

WORKING TOWARDS NATIONAL RECONCILIATION

Panel 2

Introduction: You're listening to the Middle East Institute's podcast series. To support MEI's programs and podcasts, please donate at www.MEI.edu. Thank you for your support.

Kate Seelye: Good morning, everybody. I'm Kate Seelye, Senior Vice President of the Middle East Institute and I want to welcome you back from your coffee break. I know they're never long enough, but we have a very exciting program ahead of us and we want to get started. The first panel of the day, Forging a Viable Political Path, looked at the steps forward for the actors and moving Egypt toward a more stable, secure and democratic society. This panel is going to take on another important issue in Egypt, which is the growing of polarization and division that has characterized the last several months, hence, the title of the panel, Working Toward National Reconciliation, a very crucial goal for Egypt's future. We couldn't have a more diverse and interesting panel with us today to discuss this crucial issue. It's probably the most diverse panel of Egyptians in Washington to meet in the last couple of months and they are being moderated by somebody who needs very little introduction, but let me briefly go through the introductions for you. In depth bios are in your program book. But we're joined today by Mr. Wael Haddara. Mr. Wael Haddara served as an advisor to former President Morsi during his election campaign in 2012 and has come down from Canada to join us today. Dina Guirguis is the Advocacy Director for the Tahir Institute for Middle East Policy and writes extensively on Egyptian politics. Next to her is Dr. Hani Sarie Eldin, the Head of the Commercial and Maritime Law Department of the Faculty of Law at Cairo University and also a member of the Dostour Party and Nader Bakkar, who is the advisor to the Chairman for Media Affairs of Egypt's al Nour Party and was one of the cofounders. They're being led in discussion by Thomas Freidman, who needs little introduction in this town. He's a three time Pulitzer Prize winning author and journalist of one of my favorite books, *From Beirut to Jerusalem*. Most importantly, he's been writing extensively about Egypt over the past couple of months. It's a topic he writes about with great passion and compassion, making him a really ideal moderator for today's very unique panel. So I want to thank you all, panelists, and moderator for joining us today. It's a great honor and a privilege and I would like to hand it over to you, Thomas.

Thomas Friedman: Yea, thank you very much. It's a treat to be here. I've been really looking forward to this. It is a great panel and some of the folks here I know and some I met in right in the middle of Tahir Square. First time I met Nadir during the revolution. I'm going to begin with a question which I think is obviously central one right now and that is that should we feel more optimistic or more pessimistic about Egypt's future in the wake of what happened in the first week of July of this year? And I'll begin by sharing my own bias and my own bias is that I am unbalanced, unbalanced optimistic, and I will tell you why and it goes back to an observation I made and wrote about during Tahir Square, because after Tahir Square, people

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when I came back home having had the privilege to be there and there are two people in this audience who are my escorts during those amazing days and people asked me what I saw in Tahir Square. And I told them actually what I saw was a tiger that had been living for 50 years in a 5x8 cage get released and there are three things I'm going to tell you about tiger. One, tiger is not going back in the cage. Two, do not try to ride tiger. Tiger rides only for Egypt. If you try to ride him for the army or for the Muslim Brotherhood, if you were to try to ride him for Hamas or Israel, if you try to ride him for Iran or the European Union, this tiger will only ride for Egypt and anyone who tries to ride tiger for their own narrow interests will get their head bitten off. And lastly, tiger only eats beef, because this tiger has been fed every lie in the Arabic language for 50 years, every bit of dog food, cat food and Hamburger Helper and God save you if you try to feed this tiger anything other than beef. So, I have not been really disappointed by that theory and it gets to my second reason for optimism and my second reason for optimism is that I have a model about the Middle East in general and that is that the Middle East only puts a smile on your face when it stars with them, not with us, not with outsiders. When there's something deeply rooted that starts with them. I say Camp David started between Egyptians and Israelis. Oslo started between Israelis and Palestinians. It's not called Oslo for nothing. It's not called Virginia. The tribal authorizing in Unmar started there and I would argue that something very deep and authentic started in Egypt and when that happens, we can amplify. We can help, but it's very important something is started with Egyptians and I think that, for me, is a huge source of optimism however it gets interpreted.

My last... Though I said I am an unbalanced optimist and the reason I'm cautious to be optimistic has to do with a project I've actually been involved with for the last four months. I've been doing a documentary on climate and environmental stresses and the Arab Awakening. We've been to Yemen and to Syria and Egypt looking at some of the population, water, environmental and climate stresses that really help contribute to the pressures which produced this Arab Awakening. It's been a fascinating experience, because I've actually gone through the whole Arab world on a trip in which I never spoke to a politician. I only spoke to Arab environmentalists and they're an amazing community I must say and when you look at the whole Arab world through the lens of environment, you get a very, very different picture and the picture you get reminds me of something Princess Di said, the late Princess Di, when she was involved her in very difficult marriage with Prince Charles. She said one day, you know, there are three people in this marriage. And my message and the reason why I'm a little temperate in my optimism is I think Egyptians and Arabs need to understand, there are now three people in this marriage. It isn't just the military and the Muslim Brotherhood. It's also Mother Nature. Mother Nature in the form of huge population explosion, salt water intrusion, rising desertification, rising average temperatures and the thing about Mother Nature is that she's just chemistry, biology and physics. She's not like the United States or Europe. You can't talk her up; you can't talk her down. You can't say, "Mother Nature, we're having a

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revolution. Could you take a few years off?" She's going to do whatever chemistry, biology and physics dictate and she always bats last, Mother Nature. Do not mess with Mother Nature and she is going to be in this story and there's a very famous climate scientist, Dana Meadows, who is someone I've always admired, late climate scientist, who always used to say when asked if we have enough time to deal with climate change, she's always say, "We have exactly enough time starting now," and that's how I feel about the whole Arab Awakening. We have exactly enough time starting now. There's time to waste going sideways or backwards because there are now three people in this story.

So with that introduction of my own bias, I'm just going to go right down the panel here. Wael, I'm going to start with you. Are unbalanced, the events of the end of June and early July, a reason for optimism or pessimism about Egypt's future?

Wael Haddara: Well I think that clearly from my perspective the events of June 30th and July 3rd were a disaster. But, um, and...

Thomas Friedman: Please explain why.

