

# Between 'Engagement' and a 'Values-Led' Approach: Britain and the Muslim Brotherhood from 9/11 to the Arab Spring

By Martyn Frampton & Shiraz Maher

## Introduction

David Cameron became the first Western leader to visit Egypt in the wake of Hosni Mubarak's deposition in February 2011. On that occasion, while promising to help Egyptians create the "building blocks of democracy," Cameron refused to meet with the Muslim Brotherhood. For this, he was censured by a prominent member of the organization's Guidance Bureau, Essam al-Erian, who dismissed Cameron as irrelevant, declaring that "Egypt finished with the British occupation 65 years ago."<sup>1</sup> Subsequent developments brought a shift in British posture. By April 2011, a delegation from the British Foreign Office, led by Consul-General Marie-Louise Archer was reported to have visited the Brotherhood's administrative offices in Alexandria. "Ikhwanweb," the group's English-language website, claimed the meeting flowed from new British efforts to cooperate with the group and alleged that the Relations Coordinator for the UK's Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), Martin Hetringen, had expressed the government's desire to open the door toward full, direct political dialogue with the Brotherhood.<sup>2</sup> The British Ambassador to Egypt, James Watt, subsequently said the group was entitled to take part in the country's transition to democracy and downplayed concerns about the organization.<sup>3</sup>

Britain was not alone in re-examining its position during this period. The French Foreign Minister, Alain Juppe, also signalled that France would be "willing to talk to everyone" in Egypt, including the Brotherhood and even suggested that France had previously been misled by Arab governments about the true nature of the group.<sup>4</sup> In response, the British-based Brotherhood leader, Kemal Helbawi (who has since left the group), expressed satisfaction that western governments now appeared ready to discard "false accusations" against the Brotherhood, while Essam al-Erian confirmed they would talk to western governments without preconditions.<sup>5</sup> Soon after, *Al-Ahram* reported that a spokesman for Baroness Ashton, the European Union's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, had said, when asked about the Muslim Brotherhood, that the EU was "open to dialogue with anyone who is interested in democracy." It was confirmed, too, that she had met with members of the organization during a visit to Egypt shortly after the revolution began.<sup>6</sup> By late summer 2011, the Brotherhood's political leaders had also met with the acting

---

<sup>1</sup> "Middle East crisis: David Cameron arrives in Egypt to push for democracy," *Daily Telegraph*, February 21, 2011; "Muslim Brothers see corruption-free Egypt flourishing," *Al-Arabiya News*, February 23, 2011.

<sup>2</sup> Al-Sayyed Al-Abbadi, "Foreign Office Visits MB in Alexandria," *Ikhwanweb*, April 10, 2011.

<sup>3</sup> "UK Ambassador Downplays Concerns of Growing MB Political Role," *Ikhwanweb*, June 29, 2011,

<sup>4</sup> "France signals new openness on Muslim groups abroad," *Reuters*, April 19, 2011,

<sup>5</sup> "MB welcomes dialogue with the West without preconditions," *Ikhwanweb*, April 22, 2011,

<sup>6</sup> "EU ready to expand dialogue with Muslim Brotherhood," *Jerusalem Post*, May 7, 2011.

Russian ambassador at the party's headquarters in Cairo.<sup>7</sup> Finally, the United States revised its public attitude towards the Brotherhood in June of the same year. Although U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton initially insisted that the United States would only initiate limited contacts with the group, by early 2012 representatives from the State Department, Senate, and White House had met with Brotherhood officials in both Cairo and Washington.<sup>8</sup>

It would, thus, seem that the Arab Spring has precipitated a new era of relations between western countries and the most influential Islamist organization in the Middle East.<sup>9</sup> That this should be the case is perhaps inevitable given that the Muslim Brotherhood has emerged as “the big winner” from events in Egypt. Previously banned for more than half a century, and forced to operate in semi-clandestine fashion, it is now the largest organized political force. In the parliamentary elections that concluded in January 2012, the Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party (FJP) won 235 seats out of a possible 503, taking 37 percent of the vote.<sup>10</sup> Its success comes amidst a broader wave of Islamist success. To the surprise of many, the ultra-conservative Salafist al-Nour party came second with 123 seats, which represents 28 percent of the vote.<sup>11</sup> More recently, the Brotherhood's Mohammed Mursi was elected Egypt's first post-Mubarak president after defeating a former general, Ahmed Shafiq, in the June 2012 run-off.

These developments have channelled Islamist activism away from extra-state actors who operate beyond the system (often embracing violent means), instead placing a premium on civic engagement through existing constitutional and legal forms. Indeed, it is this new reality that poses a real challenge to British and other western governments. Terrorist groups and those operating beyond the law are easily condemned; their excesses serve as a synecdoche by which they are wholly defined. The difficulty comes when such groups transition into the realm of legitimacy conferred by electoral success. An early indication of the problems this can create arose when Hamas won the Palestinian Legislative Elections in Gaza in 2006. The United States and the Quartet on the Middle East all immediately responded by suspending aid to Gaza and refusing to recognize the Hamas government there. Six years later, the results of that policy might be described, at best, as mixed; Hamas remains *in situ* and the Arab-Israeli conflict appears no closer to resolution. Of course, that situation is a

---

<sup>7</sup> “Muslim Brotherhood party leaders meet with Russian diplomat,” *Abram Online*, August 11, 2011,

<sup>8</sup> A. Mohammed, “U.S. shifts to closer contact with Egypt Islamists,” Reuters, June 30, 2011; “U.S. met with Egypt Islamists: U.S. diplomat,” Reuters, October 2, 2011; “US senator John Kerry visits Muslim Brotherhood's FJP headquarters,” *Ahram Online*, December 11, 2011; “Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood hails ties with US,” AFP, January 11, 2012; “Officials from Egypt's Brotherhood at White House,” AFP, April 4, 2012; “Obama Administration says it talked with Muslim Brotherhood to promote small business,” CNS News, April 23, 2012

<sup>9</sup> Here the term Islamist is not used in a pejorative sense, but simply to denote a political movement that seeks to bring about the renewal of Islam throughout society, as an essential step towards instituting an Islamic State. For a comprehensive introduction to this subject see, P. Mandaville, *Global Political Islam* (Routledge: Abingdon, 2007); J. Calvert, *Islamism: A Documentary and Reference Guide* (Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut, 2008), F. Volpi (ed.), *Political Islam: A critical reader* (Routledge: Abingdon, 2011).

<sup>10</sup> “Intikhabaat Musr,” <http://www.elections2011.eg/>. Last accessed June 2, 2012.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

particular one and its lessons are not easily transferable to other Middle Eastern countries. Unlike the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, for example, Hamas is an avowedly terrorist group, publicly committed to the destruction of Israel. This makes it an unpalatable and unacceptable partner. In Egypt, by contrast, the Brotherhood has, at least in its domestic context, long disavowed the use of revolutionary violence.

Yet, this is not to say that serious questions do not remain about how to deal with the Brotherhood—many of which stem from the broader spectrum of its views. The group, for instance, retains a persistent belief in the efficacy of violent jihad as the only way to deal with Israel. There are conflicting signals about what this would mean in terms of how a Brotherhood administration would act once in power. Some Brotherhood spokesmen have promised to abide by the terms of the Egyptian-Israeli Camp David peace treaty; others have professed a more belligerent, even bellicose, set of policies.<sup>12</sup>

This one example epitomizes the new complications that will arise from the Brotherhood's ascendancy in Egypt. The extent of these challenges was apparent during the presidential elections that followed Mubarak's deposition. One campaign rally for the Brotherhood's candidate, Mohammed Mursi, featured the controversial cleric, Safwat Hegazi who told the rally that "millions of martyrs" would "march toward Jerusalem." Hegazi is well known to the British authorities. In 2009 the Home Office included him on a list of 16 foreign hate preachers who would be excluded from entering the United Kingdom on the grounds that his presence in Britain would not be conducive to the public good. He was specifically identified as someone "engaging in unacceptable behaviour by glorifying terrorist violence."<sup>13</sup> Despite his extreme views, he was regarded by the Brotherhood as an important individual to endorse Mursi's (ultimately successful) candidature.

The prospect for very real policy dilemmas is therefore acute, particularly as the volatile and fissiparous miasma that now envelopes the region intensifies. Charting a way forward and deciding on an appropriate policy for dealing with the Brotherhood and other Islamist groups is likely to test even the brightest mandarins of the British state.

### **A Long-running Debate: Democratization and/or Counterterrorism?**

In the British context, discussions over whether or not to engage with the Muslim Brotherhood and other Islamists are far from new. Indeed, Mark Curtis has shown there is a long-standing impulse within the DNA of British foreign policy to view strains of conservative Islam and Islamism as potential allies—whether as part of an effort to preserve imperial influence, or as a way of providing an alternative to more dangerous challenges, such as those posed by Nasserism and communism.<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>12</sup> U.S.: Muslim Brotherhood gave assurances on Egypt-Israel peace treaty, *Haaretz*, January 6, 2012; "Khairat Al-Shater: Fulfilling Egyptian Revolution's Demands Top Muslim Brotherhood Priority," Ikhwanweb, January 28, 2012

<sup>13</sup> *Home Office name hate promoters excluded from the UK*, Home Office press release, May 5, 2009.

