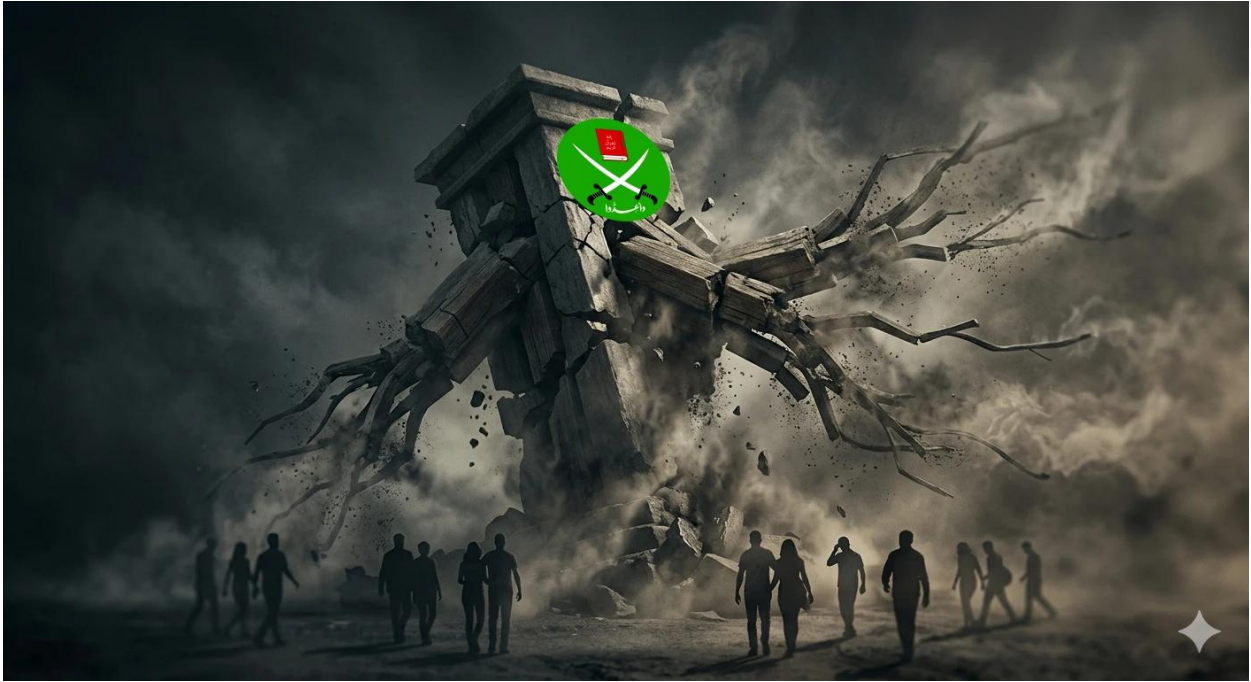


Why has talking about the death of the Muslim Brotherhood become permissible? A reading of Al-Zafarani's post.

حمزة حسن | June 7, 2026



I read the post published by former Muslim Brotherhood leader Dr. Ibrahim Al-Zaafarani, who was a significant figure in placing the group on Egypt's map in Alexandria. His article was entitled "The Regulation Changes but Brotherhood is Irreplaceable," where he implied and affirmed his previous vision for the group with the necessity that the values of brotherhood should rise above the rigid provisions of regulations.

I waited over a week to see and follow the comments, which are from major former or current leaders inside the group, to look into what they say and listen to their opinions, which contribute to creating a realistic view of the group's current reality based on the reactions to the post, which varied from support to rejection.

At first glance, it may seem that this post is an invitation from Al-Zaafarani to rearrange the group's papers and a call to end the disputes and divisions that

occurred since the military coup, peaking in 2021. But in my opinion, this post is an indicator of the group's imminent demise or reaching a stage of illness that cannot be healed, so much so that talking about its death openly is acceptable while the group suffers from security restrictions — contrary to the doctor's previous ethics, as he refused to leave the group under Mubarak when it was under security constraints and only left it after Mubarak's regime fell and the group gained its internal freedom, which confirms that the doctor spoke out publicly because he most likely sees the matter as settled.

Why Now?

Anyone following Al-Zaafarani knows that, since his resignation from the group in 2011 after almost 45 years of working within it, he has been affirming that the group is on its way to decline due to its internal problems and the weakness of the new organizational structure from an administrative, organizational, and intellectual perspective. Hence, his recent post is nothing new or different from what he predicted in 2011 and the subsequent years before the military coup against the Muslim Brotherhood in 2013.

