

# Khairat al-Shater on the Rise of the Muslim Brotherhood

**U**PON HIS RELEASE FROM PRISON IN MARCH 2011, KHAIRAT AL-SHATER, the Deputy Guide of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, was reportedly tasked by the Guidance Council of the Brotherhood with performing a comprehensive review of the movement's overall strategy in the post-Mubarak era. This new strategy, which is supposed to reflect the fact of the Brotherhood's rise as the most powerful political force in Egypt today, has often been referred to as "The Nahda Project." (Nahda means "Renaissance" or "Rise.")

We know very little about al-shater as a politician. he has been described as the "IronMan" of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB). As one of Egypt's most successful businessmen, his prestigious stature within the MB's ranks might be attributed to his financial support to the movement over the years. His prestige also derives from the enormous personal suffering that he has endured for the MB's cause: He has spent more than half of the past two decades in prison, and his property has been confiscated twice in the same period. Al-Shater, moreover, is well connected internationally, and has very strong business ties across the region—in Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Qatar, among other places. He is also said to be a major supporter of Hamas.

When the Muslim Brotherhood sought to contest the present Prime Minister Kamal El-Ganzouri and his cabinet, it was not surprising that their nominee for the office was Khairat Al-Shater. When, more recently, the Brotherhood failed to force their will on the ruling Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, the movement decided to renege on all of their reassuring promises since the outbreak of the Egyptian Revolution in 2011 and run a candidate in the upcoming presidential elections. Once more, this candidate was Khairat Al-Shater.

The importance of Al-Shater and his project therefore cannot be exaggerated. The following text is a complete English translation of a lecture Al-Shater gave in Alexandria, Egypt on April 21, 2011. The lecture, which is entitled “Features of Nahda: Gains of the Revolution and the Horizons for Developing,” is perhaps the single most important elaboration to date of not only Al-Shater’s worldview and politics, but of the MB’s plan for the future of Egypt and the region more generally in the post-Mubarak era.

The following translation of Al-Shater’s speech is based on a transcription of a video recording of the lecture, which is presently available on YouTube.<sup>1</sup> This transcription and translation is made available through the efforts of a team from the Egyptian Union of Liberal Youth, including (as transcriber) Ahmed Ragab Mohameed, (translator) Damien Pieretti, and (editor) Amr Bargisi. ~*Translator’s Note*

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FIRST OF ALL I WOULD LIKE TO DIRECT MY THANKS TO MY MENTORS AND IKHWAN in Alexandria for this audience and reception, with thanks due to Ustath<sup>2</sup> Gum’a Amin, Deputy General Guide and our mentor for a long time, and to all of our mentors in Alexandria, and likewise to our sisters in the Administrative Office, thanks to all of you, and may God reward you well and bless you, and accept your deeds and ours. I truly feel great happiness to have this meeting today with my brothers in Alexandria, after prisons have deprived us for a long time from meeting you and enjoying your company, and this was bestowed upon us by God after the success of the great revolution of this kind and blessed people, so may God reward you well.

Our talk today is about the developing of Ikhwani<sup>3</sup> work. As you all know that His Grace the [General] Guide and the Guidance Bureau charged me with the supervision over the issue of developing Ikhwani Work. This matter, as you all know, is an imperative and continuous one. We were taught that Ihsan<sup>4</sup> is an important degree in the life of the Muslim which he constantly seeks by pursuing the causes<sup>5</sup> for improving [one’s] work up to the highest degree of mastery. We were also taught that wisdom is the believer’s objective, wherever he finds it he is the most worthy of it. And, we were taught that the mercy of God comes to him who came to know his times, so that his path became straightforward. Therefore one’s [i.e. our] approach, while keeping faith in the General Rules of the Islamic method, is to continuously examine reality and the changes he or his Ummah<sup>6</sup> experience, or that occur in his life or in that of the Gama’a,<sup>7</sup> so as to pursue the causes which render his methods, manners and means compatible with this reality; benefitting from all its positive changes while minimizing the effects of its negative changes. The issue of improvement, betterment, mastery, developing or

changing for the better is one which is concomitant to the nature of the Islamic<sup>8</sup> movement and Islamic thought; occasionally, however, some circumstances and major transformations occur in the life of the Ummah or the Gama'a which make the issue of development and change even more pressing. None is more significant than the historical moment which Egypt and most of the peoples and states of the region are now experiencing. We call upon God Almighty to make this transformation the beginning of a new Nahda<sup>9</sup> for the Ummah and the shaking off of the state of backwardness from which it has suffered for decades.

As Ikhwan, it is imperative that we, as well as the entirety of the Ummah God Willing, take advantage of this revolution which took place in Egypt and continues in the countries surrounding us, and which undoubtedly represents a historical moment and a major new transformative stage. As I mentioned, this makes the issue of developing even more of an obligation. But what do we mean by the development of Ikhwani work: i.e. What is the nature of such development? Does it involve the entirety of Ikhwani work or parts of it but not others? What are the mechanisms which we will apply in the process of developing? Who is responsible for the planning of developing? And, who is responsible for executing the matters which we will agree to develop?

Who is responsible for the planning of developing, and who is responsible for executing the matters which we will agree to develop? Before answering these questions I find myself in need of discussing a number of introductions to which you are undoubtedly privy due to your understanding of the Da'wah<sup>10</sup> and its history, however, I shall mention them for the sake of reminding and because I will infer some of the issues related to development around them.

The first introduction is that I would like us to remember and review together briefly the general framework for our method and our way of working as Muslim Brothers because we need to distinguish within this framework between Constants and Variables. Naturally, Constants are not subject to developing, hanging, addition or omission; only Variables are. You all know that our main and overall mission as Muslim Brothers is to empower<sup>11</sup> God's Religion on Earth, to organize our life and the lives of people on the basis of Islam, to establish the Nahda of the Ummah and its civilization on the basis of Islam, and to subjugation<sup>12</sup> of people to God on Earth.

All of these are synonyms conveying the same meaning. This is why one of the Ikhwan's preachers said [cut in video].

Everywhere, the Ikhwan are working to restore Islam in its all-encompassing conception to the lives of people, and they believe that this will only come about through the strong society. Thus the mission is clear: restoring Islam in its all-encompassing conception; subjugating people to God; instituting the religion of God; the Islamization of life, empowering of God's religion; and establishing the Nahda of the Ummah on the

basis of Islam. All of these synonymous phrases give the same meaning, intention or definition, and that is the overall mission which we are seeking to accomplish as Ikhwan.

We were also taught in the method of the Muslim Brotherhood that, with regard to this overall mission: Imam Al-Banna, may he rest in peace, through his understanding of the Prophet's method (PBUH) and his way of instituting religion, outlined for us a number of stages or secondary objectives which, after their completion, will eventually lead to the achievement of this overall mission. Thus we've learned [to start with] building the Muslim individual, the Muslim family, the Muslim society, the Islamic government, the global Islamic State and reaching the status of Ustathiya<sup>13</sup> with that State. If all of these secondary objectives are completed, then the overall mission is achieved: the Empowerment of God's Religion.

[Repetition...]<sup>14</sup>

We also learned in the method of the Muslim Brotherhood that this overall mission and these secondary goals can only be achieved by means of the strong Gama'a. The Gama'a is therefore the one primary instrument to achieve this overall mission and these secondary goals. We say Islam disappeared from life, thus preachers of the Ikhwan undertook the work of restoring Islam in its all-encompassing conception to the lives of people, and they believed that this would only come by way of the strong Gama'a. This is the same idea as that was expressed by His Eminence Omar Bin Al-Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him), which some scholars attribute to the prophet himself, stating that "there is no religion without a Gama'a, no Gama'a without an Imam<sup>15</sup>, and no Imam without obedience."

[Repetition...]

The Gama'a is thus an instrument and not a long-term goal. It is an instrument or means to Islamize life in its entirety and institute religion as His Eminence Omar said, and as such, this is part of the constants which we believe in as Ikhwan. The primary instrument for implementing this project is the Gama'a, not the Party or any other means, because whoever studies the jurisprudence of instituting religion as established by our master the prophet (PBUH) will find that the instrument which he used was the Gama'a.

[Repetition...]

The party, my brothers,<sup>16</sup> as an instrument, means, or vessel, is not born of the Islamic idea, or of the Islamic experience, or of the Islamic model. Rather, it is one of the various products of Western civilization, the Western model, or the Western Nahda. It is an instrument or a vessel for the deliberation of power in the political space, an instrument for [engaging in] the conflict for the sake of obtaining power. The Gama'a,

on the other hand, is not an instrument of conflict or competition. The Gama'a is an instrument of integration and rallying of the entire Ummah in order to build its Nahda on the basis of Islam.

