

Fwd: Smear piece on UAE and FDD



John Hannah

Tue 8/16/2016 5:43 PM

To: Yousef Al Otaiba (otaiba7@hotmail.com) ↗

⬆️ 🟢 📧 ↩️ Reply

You replied on 8/18/2016 6:56 AM.



Look at that United Arab..

15 KB



ATT00001.htm

1 KB

2 attachments (16 KB) Download all Save all to OneDrive - Personal

Hi Ambassador. Hope you're well. Passing on the attached article from a mid-size Turkish daily that pairs the UAE and FDD, among others, as co-conspirators behind Turkey's coup. Honored that we're in your company.

Hope to see you soon. JH

Mon, May 22, 2017 5:53 PM

Re: invitation

From: Yousef Al Otaiba <otaiba7@hotmail.com>

To: Robert Gates <rmgates25@aol.com>

Even better.

Please let me know next time you're in town and i'll buy you lunch.

MBZ sends his best from abu dhabi. He says 'give them hell tomorrow.'

From: Robert Gates

Sent: Monday, May 22, 2017 5:52 PM

To: Yousef Al Otaiba

Subject: Re: invitation

Yousef,

Thanks. Happily it's not a speech but a fireside chat. But I think I'll have the chance to put some folks on notice.

Maybe the next time I'm in town, I'll be here long enough to see you. It's been too long.

Bob

From: John Hannah
Sent: Monday, April 24, 2017 5:47 PM
To: Yousef Al Otaiba
Subject: Re: Proposed FDD Agenda for Exchanges with UAE Experts

Yousef: one other thing. If appropriate on your end, Schanzer (who is in AD from evening 11th thru early morning 13th) and I would like to request a meeting with Dahlan, if he's willing and available.

Thanks, again.

JH

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 24, 2017, at 6:32 AM, Yousef Al Otaiba <otaiba7@hotmail.com> wrote:

John,

This is perfect. You're absolutely right, it should not be too prescriptive. Our folks simply wanted to have an idea of the topics so they can prepare before you arrive and have solid answers and information for you.

I will confirm the dates for you by today or tomorrow at the latest.




Re: Forbes: Why is Qatar Hosting Terrorists Like Hamas?



John Hannah <jhannah@Defenddemocracy.org>

Fri 4/28, 10:44 AM

You

   Reply | v

Hah. Bu don't move the hotel. Of course not. Just force Hamas to reschedule at a different venue not owned by Emiratis. Remind people that they're MB and a designated error group.

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 28, 2017, at 10:34 AM, Yousef Al Otaiba <otaiba7@hotmail.com> wrote:

How's this, you move the base then we'll move the hotel :-)

From: John Hannah
Sent: Friday, April 28, 2017 9:59 AM
To: Yousef Al Otaiba
Subject: Re: Forbes: Why is Qatar Hosting Terrorists Like Hamas?

Yes, we should try to move the base. But why is it unfair? If the Marriott was hosting a Hamas/MB event in Doha, shouldn't we complain as well?

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 28, 2017, at 9:50 AM, Yousef Al Otaiba <otaiba7@hotmail.com> wrote:

Shouldn't we trying to move the base??

I don't think it's fair to point the finger at an Emirati company on this one.

From: John Hannah
Sent: Friday, April 28, 2017 9:50 AM
To: Yousef Al Otaiba
Subject: Re: Forbes: Why is Qatar Hosting Terrorists Like Hamas?

So I guess the question is why would an Emirati company agree to host in Doha a major propaganda re-branding sham undertaken by a US-designated terrorist organization that was engineered by the Muslim Brotherhood-loving Qataris? Shouldn't we be making these things more difficult, not less?

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 28, 2017, at 9:30 AM, Yousef Al Otaiba <otaiba7@hotmail.com> wrote:

From: Foad Mardukhi (EAA) <foad.mardukhi@eaa.gov.ae>
Sent: Friday, April 28, 2017 8:23 AM
To: 'otaiba7@hotmail.com'; Richard Mintz (richard.mintz@harbourgrp.com)
Cc: Simon Pearce (EAA)
Subject: Forbes: Why is Qatar Hosting Terrorists Like Hamas?

Richard Minter is an award-winning investigative journalist and has written three New York Times best-selling books on foreign policy including his latest, [Leading From Behind](#). Previously he was an editorial page writer and columnist for the [Wall Street Journal](#) in Brussels, a member of the investigative reporting team of the [Sunday Times](#) in London and vice president and editorial page editor for the [Washington Times](#)

<image002.jpg>

[Opinion 4/28/2017](#)

Why is Our Ally Qatar Hosting Terrorists Like Hamas?

By Richard Minter

One week after hosting U.S. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis, Qatar will be hosting a conference by Hamas. Is there a better symbol of Qatar's two-faced foreign policy?

Hamas, the Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, is officially designated as a terrorist

From: John Hannah <jhannah@Defenddemocracy.org>
Sent: Monday, May 8, 2017 4:44 PM
To: Yousef Al Otaiba
Subject: Qatar-Muslim Brotherhood event

Hi Yousef. Wanted to highlight this major conference we're hosting on May 23rd at the Fairmont. We're going to drill in on Qatar and the MB. It would be great if you and other embassy analysts could honor us with your attendance. It would also be enormously helpful if you could help spread the word about the conference to others around town who share our deep concern and interest in these issues.

