SUMMARY

- The Egyptian cabinet’s recently proposed amendments to the Nationality Law would enable the government to revoke citizenship from peaceful opponents of the regime of Abdel Fattah al-Sisi under a sweeping definition of who poses a threat to “state security” and “public order.”

- If approved by the pro-regime parliament, the revised law would constitute a new and unprecedented tool in the regime’s repressive toolkit. The law could be wielded against opposition figures inside the country as well as against members of Egypt’s growing exile community.

- The proposed amendments contravene Egypt’s 2014 constitution and international human rights norms.

- Egypt appears to be borrowing from the playbook of authoritarian Gulf monarchies that use the extreme tactic of annuling the citizenship of opposition figures.

INTRODUCTION

Last December, Mostafa Bakry, a staunchly pro-regime member of parliament, proposed legislation to revoke the citizenship of anyone in Egypt convicted of committing a “terrorist crime.” More than 100 lawmakers supported the bill, but the government opposed it, apparently because it planned to introduce even more stringent measures.

Indeed, on September 20, 2017, with little public warning, the Egyptian cabinet approved amendments to the Nationality Law that would allow the state (technically, the cabinet) to strip citizenship from Egyptians it deems a “threat to national security” or involved in “undermining public order.”1 Laws enacted by the regime of President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi define threats to national security and public order in a disturbingly

---

broad manner, to encompass peaceful political actions that include some forms of protest, assembly, civic activism, and speech, and the regime has used these laws to harass or imprison many journalists, activists, and human rights defenders. Revocation of citizenship means the annulment of certain rights ensured by the Egyptian constitution, including access to employment, healthcare, education, subsidized food, and other governmental services. It also means severe or complete restrictions on travel, the loss of status in society, and the severing of practical and emotional ties with one’s homeland.

The regime’s internal decision-making process is so opaque that it is difficult to know who came up with the idea for the amendments or when they will be sent to parliament for approval. But simply the fact that the cabinet has approved the text should raise alarms. Citizenship is a fundamental aspect of one’s identity. Withdrawing it for political reasons is an extreme form of state punishment.

THE ORIGINAL LAW AND THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

In its original form, the Nationality Law (Law No. 26/1975) stipulates the conditions under which the state can revoke citizenship from natural-born and naturalized Egyptians. These include if someone: has obtained another nationality without the consent of the Interior Ministry; is serving in a foreign army without prior authorization; has been convicted of a crime while residing abroad that harms Egypt’s foreign security interests; refuses to follow a cabinet order to leave his or her employment with a foreign government or a foreign or international “body” that is deemed contrary to national interests; is working abroad for an agency that aims to undermine the state’s social or economic order; is serving a foreign state or government that is at war with Egypt or with which diplomatic relations have been severed; or is “characterized at any time by Zionism.”

According to Egyptian passport officials, during the 42 years of the law’s existence, only 22 citizens have been stripped of their citizenship. According to the Official Gazette, however,

---

2. According to Egypt’s constitution, citizenship entitles Egyptians to a set of rights, including to state employment “on the basis of merit” (Article 14), to comprehensive health care (Article 18), and to education (Article 19). Constitution of Egypt, 2014; English translation available at http://www.sis.gov.eg/Newvr/Dustor-en001.pdf.
3. The United States Supreme Court ruled in 1958 (case of Trop v. Dulles) that citizenship “is not a license that expires upon misbehavior. Rather, it can only be voluntarily renounced by express language and, or, conduct.” The court described denationalization as “a form of punishment more primitive than torture” because it inflicts the “total destruction of the individual’s status in organized society.” It is possible for a naturalized U.S. citizen to have his or her citizenship revoked, but only under very narrowly defined circumstances, and the action is quite rare. Natural-born U.S. citizens cannot be stripped of their citizenship. With the rise of international terrorism by transnational groups such as the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) in recent years, some democracies have adopted harsher policies toward the citizenship of their nationals who are involved in terror crimes. The United Kingdom, for example, stripped at least 152 British ISIS recruits of citizenship in 2016 and 2017. Denmark and Australia used similar measures against some of their nationals convicted of terrorism in the past few years. In all these cases, notably, those stripped of citizenship had to meet two crucial conditions: 1) they were convicted of terrorism by a court; and 2) they possessed a second nationality (dual nationals). Egypt’s proposed changes to its nationality law, by contrast, would also apply to dual citizens and to those who do not have another nationality.
4. Egypt’s nationality law differentiates between two categories of nationality: foreigners who acquired citizenship through naturalization (naturalized citizens) and Egyptians who received citizenship at birth (natural-born citizens). When referring to revocation of citizenship, the law uses the term sahb (withdrawal) for naturalized citizens and the term isqat (renunciation) for natural-born citizens. In this paper, the general term “revocation” refers to both categories. The full text of the law can be found here (in Arabic): https://deltalaw.blogspot.com/2012/09/26-1975-154-2004.html?m=1.
The state revoked the citizenship of at least 23 people between March 2014 and September 2015 alone, during the brief premiership of Ibrahim Mehleb. In addition, according to news reports, at least nine more Egyptians were stripped of their citizenship from October 2015 through November 2017.

