Political Islam and Europe
Views from the Arab Mediterranean States and Turkey

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Abstract. The social, political and economic power of moderate Middle East and North African Islamist movements has been growing for a generation or so. The question of how to deal with Islamists who reject violence, embrace democracy and outperform their competitors at the polls has therefore become a central concern not only of incumbent Middle East elites, but also of interested foreign actors such as the EU and US. Robert Springborg sees the need for the EU to clarify its policies towards the MENA region and Muslim democrats within it. The present lack of EU policies on engaging with moderate Islamists leads them to be at best curious about the EU and at worse to be suspicious of it. Engagement might itself help to contribute to policy formation in this important area, and serve as a vehicle to disseminate information about relevant EU policies.

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Introduction

The social, political and even economic power of moderate Middle East Islamists has been growing for a generation or so, but the phenomenon was not given the attention it deserved by outside observers and policy makers until the impressive recent electoral performances by Arab Islamists in Palestine, Lebanon, Egypt, Morocco and, most recently, Bahrain. Earlier accomplishments at the polls by the Islamic Action Front in Jordan in 1989 and the Justice and Development Party (AKP) in Turkey in 2002, although signalling the importance of political Islam, did not establish its status as the pre-eminent oppositional political force in the region. Now that status cannot be disputed. As a result, the question of how to deal with Islamists who reject violence, embrace democracy and outperform their competitors at the polls has become a central concern not only of incumbent Middle East elites, but of interested foreign actors as well.

For the European Union (EU) and its member states, the US and the governments of other member countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the present political configuration in most Middle East and North African (MENA) countries presents a well-known and fundamental dilemma. On the one hand, they are uncomfortable both with the authoritarianism of most incumbents and with much of the content of Islamists' beliefs and policy preferences. On the other hand, they are comfortable with the semi-secular policies of most incumbents and with moderate Islamists' apparent embrace of democratic processes. Hence the question these foreign governments confront is how to square the circle in their dealings with MENA countries, ruled over by authoritarians with (at least, nominally) acceptable policies but unacceptable methods and challenged by Islamists whose democratic methods are acceptable but many of whose policy preferences sometimes seem to be inimical to Western interests and beliefs. The purpose of this volume has been to begin to explore ways in which this dilemma might best be resolved.

Because relatively little is known about the attitudes and opinions of moderate Islamists and because most have yet to establish track records in government, this investigation has focussed on them, leaving aside questions concerning the beliefs and behaviour of the semi-secular incumbent MENA elites and, for that matter, of Western political elites as well. Recognising then that this is a first step in seeking information for addressing the dilemmas posed to Western governments by authoritarian incumbents and apparently democratic Islamist challengers, it nevertheless provides a useful introduction to understanding the relevant views of moderate Islamists. This information can in turn assist in evaluating the costs and benefits to concerned parties in the West of entering into dialogue with Muslim democrats; in understanding how such a dialogue might best be structured; and in anticipating realistic expectations of any dialogue that might occur.

In order to accomplish these objectives the contributors to the volume were instructed to utilise a standard protocol for their investigation of Islamism within the country of their concern. The

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subjects of focus in the protocol were the evolution of Islamism and the views of Islamists on several related issues, including political reform, democratic models, EU foreign policy, and areas of potential collaboration and difference with Europe. The findings reported in the various chapters are thus sufficiently comparable both to discern differences between countries and to formulate empirically-based generalisations about Islamism within the MENA generally. The purposes of this chapter are to do just that, as well as to draw out the implications of these empirical findings for a potential dialogue with Europe. To do this the chapter will first identify empirical regularities and differences across the case studies. It will then take up some issues that the data do not address or provide insufficient bases upon which comparative observations can rest. It will then shift to a consideration of the costs and benefits of engagement with Islamism. Finally, it will conclude with some recommendations as to how a dialogue might best be conducted.

1.   Who are the Muslim Democrats?

Muslim democrats consist of those movements and organised political parties that have either rejected violence and radicalism or restricted its application to what they see as efforts to achieve national liberation; or have evolved from being politically passive and focused on encouraging personal religiosity and/or providing social services, into being political activists. Many of them are former exiles, who have returned to their native countries following previous confrontations with incumbent regimes. In some cases movements and organisations of Muslim democrats combine these different backgrounds, having formerly been supporters of political violence and in other periods having operated primarily in exile.

All of the Muslim democrats under study, with two exceptions, are national Islamists in that their political focus is on their own nation-state, where they are seeking through democratic means to exercise political power. The two exceptions are Hamas and Hizbollah, which are more correctly thought of as Islamist liberation movements in that the primary stimulus for their creation and for much of their present raison d'être has been confrontation with an occupying power. These two parties have also not completely and absolutely eschewed the use of violence in the domestic politics of Palestine and Lebanon, respectively. They can possibly be thought of as Muslim democrats, however, because they have accepted the rules of democratic contestation in their respective national settings and are not substantially more inclined to violence than other political actors with whom they are competing.

The long political journey of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood (MB, or Muslim Brothers) illustrates the tortuous path followed by many Muslim democrats, which is hardly surprising given that the leading organisations in most Arab countries are either national organisational offshoots of the MB or were inspired by it. It commenced essentially as a social movement dedicated to personal spiritual regeneration and social service provision in Egypt in 1928. As the anti-British struggle intensified in the post-war era, the MB was both politicised and radicalised, with its armed wing entering into guerrilla combat in the Suez Canal zone against the British and its secret underground organisation engaging in assassination of leading Egyptian political figures. Accused of plotting against Nasser in 1954 after it had been afforded special political status by the Free Officers who sought to use its power to bolster their own, the MB was crushed.

Upon Nasser's death in 1970 his successor, Anwar al Sadat, commenced almost immediately to court the MB as a counterweight to the then powerful left. But as Sadat's domestic political position deteriorated following his trip to Jerusalem in November 1977, he began to clamp down on all forms of autonomous political activity, including that by the Muslim Brotherhood.

The same scenario of a new regime courting popularity through a political liberalisation played itself out under President Mubarak, who, succeeding Sadat in 1981, let MB members and other political figures out of jail and permitted the MB to run for elections in alliance with the Wafd Party in 1984, despite the fact that it was not allowed to register as a political party. Since that

time the MB has increased its political presence, although in zigzag fashion as the regime has alternated between allowing it political space and cracking down on it. It steadfastly refused to be drawn into the early 1990s insurgency led by the more radical Islamist organisations, chief of which were Islamic Jihad and Gama`a Islamiyya, but this did not prevent the regime from accusing it of so doing and harassing it in various ways. The combination of its political experience gained through electoral campaigns and membership in parliament, along with its solid membership base, enabled it to win 88 seats in the 454 member parliament in the 2005 elections, a remarkable achievement in the face of voter intimidation and general electoral fraud perpetrated by the regime.