<sup>14</sup> M. Curtis, *Secret Affairs: Britain's Collusion with Radical Islam* (Serpent's Tail: London, 2010)

With regards to American policy, Ian Johnson’s work has shown the prominence of similar tendencies there.<sup>15</sup>

More recently, debates over whether or not to pursue engagement have been bound up with broader concerns about how to promote democratic reform in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. The explicit adoption of a “freedom agenda” by the Bush administration from 2003 onwards intensified these arguments. Those advocating dialogue with the Ikhwan have portrayed it as an indispensable partner for western countries—a necessary ingredient of any process of democratization, given their sizable support base in much of that region. Those opposed to such ideas have invariably charged their advocates with being naive about the Brotherhood’s intentions and view it in a far less positive light.

In Britain, the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) has come out particularly strongly in favor of such engagement. A report produced by Joshua Stacher in 2008, *Brothers in Arms? Engaging the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt*, consequently portrayed the group as a “critical element of the Egyptian political landscape.”<sup>16</sup> It argued that groups like it had “proved themselves to be sophisticated and responsible political actors [who] should also be considered as potential partners in processes of regional political development.”<sup>17</sup> According to Stacher, recent policy documents produced by the Brotherhood exhibited “few hints of a reactionary movement bent on religious rule by force”—rather, they were said to show a group “committed to achieving more concrete political reforms.”<sup>18</sup> For this reason, he claimed it was “perhaps more appropriate to view the group’s political beliefs as being based on universal values that are cloaked in an Islamic idiom.”<sup>19</sup> The supposedly pragmatic nature of the Brotherhood’s character led Stacher to conclude that:

Representatives of western governments should seek more opportunities for dialogue with political opposition groups in Egypt, including the Muslim Brotherhood... [they] must be more willing to engage with the Brotherhood on the basis of what it says and how it acts, rather than treating it as an inflexible and dogmatic religious organisation with which there can be no common ground.<sup>20</sup>

The IPPR echoed similar sentiments the following year in a report authored by Alex Glennie. She urged Western policymakers to “fundamentally rethink their political strategy for engaging with Islamist parties and movements.”<sup>21</sup> They were also called to be “more proactive in creating channels for serious and sustained dialogue with Islamists.”<sup>22</sup> Glennie’s premise was that achieving democratic

---

<sup>15</sup> I. Johnson, *A Mosque in Munich: Nazis, the CIA and the Rise of the Muslim Brotherhood in the West* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010)

<sup>16</sup> J. Stacher, *Brothers in Arms? Engaging the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt* (IPPR, 2008)

<sup>17</sup> Ibid

<sup>18</sup> Ibid

<sup>19</sup> Ibid

<sup>20</sup> Ibid

<sup>21</sup> A. Glennie, *Building Bridges, Not Walls: Engaging with political Islamists in the Middle East and North Africa* (IPPR, 2009) pp. 6-7, 44-5.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid

reform in the Middle East/North Africa (MENA) region required “dialogue with some of the existing mainstream Islamist movements there.”<sup>23</sup> In this context, Islamist movements were defined as those “groups that engage or seek to engage in the legal political process of their countries and that have publicly eschewed the use of violence to help realise their objectives at the national level, even where they are discriminated against or repressed.”<sup>24</sup> The Muslim Brotherhood was specifically cited as just such a group.

Elsewhere, a similar line of argument has been advocated by groups such as Forward Thinking and Conflicts Forum. The former has a particular focus on the Arab-Israeli conflict and urges the “participation of those who are regarded as political or religious hardliners” in any peace process.<sup>25</sup> This stance is echoed by Conflicts Forum, a lobby group set up in 2004 under the aegis of directors Mark Perry and Alistair Crooke, who call on the west to “to talk to the Islamists who can influence events,” citing Hamas, Hezbollah and the Muslim Brotherhood as prime examples.<sup>26</sup> Crooke, a former officer in the Secret Intelligence Service (also known as MI6), is a particularly outspoken advocate of engaging with Islamist groups.<sup>27</sup>

The case thus made by proponents of engagement with Islamists is that in order to achieve reform and democratization in the region—and particularly in Egypt—one must do business with the Muslim Brotherhood. The latter is held to be “the only game in town.” Against this, are those who view the Brotherhood as a theocratic movement, fundamentally opposed to democratic pluralism. On their reading, the democratic empowerment of the Brotherhood would mean, to echo Bernard Lewis’s famous formulation, “one man, one vote, one time.”<sup>28</sup>

The period since 9/11 has seen the intertwining of such disputes with other concerns. As Lorenzo Vidino has noted, in the aftermath of that attack, policymakers have been forced to ask whether the Brotherhood should be seen as “fire fighters or arsonists.”<sup>29</sup> On one side are those who feel that because the movement shares certain ideological reference points with the militants of al Qaeda—effectively allowing the Brotherhood to “speak their language”—then it can help insulate potential recruits against the siren call to violent jihad. By contrast, others argue that the Muslim Brotherhood and its message, like that of other reactionary groups, actually serve as a gateway to more radical and

---

<sup>23</sup> Ibid

<sup>24</sup> Ibid

<sup>25</sup> “Middle East Initiative,” Forward Thinking website

<sup>26</sup> “About Conflicts Forum,” Conflicts Forum website

<sup>27</sup> A. Crooke, *Resistance: The Essence of the Islamist Revolution* (Pluto Press: London, 2009). See also, J. Harkin, “Middleman in the Middle East,” *Financial Times*, January 2, 2009.

<sup>28</sup> Lewis's phrase was brought to a wider audience by the then Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Edward Djerejian, in a 1992 speech in Washington D.C. See, Edward Djerejian, Meridian House Speech, Washington, D.C., June 4, 1992.

<sup>29</sup> L. Vidino, *The New Muslim Brotherhood in the West* (Columbia University Press: New York, 2010), pp. 199-221.

violent forms of Islamism.<sup>30</sup> At the heart of this debate is a key question: how should democratic change be initiated in the Middle East/North Africa region while guarding against the threat posed by Islamist terrorists? In Britain, the effort to solve this conundrum was still in flux when it took on added urgency and importance following the July 7, 2005 terrorist attacks on the London transport network—an event more commonly referred to as 7/7.

### **Preventing Extremism: an Imperative for Dialogue?**

A year before the 7/7 attacks, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office had established its Engaging with the Islamic World Group (EIWG). A product of the post-9/11 environment—and the leading role that Britain subsequently played in the “war on terror”—the EIWG undertook a variety of work that aimed to both “increase understanding of and engagement with Muslim countries and communities” and “counter the ideological, and theological underpinnings of the terrorist narrative, in order to prevent radicalisation.” Its mission was to facilitate “constructive engagement with a wide range of groups and opinion.”<sup>31</sup> From 2005 the EIWG took on new salience as a central part of the FCO’s departmental contribution to the government’s “Prevent” initiative.

Prevent is one of the four prongs that makes up the wider “CONTEST” strategy for counter-terrorism in the United Kingdom, first published in 2006 and later revised in 2009.<sup>32</sup> The other three, “pursue,” “protect” and “prepare” are more concerned with what might be termed “hard” power responses to immediate security issues.<sup>33</sup> Prevent, by contrast, represents an attempt by the government to deploy “soft power” in the struggle against violent threats—to interdict the process of radicalization from which terrorism emerges. As such, it has been primarily concerned with engaging Muslim communities, groups, and individuals—both at home and abroad. And within this context, a fundamental issue raised by the creation of Prevent was how far Islamists should be seen as appropriate partners for government.

The character of Prevent has evolved considerably since its inception. In the immediate aftermath of the 2005 bombings, the government turned to traditional, nationally-run gatekeeper organizations, which claimed to speak on behalf of British Muslims. Downing Street convened seven working groups to investigate radicalism in Muslim communities which produced the *Preventing Extremism Together* (PET) report. This was subsequently presented to then Prime Minister Tony Blair as a blueprint for fighting extremism.<sup>34</sup> Yet, many of the working groups were overwhelmingly comprised of individuals from the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB), a group itself accused of holding extremist views due to its links with the Jamaat-i-Islami (JI)—the South Asian equivalent of

---

<sup>30</sup> For a broader perspective on this line of reasoning, see M. Burleigh, *Blood and Rage: A Cultural History of Terrorism* (Harper Press: London, 2008).

