

**CARNEGIE ENDOWMENT
FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE**

THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD'S PARTY PLATFORM

CHAIR:

**DIANE SINGERMAN,
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR,
AMERICAN UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNMENT**

SPEAKERS:

**MARC LYNCH,
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR,
GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
ELLIOTT SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS**

**AMR HAMZAWY,
SENIOR ASSOCIATE,
CARNEGIE ENDOWMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE**

**NATHAN BROWN,
DIRECTOR,
INSTITUTE FOR MIDDLE EAST STUDIES,
GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
ELLIOTT SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS**

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2007

*Transcript by
Federal News Service
Washington, D.C.*

DIANE SINGERMAN: I'd like to welcome you all to this event on the Muslim Brotherhood's party platform. Today, we have three excellent, erudite speakers to talk about these issues. And so, I'd like to get started. I am Diane Singerman. I teach in the department of government at American University and teach and write about Middle East politics, particularly Egypt. So I'm very anxious to hear what my colleagues and friends have to say.

Today, first, I might just introduce everybody and then we can just kind of get started. Amr Hamzawy, who is a senior associate at Carnegie here and has been writing prolifically about important issues, has taught previously at Cairo University and the Free University of Berlin. He has many publications, the most recent one, "Debunking the Myth of Islamic Intransigence" – intransigence, I can never pronounce that – "Regression in the Muslim Brotherhood's Platform," et cetera, et cetera. He will speak first largely on the platform, the new platform of the Muslim Brothers.

Second, Nathan Brown, who is the director of the new Institute for Middle East Studies at the Elliott School of International Affairs at G.W. University. He has also been writing prolifically. As you all know, some of the best work comes out of the Carnegie Foundation and that's been wonderful for all of us. One of his most recent publications is "What Islamists Need to Be Clear About: The Case of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood." And he has many other scholarly publications as well.

Marc Lynch will be the third speaker. And he has just joined the George Washington University and the Elliott School as a professor of political science, previously at Williams College. And his most recent book is entitled "Voices of a New Arab Public: Iraq, al Jazeera, and Middle East Politics Today" and also has a very active and popular blog called Abu Aardvark. So anyways, I give you first Amr Hamzawy and thank you all for coming.

AMR HAMZAWY: Diane, thank you very much. Let me start right away by telling you what I am going to do in my 15 minutes in which I'm going to discuss some details about the party platform, primarily the controversial issues, look at the process of how the platform was drafted. What does the process tell us with regard to differences within al Ikhwan and with regard to the significance of public debates in Egypt about the Muslim Brotherhood and its role, its political role in Egypt of now, of today.

First of all, let me just spend a few sentences on the current political situation in Egypt and the situation in which the Muslim Brotherhood, as a movement, did manage, in 2005, to contest the biggest share of opposition parties and movements in Egypt with the parliamentary elections. The Muslim Brotherhood managed to win 20 percent of the seats of the People's Assembly. And since then, the movement has been in a confrontation with the regime. What we have been witnessing since the end of 2005 and

throughout the last two years is an ongoing confrontation between the regime and Muslim Brotherhood.

I am not going to spend much time with regard to the details of the confrontation. I assume it's known to at least some of you. What is significant here is that the political moment in which the party platform was put out is a moment of confrontation, of ongoing confrontation between the regime and the movement. It's a moment of confrontation in which the movement faces a great deal of restrictions and limitations imposed on its political role as well as its social activism and even religious activism by the regime.

Secondly, and before I get into the process of drafting the platform and its controversial points, one of the questions which was raised in Egypt – in fact, as the Muslim Brotherhood made it clear that they are going to announce to put forward the party platform – is why are they doing it, because if you look at the constitutional environment right now, and if you take the constitutional amendments, which were accepted by the People's Assembly in early 2007 and adopted in a popular referendum in March or April 2007, these constitutional amendments basically ban any party with a religious frame of reference. So it's highly unlikely that the Muslim Brotherhood will get license for a political party anytime soon.

So the question which was raised to the movement and outside the movement was, why are you interested in putting out a party platform? And my reading, my explanation, is two-fold. One, the movement is definitely interested in changing the headlines, in moving beyond the current confrontation in which several leaders were arrested, transferred to military tribunals, in which the movement has been faced with regime pressure over the last two years. So they are interested in getting back to the Egyptian public space with more of an active role, putting out a party platform.

And secondly, and I imagine Nathan and Marc will be addressing the same point as well, the movement, by putting out the platform, is addressing some of the concerns of the wider public space in Egypt, concerns about where the movement stands, what does the movement really think with regard to equal political rights for Muslims and non-Muslims, with regard to women, with regard to the role of religion in managing state affairs, in managing Egyptian politics. So in a way, it was getting back to the public space, moving beyond the current wave of repression, of confrontation between the regime and the movement, getting back into more of an active role and addressing some of the concerns which do exist out there in the Egyptian public space be that independent media or intellectual debates or even debates between different figures within the movement itself.

Now, let me come to the process of drafting the platform before I get into the controversial points of the platform. And first of all, the current draft which we have, it is a draft; it's not the final version of the platform. It's being revised as of now. And this platform, the current draft was circulated to intellectuals, opinionmakers, politicians in Egypt and partially outside it between the end of September and the beginning of

October. So we have, in fact, one month, four weeks of debate, intensive debate, in Egypt and outside about this draft of the Muslim Brotherhood's party platform.

With regard to the drafting process, it's quite interesting that we have two narratives. One, an official narrative coming out of the Guidance Office, coming out of a group of leaders within the Muslim Brotherhood. And we do have an unofficial narrative which does not simply come out from outside the movement, but does have some voices within the movement itself. This is one of the very interesting dynamics which we have to look at.

The official narrative goes basically like this: the general guide, the supreme guide, Mohammed Mahdi Akef, apparently asked the committee, composed of politicians, legal experts, and religious scholars somewhere about the beginning of 2007 to draft a party platform. This party platform was drafted, and was given back to the supreme guide, who discussed it with the Guidance Office of the movement. There were some remarks. It went back to the committee, back to the Guidance Office, from the Guidance Office to the administrative groups in different Egyptian regions, governorates of the Muslim Brotherhood, and to different administrative offices. And from the administrative offices to the Shura Council of the movement, which is the central decisionmaking body, and from the Shura Council, after being approved, back to the Guidance Office, and from the Guidance Office, to Egyptian intellectuals.

This is the official narrative coming out from Mahdi Akef, who is the general guide, or from leading figures within the movement like Mohammed Habib, who is vice chairman or vice general guide of the movement and two leading figures, about whom I am going to talk later, Mohammed Mursi and Mahmoud Ezzat.

But again there is this official narrative of – which, in fact, does present a picture of the Muslim Brotherhood as a movement which did consult about the platform, which did discuss the platforms and details, be it with its controversial and non-controversial issues. There is a different narrative coming out from the movement itself. There are leading figures here, prominently Abdel-Moneim Abul-Futuh (sp), who was a member of the Guidance Office. But someone like Gamal Heshmat (sp), a well-known former parliamentarian and quite an influential figure within the movement as well, and someone like Issam al Aryan (sp), who is not in the guidance bureau, but is in charge of the so-called political affairs within the movement and quite – in fact, does play the role of the spokesman of the movement, or has been playing throughout the last years.

The unofficial narrative goes in a different way. It basically states that the draft which was circulated to Egyptian intellectuals, opinion makers and politicians was not discussed sufficiently within the movement and was not discussed even not within the Guidance Office. Abdel-Moneim Abul-Futuh, who is a member of the guidance office, did say in different interviews that he was not consulted with regard to the draft that was circulated. There are a lot of doubts with this group that put forward with regard to consultation beyond the Guidance Office into the administrative units or offices of the movement across Egypt and within the Shura Council of the movement.

So the second narrative, the parallel narrative, is a narrative which, in fact, does not indicate or does not give us a picture of a movement that consults, that is in a process of consultation about one of its major political efforts, to put out a party platform, the first time that the Muslim Brotherhood puts out a party platform as a movement in their name. There were prior attempts in the 1980s, but this was always in coalition with existing political parties in Egypt back then.

So the drafting process, it seems that we do have these two narratives. I am inclined, based on different conversations which I did have in the last few weeks and based on different interviews that were published in Egypt over the last four, five weeks, I am inclined to take the second narrative to be the more accurate one, that indeed there was an apparent lack of consultation with the Guidance Office and beyond that. And apparently, we do have two groups in the Guidance Office and in the movement in general which are shaping its internal dynamics.

Interesting as well with regard to the drafting process, as I said at the beginning, we are right now in a moment of revision as the movement apparently did agree on forming a new committee, a committee which is headed by Mohammed Habib, by the vice general guide and composed of 40 politicians, legal experts, religious scholars, and intellectuals close to the movement. And they have been looking at the feedback which the platform generated out there in the Egyptian public space, in the movement, outside the movement, and trying to revise it. And there are signs of a consensus emerging. I am going to get to it hopefully if I have time at the very end.

Now, let me move from the drafting process and what it indicates with regard to consultation, plurality of opinions within the movement into the controversial points. And as you may know, there are basically two controversial points which received a great deal of media commentary, a great deal of debate in Egypt and outside. One is the provision which you have on page 12 of the party platform with regard to establishing a senior elected body, an elected body of senior religious scholars that does have or is supposed to have a binding opinion when it comes to what the parliament or the president put out in terms of decrees or legislation. This supreme council of elected ulema (ph) is supposed to have a binding opinion on the parliament and on the president when it comes to a *umural katai* (ph), the definitive matters of Sharia, of Islamic law.