In sum, the Egyptian MB at various stages in its almost 80-year history has manifested virtually all forms and stages of Islamist political organisation. In its early period it was politically passive, focused instead on personal behaviour and social services. It then became politically engaged and was swept up in anti-colonial and internal violence. Crushed by Nasser and then revived by Sadat, who permitted its leading members to return to the country, it definitively turned its back on political violence in the 1970s and has sought since then to build its capacities to compete for power within that political space the regime allows. It has used its influence in recent years to impact policies, especially in the cultural sphere. It has provided inspiration for numerous other Islamist movements and its trajectory to non-violent, democratic participation has no doubt served as a model for many of them.

Whatever the particular path MENA Islamist organisations have followed to arrive at their present state of Muslim democrats, their moderation is now comprised of several different components. First, they renounce violence against domestic actors, although not against Israel in the case of Hizbollah and Hamas, organisations which also maintain significant coercive capacities that have direct relevance to the internal politics of Lebanon and Palestine, respectively. So by this measure the status of Hizbollah and Hamas as Muslim democrats is somewhat ambiguous and will remain so unless and until at a minimum they absolutely and unequivocally renounce the use of violence in domestic politics and take practical steps to implement that policy. Whether or not a renunciation of violence against Israel is also required for them to be dubbed Muslim democrats is a much more complicated matter and involves considerations of international law and foreign policy that are beyond the scope of this paper.

Second, these parties and movements have engaged directly in democratic practices, especially elections, although it is probably also true to say that they would not reject other paths to power, such as through co-optation by the military. Indeed, there is evidence to suggest that their political manoeuvring is intended to make them suitable partners for politically beleaguered militaries and security forces that might one day find themselves in need of such allies. Still, this scenario, which was acted out in Egypt in the 1952-54 interregnum and for some period of time after the Umar al Bashir coup in 1989 in the Sudan, seems less likely than a democratic scenario in most national settings. For one thing, Islamists have learned through the experiences of Egypt and Sudan that a Faustian bargain with the military is fraught with peril. For another, Hamas has recently demonstrated that electoral victory is possible; while Hizbollah has shown that even minority participation in government as a result of electoral performance provides substantial benefits. The Turkish case of the Justice and Development Party assuming the reins of power is also instructive. For Muslim democrats to throw away their chances of exercising governmental power through the ballot box in favour of a short cut via an alliance with the military would suggest political despair, to say nothing of poor political judgement, neither of which seems to characterise contemporary Muslim democrats.

Third, Muslim democrats are measured in their approach to Islamicisation. Unlike the Taliban in Afghanistan, the Muslim democrats of Turkey and the Mediterranean Arab world have been reasonably cautious in their efforts to spread Islamic practices, although there is considerable variation in how strident these efforts have been. In Palestine Hamas has explicitly renounced any desire or attempt at imposed Islamicisation, while Hizbollah has taken the position that

Lebanon is a pluralistic, multi-cultural society in which religious diversity must be respected. Morocco's Justice and Development Party (PJD), despite its status as the third largest party in parliament, has not vociferously advocated measures to impose Islamic dress or other manifestations of religiosity. On the other hand, Egypt's MB has used its presence in parliament to launch attacks on governmental actions that they deem to be too liberal or secular and have also sought through the courts to restrict personal freedoms that they deem to violate strict interpretations of Islam. Whether it and others like it would seek to impose Islamicisation if they were to attain power is an open question, but there are good reasons to suggest that they would not, chief among which are political calculations based on fear of backlash by both domestic and international political actors were they to do so. For Egypt, the presence of a Christian minority that comprises some 6-10% of the population and is actively supported internationally poses a further restraint.

Fourth, some Islamists have demonstrated, at least at the elite level, a willingness to engage directly with non-Muslim international actors, such as democracy promoters from the US and the EU and its member states. In Egypt, for example, both the parliamentary and party leadership of the MB have worked with the Westminster Foundation's project to strengthen various capacities of parliament. Similar cooperation has occurred in Morocco, whereas in Palestine Hamas has conveyed its willingness to work with Western governments, who have refused to reciprocate. While all Muslim democrats express reservations about involvement of European and North American actors in their respective political systems, this in no way differentiates them from most secular nationalist opposition figures or even from incumbent authoritarians, the latter of which typically condemn external support for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and democratisation activities in general, but which have no qualms about themselves receiving various types of support from those same external actors.

In addition to sharing a growing tendency towards moderation, the movements and political parties labelled here as Muslim democrats are also characterised by significant gaps between their leaders and followers, precisely because they are mass-based organisations. Unlike most of their secular and semi-secular competitors within political oppositions, which are typically coteries of elites without popular bases, or government-controlled and -created single parties which are loosely-knit patronage vehicles, Muslim democrats typically span the social order. Their leaders are normally educated professionals, while at the base they recruit successfully from among the petty bourgeoisie and even among the socially marginal, including unemployed and undereducated youths. It is not surprising, therefore, that within the same organisation a wide variety of different interests and outlooks exits.

A key question (beyond the scope of this book) is how leaders of these movements and organisations retain the loyalty of their followers, for objectively their interests are not identical and socially they may inhabit and reflect quite different milieu. A common observation about moderate Islamist leaders is that they appear remarkably familiar with Western models and procedures and seem to have no difficulty in interacting with Westerners, even in their own languages. Presumably if asked about the reasons for the loyalty of their followers, these leaders would invoke explanations to the effect that they share common views of social, economic and political problems precisely because they are all committed Muslims. Leaving aside the issue of whether or not shared ideological commitment provides sufficient glue to bind together those of markedly different social backgrounds within a single political organisation, the question remains of how such coherence is created, maintained and acted upon operationally. Might it be middle level apparatchiks who provide key linkages between elites and the mass base? Alternatively, might it be that these Islamist organisations are comprised of coalitions based on pre-existing social units, with the organisational sinews thus linking the leaders of these social units, who in turn deliver their followers?