<sup>31</sup> “Engaging the Islamic World, International Priorities,” The Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

<sup>32</sup> *Countering International Terrorism: The United Kingdom’s Strategy* (July 2006) Cm:6888

<sup>33</sup> For an analysis of this aspect, see Frank Gregory, “The UK’s Domestic Response to Global Terrorism: Strategy, Structure and Implementation with Special Reference to the Role of the Police,” *Real Instituto Elcano*, June 18, 2007

<sup>34</sup> *Preventing Extremism Together Working Groups August-October 2005* (Home Office, October 2005)

the Muslim Brotherhood. One participant in the Working Groups, Haras Rafiq, resigned in protest. “It was as if they had decided what their findings were before they had begun; people were just going through the motions,” he said.<sup>35</sup>

Rafiq’s voice was just one of a number who were critical of the apparent willingness of some within the British state to work with Islamists on the basis of an imagined “security imperative.” Initially, it was the latter that served to frame the character of Prevent. But 2006 proved to be a decisive year for the debate. In that year, police uncovered an ambitious plot by a group of British Muslims to simultaneously detonate liquid bombs on several transatlantic aircraft flying from London to the United States. The scale of the conspiracy was unprecedented, even threatening to eclipse the destruction of 9/11. More significant for this article, was the reaction of the government’s erstwhile allies in the MCB; for having failed to deliver on promises made in the PET report, the MCB blamed British and U.S. foreign policy as the primary motivation behind the plot. In the eyes of the Prime Minister and others within Cabinet this was a step too far. The MCB was felt to be legitimizing terrorism, drawing moral equivalences, while failing to directly confront the radicalization of some young British men. This raised fresh and troubling concerns about its suitability as a partnership organization. Subsequently, therefore, the government sought to rebalance its relationship with groups like the MCB by empowering alternative organizations at the grassroots. The new mantra in Whitehall was that it would only work with groups and individuals that accepted a set of “non-negotiable values.”<sup>36</sup> Greater attention was also directed to local initiatives through schemes such as the Preventing Violent Extremism Pathfinder Fund (PVE) which was overseen by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG).<sup>37</sup>

Despite this, anxieties persisted about the manner in which Prevent was operating.<sup>38</sup> Particular unease concerned the question of which groups were being engaged with and funded at the local level.<sup>39</sup> Again, the pertinence of all this is that government resources appeared to be being channelled towards groups ideologically inspired by—or linked by key individuals to—the Muslim Brotherhood. Among the most important in the British domestic context are the Muslim Association of Britain (MAB) and its offshoots, the British Muslim Initiative (BMI), and the Cordoba Foundation.

The MAB was founded by the then European spokesman for the Muslim Brotherhood, Kemal Helbawi, in 1997 and has been described, both by sympathetic observers and in parliament as a

---

<sup>35</sup> James Brandon, “The UK’s Experience in Counter-Radicalization,” *CTC Sentinel* (April, 2008)

<sup>36</sup> T. Helm, “Back British values or lose grants, Kelly tells Muslim groups,” *Daily Telegraph*, October 12, 2006,

<sup>37</sup> *Preventing Violent Extremism – winning hearts and minds*; and *The Prevent Strategy: A Guide for Local Partners in England* (April, 2007); *The Prevent Strategy: A Guide for Local Partners in England, stopping people becoming or supporting terrorists and violent extremists* (May, 2008) Ref: 288324

<sup>38</sup> *House of Commons Communities and Local Government Committee, Preventing Violent Extremism, Sixth Report of Session 2009-10* (March, 2010) HC:65

<sup>39</sup> *Council Spending Uncovered II: No. 5: The Prevent Strategy*, (Taxpayers Alliance, 2009); S. Maher and M. Frampton, *Choosing our friends wisely: Criteria for engagement with Muslim groups* (Policy Exchange, 2009)

“Muslim Brotherhood group.”<sup>40</sup> This perception was strengthened by the fact that leading MAB members have included Azzam Tamimi, Mohammed Sawalha and Anas al-Tikriti. Tamimi has travelled internationally as a “special envoy” of Hamas and is known for his defence of the group, while Sawalha has been described in American court documents—and by the BBC—as a former “Hamas leader in the West Bank” until the mid-1990s.<sup>41</sup> After playing a central role in the MAB, Sawalha later created the British Muslim Initiative (BMI) in 2006. Anas al-Tikriti was closely involved with this initiative and is himself a former chairman of the MAB.<sup>42</sup> In 2005 he also founded the Cordoba Foundation, ostensibly to “promote dialogue” between “the West and the Muslim world.”<sup>43</sup>

The exact nature of the relationship between these different groups is unclear.<sup>44</sup> Tikriti has described the MAB and the BMI (and his own position within them), in the following terms:

The MAB is a grassroots organisation established almost 11 years ago, and I had the honour of being amongst its founding members. I am a member of MAB and was its president in 2004, although I no longer hold a leading post within it. BMI is a political organisation founded by a group of activists in 2006. It does not have a membership, nor does it cover aspects of a British Muslim's life beyond politics (such as MAB does). I am one of the founding members, and currently spokesman for BMI.<sup>45</sup>

This is not to say, however, that groups such as the BMI and the MAB follow orders from an Islamist equivalent of the Comintern. Indeed, the MAB has attempted to show some independence from the Muslim Brotherhood abroad. During his tenure as President, Anas al-Tikriti told the *Times*:

[The] MAB reserves the right to be proud of the humane notions and principles of the Muslim Brotherhood, who has proven to be an inspiration to Muslims, Arab and otherwise for many

---

<sup>40</sup> For Helbawy's role, see <http://www.khelbawy.com/about.html>. On the MAB, see *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, December 18, 2003, Column 1763; Peter Bergen and Paul Cruikshank, “The Unravelling: the jihadist revolt against Al Qaeda” *The New Republic*, June 11, 2008

<sup>41</sup> For Tamimi, see *BERNAMA* Malaysian News Agency, June 27, 2006. Also see Mohammed Muslih, *The Foreign Policy of Hamas*, Council on Foreign Relations (New York, 1999) p.14; For Sawalha, see *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, December 18, 2003, Column 1763

<sup>42</sup> S. Maher and M. Frampton, *Choosing our friends wisely: Criteria for engagement with Muslim groups* (Policy Exchange, 2009)

<sup>43</sup> “*The Cordoba Foundation – About us*,” [www.thecordobafoundation.com](http://www.thecordobafoundation.com)

<sup>44</sup> A recent academic study has stated: “Some saw the latter as a wholly new organisation, not warmly regarded by MAB's leadership. For others, BMI is effectively—though not officially—a branch of MAB, its principal members drawn from the membership and former leadership of that organisation,” in Richard Phillips, “Standing together: the Muslim Association of Britain and the anti-war movement” in *Race & Class*, Vol. 50, No. 2 (2008), p. 109

<sup>45</sup> A. Al-Tikriti, “Live Dialogue,” *IslamOnline*, May 5, 2008



decades. We also reserve the right to disagree with or divert from the opinion and line of the Muslim Brotherhood, or any other organization, Muslim or otherwise on any issue at hand.<sup>46</sup>

Yet, it is clear that groups like the MAB consider themselves in step with a broader movement which adheres to an Islamist ideology.

Within the context of Prevent and PVE initiatives, each of these organizations was a recipient of official funding. Thus, in 2006-7, the Cordoba Foundation was allocated £34,000 by Tower Hamlets local authority for activities meant to counter extremism (though part of this was later withdrawn after objections were raised).<sup>47</sup> In 2006, meanwhile, a Mosque and Imams National Advisory Board (MINAB) was created with the involvement of four stakeholder organizations—of which the MAB was one. The government allocated it £75,600 in 2007-8 and a further £116,000 in 2008-9.<sup>48</sup>

In the British context, it is therefore clear that those close to the Brotherhood—those who articulate a similar worldview and are sympathetic to its aims—have clearly benefitted from Prevent funds. The same is true abroad.

### **The Role of the FCO: Blurring the Foreign and the Domestic**

Since 2006, the Foreign Office has played a key role in Prevent as part of its “strategic priorities.” The role of the EIWG has already been noted. More broadly, the government has listed the activities of the FCO in this sphere as comprising:

- The “empowering voices of mainstream Islam” road show, which involves large events where young British Muslims can encounter Muslim scholars tackling extremist misinterpretations of Islam;
- The “Muslims of Europe” conference: bringing together key Western and Muslim-world Muslim thinkers and scholars, for a strong theological declaration rejecting extremism and terrorism, in Istanbul in June 2006;
- Developing contacts with high-profile, influential figures in the Muslim world; and
- An FCO foreign policy awareness and outreach programme, involving... diplomatic activity with key international partners and international organisations to reach agreement on the nature and dangers of radicalisation and frame common approaches to address it.<sup>49</sup>

---

<sup>46</sup> See, David Toube, “Reject the support of Islamists,” *Jewish Chronicle*, April 18, 2008; “MAB responds to vile attack,” *Islamic Human Rights Commission*, <http://www.ihrc.org.uk/show.php?id=1216>.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> *Council Spending Uncovered II: No. 5: The Prevent Strategy* (Taxpayers Alliance, 2009)

<sup>49</sup> Government Response to the Intelligence and Security Committee’s Report into the London Terrorist Attacks on July 7, 2005 (May 2006), Cm 6786.