Thanks and all best,

John

Dear Ambassador Otaiba,

I hope all is well. **On behalf of FDD, I wanted to be sure you received an invitation for FDD's upcoming conference on Tuesday, May 23, [Qatar and the Muslim Brotherhood's Global Affiliates: A New U.S. Administration Considers New Policies](#)**, taking place from 8am to 2pm at the Fairmont Hotel in Washington, DC.

I hope you'll join FDD, in partnership with the Hudson Institute and The George Washington University's Center for Cyber & Homeland Security, as we explore the nuance behind the headlines and look at how U.S. policy can address this complex threat. It promises be a very timely and dynamic morning of discussions.

We'd be honored to host you and any colleagues of yours that might be interested in joining us in our distinguished audience. Kindly let us know if you can make it or you are welcome to register directly [here](#).

We'll be announcing the agenda very soon. In the interim, scroll down or visit our [event website](#) to see our current lineup of speakers.

I hope to see you on the 23rd.

Best regards,
John

Confirmed speakers include:

- **Mokhtar Awad**, Research Fellow in the Program on Extremism at The George Washington University
- **Tom Gjelten**, Correspondent with NPR News
- **Amb. Husain Haqqani**, former Ambassador of Pakistan to the U.S. and Director for South and Central Asia at the Hudson Institute
- **Jenna Lee**, Anchor at Fox News Channel
- **Mary Beth Long**, former U.S. Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs and Nonresident Fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies

From: John Hannah <jpwhannah@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, April 23, 2017 10:02 PM
To: otaiba7@hotmail.com
Subject: Proposed FDD Agenda for Exchanges with UAE Experts

Dear Yousef:

Thank you again for agreeing to help facilitate a visit to the UAE by a 3-person delegation of regional experts from the Foundation for Defense of Democracies. As discussed, our primary goal is to establish an ongoing professional relationship with the UAE's top governmental experts on various aspects of the Middle East. As a starting point, we are proposing several days of policy-relevant discussions on a range of important topics. With an eye to imposing some loose structure on the meetings, I am forwarding a broad notional agenda of several areas that we hope to explore in some depth. But please do not view this outline as an artificial straight jacket. It's at best a starting point. We very much are hoping that our exchanges can be relatively freewheeling and open, taking their own natural course and laying a strong foundation for future mutually beneficial cooperation between our respective institutions. I'm confident that both sides will find the interactions helpful to our joint work to advance our common interests in enhancing regional security and stability. Thank you, again, and my very best regards.

With deep respect and appreciation,

John Hannah
Senior Counselor, the Foundation for Defense of Democracies

Proposed Agenda for Foundation for Defense of Democracies Exchange with UAE Government Experts

June 11-14, 2017

FDD Participants

Mark Dubowitz — CEO
Jonathan Schanzer — VP for Research
John Hannah — Senior Counselor

Sunday evening, June 11, 2016

— (If possible) Introductory dinner with Jonathan Schanzer, John Hannah and UAE Experts

Monday, June 12, 2016

1. Qatar

Share assessments of Qatar's troubling regional role, including:

- Qatar as a permissive jurisdiction for terrorism finance
- Qatar support for radical Islamists (Muslim Brotherhood, Al Qaeda, Syrian and Libyan extremists, Hamas, the Taliban, etc.)
- Qatar's destabilizing role in Egypt, Syria, Libya, the Gulf
- Al Jazeera as an instrument of regional instability and radicalization

Discuss possible U.S./UAE policy responses to coerce and/or induce better behavior from Qatar

- Reducing source of Qatari leverage, especially U.S. dependence on Al Udeid
- Terrorism designations
- Political, economic, security sanctions?

2. Muslim Brotherhood

Share assessments on the nature, structure, status of the global movement and how best to combat it

- Do sufficient grounds exist to designate and sanction the global movement?
- If not, what individual MB affiliates can most easily be designated?
- Are new tools needed to weaken and delegitimize the movement. e.g., a new sanctions category for those fueling the ideology of radical Islamism?

3. Turkey

Share assessments of Turkish developments

- Implications of Erdogan's executive presidency

Proposed FDD Agenda for Exchanges with UAE Experts

- Erdogan's regional role and ambitions
- Role of Islamism in Erdogan's policies and goals
- The Kurdish issue
- Turkish policy toward Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Iran, Libya, the Gulf, Israel, Russia, Europe

Discussion of possible U.S./UAE policy responses to coerce/induce better Turkish behavior

- Political, economic, security tools

4. Saudi Arabia

Share assessment of changes in Saudi leadership and policies

- Vision 2030
- Saudi foreign, defense and counter-terrorism policies
- Saudi internal challenges: economic, political, social, religious
- Saudi relations with the U.S., Russia, China, regional players
- Saudi role in delegitimizing global jihadism

Discuss possible U.S./UAE policy responses to maximize support for Saudi stability and success

- Political, economic, security tools

5. Open Discussion

- Possible topics: Rapid general assessments of situations in Egypt, Libya, Palestinian politics, Iraq, KRG, ISIS, Syria, Oman

Tuesday, June 13, 2017: Day-long exchange on Iran

1. Internal Iranian politics

- Outlook for May 17 presidential elections
- Elite power dynamics: Supreme Leader, IRGC, Rouhani, etc.
- Economic situation
- Societal cleavages: minorities, workers, women, students, the bazaar
- Regime stability and vulnerabilities
- Supreme Leader succession?

