim Brotherhood by both the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia. While certainly various members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation have their own hypocrisies when it comes to terrorism and the promotion of salafi-jihadism, their designations carry with them some admission with regards to the associated global network, funding streams and a shift, especially with petro-Islamist gulf states to some of their previous rather facilitative policies with pertaining to the Muslim Brotherhood.

While the MB is a Sunni Islamist group hatched in Egypt, the overlap with Islamist movements in Pakistan and Asia are quite central. This dates back to the relationship between Hassan al-Banna and Mawlana Al-Mawdudi. While the MB hatched groups like ISNA and NAIT, Mawdudi’s Jamaat-e-Islami hatched similar groups like the Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA). There has always been major overlap between leadership and organizational ideologies, but no conversation on the MB should ignore their major cross cultural affiliates like the Turkish AKP, the Pakistani JI, or even the Shi’a Iranian Khomeinists.

Public Obstacles

Denial fuels bigotry rather than quelling it: If the reason for routinely publicly engaging Muslim leaders after acts of Islamist terror against Americans is simply to quell the fear of Americans, I will contend that the denial and obfuscation of the administration and the Muslims they engage does the exact opposite. Enabling the deep denial of the need for American Muslims to address the root causes of Islamist inspired terrorism and its separatism by not naming the Muslim Brotherhood a terror organization actually in the end fuels a growing fear of Muslims and Islam due to our policy choices for avoidance over transparency. Pew polling demonstrates that American feelings about

⁵⁰ Ladan and Roya Boroumand. Terror, Islam, and Democracy. *Journal of Democracy*. 13.2 (2002) 5-20.

⁵¹ Egypt Bans Muslim Brotherhood. *CBS News*. October 8, 2013.

⁵² Reuters Staff. [Saudi Arabia designates Muslim Brotherhood terrorist group](#). Reuters. March 7, 2014.

⁵³ Reuters Staff. [UAE lists Muslim Brotherhood as terrorist group](#). November

Muslims is “cooler” than any other faith group scoring a 40 out of 100.⁵⁴ In fact, there is nothing that would do more to melt away anti-Muslim bigotry to the extent that it exists than for Americans to see Muslims step away from denial and actually engaging and confronting the Jihad and the Muslim Brotherhood with their own jihad for liberty and against theocracy. We should be calling for a jihad against jihad rather than shielding Muslims and Americans from the tough love that they need.

Defensive posture: the last 90 years of the Muslim Brotherhood existence has proven that a Western fear of riling up the militant Islamists by proactively identifying them as terrorists is only going to empower them through appeasement and defensiveness rather than taking them on offensively. Every day the Muslim Brotherhood militants will find an excuse to commit an act of terror or blame the west for their ills rather than their own theocracy. It is long overdue for us to take the offense against the Muslim Brotherhood.

Bipartisan blinders and false assumptions: Both the Bush administration and the Obama administration have thus far erroneously felt that giving the radical Islamists air time for their Islamic theological verbiage will lend them credibility. From the time of Attorney General Gonzales, onward there have been significant attempts by the Department of Justice to control the lexicon used to describe radical Islamists, with repeated recommendations to avoid any religiously charged terminology. The assumption that radical Islamists need our air time in order to brand themselves is false and it is more absurd to assume that their identity and branding can be defeated by ignoring groups like the Muslim Brotherhood. In fact it requires the opposite—honest exposure, engagement, and marginalization of the Muslim Brotherhood. In fact the suppression of the truth of their Islamist identity is an obstacle to a whole host of policies and engagements which would be the beginning of their defeat.

The problem of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Lobby: The OIC is the proverbial elephant in the room. On the issue of the Muslim Brotherhood there is some significant division within the Arab Sunni world. The constant refrain from the Obama administration that the United States should not “declare war against 1.6 billion Muslims and their governments” is related to global intimidation by the OIC sadly while ignoring the plight of Muslim and non-Muslim dissidents in their nations who lead the fight against Islamist movements.

First, make no mistake. Across the Middle East and Muslim majority world, many leaders, scholars, and pundits call these individuals and their acts exactly what they call themselves- Islamists and jihadists. Some of these governments like Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Egypt, have come around and perhaps in the interest of self-preservation have identified the threat of the Muslim Brotherhood and are finally beginning to defund the very Islamist groups their petro-Islam fed around the world that were berthed by the Muslim Brotherhood.

However, their approach is very schizophrenic because the Islamic states of each OIC nation is based in some form of autocratic theocracy and platforms for theo-political movements that are either directly Islamist like the Khomenists of the *Islamic Republic of Iran* or the shar’ia state of the *Islamic Republic of Pakistan* or the Wahhabism of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. All these states have state sponsored ideologies that are the underbelly that inspires militant movements like ISIS, Hamas, Al Qaeda, and Hizballah and their Muslim Brotherhood common ideologies. Those Islamist governments often exploit the militancy of jihadists in order to dictate the ruling form of Islam. Only in the United States and in the West can we both identify the radicalism of the Muslim Brotherhood while also countering with an offense of secular liberal ideals of universal human rights which is far more effective than the Islamism and Salafism of OIC nation-states who are just jihadists of a different flavor.

There is no country that would be more effective at beginning to eliminate the Muslim Brotherhood than the United States due to the profound safe harbor they have enjoyed in the United States.

The OIC nations hide behind the façade of “countering violent extremism” all the while their governments fuel “violent Islamism”. It is heartbreaking as an American Muslim to see my own American democratic government invoke OIC-like blasphemy law behaviors preventing the antiseptic of sunlight upon the Islamist ideas which

⁵⁴ [How Americans Feel About Religious Groups: Jews, Catholics and Evangelicals rated warmly, Atheists and Muslims more Coldly](#). Pew Research Center: Religion and Public Life. July 16, 2014.

radicalize our co-religionists. With our founders' history in defeating theocracy, Americans are uniquely qualified to understand the battle against theocracy from within a faith. The best summary of the influence of the OIC upon our public discourse regarding Islam is Deborah Weiss' monograph, "The Organization of Islamic Cooperation's Jihad on Free Speech".⁵⁵

The Dangers of Qatar and Turkey

These divisions are beginning to bare out with countries like Qatar and Turkey which are dominated by leaders sympathetic to or directly involved in Islamist party politics.

With **Qatar** for example, it has become the Arab national safe haven for former Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood luminaries and activists. They have provided them not only safe haven but a global perch from which to spread their ideology and hegemony. Their media arm, *Al Jazeera*, is reportedly staffed by upwards of 90 percent MB sympathizers. Their position on the MB has placed them squarely in the crosshairs of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt. It is not surprising that along with Qatar's relationship with the Brotherhood it is also very sympathetic politically ideologically and economically with Iran and its Khomeinists. This schism within the Sunni region led to an embargo last year on Qatar that remains until Saudi demands are met with abandonment of the Muslim brotherhood being primary.

The Emir of Qatar has been historically close to Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi who has been there since 1961. Qatar has been all in with the belief that the brotherhood represented the wave politically of the future in the Middle East. They similarly have supported Hamas and the Iranian global sponsorship of terror turning a blind eye to their support of Hezbollah and the Assad regime. They share rich natural gas fields with the Iranian regime. The Brotherhood's desire to create a global Sunni caliphate and Islamic state positioned the Qatari royal family to be part of that leadership. However this positioning has put them not only in the advocacy of all of the terror connections of the Muslim Brotherhood globally but also at odds with the other regimes in the Middle East who see the Muslim Brotherhood as an existential threat. Make no mistake. The Muslim brotherhood would not be what it is today were it not for petro-Islam billions coming from Qatar and until a year ago the rest of the Gulf states.⁵⁶

A designation of the Muslim brotherhood as a terror group is essential for American and global security and the containment of the Qatari royal families anti-Western and anti-democracy pro-Islamist positions. Additionally, their fealty for the Iranian theocrats and their heavy economic cooperation also demands their containment.

The other global platform for the Muslim brotherhood is growing with the country of **Turkey** which also has an Islamist party in control--the Islamist Justice and Development Party (AKP) of Recep Erdogan. Turkey is a separate case study requiring a hearing on its own; however, its decades-old support of Hamas, it's aid to help Iran subvert the sanctions against them, and its own evangelical Dawa into the West including now the largest mosque in the United States built in Maryland by the Turkish Republic's *diyanet* religious authority are all consistent with and in parallel to the project of the Muslim Brotherhood. While Erdogan's government for years was sympathetic to the Assad regime in Syria, the revolution of 2011 was viewed as an opportunity to have a neighboring Sunni Islamist power sympathetic to the AKP in place. So Turkey along with Qatar proceeded to aid and support the radical Islamist element of the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood and marginalize the more liberal secular elements of the revolution. It also helped them counter their Kurdish enemies. Qatar did the same. Nothing epitomizes the relationship between Erdogan's AKP and the global Muslim Brotherhood then the recent hosting by the Republic of Turkey of the 90th anniversary gala of the Muslim brotherhood. Speeches and rhetoric from the event and releases around the event in Turkey noted the Brotherhood's call to continue on the path of a comprehensive restoration of Islamic states around the world.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Weiss, Deborah Esq. [The Organization of Islamic Cooperation's Jihad on Free Speech](#). June 6, 2015

⁵⁶ Eric Trager. [The Muslim Brotherhood is the Root of the Qatar Crisis](#). *The Atlantic*. July 2, 2017.

