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Article 1.

The Washington Post

Avoiding a summer of blood

David Ignatius

June 22 -- “Peace is at hand,” Henry Kissinger famously announced in October 1972 after a seeming breakthrough in Vietnam negotiations. But it wasn’t at hand. It took three more months to complete the Paris Peace Accords, which collapsed in 1975 when North Vietnam overran Saigon.

This Vietnam history is a caution against premature optimism about diplomatic solutions to deeply embedded conflicts, such as the one in Afghanistan. But the fact remains, as is so often stated, that there is no military solution to such conflicts. The challenge is creating a dialogue among people who profoundly mistrust each other — and averting a pell-mell civil war.

President Obama is embracing the logic of a political settlement for Afghanistan with his speech Wednesday night. With Osama bin Laden dead, Obama can claim that America’s core mission of combating al-Qaeda is succeeding. He can bring some troops home and step up diplomatic negotiations with the Taliban to reach a broad peace deal by 2014.

Obama’s strategy for the Afghanistan negotiations highlights two factors that could also be relevant in the increasingly messy conflicts in Libya and Syria. First, the dialogue must be sponsored by people inside the country that’s facing internal strife. The United States may encourage contacts, but the process has to be “Afghan-led,” or “Libyan-led,” or “Syrian-led.” Second, this dialogue requires a regional framework, so that the combatants don’t turn to meddling neighbors for help.

America's secret contacts with the Taliban have made progress partly because President Hamid Karzai wants them to succeed and, perhaps more important, because India, Pakistan, Russia and China are also supporting the outreach process — with silent acquiescence from Iran, too. This regional framework is the real exit ramp that will allow withdrawal of U.S. troops.

Let's think about how this diplomatic model might apply to Libya and Syria. In both cases, the insurgents are seen in the West as the "good guys," battling corrupt, autocratic leaders. Personally, I wish that both Moammar Gaddafi and Bashar al-Assad would give up power tomorrow. But that doesn't seem in the cards: Both leaders have shown they're willing to kill thousands of their citizens to hang on, and the rebel movements in both countries seem too weak to displace the dictators by force. Outside military intervention may seem tempting, but it isn't working very well in Libya, and might fare even worse in Syria.

The right goal in Libya and Syria (as in Afghanistan) is a transition to an inclusive, democratic government — with as little bloodshed along the way as possible. The alternative to such a settlement is a protracted conflict that could mean massacres of civilians and, on present evidence, a bloody stalemate that further destabilizes the region.

It's distasteful to contemplate dialogue with leaders such as Gaddafi and Assad who, to put it bluntly, have blood on their hands. But this approach is worth exploring if it can foster a transition to a democratic government — where the autocrats cede power to a coalition that includes reformist elements of the old regime and the opposition.

An emissary who is close to Gaddafi's inner circle has outlined in recent interviews a Libyan formula for transition. He proposes a gradual transfer of power to a new government that would unite the

rebel Transitional National Council with “reconcilables” from the regime. Gaddafi himself would quit Tripoli and give up power, but this would be an outcome of negotiations, rather than a precondition. State Department officials are skeptical, but they should test the emissary’s ability to deliver.

The Syrian case is also complicated by the blood-soaked history of the regime. In a speech Monday, Assad proposed a national dialogue, in which the democratic opposition would select 100 participants to meet with government representatives — and plan elections and a new constitution. Given Assad’s disappointing record, it’s doubtful that he can or will deliver. But it makes sense to test his offer — not least because such a process would terrify Assad’s patrons in Iran. If the dialogue fails, the Syrian demonstrations will be all the more potent, and Assad’s hold weaker.

These internal dialogues should be bolstered by regional support, as with Afghanistan. The right shepherds for Libya are its newly democratic neighbors, Egypt and Tunisia, backed by France, Britain and Germany. In Syria, the obvious mediator-in-waiting is Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, backed by the Gulf countries. Here’s the point: The Arab Spring should not turn into a summer of blood, if there are diplomatic alternatives.

Article 2.

Project Syndicate

The Middle East's Slow-Motion Revolution

Prince El Hassan bin Talal

2011-06-21 -- AMMAN – There seem to be a thousand and one interpretations of the changes sweeping across the countries of the Middle East and North Africa. One response that is often heard is a note of cautious optimism, captured in US President Barack Obama recent speech at the State Department when he referred to the "promise of the future."

But sometimes we also hear the populist smears that have been applied to the Middle East for so long that nothing, it seems – no amount of extraordinary change – can silence them. After the successful revolts in Cairo and Tunis, the slanders abated. Soon, however, the old messages depicting the Middle East as extreme, fundamentalist, and hostile to democracy began to re-insinuate themselves in the West.

On the other hand, ordinary men and women in the West seem to feel an instinctive sympathy toward their counterparts in the Middle East and North Africa, many of whom are paying the ultimate price in fighting for their rights. These sacrifices have convinced many Westerners that the Middle East is not beyond redemption, and that the region's people should be given a chance to enjoy the same liberty that they do.

This clash of perceptions has caught the world's policy experts and analysts off guard. That, too, is not surprising, because the situation remains an amorphous mix of hope and destruction.