Wael Haddara: Well, you know, I'd have to side with Tarek Masoud from the previous panel. There is a very clear way to move forward for Egypt if we accepted there was extreme public dissatisfaction with the Brotherhood or the presidency of Mohamed Morsi, the Constitution of 2012 gave the Prime Minister vast, vast control and in fact was supported by the Supreme Court and the Supreme Court overturned the election writs that President Morsi issued in February on the grounds that it was not actually initiated by the Prime Minister. So, and the Constitution stipulates that the president exercises authority through the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister is selected by Parliament. Parliament's directions were in the works. If there was such deep public dissatisfaction with the President and his party or his former party, then it would have been fairly straightforward to maintain the integrity of the democratic transition of Egypt, maintain hope for the country by organizing around those elections and we didn't see that. What we saw instead was an upending of the democratic transition in favor of military intervention and, you know, as much as the military is maybe trying to have a civilian face to this, the reality is that it is the military that's in control and now there is no clear path forward in terms of how we go. So, in that sense, to me it was a disaster. The spilling of blood, the arbitrary measures, the detentions, the arrests, people being held at unknown locations, even the notion of talking with Legal Access is a bit of a joke. So, an unqualified disaster in my mind. Whether that's cause for optimism or pessimism is a different question. Like you, I'm an optimist. I'm an optimist for two reasons. One is by dint to the religious world view that says you must never lose hope in the infinite mercy of God and one is by dint of an Egyptian world view that I recognized in myself I had lost prior to January 25th. Like many Egyptians, I think we've given up on the notion of

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Egypt rising and January 25th came to say, much like you described, that the true measure of a nation is not by the days, weeks and months or even decades in which it is constrained and made into a, put into a 5x8 cage, but it is by decades, centuries, millennia, that over and over and over show what it's true character is and I think Egyptians have done that over millennia and they will do that again.

Thomas Friedman: Great. Dina Guirguis, same question.

Dina Guirguis: Since I'm a lawyer, I'm going to give you a very lawyerly answer and say it depends. I think it's still too early to tell. I think I personally did support what happened on June 30th. I think it was sufficiently clear that a broad, broad mass of Egyptians, even those who had supported President Morsi during the presidential election, it was clear that I would say an overwhelming majority of Egyptians were so dissatisfied with his presidency and with his regime's performance that they needed substantive change. It was also clear that President Morsi and his regime were not very responsive to the people's demands. If you look sort of at the revolution of the speeches, of the Morsi speeches, after June 30th really became the sort of serious phenomenon, we see an escalation for Morsi really and a confrontation and a challenging tone where, you know, in his final speech he said, "I will defend my legitimacy." He must have used the word legitimacy, I think the count was something like 59 times and he said, "I will defend my own legitimacy with my own blood if I have to." So clearly there was escalation. It didn't seem like there was a political solution at the time. There was a great challenge, confrontation between the judiciary and the executive in that the executive had taken several steps to undermine the judiciary and so impeachment methods via the judiciary would have been very difficult to come by at that time. So I see it as a positive step. You know, I have never been a fan of the military. Anybody that's, you know, read what I write, knows that much. With that said, a timetable and a roadmap has been set. Like it or not, they're actually proceeding according to the timetable and the timeline. You know, the crackdown on the Brotherhood is clearly problematic for a number of reasons, mainly that Egypt's history tells us that, you know, repression of Islamists actually does not work, that there has to be some form of accommodation here and I think that's what the panel will discuss at greater length. But, you know, I think it really depends on the military's understanding that transition to civilian rule is an imperative. It's an imperative within a specific timeframe as well and it also depends on the military understanding that the security crackdown is not a substantive solution. It also depends on the Brotherhood and Islamists' movements overall relinquishing frankly the duplicity, the duplicity and the distinction between their words, which appear to be very pro democratic, pro equality and really actions that have systematically undermine that rhetoric. So I'll leave it at that.

Thomas Friedman: Thank you. Hani?

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Hani Sarie Eldin: So I'm actually to look forward about the future not to discuss much of the past. I would say very clearly I am very optimistic about the future of Egypt provided two things to happen. First is to have committed parties. I mean by parties, all parties involved. I'm not talking about (inaudible) parties to diffuse attention from the short term and secondly, to commit to genuine democracy process. If we have this commitment and belief of all parties involved, definitely we would move forward. We have some signs of that, for example, despite all the unrest happening and the confrontation between Muslim Brotherhood and I would say majority of Egyptians who have not been very satisfied with the last year policies and worried about their future and about Egypt's civilization as such and putting Egypt first. I think despite that there has been no refusal to include Islamists and modern Muslims, or moderate Muslims in general, and I think this is a step forward. But to get the Muslim Brotherhood involved in the process, this I think depends on them and on their leader, whether they want to be part again, despite all the disappointment, to be part of the process and I think the new generation of Muslim Brotherhood might push for that to happen. And secondly, we should stick with our definitely generally democratic process. It's not only about election. Part of it, how to involve other parties, how to focus on the common interests of Egyptians rather than differences and I think this is the main mistake we have done during the transition period. We focused on our differences and all failing nations in the transition period done that and most of the nations who managed to move forward in the transitional period were focused on their common interests and common grounds rather than differences. So it is really important not to repeat the same mistake and I have Nader next to me and I have some warrant. When I started to hear, this is not an attack at all, but this is a general...

Nader Bakkar: (inaudible)

Thomas Friedman: You are welcome to attacks. It's okay.

Hani Sarie Eldin: Ah, no. Seriously when I started, we are talking about the Fifty Committee, which is the Constitutional Committee, one of the comments came, we would be here in this Committee to protect the Islamic interests and what we have achieved. This I think is wrong. Maybe you address your own people, but this is I think wrong because, again, it divides the nation and what I'm saying here, I'm saying also to the liberals and the others. Don't try to get everything by knockout. This doesn't work. We have to all involved in the process, but there's a condition to that. You have to believe in the democratic process and that this would include different, all people, in the process. So I'm optimistic and I think that our growing understanding of the need to move forward.

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Thomas Friedman: Great. Nader and I met right in the week of Tahir Square. I can still see myself in your office. We had a couple of beers together. That was you, wasn't it?

Nader Bakkar: Yes.

[laughter]

Thomas Friedman: Just a joke. Don't tape that.

[laughter]

Male: The Egyptians media is going to have a field day.

Thomas Friedman: [laughter] Just a joke. Nader, how do you react to all of this?

Nader Bakkar: Okay, first of all, I would like to thank the Middle East Institute for this invitation, for giving me the chance, giving us the chance to meet here and to talk about this critical issue, not only for Egypt, because I want to outcries from the media, from the Egypt media, to understand that it is not a critical issue only for Egyptians but I am quite sure that the Egyptian issue will affect, whether negatively or positively, not only the Middle East, but the whole world. So I want to my critics from the Egyptian media to understand that, why we are meeting here to talk about the reconciliation. It doesn't matter what we are talking about the only thing that we should insist on here is to reach a common ground between old and different... Actually, I want to give you my experience here, if I can say that, as one who I want to be practical as more as I can on this panel. We tried as a new party. We tried six months ago and I think Dr. Hani and Dr. Wael as well can remember it. I mean because they were in Egypt. We tried six months ago to end the polarization in Egypt making an initiative at that time. It was an initiative not only for Dr. Mohamed Morsi. I am belonging to the Islamic Extreme, by the way. But for Dr. Mohamed Morsi, (inaudible) lift and (inaudible) for all. This initiative was precisely talking about formulating a coalition government under Dr. Mohamed Morsi regime ending the problem with the prosecutor general, substituting him, and ending the incitement against the judiciary and even against the deep state and let me tell you something here. One of the major and strategic mistakes that people are concentrating here is just to take the end picture of the June 30 and what is after the June 30 and forgetting the whole, not only the past year, but the whole two years before. One of the Dr. Mohamed Morsi and his regime fateful mistakes was to show for everybody that the battle is against the deep state, while in our point of view, the right choice at that time is to contain this deep state, is to include them, is to call, actually to call for a true kind of reconciliation with the previous regime, I mean, the Mubarak regime. A moot party still stuck to its principle, regarding the segregation of Muslim

