RADICAL
ENGAGEMENTS

Essays on Religion, Extremism, Politics, and Libya

AREF ALI NAYED

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Aref Ali Nayed

VOLUME I

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FOREWORD

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Aref Ali Nayed has intellect, courage, charisma, resilience, and an active moral compass. He aligns three elements that are essential for transformational leadership: wisdom, understanding, and knowledge. He is able to draw on the deepest sources of Islamic wisdom and compassion, to understand our need for "rootedness" in tradition and history, combined with knowledge and skill as a political strategist and communicator.

In this remarkable collection of essays, speeches, and interviews, readers will be provoked to think, and to wonder: How do we make sense of the failed Arab Springs across the Middle East and North Africa? How do we explain the growth of cross-border terror networks attracting foreign fighters to violence? What went terribly wrong following the overthrow of Qaddafi? How do we understand the "tyranny of minorities" and the hijacking of revolutions? How might we build an ecology of compassion among communities, drawing on the best of Islamic traditions and tribal and social diversity to meet the challenge of the Islamic State and its affiliates? Dr. Nayed provides nutritious food for thought on all these issues.

I've had the privilege of working with a range of world leaders across public, private, and social sectors—from Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor to Diana, Princess of Wales, U.N. Secretary General Kofi Anan, and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. Leadership comes in all shapes and sizes, but rarely do you find an individual who seamlessly integrates theological, philosophical, political, economic, religious, and social network analysis. More rare is the individual who can apply these diverse strands to the urgent challenges of our day,

including the resurgence of religion-related violence—the mass killing in the name of God.

Nayed is an astute guide, an interpreter who helps his audience make sense of disturbing trends and disruptive events. He communicates with accessible language, as a Muslim theologian and philosopher, first and foremost, but also as a political strategist and historian. Though despairing of the negative trends in the Middle East, Nayed holds fast to his resilient optimist, searching for a pathway towards peace in his beloved Libya.

In *Radical Engagements*, Nayed insightfully frames what has happened in Libya since the fall of Qaddafi, placing events in historical context of the rise and behavior of fascist movements. He depicts the Libyan case as the hijacking of a revolution by "neo-fascists dressed in religious garb." He laments the devastating consequences, but he also proposes constructive pathways forward.

I first met Aref Nayed in February 2012, a year after the Libyan Revolution. I was writing and doing graduate studies in Cambridge. David Ford, Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge University, was eager to introduce me to his dear Libyan friend and colleague, because I was unexpectedly headed to Washington, DC, to take on my first and only diplomatic role in the U.S. government. I had received a political appointment to serve in President Obama's Department of State as a Deputy Assistant Secretary for a new Bureau of Conflict Stabilizations Operations launched by Secretary Hillary Clinton. I became partially responsible for strategic partnerships and transnational outreach to civil society on several portfolios, including Libya, one of the most troubling. President Obama, would later call Libya was one of his great regrets.

The three tense years I served in government, Aref Nayed told anyone who would listen of the dangers ahead, warning rather prophetically of the fascist trends hijacking Islam, the unaccountable militias undermining elected officials, and, most ominously, that Al Qaeda and ISIS affiliates were busy creating beachheads in a destabilized Libya, only an hour's flight from Italy. Nayed even warned our U.S. Ambassador Chris Stevens to screen better those with whom he trusted with his security. Ambassador Nayed and I both, separately, spoke to Ambassador Stevens just days before he and his colleagues

were murdered on September 12, 2012, when the U.S. Consulate in Benghazi was attacked by Islamist militants. Some State Department colleagues at the time called Ambassador Nayed "alarmist" and "divisive." Sadly, his predictions came true. Today, Libya is struggling to survive.

Libya's revolution started one year before I met Nayed. A country suppressed under the convoluted and violent policies of Muammar Gaddafi's *Jamahiriyah* system for 42 years rose up in a matter of days and said, "No more." It started small. Following the examples of Egypt and Tunisia, on February 17th, the eastern city of Benghazi called for a demonstration they labeled a "Day of Rage." Two days before the protest, on February 15th, one of the march's organizers, a popular human rights lawyer named Fathi Terbil, was arrested. He was held for a few hours and released, but word spread through social media of Terbil's detainment, and Benghazites took to the streets. Shooting and throwing rocks at government buildings, the crowd ended up outside the Katiba (Gaddafi's security offices), chanting "Wake up! Wake up, Benghazi! This is the day you've been waiting for!" Many who participated say they weren't thinking of overthrowing the government, just asking for reform, including a constitution and the right to assemble peacefully. As the news spread, other protests broke out. Within 24 hours, Tubruk, Misrata, and Baida—all cities in the East—had clashes with security forces that led to four dead and eighty injured. When the "Day of Rage" dawned on the 17th of February, armored trucks tore through the streets of Benghazi and Gaddafi's men attacked protestors with knives, cleavers and guns. And the people fought back.

The Revolution had begun, and the possibility that Gaddafi might fall became real, leaving a burning question: Who would lead Libya in his place?

Aref Nayed had recently served four years as Libya's Ambassador to the UAE. Back in February 2011, however, he was teaching in the Uthman Pasha Madrasa and overseeing his private IT firm. He heard rumblings about protests in the East, knew about the "Day of Rage" plans, but hadn't been directly involved in any of it. That would change quickly. "Benghazi happens on the 17th. As the Katiba is falling in Benghazi, my cousin kept phoning to give me the news, because

he was there at the Katiba. As it became clearer how vicious the killings were in Benghazi, Tripoli began to move." From his office, Nayed kept track of the growing calls for protest. On the night of February 19th, he heard of a small demonstration taking place in Fashloom, a neighborhood of Tripoli. "Four of us were working together in the office and we decided to go." When they got there, the demonstration was over, and the police were hauling people into trucks to take them away. "We saw them dragging people, bloodied people, out of Fashloom. And I remember this quite vividly, there was a truck full of young people that they had arrested. And this guy in the back with a big stick, they were sealed inside this truck, and this guy was holding on to the back of this kid and he was swearing and using profane language and he was saying, 'I can't wait' to do this and this and that. It was that scene that convinced me that we have to participate in this."

Nayed immediately flew to Turkey to ask for help in overthrowing Gaddafi. "I drove myself to the airport, had my office in Dubai buy an e-ticket, left the car in the parking in the airport and got on Turkish Airlines. It was the last Turkish Airlines that got out." When he reached Istanbul, he arranged interviews with *Sky News* and the *BBC*, condemning Gaddafi. "I cannot remember a moment in my life when I felt such a strong sense of luminescence than at the beginning of the Libyan uprising," Nayed recalls.

This contrast, between *luminescence* and an emergent darkness, is a major theme in Nayed's speeches and writing to follow. "Now there is a spreading and pervasive darkness in Libya," Nayed explains, "a darkness that makes it very difficult to live in the very land that was liberated." He describes how, from the outset, the Libyan revolution offered great hope, but was used for another purpose by those looking to advance their own power in Libya, particularly the Muslim Brotherhood and their affiliates. These Islamists, working to replace secular governments with a theocratic state, quickly activated to assert their own, long-held agenda into post-Gaddafi Libya.

Libyans thought they were working together to reclaim their country. Tripoli fell on August 20th, and Gaddafi was captured on October 20th. There were celebrations across the country. Libya was on the path to a free and fair democracy. Nayed was appointed to lead the

Libyan Stabilization Committee. Working from outside Libya, Nayed partnered with Mahmoud Jibril, the interim Prime Minister, to garner international support and local candidates for the upcoming elections. The Muslim Brotherhood was working equally hard to assemble its own candidates, mostly undetected and under the noses of the National Transition Council (NTC), the body charged with putting up candidates to be elected to the General National Council, (GNC) whose main task would be to draft a constitution. Because of the Political Isolation law, it was often difficult to tell which political parties the members of the National Transition Council (NTC) belonged to. People showed up in Benghazi to lobby for their candidates to be elected to the General National Council (GNC) with their affiliations undeclared.

The Muslim Brotherhood were the most prepared to seize power, according to Nayed. "When they first came to Benghazi, we naively welcomed them. We thought, 'We're all Libyans.' We had to be inclusive."

In June 2012, Libya had an open and free election. Two hundred members were elected to the General National Council (GNC) whose chief task was to draft a Constitution and ready the country for elections in 2013. The government was staying on task, readying for a parliamentary system. The elected government was mostly made up of politically moderate Muslims ready to embrace democracy.

Unfortunately, the militias that had been mostly run by the Islamists during the war were never disbanded. They were in the perfect position to use intimidation and force to promote the Islamists' political aims. The army under the newly elected President Zeidan, was not yet built or competent, and the militias (the Libyan "Shields") were left intact. These Shields were heavily subsidized by Ansar al-Sharia and the Muslim Brotherhood.

In June 2014, Libya held another election. Again, it was a free and legal process, and a House of Representatives (HoR) was elected. The Islamists did not fare as well in this election. While the turnout was not impressive (estimated Libyans who voted was between 8–10 percent), the Islamists share of the vote was less than ten percent. This democratically elected House of Representatives assembled in Benghazi and set to work on drafting a constitution.

Refusing to recognize the results in such a low turnout election, the Islamists formed an alliance of militias called "Libya Dawn" and seized Tripoli after a six-week bombardment in August 2014. They revived the defunct former parliament (the GNC) with a few of their original representatives and declared themselves Libya's official government, in direct competition with the newly elected HOR, which, for safety's sake, moved from Benghazi to Tobruk, near the Egyptian border.

The U.S government's basic position on the dueling governments is that it does not recognize the Tripoli-based General National Congress (GNC). The nuance, however, is that American officials believe the legitimacy of the Tobruk-based House of Representatives should not be based on its electoral mandate alone, but also on its commitment to govern *inclusively*. An exasperated Aref Nayed repeatedly wonders out loud in his interviews and speeches to follow: How is one supposed to govern "inclusively" with "exclusivists"?

Islamists now control the West of Libya, including its capital, Tripoli. Libya Dawn seized Tripoli by force, and many of its leaders are militia fighters from The Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG), the group that fought with Osama Bin Laden in Afghanistan.

Nayed reiterates his conviction that the Islamists have no legal status for governing Libya. "This small minority has managed, through a vicious and unscrupulous combination of violence, intimidation, blackmail, bribery and the parasitic appropriations of all key functions and resources of the emerging Libyan state, to tyrannize the Libyan people for the last five years."

He explains that their power grab was more subterranean because they don't go after the first layer of power, the highest-level Minister positions. They took on the more operational roles—the deputy positions. "They were the second layer, all operative, all ideologically driven. Deputy Minister of Defense, Deputy Minister of Interior. They controlled everything and they were very good at it."

This governmental fight for dominance—daily and in nearly every major city—has taken its toll, felt most acutely by average Libyan citizens. Any Libyans who could get out did so. Benghazi, a city of one million people in February 2011, had aspirations after the revolution to become the New York of North Africa. By early 2015, it looked like

Sarajevo in the 1990s. Its population is down to 185,000, with basic amenities scarce and expensive. Hospitals are decimated, and even in Tripoli electricity is cut off most hours of the day.

For his outspoken stance against Islamist militias and extortionists, Nayed has sometimes been called "polarizing." Nayed is aware of the labels his outspokenness against the Islamists have earned him. He doesn't fret over it. He's more worried at the alliance the Islamists have made with Ansar al-Sharia (an al Qaeda off-shoot) because of the presence of ISIS in Libya. Ansar al-Sharia already swore allegiance to ISIS. They keep saying everyone else is a traitor, including Nayed, for asking for foreign assistance.

The group's supporters online have been aggressively recruiting while making their case for ISIS expansion in Libya. Nayed sees ISIS as not only the biggest threat to Libya, but the biggest threat to the rest of Africa and Europe, as well. "If Libyans don't get help fighting ISIS, it will conquer Libya and use it as a global terrorism base." He's afraid ISIS will use Libya's vast oil reserves to convert Libya into its "ATM, gas station and airport." Attacks on Europe are sure to follow, he thinks. "It's the most important risk to the security of the region, be it our Arab neighbors, our African neighbors or our European neighbors across the Mediterranean. We need a concerted strategy to thwart ISIS and rebuild Libya."

Can Nayed let go of his reservations about the Islamists enough to work with them to oust ISIS? "We include inclusivists, we exclude exclusivists," he says. "Simple criteria: those who violate human rights and humanitarian law" are not fit to govern. But, if they agree to take responsibility for the devastation they have wrought, perhaps there is a way forward. "There must be justice for all the abuses, including under Gaddafi, like South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Committee. Renounce Violence. If you're willing to be humane, not ideological, we welcome you."

The pressing question is how to proceed from here? What would a brighter future look like? This is where Nayed's resilient optimism shines through his writing and speeches. "Where there is no vision, the people perish," an oft-quoted Biblical proverb reminds us. Nayed builds his hope on the Libyans themselves, particularly the rising generation. "We must look to the social fabric. There are great networks of

goodness and compassion in Libya. There is much to be hopeful for. ISIS is simply a culture of nihilism and death. It lives off the loss of meaning. We must trust in the caring of Arab women, in the resilience of our young people. We need to respect locality, listen to the locality, the townships, clans and tribes. We must re-start the Libyan economy, offer Libyan youth a forward-looking and inspiring vision. A truck stuck in sand can only be pulled out from a fixed point at the front, beyond the sand. A forward-looking vision is vital for getting Libya unstuck."

Nayed sees a crucial need for an internal recalibration of Libyans to overcome the disaster of the last five years of violent conflict. "In the face of the hate, despair and cynicism propagated by ISIS ... we must retrieve and propagate the authentic virtues of compassion, faith and hope."

By now, Aref Nayed has become a friend, a teacher, and a partner in an international effort called the *Global Covenant*—a commitment by a growing network of scholars, religious actors, policymakers, and civil society dedicated to reduce and prevent violence in the name of religion. We have had the privilege to observe Nayed's evolution as a strategist and deep thinker on what radical engagement means.

Nayed's determination is as convincing in person as it appears on the pages to follow. I am grateful for his wisdom, his understanding, and his knowledge, in service to Libya, the Middle East, and to anyone who is willing to listen intently and with hope. His words chart a way forward with hope and compassion.

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PART ONE

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ESSAYS

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Beyond Fascism:
New Libya Actualized

THE SHIFT FROM UTTER PRIDE AND JOY AT LIBYA'S COSTLY liberation to a per-plexing and painful anxiety is noticeable and clearly felt. Dark forces can be sensed lurking just below the very ground on which we stand. We have even seen them as they snatched fellow Libyans, and even some of our guests, from our midst. Physical and verbal sadistic abuses are committed daily in various arenas, ranging from dungeons to 'political' debates.

What are we doing? What is happening to us? Where are we? Where are we going? Who are we? Who do we want to be?—these are just a few of the questions that rise from this abyss of anxiety. Maybe this anxiety is nothing but the 'dizziness of freedom' that Søren Kierkegaard equated with anxiety itself.[1] Rather than dizziness, however, it actually feels more like that despair that Kierkegaard calls 'the sickness unto death'![2]

It is actually death, or rather assassinations, that shock us into the realization that there is much to dread and to even despair about in Libya today. From the early assassination of General Abdul Fatah Yunis and his colleagues, to that of Ambassador Chris Stevens and his colleagues, to the recent assassinations in the East, West and South of Libya, the ultimate crime of murdering a fellow human being truly does fill one's very core with 'the sickness unto death'.

Life and living is about growing and flourishing, and Libya will not grow and flourish until it overcomes the despair of 'the sickness unto death'.

These notes are the reflections of one Libyan upon his own despair and anxiety. They are shared in a spirit of brokenness that knows it

needs help, and that recognizes that help can only come through open sharing and dialogue of one's thoughts, experience, and even weaknesses and fears.

The jolt of the sight of some of the places I cherish the most in Libya being destroyed in full daylight by thugs, under the protection of the 'Supreme Security Committee' (or the SSC), was the precise moment when my joy at my country's liberation turned into anxiety and then dread.

At that moment, images of thuggish 'Black Shirts,' and the Fascist 'Security Committees' that supported them, dusted themselves off history books and old black-and-white footage and became a shocking living reality before my very eyes. I realized in a moment that my country was turning fascist, or rather, I should say, I realized that Libya was 'returning', rather than 'turning' fascist.

Overall, Libya has a tragic history of over seventy years of fascist rule. Just as Libya was struggling to remerge from the Italian fascist oppression of Mussolini and Graziani, yet another viscious fascist kidnapped it and pillaged it for over forty years: Gaddafi.

Gaddafi and his rule were nothing but deranged copies of Mussolini and his rule. Populism, corporatism, militarism, corruption, xenophobia, egomaniacs, thugs, intimidation, torture, and assassinations were important features of both the Mussolini and Gaddafi fascist regimes.

The similarities in strategies and tactics are actually quite striking: from the indoctrination camps for children and youth, to the propaganda machinery, to the false syndicates and associations, to the militarization of all society, and even to the 'Fascist Philosopher' and 'Fascist Intellectual' archetypes and their cheering guilds.

Just as Mussolini insidiously consolidated his power using all institutions then available to him—from the Monarchy to the Parliament—while emptying them from their content, and eventually destroying them, Gaddafi, also, consolidated his power to become the sole 'Leader' (*Il Duce*) within a few years of the 1969 conspiracy. Having ruled even longer than Mussolini, Gaddafi eventually summar-ized and summed up all remnants of all institutions into his very person!

Gaddafi could not have done it alone, and the creation of his own 'Black Shirts', the 'Revolutionary Committees', was essential. It was

also essential for him to show that he was willing to go all the way, and murder, in cold-blood, all Libyans who would dare to even think of opposing his dark ways. The early clandestine assassinations, and then pubic humiliations and hangings of dissenters, became the very foundation on which he built his own local version of Fascism.

Old habits die hard. Today—and after a liberation uprising that cost hundreds of thousands of lives, limbs, injuries, and sufferings— fascist tendencies are reappearing under new guises, colours, and flags. It seems that, having become painfully free, we may be somehow plunging our freedom into the dark abyss of Fascism. From political assassinations, to bullying, to intimidation, to gangster conduct, to totalitarian discourses and bodies, to self-righteous and vindictive political parties: the signs of the times are not good at all, and do not bode well for that luminance of freedom and civil liberties that guided us in our painful struggle for liberation.

Initially, it appeared that fascist tendencies were the result of opportunistic 'professional revolutionaries', as Hannah Arendt calls them. However, eventually, the pervasiveness and depth of such tendencies began to clearly indicate that the problems are much deeper, and are actually lurking at the unconscious level of millions of individuals, and may actually be lurking at the Libyan 'collective unconscious' (*kollektives Unbewusstes*), if we may invoke the Jungian term to mean a 'communal unconscious'.

Reflecting on emergent fascist tendencies, and sensing that their roots are actually quite deep, naturally led to the consideration of an old important book by Erich Fromm called *Escape from Freedom*.[3] Here Fromm pointed out that as 'individuals' emerged from the communal contexts of medieval times, in which they lived arduously, but 'meaningful' and well-referenced lives, achieving a 'freedom from' which was by no means comfortable. The emergence of individuals was also the emergence of a precarious lonely existence in which one felt one's utter aloneness and powerlessness.

Fromm offers a helpful typology of 'mechanisms of escape' that fearful lonely and powerless individuals resorted to in order to reestablish and re-comfort themselves. He says that there are three basic such mechanisms: (1) *Automaton Conformity;* (2) *Authoritarianism;* and (3) *Destructiveness.*

In *'Automaton Conformity',* one suppresses one's authentic self, and instead molds himself into an 'ideal self' dictated by the society into which he strives to fit. Through self-imposed conformity to established normative patterns, one becomes an 'automaton' of a standard type.

In *'Authoritarianism',* one readily submits one's self to an authoritative figure who becomes his 'magic helper' out of powerlessness and confusion. Figures who are seemingly powerful and clear about who they are and where they are going become the accepted masters whose commands are simply and trustingly followed.

Finally, in *'Destructiveness',* one invokes a drastic solution to one's deep feelings of alones and powerlessness. The discomforts with the world, or some of its contents, including other persons, are aggressively dealt with through sheer destruction. As Fromm puts it, 'the destruction of the world is the last, almost desperate attempt to save myself from being crushed by it.'[4]

Reading Fromm, with Libya's glory and agony in mind, one is struck by how helpful his typology of escape mechanisms is. Indeed, in today's Libya we find all three mechanisms very much apparent. From young people, who look almost identical, thinking that they are properly implementing a normative pattern, to people who make prominent religious and political figures into heroes worthy of blind trust and obedience, to young angry armed men keen on destroying all that comes in their way, even if it is Libya itself, or more drastically, the world itself.

Fromm rightly pointed out that it is such mechanisms that have historically made Italians, Germans, and Spaniards readily espouse Fascism and cheer its diabolical aggressiveness toward the 'weaker' others. Today, in Libya, these mechanisms are clearly visible, and Fascism is yet again a strong temptation in this country that has suffered and languished under fascisms, both foreign and local, for such long decades.

Key to preempting and preventing the rise of Fascism in Libya is a recognition of the mass temptation towards it that may follow any or all of Fromm's escape mechanisms.

Another important key is to move from mere 'freedom from' or 'negative freedom' to 'freedom to' or 'positive freedom', a freedom of
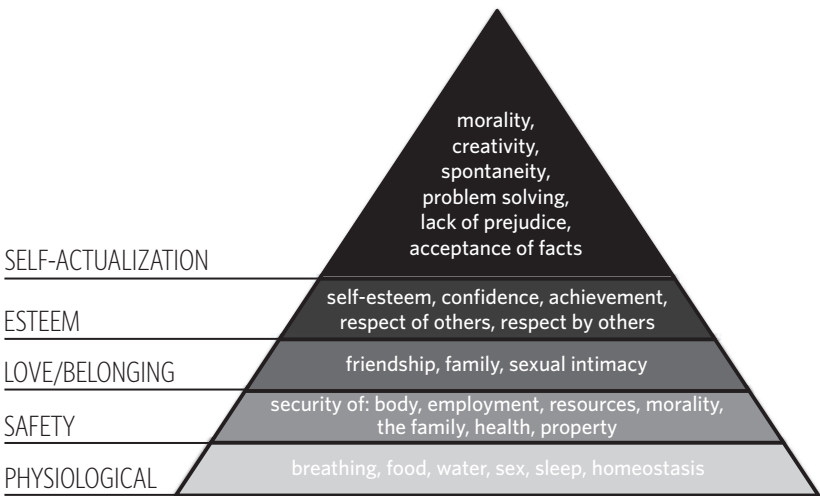
full personal, creative, and spontaneous, self-actualization. As Fromm, and after him Isaiah Berlin point out there are two types of freedom or liberty: Freedom from tyranny and oppression, and freedom to become fully human with dignity and self-actualization and expression.[5]

In Libya, freedom from Gaddafi and his regime of tyranny and oppression was painfully achieved at a tremendous price, human and physical. Now, New Libya must be actualized through that second type of freedom, that is to be creative, spontaneous, and constructive. Yet, how can this New Libya be actualized?

There are individual and self-focused notions of actualization in several resources, from Fromm's own positive advice, to Isaiah Berlin's, to Karen Horney's, and various other post-Freudian advisors and therapists.[6]

Perhaps the most comprehensive and most helpful notion of such individual self-actualization is that of Abraham Maslow, who considered 'self-actualization' to be the very tip of the pyramid of his famous 'Hierarchy of Needs':[7]

Maslow's 'Hierarchy of Needs'

SELF-ACTUALIZATION

morality, creativity, spontaneity, problem solving, lack of prejudice, acceptance of facts

ESTEEM

self-esteem, confidence, achievement, respect of others, respect by others

LOVE/BELONGING

friendship, family, sexual intimacy

SAFETY

security of: body, employment, resources, morality, the family, health, property

PHYSIOLOGICAL

breathing, food, water, sex, sleep, homeostasis

Dennis Coon and John Mitterer helpfully summarized the typical characteristics of 'self-actualizers':[8]

- *Efficient perceptions of reality.* Self-actualizers are able to judge situations correctly and honestly. They are very sensitive to the fake and dishonest.
- *Comfortable acceptance of self, others, nature.* Self-actualizers accept their own human nature with all its flaws. The shortcomings of others and the contradictions of the human condition are accepted with humour and tolerance.
- *Spontaneity.* Maslow's subjects extended their creativity into everyday activities. Actualizers tend to be unusually alive, engaged, and spontaneous.
- *Task centering.* Most of Maslow's subjects had a mission to fulfill in life or some task or problem outside of themselves to pursue. Humanitarians such as Albert Schweitzer and Mother Teresa are considered to have possessed this quality.
- *Autonomy.* Self-actualizers are free from reliance on external authorities or other people. They tend to be resourceful and independent.
- *Continued freshness of appreciation.* The self-actualizer seems to constantly renew appreciation of life's basic goods. A sunset or a flower will be experienced as intensely time after time as it was at first. There is an 'innocence of vision', like that of an artist or child.
- *Fellowship with humanity.* Maslow's subjects felt a deep identification with others and the human situation in general.
- *Profound interpersonal relationships.* The interpersonal relationships of self-actualizers are marked by deep loving bonds.
- *Comfort with solitude.* Despite their satisfying relationships with others, self-actualizing persons value solitude and are comfortable being alone.
- *Non-hostile sense of humour.* This refers to the wonderful capacity to laugh at oneself. It also describes the kind of

humor a man like Abraham Lincoln had. Lincoln probably never made a joke that hurt anybody. His wry comments were gentle proddings of human shortcomings

- *Peak experiences.* All of Maslow's subjects reported the frequent occurrence of peak experiences (temporary moments of self-actualization). These occasions were marked by feelings of ecstasy, harmony, and deep meaning. Self-actualizers reported feeling at one with the universe, stronger and calmer than ever before, filled with light, beautiful and good, and so forth. In summary, self-actualizers feel safe, not anxious, accepted, loved, loving, and alive.

Indeed, judging by the youthful aspirations widely expressed on Libyan Facebook pages, the list of traits of self-actualizers above does seem like a comprehensive wish-list for many young Libyans.

Stabilization Framework

Furthermore, the idea of a 'hierarchy of needs' that must have a base of physical well-being, security, and safety does make sense. As a matter of fact the very framework for the Libya Stabilization Team the operations, of which the author was involved with, does seem to directly address the very needs that Maslow's pyramid insightfully points out and prioritizes. That stabilization framework was summarized in a flower-figure of co-dependent areas of needs and activities:

However, is the actualizing of the New Libya basically about encouraging the self-actualization of Libyan individuals?

While in California Maslow's individualistic self-actualization may seem straightforward and sensible, it may not be the case of family-rooted, community-centered Libyans.

It is true that the youthful 'Facebook crowd' may exhibit California-like individualist aspirations of self-actualization and fulfillment. However, one must be careful not to jump to conclusions even to the real-life situations and expectations of young Libyans today. While the strictly tribal and family-centric views of Libyans may have been opened up towards individuality to a very large extent over the past half-century or so, Libya does remain a strongly community-oriented environment in which atomistic 'individuals' seldom truly exist.

Can there be a Libyan notion, or even multiple notions, of self-actualization that are also communally sensitive, and that see self-development as also community-development, and vice versa? This is an issue that must be discussed on a community level in multiple dialogues and workshops; however, it may be helpful to point out that Libya does have a deep and esteemed history of traditions of self-actualization that also work within, on, and with communities. This must be understood within the context that history is mixed, and some aspects of it may actually have involved 'escapes from freedom' of the nature discussed above in Fromm's typology of escape mechanisms.

Libya does have a history of spiritual paths (*turuq*) that at times aimed at demolishing the very self of the adherent, rather than actualizing it. In such cases Fromm's mechanisms seem to have all been used in the frantic avoidance of true freedom. However, Libya does also have an interesting, if little-known, history of ways that did concretely achieve personal as well as communal growth and flourishing.

While the study of such historical ways of self/communal-actualiza-

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tion is beyond the scope of this paper, it is important to point out that the study of movements such as the Sanusiyya may actually yield a much-needed retrieval and rehabilitation of actualization frameworks and approaches.

In the Grand Sanusi's approach, a distinct psychotherapeutically rich school of human flourishing was developed. From his typology of psychological and spiritual tendencies (for example, his typology of the *nufus* or the self), to his notion of the mimesis or emulation of the 'perfect man' (Muhammad, may the peace and blesings of God be upon him, as the collective archetype of human perfection)—the Grand Sanusi offers an important framework and toolkit for self-actualization, but always in the context of community. His amazingly holistic development of ecologically and socially sensitive lodges (*zawiyas*), seems to point to a deep realization that healthy and happy individuals can only be actualized in healthy and happy actualized communities. Libyans have to re-visit their much-neglected, and largely destroyed, authentic traditions in search of balanced approaches to actualization that cater to the communal as well as the individual needs of young Libyans today.[9]

Perhaps a helpful approach is to see the palatable anxiety that one feels in Libya today as a result of a crisis of meaning, and that there is a need for the re-articulation of meaningful frameworks and discourses that can help heal hearts and settle minds, and thus heal the country. Perhaps we are witnessing a nationwide 'search for meaning', or even 'ultimate meaning', to put it in the illuminating terms of Viktor Frankl.[10]

Perhaps an approach of 'logotherapy'[11] needs to be deployed in order to help actualizing the repair and healing process that can lead to a meaningful existence and life for ordinary Libyans. Perhaps such logo-therapy can be a rearticulated discourse, or *Kalam*, that is compassion-centered and meaning-giving. Such a new *Kalam* as logo-therapy may turn out to be the key to national healing, rehabilitation, rejuvenation, and renewal. Such a new *Kalam* may help grow true 'ecologies of peace, compassion, and blessing'[12] in our New Libya.

Indeed, we must honestly and courageously identify tendencies towards Fascism in today's Libya. We must invoke all known deep reflections on how Fascism and Totalitarianism arise. We must do our

utmost to preempt and block the fulfillment of such dark and dangerous tendencies. The escape from freedom would result in Fascism, yet the escape from Fascism cannot be achieved without fully actualizing all human possibilities in Libya—individual *and* communal. Such actualization must be discussed and diligently worked out, with our fellow Libyans of today, our fellow Libyans from the past, and in mindfulness of our fellow Libyans of the future! Such actualization may be approached through a healing re-articulation, a logotherapy, or a *kalam*-therapy that may create fresh abodes of peace. *And God knows best!* ♣

NOTES

[1] See Søren Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Anxiety*, Princeton University Press, 1981.

[2] See Søren Kierkegaard, *The Sickness Unto Death*, Princeton University Press, 1983.

[3] The U.S. edition was titled *Escape from Freedom* (Farrar & Rinehart, 1941), whilst outside the U.S. the edition was titled *The Fear of Freedom* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1942).

[4] Eric Fromm, *Escape from Freedom*, 1941.

[5] Isaiah Berlin, *Two Concepts of Liberty*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1958.

[6] See, for example, Karen Horney, *Neurosis and Human Growth: The Struggle Towards Self-Realization*, W. W. Norton and Company Inc., 1950.

[7] Abraham Maslow, 'A Theory of Human Motivation', originally published in *Psychological Review*, 50, pp.370–396, 1943. The study was later expanded into a book: *Motivation and Personality*, Harper, 1954.

[8] Dennis Coon and John Mitterer, *An Introduction to Psychology: Gateways to Mind and Behavior*, 2007.

[9] For more on the Grand Sanusi and on the Sanusiyya, see E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *The Sanusi of Cyrenaica*, Oxford Univer-sity Press, 1949; and Knut S. Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar on the Desert Edge: Muhammad B. Ali al-Sanusi and his Brotherhood*, Northwestern University Press, Evanston, 1995.

[10] Viktor Frankl, *Man's Search for Ultimate Meaning*, Perseus Book Publishing, New York, 1997.

[11] Viktor Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning: An Introduction to Logotherapy*, Beacon Press, Boston, 2006.

[12] See Aref Ali Nayed, *Growing Ecologies of Peace, Compassion and Blessing: A Muslim Response to 'A Muscat Manifesto'*, Kalam Research & Media with The Cambridge Inter-Faith Programme, Dubai, UAE, 2010.

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Libya: From Revolutionary Legitimacy to Constitutional Legitimacy

I AM VERY FOND OF A PARTICULAR SAGE OF ISLAM—SHEIKH Ibn ʿAta Allah Iskandari—a great Shadhili sheikh. Ibn ʿAta Allah spoke of beginnings, of light-filled beginnings in his *Hikam*: "If one's beginning was illuminated his end will also be illuminated."[1] I cannot remember any moment in my life when I felt such a strong sense of luminescence than at the beginning of the Libyan uprising. Granted it was a very dangerous time, a very difficult time, a very anguished time—but it had a kind of a light, a luminescence to it, that is almost impossible to describe. And yet now there is a spreading of pervasive darkness in Libya, a darkness that makes it very difficult to live in the very land that was liberated.

It is very difficult to attribute the sorry state we are in today to such luminescent beginnings. It is as if Sheikh Iskandari were wrong, and that this is a case of luminous beginnings but of dark endings. Either the sage was wrong, or the Libyan process—whether it be uprising or revolution—has not yet ended. And we all hope that the end will be far from the darkness of these days and will be in fact blessed with an ending of luminescence. Perhaps we are passing through a stage of searching and bewilderment—a dark night of the soul, as John of the Cross once called it—that will lead to an ascent and to luminescent endings. I would prefer to believe that the sage is right—that the process is not complete, and that we must just struggle on.

The great political thinker Hannah Arendt also wrote on the question of beginnings. For her beginnings were extremely important, and absolutely essential to the notion of being human.

Action has the closest connection with the human condition of natality; the new beginning inherent in birth can make itself felt in the world only because the new-comer possesses the capacity of beginning something anew, that is, of acting.[2]

As such, Arendt defined humanity through beginnings, what she refers to as natality—the ability to act anew and to give birth to new things.

When we look at the uprising in Libya we find that Arendt was right. There was a feeling of being born, a feeling of newness, a feeling of surprise and bewilderment, a feeling of excitement; a feeling of being human after years of inaction and dehumanization. Arendt believed that what was so important concerning the nature of humanity and of human action, and what makes it distinctive is that it has freedom and it has plurality like the abundance of the spring for example:

It is in the nature of beginning that something new is started which cannot be expected from whatever may have happened before. This character of startling unexpectedness is inherent in all beginnings … The fact that man is capable of action means that the unexpected can be expected from him, that he is able to perform what is infinitely impro-bable. And this again is possible only because each man is unique, so that with each birth something uniquely new comes into the world.[3]

Revolutions, according to Arendt, present us with just this plurality of openings, and of possibilities, in the people's attempt to birth their country anew and to found a new political world. And although the revolutions offer the feeling of excitement and opening, they also present us with challenges and difficulties. For Arendt: "revolutions are the only political events which confront us directly and inevitably with the problem of beginning".[4] So when we say the Arab Spring, we can really only appreciate the idea of Spring if we see it as an open-ended process that is in itself problematic—that is instable, ongoing, and that is not yet completed.

Arendt also speaks of a startling unexpectedness in revolutions. The events of early 2011 in Libya were certainly unexpected. For the last decade of the dictatorship's existence, many people felt resigned to the dictatorship in one form or another and tried to reach some sort of fatalistic compliance or dialogical engagement with it. It was therefore

almost impossible to imagine an uprising of the kind that happened in 2011.

However, the Libyan people, being human, as Arendt reminds us, took action in the most profound sense and started to create new beginnings for their homeland. They revolted against the tyranny and darkness, and accomplished amazing things, things beyond imagination. With these beginnings Libyans began to resist, undermine, and remove the shackles of a tyranny that had lasted for over four decades. And through these beginnings—where young Libyans came out and explained to the world that they needed help—the people of Benghazi were able to be saved. Most now agree that we would have had a genocide in Benghazi had we not sought help from others.

Some now have regrets. For the American people, the very city they tried to save seemed to have turned around and killed their ambassador. Some in Libya and outside see the daily violence and have started to think that maybe they should not have helped. There is a certain painful truth to this logic, however there are some truths drowned out by the pain and violence. It's also true that after the assassination of the American ambassador the people of Benghazi proceeded to push out of the city the armed groups they suspected of being involved in the crime. These people were later unfortunately failed by their government and congress when the culpable forces were sanctioned and declared legitimate. There was a lot of bravery even in the aftermath of tragedy, disappointment, and betrayal. Libyan citizens continue to resist the violence and assassinations, and continue to search for a new beginning for their homeland.

So indeed there was a beginning, a beginning of freedom, a luminescent beginning; a beginning that was quite exciting and quite amazing, and miraculous in many ways. And yet something really strange happened. What happened to us and how is it that we ended up with a situation that we have today? There are daily assassinations, and shootings, threats and violence within the government. How did this happen? How did this freedom of action that Arendt would describe as a revolution in the true sense transform into what we have today?

Freedom
Maybe freedom came shockingly too fast and proved a bit too much for us to take. The great German scholar Erich Fromm wrote a book

called *Escape from Freedom*, in which he describes how people panic when they become free, and how they search for a constancy and assurance that freedom cannot give, and they resort to mechanisms in order to escape from freedom. Perhaps we also panicked and sought to escape from our freedom too.

Fromm identified three important tactics that people employ in their attempt to escape from freedom. The first tactic he called *authoritarianism*, where the person either accepts gladly an authority so that he doesn't have to make his own decisions and doesn't have to bear challenges and responsibilities; or worse, as in some cases, he imposes his will upon others imposing in order to end the indeterminacy and therefore becoming a tyrant.[5] The second, which he called *destructiveness*, essentially relies on destruction of the world around one as a means of escape.[6] Perhaps the people who blow themselves up and take a few people along are basically escaping from freedom through destructiveness, and are not in fact simply expressing certain religious ideas extremely, as is often interpreted. The third form of escape he called *automaton conformity*, which means that the person finds an example like a template and blindly follows it.[7] We can see all these tendencies in one form or another being manifest in today's Libya.

However I do not think our present scenario can be described as just an attempt by Libyans to escape from a newfound freedom, and I think there is in fact a deeper meaning to these events. Maybe what's happening is also a kind of collapse of the attempts at meaning which help us to make sense of the world around us. Maybe—as Vicktor Frankl would say—we are trying to find meanings or even "ultimate meanings".[8]

What I fear is that just as we are having difficulties grasping meanings or articulating meanings, maybe we are replacing our search for meanings with fast meanings, which, like fast-food, are quick, easy, but are ultimately unhealthy. We can pick up quick-fix answers to very complicated questions that ultimately do not address any of the concerns that prompted our questions in the first place. And so, from a vendor you can purchase five books and two CDs, listen to them and all of a sudden you have meaning, as you feel you know exactly how the world works, you can categorize human beings to us versus them. But the world is never that simple.

There is clearly a crisis of meaning in Libya, one that we find difficult to admit to and even more difficult to find a resolution to. With this search for quick fixes we have been finding what Dietrich Bonhoeffer called "cheap grace". Cheap grace is one that comes without struggle, one that we "bestow on ourselves" rather than expend the tiresome and difficult effort required to receive grace from above.[9]

Politics

Whatever it is, we are definitely not in a very good place right now. Too many people have died, and since the end of the Gaddafi regime hundreds more have passed away. Our jails and so-called holding centers are full of people who in most cases—for whatever reason they have been detained—have not been given due process, have not been put on trial, and in some cases have been tortured. All this has been documented by not only international human rights groups such as Amnesty International, but many local rights groups, such as Libyan Lawyers for Justice. So what is the problem?

Hannah Arendt saw a problem in the traits of a particular group of people called professional revolutionists. For me, this group certainly bears some of the guilt for what's happening to Libya today. Arendt highlighted that most revolutions surprise all facets of society equally, and as such no one group can ever be said to be culpable for its outbreak or its completion, despite what they might claim. Professional revolutionists are opportunistic, they are those figures who generally appear after the outbreak and for whom revolution soon becomes a career. As Arendt notes: "The part of the professional revolutionists usually consists not in making a revolution but in rising to power after it has broken out, and their advantage in this power struggle lies less in their theories and mental or organizational preparation than in the simple fact that their names are the only ones which are publicly known."[10]

In Libya there are people who have made this "revolution" a profession and are self-righteously imposing their will upon others. They are imposing their ideologies on others as if they have an exclusive right to speak for the revolution and, therefore, for Libyan society as a whole. These ideologies sometimes are Islamist and sometimes they are not, and often they are tribal or regional. What all of

these ideologies have in common is a "will to power" that encourages bigotry and breeds a fascist attitude that is detrimental to the liberty and security of Libya as a whole and which precludes the kind of dialogue and political bargaining that we sorely need.

It might seem strange to use the term "fascism", but when the gravestones, tombs, and graves themselves of widely respected Islamic scholars such as Sidi Sha'ab were being demolished in Tripoli after the revolution, the Supreme Security Committee was watching over the destruction and guarding those carrying it out. Such acts of bigotry and destruction, sponsored by the state, clearly represent aspects of both fascism and totalitarianism. Mussolini coined the term totalitarianism, and through acts like these it is very much as if we are witnessing a regression. It is as if Libya retained a subconscious trend of these trends as a vestige from the days of Graziani and Mussolini. Maybe for forty-two years Gaddafi was simply a Libyan Graziani. Whether it is true or not, Gaddafi held Graziani's books in high regard, and in some of his speeches you can hear phrases that are straight out of *Verso il Fezzan* or the other books of Graziani.

R. G. Collingwood called this phenomenon incapsulation—whereby nuggets of the past that are held as if frozen in time become active again.[11] For example, in Malta you can hear most likely a North African accent from the sixteenth century incapsulated in the Maltese language. Maybe what we basically have is an incapsulation of fascistic tendencies from the 1920s and 1930s that are being activated—sometimes wearing an Islamic or secular garb and sometimes wearing a tribal or regional one. In all these cases fascist attitudes are emerging. Fascism makes sense of the bigoted and thuggish behavior, it makes sense of the senseless violence, and it makes sense of the categorization of people into "us and them" and the oppression of other people. A descent into a kind of a fascistic underworld that just is there and was never really resolved or dealt with is one explanation of our predicament.

Another predicament that surrounds our country is an inability to engage in real dialogue. What's even more troubling in our country right now is that while for good reason a lot of worry, dread, and depression exist, at the same time an overabundance of certainty exists. People are so certain that they are right. Certain groups have

become so vehement in their righteousness and so aggressive and possessive in the way they engage with institutions and the body politic. Most worryingly, and most destructively, they try to occupy the very joints of the state, and like arthritis this control renders the state immobile.

The joints of the state are populated in many cases by people who, instead of being interested in the future of Libya, are only interested in their party or group. These individuals are essentially paralyzing the country to the point where no prime minister to-date has been able to effectively do his job. Every time they try to do their job, they find that the joints are paralyzed—be it the Ministries of Defense, Interior, and Finance, or the Intelligence, or the Central Bank. Ultimately the presence and deliberate actions of these saboteurs render the state vulnerable to forces that are not interested in a prosperous and stable Libya. These afflictions need to be cured. Those paralyzing the joints of the state must ease off. We all need to recognize that Libya as a state needs to be responsive and open to the various perspectives present in Libyan society.

In neighboring countries these groups unfortunately became so possessive of the institutions of state that the situation escalated. As one group clenched its iron grip, another retaliated and in doing so became equally possessive. This kind of revenge is not helpful or productive, and will not help us achieve a new era of good governance in Libya. I hope that in Libya we can avoid this kind of exclusion and counter-exclusion between the different trends present in our society.

From my perspective, the problem lies in the overabundance of a type of certitude. This may seem an unusual thing for a Muslim theologian to say. Normally theologians ask their audience to be certain about God, and about prophecy. I am certain in that sense, of *yaqin* (the Islamic concept of certainty); however there is mature certitude and immature certitude. A mature certitude is based on humility that receives the certitude from above. An immature certitude is a certitude of imposition of will, and is hence a false certitude. I see too much of the second type, where people are so absolutely sure of themselves that they are not willing to listen to others.

In this kind of environment it is practically impossible to forge a democracy or make a lasting constitution. Democratic governance and

constitution-writing demand humility and require us to listen to others. Ultimately constitutions are rooted in their broad-based legitimacy, in consensus—and consensus cannot happen through imposition of will. Consensus necessarily implies dialogue. Consensus necessarily means acknowledging the polyphony of the many voices in society, and not only polyphony, but the ability to listen to these voices all at once and ultimately to listen to and accommodate the will of others. A constitution can only be reached on the basis of consensus and a wider inclusive settlement that must be based in a genuine heart-to-heart dialogue, and as Desmond Tutu mentioned forgiveness is central to this:

> Forgiving and being reconciled to our enemies or our loved ones are not about pretending that things are other than they are. It is not about patting one another on the back and turning a blind eye to the wrong. True reconciliation exposes the awfulness, the abuse, the hurt, the truth. It could even sometimes make things worse. It is a risky undertaking but in the end it is worthwhile, because in the end only an honest confrontation with reality can bring real healing. Superficial reconciliation can bring only superficial healing.[12]

Revolution?

Perhaps the problem lies precisely in the fact that we have called our uprising "a revolution". When social change is tagged with the name "revolution", the revolutionaries seem to display certain recognizable vices. The first vice is self-righteousness. Revolutionaries feel that they are right, and that they exclusively have revolted against the wrong.

They also have an intense notion of victim; claiming that they were tyrannized and victimized and therefore now they have a right to victimize others. So, when some of the people who were tortured in the Abu Selim Prison now became guards they started to torture prisoners in the same way that they themselves were tortured. As with the cases of abused children who grow up to be abusers themselves as fathers and mothers, it is a tragedy.

Then comes the vice of arrogance—of feeling that you have all the right values that others do not, and that you are entitled because of this. To my mind, one of the biggest mistakes that the National Transitional Council made, and which is perpetuated until today, is to

pay those that took up arms in our uprising against tyranny. In doing so, we effectively turned honorable and heroic young people into cash junkies, and encouraged a sense of entitlement and an addiction to giveaways. This addiction is so far advanced that when the giveaways stop, these individuals suffer withdrawal symptoms and then resort to demanding payment with force. It is a disappointing state of affairs when people have had, in some cases, to sign checks with a gun to their head. It is deplorable that we have done this to our youth.

Lastly is the vice of dehumanization. Gaddafi previously used to call us rats—dehumanizing us to the level of rodents. Recently we have gone a step further than even Gaddafi, and now dehumanize people to the level of algae (*tahaleb*) because algae is green and worthless—characteristics that inherently exclude you from the new political order. Immanuel Kant in his book *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals* spoke of a central distinction between a thing and a person, which helps us understand how dehumanization works, and what it leads to. For Kant a person is not for the sake of something else, but for the sake of himself or herself.[13] A thing on the other hand may be for the sake of something else. Every day we continue to make our fellow Libyans into things, not persons, which makes it easier to torture them, easier to deny their rights. All of this because we called ourselves the revolutionaries and called what we have done a revolution. Let us call it an uprising and spare ourselves these injustices created by the assertion of revolutionary legitimacy by various segments of the population.

Edmund Burke, as early as 1790, in his book *Reflections on the Revolution in France* pointed to this kind of behavior, as did Hannah Arendt also in her book *On Revolution* pointing how revolutionary legitimacy left states vulnerable to oppressive politics. The post-World War II literature analyzing the development of fascism, totalitarianism, and tyranny is very instructive to read. So now, how can we get over this? I think we have to get over this by moving from revolutionary legitimacy to constitutional legitimacy.

Constitutional Legitimacy
In my opinion a there was a huge mistake made in the summer of 2011 when people were gathering in Benghazi to discuss the drafting of a

constitutional declaration. There was an overall trend towards restoration of the Libya that Gaddafi took over in his 1969 coup. Now while the national flag and anthem of the Kingdom of Libya were restored overnight, the constitution of the Kingdom of Libya was not.

I would have preferred that in the summer of 2011 we had adopted the old constitution as a starting point, rather than committing to writing a constitution from scratch. By making this commitment we essentially bound ourselves to reinventing the wheel, and disconnected ourselves from our political heritage. I am not sure that we have the kind of humility that our forefathers had in the 1940s and 50s. Those gentlemen—and I am afraid there were no women in the constitutional assembly of that time—were humble enough to listen to each other.

Moreover, even though they were proud Bedouin tribesmen, proud Libyans from all regions of the country, they were humble enough to listen to each other, and self-confident enough to listen to Adrian Pelt, a man coming from far away with a mandate from the newly-established United Nations.[14] They were humble and confident enough to listen to the experts sent to aid them—some Palestinian, some Iraqi—and write a robust, lithe, and lasting constitution.

I am concerned that the amount of listening necessary to reach a consensus in today's Libya does not exist. Right now we do not see many people listening to each other. And while there are over thirty-two dialogue initiatives (at my last count), these are for the most part monologues about dialogue. When each group has their own dialogue initiative there is by definition no dialogue. And even when people get together with higher aims, seeking to initiate a real dialogue, you will find individuals trying to possess the dialogue—they become the "So-and-so" initiative for dialogue.

Writing a constitution from scratch is feasible if the time is right, and if those who are writing it are able to do it. The problem is that we now have clear structural fault lines in the official, formal political sphere that are triggering these earthquakes that we are feeling throughout society and continue to destabilize our country. The period for the life of the General National Congress (GNC) was clear and a constitutional process was supposed to go in tandem with it. However, the GNC mistook itself for a parliament, the head of the GNC mistook himself for the president of Libya, and the committees of the GNC

mistook themselves for executive bodies. Consequently, rather than proceeding to write the constitution or generating a committee to write the constitution, the GNC did everything else but contribute to the writing of the constitution.

Time ran out in February, but many GNC members insisted there was no deadline. And while the GNC can theoretically be perpetuated in terms of lifespan because it has that ultimate legitimacy, steps need to be taken to renew and concretize its currently rather shaky and tenuous mandate, and therefore allow time to write the constitution. But I am afraid the Libyan street was critical of the steps the GNC made—as far as one can possibly measure it without impartial polling.

The November 9th Movement said that they respect the GNC as a structure, but that they should not continue unless they are re-elected in order to get renewed legitimacy. Others are more critical and have argued that something based on the Constitution of 1951 is the only viable answer. There are a number of options among this group: the federalists favoring the version of 1951; those who don't like federalism choosing the Constitution of 1951 plus the modifications made in 1963; and those who want to go beyond that, and have a body of laws that actually defines local rule, divides the provinces proposing the Constitution of 1951, plus the modification of 1963 and all the laws based on 1963 up until August 31, 1969.

I personally am in favor of the latter as a pragmatic and effective solution to our current constitutional instability. The chances of us quickly producing a viable constitutional draft are almost zero, simply because no one is listening. The chances of us creating a constitution that offers lasting stability for our country is even lower. Reaching the legitimacy cliff of February 7 was a reckless risk to take, but hopefully it will generate a sense of urgency and spur Libyans on to be creative again in reaching a solution.

I am of the view that we should renew the GNC's legitimacy through another general election, and immediately reinstitute the Libyan Constitution of 1951 modified in 1963 with all the laws up to August 31, 1969, using it as a stop-gap, and getting the king to promise that he will do a referendum on the monarchy. It can be an anchor to provide stability, and a stepping-stone towards steady, long-term constitutional development.

Getting a constitution is difficult precisely because—at least in the official politics in today's Libya—the mechanisms for consensus are not present and real dialogue does not occur. Spoilers of any possible dialogue exist in Libya today, groups who are so committed to violence, who see the rest of the society as *kuffar* or infidels, and who will not be a part of any consensus making. Many of these groups, by definition, will not accept it, and will sabotage it at every step. We need to acknowledge this fact, and we need a simple social covenant, a social compact of sorts, to affirm our commitment to each other and to Libya. The Prophet Muhammad (God bless him and give him peace) was part of such a convenant, established before the advent of Islam, in what's called *Hilf al-Fudul*. *Hilf al-Fudul* was a very simple social contract, which was honored after the advent of Islam and stated that all should stand together to protect each other.

Libya needs a *Hilf al-Fudul*: a straightforward and open commitment by all to non-violence and to the peaceful settlement of dispute, of using the disputation, dialogue, and discussion to reach consensus. If individuals continue to use violence and assassination as a political tool, and if they are not willing to sign up to that, then the Libyan populace must commit to shunning these people, and they must be dealt with severely.

A fringe group in Derna declared their own Islamic state, and the militias there continue daily to issue threats, employ thuggery, assassinate Libyans and foreigners alike, and bomb public places. Now, maybe this is what Libyans actually want; however, no single figure or group should be able unilaterally to declare this—totally oblivious to the wishes or the desires of the rest of their fellow Libyans. In order to have this covenant we need to talk; and in order to talk we have to acknowledge that we do not have all the answers, and that we are weak enough, ignorant enough, and even messed up enough to know that we need our fellow Libyans.

