Pyramid Scheme: The Case Against Arms Sales to Egypt

By “Coach Vance” Trefethen & Jonathan T. Helton

***Resolved: The United States Federal Government should significantly reform its import and/or export policy within the bounds of international trade***

Summary: Egypt is one of the largest recipients of US military equipment, exported to Egypt at US taxpayer expense under the Foreign Military Financing program. (US Fed Govt gives Egypt $ on condition that they spend it on US military equipment and import it back to Egypt) In addition to not accomplishing anything positive, US military exports to Egypt make things worse. It emboldens and enables a corrupt repressive regime that denies human rights, and in so doing it fuels anti-American sentiment and leads to more terrorism.

Pyramid Scheme: The Case Against Arms Sales to Egypt 3

OBSERVATION 1. DEFINITIONS 3

Significant 3

Policy 3

OBSERVATION 2. INHERENCY, or Facts about Status Quo policies. 3

FACT 1. $1.3 billion per year. 3

The US provides $1.3 billion annually in Foreign Military Financing for Egypt 3

FACT 2. More on the way 3

Biden’s policy will export billions of dollars more in weapons to Egypt 3

OBSERVATION 3. The HARMS, or What’s wrong with current policy? 4

HARM 1. Prolonging oppression 4

A. The Link: US arms exports perpetuate military control of the Egyptian government and economy 4

B. The Impact: Human rights violations. Even the US State Dept. admits: Egypt has serious human rights abuses 4

HARM 2. Fueling terrorism 4

A. Peaceful dissent blocked. Egyptian President Sisi’s policies against terrorism actually fuel it, by blocking peaceful dissent 4

B. Outside pressure needed. Allies must apply pressure to Egypt to end repression to improve stability and reduce terrorism 4

OBSERVATION 4. The PLAN, to be enacted by Congress & the President 5

OBSERVATION 5. The ADVANTAGES 5

ADVANTAGE 1. Ends US responsibility and reduces backlash 5

Ending US aid to Egypt eliminates our moral responsibility for their abuses and avoids the inevitable anti-American backlash against us 5

ADVANTAGE 2. Leverage for change. 5

US military aid suspension conditioned on human rights reforms is the best use of leverage to bring change to Egypt 5

2A Evidence: Egypt Arms Sales 6

DEFINITIONS / TOPICALITY 6

FMF: Foreign Military Financing – We give them money, they use it to buy military equipment from US suppliers 6

MINOR REPAIR RESPONSES 6

A/T “Suspend, don’t cancel” or “Put more conditions on aid” – Already tried & failed by Presidents GW Bush and Obama 6

INHERENCY 6

Biden committed to arms exports to Egypt without regard to human rights 6

A/T “Military aid was canceled in Jan. 2022” – Only a slap on the wrist. The rest of the arms sales were approved 7

A/T “$130 million military aid was canceled” – Only 10% of annual US/Egypt military aid 7

US State Department admits Egypt has human rights problems – enough to cancel a small amount of military aid – and then do nothing about all the rest 7

Egyptian President Sisi has a long track-record of chaos and anti-democratic policies 7

A/T “Recent reforms” – Not enough. Lifting of emergency in ’21 is a good start, but far from enough 8

Sparse and failing oversight of how they use our military aid 8

HARMS / SIGNIFICANCE 8

Human Rights Oppression Within Egypt 8

Government oppresses or controls everything: Media, civil rights advocates, political dissidents, judiciary, and parliament 8

Egypt has huge human rights violations: Arbitrary arrests and widespread torture 9

Specific Link: US Military Aid 🡪 Human Rights 9

US military aid gives green light to human rights oppression in Egypt 9

Sending arms to Egypt without regard for human rights encourages and prolongs repression 9

US military support undermines Egyptians’ struggle for democracy 9

More military aid would make human rights in Egypt even worse 10

Backlash & Terrorism 10

Jailing the innocent in Egypt turns many of them to become terrorists 10

Brutal Egyptian government tactics lead to more terrorism 10

While taking our aid, they oppose our verification steps and stir up anti-Americanism 10

Egyptian’s government’s goal isn’t really to fight terror – it’s really about repressing dissent 11

Repression helped create one of al-Qaeda’s leaders 11

Egypt’s repressive policies encourage more jihadi terrorism 11

Misdirected tactics kill civilians 11

Humanitarian efforts blocked 12

SOLVENCY / ADVOCACY 12

No justification for arming a regime that violates human rights and at war with its own people 12

Arms export pressure on Egypt works, based on past experience, and we should do it completely and sustain it 12

Voting Criterion: If our “influence” either way (with or without Egypt military aid) is a wash, we should side with our values 12

Deficits harm our economy (extra advantage of cutting foreign aid spending) 13

DISADVANTAGE RESPONSES 13

A/T “Alienate Egypt as an ally / Hurts US foreign interests” – Egypt has no impact on any significant foreign policy issues 13

A/T “Alienate Egypt as an ally” – Not much of an ally, they harm US interests by supporting Russia, N. Korea, Libya, and Syria. 14

A/T “Alienate Egypt as an ally” – Non-Unique: Egypt already opposes US interests in the region in Status Quo 14

A/T “Egypt breaks treaty and starts war with Israel” – Won’t happen regardless of whether we give aid or not 14

A/T “Egypt needs U.S. equipment” – They don’t use it for anything. 15

A/T “Egypt needs US weapons for security” – Egypt’s arms imports are misused, don’t help security 15

“Egypt killing terrorists” – Reports are exaggerated, and a lot of them are actually civilians 15

A/T “They need US weapons to fight terrorism” – They need better policies, not more weapons 16

A/T “Harms Egyptian security” - No data exists to support claims that US military aid helps Egypt 16

A/T “Egypt will break the Camp David treaty and start a war with Israel” – Won’t happen. Treaty doesn’t depend on US aid 16

A/T “Egypt will buy from Russia” – Non-unique; they already do. 17

A/T “Harms U.S. arms industry” – Industry profits growing 17

A/T “Reduced US influence” – Turn: Arms exports to Egypt reduce American influence on human rights or any other issue 17

A/T “Lost US influence” – Turn: Status Quo arms sales policy is what loses our influence 17

A/T “Lost US influence” - US arms exports don’t buy any influence for human rights in Egypt 18

Pyramid Scheme: The Case Against Arms Sales to Egypt

Supporting a friend is normally a good thing, and loyalty is a virtue. But supporting him when he does evil things makes you complicit in his misdeeds. US foreign arms export policy has gone beyond supporting a friend to complicity in evil, and that’s why it’s past time we affirmed that: The United States Federal Government should significantly reform its import and/or export policy. We will be advocating changing the US government’s policy of funding the export of military equipment to Egypt.

OBSERVATION 1. DEFINITIONS

Significant

Merriam Webster Online Dictionary copyright 2022. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/significant> (accessed 10 May 2022)

2a**:**having or likely to have [influence](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/influence#h1) or effect **:**[IMPORTANT](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/important)

Policy

Merriam Webster Online Dictionary copyright 2022. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/policy> (accessed 10 May 2022)

a high-level overall plan embracing the general goals and acceptable procedures especially of a governmental body

OBSERVATION 2. INHERENCY, or Facts about Status Quo policies.

**In the Status Quo, the US government gives money annually to Egypt that is earmarked and must be spent on US weapons, which are then exported to Egypt. We see this in 2 FACTS:**

FACT 1. $1.3 billion per year.