Through these initiatives, the FCO dispensed a substantial amount of Prevent funding. For example, in 2008-9 it allocated £127,740 to its own Counter-Terrorism Department for the purpose of “promoting moderate Islam.” The same department also received £220,853 for a project known as “projecting British Islam” and a further £4,588 for “Prevent inward media visits.”<sup>50</sup>

One of the key initiatives in this regard was the Radical Middle Way (RMW) whose stated aims included “empowering voices of mainstream Islam.” As described above, it primarily sought to achieve this through a series of road shows and was generously supported by government sponsorship.<sup>51</sup> The creation of the RMW was one of the key recommendations to emerge from the Preventing Extremism Together report and was launched in late 2005 with support from the Home Office, FCO and DCLG.<sup>52</sup> Several Muslim organizations also backed its launch including *Q-News*, the Young Muslim Organisation (YMO) and the Federation of Islamic Student Societies (FOSIS).<sup>53</sup> Parliamentary questions have revealed that between February 2006 and March 2007, the RMW received £412,129 from the FCO and Home Office; in 2007-8 it received a further £275,000.<sup>54</sup> In addition the RMW enjoyed support from local authorities, including Southwark which gave it £21,563 in 2007-8, and Tower Hamlets which awarded it £6000.<sup>55</sup>

A series of internal FCO documents leaked to the journalist Martin Bright suggested that this coalition was assembled at the explicit request of EIWG officials in the FCO.<sup>56</sup> The guiding impulse for the scheme was the idea that “influential international and national mainstream scholars and thinkers” should be used to “theologically and intellectually tackle extremist interpretations of Islam.”<sup>57</sup> In its incipient phases, RMW activity was concentrated in areas thought to be especially vulnerable to Islamist extremism within Britain including: London, Birmingham, Bradford, Manchester, Kirklees, Leicester, and Luton. However, the RMW was also tasked with speaking to Muslim communities abroad to promote a better image of the United Kingdom. FCO documents reveal that it was in this context that senior civil servants attempted to identify “leading personalities in the Muslim world” including “figures with transnational religious influence.”<sup>58</sup> Figures from the Muslim Brotherhood were among those identified as just such figures.<sup>59</sup> As a result, Kemal

---

<sup>50</sup> Council Spending Uncovered II: No. 5: The Prevent Strategy (Taxpayers Alliance, 2009)

<sup>51</sup> For more on the RMW see *Preventing Violent Extremism: Winning Hearts and Minds* (April 2007); *Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Departmental Report 1 April 2006 – 31 March 2007* (May 2007) Cm 7099.

<sup>52</sup> *Preventing Extremism Together: Working Group Report* (August-October 2005)

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>54</sup> *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, November 27, 2007, Column 347W

<sup>55</sup> *Council Spending Uncovered II: No. 5: The Prevent Strategy*, (Taxpayers Alliance, 2009)

<sup>56</sup> “Subject: UK NGO Selection for Roadshow Project” (August 16, 2005) Document 12 in M. Bright, *When progressives treat with reactionaries: The British State’s flirtation with radical Islamism* (Policy Exchange, 2006)

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>59</sup> “Who’s Who in the Umma: leading personalities in the Muslim world,” [FCO document in possession of authors as result of Freedom of Information Request]

Helbawi—the onetime spokesman for the Muslim Brotherhood in the West—was invited to address an RMW event in 2009.<sup>60</sup>

The manner in which RMW has been run is indicative of the way in which the exigencies of Prevent have led some within government to blur the boundaries between the domestic and the foreign. In a globalized world where radical Islamists have imagined the existence of a transnational *Ummah*, many officials came to believe that the British state’s response should be equally comprehensive in character. In the battle to combat violent extremism, it is clear that some officials have seen so-called “moderate” Islamist groups, such as the Muslim Brotherhood, as constituting ideal partners. As an FCO document seen by the authors (which is undated, but which was produced some time between July 2004 and August 2006), states:

Not only does HMG [Her Majesty’s Government] now recognise that engagement with Islamic countries is of high strategic importance, but it acknowledges that work with Islamists—those who base politics on Islamic principles—is a key element to this engagement... We must first identify who we are talking about: it is easy to point to the self-proclaimed Islamist parties which operate in the more open political systems... but what about the Islamist media... intellectuals (e.g. Qatar-based Yusuf al-Qaradawi) and religious institutions... These too play a political role.<sup>61</sup>

The scholar mentioned here, Yusuf al-Qaradawi, has been the subject of deep controversy in Britain since 2004. A former member of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, he was invited to assume the position of its General Guide (providing overall spiritual leadership) on at least two occasions—although he refused on both occasions, preferring instead to maintain an independent powerbase while retaining immense influence within the Brotherhood. Indeed, he enjoys such prominence that Bettina Gräf and Jakob Skovgaard-Petersen have labelled him a “phenomenon” and a “global Mufti.”<sup>62</sup> Much of his international stature has been built from Qatar where he has lived in exile since the 1960s, and where he enjoys relative freedom to express his views freely. As a result, Qaradawi has produced many publications and hosts a popular television show, *Shariah and Life*, on al-Jazeera.

Qaradawi visited London in July 2004 for a meeting of the European Council for Fatwa Research (ECFR) and to launch the International Union of Muslim Scholars (IUMS)—both of which he chaired. More significantly, he was also invited to attend a reception at City Hall by then Mayor, Ken Livingstone. This, despite the fact that Qaradawi was, at that time, banned from entering the United States because of fatwas he had issued sanctioning Palestinian suicide bombing. Clearly, such views did not trouble Livingstone. Nor were they considered an obstacle to closer relations with the Sheikh by others within Whitehall. On the contrary, some British officials were only too willing to

---

<sup>60</sup> For more on Helbawi see above p. XX

<sup>61</sup> Political Islam—REDACTED (Discussion on Projects), [FCO document in possession of authors as result of Freedom of Information Request]

<sup>62</sup> Bettina Gräf and Jakob Skovgaard-Petersen, *The Global Mufti: The Phenomenon of Yusuf al-Qaradawi* (London, 2009).

entertain Qaradawi on the basis of his assumed influence among British Muslims. A letter from the Head of the Middle East Department at the FCO to the Home Office in July 2004 stated, “Qaradawi has some controversial opinions, but none that are particularly unusual or exceptional amongst Muslims.”<sup>63</sup> The author also noted that Qaradawi had condemned al Qaeda and been critical of hard-line Taliban injunctions. And while the letter did acknowledge that the Sheikh had “made clear his support” for suicide bombing in Israel, and resistance in Iraq, it nonetheless concluded that Qaradawi was “regarded by most as a pragmatic conservative in the classic Muslim Brotherhood mould rather than a fanatic or extremist.”<sup>64</sup> It was on the basis of views such as this, then, that the FCO were prepared to support his entry into the country.

It is clear that even though the FCO was fully aware of Qaradawi’s views, it did not regard them as inherently problematic. An e-mail sent by FCO officials after Qaradawi’s 2004 visit displays an awareness of the fact that he believed America had invaded Iraq “by force and without legitimacy, and that this occupation can and should legitimately be resisted.” However, it was also suggested that Qaradawi should not be seen in the same way as al Qaeda supporters because he preferred “properly sanctioned means i.e. religiously sanctioned and controlled and according to the rules of war.” The author went on to advise his FCO counterparts that “while this is an unwelcome view to us, it is not a particularly radical one and in fact reflects the broad view of most Muslims in the region.”<sup>65</sup> In fact, not only was it argued that the British state should engage with Qaradawi despite his views—but that failing to do so would be counterproductive. Marginalizing Qaradawi, it was said, would “alienate significant and influential members of the global Muslim community” and “have a negative impact on our relations with British Muslim communities,” the e-mail cautioned.<sup>66</sup>

Indeed, for some sections of the British state, *prima facie* concerns about Qaradawi’s views on certain issues merely enhanced his suitability as a possible partner. Ian Blair, who was Chief Constable of the Metropolitan Police at the time, publicly confirmed in 2006 that Qaradawi held “views on the Palestinian intifada that probably would not be very acceptable... [and] has views about the role of women in Islamic society, which are not very acceptable either.” However, Blair went on to state that he overlooked these considerations because Qaradawi could “command an audience of 50,000 young people at the drop of a hat.” A premium was therefore placed on engagement. For Blair, the equation and its answer were simple: “Are you going to talk to him or not? ... our view is, ‘Yes we

---

<sup>63</sup> “Shaykh Yusuf al-Qaradawi” (July 14, 2005) Document 6 in M. Bright, *When progressives treat with reactionaries: The British State’s flirtation with radical Islamism* (Policy Exchange, 2006).

<sup>64</sup> “Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi,” Letter from Head of Middle East Department to “Unnamed,” Home Office, July 8, 2004 [FCO document in possession of authors as result of Freedom of Information Request]

<sup>65</sup> E-mail to Simon Lovett, November 2, 2004. For more on FCO awareness of Qaradawi’s views see “Qaradawi – RESTRICTED” E-mail, August 30, 2005 – on his legitimization of “resistance against occupation” and his assertion that it was a “religious duty” for Muslims to “defend their land, using all means available to them, including suicide operations.” [FCO document in possession of authors as result of Freedom of Information Request]

<sup>66</sup> “Shaykh Yusuf al-Qaradawi” (July 14, 2005) Document 6 in M. Bright, *When progressives treat with reactionaries: The British State’s flirtation with radical Islamism* (Policy Exchange, 2006).

are going to talk to him however difficult that becomes.”<sup>67</sup> The Muslim Contact Unit, which had been set up by Metropolitan Police Special Branch, went even further. In a statement circulated to the FCO, they described Qaradawi as having “a positive Muslim community impact in the fight against Al Qaida [sic] propaganda in the UK. His support for Palestinian suicide bombers adds credibility to his condemnation of Al Qaida in those sections of the community most susceptible to the blandishments of Al Qaida terrorist propaganda.”<sup>68</sup>

More generally, it is clear that Qaradawi continued to be seen as a positive influence by many within British officialdom.<sup>69</sup> In March 2006, the FCO organized a meeting between the Sheikh and a delegation of British Muslims that it took to Qatar.<sup>70</sup> During that gathering Qaradawi was said to have encouraged them to integrate into British society.<sup>71</sup> Later that year he was invited to attend a conference on Muslims in Europe, which was organized and paid for by the FCO and held in Istanbul.<sup>72</sup> Billed as a gathering of “many of Europe’s most eminent Muslim scholars and thinkers,” together with their “international counterparts,” the conference produced a “unique declaration urging European Muslims to promote active citizenship and social harmony.”<sup>73</sup>

In this respect, the Foreign Office’s relationship with Qaradawi typified the way in which the challenges of the “war on terror” era were seen as traversing the border between domestic and foreign issues. Qaradawi was felt to be making a positive contribution to the conduct of both British foreign policy and domestic counterterrorism efforts. For this reason, engagement was deemed legitimate and necessary. In this respect, the very existence of a relationship with a man often still described as a spiritual guide for the Muslim Brotherhood was emblematic of the broader evolution in policy in the last decade.

