DEBAT

Dominique Moisï, conseiller spécial, Ifri

There is food for thought there. Let me start with the observation made by Hubert Védrine in his presentation. What is the meaning of better governance in the Middle East? Sixty years ago, Egypt was on the eve of a revolution, but in a much better state than South Korea, which was coming out of a war, and the last 60 years have seen an extremely different transformation of Asia on the one hand and of the Middle East on the other. There was a miracle in Asia, and there was, to say the least, no miracle in the Middle East. Why is this so?

It is, to a large extent, a question of governance, and not only of the international context and not only of other considerations. The Arab Spring, whatever that means, was based on the frustration of some significant segment of the population towards, not necessarily the non-existence of democracy, but the absence of the rule of law, and the betrayal of what are called human rights policies. Therefore, this is a question which has to be addressed somewhere. When you rightly denounced the radicalisation, the fanaticism, of Daesh, Faesh, there is also what is called state terror. It was said yesterday by the Prince that the majority of the 200,000 people that died in Syria had been killed by their own regime. I will not enter into figures, but this is part of the reality of the region which we must face.

Therefore, I would say that better governance in the Middle East means the same thing as better governance in Asia or better governance in Africa. I am not calling for the imposition of Western democratic models onto the region, but I am calling for the simple existence of what people describe as the rule of law, because I believe it is very important.

Secondly, because I want to challenge Sergei, I might agree fully with your vision that the last thing we should do is to interfere in the region, but I am not sure Russia has applied that policy to itself. I see great involvement of Russia in the region for a very long period of time. Are you speaking as an intellectual denouncing your country as well as the rest? That is fine, because you are an independent speaker, because it seems to me that it should be applied to your country as well as to the others.

When it comes to Meir, I feel terribly close to what you say. However, while I think you are very representative of the society, you are not necessarily representative of the political body, and if you are, you have to prove, by making an alliance of the moderates, that you can make a difference. Unfortunately, the moderates in power did not necessarily make a difference in the past. You could repeat that formula that the Palestinians never miss an opportunity to miss an opportunity, but I think the reality, to use Miguel's words, is more complex than that.

Therefore, we have a lot of questions to raise if we want to be true to ourselves and to the audience.

Sergei Karaganov, président honoraire du Présidium du conseil en charge de la politique extérieure et de défense de Russie

I applied it fully to my country, the former Soviet Union. Russia is less involved now, but if we get involved, I will condemn it, of course. Here I would disagree with you a little, Dominique, when you said it was a question of governance, whereas I would say it is a question of culture. It is much deeper than governance. The fantastic Muslim Arab civilisation is living through a difficult period. European civilisation lived through a difficult period from the sixth to the 11th or 12th centuries before producing fantastic results. Now we have the same thing happening to Arab Muslim civilisation, and if we interfere it would not help; it would only deteriorate things, because that would create, and is creating, hatred for our side of the world and an excuse for themselves not to do things. I must say that the more aloof we are the better it is for the people, because, of course, it would not take six centuries like in Europe to recuperate this time, I hope.

Meir Sheetrit, membre de la Knesset ; ancien ministre responsible des services de renseignements d'Israël

I would like to answer your question. Firstly, we have been very close to agreement in the past, which is why I said it was a missed opportunity. When Olmert was Prime Minister I was a member of his cabinet, and he signed an agreement with Abu Mazen in his home, and Abu Mazen asked for a few days more on an agreement which he accepted, and which suggested almost everything it was possible to suggest - 95% of the West Bank, something like a 4% swap, all of the Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem - and he refused.

Therefore, we have a problem as Israelis, because usually when there is a clash between rational people and people who do not think rationally, you always speak to the rational people, not to the irrational ones. Nobody is trying to speak to Daesh today, and as a matter of fact I am sorry to say that I do not understand the world. Daesh is a group of perhaps 15,000 to 17,000 people, and the world was not really serious about taking care of it. Syria did not touch them at all, and in one or a few attacks they killed all their sources of revenue, taking oil from Syria and selling 50% to different countries. It is crazy to leave such an organisation as a threat to put fear in people's hearts. They are not that big, but the world is very hesitant to interfere.

Yes, you should interfere. There are places where you cannot stand aside and say you are doing nothing. I think the world should interfere. Thierry de Montbrial said yesterday that he wanted some provocative questions to be asked, so I have one. I think we should break the ice. We have peace with Egypt, and, thank God, we have had that peace since 1979, and no soldiers were killed on either side on the borders. We have peace with Jordan, and we live with them very nicely. I expect and I wish that we can make peace with Saudi Arabia, because if it were to sign a peace with Israel it would be a huge sign that they could be a big ally behind us who could call together all the Arab states and move the process forward. Nobody has any doubt that the solution would be establishing a Palestinian state side-by-side with Israel.

