

# Views of Arab Democrats: Advice to America on Promoting Middle East Reform

by [J. Scott Carpenter \(/experts/j-scott-carpenter\)](#)

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## ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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J. Scott Carpenter is an adjunct fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.



In-Depth Reports

**C**onventional wisdom holds that the Bush administration's Freedom Agenda has made "democracy" a dirty word throughout the Middle East. Is this really true?

The Washington Institute brought together an array of Arab democrats -- from Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia, and the West Bank -- to ask them what they think about the past and future of America's efforts to promote democracy throughout the region. While they offer sobering suggestions for how Washington should advance democratic change, they are universal in their call for the new Obama administration to persist in this vital effort. At a time when our president-elect has promised to listen to the voices of America's friends throughout the Middle East, this new Strategic Report by [Project FIKRA \(/templateI02.php?SID=24&newActiveSubNav=Project%20Fikra&activeSubNavLink=templateI02.php%3FSID%3D24&newActiveNav=researchPrograms\)](#) director J. Scott Carpenter should be "must" reading throughout the halls of government.

Participants: **Mohamed Abdelbaky**, *Akher Saa* magazine; **Adel Abdellatif**, United Nations Development Program; **Abdulla Alderazi**, Bahrain Human Rights Society; **Engi El Haddad**, Shayfeen.com, Afro-Egyptian Human Rights Organization, Egyptians Against Corruption, and the Centre for Media Freedom in the Middle East and North Africa; **Mozn Hassan**, Nazra for Feminist Studies; **Hani Hourani**, al-Urdun al-Jadid; **Mohsen Marzouk**, Arab Democracy Foundation; **Salameh Nematt**, *Daily Beast*; **Oussama Safa**, Lebanese Center for Policy Studies; **Nader Said**, Birzeit University.

## the author

**J.** Scott Carpenter, Keston Family fellow at The Washington Institute, is the director of Project Fikra, which focuses on empowering Arab democrats in their struggles against extremism. Previously, Mr. Carpenter served as deputy assistant secretary of state in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs as well as coordinator for the State Department's Broader Middle East and North Africa Initiatives. Additionally, as director of the governance group for the Coalition Provisional Authority in Baghdad, he helped guide Iraq's political transition with a wide array of democracy initiatives.

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