



## MONA MAKRAM EBEID

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### Jim HOAGLAND

Our next speaker I think is well-known to many of us here, Mona Makram-Ebeid, senator in Egypt and a person who is known for saying what she thinks.

### Mona MAKRAM-EBEID

I am delighted to be here today to share some thoughts on where we find ourselves in Egypt, six years after the first revolution 2011, and just four years after the second one in 2013.

On the eve of the January 2011 revolution, the political scene had few ideological stances for mobilization aside from the Muslim Brothers, which helps to explain the inability of many non-Islamic groups, who call themselves liberals or leftists including the youth, to organize effectively, with the result that the hierarchies within the present regime have evolved in a way that prioritizes the military and the security establishments.

The corollary to the growing influence of the security establishment has been the neutralizing of civilian politics. Civil society is under relentless pressure and its activities have been severely curtailed.

Today rethinking is taking place among substantial fears, both among regime supporters and a broad cross-section of the population, focusing on the rising threat of radicalization of certain Islamic groups particularly in the Sinai and their brutal attacks against Christians, anti-state violence and terrorism, fears that have gripped the political calculation of the regime, but also the non-Islamist opposition and much of the general public. As a result, non-Islamists have come to see the military and the institutions of the state as the primary defense against Islamic ambitions to remake the state and redefine Egyptian identity.

Although this alliance of civilians with the army against the brotherhood will postpone full democracy and civilian control for some years, it may well be the fastest possible path towards sustainable democracy if certain requirements are met, such as a more comprehensive set of economic and political reforms.

Coming to the end of his third year in office, Sisi is still in a strong political position. He is likely to finish his first four-year term and might be in a position to win a second term until 2022.