Therefore in our process of developing and changing, it would not be possible if someone says "the Gama'a should become a party," or "forget about the Gama'a and let's establish a party or two or three," because the party is a vessel born of the Western idea which has a particular nature within particular limitations; it is designed and conceived, as manifested by everything from its philosophy to its methods, for the political process which is only one part of the greater Nahda project in politics, economy, society, education, morals, values, behavior, children, women, the elderly, the young. Every aspect of life is to be Islamized and the primary instrument for this is the Gama'a. The Gama'a may establish a party, an association, schools, and many other means for some of the secondary tasks; but the Gama'a is to remain the instrument which establishes an entire life for the Ummah on the basis of Islamic reference or the basis of the Islamic method.

[Repetition...]

We also learned in the Ikhwan's method and in the jurisprudence of instituting religion as applied by God's prophet (PBUH) that this Gama'a has a Shar'i<sup>17</sup> definition, a specific meaning, as well as special characteristics. If these characteristics are not attained within a community of human beings, we cannot call it an Islamic Gama'a, which His Eminence Omar meant to be the instrument for instituting religion.

The Gama'a has two primary prerequisites that must be on hand. The Ulama<sup>18</sup> have said the first prerequisite is the strength of the psychological construction of the Gama'a's individuals. Every individual in the Gama'a should be [an] Islam, a walking Quran; his deeds should be the Quran; His faith, worship, manners, relationships, and all that is related to his behavior, thoughts, and emotions should be identical with the Islam that Muhammad (PBUH) got from God Almighty.

So if this psychological construction is present, does that alone bring a Gama'a into being? They said "no," a strong organizational construction is imperative. His Eminence Omar says "there is no religion without a Gama'a, and no Gama'a without an Imam." This means officials, structures and groups; a particular structure, not just a matter of circumstance. This structure also needs to be obeyed and committed to. The structure applies Shura<sup>19</sup> in decision-making, but when a decision is reached, all levels [of the structure] must commit and obey.

[Repetition...]

So we are Groups, Families, Branches, Regions<sup>20</sup> and officials, the form of such struc-

ture may change from one era to another, but the idea is that there must be an organization. There must be work and, in this system, there must remain certain degrees of commitment. So it is not possible for us to call any gathering a Gama'a, as in the technical term of the Islamic movement, where each can do what he wants or an one with an idea different from that of the majority comes out saying it or committing to it. Not any existing gathering is a Gama'a, even if it were a group of good people who are committed to Islam; they are not a Gama'a as such without their structures and officials, without system, commitment, and obedience.

The Gama'a thus requires the strength of psychological construction and the strength of organizational construction. The organizational construction needs structures, officials, and relationships that bind them together.

The Ulama classified these relationships into brotherhood, trust and obedience. [Political] Parties always talk about partisan commitment, which is synonymous with obedience; meaning that people hear and execute the party's policy and commit to its instructions, so the analogous term we have for Partisan commitment is obedience. However, we have two [other] important issues, that of brotherhood and that of trust. These relationships must be present, so we won't call just any gathering a Gama'a, and won't call just any individual a member of a Gama'a, if he didn't commit and can't be described by these characteristics on the level of personal piety as a Muslim person and on the level of adherence to the particular relationships of Ikhwan, confidence and commitment to the Gama'a. We can't call such an individual a member of a Gama'a, even if he refers to himself as such, because the issue at stake is not what I say about myself, but the criteria of how I behave: Are these characteristics present in me or not?

*[Repetition...]*

It is not possible for someone to say I'm one of the Ikhwan despite his lacking some of these characteristics in the first place, even if he himself is a virtuous and pious brother. This is why Imam Al-Banna in his memoirs warned of the pious unorganized man or he who always breaks ranks because the issue is not only one of individual piety, but rather with individual piety the issues connected to organizational development must also be present.

Thus, we learned in the Muslim Brotherhood's method that the overall mission is to empower God's religion or establish the Ummah's Nahda on the basis of Islamic reference, from the Muslim individual to Ustathia, a mission that can only be achieved through the Gama'a which has certain prerequisites and characteristics. We also learned that this Gama'a, in order to achieve this objective and mission, must proceed along three lines: definition, formation and execution.<sup>21</sup>

[Repetitions...]

When Imam Al-Banna told us that these are the fundamentals of the Muslim Brotherhood method, he did not come up with them, nor was it he who invented them. Rather, he examined the method of the Prophet (PBUH) and how he instituted the religion of God Almighty in the first stage after [receiving] the revelation and found this framework. The Prophet strove to achieve this mission and these objectives; he formed this Gama'a with these characteristics and attributes, and during the time of the prophet this Gama'a proceeded along the lines of definition, formation and execution.

Thus this part of our method represents constants, and there is no room for discussion about change and developing. No one can come and say "let's change the overall mission." No one can come and say, "Let's change the overall mission." No one can say, "Let's remove one of these objectives." No one can say, "Instead of the Gama'a let's make a party or two." No one can say, "We'll work along three lines other than definition, formation and execution." No one can say, "Forget about obedience, discipline and structures of the Gama'a," claiming that we can call any gathering a Gama'a." No. All of these are constants that represent the fundamental framework for our method: the method of the Muslim Brotherhood. It is not open to developing or change.

[Repetition...]

We have reviewed the stages from the Individual to Ustathiya, but where are we now along these stages? I mean are we now at the stage of the individual, household, society, Government, Global Islamic State or Ustathiya? To answer this question we look at our situation and our history. His Eminence the Prophet (PBUH), before he met his creator, had already made headway for the Muslim Gama'a under his leadership, regarding the household, individual, and society stages, and he established the Islamic state in Medina. He then began to expand this state to cover the Arabian Peninsula and then began the launch of the Global State of Islam; the evidence is that Ghzawat Mo'tah<sup>22</sup> took place in his time (PBUH), and we all know that Mo'tah is in Jordan and not in the Arabian Peninsula.

Therefore, the path was clear, thus the Rashidun (rightly-guided) Caliphs, God's grace upon all of them, continued the stage of the Global State of Islam, and so its domain expanded, and the Persian and Roman (Byzantine) States fell as the new state of Islam emerged on the global level. This state arrived after some time to the point where it became the strongest state in existence, and therefore Ustathia was actualized in reality. This, my brothers, was concluded in forty or fifty years and endured for more than 1000 years. Sometimes, Ustathia was lost, and at other times, like in the period of the Tatar War (Mongul Invasion), the Caliphate fell in Baghdad. But because Islamic

regimes and governments were present in states in Egypt, Palestine, and North Africa, Muslims gathered together again, fought and defeated the Tatars, restored the Caliphate once more, and after a while, the Caliphate returned to a state of greatness.

The last form of the Islamic Caliphate was the Ottoman government, but last century, it first lost the state of Ustathia which had been present but in a weak form. Hence we lost Ustathia and then after this the Caliphate itself collapsed. If Islam had been governing our states and countries in Egypt, Libya, the Hejaz, and so forth, perhaps it would have been possible to pursue the reinstatement of the Global State of Islam. However, what happened was that many of the states of the Islamic world had been occupied [by Western powers] before or after the fall of the Caliphate. The English (British) came to Egypt in 1882 and [before that] went to India. The French descended upon the Levantine region, Lebanon, Algeria and Tunisia. Italy descended upon Libya. Holland went to Indonesia. The colonial states spread across all of our states to a large extent, and, step by step, secular systems were put in place [of Muslim ones] with regard to the organization of the lives of Muslims in their petty states, so that in the end we couldn't say that we have an Islamic System of Government in any of these states.

What was changed first in Egypt was the judicial or legal system. They said "you all govern yourselves in Shari'a courts; here we have foreigners so we'll create special courts for them." After a little while they told us "foreigners are feuding with Egyptians, so we'll make mixed courts." After a little while these mixed courts became the norm, relying on positive (man-made) laws, with the exception of personal status laws, in addition very little articles in civil or criminal codes which might be said to be related to the Islamic Judicial system.

After that came the economic system. Muslims didn't know the system of interest or banks or management of the economy on the basis of capitalism. So after changing the laws step by step as well, the secular economic system, or the capitalist system, was also instated in the place of the system which had been dominant in our Islamic states, the same happened in education and in most of the other matters.

The crucial issue here is the systems which are being implemented, not only whether the president is nominally Muslim or is chosen in an Islamic manner even if that had happened—and it didn't. What is more important and more dangerous than this was that in the end, we are saying that an Islamic system in our countries means that the various areas of our life are organized on the basis of Islam, on the basis of the Islamic idea, or Islamic Reference, however this system was replaced one part after the other, so that the systems which are implemented in all of our Muslim countries became secular systems, systems imported from the West or the East, but not Islamic systems. I am not addressing the issue of Takfir,<sup>23</sup> since this is not the subject of my discussion right now, but the criteria for the organization of the various

aspects of our lives is no longer based on Islam, and as such we have lost Ustathiya, we have lost the Caliphate or the Global State of Islam, and we have also lost Islamic governments on the single-country level.