Some of the proposed amendments accord with global practices. One change would increase the waiting period for the offspring of an Egyptian mother and a foreign father to obtain Egyptian nationality from one to two years. Another would give the authorities the right to revoke the citizenship of anyone who used fraudulent means or provided false information to acquire it.

Other amendments, however, are far from standard and are potentially dangerous. The full text of the amended law has not yet been made public, but the official statement issued by the cabinet on September 20, together with news reports citing statements from Interior Ministry officials about the law, indicate three main areas for concern.

One proposed amendment would require natural-born Egyptian nationals working abroad for a foreign government or a foreign or international body to leave their posts immediately if the state orders them to quit. If they do not comply, their citizenship is at risk. The original text allows a six-month grace period. The exact meaning of the term “body” in this context is not clear. Potentially, this article could be deployed against Egyptians who fled the country during the wave of repression following al-Sisi’s July 2013 ouster of President Mohamed Morsi and who are now working abroad in various foreign media outlets or human rights organizations. Or it could be used to intimidate Egyptian nationals working overseas for international organizations from expressing oppositional political views.

A second proposed amendment would give the state the right to revoke citizenship from Egyptians living abroad convicted of harming Egypt’s external or domestic security. In the original law, natural-born citizens could only have their citizenship stripped for harming Egypt’s external security interests (such as through espionage). The proposed change would also make their citizenship vulnerable if they are convicted of actions that harm the country domestically such as through disturbing public order, opposing the regime, and so forth. (Both conditions already applied to naturalized

---


7. This is based on the author’s tabulation of information found in various Egyptian press reports.


9. The word in Arabic is هيئة (hay’a).

10. The term من جهة الاخلاء (min jihat al-khaarij) (roughly translated as “from the angle of outside”) refers to the relationship of the Egyptian government to foreign countries and foreign interests, while من جهة الاختلاط (min jihat al-daakhil) (“from the angle of inside”) refers to the relationship of the Egyptian state to its own subjects. A helpful explainer of these terms is found in In re General Intelligence Directorate, Supreme Court of Egypt, Case 2/7 (1976), University of Minnesota Human Rights Library, http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/arabic/Egypt-SCC-SC/Egypt-SCC-2-Y7.html.
citizens.) Those targeted under the new language could include Egyptians who have fled into exile since Morsi’s ouster and whom al-Sisi’s regime has convicted in absentia for terrorism-related charges (as noted, defined extremely broadly in Egyptian law), or for demonstrating illegally under the 2013 Protest Law or posing other nonviolent threats to “public order” in trials that Egyptian and international human rights groups describe as deeply flawed.¹¹

A third proposed amendment, perhaps the most sweeping, would allow the state to revoke the citizenship of Egyptians convicted of “belonging to a group, association, front, organization, gang, or entity of any kind, inside or outside the country, that aims to harm the public order of the state or undermine its social, economic or political order” (emphasis added). This worrying language is entirely new; it is not part of the original law. It appears that it would apply to naturalized and natural-born citizens and to those living inside and outside Egypt. Al-Sisi’s regime has banned the Muslim Brotherhood and activist groups such as the April 6 Youth Movement for, inter alia, posing threats to national security and attacking public order; it has arrested members of political parties and activists and investigated human rights NGOs on similar grounds. Egyptians affiliated with a wide range of organizations that run afoul of the regime could be vulnerable under such far-reaching language.¹² Egyptian officials have declared that revocations of citizenship will

