

Arab Reform Bulletin: July 2007



Published by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

July 2007, Volume 5, Issue 6

Michele Dunne, Editor

Julia Choucair, Deputy Editor

Dina Bishara, Assistant Editor

To view this issue as a PDF, click [here](#).

Read the Arab Reform Bulletin and other Middle East Program publications in Arabic at

<http://www.carnegieendowment.org/programs/arabic/>

Read the Arab Reform Bulletin and other Middle East Program publications in English at

<http://www.carnegieendowment.org/MiddleEast>

Editor's Note:

With this issue, we bid a reluctant farewell to Deputy Editor Julia Choucair and Assistant Editor Dina Bishara, who have been the bedrock of the *Arab Reform Bulletin* for the last two years, with thanks for their many contributions. We welcome Salma Waheedi, who will take over as Assistant Editor.

—Michele Dunne

Subscriber Information

Click [here](#) to receive the *Arab Reform Bulletin* in English or Arabic.

Click [here](#) to read past issues of the *Bulletin* in English; click [here](#) for Arabic.

We welcome your comments or suggestions. Please e-mail the editor at arb@CarnegieEndowment.org.

Insights and Analysis

[Morocco: Interview with Khalid al-Hariry, MP, Socialist Union for Popular Forces \(USFP\)](#)

[Libya: The Limits to Reform](#)

Ronald Bruce St John

[Jordan: Iraq War Endangers Economic Reform](#)

David DeBartolo

[Arab States: How Criticizing the Government Becomes Illegal](#)

Moataz El Fegierly

[Arab States: Rough Sledding for U.S. Party Aid Organizations](#)

Dina Bishara

Readers React

Find out how readers are reacting to articles in the *Arab Reform Bulletin*. Join the debate by sending your views to the editor at arb@CarnegieEndowment.org.

News and Views

Kuwait: Ministers Resign
Bahrain: First Income Tax; Press Law; Truth and Reconciliation Committee
Saudi Arabia: Government Critic Arrested
Yemen: Opposition Journalist Arrested
Morocco: Run-up to Elections
Algeria: Electoral Law Amendments
Libya: Journalists on Trial
Egypt: New Islamist Party; Nour Update; U.S. Considers Conditioning Aid
Jordan: Former MP Charged; Run-up to Municipal Elections; Child Labor Code
Syria: Student Activists Arrested
Upcoming Political Events
Views from the Arab Media

Read On

New publications on Iraq, Palestine, Lebanon, Morocco, Algeria, Egypt, Syria, educational reform, U.S. policy, and more.

Subscriber Information

Insights and Analysis

Morocco: Interview with Khalid al-Hariry, MP, Socialist Union for Popular Forces (USFP)

How will recent amendments to the electoral system and political parties' law—raising the threshold for parties to enter parliament and conditions for obtaining public funding—affect the legislative elections in September?

The electoral system in Morocco is mixed. There are 295 seats in parliament elected via proportional representation in local districts and an additional 30 seats allocated to women and elected on a nationwide basis. The newly established threshold (the proportion of votes a party must win to get a seat in parliament) is 7 percent in any given district. There is no national threshold for political parties. If we had been able to impose a national threshold of 10 percent to get a seat, for example, the September elections might have resulted in only two parties in parliament—or four or five parties if there had been a 7 percent national threshold. However, this did not happen, because the parties don't have enough power to change the electoral system, and some of them (unlike the USFP) totally reject change.

Are the small parties forming alliances to increase their chances at getting seats in parliament, and consequently to improve their relative positions for public funding (which requires attaining 5 percent of the popular vote nationally)?

Exactly. The small parties realize that they won't get more than a seat or two in parliament, and that their chances increase with alliances. For example, there is an alliance among three leftist parties to agree on candidates for the upcoming elections.

Why is it difficult for any party to win a majority in the Moroccan parliament?

For starters, there are technical factors. The current electoral system makes it unlikely that a party will win more than 20 percent of the seats, and encourages the dismemberment of electoral blocs. Another factor is that the large political parties in the first stage don't win more than 15 percent of the vote, and hence don't even come close to a majority in the following stages. There may be a third factor, which is that there are some in the Moroccan political system who don't wish to have strong political parties with a stable parliamentary majority.

Why have the larger parties announced their electoral platforms early this year?

In the 2002 elections, the USFP announced its platform a few weeks before the elections, and so the party's candidates did not rely heavily on the platform in campaigning. Today, things are different. The parties were able to announce their platforms months before the elections due to the fact that the election date was set relatively far in advance for the first time. The USFP began readying its platform in October 2006, with teams of party theorists, activists, and outside experts taking part in the preparation for the first time. After approving it in the general party congress, the USFP announced the platform. The Istiqlal party and the Party of Justice and Development (PJD) also have announced their platforms. It is noteworthy that all the platforms have moved beyond the general statements of the past to focus on the details of proposed public policies. Here we can see the influence of a new generation of activists within the parties.

Are there fundamental differences among the various platforms that would impede a possible governing coalition between, for example, the USFP and the PJD?

The main differences among the parties' platforms lie in their views of the role of religion in society, as well as politics and culture. The USFP and PJD platforms differ on the type of society the parties want, the role of religion in politics, the values

in the educational system, the status of women, youth issues, economic management, and also regional and international relations. Here the Istiqlal party chose to take the middle ground; it is closer to the USFP on some issues and Justice and Development on others. So I would say that a ruling coalition between the USFP and Justice and Development is a very remote prospect. My belief is that the election will not result in an overwhelming victory for any one party, and will allow the current coalition among the USFP, Istiqlal, and other parties to continue in power.

How has participating in ruling coalitions affected the USFP as a party?

It's tricky, as there are both positive and negative aspects. On the positive side, the party undoubtedly learned much about political management and public affairs, and gained a realism that it had not previously possessed. The party's platform had been concerned with defending social demands without paying attention to resources, and it had put political and constitutional reform first. In the current platform, economic and social development is at the forefront as a prerequisite to social and political reform. The party also established an undeniably positive record of managing public affairs during the past years, especially in economics, education, human rights, and social security. The negative aspects of participating in government emerged when the party did not take a clear stance on important political issues due to the need to compromise with its partners, and when it was unable to communicate constructively with its electoral base.

What will be the challenges for the new parliament to be elected in September?

I don't think that the upcoming elections will radically change the present balance of political power. The real challenge for us in Morocco is that of economic and social development, first and foremost. There are certainly other key issues having to do with constitutional and political reform, the parliament's status, and building the rule of law, but development is an essential means to progress on these other tracks. In Morocco today, through the current political system, the parliament has more opportunities and space to push for political reforms than it has exploited successfully. We need to do that in the new parliament.