So for the first time Muslims became exposed. For the first time Muslims had no state and no Sultan.<sup>24</sup> There was no government protecting religion's territory. That was it. For the first time in the history of Muslims and with the fall of the Caliphate, secular systems were substituted for the existing systems of life and government in our petty states, our society became completely exposed since there was no Sultan. The words of His Eminence Omar "No religion without a Gama'a and no Gama'a without an Imam": there was no Imam, there is now no regime protecting religion in the lives of these people.

When this happened, there were reactions in the Islamic world to this new tragedy as to what we were supposed to do. His Grace Imam Mohamed Abduh, may he rest in peace, said that the solution lies in the reform of religious education. Sheikh Mohamed Ibn Abd Al-Wahab in the Hejaz said that the solution lies in combating Bid'as<sup>25</sup> of creed. Sheikh Mahmoud Al-Sobky, the founder of the Shari'a Association in Egypt, may he rest in peace, said the solution lies in combating Bid'as of rituals. The Sennusi movement in Libya and the Mahdiyya in Sudan said the solution lies in liberating the occupied homeland first.

Developments, visions and initiatives emerged for dealing with this new reality, but the problem is that none of these paid attention to the fact that the situation had changed and that for the first time we were outside the sphere of government or authority. We became a society without a government that represents Islam. Therefore, [we ask] Imam Mohammed Abduh, who is going to reform the religious education if the new government imposes a secular system which doesn't want a religious educational system in the first place? It brought us an educational system tied to the Western model. Also who will fight Bid'as? Who will do anything?

There was no clear answer to this question. The first person, as far as we know, to be aware of the change in the situation, was Imam Al-Banna, may God have mercy on him. He acknowledged that the equation had changed, that we were now outside the realm of state and authority, so he researched the history of Muslims in order to find what the solution was when something like this happened previously. He found that there was no precedent in the lives of all Muslims, because we never in our history lost Ustathiya, the Caliphate or government at the level of the states. Even when the Caliphate fell in the days of the Tatars, or was weakened in the days of the Crusaders, there was Qutuz<sup>26</sup> in Egypt; there was someone here or there, and the situation was rectified. But there was no similar experience in over a thousand years in the history of Muslims, so Al-Banna did not find anything but in the method of the Prophet (PBUH) and his ear-

ly biography; he was the [only] one who instituted religion without being in the seat of power. Where did he start from then? He started with the Muslim individual, the household, and the society. He established the Muslim Gama'a under his leadership (PBUH).

So Imam Al-Banna, may God have mercy on him, went back to the method of the Prophet (PBUH) and studied his jurisprudence or his Way of instituting religion, and thus he extracted this Way, explained it and outlined it for us in what is known as the method of the Muslim Brotherhood. Therefore, my brothers, the Muslim Brotherhood's method is that of the Prophet's (PBUH), and thus we say that the Muslim who is connected to the Gama'a and the method must believe and realize that he is on the right path and that he must not be on a path other than this one. One of the fundamental prerequisites to develop the Brother within the Gama'a is to realize that you are on the right path and that you must not be on a path other than this one.

*[Repetition...]*

As Ikhwan we have spent a long time working on the individual, walking along this line, working on the household, working on society. So we are now developing the Muslim individual, and God willing we will continue. We are developing the Muslim household and God willing we will continue. We are developing the Muslim society, and God willing we will continue. We are preparing for the stage of Islamic government after this because it is what follows the stage of society. Our preparation for the stage of Islamic government does not, as the secularists understand it, entail us striving to reach the seat of government ourselves. Our one and only concern is for there to be a government that is faithful to the method of our Lord Almighty, and a government keen on establishing the lives of people on the basis of Islamic reference, whether it be us or someone else.

We are different from other parties; the issue is not that we ourselves need to govern as some think. No. The issue is that we are working on the stage of society, and we are preparing this society for the stage of Islamic government, which is what organizes the remaining aspects of people's lives, those outside the scope of society, such as economics, politics and all other fields, on the basis of Islamic Reference.

So this is our first introduction: Our mission is to develop the Ummah's Nahda on the basis of Islamic Reference. This mission requires the progression through a number of stages from the individual to Ustathiya. Our primary tool, based on the method of the Prophet (PBUH) is the Gama'a, which has characteristics and components, and must proceed along the three lines of progress. On the historical or realistic front, we are at the stage of society and about to be in the stage government alongside which we must continue to work on the individual and the household. This first introduction outlines our overall mission and our instrument and delineates that which is

constant in our method, that which is not subject to developing or change because it is connected to the method of the Prophet (PBUH).

As for the second introduction: when we talk about developing the Ummah's Nahda on the basis of Islamic Reference, some [people] do not realize how deep the issue of Islamic Reference is; they imagine that it is an emotional word or that I can take the experience of Japan, of Britain, of Malaysia, of Turkey, or any other experience and dress it an Islamic appearance or Islamic outfit. The issue is not like this. The issue is that the Islamic method is a substantial method that deeply impacts the organization of [all] aspects of life. This needs to be clear before us; it is not a matter of an emotional or a formalistic slogan, but rather a substantial and fundamental issue.

So for example, when we come to the political regime based on Islamic reference, we will find that Islam outlines general rules for life, in its political conception, amidst the Muslim society, country or people. One General Rule, among others, for example states "their affairs being Shura (counsel) between them."<sup>27</sup> This means that all the decision-making mechanisms inside the Muslim society become based on Shura, and means also that the choices of officials and representatives at the various levels should be based on Shura. As for the system we will use in decision-making or the organization of our political lives; or the issues of whether we will choose a parliamentary republican system or a presidential republican system; or whether we will have unicameral or bicameral legislature; or whether we will elect one president of the republic, or the ruler or primary official, or three or four and not one; whether we will choose them directly or by way of representation; all of these issues, my brothers, are subject to Ijtihad.<sup>28</sup>

We cannot take the words of His Eminence Omar Ibn Al-Khattab which were present in his time as a framework or executive structure for the administration of the state and say that it will be useful to us today. For our Lord Almighty, because he knew that the variables in life would be many, outlined for us a number of rules. It is demanded of us that the Muslim political scientist living in our time apply Ijtihad and start to tell us the design of the political system that we will use. On what basis does he lay down this system? On the basis of the General Rule, "their affairs being Shura between them," the experiences of Muslims from the days of His Eminence the Prophet to the present, and human experiences in general if he finds in them something useful. The Muslim political scientist comes to do this and lay down the system, and since [the process] involves human beings, reality and experience, if we said to three people to engage in Ijtihad each one by himself, it is possible that the three will come up with three systems similar to each other and also possible that the three to come up with somewhat different ones.

Who will delineate the system which the Ummah will commit to and apply to its

life? [It is] the Ummah itself. Thus the matter is posed to the Ummah, to the public organization, to the council (parliament) which represents it, and they decide on the most favorable political system to apply and use. So for example if a Mujtahid<sup>29</sup> says “nothing will work with you but a Just Despot,”<sup>30</sup> we would say no, because this contradicts the General Rule, “their affairs being counsel between them;” a despot does not work. If a Mujtahid who had studied the experience of the Soviet Union in a particular historical stage came and said the idea that the workers should rule is plausible because they are the ones who produce and work in the factories, we say no, because the General Rule, “their affairs being counsel between them,” didn’t say “the affairs of workers;” affairs, rather, refers to the entire people.

What I mean by this discussion, my brothers, is that for the systems that we will use in organizing our lives on the political, economic, social or educational level, there are rules that govern them, and there are Islamic experiences, and the matter requires Ijtihad. So it’s not possible for me to take experience X or Y and say this is what I’m going to use and that’s it, because it might not conform with these rules which exist for us, in addition to the fact that Islam posits some of details about the characteristics of the Ruler or official, and about the [rules] governing his relationship, [considering duties and rights], with the citizens. Thus the Islamic system is a system which has substance. It has conceptions and rules which govern it. It has means and modes. Of course, Muslims stopped living their lives according to Islamic reference, we’ve spent 200 to 300 years, so what Muslims see now are the models of the West, Japan, China, Korea, or others, because there are now no systems based on Islamic Reference among all of present states of the Sunni people throughout the entire world.

[Repetition...]

The third introduction is a historical introduction specific to the period of twenty or thirty years, i.e. the period which just passed. You all know that the Society of the Muslim Brothers, and as such its method of working to institute God Almighty’s method and empowering God’s religion in the lives of people, stopped since the year 1954 and disappeared until the second half of the seventies of the last century; for more than twenty years. It is true that there was the organization of 1965 but the numbers and duration were limited and the public did not feel its presence strongly. So we can all say that the Ikhwan disappeared from 1954 to 1974 roughly, because there were some of the Ikhwan that showed up in 1972 and 1973 but their numbers were small. Had this absence been for a short time, hadn’t there been misrepresentation of the Ikhwan’s method, and hadn’t there been another model presented, i.e. the Nasserist model, which they tried to spread to a great extent; if the Ikhwan were for example imprisoned for two years, and the number of prisoners were three or

four thousand while there were a hundred thousand outside, then the Muslim Brotherhood was brought back, it would have been easy to reorganize their ranks and reestablish their structure. What happened, however, was that most or a large fraction of the Ikhwan were sent to prison, and for a long time, the Nasserite model was massively propagated, and it was heavily attempted to misrepresent the method and ways of the Muslim Brotherhood.