¹¹. Terrorism, according to the anti-terrorism law (Law No. 94/2015), encompasses an extremely broad range of activities, including speech, writing, and other peaceful dissent and civil disobedience that the authorities deem to “harm national unity, social peace, or national security,” to constitute “any use of force, violence, threat, or intimidation domestically or abroad for the purpose of disturbing public order, or endangering the safety, interests, or security of the community,” or to “obstruct the enforcement of any of the provisions of the Constitution, laws, or regulations.” For an English translation of the law, see http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/images/EgyptSource/Egypt_Anti-Terror_Law_Translation.pdf. In addition, 2014 amendments to the penal code criminalize an undefined set of individual and organizational activities as “harming the nation’s interest” and “disturbing public peace and order.” See Law No. 50/2014 amending Law No. 58/1937, promulgating the Penal Code.

¹². In just one such example, in October 2017 a university student and member of the leftist Bread and Freedom Party was sentenced to five years in prison for “promoting terrorist acts” after he criticized the government’s human rights record and economic policies on his Facebook page. See Mahmoud Farouk, “The Wrong Target: Egypt Imprisons Nonviolent Student Activist For Terrorism,” POMED, October 2017, http://pomed.org/pomed-publications/pomed-snapshot-the-wrong-target-egypt-imprisons-nonviolent-coptic-christian-for-terrorism/.
only follow final judicial verdicts, but there are many reasons to be skeptical of such assurances in light of the frequent rule of law violations in today’s Egypt.\(^{13}\)

The Egyptian state already has some ability to withhold passports and to block travel as a political punishment. For instance, the Law of Terrorist Entities (Law No. 8/2015) allows the government to place Egyptians on the “terrorist entities list”—an action that can be initiated without a judicial ruling and by applying a very broad definition of ‘terrorism’—and bar them from travel, withdraw or cancel their passports, and ban them from receiving a new passport.\(^{14}\) These provisions are less harsh, however, than the proposed changes to the Nationality Law, since the withdrawal of a passport may result in an effective ban on travel, but does not lead to the revocation of other privileges of citizenship.

\section*{HOW MIGHT THE REGIME USE THE AMENDED LAW?}

Egyptian officials make the case that the revised Nationality Law would protect national security by stripping terrorists of Egyptian citizenship, thereby cutting their links to Egyptian society and thwarting their access to the country. MP Ihab al-Khouly, secretary of the parliament’s constitutional and legislative affairs committee, announced that the amended law will “fight terrorism,” and Ahmed Ismail, an MP serving on the defense and national security committee, similarly contended that the amendments would “protect national security.”\(^{15}\) Emphasizing a somewhat different angle, Ahmed al-Anwar, the Interior Minister’s Assistant for Passports, Immigration and Nationality, said that the amendments “aim to preserve Egyptian identity and nationality”—seemingly hinting at the idea that those who hold certain political views or affiliations should not be allowed to be Egyptian.\(^{16}\)

\begin{center}
An Interior Minister official said that the amendments “aim to preserve Egyptian identity and nationality.”
\end{center}

Some officials have suggested that one of the main purposes of a revised law would be to revoke citizenship from thousands of Palestinians granted Egyptian citizenship during Morsi’s presidency.\(^{17}\) They claim that these Palestinian-Egyptians have joined the jihadist insurgency in the Sinai Peninsula or are affiliated with the militant Palestinian Islamist group Hamas. MP Mohamed Aql stated, “They are living among us but do everything possible to cause harm to our country...these former Gazans can be found in Sinai, fighting the Egyptian army within the ranks of the Islamic

\begin{itemize}
\item For instance, the Law of Terrorist Entities (Law No. 8/2015) allows the government to place Egyptians on the “terrorist entities list”—an action that can be initiated without a judicial ruling and by applying a very broad definition of ‘terrorism’—and bar them from travel, withdraw or cancel their passports, and ban them from receiving a new passport.\(^{14}\)


\item Mahmoud Abdel Rady, “Interior Minister’s Assistant for Passports, Immigration and Nationality: Revoking Citizenship from Members of Terrorist Groups Will Be Based on Court Rulings,” Youm7 [Arabic], September 26, 2017, https://tinyurl.com/y9yk2582.

