

The Political Transformation of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan: From Social Movement to Parliamentary Opposition Force

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Abstract

The Muslim Brotherhood is one of the modern Islamic movements that has had a significant influence on political and social dynamics in the Middle East. Founded in 1928 in Egypt, the organization developed in response to Western colonialism and the disintegration of the Islamic world after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. The spread of Islamic reform ideas and the da'wah activities of the Muslim Brotherhood reached Transjordan, where it was officially established in 1945. In its early stages, the organization focused on da'wah, education, and social services, which gave it strong legitimacy among the Jordanian people. The transformation towards political involvement began to strengthen after their success in the 1989 elections, followed by the establishment of the Islamic Action Front (IAF) in 1992 as its official political representation. This study analyzes the dynamics of the development of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan during the period 1989–2013 and examines the impact of government policy after the 2024 elections on the organization's position. This study shows that the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan is an example of the adaptation of Islamic movements to democratic political mechanisms as well as a response to the state's ever-changing regulations.

Keywords: Islamic Movement; Muslim Brotherhood; Jordan

Introduction

Amidst the dynamics of contemporary Muslim activism in various parts of the world, the Muslim Brotherhood has emerged as one of the most influential missionary organizations in the Middle East, especially Egypt. This organization has demonstrated its ability to capture various social aspirations around it so that its orientation and da'wah strategies are always closely related to the needs and conditions of the community. The Muslim Brotherhood was founded in the city of Ismailiyah, located in northeastern Egypt, precisely on the western edge of the Suez Canal, in March 1928 by Sheikh Hasan Ahmad Abd ar-Rahman al-Bana or Hasan al-Bana.¹

The Muslim Brotherhood movement emerged as a response to Western colonialism and the collapse of the Ottoman Empire after World War I. Since the end of World War I, Britain occupied Muslim territories while France occupied the coastal regions of Syria, Lebanon, and most of Galilee due to the Sykes-Picot Agreement. The Sykes-Picot Agreement was a secret agreement between Britain and France in 1916, approved by Russia, which divided the former Ottoman Turkish territories into two spheres of influence.² The purpose of establishing the Muslim Brotherhood was to revive Islamic values in all aspects of life, such as social, political, economic, and cultural, through education and preaching, and to reunite the Islamic world that had been divided by imperialism.³ From 1930 to the 1940s, the Muslim Brotherhood grew rapidly in Egypt, establishing branches in other Middle

¹ Ali Abdul Halim Mahmud, *Ikhwanul Muslimin Konsep Gerakan Terpadu* (Gema Insani Press, 1997), p. 23.

² David Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace: The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East* (Holt Paperbacks, 2001), p. 232–38.

³ Richard Paul Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers* (Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 8–9.

Eastern countries.⁴

The movement spread to various regions in the Middle East, including Jordan. The Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan is one of the most important branches of the Muslim Brotherhood movement network originating in Egypt. Its emergence cannot be separated from the socio-political dynamics of the Middle East in the first half of the 20th century, when ideas of Islamic renewal, resistance to colonialism, and the need for Muslim solidarity developed widely. These ideas reached Transjordan through da'wah (proselytizing), education, and the activities of intellectuals and scholars who interacted with centers of Islamic thought in Egypt. It was in this context that the Muslim Brotherhood began to gain acceptance in Jordan. The Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan was officially formed on November 9, 1945, by Abdel Latif Abou Qura from the city of Salt when the region was still under the rule of the Emirate of Transjordan. The legality of this organization was later reinforced by a decree signed by the Prime Minister.⁵

In its early days, the organization was involved in preaching, education, and social activities. This pattern of activity gave the Muslim Brotherhood legitimacy as an institution that played a role in improving public morality, providing community services, and strengthening social solidarity.⁶ The transformation of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan from a religious and social movement to a political one is one of the important dynamics in the history of contemporary Middle Eastern politics. The Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan provides an example of the compatibility of

⁴ Brynjar Lia, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers in Egypt: The Rise of an Islamic Mass Movement 1928-1942* (Ithaca Press, 1998), p. 99–105.

