

Muslim Brotherhood Designations: Understanding the Options, Criteria, and Implications

*A Conversation with Jonathan Schanzer, Samuel Tadros, and Amy Hawthorne,
moderated by Nancy Youssef.*

YOUSSEF: Thank you for coming to what I think will be a really interesting conversation about the designation, the potential designation, of the Muslim Brotherhood as an FTO, what we refer to foreign terrorist organization, going forward. I'd like to begin by introducing our esteemed panelists. I'm going to go all the way to the end first, Jonathan Schanzer. He's the Senior Vice President for Research at FDD. He's previously worked as a terrorism finance analyst at the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

To his left, Amy Hawthorne, who's the Deputy Director for Research at the Project on Middle East Democracy. She previously was an appointee at the U.S. Department of State for two years, where she helped to coordinate U.S. support for Egypt's transition and advised on the U.S. response to the Arab Spring.

To her left, Sam Tadros, who's the senior fellow at Hudson Institute's Center for Religious Freedom. He's also a distinguished visiting fellow in Middle Eastern Studies at the Hoover Institution and a lecturer at Johns Hopkins University's School for Advanced International Studies where he teaches Middle Eastern politics. Thank you, everyone, for joining us.

I'd like to start the conversation because I think, one way, we need to frame this as about how we think about the Muslim Brotherhood. Sam, I wonder if you would kick us off in terms of describing the Muslim Brotherhood in its current state. Amy, I'd like you to separately tackle the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, if we could, just for the purposes of our discussion, think of how we should think about the Muslim Brotherhood.

TADROS: Thank you, Nancy, for the introduction and for FDD for organizing this. I think the best way to understand the Brotherhood is by looking at what its very founder said about the organization. I thought a quote from him was quite appropriate in this.

YOUSSEF: Hassan al-Banna?

TADROS: Hassan al-Banna. He said, "We are Salafi da'wah, a Sunni order, a Sufi truth, a political body, a sports group, a scientific, cultural organization, an economic enterprise, and a social idea. People say that we are a political party, but we are not exactly a political party, although politics is part of our work. People say we are a welfare or a social organization. And although these are parts of our work, it is not exactly who we are. We are the companions of the prophet and the people who follow God's path on earth." The last line, "Which is why we are mercy for mankind."

Now what does this exactly mean? To quote a line from a movie from *Kingdom of Heaven* where Saladin is asked what is Jerusalem and replies, "It is nothing, it is everything." The description tells us very little about what the organization is, but it does tell us that the

organization views itself as one that encompasses every aspect of human life. There's no aspect that is not part of what the Muslim Brotherhood sees its role to be in.

It's often easy to describe the Muslim Brotherhood as an organization. It's a hierarchical organization. It's one that's very hard to join. It takes five to eight years of passing through different stages, being examined at them, to become a full member of the Muslim Brotherhood.

At the same time – it also have a structure with leadership and all of this – at the same time, the Muslim Brotherhood also represents a movement, an idea. An idea that Hassan al-Banna explained, as we have six stages that we want to go through until we reach our end goal, these six stages being the Muslim individual creating a true Muslim individual, the Muslim family, society, government, caliphate, and then that last stage, which he described as Ustaziyat al-Alam the mentorship, the dominion over the whole world.

The Muslim Brotherhood has been dedicated to that vision and that end goal at every stage of its history. The means have always differed. There's a very openness to a pragmatic approach to the means to reach that goal, but the end goal has never changed.

YOUSSEF: And Amy, I was wondering if you could then tackle where the Muslim Brotherhood is in Egypt in its current state?

HAWTHORNE: Sure. Well, first of all, good morning and thank you to FDD for inviting me. I think Sam did a great job describing some of the central concepts of the Muslim Brotherhood. The Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, as I'm sure all of you know, is the original organization that was founded in Egypt in 1928.

It is often referred to as the mothership, the original organized form of this movement that has – not only was it the first group, but throughout history, throughout that last hundred years, it has typically exerted a very large amount of influence over Muslim Brotherhood affiliates and offshoots around the world.

I think what Sam said is really important about, you know, at the core of the Muslim Brotherhood being an idea. The group has lots of ideas, but I guess when I think about it as an analyst, I think about two main ideas that I associate with this movement, the first is the goal of establishing Sharia, as the Muslim Brotherhood would interpret and define it, as the basis for state and society. And a second goal would be to unify Muslims all around the world in some sort of unified entity.

Now, of course, how the group – how this movement organizes itself to go about that and pursue those two goals really has differed from country to country, from historical era to historical era. But the Egyptian group, as I said, has always been the most important and the most influential.

Now this Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, or EMB, as we often refer to it, throughout most of its history has been in opposition, to the extent, the incumbent Egyptian regime at the

time. That has generally been its posture. Its relationship with the Egyptian state, with the Egyptian regime has really varied from one period to the next.

Of course, under Nasser, we saw very, very harsh – Well, initial common goal actually. I mean the Muslim Brotherhood and the free officers had close links. But then after the overthrow of the monarchy and the establishment of the Egyptian republic, the Muslim Brotherhood and the Nasser regime came into conflict. That was followed by a very intense period of repression.

Sadat, President Anwar Sadat, as we know, made a strategic policy decision to re-allow the brotherhood back into political life and to resume some of its social and cultural activities. President Hosni Mubarak went through a lot of different phases with the group, tolerating it, repressing it but not fully.

Now, of course, we know the brotherhood was briefly in power for about a year after the overthrow of President Mubarak. And then since 2013, since the coup in Egypt in July 2013, I think it's safe to say, and I'd be curious Sam's thoughts on this, that the Brotherhood, the Egyptian Brotherhood, has gone through its most intense period of repression in its history.

There has been tens of thousands of brothers arrested, put in prison, at least a thousand, maybe more, Muslim Brotherhood followers, supporters, members killed. The use of state violence, Egyptian state violence, against the group has been extreme. The use of torture and abuse in prison has been extreme.

There have been targeted assassinations, extreme state violence against the group in order to crush it, in addition to the Egyptian government naming the group a terrorist organization, banning it, and undertaking a mass campaign to shut down its charitable organizations, its affiliated businesses, and to confiscate its assets.

It's difficult, as we know, to get really accurate, clear information about the exact state of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood today. But I think it's safe to say that most of the top leadership is in prison in Egypt, along with the second, third, and maybe even a layer down of leadership.

Some of the leadership, a small number, have escaped into exile. The group is basically in a very, very dysfunctional state because of the situation that it finds itself in this period of extreme repression.

YOUSSEF: So Jonathan, then based on that, the state of the MB right now, what about it do you think – Well, let's back up and say what is required to be an FTO? What is it, based on your assessment, within the MB that qualifies it, or at least members or parts of it, to be designated an FTO?

