

**TABLE 3—VARIATION IN THE SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRACY  
BY ATTITUDES TOWARD A POLITICAL ROLE FOR ISLAM**

	PERCENTAGE SAYING THAT DESPITE DRAWBACKS, DEMOCRACY IS THE BEST SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT	
	Strongly Agree/Agree that Men of Religion Should Influence Government Decisions	Strongly Disagree/ Disagree that Men of Religion Should Influence Government Decisions
All Countries	54%	46%
Jordan	52%	48%
Palestine	55%	45%
Algeria	58%	42%
Morocco	63%	37%
Kuwait	39%	61%

explained by the religious orientations and attachments of ordinary men and women.

A different question bearing on the relationship between democracy and Islam concerns the role of Islam in political affairs. Many Arab citizens express support for the influence of Islam in government and politics. This is not the view of all citizens, however. In contrast to support for democracy, which is expressed by the overwhelming majority of the respondents in the Arab Barometer and other recent surveys, men and women in every country where surveys have been conducted are divided on the question of whether Islam should play an important political role. For example, whereas 56 percent of the respondents in the Arab Barometer surveys agree with the statement that men of religion should have influence over government decisions,<sup>13</sup> 44 percent disagree, indicating that they believe Islam should *not* play an important political role.

Further, the division of opinion observed among all respondents is present to the same degree among those who express support for democracy. Among respondents who believe democracy to be the best political system, despite any possible drawbacks, 54 percent believe that men of religion should have influence over government decisions while 46 percent disagree. This is shown in Table 3, which juxtaposes these items measuring support for democracy and support for a political role for Islam. Although there is modest variation from country to country, Table 3 shows that respondents who support democracy are divided more or less equally between those who favor secular democracy and those who favor a political system that is both democratic and gives an important role to Islam. Consistent with findings reported earlier, it also shows that among the relatively few respondents who do not support democracy there is also a division of opinion regarding a political role for Islam.