But today, in Amman, as in almost every Arab capital, independent meetings and debates about how to move forward are taking place in art galleries, think tanks, salons, ordinary households, and, most significantly, online. A region often depicted as "backward" is debating its destiny both face-to-face and across social networks every second of every day.

Yet tweeting is no substitute for thought. Indeed, the events and personalities that have so far gained attention seem to fill the void where the declarations of freedom and treatises on rights – where the ideas – should be.

The result is the confusion that we now see. Contradictions abound. Governments across the region have been identified as the problem, and yet the state is being called upon to address a social and political agenda that has not yet been fully defined. We are seeing the birth of a more democratic spirit among the region's peoples, but a corresponding sense of democratic responsibility remains underdeveloped.

No matter how influential new media have been, they cannot replace the need for a region-wide "manifesto for change" that all who seek freedom can embrace. Any such manifesto must address the two elephants in the room – Palestine and the price of oil – as well as the extent to which regional water and energy resources, now rapidly depleting, should be shared. (Here, I and experts from around the world have been calling for the creation of a Supranational Commission for Water and Energy to ensure the kind of sustainable resource management that the Strategic Foresight Group has labeled "Blue Peace.")

Of course, generating ideas is easier said than done. By limiting free speech and forcing millions of young people to stay at home without jobs, the only public space left for many people happens to be virtual. Arab governments switched their people off, so their people migrated

online. The result is that an old guard now confronts a new wave, and the two sides think entirely differently and speak at cross-purposes. Whatever the new wave's limitations, its borderless online conversations are offsetting the region's political, religious, social, and cultural balkanization. The people of West Asia and North Africa are talking among themselves, even if their governments remain remote. That is a source of hope, if not yet of the systematic and coherent ideas about how to remake their societies that the region needs.

Cyber-activism has its limits; it cannot, in the end, deliver either democracy or prosperity. Communication may be instant, but, with no coherent animating ideology, the revolution proceeds in slow motion. The battle being fought for the soul of the Middle East cannot be won online, nor can it be subdued through the cynical manipulation of trust and fear. The quality of freedom in the Middle East, as elsewhere, will depend on its supporters' commitment to liberal and democratic values.

HRH Prince El Hassan bin Talal is chairman and founder of the Arab Thought Forum and the West Asia-North Africa Forum.

Article 3.

Stratfor

Turkey's Inevitable Problems With Neighbors

June 21, 2011 -- Syrian President Bashar al Assad delivered a long and uneventful speech Monday, during which he basically divided Syria's protest society into three categories: the good, the criminal and the Salafi. Assad claimed that instability caused by the latter two was to blame for the delay in implementing reforms. Rather than promising concrete reforms that have been strongly urged by the Turks, the Syrian president emphasized that security had to come first, while trying to present himself as a neutral mediator between the population and security forces. Not surprisingly, the speech fell on deaf ears throughout Syria, but also in Ankara, where the government let its growing impatience show and told the Syrian president once again that he isn't doing enough to satisfy the demands of his people. With more than 10,000 Syrian refugees spilling across the Turkish border to escape the army's siege, the situation in Syria is undoubtedly growing desperate. However, we have not yet seen the red flags that would indicate the al Assad regime is in imminent danger of collapse. The reasons are fairly straightforward. The al Assad clan belongs to Syria's Alawite minority, who only 40 years ago were living under the thumb of the country's majority Sunni population. Four decades in power is not a long time, and vengeance is a powerful force in this part of the world. The Alawites understand that they face an existential crisis, and if they allow their grip over the Baath-dominated political system - and most importantly the military - to loosen even slightly, they will likely become the prime targets of a Sunni vendetta campaign aiming to return the Alawites to their

subservient status. This may explain why al Assad felt the need to stress in his speech that his minority government would not take "revenge" against those who stand down from their protests.

Turkey is understandably nervous about what is happening next door in Syria. Ankara would prefer a Syria ruled by a stable Sunni regime, especially one that would look to Turkey's ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) for political guidance. However, the Turks can see that Alawite leadership will not leave power without a long and bloody fight. Recreating a sphere of Turkish-modeled Sunni influence in the Levant may be a long-term goal for Ankara, but the Turkish government is certainly not prepared to pay the near-term cost of civil strife in Syria spilling across Turkish borders.

Turkey has so far addressed this dilemma mainly through rhetoric, issuing angry speeches against Syrian leadership, while floating the idea of a military buffer zone for Syrian refugees. For awhile, assuming the role of regional disciplinarian played well to an AKP public-relations strategy that portrayed Turkey as the model for the Arab Spring and the go-to mediator for the Mideast's problems. But the more Syria destabilizes - and with each time it ignores Ankara's demands - the more Turkey risks appearing impotent.