SCHANZER: Thanks, Nancy. So maybe just a little bit more background in terms of understanding why there's this intense concern about the Muslim Brotherhood. At minimum, I think we should probably call the Muslim Brotherhood a hate group, at minimum.

What we talk about is an ideology that continues to fuel this muscular, aggressive interpretation of Islam, that it stands above all others. The ideologies, the tracks of Hassan al-Banna, Sayyid Qutb, and others from within the Muslim Brotherhood's history has gone on to inspire jihadists of all stripes, whether al-Qaeda, ISIS, Hamas, Taliban, et cetera. We have seen them draw inspiration from this. It's sort of the gateway drug to harder jihadism, if you will.

Now that doesn't, in it of itself, qualify the Muslim Brotherhood for terrorist designation, far from it. We're talking about ideas. But I think it's important to at least lay that out there in terms of understanding why this visceral reaction, why this anger toward the Brotherhood by so-called moderate regimes across the Middle East and here in the United States.

As for designation, there are very specific criteria. That really boils down to, from an FTO perspective, foreign terrorist organization, through the state department, we're talking about a history of violence. When you look at the list of those that are on there already, Hezbollah, Hamas, al-Qaeda, ISIS, there is no doubt about their activities, that they claim responsibility, that they're engaging in these campaigns of violence. It's a no-brainer.

Then from the State Department's perspective, when they think about their ultimate goal of pursuing diplomacy, trying to build coalitions, work with other countries, there's really not a lot of debate about the way that these groups are listed.

I think that when we talk about designation, and we can get into this a little bit more, it's probably easier when we talk about the Brotherhood to talk about some of the other things that it does, the financing of terrorism, the support for other terrorist organizations.

That takes us away from the State Department designation approach and puts us more into the realm of Treasury. Treasury has a robust designation process where we look at the support for other violent groups. That may yet be the best way forward and that's one of the things that we've been exploring here at FDD.

YOUSSEF: I appreciate that, but I think for the audience, we don't see the Muslim Brotherhood taking responsibility for terror acts. We don't see this behavior that one assigns to other groups that have been assigned the FTO designation.

I'm curious, and I'll open this up to the panel, what precisely is the threat – and I appreciate what you're saying about it as the treasury designation. But for the purposes of our conversation, what is the threat that an FTO designation would address? I'm curious, Amy, if you want to maybe kick us off.

HAWTHORNE: Sure. Well, just to build into that, let me respond to a couple of things that Jon said. First of all, I personally view much of the Muslim Brotherhood's ideology, its statements, some of its actions as hateful and unacceptable and reprehensible. Unfortunately, I'm not sure in all cases in the Arab world that it's that ideology and its intolerant and illiberal ideas that are the basis for Arab regimes opposing the group. If that were the case, we would see very different Arab regimes.

Sadly, we've seen a lot of Arab regimes over the years, even some that are supposedly close allies of the United States, expounding and propagating some of the same ideas that the brotherhood and other groups propagate when it comes to intolerance of non-Muslims, status – position toward women, and so forth.

In my view, what Arab regimes really, really oppose about the Brotherhood is primarily about their quest for power. The Brotherhood wants to overturn the existing social and political order and replace incumbent regimes with their version, vaguely defined, of some sort of Sharia-based regime.

In different times and in different countries, the Brotherhood has posed a significant political threat to incumbent Arab regimes. It's really about power. It's not the objection to the Brotherhood when it comes to Arab regimes.

Sadly, as I said, I don't think the objection is primarily about ideology. Otherwise, we would see these regimes taking very different steps and measures in response to some of the reprehensible and hateful ideas that the brotherhood has propagated.

I'm also not sure that we can state as a blanket statement that the brotherhood is a gateway drug to violent jihadism. To be sure, there is absolutely no question that members of the Muslim Brotherhood, including some important members of the Muslim Brotherhood, have left the group and gone on to join or become important actors in al-Qaeda and other radical, violent Islamist organizations.

But as we know, unfortunately, the phenomenon of political Islam, of radical jihadism, of violent jihadism is an ideology that seems to appeal to a lot of different people around the world and to be able to recruit people from all different backgrounds, even from within our own country and society.

I think that, yes, it's true that some Muslim brothers, have gone on to – after they've been in the Brotherhood, they've gone on to join much more radical and indeed violent groups. Of course, it's important to state that since the 1970s, the official position of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood has been peaceful struggle and a renunciation of the use of violence.

But I do think that radical Islam, unfortunately, seems to appeal to many people, and many people join radical Islamist movements who never are members of the Brotherhood. They don't necessarily have to pass through the Brotherhood in order to radicalize. I just want to state that.

In terms of what the threat is, well, this is an important thing to discuss in detail. If the United States government has credible evidence that can withstand judicial review and withstand a court challenge that the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt or in other countries or various related organizations are engaged in carrying out or supporting terrorism as U.S. law defines it, then those organizations or those individuals, in the case of particular individuals, that presents a terrorist threat to the United States potentially.

Of course, we have to look at each country differently and assess the level of the threat, but that – when we're talking about violence and terrorism, we have to look at the groups or the individuals who are alleged to have engaged in those acts and assess the threat that they may pose to our security, our national interest.

If the threat, in other cases, is really about ideology, if we see the ideas and the ideology of the Brotherhood as a threat, then we need to respond to that in a very different manner and with a different set of tools and a different approach.

One of the things that concerns me about the possibility – of course, we don't know. There's a policy discussion going on inside the administration right now. But one of the things that concerns me is that a blanket designation of the Muslim Brotherhood that would sweep up a lot of groups and individuals and movements that are not engaged in terrorism and for which there is no evidence that they're engaged in terrorism really doesn't address, I think, a big part of the problem. I would say we have to be distinct about those challenges.

YOUSSEF: I'd like Jonathan then Sam responding, because I do think there is some agreement. What I'm hearing from both of you is a rejection of a blanket designation of the MB as an FTO and a desire for a more nuanced discussion and approach. I was wondering, Jonathan, if you could spell that out and then, Sam, if you would follow up.

SCHANZER: Sure. Well, what I would say is I don't think there's anything wrong with the U.S. trying to make an assessment of the Muslim Brotherhood as an FTO. We have every right to do it and we should. If we can actually prove that there is a top-down structure, a hierarchical structure where you have the leadership in Egypt, or anywhere else for that matter, whether they're in exile in Turkey or Qatar, whatever they're doing that they're actually directing traffic, telling people to carry out attacks, and we can show that that structure exists, then we should designate.

