

Panel: Leadership and the Legacies of the Arab Spring (Grand Ballroom)

Date/Time: April 26, 2012 / 14:30 – 15:45

Organizing Institution: The Asan Institute for Policy Studies

Talking Points for: Diederik Vandewalle
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In thinking about the relationship between leadership and the Arab Spring, it becomes clear that there exists a distinction between countries where there was a "state tradition" (Tunisia and Egypt) with those where there was no state to speak of (Libya). What does this difference suggest for the possibility of real leadership emerging in each set of "non-state" versus "state tradition" countries in the Middle East? While obviously unique in their own right, the movements in Tunisia and Egypt at least had some semblance of "political tradition" and history to move their interests forward. In contrast, in Libya the leadership is emerging ex nihilo, with no history of being involved in politics, and bearing the heavy scars of a lack of institutions under Qadhafi. Thus, for Libya, the prospects for effective, successful leadership in the short term are likely to remain uncertain.

* The views expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of the Asan Institute for Policy Studies.
