

**TESTIMONY for Hearing before:**

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

**“The Muslim Brotherhood’s Global Threat”**

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**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)

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 'shar'ia' 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.<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup>

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 21<sup>st</sup> 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

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<sup>1</sup> Press Conference of the Launch of the Muslim Reform Movement, National Press Club, December 4, 2015: : <https://youtu.be/xlAnr8bllr8>

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

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-19<sup>th</sup> 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 7<sup>th</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup> We cannot functionally address the global threat of the Muslim Brotherhood without understanding these concepts.

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<sup>3</sup> [Interim Report and Recommendations of the Homeland Security Advisory Council Countering Violent Extremism \(CVE\) Subcommittee of the US Department of Homeland Security](#). June 2016.

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”.<sup>4</sup> 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.*”<sup>5</sup>

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 Gemal 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

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

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

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.*"<sup>6</sup> 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.<sup>7</sup> 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."<sup>8 9</sup>

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*

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<sup>6</sup> 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>

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

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

<sup>9</sup> 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.<sup>10</sup> "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"<sup>11</sup>

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."<sup>12</sup> 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."<sup>13</sup>

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

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

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

<sup>12</sup> 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.

<sup>13</sup> 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.<sup>14</sup> 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 reinstated"<sup>15</sup> 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.<sup>16</sup> 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.<sup>17</sup> MB Sheikh Essam Telemeh said if police detain your family you should organize and kidnap their family as hostages.<sup>18</sup> 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.<sup>19</sup> 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.<sup>20</sup> The document was affirmed by the Muslim Brotherhood in an English-language statement published on their official website.<sup>21</sup>

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

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<sup>14</sup> John Rossomondo. "[Emails show Clinton was Told about MB-AQ Links](#)". *IPT News*. May 2, 2016.

<sup>15</sup> John Rossomondo. "[Emails show Clinton was Told about MB-AQ Links](#)". *IPT News*. May 2, 2016.

<sup>16</sup> 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.

<sup>17</sup> USCIRF Annual Report. [Egypt: A Country of Particular Concern \(CPC\)](#). May 2015.

<sup>18</sup> Patrick Poole. [Muslim Brotherhood Steps Up Terror in Egypt, While U.S. Provides Cover](#). *PJ Media*. June 2, 2015.

<sup>19</sup> Leila Fadel. Egypt's [Muslim Brotherhood Divides over Response to Killings](#). July 11, 2015.

<sup>20</sup> [Muslim Brotherhood supports call for retribution](#). Daily News Egypt. May 31, 2015.

<sup>21</sup> [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".<sup>22</sup>

### **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).<sup>23</sup> 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.<sup>24</sup>

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.<sup>25</sup>

**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.<sup>26</sup> <sup>27</sup> 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

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<sup>22</sup> John Rossomondo. "[Emails show Clinton was Told about MB-AQ Links](#)". *IPT News*. May 2, 2016.

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

<sup>24</sup> Al Arabiya Institute for Studies. [Libyan Dawn: Map of allies and enemies](#). *AlArabiya*. August 25, 2014.

<sup>25</sup> 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/>

<sup>26</sup> 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>

<sup>27</sup> 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.<sup>28</sup>

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.<sup>29</sup>

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.<sup>30 31</sup>

### **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*.<sup>32</sup> 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

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<sup>28</sup> 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>

<sup>29</sup> [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.

<sup>30</sup> The Charter of the Islamic Resistance Movement. August 18, 1988. <https://fas.org/irp/world/para/docs/880818a.htm>

<sup>31</sup> [Foreign Terrorist Organizations](#). U.S. Dept. of State. Hamas. October 8, 1997.

<sup>32</sup> 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.<sup>33</sup> 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."<sup>34</sup> 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.*"<sup>35</sup> 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.<sup>36</sup> 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

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<sup>33</sup> 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>

<sup>34</sup> 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>

<sup>35</sup> 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>

<sup>36</sup> 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.<sup>37</sup> 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.<sup>38</sup>

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.<sup>39</sup> 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."*<sup>40</sup> 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."*<sup>41</sup>

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.<sup>42</sup>

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.<sup>43</sup> 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 Shrabby 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.

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

<sup>38</sup> 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>

<sup>39</sup> 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>

<sup>40</sup> 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>

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

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

<sup>43</sup> 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.<sup>44</sup> 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.<sup>45</sup>

### **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

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<sup>44</sup> 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>

<sup>45</sup> 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).<sup>46</sup>

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."*<sup>47</sup>

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.<sup>48</sup> 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*

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<sup>46</sup> 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.

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

<sup>48</sup> 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.”<sup>49</sup> 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 polities) as among the enemies that a virtuous, ideologically self-conscious vanguard minority would have to fight

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<sup>49</sup> 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.”<sup>50</sup> 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 2013<sup>51</sup>; the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia designated the group on March 7, 2014<sup>52</sup>; the Cabinet of the United Arab Emirates published a list of terrorist organizations, including the Muslim Brotherhood and its local affiliates<sup>53</sup>; 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

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

<sup>51</sup> Egypt Bans Muslim Brotherhood. [CBS News](#). October 8, 2013.

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

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

Muslims is “cooler” than any other faith group scoring a 40 out of 100.<sup>54</sup> 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 Khomienists 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

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<sup>54</sup> [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".<sup>55</sup>

### 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.<sup>56</sup>

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 90<sup>th</sup> 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.<sup>57</sup>

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

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

<sup>57</sup> [Muslim Brotherhood thanks Turkey for Hosting 90<sup>th</sup> 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 twic 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".<sup>58</sup> 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."<sup>59</sup> 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 propoganda 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 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,

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

<sup>59</sup> 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](http://www.change.org)

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*...affirmed at 8 AM this Fourth Day of December, Two-Thousand and Fifteen*

- Allah is our objective.
- The Prophet is our leader.
- The Koran is our law.
- Jihad is our way.
- Dying in the way of Allah is our highest hope.



