Negative Brief: Egypt Arms Sales - good

By Rebecca Sumner and “Coach Vance” Trefethen

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

The Affirmative plan will eliminate or suspend U.S. military aid (US-financed arms exports: We give Egypt the money and they have to spend it on US military equipment, which is then exported to Egypt. It’s “aid” and “arms sales/arms exports” at the same time.) to Egypt. Military Aid is not actually money going to Egypt for them to spend wherever they please, but the United States gives them an account with a certain amount of money, and they can only use that money on arms sold by U.S. manufacturers.

Negative will argue that U.S. manufacturers will be hurt, because they’ll lose the deals they could make on weapons sales to Egypt. Not only that, but Egypt doesn’t have enough resources for this cut to military aid, and they won’t be able to fight terrorism like they’re doing now. Ending military aid would cause Egypt to break away from alliance with the U.S., harming US foreign policy interests, weakening US influence in the Middle East, and destabilizing the entire region. And it would motivate Egypt to drop out of its Peace Treaty with Israel, further increasing the risks of war and instability in the already volatile Middle East.

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Negative: Egypt Arms Sales - good

SOURCE INDICTMENT

Human Rights Watch

HRW is biased, corrupt and all about ideology, not facts

Michael Rubin 2020 (Resident Scholar, American Enterprise Institute) 1 Apr 2020 “Human Rights Watch reports are no longer credible” <https://www.aei.org/op-eds/human-rights-watch-reports-are-no-longer-credible/> (accessed 21 May 2022)

After the American Friends Service Committee, for example[, embraced the genocidal Khmer Rouge](https://www.aei.org/articles/putting-politics-before-pacifism/), who should trust them on [North Korea](https://www.afsc.org/office/north-korea) or the Hamas-run [Gaza Strip](https://www.afsc.org/action/end-blockade-gaza)? In recent years, Human Rights Watch has also strayed from the objective to the subjective and from the neutral to the corrupt. More than a decade ago, Sarah Leah Whitson, then-executive director for the Middle East and North Africa at Human Rights Watch and now managing director at the Quincy Institute, [sought to raise money](https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB124528343805525561) in Saudi Arabia by promising to be even more critical of Israel. When exposed, Human Rights Watch backed off that action but, last month, Ken Roth, the organization’s executive director was at it again, [agreeing](https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/op-eds/human-rights-watchs-saudi-funding-scandal-tarnishes-the-ngo-industry) to limit the group’s work on gays in the Middle East in exchange for a cash infusion from a Saudi businessman. This is not the first time Roth has subordinated his group’s mission for the [sake of](https://www.aei.org/foreign-and-defense-policy/can-human-rights-watch-salvaged/) [politics](https://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:AKkUObQFzuEJ:https://www.commentarymagazine.com/michael-rubin/its-time-for-hrws-ken-roth-to-go/+&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us&client=firefox-b-e) or cash. The rot at Human Rights Watch has gone so deep that the group [has even](https://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:qCi_4tfoaTIJ:https://www.commentarymagazine.com/michael-rubin/what-was-human-rights-watch-thinking/+&cd=2&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us) [partnered with](https://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:4TTvXX9A2OgJ:https://www.commentarymagazine.com/michael-rubin/human-rights-watch-should-rescind-reports/+&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us) and incorporated reporting from a group launched by a designated al Qaeda [financier](https://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/jl2249.aspx). The problem has grown so bad under Roth that, in 2009, the group’s founder took to the pages of the New York Times to [lament](https://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/20/opinion/20bernstein.html) how off the rails Human Rights Watch had become. Too many of its reports today are short on methodology and long on ideology.

HRW evidence should have zero weight in policy debates

Michael Rubin 2020 (Resident Scholar, American Enterprise Institute) 1 Apr 2020 “Human Rights Watch reports are no longer credible” <https://www.aei.org/op-eds/human-rights-watch-reports-are-no-longer-credible/> (accessed 21 May 2022)

The Islamic Republic’s nuclear program is a matter of [life and death](https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2020-03-08/iran-and-coronavirus-nuclear-weapons-are-the-bigger-threat). So too are Iran’s efforts to fight the coronavirus. Hundreds of thousands of Iranians have also died over the Islamic Republic’s 40 years because of the regime’s corruption and ideological prerogatives. It is important to consider and debate such weighty matters to their fullest. But no argument can be won when relying on an organization that coasts on its reputation but has repeatedly proven itself to pride partisanship and policy prerogatives over objectivity and adherence to its founding principles. Perhaps when Human Rights Watch has new leadership, it can restore itself to its moral and academic high ground. Until then, however, it should have no weight in the U.S. and human rights policy debates.