What is the status of liberal and leftist parties in Morocco ? Are they witnessing a crisis similar to that in other Arab countries?

The parties' situation here is different from that of their counterparts in the eastern part of the Arab world. Moroccan politics since independence has always included party pluralism, and the liberal and leftist parties have strong popular bases . These parties will most likely maintain, if not improve, their positions in the September elections. Yes, there is calcification within some liberal and leftist parties, and they badly need to open up to new social and demographic groups and attract activists and leaders from the younger generations, while taking a new look at their ideological and political focuses. Nonetheless, parties such as Istiqlal and USFP will not lose their popular bases; their presence in the Moroccan street is strong. Through the adoption of the *infitah* (opening) initiative at the USFP's seventh congress, we have recruited thousands of new members. Today we are involved in a process of self-renewal whose fruits can be seen in the recently announced electoral platforms.

This interview was conducted by Amr Hamzawy , senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. It was translated from Arabic by Paul Wulfsberg.

[Return to table of contents.](#) [Printer-friendly version.](#)

Libya: The Limits to Reform

Ronald Bruce St John

Following three decades of socialist experimentation, Libyan leader Muammar al-Qaddafi initiated a major shift in economic policy at the turn of the millennium. When early efforts at economic liberalization produced limited results, he stepped up the pressure in June 2003, declaring the public sector a failure, calling for the privatization of the economy, and pledging to bring Libya into the World Trade Organization. Reform efforts intensified further after Libya renounced weapons of mass destruction in December 2003. In reality, however, real performance has never approached official rhetoric.

In an effort to reach production levels last achieved almost four decades ago, Libya's recent oil and gas policy has been a unique blend of the old and the new, with continuity often more apparent than innovation. Based on a 1974 business model, the current round of exploration and production sharing agreements (EPSA, phase 4), offers enhanced incentives and a more transparent, competitive bidding milieu. Oil industry response to this approach, which includes streamlined approval procedures, has been good. Well over 120 international oil companies have expressed interest and after three rounds, over two dozen companies from more than a dozen countries have been awarded contracts. Libya has also pursued a bilateral business model for larger energy projects, closing big deals with Royal Dutch/Shell, Occidental Petroleum, and BP.

Reform outside the hydrocarbon sector—characterized by an uncoordinated, piecemeal approach—has been much less impressive. Qaddafi appointed Shukri Ghanem, a vocal proponent of privatization and liberalization, as prime minister in early 2003, but as criticism of economic reform mounted, he replaced him three years later with his more malleable deputy, Ali Baghdadi al-Mahmudi. The cabinet reshuffle was a victory for conservative hardliners, and the much-trumpeted privatization program, which in the non-hydrocarbon sectors had hardly begun under Ghanem, slowed to a crawl.

True to form, Qaddafi has been as much a part of the problem as a part of the solution. As government officials touted Libya as the best place in the world to invest, the Libyan leader, in a series of statements, contributed to international uncertainty as to the speed and direction of reform policy. In a July 2006 speech, for example, he said he wanted to curb the role of foreigners in the economy to ensure Libya's wealth stayed at home. A month later, he scolded the nation for its over-reliance on hydrocarbon revenues, foreigners, and imports. Statements such as these did little to reassure potential investors.

A series of official pronouncements in recent months have left foreign firms even more uncertain about the feasibility of investing in Libya. In November 2006, the General People's Committee made it mandatory for foreign companies operating in Libya to set up joint ventures with local Libyan partners. Foreign companies already invested in Libya wondered how the requirement would apply to them, while potential investors rightly viewed it as yet another commercial obstacle to overcome. As another example, employment regulations oblige foreign companies to hire and train Libyan nationals, reducing dependence on foreign workers. After the government announced in January 2007 that it intended to lay off 400,000 public sector employees, foreign companies rightly worried they would be forced to the forefront in efforts to find jobs for this surge of new workers in the private labor market. Compounding the confusion, the regime arrested several Libyan businessmen in early 2007 for violating the principles of "people's socialism," a term employed by Libyan officials who insist that economic liberalization must be consistent with the principles found in *The Green Book*, Qaddafi's socioeconomic and political manifesto.

In any case, Libya will likely experience real limits to a development model based on its current political system. Selected elements of a Western-style, representative democracy are present in the Libyan system of "direct democracy," but others—the rule of law, respect for human rights, and freedom to dissent—are not. Over the last few years, Libyan officials have become expert in tossing about terms such as accountability, diversification, partnership, and transparency. Unfortunately, the reality on the ground is a reform process implemented in an ad hoc, opaque manner with its pace and effectiveness compromised by human capacity constraints.

Consequently, the Libyan road to economic liberalization will likely be a rocky one with road blocks, dead ends, and detours along the way. Changes to the current political system in support of a market economy remain possible but not probable. A more likely scenario is the creation of some form of hybrid economic system, as Qaddafi has suggested in his vague references to "popular capitalism" or "people's socialism," which would be compatible with the current political system. In the interim, economic reform in Libya will remain a two-track, two-speed process with reform in the oil and gas industry outpacing that in other sectors.

Ronald Bruce St John, an independent scholar, is author of Historical Dictionary of Libya (2006, 1998, 1991), Libya and the United States: Two Centuries of Strife (2002), and Qaddafi's World Design: Libyan Foreign Policy, 1969-1987 (1987).

[Return to table of contents.](#) [Printer-friendly version.](#)

Jordan: Iraq War Endangers Economic Reform

David DeBartolo

Since its economic crisis in the late 1980s, Jordan has pursued an economic reform program with several inter-related objectives: controlling inflation, cutting the government's budget deficit, fostering exports, supporting private sector development, and rebuilding foreign reserves. Jordan largely succeeded in achieving these goals until the outbreak of the Iraq war in 2003. Since then, however, ripple effects of the war have caused rising inflation, undermining efforts to cut the deficit and promote exports.

Jordan's inflation rate from 1999-2003 was below 2 percent each year, but it has now risen to over 6 percent. Higher food prices have accounted for half of the total inflation over the last three years, partly because Jordan is exporting many of its fruits and vegetables to the U.S. army in Iraq. The end of subsidized oil shipments from Saddam Hussein's government, rising world oil prices, and reduced government subsidies have combined to cause fuel prices to Jordanian consumers to rise 54 percent since 2002. Real estate and housing prices in Amman have also risen due to the influx of some 800,000 Iraqis, though this contributes less to overall inflation than is commonly believed. In addition, the Jordanian dinar's weakness relative to the Euro since 2002 has made imports from Europe more expensive for Jordanians, reinforcing the other inflationary trends.