So if you look at the draft platform which was circulated, there is a clear distinction between definitive matters, *umural katai*, and non-definitive matters. And the provision in the platform to establish a senior body of elected religious scholars that is supposed to have a binding opinion with regard to the parliament and president is related only to definitive matters of Islamic Law. With non-definitive matters, it's not a binding opinion. But this is one big, controversial issue. It raised a great deal of discussion. It was opposed from within the movement and outside it as moving Egypt, in some radical criticisms, into an Iranian-style theocracy, and in more mild criticism, as basically compromising the civil nature of the Egyptian state.

The second controversial point pertains to the eligibility of Copts and women to run or to be appointed to run for the presidency or to be appointed as prime minister. If you look at the current draft of the platform as it was circulated in the end of September, beginning of October, it rules out as a possibility a Copt or a women running for the presidency or being appointed as prime minister. With regard to the presidency and the prime ministership, the big criticism right here is that, once again, it compromises the principle of equal rights for Muslims and non-Muslims, for male and female citizens in Egypt.

Finally, one more controversial point is with regard to the movement's vision of the state. If you look at the party platform—which is detailed, I mean, we are speaking about 128 pages—and look at the sections on economic policies and the sections on social and cultural policies, you get the feeling of, in fact, two visions of the state: a retreating state, which is not supposed to interfere much in the market economy and, on the other hand, an interventionist state, which is supposed regulate media, arts, culture, for whatever reason and whatever justification is given in the platform. So there is a great disturbance, in fact, and so if only ambivalence or ambiguity, a great disturbance in the platform with regard to the vision of the state, which the movement is putting forward.

The final controversial point, which was less discussed in Egypt and more discussed outside, was with regard to the lack of separation between the movement and the political party. The party platform does not mention, not in a single sentence, any possibility of separating the movement from the political party, separating the religious movement from the party as a political actor, as a political organization. And this goes basically to the debate within the movement and outside it with regard to separating dawa (ph) from politics, with regard to separating missionary activism or religious activism from politics.

These are the controversial points. Now, what is interesting is that while the movement was debating, while Egypt was debating the party platform, there were some interesting signs, in fact, of dissent, disagreement, substantial differences within the movement, to the extent that we can speak for the first time about two groups in a very clear way. And these are not the same rumors which we have been hearing over the last year about soft liners and hard liners within the movement. We, in fact, have two groups. Regardless of the labels, we have a group which is basically composed of Mohammed Habib, vice general guide; and Mahmoud Ezzat and Mohammed Mursi, two leading figures of the movement. There is, in fact, some reference in the Egyptian press to esob itelet (ph), referring to Mohammed Habib, Mursi, and Ezzat as a “gang of three.”

And this gang of three, regardless whether we use gang or not, is basically for establishing a senior council of elected uruah (ph). So there are signs of a change. Until the beginning of November, in fact, until very few days ago, they were for the establishment of a senior council of religious scholars for ruling out the possibility of Copts and women running for the presidency or being appointed as prime ministers.

And we have a second group, prominently Abdel-Moneim Abul-Futuh, a member of the Guidance Office, Gamal Heshmat, as I said, and some others. And, in fact, two interesting actors coming into this group, primarily the parliamentary block, the 88 members of the Muslim Brotherhood in the People's Assembly, and the speaker. In fact, the chairman of the parliamentary group of the Muslim Brotherhood indicated in an interview recently that whatever the parliamentary block put forward during the consultation process was not taken into consideration, that this draft does not reflect the opinion of the parliamentary block.

And a second group, which I guess Marc is going to address, is young members of the movement, including bloggers. So the second group—those who oppose the establishment of an elected body of senior scholars, oppose ruling out the possibility of Copts and women running for the presidency and prime ministership—is more diverse, but less powerful. The first group is the more powerful group within the guidance office.

The final point which I am going to address, is the emerging consensus within the movement. And this is really a development of the last few days documented in different interviews, one interview by Mohammed Habib as vice supreme guide, given to al Ikhwan web on November 11th, and two other interviews which were given by Mahmoud Ezzat a few days earlier and by Abdel-Moneim Abul-Futuh, the leader of the second group or the most prominent figure of the second group, to al Ikhwan Online and Islam online. These are websites, I guess, I mean, I hope you are familiar with them. One is basically the official website, the Arab website of al Ikhwan. Al Ikhwan Online, al Ikhwan web, is the official English website. And I guess Marc is going to address them because there are great differences and interesting differences between the two of them.

Anyhow, the emerging consensus is based on three points: one, dropping the issue of the elected body of senior religious scholars, dropping it by basically resorting to a formulation which Abul-Futuh did put forward, which is that the supreme constitutional court is the one body in Egypt which is supposed to judge was there any legislation, was there any decree does match the constitution, the constitution's constitutional provisions or not, so basically, retreating from the suggestion of establishing an elected body of senior ulema (ph).

But the consensus is based on, in fact, ruling out the possibility of Copts and women or being appointed for the presidency or the prime ministership. Abul-Futuh was very clear in the interview he gave two days ago saying that yes, the guidance office did agree on ruling out the possibility of Copts and women running for the presidency or being appointed as prime minister. This is basically what he said: that this is the Muslim Brotherhood's point of view and it's not binding on Egyptians in general. But they stand for it as a movement.

Final item, final aspect of the consensus emerging is basically to try to convey to the public opinion in Egypt, primarily, the fact that there is still some room for change, for amendment in the party platform based on the discussion which the second draft or

third draft; there are two narratives here, but I'm not going to go into the details of which draft we have.

Final remarks – one minute, Diane, and I am done – final remarks with regard to what does it tell us really? I mean, Nathan and Marc are going to address it as well, but let me just give you four insights. I am going just to outline them. One, the current debate really confirms that we are looking at a very dynamic movement. It has differences; it has different groups; it has different factions. And it is able to debate different opinions, a plurality of opinions in an open way. The debate within the movement was, in fact, transmitted into the public space. In fact, it took place out there in the public. I mean, figures of the two groups did use the media, print press, satellite channels, to document their stances. This was a public debate. So it's a dynamic movement which does not shy away from discussing its opinions in public, one.

Two, in fact, it does tell us about the fact that we do have a movement that is looking seriously at the costs of its political participation, of its participation in legal politics and what does it really mean. I know Nathan is going to address this in a comparative approach as well. What I am just trying to say is that this is a movement which spends time to see how it can measure its ideological commitments, which it takes very seriously, with its commitment based on participation in legal politics and how to find a way out.

Three, it does tell us about a degree or – at least to an extent – a sense of regression in the movement, out of fear of losing constituencies. The suggestion which was made in the platform that was circulated end of September, beginning of October, with regard to the elected body of senior scholars was not part of any initiative, any statement which the movement put out throughout the 1980s and 1990s and the rest of the years. If you go back as far as 1987, to the party platform of al Ikhwan, of the Muslim Brotherhood, plus of Hezbollah Amal Party, and I guess one minor party as well, you will not find any mention between '87 and 2007 of establishing an elected body for religious scholars. It does tell us about the signs of regression while again reflecting on the costs of political participation.

Final point, although I am not inclined to use these labels, hard liners, soft liners, we are really witnessing the existence of two groups. Regardless how these groups move, these are two groups that are out there. They seem to have found a consensus, but the conflict and the struggle which is going on is bound to continue. Let me stop here.

DR. SINGERMAN: Thank you, Amr. Professor Nathan Brown will speak next.

NATHAN BROWN: Okay, thank you very much, Diane. Thank you, Amr. I'm going to take a look at—basically start from the same point that Amr did—but try and view things not from the perspective of internal disagreements and processes within the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, but look at things a little bit more in comparative perspective with other Islamist movements and Islamist political parties in the Arab world. But starting from the same starting point, you know, why is it that they issue a

party platform? In a sense, they are answering questions which don't seem to be demanding to have an answer right now. And they are answering them at just amazing length.

The party platform is quite a weighty document if you print it out. And there's no election coming. There is no body in Egypt that has any legal existence called the Muslim Brotherhood. There are other – you know, the Jordanian Islamic Action Front is facing an election next week. There are, you know, it's a legal party. The PJD in Morocco is a legal party that went through an election earlier this year. Why is it, what is going here? Why is it that they feel the need to issue not simply a platform, but a long and detailed, sometimes painfully detailed platform?

Well, I think that the motivations are clear and Amr touched on some of them. Number one is to reassure an international audience. It has real questions. I mean, the Muslim Brotherhood made a big splash internationally with the recent parliamentary elections. And there are an awful lot of questions and an awful lot of debate about where it is that they stand and an awful lot of demands for them to clarify their positions, also to reassure domestic critics. The Muslim Brotherhood, right now, is basically the only viable opposition party in Egypt, the only one. There are other opposition groups, opposition leaders, but they don't have much of an organizational capacity. So they have attracted tremendous attention. They have people that they want to assure there that they are really prepared to take on the full duties of a political party.

And the third possible motive is to resolve internal differences. The rapid entry – the Muslim Brotherhood has always had a foot in the political arena—now with 20 percent of the seats in parliament, with daily questions of politics being repeatedly referred to or being debated and the Muslim Brotherhood has to clarify its position, it needs to sort of get its leadership all on the same page. Those would seem to be the motives.