MINOR REPAIR: Change some of the military aid to make it more specific to anti-terrorism requirements

Egypt needs equipment specific to anti-terrorism efforts. Example: Improvised Explosive Device (IED) detectors

Yoram Schweitzer and Dr. Ofir Winter 2017 (Schweitzer—expert on international terrorism, Senior Research Fellow for Institute for National Security Studies (INSS) and head of the INSS Program on Terrorism and Low Intensity Conflict; formerly in Israeli intelligence community ; served as a consultant on counter-terror strategies to the prime minister's office and the Ministry of Defense, Head of the Counter International Terror Section in the Israeli Defense Force; MA in military and diplomatic history from Tel Aviv Univ. Winter— research fellow at INSS, PhD from Dept of Middle Eastern and African History at Tel Aviv Univ. ) INSS Insight No. 996 29 Nov 2017 “The War on Terrorism in Sinai: A Watershed?” <http://www.inss.org.il/publication/war-terrorism-sinai-watershed/> (accessed 21 May 2022)

It is clear that the Islamic State and its supporters seek to continue the engagement in other locations around the world, including Egypt. It is therefore vital that Egypt receive increased aid from its partners in the global war on Salafi jihadist terrorism. Support from the United States in the form of Tweets from President Trump is insufficient. An organized US effort to provide essential assistance is needed, including specific equipment for counterterrorism (for example IED detectors), intelligence, and operational and intelligence consulting to take advantage of the United States’ experience in fighting the Islamic State in other arenas.

INHERENCY

1. Status Quo “small cuts” policy is best

Status Quo is sanctioning with small cuts in military exports to Egypt, while some progress on human rights was made

Deutsche Welle 2022 (German news agency, pronounced “Doy Chuh Vell Uh”)29 Jan 2022 U.S. cuts military aid for Egypt after arms sale <https://frontline.thehindu.com/dispatches/us-cuts-military-aid-for-egypt-after-arms-sale/article38344792.ece> (accessed 21 May 2022)

Secretary of State Antony Blinken approved the release of $300 million in aid to Egypt, while withholding another $130 million unless the government addressed "specific human-rights related conditions" by the end of January. "The deadline for meeting those conditions will soon pass,'' the State Department said. "The (government of Egypt) made notable progress on the conditions but to date has not met them all. Therefore, after January 30, the secretary intends to reprogram the $130 million to other national security priorities.'' The AP news agency cited U.S. officials as saying that the withheld military aid and the January 25 arms sale are unrelated.

Small cuts in military exports sends the right message on human rights but doesn’t break the relationship and harm the U.S.

David Schenker 2021 (Senior Fellow at The Washington Institute and director of the Program on Arab Politics. He is the former Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs) Getting Tough with Egypt Won’t Work 25 May 2021 <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/getting-tough-egypt-wont-work> (accessed 21 May 2022)

Ultimately, U.S. aid should be commensurate with the value of the relationship and sufficient to protect U.S. equities. Striking $300 million—but without implementing additional cuts or sanctions—would send an unmistakable signal of Washington’s frustrations while still allowing the two capitals to manage their relations based on mutual interests. This funding reduction may also prove sustainable in future annual authorizations past 2021. But cutting deeper could provoke a painful and self-defeating backlash, undermining Egyptian cooperation on Washington’s core interests and specific priorities (e.g., releasing wrongly detained American citizens; limiting further purchases of significant Russian weapons systems). At one time, the bilateral relationship may have been “strategic.” These days, Washington may have to settle for “productive.”

It’s already working: Egypt has started reforming following the $130 million cut

NEW YORK TIMES 2021 (journalists Mona El-Naggar and Lara Jakes) 16 Sept 2021 “U.S. and Egypt Put Improving Egypt’s Human Rights on the Agenda” <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/16/world/middleeast/egypt-human-rights.html> (accessed 21 May 2022)

Within days of each other, the United States and Egypt announced moves this week that, for the first time in years, would put human rights on the agenda in Egypt, a country that has become notorious for jailing activists, targeting journalists and squashing free speech. On Tuesday, the State Department notified Congress that it was withholding $130 million in military aid until Egypt meets specific human rights benchmarks. Biden administration officials said it was the first time that a secretary of state had refused to issue a formal national security waiver to provide the aid. Three days earlier, President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi of Egypt announced a new human rights strategy, laying out a plan to protect human rights for the first time in his seven years in power, apparently in response to international pressure. While the Biden move was incremental — blocking only $130 million out of the $1.3 billion in aid the United States gives Egypt each year — and any concrete effects of Mr. el-Sisi’s announcement remain to be seen, Egyptian rights advocates said the moves signaled progress after years of unchecked abuse by government authorities that has landed thousands in prisons, blocked hundreds of independent and opposition media websites, and brought [accusations of extrajudicial killings](https://www.hrw.org/report/2021/09/07/security-forces-dealt-them/suspicious-killings-and-extrajudicial-executions) by Egyptian security forces.

