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Arabs Pessimistic on Obama's Second Term

By Jason Ditz

November 7, 2012

President Obama's election was loudly welcomed in the Arab world in 2008, with the president quickly making conciliatory speeches toward Muslims and convincing many that the Bush era was finally over.

Fast forward to 2012, and Arab commentators seem much more pessimistic about the Obama they have come to know over the past four years, with several blasting him for "moderate speech" that was "inconsistent" with his actual policies.

The most direct comment came from a top Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood leader, Issam al-Aryan, who warned it was time for Obama to "accept the will of the Arab people" while urging Arabs to "rely on ourselves and on our resources" for actual change.

Muslim Brotherhood-backed parties swept the Egyptian parliamentary election as well as taking the presidency. The Obama Administration has been hesitant to back Egypt's new government, however, after decades of US backing for the dictator Hosni Mubarak, who was ousted in a popular revolution last year.

Hamas officials were a little more hopeful, suggesting it was possible for Obama to adopt a "moral policy" now that he isn't running for reelection and no longer has to worry about political expediency.