⁵ Joas Wagemakers, *The Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan* (Cambridge University Press, 2020), p. 19.

⁶ Mahfud Alizar, "Pembaharuan Pemikiran Islam Di Timur Tengah: Kontribusi Hassan Al-Banna Dan Pengaruhnya Terhadap Kemerdekaan Negara-Negara Muslim," *AL-WIHDAH Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 2024, p. 46.

Islam with democratic principles and political stability.

The political involvement of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan peaked in 1992 with the establishment of the Islamic Action Front (IAF) as a political forum, following the government's legalization of the formation of political parties. The formation of the Islamic Action Front (IAF) marked the political role of the Muslim Brotherhood and positioned it as a major opposition force active in public policy discourse. Their success in the 1989 elections established the organization as a moderate political actor. At the same time, this success demonstrated the capacity of the Islamic movement to operate within the framework of Jordan's parliamentary democracy and adapt to procedural and constitutional political mechanisms.

Based on the introduction above, in order to understand the issues being studied in depth and in a focused manner, it is necessary to identify the main issue that will be the focus of the first study: what has been the dynamic development of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan from 1989 to 2013? How did the Jordanian government's policies after the 2024 elections impact the Muslim Brotherhood organization? So far, there has been no literature that discusses the Muslim Brotherhood movement in Jordan in depth. There have been several studies, such as those conducted by Sabir Rosidin (2020)⁷ examining the thoughts and socio-political movements of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) as an Islamic missionary organization that had a major influence on the Islamic revival in Egypt and the Islamic world in the 20th century. A study written by Hidayat HT (2019)⁸ discusses the concept and important

⁷ Sabir Rosidin, "Ikhwanul Muslimin: Pemikiran Dan Pergerakan Sosial-Politik Islam Abad 20 Di," *Prosiding Konferensi Ilmiah Mahasiswa Unissula (KIMU)* 3, 2020.

⁸ Hidayat Ht, "Peranan Usroh Dalam Gerakan Ikhwanul Muslimin," *Yönetim* 2, no. 1 (2019).

role of usroh as a strategic part of the structure of the Muslim Brotherhood (IM) movement. The Muslim Brotherhood, founded by Hasan Al-Banna in Egypt in 1928, is known as an Islamic movement that aims to fully implement Islamic law in personal and socio-political life. The success and resilience of this movement is inseparable from its internal coaching system through the smallest unit called usrah. In the context of the IM movement, usrah is a small cell consisting of five to ten members, led by a naqib. Usrah is the main vehicle in the process of tarbiyah (education), jama'i (collective), and ijtima'i (social). This concept is based on the values of ukhuwah islamiyah (Islamic brotherhood) with three main pillars: ta'aruf (getting to know each other), tafahum (understanding each other), and takāful (bearing each other's burdens). This study aims to identify research gaps and explain the understanding of the dynamics of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan.

Method

The selection of Jordan as the research location was based on the country's strategic position as one of the strongest and oldest bases of the Ikhwan movement in the Middle East, as well as the only branch that, since its establishment in 1945, had obtained formal legality from the state until its official dissolution in 2020. The data used in this study is qualitative, meaning that it is not presented in numerical form, but rather in the form of narratives, images, audio recordings, or photographs. The analysis process was carried out based on two types of sources, namely primary and secondary sources.⁹ The primary sources in this study are books that specifically discuss the Muslim Brotherhood. Meanwhile, secondary sources include writings related to the Muslim Brotherhood found in certain sections of books, articles in print

⁹ Kuntowijoyo, *Pengantar Ilmu Sejarah* (Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana, 2013), p.73.