SIGNIFICANCE / HARMS

1. Egypt’s government doing better – aid cuts not justified

US should continue aid: Egyptian President Sisi is reforming and has majority support of the people

Dr. Ahmed Zewail updated 2015 (Nobel laureate for Chemistry (1999); professor at California Institute of Technology, serves on President’s Council of Advisors on Science and Technology, and is the president’s special envoy for science to the Middle East) 5 Nov 2014 **Updated** 5 Jan 2015, HUFFINGTON POST, “Why It Would Be a Big Mistake for the U.S. to Cut Aid to Egypt,” <https://www.huffingtonpost.com/ahmed-zewail/us-egypt-aid-sisi_b_6075224.html> (accessed 21 May 2022)

Besides the issues of security to its east (the Islamic State), to its west (Libya), and in the south (Yemen), there are internal issues — economic and unemployment factors — of grave concern. But despite this, Sisi has managed to get the majority of Egyptians behind him, taken serious steps toward reforming the ailing economy, and given hope to the country by initiating major national projects, such as the New Suez Canal and the new City of Science and Technology. He is the first president to form a Council of Advisors of scientists and engineers to aid him in solving major national problems. As the the Economist put it in a piece about Sisi’s first 100 days, the president, “has brought economic and diplomatic advances as well as hope to Egyptians wearied by years of political turmoil.” Threatening Egypt with aid cuts is not in the best interest of the U.S.-Egypt relationship. The issue is no longer Sisi alone. Rather, it is “We the People” who are also deciding on future relationships, not only with the U.S., but also with Israel.

2. Egypt is fighting terrorism

Egypt is controlling the terrorism threat, and cooperating with the U.S. and Israel

James Stavridis 2017 (retired four-star U.S. Navy admiral and NATO supreme allied commander; Dean of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts Univ.) 24 Feb 2017, “Egypt Desperately Needs a Friend Right Now,” <http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/02/24/egypt-desperately-needs-a-friend-right-now/> (accessed 21 May 2022)

Although Egypt is facing terrorism from within, including flickers of the so-called Islamic State trying to penetrate the country, the security and intelligence services are doing a reasonable job controlling the threat. They are watching both Libya to the west and events in Gaza to the east with a wary eye, and cooperation with both U.S. and Israeli intelligence services is good.

Egypt is working to defeat Radical Islamist threats. Pres. Sisi is doing exactly the right thing and we ought to support him

Joel C. Rosenberg 2017 (New York Times best-selling author; addressed audiences at the White House and the Pentagon, Members of Congress, Members of the Canadian Parliament.) 26 Feb 2017 “It’s time to rebuild ties with Egypt. Here are six reasons why the U.S. & West should work closely with President el-Sisi. He’s making progress, and he needs help.” <https://flashtrafficblog.wordpress.com/2017/02/26/its-time-to-rebuild-ties-with-egypt-here-are-six-reasons-why-the-u-s-west-should-work-closely-with-president-el-sisi-hes-making-progress-and-he-needs-help/> (accessed 21 May 2022)

He is working around the clock to defeat the Radical Islamist jihadist threat to Egypt and her neighbors. In the summer of 2013, after 22 million Egyptians signed a petition to remove the Brotherhood from power, el-Sisi and the Egyptian military brought down the Brotherhood regime that was strangling Egypt and was trying to impose Sharia law. They specifically removed Mohammed Morsi from power. Remember that Morsi, the Brotherhood leader who briefly rose to the presidency in Egypt, is the man who famously said during a speech, “The Koran is our constitution, the Prophet is our leader, jihad is our path and death in the name of Allah is our goal.” Many other Brotherhood leaders were arrested. El-Sisi and his colleagues were absolutely right to remove Morsi and the Brotherhood from power, despite widespread condemnations from President Obama and many world leaders. Since then, the former general has directed his military to crush the jihadists operating in the Sinai.