Whatever the answer is to the query of how the gap between leaders and their followers is bridged in these organisations, it is apparent from the evidence presented in this volume and

more generally that Muslim democrats are under constant threat of being outflanked by extremists. Indeed, in virtually every country under study both moderate and radical Islamist organisations coexist. In the case of Egypt, for example, the dominant MB faces challengers on both the left and right flanks. On the former, Islamic Jihad, Gama`a Islamiyya and a host of smaller organisations have track records of violence and uncompromising stands towards the government and its Western backers, even though some have in recent years renounced violence. On the right, al Wasat, as suggested by the very name - which means 'the middle' – is an attempt led by young political entrepreneurs to capture the political middle ground between the MB, on the one hand, and those who are less committed Islamists and even Christians, on the other. In Palestine, Islamic Jihad stands firmly on Hamas' left flank, frequently refusing to honour ceasefires and other concessions that Hamas is willing to make. A similar relationship exists in Morocco between the establishment-oriented PJD and the more radical Justice and Charity. The history of the Islamist insurrection in Algeria cannot be told accurately without reference to the split between the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), which gradually eschewed violence, on the one hand, and the Armed Islamic Group (GIA), on the other, which intensified it. All Islamist organisations are banned in Syria, but the Syrian Muslim Brothers operating from exile are pursuing a moderate, non-violent line, while occasional acts of political violence, such as the attack on the US Embassy in 2006, suggest that radical underground Islamist organisations are not content with non-violent means to deal with their perceived enemies. In comparatively democratic Turkey the ruling moderate Islamist AKP has to be wary of the appeals of the considerably more radical Felicity Party. The fragmentation of both Sunni and Shi`a communities in Iraq into numerous Islamist political organisations, with some eschewing violence and others perpetrating it on a daily basis, is the extreme case that exemplifies the general trend.

This evidence suggests that Muslim democrats do not have the Islamist political field to themselves. Others who claim to be yet more democratic than they or, more typically, more effective because they have not 'sold out' by renouncing violence and accepting democracy, are present in virtually every country in the region. The relative strengths of moderates and radicals are determined in large measure by the contexts in which they operate. Probably the most common theme running through the recent history of these countries is that the radicals overplay their hand, inviting massive and successful retaliation by governments, leaving the ground clear for the moderates. This scenario played itself out in Syria in the early 1980s, in Egypt in the early 1990s, in Algeria later in that decade. In Turkey one can read the history of the last quarter century as one in which governmental repression of Islamists brought about their gradual moderation, leading ultimately to their successful assumption of governmental power in 2002. It would be incorrect, however, to assume that history moves in a uni-linear, predictable fashion and that present contexts which by and large favour moderates will persist. The volatile situations in Lebanon and Palestine are possibly the most likely candidates for a return to conditions in which moderation is overwhelmed by violent approaches, but they are by no means the only possible candidates for such changes.

That moderation is in significant measure a product of context and that radical organisations are for the most part still present, but sitting on the political sidelines presumably waiting for a return of conditions that will favour them rather than Muslim democrats, suggest the tenuous nature of the present conjuncture. Moderation has yet to be firmly institutionalised, which requires it not only to be incorporated into the political system and to be accepted by important external actors, it also requires accommodation and ultimate acceptance by other domestic political forces. Not even Turkey has yet met those preconditions, as many significant Turkish political actors still harbour ambitions of turning back the political clock to Kemalist secularism and evicting Islamists not only from government, but from the political and social systems more broadly.

It would hardly be surprising, therefore, if Muslim democrats were contingent ones. Threatened on their flanks by other Islamists, in the front by opposed governments and powerful foreign actors, and in the rear by the frailties of their own organisations, they naturally must feel compelled to keep all options open. Democracy is the preferred, but not the only option. They would be politically foolish to make their last stand for democratic principles when other actors in the system are violating them. It is thus vital that so long as democracy remains contingent in the mind of those who are in positions to help bring it about, that the conditions which nurture it are as favourable as possible. In the case of Islamist moderates, most have recently witnessed the heavy price paid by failed direct assaults on entrenched political power and have drawn the conclusion that compromise is preferable to 'all or nothing' approaches. But that situation cannot continue indefinitely if all paths to power appear irrevocably blocked, if only because Islamist radicals are already there to pick up the challenge.

A final feature common to Muslim democrats observed in the chapters is that they do not see themselves as representing specific societal or economic interests. Indeed, the very concept of interest is inimical to them and, they would claim, to Islam itself. Good Muslims are, by definition, united, forming a society that is cohesive, fair and moral. The divisions that Islam sanctifies are between those who are Muslim and those who are not. Contemporary Islamists implicitly also distinguish between engaged and disengaged Muslims, that is, those who are committed to establishing Muslim social and political orders and those who are not. The task before them is thus to engage those Muslims, not to represent interests of specific classes, regions, ethnic or other group interests. Reflecting this orientation is the Islamist concern with moral issues in society, which takes the form of preoccupation with education, culture and the media. So, for example, in the 2000-2005 Egyptian parliament, the seventeen MB deputies devoted 80% of their interpellations, or questions to ministers, to matters concerning those issues, leaving a scant 20% for matters of economics, foreign and defence policies, and other vital governance issues.[1]

Materialists naturally find this argumentation to be both temporising and self-serving. In reality, according to them, Islamists can claim to be above the fray of politics that decides who gets what, how and when, only as long as they are not in government. So, presently, most Muslim democrats have the luxury of being all things to all people, not having to make hard choices on resource allocations while reinforcing claims to moral superiority by focusing on culture and education. But when and if they confront material reality, according to this view, they will have to reveal which interests they favour and which they ignore. This in turn will tend to fracture their political organisations and possibly bring about broader political realignments, with Islamists forging new coalitions with non-Islamists on the basis of interests rather than on the basis of moral convictions and claims.

Islamists would naturally reject this reasoning and scenario, not only on philosophical grounds but possibly also by pointing out that Islam is generating a new calculus of interest, with Islamic banking and finances being but one manifestation of this re-ordering of the material according to Islamic precepts. They might also point to the Turkish case, where the AKP has in fact been in government for more than four years and if anything, appears to be as united and in a stronger political position than when it first swept into office, despite having had to wrestle with allocation issues.