As such we are able to say that there was a long period of severance that affected the history of the Ikhwan's work in Egypt. For when the Ikhwan got out of prisons during the second half of the seventies or at the end of the first half, they started the re-establishment of the Gama'a or the second establishment of Society of the Muslim Brothers. This issue of establishment is of course important and necessary because we said in the first introduction that the primary tool for empowering God's religion is establishing the Gama'a and considering the discussion of His Eminence Omar that there is no religion without a Gama'a. So it was imperative for the Muslim Brothers when they left the prisons to establish or re-establish the Gama'a after it was made to disappear for a long time.

It might be true that there was a group of Ikhwan present in prison that stayed in contact with each other in some form or another and in some cases organizational connections emerged, however this was far removed from the reality of society. The Gama'a wasn't present or widespread in cities and villages. There were no structures and as such it was the primary mission of the Ikhwan who got out of prison during the beginning of the seventies was the re-establishment of the Gama'a. This is of course, my brothers, a process that took a long time and toward which enormous efforts were exerted, because there were no Groups, no Families, no Branches, no Regions, no administrative offices, and no Shura Council. Some of the old members of the Guidance Bureau were in prison, and they retained their positions when they got out in the beginning of the process of re-establishing the Gama'a, but the rest of the structure was not present and, as I said a little while ago, if the matter had just been imprisonment for two or three years followed by their release, their regrouping and re-organization would have been simple. However this was for twenty years or more, and another intellectual model was propagated, that being the Nasserite model.

When the Ikhwan were released and began the re-establishment, the first stage during the first year or two was an attempt to get acquainted with the existing reality. Later they began the attempt to correct the negative image which Nasser and his regime had drawn on the Ikhwan. So they began their activities on this basis and then moved to the issue of Da'wa (calling) to Islam in its totality, introducing Islam in its totality, and began to introduce the Muslim Brotherhood's method. Then they scouted for elements [in society] which were prepared to believe in this method, so efforts were

exerted to educate them, followed by the process of organizing them in groups. When the work first started, there was a group at the central level in Cairo [consisting of] Ustath Umar El-Tilmisani<sup>31</sup> (may God have mercy on him), Ustath Mustafa Mashhur<sup>32</sup> (may God have mercy on him), Doctor Ahmed El-Malt<sup>33</sup> (may God have mercy on him), Al-Hajj Hosni,<sup>34</sup> there was a group of twenty, thirty, or forty Ikhwan present. In the other governorates there were also groups. In Alexandria there was Al-Hajj Abbass As-Sissi,<sup>35</sup> and Al-Hajj Mahmoud Shukri,<sup>36</sup> and many other names. However, we are still talking about twenty or thirty Ikhwan in the governorates; there were also some two to six working in each governorate.

Some people, my brothers, underestimate the issue of the re-establishment of Ikhwan work in the seventies by reducing it to student activism. This is wrong. Some people reduce it to activism in Cairo University, and this is an even bigger mistake. Some go so far as to Qasr Al-Aini Faculty of Medicine (Cairo University Medical School), and this is also incorrect. I was a witness to this stage, so was Ustath Guma'a [Amin], and Ustath Muhamed Hussein<sup>37</sup> and many others.

The Ikhwan were released and began their activities in the governorates. It is true that they focused on working in the universities because there was an Islamic revival present after the setback of '67—a divine Islamic revival. The Islamic work that started after '67 began gradually and every year was improving on the last, but the work lacked a vision or a project—meaning that we were trying to be religious and were trying to serve our religion, but didn't know how. I said in the introduction that in the Ikhwan's method there's an overall mission of instituting God's Sharia and developing the Ummah's Nahda on the basis of Islam, that there are sub-goals from the individual to Ustathiya, that the primary instrument is the Gama'a which has specific characteristics, and that the Gama'a must proceed along the three lines. This is a method. This is a vision. This is a comprehensive project known as the Islamic project which the Ikhwan are trying to accomplish.

Our blessed revival in the universities, however, was a random revival of religiosity without a clear vision for the way of instituting religion. I remember my mentor Ustath Mohamed Hussein. It was 1973, and I and a group of my colleagues were finishing our BA in Engineering. We were sitting together and Ustath Mohammed was with us, and we were wondering what we were going to do when we leave the university. Would we go to Al-Mansoura or Port Said and spend some time in each city? We were now used to Islamic activism in the university, we knew what we were doing there, and things went [for us] even if there was no [immediate] project. But when we returned to our homes, in what ways would we become active and how? We didn't find a clear and specific answer, so I personally decided not to take the exam that year and actually postponed my graduation a year because we agreed, and Ustath Mohamed Hus-

sein was with us, that we would form a group and study what methods are available. But if we did not like any of them, was it possible for us to make our own method? We sat, talked and studied. We'd study Creed, History, Islamic Movements and many other issues in order to put forth a conception for when we leave the university and for how we would continue our activities.

Why am I telling you this story? So that you realize, my brothers, the nature of this stage, that there was no clear vision and that there was a huge amount of suffering. When the Ikhwan were released from prison, though their numbers were small relative to the total number of students, this blessed revival started to have a vision before it, and they began to mobilize our brothers [in the university] and illuminate for them the mission, goals and the Gama'a as a project. So there was some response from the individuals taking part in the Islamic revival, and there were people who chose the Salafi line, while our brothers in Upper Egypt took another path. I remember after we agreed to stay a year in order to figure out what we were going to do, I graduated and went to work at Mansoura University, and I didn't sense that there was a problem because there were Islamic activists in the university. After a while Ustath Mohamed Hussein and a group of brothers were beginning to become convinced with the Ikhwan's method. He came and visited me so as to discuss the subject. Before discussing anything, he asked me "Where will we go to Friday prayer?" I told him I would pray in a mosque here where the Ikhwan deliver the sermons. He then answered, "That's it, you've made it easier for us, because we came to discuss this [specific] subject, so thank God you've made the distance shorter."

Why am I telling you this my brothers? So that you realize the amount of suffering that existed during that time, as well as the amount of effort exerted by the Ikhwan who left prison, and the youth who cooperated with them on the subject of re-establishing the Ikhwan structure or Gama'a. This matter took ten or even fifteen years, not just a few days, because as I said from the beginning, if the incarcerated Ikhwan had served just two years and then released, it would have been easy; they would have exerted a little effort and organized what had existed before. However the matter took a much, much longer time, and the Ikhwan's project succeeded by the grace of God in most of the universities, then in most of the cities, followed by most of the neighborhoods in the big cities, then the villages and the rural areas.

In the year 1990, the Muslim Brotherhood's first generally elected Shura Council was formed, as were Shura Councils and administrative offices in the governorates; the first elected Guidance Bureau was also chosen in 1990, and after it was based on the historical [contribution] criterion; it became a matter of election that [first] year. The structure became visible everywhere in the entirety of the Arab Republic of Egypt, from Cairo to of all the governorates and villages, in many of the neighborhoods and

rural areas. We started sections, committees, branches and regions: a very, very huge structure. But this was by the blessing and efforts of a great number of the Ikhwan that came out of prison and those who allied with them, cooperated with them or accepted their project from among the university youth at this time. No one individual or group, whoever that may be, can take credit for this by themselves. It was by the grace of God Almighty that our brothers who were coming out [of prison] were successful in their marketing and calling for the vision of the Ikhwan, spreading it among many of the youth and others so that this structure came into existence. Thus the new generations need to realize the nature of this stage and the efforts that were exerted by our brothers coming out of prison in spite of their many problems and circumstances resulting from their absence from their homes and families for so long.

A Brother now, by the grace of God, finds everything working: Branches, Regions, Committees, Departments, and Offices. He can go onto Facebook and say, “We don’t want the [General] Guide; we don’t want a Guidance Bureau.” However, he grew up in easy and simple circumstances; he didn’t feel the efforts and hardships endured by the Ikhwan in this period, and he is now a passenger on a functioning train, asking for [a choice of] coffee, tea, food, and juice. That’s it, the issue is easy and simple for him; he puts any idea that comes to him on Facebook.