The crisis in Syria will likely lead to a recalibration of Turkish foreign policy. The architect of Turkey's foreign policy, Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu, coined the phrase "zero problems with neighbors" to describe the guiding principle of Turkey's interactions with surrounding regimes. Turkey obviously has a problem with Syria's leadership, and not a small one. It is becoming increasingly apparent that Turkey may not yet have what it takes to deal with Syria, beyond issuing rhetorical censures. Establishing a military buffer zone as a safe haven for Syrian refugees not only would call for an international mandate, but would entail Turkish troops occupying foreign land - which would likely set off alarm bells

among Arabs who already suspect Turkey of harboring a so-called neo-Ottoman agenda. Turkey's ardent support for Libyan rebels against Moammar Gadhafi and public backing for Syrian opposition forces have already unnerved Arab monarchist regimes that are trying to undermine the effects of the Arab Spring and are growing distrustful of Turkish intentions. Moreover, any move construed as Turkey trying to facilitate the downfall of the al Assad regime would undoubtedly create problems with Iran, a neighbor Turkey has taken great care to avoid aggravating. Iran relies heavily on the Alawite regime in Syria to maintain a foothold in the Levant through groups like Hezbollah in Lebanon and Palestinian Islamic Jihad and Hamas in the Gaza Strip. Since the return of Syria to Sunni control would unravel a key pillar of Iranian deterrent strategy, we can expect that Iran is doing everything possible to undermine the very Syrian opposition forces looking to Ankara for support. Turkey has avoided confrontation with Iran thus far while working quietly to build a Sunni counterbalance to Iranian-backed Shia in Iraq in the face of an impending U.S. withdrawal. A power vacuum in Syria filled by Turkish-backed Sunnis would reinforce a nascent confrontation between Iran and Turkey with deep geopolitical underpinnings. Nations do not have friends; they have interests. And Turkey, an historically influential country sitting on one of the most geopolitically complex pieces of real estate in the world, is now finding that a foreign policy built on avoiding problems with neighbors grinds against reality. In STRATFOR's view, this was inevitable, which is why we took interest in Monday's issue of Today's Zaman, an English-language outlet loyal to the movement of Fethullah Gulen and strongly supportive of the ruling AKP. Two editorials in Monday's publication held that the Syrian crisis has exposed the coming demise of Turkey's "zero problems with neighbors" policy.

That this idea is being introduced into the public discourse is revealing, not only of Turkey's internal debate on this issue, but also of the message that Ankara may be trying to send to the United States and others: It needs time to develop the wherewithal to meaningfully influence its neighborhood. The United States wants Turkey to help shoulder the burden of managing the Middle East as it looks to extricate its military from Iraq. Washington especially needs to develop a strong counterbalance to Iran - a role historically filled by Turkey. This obviously presents a conflict of interests: Washington is trying to push Turkey into a role it's not quite ready for; meanwhile, Turkey is trying to sort out its growing pains while appearing influential abroad.

Turkey's evolution will be difficult and uncomfortable, but this should not come as a surprise. "Zero problems with neighbors" worked well for Turkey at the start of the century, as it came out of its domestic shell, yet took care to avoid being seen as a resurgent power with imperial interests. After a decade of regional conflict, Turkey is finding that problems with neighbors are not only unavoidable, but may even be necessary as the Turkish state redefines its core interests.

Article 4.

Agence Global

A Defiant Asad Sticks to His Guns

Patrick Seale

21 Jun 2011 -- All those dreaming of -- and working for -- 'regime change' in Syria will be outraged by President Bashar al-Asad's speech last Monday, 20 June. They want him out, together with the hate figures around him who have been conducting the brutal repression of the protest movement. But he is not stepping down. He intends to stay on -- and to fight on.

Asad gave no ground to his political enemies. The speech was not, in fact, addressed to them. It was addressed to Syria's 'silent majority' which -- or so the President continues to believe -- aspires to security, stability and national unity, and is terrified, above all, of a sectarian war on the Iraqi model.

The President explained that, in order to understand the nature of the crisis, he had held several meetings in recent weeks with citizens from all parts of the country. He wanted to hear directly from them. The conclusion he had reached was that there were several different components to the protest movement.

First, there were those who had legitimate demands, who wanted justice, democracy and jobs, and the resolution of problems which had accumulated over decades. Their demands could not be ignored. He intended to address them and had already started to do so. But then there were the others -- the criminal outlaws, the blasphemous intellectuals who spoke in the name of religion, the vandals, conspirators and paid agents of foreign powers. Under cover of the protest movement, they had taken up arms against the state!

These conspirators, he said, had called for foreign intervention, they had smeared Syria's image and destroyed public and private property.

They had no respect for state institutions or the rule of law. No reform was possible with such vandals.

He dismissed the argument that Syria was not facing a conspiracy. There was a conspiracy, he declared – designed abroad and perpetrated inside the country. How else to explain the satellite phones, the advanced weapons, the guns mounted on trucks in the hands of his enemies? Syria had always been a target of conspiracy. He had long been under pressure to abandon his principles. (No doubt, by this he meant his Arab nationalist convictions, his alliance with Iran and Hizbullah, his opposition to Israel and the United States.) Syria needed to strengthen its immunity against such conspiracies, he insisted.

In this defiant speech, President Asad made no mention of the abuses of his security services -- the callous use of live fire against civilians, the killing of well over a thousand protesters, the deployment of tanks to besiege rebellious cities, the mass arrests, the beatings and the torture, the flight of terrified refugees across Syria's borders -- a catalogue of outrages which has shattered Syria's reputation and earned it international condemnation. The refugees in Turkey should return home, he said. They would not be punished. The army would protect them. But those who have had a taste of army brutality may not be persuaded by the President's assurances. He did, however, have a word of condolence for bereaved mothers.