The US provides $1.3 billion annually in Foreign Military Financing for Egypt

Khalil Al-Anani 2022 (Senior Fellow at the Arab Center, Washington DC) 28 Feb 2022 “Sisi Intensifies Arms Imports to Secure External Support for His Policies” <https://arabcenterdc.org/resource/sisi-intensifies-arms-imports-to-secure-external-support-for-his-policies/> (accessed 18 May 2022)

According to the [Congressional Research Service](https://sgp.fas.org/crs/mideast/R44984.pdf), “Egypt has consistently been one of the world’s highest recipients of Foreign Military Financing (FMF), which it uses exclusively to purchase U.S. weapons.” Egypt receives around $1.3 billion annually, which makes it the second largest recipient of the US foreign aid, after Israel.

FACT 2. More on the way

Biden’s policy will export billions of dollars more in weapons to Egypt

CNN 2022. “Biden administration authorizes $2.5 billion in arms sales to Egypt despite human rights concerns[“](https://www.cnn.com/profiles/jennifer-hansler) 25 Jan 2022 <https://www.cnn.com/2022/01/25/politics/us-arms-sales-egypt/index.html> (accessed 18 May 2022)

The Biden administration has authorized more than $2 billion in arms sales to Egypt despite ongoing concerns about Cairo's human rights record. The approval of the sale of military aircraft and air defense radar systems, announced by the State Department on Tuesday, comes days before Secretary of State Antony Blinken must determine whether to release a tranche of military aid that was put on hold in September over human rights concerns. According to the announcement from the State Department, the administration formally notified Congress of the intended sales of 12 C-130J Super Hercules aircraft and related equipment for $2.2 billion and three SPS-48 Land Based Radar and related equipment for $355 million.

OBSERVATION 3. The HARMS, or What’s wrong with current policy?

HARM 1. Prolonging oppression

A. The Link: US arms exports perpetuate military control of the Egyptian government and economy

Seth Binder and William Hartung 2018 (Binder - expert in security assistance and Middle East affairs at Strategic Research & Analysis. Hartung is the director of the Arms and Security Project at the Center for International Policy) 28 March 2018 “Time To Rethink U.S. Military Aid To Egypt” <https://lobelog.com/time-to-rethink-u-s-military-aid-to-egypt/> (accessed 20 May 2022)

Ultimately, the lasting impact of decades of providing over $1 billion in military aid to Egypt per year is not just the massive number of tanks and missiles, but the military’s influence over the Egyptian state. For example, the military’s role in the economy is thought to be somewhere between 40 and 60 percent and includes businesses involved in nearly every sector, from foodstuffs and real estate to construction and electronics. U.S. military aid is not cash that can be diverted for personal benefit. But agreements that allow for U.S. aid to be spent on economic activities within Egypt, like co-production of the M-1 Abrams tank, have helped perpetuate military-run businesses that lack transparency and oversight.

B. The Impact: Human rights violations. Even the US State Dept. admits: Egypt has serious human rights abuses

CNN 2022. “Biden administration authorizes $2.5 billion in arms sales to Egypt despite human rights concerns[“](https://www.cnn.com/profiles/jennifer-hansler) 25 Jan 2022 <https://www.cnn.com/2022/01/25/politics/us-arms-sales-egypt/index.html> (accessed 18 May 2022)

The Egyptian government has been charged with serious human rights abuses, including unlawful or arbitrary killings, forced disappearance, torture, "harsh and life-threatening prison conditions," arbitrary detention, restrictions on freedom of speech, expression, and political participation, according to the State Department's [annual report](https://www.state.gov/reports/2020-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/egypt/)on human rights in the country

HARM 2. Fueling terrorism

A. Peaceful dissent blocked. Egyptian President Sisi’s policies against terrorism actually fuel it, by blocking peaceful dissent

Abdelrahman Mansour 2021. (journalist and human rights activist from Mansoura, Egypt) 27 Jan 2021 FOREIGN POLICY “Sisi’s Last Stand” <https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/01/27/egypt-sisi-human-rights-protests-detention-terrorism-biden-trump/> (accessed 20 May 2022)

But, ironically, Sisi’s policies may themselves turn to cause such political unrest. As the president prevents any real political activity, shuts down rights campaigns, and locks away political dissents, the only voices suppressed are those of peaceful dissent. They are the ones who give frustrated, ordinary Egyptians hope for a democratic future where justice and the rule of law prevail. Labeling activists and political opponents “terrorists” discredits attempts by the government to be taken seriously in its conflict against real threats in a region that—despite Sisi’s show of force—remains virulently turbulent. Average Egyptians will dismiss the government’s security procedures, and international security agencies will take with a grain of salt the terrorist lists published in Cairo. It’s only a matter of time.

B. Outside pressure needed. Allies must apply pressure to Egypt to end repression to improve stability and reduce terrorism

Abdelrahman Mansour 2021. (journalist and human rights activist from Mansoura, Egypt) 27 Jan 2021 FOREIGN POLICY “Sisi’s Last Stand” <https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/01/27/egypt-sisi-human-rights-protests-detention-terrorism-biden-trump/> (accessed 20 May 2022)

Sisi’s U.S. and European allies should use the weight of their respective offices to send a clear message to the Egyptian government that its repressive policies threaten Egypt’s stability in the long run and, more specifically, increase the danger of real terrorism. The Egyptian people are not waiting for the West to deliver them democracy. They only want a chance to bring it about themselves.

OBSERVATION 4. The PLAN, to be enacted by Congress & the President

1. Congress votes to stop military exports to Egypt until it   
A. has a democratically elected government chosen in free and fair elections  
B. releases NGO human rights advocates and political prisoners, and  
C. upholds freedoms of speech, press, religion, assembly and fair trials   
2. Enforcement through the State Department. Congress refuses to approve any military exports until the Secretary of State testifies under oath before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs or the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations that all conditions have been met.

3. Funding is a net reduction in the federal budget by canceling Foreign Military Financing.  
4. Plan takes effect next October 1.   
5. All Affirmative speeches may clarify.

OBSERVATION 5. The ADVANTAGES

ADVANTAGE 1. Ends US responsibility and reduces backlash

Ending US aid to Egypt eliminates our moral responsibility for their abuses and avoids the inevitable anti-American backlash against us

Doug Bandow 2018 (senior fellow at the Cato Institute, specializing in foreign policy and civil liberties. He worked as special assistant to President Ronald Reagan; has been a regular commentator on ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN, Fox News Channel, and MSNBC; JD from Stanford Univ.) 30 April 2018 “Why Washington Turns a Blind Eye to Egypt’s Thugocracy” <https://www.cato.org/publications/commentary/why-washington-turns-blind-eye-egypts-thugocracy> (accessed 20 May 2022)

Foreign policy inevitably involves occasional tough moral compromises. However, the end of the Cold War has reduced pressure on Washington to ignore the cruel brutality of client regimes. In cases like Egypt, America is complicit in grotesque and widespread violations of human rights. That repression makes future violence more likely when political change inevitably occurs, and ensures that the United States will be targeted by those who suffered under what Vice President Pence lauded as a “strategic partnership” of “great importance to the American people.” Washington cannot make Egypt free, but it should stop enthusiastically embracing and subsidizing those who hold an entire country in bondage.

ADVANTAGE 2. Leverage for change.

US military aid suspension conditioned on human rights reforms is the best use of leverage to bring change to Egypt

Human Rights First and the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies 2018. (HRF - a nonprofit, nonpartisan international human rights organization based in New York and Washington. CIHRS - n independent regional nongovernmental organization which aims to promote respect for the principles of human rights and democracy in the Arab region.) Aiding Repression in Egypt Why the United States Needs to Keep Human Rights Conditions on Military Aid, September 2018 <https://www.humanrightsfirst.org/sites/default/files/Aiding-Repression-in-Egypt-final.pdf> (accessed 20 May 2022)

In the long run, Egypt sliding further into dictatorship will only exacerbate the tensions and instability that threaten U.S. interests in the Middle East. Rather than ignoring Egypt’s worsening human rights situation, the U.S. government should revert to its recent policy of conditioning and withholding FMF until the Egyptian government achieves meaningful progress on human rights. The Trump Administration has leverage in the form of military aid, and it should use it. Conditionality should include significant, positive movement on Case 173 and other human rights violations. If the administration remains unwilling to act, Congress should strengthen the human rights language passed in recent years through successive appropriations bills, including by limiting the administration’s ability to invoke a national security waiver to end run the law’s intent. Congress should make clear to both the Trump Administration and the Egyptian government that the latter should either comply with human rights conditions or be prepared to forego a meaningful portion of future U.S. military aid.