I think that it is going to be difficult for the bureaucracy to try to digest a movement that spans 92 countries and has hundreds and hundreds of splinter groups. It's going to be difficult.

Again, I don't want to dissuade the U.S. government from making that assessment, but I think there needs to be backup. There needs to be an alternative plan if the goal, and I think it's a laudable one, is to try to address the radical trends and challenges that exist from within the Brotherhood. That's where I think we should be looking at other violent groups that exist within the brotherhood at a smaller level, at a state level.

I've testified about this last year where I talked about the Libyan Hizb al-Watan, which has a lot of ties back to al-Qaeda, the Islah Party in Yemen, again a lot of ties to al-Qaeda. These are things that we should be exploring and we can begin to build out the network that way, if the other way doesn't work.

But I would want to take issue with one thing that Amy mentioned about this idea of the Brotherhood being, let's say, only partially violent. I mean what we've seen is, I think, a couple

of different brands of Ikhwan emerge over time. There are those that are very clearly violent, Hamas, Hasm in Egypt, Liwa al-Thawra.

These are groups that have already been designated and they are violent splinters of the Brotherhood. It's very clear who they are and what they stand for. Then there are other groups that I think probably deserve designation, like in Libya and in Yemen where the connections to al-Qaeda are very clear.

Then there are other groups that, quite frankly, have been tamed by the various regimes. They maybe weren't necessarily inclined to be non-violent, but they found very little choice as the government began to crackdown, Egypt being one very prominent example, and I don't necessarily agree with the way that it's been done.

But they've been neutered. They probably have some radical tendencies, but they've not been allowed to have those tendencies manifest. Jordan has had a really interesting struggle in trying to isolate the Islamic Action Front and to not allow it to pose a threat to the regime over time.

And so I don't necessarily think that the baseline of these groups are necessarily peaceful. I think they've settled into a political routine in many of the regimes that we're looking at. I still think that the baseline ideology is highly problematic.

YOUSSEF: Sam?

TADROS: Let me start by commenting on one thing Amy said about whether it's a struggle between the regimes and the Muslim Brotherhood is purely political or also has an ideological component. I think one important ideological difference between them is the way they view whether the nation state is accepted or not.

Part of the popular rejection of the brotherhood in Egypt, which was there besides the military moving, stemmed from a perception, real or imagined, that the Brotherhood stood against the Egyptian sense of identity and nationalism, that the Brotherhood's pan-Islamic view clashed with the interest of Egypt itself, that they would prefer the interest of – or serving their other branches in Malaysia and anywhere than in serving Egypt's national interest. But let me tell a story of a young guy that I think captures the struggle we're dealing with in dealing with the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt.

Mahmoud al-Ahmadi was born in 1994. He was a typical guy. He joined the Muslim Brotherhood at a young age. His brother had been a leader in the brotherhood, head of an osrah, a family, a small unit of Muslim brothers within the structure. He participated in the demonstrations in Egypt following the 2011 revolution.

Then when the coup happened, he started going to Rabaa. He wasn't killed in Rabaa. He managed to escape. He started following the Brotherhood leaders' suggestion of, "How do we bring down this regime through popular mobilization?"

He joined the demonstrations that the Brotherhood organized throughout the country. The demonstrations were being attacked and beaten by police officers. The idea was natural that we need to form to protect ourselves.

As such, the Muslim Brotherhood leadership, we know that for a fact, decided to create protection and deterrence units, to protect its own demonstrations, especially the women, from being attacked by police thugs.

Over a couple of months, the demonstrations weren't achieving much and the violence from the regime did not stop. The idea came that we need something else more than that. We need to be able to respond. If they're going to beat us, shouldn't we be able to beat them back?

A Brotherhood leader, in fact a member of the guidance council, Mohamed Kamal, decided to form another type of units in the Brotherhood called the special operations unit. These would not engage in terrorist attacks. They wouldn't bomb civilians, wouldn't do anything like that. But they would use a certain level of violence in order to inflict harm on the regime components by which, for example, we would throw Molotov cocktail on police stations. Nothing wrong with that, right? They're killing us anyway. Over time, some members of these special op units started realizing that this wasn't achieving anything.

An ideologue in Turkey, an American convert to Islam, out of all things, suggested to them and began popularizing the idea that to target the regime, to bring this regime down, you shouldn't target the police station or the policemen. You should target multinational companies because these, in reality, were the main power behind the throne.

We started to have operations where you'd have a bombing of McDonald's, for example, or bank branches in the country, a communications company, the electricity grid. Let's target the economic aspect of the regime. He had been a leftist in his early years, and he mixed his Islamist ideology with these leftist ideas of the multinationals controlling the world.

But that, again, was not achieving anything. The regime repression was continuing. The reality was the regime was still there and the Brotherhood had been thrown out of power and out of everything.

We then had the next stage in that transformation where we had groups created called popular resistance and revolution replenishment. Both those groups, again, we know were created by Mohamed Kamal, the member of the Muslim Brotherhood's guidance council.

These groups, if the Brotherhood's slogan in the beginning was "Our peacefulness is stronger than bullets", then the slogan became "Anything below blood is peacefulness". We can use other means besides killing. Anything else is now permissible for us to do.

Then Mahmoud al-Ahmadi had joined all of these phases. His story was the typical one for these young brothers born in the '90s and engaged with the organization.

Then one of his leaders in the Brotherhood, Yahia Moussa, who had been the Brotherhood spokesman for the health ministry under President Morsi, decided to form a more advanced group. It would not get a name. That group would train itself to conduct operations against regime figures. The first target chosen was Egypt's attorney general. On the 29th of June, 2015, they actually managed to kill him.

That wasn't an operation by the Islamic state, by any of these known terrorist organization. The guy who did the bomb, the guy who pushed the button was Mahmoud al-Ahmadi.

Now what does this story tell us? It tells us that the picture is very complicated because we have, number one, Mohamed Kamal is dead. He had been killed in a shootout with the police in 2016. We don't know who's now in charge of these kinds of operations.

Are these operations, were they agreed upon by the entire structure of the brotherhood? No, because there are two competing guidance councils today inside the Muslim Brotherhood. But is the issue simply that the Muslim Brotherhood does not engage in violence? Not exactly. It's much more complicated than that.

We have a picture of a not one-time decision of we are going to kill people, but we have a process, a process that's also legitimized and, I mean, explained in ideological terms through works by Muslim Brotherhood chiefs.

We've had something called the Nidaa al-Kinana, which was signed by a long list of scholars associated with the Brotherhood justifying the killing of people associated with the regime, not in religious terms of these are kafirs, they are unbelievers, but in arguments that these people have blood on their hands and, thus, their death is punishment, is fair punishment for their crimes.