And the interesting thing is, thus far, I don't think it has met those. In terms of the international audience, the international audience doesn't necessarily seem to be all that reassured. The domestic reaction by people who would be sort of friendly to the idea of a pluralist system that could incorporate the Brotherhood is not necessarily reassured because of the issues which I'll talk about in a minute that Amr – but in terms of resolving internal differences, well, Amr may be right that they've managed to hammer out some things in the last couple of days, but what strikes me when I look at the last month or so is the degree to which differences within the leadership have broken out into the public and in language that Muslim Brotherhood leaders are not accustomed to using with each other in public. There's been a loss in sort of a collegiality of party lines and so forth and so on.

In terms of, you know, reassuring or resolving internal differences, that may be an important goal if you think you're close to political power, so you know what to do when you get. But they are nowhere near it. They don't even have legal existence. So why resolve differences? Why not leave things ambiguous in order to avoid things like

dividing the leadership or splitting constituencies. Why does the Muslim Brotherhood have to tell anybody what its position is on Copts and women as presidents of the republic? No one is asking their opinion right now and they could basically fudge the issue, continue to fudge the issue. But they've decided this time to have it out.

What I want to do is to just observe a little bit about the cost that I think the movement has paid for issuing the party platform. If you look at the platform and the public debate over it and the debate within the movement that has broken out in public, it is remarkable how much it is concentrated on those two issues, women and Copts as president and this body for determining the Sharia. What is fascinating is that if you read the document, you are dealing with two or three sentences out of, what, 120 pages, and not the sentences that they would necessarily want to put forward. There is page after page about culture, about economics, about corruption, about deregulating cell phones, about judicial reform.

These are the things that they basically want to position themselves as a politically reform-minded, nationalistic, responsible, you know, body with a full program. And they're coming off, instead, as the organization that is trying to impose Sharia law and is trying to bar women and Christians from top public office.

I think, to be honest, to some extent, it's a measure of the political inexperience of the movement in playing the game that they are trying to play, but also the hostility of the Egyptian political system to a movement that is trying to play this game. And the way that I want to illustrate that is taking a look a little bit just in comparative respect, to see how movements that have a firmer, that are more firmly established within their political systems have some legal recognition, some history of regular participation, and accepted participation in parliament, handles these issues slightly differently.

First, women and Copts – it's not as if the issue is absolutely trivial to the Muslim Brotherhood. Obviously, there are people who feel very, very strongly about it. The issue is debated sort of from the perspective of Islamic law, where there's a classic Islamic legal thought about what are the requirements of a ruler. And then, there are people who say, well, look, that was a political theory that was developed at a time when there was a single person called the ruler. We're now dealing with a state of institutions. And in a state of institutions, it doesn't make sense to ask the same questions and come up with the same answers.

To have a Christian, perhaps, as head of state would be thinkable in a way that it would not have been thinkable, say, a thousand years ago when you had a very different political system. So in a sense, you've got to come up with new answers. So there's that debate on a religious and Sharia-based level. There's also a debate on a political level, where the camp led by Abdel-Moneim Abul-Futuh basically say – some of the calculation is, I think, look, no Christian or woman is going to get elected president of Egypt. Why do we have to put this in our platform? This is a headache we do not need. It would be like having a requirement in the United States that the president of the United States has to be fluent in English and passing that in the Constitution. Why do you need

that? Nobody else is going to get elected anyways, so there's a political debate at a level of sort of political strategizing that's going on as well.

But the interesting thing is, this is not what the Muslim Brotherhood is about. Nobody that I know of, and I haven't met every single member of the organization or haven't met the vast majority, but I doubt very few of them joined in order to prevent women or Copts from being president of the republic. There are other things – even when they care about inter-religious or confessional issues, even when they care about gender issues, and they do, they tend to focus on them in very different ways.

They are about protecting the family; they are about protecting the Egyptian family life, protecting religious values and that sort of thing. And the question of the identity, the religious identity or the gender of the president of the republic is far down on their list. And yet, that is where they've been forced to put front, center, and forward. By comparison, the comparison I would make here is with the Islamic Constitutional Movement in Kuwait which, in a sense, was saddled with a similar kind of debate, not over head of state – because that is resolved in Kuwait; it's kept within the ruling family – but over the question of whether or not women could vote and whether or not they could run for office.

And there was a long debate in which, in a sense, the movement was divided on the same lines as the Muslim Brotherhood, between some leaders who said this is a headache we don't need; it embarrasses us internationally and so on; it makes us look like a retrograde movement. They've also got constituents who, and a hard-core constituency who would say, you've got to hold fast to your Islamic principles here. There was a debate on a Sharia level; there was a debate on a practical, political level.

Finally, much to the relief, I think, of the leadership of the movement, the law was amended to allow women the right to vote over the opposition of most of the Islamic Constitutional Movement. And at that point, they were able to switch the terms of the debate very much in terms that they wanted it. It no longer became about women's right to vote, but the Islamic Constitutional Movement said, we're going to develop our own women's rights legislation.

And it's a piece of legislation that's actually a fascinating initiative if you were to think of what, say, the religious right in this country would do if it were to come up with a piece of women's rights legislation. That's what it would look like. It's in a sense, extremely paternalistic, extremely protective, extremely, you could say, sort of family oriented and oriented towards protecting the role of women in a very traditional conception of her family role. But also one that offers real material benefits to women who decide not to work after they have children, and this sort of thing, in the way that has real popular resonance, that's going to get them votes. They are offering material benefits to people in a positive way, not saying what women can't do, but what will be actively provided for women according to what their rights are in a fairly conservative vision of society. That's not how the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt has been cornered into the debate. They've been cornered into a debate very much not on their terms.

Second, this issue of sharia – again, it’s a sentence. And the sentence is elliptically worded and to me, it’s not even clear how it would be implemented. But if I were a member, and correct me if I’m wrong, it says there will be this elected body of religious scholars whose advice will be advisory in those matters that are not definitive. I think it’s said in a negative way.

DR. HAMZAWY: This is the second part of the sentence.

DR. BROWN: Oh, okay. All right.

DR. HAMAZAWY: The first part is its advice is going to be binding in definitive matters.

DR. BROWN: Oh, okay. I forgot the first part of the sentence. I thought it was only the elliptical second part. But in any case, and that’s it. How does it work? How do you get a dispute that goes to this body? Where does this fit constitutionally and so on? What it masks is a deeper – consensus may be too strong a word; it’s certainly not wall-to-wall – but I would say a deeper agreement among broad parts of the Egyptian political spectrum about the place of the Islamic sharia in Egyptian political life and the legal system. And that is that according to article two of the Egyptian constitution, the article that the Muslim Brotherhood likes to beat everybody over the head with, it’s the principles of the Islamic sharia shall be the principle source of legislation, which is taken to mean that in those matters which are definitive, the way the sharia is definitive, legal enactments by the parliament or decrees by ministers or by the president can’t contradict those definitive parts of the sharia. Where we know exactly what the sharia says, nobody can contradict it.

In other matters, the regular political authorities are free to decide what interpretation they think is most in interest with the common interest of the community. That’s actually a fairly widely accepted, not certainly universally accepted. So the dispute becomes not over exactly what that means, but over how to implement it, or not even how to implement it; who implements it. Who decides what are these fundamental principles?

And here the answer seems to be, that the Muslim Brotherhood is proposing, is we will have a body of religious scholars who are ruling just like if you were to have a medical matter, you would refer to a body of medical experts. If it involves sharia, these are the people who are best positioned to judge. And it’s elected primarily in order to get away from the system right now, where top religious officials are felt to be under state domination. So if you ask a high religious official – if a high political official asks a high religious official a question, he gets exactly the answer he wants. So this would place some real restraints on rulers.

The problem, of course, is what it does. Yes, this body is elected, but it’s elected – it’s presumably not popularly elected; it’s elected by other religious scholars. And it’s

not something that everybody is eligible for. This is hardly a democratic body. This is taking certain matters outside of the democratic process and saying, in these matters, in these specific matters, it is up to the religious scholars to rule. And this, of course, as Amr said, may bother certain people because it seems a step in the direction of giving political authority to religious scholars, not simply, you know, deferring to their wisdom, but actually giving them a veto power. Again, how institutionally it would work is not clear.

And to me, that's actually one of the interesting things. There has been sort of a long-standing debate among the Islamic intellectuals about exactly what are the powers of – how far you can let popular sovereignty go, how far parliament can go, how you draw on the Sharia in order to – in the current legal environment. And this platform has no answers to those questions. It just has this statement that seems to go fairly far in a direction, but no details about how this is going to operate. I don't think they know exactly how it's going to operate. And it may be true, as Amr says, that they will eventually just say it's more of a headache than it's worth.

The interesting thing is that Islamic movements elsewhere have basically gotten away from this kind of insistence on some sort of expert body that's going to have a veto power and instead I think try to reassure people that they are willing to work within the democratic process in order to draw on sharia principles in the course of legislation. So for instance, they will have the Kuwaiti Islamic Constitutional Movement talk about a committee that is supposed to review all existing laws and make recommendations to the parliament on amendments. It's not overriding the legislative or the democratic process; it's informing and, they would see it, enriching the democratic process by giving them this technical expertise, but fundamentally no derogation of popular sovereignty.

And it simply sounds an awful lot less frightening than giving authority to – I was going to say unelected people – they are not unelected, but by elected people only, but by people who are not elected by the broad population. Interestingly, my own sense is that Islamist political thought in Egypt is growing increasingly comfortable with democratic mechanisms and is probably willing – when I read stuff now versus stuff that came out in the 1980s, my impression is that they're far more comfortable with giving much greater leeway to democratic procedures for operating in these questions partly because of some intellectual development and partly because of some self-confidence that they increasingly represent a majority of the Egyptian population. So they'll win either way, whether on principle or whether in practice.