3. A/T: “Human rights violations in Egypt”— Safe before perfect

Egypt’s theme is ‘safe before perfect’—they’ll try to improve human rights, but top priority is terrorism

James Stavridis 2017 (retired four-star U.S. Navy admiral and NATO supreme allied commander; Dean of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts Univ.) 24 Feb 2017, “Egypt Desperately Needs a Friend Right Now,” <http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/02/24/egypt-desperately-needs-a-friend-right-now/> (accessed 21 May 2022)

Led by a technocratic team assembled by President Sisi, the Egyptian government’s theme is “safe before perfect,” meaning it will try to improve on human rights but the top priority is ensuring day-to-day safety on the streets and freedom from terrorism.

“Safe before perfect” is the right policy. We should be thanking Egypt’s president, not sanctioning him

Joel C. Rosenberg 2017 (New York Times best-selling author; addressed audiences at the White House and the Pentagon, Members of Congress, Members of the Canadian Parliament.) 26 Feb 2017 “It’s time to rebuild ties with Egypt. Here are six reasons why the U.S. & West should work closely with President el-Sisi. He’s making progress, and he needs help.” <https://flashtrafficblog.wordpress.com/2017/02/26/its-time-to-rebuild-ties-with-egypt-here-are-six-reasons-why-the-u-s-west-should-work-closely-with-president-el-sisi-hes-making-progress-and-he-needs-help/> (accessed 21 May 2022)

Yes, there are human rights violations in Egypt, serious economic challenges and numerous other issues that el-Sisi needs to address. One analyst of the Egyptian political scene notes that “the Egyptian government’s theme is ‘safe before perfect,’ meaning it will try to improve on human rights but the top priority is ensuring day-to-day safety on the streets and freedom from terrorism.” The U.S. government — along with the Christian and Jewish communities — should continue to press Egypt’s leaders to do the right thing, sooner rather than later. At the same time, we should also be thanking el-Sisi for what he has done right, and encouraging him to move further in the right direction. The West needs a safe and stable Egypt as a friend and an ally — now more than ever.

SOLVENCY

1. Not effective at changing Egypt

Imposing sanctions and conditions would have little hope of changing Egypt

David Schenker 2021 (Senior Fellow at The Washington Institute and director of the Program on Arab Politics. He is the former Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs) Getting Tough with Egypt Won’t Work 25 May 2021 <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/getting-tough-egypt-wont-work> (accessed 21 May 2022)

Fourth, the record of the past couple decades shows episodic successes but little evidence that U.S. conditionality and threats produce sustained changes in Egyptian policy. In other words, however legitimate and legal Washington’s demands may be, they stand a high chance of being ineffective—and, along the way, further eroding the relationship. In this situation, Washington may want to pause and reconsider its options before implementing sanctions and aid conditions that stand little hope of achieving their intended purpose.

Quantity of US military aid to Egypt is too small a percentage of their budget to matter much to them

David Schenker 2021 (Senior Fellow at The Washington Institute and director of the Program on Arab Politics. He is the former Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs) Getting Tough with Egypt Won’t Work 25 May 2021 <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/getting-tough-egypt-wont-work> (accessed 21 May 2022)

After so many years of frustrating, ignored appeals on these issues, conditioning funds is undoubtedly gratifying to many in Washington and abroad. The question for U.S. policymakers is whether curtailing $300 million in FMF—and perhaps more if CAATSA sanctions are imposed—will have a positive impact on Egypt’s behavior. If history is any guide, the answer is no. First, the value of U.S. assistance is not what it used to be: in 1978, U.S. aid constituted nearly 6.4% of Egypt’s GDP, but today it is less than half a percent.

Egyptian government absolutely will not relax its policies against political opposition, no matter what

David Schenker 2021 (Senior Fellow at The Washington Institute and director of the Program on Arab Politics. He is the former Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs) Getting Tough with Egypt Won’t Work 25 May 2021 <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/getting-tough-egypt-wont-work> (accessed 21 May 2022)

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Withholding arms as an instrument of coercion doesn’t produce desired benefits

Ray Rounds 2019. (a U.S. Air Force F-15E pilot and a Ph.D. candidate at Georgetown University in International Relations.) “The Case Against Arms Embargos, Even for Saudi Arabia.” April 16, 2019. <https://warontherocks.com/2019/04/the-case-against-arms-embargos-even-for-saudi-arabia/> (accessed 21 May 2022)

Whether it is delayed approval, as in the recent Kuwaiti F-18 purchase, an outright embargo, like Egyptian F-16s in 2013, or denial of technology transfer, as in the 2016 Turkish Patriot missile request, using the withholding of arms sales as a blunt force instrument of coercion is unlikely to produce desired strategic benefits and often backfires.