We've had justifications of violence and pushing for incitement, for encouragement for these operations from the Muslim Brotherhood channels operating at Turkey. We have about 10,000 Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood members that reside in Turkey today, smaller numbers in Qatar, Sudan, and Malaysia. But in Turkey, we have these Muslim Brotherhood TV channels that have been, all the time, inciting for violence and celebrating these kinds of acts against the regime.

YOUSSEF: You describe a very nuanced Muslim Brotherhood that we can't brand it as one thing and that there are offshoots and there are subsects. Jonathan, you described the need to perhaps use financing as a chief goal. I want to get to the question of what relationship then does the FTO have at solving either of these, given how disparate the group can be, given the limitations of it?

I want to try it this way. Is there a risk associated with not designating individuals or offshoots or state Muslim Brotherhoods as FTOs? Is there a risk associated with not tackling it that way?

SCHANZER: I don't know if there's a risk in not doing it. I mean, look, the FTO issue is going to be, I think, again, problematic to digest for the bureaucracy. I think I would be more focused on that right now, about how the bureaucracy responds to this call. You're going to have branches that are seen as part of the existing governments, like in Morocco or Tunisia or Jordan where the governments don't want this to take place. In other words –

YOUSSEF: Because they have Muslim Brotherhood in government, which would make –

SCHANZER: Right. They're part of the existing structure. You've got this friction with allied governments and, apparently, some of them have actually weighed in with the State Department, saying, "Please don't do this." These governments have said, "Don't do this." The FTO, I think, for right now – look, again, I think there ought to be an assessment. I'd like to see what that assessment yields –

YOUSSEF: - Produces.

SCHANZER: I'm not sure we'll see it, but I'd be fascinated to see it, see whether we can determine that there's a top-down structure and that violence is being ordered from the executives of the Muslim Brotherhood and that others are carrying out that violence in all these other places. I think it will be difficult.

But I do think that we have a mandate, we have a mission already for tackling the problem of terror finance and extremism violence around the world. This is what Treasury does on a day-to-day basis. We have Executive Order 13224. This is the basis for all of the terrorism designations that we've done against Hamas, al-Qaeda, ISIS, et cetera.

We use this structure now to go after individuals, charities, businesses, broader groups for that matter, and we designate them. They are deemed as off-limits. It's not done through the State Department. It's a little less of a diplomatic play and a little bit more of a finance one, but the diplomacy still plays out through these Treasury actions.

This is, I think, that piecemeal approach, is I think going to be a little bit easier to pull off. I just don't believe in – I don't like using this term, but the deep state, as everybody calls it. I just don't think that it's going to process in that State Department fashion.

But taking a piecemeal will work. It is the way to start to target the Brotherhood in ways that, I think, meet criteria and are deserving. And this is, I think, the important thing to point out here.

If the goal here is to begin to tackle the brotherhood and the challenges that it poses around the region, start out this way, digest these pieces one by one. For anyone who's curious about how this plays out, just take a look at the IRGC designation that we saw.

Finally, we did see an FTO designation, but that was the result of years and years of Treasury designations of elements of the IRGC, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps of Iran. We were able to build out, you could create this edifice over time so that, so that after years of

identifying elements that were deserving of designation because of terrorism, missile proliferation, and all the other issues that we'd identified, it was kind of a no-brainer to be able to hit the entire guard corps with an FTO designation.

In other words, we should be thinking about this, in my view, somewhat pragmatically knowing that there's going to be pushback diplomatically for an FTO designation.

YOUSSEF: Jonathan, you talked a little bit about the impact in some of the countries. I want to, before we go to questions, really talk about how this discussion could shape politics in the region. Amy, I wonder if you would tackle, if it's an individual, if it's a subsect, if it's the whole group, what is the potential impact of this designation, or even the discussion of this designation, have on the Sisi government, have on Egypt politics writ large? Then I have a question for you, Sam.

HAWTHORNE: Well, first of all, I just want to remind everyone that, in the United States, we have a process for foreign terrorist organization designation that is based on law and it's based on evidence, evidentiary standards, that can hold up in the court of law. We have a very specific process that goes through many levels of review.

If the process is working as it should with integrity, then it is the policy decisions that the Treasury Secretary or the Secretary of State can take with regard to designation are supposed to be based on evidence according to our laws.

I think that when we look at the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, for example, it is a very complex picture. I think Sam did a really good job of laying out the complexities. There is no doubt that the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood has undergone severe internal tensions, fracturing, division.

I don't believe the organization has actually split apart yet, but it has gone through some severe internal tension in terms of how to respond, how should the group respond to being thrown out of power and facing this intense state violence and severe crackdown.

It is true that there are members of the Muslim Brotherhood for whom there seems to be credible evidence that they have engaged in terrorist activities. But when U.S. law is looking at this problem, I think it's very important for U.S. officials to distinguish between individual Muslim brothers and what Jon described about the leadership of the organization and whether that leadership is directing and organizing violence from the top.

I think that if the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, as the Egyptian government alleged, has become a terrorist organization, we would see the organization as such, but behaving very differently, saying and doing very different things. The leadership of the organization, and some of the leadership is not in prison and some of it is overseas, and they do act and make decisions and sometimes say things, we would see them playing a very different role.

I think it's notable that the members of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood and their supporters, when they have engaged in violence, they have split off from the group. It hasn't -

They have formed offshoot groups and splinter groups. They have not stayed within the structure of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood as an organization.

Those are the criteria that I would want the U.S. government to be looking at, because terrorism is a serious problem. We all know that. It's a real problem. It's a thing. We have to maintain the integrity of our system in order to be able to designate and say who the United States government sees as a terrorist organization as opposed to an organization whose ideas we abhor, whose ideology we find reprehensible, but which is not engaged in terrorism as U.S. law defines it. So as Jon said, this needs to go through an assessment and a process and be based on evidence.

That leads me into the situation in Egypt, because the Egyptian government does not operate with regard to designation of terrorist organizations in the same way that the United States does. The U.S. has a very specific definition in law of what terrorism is and what terrorist organizations and terrorist acts are.

The Egyptian government has a very broad definition of terrorism that is so broad that it encompasses and has been used to prosecute secular, peaceful activists who are actually opposed to the Muslim Brotherhood and have nothing to do with violent jihadism in any way.

The Egyptian government's definition of terrorism is basically people who organize politically against the regime, including some who may engage in violence and those who use peaceful methods, including writing a post on Facebook against the regime.

The Egyptian definition, the Sisi government's definition of terrorism, is so broad that it has ensnared tens of thousands of people who oppose the Egyptian regime from the Brotherhood and from staunchly non-Islamist and staunchly secular groups.