The heart of Asad's address was a statement of his ambition to shape a new vision for Syria's future. Reform, he declared, was his firm conviction. His one big idea -- the centrepiece of his speech -- was a plan for a National Dialogue. A special authority had been set up to work out the necessary arrangements for this great debate, which he hoped would provide for the widest possible popular participation. The task was to create a forum where far-reaching political and economic reforms could be discussed, so that legislation could then

be drafted and passed into law. There could be no giant leap into the unknown because decisions taken now would affect Syria for decades to come.

The speech will disappoint all those who had hoped for immediate and dramatic reforms. The President served up a diet of words rather than of actions. He did mention, however, that elections would take place in August, and that among the bills to be discussed would be a new electoral law, a law allowing for the formation of political parties, a media law, a law to give greater powers to municipal authorities, and the need to amend or even entirely rewrite the Constitution. He seemed to be indicating that the notorious Article 8 of the Constitution, which gives the Ba'th party a "leading role in state and society," might be scrapped.

This may well prove hard to achieve. Having enjoyed a monopoly on the political scene since 1963, Syria's Ba'th party has long since become rigid and Stalinist, and is probably incapable of sharing power with other parties. More battles lie ahead.

To all but his diehard political enemies, President Asad seemed thoughtful and even conciliatory. He did not look like a leader battling for survival. No doubt, the credits outweigh the debits in his personal profit-and-loss account. He knows that he need fear no foreign military intervention: After Libya, no Western power would even contemplate it. Some soldiers have defected to the rebels, but there has been no major split in the army or the security services, or in the regime itself. Whatever disputes and dissensions there may have been in the ruling circle have been carefully hidden from view. He knows that so long as they remain united, it will be difficult, if not impossible, for the opposition to topple him.

At the UN and elsewhere, Syria enjoys the protection of Russia -- perhaps concerned for its naval base at Tartus. The Russian view is that the Syrian crisis poses no threat to international peace and

security. China, India, South Africa and Brazil all side with Syria. At home, the country will not face starvation -- this year's wheat harvest is estimated at 3.6m tons. Oil and gas exports have so far not been affected.

On the debit side, however, tourism has collapsed; inward investment has dried up; the increase Asad has decree in the salaries of government bureaucrats is estimated to cost $1bn a year -- driving the government deficit to dangerous heights. If the crisis continues much longer, Syria will need a large cash injection from somewhere, and is probably looking to Qatar. Then there is the unpredictable factor. What if the protests continue and become more violent? Will the merchant middle class, the backbone of the regime, remain loyal? Could the economy take the strain? What might next Friday bring?

I was reached this week on the phone by a well-placed Syrian, close to the regime. "Western condemnation of Syria is pure hypocrisy," he fumed. "Every regime in the world will try to destroy its enemies. Have you heard of a place called Abu Ghraib? Or the hundreds of thousands killed by America in Iraq? Or Israel's massacre in Gaza? Or the 10,000 Palestinians in Israeli jails? If the U.S. and Israel can get away with large-scale killing and torture, why can't we? They claim to act in self-defence, so do we!"

It would seem that lawlessness and contempt for human life are contagious.

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Article 5.

Foreign Policy In Focus

Egypt's Evolving Foreign Policy

Richard Javad Heydarian

June 21, 2011 -- Egypt was once a major player in the Middle East, particularly under the leadership of Gamal Abdel Nasser in the 1950s and 1960s. Over the last decades, Egypt gradually lost its prestige and influence in the region as it became an introverted autocratic regime. In the post-Nasserite period, Egypt strengthened its ties with Israel, isolated Hamas, repressed domestic Islamic movements, marginalized democratic forces, and confronted regional powers such as Iran. However, with the political demise of Hosni Mubarak the country's foreign policy is gradually moving in a direction that better reflects popular sentiments. The new Egypt is looking to normalize relations with countries like Iran, re-evaluate ties with Israel, and tilt more toward the Palestinian cause. Given its profound cultural capital, powerful military, huge population, and strong economic fundamentals, Egypt could not only regain its regional influence but also play a more assertive and prominent international role. More importantly, the emergence of a democratic system in Egypt could transform the country into a model for the Arab world.

Democratic Earthquake

Domestic factors like corruption, political repression, and desperate economic conditions galvanized the populace against the Egyptian state. But Mubarak's foreign policy doctrine also contributed to the erosion of his political base. The democratic revolution was also a response to the government's complicity in the siege of Gaza, seeming timidity in foreign affairs, and his growing reliance on the United States for the perpetuation of his reign. The High Council of the Armed Forces currently rules Egypt, and the military shows no