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Brotherhood because we at that time we said clearly that we are against the segregation of the National Democratic Party. We warned not only Muslim Brotherhood but others that generalizing punishment against others would not benefit you and this weapon will be used against you one day. So now, we are getting the same thing with Muslim Brotherhood. We are telling our people, our ten politicians, telling the military, and telling the Egyptian society is that segregating Muslim Brotherhood will not be the solution. The statement of to be with us or against us, the equation and I will (inaudible) on this equation, the equation of either security or freedom the (inaudible) would not benefit this country. So if I had the chance, I would tell you more about this (inaudible), the last one and our efforts, the governing the reconciliation on ground with Muslim Brotherhood and the mediation through the Muslim Brotherhood and the military before, (inaudible) the evacuation and after then actually.

Thomas Friedman: Now let's pick up with your point, because everyone has touched on this. You know, my own bias of having lived through the Lebanese Civil War and ultimately Taif, by the lesson I drew from that as applies to the Arab Awakening is that the Lebanese Civil War ended tragically. It took 14 years, but ended it on one principle – no victor, no vanquished. Everyone has to be included. But also ended on the principle that the minority has to be overrepresented to reassure them. So you know Christians are only 35% of the population and actually got 50% of the seats and I do think there's a lot of wisdom in that model. So my question, in light of everything, the points you all made and they're all wonderful points, can there be a bridge built, an inclusive bridge built that will bring the Muslim Brotherhood back into the political process? Should we care about the Muslim Brotherhood or should we care about Islamists? Is it specific to one party? But how do we get back to a broader reconciliation process? Because one thing I really do believe is that the lift Egypt has to make is huge. It's a big lift and it requires everyone. It requires the biggest cross-section of the population, men and women, that one can imagine. So, how can we get back?

Wael Haddara: I'll start by saying that I'm a firm believer in Santa Ana's notion that all progress is rooted in the past and the difficulty with Egypt is that, you know, we say in this part of the world that everybody is entitled to their own opinion. In Egypt, everybody thinks that they are entitled to their own facts and so the narrative of what happened over the last couple of years and particularly over the presidency of President Morsi is, in fact, in dispute. You know, so Nader will say you know, the President to calm the deep state, to calm the Mubarak regime whereas many so called liberal activists will say the President did not do enough. In fact, he embraced the regime and invariably, the story of the last years is that we're caught in the middle. On the one side people say, "You're not doing enough." On the other side, people are saying, "You're doing too much." And so unless we can sort out what actually happened, an assessment of was the problem that we didn't do enough or

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was the problem that we did too much? The suggestions that get built on that are going to have to be subject for a lot of criticism.

Thomas Friedman: Well, let me press you to be a little more specific.

Wael Haddara: Sure.

Thomas Friedman: Given the dilemma we have and that is that politics doesn't always give us that opportunity to sort out the past and so...

Wael Haddara: Unless the (inaudible) have the President, which is...

Thomas Friedman: Exactly. And (inaudible)...

Wael Haddara: ... the notion, so the notion that we need a process of national reconciliation. How do you have a process of national reconciliation with the heads of four major political parties are either in detention or self-imposed exile. You know, one of them is accused of major high treason, etc., etc. So Dr. Badrawi is under a cloud of charges. He's now overseas. I believe Dr. Imanour is overseas as well, but there's rumblings of stuff going on against them. (inaudible), you know, and they are not just Islamists parties. I mean, the former head of the (inaudible) is in that boat. The (inaudible) is distinctly a secularist party. So if we are serious about talking about national reconciliation, we have to acknowledge that the platform on which we are standing right now does not allow for that.

Thomas Friedman: Even the beginning?

Wael Haddara: Yea. And Bill Burns and (inaudible) were in Egypt a few weeks ago trying to convince people that a series of confidence building measures, starting with the release of at least a few people, somebody that you can negotiate with, somebody that can sit at the table, is imperative to beginning this process.

Thomas Friedman: Let me stop you there. You know, what's your reaction to Wael's point?

Dina Guirguis: Oh, I mean we're really living a cycle. It's been sort of the repeated cycle of the Muslim Brotherhood and its relationship with the state that it does represent a segment of the Egyptian population. We do have polarization. I agree with the previous panel, with getting (inaudible), saying the camps are not equal and that the Muslim Brotherhood has in fact lost popularity over the past year and may continue to do so if they continue to embrace sort of street violence and tactics and so you know, they're there. They exist. For whatever reason, they are repressed and then they go into forms of resistance, whether that be underground violence;

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whether that be reaching out via grassroots methods to the public until they sort of reach a certain mass where they are able to enter into an accommodation with the strongest player on the ground. That tends to be the state. They did so with SCAF, as we can remember. They did so and there seemed to be an implicit understanding, I think, that in exchange for staying out of national security matters, that the Islamist road map would pass without a problem, if we recall, the youth, the secular or the non-Islamist youth that had taken to the street to protest SCAF's measures, undemocratic measures that they saw, were criticized by the Brotherhood leadership at the time, who called on their followers and said, "We will not be part of these protests. We think the SCAF is doing a fantastic job." So, let's not forget that. Now, why that relationship broke down is something that we can examine. It's clear the Brotherhood had started to engage in divisive rhetoric. It's clear that the Brotherhood started to initiate sectarian strife. The Brotherhood also did something very critical for the Egyptian Army. A Morsi aide went out, I believe it was in June, and said that they encourage or that they accept Egyptians to go wage Jihad in Syria. Now, this is a huge problem for the Egyptian military. So there are a constellation of reasons there. So, really we are back in the cycle and we are back in the moment of repression, which is going to lead and is already leading to resistance. Now, what we need is...

Thomas Friedman: How do we break it? Yea. How do we break it?

Dina Guirguis: ... to break that cycle. To break that cycle. But my question, I guess, back to Mr. Haddara and also to the Nour Party representative here, is how do we, or to go back to your example, Tom, if they represent 20 or 25% of the Egyptian population today and we agree to give them 45% or 50%, I personally as somebody who believes in human rights and...

Thomas Friedman: I didn't mean to suggest actually that analogy.

Dina Guirguis: Right.

Thomas Friedman: But I just... it works just as well. [laughter]

Dina Guirguis: If we were... Here are the questions that I am posing, I guess, for those that would adopt an Islamist position. How is it that I am able to trust a party whose president, President Morsi, sat in on a rally excoriating Shiites in the most humiliating, insidious way which led to their lynching in the most heinous way four days later without a statement, a single condemnation from the President at that time?

Wael Haddara: That's not true, you know.

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Dina Guirguis: Okay. Well, I'd like an answer to that.

Thomas Friedman: Well, let's get an answer.

Dina Guirguis: Right.

Thomas Friedman: What's your reaction to that?