Therefore it is very important, my brothers, that we realize that very, very great efforts were exerted during this period so that the structure could be established and stabilized. When the structure was solidified and started to become present after 1990, it was natural that the Gama’a would begin to prepare for a stage of opening up to society. It started to prepare the path, with bigger steps in the project of developing the Nahda of the Ummah on the basis of Islam, because in the stage of establishing the structure, a large part of the Ikhwan’s efforts were directed to building the structure itself, and to re-establishing the Ikhwan. Thus sixty to seventy percent of the effort was exerted by the Ikhwan in order to bring back this structure because the issue is not merely re-organization plain and simple. There was spreading the idea and searching for supporters, educating and organizing them, and distributing them across the structure’s units, so that sixty to seventy percent of the effort was focusing on the structure itself and its re-establishment and twenty to thirty percent was for our work in society and our activities in the mosques.

*[Break for Maghreb (Sunset) Prayer]*

*[Repetition...]*

We participated in the elections for the People’s Assembly in ’84 and ’87; we entered the Union elections and the University Faculties Clubs Elections, and we began working in the mosques and associations. By 1990 or the beginning of the nineties, Ikhwan,

represented by His Grace Ustath Moustafa Mashhour, who, may God have mercy on him, was Deputy to the General Guide and responsible for the planning committee in the Muslim Brotherhood during this time, began to be orientated towards opening up more to society and focusing more on the issue of developing the Ummah's Nahda on the basis of Islamic Reference. Directives were indeed put forth and devising of the plan began, and any of you who goes back to the plan that exists now, or the version that preceded it, will find in it explicit texts indicating that seventy percent of the Ikhwan's efforts were directed to work in society.

This was written, but it was not implemented because in the year 1990 or in the beginning of the nineties, an essential change was beginning to take place in the interaction between the incumbent regime and the Muslim Brotherhood during this time. Before this time, there was some room for movement; I'm not saying room for movement means complete freedom. However, there was to a certain extent some degree of freedom with restrictions. The change that occurred was that the regime picked a new strategy. Why did this change occur? The objective of this strategy was to curb, confuse and constrict the Ikhwan. Why though? Many explanations were given but the most plausible of these was the success of the Islamic Salvation Front in Algeria in the elections. Before that, Mubarak was making statements in the press and international news agencies stating that the Ikhwan could possibly be absorbed into the political process. After the Islamic Salvation Front succeeded to a great extent in Algeria, Mubarak and some of the factions in his regime began to fear that this political process and this marginal position given to the Ikhwan in the form of partial freedom to work would give them the room to sweep the elections at any time and create a problem.

The new strategy was based on two primary lines. The first line was the enactment of a number of oppressive procedures against the Ikhwan, first manifested in the imprisonment of Ikhwan for various reasons, some of which were connected to the events of day. We all know that during the elections for the People's Assembly or other elections, some two, three, four, five or even seven thousand of us were kept in prisons. Also, they started a second methodical way which they learned from the Yemeni regime of Imam Ahmed: the hostage system. In order to control the tribes which he feared would rebel, Imam Ahmed would take as hostage from every tribe the young man dearest to the heart of the leader of the tribe and keep him in his palace so as to guarantee that this tribe, due to its concern for its son, would stay calm and not cause problems.

So Mubarak applied this system with some modification, and thus began in 1992 by taking groups of Ikhwan and placing them in prisons. These groups always included a number of the higher leaders (a member of two from the Guidance Bureau, someone from the officials in the provinces of departments, and groups of Ikhwan on

various administrative levels) because his objective was to cause a state of concern, fear or panic for the entire body of the Gama'a. So if he took someone from the Guidance Bureau only, the middle-ranking leaders and the rest of the Gama'a could still work and say that it was the leadership's fate, may God be with them. If it was only individuals from the bottom and the base, the leadership might have said this is a tax and the Ikhwan must pay it and the group will remain in prison for some time and then get out. However, he took groups, that is, key sectors from top to bottom, in which all levels were represented, to that no one inside the body of the Gama'a felt himself safe from prison. It began with groups in 1992 in the Salsabil Case,<sup>38</sup> and he put them in precautionary incarceration from six months to one year. In 1995, he developed the idea by bringing in martial courts, and the sentences became, instead of six months to a year, three to five years.

Cases followed one after another—until the last case of 2006, in which I was included, along with Engineer Mehdat [El-Haddad], Ahmed En-Nahas, Gamal Shaaban, Mahmoud Abd Al-Gawad and other Ikhwan from various regions. The price tag became three, five, seven or ten [years]; it grew a little bit. This, my brothers, was primarily meant to cause the maximum amount of fear and confusion to the body of the entire Gama'a. Everyone who was exposed to prison from '92 all the way to the fall of Mubarak, [came to] about 30 thousand Ikhwan, some of whom were imprisoned one, two, three, four, or five times. Every now and again you'd find Medhat in jail, you'd find Mohamed Ibrahim in jail, and you'd find Khairat in jail, and so on. Thirty thousand doesn't mean thirty thousand incarcerations. No. This is thirty thousand people, many of whom were imprisoned more than once, so huge numbers and multiple incarcerations.

Therefore we all began to put our prison suitcases under our beds as we expected to be imprisoned at any time. When any door that was knocked at twelve or one o'clock at night, even if it was a Brother was coming to you about an issue or with a problem, the first thing to come to your mind was that State Security had arrived. Therefore incarceration of this type had as its intention to confuse and frighten the Ikhwan, make them feel unsafe and insecure, and more. They prevented our children, Ikhwan and youth from being hired for faculty positions at universities; those who came out first were not appointed as lecturers, or representatives in the union, judiciary, or press. Those who worked as teachers in education were moved to administrative positions; those who worked as mosque preachers were moved to administrative positions. He prevented people from traveling. Lately, he started to shut down our companies and in the year 2000, even cracked down upon nine thousand firms and companies throughout the Republic on the eve of the elections.

Therefore the first line employed by Mubarak from the beginning of the nineties

was directing a number of oppressive procedures aimed at individuals and leaders of the Gama'a with the intention of frightening and confusing them and of course also as a message to society that if you walk with these people your fate will be the same as theirs. So this was the first line of strategy.

The second line was tightening or closing us off from external work outlets. So [we were allowed entry to] no syndicates or unions; parliamentary elections were rigged except for a few exceptional cases; no local councils or mosques; nothing. All venues were being completely closed. He ordered crackdowns on us as individuals, as groups and as Ikhwan, and the tightening of the outside environment in which we could work led to two issues. First, in the language of Administration, when any organization, institution or group is cut off from all the opportunities to work in the outside environment and is struck at its core, it must become significantly weakened almost to the point of dying. But because the Society of the Muslim Brotherhood is an Islamic Gama'a based on God's method, our Lord Almighty protected the organization despite the existence of a number of negative forces on the work and objectives of the Gama'a.

Here I don't necessarily mean by negative effects flaws among the Ikhwan. Rather, to take but one example, when we wanted to hold elections, we either could not hold them [at all], or we held them by passing [the vote from one level to the next]. The last elections for the Guidance Bureau took place when I was in prison. The General Shura Council convened in six or seven places, not just one place. There was a time, during the period of relative openness, when for example, the administrative office grew to sixteen or seventeen members because the burdens of work are many. But when they entered the Alexandria office and arrested them once, then twice—besides the Beheira and other offices—the Ikhwan said 10 is enough for the administrative office.

The issue of Shura itself and its activation [was affected]: in the eighties we used to meet with the Ikhwan, or the Ikhwan officials would meet us like our meeting with you right now. The meetings could maybe have one, two or three thousand; or in the camp in Agami in Abu Talat, there were hundreds of Ikhwan and Ikhwan leaders present. We were denied all of this, and therefore our education took place in closed spaces and with limited actions. Our bylaws became highly complicated and our Shura was, to a great extent, suspended. Thus many of our means of decision-making, working and administration were negatively affected against our will as a result of this difficult circumstance. Were this to happen to any organization, institution or group in any place, it has to suffer some sort of introversion. We are saying this in the context of evaluating our reality so that when we talk about change and development, we also become aware of the matters which circumstances of confinement and danger imposed on us. Therefore we should change and treat these problems in the coming stage.

The second result achieved by the strategy of Mubarak or his regime was the delaying of our release to expand the project of developing the Ummah's Nahda on the basis of Islamic Reference because we could not open up to society. Even [our] companies in the private sector were closed, even liquidating our associations. In the end, you want to involve society and anchor the values of societal participation so that all the people participate in the developing of their own Nahda and that of the Ummah on the basis of Islam. But how do you do that? Through the private sector, through associations, through society's different institutions, your schools, your hospitals, and all your means and instruments. So when all of this is closed off to you, this prevents you from undertaking your project of developing the Ummah's Nahda on the basis of Islamic Reference. So this was also a major effect, a product of the plan undertaken by Mubarak and his regime starting in the nineties.