Inflation is causing widespread discontent among Jordanians as it reduces their purchasing power. The opposition press frequently features stories about rising food prices, faulting the government for curtailing food subsidies over the last fifteen years. Inflation is actually worse in rural areas than in Amman, because it is driven by rising prices for food and fuel, necessities that form a greater percentage of poorer Jordanians' consumption. This poses particular problems for the Jordanian government, which counts on East Bank Jordanians from outside Amman for much of its political support.

Sensitive to this constituency, the government responded by raising the salaries of public sector employees (who are mostly East Bank Jordanians), to compensate for their eroding purchasing power. This wage hike is a major driver of the government's fiscally expansionary budget for 2007, the first time that a Jordanian government departed from the contractionary fiscal policy that was central to Jordan's economic reform. The 2007 budget was 11 percent larger than the previous year's budget, significantly outpacing Jordan's real GDP growth. While the political logic of boosting civil servants'

salaries and public sector spending is clear, the expansionary budget is likely to boost inflation even further and to increase the budget deficit to a potentially unsustainable level.

Inflation also threatens to harm Jordanian exporters. Some Jordanian economists fear that the influx of spending from Iraqis who have moved to Jordan, in an environment of rising oil and food prices, risks sparking a form of “Dutch Disease” in Jordan. In such a situation, the foreign exchange and other inflationary factors would combine to overvalue the Jordanian dinar's real exchange rate relative to the U.S. dollar, making Jordanian exports less competitive in the U.S. and the Arab world, Jordan's two main export markets.

Early signs of the impact of the increasingly overvalued real exchange rate on exports are already visible. Exports grew from 23 percent of GDP in 2003 to 29 percent in 2004, but as inflation picked up, Jordan's export growth relative to its GDP correspondingly disappeared. As of 2006, Jordan's exports remained stable at 29 percent of GDP. Jordan's exports are no longer growing more quickly than the economy in general. First quarter figures for 2007 show that Jordan's manufacturing exports, after driving Jordan's export growth the last several years, have now stagnated. (The export figures overstate Jordanian manufacturers' international competitiveness in any case, as they include clothing and textile exports from Jordan's Qualifying Industrial Zones, which have preferential access to the U.S. market.)

To control inflation while maintaining an expansionary fiscal policy, Jordan is relying upon a tight monetary policy. But even if raising interest rates is able to keep inflation to tolerable levels, high rates risk stifling investment that is needed by many sectors of the economy and will only exacerbate the difficult situation of those seeking to buy real estate.

Jordan has, since its brief political opening in the late 1980s and early 1990s, sought to defer democratization in favor of economic reform. Now, inflation largely caused by the Iraq war threatens to undermine the pillars of Jordan's economic reform agenda. Jordan faces a severe challenge of creating new jobs and lowering its unemployment rate, which cannot be done sustainably by public sector spending. If the private sector does not close that economic gap, discontent with the country's economic situation could be felt as soon as this month's municipal elections and parliamentary elections scheduled for November.

David M. DeBartolo was a Fulbright Fellow in Jordan in 2006-2007.

[Return to table of contents.](#) [Printer-friendly version.](#)

Arab States: How Criticizing the Government Becomes Illegal

Moataz El Fegjery

Unwilling to remain on the sidelines in the reform debate that the region has witnessed for the past two years, Arab governments have asserted themselves against civil society activists and reformists, creating a significant rise in the numbers of Arab prisoners of conscience. The return of security issues to the fore once again in the politics of the Middle East, as well as the softening of calls by the international community for freedom and reform, have encouraged Arab regimes in such actions.

Arab regimes use similar strategies to repress criticism. Among them is recourse to extremely vague and general laws whose interpretation and application are subject to the whim of the executive authority. Such legal texts are a shared feature of Arab nations whereby peaceful expression of opinion is criminalized by the use of language such as “threatening public order,” “undermining the Constitution,” “insulting the president” (or the royal family), “offending religion,” “spreading false information that could harm the reputation of the country,” “discrediting the country abroad,” and similar formulations. The lack of judicial independence, subordination of the prosecutor's office to the executive authorities, and expansion of national security and military trials controlled by the executive branch all conspire to facilitate prosecution of such cases, which are often classified as affecting the security of the state.

In addition to laws long on the books, the post-September 2001 security situation has eased the passage of new laws to fight terrorism, which adopt definitions of terrorism broad enough to criminalize peaceful political or civil action. Bahrain, Morocco, Qatar, and Tunisia have already enacted new laws. Other countries such as Egypt and Syria have used special laws for decades that grant near total authority to the security apparatus for administrative detention and the violation of constitutional rights. The Egyptian government has not been content with its emergency law, but has gone so far as to introduce articles to combat terrorism—and justify restricting human and civil rights—into the Constitution, a unique precedent in constitutional traditions world-wide.

Selective enforcement of old and new laws that criminalize criticizing the government has led to a rash of arrests, trials, and prison sentences for reasons of conscience. The situation is perhaps the most serious in Syria, where a series of prison sentences have been handed down in recent months to political and human rights activists. Among the most prominent is Kamal al-Labwani, sentenced to twelve years in prison for “involvement in foreign plots planning aggression against Syria” after he met with human rights activists, journalists, and government officials in Europe and the United States. Syria also took disciplinary action against those who signed the Beirut-Damascus Declaration that called for an end to Syrian interference in Lebanese affairs. The most notable of these cases include a five-year sentence meted out to lawyer Anwar al-Bunni, and a three-year sentence given to the activists Michel Kilo and Mahmoud Issa, for “weakening national feeling and inciting sectarian and ideological arrogance.”

But Syria is by no means alone in prosecuting those who express views that irritate the government. In Tunisia, journalist

Muhammad Abbo was sentenced to three years in prison on charges including “publishing writings that disturb public order” and “defaming judicial authorities” because of his articles on torture in Tunisian prisons. Egypt has similarly prosecuted journalist Huweida Taha for “publishing false information violating the reputation of the country” due to her work on torture, as well as blogger Karim Amer and newspaper editor Ibrahim Eissa for “insulting the president.” In Bahrain a number of human rights activists have suffered security and judicial harassment, accused of defaming the royal person. In Sudan, journalist Osman Mirghani was imprisoned for criticizing the minister of justice under a penal code that allows the public prosecutor to undertake any actions and measures to protect public order, an article also used to justify suspending publication of an independent newspaper.