Wael Haddara: No. That's... so, there definitely was a statement. There were a number of statements and one of the challenges that we had over the past year has been we really, you know, the answer to the philosophical question of when a tree falls in the forest and there's no one around to, you know, to see it, did it make a sound? We issued statements. They're on the Facebook page, which is still up. You have them at a press conference and there is very little echo. The issue of the presidential aide after the...

Dina Guirguis: After the conference?

Wael Haddara: Yea, absolutely.

Dina Guirguis: Well, why didn't President Morsi say Shiites or Egyptians and they should not be called infidels and they should not be called... and (inaudible) and (inaudible).

Wael Haddara: Review the statement. Review the statement.

Dina Guirguis: I mean, what's his...

Thomas Friedman: Let me get back, so we don't get caught in that.

Dina Guirguis: Right.

Thomas Friedman: No. It's important about just the passion that you feel...

Wael Haddara: Yea, yea. We don't want it to...

Thomas Friedman: Exactly. So let me go to Hani to be the peacemaker here, or to Nader. Okay?

[laughter]

Wael Haddara: They've tried to (inaudible).

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Thomas Friedman: But I want to take that... We see here the passions at work and they are legitimate and I understand them. I want to go back to you and Nader. How do we bridge that? How do we get... How do we not let the past bury the future? How do we get... should we be concerned about this vacuum of a very important political party in the process going forward and what would you demand of them to be part of this process, both of you, and what do you think they're entitled to?

Hani Sarie Eldin: Tom, I think the reconciliation process is not a decision to make and enforce it overnight. It needs a lot of patience and a lot of work to break the mistrust in the place and you can't do this overnight. So I think practically speaking, one of the things, and it doesn't matter who made the first step, whether the Muslim Brotherhood or the military or the government or the whoever in charge. But I think the first step has been taken in the sense that a commitment to democracy process and to start the Constitution again process and to establish sort of main principle that accommodate everybody and I think this would be a way forward.

Thomas Friedman: But let me just be specific here.

Hani Sarie Eldin: Sure.

Thomas Friedman: But you know, in terms of Wael's point, what, you know, should they be, should the Muslim Brotherhood be included and in terms of Dina's point, what should we demand of them to be a part of the process?

Male: And Brotherhood.

Thomas Friedman: And Broth... Exactly. But, let's be specific here.

Hani Sarie Eldin: This is, again, it's up to them, because it's very clear. You have to first recognize that you made mistakes and you have to be committed to the democratic process, again and you have to ...

Thomas Friedman: Right. Because as Wael said, how do I do that from jail?

Hani Sarie Eldin: You have to denounce. Definitely you have to denounce violence on your own people. You have to also...

Wael Haddara: But (inaudible) was done, right?

Hani Sarie Eldin: Sorry?

Wael Haddara: Multiple (inaudible).

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Hani Sarie Eldin: I did not interrupt you, so please, Wael. Please.

Thomas Friedman: Only I can interrupt.

Wael Haddara: You're the boss.

Hani Sarie Eldin: It's again, if you continue to think and one of their names, I didn't actually to talk about the past, but since we have to talk about past to explain myself here, one of the major mistakes and this is, again, has to be very clear. One of the main mistakes I believe that the Muslim Brotherhood committed, they came with ideas from the past through the present and they decided, which is a (inaudible) idea and their main objective for the past year is to control Egypt at all levels and to seclude everybody else who is not within their system or has some sympathy to them. This was clear and this is why in one year they managed to be opponents to military, police, ordinary people, liberals, judicial system – everybody – because they, everybody else who would not belong to them was excluded from the process.

Thomas Friedman: Let me interrupt and then just one second. Okay? Because what I hear from you and Dina said, we want you to acknowledge, okay where you went wrong.

Hani Sarie Eldin: Absolutely.

Thomas Friedman: But what else is... how do I do that from a jail cell? Who's even going to hear me if I do? How do I do that if I can't actually organize my people to have that kind of statement or declaration or rethink? I want to bring Nader in. So, what, what... help us out here. You can be the mediator here. You're still part of the political process, but you certainly understand the currents and rhythms of the Islamist community. Is there a way back for the Muslim Brotherhood? Should there be... should we be concerned about this? What is your thought on that?

Nader Bakkar: First of all, let me ask you a question. Why a new party? Why a new party has joined the roadmap by the third of July?

Thomas Friedman: Please. Yea.

Nader Bakkar: Actually, I am belonging, again, I am belonging to the same Islamist extreme that (inaudible) I belong to.

Thomas Friedman: Yes.

Nader Bakkar: Realizing facts doesn't mean that we accept it or accept them. We realized before the 30th of June that things would come to an end. We tried a lot to

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limit the losses, if I could say that, to limit the losses of the whole Islamic extreme to its minimum level. We tried a lot.

Thomas Friedman: The losses of the Islamic. Uh huh. Yea.

Nader Bakkar: The losses of the Islamic extreme to its minimum level, even after the 30th of June take place, even the 30th of June, we tried to reach again with Mohamed Morsi to save whatever he can save. I am telling you because.. I am telling you that I have the same feeling of Dr. Haddara and same worries about the future of Islamic extreme, but in a reasonable, if I can say that, in a reasonable way. We actually joined the 3rd of July roadmap in order to choose the least evil. In order to consider that the past year regarding not only Muslim Brotherhood, because of course we are, we don't do the same, to the same situation.

Thomas Friedman: Yea.

Nader Bakkar: So when the Egyptian people are judging the Muslim Brotherhood, of course, they are stereotyping the whole Islamic extreme, even if we are trying to separate our situations from the Muslim Brotherhood. I am not criticizing you or attacking you. We wanted at that time to consider the past year as a failed experiment and that's all. Let's quickly reengage in the political process. We were and still trust very much in the popularity of the Islamic extreme. So why not to consider the past year as a failed experiment and reengage again in the political process, learning from the mistakes and by the way, Muslim Brotherhood before the past year, they said a lot by engineer (inaudible) I hope everything will (inaudible) in the coming future, he said a lot of times that we understand, we completely understand the bad experiment of Algeria. Even he said the (inaudible) would want to forbid it again. I would like to say that even the Turkish experiment itself, they didn't learn from it. How to deal with the military; how to deal with the SCAF; how to understand that the deep state is there and will be there for the longest time. Things need to have a changed management philosophy. Things need to be clear for the Egyptian people. A transparent...

Thomas Friedman: Right. So let me just... yeah. What I hear coming from you is that the Islamists or the Muslim Brotherhood should acknowledge that this was a failed experiment for many reasons and the military should, too, and everyone should sort of go forward basically. I want to get to the liberal parties as well and the Centrist Party, because I just want to... because I'm still hungry. I'm still hungry here for a way forward. I still don't feel I've got an answer to my question, should and must the Muslim Brotherhood be included in the political process as the Muslim Brotherhood and if so, how specifically, what do they have to do and what do the Centrists have to accept for this to happen? Somebody give me an answer.

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Nader Bakkar: Can I complete my thought?

Thomas Friedman: Yea. I'm sorry. Yea. Yea.