So now, by the grace of God and after the revolution, Mubarak and a large part of his regime are gone, and we hope that what remains of the regime is removed and God willing never returns. The Ummah has embarked on a new stage of freedom unknown for long times, having tied the hands of the security institution to a great extent up until now, and God willing it will return to its natural task without harming citizens, as its chief role becomes only that which is outlined by the law and constitution. The obstacle has now been removed, so we must return to the beginning of the matter which we were supposed to have undertaken since the nineties and on which we are expanding now, opening up to society to a great extent, enlightening the entire Ummah, and summoning its strength so that it contributes to the realization of its Nahda on the basis of Islamic Reference.

Therefore the Ikhwan's first and main task is to contribute to the developing of the Ummah's Nahda on the basis of Islamic Reference; this is now our essential task. We can't say that we must focus on the completion or building of the Gama'a because its structure, thanks to God, is very strong. So we may spend twenty to thirty percent of the effort on the Gama'a, however we must return to the words of our speeches and attitudes, and spend sixty to seventy percent on societal work to anchor the values of participation by everyone. The issue of the Nahda on the basis of Islamic Reference, my brothers, is not as easy a subject as its title suggests, because this project of the Ummah's Nahda does not exist on the level of planning or formulation. This means that efforts are demanded of us to organize and think about what developing the Ummah's Nahda on the basis of Islam means. Mubarak, and before him Sadat and the regimes that existed since '52 did not seek to push Egypt and summon her efforts to participate in the developing of its Nahda on the basis of any method. Even this never happened.

They were focused on the fact that the president, head of state, and inspired leader be the one who directs and executes everything; that his directives be the ones that

drive [everything]. That the Ummah be responsible for the developing of its Nahda, the very concept of it, was absent. It was non-existent. Thus today it is required of us that we first contribute alongside the honest and the loyal among the children of this Ummah to the formulation of what the Nahda project means. This “Nahda” is big talk, but in the end we need to have a number of tracks in social, economic, health, education and moral development in many fields. Each of these tracks comprises sub-tracks, and these sub-tracks comprise projects. Who will execute the projects? The people will. The private sector has a role. Civil society associations have a role. All Islamic and non-Islamic institutions have a role. The state also has a role in order to develop the Ummah’s Nahda.

So we, as a people and as Ikhwan, should contribute to defining what “Nahda” means, and we invite people to take part in the implement of this Nahda. As for the part that is specific to the state, we advise the state or the government. This issue might require pressure, so we hold demonstrations or any type of pressure so that the state fulfills its role. We may, after the coming elections, get part of the cabinet, or part of the government. Therefore we should not neglect or marginalize the aspect specific to the government because it is a major aspect, however we advise government and apply pressure to it, and perhaps participate in government at some point.

Thus now, while discussing the developing of the Nahda, we are required to put effort into formulating the project; we plan, work and discuss the meaning of “Nahda” and the meaning of projects, and who will run the projects. This subject is a big challenge that the Ikhwan must assist in preparing for. After that, besides thought and planning, it is demanded of us that we tell the people how to work and that we help them: those who want to start an association, those who want to form a company, those who want to start a school, those who want start an institution. All of these issues require major efforts because the people don’t have experience. We as Egyptians have some experience only in charity work: a project on supporting orphans, Ramadan [charity] kit, winter clothes or blankets. But now we are talking about efforts for development, about efforts for Nahda, and the topic is much larger than the issue of [social] solidarity. Our thinking needs to be on a wider scale than this.

So we will think and plan, while at the same time we want to arrange for how the work will go, because we are the biggest faction currently present in the Ummah; present, organized and aware of the issues management. Thus we need to make an effort in this field. When we talk about developing the Ummah’s Nahda on the basis of Islamic Reference, we don’t mean that the Muslim Brothers are the Ummah’s representatives in developing the Nahda, but rather that they think, plan, spread awareness and market the idea. The entire Ummah participates in developing its Nahda because the responsibility falls on the shoulder of the Ummah as a whole; coopera-

tion with the entire Ummah in all shades of its spectrum so that we contribute to developing this project however long it takes. This is the first and primary mission, and we said from the beginning that we learned in the Muslim Brotherhood that our mission is to develop the Ummah on the basis of Islamic Reference. [With regards to] this mission, we've passed a historical stage; we were establishing the Gama'a, and when we came to focus on it, we were greatly obstructed. Now, the obstacles have been removed, and so we return to the origin; to our natural objective; to our main mission.

We are not making and constituting a Gama'a in order to stay and work only on ourselves and on each other. This is required; but all of this is a means or instrument to develop the Ummah's Nahda on the basis of Islam, to empower God's Shari'a, to organize our lives and the lives of all people on the basis of God's method. Thus this issue requires a great effort in the coming stage, God willing, and as one of the pious businessmen said "he who begins is never late," meaning that even if we begin with a small effort; [gradually] this effort and work will accumulate so that we establish for the developing of a strong Nahda for our nation on the basis of Islamic Reference. This is the first and primary mission.

Our second mission in this stage is to maintain, to an appropriate level, the vitality of the revolution and maximize its results. Someone says to me "ok so you're talking about the Ummah's Nahda, what is the issue's relationship with the revolution?" I say that what prevented us and the Ummah from developing its Nahda was the autocratic regime. We don't want the autocracy to return once again. We don't want someone to incarcerate the Ikhwan or anyone else. We don't want someone to shut down the institutions we form for the developing of society. For this to happen, the revolution needs to be partially perpetual, and it needs to push for the achievement of as much of its objectives as possible because it hasn't realized all of them until now. [The revolutionaries] don't need to come out in the many millions that came out before; this was a situation relevant to the historical event of overthrowing the regime. Rather the appropriate level of at least one or two million should remain so as to keep a guarantee that the current government or any future government commits to the interests of the people, to building a stable political life including peaceful rotation of power, independence of the judiciary, rule of law, security, and attempts to develop the country and people and fix [their] problems. In short a government with which we wouldn't have a problem and would support. However if it deviated from this path and changed the rule to its own advantage, or that of its [entourage] as was the case with Mubarak, then the people who have awakened must never again sleep.

Therefore part of the vitality of the revolution must continue, and this must become part of our mission in cooperation with the different forces of the people: the improvement of its results, meaning that the revolution right now has achieved some

of its results and still has other demands. However, now there is a struggle of many wills. The West is playing in the region. The remnants of the old regime are playing. The current ruling power is dealing with the issue a bit slowly. The people have demands. So all of us must think of how we can help each other in order to maximize the results which we obtain from this great revolution.

Thus we have two fundamental missions. The first mission is to contribute to developing the Ummah's Nahda on the basis of Islamic Reference, and this needs efforts on the planning and formulation level, as well as on the organizational and administrative level. The second mission is to maintain to an appropriate level the vitality of the revolution and maximize its results. These two missions together require of us a third fundamental mission and that is the re-interpretation of the Ikhwani work and developing it so that it is able to undertake these missions in the circumstances and stage in which we are now living, for we agreed that we have [suffered] some negative effects; our structures, bylaws and some of our other aspects were influenced during the period of crackdowns. The circumstances today have changed. The degree of openness is significant. The missions cast upon our shoulders and on the rest of the people are major. It is imperative that we train our Gama'a and ranks, develop, improve and perfect so that we become able to execute the first and second mission. What will we develop? What will we change? We will look in our programs and plans. We will look into the fields of our work because the circumstances have changed today. My programs were relatively limited with regard to the movement for society because of crackdowns. Now things have changed, so we must re-examine my programs for interaction with society.

I was pursuing human development and educational programs that were influenced one way or another by the stage that just passed. Today there are new requirements, so I must reexamine the human development and educational programs that are present around me. We used to educate in a closed atmosphere. Now the world is open, so I must think about changing my ways and means with regard to the educational process. I had structures; these structures were related to my fields of work, meaning that maybe in the period of Imam Al-Banna some of the administrative units in the body of the Ikhwan didn't exist because the field didn't exist. For me to say that I will form a section for professionals (white-collars), I need to have work in the field of professionals, so the fields are determined before the structure. I need to revise the fields of work. Are the existing fields of work currently sufficient, or do I have an opportunity to add to them or modify them? After that I look at the administrative structures. After I've outlined the projects, programs, vision and educational methods, I begin to see whether these structures are appropriate or not. I need to add one, two or three. I need to change, I want to combine. The matter must be looked into.

The last thing we look into is the bylaws; I look at what type of amendments my by-laws need, but why are they the last thing, my brothers? It is because the by-laws delineate the relationship between the structure's units and define the relationship between individuals inside the structure. It would not work if I have not finished the structure's units and start speaking about the by-laws, so we always say because of this that the issue of developing is one that has technical rules and a particular arrangement that needs to be dealt with in its way. The first one is to look in the culture and prevailing thoughts, then the long-term projects and strategies, then the intermediate programs, fields of activity and structures, and then the by-laws. Thus what I said just right now entails two issues of utmost importance.