Yesterday, Prince Turki said, and I believe he was right with all my heart, that with the Jewish mind and Arab money we can change the world. It is true. When you think about the fact that today in the Middle East weapons sales amount to something like USD 200 billion every year, think what we could do with that money to benefit people in terms of food, health, housing in different places. Israel has a very good economy, we have a strong army, we are not afraid and would never ask anybody to fight for us, but we would like to live peacefully. 75% of the Israeli people, and 75% of the Palestinian people, support people and support two states, according to polls carried out in Israel, but the problem is not the people; the problem is leadership, and I am sorry to say that the leadership is still not making decisions.

What I am doing with my life is to push ahead this idea all the time, that there will be a government which will make a decision. I believe, with my friend Mr Moratinos, that it does not matter if you negotiate or not. Arafat used to say it all the time - I met with him many times, and he always used to say that if there is a will there is a way. Suppose Abu Mazen said in the UN that he wanted the 1967 borders with a swap and a capital in East Jerusalem, and suppose Netanyahu stood up and said he accepted, and wanted to discuss the borders. Who cares? Do you really think that any Palestinian cares where the border will pass, or whether any Israeli really cares where the border will pass? We would like to be boring states, with no news, nothing. You are right that everybody is tired of us; even we are tired of ourselves, Jews and Palestinians. We would really like to live in peace.

Every family in Israel, I am sorry to say, lost a child in wars since Israel was established, and we would really like to live like everybody else in the world, without worrying what is going to happen tomorrow. Today we are always living in stress, while we have, among other things, Iran. We cannot allow a situation where Iran has a nuclear weapon, and the Americans should not allow it, not because of Israel; if they allow it, it will totally change the Middle East. Iran is a danger to the world, and if Iran has a nuclear weapon and tries to manoeuvre the whole world, it will not be long before you find a nuclear weapon in the hands of terrorists. Think about it. Otherwise, nobody can explain why Iran is developing missiles for 3,000 kilometres, covering all of Europe. What is it for? Israel does not need 3,000 kilometres.

Therefore, we have to take care of it, and the world cannot stand aside and say nothing is happening when Ahmadinejad said in the UN that we should wipe Israel off the map. That is crazy, so we have to take it seriously; people say not to take it seriously, but we are taking it seriously. We cannot ignore it. We have to protect our existence and we will not give it up. We will never give up., because I believe and hope that there will be a diplomatic solution. Diplomats say that war is a failure of diplomatic efforts, and I believe in a diplomatic solution, and wish there would be a diplomatic solution.

Dominique Moisï, conseiller spécial, Ifri

I think we understood that.

Meir Sheetrit, membre de la Knesset ; ancien ministre responsible des services de renseignements d'Israël

We cannot really accept it.

Dominique Moisï, conseiller spécial, Ifri

I will give the floor, out of democracy, to Miguel and to Hubert.

Miguel Angel Moratinos, ancien ministre des Affaires étrangères d'Espagne

Regarding non-interference, I understand your point. However, how can we accept that, when hundreds of thousands of civilians are killed, we do not intervene? We have the UN, and lately there have not been too many good things from the UN, but one positive resolution was "the Responsibility to Protect", so sometimes we have to interfere. Yes, you have to interfere if you want people to survive, and you have to interfere because there are parties asking you to interfere to make peace in the Middle East between Palestinians and Israelis. We would have had a long discussion in the past about bad interference that produced bad results, and nobody wants that, but there could be good interference.

Secondly, on the two state solution and Iran, if fully agree with the Prince and with you in asking why this Arab Peace Initiative has not been implemented. The best guarantee for the future of Israel is to have full diplomatic relations with the whole Arab world; it is much better than American support and guarantees, I can assure you, so the only thing you have to do is to find a solution with the Palestinians, in your way, and we as the international community will have to accompany your final discussions. We know everything by heart. I know what you told me about Olmert, and I support your position, because I know how the negotiations went, so what it needs is to negotiate this final political decision, and it can be done. Then you will have a much better reaction: instead of fighting terror alone, instead of fighting the coalition alone, you will all fight together, and that will protect the future of the two-state solution in the region.