Nader Bakkar: If sure Muslim Brotherhood should be included in the coming future or they will again come to the underground world. You are talking about millions of people. Secluding them from the political life doesn't mean that you can successfully exclude them from the social life. They will be there and of course I cannot imagine that because some people dislike Muslim Brotherhood they will disappear from the society. So, I think now after (inaudible) and (inaudible) evacuation, now Muslim Brotherhood and I'm repeating what Dr. (inaudible) said before. Muslim Brotherhood should have a complete revision, not only to thoughts, but to the way they are dealing with others outside the Muslim Brotherhood; the way they think how Egypt and other countries by the way should (inaudible) under their regime or a regime that is containing themselves. So a complete revision not only to thoughts, but to the hierarchy, to the way of dealing with others.

Thomas Friedman: Yes. Okay. Let's stop there. I want to go quickly, give everybody just a real quick to answer and then I want to go to liberal and then I want to open it to the floor. So...

Wael Haddara: I come back to...

Thomas Friedman: But I think there is a central point.

Wael Haddara: Sure. I want to come back to two basic things. The first is with the depth of popular resentment against the Islamists or the Brotherhood specifically, why could we not have Parliamentary elections that were held up three times.

Thomas Friedman: My answer is we didn't have that. We have to go... We've got to start where we are now.

Wael Haddara: Right. And so the question is, how do people view the mechanisms for resolving our differences? And so if the idea is that we always need to impose things on people, framing the question of should the Brotherhood have a role or not is part of the problem. You're asking should Egyptians, really I mean unless we now get into the discourse of they're not Egyptian, should Egyptians have a role in the country's political future? The way we're asking the question, the way we're framing the conversation is antithetical to what national reconciliation and representative government could look like.

Thomas Friedman: So from your point of view, there's only one answer to that question. They have to be released to organize politically and...

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Wael Haddara: And everybody else.

Thomas Friedman: Right. Absolutely.

Wael Haddara: (inaudible) and people need to be able to feel they can home.

Thomas Friedman: Very clear repre... Dina?

Dina Guirguis: I agree completely that there needs to be a broad conversation among the Egypt public, but first, well as part of that, integral to that, I need to understand who you are as the Muslim Brotherhood. I need...

Wael Haddara: It's not me. I'm not the...

Dina Guirguis: ... to understand why after July 3rd, we have (inaudible) (inaudible) (inaudible) (inaudible) specifically invited, you know, to the (inaudible) multiple times to say, we will martyr ourselves. Christians and communists are following Assisi. You know, (inaudible) even said, (inaudible) (inaudible), who was considered a moderate leader of the Brotherhood, went out and explicitly and said, "If Morsi is restored to power, the attacks in Sinai will immediately stop." Therefore, when you question why the Egyptian public makes links of the Muslim Brotherhood to terrorists groups, you must understand where that is coming from. So for me, it's not enough to acknowledge the failures of the past. I want to know who you are now and I want Egyptians to have a broad conversations as to whether we accept you with all of your ideological point of view baggage, whatever it may be as part of our roadmap moving forward and that includes the Constitution and I would pose the same question to al Nour Party. You advised the Brotherhood to undergo revisions. Al Nour Party was equally guilty of excoriating Shiites and you even had a campaign saying, "(inaudible) to the Shiite. Together against Shiites." Therefore, to me that says you do not have the understanding of citizenship that I would like to see post revolutionary Egypt adopt and so I need to understand, are you going to undergo revisions as well?

Thomas Friedman: Nader?

Nader Bakkar: It comes to me?

Thomas Friedman: Yea. Hani and then Nader. Yea, as a moderator you dream of having someone like Dina on your panel.

[laughter]

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Hani Sarie Eldin: Just before answering your question, Dr. Haddara mentioned several times to Dr. (inaudible) and to (inaudible). I spoke with Dr. (inaudible) and (inaudible).

Thomas Friedman: Yes.

Hani Sarie Eldin: I spoke with Dr. Badrawi after his resignation and he was, I mean, in very good shape and he told me that he's going to spend his rest of the summer with his grandchildren. There is no, any... he's not under arrest. Yes, he's under attack by media and some of the opponents, but he's not...

Thomas Friedman: Again, I want to be specific. You know, how do we...

Hani Sarie Eldin: No, no. Because this has to be mentioned as (inaudible) the same.

Thomas Friedman: Right.

Hani Sarie Eldin: He can come. He doesn't have any problems or judicial problems.

Thomas Friedman: But the fate and the future of the Muslim Brotherhood...

Hani Sarie Eldin: Back to future, again. As I said, it's again I think it's a very difficult question. How to start? And I think the main spot is to stick with the roadmap, which Constitution and nobody will be excluded. If you decide to enter into the election, there has been no ban on the Muslim Brotherhood or any other Islamists parties to get into the election. So it's part, this is one of the things. If you want to and face people and want to impose (inaudible), there has been no ban and I categorically against any collective banning against anybody, because this is, again, you can't do it and this will definitely hinder the moving forward to democratic. So what I'm saying is frankly you can't take a decision Muslim Brotherhood should be included or should be excluded.

Thomas Friedman: Right.

Hani Sarie Eldin: But you have to have a general plan to include everybody according to the map. You have a good Constitution which include everybody. Then you have a presidential or parliamentary and presidential election.

Thomas Friedman: Okay.

Hani Sarie Eldin: Everybody would be entitled to do this in a free election. This is very important and then it is up to the people to decide and it's up to you which route you want to go in. So that's I think is best way to move forward.

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Thomas Friedman: Okay. Nader, a question was posed to you.

Nader Bakkar: Okay. I was an elected member the previous Constitutional Committee. An elected, not hired. An elected member. Okay? And this is a point that I want to stress here. I still remember and I don't know if Dina shared the same thing. I still remember how we struggled to find some kind of compromise between old and different ideologies inside the Constitution, the Constitutional Committee, that ends by an agreement to have four new articles, or actually three new articles and now with this Constitution. One of them, which is totally avoided in any discussion between the most of Egyptian groups now, in the third article, which for the first time in all over Egypt history talks about (inaudible) and Jewish rights in Egypt (inaudible) from the second article. This kind of compromise ended with this third article, along with the article 290. And by the way, for everybody here to know, this paper was initially originally signed by the church representatives, an (inaudible) representative, judiciary representative, Muslim Brotherhood and a new party, as well as the liberal extreme. I have here to say that only Dr. (inaudible) did say that I am signing that with some concern about this agreement. So, we tried. I'm not saying that we are ideal, but we tried to find an end to the sectarian struggle or to the sectarian problems. Secondly, I want to make a remark that when the Middle East Institute invited me, I noted that the invitation letter itself, they described, I know it is, it was not intended, but they described (inaudible) Dina with the Coptic lawyer. I said, "Why?"

Dina Guirguis: I say why, too. I didn't see that.

Nader Bakkar: After that yesterday, perhaps some (inaudible) to the letter, but at that time, I read this note. Why they said the Coptic lawyer? It is for me to know that she's Coptic before I come here, so to make some kind of ah, ah, I don't know.