Prisoners of conscience and defenders of human and political rights in the Arab world are in dire need of the solidarity and support of global civil society. Governments bound by international cooperation agreements with the governments of the Arab region, especially the European Union and the United States, should place the issue of prisoners of conscience high on their list of priorities. These violations will continue to multiply so long as the governments of the region lack the political will to expand the space for freedom of opinion and expression, without which there will be no opportunity for true democratic development.

Moataz El Feghery is program director at the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies and member of the Executive Committee of the Euro-Mediterranean Network for Human Rights. This article was translated from Arabic by Kevin Burnham.

[Return to table of contents.](#) [Printer-friendly version.](#)

Arab States: Rough Sledding for U.S. Party Aid Organizations

Dina Bishara

Foreign democracy assistance organizations working directly with political parties have come into the line of fire as some Arab governments have pushed back against democratization initiatives over the past two years. In Algeria, Bahrain, and Egypt in particular, the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the International Republican Institute (IRI) have been among the first to feel pressure. In Iraq, where such institutes expend the vast majority of their funding for the Middle East, not only do their employees face danger—an NDI employee was killed in Baghdad in January—but their programs are subject to constant political uncertainty. Such is also the case in Palestine. In Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, and Yemen, party institutes have maintained their freedom of operation, but even there the governments have sometimes exploited suspicions of foreign governments' agendas to put pressure on parties that accept U.S. assistance. In many other Arab countries institutes have no significant activities yet because they deem the atmosphere too restrictive.

Party aid programs primarily consist of workshops, seminars, and other activities aimed at transferring knowledge about political party development to local activists. In some countries party institutes have also carried out public opinion polling and helped organize election monitoring, activities that have irritated governments in some cases. Although U.S. party aid is not focused solely on preparing parties for electoral campaigns, it is during these campaigns that parties showcase the knowledge and skills they have gained from participating in assistance programs.

Problems between party institutes and Arab governments sometimes arise due to specific actions by institutes or their representatives, but more often are born out of a general sense on the part of governments that institutes have overstayed their welcome. In recent years Arab governments invited or at least accepted the presence of U.S. party aid organizations in order to burnish democratization credentials at what the governments perceived to be a relatively low cost to their control of domestic politics. This reluctant toleration turned into rejection when the party institutes became too effective in empowering opposition parties, too annoying to regime stalwarts, or too much in the way of government plans to control approaching elections.

Arab governments have attempted to use two mechanisms to derail the activities of organizations such as NDI and IRI: interposing government bodies and raising legal restrictions. In Bahrain, for example, after NDI had played an important role in persuading the principal opposition political society, al-Wefaq, to participate in elections, the government demanded that the institute work through a newly-created government body (the Bahraini Institute for Political Development) rather than communicate directly with parties. Likewise in Algeria, the government imposed a requirement that NDI consult with it before selecting partners for activities.

Regarding legal restrictions, governments have often allowed party institutes to begin work without formal licensing—only to impose licensing and other restrictions later on. Governments in Algeria, Bahrain, and Egypt are blocking NDI and IRI activities by arguing that there is no specific legislation sanctioning the establishment of branches of foreign non-governmental organizations, by complicating registration procedures where legislation exists, or by simply denying visas or residence permits to staff members. In Egypt, U.S. democracy assistance organizations found themselves in legal limbo after government officials and parliamentarians became angry about statements made to the press by a party institute representative in 2006; such organizations still have staff in Cairo but are unable to have formal offices or to hold activities. In Algeria and Bahrain, institute representatives were denied permission to remain in the country. When party aid organizations have responded by holding training workshops in other countries and inviting local party activists, governments have in some cases barred invitees from traveling.

The U.S. government—which funds the party institutes' democracy promotion activities through the National Endowment for Democracy, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and the Department of State—has protested such actions but has stopped short of exerting real pressure on Arab governments. In addition, the U.S. government has sometimes

imposed restrictions on institutes, for example asking that they exclude from their activities in Egypt participants from organizations not licensed by the Egyptian government.

NDI and IRI operations continue to expand and enjoy wide latitude in Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, and Yemen. In the lead-up to the Moroccan legislative elections in September 2007, IRI has expanded its staff without provoking an official backlash. In Yemen, NDI was among the domestic and foreign NGOs accredited to observe presidential and municipal elections in September 2006. But even in such countries, governments sometimes manipulate foreign democracy assistance organizations as a way to create suspicion about the agendas of opposition parties. In May 2007, a Jordanian government newspaper publicized a private meeting between the Islamic Action Front (IAF), the country's largest opposition party, and NDI representatives, claiming that the IAF was asking for NDI support ahead of municipal and legislative elections. An IAF statement characterized the story as another chapter in the Jordanian government's ongoing campaign against the Islamist party.

Dina Bishara is assistant editor of the Arab Reform Bulletin.

[Return to table of contents.](#) [Printer-friendly version.](#)

Readers React

In his recent [article](#) (June 2007) on Algeria, Rachid Tlemçani accurately captures the essence of the shifting civil-military balance of power taking place since Bouteflika's reelection to the presidency in 2004. The dominant political position held by *le pouvoir* and its high army officers has receded under Bouteflika's stewardship without, however, denying them access to the perks, patronage, and privileges long associated with elite status in the Algerian state. Given the accuracy of his analysis it is somewhat puzzling, however, to see the author referring to "the top echelons of the military establishment playing a crucial role in the country's political life through high-ranking officers holding public office" inasmuch as virtually all high level political positions in the state are now completely staffed by civilians appointed directly by Bouteflika, who also remains Minister of Defense, thus insuring his control of both the civilian and military pillars of power.

Yet, Tlemçani's overall assessment regarding the concentration of political power in the executive branch of government at the expense of all other centers of power remains very much on the mark. Sadly for Algerian civil society as for the rest of the Arab world, the robust authoritarianism long associated with the *mukhabarat* has not been significantly diminished but only shifted from military to political bases of institutional power.