sign of making a decisive break with the past. Nevertheless, the new leaders are more wary and sensitive to the qualms of the people. The prosecution of former ministers, officials, and even the former president and his family symbolizes the junta's responsiveness to popular demands. The military's consistently expressed commitment to push through with democratic elections and create a conducive environment for an eventual transition to a civilian democratic political system indicates that the balance of forces has shifted to the people — despite the lingering threat of counterrevolution, mobilization fatigue, and medium-term disenchantment with democracy. The military occupies a position of prestige and privilege in the society, and it is in its best interest to create a smooth transfer of power in succeeding months and years. Perpetuating the policies of the past regime would anger the population. So it's more than likely that the new Egyptian leadership will review the tenets of the former regime's foreign policy architecture. The Islamists are already pre-empting their opponents by talking about how they seek to emulate the Turkish model, where Islam and political moderation coincide, especially in the realm of foreign affairs. Moreover, the Muslim Brotherhood has expressed its interest in occupying more low profile and welfare-oriented executive ministries. So far, the Islamists have not even vied for the position of presidency, content with gaining some parliamentary representation and possibly some influence in the executive branch. The Islamists at this point are more concerned with gaining domestic political support and avoiding any backlash from the military, democrats, and foreign powers. Any Islamist-backed radical departure from the past could justify a crackdown by the military or compromise the country's economic well-being and political stability, which could, in turn, erode broader popular support for their agenda. However, if Israel steps up its aggressive policies in the region — with the West failing to support

the democrats — the Islamists could try to pressure the government — through mass rallies, political mobilization, and populist rhetoric — to abrogate the peace treaty with Israel or to qualitatively shift, if not downgrade, bilateral relations with the United States. Such a dynamic would inadvertently put pressure on post-revolutionary Egypt to be more assertive in its ties with Israel and the West.

The Gushing Wound of Palestine

The Palestinian question has been at the heart of the Arab political discourse for the last seven decades. The 1979 peace deal between Egypt and Israel ushered in an unprecedented phase of strong bilateral cooperation between the two former enemies, but it was also a major cause of the unpopularity of both Sadat and Mubarak. Israel benefited from the cold peace by neutralizing the most powerful conventional force in the Arab world. It even coordinated closely with Egypt on the siege of Gaza.Although the peace accords allowed Egypt to avoid another conflict with Israel and win substantial economic-military aid from the United States, the country's image has suffered a significant blow in the last three decades. Strategically, Egypt's withdrawal from the Arab-Israeli conflict allowed other powers to raise their political profile and regional influence. The resulting strategic vacuum simply shifted the regional balance of power in favor of non-Arab and/or non-traditional powers. Iran, Syria, and Qatar — and later Turkey — have been the biggest beneficiaries of Egypt's neutrality on the Palestinian issue.

Aware of the popular sentiment in favor of the Palestinian cause, the new Egyptian leadership initiated two important policy shifts. First, it re-opened the Rafah border, which has allowed most residents of Gaza to escape the suffocating siege imposed by Israel. Second, Egypt has played an active role in facilitating the unity deal between rival factions in Palestine. The deal represents the best chance for Palestinians to finally form a united front in future negotiations with

Israel and break the oppressive deadlock that has plagued previous negotiations. These two developments may portend more critical foreign policy reformulations, especially on Israeli-Egyptian relations, in coming years.

Reaching out to Others

Anxieties over political change in Egypt are not only confined to the Palestine-Israel equation. Egypt's emerging détente with Iran is beginning to worry not only the United States and Israel, but also monarchies in the Persian Gulf. A year before the 2011 revolution, many prominent leaders in Egypt and the Arab world began to realize the value of normalized relations with Iran. The two countries began to consider the resumption of direct flights between the two nations after 32 years. Also in 2010, the head of the Arab League, Amr Moussa, urged member countries to acknowledge the new geopolitical realities in the region: namely, the rise of non-Arab countries such as Turkey and Iran. He touched on the thorny issue of Iran-Arab tensions by stating, "I realize that some are worried about Iran but that is precisely why we need the dialogue." He reiterated his position after the revolution as he was preparing to run for the presidency in the Egyptian elections:"Iran is not the natural enemy of Arabs… We have a lot to gain by peaceful relations -- or less tense relations -- with Iran." Just weeks after the downfall of Mubarak, Egypt allowed Iranian warships to cross the Suez Canal, provoking uproar among Israelis and even Americans. In succeeding months, the diplomatic flirtation between the two countries took an even more interesting turn when Egyptian Foreign Minister Nabil El-Arabi stated that Egypt was "turning over a new leaf with all countries, including Iran." Iran's Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salehi immediately expressed his country's appreciation of El-Arabi's comments by expressing his wishes for "expansion in relations." The two ministers met on the sidelines of the Organization of Islamic

Conference (OIC) in Bali, where the OIC expressed its support for improvement of ties between the two major Muslim countries.

Egypt's Changing Role

Gamal Abdel Nasser was the central figure behind the first Arab revolution, which precipitated the withdrawal of colonial powers, Britain and France, from the Middle East. As Saudi Arabia spearheads a regional counter-revolution by abetting repressive monarchs in the Persian Gulf and providing sanctuary to fallen autocrats — with President Saleh of Yemen being among the latest beneficiaries — post-revolutionary Egypt could once again inspire change across the region. Given its size, history, and cultural influence, a successful transition to democracy would undoubtedly transform Egypt into a role model for smaller fellow Arab countries. The era of yes men in the Arab world is beginning to end, and the new Egypt — though it has maintained good ties with the U.S. — will be more assertive and independent in its foreign policy choices. The case of Turkey is very instructive. Despite being a pillar of NATO, and a strong ally of the Unites States, Turkey has repeatedly shown its independence on a number of key regional issues such as Iran's nuclear program, the invasion of Iraq, and the siege of Gaza. There are limits to this independence. Egypt is heavily reliant on aid, investments, tourism, and trade. Economic concerns are still the country's top priority. According to the latest Gallup poll, the majority of Egyptians are extremely pessimistic about the economy. Therefore, the priority of post-revolutionary Egypt's leaders is ultimately the restoration of confidence and economic dynamism. Democrats and Islamists are also aware that the military could choose to intervene — with tacit support from outside — if the democratic process gives birth to a radical government that jeopardizes the interests of the military and the state. This has been the case in other comparable countries such as Turkey and Pakistan, where the military