media, and information from websites. This research is a type of library research, which is a research method that collects data and information from various library sources, such as books, journals, articles, and other documents to support the research.¹⁰ Basically, every form of research utilizes library sources. Literature studies refer to types of research whose data sources are obtained predominantly, or even entirely, from library materials such as books, scientific articles, official documents, research reports, newspapers, and the like. Therefore, the quality of this type of research is highly dependent on the quality of the written sources used. The more valid and authentic the documents used as references, the stronger the data produced. Similarly, the use of up-to-date references will increase the relevance and accuracy of the research results.¹¹

Result and Discussion

The Dynamics of the Muslim Brotherhood from 1989 to 2013

The Kingdom of Jordan granted permission for the establishment of the Muslim Brotherhood, and in 1953 the organization's status was changed to a "charitable society" without severing ties with the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. In other words, from the outset, the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan operated legally under the state, and its formation took place in a turbulent socio-political context.¹² In 1948, there was a Palestinian exodus, causing many Palestinian refugees to enter Jordan and strengthen the social base of the Muslim Brotherhood. Before

¹⁰ Muhammad Rijal Fadli, "Memahami desain metode penelitian kualitatif," *Humanika, Kajian Ilmiah Mata Kuliah Umum* 21, no. 1 (2021): p. 35.

¹¹ Miza Nina Adlini dkk., "Metode Penelitian Kualitatif Studi Pustaka," *Edumaspul: Jurnal Pendidikan* 6, no. 1 (2022): p. 975.

¹² David Siddhartha Patel, *The Communal Fracturing of the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood* (Timur Tengah, 2013), 4.

1948, this movement had actually been growing since the late 1920s in the Palestinian territories and then spread to Transjordan.¹³ The Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan was officially recognized as a foundation by the Cabinet. The headquarters was officially opened by King Abdullah bin Husain. The former Muraqib Am, Ustadz Muhammad Abdur-Rahman Khalifah, made it possible for the Jordanian cabinet to issue a decree in 1953. The Muslim Brotherhood is considered a general and comprehensive Islamic institution, and is neither a political party nor a social foundation. This was after the drafting of the new Articles of Association of the Muslim Brotherhood.¹⁴

The journey of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan from 1989 to 2013 shows important dynamics in the relationship between Islamic movements and the state. Shifts in strategy, political restrictions imposed by the government, and the influence of regional turmoil made this period one of the most decisive phases in Jordan's political development. From the outset, the Muslim Brotherhood had been present as a missionary and social movement, but the political momentum of 1989 brought them more decisively into the formal political arena. Significant changes began with Jordan's political liberalization in 1989. The economic crisis and social tensions forced the government to reopen a more inclusive electoral process. In these elections, the Muslim Brotherhood emerged as a dominant political actor, gaining widespread support from the public and occupying strategic positions in parliament.¹⁵ This success reflects the strength of the social network and moral legitimacy that the Muslim Brotherhood has built over several decades. Since then, the Muslim

¹³ Lefevre, *Islamism and Globalisation in Jordan: The Muslim Brotherhood's Quest for Hegemony*, p. 27.

¹⁴ Wagemakers, *The Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan*, p. 21.

¹⁵ Beverley Milton dkk., *Jordan: warisan Hashemite* (Routledge, 2009), p. 45–47.

Brotherhood has been seen as a moderate opposition force capable of working within the framework of Jordan's parliamentary democracy.

The Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan was active in politics and was strengthened through the formation of the Islamic Action Front (IAF) in 1992 as the official political wing of the Muslim Brotherhood. The establishment of the Islamic Action Front (IAF) was a form of institutionalization of more established and legal political involvement, while also making the Muslim Brotherhood the largest formal opposition in Jordan. The Islamic Action Front (IAF) played a role in articulating public issues such as anti-corruption, electoral reform, and economic distribution, making it one of the parties that most consistently promoted political transparency. The initial wave of democratization encountered obstacles in 1993 when the Jordanian government changed the electoral system to Single Non-Transferable Vote (SNTV) or the "one person, one vote" system. This policy proved to reduce the dominance of the Muslim Brotherhood by weakening their capacity to win collective votes. The new system benefited independent and tribal candidates, thereby reducing the political representation of the Islamic Action Front (IAF) in parliament. Since then, the relationship between the Muslim Brotherhood and the state has entered a phase of fluctuation between compromise and tension.¹⁶