Discussion of possible U.S./UAE policies to positively impact Iranian internal situation

- Political, economic, military, intelligence, cyber tools
- Likely Iranian responses and counter measures

2. Iranian regional aggression and support for terrorism

- Iranian goals, capabilities, strategies
- Yemen
- Syria
- Iraq
- Lebanon

Proposed FDD Agenda for Exchanges with UAE Experts

- Bahrain
- Palestinian territories
- Afghanistan
- Saudi?
- Persian Gulf (maritime)

Discuss possible U.S./UAE policy responses to contain and defeat Iranian aggression

- Political, economic, military, intelligence, cyber tools
- Likely Iranian responses and counter measures

3. Iranian-Russian relations

- Evolving nature of relationship
- Russian and Iranian perspectives
- Possibility for splits?

Assessing broader implications of renewed Russian role in Middle East

- Political, military, strategic significance
- What does Putin want?

Discussion of possible U.S./UAE policy response to contain Russian troublemaking

- Possibility of cooperation?
- Political, economic, military tools
- Likely Russian responses

4. JCPOA and Iranian Ballistic Missile Program

- Share assessments of JCPOA
- Ripping up vs. strictly enforcing vs. amending
- Iranian perspectives of JCPOA: to cheat or comply?
- European, Russian, Chinese positions
- What does strict enforcement look like?
- How can the JCPOA be amended, especially eliminating sunset clauses

Share assessments of ballistic missile program

- Political, economic, military, intelligence, cyber tools to combat program
- Likely Iranian responses

Wednesday, June 14, 2017 and Thursday, June 15, 2017

Requested meetings for John Hannah and Mark Dubowitz with senior UAE officials (depending on availability):

- HH Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed
- HH Sheikh Tanoun bin Zayed
- HH Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed
- HH Sheikh Khalid bin Mohammad bin Zayed
- HE Ali Al Shamsi

Proposed FDD Agenda for Exchanges with UAE Experts

- Khaldoun Mubarak
- Dr. Anwar Gargash

Subject: Re: Saudi piece
From: Yousef Al Otaiba <otaiba7@hotmail.com>
Date: 21-Apr-17 9:10 PM
To: "Ignatius, David" <David.Ignatius@washpost.com>
BCC: Abdullah Bin Zayed <abz@mofa.gov.ae>

David,

Thank you for taking the time to go out there and meet with MBS. As someone who knows the region well, it looks from how you wrote this piece, that you are beginning to see what we've been seeing for the last two years. Change!

Change in attitude, change in style, change in approach.

I think we would all agree these changes in Saudi are much needed. So I'm relieved to find that you saw what we've been seeing and frequently trying to convey. Your voice and your credibility will be a huge factor in getting reasonable folks to understand and believe in what's happening.

Our job now, is to do everything possible to ensure MBS succeeds.

Thank you David.

Yousef

From: Ignatius, David <David.Ignatius@washpost.com>
Sent: Friday, April 21, 2017 1:21 AM
To: Yousef Otaiba
Subject: Saudi piece

A young prince is reimagining Saudi Arabia. Can he make his vision come true?
<http://wapo.st/2oVEjn2>

NYT profile of MBS (must-read; HH MBZ mentioned)



Foad Mardukhi (EAA) <foad.mardukhi@eaa.gov.ae>

Sat 10/15/2016, 2:24 PM

You; Richard Mintz (richard.mintz@harbourgrp.com) ↵

👍 📧 📧 ↩ Reply | ▾

Inbox

4300 words.

Here's the section of the profile on AD:

His desire to reimagine the Saudi state is reflected in his admiration — some even call it envy — for the kingdom's more modern and progressive neighbor in the Persian Gulf, the United Arab Emirates.

He has influential supporters in this effort, particularly the crown prince of Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, who for more than a year has been promoting Prince bin Salman in the Middle East and in Washington.

Crown Prince bin Zayed, the United Arab Emirates' de facto ruler, is a favorite among Obama administration officials, who view him as a reliable ally and a respected voice in the Sunni world. But he also has a history of personal antipathy toward Prince bin Nayef, adding a particular urgency to his support for the chief rival of the Saudi crown prince.

In April of last year, Mr. Obama's national security adviser, Susan E. Rice, led a small delegation of top White House officials to visit Prince bin Zayed at his home in McLean, Va. During the meeting, according to several officials who attended, the prince urged the Americans to develop a relationship with Prince bin Salman.

The New York Times

Rise of Saudi Prince Shatters Decades of Royal Tradition

By [MARK MAZZETTI](#) and [BEN HUBBARD](#) OCT. 15, 2016



Qatar and the Muslim Brotherhood's Global Affiliates: New U.S. Administration Considers New Policies

Event Summary and Notes

The Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, in collaboration with the Hudson Institute and George Washington University's Center for Cyber & Homeland Security, hosted a conference titled, "Qatar and the Muslim Brotherhood's Global Affiliates: New US Administration Considers New Policies." At this conference, experts explained the relationship between the US and Qatar, detailed the perceived threat the region and the West senses from the Muslim Brotherhood, and outlined strategies that the new US Administration should employ to address issues of illicit financing and terror in the region. Archived video of the vent can be found [here](#).

Summary

The conference focused on the history, context, and goals of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB), and outlined how the MB's approach to its goals have changed since being ousted in Egypt. The panelists identified Qatar as a regional hub for the Muslim Brotherhood and other organizations deemed as terrorist groups. The various panels provided general background on Qatar's ongoing decision to provide a harbor and venue for hate speech to groups perceived to be terrorist organizations by their neighbors and the West, such as the MB, Hamas, and the Taliban.

In order to provide policy recommendations towards Qatar on this issue, the various experts detailed the complicated issues that have so far inhibited the West and Sunni Gulf states from finding common ground with Qatar on how to deal with these groups.