I make this point to underscore the importance of knowing that if the Trump administration is going to go down this path and the U.S. government doesn't have strong evidence that holds up according to our laws, we are basically endorsing, we would be. If we make a designation that is based on hateful ideology but not based on evidence of terrorist activity according to our laws, then we're basically endorsing the Egyptian regime's approach to this. We can imagine all the dangerous implications of that.

The last sentence I would say is that Jon or Sam, I don't remember which one, described the Brotherhood in Egypt these days as neutered. If the U.S. government does make a designation, for example, that the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, or important members of it, are engaged in terrorism, this is a political victory for the Sisi regime.

The Egyptian government does not need the U.S. to do this to crush the brotherhood. They are crushing the brotherhood on their own. But what it does is it's a legitimation and a political victory for Sisi. That's why he wants Trump to do it.

YOUSSEF: Okay. I think it's a fascinating point. Sam, if you'd just take it a step further then. How does that look, that legitimization on the ground to Egypt? Do you see them using that

to go after other groups, putting other groups under that category, using that as part of Egyptian law or citing it in Egyptian trials? I'm curious how we might see that play out on the ground.

TADROS: Well, I don't think they're waiting for us to handle the Brotherhood the way that they want to handle it. Let me first go into a couple of things. I think part of the conversation about the relationship between the Muslim Brotherhood or members of the Brotherhood and terrorist organization, imagines rigid positions that a person moves from A to B. He leaves the Brotherhood and joins al-Qaeda, or forms al-Qaeda in cases of bin Laden or others.

I think there's more of a flux there, meaning why the Brotherhood is a hierarchical organization. This has not made it immune to ideological influences from the outside, in more radical terms. Before even the Egyptian Revolution, a couple of scholars had worked on what they termed the Salafization of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, the spread of Salafi ideas within the rank and file of the brotherhood itself, following the revolution and as a result of the Muslim Brotherhood positioning itself as an ally of more radical Salafi groups, especially activist Salafi groups in Cairo.

The Brotherhood members shared – I mean the camp in Rabaa was basically an Islamist utopia of all these Islamists of different stripes living together, sharing experiences. The influence of those ideas and spread within the organization, I think, paints a much more complex picture.

In terms of the regime and how it would use it, I think, obviously, the US should not follow the Egyptian regime's definition of what terrorism is and terrorism is not. As Amy said, the regime has targeted people that have nothing to do with violence.

But I think the regime is interested in this not just for a pure moral victory of, "Hey, the U.S. is supporting us," I think there are practical aspects of it related to the brotherhood's activity in Turkey especially. We've had one instance where the Turkish government handed back a guy who was involved in violent acts to the Egyptian regime. But Turkey has been basically a safe haven for the Muslim Brotherhood.

I think the regime is especially worried about the role of the Brotherhood media in Turkey and how it spreads ideas both against the regime and for our purposes, incitement to violence, through these channels and about the organization's financial structure that the Brotherhood in Turkey is then supplying to the brotherhood in Egypt.

YOUSSEF: Jonathan?

SCHANZER: Yeah. I would say maybe two things. I know we want to move on to Q&A. But it's impossible to not look at this through the lens of the intra-Sunni split that we're seeing right now in the Arab and Muslim world.

The traditional Gulf Arab States, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Bahrain, with maybe Egypt in tow, squaring off against the Qataris and the Turks, who are the number one proponents of the Muslim Brotherhood on a world stage.

There's no secret, obviously, that the Gulf Arab States have blockaded the Qataris, and a lot of this has to do with their support for the Brotherhood over time. You have this spat now. I think the Khashoggi incident was just one element of it, but the Saudi rivalry with Turkey, the Egyptian antipathy toward Turkey that Sam just mentioned.

This is at the heart, I think, of what's happening here. It's not just that they'd like to designate these groups, but they are also seeking to delegitimize the sponsors of these groups. There is a geopolitical perspective that we cannot ignore here.

One maybe final thought here, as we talk about the designation process and how this might work, look, I fully agree with Amy and Sam that there is no way that the U.S. can or should adopt Egypt's interpretation of what a terrorist group is. We have our laws, we have our structures. They work actually pretty well. That's why I think the assessments need to be made both at a State and Treasury level. Then we can move forward from there.

What I think is interesting to me, and I've no insight into this, but I would like to see whether the Saudis, the Emiratis, the Egyptians are actually working with our Treasury Department, for example, to provide targets, to actually share this kind of intel to see whether it meets criteria. In other words, we could begin to pick them off one by one if they meet the criteria.

I don't know whether these governments are doing this, but there is a tried and true method of bilateral designation, working together. We do this with other countries. The question is are they trying to do this? Are they trying to learn how we see this criteria and for them to provide the evidence against some of the enemies of their state?

In other words, it doesn't have to be mutually exclusive here. They can find targets that meet our criteria. I just don't know if they're trying.

YOUSSEF: I'd like to open it up to Q&A. I'd just ask the audience members if you could wait for the microphone, please, and identify yourself before asking your question. Start at the back. There we go.

SPEAKER: Hi. My question, do you guys have any information about the cooperation between Muslim Brotherhood and Iran? We all remember that the president of Iran is the only one who visited Egypt when this terror group was in power in Egypt. What are the connections between Iran as a Shia and a terror group like Muslim Brotherhood as a Sunni?

SCHANZER: I'll maybe just make a quick mention of this. I am very familiar with the Egyptian government's perspective on this relationship between the Ikhwan and Iran. I don't deny it, that I think that there is a brotherhood, if you will, between these two interpretations of Islam.

There's no question that when Morsi was in power, his first official state visit was with the Iranians. I think that was extremely telling and I think it was yet another reason why some of

the Gulf States and the Egyptian seculars, if you will, were deeply alarmed. I actually think back to – We just saw the deposing of Omar al-Bashir in Sudan.

It's really interesting. When you look back at the early history of that regime, it was, of course, a Muslim Brotherhood regime in its inception. It was during the early years of that that you saw the presence of the IRGC, you saw the presence of the Ikhwan, and you saw the presence of al-Qaeda all in the same place. It was very clear at that time, in the late 1980s, early 1990s, that there was quite a bit of cooperation and collaboration.

Whether that exists today, I just don't have the visibility. But I do know that the political interpretation of Islam that the Ikhwan embraces is also embraced by the regime in Iran. I don't want to say they're on the same side on everything, but, in some cases, absolutely they are. I think the regime in Tehran was almost certainly cheering for the Ikhwan as it threatened to topple regimes across the Arab world during the Arab Spring.

YOUSSEF: Amy?

