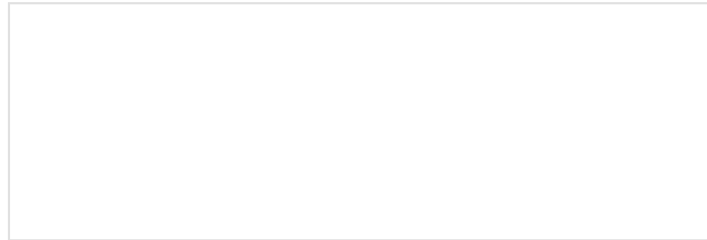


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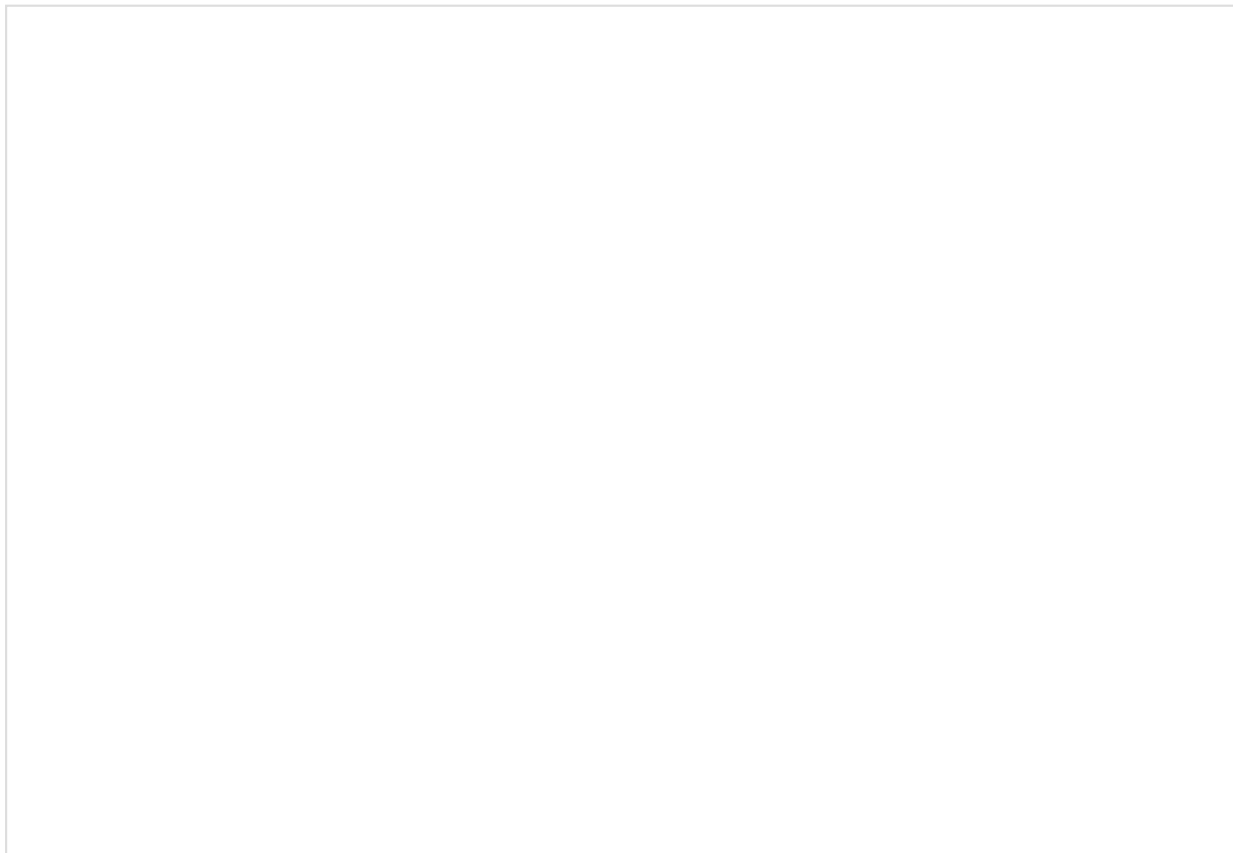
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# Chibli Mallat, Former Lebanese Presidential Candidate, Discusses Gaddafi, Middle East Revolutions

By JORGE A. ARAYA, CONTRIBUTING WRITER March 7, 2011

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LORA D STOIANOVA

Chibli Mallat answers questions after his talk on nonviolent revolutions and

democratic strategy in the Middle East as part of the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs Middle East Seminar Series on Friday.

Former Lebanese presidential candidate Chibli Mallat spoke about the waves of unrest that are sweeping the Middle East on Friday evening at the Center for Government and International Studies, encouraging audience members to support what he called “a human rights revolution.”

Throughout the lecture and in the subsequent seminar, Mallat, a visiting professor of Islamic legal studies at Harvard Law School, emphasized his belief that a philosophy of nonviolence underlies the movements opposing authoritarian regimes in countries such as Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya.

“Democracy is another form of nonviolence,” he said.

Once these movements succeed in toppling dictators, Mallat said that the people have the opportunity to express their views of society by reforming or rewriting existing constitutions.

Despite his optimism regarding the ongoing protests, Mallat also expressed worry about the violent manner in which the regime of Muammar al-Gaddafi has responded to opposition in Libya. He urged the establishment of a “no-fly zone” by Western governments to prevent further deaths and warned of a “bloodbath” if Gaddafi’s forces are able to regain control of rebellious regions.

Furthermore, Mallat expressed his hope that, if Gaddafi is removed from power, he will face an international tribunal for crimes against humanity.

The former presidential candidate highlighted the universal nature of the values and the desires underpinning unrest in the Middle East.

“This is not an Arab revolution,” he said. “It is not a Middle Eastern revolution. It is a world revolution.”

Mallat urged the Harvard community and the West to go beyond mere words and actively support democratic movements in the Middle East.

He pointed to the example of a group of students at the Law School who have made recommendations as to how the Egyptian constitution might be amended.

Mallat is no stranger to confronting power. In 1992, he was briefly imprisoned in Iran after helping to organize international monitoring of elections in Iraq.

In 2005, he was a leading figure of the Cedar Revolution in Lebanon, which sought to

replace the heavily pro-Syrian government with a more independent leadership following the assassination of Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri.

Leonard Wood, a student at Harvard Law School, said after the event that Mallat is uniquely qualified to comment on current events.

“Professor Mallat has been one of a handful of leading scholars who have focused on the importance of developing popular protests and peaceful resistance,” he said.

For his part, Lebanese student Dany Jradi '14, praised Mallat's ability to reach out to people with different ideological inclinations.

“He's not addressing one extreme view. He's trying to bring different views together,” he said.

*This article has been revised to reflect the following correction.*

### **CORRECTION: MAR. 7, 2011**

The Mar. 7 article "Chibli Mallat, Former Lebanese Presidential Candidate, Discusses Gaddafi, Middle East Revolutions" incorrectly stated that Mallat had been jailed in Iraq. In fact, he was jailed in Iran after supervising elections in Iraq.

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