In the early 2000s, the political situation became increasingly complex. Global security issues and rising suspicion of Islamic movements after the September 11 attacks prompted the government to tighten political regulations. The Muslim

¹⁶ Rayeq Saleem Eid Albrizat, "The Perception of Jordanian Political Parties Toward Iraqi Refugees and Political Stability in Jordan" (fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, 2013), p. 15-20.

Brotherhood tried to respond by strengthening its moderate identity and emphasizing its role in national stability, but internal fragmentation between conservative and reformist groups caused the organization to experience considerable internal pressure. The most decisive dynamics occurred during the Arab Spring period from 2011 to 2013.¹⁷ The wave of public demonstrations that swept across the Middle East inspired protests in Jordan, involving various groups including HIRAK youth activists, the Islamic Action Front (IAF), and the Muslim Brotherhood. Initial protests demanded economic reform due to high unemployment, elite corruption, and inflation, but later developed into demands for political reform. The Muslim Brotherhood emerged as the main actor directing criticism of the electoral system and executive dominance.

Jordan did not experience a revolution like Tunisia or Egypt, but the level of mass mobilization was quite significant. More than 6,000 demonstrations took place between 2011 and 2014, and more than 800 labor actions occurred in the first two years of the Arab Spring. The Islamic Action Front (IAF), as the political representative of the Muslim Brotherhood, played a central role in the major protests, especially those demanding changes to the electoral law, which was considered to favor the tribes of the East Bank. Responding to this pressure, King Abdullah II took strategic steps by implementing a series of political reforms. He dissolved the cabinet, appointed a new prime minister, amended the constitution, formed a Constitutional Court, and revised the electoral law. These policies effectively reduced the escalation of protests, enabling Jordan to avoid the fall of the regime as happened in several other Arab countries. However, for

¹⁷ Martin Beck dan Simone Huser, "Jordan and the 'Arab Spring': No Challenge, No Change?," *Middle East Critique*, advance online publication, 2015, p. 85.

the Muslim Brotherhood, these reforms did not fully address their demands. Dissatisfaction with the electoral law led the Muslim Brotherhood or Islamic Action Front (IAF) to boycott the 2013 elections, marking the peak of tension between the Islamic movement and the state.¹⁸

At this stage, internal fragmentation within the Muslim Brotherhood became increasingly apparent and gradually eroded the organization's cohesion, marking the end of a long period of dynamism that lasted from 1989 to 2013. In general, this period demonstrated the Muslim Brotherhood's ability to read and take advantage of emerging political opportunities, even though at the same time they had to deal with various forms of structural restrictions imposed by the state. The relationship between the Muslim Brotherhood and the government during this phase showed a fluctuating pattern, moving between phases of openness and phases of tightening, which were greatly influenced by changes in domestic policy and the broader regional political constellation.¹⁹ The entire journey confirms that the position of political Islam in Jordan has always been in a state of continuous negotiation between the idealism of the movement and the calculations of state power.

The year 2013 marked a historic turning point that signaled the most fundamental change in the journey of the Muslim Brotherhood in the Middle East. The fall of Mohamed Morsi's government in Egypt through a military coup not only ended the Muslim Brotherhood's first political experiment in leading a country, but also shook the entire network of this movement in the Arab world. Since then, the Muslim Brotherhood has entered a

¹⁸ Jillian Schwedler, "Jordan: The Quiescent Opposition," <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/jordan-thequiescent-opposition>, 2015.