First, when we talk about developing the Ikhwan's work we talk about developing until we are able to undertake the major missions: cooperation with the people in developing the Ummah's Nahda on the basis of Islamic Reference, and cooperation with the people in preserving an appropriate level of vitality for the revolution and maximizing its results. For I see a lot of Ikhwan who meet me and bring me papers or suggestions. One brother, for example, was angry that he didn't make it to the regional council of Muharam Bey [district in Alexandria] in the last elections, and he imagined that with the change and developing that we would amend the bylaw and re-hold elections because he was angry about the composition of the region's council. Or he didn't make it to the administrative office, or he didn't make it in any of the various issues. A Brother is annoyed about a branch official and wants to change him, so his thinking about developing and change is that he wants to solve some of the problems that he's suffering from.

We don't have a disagreement in that we must look at the problems, solve them and understand them. But there is a difference if you're thinking about developing on a big scale since the Gama'a has major tasks that need to be launched in order to realize them. Therefore when you think of developing you think on this [major] level, and between thinking, about developing in order to solve a small problem of conflict with the head of Family in one Branch, or the Branch Official in one of region. There is a huge difference between the two levels of thinking.

[Repetition...]

Second, [...] development is a technical process that has rules, and so it's not possible for a Brother to tell me or present a suggestion as soon as he meets me, saying "tomorrow we want to change the by-law," or "tomorrow we want to hold elections for the administrative office in Alexandria," or in the Guidance Bureau or anywhere.

All of this talk is acceptable as suggestions, but the issue requires preparation. Before I speak about amending the by-laws I must have looked at the structures; and

before them at the fields of work, and before them at the vision and strategies, and before them at the prevailing culture. The subject needs to be in this order. Therefore, we need to realize that the issue will take time.

The third point in development is that the issue of development is not the responsibility of one person or one group of people inside the Ikhwan but rather the responsibility of the Ikhwan as a whole. Why, my brothers? Because you fill different positions inside the Gama'a. When I'm an individual in a family, I see the Ikhwan as an organization and as a method from one angle; when I am a leader of a family, I see it from a different angle. When I become a member of a Branch Council, a Branch Official, a member of a Regional Council, or the Students' Committee, or the Scouts, or the Sisters' Section, the place in which I work always affects the angle of my vision, and perhaps I can see [my part] better than anybody else.

We all see the Ikhwan from different angles; therefore it becomes the duty of every Brother to examine the work he practices and try to answer the question: how can we develop this state? That's number one, and because he's part of the Ikhwan as a whole, if he has advice, an opinion or a suggestion for developing the Ikhwan's work from any other angle he must also say it. For this reason I came to you today to clarify for you, so that you understand and realize the nature of the process of development. It is a large, wide, and continuous issue and departs from the philosophy or idea of executing the primary tasks of the Ikhwan's mission, the two missions which I've mentioned. It's a major issue; it's not on the level of treating some of the small problems, despite our keenness to solve these [small] problems.

*[Repetition...]*

The Family thinks, the Branch thinks and writes its particular suggestions on developing. Brothers and Sisters promote these suggestions on all administrative levels; it is required of them that they set aside part of their time and write us ideas and suggestions. Only so that we organize the process and keep it simple, we will submit to you a written questionnaire containing a group of questions specific to the development process and suggestions. The last question will be an open question, meaning that if we, for example, asked for your opinion on the development of the structure or the by-laws, you would write the part about the by-laws under the question specific to the by-laws, but in the last question we will ask you whether you have any other suggestions for development because it's probable that the questions don't cover all of the ideas you have. So you write all of these ideas, and we will take all of these opinions and suggestions.

This investigation or questionnaire will be sent to you by way of the administrative, regional, branch and family offices God willing, and they will be compiled. Even if this investigation was sent tomorrow or in one week or two and compiled, the door will

remain open for the ideas and opinions of any other person who wants to send a suggestion. We put up a web page to collect suggestions, and more than two or three thousand suggestions have now come to me by way of the internet, relevant to the development of the work. We've actually opened it up to Ikhwan and non-Ikhwan. To Ikhwan because, naturally, this is their Gama'a and they are the ones responsible for developing and improving it, and to non-Ikhwan because we also want to learn how others want to see it. What do they imagine us to be? What do they want? We may find someone with a useful suggestion.

All of these suggestions and data will be compiled in a number of steps and in a number of committees and units that will consider them inside the Gama'a until they are manifested in a program of development that has priorities, means of execution, and a timetable and then sent to the different units of the Gama'a in order to execute them in the coming stage.

Therefore, development on the level of suggestion is the responsibility of all of us, and then on the level of execution it is also the responsibility of all of us. It is not the responsibility of the Guidance Bureau, nor is it that of Engineer Khairat, nor that of one or two. Even the groups of committees that are working on the topic are only there to organize, classify and filter it in order to put in the form of a program to be presented to the institutions of the Gama'a to adopt it and then execute it. Therefore developing is the responsibility of all of us as Ikhwan.

So we want all of the suggestions you all raise through the existing survey or through any other method you see as appropriate after this, through the internet or otherwise. After this, development is not our responsibility only on the intellectual level, but on the level of execution as well, and I want every Brother and Sister from among you to take heed of a lesson regarding our responsibility in this field because, my brothers, we are in a major historical stage in Egypt after the revolution. Thus we must take advantage of this opportunity to develop our Gama'a and push it to the furthest level possible to contribute to Egypt's salvation, the success of her revolution, and the developing of her Nahda on the basis of Islamic Reference, so that this people and this Ummah may enjoy the life it deserves, and so that we succeed, God willing, in completing our mission related to realizing the objective of Muslim society and Islamic government, launching onto what comes after.

*[Break in video...]*

Also with this came great media misrepresentation, and there were also attempts to divide the Ikhwan's ranks and many other means that you all know of. Now, after the diminishing role of security attacks and oppressive procedures, another gulp of media distortion is expected, and you all noticed this to a great extent. So now many

of the so-called independent channels and newspapers are starting to exploit all situations to distort our image as Ikhwan, to distort the image of the entire Islamic Movement, and then the entire Islamic perspective on organizing matters of life. I don't believe that I need to give you evidence of this because you saw what happened with the constitutional amendments. Had we said "No" to the constitutional amendments, they would have attacked us as well, and you saw today that they are exploiting every word and stray opinion here or there and blowing it out of proportion to a great extent as well as distorting [our] statements.

My advice to the Brothers and Sisters first of all is not to be annoyed much by these campaigns because they are inflated and they are trying to misrepresent us to the greatest extent. So we can perhaps be annoyed to the extent that we try to confront them and counter their effects, but let's not be confused, perplexed or lose confidence in ourselves because this is a natural development; after they lost a number of oppressive means, they're now focusing to a great degree on media. So first our confidence in God Almighty, then in ourselves, doesn't shake. No ruse or confusion will work on us. The second issue is that we should not believe everything that is published in the media because they change words, and/or statements. They cut and paste so as to misrepresent the image of the Ikhwan and their statements. So let no Brother come to me asking why did someone say this or why did someone do that because in this you will be assuming the honesty of these media which are unfortunately in many cases dishonest in their campaigns to misrepresent us. So this is one point we need to pay attention to. Of course, as Ikhwan we are now preparing a media strategy and will gain some of the media outlets which will emerge, God willing, in the coming period. Also, your role is to try and clarify our image with the audience you're dealing with and [help] people understand the truth.

This, God willing, is possible because the biggest independent newspaper in Egypt distributes 400,000 copies. You all participate in society and can reach millions of people, not 400,000. Therefore our ability to influence and communicate directly is, God willing, important and effective, in addition to our media outlets which we will try to increase and multiply in the coming stage.

The second point is that, my brothers, we are in a major fundamental transformative stage, and in a nation or a Gama'a that goes through such transformative stages, there are always many approaches in dealing with the new stage. How do we deal with it? There is no problem that, within the body of an organization like the Muslim Brotherhood, there would be a plurality of visions. On the contrary, this is something natural and desirable; there should be many opinions. What's important is how we decide upon our differences. We decide through Shura and by adopting the majority opinion because our Shura is binding and not only informative. When

it happens that we agree on a subject and the majority ratifies it, most of those in the minority whose opinions were not taken commit to the opinion of the majority and life goes on. However, in the current transformative stages, an individual, or two, or five, or ten or twenty might emerge and insist that their vision, their choice and their method deals with the new reality. We try with them once, twice, three or four times as Ikhwan, as representatives for the majority, and if they comply, they're welcome. They're also welcome not to comply and may God reward them well, and we wish success for them and for us. This is because sometimes good deeds in the service of Islam, Muslims or the homeland are not all necessarily absolutely right or wrong. I might expect the relative advantages of one way to be seventy percent compared to that of a second way which might be fifty percent. Someone else might say the fifty percent is better and insist on working with it.