Dominique Moisï, conseiller spécial, Ifri

Au fond, j'ai prolongé ta question sur la meilleure gouvernance. Tu es d'accord ou pas avec le fait que la meilleure gouvernance doit s'appliquer de la même manière dans toutes les parties du monde, parce que les mêmes choses sont demandées par les citoyens où qu'ils vivent de manière fondamentale ?

Hubert Védrine, ancien ministre des Affaires étrangères français

Quand j'ai parlé de meilleure gouvernance dans l'exposé - d'abord c'est le thème général du forum, de la conférence - j'en parlais d'une façon régionale. C'est l'espérance utopique de voir un jour les différentes puissances du Moyen-Orient s'accorder sur une gestion plus rationnelle et raisonnable des différences, et des désaccords. C'est une utopie. Toi tu en as parlé sur le plan interne. Et là je suis d'accord : tous les peuples du monde aspirent à être mieux gouvernés, de façon plus honnête, souhaitent que leurs droits soient respectés. Mais je ne pense pas pour autant que tous les peuples du monde veuillent copier la démocratie occidentale. D'abord parce qu'elle ne marche plus très bien, elle est fatiguée. On le voit à différents signes : le niveau d'abstention, la permanence de la contestation au nom de la démocratie directe et, aux Etats-Unis, l'envahissement de la démocratie par l'argent qui est devenu une véritable pathologie. Donc je répète que tous les peuples, partout dans le monde, y compris dans le monde arabe, aspirent à ça mais ils ne veulent pas que ce soit fait par le biais de l'ingérence. Je pense que l'ingérence occidentale est au bout du rouleau. On peut soutenir, on peut encourager, on peut saluer la démocratisation mais on ne peut pas se substituer aux mouvements internes des peuples. Quand on revient aux questions dont on a parlé, notamment le Proche-Orient, il est évident qu'on n'aboutira jamais s'il n'y a pas une coalition positive pour aider les Israéliens à sortir du piège. On voit bien d'ailleurs que beaucoup de grandes figures, de grands écrivains, de grands intellectuels israéliens disent « aidez-nous », « aidez-nous à sortir du piège ». Et un des éléments de piège, je l'ai mentionné tout à l'heure, entre autres, c'est le système électoral israélien. C'est impossible en Israël - même s'il y a un camp de la paix virtuel, qui est à la fois courageux, majoritaire, mais qui n'est pas organisé politiquement, qui n'a pas de parti, qui n'a pas de leader - pour un gouvernement quel qu'il soit de prendre des décisions courageuses parce qu'il a toujours besoin du soutien de petits partis nationalistes ou religieux extrémistes. Donc ça ne peut être qu'une coalition des amis d'Israël, à commencer par les Etats-Unis, qui aiderait les Israéliens qui le souhaitent à sortir du piège du statu-quo. Après un accord il faudrait gérer une sorte de chaos palestinien qui durerait un certain temps. J'ai trouvé très bien que des Parlements en Europe adoptent le texte sur la Palestine même si on sait très bien que cela n'a pas de conséquences pratiques. J'ai trouvé très bien que la France propose une conférence. Mais il faut un processus de préparation. Faudra t'il parler de la conférence avec le futur gouvernement israélien, qui peut être encore plus fermé que celui-là ? Cela paraît perdu. Sauf si en Israël, on parle aux gens, à l'opinion. Je pense qu'il y a des ressorts qui n'ont pas été assez exploités jusqu'à maintenant. Il y a beaucoup de personnalités en Israël qui veulent aller dans ce sens. Il y a énormément de gens dans le monde musulman, arabe et musulman, qui veulent combattre l'extrémisme et le terrorisme, qui veulent combattre l'interprétation folle de l'Islam. Donc ce sont des forces énormes qui se lèvent et qui sont des leviers qu'il ne faut pas négliger. Il ne faut pas qu'on raisonne uniquement en termes de gouvernements.

Dominique Moisï, conseiller spécial, Ifri

Yes. However, the negative forces have a passionate will to destroy whatever process can occur, whereas the peaceful and moderate forces are, for the moment, divided and hesitant. Peace will come as a sacrifice for both parts and that sacrifice must appear as justified because the alternative is clearly suicidal or you have some confidence in the fact that the sacrifice that you make will be followed by substantial and long term reward. For the moment, the key has not been found to unlock this difficult and tangled negative process.

I will now open up the debate.