John Entelis
Director, Middle East Studies Program, Fordham University

Bilal Wahab is quite right, in his [snapshot](#) (June 2007) of the Kurdistan Region, to concentrate on oil economics. This is the factor that will most tightly knit the Kurdistan Region into Iraq and into pragmatic, mutually beneficial relationships with its other neighbors, including Turkey. As with other new federations, Iraq's raison d'être will not be ethnicity or religion, but trade. Iraq's decentralized federal constitution provides a platform from which competing nationalisms (Arab, Kurdish, Turkish) can be resolved through the careful allocation of petroleum rights. Turkey and Iraq's other neighbors can now expect to meet their own energy needs through Iraqi Kurdistan petroleum, to compete for a stake in upstream Kurdistan oil development, and to enjoy pipeline tariffs for the transport of this petroleum across their territory. Can Turkey, Iraq, and Kurdistan resist nationalist rhetoric, as Mr. Wahab hopes, and really start to capitalize on these opportunities? If so, this new cooperative oil prosperity—an ethos of enlightened self interest—could establish a new stability for that part of the Middle East.

Jonathan Morrow
Attorney, Washington DC, and advisor to the Kurdistan Regional Government

Send your views on what you have read in the *Arab Reform Bulletin* to the editor at arb@carnegieendowment.org.

[Return to table of contents.](#)

News and Views

Kuwait: Ministers Resign

Kuwait's oil and transportation ministers resigned on June 30 over a parliament inquiry into corruption allegations. The parliament had scheduled a vote of confidence for July 9 regarding Oil Minister Sheikh Ali al-Jarrah al-Sabah's alleged involvement in the multi-million dollar Kuwait Oil Tanker Company fraud case. Ten MPs filed the motion on June 26 after questioning the minister for nine hours. Transportation minister Shareeda al-Maousherji resigned in solidarity. The ministers of electricity and housing will temporarily fill the vacancies. Previous motions to question ministers in parliament have led either to cabinet resignations or to dissolution of the legislature. In March, the Kuwaiti cabinet resigned after eight months in office to abort a no-confidence vote against former health minister Sheikh Ahmed al-Abdullah al-Sabah.

Bahrain: First Gulf Income Tax; Press Law; Truth and Reconciliation Committee

Bahrain has become the first Arab Gulf state to introduce an income tax on residents. As of June 25, all public and private sector employees began to contribute 1 percent of their salary to an unemployment insurance plan. Citizens and non-citizens alike must pay the tax, but only citizens will receive benefits. Labor unions criticized the tax in light of rising inflation and widespread dissatisfaction with low wages. Workers also object to the exemption of military personnel and elected officials. Key religious figures labeled the tax as un-Islamic as it deducts money without the consent of the worker. Bahrain's largest opposition group, the Shi'i political society al-Wefaq, welcomed the unemployment insurance plan but criticized the tax on the grounds that the government should fund unemployment insurance.

Bahrain's upper house of parliament, the Shura Council, passed amendments to the 2002 press and publications law on May 28, abolishing jail sentences for journalists and stipulating that editors may not be sued for articles they did not write. The current press law allows prison sentences of six months to five years for journalists convicted of press offences. According to local media sources, more than sixty-five lawsuits have been brought against journalists since 2001. The new draft law is awaiting discussion in the lower house of parliament. In 2003, parliament rejected a similar bill.

Eleven Bahraini human rights organizations and opposition groups, including Islamist and leftist political societies, joined forces on June 26 to form a truth and reconciliation committee in order to address human rights abuses by the government in the 1970s-1990s. Participants at the meeting called for the committee to uncover the facts and provide compensation to anyone who sustained injuries or was subjected to torture, deportation, or arbitrary arrest. They also called for punishing those who allegedly carried out torture, explicitly rejecting the 2002 amnesty law (known as Decree 56) that pardoned all political prisoners as well as those who may have committed human rights violations. Committee members will be announced on December 10, 2007, the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Saudi Arabia: Government Critic Arrested

Former university professor Said Bin Zuair was arrested in Riyadh on June 6 on charges of collecting money to aid terrorists, but observers believe he was arrested for criticizing the government. He was previously arrested in 2004 for his critical remarks about the Saudi government's approach to tackling terrorism during a debate on *al-Jazeera*. He was later convicted on vague charges that included "disobeying the country's ruler," and sentenced to five years in prison, but was released in August 2005 following a pardon by King Abdullah. He was also detained in 1995 and held without charge or trial for some years. He is currently being held incommunicado at an unconfirmed location. Click [here](#) for details.

Yemen: Opposition Journalist Arrested

Abdelkarim al-Khaiwani, former editor of the online newspaper *al-Shoura*, was arrested on June 20 on charges of conspiring with anti-government rebels in the northwestern city of Saada. A state security court in Sanaa extended his pre-trial detention for one month on June 25. Al-Khaiwani and fourteen other suspects were accused of belonging to a terrorist cell, carrying out terrorist operations, destroying military and security installations, manufacturing explosives, murdering two soldiers, undermining public opinion, and publishing false information about the government's battle with the rebels. Al-Khaiwani was sentenced to a year in prison in September 2004 for incitement, insulting the president, publishing false news, and causing tribal and sectarian discrimination for his published criticisms of the government's conduct in the fighting. The Yemeni government has also blocked *al-Shoura's* website episodically. Click [here](#) for details.

Since mid-June, Yemen's information ministry has been censoring the distribution of news to mobile phone by SMS messages. Messages criticizing Saleh's government had circulated in the weeks prior to the ban.

Morocco: Run-up to Elections

The Moroccan government has allotted U.S. \$24 million to finance political parties' campaigns ahead of legislative elections on September 7. The government will initially grant \$60,000 to thirty-four political parties with further grants contingent on the parties' performance in the elections. Parties that do not win at least 5 percent of the vote nationwide will have to return some of the funds to the government.

After weeks of debate, the Supreme Authority for Audiovisual Communications relented to political pressure from Morocco's pro-government parties and abandoned proposed modifications in the use of air time during the parliamentary campaign. Proposed quotas would have allocated 40 percent of air time to parties that currently hold 90 percent of parliamentary seats, 30 percent to parties holding 10 percent of seats, and 30 to newly created parties. Instead, the Authority will revert to the same quotas used during non-electoral periods: 30 percent for the government, 30 percent for parties in the governing coalition (USFP and Istiqlal), 30 percent for opposition parties in parliament, and 10 percent for parties unrepresented in parliament. Small political parties objected to this reversal, as it gives the government and its allies 60 percent of air time.

The Party of Justice and Development (PJD) voiced concerns over the harassment of its MPs in Fez by gangs reportedly funded by the Istiqlal party.