\item In 2004, Egypt enacted a law that allowed children of Egyptian mothers and foreign fathers to acquire Egyptian citizenship, but the Egyptian authorities did not grant Palestinians with Egyptian mothers this right, using as pretext an Arab League recommendation aimed at preserving Palestinian identity. In 2011, the Arab League recommendation was reversed, and from May 2011 through May 2014, 24,000 Palestinians granted Egyptian citizenship during Morsi’s presidency. See Mohamed Barakat, “Head of Passports Agency to al-Watan: Palestinians Cannot be Prevented from Acquiring Egyptian Citizenship,” al-Watan [Arabic], February 9, 2014, https://www.ewatannews.com/news_details/413942; Mohamed Shoman and Fatma al-Dessouki, “Head of Passports Agency: 8,000 Palestinians Acquired Egyptian Citizenship under Morsi,” al-Ahran [Arabic], May 17, 2014, https://tinyurl.com/yabletnay.
\end{itemize}
Aql added that amendments are needed to “help protect Egypt” from numerous security threats. Another MP, Osama Abu al-Magd, argued that such foreigners who acquired Egyptian nationality in recent years belong to a “particular group” (presumably the Muslim Brotherhood) and are not legitimate citizens—echoing al-Sisi’s rhetoric that the Brotherhood are not Egyptians.

A high-ranking Interior Ministry official suggested that the amended law could be used to strip citizenship from Morsi himself, already serving a life sentence for espionage and a 20-year sentence for killing demonstrators. The official stated that the cabinet would take such a decision after considering Egypt’s “supreme interests and national security requirements.”

Beyond this, officials have not said much publicly about how the amended law would be applied. But the scope of repression in recent years suggests that many Islamist and secular opponents of the regime could be targeted. There have already been politically motivated attempts to strip citizenship from prominent Egyptians of various political colorations. In recent years, dozens of lawsuits filed before the State Council by pro-regime lawyers have demanded the withdrawal of citizenship from a long list of public figures based on spurious allegations that they are terrorists, harmed Egypt’s national security in other ways, or incited against the state. Such defendants have included prominent former opposition leader (and briefly vice-president in 2013) Mohamed ElBaradei, former presidential candidate Ayman Nour, political satirist and television star Bassem Youssef, online activist Wael Ghonim, and children's rights activist and humanitarian worker Aya Hijazi. The courts so far have rejected all of these lawsuits on the basis that they were illegal according to the existing Nationality Law. In addition, in recent years the government has agreed to release certain high-profile, dual-nationality political prisoners on the condition that they renounce their Egyptian citizenship and be deported. Detainees Egyptian-Canadian journalist Mohamed Fahmy and Egyptian-American activist Mohamed Soltan both gained their freedom in 2015 in this way, after they each spent more than a year in prison in internationally

19. Ibid.
22. Pro-regime lawyers involved in such lawsuits include Tarek Mahmoud and Samir Sabry, who often files lawsuits in defense of “public morality.”
23. The State Council “is an independent judicial body that is exclusively competent to adjudicate in administrative disputes, disciplinary cases and appeals, and disputes pertaining to its decisions.” Article 190, Constitution of Egypt, 2014.
publicized cases. Notably, in 2016 the Interior Minister restored Fahmy's citizenship. Some allege that this occurred after Fahmy expressed support for the regime.

Furthermore, there have been recent troubling reports that Egyptian embassies have delayed the renewal of passports of dissidents or regime critics living outside the country, requiring that they return to Egypt to file the paperwork, or simply failing to respond to their applications. For example, in April 2017, ElBaradei, who currently resides in Austria, tweeted to complain about a delay in renewing his passport, saying that he hopes that citizenship rights do not now depend on supporting state policies. ElBaradei eventually received his new passport after his tweet attracted wide attention. Other public figures living in exile have faced such difficulties in renewing their passports, including Ayman Nour, political figure Amr Abdel Hady, journalist Abdel Moneim Mahmoud, and several human rights defenders, writers, and others. Some do not want to speak up publicly about their ordeal, and fear that their return to Egypt to receive new passports would be a trap to prosecute or arrest them.