Overall, the panelists agreed that the US needs to put more pressure on Qatar in order to prompt a change in behavior from the nation. In turn, Qatar needs to prove that it is actively seeking to stop terror financing and any other form of support for terrorism within its borders.

Key Takeaways

- The Muslim Brotherhood is a large organization, which is difficult to fully comprehend because of the various facets of the group and its continuous evolution.
- The goal of the Muslim Brotherhood is to *Islamize* the world in a grassroots manner, they hope to politicize it and achieve state control. The MB is said to have organizations in over 70 states and their plan is to achieve control of those states to unify and create a Caliphate.
- While the Muslim Brotherhood has not been a violent Islamist organization since the 1970s, it never renounced violence, which has allowed for a violent faction within it to rise up since the fall of the MB in Egypt.
- Qatar continues to serve as a safe harbor for the Muslim Brotherhood and provides coverage for their actions, which have been proven to be nefarious and illicit.
- While the government of Qatar does not financially support the Muslim Brotherhood or other terrorist organizations, they have not actively pursued the people within Qatar who financially support terrorist organizations.

- The US still sees Qatar as an important military ally in the region, however this will not be enough for the US to continue seeing Qatar as a friend. The US should keep all options on the table – including the possibility of relocating its Air Force base – in order to gain leverage.
- The recent Arab Summit in Riyadh will serve as an opportunity for Qatar to prove that they are willing to actively work with the United States and their Gulf neighbors to counter the extremist networks operating through its territory. To that end, the US should hold Qatar accountable, and ensure the country is living up to its agreements.
- Qatar can no longer remain a passive actor when it comes to illicit financing and providing venues for extremist dialogues. In order to show that it is a team player, it must clarify many of its policies that have until now been opaque to the public.
- It is important for the US to remain engaged in the Middle East and show its Gulf allies that America will stand by them. However, the Gulf allies need to take the lead in confronting the problems that are in the region.
- For the Qataris, the end goal needs to be behavior change, and transparency is essential to that. The Saudis share data on their efforts to counter illicit financing, while the Qataris still do not.
- We want an effective mutual and respectful partnership with every country in the region. To get there, we need to get on the same page, we need to set out a game-plan, and we need to hold our partners accountable at every stage. This takes resources and focused dedication.

Summaries of various remarks and program panel discussions follow.

Welcome Remarks by FDD President and Founder Clifford D. May

- For fifteen years, the US has tried to understand the ideologies that drive terrorism, that justify terrorism, the movements, state actors, and non-state actors that are responsible for these acts. However, they still have a very long way to go.
- A few weeks ago, Hamas, a Muslim Brotherhood affiliate, designated as a terrorist organization by, among others, governments from the US, UK and the EU, hosted a press conference in Doha, the capital of Qatar to unveil a document of general principals and policies.
- [Qatar] applauded the progress made by Hamas, however, members of FDD have read and translated the document and have been trying to make clear that this is not a new charter nor a turning point in anything they have represented as moderation.
- Instead, they call for a Palestinian government to control all of the land in present day Israel, and advocate for all forms of modern day resistance, a familiar Hamas euphemism for terrorism.
- Qatar hosts Hamas and helps support it, as it does with other Muslim Brotherhood organizations throughout the Middle East. Financiers of Al Qaeda, and other terrorist groups, operate openly and notoriously, as the former Assistant Secretary for Illicit Terror Financing confirmed at an FDD event in February.
- Islamists, such as Yousef Al Qaradawi, have been routinely featured on Al Jazeera, a state funded and controlled media organization.
- At the same time, Qatar hosts the largest US military base in the Middle East, so it is complicated.
- An open discussion on Qatar's activities, some of them nefarious, some of them illicit, is not only helping the vital US interests, but helping the US-Qatari relationship.
- As for the Muslim Brotherhood, it is not a force for moderation, it does not stand for freedom or democracy. But it also is not necessarily a homogenous movement that qualifies for a blanket designation as a terrorist organization.

Keynote Discussion

- **Dr. Robert Gates, former Secretary of Defense (2006-2011)**
- **Moderator: Jenna Lee, Anchor at Fox News Channel**

How do we better protect ourselves [from attacks such as the one that occurred last night in Manchester]? The Pentagon announced last week that part of their strategy is to surround all of the terrorists that are [in Syria] and kill them. What do you think of that strategy, and if the diaspora is a threat, do you think it will lead to more attacks like what just happened in Manchester?

- That's a logical strategy, but when you have the numbers of refugees that we've seen coming out of Syria and Iraq, the ability to identify terrorists among those refugees is going to be incredibly difficult.
- I suppose there should be some sort of vetting process, particularly at borders and so on. But until you can get them to a place where they can be vetted, it is going to be very difficult to separate members of ISIS who are fleeing from the refugees.
- My guess is that a substantial number of them will have had already fled.

We just found out about the recent terrorist attack in Yemen. The drone strikes from this administration in just the last months far surpasses the drone strikes carried out by the previous administration in just the last year. What do you think about that strategy in Yemen?

- Yemen has in many ways become a proxy war between Iran and Saudi Arabia. It is important for those in the region to know who our friends are and to support them.
- It is important that we demonstrate to our allies in the region that we will support them, so I think the idea of a greater flexibility of our operations is very important.
- If the President has decided that we should help the Saudis in Yemen, then the greater flexibility that can be given to our troops to support that mission, the better.

Who our friends are and how we define allies is one of the subjects for this conference. I'd like to start with the Muslim Brotherhood – is it a terrorist organization?