2A Evidence: Egypt Arms Sales

DEFINITIONS / TOPICALITY

FMF: Foreign Military Financing – We give them money, they use it to buy military equipment from US suppliers

Jeremy M. Sharp 2021 (Specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs for the Congressional Research Service) 30 Sept 2021 “Egypt: Background and U.S. Relations” <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RL33003.pdf> (accessed 20 May 2022)

All U.S. military aid to Egypt finances the procurement of weapons systems and services from U.S. defense contractors. For FY2022, the Biden Administration has requested $1.4 billion in bilateral assistance for Egypt, the same amount Congress appropriated the previous year. Nearly all of the U.S. funds for Egypt come from the Foreign Military Financing (FMF) account. All U.S. military aid to Egypt finances the procurement of weapons systems and services from U.S. defense contractors.

MINOR REPAIR RESPONSES

A/T “Suspend, don’t cancel” or “Put more conditions on aid” – Already tried & failed by Presidents GW Bush and Obama

Neil Hicks 2017 (Neil Hicks is the director of human rights promotion at Human Rights First, which is an independent advocacy and action organization.) 30 August 2017 “Tillerson withholding aid to Egypt is a necessary and unprecedented move” <http://thehill.com/blogs/pundits-blog/international-affairs/348538-tillerson-withholding-aid-to-egypt-is-a-necessary> (accessed 20 May 2022)

President Obama suspended military assistance after the coup and ensuing violence that brought President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi to power in July 2013, including the [killing](https://www.hrw.org/report/2014/08/12/all-according-plan/raba-massacre-and-mass-killings-protesters-egypt) of hundreds of supporters of deposed president Mohamed Morsi in August 2013. However, Obama lifted this suspension in March 2015 despite no improvement in the country’s human rights situation. Thirteen years prior, President George W. Bush threatened to withhold $130 million in foreign assistance over the imprisonment of human rights activist Saad Eddin Ibrahim, but did not follow through after Congress declined to appropriate additional funding.

INHERENCY

Biden committed to arms exports to Egypt without regard to human rights

Seth Binder 2021 (Director of Advocacy at POMED. Previously, he served as the program manager and research associate at the Center for International Policy’s (CIP) Security Assistance Monitor program) BACK TO BUSINESS AS USUAL PRESIDENT BIDEN’S FIRST FOREIGN AFFAIRS BUDGET FOR THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA Sept 2021 <https://pomed.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/POMED_BudgetReport_FY22_final.pdf> (accessed 20 May 2022)

Despite President Biden’s declaration that he would end the “blank checks” for Egypt’s authoritarian regime, the FY22 request seeks the same $1.3 billion in Foreign Military Financing that Egypt has received since 1987. The administration has also explicitly and repeatedly expressed opposition to Congress including human rights conditions on military aid to Egypt in the FY22 appropriations bill. The administration also used a loophole in the FY20 law to obligate $300 million of the $1.3 billion in military aid conditioned on human rights.

A/T “Military aid was canceled in Jan. 2022” – Only a slap on the wrist. The rest of the arms sales were approved

Deutsche Welle 2022 (German news agency) 29 Jan 2022 “US cancels military aid for Egypt after major arms sale” <https://www.dw.com/en/us-cancels-military-aid-for-egypt-after-major-arms-sale/a-60595661> (accessed 19 May 2022)

Sarah Holewinski, Washington director at Human Rights Watch, welcomed the decision to withhold military aid while expressing disappointment on the arms sale. "This was the right decision," Holewinski said, referring to the withholding of military aid. "Egypt's atrocious human rights record should leave no room for compromises from the US government." Speaking on the $2.5 billion arms sale, she added that denying the $130 million was "not much more than a slap on the wrist given those handouts."

A/T “$130 million military aid was canceled” – Only 10% of annual US/Egypt military aid

Sen. Rand Paul 2022. (R-Kentucky) 20 May 2022 “Why I want to kill Biden’s massive US-Egyptian arms deal” <https://responsiblestatecraft.org/2022/02/10/why-i-want-to-kill-the-2-5-billion-egyptian-arms-deal/> (accessed 19 May 2022)

In what may be described as the definition of a slap on the wrist, the $130 million the State Department blocked is only a tenth of the annual $1.3 billion the United States has given to Egypt every year since 1987. In fact, [Egypt is one of the largest recipients of U.S. military aid](https://pomed.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/200506_SecurityAssistanceToEgypt.pdf).

US State Department admits Egypt has human rights problems – enough to cancel a small amount of military aid – and then do nothing about all the rest

Deutsche Welle 2022 (German news agency) 29 Jan 2022 “US cancels military aid for Egypt after major arms sale” <https://www.dw.com/en/us-cancels-military-aid-for-egypt-after-major-arms-sale/a-60595661> (accessed 19 May 2022)

The United States is canceling $130 million (€117 million) in military aid to Egypt over [human rights concerns](https://www.dw.com/en/women-in-egypt-ongoing-crackdown-stokes-solidarity/a-60499419), the State Department said on Friday. The announcement comes just days after US President Joe Biden's administration approved a $2.5 billion [arms sale to Egypt](https://www.dw.com/en/german-weapons-exports-hit-record-with-bumper-egypt-sales/a-60466572) on Tuesday. This included 12 Super Hercules C-130 transport aircraft and air defense radar systems. What did the State Department say? The State Department said Friday that Egypt had not met the conditions to receive the $130 million in foreign military financing that had been on hold since September. In its announcement, the State Department made no mention of the $2.5 billion arms sale, which included military transport planes and radar systems.

Egyptian President Sisi has a long track-record of chaos and anti-democratic policies

Doug Bandow 2018 (senior fellow at the Cato Institute, specializing in foreign policy and civil liberties. He worked as special assistant to President Ronald Reagan; has been a regular commentator on ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN, Fox News Channel, and MSNBC; JD from Stanford Univ.) 30 April 2018 “Why Washington Turns a Blind Eye to Egypt’s Thugocracy” <https://www.cato.org/publications/commentary/why-washington-turns-blind-eye-egypts-thugocracy> (accessed 20 May 2022)

Five years ago General el-Sisi staged a coup, arrested the elected president, Mohamed Morsi, killed hundreds of pro-Morsi demonstrators, and jailed tens of thousands of opponents, critics and demonstrators. Having suppressed all serious opposition, el-Sisi took over as president and in 2014 staged a faux election, winning more than 97 percent of the vote over minor opposition. El-Sisi staged an electoral repeat in March. This time several would-be opponents, including with military backgrounds, sought to oppose him, but he arrested or intimidated them all.

A/T “Recent reforms” – Not enough. Lifting of emergency in ’21 is a good start, but far from enough

Human Rights Watch 2021. (international human rights advocacy group) 26 Oct 2021 “Egypt: Ending State of Emergency a Start But Insufficient “ https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/10/26/egypt-ending-state-emergency-start-insufficient (accessed 20 May 2022)

Amending the new NGO law, while positive, is hardly a sufficient response to Egypt’s  [Egyptian](https://www.hrw.org/middle-east/n-africa/egypt) President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi’s October 25, 2021 announcement that he is lifting the nationwide state of emergency is positive, but far from sufficient to begin to quell the country’s prolonged human rights crisis, Human Rights Watch said today. The government needs to end many other emergency-law-like restrictions on civic participation, freedom of speech, and peaceful assembly. The president should also free the many thousands of people jailed under those unjust laws.