**CONTRAVENING EGYPT'S CONSTITUTION AND INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS NORMS**

The proposed repressive amendments appear to contravene Egypt's constitution, enacted with much fanfare in 2014. Constitutional law expert Mohamed Nour Farahat argues that they conflict with Article 6, which says that "citizenship is a right to anyone born to an Egyptian father or an Egyptian mother. Being legally recognized and obtaining official papers proving his personal data is a right guaranteed

---

and organized by law.” The amendments also seem to contradict Article 92, which states that rights and freedoms of individual citizens may not be suspended or reduced. No law that regulates the exercise of rights and freedoms may restrict them in such a way that infringes upon their essence and foundation.

The proposed amendments run counter to international human rights conventions to which Egypt is a signatory as well as global rights norms. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that “everyone has the right to a nationality” and that “no one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality.” Likewise, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights states that “no one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his right to enter his own country.” Article 93 of Egypt’s constitution states that Egypt is obliged to respect the international treaties and human rights charters it has ratified.

The proposed amendments run counter to international human rights conventions as well as global rights norms.

The amended law, if enacted, also would clash with important UN resolutions on the rights of citizenship. For example, in a June 2016 resolution, the UN Human Rights Council reaffirmed that “the right to a nationality of every human person is a fundamental human right enshrined in, inter alia, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights” and asserted that “the arbitrary deprivation of nationality...is a violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms.” And in a 1995 resolution, the UN General Assembly called upon states to “adopt nationality legislation with a view to reducing statelessness, consistent with the fundamental principles of international law, in particular by preventing arbitrary deprivation of nationality and by eliminating provisions that permit the renunciation of a nationality without the prior possession or acquisition of another nationality.”

STATELESS EGYPTIANS?

If the amended law in its current form is enacted and widely applied, it could result in a significant legal dilemma by creating a class of Egyptians who are deprived of legal rights in their own country. Membership in groups banned by al-Sisi’s regime may exceed one million Egyptians. Even if only a fraction of these groups’ membership is targeted under an amended law, a large number of people would be affected. It is unclear whether such newly stateless Egyptians would be expelled (or to where), or if they would remain in the country but without any basic rights. The fate of Egyptians whose citizenship is revoked while they are living in exile, especially those who do not hold a second nationality or are not granted political asylum in another country, is also unclear.

Modern Egypt history contains an unhappy precedent for expulsion and for the existence of...
a large stateless community of residents inside the country. President Gamal Abdel Nasser expelled thousands of Egyptian Jews in the late 1950s, depriving them of their citizenship in the process. Nasser also issued legislation that made it close to impossible for those Egyptian Jews who stayed in the country to acquire citizenship; many had already been made stateless by laws enacted earlier, during the monarchy.\(^{31}\)

Al-Sisi’s regime may be looking more to emulate the practices of several of Gulf monarchies that notoriously use revocation of citizenship as a tool of repression. Since 2011, four of the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states—Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE)—have amended their nationality or anti-terrorism laws to make it much easier to revoke citizenship, targeting especially opposition (or perceived opposition) figures. According to the scholar Zahra Babar, these governments have embraced the idea that citizenship should be contingent on political beliefs and on the state’s security calculations, effectively “securitizing” citizenship. In the view of many Gulf regimes, Babar writes, “good citizens are ‘low-risk individuals,’ authenticated through security identification techniques.”\(^{32}\)

Bahrain has used revocation of citizenship as a weapon to punish opposition figures for decades; since the 2011 pro-democracy uprising on the island, the government stepped up the practice, stripping at least 451 Bahrainis of their citizenship.\(^{33}\) In 2014, Kuwait annulled the citizenship of at least 32 individuals, mostly political activists and dissidents.\(^{34}\) In the same year, the UAE amended its anti-terrorism laws, adopting “a comprehensive generalization and stretching of the definition of terrorism” that gives the state “considerable latitude to convict political dissidents and activists as terrorists.”\(^{35}\) In recent years the UAE has revoked the citizenship of some 200 nationals, most of them Islamists deemed sympathetic to Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood.\(^{36}\) In Qatar in 2004, the state stripped all the members of the Ghafran tribe of their nationality. Qatar claimed that the tribesmen had committed fraud by not disclosing that they also held Saudi citizenship; the tribesmen contend that that the decision was politically motivated because some of their members had been involved in an attempted coup against the ruling family.\(^{37}\) Some of these Gulf citizens stripped of citizenship have been expelled from their countries, but others have remained at home, deprived of sociopolitical rights and in some cases losing the ability to work or travel.