¹⁹ Nur Koprulu, "Consolidated monarchies in the post-'Arab Spring' era: the case of Jordan," *Israel Affairs*, advance online publication, 2014, p. 319.

phase that is completely different from the movement that once symbolized political optimism after the Arab Spring, becoming an organization that faces delegitimization, fragmentation, and structural restrictions in almost all countries where it operates. It is in these turbulent conditions that the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan has undergone the most significant change in its history. The previously relatively stable relationship between the Brotherhood and the state entered a phase of legal and administrative restrictions.²⁰

Implementation of Jordanian Government Policy After the 2024 Elections Regarding the Muslim Brotherhood

The tension of the regime influenced the political strategy of the Muslim Brotherhood in 1997. The IAF boycotted the elections in protest against changes to the election law that they felt were detrimental to them. Similarly, after unsatisfactory results in 2007 (only 6 seats out of 22 candidates), the Islamic Action Front (IAF) boycotted the 2010 elections in order to demand substantial changes. It was only in the 2013 elections that the Islamic Action Front (IAF) fully participated again, after boycotting once more.²¹ The 2016 and 2020 elections marked a turning point, with the Islamic Action Front (IAF) regaining significant victories, winning 16 seats in 2016 and 10 seats in 2020.²² For the record, in the 2024 elections, the Islamic Action Front (IAF) achieved a new record with 31 seats out of 138. In general, the Brotherhood's seat gains in parliament since 1989 reflect political swings from dozens of seats initially, a sharp

²⁰ Nayera Mohamed Hamed Ibrahim, "The Determinants of Jordan's Stability Case Study: The Arab Spring (2011–2019) and the COVID-19 Pandemic," *Asian Journal of Comparative Politics* 7, no. 3 (2022): p. 638–39.

²¹ Nur Koprulu, "Jordan since the Uprisings: Between Change and Stability," *Middle East Policy* 21, no. 2 (2014): p. 123.

²² Yair Minzili, "The Jordania Regime Fight the War of Ideas," 2007.

decline due to boycotts or restrictions, and a resurgence in the last decade.²³

More than just a political party, the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan is known for its extensive charity and missionary networks. The organization runs various social institutions ranging from hospitals and religious schools to humanitarian organizations as part of its mission to spread Islam in a practical manner. It is through these institutions that they have gained support among urban and rural communities, especially among Palestinians. The Muslim Brotherhood also provides space for women in political and da'wah activities. For example, Hayat al-Museimi became the first female member of the Islamic Action Front (IAF) parliament (2003–2007), demonstrating the pioneering role of women in this movement. The establishment of this independent social body also gave the Brotherhood a deep mass base, which later became one of its strong political assets when it entered the general election arena.²⁴

The relationship between the Muslim Brotherhood and the Hashemite monarchy has fluctuated over time. During the reign of King Hussein, particularly from 1945 to 1989, the two sides were fairly cooperative as they both wanted to maintain the stability of the country. However, tensions began to rise in the late 1990s under King Abdullah II. The Jordan-Israel peace agreement (1994) sparked criticism from the Brotherhood and caused relations to heat up. The regime became increasingly concerned about the political potential of the Muslim Brotherhood and restrictions began to be imposed, such as limiting the Brotherhood's influence on campuses and in the media, and even pressuring party members

²³ Bar Shmuel, "The Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan," *The Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies*, 1998, p. 19.

²⁴ Minzili, "The Jordania Regime Fight the War of Ideas."

not to enter the public bureaucracy.²⁵

On January 14, 2011, Jordanians began staging protests in response to the national political situation and the influence of the wave of demonstrations sweeping across various Arab countries. This mass mobilization first appeared in cities such as Dhiban, Tafilah, Ma'an, and Al-Karak, before eventually shifting to the capital Amman. The demonstrators consciously avoided anti-regime rhetoric and did not cross the line of direct criticism of the monarchy. Nevertheless, their main demands focused on the need for political reform and economic improvement. The protest movement was diverse, involving Islamist groups, the traditional leftist opposition, military retirees, and the Hirak activist network.²⁶