Resolution of these philosophical and empirical debates is beyond the scope of this chapter. Suffice it to say here that Islamist democrats reject the epistemological foundations of Western political science and political economy, which prioritise the material over the spiritual and are sceptical of those who claim to be acting on moral grounds. The tests of whether or not

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[1] These figures come from a publication issued by the MB and referred to in Gamal Essam El-Din, "One More Episode", *al Ahram Weekly,* 1 December 2006.

moderate Islamists can rise above specific material interests and maintain coalitions of Muslim wholes have yet to be undergone. With the partial exception of Turkey, Muslim democrats remain on the sidelines of MENA governance. In the case of Turkey it can be argued that countervailing forces have reduced both the AKP's control of and perceived responsibility for public policy, so the Turkish test is yet to really commence. And one can also argue that in Turkey the AKP more clearly represents the interests of the independent small and middle bourgeoisie, especially its Anatolian core, so that it does indeed rest on a sold material base. But this is to prejudge the issue, for it cannot at this stage be resolved empirically. All that can be said with complete confidence is that there are profound differences between Western and Muslim political philosophies and that the views of each will colour the manner in which they would enter into and conduct dialogue with the other.

In conclusion, these chapters reveal remarkable consistency about the nature of Muslim democrats, given that they are a political phenomenon present in so many different countries in the region. Their evolution, however, has followed similar patterns in those various countries, with the MB in Egypt not only having the longest such history of evolution, but serving as a model for Arab Muslim democrats elsewhere. Presently favoured by the historical conjuncture that has seen radicalism eclipsed, at least for the time being, Muslim democrats must nevertheless be cautious of their commitment to democracy, for the systems in which they operate are at best quasi-democratic and their challengers do not necessarily share such a commitment. Not having been called upon to formulate and implement public policies, the 'real' nature of Muslim democrats remains – aside from the case of Turkey - untested. They themselves profess that the moral imperatives of Islam provide sufficient guide for public policy and establishing and maintaining a coherent, Muslim socio-political order, whereas many non-Muslim observers remain sceptical of their ability to remain united in the face of the difficulty of reconciling competing material claims.

2.   Muslim Democrats' views of the EU

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the Muslim democrats interviewed for this volume, with the partial exception of the Turks, appear to know little about EU policies, including the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) and the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). After all, EU policies are not particularly well-known to European audiences and those policies relevant to MENA countries have been negotiated almost exclusively on government to government bases. Other issues, such as the Lebanese war of 2006, the civil war in Iraq or the ongoing Israel-Palestine conflict, to say nothing of domestic political issues in the countries concerned or US policies towards the region, have all captured greater media and public attention than European policies, which seem in fact to have little impact on the ground. Thus Muslim democrats, like their fellow countrymen, have had few opportunities to learn about relevant EU policies, to say nothing of participating in their formulation.

The impact of this lack of knowledge is that most Muslim democrats appear to evaluate the EU at a general perceptual level, rather than on an empirical basis. Not knowing what the EU has proposed to do vis à vis their country or what in fact it is doing, they report in general how they feel about the EU. Not surprisingly they say that they feel distant from the EU and its negotiations with their respective governments. Interestingly, this lack of engagement does not seem to translate into hostility. Most respondents report a generally favourable view of Europeans, European countries and the EU and would like to have more direct interactions with them. In some cases they differentiate between European countries, with France typically being evaluated more favourably than the UK, for example.

Muslim democrats express no profound reservations about interaction with Europe, at least as far as economic and technical matters are concerned, although members of Hizbollah evince concern that the EU will seek to impose privatisation and other elements of neo-liberal

economic policy. MENA Muslim democrats are more cautious about interactions over socio-cultural and political issues, however, with some expressing their opposition to direct EU involvement in democracy promotion, for example. Virtually all moderate Islamists caution the EU about interference in the cultural domain, in which they see Islam as playing a vital role. In general there appears to be a desire to learn from Europeans in various fields, albeit with qualifications about political and cultural matters.

Muslim democrats are thus quite unlike more radical Islamists, who reject interaction with the European Union on principle. The possible rationales underlying the accommodating approach of the former are probably driven as much by their present political circumstances as they are by their broader philosophical outlooks. Their more moderate views, coupled in many cases with direct familiarity with the West and desire to learn more from it, predispose them to want to engage. But they must also see direct political benefits from such engagement or they would not be such strong supporters of it.

The benefits in question grow out of their special status as Islamist opposition forces in authoritarian political systems. They are seeking legitimacy and recognition, both domestically and internationally. In some countries, such as Egypt and the member countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), it is unlawful for them to operate as political parties, whereas in others, such as Syria and Tunisia, membership in an Islamist organisation is illegal, in the former constituting a capital offence. Only in Turkey, Lebanon and Palestine do they have an established presence in government, but even in these comparatively open systems they are confronted with politically existential threats. It is not inconceivable, for example, that in the wake of a political change they could face severe restrictions or even worse. Elsewhere, the existential threats are more real and pressing and the challenges to operating as democratic organisations yet more profound. So to protect themselves against autocratic regimes or not fully institutionalised democratic or quasi-democratic ones, they need broader recognition and the legitimation such recognition provides. Entering into direct dialogue with the EU, even informally, provides some measure of that recognition and thus legitimation.

The content of interaction with the EU might from Islamists' perspective also be beneficial. Material resources, depending on how they were provided, might be welcome. Moderate Islamists are well aware that substantial resources flow not only to governments, but also to secular oppositionists in the region. To be put on an equal footing with secularists would be of substantial symbolic value even if resources were not part of the exchange. Of still greater value would be pressure on regimes by the EU to liberalise and democratise, for such measures, if successful, would necessarily provide greater political space within which Muslim democrats could operate.

The potential downside for Muslim democrats of substantially enhanced interactions with the EU would be threats to their reputation and unity. Their opponents might use such interactions to discredit them, as governments have done with other opposition organisations, for example. Such criticism could exacerbate internal tensions that might arise over the issue of whether or not and how to engage with the EU. Criticism from elements within the broader Islamist movement could be anticipated by Muslim democrats unless the terms of such engagement were delineated in what was seen to be appropriate fashion. Overall, however, the possible benefits to Muslim democrats of engagement considerably outweigh the potential costs. They seem to indicate a clear awareness of that as suggested by their manifest desire to engage.

3.   Muslim Democrats' comparative views of the EU and US

Muslim democrats interviewed for this volume differ more in their views of the EU and US than they do on matters previously discussed. This seems to reflect their different experiences with the EU and US. In Morocco and Turkey, for example, countries where they have a long history of engagement with the US, Muslim democrats believe the US to be more interested in them

and their welfare than is the EU. This apparently reflects not only the proactive nature of US government policy towards these countries, but more generally it probably also reflects the comparative plethora of US-based private or quasi-governmental democracy promotion organisations. Europe, by comparison, relies more heavily on governmental actors for democracy and human rights promotion. Because those actors are more restricted by government policy than are those of civil society, the likelihood is that if Muslim democrats have interacted directly with democracy promoters, they will be Americans.