- These things have legal and political definitions. The Muslim Brotherhood, in the context of science fiction, are "shape shifters" – they will look like whatever they think you want them to look like.
- Before the events of the Arab Spring, the Muslim Brotherhood went through pains to say that they were moderate and wanted an open democratic process. However, the day they assumed power, it became very clear that Mohamed Morsi intended to become authoritarian, and it didn't take very long until they changed the constitution to embrace Sharia law.
- The one time we have seen the Muslim Brotherhood come to power, they have shown that they are indeed not moderate or democratic.
- Hamas is an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood, it is seen as the ideological forerunner of both Al Qaeda and the ISIS.

Do you think the Muslim Brotherhood should be designated as a terrorist organization?

- There are geographical and generational differences within the Muslim Brotherhood.
- It would be a mistake to see it as a solid block. I think this conference should look into whether there are different factions or whether the organization as a whole should be seen as a terrorist organization.

- President Trump put it well in his remarks in Riyadh: let's forget all of the academic details, this is good versus evil. One of the things I liked about the speech, is the onus it put on the predominantly Islamic countries for them to take internal steps to be aggressive towards these [terrorist organizations].

What are the long-term goals of the Muslim Brotherhood?

- Their goals have not changed since the Brotherhood was founded, and that is to reestablish the Caliphate and impose Sharia law.
- For a long time, Qatar has had a welcome mat out for the MB, and other countries in the region are weary of that welcome mat.
- Qatar has from time to time, and usually under great pressure from their neighbors, expelled members of the MB. However, there is still a long history of Qatar welcoming the MB in and giving them a safe haven.

How effective do you think our country has been in countering the growth of the MB?

- The United States, based on my experience, has not much targeted the MB. We've targeted terrorist organizations and terrorist networks.
- If this conference can determine what chapters of the MB are involved in terrorist activity in one way or another, then we can designate them as such and thus have the basis on which we can act against them.
- I'm sure we've investigated potential financial channels coming from MB resources, and the money being channeled to terrorist networks. If this is not already being done, then it should be done.

What has been your experience with the nation of Qatar, not just through the funding but also as a platform that is given to these particular groups?

- When I began at the Department of Defense in 2006, the relationship between the United States and Qatar was very poor. In fact, no senior American official had been to Qatar for a very long time, for a number of issues. The first was the perceived support from Qatar to our adversaries, such as the concern that Al Jazeera was working against our troops and providing information to our adversaries, as well as Al Jazeera being a platform for people who glorified the killing of American troops.
- Qatar's neighbors considered it to be a pariah because they believed Qatar's policies and Al Jazeera were fomenting instability in the region.
- We have continued to have political issues with the government of Qatar, even as we have been strategic military allies and they have not only invested a lot of money in Al Udeid Airbase, but also given us a lot of freedom in how we use our military from that base.

Should the US consider moving their airbase, Al Udeid, as leverage, based on the relationship you've described we want from the Qataris?

- I don't think anyone should underestimate how much of a process that would undertake.
- Qatar is the only country in the region that allows us to land B-52s. We have done operations out of there for a dozen years, so transitioning away from there would be expensive and a very complicated situation. It would take time to build an alternative facility.
- Nevertheless, it does not serve as leverage on Qatar's part. There are still ways to signal that our patience is running low.

Do you believe Qatar is an ally to the US?

- I definitely believe they are our military ally. They have flown with us in Libya and against ISIS, so yes, I would say they are our ally.
- Qatar wants an important place on the world stage and an important place in the region. They want to have a good relationship with Iran, the Gulf States, the US, Assad, with everybody, so that they can maneuver and play this role on the world stage, which contrasts dramatically with the size of their country.
- The ruling family sees this approach as the most likely to ensure the longevity of the regime in the country.

What are your observations on the President's trip overall?

- The President has successfully been making three points:
 1. Even though the US will continue to abide by the provisions of the nuclear deal [with Iran], nothing has changed on the ground in terms of being against Iran's meddling in the region.
 2. Gulf states need to pull their own weight in dealing with the threats we are facing from extremist groups around the world and in the Middle East.
 3. The continued assurance that the US is an ally of the Gulf States.

The Muslim Brotherhood, Qatar, and the Tools Congress Can Use to Combat Illicit Activities

- *Rep. Ed Royce, Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee*
- *Moderator: Mark Dubowitz, CEO of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies*

We have already talked about it being key to identify the elements of the MB that are actually involved in supporting terrorism and their affiliates. Do you think that is the right approach?

- We are working on new legislation that will designate any entity that operates with or funds the MB, or other terrorists, such as Hamas, to be sanctionable by the US.
- The key is to identify which groups within the MB are extremist and violent, and separate those threats from the MB groups that seek to promote their version of Islamism.
- There are political parties in Jordan, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, etc. that are part of a government coalition who maybe had some of the foundation of the work of the MB but are not committed to violence. That is a different type of organization than Hamas, or other entities trying to overthrow governments in the Middle East.

Hamas is recognized as a terrorist organization but there are still efforts to white wash Hamas by Qatar. Can you give us insight into the view of Congress on Hamas today?

- Hamas' charter is an example of their commitment to violence. Over 400 civilians who have lost their lives due to violence directed by Hamas. Slaughtering civilians is part of what they do.
- I do not see how they differ much from the *modus operandi* of Al Qaeda or ISIS, who believe targeting civilians is what they're supposed to do in this world.
- In the House and Senate we continue to have hearings on the role Hamas plays in promoting violence and destabilizing the region in an effort to understand how we can counter the threat they create.