Dina Guirguis: Well, you're (inaudible).

Nader Bakkar: (inaudible) my words. The Coptic lawyer and this is actually what we should do with Egyptians society itself. Egyptian society itself, after not only the 30th of June, but after the two, the previous two years, should have some kind of (inaudible), if I can say to its way of thinking about others. It's way of dealing with others.

Thomas Friedman: Nader, let me stop you there, because I want to get to another thing and the audience. I want to take the other side of this question, which for me is very important, which is, one thing that hasn't manifested itself since Tahir is a broad based, authentic, legitimate, progressive liberal party in Egypt that stands for a multi-sectarian Egypt, an Egypt that will develop the Arab Human Development Report, to

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overcome the deficits of knowledge and women's empowerment and freedom. Why is that? Not that there aren't those voices. We know Dr. (inaudible) did, but why is there no broad base that could really take on the Muslim Brotherhood in election and Nour in a way that would really resonate?

Dina Guirguis: Well I think that's a great question. First of all, I want to start by sort of disavowing this concept that's been proliferating here in DC policy circles about the il-liberal liberals. We don't know who the liberals are. We've tested the SCAF. They were certainly not liberal. We've tested the Brotherhood. They were certainly not liberal. But we haven't tested the liberals yet. Who these liberals are, that's a big question. I mean, there is this large swath of people. Say, you know, there's a titan sort of confrontation between the military and the Brotherhood or Islamists overall and this third sort of amorphous mass. You can call them Civic Egypt; you can call them Non-Islamist Egypt. You know, they go by many names.

Thomas Friedman: Well, I struggle to identify who they are. They are not actually telling us.

Dina Guirguis: Exactly. They're liberals and leftists. They have frankly been very poor in extending their message not just to the international community, but to Egyptians as well. I think part of it goes back to differing ideologies. By definition, the Brotherhood is a disciplined hierarchal organization. Democratic or liberal movements that are not bound to religious ideology are not. Therefore, dissention and disagreement and even disagreements with Badawi, people calling him a traitor and to be tried, there's an equal and opposite camp saying this is nonsense and Badawi is still a valued member of our movement, whatever it may be. So, it is incumbent upon us to try to figure this out ahead of any future election, because we are polarized. We do have a political vacuum. The current government is a transitional one. I, for one, do believe that the military seems to and (inaudible) seems to have learned from SCAF's mistakes in that they do actually want a departure from daily governance, from the nightmare that is governing Egypt on a daily basis and what happens next, we simply don't know. Who is a viable presidential candidate, we don't know. What worries me, is that in these circumstances of polarization and political vacuum, this is really where we see the potential for charisma, nationalism, populism to really emerge and has been mentioned before, Egypt is living a very nationalistic moment and if we go back in Egyptian history when Egypt lived that moment in the past, it did not fare well.

Thomas Friedman: Hani, I want you to answer to that and then we're going to open it to the floor.

Hani Sarie Eldin: Sure. It is a very important question, because I have been, for example, and other parties classified, I don't know by whom, as liberal parties and

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most of us have not defined themselves as liberal, but we have been defined by others as liberal because it's mainly the concept was sort of a civic parties, non-Islamist parties and again, there is a diversification between these parties among themselves and they were more focused about democracy and more focused about freedom, about social affairs. But this is, again, has been said and they have been treated as such. Why? There is no such no real ideological definition in these parties to be classified as such and this is part of the problem. But all civic parties, as I would like to classify them or describe them, whether the parties before the revolution, the January revolution, all these new parties, they still struggle in building themselves and reaching out the people, because they started from scratch. And there's a lot also among the people of mistrust these parties because they haven't proved themselves before the revolution and the new parties as well have not reached out the people because they were, you know, not, they don't have a common grounds in every village and this is in the building process. We should not also put all of our discourtesies to these parties because they are new parties and they are still in the building process. You have a funding issues in most of these parties. While part of the election (inaudible) and we have to face it, there has been a lot of money injected to Islamists parties particularly main four – The Freedom Justice Party, the Nour Party, the (inaudible) Party. You can ignore. I am telling you an information, established information and this has been...

Nader Bakkar: Where is evidence?

Hani Sarie Eldin: I have the evidence.

Nader Bakkar: Okay. Bring it to the judiciary.

Hani Sarie Eldin: It is with the judiciary by the way.

Nader Bakkar: Okay. (inaudible) investigation.

Hani Sarie Eldin: Nader, there has been a judgment where some people have been jailed. The problem with the foreign aid issues were not actually to submit finances to these organizations, but rather to have cash to these parties and this is established.

Thomas Friedman: Let me stop you guys there, because I want to...

[crosstalk]

Hani Sarie Eldin: I just want to finish my... please. I want to finish my part.

Thomas Friedman: Yea. Go ahead.

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Hani Sarie Eldin: So these parties have (inaudible) financial, organization and also a lot of other issues (inaudible). So they are in the building process and, therefore, also you have, we have to acknowledge a problem which will be coming. I don't think any of these parties have a strong candidate to offer and this as such, you might have a candidate coming from the military background. This is like this can happen and I think if this happen, it might affect the democracy process. I would love to see a candidate coming from non-military background. But this might not be the case in the near future.

Thomas Friedman: Well, quickly and then we are going to go to the floor. It looks like I have some angry people.

Wael Haddara: An important point. When Kate reached out around this conference, I made very clear that I am not a member of the Brotherhood actually and so I can't really represent their position. And one of And yea, so everybody's pointing. But, the point really is we have to ask ourselves why isn't a representative of the Brotherhood here at this forum or the FJP at least to be able to present their point of view? Which brings me back to my very basic point, is because they're all in jail.

Thomas Friedman: Okay. Let's hold that. The floor is open.

Hani Sarie Eldin: They're not all in jail. They're not all in jail. [laughter]

Thomas Friedman: The young lady over there.

Wael Haddara: The existence of an exception proves existence of a rule.

Thomas Friedman: Right over here. The young lady there. Yea?

Female: Hello. (inaudible) My question is for Mr. Bakkar. I just wanted to have your comments on the child marriage article that was passed in the Constitution where you were elected as a member, please.

Nader Bakkar: Do you remember its number?

Female: Ha ha, no. I don't remember its number.

Nader Bakkar: Because it doesn't exist.

Female: Really?

Nader Bakkar: Yes.

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Female: So if you can inform us about it, this would be great.

Nader Bakkar: Of course. Of course.

Female: And if it is true that it was passed, I just wonder how come the rest of the world did not comment or say anything about little girls as of the age of 13 in Egypt getting married?

Thomas Friedman: I guess that was directed at you, Nader.

Nader Bakkar: First of all, with all respect to you, and I'm not joking when I say that doesn't exist, but I really tell you the truth. This article doesn't exist, firstly. Secondly, the issue of children marriage. Do you know, ma'am, that the US loathes regarding, I can't remember, South Carolina, I think, some states here, some states here, ha?

Audience Member: (inaudible).