In 2015, the Jordanian government intervened openly to cripple the Muslim Brotherhood. The regime of a rival Muslim Brotherhood group called the Muslim Brotherhood Society (MBS), whose supporters are former members of the Brotherhood who have been expelled, is considered by many observers to be aimed at dividing the Muslim Brotherhood organization. Even the Ministry of Land transferred seven properties belonging to the Brotherhood, worth millions of dollars, to the new organization, while the original Brotherhood was banned from holding public tarawih prayers during Ramadan 2015.²⁷ This action is considered to officially sever ties with the original Muslim Brotherhood and

²⁵ Shaul Mishal, *West Bank/East Bank: Palestinians in Jordan: 1947–1967* (Yale University Press, 1978).

²⁶ Ahmad Zainal Mustofa, “Arab Spring di Yordania 2011-2013 : Dari Demonstrasi Publik Menuju Reformasi Politik,” *SIYAR Journal* 4, no. 2 (2024): p. 105.

²⁷ Muhammad Turhan Yani, “Wacana Pemerintahan Demoktis dan Dinamika Politik di Negeri-negeri Timur Tengah: Saudi Arabia, Yordania, Mesir, Iran, dan Turki,” *ISLAMICA: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 1, no. 2 (2014): 124, <https://doi.org/10.15642/islamica.2007.1.2.121-134>.

weaken their structural base. Overall, the Jordanian regime uses legal and political intervention to undermine the Muslim Brotherhood movement, for example through the new 2022 election law, with the aim of dividing the Muslim Brotherhood's power and promoting pro-government factions.²⁸

After the 2015–2016 conflict, the Islamic Action Front (IAF) made a comeback in politics. In the 2016 and 2020 parliamentary elections, they won dozens of seats, signaling the rise of Islamists in Jordan. Support from young and urban voters boosted their results. Nevertheless, the regime continues to control the political space: for example, the 2022 Election Law gives large quotas to political parties, forcing new coalitions to compete with the Islamic Action Front (IAF). In addition, the government has implemented a strict internet surveillance law (Digital Surveillance Law 2023) that restricts the freedom of expression of opposition groups, including members of the Islamic Action Front (IAF).²⁹

From the outset, the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood faced internal tensions between hardliners and moderates. In 2015, hundreds of members, including long-time Brotherhood figures, resigned and formed a new political group (the Elders Group) with a secular orientation. Meanwhile, the faction loyal to the original ideology supported the formation of the Zamzam Party and several other constitutional initiatives backed by the monarchy. The government deliberately exploited this dispute, with the royal apparatus promoting Muslim Brotherhood representatives who were considered more compromising, and even encouraging

²⁸ Hana Jaber, "The Jordanian Muslim brotherhood movement: from pillar of monarchy to enemy of the state," *Fondation Pour La Recherche Et Str At Égrique*, 2017.

²⁹<https://www.frstrategie.org/en/programs/observatoire-du-monde-arabo-musulman-et-duasahel/jordanian-muslim-brotherhood-movement-pillar-monarchy-enemy-state-2017> (blog), 2017.

splinter parties to limit the influence of the Islamic Action Front (IAF).³⁰ This fragmentation makes it difficult for the Muslim Brotherhood to act as a single political bloc. According to monitoring agencies, the government has intervened in the Muslim Brotherhood's internal conflict by granting permission and symbolic support to certain factions. As a result, by the 2020s, the Muslim Brotherhood was split into at least two parent organizations (Muslim Brotherhood groups) that still claimed authenticity to the movement, and new groups (Zamzam, Society, Elders Group) that were considered unauthorized to use the name Muslim Brotherhood. In 2023, the situation became even more tense as the Gaza-Israel conflict sparked mass solidarity in Jordan.³¹