Sparse and failing oversight of how they use our military aid

Government Accountability Office 2016 ( an independent, nonpartisan oversight agency that works for Congress) 12 April 2016 “U.S. Government Should Strengthen End-Use Monitoring and Human Rights Vetting for Egypt” <https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-435> (accessed 20 May 2022)

The Departments of Defense (DOD) and State implemented end-use monitoring for equipment transferred to Egyptian security forces, but challenges including obtaining Egyptian government cooperation hindered some efforts. DOD completed all required end-use monitoring inventories and physical security inspections of storage sites for missiles and night vision devices (NVD) in fiscal year 2015, but DOD lacked documentation showing that it completed physical security inspections for these sensitive items in prior years. Despite agreeing to give access, the Egyptian government prevented DOD officials from accessing a storage site to verify the physical security of some NVDs prior to 2015, according to DOD officials and documents. State conducted 12 end-use checks of U.S. equipment exported to Egypt in fiscal years 2011 to 2015, but State data indicate that the Egyptian government's incomplete and slow responses to some inquiries limited U.S. efforts to verify the use and security of certain equipment, including NVDs and riot-control items. Despite this lack of cooperation, since 2008, State has not used outreach programs in Egypt that are intended to facilitate host country cooperation and compliance with State's monitoring program. According to State officials, this was due to the small number of end-use checks conducted in Egypt and the lower priority assigned to Egypt than to other countries.

HARMS / SIGNIFICANCE

Human Rights Oppression Within Egypt

Government oppresses or controls everything: Media, civil rights advocates, political dissidents, judiciary, and parliament

Michele Dunne 2017 (director and a senior fellow in Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Middle East Program; expert on political and economic change in Arab countries, particularly Egypt, as well as U.S. policy in the Middle East.) Testimony before the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs. 25 April 2017 “The United States’ Assistance for Egypt” (accessed 20 May 2022) <http://carnegieendowment.org/2017/04/25/united-states-assistance-for-egypt-pub-68756>

The fact that economic decisions in Egypt serve such a narrow range of interests reflects the overall constriction of public institutions as well as civil society. The parliament is open only to coup-supporters, with not only most Islamists but also many secular parties either legally barred or strongly harassed—even including several larger secular parties that have supported Sisi but have tried to preserve some modicum of independence. The judiciary, once the branch of the government most respected by citizens, has become highly politicized. Media and journalists have been strongly repressed, and there are very few media outlets that are truly independent. Civil society groups, both secular groups focusing on human rights or civil liberties and social welfare groups suspected of ties to the Muslim Brotherhood, have received harsh treatment unprecedented in Egypt—closed down, assets confiscated, leaders either under prosecution or driven out of the country by death threats.

Egypt has huge human rights violations: Arbitrary arrests and widespread torture

Sen. Rand Paul 2022. (R-Kentucky) 20 May 2022 “Why I want to kill Biden’s massive US-Egyptian arms deal” <https://responsiblestatecraft.org/2022/02/10/why-i-want-to-kill-the-2-5-billion-egyptian-arms-deal/> (accessed 19 May 2022)

As the United States prepares to effectuate yet another military sale, perhaps we should review how one of our most reliable customers treats its people. Human Rights Watch [reports](https://www.hrw.org/report/2020/03/23/no-one-cared-he-was-child/egyptian-security-forces-abuse-children-detention) “Egypt’s security apparatus has arbitrarily arrested and prosecuted tens of thousands of persons,” and that “torture crimes against detainees in Egypt are systematic, widespread and likely constitute crimes against humanity.”

Specific Link: US Military Aid 🡪 Human Rights

US military aid gives green light to human rights oppression in Egypt

Sondos Asem 2018 (journalist) 28 July 2018 « US military aid to Egypt a 'green light for repression,' say former prisoners” <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/us-egypt-military-aid-human-rights-1105284286> (accessed 20 May 2022)

Aya Hijazi, an Egyptian American who spent three years in jail in Egypt, was flown to Washington on a US government plane in April 2017 after being acquitted in a trial which Human Rights Watch described as "a travesty of justice". The charges brought against Hijazi were linked to her role as the founder of a civil society organisation, Belady, aimed at rehabilitating street children in Egypt. Following her return to Washington, Hijazi was photographed in the Oval Office with Trump, who said it was a "great honour" to host her. She said the US decision to release the aid was “an expected yet unfortunate step back for human rights". "This gives the military a green light to continue the reign of suppression it is embarking on," she told MEE.

Sending arms to Egypt without regard for human rights encourages and prolongs repression

Amr Magdi 2021 (Senior Researcher, Middle East & North Africa Division, Human Rights Watch) 14 Oct 2021 “Al-Sisi’s Western Benefactors Are Betraying Egypt’s Democratic Struggle” (accessed 20 Mayh 2022) https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/10/14/al-sisis-western-benefactors-are-betraying-egypts-democratic-struggle

While weakly condemning al-Sisi’s record, the US and other countries, like France, rarely link their sweeping security assistance and weapons sales to human rights, even though they may contribute to gross abuses. Sometimes, they [openly refuse to](https://www.euractiv.com/section/global-europe/news/macron-says-france-will-sell-arms-to-egypt-irrespective-of-rights/) condition weapons sales on human rights. In my meetings with US and European officials, I emphasize that the struggle for democracy in Egypt is the responsibility of Egyptians themselves. But unconditional foreign support to al-Sisi, and Egypt’s strongmen before him, has encouraged the deterioration of the situation in Egypt. It has so indulged the country’s ruling elite that they believe they will always get what they want from Washington and their other allies, even in the face of extrajudicial killings, torture, and other well-documented abuses—and even when these abuses target their own citizens. It is hard to believe that any country would get away with [jailing](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/13/world/middleeast/egypt-prisoner-moustafa-kassem-dies.html) and even [killing](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-57238620) US, [British](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-23700044), Italian, and [French](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/sep/18/egypt-frenchman-dies-syria-morsi#:~:text=Frenchman%20Eric%20Lang%2C%2049%2C%20a,to%20produce%20valid%20residency%20papers.) [tourists](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/apr/01/egypt-military-tourist-attack-white-desert#:~:text=April%20Corley%20from%20San%20Diego,the%20group%20for%20jihadist%20militants.), activists, and journalists, like Egypt has under al-Sisi.

US military support undermines Egyptians’ struggle for democracy

Amr Magdi 2021 (Senior Researcher, Middle East & North Africa Division, Human Rights Watch) 14 Oct 2021 “Al-Sisi’s Western Benefactors Are Betraying Egypt’s Democratic Struggle” (accessed 20 May 2022) https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/10/14/al-sisis-western-benefactors-are-betraying-egypts-democratic-struggle

Even if the US ultimately withholds a small part of this funding, it continues to provide well over $1 billion in military support to Egypt each year. That ongoing support for al-Sisi’s government in the face of a deplorable and deteriorating human rights situation in Egypt severely undermines Egyptians’ brave struggle for democracy and the rule of law a decade after the popular uprising that ended Hosni Mubarak’s authoritarian rule.

More military aid would make human rights in Egypt even worse

Doug Bandow 2018 (senior fellow at the Cato Institute, specializing in foreign policy and civil liberties. He worked as special assistant to President Ronald Reagan;JD from Stanford Univ.) 30 April 2018 “Why Washington Turns a Blind Eye to Egypt’s Thugocracy” <https://www.cato.org/publications/commentary/why-washington-turns-blind-eye-egypts-thugocracy> (accessed 20 May 2022)

Worse, additional aid would strengthen Cairo’s repressive rule. Today no action is too small for the regime to punish: posting a cartoon of el-Sisi with Mickey Mouse ears on Facebook earned one man a three-year prison term. A pop star recently was sentenced to six months in prison for calling the Nile River “dirty,” which was taken as an insult to the state—even though the river is, well, dirty, as I have seen from personal observation.