Resilience

While the media in Libya and outside may focus on our problems, these are actually rather isolated and are exacerbated by marginal groups who intensify the impact of these failings on the rest of society. The majority of Libyans are getting on with life, albeit in tough

circumstances. Libyans have demonstrated throughout these past three years and continue to demonstrate a huge capacity for resilience, which grows stronger each time it is put to the test. And while there are many sources of resilience in Libyan society, there are some sources of resilience to which I would like to draw attention.

First, Libyan women are a critical source of resilience. This resilience needs to be acknowledged more unambiguously and needs to be invoked as a catalyst for stability and development moving forward. Libyan women have shown tremendous bravery not only during the uprising, but also in its aftermath.

It was the mothers of those jailed in Abu Selim who actually started this uprising. This was an uprising started by women and sustained by women, and Libyans prevailed in their fight against tyranny through the efforts of both men and women. At least 50 per cent of the Libyan effort in this uprising can be attributed to the actions of women. This should never be belittled, undermined, or forgotten.

Many of the men in Libya were courageous only because the women in their lives had encouraged them to be so. I will be the first to admit that my wife, mother, sisters, and daughter inspired whatever bravery I may have shown during the uprising. My wife put it quite bluntly: "If you don't go to Benghazi, then don't come home!" You can understand, I had to go to Benghazi!

After having contributed to more than 50 per cent of the efforts needed for this uprising to succeed, they have ended up with an ability to influence no more than 10 or 15 per cent of political decisions in our new political sphere. In terms of leadership women have, even in the best cases, only been assigned token ministries. I believe that the future government of Libya should be constituted of 50 per cent women and the GNC should also have 50 per cent women.

Another form of resiliency for Libya is religious. Scholars of traditional madrasas have offered a lot of resilience and even resistance to the growing influence of those small but active groups of extremists and radicals. Both the League of Libyan Ulema—which was formed out of the Network of Free Ulema—and also the Council of Sufis in Libya have helped by repeatedly issuing decrees to counterbalance the impact of extremist and fringe views on the religious establishment in Libya. Out of respect for the mufti they do not even call them fatwas,

but they are fatwas of sorts. The League has responded to and has refuted every fatwa that they see as not representing the authentic tradition of Libya—which is historically Ashʿari, Maliki, and Sufi (with the exception of the Nafusa Mountains, which have an Ibadi presence).

To give an example, when the Libyan Dar al-Ifta issued a fatwa calling on people to topple the government, the League of Libyan Ulema quickly issued a scholarly corrective declaring that it is not the business of the Dar al-Ifta to issue such pronouncements. This religious resilience is also important to invoke and to speak to.

There is also tribal resilience. The great tribes—particularly those of al-Obaidat and al-Awageer—have showed tremendous resiliency in times of great tension, and tribal politics continues to be the area where real political discussion takes place, and tribes continue to undergird our nation state. Where necessary they have also gone beyond resilience and have displayed resistance to attempts by small ideological groups to dominate their areas.

Young people have also demonstrated incredible resilience. At each stage of the uprising young people have come out and publically protested against those they see as taking advantage of the wider populace, those who they believe stole the inheritance of the uprising. And young people have bravely and repeatedly come out to demonstrate against the trends of intimidation, violence, and murders in Benghazi and elsewhere.

Last December the young people of Benghazi came out, and—against all odds and on their own—managed to organize a pan-Arab club basketball tournament. Not only did they organize the tournament itself, but they repaired all the stadiums, secured all the games, offered hospitality, used their own vehicles and buses to transport, and offered food, and so on, to the guests. And they successfully completed the tournament and even winning and becoming the Arab champions.

Young people from Benghazi continue to display resilience, continue to offer hospitality, and continue to demonstrate world-class sporting excellence throughout all of this instability. And they do this with hardly any help from anyone. These are just some of the examples of resilience that young people are offering, but there are innumerable

amounts more in all areas of the country—North, South, East, and West.

Specific sources of resilience play their part, but the most important source of resilience that Libya currently has, in my view, comes through the massive distribution of power to Libyans across the country. What is often lamented as fragmentation is, I believe, a blessing. Just as the Internet is remarkably resilient simply because it is so massively distributed and massively interconnected, Libyan communities at the municipal level, village level, and local council level offer great resilience and can be great resources for strength and growth if we are able to weave them together.

That is why I believe that if we help the municipalities through municipal reconstruction teams, and create a smart grid that can help them communicate and trade with each other, then we will have made the first real steps towards a long-term stability and prosperity. I believe that with our municipalities we already have in many cases the founding blocks of a great future. Founding blocks that represent an indigenous Libyan version of a phenomenon that Thomas Jefferson had called the "little republics" when he was thinking about challenges of governance in the United States:

> Every hundred, besides a school, should have a justice of the peace, a constable and a captain of militia. These officers, or some others within the hundred, should be a corporation to manage all its concerns, to take care of its roads, its poor, and its police by patrols, &c., (as the select men of the Eastern townships.) Every hundred should elect one or two jurors to serve where requisite, and all other elections should be made in the hundreds separately, and the votes of all the hundreds be brought together. Our present Captaincies might be declared hundreds for the present, with a power to the courts to alter them occasionally. These little republics would be the main strength of the great one.[15]

We should also not assume the absence of a causal relationship between instability and the massive distribution of weapons. In fact societies can be very safe when weapons are massively distributed and properly registered. We should remember that Switzerland, Finland, and Sweden are among the countries in the world with the most weapons per capita. Although these are very different countries, in Libya's specific case, the continued diffusion of small arms among the

population is likely to offer greater security in the short to medium term, than through programs that result in one group with a monopoly. This is not dismissive of the dangers that guns pose, and the need for a robust police force, however massive parallelism and distribution can offer a kind of resilience that is in great need after a long period of authoritarianism—especially in a period where groups are continuingly tempted to consolidate their power at the expense of others.

The Future

One form of resilience that we urgently need is to build a cohesive vision for the future of Libya. This is something that we haven't been doing enough soul-searching about and we certainly haven't been expressing ourselves enough about. We need strategic communication that can present a positive and affirming vision to the public. Offering the Libyan public ways that they can participate in the democractic and nation-building process is essential in establishing confidence in our politics, and establishing a mutually supportive relationship between the people and state institutions—a far cry from the distrust that exists both now and in the Gaddafi era.

During the uprising many people from very diverse backgrounds were united because they were all against Gaddafi, but a negative vision is no longer enough. It is not enough for Libyans simply to have liberty from something. In today's Libya it is especially important to have liberty to do things, to construct things and it is very important to have visions and to share to share those visions, and to build a common vision together.

As this search for a new future progresses, and as we chart our course together, I believe that two key elements will be essential: rootedness and openness.

Libya needs to remain rooted. Rooted to its heritage, rooted to its customs, as a people rooted to our land. Our roots run deep, they move, they intermingle, and they intertwine. Our families, tribes, friends, towns and histories define us. We are Libyans. Just as we were not defined by Gaddafi, we should not be defined by our opposition to him. Libyans are more than that.

We need to remain rooted to our thousand-year history of Islamic

learning, and to the teachings of our forefathers. Teachings that taught us respect for God, modesty and moderation in thought and our way of life, and pride and compassion in how we interact with others. Ours is a rich heritage of teaching that has long roots. It is a heritage that continued to exist throughout all the occupations of Libya, and which served as a well-spring that we have drawn upon to resist tyranny, cruelty, and corruption throughout. I am confident that we will continue to stay rooted to this tradition and that it will continue to lead us towards a brighter, fairer, safer, more just, and more compassionate future.

Libya also needs to remain open. As we transition into this new era of Libya's life we need to establish an open and accessible climate that is enabling and supportive of Libyans across the board. As Lao Tzu says in his book *Tao Te Ching* "what's useful about a window is what's not there."[16] We should not be so obsessed with showpiece projects like building the biggest cement factory in North Africa, or the biggest steel factory in North Africa as was Gaddafi, or with simply exploiting a diminishing oil supply. While superficially attractive, these shortcuts will leave us vulnerable to corruption, instability, and asymmetrical growth.

Libya needs simply to be an open space, a free zone for trade as it was historically, both in Libya, but also with our neighbors—to the North by sea to Europe, to the East and West along the coast of the Maghreb, and into the vast expanse of Africa. Libya is fortunate to have its roots at the juncture between great trading hubs, but, looking forward, we need to be open to the benefit that our location bestows upon us.

Libya needs to take advantage of technological advancements that can help us achieve a secure and enduring prosperity. It needs to take principled steps to combat criminality, thuggery, and extremism. So, instead of being a free zone for drug smuggling, illegal immigration, or terrorism, as is fast becoming the case, Libya can be a free zone for trade that benefits all Libyans.

Libya also needs to be open to benefiting from the most abundant resource that we have: the sun. The rays of the ever-present Libyan sun can be harnessed and exploited. Libya is the best place for putting solar energy systems that could lead to greater energy security in the region.

The sun is a latent and underused asset that is both sustainable and clean, and will enable us to preserve our fossil fuel reserves for our youth, ensuring enduring econo-mic growth and energy security for Libya in the long term.

In the new Libya, we can achieve unity, but it must be a receptive unity that is not imposed. An open and rooted unity. Netting together all the "little republics" through dialogue and enabling technologies that help teach, serve, trade, and interact will support the resiliencies, strengths, and gifts that already exist throughout Libya's population.

Moreover it can help us achieve a Libyan "Jeffersonian" democracy that is rooted in Libya's 1000-year-old Islamic tradition, a tradition that is inherited from our forefathers that is balanced between doctrine, jurisprudence, and spirituality.

NOTES

* This paper is based on a lecture given at Georgetown University.

[1] Ibn ʿAta Allah al-Iskandari, *The Book of Aphorisms*, trans. Muhammed Nafih Wafy (Selangor: Islamic Book Trust, 2010), 15.

[2] Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 9.

[3] Ibid., 177–8.

[4] Arendt, On Revolution (London: Penguin Books, 2006), 21 (*my italics*).

[5] Erich Fromm, *Escape from Freedom* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1941), 141–78.

[6] Ibid., 179–84.

[7] Ibid., 185–205.

[8] Viktor Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning* (Washington: Washington Square Press, 1959). On the issue of "Ultimate Meaning", see p. 141.

[9] Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (Norwich: SCM Press, 1959), Chapter 1.

[10] Arendt, *On Revolution*, 252. Arendt prefers to use the term "revolutionists" but we might normally speak of this group as "revolutionaries".

[11] R. G. Collingwood, *An Autobiography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 99–113. A term present in some of his earlier writings, but dealt with most systematically in his autobiography.

[12] Desmond Tutu, *God Has a Dream* (London: Rider Press, 2005), 55–6.

[13] Immanuel Kant, *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. Lewis W. Beck (New York: Liberal Arts Press, 1959), 39–64.

[14] Adrian Pelt, *Libyan Independence and the United Nations: A Case of Planned Decolonization* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970).

[15] Jean M. Yarbough, ed., *The Essential Jefferson* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2006), 207 (*my italics*). Letter to John Tyler Monticello, May 26, 1810.

[16] Lao Tzu, *Tao Te Ching: The Ancient Classic* (Chichester: Capstone Publishing Ltd., 2012), 11. The quote reads: "We pierce doors and windows to make a house; And it is on these spaces where there is nothing that the usefulness of the house depends."

❧❦

ISIS in Libya: Winning the Propaganda War

Ansar al-sharia is attacking the Libyan state. They are attacking the flag, the army and the young. I recently screened an incredibly disturbing video shot in my hometown of Benghazi, filmed by ISIS affiliates from Ansar Al-Sharia. It is from an attack by Ansar Al-Sharia on the Libyan National Army.

The video shows a Libyan National Army tank being targeted and destroyed. There were young people, young Libyans, in that tank. These young National Army soldiers were representing their country, not a special interest, a party, a group, or a militia.

What I find particularly troubling is that this and other extremist videos bear an un-settling resemblance to violent computer games like "Call of Duty": the red crosshairs on the tank, the cinematography cutting quickly to the anti-tank weapon, the slow-motion launch of the missile, the explosion as the tank is hit, the musical accompaniment.

This is not an isolated media phenomenon. It is part of an increasingly sophisticated strategic communications exercise being led by ISIS.

I wanted to understand this phenomenon further so I reviewed some of the propaganda videos produced by ISIS to get a sense of why their media efforts seem to be so effective. One of the most striking things is the similarity between the Ansar Al-Sharia video and the ISIS video produced by their media centre.

These videos demonstrate a grotesque perversion of Islam. These films were produced by Al-Hayat Media Center, ISIS's media arm. It is important to understand that Libya is in very real danger of becoming an ISIS garrison and an ATM for ISIS operations in Syria and Iraq. There is a good chance that Libya's oil wealth was siphoned off by

Islamists and provided oxygen for the growth of ISIS during the recent Islamist regime. It certainly has not been used to make our country a better place for Libyans.

The city of Derna has fallen to ISIS and its affiliate terrorist group Ansar Al-Sharia. In both Derna and Benghazi, Sabrata, and now in Sirt and Sukna, these organizations are committing atrocities on my fellow citizens: public beheadings, floggings and other depredations. Yet the leader of the Libya Dawn faction that seized control of Tripoli by force of arms and is seeking legitimacy recently announced that Ansar Al-Sharia, a UN designated terrorist organization, "is a simple, beautiful, amiable idea, if we just sit with them for dialogue or negotiation we can win them over".

Did the videos we screened look like dialogue or negotiation? Not at all, and yet they have a perverse appeal that is attracting poor misguided souls from all over the world. Within a period of thirty days in September and October of 2014 ISIS in Syria and Iraq recruited 6,000 young people, including about 1,300 volunteer jihadis who arrived from foreign countries to join their forces. And I can guarantee that the clips we screened and other ISIS media efforts played a major role in leading these gullible and ignorant conscripts down the murderous path they've set themselves upon.

Why is it that these videos have the power to attract young people? The production values are straight out of Hollywood—cloyingly sentimental, warm and fuzzy (with much brotherly hugging), romantic and swashbuckling. The principals in the productions are presented as attractive heroic men of action who are also humble, soft-spoken and kind-hearted—your average boys next door, but packing AK47s and rocket launchers.

There is a romantic, almost aphrodisiac quality to these productions that has seduced many gormless schoolgirls to join the young fighters. Hundreds of teenage girls from western countries have "self-radicalized" through ISIS social media propaganda and videocasts. According to Hans-Georg Maassen, president of Germany's Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, underage girls are leaving Germany for ISIS territory "with the romantic idea of jihad and jihad marriage and are marrying young male fighters who they've gotten to know via the internet." The youngest of these girls is 13 years old.

Shaista Gohir of the UK Muslim Women's Network explained: "Some of these girls are very young and naive, they don't understand the conflict or their faith, and they are easily manipulated. Some of them are taking young children with them; some may believe they are taking part in a humanitarian mission."

Well, let's have a closer look at the humanitarian mission the naive young girls—and heavily armed young men—have flocked to participate in: The sentimentality—a hallmark of Hollywood movie-making—takes on an incredibly sinister turn in another clip we reviewed: of an ISIS recruiter in a neighborhood enlisting suicide bombers from among the young men—with their families sitting round a square on folding chairs, looking on with pride, applauding each volunteer as they pledged to blow themselves—and other hapless bystanders—to bloody fragments. One young man signs up with his baby daughter in his arms! All the while the recruiter and the volunteers are hugging each other—there really is a lot of hugging going on—and invoking verses of the Qur'an and the Muslim affirmation of faith—in order to commit two ultra-violent acts that are explicitly forbidden in Islam: suicide and the indiscriminate murder of innocents.

It is a moral inversion as stark and disquieting as one is likely to see.

In addition to movies, Hayat Media Center releases a glossy online English magazine called *Dabiq* and a series of in-depth online news-letters called Islamic State Report that detail ISIS strategy and updates on its "successes". The high-quality nature of these publications, all written in English, is reminiscent of Al-Qaeda's infamous online magazine, *Inspire*.

Security blogger John Little observed: "it was obvious very early on that ISIS launched their offensive with a social media campaign well-planned in advance. This wasn't an afterthought. This wasn't some-thing that they made up as they went along." CBS corres-pondent Alexander Trowbridge commented that the social media campaign was disci- plined and had what he called "top-down message control designed to stimulate grass roots activity. Complete with an app and highly orchestrated hashtag pushes, the ISIS social media strategy mirrors that of a marketing company building buzz around a new product."

While not even remotely on the aesthetic level of the stunning propaganda movies produced by Goebbels' media machine glorifying Hitler's Third Reich, the ISIS videos have a crude, visceral impact that is disturbingly seductive.

What we are witnessing is pure fascism using the vocabulary and trappings of Islam but without a scintilla of the profound knowledge and spirit of Islam. The ground has been well-prepared by secular fascism that took root in our region during the post-colonial independence period after the Second World War. Although fascism was eliminated as a force in Europe it emerged across the Middle East, in North Africa and the Levant, in the form of Baathist, Phalangist and Nasserist revolutionary ideologies that swept across the region during the 1950s and 60s.

These were secular nationalist movements that were fundamentally fascist. Read *Falsafa at-Thawra* (the *Philosophy of Revolution*) by Gamel Abd Al-Nasser or Muslim Brotherhood ideologue Sayyid Qutb's highly influential *Ma'alim fi'l Tariq* (*Milestones*), and you will find that they have the same basic outlook and structure and fundamentally the same aim. Both books promote a theory about a righteous elite that has exclusive ownership of the truth, which gives the movement the right to impose this truth upon others.

If you compare these two books to Lenin's political pamphlet *What is to be done?* or the writings of Nazi leaders, you can see that they all share the same structure and have the same essential aims. You'll also find the same structure in speeches by Fidel Castro. These concepts have more to do with tyranny in the name of the State, in the name of the Reich, in the name of the Umma, in the name of Caliphate. It is the same inhumane tyranny that uses human beings as a mechanism to serve the state because they claim that they—the leaders —are the only true representatives of the state, the nation, the motherland, the Umma, the Caliphate, or of God Himself.

So how do Hollywood movies and video games play a part in fascist propaganda? First of all there is what I would call polarization: seeing the world as either black or white, good or evil, true or false—Darth Vader *vs.* Luke Skywalker. The white hats *vs.* the black hats. The two sides are absolutely dichotomized. Hollywood movies and television tend to reduce storytelling to simple, easy to swallow stereotypes to

reach the widest possible audience. ISIS does precisely the same thing and for the same reasons. They represent their movement as the only true interpretation of Islam and those Muslims with differing points of view, along with the rest of the non-Muslim world, are infidels and in their apocalyptic world all infidels must be vanquished or enslaved.

The second feature is the illusion of absolute certainty. This illusion can only take root if the leaders are considered infallible. This is completely contrary to traditional Islam. The Messenger of God, peace be upon him, told his Companions, "If you did not sin, God would destroy you and replace you with a people who sinned so that they can ask for forgiveness and repent." Fallibility is fundamental to our faith. Only the Prophets can be considered to be infallible because they are protected by God. No others, not even saints, can be considered infallible. But the leaders of ISIS, as with their fascist forefathers, need to cultivate the notion of infallibility to convince their witless legions to commit atrocities in the name of "the truth".

The third feature is the imposition of will. If you look at ISIS propaganda, it is all about imposing its will. Hitler's infamous propaganda masterpiece glorifying the Nazi Party Congress at Nuremberg was called Triumph of the Will. For ISIS, they reduce God to will, even though Allah has 99 Names and Attributes. And Allah has said, "My Mercy precedes My Wrath." God is Compassion. But Compassion is completely absent from anything that ISIS does. It is as if all of these attributes and names of Allah had disappeared—except for those describing Power and the force of Will. They forget about *Al-Rahman* (the Com-passionate), *Al-Rahim* (the Most Merciful), *Al-Rauf* (the Most Lenient), *Al-Wudud* (the Most Loving), all of these names that describe compassion and love. Indeed, they simplify theology to a single attribute. They are no different from the Nazis and they are drawing the region and the world into a holocaust—a perfect bloody storm.

How can we deal with this horrendous state of affairs? First of all, we have to recognize it for what it is. It is a mistake to think that these are the misguided ideas of a few young people. This is a cancer, a deep mass psychosis that has taken root and metastasized across the Islamic world. It is a virus that has spread rapidly via social media.

The extremist groups we are talking about are using the most

sophisticated digital media to spread their ideology. They are using Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, videocasts, pod-casts and every emerging form of digital communications to propagate their message. They have graphic designers, animators, composers and filmmakers working at a reasonably high level. So did Goebbels, Hitler's Information Minister. His propaganda machine used the most advanced tools of the time. The ISIS true believers do the same. I think it is a kind of Manicheism—a heretical synthetic religious confrontation between the forces of light and darkness. But, why is it happening? Why in the Middle East? Why in Islamic cultures?

In traditional societies, there have always existed frameworks that give people meaning. Our civilization has experienced a loss of meaning. I believe that over the last few decades, we have been losing our framework of meaning. Traditional community meanings, religious meanings, family meanings are disintegrating. Frameworks of meaning are breaking down under the influence of globalization, the internet, satellite television, movies. People are losing traditional frameworks that give meaning to their lives.

There are consequences to this collapse. When meanings break down there is a powerful and pervasive sense of insecurity and fear. One becomes terrified of not knowing who one is and where one is going. In post-modern societies young people are cut adrift. They've lost the meaning. Those who experience this disconcerting fear often look for a quick fix. When deep, abiding meanings are lost, one can be vulnerable to an easy way out.

There was a time when young people understood that the pursuit of knowledge and salvation took a lifetime. Today, mass media and consumer societies have sold us an instant culture. Overnight success, fast results, upward mobility, shortcuts, fifteen minutes of fame, weekend enlightenment sessions and all the hype consumer society promotes, has distorted mass perceptions. This breeds laziness. Laziness leads to a search for an easy way out. People suffering from poverty, helplessness and hopelessness are particularly vulnerable to fast solutions. Over 60 percent of the population in the Middle East is under 25 years of age. The Middle East also has the highest unemployment rate in the world, with a rate of 25% in North Africa and 28% in the Middle East.

The uprisings across the Arab world gave young people high hopes. These hopes have not been realized. So, when someone comes and tells you that they can offer you both a Utopia and Paradise, and you're unemployed, underemployed or frustrated in one way or another, what are you likely to do? They tell you that you are going to go to Paradise and, on top of that, you can have everything you want in this world. Your vices become virtues. If you are a killer you can now kill and feel virtuous and empowered. If you have sexual desires you can go and take Yazidi women as sex slaves and sell or buy them as objects. And if you do get killed you go straight to Heaven. It's a win-win. It's a no-brainer, and I do mean a no-brainer.

They are basically delivering base desires and vices in a cheap package that makes a frustrated and gullible young man or woman feel self-righteous without feeling guilty. In fact, you can feel so self-righteous that you can effectively annihilate anybody who disagrees with you.

Let's face it, for most young people who have only a tentative grasp of their religion— and, sadly, this is the case across the Islamic world— this can be an incredibly attractive proposition. But when we talk about building counter-narratives we must also deliver counter-meanings—real meanings, and examples to young people, because whatever is out there is not working. How can we give them real meaning—something that is accessible and explained in a language they understand?

We have no shortage of traditional scholars who know the traditional discourse on compassion, love, and helping others; who can explain how the centres of Islam deal with others and how you have to kind, even to dogs and cats, let alone human beings. But the real world, even in the developed countries, appears to be unjust, inequitable, cruel, and ruled by a corrupt, power-hungry elite.

We have no shortage of scholars. The problem is that they don't know how to communicate with young people in a language they can understand. There is a need for the doctrines and the jurisprudence of Islam to be re-articulated or, to be blunt, rebranded. The religious establishment needs to come down from its ivory towers and learn how to speak to young people in their own language. Scholars urgently need to learn how to use media and communications technologies to

reach their young constituents. If this doesn't happen we're in danger of losing our youth. It is happening right now.

It is staggering how many young people are attracted by these things and how many are killing themselves and others, destroying the world around them simply because these psychotic criminals that profess to have all the answers are giving them the illusion of a meaning that is in fact nihilist and the antithesis of Islam but couched in the vocabulary of our faith. Our scholars are failing miserably. We are not giving our young people what they need. We are even in denial that we are failing.

There are exceptions of course. The Royal Aal Al-Bayt Institute in Jordan has done incredible work through the Amman Message and Common Word. This week, Al-Azhar took a strong stance with a very clear declaration that ISIS has nothing to do with Islam and that the religion is filled with tolerance, compassion and mercy. Another major effort is the work of Sheikh Abdullah Bin Bayyah and the conference that was organized in Abu Dhabi on Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies. Another example is The Council of Elders that is now being built up of great sages like Abdullah Bin Bayyah, Sheikh Al-Azhar, and the great scholars of Mauritania, Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia. The collective wisdom these learned men bring transform the public understanding of our faith, like a perfumed essence. These scholars need help from media professionals on how to deliver these critical messages of Islam.

Our faith teaches us not to kill others, these people glorify killing. Our faith teaches us not to hate, these people promote hatred. Our faith teaches us to respect women, these people debase women. Our faith teaches us to help one another, these people oppress others. ISIS is the antithesis of Islam. It is the enemy of Islam in the guise of Islam.

These people are murderous criminals and what are we doing to counter this abased and aberrant ideology?

Our efforts in counter-terrorism and countering violent extremism must focus at the root causes and not just at superficialities. In biology, there is a distinction between phenotype and genotype. For example, the color and taste of fruits are called phenotypes, physical representations of genetic material. But the genetic material or the seeds of beings are the genotypes. Violent extremism as a behavior is like a bad

tree, as is mentioned in the Qur'an. We need to know about the seeds, the genotype, of this evil tree.

The seeds are undoubtedly connected to the corrosion of modern Islamic theology. The glorification of the demonic becomes an anti-God equivalent to God; infallible certainty becomes a form of idolatry, the association of others with God.

These criminal heretics make their ideology, and by extension, themselves into gods through self-worship. These are theological mutations and the roots of so much ignorance and bad preaching that has pervaded the Muslim world.

My country is under dire threat from ISIS and its Islamist agents. Civilizations throughout the Middle East that are hundreds of years old are being wiped out. Villagers are being forced to leave their communities based on extremist propaganda. ISIS is in Derna, Benghazi and Sabrata. In these cities our Army, the Libyan National Army, is fighting ISIS and its affiliates, like Ansar Al-Sharia and other terrorist factions.

ISIS is not only a direct threat to the people of Libya, who are overwhelmingly moderate and peace-loving citizens, it is also a direct threat to our neighbors in Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, Chad, and Niger. More than this, the violent anarchy and terrorist action in Libya being glorified on video is taking place an hour and half from Rome by air, an hour from Athens, and three hours from London.

Our neighbors in the North, in Spain, Italy, Greece, France, and the UK should be worried—very worried. The Dutch government recently released a statement that Libya is now the biggest threat to Europe. We have airports that are under the control of ISIS and its affiliates and these airport have aircraft that can be easily used to attack Europe. These videos are of direct relevance to our lives and our safety and security.

As I look at my own country teetering on the edge of anarchy or collapse, I see an urgency now for authoritative scholars to ally themselves with masters of digital technology and with honest, expert communicators and learn how to communicate with young people in languages they can understand. This has to be a long-term, sustained effort. Men and women of knowledge have to step down from their ivory towers and techies have to step up. They need to work hand-in-

hand together to stop the next wave of criminal heresy that is sweeping across our Muslim lands.

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Overcoming ISIS in Libya: Towards a Disaster Recovery Plan

THE GRUESOME MASS-BEHEADINGS of 21 Egyptian Copts on the shores of my country, and the thousands of beheadings, murders, kidnappings, and displacements of Libyans, have combined to make the 4th anniversary of February 17th a heavy day indeed!

A dark nightmare replaced our luminescent dreams of a better Libya—free from tyranny, and springing forward on a democratic path towards security, stability, rule-of-law, human-dignity, economic prosperity and national thriving.

Islamists have lost in every single one of the three, free-open-and-monitored, elections held in post-revolutionary Libya. The Muslim Brotherhood and the Libyan Fighting Group have utilized arguments of 'inclusivity' to insert themselves deep into the very joints of the Libyan State.

When Islamists lost the last election, they simply boycotted the resulting Parliament, and physically attacked both the Parliament's seat in Benghazi and the legitimate Government's Seat in Tripoli. Having lost through ballot-box, they effectively resorted to the gun!

Having been included, Islamists effectively excluded all others. They used their control over the Libyan State, with its vast resources, to make Libya into the ATM, gas-station, and a platform for their 'Islamic State'. Even today, they continue to do so through their defunct GNC, and its Islamist pseudo-Government.

Thus, for four years, the resources of the Libyan State went into enabling an 'Islamic State', across the region, including in Syria and Iraq. Today, the Frankenstein that Islamists fostered from the very livelihood of Libyans (to the tune of tens of billions of dollars)

slaughters Muslim Libyans, as well as their Christian guests with total impunity.

IS, its affiliates, supporters, and apologists today control airports a couple of hours flight from any European capital, in addition to controlling the illegal immigration boat traffic into Europe. The bloodied knife pointed at Rome, in the grotesque IS slaughter video, must be taken literally and seriously.

The Libyan State failed to rise from the ashes of the 2011 uprising, simply because another 'State' was the real aspiration of the Islamists: an 'Islamic State' (IS). They have been cannibalizing the resources of the Libyan State to feed a transnational one.

The net result of four years of building an 'Islamic State' at the cost of the Libyan State has been a national, regional, and international *Disaster*!

Facing disaster, there is always an existential 'either/or': a 'fight-or-flight' response. I believe that we must fight for Libya, and according to a proper 'Disaster Recovery Plan', but let us first look at the flight-mechanisms being peddled around lately.

Fleeing from the disaster comes in at least three varieties:

1. *Denial* (example: there is no IS in Libya, and the video was a fabrication or an intel-ligence conspiracy!).

2. *Abandonment* (example: Libya is hopeless, let us just focus elsewhere).

3. *Appeasement* (example: let's engage in dialogue and make friends with 'moderate' Islamists, who will help calm down their vicious IS attack dogs. Maybe we can even form a 'National Unity Government' with them).

None of the above three 'flight' tactics will work. The first two will mean doing nothing to address an existential threat not only to Libya and its Arab and African neighbors, but to the very heart of Europe. The third will lead to the continuation of the control of the Libyan State by Islamist Trojans who have four years of experience at using the resources of the Libyan State to build their own transnational Islamic State.

We support the Bernardino Leon-led efforts at national dialogue leading to the formation of a National Unity Government. Such a dialogue must however be at the level of the social-fabric. The resulting government must be broadly representative of the Libyan people, be purely technocratic and be exclusively focused on building Libya—a Libya for Libyans. We can't afford yet another government that includes transnational ideologues at the joints.

In the face of the disaster afflicting Libya and threatening its neighbors, we have no choice but to courageously and consistently take up the option to fight. 'Fighting' however must consist of much more than just the necessary military engagement of IS and Ansar al-Sharia locations and forces.

To overcome the darkness of IS we must follow a clear Disaster Recovery Plan for Libya. Such a plan must be developed and implemented rapidly by Libyans, and in close partnership with a new 'Friends of Libya' consortium consisting of reliable and similarly-minded regional and international allies.

Key-features for a **Disaster Recovery Plan**, for Libya are as follows:

1. Uphold, and internationally support, the duly elected bodies that exist in Libya today: the House of Representatives (HoR) and its Government, the Constitution Drafting Assembly (CDA), and local municipal councils.

2. Protect and secure the HoR, the Government, the CDA, and local elected leadership, to enable them to work without pressure, intimidation, and duress.

3. Protect and secure the Supreme Court of Libya and its Constitutional Council, and publish the results of an independent international investigation of its latest important decisions. Judgments made under duress should be declared null-and-void by the international community.

4. Complete the membership of the HoR through demanding that its few boycotting members re-join it. They must participate from within—by stepping outside and then complaining about 'lack of

inclusivity' they are in effect excluding all other members. Members who continue to refuse to re-join the HoR must be duly replaced by the runners-up from the same electoral districts.

5. Provide a safe location for HoR to hold its meetings in Tobruk, until it can safely move back to its official seat in Benghazi.

6. Provide urgent technical assistance to the CDA in a safe and supportive environment, in order to expedite the completion of Libya's Constitution.

7. If the constitutional drafting process takes more than another 90 days to complete, we should return to the original recommendations of the February Commission, and then call a general Presidential election. The HoR had unfortunately absorbed the powers of the President, on the assumption that the CDA was to be done with the constitution drafting by December of 2014.

8. Provide urgent technical assistance to the HoR-appointed Government, and introduce mechanisms for improved governance and transparency.

9. Urgently form an 'Emergency Economic Board' that can bring together Libya's top technocrats in Central Banking, Oil, Fuel, Humanitarian Relief, Finance, Investment, and Telecom, with top-experts from the UN, the EU, the Word Bank, and the IMF. The Board must be tasked with safeguarding and optimizing Libya's remaining resources in order to protect against the effects of the economic and financial abyss facing Libya, due to the deadly combination of collapsing oil production and pricing.

10. Immediately convene clusters of social fabric and civil society meetings, including municipal, tribal, and reconciliation councils, in preparation for convening a pan-Libyan gathering of key leaders at the municipal, tribal, and civil society levels. Such social consensus-building is vital for supporting constitutional and democratic processes.

11. Urgently form a National Security Joint-Command Center that can lead the fight against IS, Ansar-al-Sharia, and all their affiliates, allies, and backers. This Council must include officers from all of Libya's key cities, towns, and tribes, who are genuinely committed to fighting terrorism in Libya. This Council must be vitally linked to regional and international consortia that are now fighting IS and other terrorists in other countries. Such links can be facilitated by placing international expert advisors within the Center.

12. Urgently form a Libyan Rapid Deployment Force (LRDF) that consists of army officers and soldiers from across Libya, and provide three bases from which they can operate: in the East, West, and South of Libya. The LRDF must include international expert advisors provided by the UN, to ensure that the force remains pan-Libyan in command and orientation. The LDRF must not include any ideologically-motivated elements. Its doctrine must be Libya-focused, and must not include any transnational aspirations.

13. The international community must demand and help to enforce the demilitarization of Tripoli, enabling the HoR-appointed Government to function from the Capital. It must also demand and help enforce the demilitarization of Benghazi, enabling the HoR to function from its official Seat.

14. The economic and cultural effort against radicalization and extremism must be given top priority. We must re-start the Libyan economy, offer Libyan youth a forward-looking and inspiring Vision for the country. A truck stuck in sand can only be pulled out from a fixed point at the front, beyond the sand. A forward-looking Vision is vital for getting Libya unstuck.

The capacity-building and visionary-inspiration of young Libyan women and men is key to national recovery. In the face of the hate, despair, and cynicism propagated by IS through its grotesque videos, we must retrieve and propagate the authentic virtues of compassion, faith, and hope!

❧❦

Libya and the Tyranny of the Minority

GREAT DEMOCRATS, FROM JOHN ADAMS, to Alexis de Tocqueville, to John Stuart Mill have long warned of the dangers of the 'Tyranny of the Majority', and how it can jeopardize the very spirit of democracy.

For the last four years, and now, even under the blue flag of the United Nations, Libya continues to suffer from a catastrophic and bloody 'Tyranny of the Minority.'

In three fair, free, and monitored elections, and despite their political mobilization vastly outstripping any of their adversaries', an Islamist minority (consisting of the Muslim Brotherhood, the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group, and their affiliates and associates) never achieved more than 10% of the popular vote. Yet, this small minority has managed through a vicious and unscrupulous combination of violence, intimidation, blackmail, bribery, and the parasitic appropriation of all key functions and resources of the emerging Libyan State, to tyrannize the Libyan people for the past four years.

In the summer of 2014, frustrated at the waning electoral support of their candidates and emboldened by the move of the elected parliament, known as the House of Representatives, to a duress-free Tobruk, an alliance of Islamist militias called Fajr Libya seized Tripoli at the barrel of the gun. Then, to create a semblance of legitimacy, Fajr Libya resurrected the defunct General National Congress (GNC) with a tiny fragment of its original membership—appointing a pseudo-government with former jihadis and ISIS apologists at its head.

In Morocco, this tiny fragment uses the banner of the entire GNC to make a most dubious claim to legitimacy, and a most audacious claim to a 50–50 'Presidential Council.'

Logically, even if any such concession were to be made, it would have be made to the entire GNC, with all its membership, of which the Islamist fragment constitutes less than 10%. In effect by hijacking the banner of the entire GNC, the Islamist fragment has inflated their claim to any such sharing settlement ten-fold, from 5% to 50%!

In Algeria, an even tinier fragment of Libya's political landscape, consisting of Islamists who never won a single seat in their communities, sit at a table in a 50–50 configuration.

For Libya's emerging democracy not to collapse into a sham endorsement of tyrannical Islamist rule, the brave young women and men of Libya, and the international community, have to simply say 'NO' to the continuing injustice of this Tyranny of the Minority.

The international community is demanding the speedy formation of a 'National Unity Government'. Since the 17 February Revolution, Libya has had four years of 'unity' governments. These governments have been 'inclusive' of the major factions that were empowered by the 2011 uprising. But, these factions, forged in the fight against Gaddafi, do not represent Libya's electorate.

Governments over the past four years have failed for two reasons. Firstly, they inherited a Libya devoid of institutions. Secondly, the results of elections did not align with the skewed power bases in the country. The former meant that governments in Libya had their hands on the wheel of a car with no engine. While, the latter meant that the formal politics of elections, parliaments and prime ministers, never reflected the realpolitik of militias. Threats, hostage takings, assassinations, and blackmailing, ensured that parliamentary politics was always under duress.

We are left in a dangerous position. Libya's current negotiations are not peace talks between belligerents, although, that's what some want them to be. They are not talks to help reconcile differences between elected politicians, although that's what they started as. The current hybrid talks run the very serious risk of providing legal legitimacy to extortion, while perpetuating and blessing the Tyranny of the Minority.

The goal of the UN-sponsored dialogue was clear: to address the grievances of the political boycotters of the House of Representatives and compel them to return. The goal of peace talks is also clear, to end

fighting. In all peace talks it is a given that those sitting around the table represent the warring parties and that all sides use their power on the ground to force talks in their own favour.

Before the UN presides over the creation of a government with a mandate for the next two years, we should be clear about what is happening here and mindful that we don't relapse into a government that recreates the past four years of tyranny, squander, and chaos. By welcoming belligerents into the process under the guise of national unity and reconciliation, the current talks legitimize gun-barrel diplomacy over the ballot box.

Libya cannot afford to be forced into a unity government that distorts the social fabric of the country and rewards violence with a Prime Ministership or Presidency. This is not a solution for stability, this is not even a solution to end the conflict. This is a recipe for enshrining warlordism and militia rule as the future of Libya. The Tyranny of the Minority would effectively continue, but now with the international community's blessing.

Libya needs to rectify its democratic transition and urgently needs to fight the terrorism of ISIS and its apologists. To do this, states that were involved in the intervention in 2011 and continue to play an important role in the country should understand that a Unity Government that does not represent the people is not a solution to ending Libya's conflict, and a dialogue among politicians is not a substitute for real peace talks among the warring factions.

The Islamist factions that seized control of Libya by force of arms and are now claiming legitimacy represent less than 10 percent of the Libya electorate. They have never won a free and fair election. They do not represent the Libyan people.

By supporting a delegation that includes members of the Fajr Libya (a faction that the recently-released UN Security Council Panel of Experts Report holds culpable for "the implosion of the political process in Libya"), the UN is contradicting even its own legal assessment. The Libyan people paid dearly to overcome the tyranny of one man. They have been paying even more dearly for the past four years under the Tyranny of the Minority of Islamists. They do not deserve yet another two years of such tyranny, now under the name of a 'National Unity Government' blessed by the UN.

PART TWO

SPEECHES

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Crisis of Theology
in the Modern World

DISTINGUISHED SCHOLARS, ulema, students, guests; beloved former students who were really my teachers during that wonderful year that I spent in Kuala Lumpur in 1997–1998. I would like to start with an expression of thanks and gratitude to Allah for this outpouring of rain, as Sohail Nakhooda has pointed out; coming from dry areas in the world, we appreciate every drop of it. We are very grateful. I would also like to express my gratitude to all of you for coming, and I would like to begin by expressing my gratitude to Professor Dr Muhammad Naquib al-‘Attas, may Allah preserve him, who was the very reason why I came to Malaysia in the first place during the late 1990s. I met him in Istanbul, and he kindly invited me to come, and I consider myself a student of this great scholar, May Allah give him a long life combined with great health.

I would also like to express my gratitude to all my colleagues at ISTAC during those years, and to my students. I am really pleased and happy to see Dr. Magawati, and to be introduced by Dr. Adila, and to see women leadership in the directorship of institutes and universities here in Malaysia, and to see so many Malaysian women here today. I am grateful to these women students and colleagues, and also to my students at ISTAC who have now become great professors and directors. Sidi Dr. Amran Muhammad, Dr. Zainy, Sidi Muhammad Zain, all these wonderful people who have made a tremendous effort to make this event possible. And I am absolutely grateful to all of them.

I am very heartened, aside from having such large photographs, to have so many logos on this introductory slide. These logos represent esteemed institutes and communities. What we believe at Kalam Research and Media is that we must have a community of communi-

ties; a network of networks. We need each other, the task before is so tremendous; no one institution, no one scholar or group of scholars can actually achieve it. We need to network with each other to do what we need to do. I am grateful to these people who have made this network of universities, scholarship, communities, and institutes, possible. Hopefully this will be the first of many gatherings here in Kuala Lumpur where we can share with each other, not just knowledge and scholarship, but also pains, anguish, and difficulties, and worries, and doubts, and challenges that we face every day.

Modern Challenges to Religiosity

If we are going to make any progress in life, we must first recognize that we are in a very difficult situation. A situation that is difficult not only for Muslims but for all religious people in this world. Religion as such is passing through crisis after crisis in this modern world that has become so industrialized, so materialized, and so commercialized that the very value of religiosity, of the sacred, of revelatory knowledge, has been diminishing every year in many areas.

We are also facing another very serious challenge: the wrong approach to religiosity. We are facing the challenge of fascism, violence and extremism that pretends to be religion, and that actually tries to hijack religious discourse, and uses religious narrative, false narratives, pseudo narratives, to actually mutilate not only the religion but also mutilate humanity and to be aggressive against humanity in the very name of religion. So on the one hand we have the crisis that is caused by diminishing respect for religiosity, but we also have the crisis that is caused by the wrong understanding of religiosity and the wrong application of it. With this double difficulty, Islam today faces a huge challenge. That is the bad news. The good news is, Islam has been through so many challenges before.

Centuries ago, we have been facing a challenge, one challenge after the other. Even in the Abbasid period, there was this double dilemma, of people who thought scholarship, humanity and humanism demanded the rejection of religiosity; so there were some atheistic trends even in the Abbasid period. There was also the phenomenon of the Khawarij long ago, and of religious trends that actually tried to destroy religion in the name of religion. This is not a new phenomenon. It is

extremely important to learn from the great examples of the past, scholars and dedicated sages who actually met those challenges in their time. People like Imam al-Ghazali, Imam Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, Imam Juwayni, Imam Ibn Furak; these great scholars and this is just a small list of examples, actually took on the challenge and elaborated a massive tradition of kalam.

On Kalam and its Role in Modernity

Kalam as a discourse, and kalam in Arabic as you know actually means discourse. It means talk, it means words, but it also means efficacy, because *k-l-m* included the meaning of a wound. Efficacy and operativity. Kalam is not just talk, it is actually operative, effective, talk. It is actually operative, effective, transformative talk. What kind of talk? It is talk that is inspired by the very revelation of Allah in the Qur'an and the Sunna. It is a talk that does not try to arrogantly replace God's own talk, Allah's own talk, but actually a talk that tries to rearticulate what the human understands from divine revelation in the Qur'an and the Sunna. So it is a human discourse regarding divine discourse. It is a human discourse that tries to humbly understand and to humbly articulate that understanding. Kalam is not a museum, and with all due respect to museums, and this is a beautiful museum that actually realizes that you need living human beings, doing living discussion in order to be a true museum.

So kalam is not just a store of insights or propositions, it is not just a number of *hawashi* and a number of *mutun*. It is actually a living tradition. And it is a living challenge that must be met in every generation, again and again and again. Today as you are driving to this lecture hall, you probably used your windshield wipers in the car. And when the rain was pouring, you did not say, click, and use the windshield wiper once. You did not do that. Why? Because the rain kept coming and you kept using the wiper. Kalam has to again and again and again without tire, continue to work. You cannot just say that Sidi Muhammad bin Yusuf al-Sanusi did all the work in *Umm al-Barahin* and in his massive works, and they are great works, so now are we just done after *Umm al-Barahin*. Nor can you say that Ghazali did all the work. He passed away in 1111/505, and that is it, we just have him and the work is done. No. That was work done for that time

according to those challenges in that context. But every one of you as Muslims, as intellectuals, as scholars, needs to do this again and again for every generation.

Kalam as the Qur'anic *Kalima Tayyiba*: Rootedness, Openness, and Fruitfulness

We do not do kalam in a *bid'i* way; we do not do it in a way that forgets the past and disrespects the past, or degrades the past. We do it in an authentic way. Kalam is a *kalima tayyiba*; as expressed in the Qur'an al-Karim (14:24–25). And the *kalima tayyiba* in the Qur'an has certain features; these features have to be the very features, distinctive features of kalam. The *kalima tayyiba* has to be "*asluha thabit*," meaning, it has to have roots that are well established. You cannot have kalam without '*asluha thabit*' and the way to get the *asluha thabit* is to be instantiated in the Qur'an and the Sunna and in the respected and massive traditions through an unbroken chain (*sanad muttasil*), with the great ulema of this Umma. This great country, Malaysia, and neighboring countries like Indonesia and Singapore and Brunei and Thailand, have had a tremendous tradition that goes very deep.

Your *sanad* in kalam, in Ash'ari Kalam in particular, goes all the way back to Imam al-Shafi'i. To the great *al-Fiqh al-Akbar* of these Imams. It is not something that is now imported from the Arab world or the Western world. It is something that your forefathers inherited generation after generation and protected generation after generation in extremely difficult circumstances. In the middle of jungles; in the middle of nowhere, as some moderns would say, people were preserving *Umm al-Barahin*. They were preserving the *Hawashi* of Dardir, they were preserving the *Jawhara* of al-Laqqani, and they were preserving kalam.

And yes, maybe sometimes it was not so elaborated, but at least the memory was kept alive, and kept authentic, with *sanad muttasil*. I am really looking forward to meeting the great ulema of this nation, not only today but also tomorrow, inshallah, in our meetings with them. It is very important that modern societies and the universities and government officials, respect these great ulema who under very difficult circumstances preserve the *sanad* of this nation, and the *sanad* of the

Umma at large. So the kalam has to be *asluha thabit*; it has to have a usul that are properly inherited through *sanad*. When we say *sanad* we don't just meant an *ijaza* that is written and given, even though there is barakah even in that, but what we mean is *suhba*, companionship, years of discipleship under scholars who inherited what they know from years of discipleship under their sheikhs. So that when you have *suhba* with these sheikhs, you are having with people who have had *suhba* with those who have had *suhba*, with people who have had *suhba* with the Sahaba, who had the *suhba* of the Prophet, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, who is the *asl* of the *usul*, and is the very root of all goodness. We are so happy to have started with beautiful *qasidas* (odes) invoking the *madad* of Rasulullah, because without Muhammad, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, there can be no *kalam*, no *Islam*, no *ihsan*, no *iman*, no nothing. He is the very secret of who we are, and what we are, and the very value that we offer to humanity. *Allahummah Salli wa Sallim wa Barik 'Alayh.*

This authenticity, this rootedness, this *asluha thabit*, must be combined with another feature from the Qur'an: *wa far'uha fil-sama*. A tree with just roots is not very useful or helpful. It can give no shade, and it can bear no fruit. A tree must grow, and must extend itself into the horizon of '*faru'a fil-sama*.' It must be open-ended. Authenticity without openness of horizons cannot give life. It is like somebody liking a flower or a tree so much he or she takes it and puts it in a closet, and says I want to preserve this tree, so I lock it in the closet. Unfortunately after 3–4 days the tree dies, because there is no sunlight, there is no water, there is no interaction with its environment. Kalam must have '*faruha fil-sama*' and do so not with arrogance, but with confidence. Because you are rooted in the very revelation of Allah in the Qur'an and the Sunna, and in the deeply respectable traditions of the great ulema of this Umma. You must have the confidence to engage everyone.

You engage the Jews, the Christians, the Buddhists, the Hindus, the atheists, the deconstructionists the pragmatists the semioticians, the hermeneuticists, whatever they are: you have no issues. Why? Because you have *asluha thabit*, and *far'uha fil-sama*. You must have the openness to engage, and that is why at KRM when we do interfaith work,

we do not do it as an afterthought. We do not do kalam and then we do interfaith. We actually do kalam through interfaith, through dialogue with philosophy, with science. As Sohail was pointing out, we have huge issues. We have arrogant biologists who sit in universities and write books about the blind watchmaker and think that because of their biology they can reject Allah. We have physicists who think because of their quantum mechanics and their Einsteinian relativity theory that they can have somehow, relativize and dismiss religiosity as such. This challenge we can meet. We have the confidence to meet it. And for many centuries, we met the challenge of the naturalists.

When *Ashab al-Tabai'*, *al-Qa'ilin bil-Tabai'* (The Partisans of Naturalism, or the Naturalists) appeared, the *mashayikh* answered them. Our teachers answered the skeptics. They did not say 'no, skepticism is haram, we don't touch this, and we don't even discuss it.' No! We discuss it! And we answer it. Just as Imam al-Maturidi in *Kitab al-Tawhid* answered *'munkiri al-haqaiq'* those deniers of knowledge, of truth. Imam Ash'ari answered them, *Rahmatullah alahim*. Ibn Furak, Baqillani in the *Insaf* and the *Tamhid*, there are answers. '*Al-Rad 'ala al-Qailin bi-inkar al-Haqaiq*', there are responses to those who deny that there is knowledge. As Imam Nasafi says in his *'Aqida al-Nasafiyya*. '*Haqaiq ul-Ashaya Thabita,*' the realities, the truths of things are established. '*Wal-'Ilmu biha Mutahaqqiq*' and knowing of these truths is actually possible, is actually realized, is actualized

And '*Khilafan lil-Sufastaiya*' in opposition to the Sophists. And who are the Sophists? Imam Taftazani in his *Sharh* of the *'Aqida Nasafiyya* explains who they are. Imam Taftazani, says the sophists are of three kinds: *'indiya*, *inadiyya*, and *la-adriya*. Who are the *'indiya*? They are the relativists. They say 'for me it's like this, and for you it's like that, and for him it's like that, and for her it's like that' so nothing is absolute. Everything is relative. These are *'indiya*. And the *'inadiyya* say, 'there is no knowledge.' Period. And we are confident there is no knowledge. And the *la-adriya* say 'we don't know, maybe there is knowledge, maybe there is no knowledge.'

Our *mashayikh* systematically replied to all three types of sophistry, and let me tell you these Sophists also have *sanad muttasil*. They also have inheritors. These inheritors populate massive universities throughout the world, and there are relativists of today, and there are

people who deny knowledge today, and there are people who are doubtful about it today, and all of them need to be answered. Who is going to answer them? I cannot just pull a book from the 'Abbasid period and say here are the answers. Yes, these are answers from the 'Abbasid period but they have to be rearticulated today, and they have to be rearticulated in a way that takes into account all that has happened all these centuries. You cannot ignore the fact that there has been a Descartes, and there has been an Immanuel Kant, and there has been a David Hume, from deconstructionists to postmodernists. Behind all of these trends there are actually scholars that have to be addressed with respect. You cannot just burn their books, you cannot just make a judgment and send them to jail. You need to actually address them intellectually, cognitively, philosophically, and theologically. And you need to do it with the *hidaya* of the Qur'an and the Sunna, but with the courage and confidence in openness.

So this kalam, which is deeply rooted, authentic, but also open-ended, has another feature. *Tu'ti Ukulaha kulla hin*. It actually is fruitful. This is very important. A tree that has no *ukul* (fruit), has no use. Or it has an *ukul* that is *handhal*, a sour, bitter, and harmful fruit. Even though *handhal* is actually medicinal in some ways. The tree must bear fruit, meaning, Kalam has actually to be useful for people. It has to be fruitful for people. If we have great kalam conference, and great kalam publications, and great kalam symposia, but we are useless to humanity, then there is no point. In Islam, *'ilm* is not something that is done as a hobby. It is not something that is done as a luxury. *'Ilm* is actually life-giving. It has to be *nafi'*. To the point where our Prophet, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, actually said *'A'udhi bika min 'ilmin la yanfa'* (I take refuge with you O Allah from knowledge that has no use).