HAWTHORNE: Well, I'm not privy to any evidence or information that shows what the current connection is between the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood or other Muslim brotherhood affiliates and the regime in Tehran. I think there are some shared goals and common ideas between the brotherhood and Iran.

It is true that back in the late '70s and early '80s, after the Iranian Revolution, the Iranian Revolution seemed to inspire many people actually even to join the Muslim Brotherhood, because it was seen as a successful example of overthrowing a secular regime and replacing it with a religious regime.

But I think we also need to keep in mind that there are a lot of differences, very, very significant differences between the Muslim Brotherhood's ideas, goals, tactics, but, most important, their ideas and the ideas of the Islamic Republic. There might be some alignment, but there's also a lot of difference and divergence as well in terms of the ideas.

TADROS: I think, ideologically, Hassan al-Banna viewed Shias as brothers and as potential partners. He did not have the Wahhabi position on Shias, for example. The reality has been based on each country's circumstances.

In Bahrain, and Kuwait for that matter, the Muslim Brotherhood is extremely anti-Iranian and, for that matter, even anti-Shia. They've been allies of the ruling families there and, certainly in the case of Bahrain, against the Shia majority.

In other cases, there's very clear collaboration. Hamas, for example, in Gaza. In other cases, there's an ideological admiration. The Tunesian and Nahda, for example, when it started, their magazine had the pictures of three thinkers on there. It was Hassan al-Banna, Abul A'la Maududi of Pakistan, and Ali Shariati from Iran. There's certainly some ideological admiration for the success of the Iranian Revolution for the example that they offered.

In the case of the Egyptian, I think it has been – They view Iran as a successful Islamic state. In some cases, they want to do like them. In other cases, they also are pressured by the reality of the Salafi attack on them.

It's a common criticism by Salafis in their competition for members and recruits with the Brotherhood, to say that the Brotherhood are not rigid in issues of religion enough, "These guys, they're not the real thing because they are willing to deal with Shias," and so on. It needs to keep always a very tough balance in that regard.

YOUSSEF: Let's go to the front here.

ROY: Hello. I'm Justin with IRI. My question is do we know which way the administration is leading? Are they looking more at a selective approach to this or a blanket approach? If it's the blanket approach, how does it affect governments practically like Morocco or Jordan or even Yemen where there are members of the government who are part of these parties?

HAWTHORNE: Tunisia.

SCHANZER: I think from what we can discern, the administration has at least voiced support for the FTO approach for the State Department's foreign terrorist organization designation, which, again, I don't see there being a problem of making an assessment.

I do think that bureaucratically it's going to pose problems, which is why I'm suggesting an alternative, that if the policy is to begin to address the radicalization and the challenges that stem from the Muslim Brotherhood, then we've got to do it legally, we've got to do it in a way that is bureaucratically digestible, and it is not going to disrupt our bilateral relations with allies like Tunisia or Morocco.

This has been the approach that I've actually been suggesting to folks on the Hill as well as to the administration for the last two years, that you can certainly try this approach if you like, that blanket designation. It's going to be hard. Again, mentioning that you've got 92 countries where the Brotherhood, by last count, is operating, to have all of them fit within this umbrella designation and to not have disruptions of diplomacy as a result of it, you've got a lot of headaches brewing.

Instead, target the ones that are going to have a minimal fallout in terms of diplomacy, easier to meet criteria, the evidence is there, the packages to build them within the bureaucracy are smaller and easier to pass through.

This is the pragmatic approach that I'm suggesting in the event, and what I would say is in the likely event, that the bureaucratic approach at the State Department indeed fails.

YOUSSEF: Amy? I saw you taking notes there.

HAWTHORNE: I don't have any information about how the process is unfolding inside the administration, but I would remind all of you that just a little over two years ago, the U.S. government underwent the exact same process because President Trump, reportedly at that time, was interested in potentially designating the Muslim Brotherhood or affiliated groups. The U.S. government went through that process, and Secretary Tillerson decided that he did not support the designation because reportedly the evidence was not there.

I'm really asking what has changed out there in the world in the last two years that would make things different today than just two years ago when the same administration went through this process.

I think that if we are talking about using U.S. terrorism legal tools to combat terrorism, we do have many, I think, effective tools to do that. If we're talking about using those tools to target radicalization, in terms of radical ideas, I don't think those tools are the best fit.

SCHANZER: They wouldn't meet criteria.

HAWTHORNE: I think it's really important that we distinguish and keep in mind the distinction between violent and non-violent groups. If the U.S. government ends up, say, theoretically, hypothetically, designating groups or people or movements that may have hateful ideas, abhorrent ideas to many of us, but are not engaged in violence, then we really lose the distinction between what is terrorism.

Terrorism is about violence. I think it's really important that the U.S. government use the diplomatic and legal and policy tools at its disposal to maintain the distinction between the groups that have stayed on a non-violent path for their own tactical reasons perhaps, for instrumental reasons. But the important thing is they are not engaged in violence as an organization. They are not engaged in terrorism.

And the groups or people who have engaged in terrorism. We need to make a distinction between those two groups, because if we don't, the whole idea of combating terrorism, fighting terrorism as terrorism, as violence against politically motivated violence against non-combatants breaks down. Then we're basically using terrorist tools to fight a whole range of things that are basically ideas and not actions. Up until now, our law has been based on actions and on our definition of terrorism and not on ideology.

I would just say that, from my perspective, as someone who's very interested in human rights and liberal ideas and democratization as a long-term solution in the Arab world to a lot of the problems that it's facing and the blowback on us, success of administrations, the Bush administration, the Obama administration, now the Trump administration, have really failed to come up with any plausible policy to engage in a long-term struggle of ideas to counter the abhorrent ideas that apparently the Muslim Brotherhood espouses and, apparently, many people around the world and in the Arab world support.

Where is our plan? Where is the U.S. government's plan to counter that, to change the circumstances and the environment of this region that leads a significant minority of people to join this group and other groups?

That's really what we need to be talking about, and every administration has fallen completely short, including this one, unfortunately. I see nothing coming out of the Trump administration on this.

YOUSSEF: Sam, I wonder if we could tackle part of the question, sort of look at one country in particular. Jordan comes to mind because there's such a fragile piece that they've achieved there with this relationship with the Muslim Brotherhood.

How does this discussion, do you think, impact U.S. -Jordanian relations? If I'm Jordan, I'm seeing this discussion going on in the Trump administration, given the points that Amy and Jonathan have brought up, how do you think that that could affect that relationship? How much do you think that would reshape things?

TADROS: I think Jordan, obviously, wouldn't welcome this because they think their approach of managed control of the group is the right one given their own circumstances. The reality is that such a designation, I don't think the designation will be given for the reasons that both Jonathan and Amy have mentioned. I think there's no way the bureaucracy is going to come up with a legal case that would declare the whole organization worldwide.