Riad Tabet, président de Berit International Holding SA

J'ai une petite observation, un commentaire, et deux questions qui ne sont pas provocantes. L'observation est qu'on a dit, et je crois, que les conflits et les guerres au nom de Dieu ne se terminent jamais parce que Dieu n'est pas là pour trancher. C'est la première observation Mes questions sont les suivantes. À M. Meir : que pensez-vous du projet d'un État juif comme condition pour accepter deux États en Palestine et en Israël ? C'est ma première question. Deuxième question à M. Al-Assad : vous êtes président de l'Organisation pour la liberté, où était la liberté avant 2011 en Syrie ? Merci.

Vuk Jeremic, ancien président de l'Assemblée générale de l'ONU ; ancien ministre des Affaires étrangères de Serbie

The discussion on the Middle East was fascinating and this was also touched on yesterday and in some of the other panels. However, the one place that simply has not been mentioned is a place that is very close to the part of the world where I come from which is the Balkans and Southern Europe and that place is Libya. Libya is hardly in good shape and there is an element of responsibility when it comes to the international community as to what led to the situation that we have at the moment there, with vast repercussions for the stability of the wider African region and the greater Middle East.

There is very little interest in the face of faesh and the more imminent threats and challenges. We talked about a number of things that we might try. The Israeli Palestinian issue was one and whether there would be a deal or not with Iran. That would be transformational for better or for worse. However, this place is in clear need of assistance and support. As I have said, there is an element of external responsibility for the situation that we have at the moment and there was an acquiescence on behalf of those who did not intervene directly, and here I am referring to Russia. We are therefore all responsible as a family of nations for the situation there. Is there anything that can be done and where could the leadership come from this time, and not from behind but from the front?

Meir Sheetrit, membre de la Knesset ; ancien ministre responsible des services de renseignements d'Israël

I think that what I said in the panel was that I support this with all my heart, and I am not the only one. People ask what it is that we can do that we have not done and I am going to say something here that is perhaps provocative. The time may now have arrived where the United States, to be involved in resolving the situation, should force an agreement on both sides. It may be that the two sides cannot negotiate and come to an agreement, so perhaps the United States could develop its own plan, bring it forward and force Israel and the Palestinians to accept it. This could be a good excuse for the Israelis and the Palestinians to say that they have no choice.

However, I believe that they could at least do something more constructive. They could call all the Arab League countries to Washington, with the Palestinians and the Israelis, and put them together at Camp David, or wherever it might be, until they came to a conclusion. That would change the world. Again, I think that the only way that this can be done is through the Arab initiative.

You might then ask why no one has picked this up before. I am discovering this. I have spent hours with every Prime Minister since 2002 trying to convince them to go in this direction and call Riyadh and say that they accept the initiative as a basis and that there should be talks. I am sorry to say that I have failed in this. I have been to see every Prime Minister since 2002 and I know them personally and have been a minister in some of their Governments. I have had a good relationship with all of them, including Mr Netanyahu, and I have tried to put forward every element to explain why. I have failed, and I ask myself why I have failed. Why can they not see what I can see?

My answer to that is that, in my opinion, the Israeli administration and Israeli Prime Ministers would like first of all to satisfy the American administration and they therefore prefer going in their direction and having bilateral negotiations moderated by the US. That is a big mistake. As I said before, the Americans will not solve the problem through negotiation. That is not the way. However, they might be able to do it by forcing things through.

In 1956, when Israel, with France and the UK, occupied the whole of Sinai, the President of the United States ordered Israel and Prime Minister Ben Gurion to get out. In a few days' time, Israel was out of Sinai. As my friend said earlier, perhaps because of the political situation in Israel, as long as we do not have a Centre Left Government, we will not be able to overcome the political difficulties there and make a decision, even if there is a Prime Minister who agrees to move in that direction. The time might therefore come when things need to be forced and an agreement is put forward on a bona fide basis, with the Americans trying to take both sides' concerns into consideration, setting out the way that

things should go. With the agreement of Russia, China and Europe, this could be put before the world and we should tell those guys that they are drunk and that they have to go to sleep.

Ribal Al-Assad, président, Fondation Iman

I did not really understand the question [about democracy in Syria]. We all know that there was no democracy or freedom in Syria and that is why the people of Syria rose up against the Government. We all understood that their demands at the beginning were for freedom and genuine democracy and not to exchange a dictatorship for a theocracy. Unfortunately, a lot of people in the region did not want there to be genuine democracy in Syria as that would threaten their own countries, and have sent groups who certainly do not want to see any democracy in the Middle East, and certainly not in Syria.