### **Embracing Engagement: Reaching out to the Muslim Brotherhood**

In 2006 when Michael Gove MP was Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, he asked Kim Howells, then Middle East Minister, about the nature of the British government’s relationship with the Muslim Brotherhood. Howells replied that there had been “occasional contact” with members of group. He also noted that officials had “met representatives of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan,

---

<sup>67</sup> “Connecting Counter-Terrorism and Community Policy,” Remarks by Sir Ian Blair, Citizens Crime Commission of New York (April, 2006); C. Caldwell, “After Londonistan,” *New York Times*, June 25, 2006.

<sup>68</sup> Undated “Annex: Qaradawi Quotes” [FCO document in possession of authors as result of Freedom of Information Request]. It is clear from Bright, *When Progressives Treat with Reactionaries*, that it is the annex to Mockbul Ali’s letter of July 14, 2005 (Document 6).

<sup>69</sup> For example, Qaradawi’s December 2005 appeal for Iraq’s Sunni minority to “participate fully” in the country’s approaching parliamentary elections was described by at least one FCO official as “helpful and timely.” See “Iraq: Qaradawi calls for Sunni participation in the elections,” *eGram*, December 4, 2005.

<sup>70</sup> “UK Muslims Visit to Qatar – Programme,” FCO, March 6, 2006.

<sup>71</sup> S. Collis, “Qatar: UK Muslims Delegation meeting with Qaradawi,” *eGram*, March 7, 2006.

<sup>72</sup> *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, July 20, 2006, Column 630W; *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, July 25, 2006, c1282W

<sup>73</sup> “Press Release: Muslims of Europe Conference,” British Embassy Riyadh, July 10, 2006.

Kuwait, and Lebanon” and had “limited contact with members of the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood, whose membership is in exile in London.”<sup>74</sup>

The existence of such contacts came as no surprise. During an extensive interview with *Asbarq al-Awsat*, a London-based Arabic newspaper, Kemal Helbawi confirmed that dialogue between the British government and the Brotherhood had been a constant feature of state policy. Indeed, Helbawi even claimed that during the mid-1990s, when Hosni Mubarak launched a crackdown on Egyptian Islamist groups, the British government had asked him if he required personal protection. In that event, he refused. Although the veracity of this particular claim may be difficult to verify, there is evidence to support the general proposition that UK officials actively courted and cultivated a relationship with the Muslim Brotherhood during much of the last decade.

In 2005 a series of documents from the Foreign Office were leaked to Martin Bright, then political editor of the *New Statesman*, and subsequently published by the think tank Policy Exchange. They revealed that prior to 2002 the Foreign Office had maintained “infrequent working-level (second secretary) contact with Muslim Brotherhood members of parliament.” The documents conceded that this approach had been “noticed by the Egyptian authorities who made clear their displeasure,” prompting the Foreign Office to downscale its engagement with the Brotherhood to such a level that it had “only occasional contacts with MB [Muslim Brotherhood] members including one or two contacts with parliamentarians and random unplanned encounters.”<sup>75</sup> This is confirmed by internal Foreign Office correspondence released under the Freedom of Information Act which reveals that although contact was scaled back, it nonetheless continued “up until June 2003.” Yet, although the FCO was ostensibly reducing the extent of its contact with the Brotherhood, the correspondence reveals that “contacts were not restricted to elected PA [People’s Assembly] members.” Instead, members of the Foreign Office also “met the Supreme Guide of the time, Ma’moun al-Hodeibi, and other prominent MB activists, such as Essam al-Aryan [sic], none of whom were in the PA.”<sup>76</sup>

Furthermore, the suspension of contact that finally occurred in 2003 did not long endure. Documents published by Policy Exchange reveal that there were renewed calls within the FCO to engage with political Islam and the Muslim Brotherhood by mid-2005. Those favouring re-engagement were given added impetus following a private conference in Paris, which had been convened earlier that year. There, the tone for proceedings was set by Olivier Roy, a French academic, who argued that “previous western policy towards Islamists—containment and

---

<sup>74</sup> *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, May 12, 2006, Column 627W; *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, May 23, 2006: Column 1325

<sup>75</sup> “Egypt: Contacts with the Muslim Brotherhood” (January 17, 2006) Document 4 in M. Bright, *When progressives treat with reactionaries: The British State’s flirtation with radical Islamism* (Policy Exchange, 2006); See also “Egypt: Contacts with the Muslim Brotherhood,” Memorandum to Dr. Howells, January 17, 2006 [FCO document in possession of authors as result of Freedom of Information Request]; and, M. Bright, “Talking to terrorists,” *New Statesman*, February 20, 2006.

<sup>76</sup> Correspondence, January 23, 2006 [FCO document in possession of authors as result of Freedom of Information Request]

repression—had been a failure.” Instead, he counselled participants to “consider how to integrate Islamists.” His advice found a sympathetic audience among the Foreign Office mandarins present. Internal documents reveal that they favoured “taking engagement forward,” claiming that “in many MENA countries Islamist movements form the principal structured opposition.” Such beliefs gave rise to more than just discursive meetings. A more promiscuous and active embrace of Islamism followed. In fact, the suggestion was made that because “Islamist groups are often less corrupt than the generality of the societies in which they operate, consideration might be given to channelling aid resources through them.”<sup>77</sup>

This sanguine approach was not shared by all. Within days of the meeting Sir Derek Plumbly, then the British Ambassador to Egypt, raised concerns. Acknowledging that “it is desirable to talk to Islamists if we can,” he warned “there will be relatively few contexts in which we are able significantly to influence the Islamists’ agenda.” Plumbly argued against the “tendency for us to be drawn towards engagement for its own sake; to confuse ‘engaging with the Islamic world’ with ‘engaging with Islamism’; and to play down the very real downsides for us in terms of the Islamists’ likely foreign and social policies, should they actually achieve power in countries such as Egypt.” In Plumbly’s view it was better for the Foreign Office to work towards other objectives—such as democratic reform and respect for the rule of law and human rights. The Brotherhood and other Islamist groups, he reasoned, should only be engaged through specific initiatives focused around those clear aims, rather than as part of an effort to engage with political Islam simply as a “matter of principle.”<sup>78</sup>

The Ambassador’s advice went unheeded. A memorandum prepared for Kim Howells in January 2006 confirmed a decisive shift in policy. It described an increase in “the frequency of working-level contacts with Muslim Brotherhood parliamentarians (who do not advocate violence), particularly those who are members of parliamentary committees.” Indeed, the FCO was now so convinced of the virtues of engaging the Brotherhood that it advised the government to “encourage other countries to adopt a similar policy of engagement, including the EU and US.” This may have had some sway in Washington, where it was observed “The US are [is?] reviewing their position on contacts with the MB, having previously refused any contact.”<sup>79</sup>

The rationale for the shift in policy seemed clear. Egyptian parliamentary elections held in late 2005 were said to have shown the extent of popular support for the Muslim Brotherhood. Candidates from the movement had stood as independents, winning 88 seats in the People’s Assembly—equivalent to about 20 percent of all available seats (by contrast, the ruling National Democratic

---

<sup>77</sup> A. McKee, “Engaging with Islamists in the Arab World: Paris Round-Table – 1 June,” to F. Guy, June 7, 2005 [FCO document in possession of authors as result of Freedom of Information Request]

<sup>78</sup> “Engaging with Islamists” Sir Derek Plumbly, to John Sawers, Director General (Political), FCO, (June 23, 2005), Document 2 in M. Bright, *When progressives treat with reactionaries: The British State’s flirtation with radical Islamism* (Policy Exchange, 2006)

<sup>79</sup> Significantly, both of these sections were redacted from the Freedom of Information version, but can be seen in the version in Bright, as “Document 4.”