The phenomenon of intellectuals who are so arrogant towards their society that they become utterly useless for it, is a very disturbing, un-Islamic phenomenon. Authentic kalam has to be fruitful today. For young people who are facing huge challenges ranging from unemployment to an inundation of misinformation, disinformation, and mutilation of knowledge that populates the internet, satellite television; all of these challenges, what do we have to offer as *mutakallimun* to these young people? What can we offer to our societies? How can we help

the harmony in a multi-religious society, like the one in Malaysia or Indonesia or Singapore? How can we live other human beings today? How can we help in the challenge of living with others in neighborliness and in harmony and in peace? How can kalam help use with economic development? What can it say about development? What does development mean? Is there an authentically Muslim development that is not just 'growth'? Because unfortunately much of modern economics thrives on the idea of continuous growth. So people measure success by the percentage of growth.

What does that mean, growth? Normally, in another context like in biology, when there is growth, and there are cells that keep growing and growing, we call this cancer. Why is it that in political economy we call growth a good thing? What does it mean to grow reasonably? To grow in a sustainable way? To grow in a way that respects Allah's creation? To grow in a way that does not devastate the beautiful diversity of the rainforest and create not only haze, but also create one brand, one kind of tree; a rubber tree. Out of the diversity and all the birds and the flowers and the massive trees, we burn them, and then we plant one kind of crop, and we think that is development. In a way theologically we're doing the same thing.

If we look at the tradition of Islam in kalam, you will find amazing diversity. Even within Ash'arism, you will find that within the Ash'ari school there is a huge diversity and pluralism. Even Imam al-Ash'ari himself wrote *Maqalat al-Islamiyyi*n. He did not call them *Maqalat al-Kuffar*, he called them *Islamiyyin*, even though he recognizes that they had innovations, and incorrect doctrines which he spent great effort explaining. But he still recognized that there is diversity, that there is plurality. Instead we chop all of this off, and we usually have one, what we think is the right *'aqida*, usually articulated in three doctrines, taught in one book, explicated by four scholars.

And we forget all the names in the *Tabaqat al-Shafi'iyya*. We forget all the names in the *Tabaqat al-Ahnaf*. We forget all the names in the *Tabaqat al-Malikiyya*. And even the Hanbali School, we forget the diversity within these rich traditions. Now we have a version of *'aqida* that is a reduced version, of a reduced version, of a reduced version of Hanbalism, and we think that that is *'aqida*. Let me tell you, the *'aqida* of *Ahlus Sunna wal-Jama'a* is quite broad. Our *mashayikh* respected

all the *'aqaid* of *Ahlus Sunna wal-Jama'a*, be they Maturidi, Ash'ari, or Hanbali, with all the ramifications. Yes they differed, and they argued, and they had *munadhara* (debate), and I hope we will never refrain from *munadhara* and discussion, but always with respect, because all of them are Salafi in the sense that they are founded on a Salafi, be that Salaf stemming from Abu Hanifa, which goes back to Kufa then Medina, or the school of Shafi'i or the school of Malik or the school of Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, may Allah be pleased with them all. All of them are *Salaf Salih*, all of them go back to the Sahaba and the *tabi'in*. To reduce Salafism to one brand, or one reduced version of it, is quite devastating to the diversity of the tradition.

So, kalam has to follow the pattern of a *kalima tayyiba* in the Qur'an, *asluha thabit wa far'uha fil-sama tu'ti ukala kul hin bi'dhini rabbiha*. Notice the *idhni rubbiha*. *Idhin* is extremely important. Our great *mashayikh* in Libya when they give you the *ijaza* they give you the *idhin*, and this notion of *idhin* is very important. It is not only a permission to teach, but it is actually a blessing. It is a *baraka* of sorts that is transmitted from one generation to another generation. And key to the invocation of this *baraka* is a very basic and simple idea: the idea that you cannot speak of things of Allah except through the permission of Allah. And *'ta'rif Allah billah'*—you know Allah, through Allah.

As al-Hakim al-Tirmidhi said: "I looked upon knowledge and found that knowledge is of two types: *kasbi* and *wahbi* (acquired knowledge and gifted knowledge). But when I focused on *kasbi* knowledge, I found that it was also *wahbi*." All knowledge is *wahbi*. As a matter of fact, all knowledge is from Allah because of his *rahma*. It is *Al-Rahman 'allama al-Qur'an*. It is His *Rahma*, Mighty and Majestic, that actually inundates us with knowledge. Inundates us with disclosure.

With *ta'ruf* as the *mashayikh* would say. *Lo la al-ta'ruf la ma kanat ma'rifa*. You cannot have knowing without Allah aj himself making himself known to us through the gift of the Prophet Muhammad, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him . This self-disclosure of the divine to us is key. You cannot have knowledge without *idhin*. And if you want this *idhin*, how do you get it?

The Epistemology of Kalam: Compassion, Companionship, Humility

First of all the *suhba* (companionship) of the *shuyukh*. But when you get the *suhba* of the *shuyukh*, what is the first thing the sheikh teaches you? He teaches you the hadith *al-musalsal bil-awwaliya*, which reads: *Al-Rahimun yarhamhum al-rahman, irhamu man fil-ardhi yarhamkum man-fil-Sama*. Those who act in compassion, in loving kindness, Allah, Mighty and Majestic, will act upon them with compassion and loving kindness. Have this compassion and loving kindness towards creatures on earth, and Allah will gift it to you from the heavens.' This is extremely important. That means the epistemic key to kalam, and inshallah, over the duration of this event we will be talking about the epistemology of kalam.

Epistema, from which epistemology comes from, in Greek, means knowledge. And it is contrasted in Greek language with *doxa*, mere opinion. But in Islam *'ilm*, *ma'rifa*, is actually quite special. It is *nurun yaqdhifuhullah fil-qalb* (A light that God throws into the heart), as Ghazali says, following Imam Malik. This *nur* (light) is *rahma*, it is a *rahma ilahiyya* (Divine Mercy), *mutajalliya* (manifested) as *rahma Muhammadiya*, because our master Muhammad is *al-Rahmat al-muhdat* (the gifted mercy), and *rahmatun lil'alamin* (a mercy to all worlds). *Al-Rahmat al-Sabiqa wal-rahma al-llahiqa*. *Al-sabiqa* from the day of *Alastu bi-rabbikum*, and *al-lahiqa* from the day of the *bi'tha*. If knowledge is *rahma*, if pieces of knowledge are actually *rahamat*, that means that your *rahma* towards Allah's creatures, be those creatures human beings, or even animals and trees and stones, and the creation of Allah, your activity as a human being on this earth in a *rahmani* way, is the epistemic key to kalam. It is the way to get knowledge. You cannot get knowledge if you have no *rahma*.

I had a sheikh, his name was Muftah bin 'Ali Ziyadi, and it is quite interesting that his name is Muftah which means key. He taught me a lesson a long time ago when I was asking him: how do I distinguish the authentic from the inauthentic in Islam? He told me it is very simple. And I will say it in Libyan dialect because as I heard it from him. *Weyn ma fi hinn, fih Rasulilallah, sallahu alayhi wassalam*, "Whenever you find kindness, you find Rasulullah". And the opposite is true. Wherever you find cruelty, and violence and darkness, there is no Ra-

sulullah. That is not authentic Islam. It is a simple criterion that is very, very important. So when we see what ISIS is doing, this is not Islam. For me, this is Nazism under a new name. It is fascism under a new name. If you analyze their activities and their doctrines, they are the doctrines of Mussolini and Hitler, they are not the doctrines of Islam. The way they execute people, the way they kill people the way they conduct themselves, the way they have this imposition of will to power, is Nietzschean. It is actually fascist. It is not Islamic. And the criterion—there is no *rahma*.

If we say *Bismillah al-Rahman al-Rahim*, when we eat, when we wake up, and when we walk and when we talk and when we enter a building and when we exit, when we do anything, we say *Bismillah al-Rahman al-Rahim*. We don't say *Bismillah al-Qahhar al-Jabbar*, even though they are *asma husna*. *Bismillah al-Rahman al-Rahim*. Look at how central *Rahmah* is for Islam. The Prophet, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, what is his claim to fame? What is so important about him? It is that he is *al-Rahmat al-Muhdat*. That is why he is so important. Why is the Qur'an so important? Is it because it is a holy book? It is because it is *hudah wa rahma* (guidance and mercy). If you focus on every single *'ibada* (act of worship) or *mu'amalah shar'iyya* (contractual agreement) in Islam, you will find that essentially it is a manifestation of *rahma*. That is why, if you really want to be a Muslim scholar that renews kalam, you must also live in a *rahmani* way in your life. You must practice *rahma* with your wife or husband, with your children, in your neighborhood, in your country. If we have no *tarahum*, we can have no kalam.

That is why I believe kalam, unlike many other theologies in the world, is actually inherently ethical. We do not make the distinction that the Enlightenment philosophers made between ontology, epistemology, and axiology. We may make the distinction for explanation's sake, but we do not take that distinction too seriously. The ontology of Baumgarten and Wolff and later on in Kant, means the science of being. Epistemology, the logos of the episteme, is the science of knowledge, or the philosophy of knowledge. Axiology is the science of values, or the philosophy of values. In Islam, they are all combined. Our approach to being, to reality, is at once an appreciation of being and reality, an ethical appreciation and a *rahmani* appreciation of this

being, and because of this, we have knowledge. So ethics, ontology, and epistemology, in Islam are united in the *nur* of *'ilm*.

If you do not believe me, or think this is a new invention, go and read *Ihya 'ulum al-din, kitab al-'ilm*, and that is exactly what you will get. If you do not have time, then go read *Ayyuhal-Walad al-Muhib*. Go and read *Fahm al-Qur'an* of Muhasibi. Go and read *Qut al-Qulub* of Abu Talib al Makki. Read the *Hikam* of Ibn 'Ata Allah Iskandari and you will find this. Read the great discourses of Sidi Abd al-Qadir al-Jaylani and you will find this. Read the writings of Sayyidi Ahmad al-Rifa'i and you will find this. You will find it in every single great scholar. And I dare say, I am an Ash'ari and proud of it, I dare say that if you truly understand Ibn Taymiyya, and if you truly understand Ibn Qayyim, you will also find it there. The notion of separating ontology from epistemology and axiology, and the separation of values from knowledge and being, is not authentic. It is actually united. The way you get it in Islam is not simply through reading books in the library by yourself, but through the *suhba*, as our *mashayikh* have taught us: *al-suhba sabbagha*.

Sibgha is a dye; to make a fabric a blue color you have put the dye on it and it has to stay for a while; otherwise, when you wash it, the dye will go away. To actually be dyed by the very color of your sheikh requires *suhba*. And *suhba* has conditions. It has conditions of *adab*, it has conditions of humility, and it has conditions of respecting the duties of what it means to be a *talib* to a sheikh. These duties define what it means to be a murid to a sheikh; what it means to actually be an *akh*, a brother to your fellow scholars and fellow learners. These adab used to be taught in the great books like *Adab hamalat al-Qur'an* of al-Nawawi, or *Adab hamalat al-'ilm* of Ajuri. These books are extremely important. The *Adab al-tilawa* in the *Ihya*. These teach you that this transmission is a very special gift. It is a gift from Allah, of the actual living of *tarahum*, and the actual respect, *ihtiram*, to have *hurma*.

The Five Principles of Sidi Ahmad Zarruq

As Imam Zarruq says, the whole *tariq* to Allah, the whole path to Allah, and I believe that this is actually the description of what kalam should be.

(1) He says *'uluw al-himma*, you must have a very high aspiration. Your aspiration should not be other than Allah and His Prophet, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. You should aspire to the vision (*nadhra*), *yawm al-qiyama*, to look upon His Countenance. That is why our great Ash'aria said that the best punishment for the Mu'tazila for denying the *nadhra yawm al-qiyama* is that they will be deprived from it. No, we believe in *nadhra ila wajhillah 'azza wa jal, kama yaliqu bi-jalalih yawm al-qiyama* (The Beatific Vision in the Afterlife). Have a high aspiration.

The goal, the objective of kalam, is *Allah 'azza wa jal*. The *nadhra*, which is only possible by having your head hit the very sandals of Rasullallah, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, the very *na'l* of Rasullallah, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. Because Allah has so willed it that you cannot go directly to him without going through the Prophet Muhammad, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. You cannot just say *La ilaha Ilallah*, you must also say *Muhammadun Rasullullah*. His name is in the *adhan*. Why? Because of this very important mediation. So *'uluw al-himma*, as Sidi Zarruq says.

(2) *Wa Shukr al-Ni'ma*. To have gratitude. To have thankfulness. As a matter of fact, Islam is shukr: *Imma shakiran wa imma kafura*. *Kufr* is covering up of gifts. Islam is shukr, celebration of gifts. Be they your *Iman*, your Islam, or your very family, the very sustenance and food and water that you drink. *Shukr* is extremely important.

(3) *Husn al-Khidma*. Doing *khidma*, properly. This notion of *khadim*; if you want to be a *mutakallim* you better prepare yourself to be a servant. You have to be *khaddam* to this *Umma*. You cannot be a master and an arrogant professor thinking that you know it all and you can just teach it to all. It is actually that you have to be a *khadim* to the Qur'an and Sunna. A *khadim* to the ulema. A *khadim* to the *'ilm al-Sharif*.

(4) *Nufudh al-'Azma*. Meaning you must have a courage, a confidence. You cannot just lament in defeat. Muslims are amazingly gifted in that you are rewarded for trying, you are not rewarding for achieving or succeeding. Your *wajib* is ijtihad, and *mujahada*. Your *wajib* is not actually to achieve results, but to actually keep trying and trying and trying. *Nufudh al-'Azma*. To have a willingness to do things, but

not a will that is arrogant, not a will to power. But a will that invokes *La Hawla wala quwwata illa billah*. There is no capacity, no power, except through Allah. Why? Because we have an inherent *'ajz* in us. We are incapacitated by nature. We are faulty by nature. We can only get any power in this life through invoking Allah's own power. That is why the Ash'ari doctrine of *kasb* does not mean sleeping and doing nothing, but actually invoking Allah's very intention.

(5)Then last principle that Zarrug speaks about is *hifdh al-hurma*: preserving all that is sacred. Preserving all that is *muharram*, and that has *hurumat*. And if you think the Ka'ba is *Haram Sharif*, and we say *Khadim al-Haramayn*. And Medina is *Haram Sharif*, and they are. And they are *haram mu'addham*. Look at the haram that we are destroying every day. In my own country Libya and other countries, the human being is a *haram*.

The destruction of Ka'ba is actually lighter than the destruction of an innocent human life. We forget this. Life is actually made sacred by Allah, Mighty and Majestic, that it has a *hurma*, that the mal of another, and it need not be a Muslim, the mal or the property of a non-Muslim also, is a harem. It has a *hurma*. The *'irdh*, the reputation of people is a *haram*. You know on facebook people now, stab each other and they do *ghiba* and *namima*, and they lie and they think that it is alright because it is digital; it is not okay. It is actually destructive, and it destroys societies, because the reputation of human beings has *hurma*.

Purpose and Teleology: Felicity of Both Worlds

So these important *maqasid* that our great scholars like Shatibi and Sheikh Ibn Ashur have talked about, are extremely important. They have to do with the *hifdh al-hurma* that Zarruq talks about. Authentic kalam; deeply rooted; open ended; fruitful and useful for humanity. This humanity that suffers because it has a dead-end, because people keep telling this humanity that there is no hereafter. They keep telling them that there is no not-yet. You must live in a Darwinian way. The strong must eat the weak. You must have competition and competitiveness. You must just try to get what you can get and be as happy as you can be in this life, because there is no recognition of the *not-yet*. The term used by Ernst Bloch, he speaks of a not-yet consciousness,

which is extremely important. More important than a sub-conscious. This not-yet consciousness is the reason Allah Most High speaks of "*Yu'minu billah wal-yawm al-Akhir*."

Hardly do you find the Qur'an speaking of Iman without speaking of *Yawm al-Akhir* (The Last Day). Our horizon of expectation does not limit itself to this *dunya* (the here-and-now). We have a hereafter that we look forward to. And because this not-yet is open-ended for us, because of *akhira*, because of *Janna* and *nar*, because we believe in this hereafter, our cost-benefit analysis is different. It is not the cost-benefit analysis of *dunyawi* political economy. Our political economy includes an *ukhrawi* economy. Happiness *fil-darayn*, not just here. But also in the hereafter. Because we put that element in, our formula for calculating cost-benefit is very different. Because *na'im*, that is infinite, salvation that is infinite, changes the whole formula. It is like having infinity in mathematics. Take a very large number, 7 billion, 7 trillion, and divide it by infinity, what is the result in mathematics? Zero. That is how it works in math. Take infinity and divide it by any number, the biggest number you can think of. What is the result? Infinity.

When *akhira* is put into the formula, the calculation changes. Humanity needs to be told about this *akhira* . It needs to be told about this Allah Most High. It needs to be helped in resisting atheism and sacrilege and the destruction of religiosity and the sense of the sacred. This is an amanah that Muslims have. You do not do it by chopping people's heads, or crucifying them. You do it through practicing the very essence of Islam, which is *rahma*. If you cannot live *rahma*, you cannot really do *da'wa*. And kalam is a form of *rahma*, and ultimately a form of *da'wa* of peace and it actually is the very peace that is mentioned in the *salam* of Islam, which is extremely important. All of *'ilm al-kalam* can be summarized in the formula: *assalamu 'alaykum, wa rahmatullahi, wa baraktuhu*. Peace, compassion, and blessings be upon you. Thank you very much for your patience, and forgive me for taking too long to give this talk.

Thank you.

Post-Talk Responses

(1) Most of the time, when we find arrogance in naturalistic science against religion, it is due to limited knowledge of the history of science and the philosophy of science. If someone look sat the history of science, and we'll just look at a small example because we have limited time, there as a time when Kant believed that physics was finished; with Newton, physics was completed, with his Laws and his *Principia*, and that is how real knowledge is. So when he asked how knowledge is possible in metaphysics, he was trying to emulate Newton. Little did he know that after some years, Einstein came and all of a sudden we know that Newtonian mechanics only applies in domains under the speed of light that once you reach the speed of light Newtonian mechanics no longer makes sense. That it's actually limited, it's not absolute.

The knowledge that Newton discovered is not absolute knowledge. Then little did Einstein know that when quantum mechanics emerged, and he even had difficulties in his own lifetime, that in sub-atomic particle level, in the level of neutrinos, that Einsteinian physics does not quite work the way Einstein says so. What we discover from the history of science that it is not revelation that is relative, it is actually science that is relative. So whenever people try to prove the veracity of revelation by appealing to the latest scientific theory I worry. It is like a man being worried about the port of a city, and thinking that the port may be unstable so maybe I should tie it to a boat. And we'll say this man is crazy, when we're doing the same thing when we try to make the Qur'an's veracity depend on the latest discovery in science is like trying to tie revelation to a floating boat.

So knowledge of the history of science is very important because it makes people more humble about science. Also philosophy of science. As you know from the school of Karl Popper and his students like Imre Lakatos and Paul Feyerabend and Larry Laudan have all basically said that so-called scientific facts are quite theory-laden, and that things like dark matter are hypotheses that no one can ever observe by definition.

So philosophy of science and history of science actually makes scientists and philosophers more humble, and why do they have to

be more humble? Because ultimately the question of the how depends on this humbleness.

You cannot appreciate revelation, you cannot appreciate the truth of religiosity and the sacred if you're not humble. The problem is that many human beings today define humanism and the respect for humanity with arrogance. Humanity becomes elevated through humbleness to Allah. Humbleness before the revelation of Allah. The more humble you are, the more human you are, the more elevated your humanity.

That is why our respect for the Prophet, may the peace and blessings of God be upon him, is not a deification of the Prophet, may the peace and blessings of God be upon him—it is actually an emulation and a following, *ittiba'*, of someone who is a *'abd mahdh*, he is a pure *'abd* to Allah Most High. But because he is so pure in his *'ubudiyya*, we have such a manifestation in his teachings of what it means to worship Allah. So thank you professor, what you call naturalistic theology, properly done, is actually Ash'ari theology. I am so grateful my teacher, Sheikh Said Foudeh is editing the works of Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, in his *Tabi'iyat* he does exactly that. He does the *Tabi'iyat* to get to the *ilahiyyat*. And people say hes just following Aristotelian physics' no he is not. He is actually transforming Aristotelian physics, so instead of mere things you begin to see *ayat*. Because the difference between a believer and a non-believer is the difference between someone who sees ayat and someone who sees a mere thing.

(2) The contrast between *Ahlus Sunna wal-Jama'a* and Salafism is a false dichotomy. All of *Ahlus Sunna wal-Jama'a* are Salafis, and all true Salafis are *Ahlus Sunna wal-Jama'a*. True salafis are Hanbali School. They are hanabalis and for all of our history no one denies that they are *Ahlus Sunna wal-Jama'a*. And we know of a huge debate going back to the abbasid period between the Hanbalis and Ash'aris and sometimes it even got violent in Baghdad as Ibn 'Askair wrote in his *Tabyin al-Kadhib al-Muftari*, actually chronicles this battle. This is not new.

The key to making harmony is three things: (1) to know that it is your duty as a Muslim as much as possible to respect *Ahl al-Qibla* and to live in peace with *ahl al-Qibla* and try your hardest to do so. (2) In

trying to do this, you must never compromise the truth as you have learned it from your *shuyukh* who learned it from their *shuyukh* all the way back. Meaning, I am an Ash'ari, and I try to live in harmony with Salafis in my own country, but I don't do it at the cost of Ash'arism. I don't try to dilute the ash'ari doctrine or try to put it under the carpet. I celebrate it, I talk about, and I articulate it, and I am very proud of it. But this pride in my own *shuyukh*'s school does not mean disrespect for the other. It does not mean I don't appreciate the Hanbali School.

What I find disturbing about modern versions, some modern versions of the Hanbali School is that they narrow hanbalism too much. There was a first narrowing of hanbalism that occurred at the happens of Sheikh Ibn Taymiyya, and a second nar- rowing at the hands of Muhammad ibn Abdul-Wahhab, and then we get another narrowing with some of our contemporaries. I find it difficult to have arguments with people who only recognize five scholars in the history of Islam. I believe the Hanbali School is amazingly rich. I respectfully read all of Ibn Taymiyya's printed works as best as I could, and I did research on his *Radd ala al-Mantiqiyyin*, and *Naqd al-Mantiq*, and looked at his *jama' bayn al-sahih al-manqul wa sarih al ma'qul*. Tremendous respect for the school.

But what I cannot respect is some Salafi telling me that Ash'aris are not *Ahlus Sunna wal-jama'a*, or that Maturidis are ahl *bid'a*. That I find very frustrating. I am more than happy to accept that the salafi school is a manifestation of the Hanbali school, but not versions of it that dismiss the very tradition of the country that I am from.

Our country historically has been Maliki, Ash'ari, and Junaydi-Baghdadi in its *Tasawwuf*, as Ibn 'Ashir says *fi 'aqd al-Ash'ari wa fiqhi malik, wa fi tariqat al-junayd as-salik*. In Malaysia it was Ash'ari-Shafi'i usually Ba'Alawi or Hadrami *tasawwuf*, as in Turkey it was Maturidi Hanafi, and usually, Naqshbandi or Chisti as in India. So why is it always three, it's very simply, because it is Iman, Islam, and Ihsan. As Zarruq says, you need a science for doctrine or kalam or *fiqh al-akbar*, and you need a science for Islam or *fiqh*, and you need a science for *tasawwuf* or *'ilm al-tazkiya* if you don't like the word. So what I am trying to say is we should try to celebrate our school without disrespect to the others, so we must speak the truth, we must

respect Muslims, and we must recognize that firqa itself, this divisiveness, is a great problem that we should avoid.

(3) A third thing that we must try to recognize that every school has certain limitations that we should try to work with. And to recognize that for example in the writings of Ahmad Zarruq there was a huge criticism of some of the Sufi practices, even though he was one great Imam, he is a Qutb, but he still had some criticism. Criticism does not mean you reject, it does not mean disrespect; as a matter of fact, if you respect, there must be a little bit of *qila wa qal* as Imam Fakhr al-Razi says. You have to have discussion. But to actually try to eradicate the beautiful rainforest of Islam, with all its colors and birds and flowers and creatures, and to create one rubber tree plantation is not good. Islam can accommodate all that diversity. And if you cannot accommodate diversity amongst muslims, how will you do with the non-muslims. What will you do with the Buddhists and the hindus and the non-believers who do not even have a religion.

So always look for the common denominator. If someone is an atheist, try to look for a general humanism that you can live with in neighborliness, so you don't have to have a war with them. If it is a Christian, try to recognize what we have in common, our belief in the prophets and Sayyidna 'Isa and Sayyida Maryam. If you're dealing with a Jew try to understand that you try to, as best to live in peace with others, because unless you do that it is impossible to live in a complex society like you do. I hope to Allah Most High that we do not end up with a dichotomized Malaysia even amongst the muslims, but I think we all have to be humble but simultaneously say what we believe without any disrespect to others.

As for the political economy, Islamic economics, and the Islamization of knowledge. I am a big believer in islamization from the inside. I don't believe in paint jobs. There is some misunderstanding on islamization where people try to take knowledge and paint it islamically. So they take the *ribawi muamalat* of banks and take the *fiqh* to try to tailor what they want. I believe that islamic economoics and all Islamic knowledge must begin with a deep appreciation for the values that we mentioned either, and it is through the maqasid that we come to the iqtisad, and not through simple contractual tailoring of what we want

as our desires drive us. The whole notion of an internal or an internalized Islamization through the transformation of the heart, through the humble appreciation of the Qur'an and the Sunna through the humiliation that we inherit from our teachers generation after generation is a topic that will take many hours.

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Extremism, Trauma, and Therapy

THE PAST YEAR WE'VE WITNESSED many traumatic events enshroud the globe in fear and terror. Terror that was explicitly intended for public spaces: There was the Brussels bombing at the airport and surrounding metro stations, the Ankara bombing targeting public busses, the suicide bombing in Lahore's biggest public park on Easter sunday, a suicide bomber at a soccer game in Iraq. Presenting itself as an almost every day occurrence we monitor the images of these events with a sense of awe mainly by the signs of trauma we observe on the faces of victims, witnesses, families and local politicians.

There is a need to explain the relevance of understanding the correlation between extremism, trauma and therapy in our day and age, and stressing the importance of properly understanding these concepts and their triadic relationship.

Trauma and therapy are concepts that concern the disciplines of psychology and psychiatry. In neither of these have I been trained and yet, I see a crucial importance introducing and exploring these concepts in the debate surrounding extremism and ISIS. It's true that only in its proper discipline a concept like trauma will be studied in its totality. However there is reason to invoke a term, such as trauma, within a philosophical or theological framework. Theologians and philosophers often engage a foreign concept as to invoke certain analogies and metaphors that would ultimately create a different outlook, and a refreshing perspective on established cognitive frameworks. One could say that I'm attempting to gather new tools for my conceptuel toolbox. As such these tools I'm looking to find require a certain sense of practicality. They need to be useful tools that could support us in

understanding and deciphering the conceptual mechanism behind the problem we've encountered and hopefully could ultimately help us in understanding and developing structured methods of repairing the problem, heal and restore the situation to its original state.

As such, in my quest for the right set of conceptual tools, my approach will be experimental and exploratory as to find possible solutions amidst all possibilities. Rather than claiming something definitive this essay intends to explore a set of ideas and conceptual tools that can be of use to approach our problem. Since the primary observation and common factor of all these attacks and horrific events circulate around the concept of trauma we'll start with that.

In Freudian psychoanalysis, the primacy of the pleasure principle in the human psyche became contested by the psychological ravages left by the first World War. Many soldiers suffered from shell shock—which could be defined as a psychological disturbance caused by prolonged exposure to active warfare, especially being under bombardment.

It was only then that Freud began to speak about trauma in more definitive terms realising that there might be more to the human psyche than the pleasure principle. The discourse of trauma, as emerging in the aftermath of the first World War, is indebted to Freud yet with the succession of wars the discourse developed itself alongside the aftermath of every battlefield reaching its apotheosis in the aftermath of the Vietnam War (1954–1975). This was mainly due to the length of this war, the unprecedented atrocities and the extreme psychological suffering that was witnessed on a large scale by returning veterans.

Much of our current discourse on trauma needs to be understood from within that framework since these historical events form the genesis of trauma as a concept. Though in common language and common folk psychology it often refers to any kind of stress inducing situation, such definition remains too diluted and too general.

Attempts to narrow down the definition of trauma to specific events such as wars, natural disasters and other catastrophes has sparked much controversy in the literature trying to define the concept. Though I think it's safe to say that events like wars, prolonged tyranny and tyrannical practices, such as torture, systematic rape, mass executions and bombardments of civilians can be considered as trauma inducing

phenomena scarring the psychological, emotional and cultural tissue of its victims.

What is the importance of trauma for understanding the emergence and nature of ISIS? The importance of trauma in this context is three-fold: First of all, there is the *primal trauma*. I believe that the emergency of ISIS in the Middle-East is due to the traumatic experiences of Iraq invasion by the United-Nations led coalition, the systematic post Iraq War, the ethnic cleansing and sectarian cleansing that happened in Iraq, the traumatic experiences of the tyranny of Saddam Hussein, and the systematic tyranny of Hafez al-Assad and the devastating aftermath that became apparent after these events. All of these traumas which were catastrophic in terms of destructiveness, and which were quite devastating for these countries population contributed greatly to the emergence and rise of ISIS and had a direct impact on its formation.

The second dimension of trauma I'd call the utilisation of trauma. It's clear from the ISIS literature that the dwelling upon the past of a particular traumatic event functions almost as a pathological fixation in their discourse, since it's a crucial part of their entire approach for recruitment. Even in their videos—which often start with a recount and highlight of a certain trauma. As such we understand that it's not only the case that a certain trauma lies at the origins of ISIS but simultaneously ISIS utilises certain traumatic experiences, and the induced trauma, as part of their reverse psychology 'therapy'. Whereas psychological therapy would standardly be utilised to overcome the trauma their reversed approach insists on a fixation on the trauma as to ensure reliving it daily.

It's as if they almost want the traumatised population to remain traumatised and psychologically scarred. It's rather interesting that they actually deliberately keep repeating and recalling the trauma, and not just repeating the experience in a way that would transform it into something mundane, but actually developing discourses that fills people with more and more hatred and more and more fear and more and more anguish and more and more anger for traumas already experienced. Aside from the primal trauma, and the utilisation of trauma, one can discern a third dimension of trauma which I'd call a weaponized trauma. Which is not only dwelling upon the trauma of the

past but actually using trauma as a weapon. And here we're treading into the vocabulary of terror and terrorism. Where the psychological disturbance—trauma—is now explicitly sought after and situations incubated in such matter as to reach trauma. From this third dimension of trauma we can conclude that trauma can be used as a weapon in itself when inflicted by terror.

Though what's happening with ISIS I consider to actually be beyond terrorism. Their goal is the deliberate traumatisation of entire populations. And the way they do this is actually by, as they put it one of their books, *managing viciousness* or managing extreme violence in such way that the sense of danger is omnipresent You could be on an airport checking in, or you could be playing football, or you can be having a picnic in a park, or you could be doing anything that we normally associate with the calm routine of life, and all of a sudden, there is this massive trauma; catastrophic in its scale. It seems that this state of helplessness is something that they ardently attempt to achieve. To let any sense of control dissipate into a sense of powerlessness. .

In hindsight, a key concept to understand the mechanisms behind ISIS lies in the threefold nature of trauma. Not only does a certain series of traumatic experiences lie at the feet of their emergence but they've managed to develop and utilise trauma as a weapon of warfare on psychological and physical level. They utilize this trauma and then they weaponize the trauma so that they can ultimately inflict it upon others. The three dimensions of the concept of trauma are related because much of the weaponizing of trauma actually has to do with the self-righteous revenge-taking that is based on grievances that emerge from the primal—the first type—trauma.

Based on our exploration of the different dimensions of trauma we discern a few other pivotal notions being at play such as the notion of grievances, the notion of injustice, the notion of being degraded and losing dignity and wanting to restore that dignity, and wanting to take revenge for the grievances or to restore so-called justice. All these notions are depended upon a certain fixation and dwelling upon a certain trauma—which by its very nature will emphasize those feelings—consequently leading to the self-righteous kind of justification in their own minds for the infliction of the trauma on others. So that it is because *they* were traumatized and because *they* are aware of the trauma

that *they* now inflict trauma on others purely based on the notion of revenge. And it doesn't occur to them that the people that are killing are not those who traumatized them initially. In the first place, it doesn't matter for them if these people were directly related to their own trauma. It seems that the grievances, bound to a particular trauma, have detached themselves from that experience and allowed a kind of universalising of grievances.

Just because a particular person had a trauma inflicted upon them by a particular agent doesn't imply the necessity or need to put others in a similar situation, regardless of their involvement in inducing the experiences trauma. In this crooked logic the whole notion of innocence is completely disregarded. Following this logic there is no such thing as the safeguard of innocence nor such thing as an innocent victim. Everyone is, somehow, integrated into the discourse of those who incubated the aggressor's initial trauma and are thereby not an innocent victim but a justified victim by something minimal als their indirect responsibility for the experienced trauma.

Now, there are a few other points that I would like to add to this. We should not consider the emergency of ISIS as a new phenomenon. It's my conviction that such approach—upholding it as an unique and new phenomenon in history that is absolutely and solely related to Islam—would deprive us of reflections and examinations of its nature with other historical events. I'm particularly thinking of the rise of fascism that occurred in Europe at the beginning of the 20th century and the global trauma which the first World War generated.

Drawing a parallel between the emergence of ISIS and the emergence of fasciscm in Interbellum Europe out of the ashes of the first World War are crucial. I truly believe that rather than being a new phenomenon, ISIS is but a new form of fascism. It's an Islamized fascism, but a fascism nevertheless, such as dominated 20th century Europe through the writings of Mussolini, Hitler and Franco.

It has been often pointed out that the trauma which World War I spread across Europe– especially the humiliating and economically destructive indemnities that were forced upon the defeated countries of World War I—left the grievances of these populations unaddressed which were then further exploited in the treaty of Versailles, inevitably leading to a lamentation of these populations regarding the war and

its aftermath. Such becomes clear in the autobiography of Mussolini, Hitler's *Mein Kampf* and the writings of ideologues like Giovanni Gentile, who figured as the ideologue of fascism in Italy pur sang. All share the festering feelings of grievances which grow into frustration and hatred towards others. Earlier we have coined this as the primal effect of trauma and the utilisation of trauma. The third dimension, the weaponizing of trauma and the infliction of trauma upon others is most graphically illustrated in, what is called the aberration of European history, the manifestation of the holocaust.

This parallelism of ISIS with the historical emergence of fascism in interbellum Europe seems to be most crucial for the understanding of ISIS itself. It can help us deconstruct the mechanisms behind ISIS from another perspective and allow alternative conceptuel resources to be tapped into. Normally, when we think of ISIS and we want to study the mechanisms behind ISIS, we turn to books on fundamentalism, Islamic extremism, al-Qaeda, or books on the psychology of terrorism and so on. But very little work has been done on utilizing the massive intellectuel reflection that occurred after World War II, especially, on the phenomenon of the emergence and nature of fascism and totalitarianism.

Amongst those reflections we find the groundbreaking works of the political philosophers Hannah Arendt, Erich Fromm and Karl Jaspers. These authors attempted to contemplate on the atrocious events and their causes which led them to meticulously analyse of the emergence and nature of fascism in the first place. And these theories of the analyzing of the rise of fascism are, I believe, of direct relevance for understanding the rise of ISIS.

An illustrative example can be found in the writings and life of the psychologist Viktor Frankl, who not survived the Holocaust but based on his suffering and experiences went on to develop what he called «Logotherapy» in psychotherapy. Frankl concluded that human beings are always in search of meaning or for meaning and even ultimate meaning and that when people's meanings break down—when *meaning structures* are destroyed—they suffer immensely. And part of the reason people are traumatized is because they have this loss of meaning and thereby have to find, somehow, a new meaning in life and a reason to live for. Frank discerned that the psychological internalisation of a

reason to live for is crucial for the survival and overcoming of any traumatic experience.

Now, he developed the logotherapy because he wanted to reflect upon his experience in the concentration camps and process what happened to him in the hope to develop a method that could aid others in processing these traumatic events. I believe his writings are actually quite important, even for understanding the phenomenon of the rise of ISIS and how to deal with the traumas induced by them and suffered by them since it points us to a possibly solution for the trauma: therapy.

This brings us to the second part of this essay. How do you deal with trauma? Frankl's notion of logotherapy seems an option, since it aims at developing a discourse that gives meaning to life and simultaneously articulating a discourse that actually makes sense of life. The development of such discourses is extremely important as part of trying to overcome ISIS discourse of bereaving life of meaning.

So I do believe that today, the air raids on ISIS are very important and I think almost inevitable alongside the security policies and the policing to counter ISIS in their strategies. Yet, this is only one side of countering ISIS. I believe that there is an immense amount of work to be done at the cultural level, the sociological level, the psychological level, and at inoculating populations against radicalization. As in the case of physical inoculation, for example polio, it is almost impossible to treat polio after the fact. But it is very easy to prevent it if you actually inoculate children with just a few droplets during childhood. This minimal vaccination would already allow a complete prevention of the virus penetrating the body's immune system. Our approach towards ISIS should follow that pattern. we need to develop logo therapies from within the understanding that we define them not as just counternarratives, but as authentic, alternative, healthy and compassionate narratives. If these narratives would be instilled in children then it would prevent them from being subjugated by the doctrinal narratives that ISIS and others propagate.

Despite being written within a completely different historical context the writings of Frankl seem to provide us with a better understanding of our contemporary situation. The same goes for the work of Hannah Arendt, especially in her writings on the notion of what it

means to be human. The fact that human beings need to initiate action, and she defines it as a praxis that actually brings on to life new things, giving hope to young people to, so that they can initiate new things. This resonates with the notion of incubation and incubators, which doesn't necessarily refer to business only, where cultural ideals and values can go through a process of incubation.

Aside from Arendt's detailed study of the notion what it means to be human, Arendt's work is of uttermost relevance for another concept. In her diagnosis of the historical events of European fascism she introduces the notion of *professional revolutionaries*. These are people who tend to hijack revolutions. She has this beautiful book *on revolution* that I read to make sense of what happened during the Libyan Revolution because I happen to have participated in it early on. In this book she identifies a certain group of individuals who happen to be more organized and more effective and have a clearer command of control structure than the the rest of the population. It's this group of individuals who hijack popular uprisings because popular uprisings tend to be chaotic and power diffused. These people in a sense loot the revolution and put themselves in the nodes of the structures that arise—or are supposed to arise—as result of the revolution. Such can be considered the revolution in Libya (2011). Due to its spontaneous character and its immense popularity amongst the Libyan population the uprising tended to be quite chaotic. It was only a matter of logistics for certain particular ideological groups, with Marxist-Leninist and even facist characteristics, who were already quite well-organized with decades of experience and party organization and an avant-garde organization to hijack the revolution. These groups were able - amidst the general chaos- to organise themselves very early and thereby manage to take control of governmental and public structures such as the Central Bank, the Defense Ministry, the Interior Ministry, and the Intelligence Services. And by doing that, these *professional revolutionaries* actually managed to steal the *Arab Spring in Libya from the people*. Arendt's notion of *professional revolutionaries* provides us with an interesting perspective for the analysis of the failure of the Arab Spring and the emergence of ISIS. These professional revolutionaries can be considered as the cause for the failure of the revolutions as it was intended by the population.

So the phenomenon of the failure of the *Arab Spring* is actually very interesting to analyze from within the framework that Arendt provides. Why are these professional revolutionaries quite instructive to understand the failure of the Arab Spring? It's because they oftentimes are also the preparatory factor for the introduction of ISIS into the area. It is not the case that they are directly preparing for the introduction of ISIS into the field, but by their approach they kind of provide the conditions and possibilities for the rise and emergence of ISIS in their respective area. It is because such ideologues who hijacked the revolution prevent the nation state from rising. They are directly responsible for the failure of the nation state. They made Libya into a failed nation state by hijacking the revolution. And once you have a failed state, you are left behind with a dead entity, a dead organism, basically, that is not able to defend itself. It becomes prey to scavengers.

In Libya, the political and economical structures were basically scavenged by ideologues who, after hijacking the revolution, are building metanational structures, international organizations and networks that have nothing to do with the *Nation State*. And this cannibalization of the local resources at the service of something metalocal or metanational is, I think, a phenomenon that's very important. It is the ideological groups in the Middle East that actually ended up providing very good scavenging ground for ISIS.

ISIS basically lives parasitically. It lives parasitically on States that have failed. It cannot survive in a strong State that actually has proper command and control, with monitoring infrastructures and can actually ward off its enemies. It actually loves to thrive on the dead bodies of former countries or former states. And that's why it's extremely important to study what happened in the Middle East. In a certain sense these, transnational, ideological groups advertently or inadvertently, consciously or subconsciously prepared the ground for ISIS by sabotaging the rise of a modern State that is equitable to all its citizens, that has neighborliness and decency and civility and rule of law. Once these ideologues destroy the Nation State, ISIS lurking from above comes down as a vulture scavenging on the remains of the destroyed Nation State.

Another very important aspect of the literature that emerged in the

aftermath of the second World War is the literature on the notion of *escape from freedom*. This is phenomenon of people being frightened of having rights after decades of having no rights. Tyranny, as we've witnessed may times, is quite an oppressive process that shakes and destroys the core of people. So whenever a tyrannized people have an uprising to get away from tyranny to demand their freedom, they usually remain only in a sense of euphoria for a few week. Whenever Gaddafi was overthrown by an uprising of the libyan people the sense of victory and euphoria only lasted a few week. Already during those weeks, tucked within that euphoria, lingered a fear of what to do with this freedom that was finally achieved. And it is through the writings of people like Erich Fromm, for example, that can understand this as being a mechanism of escaping the immense possibilities and responsibilities that come along with freedom.

One of those mechanism for escaping the newly acquired freedom is to look for another father figure.To look for another Gaddafi, to create another General that would take care of us. Another phenomenon is to actually look for traditional authoritarian figures who are not necessarily the Head of the State but some sort of a substructure like a Mufti, or a particular figure of ideological prominence, sometimes Muftis or religiously leaders in other countries. Sometimes this person may even reside and be from a completely different country sitting many hundreds of miles away.

So what I'm trying to basically say is that rather than just looking at ISIS as a purely political or military or security issue, let us be mindful of the kind of why there are cultural and societal reasons for the rise of such groups as ISIS. And let us also understand how they actually utilize trauma as part of their strategy and let us try to, by just having that awareness, kind of invoke categories and conceptual tools that necessarily associate with this problem at first.

So if today, we want to deal with this issue of ISIS, how do we do it? First of all, you do have to fight them, and there is no way around that unfortunately. However, you must also look very closely into ideological groups that tend to facilitate them and facilitate their emergence. You also need to look at theologies, outlooks and peace oppositions that actually work as enablers for the rise of ISIS. You also have to look at the grievances and the claims of grievances and

see how these grievances can be mitigated. Sometimes people, all they need, is just the acknowledgment of grievances. As happened in South Africa, we have seen the great therapeutic value of just telling the truth and the establishment of reconciliation commissions where people just expressed their grievance. The immense therapeutic value of being heard and feeling understood cannot be disregarded as a light issue.

One must be honest and ask the question if grievances can be addressed or mitigated. Can the broken be mended (*Jabr al-Dharrar*)? Can we heal damage done? Can the sectarian atrocities that came immediately after the Iraq war be mitigated in anyway? Can there be healing of these things? Because if you don't heal these things, if you don't address them, you're basically not addressing the very raw material from which ISIS and its likes actually mold hatred. They actually, not only invoke fear and anger, and feelings of helplessness and brokenness, but they actually utilize these as raw materials for making weapons which they use against others.

I do think that we need an interdisciplinary approach, whereby, we work with, not only the theologians and the religious discourse experts, but also with the psychologist and the psychotherapist and the experts on fascism and history of fascism, the rise of these historical and political phenomena. We need to have, I think, a broader way of dealing with this because, unless we do so, unfortunately, these occurrences of trauma everyday will just continue. And one of the peculiar things about ISIS and the way they use trauma is their continuous intensification and desire to induce trauma. In the early videos of ISIS it was just the decapitation of the prisoner, and then they got into burning people alive and then they found other ways of demonstrating their cruelness. It's almost like the author of a series of horror novels who has to outdo himself in cruelty with every new book.

So they become more and more horrific. What reason lies behind such approach? It's a fact that trauma becomes *less* by a kind of familiarization with the trauma. So they actually try to intensify the trauma each time to avoid this familiarization to happen. But this trajectory of ever intensifying trauma means that the crimes that we are going to see next year are going to be more horrifying than what we're seeing today. Just as what we're seeing today actually is much more horrible than what we saw last year. And this is quite a scary

thought, because if this trajectory is not broken, it means that, basically, you'll have an almost apocalyptic kind of World War III scenario.

This World War II will be completely different from World War II. It is already not the same as World War II where they were enemy armies distributed over land, over sea and air, but still with a certain specified location. Rather than a known and specified battlefield World War III will be a war without specified locations. It will be one that is less a Von Clausewitz strategy and more a Sun Tzu strategy. And it will be a strategy of trying to to inflict, what I would call, omnipresent trauma. Meaning, that in the same week, they will hit you in a dozen different locations across the world, in a dozen different public spaces, to the point where human life, as we know it, the normal life of waking up in the morning and going to work and watching the football game and going to park will become impossible out of sheer fear of being at one of these random locations. If we don't interrupt the trajectory of ISIS and similar groups, people will be living in total agitation and traumatization all the time. I don't think anyone in any discipline is wise enough or good enough or thorough enough to be able to address this phenomenon completely. We need to do this collectively. We need to do it through networking, by connecting with other people throughout the world, and we need to, just as they are trying to inflict omnipresent trauma, develop omnipresent compassion, and peace, and create a blessed neighborliness aiming to live together in a way that respects locality and that networks localities in order to counter these extremisms.

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On Tribal Reconciliation

My little contribution to this discussion I hope will be articulated in five principles, because I seek principles and best practices of engagement. I am resurrecting and rehabilitating five principles that come from about 500 years ago. They arrive to us from a Sufi sage, scholar and a great jurist named Ahmed Zarruq. In early 2012, Zarruq was taken out of his grave by some of the same pseudo-Salafis who attacked the US Consulate in Benghazi and the same men who have stolen the Libyan revolution from its people.

Zarruq defined five principles of a spiritual life, a life of meaningful engagement, and on meaningful human interaction. They are simple but very important principles and best practices for our time.

The first principle, which he called in Arabic, *uluw al-himma*, means having exalted, transcendent, or elevated aims or visions. In other words, not being content with a lowly vision or a mundane, animal-like vision; here we search for something transcendent and elevated. Zarruq states in many of his works that the most important principle to consider is compassion, what is called in Arabic *al-rahma*. He saw Islam as the religion of compassion and the prophet of Islam as the Prophet of Compassion. Indeed, compassion was to be held up against all things; national interests, our own vested interests or human ambitions. In fact, he sought to stress that we should strive to live in mutual compassion with each other.

The second principle he called *hifdh al-hurma*, meaning the preservation or the upholding of sacredness. In this, Zarruq speaks on the importance of holding sacred that which God holds sacred, as the philosopher Immanuel Kant would agree. Persons are not mere things, persons are worthy of physical respect and he held up this principle.

All human beings, women and men, should be respected, along with the most significant of human beings; people who we could call paradigmatic persons, like Prophet Muhammad, may the peace and blessings of God be upon him, or Jesus of Nazareth, peace be upon him. These persons are worthy of respect and when you insult them or defame them, you actually insult the very essence of the people who hold them in great respect. This is why free speech should never be used to attack persons or persons who are significant for others. Women, of course, are persons. I say this because when pseudo-Salafis were attacking a major shrine in Tripoli neighbourhood of Sha'ar, the only two persons who were brave enough to defend the shrine, without any weapons of course, was a young woman of 18 and an elderly woman of 75. They kept coming to the shrine every day to protest and despite the fact that both of them were physically assaulted by these attackers. Unfortunately, and under the watchful eyes of the security apparatus that was supposed to be protecting, not only were the shrines destroyed but also the persons that stood by to protect the space. Some of the security institutions in Libya, in the New Libya, have been infiltrated by some of the crazy people that these security institutions are supposed to be fighting against. I say this with absolute frankness and without any apology. It is very important to know what we are dealing with, not simply outside attackers but there are people who are complicit in this. Either through silence, or allowing this to happen, or I dare say even conspiring to make it happen.

The third principle Zarruq stressed was *husn al-khidma*, which means perfecting service. Service to actually be focused on service. Many people in applying the Shari'a may think this means applying the rules of Shari'a while forgetting that Shari'a was historically about service and not about rulings. To make Shari'a a matter of political rule is to take away something that is very essential to Islam. The notion of service is something that is of absolute importance. And, in talking about the role of faith based entities, and NGOs and communities, it's very important to remember the dedication to service that these NGOs represent.

The fourth principle he calls *nufudh al-azma*, which translates into something like persistence or persistent determination. We have to be patient, we have to be resilient, and we have to be persistent. I was

foolish enough to give interviews, immediately after the revolution, where I was quite giddy, very, very joyful and happy and I thought I had reason to be happy. But, I must say that I am coming to realise that the revolution has only really started now and that the real revolution that we need is a revolution against our own egos, short comings, and selfishness. We must try to get a country that is based on compassion and love. One that can give a meaningful life in which people are respected truly—where human rights is respected, where women's rights are respected, and where all of us can contribute without exclusion in the building of a great nation.

And the final principle being *shukr al-ni'ma*. Which means appreciating gifts. You cannot lead a meaningful life if you do not appreciate the gift; be it family, life, faith. There are two important gifts which I would like to stress. The first is the gift of diversity, a gift that all great Libyan scholars and sages have taught us. Not everybody is the same and not everybody should be the same. New Libya should be inclusive enough to appreciate everyone and give a chance to all.

The second is the gift of others. The effect those around you have not only on your person but your ability to keep honest on that which is important. While I will agree that it is very difficult to keep yourself honest, we will find ease and honesty when those who we love and love us keep us in check and in balance with our reality. The new Libya must include everybody: Salafis, Sufis, Brotherhood, Liberals, Secularists. They should all be together and keep each other honest, so that we can have a free and honest Libya.

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Speech at the World Economic Forum

Transcription of Dr. Aref Nayed's Talk at a session on the Middle East at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting in 2015 in Davos

Interviewer: *Dr Aref you have many reasons to be amongst us this afternoon one of them that you are also Libyan and interested in the future of Libya but also that you have been an extremely astute observer of political Islam and of Islamic movements in this region and you were the one who yesterday who was telling us that ISIS had established strongholds in your country of Libya and you mentioned five places where ISIS was no more just Mosul or Raqqa, but it is also North Africa as well, and how do you see where this is going, I mean the sort of flat idea is that we are faced with either the barracks or the mosque and that we have to choose between the two, are you of this line or do you think there is a possibility of other alternatives*

Dr. Aref Nayed: In the Name of Allah, the most Merciful, the most Compassionate. First of all I would like to express my heartfelt condolences to the people of Saudi Arabia and the Arab World for the passing away of a great king, King Abdullah and also to just make a quick comment about monarchies and their stabilizing role. Unfortunately In 1969 we lost our monarch King Idris, May God rest his soul, through a coup, an army coup, and unfortunately we suffered the consequences for 42 years or more. As a matter of fact, we are still struggling to even draft a constitution when we had a perfectly good Constitution, going back to the 1950s. But be that as it may, we now have a rise of something quite sinister which we call ISIS or *Daesh*. And I believe that it is very important not to see this phenomenon as

unique to the Arab World and part of the way to expand our horizons is to look into history and the history of many civilizations, including the European one. I believe ISIS is nothing else; nothing other than Islamized Fascism basically, or fascism painted with the paint of Islam. I believe that the period we are passing through in history in the Arab world is very similar to the period Europe was passing through towards the beginning of the 20th-century, and the same dark forces that led to the rise of fascism in Italy, Spain, and Germany, are now leading to the rise of an Islamically painted fascism which is ISIS. It is no coincidence that the mass executions, the tortures, the degradation of the human being, the hallmarks of fascism are all present in the ISIS phenomenon.

So I think it is very important not to see this as an Islamic thing or an Islam thing. I think it has more to do with the will to power, and I think the will to power becomes more acute as people feel scared and threatened; I believe what is happening in our region is a reaction to the loss of meaning in many ways, and the failure of many of our traditional institutions, especially the religious ones and the cultural one, to actually not only to preserve themselves, but actually to revive and renew themselves, so as to give meaningful frameworks for young people.