But when I look at this debate, and I look, in a sense, how I think the Muslim Brotherhood has been outmaneuvered, or maneuvered into the debate on terms which it would probably prefer to have avoided. What I'm struck with is that this platform cannot be withdrawn. Once they put it out there, they basically got to say where they stand on these issues. But the transformation of the Muslim Brotherhood into a normal political party of the kind, of the sort of steps that have been taken in Morocco, Kuwait, to some extent in Jordan although it's two steps forward, one step back there, is still only in the very beginning stages in Egypt. And that's not simply because of the Muslim

Brotherhood itself, but also because of a regime that essentially will not, is not at all comfortable with the idea of a Muslim Brotherhood or a Muslim Brotherhood-type movement operating not simply as a broad, social movement, but as a political party as well.

DR. SINGERMAN: Okay, thank you Nathan. And now, we'll here from Marc Lynch, from G.W. as well.

MARC LYNCH: Thanks, Diane. That's a hard act to follow, those two. Luckily, they saved me the trouble of having to go into all that detail. And let me focus in on something, maybe, a little bit more specific, kind of how this political party platform is playing into evolving generational and political conflicts inside the Muslim Brotherhood and just talk a little bit about kind of what's happening at the cadre's level, at the grassroots and among the Muslim Brotherhood youth and how these sorts of things are playing out.

And I think a good way to start with this would be to take some small measure of responsibility for the story that I'm about to tell, which is that when I got my hands on a copy of the political party platform from someone in the movement, I read it and I was very confused by these same things that Nathan and Amr have been talking about. So I got in touch, I emailed one of what I consider to be one of the most interesting people in the entire Muslim Brotherhood today, a 26-year-old blogger named Abdel Monem Mahmoud, who runs a blog called Ana Ikhwan, I am a Muslim Brother.

And I asked Monem, what's going on with this? I haven't seen anybody talking about it and I don't really understand what's going on here. And he immediately IMed me back in Gmail – whatever you call that, GMing me back – and said, just wait. So I said, okay, I'll wait. A couple of days later, Monem published a post on his blog called, titled Hiz Belgama (ph), Party or Organization about the party platform. This was well before Abul-Futuh, Heshmat, or any of the senior leaders had said anything critical about it in public.

And Monem unloaded on the platform. He basically described it as a major setback to the hopes of reformists, not at all in accord with the reformist vision that he and his likeminded peers had been hoping for. And he posed a really sharp and pointed question. He said, is this a platform of a political party or a platform of a proselytizing dawa organization. And so, I'll take a slight exception to something that I believe Amr said, that this was being debated outside the country more than inside the country. Monem picked this up right away and focused in on it.

Within a day, he had over 60 comments on this blog post, many of them quite hostile, saying, why are you talking about this in public? Why are you airing our dirty laundry in public? But he didn't back down and he pushed it farther. And pretty soon, other blogs started picking this up and pushing it. And they actually anticipated a lot of the internal controversies which were to come. And I think that you can read this in one of two ways. You can read this as these young bloggers were the shock troops of the

reformist leaders like Abul-Futuh and Issam al Aryan and Khairat al Shatir (sp), someone you didn't mention who's been in prison for this whole thing, kind of taking the front lines and trying to push the vision.

Or you could see them as an autonomous force evolving and beginning to make their presence felt within the organization. I'll come back to that point right at the end of this presentation. After this went on for a while, the official Muslim Brotherhood website al Ikhwan Online, published an article by an Alexandria-based, kind of forty-something middle-manager type engineer named Ali Abdel Fattah (sp), who basically – it was a barely veiled attack on the reformists and the bloggers, telling them, essentially, to shut up, telling them that Islam was clear about the relationship between dawa and politics, dawa and siasee (ph) and that questioning those basic truths about the relationship between Islam and politics was simply not acceptable and that they should, essentially, stop raising these questions.

Monem responded not by shutting up, but by posting one of the most bitter and personal blog posts I've ever seen from a Muslim Brother in which he basically said, you say that what I say is against Islam? I say that you insult Islam. You insult the Muslim Brotherhood. How can it be contrary to Sharia to separate Islam and politics when every other Muslim Brotherhood organization in the world does exactly that? Is the Islamic Action Front a violation of Sharia? Is the PJD, the AKP? Are these violations of Sharia? And he refused to back down.

This post generated about a hundred comments including some with a really nasty vitriol saying things like – remember, the name of this blog is, I am a Muslim Brother – saying, not everyone who says, I am a Muslim Brother, will remain a Muslim Brother. The security services must be having a party in your apartment tonight, you know, things like that. It got extremely heated.

Monem responded not by backing down, but by apologizing to Abdel Fattah for any personal insult, saying, I respect you and I respect my elders and I don't mean any disrespect, but you're wrong. And the principle of dialogue is a red line. And we will not back down. We are good for the organization. We are healthy for the organization. These things should be talked about in public and you cannot tell us to shut up.

Then, we began to see a very interesting controversy which came to be known as the al Ikhwan off-line controversy, where an unidentified blogger set up a mirror site, a parody site, of the al Ikhwan Online website which looked exactly like it, but changed the content. And basically, it was a protest over the conservative orientation of the official website and a protest about the dominance of the conservatives of this official mouthpiece of the organization. And then, one of the other young bloggers, 24-year-old AUC graduate named Ibrahim Mudevy (ph) published a very well-reasoned, thoughtful and powerful rebuttal to Abdel Fattah which was published on al Ikhwan Online with a personal intervention of the supreme guide, Mahdi Akef. And that ran on Islam online. And that more or less ended the controversy. The still-unidentified blogger took down

the al Ikhwan off-line parody and kind of, we're back into an uncomfortable status quo at this point.

I bring up this anecdote simply to say that there is something happening with this younger generation and that they're deeply involved in these unfolding events, in these unfolding controversies. And I think that I agree with Amr that, in terms of the development of the political party platform, the second narrative is the accurate one. I interviewed most of the Muslim Brotherhood's leaders last month and I very much got the sense that you got from that narrative.

But it leaves out some important bits of the context. And I want to introduce these youth back into the story and offer a third narrative which doesn't contradict the second one, but maybe enriches it about where this came from. Within the Brotherhood, with this youth movement, the Shabab of al Ikhwan, the al Ikhwan youth or as they call themselves, the fourth gen or the kafiya (sp) generation or the 2004 generation – they have different names for themselves – have been agitating for a more active political role for quite some time. Their experience comes out of university politics, of basically from 1999, 2000 on where they were actively involved in pretty contentious student politics. I mean, this is what students do.

At that time, they, for instance, some of the key bloggers who I'll be talking about, were responsible for setting up the first online student newspaper at Cairo University, an online kind of web newspaper. And they were involved in the Islam online and other kinds of web-based initiatives. But then, when the protest of 2004, the khafiya movement, hit the streets and Egyptian politics were roiled by the protests against, well, against the Iraq War first, but then, the khafiya protest against Ashu Mubarak (ph), against the inheritance, against the emergency laws, and that sort of thing, a lot of these Muslim Brotherhood youth found themselves kind of relegated to the sidelines, and they were kind of under organizational pressure to not get involved because the organization had long had a policy of not getting involved in domestic protest against the regime. This was a calculated strategic decision. And these youth were agitating against this.

This is a generation which was – these were their peers who were going out in the streets and protesting, and they lived, many of these people, many of these youth, online. They – you know, they're all on Facebook, on YouTube, they were very comfortable online and everything. But when you began to see the kind of blog-based and forum-based activism of the Kafiya movement, they found themselves on the sidelines, which was a very uncomfortable place for them to be. And they were agitating to become more involved in politics.

When Mahdi Akef took over, one would not have expected that a septuagenarian associated with conservative wing of the movement would become a patron for these people, and he really didn't. But what he did was to empower what people call the middle generation or the second generation, people like Abul-Futuh, Khairat al Shatir, Issam al

Aryan, Mohammad Bashar, and others who did act as patrons for these people and began to give them the opportunity and encourage them to act more politically.

At the end of March in 2005, the Brotherhood goes out on the streets with a major domestic protest for the first time and the organizers and the force behind this is largely these youth, who have been – they have been itching to get involved in these kinds of things. It wasn't necessarily the most pleasant experience; there were conflicts in coordination with other movements. And of course, as soon as they came out on the streets the regime cracked down hard and arrested a few thousand Muslim Brothers for violating this red line about domestic protest. But the itch was scratched and this, you know, I think was a real, I think a real organizational breakthrough and allowing these people to begin to play a more active role in the movement.

They have a slightly more negative role, however, in December of 2006, when a group of frustrated students at al Azhar University, who had been engaged in a running confrontation over student election, setting up a free student union, and faced a kind of blatant administrative, you know, administration intervention in student politics, held an ill-advised martial arts demonstration, where they were trying to – and actually, they wanted publicity. They invited the media; they had thought this was a great idea, to show that they couldn't be pushed around, that they would fight back. Turned into a PR debacle for the organization because the newspapers and the government-owned media ran with pictures of these students dressed up like ninjas and doing martial arts moves, and it raised fears that the Brotherhood was cultivating an underground militia.

And so I think Amr is right that in 2007 when Akef said, let's go through this, the need to reassure Egyptian public opinion was, at least in part, due to this kind of fear generated by the al Azhar militia incident.

