

# On the role of the Muslim Brotherhood in today's Egypt

Friday 25 February 2011, by [NAGUIB Sameh](#), [OMAR Mostafa](#) (Date first published: 23 February 2011).

**We are reproducing here extracts concerning the role of the Muslim Brotherhood taken from a much longer interview. To read the full interview: [Conversation with an Egyptian socialist](#).**

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[...]

## **WHAT WAS the role of Revolutionary Socialists and other left forces in mobilizing for the January 25<sup>th</sup> protest?**

WE AND the rest of the left, along with April 6<sup>th</sup> Youth Movement, played a key role in mobilizing for January 25. The Muslim Brotherhood didn't support the call for protests that day because as usual, they don't like to support actions which they don't control. So the left played a leading role.

[...]

## **WHAT IS the role of the Muslim Brotherhood, the largest political opposition group in the country?**

THE MUSLIM Brotherhood leadership did not endorse the call for the January 25<sup>th</sup> demonstration. They usually don't support actions that they don't initiate and control. But as it became clear after the first day that a revolution was underway, they decided to participate.

They played an important role in Tahrir and elsewhere, especially on the day, February 2, when the government sent its thugs on horses and with Molotov cocktails to attack the demonstrators.

It wasn't necessarily their numbers that made a difference—they don't have more than 15 or 20 percent political support on the street, and only one out of the 13 martyrs that day was a member of the Brotherhood. Rather, it was their level of organization that helped. They act in a highly disciplined manner, and that helped in defending the square.

They now intend to announce the formation of a new political party. Some want it formed on a civilian and non-religious basis. Others from the conservative old guard will oppose that. In other words, we expect to see divisions in their ranks.

We have seen the formation of a more liberal group, Etilaf Shabab Althawra, the Coalition of the Youth of the Revolution, which formulated a number of political demands and negotiated with the army last Monday.

This formation includes a number of activists who participated in the revolution. But they represent a middle-class liberal wing that would like to limit the revolution to a political revolution for democratic reforms, without questioning or challenging the basic capitalist system. These liberals see their role as advising and pressuring the army to replace this or that corrupt person with this or that honest technocrat.

Many of these liberals are now opposed to workers' strikes. They say workers are selfish. Some are launching an attack on strikers on Facebook. As I said, they simply want political reforms. They oppose class struggle.

Of course, we support and demand democratic reforms. But we fight for a radical democracy where the interests of workers are front and center. But we as Revolutionary Socialists do not want to stop at a political revolution. We are organizing for a social revolution led by Egyptian workers.

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