⁵⁷ [Muslim Brotherhood thanks Turkey for Hosting 90th Anniversary Gala](#). Ikhwanweb. April 3, 2018.

Turkish groups closely allied to President Recep Erdogan have lobbied Congress to end U.S. support of the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) which is the backbone of the US supported Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) against ISIS. The Turkish American branch of Erdogan's Islamist AKP, MUSAID USA and the Turkish American National Steering Committee (TASC), were closely involved. Interestingly IPT reported that none of these groups lobbied with FARA registration (Foreign Agents Registration Act). Michael Rubin of AEI notes that *"It's not just MUSAID USA. There's at least half a dozen organization and maybe twice that who have down the same rabbit hole"* of influence operations. Apparently, these two organizations have also been on the FBI's radar. MUSIAD Executive Director Ibrahim Ulya sent an email to President Erdogan's son-in-law Berat Albayrak, Turkey's energy minister and thought to be Erdogan's heir apparent. In that he discussed the accusations of espionage by the FBI. Frequent communications between them expose how close these American organizations are with the Islamist AKP ruling party of the Republic of Turkey.

IPT notes that these groups have courted U.S. Islamist groups as they have the Muslim Brotherhood in the Middle East. They have coordinated protests and other activist work with CAIR (Council on American Islamic Relations) and USCMO (United States Council of Muslim Organizations). In fact, CAIR has presented its annual humanitarian award to the Turkish government in 2017 "for its humanitarian efforts for Syrian and Iraqi refugees".⁵⁸ Just a few weeks ago, the USCMO leadership was in Ankara to congratulate President Erdogan on his recent sham of an electoral victory as guests of the Turkish regime. CAIR's Hussam Ayloush praised it's "democracy and the rule of Law" in 2016 and also congratulated Erdogan on his victory. They all did not seem to care about the fact that the Committee to Protect Journalists named Erdogan's Turkey "the worst jailer of journalists in 2017."⁵⁹ In fact, leaders of the Egyptian Americans for Freedom and Justice (EAFJ) like Mahmoud ElSharkawy with strong ties to the Muslim Brotherhood have also worked closely with these Turkish Islamist organizations in the U.S. They have all sought an aggressive activist role in downplaying the 1915 Armenian genocide that killed 1.5 million people. They all promoted a FactCheckArmenia.com anti-Armenian propaganda site.

Conclusions and Recommendations:

The importance of identifying the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist organization could not be more clear to our national security and counterterrorism strategy. This will begin not only a necessary process of treating the cancer at its core before it metastasizes rather than its byproducts after it has already spread. But now we can also begin a much longer strategy of identifying other Islamist movements that are parallel to the Muslim Brotherhood and equally dangerous. I leave you with the following recommendations:

1. Designate the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) a foreign terrorist organization beginning in Egypt and then on a country by country basis. Libya, Syria, Kuwait, Jordan, Iraq and Yemen branches of the MB are the most obvious follow-ons based on my testimony here. But I would recommend that the designation be taken on a country by country basis and not a blanket global one, and only be driven by a need to designate every group in the world which is either a self-identified actual Muslim Brotherhood organization or an obvious Islamist terror group. This designation is not only an ideological one but one related to material, social, and militant support of the Muslim Brotherhood's *salafi-jihadi* movement.
2. Use this designation of the Muslim Brotherhood as a terror organization as a pilot strategic designation to be made country to country across the world, but do not dismiss the equal global threat of parallel militant Islamist groups like East Asia's Jamat-e-Islami, Iran's Khomeinists, or Turkey's AKP to name a few.
3. Call out American Muslim leaders to take a position on the Muslim Brotherhood, the evidence provided here, and its overarching theo-political ideologies. Will my fellow Muslims be on the side of freedom,

⁵⁸ Abha Shankar. Will Turkey's New Diplomatic Push Reduce its American MB Support? IPT News. July 7, 2016.

⁵⁹ IPT News U.S. Islamists Ignore Erdogan's Authoritarianism, Celebrate Win. June 26, 2018.

liberty, and modernity or will they be on the side of the tyranny of the Muslim Brotherhood, Turkey's Erdogan's AKP, Iran's Khomeinists or Pakistan's Jamaat e-Islami?

4. Develop foreign policy mechanisms to disincentivize Qatari and Turkish government facilitation of the Muslim Brotherhood and its global affiliates including those in the West. Considerations should include a move to suspend Turkey from NATO (perhaps warranting a separate hearing on the very complex U.S.-Turkey relations).
5. Lift up diverse pro-liberty, secular reformist Muslim voices beginning with our Muslim Reform Movement and its allies within the Muslim community who are anti-Islamist. Use that strategy and our Declaration of our Muslim Reform Movement to identify allies within Muslim communities across the world.
6. Use the MB designation as a template to transition immediately from the currently useless non-ideological center of gravity that relies on "Countering Violent Extremism" (CVE) to a much more practical one centered on "Countering Islamism" (CI) or (CVI).
7. Stop engaging Muslim Brotherhood legacy groups in government and media and NGO's and recognize their Islamist terror sympathies, misogyny, anti-Semitism, homophobia, and anti-American ideological underpinnings. We must recognize that they are not the only voice for American Muslims or any community of Muslims.
8. Re-open investigation into CAIR's radical ties and into the extensive domestic and foreign network of foundations and poorly hidden branches. Also investigate the Syrian American Council, MUSAID USA and Islamic Relief USA to name a few organizations with concerning global Islamist ties.

Respectfully submitted,

M. Zuhdi Jasser, MD
President, American Islamic Forum for Democracy
July 11, 2018

MUSLIM REFORM MOVEMENT

PREAMBLE

We are Muslims who live in the 21st century. We stand for a respectful, merciful and inclusive interpretation of Islam. We are in a battle for the soul of Islam, and an Islamic renewal must defeat the ideology of Islamism, or politicized Islam, which seeks to create Islamic states, as well as an Islamic caliphate. We seek to reclaim the progressive spirit with which Islam was born in the 7th century to fast forward it into the 21st century. We support the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted by United Nations member states in 1948.

We reject interpretations of Islam that call for any violence, social injustice and politicized Islam. Facing the threat of terrorism, intolerance, and social injustice in the name of Islam, we have reflected on how we can transform our communities based on three principles: peace, human rights and secular governance. We are announcing today the formation of an international initiative: the Muslim Reform Movement.

We have courageous reformers from around the world who have written our Declaration for Muslim Reform, a living document that we will continue to enhance as our journey continues. We invite our fellow Muslims and neighbors to join us.

DECLARATION

A. Peace: National Security, Counterterrorism and Foreign Policy

1. We stand for universal peace, love and compassion. We reject violent jihad. We believe we must target the ideology of violent Islamist extremism, in order to liberate individuals from the scourge of oppression and terrorism both in Muslim-majority societies and the West.
2. We stand for the protection of all people of all faiths and non-faith who seek freedom from dictatorships, theocracies and Islamist extremists.
3. We reject bigotry, oppression and violence against all people based on any prejudice, including ethnicity, gender, language, belief, religion, sexual orientation and gender expression.

B. Human Rights: Women's Rights and Minority Rights

1. We stand for human rights and justice. We support equal rights and dignity for all people, including minorities. We support the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights.

2. We reject tribalism, castes, monarchies and patriarchies and consider all people equal with no birth rights other than human rights. All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. Muslims don't have an exclusive right to "heaven."
3. We support equal rights for women, including equal rights to inheritance, witness, work, mobility, personal law, education, and employment. Men and women have equal rights in mosques, boards, leadership and all spheres of society. We reject sexism and misogyny.

C. Secular Governance: Freedom of Speech and Religion

1. We are for secular governance, democracy and liberty. We are against political movements in the name of religion. We separate mosque and state. We are loyal to the nations in which we live. We reject the idea of the Islamic state. There is no need for an Islamic caliphate. We oppose institutionalized sharia. Sharia is manmade.
2. We believe in life, joy, free speech and the beauty all around us. Every individual has the right to publicly express criticism of Islam. Ideas do not have rights. Human beings have rights. We reject blasphemy laws. They are a cover for the restriction of freedom of speech and religion. We affirm every individual's right to participate equally in *ijtihad*, or critical thinking, and we seek a revival of *ijtihad*.
3. We believe in freedom of religion and the right of all people to express and practice their faith, or non-faith, without threat of intimidation, persecution, discrimination or violence. Apostasy is not a crime. Our *ummah*--our community--is not just Muslims, but all of humanity.