It's at that point where, and this is December 2006, where student online activism really starts to pick up, where they create a website, the al Etylaba (ph), let's go students, in defense of the students and trying to publicize their plight and come to their defense. And a number of bloggers, who have just around this time started running personal blogs, really get on the case. One of them, the second-most widely read, judging by the statistics that I have, a guy named Magdi Sayyid (ph), Yal Amesh Mohem (ph), at first he blogs and he writes that, you know, you attacked the students. He said, why did you do this, you, quote, "are frightening a society which doesn't know us well." It's a big mistake.

But then, when the campaign kicks into gear and everyone starts criticizing these students, he turns around and he starts attacking the Muslim Brotherhood leadership. And he says, where were you elders when the students asked for protection, when the security forces were beating and kicking the students on campus grounds; where were you when the student elections were cancelled? And a couple weeks ago, he published a post in defense of the students where he called them, quote, "the real men of the Ikhwan," which, you know, if you are the patriarchal leader of the Ikhwan, is not something that you're going to take lightly. The challenge, and he was very clear that he was referring

to the male and female students, as the real men of the Ikhwan; that's a pretty potent challenge.

This is all coming out of student activism, and dealing with the student issues. Then, in response to the militia incident, or the alleged militia incident, a number of leading moderate Brotherhood leaders, primarily Huret al Sadr (ph), who is one of the major patrons of this blogging movement, are arrested and thrown in jail, and now being tried before military tribunal. And the students launch the Shabab (ph). Not all students at this point, but the youth, launch the INSA campaign, where they recruit a large number of the families of the Muslim Brothers to do an online campaign in support of the imprisoned leaders. And they post family pictures, tell stories about the personal hardship and suffering of their families; very creative, very effective online campaigning. These guys are very good at this. And that was kind of an organized campaign.

And then at that point, you see an explosion of personal blogs where a lot of these reformist youth start up their own personal blogs. And it's male and female Brothers, and they begin doing all kinds of interesting things with these personal blogs. Some of them are very personal; they tell conversion narratives, how I became a Muslim brother. Some of them, you know, they talk about music, they talk about, you know, sports, you know, all those kinds of things, which is interesting because it distinguishes them from their more Salafi peers who have a real disdain for things like entertainment, music and sports. And they try to build bridges with non-Islamist youth, and there's a lot of talk about kind of introducing youth to society, building coalitions, those sorts of things.

And they get involved in politics. Every issue that we've been talking about, the youth have played an important issue. So in May of '07, for instance, when the Brotherhood decides to contest senate elections when they have no chance of winning, the Brotherhood and the regime get locked in this battle over whether they would use the slogan, Islam is the solution. And the leadership of the Brotherhood is saying, we have to use this; you know, it's a major symbolic issue. And these pragmatist youth say, why are we picking this fight. Choose another slogan. Everybody knows what we stand for. Focus on the substance. And Ibrahim Mudabi (ph) and Magdi Sayyid both propose saying, use Egypt for the Egyptians. Everybody will love that. And they pushed this, and they lost. They lost the battle but they made the mark, and again, this is the example of the sort of thing that I have in mind.

Okay. Bringing this all back to the political party platform and the current controversies that we're talking about right now, and then I'll wrap it up. When the political party platform came out, as I said, some of the earliest and most intense criticism came from these youth. And that helps to explain at least some part of what Nathan correctly identified as one of the really unusual things going on right now, which is the Brotherhood waging these arguments in public, which is something really new and really important, that instead of this being waged behind closed doors, it's being hashed out in public.

That could be, from the point of view of many of the traditionalists in the leadership, a sign of weakness; a dangerous thing. You're airing dirty laundry, you're giving the regime ammunition against us. From the perspective of the reformists and of the youth, it's a healthy sign. It helps to reassure, let people see behind the scenes, and say, look, we're not a frightening, scary movement; we're a political movement. We are willing to let you see what we're arguing about, we build bridges and all that sort of thing. But there's a real contrast in worldviews there.

The battle that's being waged over the political party platform, then, is in a very real sense – and here's where I'm going to kind of maybe explain one of the puzzles, or try to explain one of the puzzles Nathan put out: Why bother to try to reconcile your internal differences now, when there's no election coming up? I think one of the explanations has to do with this fairly intense generational battle, where you have an alliance between the second-generation reformists, many of whom have been in jail during this period, and I think that's not an accident, allied with this reformist trend against kind of the old guard that Amr correctly identified, allied with the missing piece that no one ever talks about, this kind of third generation of kind of middle managers, people in their 40s, who are very conservative, very traditional, kind of organizational men who are not very happy with the idea that these kids, these 25-year-olds, are going to take their place and leapfrog over them into positions of influence within the organization.

Mohammed Habib (ph), in the interview that Amr mentioned, actually finally went public with his view of all this. He said that he respects the youth and their energy and their enthusiasm, but in the future he would prefer it that if they had criticisms, they directly – yes, come to me first and ask me first, and we can talk about it behind closed doors.

MR. : (Off mike.)

DR. LYNCH: Yes, yes. And from what I can tell – oh, and Ikhwan Online, by the way, simultaneously published Mustafa Nagar's (ph) lengthy defense of the bloggers in which he said, we are bloggers but we are Muslim Brothers first, and Nagar's a fairly influential figure among this youth group; he's a very nice guy. And basically, this seems to be – say there's an emerging consensus, this is them saying it's time for you to shut up now and get back on board. I don't think it's going to work. I'm very skeptical that it's going to work, but I think that that's an attempt by Habib to try and get these people back in line.

I was told by several of, I think, the more innovative and creative of these youth that if there was anywhere for them to go, they might actually split off as the Wasat Party did in the '90s. But the Wasat Party, this attempt to form a moderate political party based on Islamist principles, has been denied a political license for going on 15 years now. And so in a sense, it is the regime's decision to make sure that people like these youth have no place to go. And that is also one last thing that we might want to look at.

So the last bit of this that I want to say, and then I'll shut up and open it up for all the discussions, is to say that I don't want to give the impression that these youth represent all the youth of the Brotherhood. I'd say that, by their own estimate, they make up no more than 15 percent of the shabab, of the youth. The other 85 percent are, by their definition, more – the young Brothers out in the provinces, the salafi trend, the less sophisticated ones; that's their story. And I think, you know, they feel good about the notion they're urban sophisticates, and then their country conservatives are very conservative.

In fact, the salafi trend can be found in university campuses very strongly; they have their own online presence. They tend to not have blogs, they take part in forums. And instead, for the most part, and in the comment threads of the blogs, they're online also. It would be wrong to paint this as kind of a, you know, urban versus conservative. This is a very strong trend, and I think that that is the battle for the soul of the Brotherhood, where it's going, this is one of the ones where I think it's really shaping up.

Just this morning, I got – one of the Brotherhood bloggers gave me statistics on the most popular onsite Brotherhood sites. I think it's interesting to look at. The number one most popular one, according to Alexa rankings, is the al Mutaqa (ph) forum by far, followed by Ikhwan Online, and then a student website, followed by Egypt Window, which is run by students out on the provinces.

Then, you drop way, way down, you get to INSA, the campaign blog, followed by Abdomonem (ph), is Ana Ikhwan (ph), then a few others that I didn't recognize followed by another blogger, al Mait (ph), followed by Ikhwan Web, that's the reformist one that Amr was talking about, followed by Yal Amesh Mohem (ph) and a few others. And that, I think, actually gives you a fair indication of the distribution of views within the organization, if you assume that the main people who read this other than, you know, people like me are people within the movement. It gives you sense of that balance that I'm talking about.

But I'll stop there.

DR. SINGERMAN: Okay. Thank you, Marc.

I just want to raise one issue and then open it up to many of you. I guess one thing I would say, it seems to be a big puzzle about why now and really, why give themselves this kind of headache and this bad exposure, so to speak, as Nathan said. And I guess my question – a lot of the issues that we talk about vis-à-vis the Muslim Brothers and similar parties throughout the region have to do with questions often trying to reassure the Western press and the Western pundits and Western governments, is about questions of moderation, and also questions of sort of universal norms of citizenship.

So Amr, you used the term regression. You know, are they going back, are they going forward? Are they really committed to democracy? I mean, we're all familiar with these kind of debates.

And I guess I would like to maybe pose a different question which might not have any empirical validity whatsoever. But sort of the question about why now? One thing I wonder when people are talking about this doesn't seem like the right time. It doesn't seem like the right questions; why be so controversial? In some sense, whether the movement is trying to sort of raise the stakes in some sense of their religious legitimacy.

The regime, despite the success of the Muslim Brothers and the parliamentary bloc, is quite adept, is quite committed, to maintain a lot of coercive relationships with the Muslim Brothers. We're not talking about people bombing police stations anymore; we're not talking about sort of the occupied country. This is the parliamentary bloc, this is the only viable opposition; as Nathan said, they have a solid bloc in the parliament. Yet the arrests, the harassment, cutting off of the financial resources, imprisoning bloggers, continues unabated.

And so the question is, the Muslim Brothers, not a political party, not legal, has continued to play the game. They play the parliamentary game; it worked on one level, but it doesn't seem to change the regime's relationship to them as it does in Jordan, as it does in Turkey, as it does in Morocco. And so the question, you know, I would have in some sense, like, when the regime is so comfortable with coercion, when there are all kinds of questions circling around the succession issue, in some sense is this, even though it was buried in the draft document, is this sort of a bargaining chip for the future? Talking about a council of religious scholars that would sort of vet – and we already have a committee to sort of Islamicize the law. I mean, that's been around for a long time. But is it sort of a long-term strategic goal to kind of bring back the religious, you know, get rid of women, get rid of cops. It's a very sort of – maybe they buried it, but it's something that a lot of people pay attention to.