Arms sales have useful benefits and are not meant as a tool of coercion

Ray Rounds 2019. (a U.S. Air Force F-15E pilot and a Ph.D. candidate at Georgetown University in International Relations.) “The Case Against Arms Embargos, Even for Saudi Arabia.” April 16, 2019. <https://warontherocks.com/2019/04/the-case-against-arms-embargos-even-for-saudi-arabia/> (accessed 21 May 2022)

Arms sales are useful tools for maintaining communication, strengthening relationships, and keeping potential adversary states at bay. Conversely, as a blunt instrument of coercion (i.e. if you do not do X, we will suspend Y), they are likely losers.

2. Alternate sources

Egypt can get weapons from Russia and France instead

Congressional Research Service 2021. (non-partisan research agency of Congress) 30 Sept 2021“Egypt: Background and U.S. Relations” <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RL33003.pdf> (accessed 21 May 2022)

Since 2014, Egypt and Russia have strengthened their ties in a number of ways, including through arms deals and joint military exercises. Reportedly, Egypt is upgrading its aging fleet of legacy Soviet MiG-21 aircraft to a fourth generation MiG-29M variant. Egypt also has purchased 46 standard Ka-52 Russian attack helicopters for its air force, along with the naval version of the Ka52 for use on Egypt’s two French-procured Mistral-class helicopter dock vessels, and the S300VM surface-to-air missile defense system from Russia. In June 2020, Egyptian media reported that the Egyptian Army had agreed to purchase 500 Russian T-90 Main Battle Tanks from Uralvagonzavod, though reportedly both sides are still negotiating whether the tanks can be assembled in Egypt (M1A1 tanks have been assembled in Egypt).

3. Already tried & failed

US embargoed arms to Egypt in 2013 and it didn’t work

Ray Rounds 2019. (a U.S. Air Force F-15E pilot and a Ph.D. candidate at Georgetown University in International Relations.) “The Case Against Arms Embargos, Even for Saudi Arabia.” April 16, 2019. War on the Rocks. (a platform for analysis, commentary, debate and multimedia content on foreign policy and national security issues) <https://warontherocks.com/2019/04/the-case-against-arms-embargos-even-for-saudi-arabia/> (accessed 21 May 2022)

In 2015, Egypt agreed to purchase nearly 50 Russian MiG-29M/M2s and more than two-dozen French Rafales. This represented a shocking turn of events after more than three decades of purchasing only American-made fighter jets. It was also driven largely by the U.S. embargo put in place in 2013, after the Egyptian army’s removal of then-President Mohamed Morsi, who had won the presidency in a 2012 election. The embargo caused significant tension between the two states driven by “an Egyptian sense that they were at a point of mortal peril” while the United States was moralizing about democratic reforms. Remarkably, the United States lifted the embargo in 2015 with virtually no change in Egyptian policies, no official U.S. “democracy certification”, and Egyptian military support for the Saudi-led war in Yemen. The U.S. arms embargo as a tool of coercive change was an abject failure.

DISADVANTAGES

1. Weakens war on terrorism

Link: Egypt is crucial to U.S. war on terrorism

Embassy of Egypt, 2017 (Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt in Washington D.C.) (ethical disclosure: the article is undated but contains references to events that took place in April 2017), “Egypt-U.S. Relations: Security,” <http://www.egyptembassy.net/egypt-us-relations/strategic-partnership/security/> (accessed 21 May 2022)

As partners in the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL, Egypt works closely with the U.S. to provide intelligence and eliminate sources of terrorist funding and recruitment—in addition to a longstanding commitment to permit U.S. overflights of Egyptian airspace and expedited transit through the Suez Canal. The U.S. provides critical support to Egypt in the campaign to defeat ISIS and al Qaeda-linked terrorists in the Sinai Peninsula. This includes the delivery of U.S.-made mine resistant ambush protected (MRAP) vehicles in May 2016 and Apache helicopters in 2014 to help Egypt’s armed forces combat Islamist militants in Northern Sinai. This fight has important implications across the region and ongoing American military support to Egypt is a crucial component of the broader war against terror.