Personally, my family and I have suffered a lot from the regime, and I can imagine how the wider Syrian people have also suffered. However, that does not mean that we have to react with grudges. You cannot build democracy and freedom based on grudges. We need to build forces. Countries such as Syria and Lebanon – as you are from Lebanon – are a beautiful mosaic of peoples and the only way of protecting that beautiful mosaic is to have genuine democracy.

Mr Védrine said earlier that it may not be possible to replicate European democracies in the Middle East. That might be the case, but there needs to be a process and that process needs to start somewhere. This is something that has to be transitional – nobody says that it will arrive tomorrow. It needs to be transitional and peaceful and it will certainly not be built over the bodies of the 200,000 people who have died. By the way, those 200,000 died because the regime was responsible but not because the regime killed them. 80,000 people were killed by the Islamists, rebels and others and they are part of the security forces and the military. It is not just black and white here.

Dominique Moisï, conseiller spécial, Ifri

Did you say 18,000?

Ribal Al-Assad, président, Fondation Iman

Minorities have also suffered a lot, and what about those minorities who also want democracy? Does anyone believe that minorities in Syria do not want democracy? Does anyone believe that Christians, Alawites, Jews, Shias or Kurds do not want genuine democracy in Syria? Of course they do. However, as His Royal Highness said yesterday, there are videos on YouTube and other social media outlets and people could see what is going on. They see that people are killing Christians, Alawites and other minorities just for belonging to a certain sect or religion. They are killing Kurds and anyone who does not share their perverted ideology. That is the big problem.

I always say the same thing. If two children are fighting, you cannot leave them in a room and say 'Resolve your issues and I will come back in a hour and see how things are going' because they will kill each other. It is the same thing here. People in the Middle East are not ready. They have no experience. It took Europe and the West hundreds of years to get the democracy it has today and it will take the Middle East a lot longer. However, the West has been there and has also experienced sectarian wars. We therefore know how to help people in the Middle East so that they do not have to go down that road. We need to help them through education and we need to invest in education because on the other side there are states that are investing in Islamic extremism and spending a lot of money.

What are we doing to counter that? There are billions of dollars on satellite TV stations, internet websites, social media and other places. Just a month ago, Minister Khoja, the Information Minister of Saudi Arabia, issued a decree to close down a satellite TV station that is based in Saudi Arabia and incites hatred, killing and violence against minorities.

Unfortunately, he was sacked the next day and the TV station was re opened. This again shows that there is also a problem in Saudi Arabia. As His Royal Highness knows well, there is a real friendship between him and the King and we trust in the King. However, when we talk about the Kingdom, Saudi Arabia is not just one current. There are different currents in Saudi Arabia, as in many other countries, and some want to go forward, some want to fight extremism and some want to put the ISIS, the al Nusra Front and the Muslim Brotherhood on the list of terrorists. On the other hand, there is a very strong current that is stopping this. That is why we need to come together.

We talk about 'we' and I was raised in the West in France and have studied in the US and the UK and have been living abroad since I was nine years old. I therefore consider myself to be a citizen of the world and not just a Syrian. We have to come together to help the people, and we owe that to them because they look up to us. When they went into the streets and asked for democracy and freedom they were looking up to us and looking towards the West and the lives that we have. That was the example. When can only do this if we come together and leave our differences aside in terms of China and Russia and the problems that they have with the US and Europe. We have to put our differences aside because we all share a common enemy. There was Fascism and Nazism at one time. Today, we have Islamism, and if we do not come together to defeat it, it will threaten each one of our countries.

After four years, all the foreign fighters who are going to Syria are becoming the greatest threat to Europe's national security. However, there are also conflicting reports. The Europeans say that there are 3,000 Western fighters who have gone to Syria; Eric Holder from the US said there are 7,000. There is a big gap between these two figures. 7,000 fighters is a very dangerous notion. Those people go there and are trained and Islamicised and they then come back to Europe. What are we going to do about them? How can we stop them? First of all, they should not have been allowed to go there, but how can we now stop these extremists going? You then read other reports that say that the number of foreign extremists, rather than just Western fighters, is 15,000 in general. How could there be 7,000 from the West and another 8,000 from other Islamic countries? That does not make sense. The number must be 10 times higher, because of the lack of education, poverty and so on. If there are 7,000 from the West, there will certainly be 70,000 from other countries.