And a council, again, what it's doing is it's suggesting that perhaps their more radical allies in Azhar and other institutions, you know, need to get back in the game. Okay, we're not on the streets anymore, but we need to bring our sort of more, our religious legitimacy. We need to upgrade that; we need to upscale, as people would say. We need to scale up with those kinds of institutions and constituencies in Egypt which somehow are going to move this government to somehow take this constituency seriously, politically, and start to deal with them. When are they going to really start to – is there going to be any power-sharing ever, especially when sort of rumors are rife?

So I guess I would – and this is just a question of, you know, who is the constituency here. Who benefits from this very well-reasoned, very serious new strategy? And if it's a new strategy, sort of thinking strategically with the kinds of allies that the Muslim Brothers might have? So I maybe just pose that as a strange question, if anyone wants to respond. And if anyone wants to respond to each other, maybe just for a moment, and then we'll open it up.

DR. HAMZAWY: I guess, Diane, it's definitely a very interesting question, and I guess we are basically looking at a mix of factors to explain. One of them is what you

just said. Definitely, at least some groups within the movement, primarily if I can use that duality of old guard and young guard, especially the old guard, has been fearful over the last two years, a bit less than two years, of basically constituencies out there in urban and rural areas questioning the very logic of participation. What are we getting out of this kind of participation? We are compromising. I mean, there are real segments, conservative segments and as Marc said, I mean, salafi segments within the movement, popular constituencies out there, which have been questioning.

And it's documented on different websites, different statements from ranks and files from the cadres of the movement, documenting their frustration with regard to the choice of participation in legal politics. And they see it in a different way. What they got out of it is not simply the 88 seats, but what they got out of it are the military tribunals; is the fact that Huret al-Sadr (?) who was, in fact, the key figure in the movement for a long time, especially in the last few years before his arrest, and the one who was supposed to follow Mahdi Akef when Mahdi Akef disappears. Huret al-Sadr and the group of very influential businessmen, the business community of the Brotherhood, are now in a military tribunal.

And second, this outcome of parliamentary participation and the 88 seats has been very limited with regard to what the regime has been doing. The regime has not changed its policies; in fact, it's back to a crackdown on the movement on political space in general. So yes, I mean, there are some doubts about how to manage constituencies in a moment where the costs of political participation are increasing, negative costs of political participation are increasing.

But secondly, I guess it's as Nathan mentioned, and as Marc mentioned as well, the movement did feel—and this basically goes beyond old guard and young guard—the urge to get back to the notion of public space in a more positive way, not simply another, militia and other instances, not simply in a moment of crackdown but to document (?) where they stand.

And finally, this is basically what the movement promised Egyptians and Egyptian public space as well. If you go back to 2004 and 2005, prior to the elections, the movement has been promising, or did promise a lot with regard to clarifying its position on religion and politics, on women and cops, and this was basically an attempt to act based on the promises we'd see put out.

A final word with regard to what Marc said on bloggers. It's very interesting to look at how they are being criticized by the old guard. And to my mind, there are two arguments which are being put forward by Mohammed Habib and Mosi al Nazyeth (ph) and other one, as you mentioned. Well, these guys don't know enough; they should come to us and ask us, and we will enlighten them so they can say the right things. And secondly, they are being accused of being liberals, which Mohammed Habib used twice. I mean, accusing bloggers of being liberals. To my mind, this is one of the very first times where you have one critique describing Ikhwan members of being liberals. So it's interesting to keep in mind.

DR. LYNCH: But if you could see them hanging out in cafes, visually indistinguishable from non-Muslim Brotherhood peers, you can understand why they're being called liberals by their more conservative – more conservative

The one thing that I would add, and I agree with that, the one thing I would add is that part of the story that I was told that I can't document, but I was told this repeatedly by a number of people, in the story of the political party platform is that I don't think any of us mentioned that there were a number of much more liberal-sounding drafts of the platform circulating online before the official one was released. And the story that I was told was that when these were sent out to the provinces, and you mentioned that part of it, that the response was very negative; that this is where kind of the salafi and conservative response hit where they said, what is this, all this talk of democracy and human rights and, you know, where's the Islam?

DR. HAMZAWY: Where is sharia?

DR. LYNCH: Where is sharia? You know, this is a Muslim Brotherhood document and we want the Islam. And that's at the point when it came back with that criticism. At that moment, Huret al-Sadr, Mohammed Bashar, Issam al Aryan are in jail. Abul-Futuh is out of the country at the time, and so the story that I was told was that then this draft was kind of put together in a hurry and as a way of reassuring the conservatives, and then kind of sent out before the critics could have their say.

That's the story the critics are telling, anyway.

DR. SINGERMAN: So if I could just ask people to identify themselves, ask quick questions, and please refrain from large sort of explanations of things. But if you have something to say, please say it. So any questions? That table back there?

Q: Hi, my name is Fatima. I'm from the embassy of Yemen. I do have just a couple of quick, real basic questions.

I'm interested to know if you have any idea on the percentage of women that are in the Ikhwan movement. Are they a big percentage of women, small? I also was interested in knowing more about the leadership, also. Does it have any young – I mean, I know you've mentioned that there's like 15 percent as Ikhwan members in their youth members, but are there like, any of them represented in the leadership? Are they going to be represented in the leadership any time?

I also want to ask, where does the Ikhwan movement get their support from Egypt? I mean, is it more – this is probably a question about their economic policies. Do they reach out to their communities, like do they have a strong grassroots support?

And that's it, thank you.

MS. SINGERMAN: Okay, we're going to take four questions and then you guys will figure out who to answer. Yes, right here.

DR: Hi. Genieve Abdo from the Century Foundation.

I just wanted to ask two questions, one of which relates to this whole issue of constituency because it seems to me that this whole point of Sharia is really – to me, it would seem that that's the logical reason that this sentence was placed in the party platform. And not that I place a lot of credence in survey research, but survey research has been conducted over the last two or three years shows that overwhelmingly in most predominantly Muslim societies, when Muslims are asked about this question they say that sharia should be either the primary source of legislation or a source of legislation, constitutionally.

So I guess my question is, do you really think that this was sort of somehow an accident that this sentence was placed, or obviously, and from what you said Amr, about the response in rural areas, obviously perhaps this was more deliberate than one might assume.

And I guess the second question really pertains to Marc's presentation. And I guess, just sort of playing devil's advocate a bit, I think in this country and particularly in this town, there's become this dependency upon the younger generation to create velvet revolutions, popular rebellions, unseat regimes. And if you take Iran as one example, and of course the political and social situations are very different from Egypt, but if you take Iran as an example there's been a very active youth movement now since Khatami was elected president in 1997, and they have made zero progress.

So I guess my question for Marc is, you did say at the very end that we shouldn't place so much trust in these bloggers, but could you elaborate a bit on how they are placed in this huge political context that we're talking about? Thank you.

DR. SINGERMAN: Next question, and then we'll turn it over to the panel.

Q: My name is Mohammed Achino (ph) from the Voice of America.

Would the Muslim Brotherhood platform impact the Islamist agenda across the Islamist world, or would it show that the Muslim Brotherhood's movement is becoming revisionist and backward?

DR. SINGERMAN: Why don't we – there's a lot there, so one of you guys want to –

DR. BROWN: There is a lot there, and I'll just address two questions briefly, I guess, and leave the rest for others.

First, in terms of younger generation in the leadership, you know, I don't know percentages, but I would very surprised if the Muslim Brotherhood was much different from any other Egyptian organization in terms of the representation of young people in the leadership. The younger generation has, I think, a prominent role for a couple reasons. Number one was – and both having to do with publicity, number one having to do with the blogging movement that Marc talked about; it certainly gives them a face internationally as well. I mean, this is accessible outside the country.

And the second is a deliberate decision, I think, to put with the recent arrests, to put the families of those people arrested out in front of the movement. And so all of a sudden, you have sons and daughters of leaders out there in public, speaking to and quickly becoming some of the more media-savvy members of the movement, and therefore presenting a lot of its public face not simply domestically but internationally, at least within the Arab world. So, you know, these people get well-known and so my sense is that, although they are probably under-represented and probably absolutely unrepresented in top leadership, they punch a little bit above their weight in terms of public impact.

In terms of the sentence about sharia and sort of how it got there, I think you're absolutely right, sharia's popular. And to stand against sharia is something that, first, almost no Islamist movement could do by definition but also is something that, you know, is one of the main appeals. But there are other ways to do it; you know, application of Sharia law is, you know, sort of what they traditionally called for. Well, nobody knows exactly what that means, and therefore it's a great sentence because nobody's against it, but nobody knows how to implement it.

The interesting thing about this sentence was that clearly it was debated within the movement, and clearly it represents a particular position within the movement and one that is controversial. I remember seeing, at one point, I think there was an interview with – Amr, maybe you remember this incident, Gamal Heshmat, a Brotherhood leader, where he talked about creation of some sort of body of Ulameh (ph), and the newspaper headline it, you know, an Iranian-style body. Not only did he say I was misquoted, he filed suit. You know, there was a critical distinction there that, you know, the body that he was suggesting was advisory. And this is not in the platform, you know, in the stuff that we're talking about it may drop out; it had this required element.

