

MB criticizes Egypt regime at opposition conference

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Essam el-Erian

Top leader of Muslim Brotherhood

A top leader of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood Essam el-Erian said yesterday that Egypt needs better government, leadership, elites, and opposition than those that exist now.

He described the political landscape as "barren" and "dry."

The Brotherhood leader was addressing a conference organized by the 6 April Youth Movement, an opposition coalition.

The conference, titled "This is Cairo Not Gabon," was scheduled to coincide with the general congress of the ruling National Democratic Party.

In the past the Muslim Brotherhood, which is the largest and best organized opposition group in Egypt, has been excluded from opposition coalitions, such Kefaya and other protest movements. According to some analysts, this contributes to the political vacuum in Egypt.

In a speech that touched on the health sector and government policies addressing endemics, el-Erian, who is also the treasurer of the Physicians Syndicate, said the swine flu virus exposes the flawed, deteriorated and confused performance of the government. El-Erian said the government's poor performance led to a state of panic among citizens.

El-Erian also discussed the state of the Physicians Syndicate, which has been banned from holding elections for 17 years. During this period there have been three judicial rulings in favor of the Syndicate.

Elections have still not been held even though a third of the members of Syndicate's board are dead and most of the current members are in jail, el-Erian said.

The political system, el-Erian said, is only concerned with maintaining its power. Stagnation over the last 30 years has led to crushed hopes among the youth who wish for a better future for the country.

Meanwhile, Karima el-Hefnawi, an activist with the Kefaya movement, said that the confluence of power and money led to "sabotaging" the country and the collapse of the state at economic, social and political levels.

El-Hefnawi said this is because the government is composed of businessmen who were born with "a golden spoon in their mouths." El-Hefnawi illustrated her point, saying that these businessmen now decide the fates of ten person families who live in a single room surrounded by sewage.

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