Party (NDP) had taken approximately 70 percent of the seats), a result which suggested the Muslim Brotherhood was growing in influence.<sup>80</sup> That was the prevailing attitude within the Foreign Office at the time. “Political Islamist groups and parties continue to strengthen,” the Directorate of Strategy and Information observed. “Political repression and economic limitations ha[d] created popular grievances which Islamists, which their mosque networks and deep roots within populations, ha[d] been well placed to respond to.” It was also noted that social welfare programs offered by groups like the Brotherhood had, in the eyes of the public, “given them a degree of legitimacy.”<sup>81</sup> Another FCO memorandum declared that Islamists represented “the only viable opposition” in Egypt.<sup>82</sup>

Many within the British Foreign Office now appeared to be convinced. According to one official, the Muslim Brotherhood constituted “a political force” with whom “it is no longer possible for us to maintain a policy of minimal contact.” The British embassy in Cairo was advised that in order to promote democracy it should “engage with the largest *and most effective* opposition group.”<sup>83</sup> The same memorandum again reiterated the idea that engaging with these groups would allow western governments to gain influence and purchase over them:

Engaging with movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood will help increase our understanding of ‘political Islam’ generally, as well as in the specific Egyptian context... Incremental enhancement of contacts may help in discouraging radicalisation. Interacting with ‘political Islam’ is an important element of our Engaging with the Islamic World strategy and we should be trying to influence these groups.<sup>84</sup>

This advice was widely supported by a number of different departments within the FCO including the Arab-Israel North Africa Group (AINAG), the British Embassy in Cairo, and the aforementioned EIWG. Their collective assessment was that the Brotherhood should not be considered a terrorist organization although “The intellectual, political and geographical milieu [sic] which the MB inhabits means [sic] that there will always be members who move to more violent activity, even terrorism, in other organisations.”<sup>85</sup>

---

<sup>80</sup> For FCO analysis of the elections, see memorandum, “Democracy and freedom, chapter 9” [FCO document in possession of authors as result of Freedom of Information Request]

<sup>81</sup> Directorate of Strategy and Information, FCO, “Democratic Reform in the Middle East and North Africa,” March 31, 2006 [FCO document in possession of authors as result of Freedom of Information Request]

<sup>82</sup> “Reform in the Arab World: Could the UK be doing more?” [FCO document in possession of authors as result of Freedom of Information Request]

<sup>83</sup> “Shaykh Yusuf al-Qaradawi” (July 14, 2005) Document 4 in M. Bright, *When progressives treat with reactionaries: The British State’s flirtation with radical Islamism* (Policy Exchange, 2006). Notably, these words were redacted from the version of the document released to the authors under a Freedom of Information Act request.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>85</sup> A. McKee to M. Nevin (EIWG), “Egypt: The Muslim Brotherhood—Terrorists?” July 19, 2005 [FCO document in possession of authors as result of Freedom of Information Request]



Kim Howells and the then Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw, agreed with these recommendations and authorized greater levels of contact.<sup>86</sup> A memorandum from February 2006 confirmed a new policy of “outreach to moderate Islamists, including the Muslim Brotherhood.”<sup>87</sup> The counterterrorism impetus behind these efforts was confirmed in a letter sent by Sir Derek Plumbly to Peter Gooderham, who led the MENA department in the FCO, where he specifically referred to “developing contacts with the Muslim Brotherhood in line with our new policy.”<sup>88</sup> That policy was the furthering of Prevent objectives.

As a result, the policy of engagement was taken forward—albeit cautiously, for fear of damaging relations with Mubarak’s administration.<sup>89</sup> To guard against accusations of impropriety diplomats were told “to engage only with MB parliamentarians, in their parliamentary capacity.”<sup>90</sup> Weeks after the FCO initiated this policy, the Home Secretary, Charles Clarke, had a meeting with his Egyptian counterpart from the Interior Ministry, General Habib al-Adli. In an effort to play down the change in policy, Clarke told him “the British Government was not seeking to encourage the MB but it was our standard policy to have contact, when appropriate, with all elements of a Parliament.”<sup>91</sup>

However, it seems clear that the policy was actually much more expansive than Clarke had suggested. A diplomat from the British embassy attended a meeting of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Egyptian Parliament in May 2006, whose members included Youssri Ta’leeb, a member of the Muslim Brotherhood. Although the meeting was critical about aspects of British foreign policy, it was reported that “the vibes—even from the MB... were welcoming and friendly.”<sup>92</sup> British officials also discussed the issue of constitutional reform in Egypt with two parliamentary members of the Brotherhood later that year.<sup>93</sup>

Anxiety within Mubarak’s government grew. Already unhappy with electoral gains secured by the Brotherhood, the nature of these increased contacts upset the Egyptian regime further. In the months that followed it cracked down heavily on the movement, in what the group itself believed

---

<sup>86</sup> “Egypt: Contacts with the Muslim Brotherhood,” January 19, 2006; “Egypt: Contacts with the Muslim Brotherhood,” AINAG, January 23, 2006. [FCO document in possession of authors as result of Freedom of Information Request]

<sup>87</sup> Untitled document, February 13, 2006. See also, Engaging with the Islamic World Group, “Untitled document,” April 5, 2006 [FCO document in possession of authors as result of Freedom of Information Request]

<sup>88</sup> Sir Derek Plumbly, Cairo Letter to Peter Gooderham, February 8, 2006. [FCO document in possession of authors as result of Freedom of Information Request]

<sup>89</sup> “Shaykh Yusuf al-Qaradawi” (July 14, 2005) Document 4 in M. Bright, *When progressives treat with reactionaries: The British State’s flirtation with radical Islamism* (Policy Exchange, 2006).

<sup>90</sup> Middle East and North Africa Research Group/British Embassy, Cairo, “Egypt: The Risks Ahead,” August 2006 [FCO document in possession of authors as result of Freedom of Information Request].

<sup>91</sup> Note of Meeting between Home Secretary and General Habib Al-Adli, Egyptian Interior Minister, February 22, 2006. [FCO document in possession of authors as result of Freedom of Information Request]

<sup>92</sup> “Egypt: Parliamentary Foreign Relations Committee,” Cairo to London, May 17, 2006. [FCO document in possession of authors as result of Freedom of Information Request]

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

was the worst wave of repression against it for more than a decade. Several hundred Muslim Brothers, including a number of leadership figures such as Essam El-Erian and Mohammed Mursi—now Egypt’s President—were imprisoned.<sup>94</sup> Pressure on the group continued throughout 2006 and 2007.<sup>95</sup> Notwithstanding this, the British embassy in Cairo concluded that, “despite repression the Muslim Brotherhood is becoming more confident and strident.”<sup>96</sup> Privately, the British embassy also urged the Egyptian government to allow “space for opposition” and stressed “the danger of driving the MBs [Muslim Brothers] underground.”<sup>97</sup>

This burgeoning relationship was put to the test during Hezbollah’s war with Israel during summer 2006. The Brotherhood enthusiastically backed Hezbollah in the conflict, describing the capture of Israeli soldiers as a “heroic act.”<sup>98</sup> The Lebanese people were also urged to rally behind Hezbollah, offering the movement whatever support they could. Despite this, the notion that the Brotherhood was a group with whom the British government could—and indeed should—do business continued to gather momentum. Indeed, the following year, the House of Commons Select Committee on Foreign Affairs effectively reaffirmed the premise on which the government’s engagement strategy was based. “As long as the Muslim Brotherhood expresses a commitment to the democratic process and non-violence” it stated, “we recommend that the British Government should engage with it and seek to influence its members.”<sup>99</sup> Although the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Mark Malloch Brown, later told the Egyptian Foreign Minister that Britain would only deal with “legitimate entities”—the policy of engaging the Brotherhood was far from abandoned. Rather, it endured—though not without generating opposition.

### **Toward a Values-Led Approach**

The strategy of engaging with Islamism—whether at home or abroad, whether under the auspices of Prevent or a pro-democratization agenda—was controversial. Criticism came from both sides of the political spectrum. Within the Labour government that held office until 2010, objections were raised by the Prime Minister himself as well as several other Ministers including Ruth Kelly, Hazel Blears,

---

<sup>94</sup> Ibid. See also, Egypt: PM/Ministerial Visit to UK,” Cairo to London, March 13, 2006; “Egypt: Uncertain Prospects for Political Reforms,” Cairo to London, March 30, 2006 [FCO documents in possession of authors as result of Freedom of Information Request].

<sup>95</sup> See, for example: “Brotherhood mass arrests,” Cairo Internal Minuting, February 15, 2007; “Human Rights,” Cairo to London, February 26, 2007; “A New Constitution,” Cairo to London, March 21, 2007; “Shura Council Elections,” Cairo to London, May 17, 2007; “Human Rights—An Overview,” Cairo to London, June 11, 2007 [FCO documents in possession of authors as result of Freedom of Information Request].

<sup>96</sup> “Secretary of State’s visit to Egypt: Scene setter,” Cairo to London, August 31, 2008. [FCO document in possession of authors as result of Freedom of Information Request]

<sup>97</sup> Plumbly, “The Government bears down on the Muslim Brothers,” Cairo to London, January 23, 2007. [FCO document in possession of authors as result of Freedom of Information Request]

<sup>98</sup> “Gaza/Lebanon/Israel: Egypt,” Cairo to London, July 16, 2006. [FCO document in possession of authors as result of Freedom of Information Request.]

<sup>99</sup> *House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, Global Security: The Middle East, Eighth Report of Session 2006–07* (July 2007) HC363

and Denis MacShane. Journalists considered on the left, such as Martin Bright and Nick Cohen, were also vociferous in arguing against the cultivation of unfettered relationships with Islamists. Their view was that British policy, on all fronts, should greater reflect British values when countering ideological and extremist threats.