**DOMESTIC CONCERNS, INTERNATIONAL SILENCE**

Egyptian legal experts and human rights defenders have voiced grave concerns about the proposed amendments and the legal and humanitarian crises they may provoke. Eminent constitutional law expert Tarek al-Bishry questioned the government’s assurances that it would use the amendments only against convicted terrorists, warning that officials “can easily use the Criminal Code to punish those who work against national security... but to deprive people of their citizenship is actually something that casts doubt on the real

---

\(^{31}\) For a more comprehensive overview, see Michael M. Laskier, “Egyptian Jewry under the Nasser Regime, 1956–70,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 31, no. 3, July 1995, 573-619, [http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00263209508701070](http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00263209508701070).


\(^{35}\) Babar, “The Enemy Within,” 537.


intentions of the government.” 38 Nasser Amin, a lawyer and member of the National Council for Human Rights (NCHR), cautioned that “if passed, [the law] will be a major legislative disaster that will forcibly turn citizens into aliens.” 39 Another NCHR member, George Ishak, emphasized that “Egyptian nationality is not a gift granted by anybody. No one should deprive an Egyptian of his nationality.” 40 Scholar, former member of parliament, and democracy advocate Amr Hamzawy described the amendments as “fascist,” likening them to the 1935 Reich Citizenship Law that enabled the Nazis to strip German citizenship from scores of politicians, writers, and artists who opposed their rule. 41

The international community has largely been silent; no foreign governments have issued statements about the proposed new law. This may be due to a lack of knowledge about the developments, to indifference, or to a belief that criticizing al-Sisi’s growing repression has no effect. At times, however, al-Sisi has taken constructive steps (albeit quite modest ones) in response to human rights pressure from international capitals. 42

CONCLUSION

If Egypt’s government submits the amended Nationality Law to the parliament, MPs are likely to approve the bill overwhelmingly.

42. For example, releases of some political prisoners. In addition, the State Department’s August 2017 decision to delay the release of $195 million of military assistance to Egypt was in part a response to U.S. frustration over Sisi’s ratification of a draconian NGO law. The U.S. decision provoked shock and anger among Egyptian officials, but some reports indicate that the Cairo government has expressed willingness to amend the law, in order to receive the suspended aid.
43. For example, the bills passed in the parliament’s first session were “mostly or wholly government-drafted bills,” according to analysis by the Tahrir Institute for Middle East Policy (TIMEP). See “Egypt Parliament Watch: Session One Report,” TIMEP, https://timep.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/EPW_Session-1_Ian-Sept-2016-Report.pdf.
and for the governments of countries where Egyptian dissidents have moved for their own safety. Even if applied more narrowly to make an example of a few opposition figures, the amended law would be a powerful blow to Egypt’s dissident communities, holding the constant threat of statelessness over their heads. Rather than enhancing the country’s ability to defeat terrorism, the amended law would deepen Egypt’s political crisis by widening state injustice and by sowing yet more resentment, anger, and despair in society.

NAEL SHAMA is a political researcher and writer whose research focuses on the international relations and comparative politics of the Middle East. He authored The Stagnant River: The State, Society and Ikhwan in Egypt (in Arabic; Rawafid, 2016); Egypt Before Tahrir: Reflections on Politics, Culture and Society (al-Madani Printers, 2014); and Egyptian Foreign Policy from Mubarak to Morsi: Against the National Interest (Routledge, 2013). His writings have been published by Le Monde Diplomatique, the Middle East Institute, Jadaliyya, Global Times, OpenDemocracy, The Huffington Post, Daily News Egypt, The Egyptian Gazette, The Art Review, al-Hayat, al-Ahram, and al-Shorouk.

THE PROJECT ON MIDDLE EAST DEMOCRACY (POMED) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization based in Washington, DC, that is dedicated to examining how genuine democracies can develop in the Middle East and how the United States can best support that process. Through dialogue, research and advocacy, POMED works to strengthen the constituency for U.S. policies that peacefully support reform in the Middle East. POMED research publications offer in-depth, original expert analysis of political developments in the Middle East as they relate to the prospects for genuine democracy in the region and to U.S. policy on democracy and human rights. The views expressed in POMED Snapshots and other publications are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of POMED or its Board of Directors. For more information, please contact the series editor Amy Hawthorne at amy.hawthorne@pomed.org.

@POMED facebook.com/POMED.Wire