I believe that it is a cultural and spiritual crisis, that is generating this nihilism, and ISIS is simply an ideology of nihilism; of nothingness, of death-affirming, rather than life-affirming, while Islam; as in Christianity; as in Buddhism; as in Judaism, and as in all great faiths of the world—is a life-affirming culture. Unfortunately our institutions that used to affirm life and to celebrate life, and to spread ideas of compassion, peace, understanding, and forgiveness and humility, are giving way to nothingness, and ISIS basically lives on this nothingness and promotes this nothingness, and that is why I believe the easiest thing we can do, and it is the worst thing we can do, is to sink into despair, or depression or cynicism about this whole thing. I believe there is much to be hopeful about.

There are intrinsic modes of resilience, within the Arab world that are extremely important within the Arab world that is extremely important. I believe the caring of Arab women, is an extremely important form of resilience; Libyan women met last week, they met a couple of,

a few weeks ago also; they met last week in Tunisia, and a few weeks before that in Egypt also, and their discourse is amazingly life-affirming, amazingly peace-focused, compassion-focused dialogue focused. We need to listen to these voices who were an integral part of the Arab Spring, but unfortunately they got suffocated as soon as the Arab Spring was successful by fascist movements, that basically deprived them of that voice.

There is resilience in our young people. It is not the case that all young Arabs are prone to ISIS. It is still with the vast numbers that are joining ISIS, it is still a tiny minority of Arab youth. Arab youth do not accept this, they want to reject this but they are looking to their adults in the society and they are not finding meaningful discourse, the religious scholars are making no sense, the preaching is not reaching the hearts, the revered institutions of the past are just peddling clichés, we need to renew our culture, we need to renew our discourse, and give these young people meaning, and the first thing we should do to give them meaning is to listen to them. This is the second form of resilience that we need to invoke.

The third one which is extremely important is to respect locality You know the state that tries to plan from above and impose its will is another form of fascism, it is also a will to power. We need to listen to the locality, be it a municipality, or a township, or a clan, or a tribe; we need to respect these local forces as the social fabric and initiate a true genuine dialogue at the social fabric level that can lead to a consensus that can give us constitutions on which we can have states that are healthy being built

So we need to invoke all these things, and we need to, most importantly, to stay hopeful, to stay positive, and create network of goodness and compassion; and that is why we are part of this network of Davos. You can only fight networks of darkness with networks of understanding, appreciation, and mutual respect.

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The Libyan Revolution and Its Future: A Conversation with Edward Stourton

The following speech and discussion was held at the University of Cambridge on 1st February 2012.

T HANK YOU EVERYONE for coming and thank you Ed for coming back for today. It's been a great blessing to be part of this faculty, and of the Cambridge Interfaith Program. I have been a very bad friend and partner in many ways, because I seldom come when I am invited and I often must rush back before I planned for and so on, but despite all this I find that coming here, even for short periods, even for truncated visits is a great joy, and a great opportunity to reflect upon the many happenings in our part of the world and in my life.

It is, you know, oftentimes when you are amid the commotion of life and events are happening so fast, it is amazingly important to step out of what is happening every once in a while, and reflect upon the processes that overtake one's life. And I find Cambridge to be a great place to come, to reflect and think, be amongst friends, and to talk deeply with mutual love and respect with people I care about a lot, like David and the colleagues here. So, it's a great joy to be here I'm still trying to figure out what exactly happened in the Libyan revolution.

Things have been happening, they're still happening, and continue to happen, and it's very difficult to really make sense of it all and I've been trying and I haven't been able to read books on revolution and theoretical reflections on revolution as much as would have liked to maybe help make sense of things but Ed Marques, my friend, and colleague at Kalam Research and Media (KRM), gave me the book of

Hannah Arendt, on the way to London and I read bits and pieces from the book on the plane. And at the end of the book, of course I jumped to the end, she speaks of a very interesting phenomenon. She sees a very interesting phenomenon of local councils arising in revolutionary situations spontaneously. And she sees this human ability for action and for surprising others in ways unexpected to be very essential to revolutions, she also notes that oftentimes revolutionary local councils very quickly give in to what she calls 'professional revolutionaries' who kind of take over the revolution and change it into partisan politics instead of this spontaneous longing for freedom that it starts with. And I was amazed at how strikingly similar what she was describing is to the situation in Libya.

As a Libyan I longed for the day when we would get rid of Gaddafi for many years, I have mentioned to David at times, you know, expressed frustrations. And I gave a lecture a year before the revolution in the Sidi al-Masri Zawiya in Tripoli, and talked about the crisis of compassion in Libya and the abundance of cruelty, and longed for a day when freedom will come, but I was never expecting what has happened. It was an amazing springing forth of so many young people, all at once, and altogether, in so many parts of Libya, in ways that were completely unpredictable. I would have never predicted that things would happen that way. No one would have expected it. Maybe a military coup or some intelligence offices, like the intelligence coup when Zine Al Abeddine came to power. But not this kind of popular uprising. It really was a popular uprising, everybody participated: men, women, young and old, even children. And it was an amazing thing to be part of this spring in the sense of this springing up. And it was as if you know, in each heart there was like a spring that was compressed for so many years, and then finally there was this release of energy and the energy of it all was just amazing; and to be part of it and to actually witness it was an astonishing experience. But as it ended in victory—for the Libyan people, and liberation from the Gaddafi regime—the energy was spent, and we began to see other phenomena that were not very pleasing to the heart, and which are worrying in many ways.

One of the phenomena is these professional revolutionaries, you know parties who were historically in Libyan are a rarity, but there

were some, and some of them even made a kind of reconciliation with Saif al-Islam Gaddafi at one point and were very reluctant to join the revolution in the first few days. But eventually once they saw the opportunity they kind of rode the wave, through their meticulous organization and good funding, and strategic thinking, they managed to start to take over in many ways: key committees in the National Transitional Council, key local council committees and began to already prepare themselves to stack the deck in a way for the next the elections that are forthcoming.

And I began to see that the enthusiasm of the young people, the aspirations, the dreams were in danger of being derailed in many ways, and maybe to use stronger language, robbed. And it is interesting that if you look at the footage on television this is the case in the Libyan revolution, also in the Egyptian revolution, to a lesser extent in the Tunisian revolution, the faces that were in the revolt in the early days are different from the faces in the letter days, it's as if there is a shift in the demography of the revolution, and the composition of the revolutionaries. I think we need theoretical tools and ways to reflect on this to understand what exactly is happening and I think Hannah Arendt provides some clues as to the things that we can use to understand them.

Be that as it may, I was wondering what it is that we revolted against and what it is that we are seeking by way of trying to understand what we've done and where we're going and I think if I were to summarize what we revolted against I would say it was three things basically: (1) tyranny, which is which is I think was a major thing; (2) corruption, extremely important as a motivator for faulty people's actions; and (3) cruelty, people were just fed up with the cruelty of the regime. If I were to ask myself today, is the revolution successful to overcoming these three things I think that the answer would be we are only partially successful since we have overcome a tyrant, but maybe we have not overcome tyranny in our own hearts, and we have not stopped tyrannizing each other. Because I already see a lot of pushing each other around, happening at the national council, and the local councils and between even preachers of religion, and different religious directions.

If I ask the question have we overcome corruption: I think not, this

is a key area of failure, many of the most corrupt officials the Libyan regime became actually supporters of certain streaks within the new revolutionary ranks and are already attempting to fund parties and already own television stations. And some the most corrupt oil officials are still there in direct and indirect ways, so I am not so sure we have overcome corruption.

And as for cruelty this is where we failed the most. The removal of cruelty involved cruelty; it was not the peaceful revolution. It was peaceful in the beginning but when Gaddafi's forces attacked the demonstrators with anti-aircraft guns, people took up arms and it became a cruel struggle. But that's understood to some extent that you would need cruelty to overcome cruelty, but what I cannot understand, and what I think is a great failure is the fact that there is still cruelty after liberation and this is happening in the detention centers, and amongst militias and recently Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International talked about this phenomenon, and made it into UN reports, and I believe that this is probably the most important failure to the revolution. And it is extremely urgent that this gets addressed.

So, is the Libyan revolution successful? I would say partially. Is there going to be another round of revolution? Most probably yes, there would be another round of revolution. Because most notably the corruption thing I think is going to cause the most issue for people. I'm not sure that the tyranny and the cruelty will be the biggest motivator, but I think the corruption issue is going to be a big issue and it is extremely important that we try to address these three issues without another round of violent action. One of the biggest issues that I have today is the question how do we overcome these things without having to go through another fight?

And I'm not so sure that I've got all the answers to this but I think one extremely important thing is the role of religious scholars, theologians and preachers. There are various schools of Islam in Libya, and I belong to the most traditional streak, the Ash'ari, Maliki, Sufi line. And I believe that there is a big responsibility on the scholars in the country to develop a theology and a preaching of compassion that can overcome the cruelty. For me that's the most important and that can overcome the tyranny and the corruption through propagating values of truth and transparency and trust, and basically a national reconcil-

iation; but maybe more about these as we address some of the questions. Forgive me for taking too long. But by way of just opening the discussion I hope these remarks have been helpful.

Edward Stourton: *It's wonderful and encouraging to people like us outside who've had such a difficulty understanding what's been going on in the region to hear someone like you who has been part of it all saying you're still trying to figure out what happened because we've felt slightly defeated sometimes by the complexity of it. I also can't help being struck by the fact as you speak, in quite a critical way about your country for which of course you're an ambassador of the Libyan government, I don't think you'd hear a British ambassador speak about Britain in those ways, and I suppose that's a mark of how much has changed in Libya, because under the old regime certainly that wouldn't have been possible would it? We'd better deal with some of the hard things first. I mean, for example just looking in this weekend's newspapers: the headline 'Angry Libyans turn against the rebels' and there does seem to be quite a lot of reporting a sense of frustration among many people who were with the rebels about the lack of progress in terms of things like jobs and so forth. How serious a problem is that do you think?*

Aref Ali Nayed: I think it is a very serious problem. The problem with Libya is the legacy; 42 years is a long time and there are so many accumulated issues and problems that have never been addressed. When you have lots of money, sometimes you can cover up a lot of issues for a long time and not fix them, and just keep throwing money at them at critical moments. You get the feeling that they're gone or that you've made progress, but in fact is they come back to haunt you. I think what's happened with the removal of the Gaddafi regime, you have the cumulative effect of all these issues and one of the key issues is: high unemployment, poverty of youth, inability of young people to get married and live in decent homes, there is a housing shortage, lack of decent jobs, education is pretty much destroyed; medical care is bad, people would go to Tunisia and Jordan for medical care. And these things have been there for a long time. when the liberation happened, and this is something that I am not happy about; most people are so fixated on security they are so focused on the guns or the paying of

the revolutionary youth or the health care for the wounded, as if these are the only priorities and these are the only things to be paid attention, and they are very important issues, but I think that we must take a much broader perspective what security is.

I think it would be much easier to solve the security issues if we address the fundamental needs of people. We need to jump-start the economy, we need to rebuild the health sector, we need to rebuild the universities, we need to rebuild education, we need to get housing projects going, create jobs. And I don't think that we need to wait for the elected government to do that in my opinion. In my view, and I was the Operations Coordinator for the Stabilization Team, our plan that was part of stabilization was already very early on jump-starting the economy and beginning with these projects, not waiting and saying, '"No we must have security first". The best security you can have is to even just pretend that life is normal and even if you bluff it in the beginning and just begin the projects, resume the building, you know fix the airport, fix the port, and just get busy with rebuilding the country, life *will* become normal. But there is this sense of waiting in Libya, which I think has cost us dearly. This notion that oh, we're only a transitional government, so let us just wait until we fix the security issue, it's not going to get fixed that way. So as for being critical and being an ambassador, I am still the Ambassador of Libya to the UAE, but because I've resigned several times, without success … maybe I am going out of my way to be fired.

Edward Stourton: *I am fascinated by what you say about cruelty so I was going to ask you about the news whatever it was a week or so ago that Medecins Sans Frontieres had decided to pull out of a detention centre in Misrata because they were treating people who they thought had been beaten up and tortured. Do you see, as somebody who sees what is going in the government, do you see any serious institutional effort by the leadership to deal with that sort of thing?*

Aref Ali Nayed: There are efforts, and I think there are genuine and sincere efforts but I don't think they are intense enough or strong enough for a variety of reasons. I remember in the early days after the liberation of Tripoli, we had meetings with the justice minister and the stabilization team invited Amnesty International, and Human Rights Watch, and we talked to the Justice Minister and explained to him

that he is personally liable for anything that happens. And that the Prime Minister is personally liable for anything that happens to people and he was taken aback by this and he was saying that we have no effective control over the militias or the detention centers, and so on and my argument back was that you cannot claim that you don't have control, because we demanded recognition by arguing that we do have control over Libyan territory. So legally you cannot wriggle out of it.

I believe that if there is a failure of the NTC in this, it is this thinking that their helplessness to affect change is going to be an excuse for not doing so; meaning that it would have been better to resign rather than to let this happen under one's own guard, and it's extremely important that people are held responsible for what's happening. We can blame Gaddafi for the 42 years of abuse but since the liberation of Tripoli, since we demanded recognition the NTC is responsible, and I dare say that they'd better fix it, because there are thousands of people in detention and there is torture. And it's real and if people say that it's not as extensive as the people say, I think that that's a lousy answer, because in Islam, even killing one person, torturing one person, detaining one person unfairly is a grave crime against humanity. I think numbers should not matter, even one tortured person is too much.

I believe that now we're seeing that the justice minister, and the new justice ministry are trying, and that they're trying to extend control over the detention centers, they are putting in mechanisms for better oversight but still the system is overloaded. The number the detainees is far too large to be processed through a juridical system that has collapsed already. There are vast problems with such centers in terms of the facilities and infrastructures. I'm not underestimating the difficulties; there are huge difficulties, but despite all these difficulties I do believe that more leadership should be shown to put a stop to this.

Edward Stourton: *You don't think that key message of responsibility has got through to the NTC, do they understand that this is now up to them?*

Aref Ali Nayed: I think the Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International report and Doctors Without Borders reports of the last week did hit home, very hard, the fact that it made it to the UN, the fact that Ian Martin of the UN brought this up, I think has gotten everyone's attention. And I do believe that measures are being taken.

Yes, the NTC has great difficulty in extending control over everything, but still, at least there should be, even if you cannot do something, at least I would say, resign, or at least rhetorically try to. But I think better things are happening. But I personally feel dissatisfied with the progress. This was flagged very early on. And in official meetings, and not enough has been done. And I think one day after the elections, an elected government may choose to bring people to justice. So, it's a real possibility. People will ask the justice ministers of today what's happening, and people should be aware of this.

EDWARD STOURTON: *The elections are in June, which is a tight timetable, you criticized what you called professional revolutionaries, in other words people with previous political experience, but you could argue, given that tight timetable, given how the whole election process is quite a complicated thing to do, that you need a few people with basic political skills. That the enthusiasm of the young demonstrators, as wonderful as it may be, as well as the bravery of the young fighters, isn't actually enough when it comes to practical politics.*

AREF ALI NAYED: I agree. My problem is with tactics that are not honourable. You know when Gaddafi and Mubarak were chasing certain parties and oppressing them I could see justification for secret action and clandestine action, and not being forthright about one's identity and one's plans. These movements had to do that in order to survive and work. I believe today everyone must declare who they are, where they get their money from, what do they want, how are they organized, what are their intentions, and to be forthright about this. Already in Libya I'm seeing NGOs being penetrated by various political operators without declaring who they are. I already see foreign money coming in without being declared, I see religious preachers on television praising well known thieves and corrupt politicians of the past and calling them heroes now. These tactics are not worthy of the great sacrifice of the young Libyan people who died in this war. Too much of a price has been paid for such cheap tactics to be used. And it's already happening and I am really worried about the country. I believe that, when I talk about professional revolutionaries I am talking about robbers of revolutions, I am not talking about moral ethical politicians. Of course, they are very much needed. But I'm afraid that too many tricks are being played, and I worry that by the time we get

to election it is the crooks who will dominate, and that we'll end up with barons who own entire parties and television stations who will control us for the next decade or so.

EDWARD STOURTON: *So, they won't truly be free elections.*

AREF ALI NAYED: You know elections can only be free if there is a fair starting point. We are in a chaos, and chaotic systems are highly sensitive to initial conditions. And if the initial conditions are skewed and unfairly tilted, you will end up with artificial victories through money and manipulation, and I don't think that that's what the young people died for. And I feel personally responsible to every young person who was martyred, not to let their blood go in vain, even if it costs us our own blood. If we were not scared of Gaddafi, we will not fear any political party that plays these games, and they're already doing it. And they're already doing it, and the young people know. And they're saying this on Facebook, and they're not being listened to, and not enough change is being affected, and if people continue to do this we will have a second revolution. We're already seeing signs of this in Benghazi and Tripoli with the storming of the council and the local council of Tripoli.

EDWARD STOURTON: *It's really reached a point where you can talk in terms of a second revolution?*

AREF ALI NAYED: Yes, absolutely.

EDWARD STOURTON: *I've got lots of other things I want to ask you about, the Arab spring in general, and the place of religion, but there's a lot there to talk about so if there is anyone who wants to come in at this point and ask questions specifically about what's been happening in Libya.*

QUESTIONER: *I am an academic of Libya. I've been in Tripoli and the rest of the country a few times over the past year. And I have a report coming out about the Libyan militias. I totally agree with your vision about, if you wait for there to be security, and if the NTC says we don't have the legitimacy to act now, well there isn't going to be security, because they're not getting the thuwar off the street, and jobs programs going, and all that, and it's great to hear you say it, but the question is about actions. I felt in your speech you were attacking two discrete tendencies and not identifying them. So, I see the corrupt kind of people from the old regime, maybe the* Sayfiyyin *(Saif Gaddafi fol-*

lowers), entirely different than the problem of the professional revo-
lutionaries, meaning people in the Misratan or Zintani militias, who
were excluded previously and now have a whole range of concerns of
turning the society upside down. My question relates to the militias;
what is the thing you guys can do immediately to use the unfrozen as-
sets to address the problem of there being so much power in the pe-
riphery in these militias?

AREF ALI NAYED: When I talked about professional revolutionaries
I'm not specifically referring to the militias themselves of Misrata and
Zintan; just to be clear. I am referring to political parties that have ex-
isted and continue to exist and I will not mention them by name be-
cause they're not here and it's not fair to mention them by name,
because they must be given the chance to defend themselves.

Now, you mention two distinct groups. There are actually three;
they are all linked, meaning: you've got the corrupt money, you've got
the professional revolutionaries, which are actual parties, and then
you've got the militias. And the scariest thing I see today, is corrupt
money financing certain political parties or tendencies, and financing
particular militias.

If you are following the Libyan case, there is a particular preacher
that came on television, and the television station is owned by one of
the tycoons, and he basically polished that tycoon, and that tycoon
has a militia that is totally financed by him and his brothers, and this
is the scary stuff. I don't think that we lost so many lives for this kind
of thing to happen. And it should not be allowed to happen, the young
people are not going to let it happen. They already know. But what
can be done is that the government has to be absolutely brave, coura-
geous, and make some really difficult decisions, even if it costs them
very dearly. And one of them is to begin immediate investigations into
the funds of more than a dozen people who are all well known to own
billions, like somebody who has a salary of 1000 dinars who owns a
billion dinars, you know, they must account for where they got the
money from. And I think if they even begin symbolic investigation of
3 or 4 individuals it will at least pull them back, because these guys
kind of waited until immediately after the liberation for a little while
and when they saw the coast was clear and that they were not going
to be investigated, now have the nerve not only to come back into the

country but to have the nerve to finance things including political parties and television stations and militias. So, there must be some anti-corruption investigations started right away, and this is a part of transitional justice. It must start. And the second thing which is extremely important is to stop this nonsense about paying revolutionary youth salaries. I mean that's an insult to the youth who fought for love of country and freedom, who were not mercenaries, and were not expecting salaries. And I know many of these young people who fought and are not taking money from the government. Meanwhile, many pretenders, what I call false liberation revolutionaries, have signed up and are taking the money. And what this has done is, it has made like a dishing out money system that simply is unhealthy. So, stop doing that. And stop creating the projects, and giving people employment rather than just handouts. And there is plenty to do in the country. Just the housing projects should keep thousands of people busy. And I think this is the sort of thing that must happen.

EDWARD STOURTON: *Anybody else at this stage would like to come in with a question?*

QUESTIONER: *Where is Saif al-Islam now, and what is likely to happen to him?*

AREF ALI NAYED: Saif al-Islam, from what I hear, is in the Zintan area. He is under arrest. And a public prosecutor of Libya has a representative on the premise for his being held, so he is under the justice system. And they are coordinating with the international criminal court on how to proceed forward. From what I hear, he is safe and being well treated. And there was some television footage to that effect. I do hope and pray that he will get a fair trial, as any Libyan who gets arrested should be getting a fair trial, and I believe that it is important to ask about the conditions of detention and his conditions and so on, but its also very important to ask about the 8000 or so other detainees who also are very important and should be given due process.

QUESTIONER: *I am a former ambassador to the Middle East, but not in North Africa. During the revolutionary war, there was quite a lot of talk in the British Press anyway, about tribal elements on both sides, and my question is this: to what extent is there a correlation between tribal affiliation and these groups that we're speaking about? Or to what extent are these groups are people who come together*

because they want money and power and whatever else they may be looking for?

Aref Ali Nayed: The tribes in Libya are important, but they are not the only factor. And tribalism exists in various gradations in Libya so you can find some city dwellers who are completely cosmopolitan and have no tribal affiliation. And you can also encounter Libyans who are nearly completely tribal. So what you have in Libya is a very complex matrix with various factors. One of them is tribalism. Another is religiosity, and that also has different flavors. Tribal, you can call them religious tribes of sorts. There are also party tribes. And there is also things like townships and cities and also regional considerations. And all of these factors together, form a very complex differential equation, that is very difficult to analyze and solve. Anybody who ignores tribes in Libya does so at their own peril, because I think they are a very important factor, but also to exaggerate it and make it into *the* factor in Libya is also not correct.

There are many differences, many nuances, and it would be very complicated to dwell into this, but most tribes actually split, it was not these tribes versus these other tribes. The war was between pro Gaddafi versus anti Gaddafi forces, and these were mixed, and certain tribes like my own Werfella tribe was split, as you know, Bani Walid was one of the last actually the last perhaps, apart from Sirte, town to be liberated. And yet Werfella including myself and many others, including some of the first people who stormed the camp in Benghazi, were involved in the pro revolutionary forces. And this is across the board. Yes, in certain cities or towns or tribes, there were majorities that supported Gaddafi, but you did have a national split in many ways. It was not along tribal lines. But the tribal element did effect things, also past tribal alliances historical alliances, did effect things, so it is extremely important for democracy to emerge for there to be a genuine social contract. And one of the things we must keep in mind when talking about Libya is that the social contract will not be just a contract between individuals, because the level of individuality differs depending on how much tribal affiliation or feeling there is.

In some cases, you will need a social contract between clans and tribes. And there needs to be a kind of consensus and a social contract reached between the Misrata, which is a townish kind of tribal group,

I mean it is not exactly a tribe. The Werfella, the Zintan, the Abeidat, these are large blocks that need to reach some sort of an understanding. This understanding can only be reached through other factors like politics, like party politics, and like religious discussions also. Because also in religion you've got Salafis of a whole set of variety, ranging from Salafi-jihadists to very moderate Salafis, and we've got the Sufis, and we've got the Ikhwan, we've got the Tabligh … there has to be a national discussion and a national settlement, in open discussion that can bring about democracy. And we need to look for those spoilers that would spoil such an open discussion from happening. Bad money is one major spoiler. And I see it very active these days. And that's one big spoiler. I think we must pay attention to it. The other thing is the big spoiler, is feelings of vengeance and anger. There is a lot of reconciliation that must happen. A lot of preaching of forgiveness; it's a long complicated process. Forgive me for the rambling, it's because I don't have clarity on all these issues, and I am trying to maybe for the first time deal with them.

Edward Stourton: *Can I pick up on the point that you make about religion. You said that scholars could be a source of reconciliation and should work hard for that, but if you do cross religious fault lines, you see them as sources of conflict, seems to be happening in Syria in the moment. How serious are the fault lines that you referred to in Libya?*

Aref Ali Nayed: Well some of them are quite serious. I mean the fact that we had reverence for the tombs of great sages and scholars. Recently, we've had a sequence of some, a strand, not all Salafis, but a strand of Salafism blowing up these tombs and even taking out the dead and the remains and throwing them in valleys. This is a very serious fault line. And has caused major issues; last week there was a demonstration about this. Now for example we have the Mawlid of the Prophet Muhammad, may the peace and blessings of God be upon him, and already they're distributing pamphlets saying that this is *haram* and *bid'a* and so on. And Sufis who form the Tripolitanian tradition in a way, have their processions that are about to happen on Saturday. So these frictions are there.

Libya used to have a consensus that was basically Ash'ari Maliki Sufi for about 1000 years. Gaddafi managed to destroy this consensus

by suppressing religious teaching through his so called cultural revo-
lution. And in that gap, many other trends have entered, including
Wahhabi tendencies and various Jihadi-Salafi tendencies. So there are
definitely fault lines. The only solution for these is dialogue and dis-
cussion, and there are some serious efforts towards this. We have been
talking as much as we could. Unfortunately, as you rightly say, religion
may augment the issues rather than solve them. But I do believe that
the essence of Islam is compassion and forgiveness, and we are not
talking enough about that in Libya, and we're not developing the dis-
courses and the preaching that is necessary for a true national recon-
ciliation. As you rightly say, I mean if the religious scholars cannot
reconcile with each other, how can they help with national reconcili-
ation, that is a valid question.

QUESTIONER: *How are you supposed to create jobs, regenerate ed-
ucation, industry, and so forth, given the circumstances in the country?*

AREF ALI NAYED: Well, while what you say is true, there are people
who've gotten used to not working and expecting a government salary
at the end of the month. But it is also true, and I have directly hired
young Libyans in IT and Communications, there are brilliant young
people who really would love to be trained and who can do things. I
believe that, though we are an oil country, we can do a lot with solar
energy, being a supplier of solar energy to Europe for example. The
Libyan desert is amazingly well suited for this. We can be suppliers of
IT production, silica is in abundance, and software.

There are many areas that can be developed, and one immediate
thing, I mean if the council simply announces that if you're a certain
age you can have free English instruction and basic computer skills,
and just basic training, and just begin, get people learning, you may
not be able to create all the jobs, but at least you can create the training
opportunities and there is an abundance of money for that kind of
work. And that is work. Training is work. And young Libyan people
are innovative, they've worked under difficult conditions even in the
80s during the embargo, and you would see these young traders bring-
ing things in from Malta and Tunisia, and they're very active. It's just
that they don't have opportunities, and I think that we need to diver-
sify the economy. I think, I hope to God that we will never build the
biggest steel factor in north Africa, or the biggest cement factory, most

of the factories that Gaddafi built were polluting factories that destroyed the environment, and destroyed people's lives. So I believe there is an abundance of industries that can be sensible, ecologically sensitive, tourism for example, not the tourism of pizza boxes and beer, but the tourism of people looking at archaeological sites and the beautiful natural scenes we have in the eastern mountains. I believe that there are plenty of opportunities, but the problem is that the government is waiting until elections, and I feel that it is very annoying, because the very waiting stance is destabilizing. They should just start with something. Even just English language instruction, basic you know, Microsoft training. And I am sure the big companies would love to come and help with these things, just to promote their brands.

EDWARD STOURTON: *To ask you a much broader question relating to the whole place of religion in what's been happening in the region as a whole, there is one thing that startles people outside is that the fact you had in Tunisia and Egypt you had revolutions that seemed to be secular in many ways. Elections happen and Islamist parties do very well. In Egypt, even the Salafi party has done remarkably well. Which raises the question of what Islam's place has come to be in what one hopes are the new democracies that emerge from that process. It's sort of a big philosophical question in a way, but it's quite a pressing one too isn't it?*

AREF ALI NAYED: It is. I think that the whole region is religious in a away. And Islam cannot be ignored in this whole region. Even secularists, you know, it's strange, even the ones who almost anti-religious, they tend to be religious in being anti-religious. I think it's impossible to avoid. What's extremely important is that theological work, serious theological work, must go forward into trying to come up with ways of talking about democracy and exercising democracy that are in line with the spiritual heritage of these countries. And at the same time, open to other members of society, a true pluralism and diversity that is essential to democracy. You know the, what I see in Libya is an attempt by certain Islamist streaks or lines to monopolize Islam and monopolize God. It's like saying if you're with me you're a Muslim and you're with God, and if you're not with me then you're not a proper Muslim and you're not with God.

I believe one of the most urgent tasks of proper scholars in Libya is

to get together and say look you can't use God in that way in politics. That is not to say that God is not important for politics, its simply that you cannot possess God and use him as an instrument or a hammer against your opponents in elections, which is already happening in Libya. There are pamphlets being distributed in Tripoli that say that voting for a secular person is *haram*, and that is ludicrous. The scholars have to say something about this. Unfortunately, the diversity of religious opinions is not reflected in the new Ifta-function. Nor in the ministry of the *awqaf*. This is something that I have personally talked to the mufti about, and the ministry of the *awqaf* about, and the government, saying that you must populate the council of Ifta to make sure that all the diversity of religious opinion is represented and that the *awqaf* minister should not use his ministry to impose his brand of Islam on the preachers.

One of the key things that regimes like Gaddafi's did was to centralize all the religious endowments and control of the mosques. And we kind of like post-liberation just assumed that that continues. I believe that one of the most important acts would be to return what are called the private endowments, so that the madrasas and the mosques would have their own endowment and have a pluralism of endowments, without centralized control, so that you don't end up with a regime ever again controlling religiosity. I am afraid that there is a cheap way to impose your school by in a way maintaining the old system of centralized command of control over religion. This is what I urged the mufti and the minister to not do. Not to enjoy the centralization that was really an inheritance from Gaddafi, to impose their own school on everybody else. And I kept telling the other scholars that look we don't have to be content with a central *awqaf* system, that if these guys don't listen and do not include us all, then maybe we'll do away with the whole system. And this is an argument that has to go on not only in Libya but I think this question will be raised in Egypt regarding the *awqaf* and even the Azhar and how its run, the Dar al Ifta al Misriyya and how its run, and also in Tunisia, how Zaytuna is run. Zaytuna should not be controlled by political Islamist parties. Zaytuna is much grander than any party. And it hinkt hat the traditional scholars who are historically very quiet and worshipful and so on, have to be vocal, or risk losing their voice forever, because if

they don't stand up for what's right, and if they cannot give a message to young people that is conducive to a better life, they face losing all legitimacy and relevance.

EDWARD STOURTON: *What about the question of the way and the degree to which Islam should be constitutionally recognized, because that's also quite a sensitive issue?*

AREF ALI NAYED: If you ask Libyans they will all tell you it should be there in the constitution. I don't think there is a difference on that. The difference is on what that means exactly. So when you say Shari'a, well what do you mean by Shari'a? And there are modern versions of what Shari'a means, that are, how can I put it, flattened, engineering-like, systems, of basically sets of rules. So this is Shari'a it's a set of rules. When you want to apply Shari'a you simply apply these rules. And the application is a matter of taking the rule and applying to the situation. This kind of mechanized Shari'a is not traditional. Its actually a kind of modern version, of what Shari'a was like. Shari'a in its original sense, of being broad way, a path to God, a spiritual journey as well as a set of rituals, kind of guidelines in life, that broader notion of Shari'a is very different.

So, when you say should Shari'a be the basis for the constitution, if you mean Shari'a in the first sense, I would definitely say absolutely not. If you say it's the second I would say yes. Because the Libyan people are Muslims, and they have every right to live by a Muslim or Islamic constitution, but broadly conceived, so you're talking about the intentionalities of the law and the spirit of the law, not merely the letter of the law. So, the issue I think again will come back to the clash between versions of Islam that are literal, flattened, and rule-based versus versions of Islam that are much richer, spiritual, more open-ended, and more accommodating.

In the Maliki tradition, which is the historical tradition of Libya, *'urf*, or custom, was one of the sources of the Shari'a. The habits of people, the norms in a society were taken into consideration. The maslaha, or what is called 'what is good for society' or in philosophical terms 'utility,' not the narrow sense of utility, but helpfulness would be a better word, has to be considered as a source for legislation. So the older richer tradition, I think can be invoked, and can be conducive to a very good and democratic constitution, but I am worried that,

and I don't want to say Mcdonald's in a way, maybe I can get sued by Mcdonald's, but there is a kind of Mc-Shari'a in a way, a fast-food version of Shari'a, of take the rule apply it, take the rule apply it, a mechanical thing that is preached by some Islamist movements, that is quite alien to the tradition. Its amazing non-traditional it is, and yet it tries to monopolize religiosity and calls the religious scholars who are the heirs of the tradition 'innovators,' and innovators in the bad sense, you know like heretical.

EDWARD STOURTON: *It matters a lot though doesn't it, correct me if im wrong, but something that struck me when I was in Egypt over Christmas, is that, the question of the way that the underpinning of the sharia works is critical to where the minorities feel comfortable in the society, and only if minorities feel comfortable do you have a true democracy, that's got to be got right in the long term.*

AREF ALI NAYED: Absolutely, and look at the tradition, and approach to sharia, like the old Azhari approach, before the Azhar got secularized, in the bad sense of secularized, by Nasser, and, in many ways, mutilated. The old Azhari tradition was quite accommodating of minorities, just as the Ottoman millet system was, I mean by the standards of those days were quite advanced in their approach towards minorities. These flattened versions of Shari'a are very unaccommodating of minorities, just as they are unaccommodating of different Muslim schools. If you think its dangerous for minorities, it is even dangerous for Sufis with their tombs, if Sufi tombs are being blown up, what's going to happen to churches. I mean its, so the intolerance is built in to these positivistic, flattened, mechanistic versions of Islam that are unfortunately propagated by certain parties, which are I find the most corrosive of the whole religion. But you know I belong to that other school so maybe my judgments are not so.

QUESTION: *Women, some 50% of the population, traditionally the source of compassion, courage, competence and skills, in maintaining the household and the environment in which the household exists, to what extent, as a matter of policy, are women being brought into policy making. Second question, relates really to Ed, is he or somebody like him going to be invited to help to establish the Libyan broadcasting corporation?*

AREF ALI NAYED: I'll begin with the second question. He was cor-

dially invited, I stamped the visa myself, to come and help us. We're actually in discussion with Thomson-Reuters and others including Al-Arabiya and so on, to try to devise training courses for young people. I believe more important than establishing stations we need to help young people develop content that can be broadcast on stations and if they won't take it then on the internet. And there are some serious attempts in this direction. The performance of the council when it comes to broadcasting and media has been quiet miserable, and there has been a lot of criticism and I think its right to criticize. But there are multiple attempts at fixing this.

Regarding women, they were not merely part of the revolution in many ways they were the ones who started it, because the movement of mothers, sisters, and wives of detainees of Buslim were the ones who started the first demonstrations that eventually led to the revolution. So we owe it to women that the revolution happened in the first place, and when it started women were there from the beginning in all the demonstrations and even some of the fighting, in supporting the revolution. At least I know in my own case, it was my mother my sister, my wife and my daughter, who gave me the courage and made me brave. I remember my sister, the hardest thing about going out and talking on radio or television and talking about what happened in Benghazi was that my family was still inside. And as we went along and I was working with the executive team and the council my nephews remained in Libya. My sister called me, she was in Jordan at the time, and she said 'Look, I know you're worried about my sons and if they get slaughtered like sheep, do not back off, and I will never forgive you if you back off on account of my kids.' And you know, for me that was very important in keeping the stand, I would have backed off if she didn't do that. And with my wife when I went to Benghazi she understood that if I go I may not come back, and she still encouraged me, and she said 'If you don't go, I don't think I can live with you anyway.'

So, what I am trying to say a lot of the so-called heroism of these great heroes of the revolution was actually due to the women, and it is very important to remember this. Now it's a major disappointment to me that the NTC does not have enough women in its ranks. The government doesn't have enough women in its ranks. It's a major fail-

ure, I myself argued against this all along. When we gathered the local councils in Abu Dhabi, Doha, and Benghazi, I made sure that the spokesperson for the entire team was a woman, Dr. Fawziya Baryun. And I believe that there is a failure there. I think the elections will change this. Women are incredibly active, they are forming societies and NGOS and so on, and I think they will succeed. I don't think it's an issue of them being given authority; they will take it. Without anyone doing them any favors, and they have the right to do so, and I think they will succeed. I don't even think we need a quota for that to happen. They will win. Because they are actually more than 50% of the Libyan population.

QUESTION: *I am a researcher on North-West Africa. I'd like to ask a question about local councils. I know these local councils have a history in the Gaddafi regime as a form of governance, and its been very important in this revolution. What do you think is the future of this political form?*

AREF ALI NAYED: One of the most difficult things about this revolution is the lack of words for descriptions. What happened was Gaddafi for about 42 years, through his rhetoric and speeches, and the green book, and the exegesis of the green book, and the centre for the study of the green book, and the conferences on the green book, and the daily television broadcasts of the phrases of the green book, actually managed to use every possible Arabic word that you can use to talk about democracy. Including grassroots councils, including parliament, including talking about representation, parties; he polluted the vocabulary by abusing words, misusing words, cheating people through using words. So there is a suspicion of a whole dictionary of words. And yet people must resort to some of them, because there is no other choice. For example, revolution itself, when you say thawra, and thuwar, and when you say revolutionary legitimacy, *Shari'a thawriyya*, even today as we say it, the nuances of Gaddafi's use of it haunts us in a way. One of the things we need to do is to make sure is that we don't scoff at certain ideas just because Gaddafi talked about them. And one of them is the local councils. People went out of their way to call them *majalis mahalliya*, and not local popular committees, or *lijan sha'biya mahaliya* or *mu'tamarat sha'biya asasiya*, and yet, people still as a matter of fact, they say 'this is like the *mu'tamarat* of

Gaddafi' and even the choosing of people they say 'this is like *tas'id*' which is the word that he used. So, people are very weary of the phenomenon just because Gaddafi used the phenomenon and cheated people when he did that. We need to overcome this fear, and appreciate the local councils.

I am of the view that the local councils are the key to Libyan democracy. Because they are non-partisan. They are not dependent on funding. they manage through a phenomenon of emergence actually provide leadership that is quite credible for the people who choose this leadership. I worked very hard with a group of young Libyans and non-Libyans like Ed Marques and Sohail Nakhooda, and some friends, to bring together the local councils to Abu Dhabi, Doha, then Benghazi, and managed to increase the seats of the NTC through that process. Unfortunately, that process did not continue; after liberation, we would have expected local elections, and then, more council members, men and women, populating the NTC. I think that was a major failure. What we have now is that people are leaping to the elections, and talking about election law and parties and so on, and neglecting the local councils. And that's a big mistake, because I think they are key to the democracy.

We have been working with various groups to try to rectify this and today and yesterday there was a gathering of local councils in Tripoli ,and this is very important and even issues in the local council of Tripoli there was a storming of the local council and objection to its leadership; but people have managed to repopulate the local council of Tripoli for more representative, or with more representative people, and that helps, so what I'm saying is, just because Gaddafi talked about them, we should not refrain from working with such local councils, except this time they're genuine. In many ways, I know this sounds weird, and many Libyans won't like hearing this, what toppled Gaddafi was the actual application of what he talked about. It wasn't all crazy.

Some of what he said was actually coming from anarchistic and socialist European thinkers, who promoted things like grassroots councils, the commune of Paris, and so on; he cheated people because he was never genuine about these things. But in a way, it's as if these ideas came back to haunt him, and his dynasty, and people don't like to say

this because they don't like to see themselves implementing anything he would have thought of, but maybe after ten years or so, we can get used to the idea.

EDWARD STOURTON: *I just want to raise one other thing, because I think we should talk about this before we go, we haven't talked about the role of NATO or the outside world, and there are those in Syria who would like to see something similar to what happened in Libya, happen there, what's your, and I know its an incredibly complicated political question, but what are your thoguhts about that?*

AREF ALI NAYED: I can tell you about NATO in Libya, first. I think that without any exaggeration, had NATO not intervened in Libya, Benghazi would have been obliterated. And this is a fact. This is a historical fact. The footage of the kilometers long army with merecenaries with equipment and so on, who were coming to—and actually bragging about what they were going to do to Benghazi—and what they were going to do to the women, there is footage of what they were saying they will be doing. And had NATO not bombed them, they would have done exactly what they promised to do, because they did it in Misrata and they did it in other places. So I have no doubt, that NATO interference or intervention in Libya, which was by the way, asked for by Libyans, including myself I must say, I was personally involved in drafting the documents requesting the no-fly zone and other things. I have, though I am a theologian, and though I preach compassion and though I hate violence, I think it was a case of where, had that violence not been inflicted upon those troops, bigger violence would have been the result. So, I think in Libya it was the right thing.

Is it the right thing in Syria? I'm not a Syrian. I don't know the complexities of the Syrian situation from the inside. Quite frankly, I don't think NATO is technically capable of interfering the same way they did in Libya for a variety of reasons. The complexities of Syria and the economic conditions and even the dynamics of Europe has changed. And the dynamics of Europe, the UK, and the US has changed. It's a completely different situation. Should there be some form of help for the Syrian people? I think absolutely, yes. I think that the Arab league tried its best, obviously he regime has been cynical, everyone should be trying to help the Syrian people, but I'm not so sure that it can be done the same way. The terrain is different, the demography is

different, the majority minority relations are different, we don't have that kind of split between Alawis and Sunnis; and the Baath is very different from the Libyan regime in many ways.

So, I would, I hesitate to pronounce. But I can tell you that in the case of Libya, had not NATO helped us, I think we would have been destroyed. I mean, it's very strange that a leader of a country would actually order mercenaries and his soldiers to systematically rape the women of an entire town. That kind of behaviour, and when you're dealing with such a crazed person, I mean the situation made it necessary. Now as soon as we have liberation, my view of violence is completely different of course. I did carry a gun during the war. I will no longer carry a gun. I do not carry a gun anymore. All my students gave up their guns immediately. And now for me, its haram for me to use violence anymore. But for that window it was an absolute religious duty to fight, and this did not come easy, God knows how much I thought of this, the pain as you are trying to sleep, and it wasn't like theoretical, my team actually helped NATO identify targets. So it was not like a theoretical thing. But I think for the first time in my life, I feel that I have, only then did I understand Bonhoeffer, and his dilemma, and understand that in some cases like Hitler, Mussolini, Gaddafi, sometimes violence is the religious duty. But there was no point that this was done with gusto or done with arrogance, I pray every night for the people who have died from both sides. And I am sure there are many innocent people who died from both sides, may God forgive us all for our transgressions. But it is, you can read theology and you can write theology, but when you're faced with these existential situations, it really matters, theology matters in a very important manner. And I believe that what do you do in a situation like that is very important.

Syrians are now facing this, it's up to Syrians what they decide to do. There should be no outside interference without a Syrian request for it, and I don't think it will be in anyway similar to Libya. It's a completely different situation.

QUESTION: *Confiscated property problem, how do we solve this problem moving forward?*

AREF ALI NAYED: Already in Benghazi, and Tripoli you see these big camps or sometimes governmental buildings with somebody hav-

ing spray painted 'this is the property of the children of so and so' and people are putting claims, and some cases physically going to take their property. The NTC has many made appeals to people to refrain from trying to rectify property grievance until the elected government is in place and a procedure for discussing these matters is developed. This is easier said than done, because some people are in a rush and some people are worried that later on they will not have the guns to impose their will on others so they're using the guns while they have them to take back their property. My family in 1978 lost massive property, through confiscation, and with my brothers we've decided not to make any claim to anything until the elected government happens, and I know many families have done that. And I think it's the sensible thing to do, because if now you try get these properties you will be creating more issues, since as you said many of these properties have been sold three to four times.

And one very important matter about properties is not simply the confiscation and the return of properties, but as Hernando de Soto the economist argues, property and the collateralization of properties is important for starting the economy and economic activity. Free market cannot happen without property titles being proper in a way, and none of the titles in Libya are proper in a way, because Gaddafi burned the registry of lands in the early 80s, and he deliberately did that. And he also destroyed some of the civil registry so he can bring in entire tribes and give them Libyan citizenship to ouse them as his own mercenaries and people and so forth. He really messed up the bases of life, including economic life. So, it's a huge issue, and there has to be a very complicated processes of sorting this out, and it is going to take years, I don't think there is any quick solution to this. And perhaps devising some system of compensations would also be part of it, but it really is a big problem, a very big problem.

Edward Stourton: *Do you think in governmental terms, Libya is now getting the sort of help that it needs from the outside world, or do you feel a sense lack of focus drifting away?*

Aref Ali Nayed: No perhaps there is even too much focus still. If you look at the number of meetings the prime minister and the foreign minister must have, everyday there are visitors. And when we do the work…we had argued in the stabilization team early on that the UN

should lead the assessment of needs, and there should be a unified assessment of needs and we can ask each nation on what they would like to work with us on, and then make an alignment. We began to make progress on that, and then the government changed, and only now there was a workshop last week about the same issue. I believe its extremely important to have this unified assessemt and alignment, and I think Libya will continue to have the attention of governments simply because it is not something on the outskirts, it really is at the heart of many things. Its at the heart of oil supply to Germany and Italy, because of the historical links. It's the heart of Russian interests in making sure that alternative gas supplies to Europe are not, I won't go there. I forget. What I am trying to say is that it is too important for oil supply, and it is too close. Tripoli is 1.5 hour flight from Rome, 40 minutes from Malta and 1.5hrs from Greece. We're virtually in Europe. Tripoli is closer to London than it is to Dubai, as I have found out from the flight.

So, I don't think Libya will be neglected, the problem is Libyans must figure out what they want to do with their lives and what kind of country they want to have. I don't think there is any shortage of friends for Libya, many nations stood with us and I am always struck by the image of Benghazi square with flags of the UK, France, Qatar, the UAE; even the Italian flag, I've seen it being celebrated in the main square of Benghazi, this is unprecedented. This is very weird, but it is also so promising in many ways if we do something with it and develop relations of mutual respect and love, and build something together, that I think it will be a lighthouse for the region. If we allow it to go to darker forces of crazy radicalization or militancy or divisive clannish attitudes, the whole world will be at risk; it is not just a problem for Libya.

I do pray that the country will go forward in a positive direction, and I think, St Augustine has a book on this, on faith, charity, and hope, does anyone remember the title? It's about the 3 cardinal virtues, and they are the same virtues that Ghazali speaks of that Fakhr al-Razi speaks of, and I believe that these three virtues are what build a nation: faith, charity, and hope.

DAVID FORD: *I have one more little question for you Aref: What should we in Cambridge do in relation to Libya?*

Aref Ali Nayed: Five things. Firstly, offer free consultancy to the universities on higher education reform. Secondly, offer free consultancy on the setting up of IT parks and IT business public sector partnerships like you do have here in Cambridge. Thirdly, make relations between various departments in the university with departments there for exchanges. It would be amazing to teach classics in Leptis Magna for example. Fourthly, being more generous with your acceptance of Libyan students, so they can do graduate work here in Cambridge. And fifthly take Libya seriously as an area of study, and send scholars to study anthropology and archaeology and even philosophy and Sufism.

CHAPTER 11

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The Religious Dimensions
of the Arab Spring

The following lecture was given by Dr Aref Ali Nayed at the Stimson Centre in Washington DC on the 1st October 2012.

I WOULD LIKE TO SPEAK TO YOU today about the Arab Springs, in the plural, and their religious dimensions. Since the 's' was dropped from the title, it gives me an opportunity to mention an important preliminary point. People speak of the Arab Spring, but whenever you assign a single noun or description or tag to processes they very quickly become *thingy*. They become creature. It then becomes easy to lose sense of diversity and the special attention that one needs to appreciate the nuances of the phenomenon or phenomena.

While the name Arab Spring is good and has a type of romantic ring to it, I think it is important to keep the plural instead of the singular because what has happened in Yemen is different from what is happening in Syria; and what is happening in Syria is different from what is happening in Egypt and is different from what is happening in Libya, and Tunisia. The word 'spring,' itself is problematic as well, because the agony that is happening is Syria for example, can hardly be described as a spring. The multiple dimensions of violence and cruelty, and all sorts of ideals are difficult to describe as a spring. The word itself is problematic, but it is problematic as it is a useful tag, so long as we use it in the plural.

As a matter of fact, within each 'spring' there has been great diversity, with even regional nuances to springs. In general, we need to stress that we are dealing with complex phenomenon, whose complexity results from two main factors. One is that you have multiple factors going into it, and these multiple factors are configured differently

in each situation and actually keep changing in each situation. The second is that the Arab spring in each one of these countries is very much a chaotic system rather than a straightforward system that you can describe with straightforward differential equations. They are chaotic systems in each case, and in physics, chaos is defined as a system being highly sensitive to initial conditions. Even with small tweaks and changes in the initial conditions you can have massive storms, so I believe that things like complexity theory and chaos theory are probably the kind of mathematics we need to describe these phenomena rather than with old political theory or social science.

More attempts should be made in terms of trying to find the right frameworks, with which to understand what is happening. In fact, we are seeing what may be called the breakdown of useful typologies. The British philosopher Gilbert Ryle developed a concept which he called category mistakes, when people categorise things in ways that are not befitting to their being, and end up make all sorts of muddleheaded mistakes.

I believe we are making lots of category mistakes because we are using the same typologies that were useful a year ago, two years ago to try and describe phenomena, or split up phenomena that are actually quite different now. And that brings me to the religious dimensions of the Arab springs.

Take a simple category like "Muslim Brotherhood" this is a fairly straightforward thing; you are either a member of the Muslim Brotherhood or you are not a member of the Muslim Brotherhood. There are ways of being a member of the Muslim Brotherhood: you join, and I think there is even a card. You become a member. It may seem like a very clear category. Yet if you look closely, you will find that the Muslim Brotherhood is not the same in Egypt as it is in Tunisia; it's not the same in Libya; it's not the same in Syria; and it's not the same in Jordan. In each country, it developed into different modes of being, and the negotiations that it participated in since its inception within each respective setting makes it a very different creature.

In Jordan, it is a political party that has negotiated with the monarchy over many years, and has entered parliament, entered elections. In Libya, you could die for just being a member in the 1970s and 80s; and in the 90s it was an entity that made peace with the regime to some

extent, and negotiated a way of existing. Within the Muslim Brotherhood, even within Libya, you will find a great deal of diversity in each generation. The Muslim Brotherhood of the 1940s, for example, took refuge with Emir Idris at the time, before he became king, and they founded the Muslim Brotherhood in Libya. I had the privilege of meeting some of the elderly scholars that had been part of that very foundational pact. And I tell you they are very different from the young Muslim Brotherhood members that I now encounter. The ethos, the theology even, the way of being of those old Muslim Brotherhood members is very different from some of the young members, and some of the current Muslim Brotherhood members, are convincing heirs to that old tradition; but some members actually look very different—it's more of a Sayyid Qutb influenced version of the Muslim Brotherhood—and they look more like businessmen that are using the party now for their own business interests and power interests. They resemble power brokers more than actual members, so even within one party that has a clear tag you get these varieties that are very, very important to take into consideration.

Take another tag: 'Salafi'. Salafis come in countless flavours. Some of them very reasonable, moderate people who simply understand Salafism as focusing on the Qur'an and the Sunna, and wanting to adhere to them more closely. Yet there are other varieties that are quite radicalised and who are *takfiris,* declaring others as infidels. They can also be very irritable, with some prone to violence directed among others. But one cannot just lump them all under one tag and expect to understand it. So, when you are negotiating with Salafis in any political process today you cannot avoid them because they are there as Libyans, as fellow Libyans, and one must make distinctions between the various strands.

Take Sufis, you know that is another tag. People say, "Oh, he's a Sufi, what does that mean?". You have Sufis that are more Sanusi-like, who are more active, and they fought against Gaddafi. You also have Sufis who are more into the trances and contemplation, and want to have nothing to do with the act of life and the political life. In sum, not only do we have Arab springs, but the political-religious actors in these springs are multiple.

You need to be aware of this variety and not to be intimidated by it.