has also played a central role in determining the destiny of the nation-state. Egypt is still the top U.S. recipient of military assistance after Israel. It is simply too embedded in the U.S. military-industrial complex to risk alienating Washington. So, too, has the financial clout and political weight of the Gulf Cooperation Council made a precipitous Egyptian tilt toward Iran unlikely. Already, the Saudis are reportedly trying to sabotage the emerging rapprochement between the two countries. According to the head of Iran's Interest Section in Cairo Mojtaba Amani, "Saudi Arabia has even threatened to expel 1.5 million workers to dissuade Cairo from the resumption of ties with Tehran." Given these undeniable realities, an abrogation of the Israeli-Egyptian 1979 peace accords or the formation of an axis between Iran and Egypt is not in the offing. Moreover, the Egyptian foreign minister has injected realism into the rapprochement euphoria by indicating that Iran should not expect any substantial improvement in bilateral ties unless a new government is elected. In fact, just recently, Egypt expelled an Iranian on grounds of espionage, denting efforts by both states to improve relations. Nonetheless, Egyptians from across the political spectrum seem to support normalizing ties. A delegation composed of Egyptian academics and civil society leaders recently visited Iran. According to a member of the delegate, Mustafa Nagar, "Iranians believe Egypt is a strong country, not only to put Israel under pressure, but to benefit from the Egyptians themselves, that's why Egypt must restore ties with this great civilization."

The Post-Hegemonic Era

The United States should play a constructive role in the democratic transition of Egypt. Despite anxieties over the possible shift in Cairo's foreign policy doctrine, Washington should ensure that the development of civil democratic institutions is not, again, compromised in the name of stability. The last thing Washington

needs is the emergence of a Pakistan-like political system, where the military controls the state at the expense of economic development, democratization, and political stability. The collapse of Arab autocracies and the impending conflagration in Pakistan should serve as wake-up calls for policymakers in Washington.

Instead of indiscriminately throwing its weight around and unconditionally cultivating ties with intransigent allies such as Israel and Saudi Arabia, the United States should be looking toward further cooperation with powerful and democratizing countries such as Turkey and Egypt. Maintenance and deepening of close ties with legitimate states with civilian governments committed to democracy and economic development is the best way for the United States to create islands of peace in different regions and construct durable multilateral arrangements, which serve common interests.

Such strategic patience could also rehabilitate the battered U.S. image around the globe. For instance, Brazil's case is very instructive: the rise of a democratic and progressive government, under President Luiz Ignacio Lula da Silva, ushered in a new era of stability and economic progress. Today, Brazil is sharing the responsibilities of hemispheric leadership with the United States and contributing to regional stability and integration. The lesson is simple: reliance on responsible regional powers is America's best chance for a smooth transition to a truly multipolar global system. Egypt can and should be just such a partner.

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Article 6.

Foreign Affairs

How Fatah-Hamas Unity Threatens U.S. Funding

Douglas N. Greenburg and Derek D. Smith

June 20, 2011 -- The reconciliation agreement signed in April between Fatah and Hamas, which called for the creation of an interim Palestinian unity government followed by elections later this year, raises a number of difficult issues for the United States. Among these is whether Washington can lawfully continue to provide aid to the Palestinian Authority (PA) if it includes Hamas as an equal partner. After all, existing U.S. law designates Hamas as a terrorist organization and thus prevents the United States from aiding it in any way. Although the unity pact suffered a setback when a planned conference in Cairo on Tuesday to announce a new government was postponed, negotations are ongoing. Should the two sides eventually succeed in creating a unity government, continued U.S. funding for the PA could be illegal. Despite this, given the PA's dependence on U.S. aid, Washington may decide that financially sustaining the Palestinian leadership is vital to the peace process or other strategic interests. As a result, it may attempt to continue aiding elements of the PA that remain unaffiliated with Hamas. Yet absent specific congressional authorization, such a strategy will face significant legal obstacles.

U.S. law has long prohibited citizens from providing support to or doing business with Hamas, which has been on the Treasury Department's designated terrorist list since 1995 and the State Department's list of designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations since 1997. Under the U.S. criminal code, individuals cannot knowingly

provide an FTO with "material support or resources," which is broadly defined as any "property or service," including money, training and advice, safe haven, transportation, and weapons, among other forms of assistance. Violation of this statute is punishable by up to 15 years in prison, or life in prison if the support results in the death of any person.

The Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) also enforces sanctions against Hamas and its affiliates, forbidding U.S. persons from engaging in any transactions with a designated terrorist, and further requiring that U.S. financial institutions block any transactions involving assets of FTOs. OFAC frequently imposes civil fines against violators of these sanctions, who may also suffer criminal penalties.