Algeria: Electoral Law Amendments

The Algerian cabinet proposed amendments to the electoral law on June 13 that would adjust the requirements for political parties and independents participating in local and legislative elections. If adopted by the People's National Assembly, only parties receiving more than 4 percent of the votes in one of the last three legislative elections and over 2,000 votes in each of twenty-five provinces would be eligible to propose slates. Parties would also qualify if they have at least 600 elected members in the local or national assemblies, distributed across at least twenty-five provinces, with no fewer than twenty

elected members per province. First-time participants in legislative elections would need to secure signatures from at least 400 registered electors for each seat contested; for local elections they would need the signatures of at least 5 percent of registered voters in the local district. According to the cabinet, the amendments aim to prevent the participation of small parties and independent candidates who “are not sufficiently rooted in society.” If the law is passed, only nine parties—the National Liberation Front (FLN), the National Rally for Democracy (RND), the Movement of Society for Peace (MSP), the Workers Party, the Algerian National Front, the Movement for National Reform (al- Islah), the Rally for Culture and Democracy (RCD), the Front of Socialist Forces, and the Islamic al-Nahda Movement—would be eligible to field candidates in local elections scheduled for November.

Libya: Journalists on Trial

The trial of twelve men detained in connection with a planned demonstration against the authorities in February began on June 24. According to Amnesty International, the detainees have been held in incommunicado detention for prolonged periods since their arrests and there are reports that at least two have been tortured. On April 20, Ahmed Youssef al-Obaidi, Adel Saleh Hmeed, Ali Saleh Hmeed, Faraj Saleh Hmeed, al-Mahdi Saleh Hmeed, and al-Sadeq Saleh Hmeed were charged in a Tripoli court with offences including attempting to overthrow the political system, possessing weapons and explosives with the intention of carrying out subversive activities, and communicating with enemy powers. They were transferred to al-Jadida Prison in Tripoli, where they are said to be held in solitary confinement. The remaining six journalists (Idriss Boufayed, Juma Boufayed, Alaa al-Drissi, Jamal al-Hajji, Bashir Qasem al-Hares, and Farid Muhammad al-Zwai) are reportedly being held in Ain Zara Prison in Tripoli. Click [here](#) for details.

Egypt: New Islamist Party; Nour Update; U.S. Considers Conditioning Aid

Islamist lawyer Muntasir al-Zayyat announced that he will form a new political party that will incorporate several Islamist trends. According to al-Zayyat, the new party, Union for Freedom, would not be the mouthpiece of any one faction but would symbolize the Islamist movements' transition from armed struggle to peaceful political cooperation. Several Gamaat Islamiyya leaders denied any involvement in the proposed party.

An Administrative Court announced that it would present a final ruling on the request for release from prison on health grounds by opposition party leader Ayman Nour on July 31. Nour, former chairman of the liberal al-Ghad Party and a candidate in Egypt's first contested presidential elections, was jailed in December 2005 on charges of forging the signatures needed for his party to be licensed. Even if released, Nour would be banned from running for public office due to his conviction on a criminal offense.

The U.S. House of Representatives adopted a bill on June 21 that proposed withholding \$200 million from the annual \$1.3 billion military aid package to Egypt pending improved human rights practices, judicial freedom, and closure of Sinai-Gaza smuggling tunnels. The U.S. Senate Appropriations committee, however, approved the assistance without conditions on June 28. The full assistance package might not be finalized by the U.S. Congress for several months. Foreign Minister Ahmed Aboul Gheit criticized the conditionality as “unacceptable interference in Egyptian affairs.”

Jordan: Former MP Charged; Run-up to Municipal Elections; Child Labor Code

Jordan's State Security Court prosecutor charged former MP and head of the Jordanian National Movement Ahmad Oweidi al-Abbadi on July 1 with belonging to an illegal organization and distributing pamphlets illegally. Al-Abbadi was arrested on May 3 following a complaint filed by Interior Minister Eid al-Fayez over the content of an April 30 email al-Abbadi sent to U.S. Senate Majority leader Harry Reid, in which he accused Jordan's government of corruption. Al-Abbadi was questioned by Amman prosecutor Sabri al-Rawashdeh for two months before being referred to a military prosecutor.

In preparation for municipal elections on July 31, Jordan's Islamic Action Front (IAF) announced it will run candidates in Amman, Irbid, Zarqa, al-Rasifa, Madaba, and Kerak, despite its opposition to some elements in the new municipalities law. The party will not announce full lists of candidates before July 24, but has released some lists. In Zarqa, the party will only contest half of the seats and will run two women. Click [here](#) for details in Arabic. The IAF announced it intends to run female candidates in many of the districts (the new electoral law includes a quota for women), a marked departure from its practice in the 1999 municipal elections. The IAF boycotted the 2003 municipal elections.

Jordan launched a code of conduct for child labor on July 5 with guidelines for employers in order to abide by ILO conventions. Jordanian law bans the employment of children under 16 and stipulated that children between 16 and 18 years of age are not permitted to work longer than six hours a day, but this rule is frequently violated. According to a recent Ministry of Labor study, 13 percent of working children in the country are subjected to forced labor, with more than 16 percent only earning JD 10-50 (US \$14-70) per month. The code of conduct has no legal power.

Syria: Student Activists Arrested

Syria's Supreme Court sentenced seven students involved in developing a youth discussion group and publishing pro-democracy articles to prison terms on June 17. Maher Isber Ibrahim, Tareq al-Ghorani, Hussam Ali Mulhim, Diab Siriyeh, Omar Ali al-Abdullah, Allam Fakhour, and Ayham Saqr were all convicted under Article 278 of the Syrian Penal Code of “taking action or making a written statement or speech that could endanger the State or harm its relationship with a foreign country, or expose it to the risk of hostile action.” Ibrahim and al-Ghorani were also convicted under Article 287 of the Code of “broadcasting false information” and received seven year prison sentences. The other five received five year terms. They were arrested between January 26 and March 18, 2006 and reportedly detained in solitary confinement until the end of April

2006. Click [here](#) for details.

[Return to table of contents.](#)

Upcoming Political Events

- Jordan: Municipal Elections, July 31, 2007; Legislative Elections, November 2007.
- Syria: Municipal Elections, August 2007.
- Morocco: Legislative Elections, September 7, 2007.
- Lebanon: Presidential Election, September 25, 2007.
- Algeria: Municipal Elections, November 2007.
- Oman: Shura Council Elections, October 2007.
- Qatar: Legislative Elections, 2007 (date to be determined).