In the Jordanian parliamentary elections on September 10, 2024, the Islamic Action Front (IAF) political wing of the Muslim Brotherhood won 31 seats out of 138 seats in the House of Representatives. This result makes the IAF the largest opposition bloc with three times more parliamentary representation than in the previous period. Electoral reforms (the 2022 Election Law) establishing a dual voting system (41 party list seats, 97 district seats) also enabled the IAF to win 17 seats from the national list and 14 district seats. Around 10 new parties managed to enter parliament, but secular (left-nationalist) political forces remain weak due to the high electoral threshold. Official results show that the Islamic Action Front (IAF) won 31 seats (the most of any party) in the Jordanian House of Representatives after the 2024 elections.³² The driving factors behind the Muslim Brotherhood's victory were public dissatisfaction with economic conditions and

³⁰Fahd dan Kelangsungan Monarkhi Timur Tengah, [http:// www. Pikiran Rakyat.com/cetak/2005/ 0805/02/0107.htm](http://www.PikiranRakyat.com/cetak/2005/0805/02/0107.htm).

³¹*Ibid.*

³² Aljazeera, "Jordan's Islamist Opposition Party Tops Parliamentary," *Astana International Forum*, 2024.

corruption. There was also popular solidarity with the Palestinian struggle, as the conflict in Gaza intensified. Changes to electoral law gave political parties more space to operate.³³

After the elections, the Islamic Action Front (IAF) sought to use its new position to push its domestic and regional political agenda. The Islamic Action Front (IAF) emphasized the need for a strong opposition voice to reverse unpopular economic policies and reject further normalization with Israel (including the cancellation of gas and security agreements).³⁴ The future of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan faces great uncertainty. With the official dissolution announced, the direction of the Brotherhood's movement will depend on subsequent political developments and their adaptation strategy. If the regime chooses to continue its crackdown (for example, dissolving the Islamic Action Front (IAF) and dissolving parliament), there are concerns that this group will go underground. Analysts warn that the total marginalization of the Brotherhood could actually trigger the emergence of militant networks, as has happened in other countries where it has been banned. Conversely, if the Islamic Action Front (IAF) is allowed to continue to exist, albeit with restrictions, it will likely continue to serve as a vehicle for Islamist political aspirations (albeit within a highly supervised framework). The government itself has so far been reluctant to dissolve the Islamic Action Front (IAF) in order to avoid public anger, but vigilance remains high.³⁵

On the other hand, the Jordanian monarchy will likely continue to balance national security and the need for political

³³ Aljazeera, "Jordan's Islamist Opposition Party Tops Parliamentary."

³⁴ Salah Abdel Haq, "About The Recent Arrests In Jordan," *Muslim Brotherhood*, 2025.

³⁵ Ahmad Sharawi, "Pro-Hamas Islamists Win The Most Seats in Jordania Election," *FDD*, 2024.

reform. As observers have pointed out, a long-term strategy for national security must include political reforms that create new spaces for civil participation. It is in this context that the fate of the Muslim Brotherhood will be decided by the regime, either by opening dialogue and utilizing the Muslim Brotherhood's organizational experience to adapt to popular demands, or by relying on harsh repression as it does now. The fact is that after the 2024 elections, the Brotherhood still holds control of 31 legitimate seats in the House of Representatives, so the total dissolution of the Islamic Action Front would be highly controversial politically.³⁶

In 2025, Jordan's political dynamics showed significant changes regarding the position and survival of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB). Following the 2024 legislative elections, pressure on the organization intensified, particularly because the Islamic Action Front (IAF) party, which had served as the official political representative of the Muslim Brotherhood, won nearly a quarter of all parliamentary seats. This vote not only reflects the consolidation of the Islamic Action Front's (IAF) electoral power but also illustrates growing public sympathy for regional issues, particularly the escalation of tension and violence in Gaza³⁷ which is one of the factors mobilizing support for this group.

Despite facing increasing domestic pressure, the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan has maintained its ideological and political position, especially on the issue of Palestine. The organization has consistently asserted that solidarity with the Palestinian struggle is not merely a political stance, but a moral and religious obligation inherent to the identity of Muslims.³⁸ This narrative plays a major

³⁶ Sharawi, "Pro-Hamas Islamists Win The Most Seats in Jordania Election."