So it certainly reflects some sort of debates within the movement. I'm still struck, as I say, about how it doesn't really reflect, I think, full thinking about something that was – I just look at the phrasing, let me go back a bit. We said Ellis Goldberg at the University of Washington, out for an event at G.W., where he talked about bringing in prior review of legislation; that is to say, for the first time laws passed by the parliament would have to be reviewed by a body before they were implemented. And when I first read the draft I thought, no, that's not what it's necessarily calling for. Amr just showed me the copy again, and I don't think it absolutely calls for that but it does sort of call for that.

Well, that is often a technique used in order to weaken constitutional courts because what it does is it forces them to examine in outside of a concrete case, just a very abstract ruling; does this law violate the constitution or does it violate the Sharia. I don't think they really thought through questions about what they're doing to the nature of judicial review in Egypt, what they're doing in terms of, you know, how it might affect other constitutional structures. So it certainly reflects debates within the movement, but I don't think the particular proposal and particular phraseology is particularly, you know, well thought through in all of its implications.

DR. SINGERMAN: Let's keep them short.

DR. HAMZAWY: Okay. Let me add one point to what Nathan just said with regard to Sharia. I do agree; I mean, it was not – if you look at the draft, it's highly unclear what they really mean and how to put it in action, how to translate it into a reality in Egypt's political environment. I guess it was put, as we just discussed, to – and as you, I guess you were heading the same direction, to satisfy some considerations among popular constituencies out there.

And in fact, secondly, it does compensate for the absence of sharia and the platform in general, which is an item, a factor that no one did look at. I mean, if you compare the current draft to the draft of 1987 or even to the reform initiative which was put forward in 2004, you have more of a mention of sharia in '87 and even in 2004 as compared to the current draft. So in a way, I guess they took sharia in general out and to compensate for them taking sharia out, they came back with such a bad formulation that led everyone, or many, to consider them as calling for a theocratic state in Egypt. But in a way, within the rhetoric and the discourse of the movement, it's a compensatory method for taking sharia out.

Secondly, on the young members and the relevance and significance. So, the 15 percent reform-minded young members, they are quite influential and I would like to add two reasons. One, Marc touched on, which is a different language they are putting forth. They are not debating using the same language or the same terminology used by the old guard or used by other members of al Ikhwan. There is a new language, so it's not only a question of style. Sometimes they are saying Ana Ikhwan, I am a member of the Muslim Brotherhood, and I am a fan of Ahly or Zamalek, which are soccer teams in Egypt. No, they are adding a different terminology into the discussion and different matters that they are interested in, social matters. I mean, there is a great deal of critique from them at the address of the leadership for ignoring social and cultural matters and focusing on politics.

And secondly, they are more daring. Just recently, a few days ago, one of the reform-minded, in al Fayyum (ph), one of the Egyptian cities, just put on his blog the names and addresses and phone numbers of Egyptian police officers close to – (in Arabic) – to basically homeland security in Egypt, to put it in an honest way. (Scattered laughter.) And the guy was arrested, and this was the first time that a member of the movement dares to get out by putting names and numbers and addresses of security representatives.

DR. LYNCH: I think the title of that post was cell-114, please.

DR. HAMZAWY: Yeah, exactly.

DR. LYNCH: Well, I don't have much to add and we're out of time, so I will say that these Muslim Brotherhood youth – I mean, as Nathan said, you know, they do punch above their weight; they are influential. And they have great access to the Guide's Office, much more than you would expect from people in their 20s. They are seen as an asset at home and abroad and if they were all blogging in English, then I would think they were pretty ornamental, but they are not; they are blogging in Arabic. They are writing for a local audience and an internal audience for the most part, and I think that is pretty important, and I'll just stop there.

DR. SINGERMAN: There was a question about the women in the movement.

DR. HAMZAWY: There – I have no ideas about the numbers. The women are decently represented in this new blogging movement – 15, 20 percent would be my – my best guess, but I haven't studied it.

DR. HAMZAWY: And they are not represented in the leadership and in fact, they have not been participating in the public debate, or in the debates because then the movement – (inaudible) – which is a great indicator for the absence of women. I mean, not a significant – (off mike) – voice – (off mike).

DR. HAMZAWY: And then when they have been most prominent, it's been in the families' campaign, so, like, Zohat al Shater (ph), the daughter of Huret al Sadr, Issam al Aryan, the daughter of Issam al Aryan, but that is in, like, a family kind of connection rather than as an independent public voice.

DR. SINGERMAN: You had a question.

Q: (Off mike) – the principle of Islam like a group being an advisory body, and at the same time saying that no one can contradict the sharia law. There is just a contradiction there between advise and saying no, you can't contradict. It's the way I look at it.

DR. BROWN: It is a contradiction and that is exactly the nature of the debate, yes. (Laughter.)

DR. LYNCH: (Inaudible) – more questions.

DR. SINGERMAN: Back there.

Q: Thank you. Amr, this is a question for you, but, again, I would like to hear from the panel if they have thoughts on this. One issue in the draft program that you did

not touch on was the al Ikhwan vis-à-vis Israel. In the program it clearly states that the Brotherhood support the goals of the Palestinian national movement in all of historic Palestine. And that of course is in accord with its long-standing position of not recognizing Israel.

Now, interestingly enough, that was one issue that did not generate any controversy at all, until a very interesting interview that Issam al Aryan gave to al Hayest (ph), in which he said something to the effect that if he became general guide, he would recognize Israel, but that position again would be subject to societal debate in general about the Camp David accords and about Egypt's position vis-à-vis Israel.

After that interview, as you probably know, he was vehemently criticized, and he began to backtrack. But then the interesting thing after that was the appearance of media reports which claimed that he was excluded from the general guidance council. And I wonder what your comment would be on that given a lot of what you touched on touches on the general nature of the debate and openness or lack of debate within the circles of the Brotherhood.

DR. SINGERMAN: Okay, we're going to take two more quick questions. Back there, and then you.

Q: I'm Mohammad – (inaudible) – Ph.D. student at American University. We sort of talk about different kind of – different groups within the Muslim Brothers, especially among the youth. Can you please elaborate on kind of the mechanisms within the group for kind of interaction among these different orientations? And one more point is kind of the older generations, how are they kind of interacting with these younger generations, especially that some people would say that it was a party. It's kind of representing a new trend and kind of post-Islamism inside Egypt. And some people are actually predicting that it might take over the stronghold of the Muslim Brothers. What kind of interaction – like, kind of inter-Islamist interactions in Egypt and how is kind of formally managed in the society.

DR. SINGERMAN: And one question there. Yeah.

Q: Thank you. (Inaudible) – consultant. I have two comments or question. I got from Amr and mainly from Marc my impression of the difference between the young youth or the younger generation and the old guard, it's always the tactics, and not necessarily the main core values of al Ikhwan, and so please correct me if I'm wrong, if there is a difference in the major issues, or it's only a tactics how to carry these major issues that they both agree to the other inside and outside Egypt.

The other thought is that despite the fact that the Muslim Brotherhood represents the main opposition block in Egypt for several reasons, if that allows their narrative, they are not really that different from the ruling party, at least – (inaudible) – social economical and on foreign affairs. They are opening up with a rolling party, at least 90

percent, and so I don't see why the people have to – (inaudible) – take risk if they agree as a ruling party 90 percent of the narratives. Thank you.

DR. SINGERMAN: One more and we'll open it up. Sorry.

Q: My name is Akmad Simhan (ph). I'm in fellowship with Freedom House and NDI. Actually, I would like to talk a little bit about – to ask Marc about – do you think – don't you think that Ibrahim Mudabi and Mahmoud (ph), they are not representing the majority of new generation Muslim Brotherhood. They are the elite. I mean, Ibrahim Mudabi is the grandson of the X leader of Muslim Brotherhood.

MR. : (Inaudible) – grandson.

Q: And also Mahmoud, he was the generator of the al Ikhwan Online Website with the English version. I mean, I have been seeing in the American University in Cairo a huge debate between Ibrahim Mudabi and – (inaudible) – Banna, the daughter of the son of the leader, the creator of the Muslim Brotherhood. And there are totally different point of views – totally – for me el Hudabi (ph) is more liberal, much, much liberal than any other.

And Lani (ph) – (inaudible) – for example, from all of this debate. Of course it used to be the biggest leader for Muslim Brotherhood University student in Cairo University. And later on Irizam Faruk, the elected leader of the liberal – the free-student union, and both of them totally have a different point of view. I'm talking about real people, they disagree with the new generation liberal point of view of Muslim Brotherhood. We are talking about people speaking English and studying in a very good education system. We are talking about the elites of Muslim Brotherhood, and the problem here that a lot – (inaudible) – is not – even just in Egypt; he is in Abuzabi (ph), so he is doing business there. So, yeah, I mean, he is not – give us the impression of a mass of youth there, a critical mass of youth; we are talking about elite people inside the view.

MR. LYNCH: Well, I don't disagree with that; that is why I said that they make up about 15 percent by their account. And they clearly are an elite, and that is why I was also careful to say this is not just the urban/rural thing, but in universities and in the cities, the more conservative trend is very strong, and so these are – they are an elite. Ibrahim writes in English, but none of the others do. You know, Abdul Mamni (ph) doesn't, Mike Disai (ph).

DR. SINGERMAN: (Off mike.)

DR. LYNCH: Neither does Mulnum (ph). They don't even speak English. So I don't buy that part of it. But in terms of their influence, I mean, clearly they are a minority and they are an elite, and they have – they do punch above their weight. I mean, they have influence in the guide's office, and their connections and their support coming from people like Shatir and Abul-Futuh and that sort of thing. But they don't command

the mass – I mean, they are representative. And that is the point that I was really trying to make, is that this is an emerging trend, but it is not the mainstream of the movement. And, you know, I would like to see this trend win out because I would like to see a Muslim Brotherhood that looks like that, but they are not really asking me what I want; you know, it's not about me; it's about what they want and what they do, and so that is why I am so interested in seeing how these arguments go forward.