The Foundation for the Defense of Democracies has categorized Qatar as a 'frenemy' – do you think that's a fair definition?

- It is a country from which financiers help Hamas, Al Qaeda, the Taliban, ISIS. I cannot for the life of me understand why Qatar wants to give a platform to [these organizations].
- It makes no sense for Qatar to think that harboring the worst of these terrorists' leadership will lead to any solution on these organizations' efforts. So, there is going to be a lot of pressure on Qatar to change its behavior.

We have heard about the important asset of the Udeid Airbase, and the notion that there is no replaceable air facility in the region. As a result, the Qataris have leverage over us because of our base in their land. Are you and your colleagues open to alternatives?

- If behaviors do not change there will definitely be an effort to look at alternatives.

Let's switch gears to talk about the MB in Turkey. What is the right approach to dealing with President Erdogan, as Turkey is a key NATO ally? The loss of Turkey would have strategic consequences on the US. Do we need to get tough on Erdogan to see any change?

- We need to make it clear that we are going to stand up for our values. To see the kind of violence we saw here in the United States carried out by his bodyguards last week is unacceptable.
- We should have a platform on social media, TV, radio, etc. in which we allow a discussion on what is happening to liberties, rights, etc. in Turkey.
- We have not been as forthright and strong an advocate for freedom as we should have been.

If Qatar does not get the message about the US getting serious over their support for terrorist organizations, at some point should we consider designating Qatar a state sponsor of terrorism?

- We are moving legislation that addresses those states that support terrorist activities in any way.
- If Qatar supports Hamas, then there will be sanctions against Qatar. If they make commitments to stop these acts and do not follow through, then legislation will be made to address those breaches.

The Muslim Brotherhood: Examining the Sum of its Parts

- **Moderator: Tom Gjelten, Correspondent with NPR News**
- **Mokhtar Awad, Research Fellow in the Program on Extremism at The George Washington University**
- **Jonathan Schanzer, Senior Vice President at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies**
- **Samuel Tadros, Senior Fellow at the Hudson Institute's Center for Religious Freedom**
- **Eric Trager, Esther K. Wagner Fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy**

What is the Muslim Brotherhood, how is it changing, and how should the new Administration deal with them?

Eric Trager:

- The Muslim Brotherhood's goal is to Islamize the world in a grassroots manner, they hope to politicize it and achieve state control. The MB is said to have organizations in over 70 states. The plan would be for the MB to achieve control of those states and once they have control, have those states unify to create a Caliphate.
- This is very clear from their literature and their recent speeches before the coup in Egypt. The MB is not a big tent organization or a mainstream movement. It is a cult that takes 5-8 years to

become a member, and every member is vetted to make sure of the person's commitment to the cause. The idea is that a rigid and insular society, which is committed to the same vision, is necessary for achieving this long-term goal of forming a Caliphate.

- The reason the MB was so successful in Egypt after the Arab Spring was because it was the only organized force on the ground in that post-revolutionary period.

We have seen a lot of tension with regards to terminology, in particular with this administration, in reaction to using the term 'Islamic' to describe the movement, and a preference for the word 'Islamist.' How important is that distinction and what exactly does it mean?

Eric Trager:

- It is important in terms of precision – we are talking over 1 billion Muslims across the world who are going to practice their faith in many ways.
- 'Islamist' means someone who is trying to promote their interpretation of Islam in the political sphere. An Islamist is someone who wants to implement Sharia law. The question is: which interpretation of Sharia? And every movement of Islam has a different interpretation of Sharia, which is why there is no consistency. As soon as you say that one interpretation of Sharia is the *only* interpretation of Sharia, you alienate a whole group of Muslims. This is what happened in Egypt after the Muslim Brotherhood came to power.

What has been the consequence of the repression that came after the coup? To what extent is where the MB is at today a response to that coup?

Mokhtar Awad:

- In many ways, the MB is going back to its roots. It has not been practicing violence since the 1970s, as from then onwards it became a non-violent movement.
- However, although the MB became non-violent in the 1970s, the organization never really found violence to be objectionable when it came to achieving this common goal.
- Now, the conversation has become again: *how do we regain power? How do we create resistance after the coup?* Before the coup there was a rising faction within the MB that found violence to be a legitimate way to achieve their goals. That faction is essentially in control now, and so there has been this rising tolerance and explicit support for violence within Egypt's MB for these methods due to what happened, but also because the organization never truly became a pacifist organization. As such, it was not so difficult for MB to resort to the methods we are seeing today.
- The real threat today is the possibility of more and more members of the MB accepting violence as a legitimate tool. This opens the possibility for linkages with other groups such as Al Qaeda. The Brotherhood today is not confined to Egypt, these are conversations that are expanding to Sudan, Turkey, and Qatar.

What are the implications for the diversity within the MB organization for US foreign policy?

Jonathan Schanzer:

- This is something several of us have been thinking about over the last months as we have seen a desire from the new administration to shift policy and designate these people as terrorist organizations.

- Why not look at each of these organizations individually and determine whether each faction meets certain criteria of their own merit to qualify as terrorist organizations?
- Take the politics out and let the intelligence do the talking. Even if they are not designated as terrorist organizations, the Department of Treasury has executive order 13224 – where there's a long list of terrorist groups already. As we gather a list of groups that we deem to be terrorists through these intelligence methods, well then you can start to go after their leadership, their financiers, etc.
- It puts the Brotherhood on notice, and lets them know that they have a choice, knowing that they never renounced violence.
- I do not think it is a problem with Congress coming out with legislation against these entities, my fear is that they try to designate these groups as terrorist organizations but that the qualification doesn't stick. Then MB can come out and say: "See? We are not a terrorist organization."