But if such a thing would happen, I think it would have mixed results in the sense of we've had cases where the Muslim Brotherhood, under pressure, has become much more pragmatic. The Tunisian case comes to mind. After especially the coup in Egypt, after the assassinations of two opposition figures there, the Nahda finally decided to give up power because it felt that if it didn't, it would lose too much. It would lose everything.

In some cases, I think an attack on the brotherhood or more pressure on the Brotherhood would result in more pragmatic approaches, not necessarily they're not going to become our ideal of what politics in the region should be but might push in that direction.

In others, of course, it's going to push people to say that "Your approach is not working. Why don't you try the others' approach?" "I mean the Islamic State had the famous quote after the Brotherhood fell in Egypt of, "Because we knew that they would never allow you, we chose the bullets and not the ballots." That was an argument that made sense to many people.

I think the reality is that if such a designation happens, in some cases, the Brotherhood's going to move in both directions and governments are going to attempt to deal with that. In some cases, the UAE, the Saudis, the Egyptians are going to succeed in putting pressure on these regimes to then follow suit. "If the US itself has done that, why don't you follow our approach?"

YOUSSEF: This way. Yes, sir?

DUNNE: Thank you very much. Charles Dunne from the Arab Center Washington. Thanks for a very illuminating discussion. It's been really very helpful and useful.

We've been talking quite a bit about the application of U.S. law and how it can be specifically applied to the Muslim Brotherhood. I would like to raise another law, which is the law of unintended consequences here. I'm wondering whether there might be some.

Jonathan, of course, alluded to the intra-Sunni struggle in the Arab world, with countries aligned against each other, and the Muslim Brotherhood issue, which was one of the issues that divide them. I mean, obviously, whether we put our finger on the scale of that has consequences for U.S. policy in the region, as we've been talking a little bit about.

The other unintended consequence I worry about a bit is the domestic consequence of designating the Muslim Brotherhood writ large, or even the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, as a foreign terrorist organization and what that can do to internal politics and internal U.S. attitudes towards American Muslims and whether it might be empowering those who would use this to further embitter our politics with some various serious potential consequences. I'm just curious as to the panel's view on this particular subject. Thank you.

SCHANZER: Oh, you're going to throw me under the bus for this one. Look, I think you asked two fascinating questions, and these are not easy ones to handle. If you ask me, from my personal perspective, about whether we should be putting our finger on this scale, look, I would say that despite some of the challenges that we have with some of these Sunni Arab states, and we know what many of them are, ideologically speaking, joining with them to reject the Brotherhood and the ideology of the Islamic Republic of Iran is in our interest, in my view.

How we do that is another story entirely, and I don't think that we should designate just because we want to throw our support to these regimes. I think we should do it because it meets criteria, because it furthers American objectives.

But I see no problem in pushing back on either of these toxic ideologies. I do see them as being really two of the primary, not the only ones but they are primary challenges that we're dealing with in the region. It just so happens that these Arab states are on our side, and I think we should support them for it. I'm assuming we'll have a bit of disagreement here on the panel about that.

As for the domestic fallout, what I can say is this. Without getting into the specific names of the different organizations that are associated with the brotherhood, we have seen problematic behavior on the part of a number of these groups. I think that the way that we have addressed it internally initially was through confrontation. In the last decade or so, I think it's been through cooption.

I don't think that either one of those have succeeded. I actually know now, and this is something that continues to shock me, we have not seen a designation, the shutting down of a charity here in the United States for terrorism grounds since 2009. That's something the U.S. government brags about, that we haven't done this.

This is shocking to me because we know that there are groups that are active in this country that are doing things that they shouldn't be, financing a terrorism and the like. I think we ought to be addressing –

Again, we should be looking at behavior. We should be looking at are they financing terrorism? If they are, we should be addressing it as such, not because of ideology but if ideology and the financing of terrorism happen to come together, we should make that clear that this is a trend and a problem that we continue to be forced to address.

HAWTHORNE: Can I –

YOUSSEF: - Absolutely.

HAWTHORNE: - Follow up on that?

YOUSSEF: Such a great question.

HAWTHORNE: Yeah, it is an excellent question, the law of unintended consequences. It depends on - let's say that if the Trump administration proceeds with a terrorist designation of the Brotherhood writ large or affiliated groups, what have you, I mean depending on how that decision is made and how it's applied, there could potentially be very troubling civil liberties implications here in the United States.

If there is a decision made about designation as terrorist organizations that is not based on evidence of terrorist activity but ideas, one can imagine how that would create very troubling precedence.

I think it really depends. We don't know how it's going to be defined and how it's going to be applied. But I would just mention, we're talking about terrorism here today, one of the things that the U.S. government, like any government, has to do is it has to make decisions about how to prioritize resources and actions and the attention of senior government officials to combat different threats, because the U.S. government, like any government, can't do everything.

One of the things that I find so strange about this whole discussion, the fact that we're even discussing this, is that, in my view, we have a very serious terrorist threat in our own country that comes from white supremacism. I would like to see the Trump administration discussing how to deal with that when we see these groups, these movements who have attacked and killed Americans, American citizens in our country.

When we talk about the Muslim Brotherhood, it's very difficult for me. Of course, I'm not privy to intelligence information. I'm not working in the U.S. government. But it's very difficult for me to see how that group poses a threat to U.S. security that is greater than the actual threats that we see emerging.

I mean two synagogues have been attacked and people slaughtered while worshipping by avowed and declared white supremacists. Where is the U.S. government response to that

problem? I would like to see a reprioritization of this and an addressing of things that I think are really scary and really threatening to us living here in the United States as Americans every day.

YOUSSEF: Sam, and then Jonathan, I'd like you – It's a great point, but I'm curious, so even this discussion of designating the Muslim Brotherhood as an FTO, does it stoke frustrations? Is it a rallying point potentially for the Brotherhood from domestic support here?

TADROS: I mean there are some that have attempted to paint the designation that this will anger the Muslim world. That's conflicting the brotherhood and Islamists with Muslims. The vast majority of Muslims, as we know, have not supported these groups, Indonesia being the largest, for example, Muslim majority country, and in other cases.

There is no doubt, that's true, people who came here are students in the '50s and '60s. The Muslim Brotherhood played an instrumental role in establishing many of these Muslim organizations that we have today in the United States.

It is also true that these organizations, over time, have become more American. People have been born here, they become second generation. These ties have become much, much weaker over time. We see, for example, when some of the brotherhood leaders, their representatives from Egypt come to the United States, or attempt to rally, we see them attending some of these conferences.