Views from the Arab Media

The relationship between dictatorship and military defeat in the Arab world was [debated](#) on *al-Jazeera's* "al-Ittijaah al-Mu'akis" (The Opposite Direction) on June 19. Saad Eddin Ebrahim, Egyptian civil rights activist and head of the Ibn Khaldun Center for Studies, argued that authoritarian regimes are incapable of leading their people or armies to victory, as authoritarianism often translates into ad-hoc decision making and lack of accountability. Kamal Shatila, head of the National Institute for Studies in Lebanon, dismissed this hypothesis, arguing instead that Western support of Israel was the main cause of the 1967 and other Arab defeats, and that Arab unity is the key to achieving any military victory.

In a June 28 [article](#) in *al-Hayat*, Israeli Arab activist and former Knesset member Azmi Bishara argues that it is necessary to include Islamist parties such as Hamas and al-Jihad al-Islami in Palestinian political life in order to avoid authoritarian rule. He adds that attempts to exclude Hamas are driven mainly by the desire of the pro-Oslo faction of the PLO to maintain its control of the Palestinian political scene. According to Bishara, it is essential that Hamas engage in dialogue and cooperation with other Palestinian factions in order to counter these attempts at exclusion and rebuild the PLO away from narrow political interests.

Egyptian writer and economist Salwa Suleiman contends in a July 2 [article](#) in Egypt's *al-Masry al-Youm* that power sharing through free and fair election of the president is the only means by which to ensure reform and development in Egypt. Only an overhaul of Egypt's current political system can ensure presidential accountability and transform a deficient citizen-government relationship into one that is based on trust and cooperation.

In a June 30 [article](#) in the electronic daily *Elaph*, Iraqi writer Mustafa Ghareeb criticizes the United States and Iraqi Prime Minister Maliki's government for focusing exclusively on Shi'i victimization under Saddam Hussein's rule, while ignoring the plight of other Iraqi factions. He argues against sectarian quotas and instead proposes that a national unity government incorporate all factions, including those opposed to the U.S. occupation.

Political reform in Arab Gulf countries has been the subject of heated debates in the press:

- In a July 3 [article](#) in the UAE's *al-Khaleej*, 'Alaa Abdul Khaleq discusses the trade-off between democratization and economic development. He compares the active political scene in Kuwait—where a strong parliament routinely clashes with the government, often leading to a political stalemate and shifting the focus away from economic development—with the UAE's successful model of economic growth but slow and uncertain progress towards democracy. He calls for development of a third model that can foster both political and economic development.
- In Saudi Arabia's *Okaz*, Saudi writer Zaki al-Milad contends in a June 28 [article](#) that growth of the concept of citizenship in Arab Gulf countries is an important measure of development, nation-building, and progress toward equal rights. Al-Milad argues that despite the economic boom and rapid social development in Gulf countries, the concept of citizenship remains underdeveloped, as tribal values continue to dominate individual and collective identities and societal relations.
- Bahraini writer and human rights activist Sabika al-Najjar argues in a July 5 [op-ed](#) in Bahrain's *al-Waqt* that in order for the king's political reforms to succeed, reconciliation between Shi'a and Sunna must be pursued. She recommends that a truth commission be established in Bahrain to foster a common understanding of the nation's past and promote justice and healing for victims of human rights violations.

[Return to table of contents.](#)

Read On

Recent publications on **Iraq** include:

- Faleh A. Jabar reflects on the history of the Iraq war and examines the viability of the current strategy in "[Iraq Four Years after the U.S.-Led Invasion](#)" (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Policy Outlook no. 37, July 2007).
- If the United States seeks to quell the civil war in Iraq, re-occupation may be the answer, argues Jeffrey Stacey in "[Re-Occupy Iraq](#)" (*National Interest*, July/August 2007).
- In "[Kurdistanoff](#)," Henri J. Barkey contends that when it comes to Iraq's Kurds, the United States needs to make a deal with Turkey or face the consequences later (*National Interest*, July/August 2007).
- Security forces in Iraqi Kurdistan routinely torture and deny basic due-process rights to detainees, according to a Human Rights Watch report ("[Caught in the Whirlwind: Torture and Denial of Due Process by the Kurdistan Security Forces](#)," July 3, 2007). Click [here](#) for Arabic.
- The British experience in Basra, far from being a model to be replicated in the rest of Iraq as some have argued, is an example of what to avoid, concludes a new International Crisis Group ("[Where is Iraq Headed? Lessons from Basra](#)," Middle East Report no. 67, June 25, 2007).
- A Human Rights Watch briefing paper argues that the judgment in the trial of Saddam Hussein reflected serious factual and legal errors by the Iraqi High Tribunal ("[The Poisoned Chalice: A Human Rights Watch Briefing Paper on the Decision of the Iraqi High Tribunal in the Dujail Case](#)," Briefing Paper no. 1, June 2007). Click [here](#) for Arabic.
- In "[Suicide Bombers in Iraq](#)," Mohammed M. Hafez explores the disproportionate impact of suicide attacks in Iraq, suggesting that they are not only dragging Iraq into a merciless civil war but are also emboldening insurgents in Afghanistan, Algeria, and Somalia (United States Institute of Peace, June 2007).
- While violence in Iraq dominates the media, beneath the surface there is a vibrant culture struggling to reassert itself, contends Nimrod Raphaeli in "[Culture in Post-Saddam Iraq](#)" (*Middle East Quarterly*, vol. 14, no. 3, Summer 2007).
- Iraq cannot depend on its neighbors to address problems that are primarily internal and Washington must avoid the temptation to link the Iraq crisis with other regional issues, conclude contributors to "[With Neighbors Like These: Iraq and the Arab States on its Borders](#)" (David Pollock, ed., Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Policy Focus no. 70).

Several recent publications address the crisis in **Palestine**:

- Although the obstacles to international intervention in Gaza remain formidable, the United States and the international community can encourage Egyptian and other Arab and Muslim mediators, as well as engage Israel regarding a possible international force, argues Scott Lasensky in "[International Intervention in Gaza: Options and Obstacles](#)" (United States Institute of Peace Briefing, June 2007).
- With Hamas's takeover of Gaza, the commonly accepted rules of the game for Palestinian politics have been lost, making it almost impossible to hold new elections or to restore social peace (International Institute for Strategic Studies, "[Hamas Coup in Gaza](#)," Strategic Comments, vol. 13, no. 5, June 2007).
- The international community should stop pretending there is a viable peace process leading to a two-state solution, contends Nathan Brown in "[The Peace Process Has No Clothes](#)" (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Web Commentary, June 14, 2007). Click [here](#) for Arabic.
- Palestinian armed groups and the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) have shown insufficient regard for civilian lives, finds a recent Human Rights Watch report ("[Indiscriminate Fire: Palestinian Rocket Attacks on Israel and Israeli Artillery Shelling in the Gaza Strip](#)," June 2007).