DR. HAMZAWY: And it's one of the layers to understand the plurality of views, differences within the movement. One layer is old guard and reform-minded young members. But we still have the same differences and conflicts which we have been having throughout the last years. As I said, Habib and his group on the one side, Abdul-Futuh (?) and his group on the other side, and these are basically members of the same generation, the generation of the 1970s, which produced the al Wasat (?) as well. So it's only one layer, and we should not overemphasize its significance. It's a significant trend, but does not represent a majority within the movement and does not have a strategic majority even.

The second thing was regard to al Wasat as the movement – I mean, al Wasat is not significant; al Wasat is a nice group, a nice bunch of guys who have been saying maybe the right things, as far as I am concerned. But they are not relevant. They do not have any constituencies. They do not command any popular support in Egypt. And in fact, it was borne that and partially it has borne because of the regime's attitude with regard to denying the party allies. And so, Abu al Ahmad (ph) and his group are heading, as far as I am concerned, nowhere. And they can not really contest the popularity of the movement in any substantial way.

What is interesting is to see how the canon debate, based on the platform, the party platform, is generating new ways of debating within the movement. As Marc mentioned, Muhammad Habib finally got out of his way to recognize the existence of bloggers, of young members. Muhammad Mursi finally went to them and met them and had a long discussion with them.

So in a way, the current debate is generating some – at least a sensitivity within the movement into managing divergent views and plurality of opinion. So it's going to be interesting how they are going to manage in the coming years. And it's quite interesting how religion is used. I mean there was a horrible fatwa, horrible fatwa between Muhammad Habib and his group and Abu Mennom (ph) and his group with regard to the elected body, it was a body of elected scholars, every one of them went to – (inaudible) – to a religious scholar to get a fatwa.

And what went wrong was basically that – (inaudible) – went to the head of ul-Saladin (sp) in Cairo University, and he got basically got the wrong fatwa. I mean, he got the fatwa from him saying that no, Copts can not run for the presidency and women are not. And a body of elected religious scholars is fine based on sharia. So Abu Mennom (sp) got it back, and he was ruled out. So there are interesting struggles going on. And religion as a resource is definitely central.

Finally, with regard to Karim's (ph) question on Israel. This is very significant. What the movement has in the platform is twofold. One, that yes, recognizing the historical right of Palestine. And then a few paragraphs later, they would say, but should we be part of the government, we would abide by Egypt's international treaties and regional obligations. And this has been the position of the movement. This is basically the gray zone they have created since 2005, saying that, yes, we are for historical Palestine, but we would abide by international treaties.

What Assam did was that he basically pushed it too far. He went beyond this gray zone, which they sustain as a consensus within the movement saying should we – it was not only should he be as a general guide, but should be al Ikhwan be in government. What he said is that we would deal with Israel as a fact of political reality. We would deal with Israel in a realistic way. And this basically led to the criticism.

I guess the consensus within the movement is really on sustaining the two, still keeping the rhetoric on historical Palestine, saying should we come, we would abide by international treaties. Assam was not excluded, as far as I know, from the revisionist process. In fact, Habib denied these allegations two days ago, saying, no, he is still very much part of it as someone who is in charge of – (inaudible) – political section within the movement.

DR. SINGERMAN: This question though from this gentleman about there not being that much of a difference between the Muslim Brothers and the state – and I think this gets to Marc's point about the red lines, the lack of the Muslim Brothers in protecting protest, the lack of the Muslim Brothers in these red lines about internal critique – which gets to your point as well of the efficacy of a younger movement – anybody?

DR. HAMZAWY: Because they are different.

DR. SINGERMAN: They are different.

DR. HAMZAWY: I mean, I do agree that there is a degree of convergence when it comes to economics, that basically what the movement, what the Brotherhood has been putting forward – and if you ignore sort of the more regulatory state, which they do have with regard to social and cultural matters – it's basically a state that accepts free-market economy, and in a way, very close to the neo-liberal vision of the NDP. But they do differ when it comes to religion and politics, when it comes to, in fact, the very structure of the political system. The Brotherhood in their platform advocates a parliamentary system, where the president is not the central figure of the system as it is right now. So there are some real differences.

The big question, however, is whether they can act based on a platform and on their differences with the government. And they cannot. I mean, they are forced to become minor – maybe significant, but not very effective – opposition.

And secondly, your question, Terry (sp), on difference between old guard and young guard, these are substantial issues, and not simply between old and young, but as I said between – if you call it Salafi group and reform-minded group, Habib and his gang, and Abu Mennom, these are substantial issues.

DR. LYNCH: On old versus young, Ibrahim Safrani (sp) insists on reminding us that he's a blogger and he's in his 50s, so you can't just –

DR. HAMZAWY: He's from Alexandria. He doesn't count.

DR. LYNCH: Oh right, so he doesn't count. Genieve, with regard to your question about the youth movement, that always reminds me of the old – I don't know if it's apocryphal or not – De Gaulle's comment about Brazil. He says in 30 years, Brazil is going to be a great power, and it always will. And that's kind of the way I always feel about youth movements is they're going to change – in 10 years, they're going to change the system and they always will. So yeah, I agree that there are real limits to what the youth movement can do in and of itself.

But that will work to two levels. One is within the organization and the other is like changing Egypt. And are the youth going to change Egypt? Well, what is going to change Egypt? I think that's too much to place on the youth. But in terms of changing the movement, I think there's more prospects there, whether they win or lose. And the fact is, as I've said, they've lost most of the fights they've picked. And I think there's a reason for that. But whether the trend is they've been defeated, or whether the trend is they're going to keep fighting until they win, I just don't know. And that's why we study it.

DR. SINGERMAN: I've been told we have this room until 6:00. But if there's no other questions, people seem to be – I'm sure our panelists are tired. Are there any other questions or comments? One more; last one.

Q: I was just curious on what you guys thought the Muslim Brotherhood, what they have gotten out of the Hamas experiment in the Gaza strip and how that has affected the inner politics or the inner workings of the Muslim Brotherhood and if it has affected it at all?

DR. SINGERMAN: Small question.

DR. BROWN: I mean, I will tell you my general impression is that most Islamist movements looked a little bit at the Hamas experience as one that kind of demonstrates the difficult position that they're in and the difficult international position that they're in, essentially. And that it demonstrates the mistakes of moving too far too quickly into politics, that Hamas entered its first election and won, and got a parliamentary majority before it was ready, before the international system was ready, and so on. I've certainly heard that from Islamists outside of Egypt.

And the only ones that I talked to in Egypt were sympathetic with the position that Hamas had gotten into, but ultimately that it bore some responsibility for getting itself into the jam. Some of them said, why not just give up power? Why not just resign? I mean, they can accomplish much of what they want to do without necessarily seizing onto this Palestinian Authority that doesn't have any authority anyway.

DR. LYNCH: And in support of that, I asked Habib, if he could do anything different over the last two years, what would it have been? And he said, we should have only won 50 seats. If we had won 50 seats, everything would have been fine and the regime wouldn't have felt the need to crack down so hard. But we did too well. And that fits with what Nathan is saying. The model that people are looking at is Turkey. I mean, among the youth, I think there is a great deal of interest in the AKP and how they managed to do it, and self-critique. Why can they do it and we can't? And also, a double standard question to the West, why are you okay with the AKP and you're not okay with us? So I'm hearing a lot more about Turkey right now than I am about Gaza.

DR. HAMZAWY: But the Hamas experience in fact has impacted on the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt in terms of debates in two ways. One, at the beginning, which was basically led to a debate about the limits of political participation – once again, of participation in legal politics and what do Islamist movements in an unpreferable international situation and an unpreferable international environment and region environment have to realize from the Hamas experience?

As Hamas went ahead and did what it did in Gaza, it generated a different debate on participation in legal politics and violence and how to rule out the possibility of Islamist movements that do strategically commit to legal participation and policies, how can they rule out the possibility of acting in a violent way domestically?

Second, there was a question, which was very interesting on how the platform is perceived outside the Muslim Brotherhood by Islamist movements across the region. And it is being debated; it is being discussed in the region and outside the region. And interestingly enough, there were – or have been – two trends. One is a critical trend. Al Bayanooni (ph) of Syria, al Ganouchi (ph) of Tunisia did go out and document the critique of what al Ikhwan called for with regard to the elected body of senior religious scholars and the eligibility of Copts and women to run for the presidency.

And the second trend, which is sort of more in favor of what al Ikhwan did out of the consideration that Diane mentioned constituencies that they cannot afford in a moment of repression where they are faced with repression and regime pressures to compromise their religious credentials. So you will find the two trends in regional perceptions as well.

MR. LYNCH: I think Bayanooni's other critique was that they weren't consulted. I thought we were supposed to be an international organization, but evidently we're not.

MR. HAMAZAWY: No, what Qadafi said in the conference that took place in London – (inaudible) – Bayanooni said what Marc just said was basically that – (inaudible) – is there to inform them, not do discuss that platform with them – to inform them about the platform. And it's up to al Ikhwan in Egypt to decide where to go, so undermining any relevance for the international organization.

MS. SINGERMAN: Well, on that note, thank you to the panelists. Thank you very much. And thank you all for coming.

(Applause.)

(END)