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The Muslim Brotherhood's Global Threat

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

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

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

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

Background

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

¹¹ Sayyid Qutb ash-Shaheed, "'The America I Have Seen': In the Scale of Human Values (1951)," *part of the CIA's November 2017 Release of Abbottabad Compound Material*, accessed July 6, 2018. (https://www.cia.gov/library/abbottabad-compound/3F/3F56ACA473044436B4C1740F65D5C3B6_Sayyid_Qutb_-_The_America_I_Have_Seen.pdf)

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

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

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

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

Muslim Brotherhood Offshoots in Focus

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Morocco's PJD: Politically Viable

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Malaysia’s PAS: Active in Opposition

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

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

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

²⁵ Mohamed Daadaoui, “In Morocco’s election last week, the major Islamist party won again. Here’s what that means,” *The Washington Post*, October 13, 2016. (https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/10/13/what-moroccos-election-results-tell-us-about-islamist-parties/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.ece46f88772b)

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

²⁷ “Morocco’s king names PJD’s Othmani as prime minister,” *Reuters*, March 17, 2017. (<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-morocco-politics/moroccos-king-names-pjds-othmani-as-new-prime-minister-idUSKBN16O1WU>)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Egypt: Outlawed

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Muslim Brotherhood Designation Targets

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

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

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

⁴⁸ Abigail Hauslohner, "Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood finds havens abroad," *The Washington Post*, November 6, 2013. (https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/egypts-muslim-brotherhood-finds-havens-abroad/2013/11/05/438f2dfe-463a-11e3-95a9-3f15b5618ba8_story.html?utm_term=.b30c8c86bdf4)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Libya's Hizb al-Watan

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

⁷¹ "Libya's Belhaj quits military to enter politics," *Agence France Presse* (France), May 15, 2012.

(<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-18078436>)

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

⁷³ Ann Marlowe, "The Next Dangerous Move in Libya," *The Daily Beast*, February 22, 2016.

(<http://www.thedailybeast.com/the-next-dangerous-move-in-libya>)

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

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

(<https://twitter.com/4belhaj/status/608573991272521729>)

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

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

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

Yemen's al-Islah

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

⁸⁷ Muslim Brotherhood Terrorist Designation Act of 2015, H.R. 3829, 114th Congress (2015). (<https://www.congress.gov/114/bills/hr3892/BILLS-114hr3892ih.pdf>)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

⁹³ Thomas Joscelyn, “Resolving the Conflict in Yemen: U.S. Interests, Risks, and Policy,” *Testimony before Senate Foreign Relations Committee*, March 9, 2017.

(http://www.defenddemocracy.org/content/uploads/documents/030917_TJ_Resolving_Conflict_Yemen.pdf)

⁹⁴ Thomas Joscelyn, “Analysis: AQAP remains under pressure,” *FDD’s Long War Journal*, May 26, 2018.

(<https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2018/05/analysis-aqap-remains-under-pressure.php>)

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

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

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

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

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

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

State Sponsors of the Muslim Brotherhood

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

Turkey

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

¹⁰⁵ The Presidency of the Turkish Republic, "TRT - "Cumhurbaşkanı Özel Yayını" (Transcript: TRT - Special Presidential Program)," June 1, 2015. (<https://www.tccb.gov.tr/mulakatlar/1709/32485/trt-cumhurbaskani-ozel-yayini>)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

¹¹¹ Names of MB leaders who fled to Turkey), "Veto Gate, July 16, 2016.

(<http://www.vetogate.com/2277925>)

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

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

¹¹⁴ Jonathan Schanzer, "Hammas Still Finds Harbor in Turkey," *The Weekly Standard*, June 8, 2016.

(<https://www.weeklystandard.com/jonathan-schanzer/hammas-still-finds-harbor-in-turkey>)

¹¹⁵ U.S. Department of the Treasury, Press Release, "Treasury Sanctions Major Hamas Leaders, Financial Facilitators and a Front Company," October 9, 2015. (<https://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/jl0159.aspx>)

¹¹⁶ Jonathan Schanzer and Michael Argosh, "Lying Down With Dogs," *Foreign Policy*, August 20, 2014.