However, I see that he spoke now in this manner out of despair for reform, not as an invitation to it, affirming that the group's current state has become a cancer that cannot be treated after every branch of the group, whether London or Istanbul, has turned into a complete institution with its financial, organizational, and media support, with its own offices, channels, and messaging.

In my opinion, the state the group's branches have reached led the doctor to the certainty that reconciling the divide is no longer possible, as the group lost its essence in pursuit of regulatory provisions, clinging to decisions that should have been internally agreed upon rather than turning into a means of conflict and division, and the group transformed from organizational brotherhood to a struggle over resources, power, and influence.

The Future of the Group Between Eulogy and Erosion

It is no secret to anyone that the Muslim Brotherhood, with its diverse paths, was more of an ideological idea than a unifying organization, hence most who left the group did not do so due to doctrinal disagreements, but rather disagreements in political visions or the realism of jurisprudence. Therefore,

you do not find in their articles or statements anything egregiously departing from the group's principles, unlike a rare few who chose an opposite and opposing path.

From this standpoint, my reading of what Dr. Ibrahim Al-Zaafarani wrote is that the group is no longer in a state of erosion but is currently in a post-collapse stage, especially with the split of the group into two components that confirm the group's original idea has failed to resolve the internal conflict that never appeared publicly throughout the group's history. We now have parties deriving legitimacy from their private interpretation of the regulation described by Al-Zaafarani as explosive in his post.

From this point, I will attempt to explore the fate of the group through different scenarios ranging from the issuance of a confirmed statement by the guide Badea from his prison, to the scenario of establishing a third current that could lead the group and work on uniting it once again. These scenarios are:

- **Scenario of Reunification:** This scenario could be the optimal solution for the group, though it carries within it another option: the official end of the group if rejected by the conflicting parties. This scenario relies on the ability of the guide Mohamed Badie to record an audio or video statement — irrefutable — providing clear decisions regarding the ongoing division in the group. This might be the only solution to resolve the legal problem for all parties, but it is unlikely to solve the structural issue and the gap between the disputing parties, as the issue is no longer about "who is the guide," but has shifted to how the group should be generally managed — unless the brotherhood clause Al-Zaafarani spoke of is activated — and if activated then, the question arises why it wasn't activated before?

The intervention of the guide in this case will not solve the regulation dilemma, as changing it might put the position of those currently adhering to it in doubt, and keeping it puts the London side in doubt. According to Al-Zaafarani's comment, the regulation is "Othman's shirt" over which the parties disputed and caused the group to split, whether in rejection or firm belief in it.

- **Exhaustion Scenario:** This is the most realistic and probable scenario, where both parties continue to deplete the group's resources and cadres

amid regional and international attacks on the group, eventually leading to each party exhausting the other internally, and in turn exhausting externally, turning the group into a historical subject rather than an actual group.

- **Scenario of a Third Current Emerging to Lead the Group** Adopting the vision of the dissidents from the group and members disagreeing with the group's current state, this is a weak option whether internally within the group or externally, as rejoining the group after dissent is seen as a return to international security restrictions without noteworthy benefits. This option requires bravery from all parties, both internal desiring reform and external who left due to reform issues, also historically, the group does not allow the presence of another current as it relies on the culture of obedience, and any rebellion against the current leadership is considered a split as is the situation currently where each party declared that the other does not represent the group.

The situation worsens as this third current will face sharp attacks from both sides: Mahmoud Hussein's front and Ibrahim Munir's front, either suspecting that the current serves the interest of one side at the expense of the other, particularly since it would deprive both sides of their legitimacy, akin to the idea of the reformist current born within the group, and neither side considers it a part of them anymore.

The Fate?

The matter is not solely about Dr. Al-Zaafarani's post, despite its importance in reviving the group in the seventies, nor is it a vision based on some commentators' feedback but rather an analytical reading of the context of events and timing.

From what has been mentioned above, unless there is a radical change in the fundamentals of the reality, the group — as a comprehensive and unified designation in the usual form — seems to be choking itself with its own hands rather than those of Amr, as the exhaustion scenario is closest to continuation, which is the current reality, and this scenario serves the interests of several

parties making maintaining it a valuable matter to the benefit of everyone except the group. Locally, this scenario serves the old and new Egyptian regime in eliminating the group after a hundred years since its creation, regionally it ends the Arab fear of its presence as the group is politically and socially the most organized in most of the Arab sphere and a political threat to thrones, and internationally, since the group is considered by most world countries a source of Islamic revolution and struggle, which is no longer desired.

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