Yes, the human being has to generalise and has to categorise and has to give typologies, but I want to point out that these typologies are not to be worshipped and we should not have fixations on them. Take for example the great scholar Ibn 'Arabi, in his *Futuhat Al-Makkiyya*, or the *Meccan Revelations* or *Openings*. The chapters are interesting because he calls each chapter a ladder, which leads one on to the next level. In each subsequent chapter, he completely destroys the previous chapter, then he builds another chapter, then he completely destroys it in following chapter. It is type of 'Yes, and then No'; Yes, No. It is a very strange way of proceeding. some scholars like Nicolaus Cusanus did this in medieval times in the Christian world, and Hasdai Crescas did this in the Jewish scholarly world. It is premised on the notion of having a positive doctrine and a negation of that doctrine. Why? Because God cannot be described fully, so you need to fail in describing him, and in turn you need to do the positing and the negating. Each typology that we use is useful, but it must also be destroyed quickly, before falling into the trap of believing they are universal. What I propose is something like what Husserl called the method of variation, as we try to describe the Arab springs in as many multiple ways as possible; at least the religious dimensions of them, and then negate those successively.

Let us take the Libyan religious scene as a case; we can draw a typology: Sufi, Salafi, Ikhwani, non-religious. That can be one typology, but we can do a more nuanced version of that: moderate Salafi, radical Salafi, contemplative Sufi, scholarly Sufi, radical Ikhwani, reasonable Ikhwani. One may also have the traditionalist *vs* non-traditionalist. In other circumstances one may replace that with politicised religiosity versus non-politicised religiosity. There are many principles of typology, just as we can describe the objects in this room as human and non-human, wooden and non-wooden, or plastic and non-plastic, and the two heaps will differ in each case because of the typology that we use, and typological principle is different in each case. So, are there religious dimensions to the Arab springs? Absolutely, and if there is one point I would like to make, it is that you cannot possibly reject religiosity in trying to understand the Arab springs. Religiosity is extremely important. Not just because I am a theologian and I like religiosity, but because it is a remarkably important factor.

Now how do we deal with this religiosity and how can we understand it? It has implications for constitutional processes, as we can see in the example of Tunisia, with debates regarding Islam as the religion of the state, with the Nahda party taking a particular approach. The same thing is being asked in Libya, should the Sharia be? The whole *Tahkim al-Shari'a* debate is actually a false debate. It is a polemic between two rival political groups on the question.

It is also extremely important to remember that prior to the Arab spring, religiosity was very different from post-Arab spring religiosity. One of the most important things to remember is that legitimacy is distributed in a different way now. There were scholars who were incredibly authoritative and legitimate in Syria, take Sheikh Al-Bouti for example, for whom I have tremendous respect as a scholar and a teacher. But it is very difficult to get young Syrians now to respect al Bouti because they see him as having sided with Assad. The weight of Al-Azhar, prior to the Arab springs is very different to the weight of Al-Azhar now, because of the perception in many people's minds that the Azhar didn't do the right thing, and continued to toe the line with Mubarak until even after the fall. But interestingly, Al-Azhar, post revolution, pre-Muslim Brotherhood ascendency, is different from Al-Azhar post-Muslim Brotherhood ascendency. Even in Egypt, where many young people who were once annoyed at al Azhar a few months ago, are rallying around Al-Azhar now because they see it as a good corrective against the dominance by the Muslim Brotherhood. What is interesting is that Sheikh Ahmed Al-Tayyeb, the head of Al Azhar, is changing his discourse and his methodology accordingly. The Mufti Ali Gomaa is also doing that. There is a kind of responsiveness to what the crowds are demanding and there is a development of the Azhari, doctrine and institutional make up.

There are now questions being raised about how Al-Azhar elects its head, and having elections rather than appointments, and how the elections will work. These processes are very new and very important, because they have to do with the structures of religious legitimacy and they have to do with normativity.

As Joseph Rawls, the great Jewish philosopher of law at Oxford, rightly points out, normativity is the most important question in the philosophy of law. This is especially true in the philosophy of

constitutions and the philosophy of the Shari'a and in the philosophy of building states in an inherently religious area.

The structures of normativity are completely transformed; in Libya the traditionalist Ulema were humdrum spiritual creatures who did not participate in politics, and liked to just flick their prayer beads and live a righteous life; and they are great, they are my teachers. When the revolution happened, myself and a few other maybe crazier characters, spoke to them, and we manged to convince them to set up something that we called the Network of Free Ulema. We argued that if we do not set up such an institution, religiosity runs the risk of being dominated by other trends involved in the political arena. In turn, the traditional line would die out because our failure to act at that critical time.

We revolted against Gaddafi and we issued a fatwa where we said revolting against him is a religious duty, which was key in fuelling the revolt, and this has brought in a new dynamic. Now there is a religious group of Ulema who are very traditionalist and Sufis and are spiritual and everything, but they are also activists in a sense. They are political. But their way of being political is almost metapolitical, as they are not politicised in the sense of having a party and an ideology, and a vanguard and a hierarchy in a party and so on like the Ikhwan, but they are still formidably political and influential. They issued fatwas that contributed to the revolt, and they also issued a fatwa recently that contributed to young people having the courage to drive out of the militias out of Benghazi. This fatwa declared that the killers of my friend Chris Stevens and the attackers on the consulate were Khawarij.

They also said that defending the shrines and embassies, and other human beings even by force was a religious duty. That was very encouraging to these NGOs that went out on the demonstrations and pushed out the militias. Had we issued a fatwa declaring that demonstrations were Haram, as our Grand Mufti just last Friday in order to prevent demonstrations coming out on Friday, they succeeded, things would have been different in Benghazi.

We also see for the first time, religious scholars are working with NGOs, with women's groups, and with the youth movement. This is a crucial factor to consider. If you just think the Ulema are just these old scholars *a la* Azhar, versus the Ikhwan and other activists, you will tend to have policies that think that the Ikhwan are the only game in

town, such that when you see them ascending in Egypt, you will assume that you must negotiate with and support them. Yes, they won Egypt, but they lost miserably in Libya in the elections. Mind you because of the election law, they didn't dominate the parliament in numbers but they dominated the process, so that they got, not the prime minister that they wanted but the second best, and now because they put him in that position they are leveraging that to the maximum.

The dynamic is quite interesting to understand, and what I urge is that people try not be wedded to frameworks that worked prior to the springs, but maybe try to develop new ones, and it is in think tanks like this esteemed think tank, and in academia where people specialise in these topics, we need to have more discussions about how fresh these realities are and maybe try and develop new frameworks to deal with them.

In sum, religion was extremely important for the Arab Springs. No, we do not understand how all these things work, so we must return to being Socratic again: to know that we do not know. I am trying to figure out what happened, what we are doing, even our own group of people. And I must say I am finding every categorisation of people that I knew to actually keep failing, as we are dealing with fresh realities and should have fresh eyes to look with, and do this in a multi-lateral, multi-national, multi-disciplinary way, ranging from theology and political science to anthropology and sociology. We need all the dimensions that are out there and we need most importantly, strange encounters of this kind, where somebody comes from Libya, being a founding member of this little contraption, the League of Libyan Ulema, to talk to people who are working in other areas and have other things.

QUESTION: *I think in this town the debate is so much focused about what happened in Benghazi. Trying to understand it, trying to understand where some of these groups that undertook lie along the spectrum. How representative they are. I wonder if you can talk a little bit more about that, the relative power, if you will, of these various factions.*

AREF NAYED: You know power is an ambiguous word. It has multiple meanings, and there are different types of power and different

processes that we call power. So if you ask for example, about the people who attacked the consulate and killed Ambassador Stevens, and asked 'Do they have the power of normativity and religious legitimacy?' Absolutely not. The vast majority of Libyans would not give such groups even an iota of legitimacy. So they have no power in that way. Do these people have power, as in political power, if you mean by political power, such as membership in parliament, influence in parliament or in the government? Again, absolutely not. They have no power in that sense of having power. Now if you asked the question. Do they have power in the sense of having large numbers of fighters, 500-1000 fighters? Absolutely not again. They are still very small in numbers, compared to the abundance of fighters now, which includes nearly everyone. Everyone has weapons, so these are small numbers.

Now if you ask the question, do they have power in the sense of being well-trained, well-armed, well-organized, and having Special Forces skills so that they are potent? Yes. They are probably the best trained, best armed, best organized, people in the country. Now do they have Sun Tzu kind of power of the art of war, ninjutsu—seriously and I mean this—deception, the power of fighting darkly and clandestine action? They are the most powerful in that regard. Because they are not transparent; they are opaque, you cannot know them, you cannot see them. They learn and they can become effective, so they are powerful in that regard. Do they have the power and the deception, to infiltrate and to create false identities and open channels of misplaced trust, so that they will be getting access to things that they shouldn't be getting to? They are very powerful in that way. And part of the secret of their power is the fact that they have something that they would call in software engineering inheritance. In object-oriented programming, inheritance is a phenomenon of one category giving rise to another category and the other category gaining some features from the first. What is interesting is the way that conditions developed in Benghazi for example, is that it was Gremlin-like, you know, not the old notion of Gremlin, but in the movie, the Gremlins.

So if you remember that cute little guy, if you pour water on him, creatures pour out of that thing. So the initial militias, they looked quite cute, with big eyes, very nice, you know they are heroes, freedom

fighters. Then water was poured on them, and more militias developed. You know what is interesting, is that in each popping out of further militias you get higher and higher concentration of not only potency but of the demonic, you know, evilness. What's interesting is that you have this big militia in Benghazi, and then some people in that militia felt that the militia was wimpy and disorganized, and they had people who were drinking, and people who were just tough guys from the street and they didn't like that; they wanted a cleaner militia with more discipline and so they created another. Well amongst those there was a group who thought that the militia was not righteous enough and that had weird doctrines, and so they needed to be truly Salafi, so they created another creature, and this process continued for a year and a half. So that when you get the self-righteous, puritanical militia, you get a very potent and troublesome strand of takfiri, jihadist, Salafist group that is not only dismissive of other Muslims but actually declares them kaffirs and has no hesitation in killing them as they have done with Abdel Fattah Younes and with Muhammad Haddiyah.

As it says in the Qur'an, one person's death is like the death of humanity, and it is not in any way to diminish the tragedy of Chris's death, but Chris was not the only one who got killed by these people, and it is very important to remember that. Not to make it any easier, but to open up our understanding more. To understand why he was killed you have to understand why all those other people were killed, and why the shrines were destroyed, and why the dead were dug up from their graves, and why the libraries were burned. These phenomena are all related. You would get a skewed understanding if you isolate these things from one another.

So, you get this very weird mutation that is heavily armed and highly trained. Well who trained them? Some got trained in Afghanistan, and others got trained even by the trainers who were training these freedom fighters, which includes helpful nations who were training these freedom fighters in perfectly legitimate circumstances. But there was very little vetting about who got trained. There was very little vetting, hardly any recording of who got the weapons. And this went on in the fog of battle. At the time I was the Chief Operations Officer of the Libyan Stabilization Team, and I advised promptly that we invoke the national ID project and register the weapons and do a vetting process.

People thought that it was a waste of time, and that there was no time for such niceties, and there was an abundance of training and an abundance of weaponry. So these guys are highly trained, heavily armed, and with theologies that are so mutilated that they would not hesitate to kill other Muslims, let alone non-Muslims.

How did these people get through? they get through because of a very strange phenomenon, namely, how chains of trust work. I may not trust her, but I trust him. But he happens to trust her. When I give my trust to him, because of his trust to her she gets trusted. So if I tell him something, she gets to know about it, even though I wouldn't trust her. So what happens is when you have chains of trust like this you can have transmissions of information from someone, to someone, even if I could not possibly trust the person, but he gets the information because of this chain effect. So, as the militias transform, or not transform, and give rise to further militias, strands of trust get maintained.

When someone left a militia, it doesn't mean that all members of the old militia wouldn't take to the new one, probably there are still some of the old members who are on talking terms with the new ones. And through this, even a very nice militia who has been very active in the revolution, and nice, and protecting public buildings and so on, inadvertently through friendship become gateways to further radicalised groups, until you get a tunnel that connects the most radicalised to the most reasonable. Now these tunnels work both ways, they can become tunnels of action and energy as they go this way, and the opposite. So that they become corridors of conflict inflicting destructive action, not because anybody was treacherous along the chain. It has nothing to do with treachery or treason, "Oh, these guys betrayed the ambassador", it wasn't like that at all. But I think it's simply because of the nature of how these things were created, and how they develop. We need to describe these processes, and I am doing a very primitive job of description here, because I don't have the tools. But there are people out there who know network theory, who know complexity theory, who know about the anthropology of trust, who know about the sociology of how knowledge works. How loyalty works, so I think there is need for a fresh go at describing these phenomenon, using an interdisciplinary approach, and an approach that connects the three types of human action that Aristotle describes.

Aristotle has this beautiful typology, which is totally useless in some other ways, but which is beautiful in certain ways of saying action is in three types, *theoria*, action, and *poesis* (which is making). So you need the people who make the revolution, talking to people who do things, talking to people who reflect on the revolutions. So I had this weird combination of readings in the last few weeks of people who have reflected on revolutions going wrong; so I read Trotsky, I read Hannah Arendt's *On Revolution*, which is on professional revolutionaries, because that's a beautiful characterization of some of the characters that I have encountered recently. And I read Guevara on Guerrilla warfare, to see what such people would need in order that they could thrive, so that maybe if you could take it away you make it fizzle away, because, yes the young people were brave enough to push them outside of Benghazi but they are lurking in the mountains now. So how can there be a counter insurgency or a counter terrorism thing, to be set up.

QUESTION: *So Dr Nayed, I would like to take you back to your discussion of typology and complexity. So the question I would end with is how to aggregate and separate the two circles that I would call political power and religion in Libya. I have been looking at the period after the regime fell in 1979 in Iran. It was a void. You had an extremely appealing religious with great credentials with a strong national appetite for precisely a reversion to the culture of Islam, which in the end perhaps got out in front of, where the religious pull, conflicted with somehow the exigencies and benefits of political power. And in the end there was a lot of compromise of religious standards, after the beginning, and in holding on to power they traded away a lot of the legitimacy to keep power. And this is my personal view. And I was thinking of the founding fathers of this country, the fact that they separated church and state, it wasn't because of the fact that they lacked religious fervour, they were very religious people, it was because there was not a uniformity of view and they knew that if there were more than one strong religious strain they would be dealing with that conflict at a time when they needed to govern the country. So Libya needs to find its way forward to governance, and people, like the people in this room have to look at this extremely multi-dimensional proposition that you have put in front of them and decide what the drivers of action are, and what are the drivers of action and what are*

we looking at. And at some point when you start to talk about different strains of religion but only in terms of what they are doing, what they are ceasing and what they are destroying, and who they are conflicting against, I wonder at what point have we crossed into a quest for political control that could be among atheists, it could be among aliens, it could be among anyone, and so the question is how do we disaggregate, or how should we think of both the reformation of political structure and power. And the motivation and validation of religious conviction, how do we separate them.

ArEF NAYED: It's a lovely question. Let me answer you in five parts. The first part is about Iran. I think what happened in Iran wasn't just that they gave up the religiosity for the power, I think what happened was that the religiosity was transformed in ways that had power related implications. So they didn't become less religious and more power hungry, they changed, Shi'ism changed at the hands of Ayatollah Khomeini, and a new creature was created. It is fully Shi'ite, its fully religious, you cannot call it just a political thing because, you know the people who followed Khomeini on this are religious scholars.

QuESTION: *Can I interrupt for a second. When it came to his death, they had a religious scholar ready to take his place and because he disagreed with the Imam he was pushed aside in favour of someone who didn't have the religious credentials, they were voted in by the ruling party. He was voted an Ayatollah, he is now voted a Grand Ayatollah, he didn't do this by religious study, and this is my point.*

Aref Nayed: Well taken, but that lowering of the bar on the scholarship bit wouldn't be seen as a compromise. What they would probably say is that, yes he is not a scholar in what they would call the *muhadith* tradition of Shi'ism, but he is more of a scholar because he understood the spirit of the Imam, and the *Wilayat al-Faqih* in a different way. So it's a redistribution of legitimacy. But it's not a religious act. I think that's an important point, to remember, and I believe one of the ways to counter the Iranian phenomena is to work with other types of religiosity that are an alternative to the *Wilayat al-Faqih* model. I mean, there are some interesting people in Mashhad, some in Kashhan that are doing the old way of Shi'ism that was not criticised in that unhelpful way by Ayatollah Khomeini, and I don't think that kind of scholarship is being done.

But be that as it may, what you say about the Founding Fathers, and this is my second point. Is also, I would qualify, because I don't think that Jefferson as an example gave up religiosity, what Jefferson did was basically to make Deism and his kind of religiosity quite an integral part of the constitutional process. Meaning, the kind of religiosity that permeates the constitution is a type of religiosity. It is Unitarian in its outlook and it synthesises morals versus, and it's a particular strand of religiosity, you know European religiosity that developed in interesting ways in America, and it's very important not to forget that because I don't think there is really separation between politics and religiosity in the stark way that some people would like to say it, as a matter of fact the kind of anti-religious secularism of the French, for example, of the French Revolution, would be completely alien to the American founding fathers. They were not irreligious and they were not anti-religious, and even when they wanted to separate, it was not separation in the dark sens, they just wanted the kind of religiosity that was broad enough and benign enough to embrace all possible religiosities.

So it's like the category of all categories in Russell, an elevated religiosity, which is very important for us Muslims. And I believe that it is possible to actually work out a Muslim theology and a philosophy of jurisprudence, that come up with a broad religiosity, that is broad enough to accept the variety within the society, and give Libyans a state that is not anti-religious or secular in the sense of the French, but more Jeffersonian. So let me put it this way. I know this may sound weird, but I think a Jeffersonian Sunnism is feasible, really, seriously, I have been working on it, seriously, I am almost there!

And Jefferson makes it quite easy, because he is so reasonable, the Deism is so close to Islam in many ways it's actually possible to do it. Though, and this is the challenge, in the constitutional process that we are about to have, this is a very important discussion to have, and I think that constitutional theorists, these philosophers of law, can be very useful. We need crash courses on constitutional law, we need crash courses on Jefferson, on Washington, what they achieved, and this is one of the easy things that the state department can fund and do, and we can have exchanges, and crash courses on these topic, so you know. That is the second point.

A third point, the secularism of the French is difficult and it

developed with time. You know people say we want to imitate the Turks, well the secularism of Turkey developed quite a bit, from Ataturk to now. So part of the problem we have got is the lumping together of things that should be distinguished, and not enough nuance in the discussion, so anything that could be done to further the discussion would be most helpful.

Now, fourthly, you raised Iran, and this is a very important thing. There is something regionally important. It is not enough to try and work against the nuclear programme in Iran. It is not enough to just do diplomacy and politics. I think that there is a theological debate that should happen between the Sunni world and Iran, which has not happened, and I think it's a debate that would relieve a lot of pressure, that if not dealt with through theological dialogue will manifest itself in war. So I think that if enough Sunni care and Shi'ite care went into sorting out our differences then maybe Bahrain would not be in such a bad situation, maybe eastern Saudi Arabia would not be in such a bad situation, and maybe the war in Syria wouldn't be so vicious. And maybe many things can be worked out but there are many postponed settlements that have been either ignored.

We pretend that they are not there, or expressed in militant ways, in violent ways, where we can actually have a healthy discussion, so, I believe that it is a huge short-coming in our greatest institutions such as Al Azhar and others, that they have lost the capacity to have a healthy and civil *disputatium*. You know people say, we don't want polemic and disputation, even now, when we do interfaith people say we do not want disputation anymore, we just want to be nice and hug, and I think that is a big mistake. Because I'd rather have the disputation at the level of syllogisms and argument than to actually have it in the street and to have by missiles, you know and, let us work out our differences. The Sunni world must work out some sort of coexistence with the Shi'i world, in a mature and scholarly manner, and it's feasible.

And the fifth point, we must come to realise that intra-faith discussions are totally not useful if they are done in isolation from interfaith discussions. So for example, I don't think that just Sunnis and Shi'as should just have that discussion without Muslims and Christians, and Muslims and Jews, and Muslims and Buddhists and Hindus having the discussion. Meaning that dialogical capabilities and

toolkits, and processes like Scriptural Reasoning, and I am honoured to be the student of Professor Peter Ochs, and Professor David Ford of Cambridge. This Scriptural Reasoning process which is amongst Jews Muslims and Christians, is actually for me a condition of possibility for Muslim-Muslim dialogue. I know this may sound weird, but it's really important to resurrect that reality, and that truth, that we knew in Andalusia, we knew in the Ottoman Empire, we knew in Sicily, we knew in many other places, but we've forgotten how to do it. So for me a Muslim who cannot dialogue with a Jew or a Christian cannot dialogue with another Muslim. You cannot do it, why? Because, the very conditions of possibility for genuine dialogue. The day we lost that capability for dialogical engagement at the humanistic level, that includes everybody, is the day we lost the ability to understand ourselves. And it is because of ignorance of ourselves that we become violent, ignorant, and destructive. We push people around. Why because we simply cannot express ourselves. It is like the frustration of trying to explain to somebody, and they don't understand you. That is when you start pushing and shoving and screaming. And violence I think is the explosion that happens when the cooking pot doesn't have that opening that is the whistle. It's an annoying whistle, but it is a very important whistle, because it releases the pressure, and it alerts you to the danger. When you lose it, you have a disaster.

QUESTION: *The question is, in terms of trying to understand the threat of Salafism. It seems there are many ways we could look at it. Is the problem that they are fundamentally anti-modern, have an intolerant ideological focus, or is the problem the actual espousal of violence by a subset, a much smaller group. Who is the real threat? This broader, non-violent Salafist movement that gives rise to these extremists, or this smaller subset, where violence is much more of a tool?*

QUESTION: *I guess, I was just wondering if you could speak more on, kind of, the idea of transitional justice and more, kind of, Arab context, specifically like Libya. I know there has been a lot of talk about transitional justice, but one of my concerns is the limits of a legalistic framework and just strictly importing this Western model, and if you could speak a little bit more to that in the Libyan context, what would you see that looking like, and if there are or there is some*

type of model that could be applied thereafter. I mean, given also our talk of the complexity of identities, and ideologies and how do you move forward with the devastation that Gaddafi left in Libya.

Aref Nayed: I'll start with the Salafism issue. I mean, just as I am an advocate of looking at the complexity and the variety I also like to lump things together once in a while and this is one of those. And one of the things that has been intriguing me lately is notion of a run-of-the-mill fascism, as the culmination or summation of that which is dangerous and problematic. And by fascism I mean, a combination of the following: Certitude of the bad type—there is good certitude and bad certitude. Certitude is cheap certitude where you absolutely know the truth in a shallow sense. Take that, and combine it with a self-righteousness of feeling that you are the one who has got the certitude, combine it with a third component, which is, paternalism "I have it, and I am responsible to impose it upon you", and fourthly the notion of seeing others as objects of the imposition of your will. So a doctrine of "my will on you", why, because, "I know better and I am responsible to make you better and I know also absolutely". This structure need not be uniquely Islamic or Christian or Jewish, or secular, this structure is dangerous no matter what gown it wears.

I believe that the problem is not Salafism as such, but fascist versions of Salafism. I believe that the problem is not the Muslim Brotherhood as such, but fascist forms of the Muslim Brotherhood. I believe the problem is not traditionalist Ulema as such, but fascist traditional Ulema. So that whenever you've got that fascism, we're in big trouble. Now, the amazing thing about fascism, is that it's very easy to detect it in somebody else, and very difficult to notice it in yourself. Why? because I am right. So, you know, to go Biblical "Oh, you hypocrite, why do you see the speck in your neighbours eye and do not see the pole that is in your eye" like Jesus says. But we do this all the time. So it's very important to keep each other honest, like having fascism comparison days, so that I point out your fascism and you point out my fascism.

So, what is going on, in Libya is that I see fascism in nearly everybody, including myself. Why? Because I get some of these other guys, they actually don't like me and they tell me why and then I find out that I am doing to them what I am accusing them of doing to me.

And the only way to get rid of this is to do the mirroring thing. So how do you get around this? It's very easy, you just buy mirrors. Because if I use the mirrors then I can see the pole in my eye. And you can see the pole in your eye. How do you do that, well, by working in pairs rather than working alone, and by having the dialogue with the other so that you can see your faults.

So that is why dialogical engagement is a condition of possibility for democracy. And if we don't have healthy, honest, down to earth, humble talk with each other there is no way forward. And dialogue is not a pair of monologues. It is very easy to do, but it has not been happening enough.

Because they are not talking, even though they are talking at each other they are not really talking with each other. And it's a human failure that we must overcome. So to go back to your Salafi question, it is neither the small group nor the big group, the problem is when these groups go fascist. How can America do right? By not being fascist. How can America do wrong in the Middle East? By being fascist. So if you just think that we finished of fascism by executing Mussolini or by getting Hitler to commit suicide, or killing Gaddafi, well, it's not as easy as that. Well, what's wrong with Mussolini, and Hitler, and Gaddafi was precisely this imposition of the will of the individual on an entire people. Because they see the people as object, and they can reform them, or change them, or even burn them. So as Gaddafi put it: I will rule you or I will kill you.

Now to some to the question you ask about transitional justice. First of all, I love the word justice, but I also fear it, because, justice talk is associated with grievance, which is very prone to self-righteousness, and is very close to self-justifying in rectification. So when Bush called the campaign "Infinite Justice" I get really scared, because at that moment what the world needed was infinite compassion, not infinite justice. I think that transitional justice is a very dangerous term if it is not combined with transitional compassion, transitional forgiveness, and transitional love.

This may sound sentimental, and I apologize, but I mean this seriously, there should be manuals on transitional justice and compassion. If you want to do complete justice in Libya, it's impossible, how can you do it? 42 years of confiscations, rape, killing torture,

marginalisation, exile. I mean it would take you a thousand years to do justice. The only way justice is going to happen is if there is an abundance of forgiveness, or even forgetfulness, but not forgetfulness that I impose on you, to ask you to forget by force, but asking your indulgence and your forgetfulness, its gifted to me because I have hurt you so badly that there is no amount of stuff that I can do even by dying in execution that would compensate you.

So that is why things are not working in transitional justice in Libya because things are not being done, with the love and the compassion, with some exceptions. I cannot see how the angry Misratis will ever achieve justice to what happened to them, because their daughters were raped in front of them by the Tawergha, but as long as they keep hating the Tawergha, and cannot see how they can forgive the Tawergha, they will not be free. But I cannot say to the Misrati, "Of, forgive them", I mean, it's hard to judge them, however, something has to click, and it's not clicking, and because it is not clicking, Libya is boiling. And there are problems between Misrata and Tawergha, Misrata and Warfalla, and Awlad Suleyman and Tebu, and it can go on and on, and unfortunately, the Council has been a combination of denial, negligence, stupidity, idiocy, postponement and hasn't really dealt with these issues in any meaningful way. Now we get a new President and a new Prime Minister, let us pray that they will be, more open to facing these things. The problem with these things is that they fester, like after a year and a half, they are much worse than had we dealt with them a year and a half ago. But maybe time also heals wound, I don't know. Some wounds don't heal with time; if you don't take antibiotics, they kill you. I don't know if they helps.

Yes, attempts were made at dialogue, but they were superficial. They had a conference on national reconciliation, and they brought Qaradawi to give the key note speech. It is an odd choice for an Egyptian living in Qatar to enter the Libyan arena and ask them to reconcile. People have to get real; this is not to scoff, as there are some efforts which are quite good, but what is interesting is that the people who've been most successful are these elderly illiterate tribesmen who do some old tribal "voodoo" that they do and they are actually stopping wars. For example, the reconciliation between the Tebu and the Awlad Suleyman was negotiated by three people, three old people.

Meanwhile in Gotham city the Prime Minister could not do it and the army could not do it. So, you have to respect these indigenous processes that work somehow, because we have forgotten how. Because Gaddafi destroyed even that, you know, he would come to a tribe and he would reverse it. He would put the leaders at the bottom and the bottom in the lead. He really messed us up, he destroyed, religious hierarchy and legitimacy, he destroyed the tribal system, and he destroyed the army. He even destroyed the Boy Scouts, really. I am a Boy Scout. He even football. The only thing that was functioning were the mercenaries, and the mobile units that he had and they were destroyed during the war. It is as chaotic and as difficult as it can get. Nevertheless, and despite the lack of institutions and real political experience, we managed to rally international support, have an elected parliament and our first government.

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The Libyan Revolution:
Experiences and Future Challenges

The following speech and discussion was held at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) on the 1st February 2012.

GOOD EVENING LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, and thank you very much Stephen for your introduction, and thank you very much to SOAS for hosting me, for your generosity and your time to share with this humble soul a few observations about my beloved country.

I do theology and bit of philosophy. And I would like to say a few theological things to begin with, and then maybe we can get on with politics to some extent.

For many years, I have thought that the main goal of a Muslim theologian today would be the articulation of a theology of compassion, on the basis of which a compassionate preaching of Islam can take place, and a compassionate sharing with people of other faiths can be possible.

This theology of compassion, which tries to be a condition of a preaching of compassion, I still hold to be quite vital.

Unfortunately, during the Arab spring—and I prefer not to use this term in the singular; I like to speak in terms of the Arab springs in the plural—the discourse of compassion has been absent. I believe that when young people came out in revolt against Gaddafi and against Mubarak, and against Zain al Abedin, they did so in search for a much better world, a compassionate world. And I believe that their revolt was not against particular persons, but against tyranny, against cruelty, and against corruption.

We have had differing degrees of success in the Arab Springs in the

fight against these three vices. In the case of Libya, the very search for freedom and democracy and a better world came with the cruelty of warfare. Warfare gave rise to the mobilization of the fighting spirit. One of our greatest challenges now, however, is to mobilize a spirit of love and compassion, and to try to build a country based on love and forgiveness; and its mighty difficult, because the very mobilization process that was necessary to fight a very hard fight has now become a hindrance to the mobilization of better feelings, and human values of peace, love, forgiveness, compassion, and reconciliation.

I therefore cannot say that our revolution in Libya is a success until we can overcome tyranny with genuine democracy, and overcome cruelty with genuine compassion, and overcome corruption with genuine transparency and fairness and cleanliness in all transactions by they governmental or private.

I am afraid that while it appears that we have succeeded, because Gaddafi has been removed; I believe our success is only partial, because I still see a lot of tyranny in us, in Libya, and I believe the most difficult idols to destroy are the idols within our own hearts. We can be tyrannical in our attitudes and in our hearts, towards our colleagues who fought with us for freedom, and ironically become tyrannical in our very fight against tyranny.

I believe also that we are very limited in our fight against cruelty because as I said the fight itself involved a lot of cruelty; and this has been pointed out by some very disturbing reports by human rights activists and groups. The fact is that there is still cruelty in Libya, and there is cruelty and torture in some holding facilities that are illegal in the real sense, as they have no association whatsoever with the ministry of justice

In the fight against corruption our success has been very limited. Some of the most corrupt are government officials whose salaries are supposed to be a thousand dinars a month, and yet own billions of dollars and euros overseas and billions of dinars in the country. They have managed, to a rather disturbing degree, to re-polish themselves, and even get religious preachers to sing their praise on television stations that they own. This corrupt clique is making a comeback, to steal yet again, under a new democratic guise.

I do not intend in any way paint a bleak picture, or belittle the suc-

cess of the revolution against Gaddafi, but we would be kidding ourselves, if we think that we have completely succeeded.

Unless we can overcome tyranny, cruelty, and corruption, young people will again and again, feeling frustrated, resort to revolution. One very striking thing about Libyan youth, and youth in other countries of course, is the incredible intelligence and know-how that they have, and the fact that they cannot be fooled anymore. If you look at Facebook and if you look at the social media traffic it is very clear that the young people realize that there is still cruelty, there is still corruption, there is still tyranny.

I predict that these young people will not only take to the street once again, like they have done recently in Benghazi and in Tripoli, and in Misrata in other places, but they may resort to even more drastic measures in the near future if we do not very seriously address these great grievances, which are the causes of the problem in the first place.

Part of the reason that these things are not being addressed properly is because they are very near to the phenomenon that Hannah Arendt explains in the end of her book, *On Revolution*, namely, professional revolutionaries.

A specific elite group of people assume the mantle of the revolution, rather than the grassroots or communal associations, and she points this out in the Hungarian revolution, and in the French revolution, and to a lesser extent in the Russian revolution when the soviets were very early on stolen by the Bolshevik party. As I was reading this, it occurred to me that to some extent the very same thing is taking place in Libya. This may partially explain why we are not able to address the three grievances that I mentioned at the very beginning, in any meaningful or any thorough way.

When this revolution began, what I believe to be a divine miracle happened, that is that Libyans had a consensus on the national transitional council under its Chairman Mustafa Abdel Jalil. If someone were to ask me if Libyans would agree on anything at that point, I would have considered that to have been impossible. But in a very short period, there was consensus on supporting the NTC and on Mustafa Abdel Jalil. And it was that consensus, fragile as it was, that enabled the country to go forward, and enabled Libya to have a legitimate partner in dialogue with international friends and partners.

Very interestingly, early on, people pointed out that the NTC was a bit too 'eastern'. That there weren't enough seats in it and that these seats were taken by mainly Eastern based tribes and persons. And very early on in our discussions with international partners it was pointed out that there wasn't enough participation from the West, the South and the centre of the country. At the time, I was helping the Executive Team and Mustafa Abdel Jalil, heading a support team that was supporting the Executive Team. We decided that we must locate representatives from all over the country, consolidate them, and bring them to Benghazi to express support for the NTC. With great difficulty, we managed to succeed, but only with the great help of volunteers from all over Libya, there were about 70 or so volunteers, we managed to pull together a rather convincing group of people, coming from the south, the centre, and the west, and we arranged through kind Emirati help, to bring them to Abu Dhabi, and through kind Qatari help to bring them to Doha, then to take them to Benghazi. In Benghazi, they pledged allegiance to the NTC, and then to fill the seats in the NTC. Our team is honoured to see many of the people who came on that journey to still be in the NTC, and to have seen some of them who made it to governmental positions. When the team organized that I believed it was a spectacular success for that time, for the task at hand.

Unfortunately, since liberation, there was supposed to be an expansion of this group, and there was supposed to be a replacement of key personalities in that group, now that cities were free and could send their proper representatives, chosen through popular selection or choice, be it elections or, kind of, popular local consensus. That didn't happen, and with only a few exceptions the council remained roughly the same size and very few changes happened, the local councils began to lose their importance to some extent in people's eyes, and people focused on the national level on what is going to happen at the elections, the election law, and what would happen for the eventual election of the assembly of 200 and so on.

I believe that that negligence with the local councils was a big mistake, if you look at the news about Libya you'll find very little talk about the local councils since the coverage of that gathering back in Abu Dhabi, Doha, and Benghazi. There is no talk about what is happening at the local level, and I believe that that is a key mistake, be-

cause by not paying attention to these developments, a great deal cannot be understood.

I believe that a sure road towards democracy would have been possible if we paid more attention to the local councils, and if we asked for elections at the local council level, immediately after the liberation, so that we can populate the general assembly or the NTC itself, with people who are duly elected locally.

Because of this we now have a very fragile NTC that is not nearly as democratically chosen or elected as it should be, and with a limited size and expertise, having to carry the country forward in a period that has been overextended for several months. Yes, there is now a transitional government, but it too remains fragile because of the selection process, the difficulties in delineation of authorities between the council and the transitional government, and because of funding issues.

So now we have this very strange situation with two fragile structures, having to cope with very heavy duties, without the necessary legitimacy, and having to cover a few very difficult months in difficult circumstances, with the addition of of arms being spread around the country and lots of groups having developed.

I believe that Hannah Arendt was right to say that the local councils are very important in developing what Jefferson would call 'Little Republics' that are distributed and that come together in a political body that is truly developed. I also see the alarming emergence of professional revolutionaries who are trying to replace the local councils through two mechanisms. One of them is trying to dominate particular local councils, especially the council of Tripoli, and there was in recent weeks, huge fights on Facebook, and also in what is called Algeria Square, including the storming of the local council, precisely because of the problematic of representation at the local level, and the struggle between the local councils around Tripoli and local council that is dominated by a particular political party or tendency.

So, this is already happening, and a further alarming tendency is the alliance of some of these professional revolutionaries in various areas of Libya with a religious, scholarly direction that is trying to basically monopolize religious legitimacy with some very polluted money supporting some of these preachers, and giving them access to subsidised television stations and so it gets very complicated. I do believe

the revolution is in real danger of being high jacked, by these cliques and these professional revolutionaries, as Arendt called them, and that the local councils are not getting enough of attention, neither locally [domestically] or internationally. This is leading to a very precarious situation where people are feeling robbed and feeling cheated, and I think that explains the violence that we have seen in Benghazi recently with the attack on the NTC itself, and some of the local attacks on the local Tripoli council. Even the Bani Walid incident which is not at all pro-Gaddafi versus anti-Gaddafi forces, but a local council pre-liberation versus a local council post-liberation, with the addition of some tribal complications.

What I am trying to say is that some of these conflicts we have seen do form a pattern, and one way of understanding their motions and reasons is to understand two things:

Think of the great intentionalities of the revolution that are not reached, and these I mentioned in the beginning, and these are the overcoming of tyranny and cruelty, and the overcoming of corruption. I think there is a feeling of unfulfilled intentionality and that is very frustrating for young people.

And the second thing is the fact that the local councils have not had their due respect and attention and further development, and we are seeing very complicated local politics and struggle and meanwhile the attention of the intellectual discussion, political discussion, and on the election law and on the future of the constitution, which are very important questions, but I think that you need to address the two sets first, in order to be able to move forward. I foresee that we will continue to have difficulties, but I do have great hope in the young people of Libya, and I think just as they overcame this almost impossible situation of Gaddafi's tyranny before, I think they will overcome all difficulties. But I am afraid it is not to be pleasant unless we can talk about these issues publicly and address these issues in open discussion.

I am also afraid this open discussion is not happening enough. It is not happening publicly enough, and there is not enough public debate. People complain about too many voices being expressed in Libya, and I think we shouldn't complain about that; what we should complain about is that these voices, or this polyphony to use Bakhtin's termi-

nology is not being consolidated through a public debate in a public sphere that is open for everyone, so that a national discourse, and vision can emerge from this complex symphony of voices.

Sometimes, when faced with a cacophony of voices, people will gravitate towards a single voice that they were used to in the past. But as soon as anybody tries to speak with a single voice, people get scared because it sounds like Gaddafi trying to dictate things with a centralized command and control model. So, when there is a single voice people object, and when there is a multiple set of voices people object, and what we need to do is to get used to listening to the multiplicity of voices.

This is not going to happen unless the local councils and their emergence are respected and can be consolidated in a grander assembly. The process is going to be painful unless we can somehow open this discussion up and get things going.

One key factor in getting the discussion going is to settle a very important stumbling block: and that is the issue of religious legitimacy. As you well know there is a debate on Islam and sharia, and the way some of the Islamist politicians portray the question is the following: Libya is a Muslim country for Muslims, so if you want Islam then you must be with us. And if you don't want to be with us then you are rejecting Islam and therefore a secularist. There are already pamphlets being distributed at universities, in which it is said that to vote for a secularist, or an *'almani*, as they say, is a haram or forbidden action.

This is quite alarming. It is very strange, but the Muslim scholars that are duly authorized according to the tradition, the Azhari types, the venerable sages and scholars of Libya, are not being heard. The religious voice has been monopolized by a certain politicized Islam. Even the Grand Mufti and the minister of the *Awqaf*, who represent a type of Salafi Malikism that is in association with political Islam that is having the platform, while the old religious scholars are not getting enough of a hearing. Assemblies of ulema were highly non-representative, and skewed in their representation.

There are people working on this, we had earlier in the revolution formed something that was called the Network of Free Ulema and that network, together with Sufi networks are consolidating in what is called the Association of Libyan Ulema, the *Rabita Ulema Libya*, and

hopefully this will consolidate into a scholarly group that will not use religion against one party or another, but will make a point of letting God be God, as Barth would say, and forbidding political parties from utilizing religion as a tool against each other.

There needs to be a non-political, non-partisan religious body that should actually work to forbid the cheap use of religiosity to attack other parties, and unless this happens we will have a skewed discussion, and the issues regarding the Shari'a and the constitution and so on will definitely be a very distorted discourse. I see this as a very important framework or moral code that prevents us from using God against each other; in addition to the local councils, they represent a critical element to the emergence of a true democracy in Libya.

I am afraid we have not completed the cycle of revolution, and unless the grievances that I talked about in the beginning, tyranny, cruelty, and corruption are addressed, and unless locality and the grassroots is paid attention to, we do have a very serious risk of people feeling robbed of their own accomplishments, and maybe taking a second go at revolution. I believe that stability in Libya, as I believe all stability, is a gift from God.

I was looking for a word in Arabic for 'stability', and it is *istikrar*, but it is better to speak of *sakina*, as is well known in the legal literature, and I think that this divine gift of peace is a form of divine compassion, and I believe divine passion is triggered through mutual compassion and through mutual love. So I would like to come back to this spiritual, theological theme of love: unless we stop trying to cheat each other, by using God against each other, and unless we stop being cruel to each other, and unless we call a spade a spade and face corruption—I mean it is absolutely ludicrous to see a preacher on television sing the praises of a well-known thief in Libya, and that has happened already and people are not stupid—and unless we are able to make sure that religiosity is truly prophetic and truly genuine in fostering a spirit of fairness and love, and in being against tyranny and against cruelty and against corruption, we will not have the stabilization that we seek. So, am I pessimistic or optimistic? I am optimistic, I believe that one must be. I believe that the three virtues that the medievals talked about: faith, hope and charity, are the roadmap to stability in not only Libya, but across the region, in other countries, and

I believe it is feasible to build a great country. But we have a long way to go, and it will be a huge mistake to think that we have killed tyranny just by killing Gaddafi. Tyranny is within all our hearts, and to think that we have gotten rid of cruelty, just because we got rid of the old torturers, we are kidding ourselves, because there are new torturers. To think that we have overcome corruption before we face the ugly realities of the recent trust of Libya, we will not have a democracy.

Yes, we will have democracy, but it is not going to be easy, and we need each other to go forward, and we need your reflections, and your advice, and we need to articulate, as much as we can, what it is that is going on.

QUESTION: *Many Libyans see you as an impediment to progress in Libya. Your appointment as ambassador to the United Arab Emirates, did not arise from the Libyan people's choice, and when your superior Mahmud Gibril was challenged on this he said that the foreign minister of the United Arab Emirates requested you in name. So, to challenge this kind of corruption that you mentioned, I think that you should start at home. There is also the question between your link with Tomorrow's Libya company (Libya al-Ghad), that gave you an exclusive mandate to do their human training resources, with Mahmud Gibril al-Werfali. You need to know that Werfalla tribe is castigated now, and it is harder for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than it is for a Werfalli to reach high office.*

STEPHEN CHAN: *Thank you, I think that we will answer that question first before going on to anyone else. They are pertinent questions and I think that Dr Nayed is prepared to answer your question.*

AREF ALI NAYED: First of all I am honoured to meet you, I have read about your efforts and your party and it's a great honour to meet you and to hear your voice, and I would be very happy to address your concerns, which are legitimate concerns. Let me begin with the appointment, I was in the demonstration in Fashloom on the 19th of February, I came out of Libya on the 20th, went to Turkey, tried to get some help from Turkey, and then went to Abu Dhabi, and asked to meet Sheikh Abdallah Bin Zayed. I had never met Sheikh Abdallah Bin Zayed before but a mutual friend managed to get me an appointment, and I explained to him the situation in Benghazi and appealed

to him to help us. And I am very happy that, I am not saying that it was only my advice, but that other people also advised him and he reflected on this, but very early on he did help, and the UAE stands in the GCC, and in the Arab League, and was absolutely key in the diplomatic effort, and we are grateful to the UAE for that.

I dare say I began my involvement in the revolution by phoning Dr. Zahi Mugherbi and Dr. Naguib al-Hsadi in Benghazi before the council was formed, and as the professors of law and the lawyers were discussing what form or structures we should have, I dare say I did take part in that discussion, over the phone through Dr. Zahi Mugherbi, and Dr. Idris and various other people in Benghazi at the time, so my involvement with the NTC was from its very inception and prior to the appointment of Dr. Mahmud Gibril.

I immensely respect Mahmud Gibril, he is from the Werfella tribe, I am from the Werfella tribe, he is from the Ziadat sub-clan, and I am from the Ziadat sub-clan, but we meet together in the, I think the ninth grandfather, so to say that he is my cousin is true in Arabic, but is not true in English, the notion of cousin is quite narrowed down. I very much respect him, when I first came out I had a network of relationships with various academics and some governments because of about 20 years of work in interfaith. I used these contacts to the maximum, I e-mailed everybody that I could, and built up a correspondence with governments regarding Libya early on, so when Mahmud Gibril was appointed, in decree number two of the NTC, I called him and I told him that I had made certain correspondences with foreign governments and that because he is now responsible for the foreign ministry that I should give him these correspondences. And when I briefed him on what I did he was appreciative and he asked me to help him out, because he had very little help at the time. I built up a formidable, I would say, group of young Libyans who have done all the work. All I did was to coordinate between them to some extent. But about 70 young Libyans helped the executive team and Mahmud Gibril in various ways, ranging from solving the fuel issue in Benghazi early on, to issues with the TFM—the international fund, to sending secretarial support with missions of Dr. Issawi to Italy, and other things that we did. Very mundane small things, these were done by volunteers, including myself, and they did not cost the government anything what-

soever. So to say that Mahmud Gibril appointed me, or that it was fa-voritism or that it was because I am from his tribe is really not quite fair. Now to say that the foreign minister of the United Arab Emirates appointed me is also not fair, because, as you know, ambassadors are appointed by their own government, but as you know it is also true that in diplomacy the host country has to accept the nomination, and the process of acceptance can take some time, and so when the UAE recognized the council as the legitimate government of Libya it was vital that an ambassador be appointed very early on, because at that time the recognition we had from the UAE was the highest form of recognition, they actually very early on recognized the council as the legitimate government of Libya and we needed that for legitimate in-ternational discussion, so it was vital that we had an ambassador very quickly. And what Sheikh Abdallah Bin Zayed did, and that's all he did, was that he told Dr. Mahmud Gibril and Sheikh Mustafa Abdel Jalil, that if you do send us Aref, who has has been arranging all the meetings thus far with the United Arab Emirates, we will accept him. That is what he said. And I was duly nominated by the Council, my name was discussed in the Council, it was agreed to in the Council, there was a discussion, there were some objections, they were over-come, and I was appointed as the ambassador. And I am honoured to have that appointment. But I made it clear from the beginning that it was a volunteer appointment, and that I would like to stop being am-bassador as soon as we have liberation. I have submitted my resigna-tion 9 times thus far, and thus far they have been telling me to hold on until they send a replacement. I have not applied for or taken a diplomatic passport, I have not changed my residence visa, it is still under my own company, I have not taken a single penny from the Libyan government, and I have not relocated to the ambassador's house, I am still living in my own house, and I have told the govern-ment in no uncertain terms that I am not interested in continuing this role. So I would like to assure you that none of what you think re-garding the appointment is as you think.

Now regarding Tomorrow's Libya, and the training, I have no clue about what you are talking about there, there is no such link. There has been a lot of stuff on Facebook, saying that Mahmud Gibril is my partner, he is not. My partner is a man from Misrata named Muneim

Hamad Boud. He has been my partner for the last 14 years, he is my only partner, ever. And I have never done any business transaction with Mahmud Gibril or anyone else in the present or past government, I did not know any of the Gaddafi brothers, except for Muhammad Gaddafi because he tried to take away a contract from me and we had a bit of a fight, OK, and I never met Saif al-Islam, so none of the stuff that's on the Facebook is fair. I believe that the team I led was subject to deliberate attacks from certain parties, and even on television a particular preacher made accusations, and I only had to say respectful thing about him when I was interviewed.

I believe have addressed your second contention. Now regarding the Werfalla tribe, with all due respect to you, the Werfalla is a big and I would say great tribe. Like any tribe in Libya it has some good people, some bad people, it has a good track record, and a bad track record, we can have a long discussion about which tribes helped whom when, and we can go on for many hours, but I cannot accept your insulting in any way the Werfalla tribe, just as I would not accept you insulting any Libyan tribe, be it Misrata, or Zintan, or anyone else. I believe that because of demography, that unless you want to take away citizenship from the Werfalla tribe, which I don't think is feasible or anyone's right then you do have to live with them, and, as a Werfalli, I am honoured to live with you, no matter what you say about us or about me. And I believe that we must learn to respect each other, and if you have grievances about particular Werfallis then you must address those concerns to that person, and use legal means to pursue them. And I will be the first to help you in that pursuit. And I very much respect your frankness and thank you for it, but I do also pray that you also hear me out, and consider what I have just told you. Thank you.

QUESTION: *I am a Sudanese and someone who comes from an essentially Arab culture. I want to focus on the point of compassion in Islam. I think the problem in Islam is that it is a pre-enlightenment Islam. It is very difficult to see how we can produce the kind of compassion coming from critical Muslims and this kind of group, I think this is the main problem I would say.*

QUESTION: *I would like to ask about the economy specifically about contracts with foreign companies, will the contracts made by the*

Gaddafi regime be honoured, and what will happen about it, and also when will the country diversify away from oil, in to areas such as tourism, Libya has a great heritage, and of course that cannot happen without security. What are you doing about these issues?

QUESTION: *I have two questions for you, one of them is, what is the current security status in Libya and what is the current government going to do about it. And the other is, what is the current government going to do about the situation in Libya so that it does not fall into a failed state, like Somalia has.*

AREF ALI NAYED: What you say about compassion in Islam is absolutely important, and compassion is so central to Islam. You have, *Bismillah Al-Rahman, Al-Rahim*. The Qur'an is called *Hidaya al-Rahma*, the Prophet *sallallahu alaihi wasallam* is called *al-rahmat al-muhdat*, and yet it is so conspicuously absent from the discourse. You can read many books about Islam without coming across the topics such as *rahma*, as though it is too mushy of a concept to form the basis of a political discourse. I believe that, and I was saying this in Benghazi recently, that the biggest crisis we have is a crisis of compassion, and a crisis of moral conduct, without it you cannot have proper politics. There is a need for a meta-political discourse, that works at the axiological level, or the ethical level that should be the foundation for more detailed or more applied politics. No what you say about the enlightenment, I am not so sure, because I believe it is actually the opposite, in the pre-enlightenment discourse the compassion was there, in late Muslim literature it was there, I am thinking even up to the late 19th century, beginning of the 20th century, it is with the discourse of enlightenment, and more precisely of modernity that you get a more engineering like Islam, that thinks of problem solving, and thinks of Islam is the solution, like a problem-solving methodology. And with this Enlightenment/Modernity, things like love, things like communion with other people in the community through compassion and mutual respect and love do not get emphasis.

In the European Enlightenment, you have two types of discourses, one is very cold and calculating and rationalistic kind of enlightenment, and then you get the kind of, pietistic version of enlightenment, something like the Kantian critique of pure reason, and the notions of the categorical imperative, and the dealing with the person as person

and the distinction of the person from thing. This kind of enlighten-ment discourse with its pietistic streak is actually very similar to pre-modern Islamic theological discourses. It is a rather complex matter and we need to look at the kind of Enlightenment, how it happened in Egypt, the school of Tahtawi, so I wouldn't put it in such a polar manner, I think it is much more complex.

Now regarding the question of the economy, will the contracts be honoured? The position of the government is that legal, proper con-tracts will be honoured. What that means is that, there will be an in-vestigation of bad contracts, which is a complex issue. I am speaking here in a personal capacity, and my opinion is that proper contracts should be honoured and that all contracts should be reviewed at some level, and the best kind of review is self-review. During the last ten years and the period of Saif al-Islam's so-called reformism, there has been a lot of high-way robbery in contracting, and if you want to ho-nour all the contracts that Saif circle signed then you would probably exhaust all the billions of dollars that are said to be in Libyan reserves, so, you get things like airports with like, four times the benchmark in terms of square footage, and double or triple the prices.

What we are seeing in this revolution is that some of the most cor-rupt officials are now owning television stations and are now coming back as great supporters of some political streaks, so there is a long way to go and it is only with that kind of frankness you exhibited here, and I am very grateful to him, that we must talk frankly and open our books, I have said in an interview that I have archives of 15 years of business activities, and I would be very happy to open them to in-spection by the government, and I think we must all come forward and be open to that kind of scrutiny, and demand transparency of each other, and I think foreign companies also have to consider their past ways, and in those cases where they were embezzled and certain offi-cials forced them into paying things they should come forward and say, Mr So and So, who was the head of this entity, did this and that, and I think there should be a mechanism for this, how can it be done is a complicated issue, that needs further discussion but I don't think that we should just honour everything because some of it is really du-bious, at the same time I don't think that governments should just wriggle their way out of contractual obligations. That would be a very

bad thing for the integrity of the country, its credit rating, and everything else. Now regarding the security, If you consider the size of Libya, if you consider the extent of the violence that was involved in this conflict, if you consider the diversity of tribes and clans and backgrounds and towns and regions and so on, what we have in Libya today is a security miracle in many ways, you can live in Tripoli and go about your business, and have cappuccinos and eat and so on, it is secure and you can travel across the country in security. Is it totally secure? Of course not. Will there be some flare ups of violence here and there? Yes, there will be, but the more we respect the local councils, the more there is discussion with the local councils, the more there is integration of these military local councils with the national army and the national police the more peace we will have, but if you look at post conflict cases in other countries I think Libya is doing remarkably well, and sometimes people think that stabilization has to do with monopoly of power and centralization, I believe that Libya has achieved what it has achieved with security is precisely because of distribution, or massive parallelism of structures.