We stand for peace, human rights and secular governance. Please stand with us!

Affirmed this Fourth Day of December, Two-Thousand and Fifteen

By the founding authors who are signatories below

#MuslimReform

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Please sign our declaration www.change.org

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Muslim Organizations***Salma Siddiqui***President, Coalition of Progressive Canadian Muslim
Organizations, Toronto, Canada**...affirmed at 8 AM this Fourth Day of December, Two-Thousand and Fifteen*

Mr. DESANTIS. Thank you.
Ambassador Benjamin, you're up for 5 minutes.

STATEMENT OF DANIEL BENJAMIN

Mr. BENJAMIN. Chairman DeSantis, Ranking Member Lynch, distinguished members of the subcommittee, thank you for inviting me here today to discuss this important subject.

The title of this hearing, "The Muslim Brotherhood's Global Threat," invites comment on two questions. The first is whether there is a singular entity entitled the Muslim Brotherhood. The second is whether that entity or some group of Muslim Brotherhood branches or affiliates represent a genuine global threat.

On the first question the answer is straightforward. As scholars, intelligence analysts, and policymakers over many years have come to agree, there is today no singular monolithic Muslim Brotherhood. Decades after the genesis of the Egyptian Ikhwan, there is no central administration linking these many different groups which are often said to have Brotherhood links, or of ideology or origins. In character and matters of doctrine they vary greatly.

The Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt is an outlawed organization, many of whose members are incarcerated. In Jordan, the Brotherhood plays a legitimate political role in the form of the Islamic Front, which has played an important role in Jordan's Parliament. The Kuwaiti Brotherhood's party is a legitimate member of that country's parliament. In Morocco, the Justice and Development Party has held the prime minister's position and is also said to be linked to the Muslim Brotherhood.

Tunisia's Ennahda is frequently characterized as having ties to the Brotherhood, though the party has probably confounded the expectation of Brotherhood members elsewhere by saying that it is separating politics from religion. It's notable that just a week ago an Ennahda member, a woman, was elected mayor of Tunis and that she does not wear a veil.

Again, no serious researcher has demonstrated durable links between these groups that could be described as ones of command and control.

Does the Muslim Brotherhood constitute a global threat? Hereto I would answer that it does not. Most of the groups that are said to be Brotherhood affiliates or franchises support the democratic process and have abjured violence, if they ever embraced it.

The Egyptian Brotherhood forswore violence in the 1970s. There is no compelling evidence that it has reversed course.

It is noteworthy that two Egyptian Brotherhood splinter groups, Liwa al-Thawra and HASM, were designated earlier this year under Executive Order 13224 as terrorist organizations and both do indeed have a record of violence. It is, however, fallacious to suggest that this is a sign of the Brotherhood's return to violence. These groups appear to have split off because their members wanted to commit violence while the Brotherhood as a whole did not.

I want to be clear, I have no sympathy for the Muslim Brotherhood. The Egyptian group, for example, often delivers hate-filled anti-American and anti-Western pronouncements that are truly repellant. But if there's a threat emanating from the various organizations that can be grouped as part of the Brotherhood family, it

is that repression against them may cause them to decide that violence is their only option.

Anyone looking for the place where the next great jihadist wave will break would have to consider Egypt a strong possibility. The Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood has hundreds of thousands of members and, despite the poor governance of Mohamed Morsi, millions of sympathizers.

The widespread use of extrajudicial killing, indiscriminate incarceration, and torture has created a situation in which modern Islamists, people who want their society to be more Islamic but do not support violence, have no good options. They may come to see themselves as cornered and having no alternative but to take up arms.

And it is important to remember that jihadism emerged in Egypt, and specifically from the notorious Tora Prison, amid the persecutions of the Nasser period. It will be a tragedy and indeed a strategic blunder if that lesson has been forgotten.

A few other quick observations.

First, the Trump administration evaluated the Brotherhood immediately after coming into office and determined that there was no legal basis to designate the group.

Although there has been much speculative writing in the press about the orientation of the Brotherhood, the State Department's decision not to designate is telling. Department decisions are not based on open-source information of uncertain quality. Instead, designation decisions are based on all-source information, including classified intelligence.

The fact that such a review took place and that the wishes of senior policymakers to designate the group were well-known tells a clear story. No basis was found for designating at the time. I am unaware of any indication that there is more of a basis now. I'm also unaware that this issue is being reviewed again within the government.

A final point. Policymakers and legislators, like physicians, must keep in mind the injunction to do no harm. A hardline approach to the Muslim Brotherhood groups and their members could do significant harm.

The United States may be enjoying improved relations with some Arab countries, such as Saudi Arabia and the UAE, countries, it should be noted, whose opposition to the Muslim Brotherhood is at least in part rooted in their opposition to democracy.

But its reputation globally among Muslims—that is the United States' reputation—is at a low point due to President Trump's travel ban, his talk about a national registry of Muslims, and other negative comments about Muslims.

The U.S. faces a real and continuing threat from jihadist terrorist violence. Unwise actions to target the Muslim Brotherhood groups will only deepen the animus against America, and we should not do anything that helps our enemies attract more recruits. That, too, would be a blunder.

It would also be a blunder to further alienate already discomfited members of the domestic American Muslim community. The last thing the U.S. needs to do is to encourage radicalization at home.

I want to thank you for your time, and I look forward to your questions.
[Prepared statement of Mr. Benjamin follows:]

Ambassador Daniel Benjamin (ret.)
John Sloan Dickey Center for International Understanding
Dartmouth College
The Muslim Brotherhood's Global Threat
Testimony Before the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
Subcommittee on National Security
Washington, DC
July 11, 2018

Chairman DeSantis, Ranking Member Lynch, Distinguished Members of the Subcommittee:

Thank you for inviting me to appear here today. The subject of the Muslim Brotherhood remains one of broad interest both for policymakers and the public. I welcome the opportunity to contribute to a discussion that could have important consequences for our nation's relationship with the Muslim world and, ultimately, our national security.

As a starting point, I would like to address the title of this hearing: "The Muslim Brotherhood's Global Threat." I do so because I believe it is important to deal with two questions the title begs. The first is whether there is a singular entity entitled the Muslim Brotherhood. The second is whether that entity – or some group of Muslim Brotherhood branches or affiliates – represent a genuine global threat.

With regard to the first question, this answer is fairly straightforward. As scholars, intelligence analysts and policymakers in past administrations have come to agree, there is no singular, monolithic Muslim Brotherhood. Founded in the 1920s in Egypt by Hassan al-Banna, the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood inspired and even assisted in the creation of many of other branches in other countries, including Jordan, Syria, Tunisia, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen. Some countries have Islamist parties that have ties to the Brotherhood of varying kinds. But decades after the genesis of the Egyptian *Ikhwan*, there is no central administration linking these disparate groups. In character and matters of doctrine, they vary greatly.

For example, the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt is an outlawed organization, many of whose members are incarcerated or on the run. In Jordan, the Brotherhood supports a legitimate political party, The Islamic Front, which has played an important – even central – role in Jordan's parliament. The Kuwaiti Brotherhood's party is also a legitimate member that country's parliament. In Morocco, the PJD, or Justice and Development Party, which has held the prime minister's position, is also said to be linked to the Muslim Brotherhood. Tunisia's Ennahda is frequently characterized as having ties to the Tunisian Brotherhood, though the party has probably confounded the expectations of Muslim Brotherhood members elsewhere by saying that it is separating politics from religion. Ennahda's inclination toward conciliation and cooperation have made it a major supporter of the democratic development of that country. Interestingly, a female member of Ennahda was elected mayor of Tunis just last week, and she does not wear a veil – another demonstration of heterogeneity among groups described as belonging to the Brotherhood.

It worth underscoring: No serious researcher has yet demonstrated durable links between these groups that could be described as ones of command and control. If one of the questions looming behind the title of today's hearing is whether the Muslim Brotherhood should be designated as a foreign terrorist organization by the State Department, then the answer would have to be no for several reasons of which is that the Muslim Brotherhood does not have the first desideratum of being "a foreign organization." While many organizations have links to the original Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, there is no single foreign organization.

Does the Muslim Brotherhood constitute a global threat? Here too, I would answer that it does not. Most of the groups that are said to be Muslim Brotherhood affiliates or franchises support democracy and abjure violence. The Egyptian Brotherhood has foresworn violence since the 1970s, and there is no compelling evidence that it has reversed course on that issue. It is noteworthy that two Egyptian MB splinter groups, Liwa al Thawra and HASM, were designated early this year under Executive Order 13224 as terrorist organizations, and both do indeed have a record of violence. It is, however, fallacious to say that this is a sign of the Brotherhood's return to violence. These groups appear to have split off because their members wanted to commit violence while the Brotherhood as a whole did not.

