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I would like to thank the IWP organizers for putting the subject of "Islam and We" forward for discussion. I beg you to bear with me for my terrible pronunciation of English.

We can say that the concept of "Jihad" is a defining concept of the relationship between Islam and the West. This word has recently entered the dictionaries of many major languages in the world, particularly the English language, after the eleventh of September incident.

Defining the concept of Jihad in Islam (which means struggle) will define its relationship with the West. Such a definition will make each side take a clear position in relation to the other in the future, whether they are conducting a dialogue or launching a bloody conflict.

In my presentation, I will address first the concept of Jihad in Islam, and second, the relationship between Islam and the West which will result from this definition.

Serious consequences have resulted from the different definitions of Jihad, either in the West, or on the part of Moslems. According to the definition Moslems have adopted, Moslems themselves have been divided into two different parties.

While the fundamentalists have adopted a hostile definition of Jihad, moderate Moslems have adopted a different definition.

Islamic fundamentalists claim that God requested all Moslem believers to declare war against non-Moslems, since they are pagans and do not believe in the message of Mohamed. Thus, their ideology has been built upon the concept of fighting pagans—whoever they are—and pursuing them to their countries. In order to win supporters among young men who will join their terrorist organizations to carry out terrorist attacks, they built their claim on two basic factors, namely: the fanatic interpretation of the word "Jihad," demanding that the believers adhere to the Law of God as mentioned in the Quran, and the many mistakes made by the West against the Arab and Islamic countries.

Now let me move on to talk about the second factor, which is the mistakes committed by the West against the Arabs and Moslems in general.

The Palestinian question is the most important cause for Moslems in modern times. This has resulted from the complete and unconditional support of the U.S.A. and the West in general for Israel in its occupation of Palestine, and in turning a blind eye to her building settlements, fragmenting and dividing the Palestinian territories, then isolating the Palestinians and humiliating them at the many road blocks, crossings and the buffer wall. All these things have instigated anger in the Arab and Islamic world, as well a feeling of oppression and humiliation. The fanatics and terrorists have taken advantage of this feeling of humiliation and oppression and recruited young Moslems to carry out terrorist acts. They found that those who were humiliated and killed in Palestine were civilians, therefore they reason there is no harm in killing civilians in America and the European countries.

Thus, both concepts have come together, namely the fanatics' concept of Jihad and the feeling of anger against the West because of its complete and unconditional support of Israel and its robbery of the rights of the Palestinians.

Addressing the first factor is the task of moderate Moslems, while addressing the second one is the task of the West, that is, "We."

How can the moderates interpret the concept of Jihad to confront the fundamentalists?

Islam emphasizes, in particular, the Jihad or the struggle of the individual (that is to say, the individual has to refrain from doing bad and from committing sins that contravene God's tenets, which are the same tenets in all other religions, such as the Ten Commandments). It also approves of war against the other nations, but only in the case of defending themselves when their religion and nations are in danger.

In this instance the aim of Jihad is to enable the individual to obtain a sound and proper life. Jihad is imposed on all believers, when their religion (or their territories) is vulnerable to an external aggression or attack with the purpose of destroying Islam.

With this definition, the subject and ideology have differed. This moderate interpretation requests Moslems hold a dialogue and reach understanding with the West. That is to say, Islam should be (and it is actually like this since moderate Moslems are the vast majority) a religion of dialogue and peace, and not a religion that produces terrorists, as some think.

I would like to give another shape or concept to the topic. It is well known that in all nations, there are left and right, liberals and conservatives, and there are also moderates and fundamentalists. Look at Israel for example, which recently evacuated the settlements in the Gaza strip. We saw a fundamentalist Jewish minority, even terrorist fundamentalists who want to rob the others of their lands by using their interpretation of the Old Testament. They even called for the killing of Palestinians. At the same time, we can see in Israel a majority who wants to abandon the territories they had occupied in 1967 in order to live peacefully with their neighbors, the Palestinians.

Therefore, Islam is a society in which we can see the moderates (peace-loving) and the fanatics (the terrorists).

In the West, and particularly in the U.S.A., a terrible confusion of both concepts has been made.

While politicians and intellectuals in research centers must have looked at this topic in the way I have already described, they have often depicted Islam naively and in a very simplistic, superficial and hostile way. They depicted Islam as a religion of killing which is dangerous to Western Civilization, and which must be fought, and they have said that Israel has to carry on building its settlements at the expense of the poor Palestinians, just because they are Moslems and murderers.

Do you think I am exaggerating?

Well, here is a very clear example from American cultural life (I mean "We"). It is Samuel Huntington.

Huntington wrote his well-known premise entitled "The Clash of Civilizations" in 1993. It was published in the U.S.A. in one of the most important periodicals, (if my memory serves me well) *Foreign Affairs*. What is the main concept of the premise?

It says "the borderlines of Islam are bloody as well as its essence," insinuating that there is no way to co-exist with it, therefore "the clash of civilizations" is inevitable between the West as a civilization and Islam as a civilization.

Here, Huntington calls for a holy war against Islam, just in the same way the Islamists wage a terrorist war against the West. Western fundamentalists have come together with the fundamental Islamists in their call to war between the pagan West (according to the fanatics) or the civilized West (according to Huntington), and between the Jihad Islam (according to the fundamentalists), or the bloody Islam (according to Huntington) (we have heard calls on TV that make one tremble with fear, such as the calls of the American clergy Pat Robertson, and the discussions on the electronic version of the *National Review* which call for throwing atomic bombs on the main Islamic cities, including Mecca and Gaza).

Who is the big loser when such calls are made?

The big loser here is moderation. Moderation is giving way to the calls of fundamentalists and fanatics in this heat of escalation. Moderation means peace in the world. When the voices that call for killing are loud, the voices that call for moderation (which are the majority) and that call for dialogue die down.

Later, Huntington began to moderate his concept of the "Conflict of Civilizations," but it was too late, after Ousama Bin Laden appeared.

The title of our panel today, "Islam and We," is a call to think about Islam. Is it really a bloody religion, or are only some Moslems terrorists?

Should the fundamentalists from both sides draw us to the clash of cultures, or should we reject fundamentalism, fanaticism and terrorism, and go into a constructive dialogue between cultures?

Thank you.