But the general impression held by Islamists of the US as compared to the EU does not favour the former. The EU is seen as being more sympathetic and better informed about the region. US policies, such as those towards Iraq, Lebanon and Palestine, are roundly condemned, with special criticism being levelled at US efforts to isolate Hamas and Hizbollah. In general the informants see the EU as being sympathetic but weak in the face of US pressure, whereas they see the US as being strong but antagonistic. Almost all urge the EU to adopt policies more independent of the US. While one might discount somewhat the comparatively favourable assessments of the EU because informants were aware they were talking with individuals who were connected to an EU-related project, the fact that those assessments were expressed in such fulsome terms and by so many informants indicates that it is not just anticipated reactions by informants that underlie them.

As far as the appropriateness of the two social and political models is concerned, views differ. With regards to the former, the treatment of indigenous Muslims is seen as being less favourable in Europe than the US. The multiculturalism of the American melting pot is contrasted favourably to the 'uniculturalism' of most European nation-states. But paradoxically, the multicultural model is not held out as being appropriate for the MENA, unless you accept the proposition put forward by a member of Turkey's AKP that his country has been multicultural for centuries. Indeed, quite the contrary is the case. Muslim democrats are seeking to establish 'unicultural' Muslim societies, with special conditions being granted to non-Muslim minorities. So while they are highly critical of the treatment of fellow Muslims in EU member states and in comparison laud their treatment in the US, they do not even entertain the possibility that the American socio-demographic model might be the more appropriate one for them to emulate.

With regards to the comparative attractiveness of political models, the reverse is the case. Muslim democrats are more attracted to EU than US models and do see those models as having direct relevance for their conditions. This preference seems to reflect various considerations. First, some of the informants are not distinguishing between the nature of the political systems and the foreign policies they generate. Thus European parliamentary democracies are seen as preferable because by and large European policies are seen as being more sympathetic and understanding of the MENA countries and of the role of moderate Islamism than is the US. Second, the US political system seems to most of the informants to be much more disorderly and 'capitalist', or at least more penetrated by special interests, than European parliamentary democracies. The free-wheeling, bargaining nature of American politics is seen as distasteful. Moreover, none of the MENA countries copied US governmental models, as they are all either parliamentary democracies of the European variant or are monarchies. So there is no first hand familiarity with the American system of balance of powers achieved through separation between the three branches of government and led by a President and Congress.

Finally, underlying the preference for European-style parliamentary democracies might well be a broader philosophical concern, which is that the good Muslim polity, hence by extension, any good polity, is a united one that does not admit of divisions along the line of particularistic interests. The American model of government is founded on the very opposite notion, namely, that different interests need to be protected by dividing and counterbalancing governmental power. The motor force of American politics is special interests and the channels through which power flows are multitudinous and only quasi-institutionalised, thus admitting of endless

bargaining and coalition formation. In Europe, by contrast, government is formed by the party or parties that capture a majority of seats in parliament, thus the channels of influence are well defined and comparatively rigid. The European model, in other words, more closely approximates the Muslim ideal, with the ruling party or parties being able to act on behalf of the entire policy to a much greater extent than the American counterpart.

In sum, perceptions of the EU and its member states tend to be more favourable on the grounds of both policies and model of government than the US, with the obvious and important exception being that of treatment of Muslim minorities. Those Muslim democrats who feel that the US has been more forthcoming than the EU seem to be those who have had first hand experience in dealing with US officials and private actors involved in democracy and human rights promotion, suggesting in turn that dialogue and engagement by Western actors results in more positive assessments of them by Islamists. The already comparatively favourable views of the EU further suggest that engagement by it, both formally and informally, would have immediate and positive impacts on the attitudes towards it held by Muslim democrats.

4. Muslim and Western conceptions of democracy and human rights

The interviews revealed unequivocally that Muslim democrats and most Westerners do not share the same *weltanschauung* when it comes to their understanding of democracy and human rights. It is important to emphasise this point because of a prevailing tendency in some circles in the West to downplay or even ignore these philosophical differences. Their reaction to Edward Said's critique of Orientalism typically underlies their view and it may in fact be an overreaction. Before Said's pioneering work, differences between 'the Orient' and the West were commonly seen as being 'essentialist' in nature, owing to inherent differences between the cultures and, most importantly, religions of the peoples concerned. This extreme view was rightly and effectively debunked by Said.

It has been replaced by an emphasis, and possibly an over-emphasis, on the role of situation in determining outlooks. This implies a plasticity of beliefs that may be excessive, as suggested by Muslim democrats' reflections on democracy and human rights as recorded in this volume. Virtually all of the interviewees draw sharp distinctions between Islamic and Western conceptions of representative government and protection of individual rights and freedoms. Yet it is also clear from available polling data that experience with democracy is the most important single factor in explaining Muslim's attitudes about that system of government.[2] In short, it is important to recognise that both 'essence' and 'situation' condition politically relevant beliefs. It is therefore reasonable to conclude that when grounded in other systems of thought and practice, such as religion, and reinforced by well-structured organisations, these political beliefs are unlikely to change dramatically as a result of intermittent engagement with outside actors, although they may undergo some modification. This is not to suggest, however, that enhanced mutual awareness is of no value, for it clearly is. It is to suggest though that expectations of changes of values, beliefs and behaviour as a result of engagement should not be excessive.

With regards to the content of views on democracy and human rights, the relevant difference in philosophical orientations of Westerners and Muslim democrats is that the former believe in universal norms, whereas the latter do not. The Islamist view is that the West is seeking to portray its own notions and practices of human rights and democracy as universal in nature. Instead, they contend, these conceptions of human rights and democracy reflect the particular cultures and histories of European nations. They are not relevant for all peoples at all times, especially for Muslims, who have their own religious, cultural and historical bases for human rights, political freedoms and democratic practices. The moderate Islamists interviewed noted

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[2] See Moataz A. Fattah, *Democratic Values in the Muslim World,* Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2006.

the excessive 'individualism' of European ideas, arguing that conceptions of human rights and democracy founded on individualism had no resonance in Islam, in which social obligations and solidarities are of greater importance. Western liberal values that prioritise individual freedom over community rights are, in short, seen as being un- or anti-Islamic. Finally, the elevation of human over divine wisdom, a concept which lies at the heart of Western representative institutions and legal systems, is also seen as being antithetical to Islam.