The Palestinian terrorist group Hamas is often described as the Muslim Brotherhood's Palestinian chapter, so it is worth discussing in this context. There is no doubt that at its inception, Hamas has ties to the Egyptian Brotherhood. But it is a mistake at this point to say that the group is an affiliate of the Brotherhood. Hamas has its own charter and a history of foreign relations – including with Iran – that no other Brotherhood group would sanction. If we are being precise about our language, Hamas is certainly not an affiliate of any other Brotherhood entity in the way that, say, al Qaeda in Arabian Peninsula is an affiliate of al Qaeda. The group does not take orders from any other entity. It is, I would add, in no way a global organization, and thus not a global threat. Moreover, it is worth noting that Hamas has historically restrained – sometimes violently – jihadi groups in Gaza that sought to target Israel with catastrophic attack. Though it carries on its own offensives against Israel, Hamas has not sought to carry out the massive attacks against Israel that were characteristic of al Qaeda for fear that it would elicit a devastating Israeli invasion of Gaza or rule the group out as a possible future negotiating partner for Israel. It is also worth noting that for all the opprobrium that both Egypt and Saudi Arabia have heaped on the Muslim Brotherhood, both have engaged with Hamas. Egypt's security discussions with Hamas are well known; King Salman has courted the group and hosted its leadership in the Kingdom just three years ago in an effort to prevent it from renewing its ties to Iran.

To be clear, I have no particular sympathy for the Muslim Brotherhood. The Egyptian group, for example, often delivers hate-filled anti-American and anti-Western pronouncements that are truly repellent. But if there is a threat emanating from the various organizations that can be grouped as part of a Brotherhood family, it is that the repression against them may cause them to decide that violence is their only option.

Anyone looking for the place where the next great jihadist wave will break would have to consider Egypt a strong possibility. The Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood has hundreds of thousands of members and, despite the poor governance of Mohamed Morsi, millions of

sympathizers. The widespread use of extrajudicial killing, indiscriminate incarceration and torture has created a situation in which moderate Islamists – people who want their society to be more Islamic but do not support violence – have no good options. They can capitulate and abandon their beliefs, which most religious believers are unlikely to do. Or they may come to see themselves as being cornered and having no alternative but to take up arms. It is important to remember that jihadism emerged in Egypt – and specifically from the notorious Tora Prison – amid the persecutions of the Nasser period. It will be a tragedy if that lesson has been forgotten, and a renewed jihadist movement again emerges from Egypt's jails.

Let me make a few more observations: First, the Trump administration evaluated the Muslim Brotherhood immediately after coming into office and determined that there was no legal basis to designate the group. Although there has been much speculative writing in the press about the orientation of Muslim Brotherhood, the State Department's decision not to designate is telling. The Department's decisions are not based on open-source information of uncertain quality. Instead, designation decisions are based on all-source information, including classified intelligence. The fact that such a review took place, and that the wishes of senior policymakers to designate the group were well known, tells a clear story. No basis was found for designating was found at the time, and I am unaware of any indication that there is more of a basis now. That fact should play an important role regarding any deliberations about the United States's posture toward the *Ikwhan*.

A final point: Policymakers and legislators, like physicians, must keep in mind the injunction to do no harm. A hardline approach to Muslim Brotherhood groups and their members could well do significant harm. The U.S. may be enjoying improved relations with some Arab countries such as Saudi Arabia and the UAE, but its reputation globally among Muslims is at a low point due to President Trump's travel ban, his loose talk about a Muslim ban or a registry of Muslims and an array of negative comments about Muslims. The U.S. faces continuing threat from jihadist terrorist violence. Unwise actions to target Muslim Brotherhood groups will only deepen the animus against America, and we should not be doing anything that helps our enemies attract more recruits. Since the Egyptian Brotherhood and al Qaeda have been sworn enemies – the anti-Brotherhood animus of al Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri is legendary – driving the groups into an embrace would be a first-class strategic blunder. Intelligence assessments leaked to the press have expressed concern about precisely this kind of consequence from a designation or other measures against Brotherhood groups.

This is not just a problem in other countries. Muslims here in the U.S. who already feel discomfited by the rhetoric and actions of the administration may become more alienated, a development with potentially negative effects. The last thing the U.S. needs is to accelerate radicalization at home. Even short of that, anything that contributes to the estrangement of the American Muslim community should be avoided. U.S. law enforcement relies on its ties with the Muslim community for a large portion of the tips it gets about potential bad actors. Damaging that relationship makes no sense whatsoever.

Thank you for your time and attention, and I look forward to your questions.

Mr. DESANTIS. I thank the gentlemen.

The gentleman notices the presence of the gentleman from Wisconsin, Mr. Grothman, a member of the full committee.

We thank you for your interest in this topic.

Without objection, I'd like to welcome Mr. Grothman to participate fully in today's hearing. And without objection, so ordered.

The chair now recognizes himself for 5 minutes.

Dr. Jasser, the argument I think somewhat sketched out by Ambassador Benjamin is that if you take a strong stand against the Brotherhood like you articulated, that you're alienating so-called moderate Islamists and that that ends up leading to more terrorism. So how do you respond to that?

Dr. JASSER. Well, again, I'd use the Cold War analogy. Were we worried when we took on the militant Soviets that we would alienate the moderate non-Soviet communists.

It is beyond bigoted to say that the Muslim community is represented only by our establishment Islamists who dominate oppressively our community.

So what better way than the country founded on defeating theocracy, the United States, to take a position against the militant arm of the theocratic branches of the Islamic faith? And I think that it would send a message around the world that we recognize that the Brotherhood is a militant organization and we that way build a platform for what I believe is a majority of the non-Islamist voices.

There were 10 million people that went to the streets in Egypt to protest in Revolution 2.0 against the Brotherhood; 90 percent of those folks were Muslims. And yet, it seems that from the arguments of the ambassador and others that the only people that we care about are the wings of this oppressive party that are non-violent and somehow want to use democracy as a tool to get the power and then oppress the rest of the folks.

If you look—I was on the U.S. Commission on Religious Freedom, met with the Brotherhood in 2013 in Cairo. And I can tell you that in speaking to them they have no interest in changing their mission, what they are, what their goal is. They see the world through the lens of theocracy, not through egalitarian rights.

To say you can moderate the Brotherhood is like saying you can moderate the Communist Party into capitalists. It's impossible.

Mr. DESANTIS. So, I mean, just to sketch out the ideology, I mean, what does that mean for Christians and Jews or other religions?

Dr. JASSER. Well, there's barely any, if any, Jews left in Egypt because of the Islamists and what they've done in that country and also dictatorship. The Islamists, when they get into power, are not only anti-Semitic, listen to their imams and clerics and what they preach out of Al Jazeera, from Qaradawi on down.

Women's rights, the ambassador may have cited that they had one not hijabed woman, but the bottom line, that's window dressing for a central authority that is misogynistic and interprets the Koran and other sharia interpretations that say that women get a half a vote of a man, a quarter of the inheritance, et cetera.

So they, as you saw in the way they put forth the constitution in Egypt, have no interest in an egalitarian, liberal, secular constitution. Their interest is the Islamic state and giving people

rights not under God, but under Islam and their interpretation of Islam, where minorities, Coptic Christians, apostates—they call moderate Muslims who are anti-Islamist apostates. They put people in jail, as Morsi did hundreds and thousands, for criticizing him as criticizing Islam. That's theocracy.

Mr. DESANTIS. This notion of a moderate Islamist, I mean, Islamism is inherently not moderate, because, I mean, if you want Islamism to be the governing faith, that is a totalitarian system, not democratic. And so to say that that's moderate, I mean, maybe it means you're not launching terrorist attacks, but you still want an end that is very illiberal, I think.

The chart you put up, and I want to see if you had—you had the Islamist wing, then you had the Brotherhood, and then kind of the terrorism growing out of that. And people say, well, the Brotherhood, they are not necessarily directing every terrorist attack, and I think that's true, but is it safe to say that the Brotherhood's ideology has served as kind of the intellectual foundation that has sprung a lot of the terrorist groups that we've seen, from al-Qaida to ISIS to everything in between?

Dr. JASSER. Absolutely. I'm a doctor. In the daytime I treat patients and disease. We don't treat symptoms. One of the primary global cancer cells for the development of al-Qaida, Islamic Jihad, all of these offshoots, the primary source of training ground is Muslim Brotherhood. Some of them train to be part of the secret committee to ultimately be violent, and some of them come to the West to make sure our policy remains defensive and not offensive.

So ultimately the goals of their ideology is to create Islamic states and a caliphate, and that has never changed.