We now have a huge number of Muslim American in the United States. Many of these organizations were formed by previous forms of the Muslim Brotherhood. How realistic is the fear that MB may have influenced the views of these Muslim Americans in the US?

Samuel Tadros:

- There is no doubt that the MB has formerly operated in the United States. The former President of Egypt, Morsi was recruited from a cell in California in the late 1970s. That tells us that there are activities that the Brotherhood has had in this country.
- The MB is a pretty ineffective organization, they could not even run Egypt for 1 year. This is an organization that could not maintain consistent support for a year. There is a zero percent threat from this organization in the United States.

ISIS and Al Nusra use as a method of recruitment that the West wants to destroy the Sunni world. How will fighting the Muslim Brotherhood effect this narrative?

Eric Trager:

- We are trying to compartmentalize that question – we are seeing the MB as one set of the problem. There is a broader concern about the ideological roots of radicalized Islam. I do not think we see these efforts against ISIS and Al Nusra in line with the Muslim Brotherhood, we are trying to understand how the MB's efforts fit in to the notion of extremism.

Mokhtar Awad:

- Some of the people inside the Syrian MB do finance and support militant groups. However, the Syrian MB is not an organization that we can look at and immediately designate a terrorist organization, especially when it pales in comparison to what is being done by ISIS or Al Nusra.

Samuel Tadros:

- There has been an argument in Washington that if you allow these people to come to power politically, that they will moderate. That has not been the case, as we have seen in Egypt. Only in Tunisia have we seen moderation, and that was only after the pressure that was put on by the general public across Tunisia.

The U.S.-Qatar Relationship: Risks and Rewards

- **Moderator: Jenna Lee, Anchor at Fox News Channel**

- *Husain Haqqani, former Ambassador of Pakistan to the U.S. and Director for South and Central Asia at the Hudson Institute*
- *Mary Beth Long, former U.S. Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs and Nonresident Fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies*
- *Jake Sullivan, former national security adviser to Vice President Joe Biden*
- *David Weinberg, Senior Fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies*

Should we use our airbase in Qatar as leverage to have them change their policy towards organizations we view as extremist, such as with Hamas? We know that Qatar has funded Hamas and MB hate preachers, by bringing them into Qatar to give them a platform to speak?

David Andrew Weinberg:

- When we talk about Qatar's relationship with Hamas, it is important to be precise. Qatar does not directly fund Hamas. They provide domestic infusions inside Gaza that help prop up Hamas' control there.
- When it comes to other terror finance concerns, they are mostly about private individuals that personally finance terrorism. Once these individuals are designated sponsors of terrorism, it is not clear what happens to them within Qatar.
 - It is not clear which of those individuals have been convicted and which of those individuals are behind bars.

Jake Sullivan:

- We need to create a common factual predicate that allows us to have a serious and productive conversation about how to change the equation.
- The first thing I would do is make sure that the intelligence community and the terror finance people at treasury are on the same page. Terror finance is not a big enough priority.
- Concerning the airbase - our goal should not be to shut it down, but we should take a firmer line with our partner. We need to make [supporting terrorist groups] the number one issue in our bilateral partnership.

Amb. Husain Haqqani:

- America struggles to call out allies when they're lying.
- The Department of Defense and State sometimes confuse bureaucratic need for national interests – they should look at fundamental interests, such as containing Islamic radical extremism.
- The airbase is a bureaucratic need: there are other countries that could possibly host the US if Qatar's double dealing becomes too much.

Mary Beth Long:

- My understanding is that there has been substantial progress made on the Qatari's responses to our concerns on terror finance, such as new appointments on the central bank and finance ministers. Does that mean it's a trajectory? I don't know. Do we need to keep the pressure on? Absolutely.
- Concerning the base, I don't see any immediate reasons to move it.

What does real progress look like to you in terms of the Qataris?

David Andrew Weinberg:

- We've seen optimism on this front before, with little results. How many Qatari-linked terror financiers have been prosecuted? I would like more clarity when it comes to what the Qataris are doing. Until now, it has been incredibly opaque.

Amb. Husain Haqqani:

- I have tremendous respect for Secretary Gates, but public praise and private criticism is what gets you Pakistan's nuclear program. You have to figure out what the other side wants. Qatar wanting to punch above its weight in the region is like Luxembourg trying to dictate to Europe.

The Luxembourg scenario is an interesting analogy – is there a double standard? Would we be asking the same questions if this were happening in a different region?

Jake Sullivan:

- Plainly, there are other countries that engage in this behavior that should be talked about. But the Qatari example allows us to clearly look at complicated relationships that America has with countries that act both against and for our interests. China and Russia don't have the same responsibilities towards global order that we do.
- At the end of the day, we're trying to build a security architecture that protects against Iranian expansionism and Sunni extremism. Throwing the Qataris overboard is not prudent policy. A much more clear-eyed approach is to call this out publicly, but in a way in which we can maintain an effective partnership.

Mary Beth

- US interests coincide with Gulf interests. Our past and current presidents have been very public about our need for further support in NATO and with the Gulf states. We need to push them publicly and privately. The last thing we want to do is alienate the Qataris.

How do we assess progress when we're not being clear what the end result is? What exactly do we want from Qatar?

Amb. Husain Haqqani:

- Progress would be if the Treasury Department experts were able to report that the 20 accounts we asked to be closed were closed, and no new ones were opened. The problem is we aren't sure if that means terror finance has completely stopped.