These profound philosophical differences underlie disagreements over specific policies, which in turn tend to become highly emotive, symbolic issues for both sides. Competing views of appropriate gender roles and relations are possibly the most critical of these symbolic issues. Muslim democrats deeply resent what they see as an attempt by Europe to impose its own preferences for gender relations, a step which they view as neo-imperialist, rather than reflecting the application of so-called universal norms. So the wearing of head scarves, the recognition of equal rights for women and the treatment of homosexuality are issues about which Muslim democrats and most Europeans have profoundly different views that will be difficult to reconcile, no matter how long and intense the dialogue over them. But it is nevertheless important to recognise that enhanced awareness of other perspectives, even if they are not shared, is a potential benefit of dialogue.

5. Additional issues that might be addressed

The approach utilised in this volume of interviewing moderate Islamists might fruitfully be extended to some other, relevant issues. Possibly the most interesting, directly relevant issue that could also be included is that of connectivity in the region in general and that between Muslim democrats specifically. Indeed, the research already undertaken and reported upon revealed that reactions to specific events in the region, such as the Lebanese war of 2006, may be of profound significance. It is clear from existing evidence that Muslim democrats, as well presumably as most residents of the region, are closely attuned to events not only in their country, but in the region as a whole. These are not hermetically sealed political systems. Indeed, the Middle East is more of a region than possibly any other in the developing world in the sense that political events in one part of it quickly impact other sub-regions and countries within it. Shared language, culture and history contribute to the strongly systemic nature of the MENA, a strength now reinforced and reflected politically by the ubiquitous nature of Islamism. It would of course be useful to assess more systematically how regional events impact the perceptions and actions of Muslim democrats and to determine if they are yet more attuned to those events than are their compatriots of different political persuasions.

Possible connections between Muslim democrats in different countries were not directly investigated. The degree to which they interact, learn from one another, and provide tangible and intangible resources is an important, yet largely unknown aspect of moderate Islamism. Intensive research which has been conducted on connections has focused on those among radical Islamists. There is nevertheless evidence that Iranian support has been vital for the creation and continued effectiveness of Hizbollah. Similarly, arguments have been made that Saudi support for Egyptian Muslim Brothers and, by extension, moderate Islamists throughout the Arab world, has been a key factor in their success. So while there has been some research on connections between radical Islamists and considerable speculation on the role of Saudi Arabia, in particular in supporting both *mujahidin* in Afghanistan and moderate Arab Islamists elsewhere, little is known in detail, particularly about the latter, to say nothing about direct dealings between moderate Islamists in the various countries. The Turkish case is being followed closely by Arab Muslim democrats, but whether that is simply a monitoring exercise or consists of more direct engagement is unknown. Precisely because there are good reasons to believe that there may be extensive interactions between moderate Islamists and that those interactions may have significant impacts, it is important that this aspect of connectivity be more thoroughly investigated. Indeed, if the EU is to adopt a policy of more extensive and

intensive engagement with moderate Islamists, it would want to consider the relevance of such regional connections to its dealings with moderate Islamists on a country by country basis.

The other major issue that remains largely unaddressed is what Muslim democrats do when they exercise political power. Of course there is little empirical evidence to report, for it is only Turkey, Palestine, and Lebanon where they are currently in government in greater or lesser measure. The two cabinet portfolios (health and education) the Jordanian Islamic Action Front was briefly awarded in the wake of the 1989 elections hardly qualify.

Yet this question is vital to understanding the political nature of moderate Islamism. The allegation that Muslim democrats have an opportunistic rather than abiding commitment to democracy is widespread. The fear that they would seek to impose a draconian, thoroughgoing Islamicisation once they had sufficient power to do so is shared by secularists everywhere in the MENA. The Turkish case has not provided much comfort to those with such doubts, precisely because in Turkey the AKP is confronted with the countervailing power not only of the military, but also by the reasonably well institutionalised legal/judicial system and by firmly held public opinion, buttressed by a comparatively well-developed civil society. Thus the AKP's capacity to impose Islamicisation is limited, whatever its will might be.

The same may well not apply in Arab countries. Military traditions are not those of nation-guarding, Kemalist secularism. Courts are not independent of the executive and public opinion is comparatively diffuse and poorly aggregated within civil society. Moreover, in opposition, Muslim democrats, such as the MB in Egypt and the Islamic Action Front in Jordan, have been vociferous in their criticism of manifestations of secular, 'global' culture and adamant in insisting upon censorship, prohibition of alcohol, imposition of dress and behaviour codes, revision of school curricula and the like. The question can rightly be raised that if this is what they are like in opposition, what would they do once in power? Alas, the track record is too short for a definitive answer to be given, but a more thorough search of the existing evidence might provide more informed assessments.[3]

A related area of ambiguity is what Muslim democrats think about the relationship between the state and the exercise of power. At a theoretical level it can be argued that since Islam encompasses both *din wa dawlah*, or religion and state, the latter is the instrument of the former, being responsible for implementation of Islamic precepts in society. In this view Muslim democrats are focused on achieving political power so that they can utilise the state to implement Islam as they conceive it.

At the level of practice, however, recent social and economic history suggests a somewhat different approach. Authoritarian states in the MENA have been inhospitable to moderate Islamists, so they have set about constructing parallel structures in civil society. This is true in the economic realm, where various forms of Islamist finance and business have sprouted and multiplied, as well as in service delivery, where a rich array of Islamist NGOs have set down roots as they have provided health, educational, sanitation, transport and other facilities. Many of those involved in these economic and social activities have become highly sceptical not only of the authoritarian, semi-secular states under which they live, but presumably also of the notion that the state should be the repository of all political, hence also all economic and social power. So it is important to know not just what Islamic doctrine says about the state, but what Muslim democrats think its appropriate role should be. What limits should be imposed upon its reach? What relationship should it have to the economy and to private providers of social services?

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[3] A recent effort to evaluate whether participation by Islamists in the political systems of Jordan and Yemen induced moderation revealed that in the former it did, but not in the latter. Both the nature of the Islamist movement and aspects of the broader political system in which it operates appear to determine whether inclusion will or will not induce moderation. See Jillian Schwedler, *Faith in Moderation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

What should the mechanisms be that protect individuals against possible excesses of the state? In sum, this is a potentially rich and important area for investigation and one that is very relevant to relations between Muslim democrats and external actors, including the EU.