Backlash & Terrorism

Jailing the innocent in Egypt turns many of them to become terrorists

Leila Fadel 2016 (national correspondent for NPR based in Las Vegas.) 24 August 2016 “As Egypt's Jails Fill, Growing Fears Of A Rise In Radicalization” <https://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2016/08/24/491170122/as-egypts-jails-fill-growing-fears-of-a-rise-in-radicalization> (accessed 20 May 2022)

Deen, a 47-year-old father and freelance journalist who runs a consulting business, spent five months in a maximum security prison. He was never charged and was finally released in March. What he saw inside scared him: young men, many who hadn't committed crimes, became hardened radicals over the course of their confinement. "In jail, they become ISIS," he says. "And this is very horrible. Many people — not one or two or three, many."

Brutal Egyptian government tactics lead to more terrorism

Prof. Mohammed Ayoob 2018 (senior fellow at the Center for Global Policy in Washington, DC and Professor Emeritus of International Relations at Michigan State Univ.) 8 April 2018 “Can America Afford to Continue Supporting Egypt's el-Sisi?” <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/can-america-afford-continue-supporting-egypts-el-sisi-25272/page/0/1> (accessed 20 May 2022)

Sisi’s antagonism toward the Islamic State stems from his feud with the Muslim Brotherhood who he considers to be Islamist extremists similar to the Islamic State. In reality, his brutal suppression of the brotherhood, which was in the process of evolving into a constitutionalist Islamist party, similar to an-Nahda in Tunisia and the AKP in Turkey, has reopened the floodgates of Islamist extremism in Egypt and a return to the 1990s-like situation when terrorist attacks had become the order of the day in Egypt. The moderate elements in the brotherhood have lost out to those who advocate the violent overthrow of the regime once propagated by the Islamist thinker and brotherhood ideologue Syed Qutb in the 1960s. This has encouraged elements within the brotherhood from taking up guns against the regime, thus turning Sisi’s assertion into a self-fulfilling prophecy.

While taking our aid, they oppose our verification steps and stir up anti-Americanism

Seth Binder and William Hartung 2018 (Binder - expert in security assistance and Middle East affairs at Strategic Research & Analysis. Hartung is the director of the Arms and Security Project at the Center for International Policy) 28 March 2018 “Time To Rethink U.S. Military Aid To Egypt” <https://lobelog.com/time-to-rethink-u-s-military-aid-to-egypt/> (accessed 20 May 2022)

The Egyptians have restricted access to the Sinai, not just for [journalists](https://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/listeningpost/2017/05/silence-sinai-covering-egypt-war-terror-170520103628202.html), but for [U.S. officials](https://www.usnews.com/news/politics/articles/2017-09-19/us-report-egypt-falls-short-on-rights-sinai-monitor-access), making it nearly impossible for the United States to ensure that U.S. law and policy are upheld. And as the Government Accountability Office has [discovered](https://www.gao.gov/assets/680/676503.pdf), Egypt has even restricted access for U.S. officials trying to carry out standard end-use monitoring checks to ensure U.S.-supplied weaponry is used for its intended purposes. The Egyptian government has also helped [perpetuate](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/america-gives-egypt-free-armored-vehicles-and-money-egypt-gives-america-a-slap-in-the-face/2016/05/29/b4f5376c-235b-11e6-8690-f14ca9de2972_story.html?utm_term=.f3318db4306b) anti-Americanism and conspiracy theories despite receiving 20 percent of its defense budget from U.S. military aid.

Egyptian’s government’s goal isn’t really to fight terror – it’s really about repressing dissent

Note to reader: The Tahrir Square was a massacre of over 800 people by government forces

Muhammad Mansour 2017 (Muhammad Mansour is an Egyptian journalist, who covered the Arab uprisings, and writes about Egyptian affairs, the Sinai insurgency and broader Middle Eastern issues.) 15 May 2017 “US aid to Egypt: Wrong but inevitable” <http://www.middleeasteye.net/columns/us-aid-egypt-wrong-inevitable-1572718623>

“The primary priority of the Egyptian military and general Sisi is not to fight terrorism or improve governance,” Tom Malinowski, assistant secretary of state for democracy, human rights and labour from 2014 to 2017 said at the Senate hearing on 25 April. “It has been to make sure that what happened in 2011 in the Tahrir square uprising can never ever, ever, ever happen again.”

Repression helped create one of al-Qaeda’s leaders

Doug Bandow 2014 (Senior Fellow at the Cato Institute; former Special Assistant to President Ronald Reagan; Senior Fellow in International Religious Persecution with the Institute on Religion and Public Policy; graduate of Florida State Univ. and Stanford Law School.) 1 September 2014 “Egypt's Al-Sisi Establishes Tyranny Mubarak Only Dreamed Of: Washington Should Stop Playing The Fool By Praising Cairo's Commitment To Democracy” <https://www.forbes.com/sites/dougbandow/2014/09/01/egypts-al-sisi-establishes-tyranny-mubarak-only-dreamed-of-washington-should-stop-playing-the-fool-by-praising-cairos-commitment-to-democracy/2/#1e8f2e3e245e>

Yet repression is unlikely to deliver stability.  Mubarak’s jails helped turn Brotherhood activist Ayman al-Zawahiri into al-Qaeda’s leader.  Daniel Benjamin and Steven Simon, both formerly with the State Department, wrote:  “Repression of Islamists in Egypt was an essential stage in the emergence of contemporary jihadism.  As splinter groups that were significantly more radical than the Muslim Brotherhood formed, Islamists became more violent.”

Egypt’s repressive policies encourage more jihadi terrorism

Elliott Abrams 2017 (Senior Fellow for Middle Eastern Studies, Council on Foreign Relations) testimony before the Senate Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs 25 April 2017 “United States Assistance for Egypt” <https://www.appropriations.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/042517-%20Abrams%20Testimony.pdf>

I would suggest that in our general battle against terrorism, Mr. Chairman, Egypt is acting in ways that will in fact make it not an asset but a liability—indeed will make it a jihadi factory. It is estimated that there are 60,000 political prisoners in Egypt today—meaning individuals who did not commit crimes of violence. If you take thousands of young men, toss them into prison, beat and torture them, incarcerate them for lengthy periods with actual jihadis, what comes out at the end of the process is in fact more jihadis.

Misdirected tactics kill civilians

Elliott Abrams 2017 (Senior Fellow for Middle Eastern Studies, Council on Foreign Relations) testimony before the Senate Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs 25 April 2017 “United States Assistance for Egypt” <https://www.appropriations.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/042517-%20Abrams%20Testimony.pdf>

While no one can doubt the desire of the Egyptian government to end terrorism and defeat Islamic State in Sinai, its tactics appear to be failing. Just as the terrorist attacks have become routine, so too have heavyhanded Egyptian responses resulting in civilian casualties. Egyptian security forces continue to accidentally kill considerable numbers of civilians in counterterror operations. In one incident, a group of tourists was mistakenly bombed in 2015. In January, a drone strike caused 10 civilian deaths. On April 20, a video surfaced on Twitter “that appears to show members of the Egyptian military shooting unarmed detainees to death at point-blank range in the Sinai Peninsula and staging the killings to look as if they had happened in combat.” Details surrounding the incident remain unclear.