Mr. BENJAMIN. Mr. DeSantis?

Mr. DESANTIS. Dr. Fradkin, Sisi gave a speech probably a couple of years ago now where he challenged a lot of the Islamist clerics and said: Look, we cannot—and he's a devote Muslim, but he was making the point that you can't have a faith that is at war with everybody who disagrees, that's billions of people. And I think he has made the decision that you really have to marginalize the Brotherhood.

What do you think? Is Dr. Jasser right or is a more targeted approach as enunciated by Dr. Schanzer? What are your views? How would you comment on those?

Mr. FRADKIN. Thank you very much for the question. It's an excellent one.

I'm not myself clear yet about just how one goes about tackling the Brotherhood in terms of the designation as a terrorist group. What I am clear about is that it does—it creates the conditions for terrorist groups, the way in which Dr. Jasser said, in the sense that it is the original version of the ideology which underlies the undertaking.

Another thing I think should be observed is this: We have tried to engage with the Brotherhood. And let's put it this way: Egypt has been an experiment in several ways.

First, we had an experiment of how the Brotherhood would behave in power. And it had been proposed before that that when they come to power they would be, through the exercise of power, they would learn to be moderate.

That we saw was false, and there are reasons why it was false, because when they saw the opportunity to exercise total power they were keen to.

We also had an experiment of trying to understand them as a vehicle for moderate politics, of engaging with them in that direction. That experiment began—well, it began actually in the Bush administration, in a variety of ways, but its most visible expression was President Obama's speech in Cairo, which, among other things, went out of its way to welcome the Brotherhood. They were welcomed to the speech itself, somewhat against the wishes of Mubarak.

Mr. DESANTIS. My time's up, so you all will have a chance. But I want to give Mr. Lynch, get him in here. So I will recognize Mr. Lynch.

Mr. LYNCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would ask unanimous consent, I have a letter here, a statement by Ryan Crocker, an eminent diplomat in the service of our country. And I'd ask that it be entered into the record.

Mr. DESANTIS. Without objection.

Mr. LYNCH. Thank you, sir.

I do want to make a distinction here about what the designation of the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist organization.

So there are a lot of conservative, we would even say repressive regimes around the world. There are many militant or extremist groups around. But the terrorist, terrorist designation is targeted toward activity, conduct, war on the civilian population.

And so that's a different terminology and a different meaning than simply targeting regimes or organizations because they are conservative in their ideology. So it's an important distinction to make.

The other challenge we have here, and I heard it from each of you, is our ability to target specific organizations for that unacceptable behavior, that waging of war on the civilian population and terrorist activity.

So, Mr. Fradkin, you've said as much.

Dr. Schanzer, you were saying in your testimony, which was very helpful, I think, and thoughtful, that rather than do this blanket label of terrorism on the whole Muslim Brotherhood, then go after the individual groups that are actually undertaking this unacceptable activity, and I completely agree.

Dr. Jasser, you as well, country by country, let's target these people and call them out, call them out and isolate them in a way that doesn't make them stronger, but isolates them and weakens them.

Ambassador Benjamin, I know you didn't speak directly to this issue, but in the past our success in isolating some of these groups has been our ability to differentiate the bad actors from the surrounding population and severing their local support.

That seems to be what's happening in many cases in the Middle East where the younger population, as I mentioned in my opening remarks, the younger population is rejecting some of the more extreme edicts of the Muslim Brotherhood.

Is that something, is that an approach that you think would be successful given your experience on the ground as an ambassador?

Mr. BENJAMIN. Mr. Lynch, the United States has had great success in isolating terrorist groups and cutting off their wellsprings of support, if you will, and diminishing their appeal to the broader population.

The United States has a much more mixed record when it comes to intervening in the politics of other countries and telling foreign populations who we approve of and who we don't.

And our ambassadors, our envoys should by all means speak out against hatred, speak out against anything that promotes division and promotes antipathy towards the West, but our ability to take on the Muslim Brotherhood in the various countries when it is not a group engaged in terrorist activities is going to be challenging.

If anything, given the fact that most of these countries the Muslim Brotherhood now has a political party, it's in the parliament, requires I think that we engage with them more and suggests that the benefits of moderation are available to all of those who pursue truly democratic policies and the pluralistic vision that the United States has stood for.

Mr. LYNCH. Thank you.

I do want to take a minute here. I thought the statement by Ryan Crocker was instructive and important.

He says here—and obviously Ryan Crocker served in Beirut during the bombings of the Marine barracks there, served for many years in Iraq. I've had many, many dealings with him. I think I've got over 20 trips to Iraq while he was our ambassador there.

But he writes that, after 38 years of his service as a Foreign Service officer, the Muslim Brotherhood is not a monolithic organization.

He adds that it's not an organization at all in the conventional sense of the term. It has no international headquarters, nor an identifiable global leadership. Individual country franchises vary dramatically in their ideology and politics, and especially in their attitudes towards political violence.

At one extreme, he acknowledges, would be the Syrian Muslim Brothers who carried out a number of lethal bombings throughout the country in the 1970s. The other would be the Muslim Brothers in Egypt, Jordan, and North Africa.

In Iraq post-2003 the only organized Sunni political party was the Muslim Brotherhood-affiliated Islamic Party in Iraq. And during his time in Iraq, 2007 to 2009, he worked closely with the Islamic Party and its leader, Iraqi Vice President Tariq al-Hashimi.

So I think what he's pointing to is the wisdom of discerning which of these affiliates and groups is engaging in terrorism and which are engaging in political activity, the distinction I made before about whether someone is labeled a radical or an extremist and one who is labeled as a terrorist. And so I hope we are precise in our language here and precise in our goal.

The other challenge with terrorism is their ability to adapt. And I think that just putting out a blanket designation on the Muslim Brotherhood, they will sidestep that in a heartbeat, and those organizations will reconfigure and reassemble in a way that will do nothing to reduce their lethality.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

Mr. DESANTIS. The gentleman yields back.

The chair now recognizes the gentleman from Arizona for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOSAR. Dr. Jasser, good seeing you again.

This conversation is headed just in the right direction here. So one of the biggest problems in making policy decisions with regard to the Muslim Brotherhood is the fact that the Muslim Brotherhood frequently creates front groups that while ostensibly are separate, but in reality have close ties to the mother ship in Egypt.

This can include respectable institutions such as civil rights organizations, community groups, and charities. A recent report by the Middle East Forum concerning Islamic Relief, an international aid charity, documented extensive ties between Islamic Relief and the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood.

One of the numerous examples given was the fact that Essam El-Haddad, cofounder of Islamic Relief Worldwide, became a foreign policy adviser to Mohamed Morsi, and according to Egyptian prosecutors used Islamic Relief moneys to fund Muslim Brotherhood terrorism in Egypt.

Question: Does this tendency of the Muslim Brotherhood to form ostensibly separate spinoff groups under more respectable sources concern you? And secondly, what should our policy towards those organizations be?

Dr. JASSER. Thank you, Congressman Gosar. And it is good to be here. Thank you.

I can't tell you enough how important this issue is. And while I believe that the—the first thing I'd respond is tell you that the best way to marginalize groups that are front groups in the West—so I call them Muslim Brotherhood legacy groups, because they don't go by the name Muslim Brotherhood.

In the United States we've not had religious parties, so they've not operated openly. In London they operate openly. The Muslim Brotherhood has an office. The Ikhwan website is operated out of London.

But if you want to decrease their influence, the to and fro passage of money, Islamic Relief, for example, it's a great example. They have donated to Islamic Relief Worldwide.

The Middle East Forum has an excellent report that was put out a week or 2 ago that looks at all of the revolving doors between radical Islamist terror groups around the world and Islamic Relief. I mean, Bangladesh, a Muslim country, does not allow Islamic Relief to do humanitarian work with Rohingya refugees because they're worried about radicalization.

So the problem with front groups in the West, I think, will be diminished not by designating group that operate in the West here under other names. I think it's too hard to do that. But once you designate the mother ship in Egypt, the Brotherhood, a terrorist organization, you designate the Yemeni, the Kuwaiti Brotherhood as terror organizations, it is going to be much more radioactive, their platform of dominating our community.

And this is why, if you look at the Muslim Sunni Association, I'd ask you all to look at the explanatory memorandum. The FBI put it into the documentation of the Holy Land Foundation trial that laid out the network of Muslim Brotherhood organizations and what their plan is in the West. That's stood the test of time in the

court system and has not been refuted effectively because it is the truth, that that was their operation.

So they are a threat. I think they oppress our own community here through their money, through their work with Qatar and other; Turkey. I mean, in Turkey just 2 weeks ago an organization called USCM, or the U.S. Consortium of Muslim Organizations, which is basically the Muslim Brotherhood leadership in America, went to congratulate Erdogan on his win in Turkey, supposedly as a democratic win. Forget the fact that he imprisons journalists, tortures professors, all these things it didn't matter to them because he's one of Brothers.