Nader Bakkar: Okay. You can search by yourself. How many states, how many states here allow for under 18 marriage, but with the parent agreement? Okay? I'm not here to struggling with you about this issue exactly. I was just telling at that time that a kind of reasonable debate should be there, a scientific debate, should be there about our Egyptian traditions and habits, about the real world in Egypt. I mean the upper Egypt and the poor areas in Egypt. You have to understand how those people are thinking, how are these traditions and then to keep after this considering to keep the right of women and they are under 18 their full rights if they don't want to marry before reaching the age of 18 or not. So, again, I don't remember right now, but I will search by myself about the states, the American States that allow for marriage under 18.

Thomas Friedman: Dina, you're a lawyer.

Dina Guirguis: Yes. I believe that under no circumstance can any state in the United States permit marriage under 16.

Nader Bakkar: You will get surprised.

Thomas Friedman: No. Sixteen.

Dina Guirguis: Sixteen. Sixteen is the cut-off. I believe what the woman was referencing here, and over 16 to 18 you need parental permission. I believe what the woman was referencing here was a proposal that was actually made by an Islamist

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to remove the mandatory age for marriage and that was proposed. It did not make it into the final version but it was there. Now the reason...

Nader Bakkar: She mentioned the Constitution.

Dina Guirguis: Now the reason...

Nader Bakkar: So be precise to the Constitution.

Dina Guirguis: Now the reason that there is so much concern about this, there should be plenty of concern of how women fare under any Islamist regime, is for instance, we had a very benign document put out by the United Nations simply to combat violence against women. The Brotherhood's response and Nader will tell you that they are more "extreme" than the Brotherhood, was to say that if Egypt ratifies this document it would lead to "the complete disintegration of society and that it contravenes Islam." Therefore, there is good reason to worry about the status of women. The Brotherhood MP (inaudible) was trying to remove whatever harassment laws, antisexual harassment laws we had in place, therefore, what kind of regard does this party if this is their representative and what she, you know, this is what she is trying to do and what she's doing. What does it say about the status of women about how these various Islamist forces regard women?

Wael Haddara: The residency approved that statement to the United Nations and supported it.

Thomas Friedman: Let's go. I just want to make sure we get somebody in the back. Back there with the blue shirt. Yea, right there.

Male: I'm independent. My question is for Bakker, but I was hoping to actually talk about reconciliation on the ground. To what degree is your party coordinating with (inaudible) to try and drive some sort of social solution to the great divisions that are happening currently in Egypt and I was wondering if you could comment, I understand if you may not have word of it, about what happened recently in (inaudible) to which is being touted by the military as the first example of reconciliation. In short, arguably the leader of the (inaudible), (inaudible), accepted or facilitated with the military intelligence to let the families of the victims accept 50,000 pounds and trips to Mecca. So is this some sort of strategy that they're hoping to implement elsewhere? I was hoping you'd comment on that.

Nader Bakkar: First of all, I doubt about some information that you have mentioned about (inaudible). But, I trust you. I trust you and let me tell you something. The (inaudible) is something different from Muslim Brotherhood. I don't my words to be like attacking Muslim Brotherhood or criticizing them. But, actually we are like

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extreme. We are not like a family. We don't have strict and firm hierarchy by which we can impose everybody belongs to this community or to this union, the (inaudible) to be whatever decision that we have make. By the way, some people from Egypt keep always saying that you guys joined genuinely the 3rd of July, while some of your members were at (inaudible) and (inaudible) (inaudible). Because we are like an institution, that some members of it cannot easily understand how the decision making of what are the facts beyond our decision, especially in this critical situation, this critical issue. So some of our members were at (inaudible) and (inaudible). Our leaders were not there. The most of our members, this is not to say that (inaudible) and (inaudible) citizens were wrong, no and (inaudible) with the right to express their point of view and to suppress their feelings against the 30th of June, but in a peaceful way.

Thomas Friedman: Let's go right up here.

Male: Hammat (inaudible), Voice of America. We heard Dr. Haddara complaining that Muslim Brotherhood can't speak for themselves because they are in prison, but Dr. (inaudible), for example, is a leader of their party and he should come up with conditions to reengage and reconcile. I would like to know what the Muslim Brotherhood has as a condition to rejoin the reconciliation and instead of just refusing what happened and denouncing the military.

Thomas Friedman: Good question. Thank you.

Wael Haddara: That's a good question. So, you know, I think it was JFK that said you can't negotiate with those who say, "What is mine is mine and what is yours is negotiable." So, you're now, you know, and not everybody is in jail, but a fair number of people are, including (inaudible), (inaudible), Morsi, (inaudible).

[Sidebar regarding people in jail]

Wael Haddara: I'm telling you, (inaudible) is not out.

Male: No, he's out.

Wael Haddara: [laughter] So, back to my point. Back to my point that everyone is entitled to their own opinions.

Nader Bakkar: (inaudible) is in jail.

Wael Haddara: Yea. I mean, it's...

Thomas Friedman: Okay.

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Wael Haddara: So, Dr. (inaudible) proposed an initiative that was in fact Bill Burns, (inaudible) Leon, the (inaudible) Foreign Minister and the MRT Foreign Minister were party to and was predicated on a very simple basic assumption that we need to sit down and negotiate a solution for Egypt as a whole and that, I think, with the idea of no victor, no vanquished really must be clearly understood by all. To do this, we need a series of confidence building measures, release some of the prisoners. In exchange for releasing the prisoners and the prisoners that were asking to be released aren't just the Brotherhood, but (inaudible), (inaudible) (inaudible) Party, you know, and others and in return as an exchange of goodwill, we will reduce the demonstrators at (inaudible) 50% and we'll continue to sit down and talk. And I'm reading this in the newspapers probably just like you are, but there was a report of this in the *Post* and *The New York Times*. People left feeling that it's going to happen any minute now and then it didn't happen. Now, what was reported in the papers is that eventually the military said you can't trust those people. They're not going to follow through with the deal, but I'll remind you throughout the last year when President Morsi was the president, that people said to us on an ongoing basis, "You are the government. You need to make overtures. You're the ones that need to make concessions. You're the ones that need to reach out." Now that the Brotherhood or the FGP are not the government and they are not even the opposition because they're in jail, they are the ones that have to reach out. They are the ones that have to make concessions. They are the ones that have to make overtures. There's got to be a consistent approach to things. We can't just flip flop.

Thomas Friedman: You know, one of the things that strikes me and I wrote this last year, one of the biggest surprises for me about the awakenings in general, but Egypt in particular, I said, you know, Egypt is a country that needs to go on a weekend retreat.

[laughter]

Thomas Friedman: That what really struck me about Egypt, but it really struck me all over.

Wael Haddara: How about a month long retreat?

Thomas Friedman: A month long retreat. But how little people knew each other, really knew each other. You know, certainly the rise of al Nour and the size of the (inaudible) movement in Egypt shocked people. But that was just one. These regimes really prevented people from really knowing each other in a deep sense.

Wael Haddara: And to survive.

