

Al-Zawahiri audiotape denouncing Greater Middle East initiative

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[Please note: Images may have been removed from this document. Page numbers have been added.]

On Friday 11 June 2004, the Arabic news network *al-Arabiya* aired a 40-second segment of what was said to be a new 10-minute audiotape with Ayman al-Zawahiri.

The voice on the videotape criticized the United States interference in the Middle East, saying America does not want democracy in the region.

The tape seemed to have been made recently, because the speaker made reference to the Arab summit in Tunisia on 22 and 23 May 2004. The CIA said it believed the tape to be authentic. It has not been possible to find an Arabic transcript nor a complete English translation of the statement. The following are translated quotes from subsequent news reports:

“Americans do not want the reforms in the Arab world. The Americans will not give us democracy and freedom. Democracy and freedom should come from within us, from our own souls, and our children and young generation will benefit from it.”

“The Americans do not want democracy and freedom for Muslims.”

“The truth of what it is seeking is to replace the current regimes with new regimes. The human rights they are advocating are the rights of the criminal to the humiliation of the Muslim.”

“The true reform begins from within us. It begins by planting the will of resistance in our hearts and the hearts of our children and coming generations.”