The growing influence of such views can be seen in the aforementioned shift in the character of the government's Prevent strategy that took place after 2006. Symptomatic of this was the then Home Secretary Jacqui Smith's decision to increase the powers of border security agents in early 2008, in order to exclude extremists. One notable casualty of this decision was Yusuf al-Qaradawi, who was now barred from entering the country—a move he later attributed to the influence of “Zionist” and “neo-conservative” lobbies.<sup>100</sup> By refusing entry, Smith was effectively expressing her preference for a more robust values-led approach to countering extremists. Further confirmation of this was provided at the annual Prevent Conference in December 2008, when Smith spoke of the need to oppose “anti-democratic ideology” by challenging “extremists,” and not just “violent extremists.”<sup>101</sup>

Thus, British policy was somewhat schizophrenic in nature. On the one hand, it is clear that many officials were prepared to sanction and pursue contacts—of varying form—with individuals like Yusuf al-Qaradawi, as well as groups like the MCB, MAB and broader Muslim Brotherhood. Equally, there was growing protests from those who doubted the wisdom and efficacy of such an approach. Crucially, the last two years have now seen a major shift in favour of the latter.

When in opposition, David Cameron had come to view Labour as having adopted an all too promiscuous embrace of Islamist movements. In a speech to the Community Security Trust in 2008, Cameron explained how normative British values should be better reflected in government policy:

The message should be clear: to those who reject democracy; to those who preach hate; to those who encourage violence; you are not part of the mainstream. You will not get public funding. You are not a welcome part of our society. We will only defeat the extremist mindset if we understand and confront it.<sup>102</sup>

Soon after Cameron formed a coalition government in May 2010, it was announced that the grant making dimension of the Preventing Violent Extremism initiative—the primary vehicle by which groups like the MAB were funded—was to be scrapped. In addition, the government also announced overall responsibility for Prevent would be moved from the Department for Communities and Local Government to the Home Office.<sup>103</sup> Cameron then commissioned Lord Carlile to conduct an independent review into the way Prevent had been run. Finally, the Prime

---

<sup>100</sup> “Doha: Protest at Embassy against Qaradawi Visa Refusal.” [FCO document in possession of authors as result of Freedom of Information Request]

<sup>101</sup> Home Secretary Jacqui Smith's speech at the Conference on Preventing Violent Extremism, December 10, 2008.

<sup>102</sup> David Cameron speech to the Community Security Trust, March 3, 2008.

<sup>103</sup> “Ministers dismantle £60m programme to prevent violent extremism,” *Guardian*, July 13, 2010

Minister gave his clearest exposition of the new manner in which the coalition would treat Prevent matters going forward when he addressed the Munich Security Conference in 2011. There, he emphasized the importance of tackling extremism per se, rather than just violent extremism—a feature of the previous administration’s approach that had attracted much criticism. In underscoring this shift, Cameron explicitly cited “Islamist extremism”—which he clearly distinguished from the religion of Islam—as a major problem.<sup>104</sup>

The publication of Lord Carlile’s review in June 2011 highlighted many of the problem areas which the Prime Minister had aimed to address in his Munich speech. For example, it acknowledged that there had previously been “cases where groups whom we would now consider to support an extremist ideology have received funding.”<sup>105</sup> This, it was accepted, had proved deeply controversial and upsetting to members of the public who felt their taxes were supporting those opposed to normative British values. More significantly, it was also argued that Prevent needed to be recast with a much greater focus on tackling the ideological aspect of extremist belief. “Preventing terrorism will mean challenging extremist (and non-violent) ideas that are also part of a terrorist ideology,” Lord Carlile’s report argued.<sup>106</sup> In a considerable advance on previous Prevent documents, extremism itself was defined as:

...vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.<sup>107</sup>

As a result, three new priorities were established for Prevent. These were to:

- respond to the ideological challenge;
- prevent people from being drawn into terrorism; and
- work with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalization.<sup>108</sup>

In addition, responsibility for delivery would now be coordinated by the Office for Security and Counter-terrorism (OSCT) based in the Home Office, and channelled through one of three main areas: local authorities, policing, and international work.

The new Prevent strategy consequently continues to afford an important role to the FCO. Indeed, it states quite explicitly that working with “Saudi Arabia and Egypt, whose Muslim institutions and organisations have considerable global influence... can positively or negatively shape the Prevent

---

<sup>104</sup> Prime Minister’s speech to Munich security conference, February 5, 2011

<sup>105</sup> *Report to the Home Secretary of Independent Oversight of Prevent Review and Strategy*, May, 2011.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid*.

agenda. We believe this work can have a very significant impact here.”<sup>109</sup> This would appear to leave open the possibility of further engagement with groups aligned to the Muslim Brotherhood if it is deemed necessary for the realization of domestic Prevent objectives. However, as the British government’s response to the Arab Spring has shown, it is clear that a much more robust values-led approach has been adopted.

### **New Realities: Responding to the Arab Spring**

The events of the Arab Spring clearly posed challenges to the Foreign Office. On the one hand, the government is keen to support what it hopes will be the development of liberal and representative democracies in the region after decades of oppressive dictatorship. At the same time, officials are wary of the dangers posed by unconditionally embracing changes that may yet give rise to regimes which are as brutal and unstable as those they have succeeded. The Foreign Minister, William Hague, has consistently offered cautious support for Arab revolutions since events in Tunisia began unfolding. The fall of Hosni Mubarak and Muammar Gaddafi were also welcomed, accompanied by more muted calls for an orderly transition in Yemen, and exasperation over the violence in Syria. At the same time, Hague has publicly recognized the limitations of foreign influence and the right of sovereign states to national self-determination. “The first, and most fundamental principle, is that we cannot dictate change from the outside, and nor would we want to,” he told an audience at the London School of Economics in March 2012. “These are not our revolutions, and that we cannot determine the future of these countries.”<sup>110</sup> These comments implicitly hedged against the prospect of a fundamentalist administration taking power in Egypt, acknowledging there was little Whitehall could do in such an event, other than to check its influence through existing relationships and international bodies.

The legitimacy conferred by electoral success obviously makes overt criticism of newly-empowered Islamists more difficult. As a result, Hague conceded that “in recent elections in Tunisia, Morocco and Egypt, political parties inspired by Islam have done very well at the ballot box. [...] We do not underestimate the challenges and stresses this may introduce, or the concerns felt by many people in these countries themselves.”<sup>111</sup> He emphasized that the government would “support and respect the choices made by the people of the region through their vote.”<sup>112</sup> Such support, however, would not be unconditional; for Hague also articulated a commitment to a values-led approach to policy, stating:

We will continue to urge all governments in the region to ensure respect for universal human rights in their constitutions and societies.

---

<sup>109</sup> *Prevent Strategy*, June 2011, Cm 8092. See also, *Report to the Home Secretary of Independent Oversight of Prevent Review and Strategy*, May, 2011.

<sup>110</sup> Foreign Secretary William Hague address to the London School of Economics event, “International Policy Responses to Change in the Arab World,” March, 2012.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid*

[...]

We will judge them on their actions, including human rights, and the true measure of the strides made by those countries who have embraced democracy will be whether governments are prepared to surrender power if they are rejected at the ballot box. This is the ultimate form of accountability.<sup>113</sup>

Such comments reflected Hague's readiness to accept the new dispensation arising from the Arab Spring—which requires dealing with the Brotherhood and other Islamist parties, but only on the basis of certain non-negotiable conditions. Hague further elucidated this position when he stated “We engage with all political groups, including those inspired by Islam that reject violence, accept democratic principles and abide by existing international agreements.”<sup>114</sup> In itself this may seem an unambitious statement, demanding only the most basic of commitments. Yet, Hague elaborated that “respect for human rights and dignity, including freedom of expression and equality of women, are universal values that must underline all political systems—there are no justified exceptions.”<sup>115</sup>

That view was shared among Hague's ministerial colleagues. The Conservative Foreign Office Minister, Alistair Burt, offered a still more forthright assessment of what the Foreign Office expects:

We will engage with any group that upholds the democratic process and the values that we champion. This includes the rights of ethnic and religious minorities and of women. [...] Democracy is not just about elections. For people's demands to be fulfilled, their human rights need to be constitutionally and legally guaranteed.<sup>116</sup>

To realize this vision, the Foreign Office has created the Arab Partnership—which it describes as “proactive foreign policy”—to coordinate Britain's strategic response to the Arab Spring.<sup>117</sup> Its stated “overarching aim” is to achieve “politically and economically open and inclusive societies in the MENA region.”<sup>118</sup> The scheme was officially launched in February 2011 by William Hague and is led by the Foreign Office, while being supported by the Department for International Development (DFID). Overall, the FCO and DFID are responsible for managing a joint fund of £110m over four years, with £40m coming from the FCO and £70m from DFID's Arab Partnership Economic Facility (APEF) fund.<sup>119</sup> Money from the Foreign Office is specifically dedicated to promoting three key objectives which include: political participation, public voice and freedom of expression, and good governance where the latter includes a commitment to the rule of

---

<sup>113</sup> Ibid

<sup>114</sup> Ibid

<sup>115</sup> Ibid

<sup>116</sup> Remarks by Foreign Office Minister Alistair Burt at the Minnesota International Center in Minneapolis, MN, January, 2012.

<sup>117</sup> “10 things to know about the Arab Partnership,” FCO website.