Because the weapons are widely spread, because no one has monopoly over power things balance themselves out in many ways. This is not to say that we should be content with the situation but we should have a program for processing these weapons and disarming, but it must be a gradual process and a parallel process, so that you don't end up with one tribe owning the power or one political party owning the power, so that you do have balance of power throughout. I believe that we need to develop structures of stabilization, or stabilization models, that do not necessarily depend on centralized command and control, but this is something that maybe we can discuss further.

QUESTION: *I would like to ask you two things about Islam, first, if you think that Salafism will become the dominant trend in Libya after the revolution, and the second, I was in Libya twice, during Gaddafi's time because we were invited by the WICS, with its headquarters in Tripoli, they were a big institution, they brought students from many countries with scholarships. I would like to know if you think that in the future this institution will survive, or will dissolve after Gaddafi's rule.*

QUESTION: *I fear that the young people do the revolution and the elderly jump on it. This is what they feel, this is my first point, and the second point is that, what do you feel about the new electoral law, and especially what do you feel about the multiple amendments that have been made now.*

QUESTION: *I would like to come back to the issue of violence. It seems that one of the most difficult issues facing the region in the post-Gaddafi era is the proliferation of arms in the region, and between all the armed groups. So how this current government is dealing with this issue.*

AREF ALI NAYED: The question, regarding Salafism, will it dominate Libyan society. Salafism as you know is a very complex phenomenon, it has many schools, sub-schools and various tendencies, nearly all those tendencies are represented in Libya today. This has to do with historical factors, returnees from other countries and the United States where Salafism was propagated in Mosques, the return of many people who studied in Saudi Arabia, the propagation of CDs and tapes and so on, so it's a complex history, and it has to do with the gap that was created by the Gaddafi regime, when he exercised something he called the cultural revolution, in which the institutions of religious teaching were destroyed in Libya, thereby creating a gap that was filled by various tendencies that were not really known to Libya before. Libya is historically Ash'ari in *'aqida*, Maliki in jurisprudence and Sufi in tendency, apart from Ibadi *madhhab* in the Nafusa Mountains, and some of the towns and tribes in the Nafusa Mountains. And that was the historical balance. This has changed, through as I say, these changes in the late 70s, 80s, and 90s, and there is a sizeable influence of Salafism in the country. Interestingly, some of them sided with Gaddafi and declared that there should be no rebellion against him, and these are more of the Madkhali type of Salafism, and some sided with the more jihadist streaks, and the Muslim Brotherhood and fought quite courageously against Gaddafi. And the dynamics between these two types of Salafism is quite complex and in each side, there is a distinct subset, and sub-subset and so on. I believe that the tradition of the country, the Ash'arism, the Malikism and the Sufism, is most worthy of out attention, of development, and of articulation, that is the school I belong to. And the parts of Salafism that warns people about

not worshiping things but only God, is something I respect and can understand, but the blowing up of tombs that has happened over the past couple of months is totally unacceptable, not only because it is theologically and juridically wrong, but I believe the most dangerous thing about it is that someone is imposing their religious opinion using bombs, and that is not something that is conducive to building a democracy. So, I will do my utmost to make sure that the tradition of the country is preserved. I played an important role with a team of great students and other teachers of renovating and restarting teaching in the Ottoman Madrasa, and we do intend to continue the tradition.

But I don't think that anybody is going to have monopoly over the religious discourse, it's going to be in discussion with the Salafis, the Ikhwan, and everybody else, and it's extremely important that we respect each other, and not resort to violence to sort out our issues, I also think that there is no more place in Libya for secret societies or parties, that everybody should be transparent about their membership and should be open about their allegiances, I am telling you exactly what my allegiances are. I am a Sanussi in *tariqa* and a Maliki, and Ash'ari, Now, regarding the WICS, it has survived, the executive team appointed a five-member caretaker team to make sure that it does not collapse, and they are preserving the manuscripts and the books and the college, and making sure that it functions because it has investments, and it also has many branches in Africa and so on, and there are various proposals about what to do with the institution and so on. I think the most likely scenario is that it will be changed into a university, along the line of the old Muhammad bin Ali Sanusi University, teaching basically mainstream Islam, and I don't think that the resources should be wasted. It was doing some good work, but it was also doing some bad work, which will of course stop.

Now, regarding the youth and thinking that the elderly has jumped. I agree with you, there isn't a worse feeling than being cheated. You are willing to give if I ask nicely, but if I cheat you out of anything they you'll feel very hurt and angry, and the angrier the frustration becomes even more dangerous. I believe we have miserably failed to include the youth in the government and in the council, there are some token representations but they are not enough. The same goes for women by the way, I don't think there is enough representation, and

these are two major weaknesses in the performance of the NTC, which will be rectified, but again I believe that the most dangerous thing about democracy is the very huge amount of money that can now be used to win elections and the lack of funding for young people who need training and who need organizational skills to be able to pull together campaigns, so that they can win elections.

Now, regarding the arms and what to do about them. As I say the fact that the arms are well distributed has contributed to stability to some extent, I know this is a weird opinion, but the dangerous trend is the arms trade across borders and the sneaking of these arms to other areas so I think this is a regional threat. The government is doing its utmost to try and gather these arms, the response has been very weak. I believe that part of the problem behind the weakness of response is, the not very intelligent idea of dishing out monthly payments to so called revolutionaries or *thuwar*. Who have inflated in numbers over the past weeks, and we now have a very large number of them, and the idea of promising them 500 dinars a month is very bad, it is bad for the dignity of the Libyan youth who fought, not for money but for the dignity and freedom of their country. And it is also making it not worthwhile to give up one's arms. I think a buy-back program would have been much more intelligent, and perhaps a trade option, of giving apartments if you give up heavy weapons, and giving business tools and equipment if you give back light weaponry, it might be a good way of jumpstarting the economy and small businesses, instead of just continuing to dish out money monthly.

These are some of the ideas being discussed the government is continuing to get the advice of international advisors including UN agencies, on how to do with it, and they are doing their utmost, but it think that it is a very difficult situation, but it's very strange, but once a young person gets attached to a gun and the high of feeling empowered, especially after years of oppression, its psychologically difficult to give this up, there are I see young people, I am honoured to know them who have refused to carry guns once liberation happened. Precisely because they feel that it is wrong to do that, that there is no moral, legitimate reason to fight, so let us pray for the best and do our utmost to disarm, but it's going to take some time.

QUESTION: *I was surprised how centralized your speech was, and I*

would like to know how affected is the post war, or post Gaddafi era going to be by foreign nations and by foreign, I mean foreign nations, mostly western. For example, how important are the western nations going to be in the building of democracy?

Aref Ali Nayed: It is very difficult to predict, but I can tell you this, Libya is about the only country in the region where the flags of western countries are flown in the main squares of liberation with pride and I believe that because of that Libya is a unique opportunity to build up a mature relationship between equals, which mutually respect and help each other, and I believe it can be a light-house for Western. You see the problem is when you say Western/Eastern. It is strange in some ways; you say western Muslim, Western Arab, one is geography the other one is religion. It is kind of strange, and I don't like these polarities. But what I can tell you is that there isn't an Anti-Western sentiment in Libya; on the contrary there is a great appreciation for the work that was done by many countries including western countries in helping the Libyan people.

Had it not been for NATO's intervention Benghazi would have been wiped out. This is documented. Just to give you an idea the line of heavy artillery and machinery that was coming to Benghazi extended for kilometers it was, like, a vast attack. It was most unfortunate that force had to be used to stop the slaughter, but it was something I think the Libyan people do appreciate. I don't speak in the name of the Libyan people, but my impression is that I don't hear, like, anti-Western things.

However, I do hear Libyans being very careful and cherishing their sovereignty, and they will not accept intervention in Libyan sovereignty by anyone, Arab or non-Arab. And even some helpful Arab countries came under a lot of criticism because of what was some dabbling into internal politics, some people must be respectful of the sovereignty. I believe that the UN must play a leading role, in consolidating the help that we are getting, first I think that we should have a unified needs assessment with UN help, then people who want to help, or countries who want to help can map what they can offer, to the needs assessment. And this was something that we discussed with Mr. Ian Martin and other people from the UN and I believe it is the best way to go forward. We are doing the best we can, this alignment,

when I was coordinating the stabilization team operations we were working very closely, then there was a little bit of a gap because of the shifts in governance, but now there have been workshops for aligning this international effort. And I believe the UN should be the leader of this alignment. And being the partner in the discussion with the Libyan government so that you don't have misalignment of people who want to help, in a repetitive way, so that you can divide up all the help and align it properly. So, I believe that in Libya a very mutual relationship between a Muslim country, an Arab country, and western countries can develop. Historically Libya had French embassies and consulates and British embassies going way back, I mean centuries, it's a very cosmopolitan place you know, it had trade with Venice and Napoli. It can play a very important role in building much greater and better relationships, which again should be based on mutual respect, and mutual compassion and love in God. As a theologian, it is good to end that way.

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CHAPTER 13

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The Dilemma of the Arab Spring: Freedom and Rootedness

The following speech was held at Fatih Sultan Mehmet Üniversitesi, Istanbul on 4th January 2012

PROFESSOR DR RECEP SENTÜRK: *Today we will be honored by the presence and the lecture by our distinguished scholar, philosopher, thinker, activist, and leader Dr. Aref Nayed to talk to us about the 'Arab Springs'. He does not like to use the term the 'Arab Spring'. He likes to use Arab 'Springs' in the plural form. And I am sure he can explain why he likes to use Arab Springs over Arab Spring. He will talk about this subject not as an external observer, because he is part of the process. He has been an important player in the process. I am sure he will apply his philosophical mind into this political process. As you may know, political scientists and experts of international relations have failed to predict something like this. And now they failed to understand and analyze it. This because the conceptual tools, their theories, paradigms, that they are using in understanding what is going on in the Muslim world, in the Arab world. They are useless tools. These phenomena made explicit that we cannot analyze Muslim societies using the tools of modern political science and international relations discipline. We need a new approach, new tools, new paradigm, conceptual tools, and metho-dological tools to analyze the Muslim world. And the failure of so many social scientists in the world, and they are revered, respected as great experts, scholars in their fields, in such a large scale. This testifies that we can no longer use these tools in understanding ourselves. We have to understand ourselves through the conceptual tools, the metho-dological tools we create for ourselves. Otherwise we will remain*

intellectually and academically dependent on the western social sciences. And this dependency is not going to help us understand ourselves. It is very ironic and paradoxical that we are using the concepts, methods and theories western social scientists produce to understand ourselves. We have to overcome this intellectual dependency. And Dr. Aref's talk tonight will be a step towards this. He will open a window for us to better understand what is going on in the Arab world.

Aref Ali Nayed: In the name God, the Most Merciful. May Peace and Blessings be bestowed upon His Prophet, his Family, his Companions and whoever follows him. The occasion of this lecture was put together very rapidly by my dear brother, friend and teacher Professor Recep. I thank all of you who, I am sure, are very busy with many worthy projects and are taking time to listen to this poor man from North Africa telling you about the Arab Springs. So thank you for attending this lecture, and let me just tell you how I come to you and under what conditions, because this is crucial as a contextualising background, and also very important to understand what kind of tools we are trying to elaborate or to retrieve, or to articulate as Professor Recep would call it. I am here after nine or ten months of revolution. Basically, I'm a very tired man and I had very little time to reflect or read or write since I have been incredibly busy, revolting against Gaddafi's tyranny and aiding in opening a new future for my country Libya. It has been a most hectic and tiresome experience. Yet at the very same time very joyful, tragic and sad. Evidently the loss has been monumental in terms of the human lives, may God's mercy be upon them. Roughly estimated there's been tens of thousands of martyrs, injured and missing persons. I come to you after travels back and forth between the United Arab Emirates, Istanbul, Qatar and various parts of Libya. These travels were dominated by a mixture of diplomatic work, political work and to some extent even military work. So it has been a rather hectic period, and this is very much the very first academic setting. In consequence I am utterly exhausted and utterly confused. So if you find confusion in what I have to say please forgive me for it. Also try to understand that I am coming to you in order to get some help from you in trying to sort things out because what has been

happening in my country, Libya, and in other Arab countries, has been nothing short of amazing, amazingly complex, amazingly difficult, and amazingly wonderful, all at the same time.

Trying to sort it out, to figure it out, trying to find out a way to reflect upon it is incumbent upon us. As Aristotle said "A philosophical life is a life of examination, and a life that is not examined upon is not worth living". As such it's part of a Muslim's obligation exercise *nazar* (*theorization*) as Imam al-Baqilani and Imam al-Maturidi and the great scholars of Kalam would state that *nazar* is *wajib* (obligatory) for humanity. Hence, we need to reflect upon what is happening in our lives, and we need to reflect as deeply as we can, and also reflect jointly and collectively because the notion of a solitary person just thinking on his own—what Ibn Majah called *tadbir al-mutawahid*—to think by oneself, is actually helpful in some contexts but requires to be combined with extensive and intensive social interaction, a lot of networking, and a lot of joint thinking. As the Prophet said: The believer is a mirror for the believer (*'Al-mu'min mira't akhihi'*) and we are mirrors for each other. I can only see myself through discussing with you. So I am hoping that after this lecture we may be able to benefit for exchanging our view and I hope that your reflections and advice will guide me forward- God willingly.

I strongly dislike the usage of the term 'Arab Spring', as if there is one singular phenomenon that's taking place across a multitude of nations. I believe that we are dealing with a multiplex phenomenon, which Recep Senturk would call a 'multiplexity'. There is no single Arab Spring. As a matter of fact, I believe it is a grave misconception to believe that you can understand what is happening in Libya because you understand what is happening in Yemen, or in Egypt, or in Tunisia, or in Syria. I believe every country has its own unique dynamic behind their uprising. As a matter of fact I think that within every national Arab Spring there are internal 'springs' within that country. the Arab Spring in Libya for example is a complex set of 'springs'. And they are happening, as Dr. Recep would say, at different levels of *wujud* (being), which is defined as *maratib al-wujud;* they are happening at different 'strata of existence', or 'layers of existence'. They are also happening at different regions, different networks, different backgrounds, and lots of factors are mixed together in a most

complex, intricate texture. And I think it is very important to point that out from the start. if you look at the *scholar* Ibn Khaldun, *may God's Mercy be upon him*—and I am very proud that he is one of our fellow North African thinkers– he developed his notion of *'asabiyya (social cohesion and solidarity)* for example, or of *al-'umran al-bashari (Civilisation studies),* or for example the dialectic between *'asabiyya* and *da'wa (proselytisation).* He makes it clear that these take unique shapes and manifest themselves in complex forms depending on various situations. As a matter of fact, if you look carefully at Khaldun's *al-Muqaddima* you will find that there is not just one single type of *'asabiyya,* but types of *'asabiyaat (social cohesions)* and that there is not a single type of *da'wa*, but different types of *da`wa.* This is clearly illustrated in the uprisings that occurred in Libya. The conceptual tools that Khaldun provides in his writings are still relevant and on point for many of our contemporary Libyan situations. We still do have *'asabiyya,* and we do have *da'wa,* all mixed up. We also have the dialectic between the *madina* (urban) and the *badwu* (Bedouin)*,* or the *badwi* elements and the *madani* elements. And lots of the complexities of the Libya situation have to do with the mixing together of these factors, sometimes in the very same person. So that you find in the same person a *tribesman* because he come from a certain tribe and he is a *city dweller* because he lived all his life in a city, and he has a *da'wa* because he affiliates to the Ikhwan, or the Salafiyya, or the Sufiyya, or one of the various types of Islamic da'wa. His identity is a mixture of Bedouin (by tradition) and urban (by education). He might be a merchant because his father was a merchant, and at the same time he might be an engineer.

So in the very same person you can find the multiplexity, as defined by Recep, the multilayered and bundling together of networks. Consequently you can say that a person is a node, but he is a node in a multiplicity of networks, all at once. So he is connected in various ways to various networks, all at once. This complexity makes it difficult to generalize about these 'Arab Springs'. Maybe what I am trying to do by coming here to Istanbul is to reflect, think, and consult about all these strands of this complexity. It may sound strange for a Libyan to come to Istanbul to sort things out in understanding his Libyanness, but I do not believe it is strange at all if you consider that until recently

it was called Tarabolis Gharb (Western Triboli) and I chose to stay in the Conrad Hotel, because it is only few meters away from the tikka *(lodge)* of Muhammad Dhafir al-Madani, Shaykh Dhafir, one of the Shuyukh of Sultan Abdul Hamid, who used to host, Libyan, Algerians, and Tunisians. Who used to come to the court to discuss matters of the Islamic community at large. So there is an element of Libyanness that is intimately connected with Istanbul and with its history, and with what was happening through the period of Ottoman reformations (*Islahaat*) in early twentieth century.

The first World War was a global catastrophe, but as it was happening and right before it's occurrence, there existed great thinkers trying to deal with the very same issues we are trying to deal with today; such were Muhammad Dhafir al-Madani, may God's mercy be upon him, Abu al-Huda al-Sayyadi, who, unfortunately, always gets very bad press. In some history books they make him a very dark character. This man has a booklet *Al-Rahim al-Insani,* which focuses completely on common humanity, and which is more sophisticated than Erasmus's writings on humanistic ethics. Yet these things become neglected, except by specialized scholars. So in a way it is natural for me to come Istanbul to sort out my identity and some of my issues, just as it is very important for us to have discussions with the Sanusi family and Sanusi scholars who have another dimension of Libyanness, and who are connected to another dimension of Libyanness that is almost forgotten, but not gone.

It is not a coincidences that Libyan rallied behind three symbols, the flag, which was a Sanusi flag, and of course the crescent and the star have an Ottoman connection as well; Umar al-Mukhtar, *May God's Mercy be upon him,* a great scholar, who is also a Sanusi Sufi Sheikh and a leader of tariqa, and thirdly, the national anthem, which is not written by Libyans or composed by Libyans, but which came to connect people with the old Libya, the Libya of independence, the venerated Libya before it got violated and corrupted by the Gaddafi tyranny of forty two years

In our attempt to understand what is happening to us it is very important to link up to these dimensions that are highly connected to our soul; the Sanusi dimension, the Ottoman dimension, the Bedouin dimension, the tribes and the refusal to be ruled by anyone; this unruly

kind of tribal independence is essentially rooted in the Libyan tribal character. Also the history, the struggle of independence, the young parties that came about and disappeared in the 1940s, 1950s, and early 1960s, parties like the Mu'tamar Party and the Jama'iyat Umar al-Mukhtar Party and various other parties; clubs like al-Nadi al-Adbi, which was in Tripoli, which was a congregation of poets and literature experts and authors who were discussing Libyan national affairs. Many young Libyans have lived their entire lives under Gaddafi's reign. They do not know this Libyan past, except through family stories and family secrets that they were told but always with great caution. I remember being told many things and also remember being told not to talk about them at school, because if I talked about them in school it would have been a disaster. I remember my father teaching me the national anthem but also telling me to never sing it because in school if you sing this anthem you would be in big trouble. What I am trying to say is that our identities as Libyans are multiplex, very complicated, many strands, and some strands interestingly enough are linked with Istanbul. So I do not find it strange to be here in Istanbul, and I do not find it to be strange at all to be in this particular institute, with the particular scholars who are here, because we share a lot of the longing to an identity, what I call rootedness in the title of this lecture; 'Freedom and Rootedness'. This rootedness is very important and rootedness is all about networking. If you look at the way the roots of a tree are formed, you'll see that they are very much branching from a radical or a primary root and they are extending outward, but they are also part of intricate networks of other roots, of other trees, even with bacteria, other creatures lurking in the earth.

As such, rootedness is already about networking. And it is very important as you search for your roots, as you try to be authentic to yourself, to who you are, to link up with other human beings who are also trying to network and to find themselves. So maybe it is just as two people hit by different cars, lying in the hospital beds next to each other trying to remind one another of who they are. 'Oh so your name is Ahmed' 'Oh, yes', 'Where are you from?' … and they are trying to have a conversation to overcome amnesia. Because amnesia is exactly what we suffer from. It is amazing that a young Libyan grows up today not knowing anything about the Sanusis. Without knowing anything

about the scholars, the muftis, the traditional scholars of this country, the great female scholars who were trying to establish a great Libya like Khadija al-Jahmy and other women in the early independence movement in Libya. We are trying to find out who we are, and as we are trying to find out who we are it is very important to commune with, have conversations with, and dialogue with people who are also trying to find themselves. Turkey is a great nation, no doubt. Just looking at Istanbul, just walking in Istanbul, you can see the greatness, you can smell the greatness. It is almost overwhelming. But it is also a country trying to find out what it is exactly. Is it European? Is it Asian? Is it Islamic? Is it secular? Even when we say secular, what kind of secular are we intending? Is it a secularism that's necessarily anti-religious? Or is there a form of secularism that is more mature, that is more open, that is more accommodating of the rootedness of the Turkish people. Are the Turkish people only Turkish? Are they Ottoman? Are they cosmopolitan in character? Are there different strands? What constitutes being Turkish? I am sure many scholars in this country are trying to find a proper response to these questions and develop a rich literature on it. I've always regretted not having learned the language but, *God Willing*, I will try.

A crucial remark needs to be made here concerning the 'arabness' of the Arab Springs in Libya. Many Libyans that are rising against the corrupt state are Arabs but not all of them. There are those that are rooted in the Amazigh culture, or the Tebu, and the Tuareg. Those are ethnically not considered part of being Arab. In this new Libya that goes beyond Arab nationalism we are trying to find out about a sense of Libyanness that is more inclusive, that is a lot more complex, that does not flatten our nationalism into one identity or one ideology or to one way of looking at the world, that we cherish the rich tapestry and texture of our country—as we are trying to find out about who we are.

When we talk about rootedness I am not talking about rootedness only in own our tradition, and only in one way, but rootedness in a complex way, in a way that links up with other people trying to find out about their roots, including Europeans; Europeans are also trying to find out their roots. Americans are also trying to find out their roots. Why is it important to find out if you are rooted? It is the same reason

that the seed does not grow on concrete, although I am always struck by the small image of the a small shoot coming out of the concrete. But if you look closely it is a crack or a pocket where some soil settled. You cannot grow without having roots. As the imagery of the 'good tree' in the Qur'an, the *kalima tayiba, asluha thabit (Qur'an, 14:24)*, it has rootedness, a constant root or a radical, *wa far`uha fi al-sama'*, and its branches are in the heavens of the sky. It is with these two conditions, being rooted and also being vertically oriented, to be open to receive, that you get the third, *tu'ti ukulaha kual hinin,* that you get the fruitfulness. So you get the fruitfulness from a combination of rootedness and openness. And you do not get this fruitfulness from you deeds nor from your egotistical imposition of will but, *bi'izn rabbiha,* with the permission of your Lord, because without this *idhn rabbani* (*divine permission*), you cannot have anything.

This is why it is extremely important when I reflect on the Libyan Springs, that it is actually a gift from Allah Most High, from God, really because it is nothing short of a *karama (miracle)*. In English you say miracle, but in Arabic you have to distinguish between *karama* and *mu'jiza*; *mu'zija* is a miracle for prophets, *karama* is for everybody else.. There is a beautiful phrase that I was reading recently in the *Mathnawi al-Arabi al-Nuri* of Bediuzzaman al-Nursi, *May God's Mercy be upon him,* in which he describes the spring, and I think it is a very good description of the Libyan Spring. He describes the spring as exhibiting the 'stamp of God',in my own translation of the Arabic into English it would sound like this: 'In this great management of the spring, *al-tasarruf al-'azim al-rabi'i,* there is a great sublime and intricate stamp of the lordship (*rububiyya),* of God. This stamp consists of …' and he has a string of descriptions, '… ultimate perfection, in ultimate regularity, in ultimate generosity, in ultimate broadness, in ultimate speed, in ultimate excellence, in ultimate intricacy. This is stamp is unique, from the One who is not prevented by one act from exercising another act, the One from whom nothing is hidden and nothing difficult'. You know, one year ago, if was to describe the atmosphere in Tripoli, we would have coffee in cafes and so on, but it was despair. Everyone was so depressed. Everybody despaired of change. They have waited for seven years for '*Saif al-Islam*' (Gaddafi) to make his famous reforms, and these reforms were resulting in a

great highway robbery of the entire country. He was basically stealing the money along with his colleagues from various companies, who were handpicked to steal with him. Nothing was happening in the country. Seven years for the reforms, nothing happened, and there was just despair. I remember the way I used to heal my heart of despair, and I used to advise my students in the Ottoman madrasa in Tripoli, to remember the words of Ahmad Zarruq, who was one of the great Shadhili masters: 'Whenever you despair, remember the verse from the Qur'an: *In yasha' yuzhibkum wa ya'ti bi-khalqin jadid wa ma zalika 'ala Allahi bi-'aziz;* If He wishes, He would obliterate you and bring about a new creation, and this is not difficult for Allah.' And this is very important to remember.

With God's creativity, there can be no despair. He is the ultimate creator and can make things happen. Just as people felt there no way of overcoming this regime, something happened, something mind-boggling happened. Young people with nothing in their hands walk to massive camps, full of arms, full or mercenaries, with their bare hands, as they were shot at with anti-aircraft machine guns, still they marched forward to branch their freedom away from this tyrant. This not something normal. This has the stamp, the *taghura,* as Nursi would say, of God. This is very much a miraculous act. It is very important when we speak about the Arab Spring, or 'Arab Springs', or 'Libyan Springs' not to think that *we* made it. Unfortunately, we are already seeing and hearing voices within Libya of people claiming, on television even, 'I made this', 'I did this', 'I started the revolution', 'I am the one who liberated Tripoli'. Unfortunately, some TV channels that are funded by certain countries make some people look like they are the great heroes and forget about other people and so on. This is nonsense.

This is nobody's revolution. It everybody's revolution, because it is God's revolution. And it is because it is a dispersed revolution. Nothing like a central command or control. There is no central command or control in this revolution, not even from the National Council because even the way the National Transitional Council emerged is a phenomenon of complexity and emergence. It was not a single player determining with intent that this should be the case or this other thing should be the case. The whole thing just emerged in a very and convoluted manner. It just emerged and it did so in a very complex and con-

voluted manner in a way that is just mind boggling. If you try to make sense of it, it is very difficult. This is why I need your help in making sense of this, because the tools of social sciences, as Dr Recep was saying, of how revolutions happen, or the theories of how revolutions happen—they just do not seem to fit. I can think of certain notions or ideas that are maybe helpful, and I used some of them in this talk, but maybe we go over some of them, 'multiplexity'—which I can never pronounce properly though and it is a very useful conceptual tool. And that's why I believe the work of Dr. Recep should be translated into English, his new book on 'open science' seems incredibly valuable for our times.

But there are also other notions like 'multilayered architecture', in software engineering, whereas you write the software, you develop certain tools, you make a tool kit at different layers of work in a way and then you pull them together with various algorithms. Maybe we can use some of the language of IT, like multilayered architecture. There is also the literature from networking theory, not just social networking theory but also IT networking theory because it is very crucial. For example, I noticed that in Libya, during the revolution, that there were certain routers that got more attention, and it is not because of what they said or did but because of they trafficked through. This is very important. For example, our leader Sheikh Mustafa Abd al-Jalil, he was not giving command in a sense, but in a way trafficking or helping to route traffic, rather than actually commanding. People find this style of leadership puzzling because theories of leadership do not apply to this revolution, classical theories of leadership. So the theory of a leader as a router of sorts, in a network, is an interesting notion to work with. Which can be closely related to other concepts in sociology such as 'social networks' and 'social networking theory'.

I am sure that it would be interesting to do a mapping of various unknowns in the Libyan Spring, and other Arab Springs as well. This is the kind of tool you would need, more than just classical sociology methods. Even models distilled from the Austrian school of economics, or alternative models like in Hayek's work, for example, of talking about dispersed knowledge or tacit knowledge, so that there is no single economic players that knows the economy beforehand, or designs the economy before hand, or determine the price beforehand; with

price being an emergent from various imperfect, dispersed nuggets of knowledge in the economy. Maybe such a political/economic idea of dispersed knowledge can be used in trying to understand the Arab Springs because in many ways no one had the blueprints for the revolution at hand. Everyone had a bit of imperfect knowledge, and often tacit, and he/she did not even talk about it often. Maybe what I am trying to articulate here is some of this tacit, partial, imperfect, and dispersed knowledge that contributed in a little way to this revolution, just as there was an abundance of other contributions to this revolutions.

Again, we can even retrieve some notion from Ibn Khaldun, may God's mercy be upon him, especially this notion of *taba'i al-'umran (patterns of civilisations)*. Patterns (*Taba'i'*) are more complex than one pattern (*tabi'a*). Maybe this has to do with Aristotle and his idea that there is not a single causality, that there is a multiplex causality, that there are different types of causes: the effective cause, the material cause, the teleological cause, the formal cause. In a way you can sense this typology in Ibn Khaldun. His *taba'i* were multiplex, and as one sister was saying yesterday, regarding the *Mawaqif* of al-Shatibi, many people flatten Shatibi, and she is right about that. They flatten Shatibi because they make his *maqasid* (objective) into a set of principles or rules, or maybe just points, while the *maqasid,* are complicated and are happening in a multiplicity of levels within the person himself, with the *niyya* (intention) of the person himself, and within society itself. If you look at Ibn al-Hajj, in his book *Al-madkhal,* he talk about the different levels of *niyya,* so there is multiplexity within the intentionality of the single human being. So when we talk about *maqasid al-shari'a,* they are much more complicated than a set of four, five, or six principles. Ibn Khaldun, illustrated this kind of refinement, this kind of intricacy.

Maybe we should look again at Ibn Khaldun, but this time not just in a historicist way, as Rosenthal and others have looked at him, but maybe in a way that mixes him up with the work of the Santa Fe Research Institute's work on complexity, on the emergence, on artificial life, and on complex system analysis, social networking theory, neuronets even. Maybe what we can do is to look at these complex figures, like Ibn Khaldun, like late Ottoman writers, like al-Sayadi, Muham-

mad Hussein al-Jisr, even recent ones like Muhammad Zahid al-Kawthari, Mustafa Sabri. All these great reformers who get neglected simply because they are too faithful to the tradition. I am always shocked that everybody knows about Muhammad 'Abduh and Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, and they do not know about Mustafa Sabri, Muhammad Zahid al-Kawthari and the alternative school, may God have Mercy upon them all. When they look at the Tunisian school, they look at reformers who were against the tradition. They do not look at Ibn 'Ashur and his *Altahrir wa ala-tanwir,* and they do not look at Khayr al-Din al-Tunsi and his open-mindedness, and his rootedness.

We need to retrieve these figure, and as we retrieve them we also need to utilize some ideas that do not even come from the social sciences. These ideas may come from economics, they may come from mathematical theory, they may come from IT, information technology, they may come from things as multimedia and graphic design, that is using computers to generate motion, of small nuggets of programming; a small set of rules that can generate a very complex tree.

Our spiritual teachers were very well aware of this already. As Ibn 'Ata Allah said: *'man ashraqat bidyatuhu ashraqat nihyatuhu'* (if the beginnings are luminescent, the ends are luminescent). He is simply saying that your life is a very chaotic system, that is very sensitive to initial conditions, as they say in physics. So you must make your initial conditions luminescent. It maybe a very small set of initial conditions. This makes a whole world of difference. For example the principle that there is an *akhira (Hereafter)*, that there is an eschatological dimension to life, just this principle changes your calculations. So if you are a cost/benefit analysis in a *duniawi* sense, meaning only for this life, your results will be utilitarian, in classical sense of utilitarianism like Benthem and John Stuart Mill and so on. But if you open the horizon of expectation, what Ernest Bloch the famous Marxist thinker called the 'not yet', so bring the not-yet into the calculations and you will find that your cost-benefit analysis changes completely. Just like in mathematics with the notion of infinity, if you take a very large number like trillion. It looks very large, but if you divide it by infinity, the result is zero, even if it was ten trillion. Again, it is zero. And if you take any number, and you take infinity and divide it by any num-

ber, regardless of how large it is, you always get infinity. This mean infinity changes everything.

The Hereafter, as an infinite dimension beyond this life, when brought into your utilitarian calculations, it will change all your formula. You will get very different economics. John Stuart Mill in his political economy as he speaks about utilitarian functions and cost-benefit analysis did not have this eschatological calculation. But maybe someone like al-Asfahani on his book *Al-nash'atayin,* or the two creations, or Imam al-Ghazali, be it in the *Mishkat,* or the *Ihyaa,* or the *Munqidh,* when he talks about *sa'adah ukhrawiyya,* this happiness in the hereafter is not limited to this life, your calculations get altered. So what I am trying to say is let's take many of these amazing ideas which are now emerging at the Santa Fe Research Institute and the MIT and other institutions, even advanced mathematical theories, theories of complexity, and let us look at our teachers approach of similar ideas. Lets us look at multiplexity, and look at the *maratib al-wujud* in this way, look at *al-harakah al-jawharia* of Mulla Sadra for example, or the inner dynamism that is talked about these days in quantum mechanics. Let us talk about Baqilani and Juwaini and their *jawhir* (substances) and *a'rad* (accidents) and talk about *a'rad* as an emergence phenomenon, rather than thinking of them as a mere tag. This way kalam, Islamic philosophy can be renewed.

A new Islamic philosophy (Kalam) can emerge. When we say kalam we do not mean just a set of beliefs and doctrines, but we mean who we are and what the purpose of our life is. We need new articulations. So what I want to say is, maybe for the Libyan Spring, or Springs, none of the tools that are now on the shelf can be applied. But maybe we need to come up with a new set of tools, a new set of ways that are a mixture of classical sources from our tradition and avant-garde, very advanced very cutting edge mathematical, information technology and economic concepts and maybe have the humility that we are not the generation facing this difficulty of having to come up with a new articulation. The challenge of a new kalam was already talked about in the late 19th century, as it was talked about in the late 18th century, and it was talked about in the late 16th century.

As a matter of fact, there are no dark ages as they teach us in the history of Islam. Matter of fact, every generation of Muslims has been

trying, just like every generation of Jews, and every generation of Christians, and every generation of Buddhists. You know, the Japanese Kyoto School, Keiji Nishitani and Kitaro for example. They were trying. They went to Germany to study with Martin Heidegger to see how they can reconcile Pure Land Buddhism with existentialism, just like Muslim today are struggling with how to make sense of hermeneutics and semiotics or postmodern Derridean thought.

Every generation is a living generation that has the challenge of combining two things, which is the title of this lecture, freedom and rootedness; the freedom to seek new horizons, new ways, to try to be free, to try to be open, to try to do things never done before, to see things in ways that were never seen before. But in the same time to be rooted in your tradition. And there is no contradiction between these concepts. If someone says, 'Look at the door. It opens and closes. But there is a problem with the door. It is fixed on one side, on the side of the hinges. So if someone says, 'I do not like this door. It does not have much freedom. It is too fixed because of the hinges. Let me remove the hinges'. You can remove the hinges, but you will have no door anymore. Openness is the result of some fixity. You cannot have total openness. Just as with the notion of the degrees of freedom.

When industrial engineers design robotic arms, they have this concept that they call, degrees of freedom. A robotic arm that can move its underarm up and down has one point of freedom. The one that moves up and down but also from the left to the right has two points of freedom. With every added movement another point of freedom is considered. Someone could say 'A perfect robotic arm should have infinite degrees of freedom'. That is wrong. The robotic arm that has infinite degrees of freedom is no arm at all, you will not be able to do anything it. So you do need some kind of fixity in life, but it is a wired kind of fixity. It is a fixity that allows for freedom. A fixity that becomes a principle for rotation. This is what Imam al-Nawawi mentions in his book *Riyad al-salihin* and *Al-azkar, 'al-ahadith al-lati yadur 'aliha madar al-Islam',* there are hadiths that are pivots, around which Islam rotates. You know the hadith, *inama al-a'mal bil-niyat wa inama likuli imri'in ma nawa,* or 'deeds are constituted by intentions, and to every human is that which they intend'. It is a pivotal hadith a point of freedom that in itself is fixed.

What Imam al-Nawawi, *may God's Mercy be upon him,* is trying to illustrate is that there are certain hadiths, certain principles, that the sheikhs call *ma'ulima min al-din bil-darura*, those bodies of information that are necessary within religion, that actually does not limit you freedom, but is the condition of possibility of your freedom. This is what Immanuel Kant calls 'conditions of possibility', which is extremely important. So when Immanuel Kant talks about freedom as a postulate for human activity, for human action, what he is saying is that for you to be free to act you must postulate this freedom. But at the same time, he himself recognizes that this freedom is postulated on the basis of what he calls implicit and accepted necessary principles or categories, so the categories of pure reason, in Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, are actually the conditions of possibility for the postulation of freedom that you need to be a moral human being so that you can be a moral agent.

In order to be a moral agent you need to have what the Ash'ari school calls call the *kasb* or 'elbow room' and the Maturidis call *al-juz al-ikhtiyari,* a kind of a choice nugget or segment. God, in His creation, gives and allows you this elbow room, but it is enough room for the door to rotate, for the openness to happen. You need a fixity that has enough openness to allow you to do things as a moral agent. In Libya, in the Arab Spring, what are our pivots? For this Libya of the future that is emerging now, what are things, the principles, around which we must rotate as a nation? What are the principles that we simply cannot give up on, that we must be really rooted in so that we can be free?

It cannot be everything goes, as Paul Feyerabend says in his book, *Against Method*. It cannot be 'anything goes'. It cannot be chaotic, in the bad sense. It is chaotic in the sense that everything is dependent on its initial conditions. It is not chaotic in the bad sense, it cannot be anarchistic. There has to be some fixity.

But what are these principles? Some people say that these things are something that some people can dictate to you, or that are ideologically based. If you read Sayyid Qutb's *Ma'alim al-tariq,* you will get them, as some of the Ikhwan, not all of the Ikhwan, would say. Or if you read *Kitab al-tawhid* of Muhammad bin Abd al-Wahhab, you will get it, as some of the Wahhabis or the Salafis would say, not all of

them. But I believe that these principles are not be found in this ideologically deterministic way, but are to be found in networks of the past, networks of the presence, and networks of the future.

Networks of the past are found having communion and communication with your past. Imam al-Ghazali, if you take him seriously, yes he is dead, but he is also living, in terms of ideas. As a matter of fact, we Muslims believe in *haya barzakhiyya* (intermediate world), which is a kind of a virtual existence, you would find this weird, But you do not find the internet or the virtual reality weird! But it is just like when you enter into the internet, you can enter into the *'alam al-barzakh* through *mahabbah*, through love, because as Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of God be upon him said, '*Almar'u ma'a man ahabba*', or togetherness is through love. So if you love Imam al-Ghazali and respect him, you do benefit from him. It is possible to love a life in communion and networking with Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, Armawi, Ghazali, Baqillani, Nasafi, and Taftazani, and so on.

The whole tradition of *madrasa*, and *isnad*, the passing on knowledge from one generation to another, is simply an exercise of networking with the past. And you have to network with the presence. You have to visit scholars, you have to talk with scholars, and not just scholars because sometimes you need to network with a guard, for example there was a guard in a small village in Libya, and because have a degree in engineering, I ran a construction site. I was so lonely I would have conversations with this Chadian guard. This guard was illiterate, but was a real master, a great sheikh who knew so many things. So what I am trying to say is that when I say networking with scholars, I do not mean just the professors. Sometimes they can be so arrogant and conceited. You need people of humility. You need to network with humanity at large and not just your community. It is very easy to network with the people you agree with. It is very important to have institutes like this one to have dialogue with people who you do not agree with.

The whole point of *itifaq* between *madaniyyat* or *hadarat,* is to have a space, a forum. For people to come together and disagree in a civil way, in a way that is *mutamadin,* in a way that is respectful of what the *mashaykh* would say *adab al-bahth wa al-munazara,* the etiquettes of research and discussion. This is a *'ilm,* a science, that used to be

taught to students which frustratingly enough has mostly been disregarded nowadays.

These days in Libya when some young people have discussions, they do not have the tools for civil discussion. So the discussion would go from low voice, beginning with no agreement, very quickly to disagreement, very quickly, and then just as what happened yesterday or the day before to shooting. You need to have tools of the settlements of disputes that are beyond physical power. That is what scholars are about. This is what institutes like this are about. You need networking with the past, networking with the presence, and networking with the future, in the sense that, you need to be in touch with the future generations who will hold you responsible for their legacy. They would say, 'My father why did not you teach me what my grandfather knew.' 'How come you lost the tradition?' 'How come you have no idea bout how I am? You have a legacy that you have to pass on and you the responsibility to live decently and morally and to build something for future generations.

So when I ask the question in today's Libya, what does Libya of today need? It needs these three conversations. We need to talk to Imam Muhammad bin Ali al-Sanusi. And as we speak today, unfortunately I had to miss it, but there is a great conference in Ganfoda, near Benghazi, on Imam Muhammad bin Ali al-Sanusi. And in a way it is our country's way of having a conversation with the great imam. And we need to have a conversation with Muhammad Dhafir al-Madani. I went I visited him few days ago, I mean everyday I pass by and read the *Fatiha,* in the *Shar'i* Sunni way, just in case some of Salafi brothers hear this, asking for *maghfira (forgiveness)* and *rahma (mercy)* for him. We need to have conversations with these scholars, we need to re-read them now. I am heavily re-reading now Imam al-Sanusi and Sheikh Madani and other great great scholars, like the book of Muhammad al-Mugherbi, on *Jam'iyyat 'Umar al-Mukhtar,* also some of politicians, like Mr. Saraj's book on *Hizb al-Mu'tamar.* We need to have a conversation with the past. Some are still living, like Sheikh Mustafa Saraj is one of those living legends.

We have to have a conversation about the past and we also need to have a discussion now, and not to be exclusivist. I need to talk to the Ikhwani, to the Marxist, to the Salafi, to the atheist, to the secular-

ist—we need to have this conversation. We also need to look upon our children with responsibility, and, and this is very touchy, to look at the future of these young people who have given up their lives, some gave their life, these martyrs. Some gave their limbs. You see these young people with no arms, no limbs. They gave part of themselves for a future. The nation is responsible for this. Every generation is responsible for this. This is a very big responsibility. While having these three conversations through networking, with the past, with the presence, with the future, perhaps we can start to make sense of who we are; of what we want in this life; what kind of a country do we want. We all know generalities. We all want democracy, freedom, a beautiful future, prosperity, but how and what kind of prosperity? Is it supermarkets everywhere where we can buy all we need? Is it the future of the fulfilling of *shahawat* (*desires*).

Is it the future that has the *akhira* as part of it? So that our utility function is broad or broader than this *dunya (earthly realm)*. What kind of future is it that we seek? Our women in Libya are a remarkable example. They taught us bravery. From day one of this revolution, they started this revolution, they made this revolution in many ways. What kind of a future do they have in this country? What does a Libyan woman want to be? And this is a question that they need to ask and the community needs to ask. This because Gaddafi also was said to have given freedom to women yet he also used them as objects, in a very debased manner. Now they are trying to find out who they are and they are trying to articulate it. They are amazingly articulate. There are Ikhwani women, Salafi women, and Marxist women and secular women, and liberal women—and the are trying to find out who they are. As they do this, they need to speak to Rabi'a al-'Adawiyya from the past. They need to talk to Turkish women, women in the UK, in the United States, and in Japan. And they need to talk to their daughters about what they want them to give them. So it is through these complexities, these multplexities. In mass communication engineering there's a concept which is called multiplexers. These multiplexers are like routers but they are used for communication software like Viber. We need to look at these multiplexers like Ibn Khaldun, these encyclopedic scholars of the past. They were very wise people, be it Shatibi or Ibn Rushd, and not just Ibn Rushd the philosopher,

but also Ibn Rushd the *faqih*, whom I believe was a greater philosopher than Ibn Rushd the philosopher in many ways, and many, many other great scholar. I am really happy to see Istanbul becoming once again a center and a great multiplexer for a big conversation that is taking place with all philosophies, with all religions, with all ways of thinking, between social sciences, economics, political science. The fact that we are here in place that has the love of Rumi and the Mevlevi tradition, that is so encompassing and tolerant, that it is able to hear all voices and to have what Mikhail Bakhtin, the Russian critic, called 'polyphony', a multiplicity of voices, and not just monologues or one voice. It is through this that we can have a carnival, but not one as such Bakhtin imagined, but a carnival of *ka'inat* as Sheikh Nursi would say, that are in a great procession to their Maker. It's as the Prophet, peace and blessings of God be upon him would say, *dunyawi,* living as if you are living forever, and is also *ukhrawi,* meaning living as though you are going to die tomorrow; so that we are optimistic and determined. And as he, peace and blessing be upon him, says, 'If the Day of Judgment comes while your are planting a tree, continue to plant it'. This is because we do not only plant in this world but also amazing wide horizons in the hereafter.

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PART THREE

INTERVIEWS

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Libya Herald Interview

The following interview by conducted by Michel Cousings with Dr Aref Ali Nayed for the Libya Herald *on August 2015.*

MICHEL COUSINS: *The objective of the UN-brokered Libya Dialogue process in Skhirat, Morocco, has been to create a Government of National Unity, a Government of National Accord. But Libya has had governments of national unity since the revolution. They have not been the problem. The problem has been security. There are two issues relating to security: the militias and the Islamic State (ISIS).*

Regarding the militias, the draft agreement has been initialled by most of the delegates at Skhirat (in Morocco), but not those from the General National Congress (GNC) in Tripoli. A new Prime Minister and two Deputy Prime Minister will be chosen very soon by the Dialogue delegates probably without the input of the GNC delegates from Tripoli. Given that situation and given that the Dialogue aim is that the new government should be based in Tripoli, do you think that is possible? Will the militias there allow the new government go to Tripoli?

AREF ALI NAYED: First of all, one of the biggest enemies we have today is cynicism and despair. That's why it is extremely important to always be hopeful and positive. And to appreciate the progress made. We must not lose sight of what is positive. The UN-led Skhirat process for peace-making in Libya has made tremendous progress. One of the key progress points it made has been the disassociation of what I call the social fabric elements or tribal elements from the ideologically-based elements in the Fajr Libya coalition [Libya Dawn].

A year ago, when Fajr Libya attacked the Tripoli International Airport and the capital in general, and took over ministries; and took over the seat of government; it was a combination of a great variety of elements with a huge participation from the social fabric or tribal elements.

One of the key successes, I think, has been, the fact that Misrata, in particular, has seen that it is wrong to be associated with the thugs and that it is wrong to be associated with ideologically-driven zealots, and that it is very important for it to reintegrate itself within Libya's broader social fabric. This is a key success to this whole process.

So when we are discussing the security architecture for the coming period, we must appreciate that a key element of success for any future architecture is that it must be supported by both Misrata and al-Zintan. Realistically speaking, these are the two largest forces in the Western part of Libya. Unless they see eye to eye; unless they come together as supporters of a National Unity Government, it is going to be very difficult to do anything in Western Libya.

Now granted, there is an important element that did not sign. That is, to put a name to it, basically the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group [LIFG] and some of the armed militias that belong to the Muslim Brotherhood and some of their associated groups.

These people did not sign on the agreement, despite the fact that some politicians from the Muslim Brotherhood and the Justice and Construction Party, which stems from the Muslim Brotherhood, did sign up and are actually promoting *the Dialogue*, which is a good thing. However, the armed wing, if you want to call it that, remains outside the agreement.

That is a challenge, of course, to the architecture of any security for Tripoli. It will be difficult to enter Tripoli without bloodshed if these elements continue to be adamant about their refusal to participate with the rest of the Libyan people in a peace settlement.

So while the security situation is not going to be easy, and will definitely continue to be difficult, with the LIFG and some of their associated militias, and even some of the rogue militias with Misratan origins, like the Salah Badi militia for example, who refused the consensus of Misrata and remained with the ideologues, these elements will continue to cause issues. Unless they sign on, I am afraid they will

have to be pressurised by not only the Libyan people but the United Nations and the international community.

It is very important that people who made many concessions, and who really tried hard, and worked hard to make peace, are rewarded. It is equally important that people who are spoilers; who sabotage the peace process; who continue to give a safe haven to the terrorists and who support terrorists; these people should never be given any safe haven or support in any way, shape, or form; not by the international community or the Libyan people.

We are looking forward to a situation where there is definitely a deadline, where people either in or be labelled as spoilers and duly dealt with by the United Nations system, and perhaps even by the International Criminal Court in the Hague for sabotaging the political process.

So the security architecture will depend on the goodwill and cooperation of elements that are strong on the ground. Again, Misrata and Zintan are definitely important parts of this architecture but, of course, they are not the only ones.

What is very important is, ultimately, to have the commitment of all the stakeholders, especially the broad social fabric of Libya, including all the townships, the cities, the tribal areas and the tribal fabric.

MICHEL COUSINS: *You mention the international community having a role in this. What role do it have in helping security, given that we also have the problem of ISIS? Are we talking about boots on the ground, air strikes, what?*

AREF ALI NAYED: The international community will need to support the forthcoming Government of National Unity in various ways. An important way is by simply uniting with that government in a unified strategy.

One of the biggest challenges in Libya is that there is no unified strategy for security; no unified architecture for security in the country. Security strategy can no longer be a device for any country without regional help and cooperation and without international help and cooperation. We cannot pretend to have security without arrangements with the rest of the world.

So the international community will need to sit with the upcoming government and put together a unified strategy for dealing with the

threats and mitigating the risks that are risks not only for Libya but for all its neighbours, as well as its neighbours across the Mediterranean. That is a very important contribution which is unification of strategy.

The second very important thing is the enablement of the National Unity Government to be able to have proper and secure command and control over the entire territory of Libya. It will involve technical assistance with command and control centres, and a Unified Command Centre from which the government can oversee the security arrangements in the entirety of the country. This involves technologies such as satellite imagery; aerial imagery; maybe drones equipped with cameras that can survey the coasts for example.

There is a huge need for technological assistance for border control, for coastline control, of course for command and control centres that can enable the government to be able to see what is happening on the ground all over Libya and be able to issue commands that can be implemented across the country.

The third thing that is very important is equipment and training. The current Libyan government, despite the fact that it is the legitimate government, stemming from the legitimate Parliament, has been deprived from acquiring any equipment; even training has been quite limited. It is very important for the future government to have the equipment and training it needs.

I am of the view that the training should happen on Libyan soil, in Libya. It is much more effective that way. The equipment should not be colossal contracts that will deplete the country's resources, but specialised equipment that can give the government an edge over the terrorists so as to be able to handle the threats that these terrorists pose.

Finally, there has to be cooperation in fighting ISIS in Libya. It makes no sense to fight ISIS in Syria and Iraq and to give them a safe haven in Libya.

We have seen what Libyans weapons and training and finance can do to our neighbours through these disgusting terrorist aggressions against tourists in Tunisia; against consulates in Cairo. So we have seen that without stabilising Libya, without fighting ISIS in Libya, ISIS will win the battle in the region.

That is a very important form of cooperation and it will have to be

done in the context of the international coalition on ISIS, to reintegrate Libya as part of the strategy against ISIS, and to have platforms for fighting ISIS in Libya through arrangements with the international community.

MICHEL COUSINS: *The original aim of the Skhirat process was to create a Government of National Accord through dialogue and reconciliation. Furthermore, the US and other states said that they would not provide aid to Libya to fight ISIS until there was such a government. Now it looks as if that government is going to happen without the GNC's approval and without reconciliation. Do you think the international community has decided that the need to fight ISIS in Libya is now too urgent and more important than the GNC and reconciliation?*

AREF ALI NAYED: The international community took over nine months of very patient, persistent, and meticulous negotiations. They have given all the stakeholders and all the parties a chance to be included. They have done their best. They have pressurized the House of Representatives to be more flexible. Indeed, the House of Representatives has made many concessions that would have been thought impossible a few months ago.

Despite all this, some stakeholders still want to be spoilers and I believe there is a reason for that. It is because there are stakeholders who do not really have a stake in the Libyan State. They have a stake in a transnational state that they would like to build or a transnational ideological organisation that they would like to promote.

Such movements only cooperate with the National State in order to scavenge its resources for their transnational aspirations. That is why they are not signing on.