(<http://foreignpolicy.com/2014/08/20/lying-down-with-dogs/>)

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

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

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

¹²⁰ Tulay Karadeniz and Elif Karaca, "Turkey would welcome Muslim Brotherhood figures who leave Qatar: Erdogan," *Reuters*, September 16, 2014. (<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-egypt-brotherhood-turkey-idUSKBN0HB0FF20140916>)

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

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

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

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

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

¹²² "'İhvan medya' Bağcılar'da! ('Ikhwan Media' at Bağcılar!)" *Radikal* (Turkey), February 3, 2015. (<http://www.radikal.com.tr/turkiye/ihvan-medya-bagcilarda-1285334/>)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

¹³¹ Mona Zia, "الجمارك: ضبط 4 حاويات قادمة من تركيا تحمل أسلحة وذخيرة حية" (Customs: 4 shipments carrying weapons and live ammunition from Turkey seized)," *Youm Sabi* (Egypt), December 28, 2013. (<https://www.youm7.com/story/2013/12/28/1422258/الجمارك-ضبط-4-حاويات-قادمة-من-تركيا-تحمل-أسلحة-وذخيرة>)

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

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

Qatar

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

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

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

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

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

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

¹³⁵ Jonathan Schanzer, "Terrorism Finance in Turkey: A Growing Concern," *Foundation for Defense of Democracies*, February 2014. (http://www.defenddemocracy.org/content/uploads/documents/Schanzer_Turkey_Final_Report_3_smaller.pdf)

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

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

¹³⁸ Ibid.

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

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

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

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

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

¹⁴⁰ “Qatar Doubles Aid to Egypt,” *Associated Press*, January 8, 2013.

(<https://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/09/world/middleeast/qatar-doubles-aid-to-egypt.html>)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

¹⁵² Youssef Cherif, “Tunisia’s Fledgling Gulf Relations,” *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, January 17, 2017. (<http://carnegieendowment.org/sada/67703>)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

¹⁵⁶ Habib Toumi, "Raising of Qatar's flag in Libya was an eerie moment," *Gulf News* (UAE), June 12, 2017. (<https://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/qatar/raising-of-qatar-s-flag-in-libya-was-an-eerie-moment-1.2042345>)

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

¹⁵⁸ United Nations Security Council, "Final report of the Panel of Experts established pursuant to resolution 1973 (2011) concerning Libya," S/2013/99, March 9, 2013. (http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_2013_99.pdf)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Recommendations

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

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

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

¹⁶⁶ Jonathan Schanzer, "Assessing the US-Qatar Relationship," *Testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa*, July 26, 2017.

(<https://docs.house.gov/meetings/FA/FA13/20170726/106329/HHRG-115-FA13-Wstate-SchanzerJ-20170726.pdf>)

¹⁶⁷ John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019, H.R. 5515, 115th Congress (2018).

(<https://www.congress.gov/bills/115/congress-house/bills/5515/text/eh?r=1#toc-HED7BF67CE6F54687BB3E751FAB980E68>)

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
Witness Disclosure Requirement — “Truth in Testimony”

Pursuant to House Rule XI, clause 2(g)(5) and Committee Rule 16(a), non-governmental witnesses are required to provide the Committee with the information requested below in advance of testifying before the Committee. You may attach additional sheets if you need more space.

Name: **Jonathan Schanzer**

1. Please list any entity you are representing in your testimony before the Committee and briefly describe your relationship with each entity.					
Name of Entity	Your relationship with the entity				
Foundation for Defense of Democracies	Senior Vice President, Research				
2. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) you or the entity or entities listed above have received since January 1, 2015, that are related to the subject of the hearing.					
Recipient of the grant or contact (you or entity above)	Grant or Contract Name	Agency	Program	Source	Amount
3. Please list any payments or contracts (including subcontracts) you or the entity or entities listed above have received since January 1, 2015 from a foreign government, that are related to the subject of the hearing.					
Recipient of the grant or contact (you or entity above)	Grant or Contract Name	Agency	Program	Source	Amount

I certify that the information above and attached is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature



Date: **06/29/18**

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Dr. Jonathan Schanzer

Senior Vice President, Research, Foundation for Defense of Democracies



Jonathan Schanzer is Senior Vice President of Research for the Foundation for Defense of Democracies and the author of the book *State of Failure: Yasser Arafat, Mahmoud Abbas and the Unmaking of the Palestinian State*. His previous book, *Hamas vs. Fatah: The Struggle for Palestine*, is still the only book on the market that chronicles the Palestinian internecine conflict.

Previously, Dr. Schanzer served as a counterterrorism analyst at the U.S. Department of the Treasury, where he took part in the designation of numerous terrorism financiers.

Dr. Schanzer got his start in the policy world as a research fellow at the Middle East Forum, a Philadelphia-based think tank. He also worked as a research fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, where he authored the book *Al-Qaeda's Armies: Middle East Affiliate Groups and the Next Generation of Terror*.

Dr. Schanzer holds a BA from Emory University, a master's degree from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and a doctorate from Kings College London. He also studied Arabic at the American University in Cairo in 2001.

Dr. Schanzer publishes widely in the national press, has testified previously before Congress, and makes frequent appearances on television. He has traveled widely in Saudi Arabia, UAE, Bahrain, Iraq, Yemen, Egypt, Morocco, Kuwait, Qatar, Turkey, Jordan, Israel, and the Palestinian Territories. Dr. Schanzer speaks Arabic and Hebrew.