<sup>118</sup> “The Arab Partnership Strategy,” FCO website

<sup>119</sup> “Arab Partnership: Leading the UK government's strategic response to the Arab Spring,” FCO website.

law, transparency, integrity, tackling corruption and the building of effective and accountable institutions.<sup>120</sup> By contrast, the APEF fund will seek to promote economic reform while also working with international financial institutions.<sup>121</sup>

In order to achieve its goals, the Arab Partnership will seek to:

- Promote and advocate political support for reform in the region, both bilaterally and with the international community
- Support the delivery of transformative programs and approaches in the region from the EU, G8, international financial institutions and Gulf donors which provide appropriate support, and incentives for reform in transitioning states
- Deliver a targeted, high-impact UK-led bilateral program of support for reformers in the region through the Arab Partnership Fund.<sup>122</sup>

In line with this, the Arab Partnership currently supports 50 projects in ten different countries, including Egypt.<sup>123</sup> These projects will, by definition, be of a long-term nature. This reflects a persisting belief in the Foreign Office that the Arab Spring will deliver a more prosperous and stable region even though the path to its realization will be invariably uneven. “There will be an Arab Summer” Sir Mark Grant, Britain’s ambassador to the United Nations, emphatically told an audience at Chatham House. “It will be chaotic and it will be uneven, and it may take a generation to get from Spring to Summer, but it will happen right across the region.”<sup>124</sup> To that end, the Arab Partnership is seeking a multifaceted approach to achieving enduring political and economic reform in the region. “This work matters, both to the people of the region and to wider international peace, security and prosperity” explains a document on the initiative.<sup>125</sup>

## Conclusion

These recent developments, then, mark a new and fundamental recalibration of British policy regarding Islamists, both at home and abroad. Whereas sections of government, particularly within the Foreign Office, embraced Islamist movements in a rather uncritical fashion in the aftermath of 9/11—and especially after 7/7—the Conservative-led coalition government has indicated a more robust approach. One result is the revised Prevent strategy of 2011. With regards to foreign relations, the favoured approach in Whitehall is now to achieve maximum leverage by holding Islamist governments accountable over basic values.

---

<sup>120</sup> Ibid

<sup>121</sup> Ibid

<sup>122</sup> Ibid

<sup>123</sup> “10 things to know about the Arab Partnership,” FCO website.

<sup>124</sup> UK Ambassador Sir Mark Lyall Grant's speech at Chatham House: “Is there an Arab Summer? The UN's response to the Arab Spring,” June 2011.

<sup>125</sup> Arab Partnership: “Leading the UK government’s strategic response to the Arab Spring,” FCO website

This is not to confuse prudent and conditional engagement with pessimism. Hague has already declared the government's commitment to working with elected representatives in Egypt—including those inspired by Islam—but on the condition they eschew violence and respect existing treaties. This is the prism through which British foreign policy will now interact with its counterparts in Cairo. "To say that Arab Spring has turned into cold winter is wrong," Hague has warned. "The Arab Spring was always going to be a long process, not an instant fix. It was bound to take different forms in each country. The staging of genuine elections in countries that have been denied them for decades is significant. But it is what happens after elections that will determine success or failure."<sup>126</sup>

Such comments may represent a necessary accommodation to the new realities emerging since early 2011—and the recognition of the legitimacy conferred on Islamists by their successes at the ballot box. This is not to say that popular sentiment always delivers responsible government, as the lessons of the twentieth century clearly have demonstrated. Yet, an outright refusal to acknowledge Islamist administrations would be perceived as undermining Britain's commitment to democratic advances in the region. It may be that this values-led approach offers Britain as much leverage as it can hope to gain, in Egypt and elsewhere, in the years ahead.

---

<sup>126</sup> William Hague, "Freedom is still flowering in the Arab Spring," *The Times*, January 13, 2012.



## Canada and the Arab Islamists: *Plus ça change...*

By Alex Wilner

Canada is a curious political animal. It is a stalwart democracy and a leading economic and energy powerhouse, a founding member of the UN, NATO and the G7/8, and a member of both the Commonwealth of Nations (i.e. the British Commonwealth) and its French counterpart, *Organisation internationale de la Francophonie*. It has built, on its own terms, a special relationship with most of the world's great powers. And it stands proudly by its military history (from the First and Second World Wars to the 2011 Libyan intervention) but pays equal homage to the role it played in establishing the UN's "peacekeeping" function (which Canadian Foreign Minister and future Prime Minister, Lester Pearson, first proposed in 1956 in response to the Suez Crisis) and the UN's *Responsibility to Protect* (R2P) principle (the product of a 2000 Canadian initiative co-written by Canadian scholar and wantabe **[aspiring?]** Prime Minister, Michael Ignatieff). In sum, Canada is a widely respected international leader. And yet, paradoxically, despite its ability to influence, direct, and lead global affairs, Canada rarely does. It remains a cautious nation with a small and tidy international footprint.

Nowhere is this more evident than in Canada's patchy (and at times, non-existent) relationship with the Islamist political forces currently rising in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). Though Canadians abhor despotism and cheer democratic reform, they seem perplexed by the revolutions that have rocked the MENA region, and uncertain, as to what the Islamists represent and how their rise to power will affect individual MENA countries, the region more broadly, and Canadian interests more specifically. And yet, Canadian policies concerning the Arab Spring, the Muslim Brotherhood, and other regional Islamist forces, seem to perpetuate and uphold Canada's historic policy positions *vis-à-vis* the old Arab guard: more open, accountable, and inclusive political (and economic) liberalization is desired; the protection of human rights and of religious and sexual minorities and women is a necessity; and regional stability that includes a resolution to the Arab-Israeli conflict remains a priority. It is likely that no matter the political futures of Egypt, Libya, Syria, Tunisia, and their neighbors, and no matter how well Islamists place in general and presidential elections, that Canada's foreign policy will echo that of years past. For Canadians, *plus ça change ... plus c'est la même chose* (the more things change the more they stay the same).

This chapter will do three things. First, it will briefly explore Canadian attitudes *vis-à-vis* political Islam. It will focus on recent history, and especially the decade since 9/11. While relying on such a shallow historical narrative certainly truncates the history of Islamic political thought, like much of the Western world (but perhaps even more so than in Europe and the United States), most Canadians were only introduced to political Islam as a result of al Qaeda's violent extremism. Rightly or wrongly, political violence rather than Islamist political thought has informed Canadian associations with (ostensibly) non-violent Islamist movements like the Muslim Brotherhood. Second, Canadian positions during the Arab Spring and regarding the recent and forthcoming

elections in the MENA region will be reviewed. Special attention will be paid to Canada's concerns for human rights, which informed its participation in NATO's 2011 Libyan campaign. Third, this chapter will attempt to sketch the future of Canadian relations with Islamist parties and rulers. The conclusion suggests that unless Canada's primary foreign policy concerns (i.e. democratization, human rights, and regional stability) are challenged or if incoming Islamist political parties dramatically alter the current status quo, Canadian relations with the new MENA governments will remain generally unfazed.

### **The Past: A Rude Awakening**

Historically, Canada has had very little structured dealings with the Muslim Brotherhood or political Islam more generally. Unlike various European countries, which are geographically and socially linked to the MENA region, and unlike the United States, which has critical national interests on a global scale, Canada has traditionally maintained little reason to engage itself in political Islam's theological affairs or strategic backyard. Ottawa has been neither for, nor against, political developments among Muslim and Islamic communities. Indeed, these sorts of developments rarely appear on Canada's radar. And when they do, Canada seldom acts alone to address them. Rather, Canadian policies have been developed multilaterally in concert with Canada's various allies and friends—as is usually the case in Canadian foreign affairs.

For illustration, consider Canadian-Iranian relations. Ottawa's relationship with Tehran after the 1979 Islamic Revolution followed general trends and concerns shared by other Western capitals. Only when Canadian interests were specifically challenged—as happened recently with the 2003 rape, torture, and beating death of Iranian-Canadian photojournalist, Zahra Kazemi, who was killed, the Canadian government emphasizes, “in an Iranian prison by regime officials”—has Ottawa unilaterally taken forceful, and at times provocative, measures.<sup>1</sup> In the Kazemi case, Canada, under both Liberal and Conservative Party leadership, has called for an official investigation; sought to establish an international forensics team to examine her body; demanded that her remains be repatriated; rejected Iran's handling of the criminal investigation and subsequent trials; repeatedly recalled its ambassador from Tehran; held Parliamentary subcommittee hearings on the case; and formally tightened its “Controlled Engagement Policy” with Iran, which downgraded bilateral relations and limited official contact between the two countries to concerns over Iran's violation of human rights, the Kazemi case, and nuclear proliferation issues.<sup>2</sup> Canada eventually severed relations with Iran in September 2012, closing its Embassy in Tehran and expelling Iranian diplomats from Canada.<sup>3</sup> Canadian courts have also signaled that Kazemi's Canadian relatives have the legal right to

---

<sup>1</sup> Government of Canada, “Canada-Iran Relations: Fact Sheet,” Accessed December 2012, ([http://www.canadainternational.gc.ca/iran/bilateral\\_relations\\_bilaterales/canada-iran.aspx?lang=eng&view=d](http://www.canadainternational.gc.ca/iran/bilateral_relations_bilaterales/canada-iran.aspx?lang=eng&view=d))

<sup>2</sup> *CBC News*, “Zahra Kazemi: Iran's Changing Story,” November 27, 2007; Government of Canada, Subcommittee on International Human Rights of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, 40<sup>th</sup> Parliament, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, Number 015, April 30, 2009.

<sup>3</sup> Laura Payton, “Canada Closes Embassy in Iran, Expels Iranian Diplomats”, *CBC News*, September 7, 2012.