

The U.S. Approach to Promoting Democracy in the Middle East

by [Michael Singh \(/experts/michael-singh\)](#)

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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Michael Singh is the Lane-Swig Senior Fellow and managing director at The Washington Institute.

On April 3, Michael Singh presented a paper at a conference in Brussels on "Democratic Change in the Arab Region: State Policy and the Dynamics of the Civil Society," organized by the Euro-Mediterranean Foundation of Support to Human Rights Defenders (EMHRF).

Examining the history of U.S. democracy promotion efforts by recent administrations, he cautions: "It is no longer possible to claim that democracy promotion and political reform are not central to U.S. interests in the Middle East, or that opportunities to advance political reform in the region are scant. Washington's relative inattention to democratization in recent years put it in a disadvantageous position when crises broke out in these countries, and has left U.S. officials playing catch-up as regional politics shift rapidly."

[Download a PDF of the paper. \(http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/html/pdf/Singh20110403Brussels.pdf\)](http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/html/pdf/Singh20110403Brussels.pdf) ❖

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