



Center for Security Policy

Statement for the Record on the
Muslim Brotherhood's Global Threat for the
House Subcommittee on National Security
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The Center for Security Policy recommends that the United States immediately designate the Muslim Brotherhood and its components as foreign terrorist organizations (FTO) under Section 219 of the Immigration and Naturalization Act.

The Muslim Brotherhood (MB) is an international Islamist organization and network founded in 1928 in Egypt, and an ideological precursor of modern jihadist terrorist groups. The MB's own explanatory memo "An Explanatory Memorandum on the General Strategic Goal for the Group in North America" that was written in 1991 notes that the Group in North America has the strategic goal of, "Establishing an effective and stable Islamic movement led by the Muslim Brotherhood (we have the vanguard concept)..." and, specifically, that this Islamic Movement is to engage in "The process of settlement" which the memorandum defines as a:

"Civilization-jihadist process" with all that word means. The Ikhwan must understand that their work in America is a kind of grand jihad in eliminating and destroying western civilization from within and sabotaging its miserable house by their hands, and the hands of the believers so that it is eliminated and God's religion is made victorious over all other religions. Without this level of understanding, we are not up to this challenge and have not prepared ourselves for Jihad yet.

The MB's strategic goal of creating a global Caliphate, which requires the overthrow of the US Constitution, is identical to that of ISIS and al Qaeda. The MB is perfectly prepared to engage in violence, tactically shifting between approving and not approving of its use, depending on place and circumstance.

Historically, the MB has established and maintained the ability to wage terroristic violence, from its "Special Apparatus" terrorist cells in the 1930s to the present. Beginning in the 1980s, the MB established an Islamist Palestinian terrorist group, resulting in the formation of Hamas in 1987. President Clinton designated Hamas as a terrorist organization in 1995 under Executive Order 12947, which formed the basis for creation of the State Department's Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) list.

Following the ouster of the MB-led regime in Egypt, the MB again displayed its willingness to engage in violence, including the formation of two armed groups, both of which the US has designated as terrorist organizations. Earlier this year, the MB called for an "uprising" against the United States in response to the relocation of the American Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem, threatening US interests worldwide.

The authority to designate an organization as an FTO resides with the Secretary of State, under 8 US Code § 1189(a), and requires satisfaction on three points: 1.) The organization is foreign; 2.) The organization engages in terrorism activity as defined by section 1182(a)(3)(B) of Title 8 or terrorism as defined by section 2656f(d)(2) of title 22 OR retains the capability and intent to engage in terrorist activity or terrorism; and 3.) The terrorist activity of the organization threatens “the national defense, foreign relations, or economic interests of the United States;” or threatens US nationals.

Section 1182(a)(3)(B) defines “engage in terrorist activity” to include: inciting, preparing, planning or gathering intelligence on targets of, or material support for, terrorist activities. Both section 1182(a)(3)(B) of Title 8 and section 2656f(d)(2) of title 22 define “terrorist groups” to include organizations with a sub-group that engages in terrorist activity.

The USG successfully demonstrated during *US v Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development* that MB members and organizations engaged in terrorist activity so defined – specifically providing material support for terrorism. The USG has already designated multiple MB sub-groups as FTO or Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGTs), as noted above. Finally, multiple MB leaders or groups have directly incited terrorist violence against US persons and US interests inside and outside American territory.

The Bush and Obama Global War on Terror/Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) approach was to treat the MB as a “moderate” ally against “violent extremists,” while ignoring the Brotherhood’s long history of subversion and terrorism. Advocates of this approach argue that designating the MB will undermine US counterterrorism efforts by alienating Brotherhood elements who are not currently engaging in terrorism. Such advocates also argue that given the level of MB penetration of or participation in friendly Middle Eastern governments, an FTO designation would harm those governments and needlessly compromise relations with them, including Bahrain, Turkey, Tunisia, Jordan.ⁱ

In fact, the USG manages to maintain relations and cooperative agreements with other nations whose governments contain members of designated terrorist organizations, including Lebanon and Iraq. In addition, multiple regional allies, including Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, have themselves designated the MB or parts thereof as terrorist. The foreign minister of Bahrain, a country cited by critics of designation as an example of an ally with an MB faction too intertwined with its government, has actually declared, “We consider the Muslim Brotherhood a terrorist group and anyone who shows sympathy with them will be tried on this basis.”ⁱⁱⁱ

The Muslim Brotherhood is not a “moderate” organization or movement, but a terrorist one. Accordingly, the Secretary of State should immediately designate the Muslim Brotherhood, as well as its fronts and controlled organizations, as Foreign Terrorist Organizations and/or Specially Designated Global Terrorists. And the Congress should express its support for such an action through the adoption of H.R. 377.

ⁱ See *e.g.* *Al Jazeera*, “Tillerson: Blacklisting Muslim Brotherhood problematic,” June 14, 2017, available at <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/06/tillerson-blacklisting-muslim-brotherhood-problematic-170614193311591.html>, accessed July 9, 2018.

ⁱⁱ *Al Jazeera*, “Bahrain FM: Muslim Brotherhood is a terrorist group,” July 6, 2017, available at <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/07/bahrain-fm-muslim-brotherhood-terrorist-group-170706140931861.html>, accessed July 9, 2018.