But on the whole, these organizations do not have the kinds of leagues with the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood as they used to do, say, in the '60s or '70s, when the brotherhood again was instrumental in establishing them.

In terms of the impact on anti-Muslim sentiment, I think it depends on the facts. I mean if we take Jonathan's approach and say the story I mentioned, we know that Mohamed Kamal, the deceased leader, played an instrumental role. He ordered the formation of some of these units. He's dead now, but let's say we designate him. He's received money from an organization here. Then the facts stand for the facts. Then there's nothing to do.

I don't think the question of the sentiments should be part of the conversation. But that's, again, assuming a very specific approach based on the facts of clear ties in support of clear acts and not just an overall statement.

YOUSSEF: Jonathan?

SCHANZER: Yeah. Look, just to reiterate, what I'm advocating for in general is conduct-based sanctions that are based on law. As I mentioned, if you have terrorist groups or individuals here that are supporting terrorist groups through financing or other kind of material support, technical support, whatever it is, our laws stipulate that we can and should designate them and that we should not be thinking about the politics of this. We should be upholding our laws. I guess there could be fallout, but there has been for decades now as we've wrestled with this battle of ideas.

Now just one issue that I do want to address. Amy mentioned the issue of white supremacist terror. There's no doubt that we're seeing an uptick in this. Based on conversations that I've had with friends in the intelligence community, we are addressing this. We are reallocating resources to address a growing problem. That's a law enforcement issue. That's an intelligence issue.

What we're talking about here is a bureaucratic one. We're not actually, by looking at the brotherhood and whether we see grounds for designation of some of its groups, all of its – whatever it is, that's not taking away from our ability to fight other violent extremists. It's not one or the other. It's not binary.

We are talking about taking a handful of people from within the bureaucracy and asking them to look at a specific problem set to see whether it comes back positive, to see whether it meets criteria. If it does, then we can have the additional conversation about what the political fallout might be with some of our allies, et cetera.

But let's not make this an either/or. I think we should be able to walk and chew gum here. I know our bureaucracy has its challenges, but I do think that we should be able to carve out a small piece of treasury and state, really a handful of people, to be able to make this assessment. It's been on our radar for a long time. There's no reason not to look at it. What we do with the evidence after that, that's for the inter-agency discussions that we will not be privy to. That's what they will decide.

YOUSSEF: We have just a couple of minutes, so I want to squeeze in one more question right here.

RAVIV: Thank you. Dan Raviv of i24 News. Maybe especially Amy and Sam. Sorry, Jon. My question is I can see why the United States has its criteria and would oppose ideologically and in terms of action, Amy, as you said, what the Muslim Brotherhood and the associated groups do. But could you just inform us, in their ideology and in their media, are they into attacking the United States and Americans or U.S. interests clearly among their targets when they take action?

TADROS: Do you want to –

HAWTHORNE: I'm not sure I understood the question. Sorry.

TADROS: Do they target Americans?

YOUSSEF: Is the –

HAWTHORNE: In their rhetoric –

RAVIV: Muslim Brotherhood groups, do they target the United States in terms of ideology and speeches and also in terms of violence, Amy? Do they target the U.S.? Maybe the MB are just into targeting their home governments.

HAWTHORNE: I mean I'll let – Can I answer first and then defer to you?

TADROS: Yeah, yeah. Definitely.

HAWTHORNE: Definitely there is many, many examples of Muslim Brotherhood affiliated groups, Muslim Brotherhood members making very anti-American statements in their various media outlets. Indeed, the context in which the Muslim Brotherhood was founded in 1928 was against British imperialism, westernization, British colonialism in Egypt and the Middle East. As time has gone on and Britain receded as the leading global power in the region and the United States became the dominant global power in the Middle East, the U.S. has become the major rhetorical target.

I would say that the Muslim Brotherhood is an anti-western organization, and you see those ideas propagated in its rhetoric, sometimes in its media. Unfortunately, they are not the only group in the region, in the Middle East, to propagate those ideas.

Sadly, from time to time, we see basically very similar rhetoric coming out of the official state organs. For example, the Egypt state media or, in the past, especially the Saudi state-controlled media. The Muslim Brotherhood does not have a monopoly on anti-western ideas, anti-Semitism, illiberal ideas. Sadly, this is the state of the region. Even those who we consider our friends sometimes propagate or endorse these same ideas.

In terms of violent acts of terrorism against American citizens, I'm not aware of any – Except I mean, of course, Hamas, which is an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood and has been designated as an FTO since –

SCHANZER: Early '90s.

HAWTHORNE: Early '90s. Hamas has killed American citizens, I believe, in its acts of terrorism. Off the top of my head, I can't think of other examples of targeting American citizens.

TADROS: Maybe Islah in Yemen might be –

SCHANZER: Islah also.

TADROS: Yeah. It might be another.

SCHANZER: Anwar al-Awlaki was actually given help and assistance by the Islah Party, which is one of the reasons why I recommend that as a –

HAWTHORNE: And he was also given help and assistance by the Yemeni government, which was our ally and the recipient – So this is a very complicated picture.

SCHANZER: We use the word "ally" very loosely.

HAWTHORNE: Well, partner.

TADROS: I mean Yemen, Libya, Hamas are the three clear cases where we've had action. As Amy said, I think the anti-western attitude is there, very clear. The west is blamed for everything. As Amy said, it's not just the brotherhood, it's also the regime.

The Muslim Brotherhood year in power was either a western conspiracy to put the Muslim Brotherhood in power, and they are allies of the west. That's from the anti-brotherhood rhetoric. Or the removal was an anti-western conspiracy where the army plays the role of the agent of the west. That's the common rhetoric in the region.

In terms of specific targeting, I don't know in the case of Egypt of individuals. We obviously had the targeting of multinationals that are originally from America, so things like McDonald's or other companies that were targeted during that phase where, again, it was an American-born ideologue, Shahid Bolsen, who rationalized that campaign.

Other than that, I'm not aware of actually the killings or targeting of Americans in specific. We've had one incident of attack on foreigners by one of these splinter groups, if we want to call it this, where Hasm attempted to place a bomb. It was a small bomb in the Myanmar's embassy, the Burmese embassy in Cairo. That was the one incident where I think one of these groups targeted non-Egyptian in their actions.

YOUSSEF: We'll have to leave it there because we've run out of time. But I just want to thank the panel. Not only did we talk about a lot of issues, how to think about the MB, how to think about the threat, how to think about the consequences, but we've done so in a really nuanced way. I just want to thank the panel for that because I think it's been a very illuminating conversation. I'd ask you to join me in thanking our panelists for such a wonderful conversation.