So if I'm going to have a voice and our Muslim reform movement is going to have a voice in the United States, the best way to weaken our main antagonists, which are the Islamists, is to begin to diagnose their foreign terror organizations that they sympathize with as terrorist organizations, the Brotherhood.

Mr. GOSAR. So my next question should be right along the line. In the case of the Islamic Relief USA, a chapter of the Islamic Relief International that pays 20 percent of its income to Islamic Relief International, it has received at least \$700,000 in Federal funds, and when accounting for various umbrella groups possibly much more. Should U.S. tax dollars be barred from going to such organizations?

Dr. JASSER. I believe once you designate the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and many of the offshoots I talked about, name Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist organization, then you can do the same thing to Islamic Relief that you did to the Holy Land Foundation because Hamas is a terrorist organization. But because they are funneling money through third parties that are not designated as terrorist organizations, they get away with.

So the short answer to your question is, yes, we should stop giving them money. But you can't do that until you designate the Muslim Brotherhood a terrorist organization.

Mr. GOSAR. I thank the gentleman. I yield back.

Mr. DESANTIS. The gentleman yields back.

The chair now recognizes Mr. Comer for 5 minutes.

Mr. COMER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

My questions will be asked to the first three gentlemen on the panel.

Ambassador Benjamin testified that most Muslim Brotherhood affiliates support democracy and renounce violence. Is that true?

Mr. FRADKIN. No. I don't think so. What has been true is the issue of violence as far as the Brotherhood is concerned, going back to the beginning, was a tactical question. Was it useful at any particular stage to use violence to advance their goals? And al-Qaida has no doubt that violence is good, but the Brotherhood sees it otherwise, but as such, there is no repudiation of violence, and that is just—there is no such statement in the historical record.

Ambassador BENJAMIN. Of course there is. The Egyptian Brotherhood has formally adjured violence in the 1990s.

Mr. FRADKIN. No, no. You said in your testimony they adjured it in the 1960s and 1970s when they—

Ambassador BENJAMIN. No, I didn't say that.

Mr. FRADKIN. And they did—it says that—what the past was. In the 1960s and 1970s, they were in prison, so they had no option to exercise violence.

I am not saying that they are for it, you know, in a big way, but it's just not true that, A—and this is the flip side of the assertion—the flip side of the assertion is that they are interested in entry into a normal, moderate politics, and that also is not true.

And in the case of the Egyptians, they thought—they took what they could get under Mubarak, under Sadat. And then when they thought they had bigger opportunities, they went in a different direction.

I want to, if I may, this brings up to the question—or an observation that Congressman Lynch made earlier that the question before us has always to do with action, terrorist action and violence. And it's important to focus on that, because that's the way in which we conceive of the threat and also the way in which our laws are written. And that's terribly important, but to some degree, and I agree with you, Congressman Lynch, that's the way in which we first have to approach the issue.

The problem is, it does skew the discussion insofar as it suggests that those who are not immediately active in violence, or even if they've, you know, eschewed violence, as Ambassador Benjamin asserts, are the parties to be worked with, the parties that are useful for interaction. And this is a continuous tendency. Once you've sort of made the distinction between the Brotherhood and al-Qaida, you say, okay, these are the guys we can work with. And it was worthwhile having the experiment, perhaps, but we have had such experiments, and they haven't worked.

Mr. COMER. Thank you.

Mr. SCHANZER. Congressman Comer, thank you for the question. What I would say is that in each of the cases that we look at around the Middle East, these groups have been shaped by their environments. So if they operate under a repressive regime, they are often left with no recourse but to recognize the regime and to renounce violence. They are more than willing to engage in the democratic process, but there's really nothing in their creed, all right, which is ultimately the dogma that they all adhere to at their core, that suggests that they have given up violence as an approach or that they've embraced democracy.

So I think we just need to remember that they have been forced into making a lot of these decisions over time. Whether they are organically going to remain there, I think, is another question entirely.

Dr. JASSER. And if I can add, I think to take what one or two Muslim leaders that happen to be sitting with Americans at the time and telling ambassadors what they think they want to hear is one thing, versus what they're actually telling their own people.

And when the supreme guide of the Muslim Brotherhood in 2010, decades after the so-called change of approach towards violence, tells his leaders that he is telling them that the best goal is to attain death and sacrifice through a jihadi generation against the U.S. and against the Zional-American conspiracy, that is a jihadi call to arms. And that was in 2010 at the same time of, you know, with al-Qaida and other groups, so it sounded very similar.

And I think basically we're hearing from some leaders that we should just continue a whack-a-mole approach to the Muslim Brotherhood program rather than actually treating the primary central organization as being a terrorist organization based on its ideology.

And, by the way, if the antiviolenence approach to them is true, we would be able to find rifles of theological, you know, disagreements with the Brotherhood's approach, their logo would have changed, all these things would have changed. None of that has happened. They're just telling a few ambassadors when they meet with them what they want to hear so that we don't interfere in their business in taking over various countries.

Ambassador BENJAMIN. If I may, sir, my points are largely being distorted here.

First of all, there's no legal basis whatsoever for designating the Brotherhood on the basis of ideology. Terrorist designations are done on the basis of violent act.

Mr. FRADKIN. Right.

Ambassador BENJAMIN. That's it. So for Dr. Jasser to talk about designating the Muslim Brotherhood is absurd.

Dr. JASSER. Well, what percent of them should be violent suicide? And answer is 10, 20, 80 percent? What percent?

Ambassador BENJAMIN. You have to identify individuals and you have to identify groups that are carrying out these acts, and that's how the law works and that's how the State Department works and that's how we have worked throughout.

And if we get into the business of deciding that a group should be designated because we don't like its ideology, first of all, we're contravening our own values in terms of freedom of speech and of discourse and we're undermining our own interests.

The United States Government has espoused the belief for many, many decades that anyone who participates in the democratic process honestly, and so far as we can tell, and this is based on both intelligence and on the basis of their statements, that we ought to talk to them. That is what engaging with them means. It's doesn't mean that we are giving them money, it doesn't mean that we're giving them any benefits. We are talking to them, and that is it.

And socialization through those processes typically, but not always, has positive effects. And we might have actually had a worse experience with Mr. Morrissey if we had not known the Muslim Brotherhood at all before, and we might have had a better experience had we had a more robust dialogue with the Muslim Brotherhood before.

And it's important to note that the reason that we did not have a more robust dialogue was because autocratic leaders prohibited us from doing so in their country, and the cycle of repression and rebellion will go on as long as we are always beholden to those autocrats.

Mr. DESANTIS. The gentleman's time has expired.

The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee, Mr. Duncan, for 5 minutes.

Mr. DUNCAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I'm sorry I had to be over on the floor, so I didn't get to hear your testimony. And I really know very little about this particular

issue, and I read that the Muslim Brotherhood has affiliates in 70 countries.

How many members are there? How many people are there in the Muslim Brotherhood all together? Does anybody know?

Mr. FRADKIN. I don't know. No.

Mr. DUNCAN. Yes. Ambassador?

Ambassador BENJAMIN. We don't know. No one has a global figure, but it's in the millions.

Dr. JASSER. Well, they won an election in Egypt. So they did that by having initially 20 to 30 percent of the vote and then they won a runoff against the former intelligence operation for Mubarak.

So, you know, in various countries, they can swing 20, 30 percent of the active Islamists, which are 30 percent of the population. So politically they're a large group.

Mr. DUNCAN. Well, I understand that at least the first three witnesses here think we should designate. Is that not correct?

Mr. SCHANZER. Not correct.

Mr. DUNCAN. Oh, okay. So of the people who are in the Muslim Brotherhood, what percentage do you think are violent or advocate violent activities? Does anybody have an opinion about that?

Mr. SCHANZER. Congressman Duncan, in my testimony, I did note that there are a number of organizations that have already been designated: Hasm, Liwa al-Thawra, Hamas. I suggested two others, one in Libya, another one in Yemen, where I think we would probably see evidence that would meet the criteria, which is a fairly simple criteria when you look at the Treasury designation process in particular. The State Department's a little bit more fuzzy.

And then I think, you know, from there, we need to think about targeting violent individuals within the factions that are officially nonviolent or are taking part in the process, because we know that there are more hard line members within each of these factions, those that support violence, those that don't. So this needs to be a targeted process across the board according to our criteria of designation.

Mr. DUNCAN. Okay. But do we have an opinion as to—I mean, is it a very small number or percentage of the people who are in the Muslim Brotherhood that would be considered violent or prone to violence?

Ambassador BENJAMIN. Very, very small.

Mr. DUNCAN. Very small.