I do hope that those who are more sensible among them will still catch up and sign but it is high time that we realise that not everyone will sign. It will be precisely those elements that have been sabotaging the democratic process in Libya for the last four years who will not sign. The reason they will not sign is because democracy is not in their vested interest. Democracy is only useful to them when they can rig elections and win them. Or when they can control the levers of the state.

When they lose elections—as happened in Libya, they lost three

consecutive elections, and when they lose the levers of power in the state, they will try to sabotage it; as indeed they have done in the attack and takeover of the Capital and the seat of government.

I was never of the view that the international community should wait for the National Unity Government. I always believed that because we have a legitimate Parliament and because we have a legitimate government led by Abdullah al-Thinni that the world community should have been cooperating with that government to fight the terrorists and not lose these nine months that we have lost.

Nevertheless it is never too late and it is better to come to this conclusion now rather than never. I think it is high time that we moved forward. We cannot let a bunch of saboteurs of the state destroy our chances for fighting the pseudo state that they are trying to promote, which is the so-called the Islamic State or ISIS.

Michel Cousins: *Do you think that the international community, by not rejecting the Supreme Court decision last November on the grounds that it was made under duress, empowered the rump GNC, and gave them a position in the debate, prolonging the mess in Libya?*

Aref Ali Nayed: It was quite understandable. The international community wanted to avoid a major conflict in Tripoli. Tripoli has two million people. We have seen the effects of a fight in Tripoli when Fajr Libya attacked; they destroyed the airport, the fuel depots, they completely removed the Wershefana clans from their land, and burned literally thousands of houses and looted thousands more. So we have seen what a fight in Tripoli can cause. So I think the international community was right to be persistently and patiently trying to convince everybody to come to terms.

However, I think everybody's patience has run out and the danger is increasing. ISIS keeps taking one town after another in the middle of Libya. They have more and more resources. They now have a fully functioning airbase an hour's flight from Rome at the al-Gurdhabiya (airbase) near Sirte. So it is only natural that everybody lost patience with this process and indeed wanted signatures; wanted a resolution.

It is the same with the Libyan people. There are people who have been living in schools for almost a year now. There are people who cannot get things like basic medical care; who cannot get gas for cooking, fuel for their cars and food, and peace for their children.

So people have definitely run out of patience. That is why the Libyan people will never forgive anyone who does not sign this agreement and gets on with life. It is a dreadful war that has to stop.

People who still want to spoil peace are people who are not interested in Libya and not interested in the welfare of the Libyan people. They should not be further entertained by the international community or the rest of the Libyan people.

We should call for the application of sanctions against such spoilers, and against those who actively support ISIS and promote it and finance it and condone it and create digital armies in its support and keep blessing it either in promotion or in the continued denial that ISIS even exists.

Such people should be categorised with ISIS as enemies of the Libyan people and of the international community. These people will never give Libya peace. They will never let Egypt or Tunisia be in peace. They will never let Italy or Greece or France be in peace.

MICHEL COUSINS: *Can we go back to the issue of security in the capital. If and when a government of national accord is created and approved by the House of Representatives, where does that government go if there are people in Tripoli who do not want it? Even if the GNC might approve the agreement, there are still those people there, like Badi, like Ghnaiwa, who are opposed to it. Returning would be very dangerous. Even if there is some sort of security, there could still be situations where, because people didn't like a government decision or because their cousin had been arrested, who might kidnap a minister again, just as before. The government has to be safe to be effective. Where might it have to go if it can't go to Tripoli?*

AREF ALI NAYED: You are alerting to a very important imbalance in the architecture of the agreement. The armed wing of the House of Representatives, which is the Libyan army, basically signed on to the agreement by obeying the parliament. They have said that only the parliament negotiates on their behalf. The Zintan forces also did that. They said the parliament represents them. So in effect they signed on. The Wershefana forces also did so. The only forces that did not sign up and are not subject to any political pressure now are precisely those rogue elements in Tripoli.

There are people who say that, in effect, the armed wing of the Is-

lamists stayed outside the agreement while their politicians jumped into the agreement so that they can have a say in the legislature and the executive while at the same time not be bound by any commitment regarding their military wing.

Such sceptics are right to bring this up. It is extremely important that people who signed up do so in action and not just in words and pen. That means we must see real commitment from the Islamists who did join the agreement and who will become part of the House of Representatives (HoR) by returning to the HoR or become part of the government by having some ministries or deputy minister positions. These people have to show real commitment in fighting terrorism. There can't be a situation where they obtain the concessions because of the military pressure that they applied, and at the same time don't have the responsibility and the obligation to curb their former military wing.

That is a key question regarding the upcoming architecture and we need to work with the international community and with all Libyans to make sure that this imbalance is addressed.

Secondly, you say that no government can go to Tripoli when people like Ghnaiwa or Badi are in charge. Of course that is the case. However, a government that has the full support of Misrata and the full support of Zintan and the full support of the Wershefana and the full support of Tajurah, and of Suq Al-Juma'a, and al-Zawia will be able to put a stop to these people.

I think these people will recognise, once these people unify under the command of a unified government, that they are no match to these combined Libyan forces.

When faced with the combined power of the Libyan people, these elements will submit to the will of the Libyan people.

Right now they are able to intimidate and scare, and kidnap and embezzle, and even assassinate because we are divided. Once we unify —all Libyans, all Libyan forces, all tribal forces, all social fabric forces, all towns, all cities—in a unified people's will to peace, then we can put a stop to this nonsense.

That is the foundation of a security architecture. It is the unity of the Libyan people and the unified determined will of the Libyan people not to put up with thugs and blackmailers and assassins.

I think these people will either come to their senses or will have to

be fought by the legitimate Libyan army, police and intelligence in order to dismantle their power and the stranglehold on our capital. We cannot leave the capital to them.

MICHEL COUSINS: *Could Tripoli became very nasty, very bloody, as the militants turn on those who they think have betrayed them—in this case the Misratans, people in the west of the country who want the agreement?*

AREF ALI NAYED: Tripoli cannot be left to fester with intense fighting. It is a large city with a large population. But there is something that is quite comforting; when the signing happened, and using the excuse of the anniversary of the Liberation of Tripoli, the thugs basically organised a parade in Tripoli. The good news is that no one showed up for it, and they only had something like 300 to 400 young people parading and they only had a very limited weapons supply; their trucks weren't exactly very impressive.

So instead of intimidating everyone they stupidly showed that they actually are quite weak. So I don't think that the forces in Tripoli are as strong as they seem, and if the Misratans and the Zintanis and the Wershefanis and the people of al-Zawia and of Suq Al-Juma'a and Tajourah are all behind the Libyan army, including some Tripolitanian militias—for example people who are now answering to [Central Tripoli mayor Al-Mahdi] Al-Harati who did sign up—if all these people combine, I don't think that these guys stand a chance.

They will probably give up their weapons and leave. And if they don't then I'm afraid every nation has to fight for its sovereignty and its capital. You cannot just leave it in their hands.

MICHEL COUSINS: *Other than security what should the priorities be for the new government?*

AREF ALI NAYED: First of all regarding security, it's important not to think about it narrowly. It is not just about weapons and checkpoints and command and control centres and fighting rogue elements.

Security has to do with economic well-being. It has to do with the giving of a healthy space and environment and an open horizon to young people. It has to do with medical security and food security and water security. Part of the problem for the last four years is that every government that has come has narrowly conceived security and has focussed on security, security and then security again.

I think that if young people believe that the economy is booming, that there are opportunities for them out there and that they will lose by continuing to remain [working] at checkpoints, then they will leave their weapons and create companies and try to participate in an economic boom.

So I think that it is very important that we look at economic stabilisation as an integral part of various elements—elements that have to do with wellbeing, that have to do with medical comfort and medical care, that have to do with education, that have to do with moving the economy. The Libyan economy has been stagnant. We've been treating the oil resource as a faucet that has been largely closed for the past couple of years.

A country cannot live like this. We need to produce again. We need to move the economy again. That is why it should be a top priority for any government that comes now to jumpstart the Libyan economy, to regain the confidence of Libyan businessmen.

I don't mean the huge tycoons that made a lot of money from the war economy, but I mean the middle-sized businesses and the people who own small and medium sized businesses and companies. We need to have their confidence again.

We need to assist them, by facilitating trade finance, by giving them the opportunity to thrive, by encouraging them to employ young Libyans, by giving them tax breaks, by giving them customs breaks.

We need to incubate new businesses for young people. We can even trade weapons for business opportunities.

We can say: you trade in your weapons and you get a small factory. You trade in your weapons and we will help you start up your construction company. Or we will help you start up your IT and communications company.

We need to have creative programmes that can inspire young people to leave the weapons aside, leave the bloodshed and move on to build something for Libya and for themselves, to settle down, to get married and have kids. Without this you cannot have security. So it is not that you need to secure the country first and then jumpstart the economy. You need to do it hand in hand. You need to do this not with any self-sufficiency illusion but with the realisation that you need all your neighbours and all the world community to do this. We need to iden-

tify partners who are willing to invest in the young people of Libyan and in the future of Libya. We need to open up the country for such investment in a way that does not threaten Libyan wellbeing or sovereignty. We need to do so rapidly. People need to be inspired again.

As I said one of our biggest enemies is despair and the loss of hope. And it is despair, the loss of hope and nihilism that fuel things like ISIS, and we need to get over this.

MICHEL COUSINS: *You say that economic reform has to go hand in hand with creating security. But there has been no economic reform any since the revolution. The result is that young people can't get a job. So they go and join a brigade. It is the only way they can get any money. Not only has there been no attempt to reform the economy, if anything it has got worse since the revolution.*

AREF ALI NAYED: It's got worse because people try to use cash as a fix, thereby creating cash addiction, which is worse than drug addiction. Because once you start giving free cash, and especially once you give cash as a reward for keeping your weapons, it's very difficult to get the kids off the weapons, just as it is very hard to get people off drugs.

Unfortunately the policy of dishing out payments to fighters, which started during the NTC times, and continues till today, is not only wrong-headed, it basically destroyed the country.

Economic reform is absolutely important. One of the key elements that needs to be understood if we are to understand why we are in the situation we are in, which is often forgotten, is that Gaddafi's socialist policies, which were quite drastic, destroyed three things in Libya. They destroyed the old structure of capital; they destroyed the old structure of property, and the old structure of labor.

The three fundamentals of the economy were transformed. They were transformed into something that was a failure. The socialist transformation never worked. Libya became more and more dependent on oil, rather than less dependent. And, ironically, it produced less and less oil. Oil production in 1968 during the last days of the king was higher than oil production at any other point since then.

In order to go forward, we need economic reform. One of the key reforms needed is respect for private property again. There is no clear land title in Libya because Gaddafi burned the land registry. We need

to restore the land registry. We need to restore labor unions that are real and not just a bunch or Revolutionary Committees' members as they were in the time of Gaddafi, unions that can uphold the rights of workers to a fair wage.

We also need to restructure the way capital is distributed because right now if you look at the distribution of wealth in Libya, you have the government which has most of the money, then you have five or six tycoons who have horded away billions through thievery, especially during the last ten years of Gaddafi's era. Then you have some small businessmen, maybe middle businessmen. Then you get a vast majority of young people who are jobless.

This kind of distribution just doesn't work and it is a formula for trouble. Because the problem is, as these young people rebel, they don't know what they want. They don't know what to do. It isn't because of their lack of imagination or vision. It is because no government has given them a framework in which to fulfil their visions and dreams. That is why economic reform is a priority.

There is a famous economist named Hernando De Soto who did some studies on Libya. I contacted him as early as 2003 out of research interest to just talk about on how an informal economy can be changed into a formal economy, how it is that we have a 1750 million square kilometres in Libya and yet how much of that can be collateralised to guarantee loans for young people, for example. It's less than .00001 percent because there is no land registry, no clear title, and no way of valuing, no credit bureau that can give credit worthiness reports.

Unless you can unleash this potential, you will not be able to jump-start the economy. We need creative ideas—ideas like De Soto's, ideas like the Finnish approach to development, or the Swedish, Norwegian attitudes towards the welfare of their people, and the automation of government as in Estonia for example and other countries where there is e-Government that can reach the tiniest of villages and towns. We need laboratories for incubating new ideas about how to restructure the economy.

MICHEL COUSINS: *You mention land registry. Countries like Poland and Hungary dealt with it. They did so by a mixture of returning land and compensating people. There has been no attempt to do that in*

Libya. There has been no attempt to deal with another issue—subsidies. If people do not pay a realistic price for water, electricity, fuel, they will never value it. Similarly, there are currency controls that prevent the economy growing. There are so many things that can be dealt with very easily, that need to be done but which have not been done. Will a government of national accord be able to do them? Why not, say, bring in the Poles or the Czechs to advice on land registry straightway?

Aref Ali Nayed: It all depends on how this government is formed, how this government is composed—the balance between the elements of this government—whether it can really be a government of accord or will it be a government of discord and bickering with parties that never get anything done because they keep blocking each other.

That's why I say that what is foundational for going forward is consensus. And consensus comes from mutual respect, and respecting each other's dignity.

That is why the agreement needs to be expanded to include the vast majority of Libyans who form the social fabric of Libya.

It is quite alarming that there was a meeting in Bani Walid of more than 37 tribes, which explicitly said that they are not supportive of the UN-led process. This is quite worrying because if this attitude continues we will find that nothing can happen in the country.

You need the buy-in of stakeholders. If you look at the grievances of why these tribes do not want to come in you can find that they are very easily addressed. Grievances such as prisoners who have been illegally detained, and for over four years now, who need to be released.

People will tell you: "How do you want to build a country with you when my kids are in your jails and where they are being tortured? And without due process."

The release of prisoners is an absolute must. There is a section in the UN agreement which deals with goodwill measures and trust-building measures. These should be in the preamble. These should be upfront in the agreement. These measures are absolutely important because they restore trust and dignity.

For example, how can you expect people to participate in rebuilding Libya with you if you have displaced them in their hundreds of thousands? People need to be able to go back to their homes.

The return of the displaced, the release of the prisoners and you mention compensation – the compensation for people whose houses have been blown up, and burned who have been maimed and whose property has been taken.

The only people who got compensation over the past four years are Islamists who compensated themselves for the years in jail in Gaddafi's time. It's fine but it is unfair to all the other people who have been injured in those times including all those who have lost their property—and the people who have lost their lives and property and freedom and limbs in the four years since the Revolution.

We need to have equity and fairness in all this. We cannot have two types of Libyans, the revolutionary Libyans and the anti-revolutionary Libyans who are seen as second-class or, worse, seen as non-human and then summarily destroyed. We must restore equality between Libyans. Equality of dignity, equality of value. Only then will Libyans cooperate.

If the government is based on such a consensus, and if it is formed by reasonable people who are willing to work with each other—they may not like each other, they may still hold some grudges about what happened during the war, they don't have to love each other—but they must love Libya in order to work with each other. And they must be able to realise that putting hurdles and preventing decision making is not going to do anyone any good.

Regarding reform, it is has been done elsewhere; it can be done (in Libya). Restructuring the banking system and exchange rates. There is the corruption of the Letters of Credit and how they are used to syphon off Libya's hard currency in the billions.

On subsidies, we need to have a sensible gradual lifting of subsidies and, at the same time, making sure that the Libyan people do share in their wealth by some sort of a smart-card scheme or a scheme for allocating money to every Libyan family because if the subsidies continue at the rate they are being paid today, we will continue to dish out medicine and food and goods and raw materials to all our neighbours—because the smuggling is massive.

With smuggling comes criminality, come drug smuggling, comes human smuggling, comes wars in the south of Libya. Most of the wars that have happened in the south of Libya and on the borders are

basically smuggler wars. They are not really social fabric wars. They are smuggler wars that use the social fabric and turn it into a tribal war but it really is about who controls the dues they get from letting smuggled goods pass by. All of this is important. Again we see the intricate relationship between economic security, the architecture of reform, and security. You cannot do one without the other.

MICHEL COUSINS: *So much of what happens in Libya at present is about money, not about ideology. People jump on ideological bandwagons to get the money. That makes it easier to deal with. When it's ideological it's in the mind. There is a great deal of crime in Libya. In Sabha for example there were over forty murders in Ramadan. What can a government of national accord do to cut down on crime? Is it again a matter of security? Or does something else need to be done?*

AREF ALI NAYED: There is no simple solution. There has to be a complex solution consisting of various elements. But what you mention about money and ideology is important.

Money and ideology can be separate but they are often intertwined. The most dangerous thievery that happened in Libya in the past four years is ideologically-motivated thievery that is self-righteous. It thinks it is stealing the money to use it for a good cause.

The ironic thing and the destructive thing is that this cause had nothing to do with Libya. It had to do with syphoning off Libyan funds in order to finance an international aim, in order to finance the rise of ISIS in Syria and Iraq and the rise of a zillion other movements that have stemmed from this basic fundamentalist ideology of thinking that they speak for God Himself and want to impose God's rule themselves as they understand it.

The ideology is not only dangerous as a system of ideas, but also because it is a major motive for stealing of Libya's money in order to use it for transnational purposes.

The second comment I would like to make is what is interesting about ideological groups in Libya is that they often acted like tribes. I know that many people from towns and cities will differ, but Libya is still quite largely tribal. So even when political parties and ideological movements thrived, they thrived on an almost tribal model. They became part of tribal warfare and used tribes for their warfare.

Crimes come in a huge variety. There are corruption crimes that are

quite vast. There is corruption in the foreign exchange and how it is used. There is corruption in trade finance and how L/Cs are used. There is corruption in customs. There is corruption in taxation. There is corruption in way things are imported. There is corruption in even in the way things are exported because people dismantle infrastructure to sell it as scrap. So there is corruption at those levels. But there is also corruption in government contracting. There is corruption in small bribes, for example, in getting a passport issued.

All that is criminality. There is also the criminality of smuggling: human smuggling, drugs smuggling, weapons smuggling, and subsidised goods smuggling—which is a huge system of crime that deprives the country of billions of dollars every year.

How do you stop all of this? Some of it is through structural reform. For example, restricting the economic model and how we do the economy; how we supply services to people; how we supply foodstuffs to people, how we supply basic goods, like fuel, and cooking gas and food.

We need to work on these structural changes. The taxation system needs to be reformed. When you have a taxation system that taxes you 90% of your income, definitely people will go and do tax evasion. It's better to reform the taxation system rather than blame the people for evading tax in Libya.

When the customs system is designed in such a way that it encourages at least 12 points of corruption, you need to change the customs system.

I think by simplifying the processes of government, by reducing bureaucracy, by reducing the number of stamps one needs to get on a sheet of paper before you can do something—it is interesting that every stamp in Libya becomes a source of corrupt income for the holder. So the less stamps you need, the less signatures and approvals, the less corruption.

So simplify government. Simplify bureaucracy. Have a straightforward system. Have a transparent system that allows the citizen to know what is going on and to report what is going on.

A grievances reporting system, a system for public tendering where people can just log in and see what tenders are available and where they can do their submission, where they can see how they were eval-

uated and why it was that company (A) was given the contract and not company (B)? You need all these measures together.

Unfortunately in Libya, when you say you want to stop crime, people think that they should commit even more crime by violating human rights, torturing people, beating up people, throwing them in these dungeons, not jails. We need to look more comprehensively at this.

Of course, Gaddafi did release almost 15,000 criminals. Many of them unfortunately, joined the Brigades and now have weapons.

So, there is some basic policing, some jail building and jail management. But that is only a small segment of what fighting crime is all about.

MICHEL COUSINS: *Illegal immigration is a major issue for Europe, and for Libya too. Is it purely a matter of security? After all there is very little illegal immigration taking place in the east of the country, it is taking place in the west. It is not taking place in substantial numbers in other countries where there is security. Can it be dealt with by getting decent security locally? And by getting rid of the corruption, because in places like Zuwara, local officials are involved in it.*

AREF ALI NAYED: People are not things. They have dignity and are of value. It's never good to compare human beings with mechanical systems. But there are mechanisms at play that can be understood through analogies. What you've got basically is a flow—a flow of human beings in vast numbers, in the tens of thousands, going from Africa to Europe. If you look at this from a flow point of view, from a fluid mechanics point of view, at why it is that this flow happens, you will understand how you can stop it.

First of all you have a differential that makes people flow. You have crushing poverty and perceived wellbeing in Europe. You need to work on this discrepancy. We have to look at this issue not superficially or at the final point. We have to look at the origin.

Why is it that people leave their land? Every human being, like every animal on earth, likes its nest, likes its locality. Why it is that someone would leave his mother and father and walk for thousands of miles and risk dying to get to Europe?

Let us ask these questions. Is it something so fundamentally wrong in the way we do the world economy and the way we structure the world economy that makes this happen? Instead of spending the

money on navies to patrol coasts, why don't we spend it on development projects in the countries of origin of these immigrants so that we help them in their own countries so that they do not have to move? So there is a differential issue that has to be looked at.

And like in the case of flow, it can be expedited and enhanced though mechanical pumps. What you have in Zuwara is basically a pump. These human trafficking mafias are basically pumps that just increase this flow. You need to stop these pumps.

You need to identify them. There is a lot of intelligence work that needs to happen, a lot of surveillance work, including satellite and aerial surveillance, and you need to identify those individuals who live off the blood of these immigrants, who live off the thousands of lives drowned in the waters of the Mediterranean. These people deserve to be in jail. They should not be making money off the suffering of human beings. That is the second thing you can do.

Another thing you can do to stop the flow is by making sure you have a government in Libya that understands that Libya also needs labour; a government that understands that the six million people of Libya are not enough to man all the projects that can happen in Libya.

If we revive and enhance the agricultural projects that are in the south of Libya, which are surprisingly successful because of the water that is available underneath the desert, if we have vast agricultural projects there, it is conceivable that we will be able to settle many workers not only to offer Libyans food security, but maybe even to export food to Europe.

There are creative ways of looking at this. We shouldn't look at this as an issue of human beings who are showing up at our doorsteps and then put a navy to stop them. Because where would they go?

It's not a simple problem, and it's not a Libyan problem. It's a world problem. Europe, I think, understands that. We need to work with our European partners on development and on developing systems for fighting the criminals who promote this but also making sure that the lives of these people are not only safeguarded but, as dignified human beings, are given opportunities somewhere or somehow.

MICHEL COUSINS: *Gaddafi paid Libyans to do nothing, to keep quiet. As a result an entitlement mentality has set in. People now think that Libya is rich and they should have a part of it and should not*

have to work or do anything, others can do it for them—the Tunisians, the Egyptians, the sub-Saharan Africans. Libyans did not use to think like this. And outside Libya, Libyans work hard and are successful, especially in areas such as banking, finance, medicine. But not in Libya. How can that be changed? Is it not about time that Libya started appreciating the value of Libyans? It does pay people properly. Look at how much a doctor is paid in Libya and how much in the UK. In the UK, he gets at least ten times as much. Look at how much an officer in the Libyan army is paid. It is peanuts compared to what a member of a Brigade gets. Has Libya not got to start appreciating the skills and dignity of ordinary Libyans so that they are willing to contribute wholeheartedly in their society?

Aref Ali Nayed: Libyans began to be dependent on government subsidies and government hand-outs and government salaries for not doing anything when Gaddafi destroyed the free economy in 1978. Before that people used to farm, used to manufacture, used to have shops, they used to trade. There were a vast variety of activities.

All of that stopped, deliberately. Gaddafi wanted the country to be socialist. But what he ended up doing was making everyone dependent on a meagre government salary that was not enough to give them a dignified life, but just enough to keep them going and not have to do much. It was a very strange and precarious kind of existence, and not a pleasant one at that. How do you change that?

It's not going to change overnight. This is going to take time. It will require putting in structures, of frameworks for economic development and activity, of structures of governance, for training, structures of capacity building, for technology transfer. That is going to take time.

What you say about Libyans being bright outside Libya and achieving, but not in Libya, it's because people need a system to achieve. A Libyan who works in, say, a large company like IBM in the States, is not working as an individual, he is working as a team member in a structure that was developed over a hundred years. When someone goes and works in a hospital in the UK, they are working in a medical care system that has taken a hundred years to develop. People thrive within systems that are successful and that encourage people to go forward.

Unfortunately, I know many [Libyan] expats who came back but

who were not able to be successful. You get a combination. They were not able to be successful so they have resentment and people resent them because they see them as prima donnas who come from overseas who have unrealistic expectations and who look down on them.

So there is this discrepancy between Libyans who were outside and had opportunities outside and Libyans inside, and between Libyans in cities and in the countryside, and between Libyans in cities and Libyans in semi-nomadic areas. There are huge social issues that have to be addressed. No one can do this in a year or two or three. That's why it is important to have a long-term vision.

I had the privilege of working with a group of young Libyans on the project of *Libya 2020 Vision*. That seems so far away but it is only five years. We need a Vision 2050. We need a forwards vision. We need to get out of the quagmire we're in by having something at the front, what Ernst Bloch calls the "*not yet*" to move forward.

Just as you get a truck out of the mud by having a winch pull it out by having a point outside of the mess. We need a vision. We have this document called *Libya 2020 Vision*. We are encouraging young people to work on this vision. There are other people working on visions. We need to get together and develop a Libyan vision that can inspire young people.

MICHEL COUSINS: *Do you think that in a limited period of time— the maximum is two years—a Government of National Accord can achieve enough to give Libyans confidence that things will get better?*

AREF ALI NAYED: When you call things temporary and transitional, it is a self-fulfilling prophecy. People tend to think that way. What is important is that even if this government has six months, or a year or two years, even if it cannot achieve great things, it must start to achieve great things. What is important is to start. The problem is that we have had false starts for four years. We just need a good start.

A jumpstart of the Libyan economy and the beginning of putting in measures that can achieve fruition in a year, two years, three years, and some maybe in a decade, but we need to start. We must not say "it's only a year so I must be obsessed with security".

No, jumpstart the economy, jumpstart education, jumpstart medicine, jumpstart wellbeing, jumpstart the media so that instead of this cynical, hateful media that is teaching people to hate each other and

kill each other, we can have a media that can encourage dialogue and understanding, and respect and dignity.

If we do nothing else in this one year or two years, except restore the dignity of men and women, by releasing prisoners, moving people back to their homes, beginning the healing process, telling the Libyan women and showing the Libyan women that we have not forgotten their sacrifices in the revolution and that they are an active member of this society, that they constitute 50 percent, give them their fair value in the government and their share in the government in a fair way.

We need to do all these things. I don't think it takes all that long to show good intent and take a step or two forward towards achieving that intent. We should not sit and lament "it's only one year; what can be done?" A lot can be done in a year.

Look at Japan after the tsunami. That should inspire us. Look at Nepal after the earthquake. They are training their people who to do carpentry and how to do electricity and how to rebuild their country.

We all have pain and we all have anguish. But pain and anguish are raw materials from which a nation can be built if we are determined enough and if we love each other enough and love our country enough.

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BBC Hardtalk Interview

The following interview by Stephen Sackur for BBC's Hardtalk *was broadcast on 14th September 2015.*

T<small>URMOIL IN THE MIDDLE EAST</small> *has created a security and migration crisis which threatens the stability of Europe and the wider world. Syria's war is, of course, at the heart of the problem. But so too is Libya's prolonged descent into chaos. Our guest is Aref Ali Nayed, Libyan Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates and a senior diplomat involved in efforts to end the post-Gaddafi internal conflict. Can Libya's warring parties join forces to save the country?*

S<small>TEPHEN</small> S<small>ACKUR</small>: *Let's start with the most immediate news on Libya. There are talks, in Morocco, between the different warring factions inside your country, there is talk of a breakthrough, an agreement imminent. What can you tell me?*

A<small>REF</small> A<small>LI</small> N<small>AYED</small>: We are quite excited, we are in the very last chapter of a very prolonged, protracted, very difficult negotiation process that was led by Bernardino Leon, the special representative of the UN to Libya. And we are literally in the very last stage. If the signing happens, we should be able to form a national accord government very shortly.

S<small>TEPHEN</small> S<small>ACKUR</small>: *Earlier in the summer, Mr. Leon seemed to believe he was very close to a deal, and then the deal didn't happy because the so-called government in Tripoli, the GNC regime, refused to acknowledge that outline deal. So why should we be confident that this time is different?*

A<small>REF</small> A<small>LI</small> N<small>AYED</small>: Because, even in the last time, there was still a

signing off with initials that was absolutely important and significant. And without that signing off, there would not have been this last episode of the talks. I do believe that this is the very last one. Mr. Leon, himself, and world powers have made it clear that the deadline of 20th of September is the final deadline for this.

Stephen Sackur: *I am very aware that I interviewed you not so long ago. In fact, pretty much four years ago, in fact. And at that time, the Gaddafi regime was in the process of being toppled. And you were extraordinarily confident that Libya was on a path to freedom, democracy, and pluralism. You told me that this was the dawn of a new era. Why should I believe you now with this new optimism you've got when you were so very wrong four years ago?*

Aref Ali Nayed: First of all, it's because I believe hope is an absolute must for humanity to go forward. And secondly, given the 42 years of tyranny that Libya experienced under Gaddafi, it's not surprising that it takes four years for us to get things at least off to a good start. So I believe that such momentous, historical changes are always difficult. But we must always hope.

Stephen Sackur: *Well, yeah, there's hope, and then there's being realistic. Your words to me, four years ago: "Tyranny will never happen again. Corruption will never happen again. One tendency overpowering all the others will never happen again in Libya." All of those things have happened many times since, and what we see today is that the people who really have the power in Libya are the men with guns who are answerable to no democratic authority.*

Aref Ali Nayed: Well, first of all, in these last four years, several people, and movements, and ideological trends have tried to have an absolute tyranny over Libya. And guess what? They all failed. There has been no tyranny of the centralized type that Gaddafi imposed on the Libyan people for 42 years.

Stephen Sackur: *Well, no, there isn't centralized tyranny, there is localized tyranny.*

Aref Ali Nayed: Yes, of course.

Stephen Sackur: *Which, in some ways, is even more anarchic. You could go to a town like Sirte today, and who is really in control? The truth is, it's the gunmen loyal to Islamic State, the Daesh.*

Aref Ali Nayed: Yes, the ISIS topic is something we need to return

to. However, no state can be built without checks and balances between multiple forces. There will always be tension in Libya. The important thing is to have harmonized tension on which you can build a state. It takes time. Negotiation is not always with words. That's what we're trying to do now in Morocco. There has been a protracted attempt by many people to take over during the last four years. They all failed. And now, everybody's recognizing that they have to somehow live together and somehow make a country together.

STEPHEN SACKUR: *Let's talk about how that might work in detail. But before we do, I think it's really important to reflect on why things have been so disastrous in the last four years in Libya. If you could put your finger on one reason why your hopes were dashed for so many years, what would it be?*

AREF ALI NAYED: It would be that the young inspirational visions of a transformed Libya were not matched by organization and management that was befitting of state building. It was an enthusiastic uprising that overthrew tyranny, but we didn't have neither the managerial skills nor the organizational skills to actually go into state building. And unfortunately, also, we've had ideological trends where the only organized parties would try to basically take over the country and in a sense, hijack the revolution.

STEPHEN SACKUR: *Would it be fair to say that people like you, secularists in Libya, also failed completely to reach out to different brands of Islamist thinking inside the country?*

AREF ALI NAYED: Well, I'm not a secularist. I'm actually a Muslim theologian.

STEPHEN SACKUR: *I know, but you're the kind of theologian who writes books about cooperation, and living with Christian communities, for example.*

AREF ALI NAYED: I have, I have spent 25 years of inter-faith dialogue. However, I would like to stress that the Libyan people are a Muslim people, and that's why Libya will be a Muslim country. However, what's most problematic in Libya are fascist trends that use Islam. And it's actually a phenomenon that we see across the region, and that's ISIS arises. It's basically a neo-fascism using Islamic terminology. So I think perhaps, if there is a failure, yes, we did fail to give young people an alternative narrative, an alternative discourse of state

building that gives prosperity to everyone. But it is a hard task, and it is a task that no one man can perform, something that the women and men of Libya have to build together.

STEPHEN SACKUR: *You've in a sense been very frank in addressing the question in terms of the internal failings of the post-Gaddafi political generation. I understand that and appreciate that. But you haven't mentioned the degree to which Libya's been a playground for proxy forces, as well, within the Arab world. And you must know – surely, you must know this better than most because you're the ambassador in the United Arab Emirates. And one could argue that the way in which the UAE has tried to play politics in Libya against the interests, for example, of Qatar, which has also been playing politics in Libya that has been another destabilizing factor in your country.*

AREF ALI NAYED: I think the entire region, the Middle Eastern region, is going through a historical dialectic that is of the utmost seriousness. It is a dialectic regarding what Islam is, who we are, where we're going. And of course, different countries have taken different approaches to this, there's no doubt. And that this is reflected in Libya itself, of course this is the case.

STEPHEN SACKUR: *Did you—if I may interrupt, but what you're saying is interesting—or would you say here and now that the way in which the UAE and Egypt on one side and Qatar on the other side have meddled in the politics of Libya in the last four years has been damaging and detrimental?*

AREF ALI NAYED: I wouldn't say meddled. What I would say is that there is a huge struggle in the Middle East between what I would call the traditionalist narrative of Al-Azhar and likeminded institutions of Sunni Islam, that is actually quite moderate, rooted in the area and the Muslim Brotherhood and a more ideologically driven, politicized Islam. This struggle in the region, of course, will reflect on Libya. And what happens in Libya will reflect on other countries. It isn't a matter of one country meddling into the other countries. I think what we're seeing is a struggle that's actually regional.

STEPHEN SACKUR: *But it is sometimes a question of out and out meddling. For example, in the summer of 2014, it is widely believed— and I'd be interested to know what you think—but it's widely believed that the UAE operating in conjunction with the Egyptians bombed*

positions of the Islamist GNC Libya Dawn group in and around Tripoli for example. Can you confirm that happened?

Aref Ali Nayed: The UAE and Egypt denied this. And the US State Department denied this.

Stephen Sackur: *No, I know. I want the truth. I know for political purposes, they denied it. But you can perhaps now tell me the truth.*

Aref Ali Nayed: Look, the truth is that as far as I know, it is not clear who did that. And as far as I know, it is something that has had no effect to actually win the battle for either side. It actually didn't have any effect. So I don't know. It's something that has nothing to do with my Embassy or myself.

Stephen Sackur: *Well, you're maintaining your position as a diplomat with that answer, I must say. But let us talk about the diplomacy of today. You've said you have high hopes that this deal can now be broken. So the de facto reality of two rival governments claiming to represent Libya will no longer be the case. There will be a national unity government. Now, for that to happen, there has to be the building of an awful lot of trust between those two rival camps. You, personally, don't appear to have any trust in the Tripoli regime at all because earlier this year, you described them—the Libya Dawn GNC group—as "a bunch of thugs. They are not partners in the terrorism. They are part of the problem."*

Aref Ali Nayed: Well, I trust in God, and I trust in the Libyan people. As for factions within Libya, I trust factions when they are kept honest by other factions in the country.

Stephen Sackur: *So you think you can strike a deal with "a bunch of thugs"?*

Aref Ali Nayed: Well, it happens every day throughout the world. It doesn't mean that you have to like the person across the table when you're negotiating. But you have to like your country enough to cut a deal for stability.

Stephen Sackur: *You also, surely, have to be big enough to say, maybe I was wrong. Maybe they're not thugs. Maybe they just have a different political perspective from me. Are you ready to say that?*

Aref Ali Nayed: Well, I really don't want to be dragged into adjectives. We are in a very sensitive period of negotiation. However, what I can tell you is, when people attack airports and attack oil de-

pots, and attack cities, and move and uproot populations like to the tune of half a million people from their homes, that's thuggish behavior. Let's put it that way.

Stephen Sackur: *See, I'm just wondering whether there really is the trust to believe this deal is going to work. I just wonder whether you've been pushed into it by the Obama administration. Because we know when he gathered together a lot of Gulf leaders in May, and he made Libya one of the key points to discuss, he made it quite plain that—to both the UAE and the Qataris at the time, he said, "I want a deal in Libya which is inclusive." Is that why you're now on the brink of signing this deal?*

Aref Ali Nayed: I think we're at the brink of signing the deal because everyone realized that there is no military solution to this. That everyone tried to actually use force to actually exert their will over the entire territory of Libya. The fact of the matter is, everybody failed. And because of this, people realized that they need to sit to each other to try and find an amicable way. Yes, this is forced. But I think it is more forced because of the distribution of power more than by any foreign power.

Stephen Sackur: *But have the Americans been pushing very hard for this inclusive deal to be done?*

Aref Ali Nayed: Well, everybody has been supporting such a negotiation, ranging from the Qataris, to the Emirates, to the Turks, to the Egyptians, to the Americans. But I don't think any superpower imposed this on anyone.

Stephen Sackur: *Now, that's some very interesting words you just said to me. You said there can be, there is no military solution, that's why we're all the negotiating table. Do you think that the commander in charge of the Tobruk government, that is your government, forces, that is Khalifa Hafter, do you think he believes there's no military solution?*

Aref Ali Nayed: I think that I cannot speak for him. You can ask him yourself. However, I think there is a realization that there is an absolute need for a negotiated settlement.

Stephen Sackur: *Consider, then, Haftar's words. He said, "I am betting that there will be a military solution." He told the* New Yorker *magazine this year, "There will be no dialogue with terrorism. The*

only thing to say about terrorism is that we will fight it till it's defeated and that we have 'purified the country.'" This is your military commander speaking.

AREF ALI NAYED: Well, you cannot hold me responsible for everything Mr. Haftar says.

STEPHEN SACKUR: *You speak for your government.*

AREF ALI NAYED: I speak for my government. But I don't speak for Mr Haftar.

STEPHEN SACKUR: *Hafter is your military commander.*

AREF ALI NAYED: He is the military commander of the Libyan army, yes.

STEPHEN SACKUR: *That is my point. You have a military commander, the guy who is responsible for developing your military strategy, who is betting on a military solution and says his aim is to purify the country.*

AREF ALI NAYED: Read the agreement that we're signing—or have already initialled in Morocco. And you shall see that fighting terrorism is an integral part of that agreement, to which everybody signs, and to which everyone agrees. Meaning, those persons in Tripoli who do sign on this document will be committed to fighting terrorism.

STEPHEN SACKUR: With the persons in Tobruk?

AREF ALI NAYED: Of course, and that is something that can unify us. I don't think that there's any Libyan who will argue that ISIS should not be falled.

STEPHEN SACKUR: *No, but let's just stick with Haftar for a moment. This is what one Obama administration official, a senior figure, said: "The US government has nothing to do with Haftar. Haftar's killing people. He says he targeting terrorists, but his definition of that is way too broad. He is a vigilante." Haftar's going to have to go, isn't he?*

AREF ALI NAYED: Well, I cannot speak for the American government or comment on what American officials will tell you. However, the vigilante-like behavior has been rampant in Libya for a good number of years, now. So it's what I can tell you is the following, that there is terrorism, and it's time that we stop the denials. Part of the problem we had with Tripoli was not only for many, many months, there was denial from Tripoli that terrorism existed, there was even the condoning of it and the helping of it. And that was the issue. If Tripoli now

signs an agreement committed to fighting ISIS, fighting terrorism, we are united in this fight.

STEPHEN SACKUR: *But my point is, why would Tripoli trust in your good intentions as long as you insist that Mr Haftar is your military commander? They regard him as a war criminal … His own records suggest that he's intent on military solutions. My question to you is: it time to remove Haftar as a sign of your government's good intent?*

AREF ALI NAYED: The negotiation as it happens now in Morocco— part of the negotiation is the question about the figures from the other side. Who attacked airports, and who committed war crimes, and who are listed a couple of months ago to go to the Security Council, and now we find them on the negotiating table. So it is a genuine question that has to be negotiated about. However, I don't think …

STEPHEN SACKUR: *So to be clear, hang on, we must move on, but just to be clear, you're saying that Khalifa Haftar's continuation as military commander of your Tobruk forces is now on the negotiating table …*

AREF ALI NAYED: It is, no person is being negotiated about by name. What is being negotiated about is what happens to all the key positions, military or civilian? And part of the negotiation is this question. Will all these positions become vacant as soon as the new government comes to power, and will they be populated again?

STEPHEN SACKUR: *Will they?*

AREF ALI NAYED: It's something that hasn't been decided yet because one of the decisive …

STEPHEN SACKUR: *Then you tell me the deal's almost done, it's clearly not done at all.*

AREF ALI NAYED: It is a crucial part of closing the deal.

STEPHEN SACKUR: *Which hasn't been agreed, yet.*

AREF ALI NAYED: This is the nature of negotiation. I mean, most political offerings …

STEPHEN SACKUR: *Well, I'm just wondering whether we should take your optimism seriously. But let's move on. Because clearly, you're telling me no decision yet taken as to whether Haftar can continue. So let's move on. Let's talk about Islamic State. You've referred to them already. You said recently that, "people don't realize how much Daesh, the Islamic State, has infiltrated Libya. They've made it their*

gas station, their ATM machine, and their airport from which they can attack any European target." So how on earth, in the current chaos and anarchy inside Libya, is that problem going to be addressed?

AREF ALI NAYED: It will be addressed if we all unite in a unified government, in an accord government that has a unified army under unified commander control and if we all fight Daesh from all sides. So if Misrata, and Zintan, and the Ajdabiya-based forces, Benghazi-based forces—if everybody joins together, we are able to fight ISIS. But we cannot do it fragmented, we cannot do it when we are fighting each other. We have to all unite in the fight against ISIS.

STEPHEN SACKUR: *Do you want western military intervention, the United States and some allies are bombing IS positions in Iraq and in Syria. Do you want them to extend their bombing campaign to Libya?*

AREF ALI NAYED: That is something that is to be decided by the new prime minister, the national accord government, and I may want —like to point out that it is really a three-person government rather than just a single prime minister. A prime minister plus two deputies. They will have to decide in conjunction with the National Security Council that's going to be part and parcel of this deal. And if that government decides to ask for help, I see no shame in asking for help. Because ISIS is an international phenomenon, it is a networked phenomenon, and it's ludicrous that there is no unified strategy to fight it.

STEPHEN SACKUR: *Yes, but the only thing one might say is that western intervention in Libya, going back to 2011, frankly, appears to have made the situation in Libya more dangerous, more chaotic, more anarchic than it was before. So you, I think, arguing as you have in the recent past for lifting the UN—lifting its arms embargo and seeing western arms being sent to Libya seems to me to be a recipe for further chaos. Those arms almost inevitably would end up in the hands of people who want to use them for malign purposes.*

AREF ALI NAYED: Well, just because an intervention was not seen through doesn't mean that further intervention's going to be destructive. I do not see how Libya will be able to fight ISIS by itself. It's going to need cooperation.

STEPHEN SACKUR: *Do you seriously think western powers are going to send weapons to, notionally, to your army, maybe the army of Mr Haftar, if he continues, who knows. But do you think they're seriously*

going to send weaponry into Libya when weaponry that arrives in Libya, by and large, over recent years, has ended up in the hands of those who want to do harm to western interests?

Aref Ali Nayed: Well, if we have a unified Libyan army and a unified command with international observers and consultants, I think that it is quite feasible, yes.

Stephen Sackur: *Let's talk about the other way in which the west sees great concern in Libya today. One is the rise in recent years of Islamic State operations in your country. The other is the way in which Libya has become a conduit for people smugglers inviting tens, hundreds of thousands of people to use Libya as a crossing point into Europe, across the Mediterranean Sea. The Europeans are desperate to find a solution. Do you see, as a representative of the Libyan government, any possibility of ending that flow of people?*

Aref Ali Nayed: Well, you have to know, any flow in nature in general happens because of a differential. And I think that we have to look at the sources of this movement. Why is it that people would leave their homes, and risk their lives, and the lives of their babies and kids in this desperate movement north?

Stephen Sackur: *Well, we know the problem. We've rehearsed it on this program many times. My immediate question to you is simply this.*

Aref Ali Nayed: Yes, but we're not doing anything about it, you know?

Stephen Sackur: *But the EU has proposals. One is to put processing centers for migrants on Libyan territory. Another is to use naval and military interventions to hit the people smugglers right offshore, off the Libyan coast. Would you support both of those?*

Aref Ali Nayed: But prior to that, don't you think it makes a lot more sense to help the development of the source countries so that people don't have to leave their homes like that?

Stephen Sackur: *That may take years to really change the situation in a country like Eritrea. In the short run, yes or no? Is the Libyan government, assuming you get the national unity deal, ready to accept the EU's demand for processing centers on your soil?*

Aref Ali Nayed: I think it's not a matter of answering a demand. It's a matter of working out a unified strategy with the Libyan coun-

terpart. When the national unity government is formed, it will have to sit with our European partners to look at this issue. But what I'm urging is that we don't look at this superficially of how to push it away from the doors of Europe as much as possible, but to actually address this at the source. Why is it that all these people are so desperately trying to get to Europe? You must try and help develop the countries from which these people come.

STEPHEN SACKUR: *But you wouldn't rule out processing centers on your territory?*

AREF ALI NAYED: This is not something that I can decide. It's something that has to be decided collectively by the new government.

STEPHEN SACKUR: *Interesting you say that because the one question I've skirted around but I'll ask you at the end is, you have been widely tipped as the nominee of the Tobruk government to be a national unity prime minister, at least one of the alternatives for the prime ministerial post. Is your name in the frame for that post?*

AREF ALI NAYED: My name is in, however, it is one of 13 names submitted by the House of Representatives. Whether that will happen or not is something that is open for discussion and negotiations. However, what I can assure you is that no single man or woman can solve Libya's problems. Libya needs teamwork. And it needs people working together. And people who may not love each other or like each other but who love and like Libya enough to work with each other. And to do so, also, in partnership with our European and international allies.

STEPHEN SACKUR: *It strikes me as possibly one of the hardest jobs in international politics right now, but you're telling me you do want to be Libya's national unity prime minister?*

AREF ALI NAYED: Yes. Because it is a duty that I have to, that I feel bound to.

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How the Libyan
Revolution was Hijacked

*The following interview Shahanaaz Habib with Dr Aref Ali Nayed
was published in Malaysian newspaper* The Star *on Sunday 3rd April
2016.*

A KEY FIGURE IN THE LIBYAN *uprising shares frank opinions
about the perilous state of the country five years after that
hopeful time and why the Islamic State organisation is not
about Islam.*

*Libyan scholar Dr. Aref Ali Nayed joined the Arab Spring uprising
in early 2011 to oust leader Colonel Muammar Gaddafi from power.
Once the deed was done, Dr. Aref was the leading coordinator of the
Libya Stabilization Team and someone people saw as a potential
Prime Minister.*

*But five years down the line, Dr Aref is not PM, Libya is still in tur-
moil with two governments in the country instead of one, leading to
the rise of the Islamic State (IS) militants, who have been running wild
creating havoc everywhere.*

*Dr Aref Ali Nayed—who has been acknowledged as one of the 50
most influential Muslims in the world—says never in his wildest imag-
ination did he think Libya would be in the state it is in now. He has
regrets and admits life in Libya today, five years after the revolution,
is worse in some ways than during Gaddafi's time. He blames this
on the ideologues and Islamists who hijacked and "mutilated" Libya's
revolution. Still, he believes Libyans have some hope because there
is an "open horizon of freedom and dignified life" they can work
towards.*

Dr Aref, Libya's ambassador to the United Arab Emirates, is the

founder and director of Dubai- and Tripoli-based Kalam Research and Media, a think tank on Islamic study and philosophy in various fields. He was in Kuala Lumpur recently when we met at IKIM (Institut Kefahaman Islam Malaysia) for this interview.

Interviewer: *The Arab Spring started off so hopefully. What went wrong?*

Aref Ali Nayed: The Arab Spring was a spontaneous outburst of energy from young women and men who were seeking freedom after many decades of tyranny. It had the basic longings and hopes that every community and every human being has, which is to live a dignified life and thrive as a human being. It was a very worthy and respectable phenomenon but because it was spontaneous, it was also chaotic.

By chaotic, I mean it did not have centers of command and control. The only people who had centers of command and control during this amazingly important historical phenomenon were the ideo- logical groups, who, for decades, had refined the methodology not only for organizing but also mobilizing the art of propaganda and the art of controlling situations.

And, unfortunately, these ideological groups realized from the beginning that there was a golden opportunity for them, and they very rapidly managed to control many nodes of the structures that began to emerge. At least that was the case in my country, Libya.

In other countries, however, where there were institutions and structures that were strong and survived the Arab Spring, like in Egypt where there was the army, and Tunisia where there was the interior ministry and police, these structures managed to exert control.

In the case of Libya, the Gaddafi regime depended on a very specific security apparatus that was not actually a kind of army of the state but rather a kind of personal protection force for Gaddafi and his sons.

So because there was a lack of institutions, the ideological groups unfortunately managed to control the state in the post revolution period that emerged.

But they kept losing elections. They tried to manipulate every election but they kept losing and losing. They lost three times. And when they lost the elections, they attacked the capital, took it over and made

the artificial phenomenon of two governments in Libya—which is not really two governments; it is actually one government and a pseudo-government that took over the Capital by force.

INTERVIEWER: *Would you say that life for the people in Libya is better now than under Gaddafi?*

AREF ALI NAYED: Life under Gaddafi had set the conditions, the kind of de-institutionalizing of the country that made Libya—once it got rid of Gaddafi—quite vulnerable to what we are seeing today.

If we look at the vital statistics of the numbers of deaths, imprisonment, vicious acts, act of tortures and attacks on human dignity, I think these attacks have happened in more numbers in these last five years of post-revolution than during all the time of Gaddafi combined.

People are worse off if you look at the statistics. But people are better off in the sense that there is an open horizon of freedom and dignified life that they can work towards. However, it is going to be a lot of hard work and it cannot be something that will happen simply.

Do we have regrets about the Libyan revolution? Yes, I have regrets about the results and the suffering that has happened to the Libyan people. However, I have no regrets in feeling that tyranny should not have been inflicted upon our people for so many decades.

It was 42 years of oppression that left our country quite desolate at all levels. And it is this desolation that has set the conditions for the kind of chaos that we have today.

I blame the ideologues, the Islamists—who, instead of participating with everyone else in a country that was equitable to al—moved very quickly to use the Arab Spring as an opportunity to take over power and inflict upon us a tyranny even worse than the tyranny of Gaddafi.

INTERVIEWER: *Surely someone would have foreseen the chaos and turmoil that would emerge when there is a power vacuum. Why didn't Libya learn lessons from what happened in Iraq, for instance?*

AREF ALI NAYED: I was the Head of Operations for the Libya Stabilization Team. We wrote a stabilization plan based on lessons from Iraq, Bosnia, Kosovo and other places. Unfortunately, all our plans were set aside about three weeks after we entered Tripoli because the Islamists simply took over. They took over through sheer aggression; and a couple of countries in our region saw to it that they were well-funded and well-placed.

We are still suffering from this mutilation of the Libyan revolution. It is actually the hijacking of the Libyan Revolution. But the solution is not to say that we should just go back to tyranny. The solution is actually to complete the Revolution, take it to its logical conclusion. And not stop until the safety, freedom, and dignity of all human being are upheld.

Interviewer: *But why should the Islamists co-operate? After the Arab Spring when there were elections in Egypt and [the Muslim Brotherhood's] Mohamed Morsi was elected President, he was toppled in a coup that the whole world supported?*

Aref Ali Nayed: I have a difficult enough time commenting on my own country. Other people's countries are their business. However, what I can tell you is that you should look at what Morsi did with that one year; when he used his rule to displace all his opponents completely and eradicate all key positions and give them to people from his own party.

When a president actually has to answer to a party head who is higher than a president, this sets the condition for popular anger.

What happened in Egypt was not simply the army acting but also massive demonstrations. How things were managed in Egypt is not something I am ready to comment on right now, but what I can tell you is that it is a lot more complex than it seems.

It is very simple for the Islamists to play the victimhood game, which they are very good at. But when they were in power; they victimized everyone else. That is the real reason for their failure. And the real reason which set the condition for the rejection, be that by popular demonstrations or [through] the [Egyptian] army.

As for Tunisia [where the Arab Spring began in December 2010], it is in a better situation than other countries. But the credit actually goes to the very wise and gentle way in which the Tunisian army and the police dealt with things. Let us not forget those institutions survived and they contributed to the peaceful departure of [Tunisian President] Ben Ali.

They also contributed to the checking of early attempts by the Islamists to effect a complete takeover and they, in a way, guaranteed democracy in a very interesting way.

Unfortunately, people attribute all good things in Tunisia to certain

personalities, like [acting president before the 2014 elections, Rashid] Ghanoushi. But I think the Tunisian army and police deserve a lot more credit than they are given. Furthermore, the ambivalent attitude of the Tunisian Islamists to Islamists in my country is most disturbing.