David Andrew Weinberg:

- The end goal needs to be behavior change. Transparency is essential. As far as I'm aware, Qatar doesn't have a list of banned terrorist organizations published. The embassy at Doha provided more detail in the last week than in the past two years. If we're going to address this problem, there needs to be transparent data on this issue. The Saudis share this data and report on it, while the Qataris do not.

What's the risk of the status quo? If everything stayed the same?

Jake Sullivan:

- It's not sustainable. We need to do more to lock it down. The United States needs to do more with Qatar as well as Kuwait and to think about this as a core pillar of our national security. We should be able to talk about these issues publicly without fear that we are completely marring our relationship with the Qataris.

The purpose of terrorism is a tactic to accomplish a political objective. If we're not talking about the ideology and what's wrong with it, while we are talking about combating its primary tactic, are we wasting our time?

Amb. Husain Haqqani:

- I completely agree but America's role in combatting ideology is secondary. Confronting ideology is chiefly a Muslim issue, and it has been slow. There's no Muslim Brotherhood presence in the UAE. Saudi and Kuwait are making progress.

David Andrew Weinberg:

- The 2014 Jeddah Communiqué laid out the key criteria for America's allies in the fight against terrorism. Qatar has failed at two key criteria: bringing terror financiers to justice, and combatting hateful ideology.
- You are still going to see hate preachers all over the Gulf. States are still sponsoring these ideological thinkers.

The definition of terrorism is still interpreted differently from country to country. Groups like Hamas are not designated as terrorists by many countries. What can we do to push a clearer understanding of our perspectives on terrorism and what terrorism financing is?

Mary Beth Long:

- We need to be explicit with our definition. But it's not for us to decide these internal issues within Islam.
- Qatar has decided to act as a safe space for all voices, both negative and positive. The Qataris will have to take responsibility for that position.

At what point will we see what is being done by the Qatari government designated as state sponsored terrorism instead of "negligence" or "turning a blind eye"?

David Andrew Weinberg:

- Never, because the State Department's definition requires an act of commission. However, the Export Administration Act 1979 – Section 6J says that a state that provides safe haven for terrorist operatives/ leaders will be called out by the Secretary of State, and dual use items exported from the US will go through a more stringent licensing process. This has never been invoked against Qatar by the executive or legislative branches. You may see that in the future, it is up to Secretary Tillerson.

What do we do to make a real change?

Amb. Husain Haqqani:

- Terrorism should be abandoned as a political tactic by these groups if they want to be respected in the rest of the world.

- The US needs to rebalance pressure vs alliance. Currently, there's not enough pressure. There is no cost [to Qatar] for harboring terrorists when we depend on them for other things.

Mary Beth Long:

- I sympathize with the ambassador, but on a practical level, it's better to continue to assert pressure without alienating allies. We should hold states accountable.

Jake Sullivan:

- At the start of every administration, presidents make strong statements and then the devil is in the details. I will just say that what we saw here this weekend does not tell us sufficiently what we will see in the next four years.
- We want an effective mutual respectful partnership with every country in the region. To get there, we need to get on the same page, we need to set out a game-plan, and we need to hold our partners accountable at every stage. This takes resources and focus and dedication. Treasury needs to receive more resources.

David Andrew Weinberg:

- There is consensus that we need to continue to keep pressure. I would disagree that we can have a debate as we do not have all the data to make an informed decision.
- Evaluating Qatari conduct is going to be impossible until they prove that they are keeping their commitments. Until we get to that point, I am going to remain skeptical.

Closing Remarks

- *Gen. Charles Wald, Former Deputy Commander of United States European Command*
- *John Hannah, Senior Counselor at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies*

Gen. Charles Wald:

- The Qatar airbase is a fantastic facility. It was built by the French and was unused for a long time. It was opened two weeks before 9/11, after which the US really needed an air base in the region.
- We have had tremendous support from Qatar as a partner and ally from the perspective of our military partnership.
- The situation in the Middle East has evolved dramatically since 2001. We are in the middle of a huge strategic change that is fairly subtle: not just between the GCC nations, but also to include Israel. These shifts are due to the existential threat emanating from Iran, terrorist, and extremists.
- The US needs to decide what the threats in the Middle East are because the confusion is creating enough problems that it is a security threat to our troops.
- The US has many friends in the Middle East, we can go back to Saudi Arabia and the UAE, so we need to stop turning a blind eye to bad behavior.
- I understand the need for diplomacy and negotiations, but we need to draw the line at some point. The point should be drawn at supporting terrorist groups, such as Hamas, the Muslim Brotherhood, etc. by any of our allies. That should start today.

John Hannah:

- There has never been a serious US national security strategy on how to deal with the phenomenon of the Muslim Brotherhood. This is an extraordinary admission of failure.

- This is a gaping hole that needs to be addressed by policy experts. This conference has given us an excellent foundation on how to more effectively deal with these challenges to US interests.
- We need to start targeting the Muslim Brotherhood chapters that clearly meet the requirements as terrorist actors
- Creating legislation that will give the President the ability to target entities that fund or support terrorist organizations, including countries such as Qatar, who provide those Muslim Brotherhood chapters material and financial support.
- We need to ensure that the Muslim Brotherhood seize the mantle of legitimacy as being the authentic voices of Muslims around the world.
- We should remember that Al Qaeda and ISIS are offshoots from the ideologies of the Muslim Brotherhood. The US should be doing everything possible ostracize, isolate and delegitimize them as we would do to any hate group.