



European Institute for Research on the Middle East

The Muslim Brotherhood in Europe

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Steven Merley is an Investigative Researcher who specializes in the study of political extremism. Over the last years, he has concentrated solely on the Muslim Brotherhood in Europe and the U.S. and his work has been sponsored by think tanks, foundations, and national media. Mr. Merley consults frequently with government/intelligence agencies and journalists on issues relating the Muslim Brotherhood.

MEP Paulo Casaca, PSE, Portugal

- The Muslim Brotherhood will be here discussed with regard to:
 - its connection with Jihaidism
 - its relation to Hamas, that is the organization to which it is linked the most
 - the European perspective, through which the various MB groups could be dealt with

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- the main features of the MB are:
 - global scope and structure
 - many different components throughout the world
 - Middle Eastern leadership
- The MB is a "network" of individuals and organizations which is something more than just an idea.
- In order to identify MB groups or affiliates it is not enough to look under the name of Muslim Brotherhood: they gather in fact under a large umbrella of different organizations, including youth and women networks.
- In the United States, it is rather difficult to identify MB members because they are not officially affiliated.
- In Europe the situation is different: the FIOE was created in November 1989 and nowadays it groups together many Muslim organisations, from students' movements to theological bodies, European bodies of EU imams, women organizations and associations of Muslim schools.
- One the FIOE leader is Ahmed Al-Rawi, an Iraqi born who supports terrorism in Israel and Iraq.
- Other key FIOE leaders are:
 - Ibrahim El-Zayat, former head of the Islamische Gemeinschaft and head of the German MB.
 - Ayman Ali, an Egyptian living in Germany, cofounder of FEMYSO and former FIOE head in the Balkans.
 - Bassam Hatahet, born in Damascus, cofounder of Al-Aqsa in Belgium and one of the leaders of FIOE in Belgium.

- The MB has headquarters and a much elaborated structure here in Belgium, especially in Brussels. The management of the organization as well as the agenda are among the less transparent.
- FIOE has become very active in the EU village, especially among EU Institutions such as the EP. They regularly meet and lobby political groups and policy advisors.
- FIOE represents today some 29 mostly Sunni Muslims organisations and more than 1000 local groups, including the Muslim Association of Britain (MAB), the Union des organisations islamiques de France (UOIF) and the Islamische Gemeinschaft in Deutschland (IGD).
- MB's talks about Islamic democracy aim at letting them being democratically elected. But seeking legitimacy in Europe and claiming to be the elected representatives of the Muslim people in Europe is not fair towards other European Muslims who do not identify themselves not in the MB nor in the FIOE.
- **Reasons for concern:**
 - unhealthy social impact: the claim to represent all European Muslims could lead to the misuse of Islam in order to pursue a political agenda. As a consequence, Islamic fundamentalism as well as the 'politicization' of religion will be fostered thus leading to an undemocratic *milieu*.
 - Hindering of integration: MB's members are not interested in integration but rather believe in making an Islamic space where everything is under Islamic rule and control. MB's ideology and misuse of the Islamic religion is also a strong vector of anti-Semitism. MB' leaders frequently use as a source of theological reference the "Protocols of the elders of Zion".
 - Association with terrorism: the MB adopted the 'doctrine of defensive Jihad' which aims at spreading the idea that a war

on Islam is being carried out and that any defense is legitimate against possible aggression or whenever Islam is insulted. The doctrine of defensive Jihad also legitimizes support to terrorism by providing a cover for it. The fundraising activity carried out both by the MB and by FIOE is massive and financial transactions in both organizations are not transparent at all. Strong connections exist between FIOE and terrorist organizations and this can be also proved by the fact that FIOE leaders consider Sheikh Youssef Qaradawi as their spiritual leader. “Individuals, such as Zindani in Yemen, have been involved in funding both MB and AQ as well as some suspicious FIOE monetary transactions in the Balkans. However, there have been no proven financial transactions between FIOE and AQ that I know of”, said Mr. Merley.

- Insufficient information: there is no enough information available, no books, no accessible website, no academic studies and no investigations.