

Dialogue Between Muslim Brotherhood and EU Has Better Prospects , Says MB Deputy Chairman



The Muslim Brotherhood places more hope on EU rather than U.S. in its efforts to promote understanding and dialogue between the Arab and Muslim worlds and the West, said MB Deputy Chairman Dr. Mohamed Habib.

In his meeting with several European think tanks, Habib emphasized that the MB is keen on effective and fruitful communication with European or American think tanks so as to address and correct any misconceptions about the MB and its ideology

Habib hoped dialogue will produce a more healthy relationship between the EU and the Arab and Muslim world in general and improve relations between Muslim minorities with their local communities in the West.

‘Cooperation of this kind will definitely have its positive impact on the general policies of the EU at large or individual member states,’ he added.

Habib emphasized that prospects for dialogue with the EU are increasing since the EU is less biased towards Arab and Islamic issues compared to the US. And although these prospects are sometimes undermined by certain

calculations; the MB hopes that the margin of engagement will increase.

However, Habib criticized the relatively similar policies of EU and US in propping up authoritarian regimes in the region despite their undemocratic practices.

"These double-standard policies are ought to be revised by the EU to enhance its credibility in the region," he said.

When Habib was asked about the form of communication that the MB holds with the EU, he said that the Muslim Brotherhood abides by official protocols in this respect.

"The Muslim Brotherhood is not a state within a state. We respect the State's institutions; therefore we would not hold any communications with foreign governments without the approval of the Egyptian Foreign Ministry".

Habib said that MB MPs hold regular meetings with EU MPs as part of the routine and customary activities between Egyptian Parliament and its European counterpart. The focus of these meetings usually revolve around development projects, in addition to general freedoms in Egypt

Habib welcomed the Club of Madrid initiatives to promote freedom of association in Egypt as a key element of democratic development. He said the MB will be pleased to join the Club's delegation to Cairo in October, whose goal is to learn about the democratic progress in Egypt and its challenges.

[of Madrid](#) is an independent organization dedicated to strengthening democracy around the world by drawing on the unique experience and resources of its Members – 70 democratic former heads of state and government. Part of the Democratic Dialogue and Freedom of Association in the Middle East and North Africa Project, this mission builds on the experiences and lessons learned from dialogue missions to Bahrain, Jordan and Morocco over the course of the past year. The project will work in Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Tunisia in 2008. The Club of Madrid is working in partnership with the Al Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies in Egypt in Madrid, Spain. [FRIDE](#) and

"We have a lot to say about freedom of forming political parties and the stagnant political atmosphere in Egypt.

There has to be progress at the legal and political levels in order to attain freedom of association. Establishing a political party is supposed to be a legal right for every citizen provided it neither has military activities nor sectarian backgrounds," Habib said.