Dr. JASSER. Congressman Duncan—

Ambassador BENJAMIN. Very small. Certainly those who have actually been involved in violent activities, it would be significantly less than 1 percent. Those who have joined splinter groups, that's another matter, but those splinter groups tend to be small.

You know, one of the things that is somewhat problematic about this panel is that, you know, the vast scholarly literature on the Muslim Brotherhood emphasizes that the overwhelming amount of energy in the last 2 decades has gone into the creation of political parties, which are by definition opposed to carrying out violence. Okay?

It is true that the Muslim Brotherhood historically has been a group from which splinters or sparks have been thrown off, and

those people have become more violent. Al-Qaida, the original al-Jihad group, those people were originally influenced by the Muslim Brotherhood and then became more radical.

But the Brotherhood itself, as far as we know, and certainly this was the state of the intelligence when I left the government, there are no major entities of the Muslim Brotherhood, setting aside Hamas, which is a special case and may not even be considered by some people to be Brotherhood, that are committed to violence.

Dr. JASSER. Congressman, there's a very—

Mr. DUNCAN. Let me just say this. You know, I've been here a long time. This is my 30th year. I was here for the first Gulf War, which I voted for, because I heard all of our top leaders say that Saddam Hussein was the greatest threat since Hitler and they talked about his elite troops, and then I saw those same elite troops surrendering to CNN camera crews and empty tanks, and so I became kind of skeptical about some of these things. And so when the second Gulf War rolled around, I ended up voting against it because I thought too many of our leaders were too eager to go to war to prove they were the new Winston Churchills or prove they were great leaders.

And so I've felt for a long time that it's been a very sad thing that we have sent so many young Americans to fight what I thought were very unnecessary wars. And I also noticed that many of the people or groups that we are talking about how great these threats were were people or groups that were going to get money, and that these threats seemed to be more about money and power than they were about any great threats.

But I see, Dr. Schanzer, you wanted to respond to the ambassador, so go ahead and respond.

Mr. SCHANZER. Yes. Look, what I would say is that I don't know where that number comes from that it's 1 percent or 5 percent or 10 percent. It's not like, you know, we're looking at poll numbers coming out of the Muslim Brotherhood where people are calling their homes and saying, "How many of you are radical?" and they're openly admitting to it, right? I mean, we don't know exactly what the numbers look like within—

Ambassador BENJAMIN. I said this was the number of people involved in violence.

Mr. SCHANZER. What we can say, though, is that when we look at radicalization, we have to look at those that go to the battle fronts, that's number one. And we do see a good number of people who were former Brothers that have gone on to join groups like al-Qaida and the Islamic State.

But also, when you look at the criteria, the Treasury criteria, I'm a former Treasury terror finance analyst, we look at basically four criteria. One is, are organizations owned or controlled by a terrorist organization, are the individuals members. That's number one. That's obvious.

Number two is financial support. That is the same, in the view of law, as engaging in violence itself.

Another is technical support and then another one is material support.

These are the criteria that we need to look at what when we assess Brotherhood groups and individuals. And I think we'll find

that it's not 1 percent, but it's also not 50 percent. There is some fuzzy math in there. I don't know how we'll ever get to it, but there is a problem within the Brotherhood. We know that for a fact.

Dr. JASSER. And if I could add just one thing, Congressman.

Mr. DUNCAN. Sure.

Dr. JASSER. These mental gymnastics and confusions that you're having is exactly what the Brotherhood wants to happen, by dividing themselves into secret committees that push forth violent arms and other committees that use political processes to come to power. They use liberation theology to basically advance, no different than a Nazi party would or other Fascist arm would, and they use militant arms and then claim denial when they are pushed by more moderate democracies like ourselves.

So at the end of the day, that wing, if it truly has—they might eschew violence on the one hand; on the other hand, they have never condemned openly those arms of their organizations or ever taken ownership of having sprouted those ideas and legitimized those factions of terrorist organizations.

Mr. DUNCAN. All right. Thank you very much.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Mr. DESANTIS. The gentleman's timed has expired.

The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from Georgia, Mr. Hice, for 5 minutes.

Mr. HICE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Listen, whether the number is 1 percent, 5 percent or, as you mentioned, up to 50 percent, the question and the issue, as we all know, it doesn't take but a small number of radical terrorists to create an enormous problem around the world wherever they may strike.

So with that in mind, Mr. Jasser, let me begin with you. How important a role does violent jihad play in the Muslim Brotherhood ideology?

Dr. JASSER. Well, I think it's central. And they might condemn certain tactics here or there, but at the end of the day, their model has remained advocating for violent jihad, their "be prepared" passage from the Koran is simply a battle that they use as their rallying cry. So at the end of the day, they are a jihadist organization that believes in the technique of violence as one of the avenues to be used.

Mr. HICE. Okay. So let's look at an example of that. How did the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood treat religious minorities, say, Coptic Christians?

Dr. JASSER. I was there in 2013, and they committed, and their leaders and imams, called for acts of violence upon Christian communities, upon the Coptic community. And while there may have been some debate here or there, there was impunity given to various Islamist leaders that called for those acts of violence. And especially after they lost power in 2013, it became no holds barred, and it's been that way since.

Mr. HICE. All right. So let's bring it closer to home. What kinds of activities does the Muslim Brotherhood engage in here in the United States? Do we know what's happening here or what kind of plans? What can you tell me about that?

Mr. SCHANZER. Look, I have to say, I'm not an expert on the Muslim Brotherhood here in the United States. I've been more focused on the splinter groups and affiliate groups abroad, but what we can say is certain groups have been involved in terror finance cases. We have seen examples of this. The Holy Land Foundation, for example, is sort of a famous one. That was an organization that was providing \$12 million to Hamas over the course of about a decade, and the Muslim Brotherhood group CAIR was an unindicted coconspirator in that case. It had an unspecified role in that case.

So we have seen examples of this in recent history, but again, I think the important thing to note here is that, you know, we need to see a certain criteria in order to designate them. In some cases we just might see examples of troubling behavior. And this is where I think we need to—you know, with all respect to all of my panelists—we need to be looking simply at the criteria, not how troubled we are about a certain ideology. We need to be—look, there is a criteria in the U.S. Government for designation. We go after those groups in the U.S. that are in violation of our law and we continue to watch those that may be exhibiting some troubling behaviors.

Mr. HICE. Okay. Thank you. But by your own admission, you're not an expert of this in the United States.

Dr. Jasser, let me go back to you. What other radical Islamic movements outside of the Muslim Brotherhood should we be concerned about here in the United States?

Dr. JASSER. Well, it's interesting, actually. If you look, for example, at the Khomeinists, Hezbollah, Hezbollah was designated a terror organization. We had sanctions against Iran for decades. That's one of the reasons there haven't been as many acts of Shia-inspired radical—it's not because the Hezbollah or the Khomeinists in Iran love America, they chant "Death to America" all the time, but the sanctions and the inability to fund and build mosques like the AKP now is building in Maryland and elsewhere, like the funneling of money from Saudi Arabia—I mean, up until just a few months ago, Saudi Arabia was actually intimately involved in this threat of the Brotherhood into Europe and in the West.

So if you look at our own national security incidents, San Bernardino, the Boston bombing, Al Awlaki. Al Awlaki came through the Muslim Student Association, which was part of the mother ships of the Muslim Brotherhood history progeny here in the United States that then evolved. Now, Al Awlaki then left the Brotherhood ideology to become a Salafi Jihadist and join al-Qaida and go to Yemen, but that revolving door of ideology, if you look at the radicalization of a lot of Islamists in the United States that go from the conveyor belt of nonviolent sort of political antiAmerican, antiSemitic political Islam that go towards radicalization, it often starts with Brotherhood legacy groups in America.

And I'll tell you, the Syrian American, the Syrian American Council is one of the central parts of that. Its own leadership has said its affiliation with the Brotherhood in Syria is one of the reasons the United States ended up funding a lot of radical Islamist groups, including Jabhat al-Nusra, Ahrar al-Sham, and other radical groups in Syria, because of Muslim Brotherhood sympathizers

in the United States that told them, “Oh, they’re okay,” and you can find it by doing research, by looking at their Facebook, social media posts that sympathize with those groups in Syria.

Mr. HICE. Thank you. Could you provide this committee with a list of all those?

Dr. JASSER. Absolutely. It’s in my written testimony that was submitted, sir.

Mr. HICE. Okay. All of them?

Dr. JASSER. Yes, sir.

Mr. HICE. Okay. Thank you.

Ambassador BENJAMIN. If I may, Mr. Hice, I believe just to expand on Dr. Schanzer’s testimony, there hasn’t been a prosecution in the United States of a Hamas affiliate since the Holy Land Foundation.

Is that correct, Jonathan?

Mr. SCHANZER. No, I don’t believe there has been.

Ambassador BENJAMIN. And that that was in the late 1990s?

Mr. SCHANZER. That was early 2000s, 2008.