6. A preliminary cost/benefit analysis of engaging with Muslim Democrats

A thorough cost/benefit analysis from a Western perspective of engaging with Muslim democrats would require clear parameters defining that engagement, including answering such questions as with exactly whom, over what topics, in what settings and so on. Prior to that undertaking all that can be done is to suggest some possible costs and benefits in general terms. As far as the former are concerned, chief among them might well be the risks of not engaging. The evolution of moderate forms of political Islam could serve to alleviate problems arising from ethnic and sectarian divisions, undercut support for violent Islamist movements, and strengthen connections between economic and political elites and the grass roots of civil society. In the absence of Muslim democrats taking on these challenges, it is hard to envision what other resources are available to address these problems, which if they are not tackled, will intensify. Engagement might also contribute to rendering authoritarian regimes more susceptible to reforms, while challenging the systems of corruption and patronage politics that underlie them. A careful engagement could also serve as a means for drawing important parts of MENA societies into a discussion with Europe and North America about the complex practical and philosophical issues of governing societies in democratic, accountable and effective ways, while also respecting the rule of law and human rights. Although engaging Muslim democrats is unlikely to solve all the political problems of the region, a thoughtful and careful engagement could clearly be a part of encouraging reform and political evolution in the region in directions that the EU would welcome. While this is clearly a long term project, it may represent one of the best uses of 'soft power' in the region.

There are also potential costs to engagement. It is unlikely to bring about coincidence of views and there is a possibility, if not carefully managed, that it could exacerbate differences and increase tensions. At the more directly political level, engagement may enhance the resources of moderate Islamists at the expense of other political actors who might in fact be more natural allies of the West. As mentioned above, engagement would necessarily provide some measure of legitimacy to moderate Islamists, which is a valuable gain for them in its own right, as authoritarian regimes are seeking to deny them this legitimacy.

But EU engagement might also contribute to a shift in the balance of power within political oppositions away from secularists and towards Muslim democrats. The former are in virtually all of the countries under consideration politically less well-organised, as evidenced by their weak electoral performances compared to the Muslim democrats, not only in national elections, but in elections in syndicates, student bodies, chambers of commerce, and indeed virtually in any setting in which elections are conducted. This does not necessarily mean, however, that moderate Islamists outnumber secularists. In addition to the organisational factor, which favours Islamists, is the fact that Islamist political parties and movements are seen as posing the only viable alternative to incumbent governments, hence are the recipients of protest votes by those who do not necessarily endorse their Islamist platforms. Finally, actual voting results that have been referred to as proof of the political predominance of Muslim democrats are not as conclusive as such claims suggest. In Palestine, for example, Hamas won about 40% of the popular vote in the January 2006 election, just slightly more than Fatah. But the electoral system converted that plurality into a substantial parliamentary majority, much to the surprise of even Hamas and Fatah operatives. Hizbollah's share of the Lebanese vote is of course kept small by virtue of the fact that it appeals virtually exclusively to the Shi`a community. It is also the case, however, that substantial numbers of Shi`a do not vote for Hizbollah, preferring instead to vote

for the secularly inclined Amal party, or for traditional notables who eschew Islamism or any other ideology, for that matter.

It is thus important not to think of moderate Islamism as constituting a political wave that is sweeping all before it. It is of large and probably still growing importance, but its support level in the population may well be lower than is typically projected by election results, even though governments have in many instances sought to discourage votes for moderate Islamist candidates. Secularists are not a small minority in any of these systems and may in fact constitute silent majorities in most. It is important, therefore, not to write them off as political dinosaurs on the verge of extinction in the MENA. That could happen, but it is not pre-ordained. To the extent dialogue influences the balance of power between moderate Islamists and secularists, it needs to be evaluated from that perspective.

7. Recommendations

Probably of greatest importance is the need to clarify what the EU is seeking from engagement with Muslim democrats. While information exchange and general dialogue serve the purposes of increasing mutual familiarity and probably reducing misunderstandings and associated tensions, these are not truly strategic objectives. The one such objective that stands out is to help facilitate the transition to pluralist democracy through gradual incorporation of democrats, including Muslim democrats, into their respective political systems. This will require various compromises and changes by virtually all actors within these political systems, and those in turn will take time and possibly support by outside parties, including the EU. The systems themselves are also in need of change, for they are structurally inhospitable to democrats. They have been built around the principle of expediting the unfettered exercise of centralised executive power and hence have an absence of checks and balances and alternative sources and centres of power. Thus the transition to pluralism under the rule of law requires the democratic development of both actors and institutions and it is that development that should provide the focus for engagement not only with Muslim democrats, but other actors and institutions within these systems.

A related consideration is that despite Muslim democrats' rejection of the concept of interest representation, unless and until that feature develops a truly pluralist democracy will not emerge. At present the relationship between political organisations, including parties and broader movements, on the one hand, and specific interests, whether economic, regional, ethnic or whatever, on the other, is weak to non-existent. Authoritarian governments have systematically sought to prevent the emergence of such linkages. They have built patronage parties as alternatives to interest-based ones. And the political societies in question have not had long histories of organised political representation of specific interests, as opposed to political leadership by notables of various types. Thus a major transition in the concept of representation is necessary if mature, stable democracies are to emerge in the MENA region. This transition can only happen once competitive, democratic politics begin to take root and provide the opportunities for that competition to facilitate the emergence of interest representation. It is in the intervening period that Muslim democrats are likely to be powerful actors within these political systems. It should not be assumed that their prospects will be enhanced by the institutionalisation of pluralism. As presently constructed the organisations of Muslim democrats are more akin to broad protest movements and service providers than to interest-based political parties. They are thus appropriate for this particular historical circumstance, but not necessarily for the one that hopefully will follow. It is thus important that those involved in engagement appreciate the historical circumstances that have given rise to the popularity of Muslim democracy and also realise that those circumstances are not likely to persist forever.