³⁷ Haq, "About The Recent Arrests In Jordan."

³⁸ Aljazeera, "Jordan Outlaws Muslim Brotherhood Group, Confiscates

role in strengthening the movement's legitimacy in the eyes of its supporters and explains why the Muslim Brotherhood's social base remains stable despite increasing pressure from the state. The situation reached a critical point on April 23, 2025, when the Jordanian government officially announced a total ban on all Muslim Brotherhood activities. Through this decision, the government declared the organization an illegal entity, followed by the confiscation of all assets, offices, and facilities related to the Muslim Brotherhood structure. Interior Minister Mazin al-Farrayeh emphasized that the dissemination or promotion of the Muslim Brotherhood ideology is now categorized as a violation of the law that is subject to legal action and sanctions. This decision marks a dramatic change in the historical relationship between the state and the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan. After nearly eight decades of operating officially since 1945 with widespread influence in the fields of politics, social services, education, and religious mobilization, the Muslim Brotherhood has now entered a new phase marked by state delegitimization and comprehensive restrictions.³⁹ This development has opened up an important discourse on the transformation of state and religious relations in Jordan, as well as the future of the political Islam movement in the region.

Conclusion

The dynamics of the Muslim Brotherhood, both in Egypt as the parent organization and in Jordan as one of its most important branches, show that the modern Islamic movement cannot be separated from the socio-political context that surrounds it. The Muslim Brotherhood was born as a reaction to Western

Assets,” *Astana International Forum*, 2025.

³⁹ Aljazeera, “Jordan Outlaws Muslim Brotherhood Group, Confiscates Assets.”

colonialism and the destruction of Islamic political institutions in the early 20th century, then developed as a da'wah and social movement that responded to the moral, educational, and solidarity needs of society. In Jordan, historical factors such as the Palestinian exodus, royal policies, and cross-regional intellectual interactions gave the Brotherhood a strong social base and formal legitimacy that other branches in the Middle East did not have. Thus, the formation and expansion of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan was not only a process of spreading religious ideas, but also the result of regional political dynamics and the needs of a society seeking a vehicle for moderate Islamic representation.

The period from 1989 to 2013 was the most decisive phase for the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan, when the political liberalization of 1989 opened opportunities for the movement to enter the formal political arena through significant electoral victories. However, these opportunities were soon met with systematic restrictions from the state, including changes to the electoral system, increased security surveillance after 2001, and internal fragmentation that weakened the organization's solidarity. The 2011 Arab Spring became a crucial turning point when the Muslim Brotherhood acted as the main opposition demanding political reform, but the state's response of limited reforms did not fully accommodate their wishes. Tensions escalated to a peak with the 2013 election boycott and the emergence of new internal factions, marking the end of the political stability once enjoyed by the Muslim Brotherhood.

This journey demonstrates that the position of political Islam in Jordan has always been a negotiation between the movement's idealism and the regime's control strategies. After the 2024 elections, political changes in Jordan showed two contrasting trends: on the one hand, the Islamic Action Front (IAF) won its biggest victory in history with 31 seats in parliament, but on the

other hand, the government increasingly restricted the movement of Islamic movements. This culminated in 2025 when the government officially banned all Muslim Brotherhood activities and confiscated all their assets, marking the end of the historic partnership between the Hashemite regime and the Muslim Brotherhood that had existed since 1945. This policy cannot be separated from the state's concerns about the political influence of the Brotherhood, the regional security situation, and the dynamics of the Gaza conflict that triggered public mobilization. With this move, the future of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan has entered a phase of uncertainty. They have the potential to adapt through strictly monitored political channels or be pushed towards informal opposition if the pressure continues. This overall dynamic confirms that the relationship between the state and Islamic movements in Jordan is an arena of ongoing contestation between political power, social legitimacy, and regime stability.

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