



Briefings



Amr Moussa in London: Only Extremists want a Clash of Civilizations

Amr Moussa, secretary general of the league of Arab States, speaking at Chatham House on Tuesday warned that the West should not attempt to defeat Islam in the same manner as it was able to defeat communism. He added that there is a vast difference between Islam as a religion and the failed manmade ideology of communism. The clash of civilizations, he explained, only exists in the mind of extremists on both sides, who must be marginalized by societies. Moderates, he added, do not believe in the inescapability of this clash. According to him, the solution requires to stop provocative actions by all sides and to resolve the political and security issues in the region. Considering the Palestinian problem as the main issue, he said that in order to secure an impartial resolution to the problem, we need an impartial broker. Moussa added that the Annapolis meeting lacked substance and represented a photo taking opportunity; he lamented that “not a single paper came out of the meeting, not even a draft.” He also reminded President Bush that his promise to see the birth of a Palestinian State during 2008 is slipping away.

Source: <http://www.asharqalawsat.com/details.asp?section=4&article=467119&issueno=10732> 4/16/2008



Qaradawi creates controversy: Miniscule percentages of alcohol allowed in Drinks

An unexpected new Fatwa by sheikh Al-Qaradawi allowing drinks with miniscule percentages of alcohol to be consumed generated a wide debate in the papers and on internet. The article reporting the Fatwa was the most read on Al-Arabiya that day. The cleric explained that a certain amount of natural and non-induced fermentation does not constitute a forbidden drink. His critics considered the pronouncement as an authorization to consume alcoholic beverages as some pointed to the fact that there is no stipulation in the Quran or the Sunnah determining what would constitute an allowed percentage. While some acknowledged that a minimal amount of alcohol will not induce intoxication, they indicated that even natural fermentation, with time, increases the contained percentages. In response, Al-Qaradawi stated that his fatwa came in response to a question regarding the slight percentages of alcohol which exist in “energy drinks” and which he did not consider a problem. Sheikh Al-Ansary from Qatar who supported Al-Qaradawi added that people have been depending to a large extent on obtaining a fatwa in order to escape responsibility, rather than letting their conscience be their guide.

Source: <http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2008/04/11/48148.html> - 4/11/2008



Jail Sentences for 25 Members of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood

In a secret session, an Egyptian military Court sentenced 25 members of the Muslim Brotherhood leadership to jail. In a trial that lasted more than a year, sentences ranging between 3 and 10 years were handed down. 15 other members were found not guilty and released. Most of those sentenced were accused of terrorism and money laundering. In a first reaction, the leader of the MB Muhammad Habib declared that the sentences were purely political in nature. Family members, lawyers and the media were physically kept at large and prevented from attending the sentencing.

Source: <http://www.asharqalawsat.com/details.asp?section=1&issueno=10732&article=467166> 4/16/2008

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