A third recommendation is for engagement to be concerned primarily with the practical, not the philosophical. As discussed above, there are clear and profound philosophical differences

between Europeans and Muslim democrats and those differences are unlikely to be resolved soon or through any imaginable sort of dialogue that could occur. Divergent views on many key issues, including human rights and especially gender relations, are embedded in these different philosophies. That does not mean, however, that compromise on the handling of these issues cannot be reached until the underlying philosophical differences are dealt with. Indeed, quite the opposite is the case, for the more the root causes of these differences are explored, the less easy will it be to reach compromise at a practical level. The search for common ground in resolving practical issues might be assisted by a general awareness of the philosophical orientations of both parties, but it could be severely impeded were the search to enhance that awareness or to turn into exercises in self-justification. Possibly the best reconciliation of this potential dilemma is to separate the two discussions, so that those with immediate policy relevance are isolated from engagement over philosophical issues, which can occur on a separate track.

A related recommendation is that engagement should be concerned with institutions and the nurturing of professionalism associated with the growth of both personal and institutional loyalties and capacities. The MENA is an area of strong societies and weak states, meaning that informal associational ties, such as those of kinship, region or sect, typically command greater loyalty than do ties to formal institutions. Mature democracy depends upon the effective functioning of such institutions, whether they are of government itself or in civil society. It is thus vital for the long term prospects for MENA democracy that such institutions, and loyalties to them, are strengthened. In the short term they also serve as valuable conduits through which democratisation assistance can reach wide audiences, including Muslim democrats. Assistance provided to parliaments, for example, is of at least indirect and frequently direct benefit to parliamentary delegations of Muslim democrats. Providing such assistance through institutions avoids the necessity of picking individual beneficiaries and also serves to cement linkages between civil society actors and state institutions. Thus to the extent engagement with Muslim democrats can simultaneously serve to strengthen their commitments to institutions and the institutions themselves, it will maximise its impacts.

Finally, the evidence presented in this volume points to the need for the EU to clarify its policies towards the MENA and, specifically Muslim democrats within it, as well as to communicate those policies to non-governmental audiences, including to Muslim democrats. The present situation is one in which lack of knowledge of EU policies, combined with the actual lack of EU policies towards engaging with moderate Islamists, cause Muslim democrats to at best be curious about the EU and at worse to be suspicious of it. Engagement might itself help to contribute to policy formation in this important area, while also serving as a vehicle to disseminate relevant information about EU policies.

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For more information on the European Commission's Euro–Mediterranean programme see:

http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external_relations/euromed/meda.htm

Political Islam and the

European Neighbourhood Policy

Workshop Organized by CEPS, Fundación Tres Culturas and FRIDE
Seville, 24-25 November 2006

The Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS) the Fundación Tres Culturas and the Fundación para las Relaciones Internacionales y el Diálogo Exterior (FRIDE) are embarking on a project to strengthen the understanding of Islamist parties' perspectives on *concrete and specific areas of European policy*. Most work on political Islam has remained focused on relatively abstract questions, while it is widely agreed that the focus of enquiry needs to be more practical, with a view to understanding more about Islamist parties' policy goals and aspirations. The core aims of this project are to link more general debates over political Islam specifically to the content of European policy in the region and to develop coherent policies to relate to these parties. CEPS the Fundación Tres Culturas and FRIDE are organising a workshop in Seville on 24-25 November 2006 in order to initiate the first phase of this project. This first workshop will involve analysts and experts, not themselves directly politically active, but known to have a certain orientation towards and access to Islamist parties.

In recent years an enormous amount of research and analysis has been undertaken on the issue of political Islam. It is widely agreed that it is desirable and indeed necessary to engage with moderate Islamist parties to a greater extent than hitherto. Yet uncertainty remains at both the conceptual and policy-making levels over how to do this. This issue needs to be addressed more systematically with greater urgency. In most southern Mediterranean Arab states Islamist parties are enjoying increasing support. This has been witnessed in recent months in particular in Egypt, Algeria, Morocco and the Palestinian Territories, while the prohibition of Islamist parties in Syria and Libya threatens to become an increasingly divisive issue. There should be an engagement with moderate Islamist parties and organisations that are currently enjoying a rise in support. For the moment it seems that there has been hardly any engagement even in less politicised areas at the grassroots level, as proposed by many analysts.

Given the more pragmatic approach recently adopted by many of the moderate Islamist movements, it is a propitious time to take advantage of their relative openness towards engaging Western countries more openly by reaching out to them and establishing strategic links. Additionally, what should be done in terms of dealing with the less moderate Islamists who have political branches, but yet have not officially renounced violence, especially in light of Hamas's recent legislative victory? What of secular-religious national alliances?

The workshop will lead to the publication of a book collecting all the findings from research in the field and the conclusions derived from discussions at the workshop. For this purpose the programme is organized following the structure of the contents of the book.

Friday, 24 November, 2006

15:30-16:00   **Introduction and Overview:**
                State of the Art in the Analysis of Political Islam and the West
                Richard Youngs, FRIDE
                Michael Emerson, CEPS

16:00-18:00   **Case Studies 1-3: Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia**
                Samir Amghar, Algeria
                Amel Boubekeur, Morocco
                Salah Eddin al-Jourshi, Tunisia
                Discussant: Mohamed Ennaji, Tres Culturas, Morocco

20:00- 22:00   **Dinner**

Saturday, 25 November, 2006

9:00-11.00   **Case Studies 4-6: Egypt, Lebanon, Syria**
                Emad Shahin, Egypt
                Talal Atrissi, Lebanon
                Salam Kawakabi, Syria
                Discussant : Nathalie Tocci, IAI, Rome

11:00-11:30   **Coffee Break**

11.30-13:30   **Case Studies 7-9: Turkey, Palestine, Jordan**
                Senem Aydin, Turkey
                Mustafa Abu Sway, Palestine
                Mohamed al Masri, Jordan
                Discussant: Abdeslam Maghraoui, USIP

                13:30-15:30   **Lunch Break**
15:30- 17:00   **Conclusions and Wrap Up**
                Robert Springborg, SOAS, London
                Discussant: Neil Melvin, SIPRI

20:00- 22:00   **Dinner**

Participants

Samir Amghar, EHESS

Talal Atrissi, Lebanese University

Senem Aydin, Free University of Brussels and CEPS

Ester Borrás Andreu, Spanish Foreign Ministry

Amel Boubekeur, EHESS

Ana Echague, FRIDE

Salah Eddin al-Jourshi

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Nathalie Tocci, CEPS

Richard Youngs, FRIDE

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Justice & Home Affairs
Politics & European Institutions
Regulatory Affairs
Trade, Development & Agricultural Policy

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European Climate Platform (ECP)
European Credit Research Institute (ECRI)
European Network of Agricultural & Rural Policy Research Institutes (ENARPRI)
European Network for Better Regulation (ENBR)
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