While we find them preaching peace and coexistence in Tunisia, we find them complicit with and in total support of Islamists in Libya who are very aggressive and who have actually contributed to the rise of radical Islam in my own country.

INTERVIEWER: *Is there political space in Libya to discuss statehood with the Islamists?*

AREF ALI NAYED: We have been going through a protracted process to reach the Unity Government. As part of that process, all parties, all stakeholders and actors, have been invited, and they are participating.

What I can tell you personally is that anyone who believes in a National State and respects the National State and is willing to defend the National State is a worthy citizen who has the right not only of coexistence but also co-participation with everyone else.

Anyone who believes in transnational structures that cannibalizes the National State to have a transnational structure at the cost of a National State should be rejected.

Just as Italy would not tolerate the fascists as part of Italian democracy, and Germany would not tolerate the Nazis as part of German democracy, I do not think movements that believe in the transnational structure beyond the state, and who do not have sufficient respect for the National State should be accommodated in democratic systems – especially not those who want to use violence against the National State.

INTERVIEWER: *Are you equating the Muslim Brotherhood and Islamists to fascists and Nazis?*

AREF ALI NAYED: It all depends on them. If they choose to conduct themselves as co-citizens in a National State, they are more than welcome by all Libyans. But if they choose to conduct themselves as scavengers of the National State, to take Libyan money to build terrorists organizations in Syria and other places, then they are not welcome. So it all depends on their behavior. I don't think it is the labels or classifications that matter. It is the conduct and action that matter.

INTERVIEWER: *The Islamic State (IS) seems to be a by-product of the Arab Spring, and their threat is everywhere—hasn't the Arab Spring made the world today less safe?*

AREF ALI NAYED: Most people who die of HIV or AIDS don't die of the virus itself, they die because the body's resistance is destroyed and they succumb to a multitude of other diseases. The so-called Islamic State or Daesh is a disease that has managed to infest the Middle East because the resistance of this entire region was reduced by the turmoil and chaos of the Arab Spring.

There are many factors that has led to its rise. I personally believe that IS has more to do with fascism than Islam. Their conduct and behavior are more like the fascists of the 1920s and 1930s in Europe.

They are disrespectful of all that is sacred, be it material—as in material culture, libraries, monuments and so on—or human—as in great scholars. Their eradication of everything that celebrates the human spirit, human life and human dignity is indicative that they have nothing to do with Islam. It is a new form of fascism with a new label.

INTERVIEWER: *You are one of the 50 most influential Muslims in the world—why are scholars like you not able to take back that psychological ground in Islam from extremists like ISIS?*

AREF ALI NAYED: When networks, structures, and institutions are ruptured, it takes some time for them to restore themselves and to heal. It is due to lack of effort; maybe we are not doing enough. We need to work together.

The phenomena of radicalization and violent extremism are not things that can be resisted and defeated in an isolated way. It is not enough to use the army and the police to resist terrorism. It is very important to develop Think Tanks, universities, graduate programs, exchange programs, publishing programs, and also digital content. The media is extremely important. And let us not forget economic development and opening up opportunities for young people in terms of employment and dignified ways of living.

Humankind thriving and the respect for human life are the best ways to resist ideologies of nihility and death which is what IS stands for. Theirs is just basically an ideology based on darkness and death.

It may seem irrational and quite crazy—it is for the same reason that Europeans were attracted to Nazism and Fascism.

When people feel powerless and alienated, feel they have no meaning in their lives, feel aggrieved and pushed around, these combined feelings of anger, trauma, and lack of meaning make people very vulnerable to peddlers of cheap meanings.

Philosopher, psychologist, and psychotherapist Viktor Frankl has written about how people seek meaning, and what ISIS has done – through the use of media, social media and the clever use of info graphics—is that it has managed to deceive people into thinking it can give them meaning quickly. So if someone with a totally wretched life is suddenly given a clear goal, a set of tools, and the assurance there are others in solidarity with him; people are naturally deceived by all this.

This is because the traditional "meaning givers" in our lives—be they religious leaders, or cultural, or communal standard setters—because of various factors are currently not able to convey the meanings that are conducive to a good life and a life of dignity.

INTERVIEWER: *ISIS seems to consist of Sunni Muslims but they target Sunni as well as Shi'a communities, so why can't Sunnis and Shi'a work together against ISIS, which is tarnishing Islam for everybody?*

AREF ALI NAYED: I completely disagree with the thinking that ISIS are Sunnis. ISIS are Khawarij [a sect that deviated from the mainstream Islam that kills its opponents, and supposedly distorts Islam and the meaning of the Qur'an to justify their actions]. They have nothing to do with the Sunni Islam. Just because they sometimes fight the Shi'as in Iran does not mean that they are Sunnis.

They are fascists who happen to fight Sunnis and Shi'as . As a matter of fact, they fight every human being, fight animals, trees, and even monuments and dead buildings.

As for the Sunni-Shi'a divide, it is centuries-old, I don't think we can resolve it in any simplified way. There were aggressive Iranian policies after the *Wilayat al-Faqih* concept was established by Khomeini. This is a concept rejected by many Shi'a scholars in Iran itself. After the rise of this concept, which it is a kind of politicizing of Shi'ism, and after the adoption of policies of expansion of Shi'ism, we began to have confrontation. This is understandable because Sunni communities felt threatened.

INTERVIEWER: *On March 23, UN envoy Martin Kobler said he was*

not allowed to land in Tripoli. As Ambassador to the UAE, can you shed some light about why that happened and what is going on there?

Aref Ali Nayed: The Government of National Accord (GNA) is attempting to enter the Capital but the aggressive ideologues that we have been talking about have been subverting this again and again despite all the concessions that the UN process has given to these Islamists, and despite the fact that they have seats on the presidential council. That is still not good enough for them. And they are preventing the GNA from entering.

People will one day have to realize that it is difficult to practice democracy with those who are fundamentally anti-democratic, who only use democracy to achieve power but who will be absolutely disinclined to give it up when they lose elections.

Interviewer: *You had ambitions to be Prime Minister. Would you still want the job?*

Aref Ali Nayed: I did allow my name to be nominated among 12 names by the Libyan House of Representatives. The UN chose a name that was not among the 12 names, and he happens to be a friend and someone I respect, and whom I support with all that I can; by giving advice, media support, and in whatever way that I can. Let us see if there are general elections and who will be nominated. If there are convincing personalities out there who I feel comfortable voting for, it is definitely not my first choice to run. However, if I see that I can be of help to my country, I may run in the future—if we ever get there!

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CNN Interview

The following interview with Becky Anderson from the CNN was broadcast on television on Sunday 23rd October 2016. The full transcript is below.

BECKY ANDERSON: *Last week I spoke to the man that many people see as the potential Libyan Prime Minister. A year ago he said himself he wants the job. Dr. Aref Nayed has served as Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates for five years. I began by asking him about Libya's efforts to fight terror.*

AREF ALI NAYED: Just as the nodes of cancer spread all over the body, ISIS has been spread throughout the region. As a matter of fact, throughout the world, and Mosul is definitely an important node. It is a main node of the cancer. However there are many others nodes, and just as the brave Iraqi people fight this menace, the brave Libyan young people from Misrata and other towns are fighting ISIS in Sirte and they are almost finished with this menace.

BECKY ANDERSON: *Does it worry you that the attention of the international community might be lessened as a result of the successes?*

AREF ALI NAYED: Well, I must say it was actually an uphill battle getting the Western World to focus on ISIS in Libya. I remember in 2015 when I made the tour to the United States to argue that we should pay attention to this menace; and that we should fight ISIS in Libya, I was met with a ridicule for the most part. Eventually, we did get the assistance we needed and we are grateful for it. It is extremely important not to limit our attention to ISIS. The al-Qaeda is still very much active in Libya, and in other parts of North Africa, and across the world. And the al-Qaeda affiliates that go by other names are still

very active. Some of them even sit in the [Libyan] Dialogue meetings now; being somehow recognized by the UN process.

Becky Anderson: *Let's just talk about the upcoming US elections; for many Republicans, the word "Benghazi" is now synonymous with "Cover Up". Scrutiny of Hilary Clinton is not going to go away over the attack there [in Benghazi]. What does Libya need from the next U.S President?*

Aref Ali Nayed: What we need from the United States is basically respect; respect of other nations. As for Benghazi, if I were to advise a future President Clinton, I would say rather than deny Benghazi, or escape from Benghazi—own Benghazi; meaning, face up to the responsibility, and let us discuss what exactly happened in Benghazi. For a long time, the West failed to recognize that the successive Libyan regimes, after the Revolution, were heavily infected by Islamist radicals of the kind that actually killed the American Ambassador [John Christopher Stevens]. If I were President Clinton, I would actually go back to this issue and I would go and help reconstruct Benghazi, and I would go back to Libya and make a success of Libya by helping the Libyan people rebuild it [Libya].

Becky Anderson: *Many people see Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar as the only potential President on the horizon. Is he a unifying figure?*

Aref Ali Nayed: I do not think the Libyan people have fought so hard, and have sacrificed so many thousands of lives; and so many lost their limps, their health, their aspirations, and many other valuables in order to have a military dictatorship. I don't think anyone intends on that; not even Khalifa Hiftar himself.

Becky Anderson: *You say: "Gone are the years of the Dictator; the Autocrat, the Strongman as it was." Five years after Gaddafi, what do you think Libya's greatest achievement has been?*

Aref Ali Nayed: Well, it is very painful for me to answer this question but what I can tell you is that, having gone out in the streets [having participated in the demonstrations] in the early days of the Revolution and contributed towards its success, I very much regret the state in which we are in right now; and this regret is extremely deep because I see more torture than we had before, more killings than we had before, more thievery than we had before, I see a deterioration in the infrastructure, I see a deterioration of the health care system, of

education; we are worse off on just about every point. However, the one thing that is extremely important is that we have an open horizon to do something new.

Becky Anderson: *Since that interview was taped, Dr. Nayed resigned among speculations that he will pursue plans to head a new unity government.*

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David Webb Interview I

The following short radio interview with David Webb on Patriot at SiriusXM was broadcast on 5th February 2015.

DAVID WEBB: *Dr. Aref Ali Nayed is the Senior Advisor to the Prime Minister of Libya. He is the current Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates and has been named one of the 50 most influential Muslims in the world by the Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Center. Ambassador Nayed, it's a pleasure to talk to you.*

AREF ALI NAYED: It's a pleasure to be here and thank you very much for giving me this opportunity, David, and please call me Aref.

DAVID WEBB: *There are a number of issues facing your country, a number of issues facing the world that we'll discuss today. But before we begin with the issues that many will be concerned about, let's talk about Libya now. After 50 years under Gaddafi, Libya essentially was a failed state. What is the current state post Gaddafi?*

AREF ALI NAYED: Unfortunately it is not a very good state. It is actually in war right now with itself in many ways. And the people are quite sad and that their dreams when they revolted against Gaddafi, they had these grand dreams of freedom and a good life for themselves and their kids. Unfortunately these dreams have not been fulfilled and there is major disappointment in people, a lot of anguish, a lot of displaced people, a lot of people with missing the very basics of a good life and it is a sad story. However, I believe the Libyan people are more determined than ever to regain this freedom which has been stolen from them.

DAVID WEBB: *Speaking of the Libyan people. Let's get a little more personal to you as, what I would call, an expat educated here in the*

United States. And often we've seen this play out in formerly despotic regimes where those that come to fix things within the country are those that have been educated like yourself in other countries. You have both an academic and a corporate background, strong skill sets that are needed to help rebuild a failed state. So how are you personally and professionally accepted in your role?

Aref Ali Nayed: Well, you know, acceptance is always a relative thing and what one thinks of one's acceptance is quite different at times of what people really think of them. So it's hard to measure, but what I can tell you is that prior to the revolution about 15 years prior to the revolution, I had gone home to Libya and began to try and rebuild our lives there. My family had left Libya in 1978–79, because of the confiscations of all private property at the time. But we began to return again in the early 1990s. And so I had worked in Libya for 15 years prior to the revolution, and had built data centers of communication networks throughout the country. So I'm not exactly a typical expat who just returned upon the revolution, I was actually in Libya 15 years prior.

I was born in Benghazi, I was raised in Tripoli. I'm married to a lady from Misrata. I would say a good feel for my country, my people a deep love for them. I was just talking to some friends when on the way here. I'm the Chairman of the Al-Ahly Club which is the biggest football club in Benghazi. And there was a very touching demonstration yesterday that demanded the continuity of our Board because there were some people who were trying to get us out because they didn't like some of our policies. So, I think there is acceptance, but I can tell you also that there are a lot of angry people who are angry with me for standing, for taking a clear stance against ISIS and against the Ansar al-Sharia and against the Islamists, the Muslim Brotherhood, and others. One's acceptance is never an absolute thing.

David Webb: *And I think that is a fair statement to make, Aref. Let's talk about the plan to rebuild Libya. And from your answer, you clearly have ties that are strong, you clearly have an interest and as I said a skill set and this is what's needed to actually rebuild a formally failed state that is still in a transition with many challenges. What's the five-year plan if you will to rebuild Libya?*

Aref Ali Nayed: You know we actually wrote a plan up to 2020,

it's called "Vision 2020 for Libya". And the amazing thing is that we didn't write it; its the young people women and men who wrote it. We simply convened what we called Vision Labs at an institution which we founded, which is a nonprofit organization called the Libya Institute for Advanced Studies (LIAS). And we formed these labs where young people could tell us what they want for Libya. And the amazing thing is that what they want for Libya is exactly what everyone in the world wants and exactly the same kind of dreams and aspirations that I experienced at a very early age in Iowa of all places.

I studied in Iowa City, Iowa, went to the last year of high school there and to the University of Iowa. And the values that Iowa farmers had were the values of generosity and compassion and a love for freedom and a good life, a healthy life, a decent life of wanting to be fair to people. Libyans just want a fair shot at prosperity and opportunity. So, these young people basically told us that they want security, that they want jobs, that they want a good education, that they want good medical care and that they want to be able to fulfill their dreams. They all have dreams, great dreams and they just want to fulfill them. Unfortunately so far, successive governments over the last four years, after Gaddafi, have failed to fulfill these dreams.

DAVID WEBB: *You mentioned young people and the median age in Libya is somewhere around 27–28 years old. Your nation of some 6 million plus, with a variety of ethnic groups, the youth that you talk about in order to have their dreams there has to be a structure for them; jobs, there has to be industry, there has to be education actually before all of that. What is the current status of education in Libya for the young and then opportunity?*

AREF ALI NAYED: Unfortunately and this is very sad, the University of Benghazi has been destroyed, the University of Misrata is closed because the young people are being encouraged to go and fight other Libyans. The University of Tripoli has problems with many activists and young people arrested by thugs and militias who are not interested in freedom or democracy except when they want to use democracy to get to tyranny, which is not being exactly a democracy. So education is in a dreadful situation. As I was mentioning, the Libya Institute for Advanced Studies (LIAS) is a private initiative in which we're trying to provide opportunities for young people to incubate ideas, it even has a

business incubator and we were trying to encourage people to start things. However, the war has taken its toll. And this war is a very strange war; it's a war that started when the Libyan people went to the ballot box for the third time and for the third time they said no to the Islamists.

So they elected the House of Representatives, that is duly elected now, and that the House of Representatives chose the government. And guess what the extremists did, instead of accepting the results, they went and attacked the two major cities of Benghazi and Tripoli, and installed themselves there. Thankfully our army is making progress as we speak in Benghazi. And I think Tripoli also we will see progress with the army very soon. And it's a huge struggle. It's a huge struggle. We're also trying to have dialogue as much as we can at the social fabric level so that we can have a social consensus.

DAVID WEBB: *You talk about the extremists and of course there's an element of a civil war there. Who are the players, the major players on both sides of this by name?*

AREF ALI NAYED: Quite frankly I think that it's not really a civil war because the civil fabric of Libyan society is quite united in wanting a united and free Libya.

DAVID WEBB: *That's good to hear.*

AREF ALI NAYED: And you know when people get pessimist, they can, and cynical, I tell them don't. The hope is precisely the great Libyan people who do want freedom and want a better life. It's really the Libyan people against the extremists. And these extremists range from the most obvious like ISIS to the more seemingly benign those who facilitate their work and who act like Trojans and had controlled the joints of the Libyan State for almost four years now and prevented the country from building itself.

DAVID WEBB: *Are those that did exist within the State structure, are there still a significant amount of them involved in government or are you able to root them out of it?*

AREF ALI NAYED: They are not in our government and that's the legitimate government and internationally recognized and that's the government of the House of Representatives that is duly elected. Thank God both the parliament and the government are free of these extremists. The extremists are tucked away in Tripoli, in the pseudo set

up. And that is precisely the point of contention we have. So now when people are asking us to be inclusive in the dialogue in Geneva, we're saying, yes, we want to be inclusive of all the inclusivist. We want to be inclusive of all people who are interested in building Libya as a nation state. But people who are interested in building an ultranational or a transnational network or entity whatever they want to call it, they're not really working to build Libya and should not be part of the national unity government.

David Webb: *When it comes to government, business sectors and business relationships, and in your role as Ambassador to the UAE, what is the status of that relationship now from the business point of view and then also from the cultural?*

Dr. Aref Ali Nayed: You know Aristotle once that the most painful thing in life is to see unfulfilled potential. And Libya is very sad precisely because of that unfulfilled potential. Libya has a vast land of over 1,750,000 square kilometers. It has 2,000 kilometers on the Mediterranean, virgin beaches that have never been developed, it has the best Roman antiquities around the Mediterranean, it has a vast amount of resources, oil and minerals, and there is no reason why it cannot be the very best country in the Middle East.

We're not fulfilling all of this for a single reason that a small group of extremists who are well organized and had the support and the financing from likeminded people managed to hijack the dreams of many young people. The Libyan revolution was a spontaneous uprising which was supported by the world and encouraged by the world and did succeed in removing tyranny. However, because these young people were not well organized and did not really have any idea of how sinister these ideologues can be, we fell victim to the hijacking of our dreams basically.

David Webb: *There are great challenges in the Middle East when dealing and you've mentioned this, the fight against extremism, fight against ISIS and other factors within Libya. The Libyan army, Libyan police, the infrastructure that's needed in order to carry on this fight. As you said you have been there, you didn't just come after the revolution. you have family, you have associations, relationships and by the way I do like the sports end of that as a sports fan myself; something that by the way is very big in the Middle East, often in the*

West we don't think of the influence of well, what's called soccer here but football and rugby and other sports.

AREF ALI NAYED: Of course, and let me start with sports. Sports in Libya is not just about sports, it's about a community, it's about values and the Al-Ahly club in Benghazi like the Ittihad Club in Tripoli. These are big clubs that actually started with the very beginning of the country and played an important role in the foundation of Libya. And my late father, God bless his memory, was the Chairman of the Al-Ahly Club in Benghazi and that is why Im when I was asked to carry on this legacy, I did it with great joy and have committed a lot of energy to the rebuilding of the club. This is a club just to give you an idea that was totally demolished by Gaddafi in the year 2000 completely, was razed to the ground. And I am very happy to say that we have rebuilt it.

DAVID WEBB: *Sports in America and I would say having traveled the world, sports is a great uniter, breaks down barriers between people. You play together, you support your teams, and there is a cultural aspect to that I think that goes beyond just the team itself. And I think that's very important for a society. Let's talk about the challenges however because the how matters, in how Libya moves forward. The status now of the Libyan army and the police, the security that's needed to secure the government and to provide security for the population.*

AREF ALI NAYED: The biggest security for Libyans and for Libya is the social fabric. We really always have to go back to that. Libya consists of many townships and municipalities and oasis and cities but also consists of clans and tribes. And these have basically alliances and clusters that can be put together. What Libya needs fundamentally is basically a social contract between all the stakeholders of Libya. All of these great towns and all of these great tribes and clans have to come together for one purpose and that is the building of Libya with a vision that is actually conducive to achieving the dreams of the young people. That's why we listen to the young people for the vision. So if you have a vision that's actually well documented and well thought out and if the social fabric of Libya unites behind it that is exactly what we need to secure our country.

However, it is very important to have a strong army and a professional police force that acts according to the law. And we have been

making great effort towards that end. Our problem however is for the last four years prior to this elected, the newly elected parliament and government. Islamist extremists infiltrated both the Defense Ministry and the Interior Ministry and the intelligence service and prevented every effort at building the Libyan army and the Libyan police. And even efforts by the United States, efforts to build for example a general purpose force were aborted precisely because the guys that were supposed to be participating from the other side were not interested in the Libyan army, they were interested in the Islamist army. And that is why it is precisely the rise of ISIS and likeminded affiliates that will prevent Libya from rising. There is now an Either/Or in our whole region.

People have to stand up and say yes to freedom, yes to democracy, yes to goodness to compassion, to love, to hope, and no to the demonic forces that we have so grotesquely witnessed over the past days and weeks and months. ISIS right now is an existential threat for our whole region. And Libya is only one hour away from Rome. Libya is only two hours away from Paris. Libya is only three hours away from London. This is very, very serious. ISIS doesn't only pose a threat for us and our neighbors like Egypt, and Tunisia and Algeria and to the south: Chad and Niger. It poses a threat to the countries across the Mediterranean from Crete to Greece to Italy to France to Spain to the UK and all other European countries. That's why we have to all unite. Part of what I did in the States, I was in Washington before I came to New York, was to talk to Congress from both parties about how important it is to include Libya in the fight against ISIS.

Davíd Webb: *The security posture, the security situation, and then, we will again you know, address even more with ISIS and outside an internal influences also effects relationships and I just want to go back for a moment to your role as Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates. Trade deals and laws are written at the top level of governments but they're enacted at the secure level which means a stable society one that is secure for businesses, corporations, trade partners needs to be there. A little more context if you will and the reality in that relationship not only between the UAE, but also other trade partners for Libya.*

Aref Ali Nayed: Libya, historically did most of its trade with

Europe across the Mediterranean because we're so close. In the last decade or so, more links to other parts of the world especially to Asia, and a little bit to North America maybe more to Canada and a little bit of trade with the US. However, all of that pretty much stopped with the deterioration in the situation, it's a war situation right now. And not much trade is happening and not much business is happening. As a matter of fact, I know of many young people who started new businesses immediately after the revolution and who are very excited about the prospects, who lost everything because of the war. Libya has a vast potential, it is on the trade routes to Africa and the trade routes to Europe. It can actually be the clearinghouse for a lot of trade between North and South. It is intimately connected to the economies ranging from Egypt to Saudi to the Emirates to Jordan to Tunisia and Algeria and Morocco to the west.

So it is—and historically Libya was a trade house—basically, a huge trade house. From Greek and Roman times, Libya lived on trade. And we need to restart these trade routes, but you cannot have trade routes when these routes are being used by ISIS and Qaeda, when these routes are being used to facilitate terrorism ranging from the Sahel to Somalia and it really is a huge problem. You know, basically the wheel of Libya cannot go forward with the stick of ISIS being stuck right into it. The removal of ISIS is key to the initiation of trade and Industry.

David Webb: *Let's bring another aspect of this that occurs to me and when we talk about trade and business, ISIS in this case to just branch off the discussion makes a lot of their money off the underground sale of oil. There are elements that are helping them do this which means they are being funded clearly and very well to the tune of millions of dollars a day. What needs to be done about that? How do the nations work together to stop this because this is happening and governments know about it?*

Aref Ali Nayed: First of all we need to have very stringent and clear criteria that act like a litmus test of who is our friend and who is not. For people to pretend to be friends and at the same time facilitate terrorism makes absolutely no sense. We should call a spade a spade and demand of all nations and all groups and all political parties that they must not only have a rhetorical clear stance against ISIS by then their affiliates but that they actually act as part of an international

consortium to limit the influence of these forces and to destroy ISIS and its affiliates. So I think we need to be demanding of all so-called partners and friends across the world.

If you are with ISIS, and Qaeda and the extremists, you cannot be a friend of civility and civilization and freedom. I think there is too much hypocrisy about these things. There are nations who pretend to be friends to the free world and when you ask them to fight ISIS they make up all sorts of excuses. There are countries that don't give facilities to be used in the fight against ISIS. This has to stop. We have to stop this nonsense and we have to realize that unless we all unite all our efforts, we will have no chance of winning against this monster. The other thing which is extremely important about this is to realize that ISIS and its affiliates are very good at parasitic behavior. It's not only that they sell oil from the, in the black market, they actually hijacked the State in Libya. For the last four years, we have Islamists who are in the joints of the State who siphoned off money not to build Libya, but to build a transnational organization, which is pretty much almost like a secret society. So we just need to be clear about these things and speak truth, not to fear for our lives and our well-being, but to actually make a stand, because I have personally lost hundreds of friends in Benghazi and Tripoli to the assassinations of these extremists and I feel that it is a duty towards these fallen martyrs of our nation to say the truth.

The truth is ISIS is growing exponentially in Libya and ISIS is posing a threat not only to us, but to our neighbors, and I came to Washington to speak about capacity building and training with the USIP, but I spent a lot of time also just raising the awareness of this threat, because we need to be part of an international strategy to fight ISIS. And quite frankly, there is a lot of good ad-hoc work, kind of a pinpoint work against ISIS, but I don't see a grand strategy. We need the strategy to fight.

David Webb: *In that strategy and I think you speak to the point of holding people to what they actually do. Let's bring one of the actors into this that I mentioned before, Turkey and Prime Minister Erdogan, Turkey is a NATO partner. They're part of NATO. They're that bridge, traditionally considered the bridge between Europe and the Middle East, but yet they are facilitators. Can Libya and other partners work to have those within Turkey that are facilitating this, whether it's*

arrested, dealt with, removed from the picture, because these are the actors and how does Erdogan who has significant challenges and questions about his type of leadership, is he truly a partner?

Aref Ali Nayed: You know, Turkey is a large country. It's a very important country. It's an anchor country in the region. It has vast resources and America over the years and NATO spent a lot to invest in infrastructure there. It is very important that this infrastructure and the resources of Turkey are put in alignment in the fight against ISIS with the rest of the free world. They cannot have it both ways. And what I can tell you from our experience in Libya unfortunately is that we have seen too much movement of foreign fighters and money and weapons via some of our airports and ports, and via Turkey unfortunately; and the traffic between Libya, Turkey, then Syria and Iraq is ongoing. This has to stop. We have seen in the last few months an improvement and the restriction on the airline movement of these foreign fighters and so on. However, we need to continue this. We are very encouraged by the visit of the King of Saudi Arabia to Turkey and we think that the Saudis with their vast influence in the region may be able to find a way to convince our Turkish brothers to basically align with the rest of the world.

David Webb: *Do the right thing. Do the right thing.*

Aref Ali Nayed: Do the right thing, because there is a magnificent alliance now between the UAE, Saudi, Jordan, Egypt, Morocco and now with the new government in Tunisia, I think this alignment of nations that are basically saying this ISIS is not Islam, this ISIS is demonic and bad and evil and must be fought. This alignment must have Turkey as part of it.

David Webb: *Let's bring in Jordan and King Abdullah to the picture, given the recent murder by these, by ISIS of their pilot, the reaction and response of Jordan aided by the coalition partners of course, but Jordan and King Abdullah, they've stepped out front in this issue and the effectiveness will be determined because of the small size of their air force and over time of what they're doing. A couple of key things, their foreign minister has said that there is no longer a border between Iraq and Syria in the areas around Raqqah, Aleppo, areas that ISIS now controls. One, do you think that is true and it is time to cross those border, cross those former borders as they put it and deal with*

ISIS with all the partners fully and in an effective manner, and two, how do you take that from both an intelligence and an actual war fighting perspective?

Aref Ali Nayed: First of all, our deepest condolences to the Jordanian people and the King of Jordan, King Abdullah. What happened was grotesque and absolutely horrible. And what happened is an indication of how debased and absolutely demonic this movement is. This movement is as dangerous as the fascism that rose in Europe in the 1920s and 30s. This movement is as dangerous as the disregard for life that the Stalinists had. And it is very important not to be stuck in departmental thinking and think that these pockets of ISIS and their affiliates are not related. You're dealing with the transnational, international global movement and we need a global alliance to fight them. We need an international alliance to fight them. The Jordanians; it's not just now that they're in the front, they have been at the front. They are a country that has taken the brunt of what was happening in the whole region with the millions of refugees from Syria and Iraq before that and they are struggling, but bravely and the King himself is personally committed to this fight.

They've shown the will. We need right now or the President of the United States and the American Congress to support the King as he fights this fight to support the Kurds who fought so heroically, both men and women who fought to liberate called Kobane at great cost. So we need to support these people who are absolutely on the front and guess what, this front extends to Libya and in Benghazi, we are fighting ISIS. In Tripoli, we are fighting ISIS. In Sirte, we are fighting ISIS. In Sirte, they own the town. They actually have set up in the exhibition center in the middle of the town, they control an airport. We have to all fight against them and that's why to go back to the dreams that Obama talked about when in his first election and about which he talked in the University of Cairo that the Middle East listened to so attentively, we have to go back to those words of hope and the, and "yes we can", and the freedom that he talked about and the compassion that he talked about, we need to all be reminded of that, including himself and the American government and we have to realize that we cannot fail young people today throughout the Muslim world, throughout the Arab world, the Arab Spring must be re-springed. We should have no regrets

about it. We just have to complete the job. So that's why we need all the support we can for King Abdullah and for all the people who are fighting so heroically against ISIS.

DAVID WEBB: *And those dreams you speak about, Aref, they have to be actualized by actions.*

AREF ALI NAYED: Absolutely.

DAVID WEBB: *And we have a debate in this country, which is a little bit too top-level on calling things what they are. Islam, the religion has a split and the President talked about in the context of the Crusades. That was what 1095 AD in its initial phase. Here, we are today where there are those who pervert and in the name of their version of Islam, Islamic state and other groups, use it to kill indiscriminately Muslims to kill all, to train and steal from generations, they train young children, they pervert the religion. Those have to be dealt with, but we also have to name and understand and go directly at that enemy. Let's take a break. Think about this for a moment. The role of the United States, the Administration, your thoughts on whether they are doing the right thing, the wrong thing and the message, not the perspective of the United States, but the perspective of the Middle East on this Administration's inability to name an enemy for what it is, establish a clear mission, a clear directive and then build an active partnership to go out and destroy that enemy.*

The Obama administration seems to have a problem according to many. And it's a debate that is more of a political pundit class, but the soldiers react to this. Those that have to actually carry out the fight react to an amorphous enemy. First, the idea of naming the enemy; they act in a perverted name or perverted version of Islam, what do you say to that?

AREF ALI NAYED: You know in the history of Europe, there was a moment of "either/or" and there was a very important moment in the history of Protestant Christianity in Europe. There was a time when Hitler tried to enlist the Christian religion to Nazism and he created basically a Nazi church and great leaders of the Protestant Church gathered together and made a declaration. They included people like Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Karl Barth. And you know what they said, this is not Christianity. This is idolatry. We can't have a Nazi church. This is Christianity and they talked about compassion and love and so

on. In Islam, today, we have to make a similar "either/or" and we have to speak loudly and to say ISIS is not Islam at all. It's a new form of fascism that's painted islamically and real Islam has to do with peace with compassion. It is written into the very name, the very, the very name of God, *Al-Rahman* (The Compassionate).

So we have to affirm our true faith and the prophetic inheritance that we received from Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him has to do with the affirmation of compassion against cruelty, of love against hate, and to say no to these guys, and to say no with all our being, with all our hearts and minds. And to do so with all the good people of this world, women and men who believe in compassion and living together for the sake of a free and good life. So, I think you are right to talk about the perversion. It's beyond the perversion. It's a complete alteration of what the religion is about. Al-Azhar is trying. This is our greatest University in Cairo and many other scholars like Shaykh Abdullah bin Bayyah and many others are getting together and are actually saying this. They're saying, this is not Islam. Our Islam is not about this kind of cruelty. Our Islam is about compassion and a good life. So this is regarding the perversion.

Now regarding policy, the Obama administration and its attitude and so on. The Obama administration, you know, this is a huge debate, but they tend to be inwardly looking. They want to give Americans jobs, they want to give Americans healthcare, and they want to give Americans an opportunity in this land. And it seems sometimes that the problems happening abroad are distant and they're the problems of other people. The problem we have today is that you can't have that anymore. To try and have an isolationist policy today is like hiding in your hotel room when the hotel is on fire. That's not going to save you. And if you want to provide jobs for Americans in America, guess what, you need to have a prosperous Europe. And if you want to have a prosperous Europe, you need to have a prosperous Middle East. And if you want to have a prosperous Middle East, Asia must be stable. We are living in a world that is not just connected by the Internet, but by everything. And our economies are so codependent, our security is so codependent. We cannot ignore ISIS in Libya and pretend to have a good life in America. The lessons from Canada and from France are very important. Canada is a very peaceful

country. I lived there in Toronto, I loved it. And in Canada, in the Parliament, these guys came and attacked. In Paris, they came and attacked. These people know no borders and that's why our co-operation has to know no borders. We have to cooperate together to fight them together.

DAVID WEBB: *In part, what I hear from you Aref is a need for a victory and a reformation at the same time for those that want to fight against this that if they will not reform there needs to be victory. Do you think there's a possibility of reform?*

AREF ALI NAYED: You know what is most needed is to retrieve and rehabilitate and renew and rearticulate all that is beautiful in our traditions. All our traditions have these deep sources of love, compassion, you know the three cardinal virtues of hope, faith and charity, you know. We all have that and the eye off armors I lived and really loved in my teenage years and in my early youth, share exactly the same values my grandfather, my father shared of just having a decent life, a decent life of fairness and fair play between all and the life of mutual help and understanding that actually focuses on the dignity of women and men. When you have a movement that degrades the human being, that enslaves women and men and actually destroys their humanity, that is something of sheer evil, that is something demonic that must be fought.

DAVID WEBB: *And taking that to within Libya, within Libya's borders, multi-cultural to have all religions represented and minority religions, Christian, Jewish, Buddhist, whatever they may be, what is that current picture within Libya. And in light of the fact that you mentioned there are even areas that ISIS has a strong foothold? Will other religions be persecuted or allowed to flourish?*

AREF ALI NAYED: Let me tell you, ISIS is not only in Derna as people commonly say. It's actually in over seven cities now and has already conducted operations in over twelve places. And we have compiled the report of these ISIS activities. Bloomberg just carried the PDF file of all the incidences, so all the evidence is there. Libya used to be a very tolerant place. In the 1950s and 60s, all religions lived toge-ther; Libyan Jews lived in Libya. The atmosphere was so absolutely tolerant. We have lost much of that tolerance and that fabric of unders-tanding. Muslim shrines, not just other religions, are being destroyed by these

extremists. And we need to unite to retrieve the plurality of Libya, to retrieve the love of Libya, the compassion of Libya, Libya was a gateway to the world. We had, we have a French Consulate that's from the 17th century in Tripoli. And we were connected to Venice and to Naples and to Africa. And right now, Africa is at a great risk. This extremism will spread from Nigeria with Boko Haram south and it's spreading and we need to do something to save not only Libya and Arab countries, but Africa, and we need to save Europe and the whole world. This is a cancer that has to be stopped. And if it continues to spread, it will undermine us all.

DAVID WEBB: *Do you think in that light that ISIS has gotten to the point where and there are many groups, many radical groups, are they* overwhelming them, either co-opting them or just taken over?

AREF ALI NAYED: I think they're basically running a franchise system. The local franchise acts locally, but sucks the resources of the local point to feed in their global organization. And that is the most dangerous thing about it, it's spreading very fast and we are seeing the phenomenon of extremist groups like Ansar al-Sharia swearing allegiance to them and actually becoming part of that network.

DAVID WEBB: *Looking at the future of Libya, will this be more of an Ataturk vision of a state where secularism exists as well or where a Gulf state's model or an Egyptian model, what does the future of Libya look like?*

AREF ALI NAYED: I think the, if we manage to get over this nightmare of ISIS, the future of Libya would look like a Muslim country that is rooted in its Islam, that is open to the world and that retrieves the most beautiful Islam that there is, the one that our grandfathers knew. It was in Islam that cared about cats and dogs, let alone human beings and Islam that built and not destroyed. I look forward to a Libya of life rather than death and of prosperity rather than deprivation, and the Libya of great love and hope rather than the despair that these people are driving Libya down into.

DAVID WEBB: *In that vision and I'm a big fan of perspective, I like your point of let's look at the perspective from Libya from the Middle East, from other areas, not just insular from the United States, what does that relationship look like with Europe, with NATO, what is that picture going forward?*

Aref Ali Nayed: The picture going forward is a consortium of nations working together in union to have a good life for all of us. And I think that the future Libya will be cooperative with NATO, with Africom and all other partners regionally. And in Africa, in order to have a stable architecture, a security architecture, but that's also a compassion architecture.

David Webb: *Sir, it's been a pleasure talking to you. I would like to have many more conversations we could talk for a long time, but just to come in and paint that picture from your point, your position, you are key as I see and I learn about you and this new government, key in a battle to help not only your nation, but the Middle East and that is a difficult challenge, sir. It's one that requires strong men, strong will, strong laws and a strong society. Good luck to you.*

Aref Ali Nayed: Thank you very much, sir and about influence, I think you're far more influential than me and I'm greatly honored to have been with you here. And as for the strength, I get my strength from my mom and my wife and my daughter. It is the women of Libya who actually give the men the strength to go forward. And unfortunately after the revolution, they did not get their fair share of the prosperity that we were all expecting.

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David Webb Interview II

The following short telephone interview with David Webb on Patriot at SiriusXM was broadcast on the 24th February 2015.

DAVID WEBB: *Ambassador, first thank you again for sitting down with me, I know these are tumultuous times and certainly troubling times in your nation of Libya so I appreciate your time.*

AREF ALI NAYED: Thank you very much for giving me this second opportunity David. I very much enjoyed meeting you and having our first discussion. It's a great honor to be with you again.

DAVID WEBB: *Thank you Ambassador, since the last time we spoke, the media here in the United States and globally have been picking up on ISIS and their activities in Libya, the horrible video of the beheadings on your shores. You've met with members of Congress in your last trip here in the United States. Who now from the US government, and including Administration officials, have you or the Libyan Government had significant communication with?*

AREF ALI NAYED: First of all David let me just express my heartfelt condolences to all Christians and all of humanity for the vicious crime against the Egyptian Christians on our shores, perpetrated by ISIS. It was very sad for me to go to the Coptic Church here in Abu Dhabi and to give condolences and I cannot tell you how difficult it is as a Muslim to actually give these condolences for crimes that these monsters are committing in the name of my religion.

What I would like to stress is that these actions have nothing to do with Islam and these ISIS monsters are not Muslims as far as any of our theological or juridical teachings are concerned. What they're doing is absolutely vicious and they're doing it to scare all of us into

submission to their will to power and we refuse to submit to them and we are fighting them very hard and we need everybody's help in this fight.

DAVID WEBB: *I share your desire for help in that fight. So from the US government's side, have we done enough? What are we doing right now and what else do we need to do?*

AREF ALI NAYED: As Libyans, the Parliament and the government and all our representatives are doing their very best to give the message out there that there is an ISIS threat not only to Libya and Libyans but all our neighbours including our European neighbours and that we need to have a unified strategy to fight them. Our Foreign Minister Mr. Mohammed al-Dairi made a trip to the United States. He first went to the United Nations and met with dozens of diplomats from the world over to explain our position.

He then also participated in the major conference on countering extremism in the States, in Washington. And he did his best to express the point of view of the Parliament and the Libyan government. We're basically not asking anybody to send their own children to battle on our behalf. We are fighting ISIS and terrorism in our country with our own great army and our own young people. What we need is basically technical coordination with the various militaries in the region and with the US military so as to have the maximum impact. We need air cover, we need better coordination, and we need joint operations for specific purposes and also satellite and other intelligence.

These are things that are definitely within the means of AFRICOM. And we have coordinated with AFRICOM during the Revolution and there is no reason why the Libyan army can't coordinate with AFRICOM again just as there is an international alliance against ISIS in Iraq and Syria, these alliances to be extended to Libya because it's a key area that they're using as a platform for their growth. Libya is very, very close to Europe as I have explained in our last interview, they're only an hour away from Rome and a couple of hours away from France, and it is very dangerous to have these monsters entrenched. Now they are in more cities, and just as we speak and as of yesterday, they're still trying to take the Zuwetina Port and the town of Ajdabiya. They are already setting up some check points in Tripoli itself, the capital, and they have already three check points and have

already set up their headquarters in the Tobacco Factory there. So it is a very dangerous situation. Every day of delay is another day of ISIS growth in our country.

DAVID WEBB: *You've just alluded to some of the aspects of our relationship, and our cooperation, and what is needed specifically in terms of intelligence which is a very key aspect of this battle. Is US intelligence still at a necessary or at the proper level in coordinating with Libyan forces and is that in need of repair in any way?*

AREF ALI NAYED: To be fair to the US intelligence community and US military, there have been many attempts over the last four years of cooperation from your government's end, and from your intelligence services' end. Our problem for the last four years has been, is that our own services, intelligence services, and also the Defense Ministry and Interior Ministry were all infiltrated by Muslim Brotherhood and Libyan Fighting Group elements who made sure that every joint project with the States was delayed from training the general purpose forces to training of special forces and even intelligence exchange.

But the Libyan people have said no to these extremists again and again, and after the third election, we formed a Parliament that's duly elected and that Parliament formed a government, and this government declared early on that it is fighting terrorism and has no room for these terrorists. And unfortunately, rather than submitting to the will of the people as expressed in the ballot box, these people went to the ammunition box and by the force of the gun took over the capital and the second city. So the problem is the counterpart.

We now have a counterpart that is able to cooperate with the US and that is the legitimate Parliament and the government of Libya. And we welcome this cooperation and have expressed keen interest in this cooperation with the US. It is now very, very important to have this close cooperation and we are, through the efforts of the Foreign Minister of Libya in his last visit, we are trying to open better ways and means of cooperating with your government and your intelligence-services.

DAVID WEBB: *Moving on to internal affairs, and speaking of co-operation, Dr. Nayed, the state of affairs of the National Dialogue that is underway right now, the United Nations is overseeing this and is that effective? What is the status?*

AREF ALI NAYED: You know the Parliament and the government supported national dialogue with the hope of separating the social and tribal element of the conflict from the ideological and Islamist element. And indeed the first sessions of the dialogue went very well and that Misratan leaders have widely chosen to have this dialogue and to take steps to distance themselves from Islamist forces controlling Tripoli, the defunct partial GNC and the pseudo government that were set up in Tripoli by the extremists.

So there was a lot of positive results and that Misrata was taking steps away from these people and the Parliament kept sending its delegates. However, just a few hours ago, the Parliament has suspended the dialogue and has recalled its delegates for urgent consultation because in the light of the most gruesome and unfortunate slaughter of these Egyptian Christians on the shores of Sirte and in the light of the massive explosion that was perpetuated in a place called El Gubba in the East of Libya that basically killed over 45 people and injured dozens. In light of these things, the Parliament is taking the view that there can be no dialogue without very clear guidelines as to what is the nature of the National Unity Government that we're trying to achieve out of this dialogue.

Basically, the concern is the following: we are worried that the dialogue will lead to the formation of a National Unity Government that's already infiltrated by the extremists that we're trying to fight. And that is something that we need to actually have as a condition for resuming discussion. Another thing that is extremely important is that the dialogue must not produce any bodies that challenge the legitimacy or undermine the legitimacy of the democratically elected body which is the Parliament. We are a democratic system; yes, it is not a perfect democracy but we are very proud of this democracy and we need to respect the results of the ballot box. This Parliament is duly elected and it has the ultimate legitimacy, there can be no undermining of it. So I think the Parliamentarians are worried about undermining of the Parliament or the getting stuck with a government that's already infected by extremism.

So I think they basically want to have some guidelines and to make it clear to those delegates that they must be careful of these points and also that whatever is agreed to on this Dialogue must be ratified by

the Parliament, by at least two thirds majority. This is a very, very important point. If we don't have these conditions, the Dialogue may actually result in suppressing the democracy that we're trying to build.

David Webb: *In terms of this National Dialogue and the challenges that you've just outlined, is the duly elected government now functioning like a government in exile in some ways? Or is it a back and forth that has not been defined?*

Aref Ali Nayed: The Parliament of Libya, the duly elected one is fully functioning out of the city of Tobruk in the East and the government is fully functioning out of the city of al-Baida also in the East. However the government has presence in the West in Rijban and Zintan towns in the western and part of the country as well. And the vast majority of the Libyan people are with the legitimate Parliament and the legitimate government. A bunch of thugs have set up shop in Tripoli with the name of the defunct previous Parliament, the GNC.

But in reality it's no more than a dozen of Islamist extremists who are using the name of the old Parliament and they set up a pseudo government that actually praises terrorists. They actually officially praise the Ansar al-Sharia, officially listed as a terrorist organization by not only the US and the EU but also UN. And they continue to be in denial. A very start and a very tragic example is that in the face of the gruesome crime of the killing of these Christians, the 21 Egyptian Christians, the pseudo government in Tripoli is in denial.

Believe it or not, they're actually claiming that this has never happened, that it's only fiction, that it's a Hollywood movie. So they don't even give the grieving families of these martyrs the respect they deserve. They want to even deny the very crime that was perpetrated. So it is an amazingly vicious bunch of thugs and what our Parliamentarians are finding disturbing is that some of these people are giving enough leeway and weight to be included in the dialogue process.

We're actually refusing to dialogue with these criminals because they deserve to be in jail and they deserve to be pursued for the crimes that they perpetrated and are continuing to perpetrate including the incubating of terrorism and the covering up for terrorism and the denial even of the crime; even the families of the victims are not given respect: they even deny the calamity that has happened. So we cannot

—these are not dialogue partners. These are people that must be fought for the sake of our country, and that is such an essential point.

We cannot build Libya with people who are against the idea of the nation state. These people are trying to create a transnational creature that's actually trying to attack everyone. And the video of the slaughter of the Christians, they actually point the knife to Rome and say that they want to invade Europe. So they're actually quite explicit about their strategy and their aims. We need to be explicit about our strategy and our aims. We need to unify our strategy and to go forward in a unified way to fight these terrorists.

DAVID WEBB: *Moving on to the fight against those terrorists and my guest, Dr. Aref Nayed, the Libyan Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates. Dr. Nayed, the Secretary of Defense, Ashton Carter, had a meeting in Kuwait with generals, ambassadors, and other top officials to the best of your knowledge and in any way that you could disclose, was Libya involved? You are certainly a part of this war against ISIL or ISIS and they are actually calling it the Counter ISIL Political Military Consultations.*

AREF ALI NAYED: Any consultation that unifies the efforts against extremism and including that of ISIS is welcomed and we hope that the discussion is going to produce some positive results. For me personally, I've been very busy in Abu Dhabi because we are being visited by our Chief of Staff of the armed Forces. And we've had two days of very productive discussions with the American colleagues, British, Italian, French, Tunisian, Egyptian and Emirati.

And again, the aim of all of these discussions is how can we build up the Libyan Army and how can we improve coordination so that we can fight terrorism together? The Libyan Army is unfortunately because of the UN embargo is being deprived of their weapons and ammunitions that it needs to fight against ISIS. And even if the embargo is not going to be lifted, at least approve the applications of the government for the supply of the Libyan Army which hasn't happened for the many past months.

So we welcome the consultations and we think that we need more of them and what I can tell you is that the two days of discussions we've been having here are the most productive and I think our European partners, in particular France and Italy are beginning to see that

this is a direct national threat to them to—an existential threat as a matter of fact—and they're taking this extremely seriously. We just hope that the world can unite and can very quickly devise a strategy and begin to work together because we're losing time and with every day these people are spreading mayhem and darkness across the land exponentially.

David Webb: *Last time, Ambassador, when we talked about the number of cities and towns where ISIS is operating in Libya, you mentioned some 12 cities. Since that time and it's been a short time, what's the situation on the ground now?*

Aref Ali Nayed: The situation is that they consolidated their control over Sirte which is a major city; that's about an hour 15 minutes by plane from Italy. They consolidated through control of that city including its airport and they have challenged all the other militias including those of Misrata to leave town. And we have been urging our Misratan countrymen to unite with the rest of Libya. We're telling them that there is an existential either/or right now. You have to make a choice, are you for the state of Libya or are you for the so called Islamic State of ISIS?

And if you're for the State of Libya you need to fight ISIS. Our heroic heroes, our heroes from the air force, the Libyan Air Force have hit targets of ISIS inside Sirte and we're hoping that the Misratans will use land forces to attack them because if they continue to hold on to Sirte, it's extremely dangerous. This is the middle of the coast of Libya, very close to Europe and it has logistical capacity to be a real platform of terror in the Mediterranean. They have also begun to expand their control over Tripoli, the capital.

They have already set up some check points and those check points are still unchallenged by the so called Libya Dawn militias in Tripoli. And the reason they are unchallenged is because they are actually complicit in the rise of ISIS. We are telling these militias in Tripoli, "Again, are you for Libya? or are you for this monster that's called ISIS?" And people have to make a choice and we cannot have as part of any future government, neither members of these extremist groups nor the apologists, nor quite frankly people who continue to cover up for the undeniable crime.

David Webb: *In the four decades of Muammar Gaddafi's brutal*

rule in Libya, he amassed quite a stockpile of weapons including chemical weapons. My sources have now verified that there are reports of chemical weapons, specifically chlorine and sarin gas that have been acquired by ISIS in Libya. Can you speak to that issue?

AREF ALI NAYED: Gaddafi had stockpiles of various chemicals throughout the country, especially in the South, and there was a program for the destruction of these stockpiles that we work very hard on with the Americans. I remember when I was Head of the Stabilization Team in the early days of the post liberation, we made sure that those programs were launched and they continued to work and much of the stockpile was indeed destroyed. However the remnants of these stockpiles, especially in the extreme part of the country, when the Islamists began to control the joints of the government they began to slow down these joint programs of destroying chemical weapons that were devised and operated jointly with the States.

And unfortunately there were many reports of some remaining stockpiles, now the status of these is unknown because unfortunately there is a militia which is called the Third Shield Militia in the South of Libya. They're unfortunately cooperating with the extremists. They're cooperating with some Touareg extremists in the South because they actually have control on some key areas that do have some of the old storage facilities of Gaddafi. It is extremely important that the US uses its satellite technology and its intelligence capability to try and trace these stockpiles. Unfortunately our government right now doesn't have the technical means to see this from the sky. It is a very important matter that should be followed closely.

And we urge the US and their other allies to try and look into this issue because if ISIS does get access to such chemicals, it will be an extremely dangerous situation. And I just want to point out that it won't take ISIS the use of chemical weapons to be dangerous, they're already dangerous. When you have an airport only an hour or two hours away from Europe and you have access to airliners and lots of explosive materials, it doesn't take a stretch of the imagination to basically have a nightmare scenario that we pray will never happen. But we shouldn't just pray—prayer is extremely important but we should also work very hard to prevent a disaster from happening, if we don't do something about ISIS in Libya.

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David Webb: *Well Ambassador I certainly stand with you as do many Americans, many around the world. This is an existential battle against the great evil with ISIS and these are trying times for all of us. Sir, to your family, to your associates, your government, to all involved in Libya and in fact around the Middle East that support this fight against ISIS, best to you sir.*

Aref Ali Nayed: Thank you very much David and let me just say that this menace threatens all of us and we are in this together and we shall stand together in the fight against ISIS. I would like to assure the American people that they have worthy partners with the millions of Libyans who share the same values of loving freedom and compassion and the love of peace and prosperity for our children and we are your partners and we just pray that we can find the ways and means to have a unified strategy sooner rather than later, to work very hard together against this evil.

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Vol. 1

This volume bring together the writings of one of the Muslim world's leading theologians, Aref Ali Nayed, on religion, politics, extremism, and the Libyan Revolution. The author was a leading figure in the Libyan Revolution, and is one of the rare scholars who has been able to combine knowledge of governance and statecraft, but also reflect on the role of religion and the effects and consequences of revolutions. This is a unique collection of essays, monographs, op eds, speeches, and interviews published over the last five years and brought together for the first time as an anthology.

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— *from the Foreword by* PROFESSOR JERRY WHITE, *Nobel Peace Prize winner for his work on the International Campaign to Ban Landmines*

AREF ALI NAYED is Former Ambassador of Libya to the UAE and Founder and Chairman of Kalam Research & Media (KRM). His works include *Vatican Engagements: A Muslim Theologian's Journey in Muslim-Catholic Dialogue* (2016); *Operational Hermeneutics: Interpretation as the Engagement of Operational Artifacts* (2011); *Growing Ecologies of Peace, Compassion and Blessing: A Muslim Response to 'A Muscat Manifesto'* (2010), and essays and monographs on theology, philosophy, spirituality and politics.

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