New publications on **Lebanon** include:

- The decision by the U.N. Security Council to set up an international tribunal to try suspects in the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri has dramatically raised tensions in Lebanon, according to Paul Salem in "[Lebanon Resists Security Threats but Must Revive National Unity Government](#)" (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Web Commentary, June 26, 2007). Click [here](#) for Arabic.
- A year after the 2006 summer war, Lebanon finds itself in a state of quasi-paralysis as a result of the drawn-out political standoff that has pitted the opposition against the government in a bid to overthrow the latter and re-draw Lebanon's political map, argues Oussama Safa in "[Lebanon's Future at a Crossroads](#)" (Arab Reform Initiative, Arab Reform Brief no. 15, June 2007).

Recent publications address reform-related developments in other Arab countries:

- Although the Middle East is frequently portrayed as a collection of authoritarian states, the region is in fact engaged in a profound and tumultuous process of political change, contends Jeremy Jones in [Negotiating Change: The New Politics of the Middle East](#) (London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 2007).
- Although the potential exists for **Kuwait** to move toward a constitutional monarchy, this possibility remains remote and the progress to date could be reversed if the ruling family suspends the constitution and parliament, as it has done in the past, argues Paul Salem in "[Kuwait: Politics in a Participatory Emirate](#)" (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Carnegie Middle East Center Paper no. 3, June 2007).
- In "[Women in Islamist Movements: Toward an Islamist Model of Women's Activism](#)," Marina Ottaway and Omayma Abdellatif suggest that the growing involvement of Arab women in Islamist political movements has enhanced their awareness of women's rights and is leading to a new activism inspired by Islamic principles rather than Western models (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Carnegie Middle East Center Paper no. 2, June 2007). Click [here](#) for Arabic.
- **Moroccan** authorities have come to rely on a stealthy system of judicial and financial controls to keep enterprising journalists in check, the Committee to Protect Journalists has found in a new report (Joel Campagna and Kamel Labidi, "[The Moroccan Façade: Politicized Court Cases, Media Law, Harassment Undermine a Nation's Press Gains](#)," July 3, 2007). Click [here](#) for Arabic.
- Despite some recent optimism and new talks starting on June 18, the conflict in **Western Sahara**—with its heavy continuing costs for all the parties—will not be resolved without a fundamental change in the UN Security Council's approach, warns an International Crisis Group report "[Western Sahara: The Cost of Conflict](#)" (Middle East/North Africa Report no. 65, June 11, 2007). Click [here](#) for a summary in Arabic.
- In "Algeria: A Future Hijacked by Corruption," Djilali Hadjadj examines the history of corruption in **Algeria** since independence and the development of mafia systems that have sustained it (*Mediterranean Politics*, vol. 12, no. 2, July 2007, 263-77).
- **Egypt** still represents the best chance for U.S. democracy promotion in the Arab world in the near future, argue Nathan Brown, Michele Dunne, and Amr Hamzawy in "[Egypt—Don't Give up on Democracy Promotion](#)" (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Policy Brief no. 52, July 2007). Click [here](#) for Arabic.
- **Syrian** national identity should be reconfigured based on an all-encompassing principle that considers Arabism as a cornerstone of the democratic Syrian national identity, argues Yasseen Haj-Saleh in "[Political Reform and the Reconfiguration of National Identity in Syria](#)" (Arab Reform Initiative, Arab Reform Brief no. 14, June 22, 2007).
- Despite modest economic reforms, **Syria's** heavily regulated economy and declining oil revenues make the country vulnerable to future shocks, argues Nimrod Raphaeli in "[Syria's Fragile Economy](#)" (*Middle East Review of International Affairs*, vol. 11, no. 2, June 2007, 34-51).
- In "[Comparing Three Muslim Brotherhoods: Syria, Jordan, Egypt](#)," Barry Rubin argues that the banner of the Islamist revolution in the Middle East has largely passed to groups sponsored by or derived from the Muslim

Brotherhood (*Middle East Review of International Affairs*, vol. 11, no. 2, 107-116).

- The summer 2007 issue of the *Middle East Report* includes analysis on the [war economy in Iraq, migrant workers in Dubai](#), and **Lebanese** reconstruction.

Two recent publications discuss **educational reform** in the Arab world:

- Despite the popularity of American-style universities in the Arab world, such institutions do not meet many of the standards of universities and colleges in the United States, especially in areas such as faculty empowerment and focus on the student, argue Shafeeq Ghabra and Margreet Arnold in "[Studying the American Way: An Assessment of American-Style Higher Education in Arab Countries](#)" (Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Policy Focus no. 71, June 2007).
- Qatar has attracted branch campuses of some of the best universities in the world, but to support both its economic and social development, the country needs much stronger results from its elementary and secondary education system, concludes Rand Corporation's [Education for a New Era: Design and Implementation of K-12 Education Reform in Qatar](#) (2007).

Recent publications address **U.S. policy** in the Middle East:

- In "[Engaging Political Islam to Promote Democracy](#)," Shadi Hamid calls for a new U.S. policy for the Middle East that unequivocally gives democratic reform priority over stability. He argues that to be credible, this policy must recognize and engage mainstream Islamist parties (Progressive Policy Institute, Policy Report, June 2007).
- The notion that democracy promotion plays a dominant role in Bush policy is a myth, argues Thomas Carothers in "[The Democracy Crusade Myth](#)" (*National Interest*, July/August 2007, 8-12).
- Rejecting the simple assumption that there is a zero-sum trade off between traditional security objectives and democracy promotion, Francis Fukuyama and Michael McFaul advocate continued U.S. efforts to promote democracy, proposing the concept of dual-track diplomacy these goals simultaneously ("[Should Democracy be Promoted or Demoted?](#)" The Stanley Foundation, June 2007).

Please note that there is no August issue of the *Arab Reform Bulletin*. See you in September.

Subscriber Information

Click [here](#) to receive the *Arab Reform Bulletin* in English or [here](#) to receive it in Arabic.
Click [here](#) to read past issues of the *Bulletin* in English; click [here](#) for Arabic.
We welcome your comments or suggestions. Please e-mail the editor at arb@CarnegieEndowment.org.

[Return to table of contents.](#)

Copyright © 2007 Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. All Rights Reserved.

URL: <http://www.carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=19427&prog=zgp&proj=zdr1,zme>

Created by Matrix Group International, Inc. ®