So I'm not saying that his way is one hundred percent wrong, and he also has no right to say that my way is one hundred percent wrong. I am trying, and I would like that all of us be together as Ikhwan; however if a person, or two, or three, or five want to take another path saying "I don't agree with the choice of the Gama'a," or "I don't agree with the method of this party, and I want to start a party" or "I want to take another method," or "I have a different opinion," we pray to God Almighty to grant him success without leading to any confusion in our camp. For, my brothers, in major transformative stages this is always a natural issue to emerge. You'll notice when the '52 revolution occurred, a group of Ikhwan followed their own line; a small number, not a large number. In all of the major stages this always happens, so no one is annoyed that x or y resigned, this one took a different line, that one wants to start a party, or that one wants to run in the presidential elections. Every human is free in his choice because a Gama'a is based on voluntary commitment. We chose this path; no one forced it upon us, and if our Lord Almighty said "no compulsion is there in religion,"<sup>39</sup> then definitely there is no compulsion in the Muslim Brotherhood's method. Therefore we deal with the issue in a natural spirit without anything that causes any agitation or confusion or annoyance. Thank God, five, six, ten or twenty; hundreds join the Gama'a daily, so there's no problem for us in numbers, even if we feel badly if any human being leaves us or walks away from us. What's important is that if he insists on walking away or taking a choice other than that taken by the majority in the Ikhwan, this does not confuse anyone or not influence you because the criterion for us is the majority and in what the majority of the Gama'a agrees upon; what we believe is the most right even if it is not absolutely right.

In the end of my talk, or the subject I talked about, I apologize for the long-windedness, but once again I reiterate my thanks and joy to meet you all. May God reward you well, and we ask that God Almighty provide for us all salvation to him alone, and

fear of him alone, and confidence in him alone, and delegation to him alone. May he grant us success in this world and the next and make you and us all among the builders of the Nahda of the Ummah on the basis of Islam. God is Great, and Praise be to God.

## NOTES

1. Recording of Al-Shater's full speech may be seen at:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JnSshs2qzrM>.
2. Ustath ("th" pronounced as in "the," or "z" in Egyptian slang) means mentor, master or simply teacher, as well as the formal way of address for men (Mr).
3. Ikhwani is the adjective form of Ikhwan (Brethren), commonly used to refer to Al-Ikhwan Al-Muslimun (The Muslim Brotherhood).
4. Ihsan is the third and highest degree of religiousness, superseding and combining the practice based degree of Islam and the faith-based degree of Iman (belief).
5. Pursuing Causes is an important concept in Islamic Creed whose primary function is to resolve the tension between God's Omnipotence and Causality, whereby a Muslim pursues causes but depends on God bringing about the result.
6. Ummah will always be transliterated, instead of being rendered as Nation. It could mean either the Egyptian Nation or the Muslim Ummah.
7. We have opted for the (Egyptian) transliteration Gama'a to avoid confusion with the various other organizations calling themselves Jama'a, primarily the Egyptian Jama'a Islamiyya. The definite Al-Jama'a can mean both society and the society (as in the Society of the Muslim Brotherhood).
8. There is usually no distinction between Islamic and Islamist in Arabic. Islamists usually prefer Islamic since they believe Islamism is synonymous with Islam.
9. Nahda is usually translated as Renaissance, which gives it more of a Western flavor than it actually carries. The term Nahda has come to signify "flourishing" or "prosperity," and it is obviously the title of Ustath El-Shater's project.
10. Da'wah is a very common concept, generically meaning the preaching and proselytizing of Islam. Here it denotes exclusively Hasan Al-Banna's teachings.
11. Empowerment is the closest translation of the key term Tamkeen, which means, basically, upholding Islam by means of political, perhaps military, power. Naturally, the Jurisprudence of Tamkeen is a major issue for all Islamists.
12. Subjugation is the English equivalent of the Arabic Ta'beed (to make a slave). The concept, however, does not necessarily involve the use of force; it rather means the theological "liberation of people from slavery to men, to the freedom of slavery to the god of Men."
13. Ustathiya is derived from Ustath (See note 2). The term Ustathiya, here used to indicate a status of "eminence among nations" is rarely applied in Hassan El-Banna's own work. It appears only

- once, in this sense, in his posthumously collected “tracts,” widely used as an instructive text for Muslim Brotherhood recruits.
14. We use [Repetition...] in places where the speaker repeats his previous arguments with more or less the same wording.
  15. Imam is used here in its original sense meaning Political Leader.
  16. The addressing form, “ya ikhwanna” (lit. our brothers) is very common in Egyptian slang and usually means “folks,” but because of the significance of the term in this context, we decided to render it as “my brothers.”
  17. Shar’i is the adjective from Shari’a.
  18. The term Ulama is now common enough in English not to be rendered as (Islamic) Scholars.
  19. Shura means counsel; it is a key term in the literature of and about Islamism. The basic question is whether Shura is compatible with or substitutable by democracy.
  20. Groups, Families, Branches and Regions are the traditional local units of the Muslim Brotherhood Organization.
  21. This is more of a literal translation of the Arabic Ta’reef, Takween and Tanfeeth (“th” pronounced as in “the,” or “z” in Egyptian slang) put forth by Hassan El-Banna in his most influential tract Al-Ta’aleem or The Teachings. There the actual meaning is closer to Information (of the public), recruitment (and organization) and implementation (or activism).
  22. Ghazwah is the Arabic term for a (holy) battle, the use of which is generally confined to the battles which took place during the prophet’s lifetime. And Ghazwat Mo’tah was the first Moslem campaign against the Roman (Byzantine) Armies.
  23. Takfir is attributing Kufr (apostasy) to a Muslim person, community or government on the basis of their actions. The overwhelming majority of scholars hold Kufr to be punishable by death in the case of individuals, but there is little consensus as to whether it is applicable to groups and, if yes, what the proper response to such groups should be. Jihadism emerged as a faction which embraces the possibility of applying Takfir to groups, and considers the fighting of such groups to be justifiable if not desirable Jihad.
  24. Sultan here could mean either “power” or the head of state.
  25. Bid’a is perhaps the single most important concept in Salafist Islam, meaning innovation in matters of religion, i.e. practicing rituals or promoting doctrines which were not upheld by the prophet and his companions (the Salaf, or ancestors). Salafists preachers often begin their sermons with the Hadith: “Every novelty is innovation, every innovation is heresy, and every heresy is in hell.”
  26. Saifuddin Qutuz (d. 1260) was a Mamluk Sultan of Egypt. He led the Egyptian army to defeat the invading Mongols at Ain Jalut; thereby practically putting an end to the Mongol conquests. Qutuz enjoys a legendary status in contemporary Islamist, Pan-Arabist and Egyptian-Nationalist narratives, second only to that of Saladin.
  27. Quran (42:38), A. J. Arberry translation.
  28. Ijtihad is the practice of issuing Fatwas (responsa) or any other form of ruling without conforming to an already established school of jurisprudence, but within the limitations of Quran and Sunnah. Ijtihad is opposed to both Taqleed (imitation) and Ibtida’ (innovation or establishing bid’as, see note 25). Etymologically, however, the term means “exertion of effort” or “diligence,” and in many cases the term carries both meanings.

29. Mujtahid is the scholar who applies Ijtihad.
30. Just Despot is a very common concept that was formulated by Muhammad Abduh as a local variation of Enlightened Absolutism.
31. Umar El-Tilmisani (d. 1986) was the third General Guide of the Muslim Brotherhood; famous for the deal or “understanding” he had with President Sadat concerning the return of the Muslim Brotherhood to social activism, especially in universities to counter the influence of Nasserist and Communist students.
32. Mustafa Mashhur (d. 2002) was the fifth General Guide of the Muslim Brotherhood.
33. Ahmed El-Malt (d. 1995) was Deputy General Guide of the Muslim Brotherhood under Umar El-Tilmisani, Mohammed Hamed Abul Nasr and Mustafa Mashhur. He participated in the 1948 Palestine War as a volunteer doctor.
34. Hosni Abdel-Baqi (d. 1990) was a member of the Muslim Brotherhood Guidance Bureau since 1948. He won a seat for the MB in the first open parliamentary elections in 1984.
35. Abbass As-Sissi (d. 2004) was a member of the Guidance Bureau of the Muslim Brotherhood who enjoyed a great reputation in Alexandria as one of the MB’s most famous preachers.
36. Mahmoud Shukri (d. 2010) was head of the Muslim Brotherhood Administrative Office in Alexandria, and one of the founders of Dar El-Dawah, the MB’s largest publishing house.
37. Mohammed Hussein Issa is a Muslim Brotherhood leading preacher in Alexandria.
38. The Salsabil Case was the first case of mass arrest for Muslim Brotherhood members since the sixties. Salsabil was the name of a Computer Software company founded by Khairat El-Shater himself, along with his longtime partner Hassan Malek, that was allegedly working on a MB plan to take over government in Egypt. The case was a government failure on both legal and publicity fronts, but El-Shater spent a year in prison.
39. Quran (2:256) A. J. Arberry Translation.