Ambassador BENJAMIN. Okay. Early 2000s.

My point being simply that the Department of Justice and the Treasury Department are watching potential terrorist activity, and the FBI, of course, very, very vigorously. And I think that the paucity of prosecutions tells a very important story about the lack of activity going on in the United States at this time.

Mr. SCHANZER. I’d like to respond to that for just a moment, because I don’t think that that actually captures the full picture.

There has not been a designation of a U.S. charity here in the United States since 2009. Okay? What it means is, is that we have a problem with the system, that we are not looking at charities, we’re not looking at the nonprofits that could be in violation of our laws.

I actually believe that during the Obama administration, not to make this political, but during those years, the fact that we did not have a designation to me is very troubling, because I don’t believe that there was no terror finance activity coming out of the U.S.

So that does not exonerate the Muslim Brotherhood. To me it seems as if the system was not working for the last decade, and I’m hoping that we get to see a reinvigoration of that system now.

Mr. HICE. Thank you for that answer and I agree. I yield back.

Mr. DESANTIS. The gentleman’s timed has expired.

The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin for 5 minutes.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Thank you. I’d like to thank you all for being here today.

Ambassador Benjamin, I’ll start with you. You’re affiliated with the Brookings Institution. Is that correct?

Ambassador BENJAMIN. I’m a nonresident senior fellow there.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Okay. I’m not sure how familiar you are with the inner workings of the Brookings Institution, but are you aware they’ve taken almost \$15 million from the Qatari Government?

Ambassador BENJAMIN. I am aware that Brookings has a center in Doha and that it has, like many other institutions in the United States, accepted funds from foreign governments, including Qatar.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Okay. Do you know why Qatar would be funding the Brookings Institution or why they would find it of interest to give them \$15 million?

Ambassador BENJAMIN. So I don't want to speak for the institution. I know, because I have participated in it, that Brookings hosts, or cohosts, an annual Islamic World Forum, which is held, I think, half the time in the United States, half the time in Qatar, and brings distinguished speakers from all over the world to talk about issues of common interest.

And as I said before, Brookings has a center in Doha where it carries on scholarly activities much like those that it carries on here.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Okay. A fellow at the Doha center, this is what I'm trying to come around, someone named Saleem Ali, was quoted as saying, in The New York Times, if you can believe The New York Times, there was a no go zone when it came to criticizing the Qatari Government, and the Members of Congress using Brookings reports on Qatar should be aware they're not getting the full story.

Do you feel that by accepting \$15 million, it colors at all the view of the Brookings Institution when it comes to talking about Qatar and therefore the Muslim Brotherhood?

Ambassador BENJAMIN. I worked at Brookings before going into the Obama administration. I was the director for the center on the U.S. and Europe. We accepted grants from the European Union, among others. And I have the highest regard for my fellow scholars at Brookings and believe strongly that their views are not influenced by the sources of their funding, in much the same way that their views are not influenced by the corporate funding, which is another frequent source of funding at Brookings and throughout the think tank world, or from foundations, whose leadership may have particular views, but those views are not imposed upon the scholars. And the think tanks generally in Washington work very hard to avoid having the views of their donors appear in their reports.

Mr. GROTHMAN. I don't know how big Brookings is, \$15 million just hits me as kind of a large sum of money.

And I just wondered, can you speculate on what motive the Qatar government, which is sponsoring the Muslim Brotherhood as well, what motivation they would have in giving such a large contribution to Brookings?

Ambassador BENJAMIN. In my dealings with the Qataris, which has been quite extensive, I know that they are interested in building dialogue between the United States and their country and the Muslim world more broadly. And, you know, we see this in many other contexts as well. You know, probably the biggest contributor to the think tank world is Norway.

I see no reason to impute any ill intentions to the Qataris here, nor would I to the many think tanks that are receiving money from the UAE or from the Saudis, whose, you know, opposition to the Muslim Brotherhood is very well known right now, even if in, particularly the Saudi case, it's been anything but consistent.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Okay. I'll ask either one of the other of you, it's been implied by Mr. Benjamin that the Muslim Brotherhood is just kind of an umbrella name and there's not a lot of coordination be-

tween the Muslim Brotherhood in one country to another. I'd ask you to comment on that in general, whichever one of the other three wants to comment.

Mr. FRADKIN. I can say a little bit about that. I think that originally there was a good deal of coordination and there's a desire for there to be such. Over time, it's been a mixed picture. For a very long time, the other Brotherhood chapters looked to the Egyptian chapter as the founding chapter. They still cooperate. In the context of the 2011 Arab revolts, people went from Egypt to Tunisia to consult with their Brotherhood chapter. Actually, the Tunisians recommended that the Egyptian Brotherhood be a little bit more restrained. It was good advice, which they didn't take. And there is that kind of thing.

Because of the situation that was referred to before by Jonathan Schanzer, it's harder for them to coordinate, but they will be looking to coordinate. And one of the issues, one of the relevant considerations, is where they will coordinate from.

Qatar is one place, because they do support the Brotherhood and they provide, in particular, support for Al Jazeera, which is a platform for the most significant Brotherhood cleric, al-Qaradawi, but I think actually more important in the near future is going to be Turkey, because Turkey is a much bigger country, it's a more powerful country, and it has the wind in its sails now, or its president does. And I think it's pretty clear he's acting as if he is going to be the godfather to the Brotherhood. He's provided a safe haven for many of the Egyptians who had to flee, Brotherhood and others.

And what exactly he will do or what they will do under his auspices, I don't know, but because of the character of Turkey and the fact that the government is so completely under the control of its president, there is much greater opportunity in the future for coordinating action, I would say.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Thank you. I believe my time is up.

Mr. DESANTIS. The gentleman yields back.

I want to again thank our witnesses for appearing before us today. The hearing record will remain open for 2 weeks for any member to submit a written opening statement or questions for the record.

And if there's no further business, without objection, the subcommittee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:35 a.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE HEARING RECORD

July 10, 2018

Statement by Ryan Crocker
Diplomat in Residence, Princeton University
Former American Ambassador to Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Syria, Kuwait and Lebanon

The Muslim Brotherhood's Global Threat

I was a career Foreign Service Officer for 38 years, almost all of it spent in the greater Middle East. During those years, I experienced and interacted with the Muslim Brotherhood in its many forms. My observations here reflect that experience.

First, the Muslim Brotherhood is not a monolithic organization. It is not an organization at all in the conventional sense of the term. It has no international headquarters nor an identifiable global leadership. Individual country franchises vary dramatically in their ideology and politics, and especially in their attitudes toward political violence. At one extreme of the spectrum would be the Syrian Muslim Brothers who carried out a number of lethal bombings throughout the country in the 1970s. At the other would be the Muslim Brothers in Egypt, Jordan, and North Africa. In Iraq post 2003, the only organized Sunni political party was the Muslim Brotherhood affiliated Islamic Party. During my time in Iraq 2007-2009, we worked closely with the Islamic Party and its leader, Iraqi Vice President Tariq al-Hashimi.

Second, as we look at states, organizations and individuals who pose a threat to the national security of the United States or its allies, the Muslim Brotherhood will not be among them. Groups such as Hizballah, al-Qaida and Islamic State do pose that threat and that is where our focus should be. While groups such as al-Qaida and the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood may claim the same ideological/theocratic underpinnings through the writings of Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood icon Sayyid Qutb (executed by the Egyptian government in 1966), their interpretations differ dramatically. Al-Qaida leader Ayman al-Zawahiri, himself an Egyptian, has denounced the Brothers as apostates precisely because they have renounced violence and chose to work within the system.

Third, while traditional U.S. allies in the region such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have outlawed the Muslim Brothers, we need to understand that sometimes their threat perceptions differ considerably from our own. In Egypt, the Muslim Brothers won the first post-Mubarak elections and governed until they were overthrown by the military. That political power is what the current regime fears, not a non-existent engagement in political terror. In Saudi Arabia, the government has made a deal with the Salafist movement, arguably more extreme than the Muslim Brotherhood, whereby the government will seek to break any rival political organization in exchange for a Salafi pledge not to conduct violent actions inside the kingdom. These allies may have their own reasons to suppress opposition movements; we do not share them. Simply put, the Muslim Brothers do not threaten the United States. We should not treat them as though they did – we have enough real enemies.

Fourth, just as we should seek to understand the largely benign nature of Muslim Brotherhood organizations in the region, we need to act in cases where there is convincing evidence of involvement by groups and individuals in acts of terror. The current and previous Administrations have pursued this approach, and it is the right one. One size does not fit all.

Finally, we should be clear. The Muslim Brothers with a few exceptions are not our friends. They don't like us, and we do not like them. But there is an enormous difference between groups that do not like us and groups that are actively seeking to do us harm. We put ourselves at grave risk by confusing the two.