Humanitarian efforts blocked

Doug Bandow 2018 (senior fellow at the Cato Institute, specializing in foreign policy and civil liberties. He worked as special assistant to President Ronald Reagan; has been a regular commentator on ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN, Fox News Channel, and MSNBC; JD from Stanford Univ.) 30 April 2018 “Why Washington Turns a Blind Eye to Egypt’s Thugocracy” <https://www.cato.org/publications/commentary/why-washington-turns-blind-eye-egypts-thugocracy> [Brackets added]

El-Sisi surpassed Mubarak by destroying the independent sector. Last year the regime implemented legislation criminalizing the operations of [Non-Governmental Organizations] NGOs focused on human rights and micromanaging the work of all others. Even mundane administrative decisions require regime approval. Among the groups killed by el-Sisi: the Al-Nadeem Center for the Rehabilitation of Victims of Violence and Torture, which both exposed the government’s reliance on torture and helped those tortured by the state. I visited the center four years ago, which is when staffers told me that the abuses were worse than under Mubarak.

SOLVENCY / ADVOCACY

No justification for arming a regime that violates human rights and at war with its own people

Sen. Rand Paul 2022. (R-Kentucky) 20 May 2022 “Why I want to kill Biden’s massive US-Egyptian arms deal” <https://responsiblestatecraft.org/2022/02/10/why-i-want-to-kill-the-2-5-billion-egyptian-arms-deal/> (accessed 19 May 2022)

President Biden pledged to put human rights at “[the center of our foreign policy](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/08/16/remarks-by-president-biden-on-afghanistan/).” Torture of children. Arbitrary arrests of dissidents and journalists. Sham elections and the violent crushing of peaceful opposition. If these are not gross violations of human rights, nothing is.  The United States cannot proudly affirm human rights to be at the center of our foreign policy, while it arms a regime at war with its own people.

Arms export pressure on Egypt works, based on past experience, and we should do it completely and sustain it

Dr. Tamara Cofman Wittes 2020. (PhD in government from Georgetown Univ.; senior fellow in the [Center for Middle East Policy](https://www.brookings.edu/center-landing/center-for-middle-east-policy/) at Brookings, where she focuses on U.S. policy in the Middle East. Former deputy assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern affairs) 10 Sept 2020 “The needed reset for the US-Egypt relationship” <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2020/09/10/the-needed-reset-for-the-us-egypt-relationship/> (accessed 21 May 2022)

In the face of these concerns, Congress has placed increasingly strict conditions on a portion of U.S. military assistance to Cairo. This conditionality has had some impact in delivering Egyptian responses to specific U.S. concerns on human rights and security. I think even Trump administration officials would agree it’s been a useful tool. These recent efforts show that focused, sustained pressure, with clear demands consistently communicated, can have some, limited impact on Egyptian actions. I agree with my colleagues that this conditionality should be renewed, and the national security waivers should be removed to ensure congressional will is enforced.

Voting Criterion: If our “influence” either way (with or without Egypt military aid) is a wash, we should side with our values

Fred Kaplan 2013 (Pulitzer Prize winning journalist) 16 August 2013 “Stop Paying the Generals” <https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2013/08/president-obama-should-end-aid-to-egypt-the-countrys-generals-act-on-their-interests-not-the-military-assistance.html> (accessed 20 May 2022)

It may well be that our influence—or lack thereof—will be the same, regardless of whether we keep aiding the Egyptian military. If it’s unclear what course of action will best serve U.S. *interests*, maybe that leaves a clear path to pursue U.S. *values* instead.

Deficits harm our economy (extra advantage of cutting foreign aid spending)

Dr William Gale and Benjamin Harris 2011. (Gale - PhD in economics, Stanford Univ.; senior fellow at the Brookings Institution; former assistant professor in the Dept of Economics at UCLA, and a senior economist for the Council of Economic Advisers under President George H.W. Bush. Harris - master’s degree in economics from Cornell Univ and a master’s degree in quantitative methods from Columbia Univ; senior research associate with the Economics Studies Program at Brookings Institution) “Reforming Taxes and Raising Revenue: Part of the Fiscal Solution” May 2011 <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/05_fiscal_solution_gale_harris.pdf> (accessed 20 May 2022)

The second broad effect is on national saving. A reduction in the deficit raises public saving, which typically results in higher national saving (national saving is the sum of household, corporate, and government saving). This effect is often ignored in discussions of tax policy and economic growth, but it can be important. Even in the absence of a financial crisis, sustained deficits have deleterious long-term effects, as they translate into lower national savings, higher interest rates, and increased indebtedness to foreign investors, all of which reduce future national income. Gale and Orszag (2004b) estimate that a 1 percent of GDP increase in the deficit will raise interest rates by 25 to 35 basis points and reduce national saving by 0.5 to 0.8 percentage points. Engen and Hubbard (2004) obtain similar results with respect to interest rates. Thus, relative to a balanced budget, a deficit equal to 6 percent of GDP would raise interest rates by at least 150 basis points and reduce the national saving rate by at least 3 percent of GDP. The IMF (2010) estimates that, in advanced economies, an increase of 10 percentage points in the initial debt/GDP ratio reduces future GDP growth rates by 0.15 percentage points.

DISADVANTAGE RESPONSES

A/T “Alienate Egypt as an ally / Hurts US foreign interests” – Egypt has no impact on any significant foreign policy issues

Andrew Miller 2018 (Deputy Director for Policy Project on Middle East Democracy) Testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Committee - Middle East and North Africa Subcommittee Hearing Egypt: Security, Human Rights, and Reform, 24 July 2018 <https://carnegieendowment.org/2018/07/24/security-human-rights-and-reform-in-egypt-pub-76943> (accessed 20 May 2022)

The first key characteristic of today’s Egypt is that the country is no longer as important to U.S. interests as it once was. President al-Sisi has been unable to reverse years of internal state decay and, with the increasing assertiveness of wealthy Gulf states, Egypt has ceased to be a regional power in the Middle East. The Egyptian government currently possesses neither the wealth, the military power, nor the administrative efficiency to shape events and outcomes elsewhere in the region, with the exceptions of Libya and Gaza. Even the country’s soft power across the region has dissipated. The days when the United States could rely upon Egypt to serve as an anchor for U.S. interests in the region are long gone. Egypt is not the key to resolving the crisis in Syria, is not at the forefront of efforts to roll back Iranian influence in the Middle East, and lacks the expeditionary capability to deploy outside of its borders in support of the United States.While Egypt has influence over the economic situation in Gaza due to its control of the border, it has scant influence in the West Bank, and is in no position to deliver the Palestinians to a peace agreement with Israel.

A/T “Alienate Egypt as an ally” – Not much of an ally, they harm US interests by supporting Russia, N. Korea, Libya, and Syria.

Seth Binder and William Hartung 2018 (Binder - expert in security assistance and Middle East affairs at Strategic Research & Analysis. Hartung is the director of the Arms and Security Project at the Center for International Policy) 28 March 2018 “Time To Rethink U.S. Military Aid To Egypt” <https://lobelog.com/time-to-rethink-u-s-military-aid-to-egypt/> (accessed 20 May 2022)

In addition, Egypt’s foreign policy has increasingly acted counter to U.S. interests. In Libya, in partnership with the United Arab Emirates, Egypt has actively supported anti-Islamist strongman General Khalifa Hiftar in opposition to [U.S. policy](https://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2017/09/274402.htm) of neutrality and a [United Nations](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/03/libya-embargo-violations-panel-report-findings-unsc-180301080019627.html) arms embargo. President al-Sisi has all but come out in [support](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/syria/2017-02-12/egypt-picks-sides-syrian-war) of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad through a thinly veiled call to respect national sovereignty. Al-Sisi has also come to a preliminary agreement to [allow](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/30/world/middleeast/russia-egypt-air-bases.html) the Russians to use Egypt’s airspace and military bases. For this access, the Russians have [sold](https://fas.org/sgp/crs/weapons/R44716.pdf) nearly $10 billion in military equipment to Egypt since 2008, including a recent deal for [50 Russian MiG-29 fighter jets](http://www.egyptindependent.com/russia-start-moving-50-mig-29-fighters-egypt-tass/). The Egyptians have also skirted sanctions, [providing](http://pomed.org/blog-post/egypts-north-korea-connection/) economic and military support to North Korea including, according to a New York Times [report](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/03/world/middleeast/egypt-north-korea-sanctions-arms-dealing.html), the purchase of 30,000 North Korean rocket-propelled grenades by the Arab Organization for Industrialization, one of Egypt’s main military-run businesses.

