



# PROJECT on Middle East Democracy

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## Our Vision

Since the attacks of September 11, 2001, there has been a growing recognition that democratic reform in the Middle East should be viewed not merely as a development objective, but also as a strategic priority. However, despite the Bush administration's dramatic rhetorical shift towards a "forward strategy of freedom," U.S. policies in the Middle East have changed only marginally over the past seven years. Much worse, by linking military-led regime change to democracy, the administration has undermined support for "democracy promotion" in the Middle East and the U.S. alike.

Today, the challenge of encouraging better governance in the Middle East remains as pressing as ever. And yet, U.S. credibility for supporting democratic development has been seriously undermined, and the foreign policy community has become divided on the subject. There is a compelling need to rigorously examine America's actual and potential impact on political reform in the region; to foster constructive dialogue among academics and activists, policymakers and practitioners, Americans and Middle Easterners; to identify clearly the parameters of legitimate, constructive democracy support in the Middle East; and to empower the coalition of actors supporting policies consistent with those principles.

## Our Programs

The Project on Middle East Democracy was created to meet these needs. Through Research, Dialogue, and Advocacy programs, we work to strengthen the broad coalition of actors and organizations who advocate U.S. policies that consistently and peacefully support democratic development in the Middle East.

- ✓ **Research:** We provide accurate, thorough research by writing country and issue background papers and budget analyses; publishing our "Weekly Wire," which highlights U.S. legislation and policy toward political reform in the Middle East; and supporting innovative research on key issues.  
(For more information, contact Shadi Hamid at shadi.hamid@pomed.org)
- ✓ **Dialogue:** We foster dialogue between and among Americans and Middle Easterners by organizing young leaders conferences in the region on political reform and U.S. policy, and conducting panel discussions in Washington bringing together experts on reform in the region.  
(For more information, contact David DeBartolo at debartolo@pomed.org)
- ✓ **Advocacy:** We support a consistent and credible pro-democracy foreign policy toward the Middle East by organizing informational briefings and events for members of Congress and their staff; discussing the consequences of legislation with lawmakers; working together with our allies to highlight key issues; and empowering advocates of consistent, peaceful U.S. support for democracy in the Middle East.  
(For more information, contact Stephen McInerney at stephen.mcinerney@pomed.org)

### RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In the first half of 2008, POMED has:

- Held **conferences** in Cairo, Amman and Rabat bringing together young American and Middle Eastern leaders to discuss political reform and jointly develop policy recommendations.
- Launched a **monthly briefing series** for congressional staff, "Rethinking Democracy Promotion," on peaceful policy tools by which the U.S. can support progress toward democracy.
- Released **major publications** analyzing American and Middle Eastern views of U.S. democracy promotion efforts and examining the president's annual budget request as it relates to democracy and governance in the Middle East.
- Held 5 **public events** for the Washington policymaking community to discuss U.S. policy and Middle East reform.