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Thomas Friedman: Exactly. It was deliberate, of course. But anyway, I just think what is so, that's why I am a bit of an optimist about Yemen, because it's so poor and so remote, but they are actually doing this six month... they've been doing this long national dialogue in a way that Egypt could so benefit from if there were a single catalyst, you know, a single finger, a Mandela like figure, who could pull everyone together. Maybe that's a naive wish, but it does...

Wael Haddara: (inaudible) said prisoners cannot negotiate.

Dina Guirguis: Right. If I may add to that just briefly.

Thomas Friedman: So anyway... Go ahead, Dina. I'm starting trouble here.

Dina Guirguis: Victors' justice is an ugly thing. That's not what we want, particularly because the military is an equal opportunity oppressor. You know, for them this may be the Islamist today; it may be somebody else tomorrow and indeed it is likely to be somebody else tomorrow. In fact, you know, the Brotherhood or Islamists, unidentified Islamists that are supportive of the non-coups movement, if you will, they've been taking out their frustrations on Copts, for instance. Copts who really have nothing to do with anything and are innocent and frankly, the military, I think is pretty satisfied to stand by and let it happen, because then it justifies their crackdown. So I don't disagree with Mr. Haddara. I do believe that overtures have to be made and that, you know, some compromises and some initiation from the government has to be made and I would like to hear more from not our military leaders but from President Adly Monsour, from his Prime Minister, from his government. Now we have a new Ministry of Reconciliation. Where are they in this process? So, you know, we do need to get this moving. But once again, going back to the point of not being able to trust the Brotherhood. The Brotherhood over a year of their rule systematically broke their promises.

Thomas Friedman: But let's not start that again.

Wael Haddara: [laughter]

Thomas Friedman: Right here. Please, yea. The gentleman there.

Male: Mr. Bakkar, I'm from American University. Earlier in the discussion Ms. Guirguis made a remark about the al Nour's Party affiliation or position on the oppression of Shiites. I think that's an important aspect of reconciliation and I was wondering if you could reply to that.

Nader Bakkar: Okay.

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[applause]

Nader Bakkar: [laughter]

Thomas Friedman: This is not Crossfire. You don't have to applaud everybody's question and answer.

Nader Bakkar: We have the right in our country to express our point of view regarding our religion, which if you hear or learned about the Shiites' ideology, which is keep insulting our religion, our Islamic religion, so what we have mentioned at that time before the 30th of June, just to rule everything in this country. Express your opinions, but on the same platform that (inaudible) and others express their opinions. Don't insult against Sunni people. Don't ... Anyway, you have to hear about Shiite point of view regarding our prophet and his companions, how they are talking about his wives, for example. So, for a national security purpose, we advised Dr. Mohamed Morsi a lot to rule everything in this country based on a specific rules. We said a lot that in Egypt we need to fix the rules of the game, the political one, the democratic one, even in every aspect. We should fix some certain rules between us all how to express our opinions in front of (inaudible) for example. How to deal even with other citizens that are not belonging to any religion. The issue here for a new party is the way that all other Egyptians are dealing with different ideologies or with different religion based on certain rules, just to fix the rules between...

Thomas Friedman: We got that. Good. Dina, a quick intervention.

Dina Guirguis: Yea. This is a poster that was being circulated and hung in Alexandria. This is the Nour party logo right down here and here it is for you, Nadar. (inaudible) to the Shiites. Together against Shiite. Shiite with an X next to it. (inaudible). They insult the (inaudible). (inaudible) Quran. They deviate from the Quran. (inaudible) Sunnis. They kill the family of Sunnis or Sunnis. How is that not incitement? I want to understand. You always come back with, "prove it." Can you prove that the Shiites...

Nader Bakkar: Can you prove that this is (inaudible)?

Dina Guirguis: So this is fabricated?

Nader Bakkar: I don't know. I don't know.

Thomas Friedman: We need an intermediary.

Hani Sarie Eldin: This typically what we face in Egypt.

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[laughter]

[applause]

Hani Sarie Eldin: Seriously. And this is the mistakes we've committed. We always raise and focus on our differences.

Nader Bakkar: Yes.

Hani Sarie Eldin: And some, unfortunately, some of the politicians say what they don't believe in and the people cannot be fooled anymore. So, as such, I think the best way to start to break this cycle of mistrust, is to stick and push the military and the government to stick with and to move forward with the roadmap, because this is very important and then the reconciliation process itself will bring... Because, for example, during the Constitution, some of the Muslim Brotherhood representatives were invited to the...

Wael Haddara: They say they weren't.

Hani Sarie Eldin: Huh?

Wael Haddara: They say they weren't.

Hani Sarie Eldin: Sorry. (inaudible) (inaudible) was one of the... he made an announcement and he said, "I have already presented before and I don't want to get involved again." So that's for the government. (inaudible), the ex-minister of Housing, (inaudible) and...

Wael Haddara: (inaudible) clearly was not invited. I have spoken explicitly to (inaudible).

Hani Sarie Eldin: ... the government, not to the Committee. To the government and he said, "No. Our position is clear. We can't do this..."

Wael Haddara: While people are in jail, we...

Hani Sarie Eldin: Yea. This is not.

Wael Haddara: But the context is important, Hani.

Hani Sarie Eldin: I understand. But what I'm saying is, we understand what you are coming from. But also there has been invitation. My point is, as we talk now, it is very difficult to break this cycle because as they say, no we want to be out of jail and

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then we start negotiation. Fair enough. The others, the government say no. Some of the leaders were involved in killing or encouraging people to kill or at least this is the view. We can't put you out of the jail, you have to be prosecuted. So this is the thing and unless you have a proper transitional period and transitional justice process, you can't go anywhere. So my advice always, let us move forward. Let us not impose collective banning on anybody and then you start to build yourself again, build your trust and it will, we will move forward and I think we will come to the point to all when we are going to set on the negotiation table. Probably now is not the right moment. Everybody's tense and I think one of the ways to diffuse this tension is to move forward with the road map, with all that is associated with it.

Thomas Friedman: That I think is a wonderful theme and tone to end on, because we are out of time.

Wael Haddara: Let me ask the audience, I should left them more hopeful or less hopeful.

Thomas Friedman: I don't want to test that proposition.

[laughter]

Thomas Friedman: We do have to end, but I would only add one thing to Hani's remark and that is I think they should also, Hani, everyone in Egypt, if I had one wish, should be made to watch the movie, *Invictus*, which is the story of Nelson Mandela's takeover after the end of apartheid and there is one particular scene in that movie that I think has the most important message for Egyptians today. It's when the new sports commissioner, the new black sports commissioner, minister in Egypt, who represents and comes from the ANC, the African National Congress, and comes to Mandela and they say we want to change the name of the national rugby team to Springbox to an important, to an authentic African name, because Springbox is really associated with white apartheid rule. And what does Mandela say? He says, "No. We are not going to do that. We must surprise them." And when you see, what I'm looking for in Egypt today, is when I read the news from Egypt and I see whether it's from the Nour movement or Dostour or from Copts or from Muslim Brotherhood, when I read a story that says wow from the military, that person surprised me. Surprised me with their courage of reconciling to the other side. Egypt really needs some surprises. Thank you very much.

Panel ends