A/T “Alienate Egypt as an ally” – Non-Unique: Egypt already opposes US interests in the region in Status Quo

Andrew Miller 2018 (Deputy Director for Policy Project on Middle East Democracy) Testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Committee - Middle East and North Africa Subcommittee Hearing Egypt: Security, Human Rights, and Reform, 24 July 2018 <https://carnegieendowment.org/2018/07/24/security-human-rights-and-reform-in-egypt-pub-76943> (accessed 20 May 2022)

The third characteristic of today’s Egypt is that it is an extremely difficult partner for the United States. The Cold War consensus that held together the U.S.-Egyptian relationship no longer holds, and Egyptian interests often diverge from those of the United States. For example, Egypt has continued its political, economic, and military cooperation with North Korea, helping Pyongyang to acquire badly needed foreign currency, at the precise time the Trump administration has sought to apply maximum pressure on King Jong Un’s regime. Egypt is also determined to build a closer relationship with Russia, regardless of how the United States treats Egypt. And, at the United Nations Security Council, Egypt has opposed U.S. positions on Syria and Israel.

A/T “Egypt breaks treaty and starts war with Israel” – Won’t happen regardless of whether we give aid or not

Doug Bandow 2018 (senior fellow at the Cato Institute, specializing in foreign policy and civil liberties. He worked as special assistant to President Ronald Reagan; has been a regular commentator on ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN, Fox News Channel, and MSNBC; JD from Stanford Univ.) 30 April 2018 “Why Washington Turns a Blind Eye to Egypt’s Thugocracy” <https://www.cato.org/publications/commentary/why-washington-turns-blind-eye-egypts-thugocracy> (accessed 20 May 2022)

Alas, the United States and other Western governments have gone soft on Egyptian repression because they value stability more than liberty. They assume that only obsequious support can preserve Egypt as an ally. However, Cairo is not going to war upon Israel, whether or not Washington subsidizes el-Sisi’s dictatorship. Interdicting traffic through the Suez Canal would be self-defeating for any Egyptian government. And the regime would retain significant incentive—access to spare parts and training for U.S.-supplied weapons, for instance—to maintain positive contacts with the West.

A/T “Egypt needs U.S. equipment” – They don’t use it for anything.

Andrew Miller and Richard Sokolsky 2018 (Miller - former director for Egypt on the National Security Council and current deputy director for policy at the Project on Middle East Democracy and a nonresident scholar at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Sokolsky - nonresident senior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. He served in the State Department for 37 years and was a member of the Secretary of State’s Office of Policy Planning from 2005-2015) 27 February 2018 “What Has $49 Billion in Foreign Military Aid Bought Us? Not Much” <http://www.theamericanconservative.com/articles/what-has-49-billion-in-foreign-military-aid-bought-us-not-much/> (accessed 20 May 2022)

Meanwhile, Middle Eastern militaries have exploited arms sales to buttress their prestige and to support local patronage networks, both of which help to sustain their dominant position in domestic politics. Egypt’s procurement of over 1,000 M1A1 Abrams tanks, for instance, has less to do with their military value than with the Egyptian jobs supported by a [co-production plant](https://www.defensenews.com/home/2015/11/01/as-us-egypt-tensions-thaw-m1a1-abrams-tank-co-production-to-resume/) in country. The Egyptian Armed Forces have so far opted not to deploy M1A1s in combat in the restive Sinai Peninsula.

A/T “Egypt needs US weapons for security” – Egypt’s arms imports are misused, don’t help security

William Hartung and Seth Binder 2020. (Hartung is the director of the Arms and Security Program at the Center for International Policy and co-director of the Center’s Sustainable Defense Task Force . Binder is the Advocacy Officer at POMED. Previously, he served as the program manager and research associate at the Center for International Policy’s Security Assistance Monitor program “U.S. SECURITY ASSISTANCE TO EGYPT Examining the Return on Investment” May 2020 <https://pomed.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/200506_SecurityAssistanceToEgypt.pdf> (accessed 20 May 2022)

Decades of nearly unconditional military aid have created a sense of entitlement within the Egyptian military and among its political leaders. They expect continued high levels of U.S. assistance, despite their lack of regard for U.S. interests and concerns. Instead of using the assistance to develop the military’s capabilities and advance shared national security interests, the Egyptian government has misused the aid for patronage and prestige. A/T

“Egypt killing terrorists” – Reports are exaggerated, and a lot of them are actually civilians

Maged Mandour 2017 (political analyst and writes the “Chronicles of the Arab Revolt” column for Open Democracy) 16 March 2017 “The Heavy Civilian Toll in Sinai” <http://carnegieendowment.org/sada/68296> (accessed 20 May 2022)

In addition, the number of casualties during counterterrorism operations far exceeds the estimated number of Wilayat Sinai fighters. Since the start of the large counterterrorism “Operation Martyr’s Right” in September 2015, the Egyptian military has [reported](https://timep.org/commentary/quarterly-report-2016-q2/) that 2,529 militants were killed and 2,481 others arrested as of December 2016. However, foreign intelligence agencies, including the [Central Intelligence Agency](https://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2015/257523.htm) (CIA) and the [Israel Defense Forces](https://twitter.com/IDFSpokesperson/status/724889560627421188?lang=en), estimated in mid-2016 that the size of Wilayat Sinai [ranges](https://timep.org/esw/profiles/terror-groups/wilayat-sinai/) from several hundred to a thousand militants, far below the numbers of reported killings. This disconnect can be explained by faulty intelligence or by inflating of the number of militants killed to include civilian deaths among militant deaths. The Egyptian government has a [history](http://www.mepc.org/articles-commentary/commentary/tragic-killing-mexican-tourists-egypt-sparks-criticism) of attacking civilians mistaken for militants. [Local sources](http://www.irinnews.org/report/99299/civilians-caught-egypt%E2%80%99s-counter-terrorism-operations) in Sinai back up the existence of such incidents, including an invented attack on a police station in Sheikh Zuweid that was used to justify the deaths of civilians in September 2013.

A/T “They need US weapons to fight terrorism” – They need better policies, not more weapons

Andrew Miller 2018 (Deputy Director for Policy Project on Middle East Democracy) Testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Committee - Middle East and North Africa Subcommittee Hearing Egypt: Security, Human Rights, and Reform, 24 July 2018 <https://carnegieendowment.org/2018/07/24/security-human-rights-and-reform-in-egypt-pub-76943> (accessed 20 May 2022)

Even where the United States and Egypt share common interests, Egypt has often rejected U.S. cooperation and assistance. Counterterrorism (CT) is a case in point. While Egypt has gladly accepted U.S. military equipment funded by American taxpayer money, it has largely spurned other forms of support that are arguably more important to its CT success, including training and advice. This is particularly detrimental to CT in Egypt, as the Egyptian military’s struggles against the ISIS affiliate in the Sinai appear to be a function of poor doctrine and tactics rather than equipment shortfalls. Moreover, al-Sisi’s government has ignored U.S. concerns that its political repression and mass incarceration of peaceful actors is fueling radicalization trends in the country, in effect creating new terrorists.