Miguel Angel Moratinos, ancien ministre des Affaires étrangères d'Espagne

Libya is proof of what Dominique Moïsi said at the beginning, [inaudible] of the Middle East. Libya could become a new Afghanistan and is the perfect explanation of my intellectual and political debate on good interference and a lack of involvement. Unfortunately, there has been a lot of bad interference in Libya, with no post conflict follow up after the decision to change the regime there. I was in Tunisia recently where the Prime Minister told me clearly that what they need is, first of all, no interference through the sending of arms and weaponry to either side and involvement in order to promote dialogue between the two sides. We either take this seriously and have the involvement of the UN and my compatriot, Bernardino León, and others who are trying to help or we Europeans – and all the region – will have a new Afghanistan in front of us. This should therefore be taken extremely serious.

Yusuf Ziya Irbec, député, République de Turquie

Minister Védrine, Minister Sheetrit and Mr Al Assad all talked about Turkey and I would like to underline a number of points. First of all, we have the common responsibility to reverse the type of extremism, sectarianism, terrorism and so on and the saying of our prophet is peace. We have to spread peace. In this case, we need to avoid the misuse of religion, especially in the Middle East, with Daesh and the other groups.

As regard Turkey's policy towards Daesh, Turkey shares 1,295 kilometres of border with Syria and Iraq and this is not easy. Any threat emanating from this geography has serious adverse effects on Turkey. After the crisis started in Syria, Daesh then added more fuel to the fire. That is one point.

My other point is the Kobani case. We have been fighting against the terrorist organisation, the PKK, since 1984. The PKK is recognised internationally as a terrorist organisation and it is not logical to expect Turkey to make a 180

degrees change to its policy. That would be very difficult to do. On the other hand, we have more than 2 million refugees in Turkey – the official figure is 1,500,000. Up to now, the amount spent on these refugees has been USD 5 billion. This is a big problem.

Air operations against Daesh should therefore continue, but that is not enough. Air strikes alone cannot eradicate extremism and there is a need for a more holistic and comprehensive strategy that addresses the root causes of this problem. As part of the international coalition against Daesh, Turkey has been continually emphasising that success is the desired for result. Turkey wishes for success in that direction. However, Daesh has been effective thanks to the air support that it receives from different parts and this is a big problem.

As regards the free zone dispute, Syria does not support this, but Turkey is not supported by the better understanding of the terror organisation and the problem is quite complicated. We therefore need to sit down and negotiate further.

Philippe Chalmin, professeur, université Paris-Dauphine

Juste une question. Il y a un sujet que vous n'avez absolument pas abordé et qui pourtant me semble être au cœur, non pas du problème israélo-palestinien, mais du problème de l'ensemble du Moyen-Orient : le pétrole. Peut-être que, s'il y a mauvaise gouvernance, cela est largement lié à l'argent du pétrole. Je voudrais quand même avoir votre réaction face à ce qui est en train de se passer. Quelles vont être, à votre sens, les conséquences du contre-choc pétrolier - largement instrumentalisé me semble-t-il par l'Arabie Saoudite avec la bénédiction, je l'imagine, des États-Unis - sur un certain nombre de pays ?

Karim El Aynaoui, directeur général de l'OCP Policy Center

From the perspective of Morocco, what is happening in the region has serious consequences, one of which, and I would like to hear the panel's comment on this, is that the attraction of political Islam that we had, and let us take the Turkish model here, which was very strong within the region is no longer so attractive. This has changed in a roller coaster fashion. If we take 2010 and then four years later, there has been a complete change and a kind of normalisation of Turkey in terms of projecting an attractive model for political Islam or for Muslim countries. I would like to have your opinion on this. It is basically good news from my point of view, although it is not necessarily good news for everyone.

Dominique Moisï, conseiller spécial, Ifri

I am afraid that we will have to end now, but I will make two quick comments, moving away from my role as moderator. On the issue of Turkey, the comment from Morocco is very interesting. I have been amongst those in Europe advocating as early as the 1980s for the entrance of Turkey into the European Union. You cannot, therefore, blame me for this. However, I do not recognise the Turkey that I was supporting 30 years ago and you have then to ask yourself why those who were so in favour of Turkey have growing doubts about the cause that they supported.

On the issue of oil, we just have to look at the latest front page of The Economist – Sheikhs vs Shale – and the answer that is provided is not the one that you are suggesting. There is tension between Saudi Arabia and the United States on this issue and an element of objective rivalry that pushes the price of oil down, which is then not necessarily good news for Russia or Venezuela among other countries.

We have to end at that point. I would like to thank everyone for this very lively debate. I am not sure that we have moved much closer to the cause of global peace in the Middle East but I hope that we are not further away.