The U.S. government has enforced these laws by bringing several high-profile criminal prosecutions against various individuals and charitable organizations for raising funds for Hamas. In 2008, for example, a federal jury in Texas convicted five U.S. citizens on charges of providing material support to Hamas through their ostensibly charitable organization, the Holy Land Foundation, resulting in sentences of 15 to 65 years in prison. The Treasury Department has also targeted charities acting as fundraising fronts for Hamas, such as the Al-Aqsa Foundation, an international relief organization formerly based in Germany that Treasury designated a terrorist entity in 2003, aiming to put them out of business by freezing their bank accounts.

Current U.S. law, then, clearly forbids and severely punishes a wide range of assistance to Hamas. But what if Hamas takes a leading role in another organization not designated as an FTO -- specifically, the PA? This question arose in 2006, when Hamas members defeated Fatah in that year's Palestinian elections. Hamas' presence in the PA posed a significant challenge to U.S. interests in the Palestinian

territories. Even so, the PA remained highly dependent on U.S. aid, receiving more than $400 million per year from Washington, and it was unclear whether the PA and its president, Fatah leader Mahmoud Abbas, could survive without it.

As a result, the U.S. Congress responded to Hamas' 2006 electoral victory by passing the Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act (PATA), which conditioned assistance to the PA on a presidential certification that Hamas did not effectively control any "ministry, agency, or instrumentality" of the PA and made "demonstrable progress" toward five benchmarks related to transparency, democratization, and antiterrorism. PATA provided a national security waiver that allowed the White House to continue funding various entities in the PA presidential office and judiciary branch, so long as Hamas did not control the recipient. It also permitted funding to nongovernmental organizations that provide aid to the West Bank and Gaza relating to humanitarian needs and democracy promotion.

Ultimately, the dilemma over funding the PA resolved itself in 2007, when Hamas broke with Fatah and the PA and took control of Gaza. This separation freed OFAC to allow all transactions with the Fatah-controlled PA in the West Bank. But should Hamas rejoin the PA as a result of the recent unity arrangement, there may be pressure on OFAC to take a tougher stance. Indeed, in recent appropriations bills, Congress has made assistance to a "power-sharing government" in Palestine contingent on compliance with PATA.

Congressional authorization to fund a Hamas-affiliated PA would likely overcome existing legal prohibitions. In the face of PATA, however, there is a substantial risk that providing aid without specific congressional authority would violate U.S. criminal laws. Although there are several arguments for exempting the PA from the U.S. laws against dealing with FTOs, none is particularly convincing. To begin with, it could be argued that although U.S. law prohibits individuals

from assisting Hamas, the president's constitutional powers to conduct foreign affairs might exempt officials carrying out the government's international policy from criminal prosecution. The existing laws and regulations, however, make federal officials just as liable for providing aid to FTOs as any private citizen, and any contrary argument would rest, at best, on untested grounds.

Additionally, it could be argued that because Hamas does not control the PA outright, aid to the PA is not the same as aid to Hamas. This may seem persuasive in some circumstances; for instance, if Hamas held only a small minority of the PA's parliamentary seats. But that is hardly the case with regard to the current reconciliation agreement, which places equal power in the hands of Fatah and Hamas to form an interim government and appoint various ministers through consensus. Moreover, according to OFAC's regulations, Hamas needs only an interest in PA transactions, rather than full control of the PA itself, to trigger sanctions against funding the PA. In fact, following Hamas' election success in 2006, OFAC determined that Hamas had "a property interest" in PA business; this may have some bearing on funding the new unity government. Much like the OFAC regulations, the U.S. criminal code does not clearly specify when an FTO's interest in an organization becomes so great that it is unlawful to provide that organization with "material support." Moreover, the serious penalties associated with violating these criminal laws demand caution when considering whether to aid an organization in which an FTO such as Hamas plays a significant role.

Another possible method for the United States to continue funding the PA is an exception in the criminal code for persons who provide "personnel," "training," or "expert advice or assistance" to an FTO with approval of the secretary of state and the attorney general. This exception could allow the United States to advise PA security and police forces, but it would not permit direct financial aid. Similarly,

the United States could attempt to convince non-Hamas elements in the PA to use and disseminate U.S. funds without any knowledge or participation of Hamas. Yet such a plan may not withstand legal scrutiny. If non-Hamas PA officials failed to honor the agreement and Hamas gained access to U.S. funds, prosecutors might one day argue that the persons who made the donation knew that such a result was likely and disregarded the risk. Such "willful blindness" could serve as the basis of a criminal prosecution. Or, the whole government may turn out to be Hamas-affiliated, rendering any such distinction meaningless.

The Obama administration could also instruct OFAC to grant specific exemptions so that the United States could fund particular entities within the PA. OFAC followed this strategy in 2006, announcing at the time that "consistent with current foreign policy" it was "authorizing U.S. persons to engage in certain transactions in which the PA may have an interest." Mirroring some of the exceptions listed under PATA, OFAC exempted transactions with the Palestinian judiciary, non-Hamas members of the Palestinian Legislative Council, and various entities controlled by Abbas.