A/T “Harms Egyptian security” - No data exists to support claims that US military aid helps Egypt

Government Accountability Office 2015 (The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) is an independent, nonpartisan agency that works for Congress. Often called the "congressional watchdog," GAO investigates how the federal government spends taxpayer dollars) February 2015 “U.S. Government Should Examine Options for Using Unobligated Funds and Evaluating Security Assistance Programs” <https://www.gao.gov/assets/670/668448.pdf>

State solicited proposals for this evaluation in May 2014 but did not receive any responses from the eligible evaluation firms. According to the State official overseeing the solicitation process, some of the eligible firms reported having concerns about being able to carry out an evaluation given the uncertain security environment in Egypt. State officials also noted that the department has never before attempted to holistically evaluate security assistance to Egypt or any other country, and the size and complexity of security assistance to Egypt make it especially challenging to conduct a formal evaluation. The State official overseeing the solicitation process for the proposed evaluation noted the difficulty of determining how security assistance contributes to broader strategic goals and said that there is limited information to serve as the basis for an evaluation because neither State nor DOD has established performance metrics, nor has either agency consistently collected performance data on the FMF program. In addition, this official noted that a foreign military such as the Egyptian Armed Forces might be reluctant to cooperate on an evaluation of military capabilities, as it might be perceived as intelligence gathering

A/T “Egypt will break the Camp David treaty and start a war with Israel” – Won’t happen. Treaty doesn’t depend on US aid

Andrew Miller 2018 (Deputy Director for Policy Project on Middle East Democracy) Testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Committee - Middle East and North Africa Subcommittee Hearing Egypt: Security, Human Rights, and Reform, 24 July 2018 <https://carnegieendowment.org/2018/07/24/security-human-rights-and-reform-in-egypt-pub-76943> (accessed 20 May 2022)

The risks of cutting Egypt’s military assistance and retaining human rights conditionality are often exaggerated. Contrary to popular belief, the United States did not undertake an indefinite commitment to provide Egypt with any specific level of military support at Camp David; reducing military assistance to Egypt would thus not put the United States in breach of the Israeli-Egyptian Peace Treaty. Moreover, the Peace Treaty is no longer dependent on U.S. mediation; Israel and Egypt have become solid, if quiet, allies.

A/T “Egypt will buy from Russia” – Non-unique; they already do.

Seth Binder and William Hartung 2018 (Binder - expert in security assistance and Middle East affairs at Strategic Research & Analysis. Hartung is the director of the Arms and Security Project at the Center for International Policy) 28 March 2018 “Time To Rethink U.S. Military Aid To Egypt” <https://lobelog.com/time-to-rethink-u-s-military-aid-to-egypt/> (accessed 20 May 2022)

Al-Sisi has also come to a preliminary agreement to [allow](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/30/world/middleeast/russia-egypt-air-bases.html) the Russians to use Egypt’s airspace and military bases. For this access, the Russians have [sold](https://fas.org/sgp/crs/weapons/R44716.pdf) nearly $10 billion in military equipment to Egypt since 2008, including a recent deal for [50 Russian MiG-29 fighter jets](http://www.egyptindependent.com/russia-start-moving-50-mig-29-fighters-egypt-tass/).

A/T “Harms U.S. arms industry” – Industry profits growing

Andrew Miller and Richard Sokolsky 2018 (Miller is a former director for Egypt on the National Security Council and current deputy director for policy at the Project on Middle East Democracy and a nonresident scholar at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Sokolsky - a nonresident senior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. He served in the State Department for 37 years and was a member of the Secretary of State’s Office of Policy Planning from 2005-2015) 27 February 2018 “What Has $49 Billion in Foreign Military Aid Bought Us? Not Much” <http://www.theamericanconservative.com/articles/what-has-49-billion-in-foreign-military-aid-bought-us-not-much/> (accessed 20 May 2022)

Under existing conditions, U.S. interests and taxpayers are not the primary beneficiaries of military assistance and arms sales. Instead, it is U.S. defense contractors and regional militaries that often prioritize domestic political influence over operational capabilities. In recent years, the U.S. arms industry has registered [record profits](http://usblogs.pwc.com/industrialinsights/2017/06/20/aerospace-strong-forecast-for-2017/), a pattern likely to continue given President Trump’s initiative to expedite government approval of weapons sales. Indeed, the State Department cleared a record number of arms sales in Fiscal Year 2017 ($75.9 billion). While champions of the U.S. arms industry defend it as an engine of job growth, [economists](https://news.brown.edu/articles/2017/05/jobscow) have found that investments in other industries are more efficient job generators.

A/T “Reduced US influence” – Turn: Arms exports to Egypt reduce American influence on human rights or any other issue

CNN 2022. “Biden administration authorizes $2.5 billion in arms sales to Egypt despite human rights concerns[“](https://www.cnn.com/profiles/jennifer-hansler) 25 Jan 2022 <https://www.cnn.com/2022/01/25/politics/us-arms-sales-egypt/index.html> (accessed 18 May 2022)

"The human rights conditions President Biden attached to our aid to Egypt were not a multiple choice menu for President Sisi to choose from — they were meant to be met in full. If the Egyptian government cherry picks a few concessions from the President's list, while intensifying its broader campaign of repression, arbitrary detention, and extrajudicial punishments, that would defeat the purpose of the administration's efforts," Democratic Reps. Don Beyer of Virginia and Tom Malinowski of New Jersey, the co-chairs of Congress' Egypt Human Rights Caucus, said in a statement Tuesday. "Rewarding such a cynical move would make it even less likely that Egypt will take our requests on human rights or any other issue seriously in the future.

A/T “Lost US influence” – Turn: Status Quo arms sales policy is what loses our influence

Melissa Etehad 2018 (master's in journalism from Columbia University and a bachelor’s in international affairs from UC San Diego and has reported from the Middle East and Europe. She previously worked at Al Jazeera English and the Washington Post's foreign desk) LOS ANGELES TIMES 15 Aug 2018 The human rights situation in Egypt is getting worse. Could withholding American military aid help? http://www.latimes.com/world/middleeast/la-fg-military-aid-egypt-20180815-story.html (accessed 20 May 2022)

Releasing military assistance to Egypt without seeing improvements in human rights taints the perception that the U.S. is serious in holding Egypt accountable, said Andrew Miller, deputy director for policy at the Project on Middle East Democracy. “Releasing the money removes pressure on the Egyptian government to meet conditions that were originally attached to that funding,” Miller said. “Egyptians will look back and see that this is further evidence Americans aren’t serious about human rights concerns. It hurts the idea of using assistance to leverage influence.”

A/T “Lost US influence” - US arms exports don’t buy any influence for human rights in Egypt

Andrew Miller and Richard Sokolsky 2018 (Miller is a former director for Egypt on the National Security Council and current deputy director for policy at the Project on Middle East Democracy and a nonresident scholar at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Sokolsky is currently a nonresident senior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. He served in the State Department for 37 years and was a member of the Secretary of State’s Office of Policy Planning from 2005-2015) 27 February 2018 “What Has $49 Billion in Foreign Military Aid Bought Us? Not Much” <http://www.theamericanconservative.com/articles/what-has-49-billion-in-foreign-military-aid-bought-us-not-much/> (accessed 20 May 2022)

Likewise, the track record of using security assistance to increase U.S. influence in the region is no more encouraging. While recipient countries are happy to utter platitudes about increased cooperation, they generally—and successfully—resist Washington’s requests to modify their policies in exchange for assistance. Ongoing U.S. assistance to Egypt did not leave Cairo open to American pleas to desist from forcibly dispersing two largely non-violent sit-ins in the capital, in which over 800 people were massacred.