Although the United States sought to continue supporting non-Hamas elements of the PA in 2006, it is doubtful that OFAC could repeat the same tactic now, thanks to the relationship between Fatah and Hamas. In 2006, Hamas campaigned against Fatah and tensions between the two camps remained strong after the election. Armed conflict broke out the following year despite the creation of a de facto unity government, splintering the PA. Should the current reconciliation agreement come to fruition, however, it would create a joint power-sharing government. As a result, it may be more difficult for OFAC to justify special exemptions on the grounds that certain entities within the PA are insulated from Hamas; by all appearances, they will be intertwined.

Lastly, OFAC could simply delist Hamas or continue allowing aid to the PA under a "general license." But this would not do away with the independent criminal ban on providing "material support" to an FTO. To remove Hamas from the criminal law banning FTO support, either the secretary of state or Congress would have to revoke the designation of Hamas as an FTO -- a highly unlikely scenario. Should the Obama administration want to continue funding a Hamas-affiliated PA to maintain U.S. influence or otherwise promote U.S. interests, current law gives him little leeway to do so. PATA places numerous restrictions on any aid to a Hamas-affiliated PA, and any attempt by the White House to continue funding the PA in spite of PATA risks violating criminal statutes. Short of removing Hamas as a designated terrorist organization and FTO, the safest way to proceed would be on the basis of legislative action that allows White House to support the PA even under a Fatah-Hamas coalition. Without it, the Obama administration's legal options are limited. No matter how much it may want to continue aiding the PA, then, its continued support may well be illegal.

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Article 7.

TIME

Why the Muslim Brotherhood Are Egypt's Best Democrats

Bobby Ghosh

June 21, 2011 -- After the fall of Saddam Hussein in 2003, many Western commentators were surprised by the ease with which Iraq's religious movements adapted to multiparty democracy. The Shi'ite groups, in particular, were quick to organize into political parties, set up grass-roots organizations across the country and form practical coalitions ahead of elections. Long assumed to be ideologically opposed to democracy, these groups showed they were in fact brilliantly adaptable. Their leaders, despite having little experience in kissing babies, campaigned like seasoned pros.

In contrast, Iraq's liberal parties were rank amateurs. Their leaders, despite having spent decades in exile in Western democracies (whereas most Islamist exiles were confined to places like Iran and Syria), seemed not to understand how democracy works: people like Iyad Allawi and Ahmed Chalabi had an air of entitlement, assuming that people would vote for them merely because they were modern, progressive and famous. They didn't bother to create a national party infrastructure, nor did they care to campaign. Instead, they held all-day salons in the manner of medieval monarchs giving audience to the elite.

Something very similar is unfolding in Egypt. Of all the political groups to have emerged since the fall of Hosni Mubarak — including the myriad youth movements, secular parties, leftists and remnants of the old National Democratic Party — the Muslim Brotherhood seem to have the best understanding of how democracy works. The Islamist

group may have taken a backseat to the liberal youth movement that brought down the dictator, but it has wasted little time in preparing for the post-Mubarak era. Although the generals in charge of Egypt's transition have not yet announced a date for the parliamentary elections (which are expected in the fall), the Brotherhood is already campaigning vigorously, in Cairo and the countryside. The youth movement, on the other hand, seems unable to break out of protest mode. The gap between the two sides was exposed in a mid-March referendum on constitutional reforms. The Brotherhood mobilized a massive "yes" vote to ensure that any meaningful reforms would take place after the parliamentary elections. The liberals were split, unsure as to which scenario they feared more: a constitution written by a military-appointed panel before the elections, or one written by a Brotherhood-dominated parliament afterward. It was a rout: 77% voted yes.

The gap has not closed. Since the referendum, many liberals have sought to undermine the result by trying to force through reforms before the elections. Their great champion, former U.N. nuclear watchdog (and Nobel laureate) Mohamed ElBaradei, argues that the constitution can't wait for people's elected representatives. The youth leaders agree and are threatening to return to Tahrir Square if they don't get their way. They claim the referendum doesn't matter because the Brotherhood misled Egyptians by portraying it as a vote on religion. (The Islamists deny this, and some neutral observers say both sides played fast and loose with the facts.)

This carping makes the liberals look like sore losers, and far from democratic. Critics accuse them of trying to buy time: a postponement in the elections would give liberals more time to get their political house in order and hopefully catch up with the Brotherhood's organizational lead. Even Alaa al-Aswany, a novelist and strong Brotherhood critic, acknowledges that it ill behooves the

liberals to attempt an end run around the referendum. "The people made a choice, and we have to respect it," he says.

The Brotherhood, meanwhile, is sitting pretty. It has offered to form a broad coalition with liberals and leftists in the elections, and promises that there will be no attempt to hijack the constitutional reform process afterward. "The new constitution has to be written by all Egyptians," says Essam Erian, a top Brotherhood leader. "No one group should have a louder voice than the others." This makes the Islamists look responsible and conciliatory, and is likely to play well with voters. (See more on the Brotherhood's election strategy in posts to come.)

In Iraq, it took the liberals years to catch up with the religious parties in organizational and campaigning skills. In the last election, Allawi finally cobbled together a coalition that won more seats than any other group, only to be outmaneuvered by postelection horse trading. If Egypt's liberals aren't careful, a similar fate awaits them.

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