Link: The U.S. needs Egypt, and Egypt needs the U.S., to defeat ISIS and Al Qaeda

Frank G. Wisner and Dr. Paul Salem 2017 (**Wisner**—former U.S. ambassador to Egypt (1986–91); graduated from Princeton Univ with a B.A. **Salem**—the Vice President for Policy and Research at the Middle East Institute. Education: B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. from Harvard) 3 Apr 2017 THE NATIONAL INTEREST, “America and Egypt Need Each Other,” <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/america-egypt-need-each-other-19993>

First, Egypt is a key ally in the war on terror, and cooperation between the military, counterterrorism and intelligence institutions of the two countries—already strong—should be reaffirmed. The United States has an interest in helping Egypt defeat the ISIS threat in northern Sinai while reducing civilian casualties; it also has an interest in helping Egypt secure the Suez Canal and maintaining overall maritime security in the Red Sea. And Egypt can be helpful to the United States in the coalition to defeat ISIS and Al Qaeda.

Brink: U.S. military aid to Egypt is crucial. Islamic State gains a crucial foothold without it

Mohamed Soliman 2018 (security analyst in Egypt for the Washington Institute, which seeks to advance a balanced and realistic understanding of American interests in the Middle East and to promote the policies that secure them), 27 Apr 2018 “How America Can Help Egypt in its War On Terror,” <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/fikraforum/view/how-america-can-help-egypt-in-its-war-on-terror>

Faced with a stubborn common terrorist enemy, the United States should expand its military support for the Egyptian army’s capabilities, focusing more on training and equipping it to counter the Islamic State (IS) in Sinai. Without increased U.S. military aid, Egypt will be ill-equipped to counter the threat of IS, which will gain a crucial foothold that can expand into other parts of the Middle East.

Impact: Deaths from terrorism. Terrorists are active in the Sinai peninsula. Egypt’s military is reducing them but the threat remains high

Congressional Research Service 2021. (non-partisan research agency of Congress) 30 Sept 2021“Egypt: Background and U.S. Relations” <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RL33003.pdf> (accessed 21 May 2022)

Several terrorist groups based in the Sinai Peninsula (the Sinai) have been waging an insurgency against the Egyptian government since 2011. The Islamic State’s Sinai Province affiliate (IS-SP) is the most lethal terrorist organization in the peninsula. Since its inception in 2014, IS-SP has attacked the Egyptian military continually, targeted Coptic Christian individuals and places of worship, and occasionally fired rockets into Israel. To counter IS-SP in northern Sinai, the Egyptian armed forces and police have declared a state of emergency, imposed curfews and travel restrictions, and erected police checkpoints along main roads. Egyptian counterterrorism efforts in the Sinai appear to have reduced the frequency of terrorist attacks somewhat. According to one analyst, as of late 2020, militant attacks had fallen to 15 a month from 40 in late 2017. However, though the pace of IS-SP attacks have dropped, other experts believe that IS-SP is a significant security threat, especially when pitted against poorly trained Egyptian conscript soldiers serving in the Sinai. According to one report from IHS Markit, “Although militant capabilities have not returned to the levels of sophistication seen from 2014-16, the group has shown it still retains high level capabilities.”

Impact: Death & Destruction. Hundreds killed by Islamic State in Egypt

Reuters news service 2018. “Islamic State announces death of senior militant in Egypt's Sinai” 2 Oct 2018 <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-egypt-security/islamic-state-announces-death-of-senior-militant-in-egypts-sinai-idUSKCN1MC2BD> (accessed 21 May 2022)

The Egyptian military and police have been conducting an operation in Sinai since February to crush militants affiliated with Islamic State. The operation came after an attack on a mosque last November that killed hundreds of worshippers.

2. Oil crisis

Link: Cutting Egypt military aid would hurt US/Egypt military cooperation

David Schenker 2013 (director of the Program on Arab Politics at The Washington Institute. former Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs) 4 Sept 2013, “Inside the Complex World of U.S. Military Assistance to Egypt,” <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/inside-the-complex-world-of-u.s.-military-assistance-to-egypt> (accessed 21 May 2022)

Cutting assistance might also put key U.S. strategic interests in Egypt at risk, including counterterrorism cooperation, priority access to the Suez Canal for U.S. warships, and relatively unrestricted U.S. military overflights. Between 2001 and 2005, American military aircraft made more than 35,000 flights through Egyptian airspace, often on short notice, while U.S. military vessels made nearly 900 expedited Suez passages.

Link: U.S. needs Egypt’s military partnership to maintain free flow of oil

Dr. Ahmed Zewail updated 2015 (Nobel prize in Chemistry (1999); professor at the California Institute of Technology, serves on President’s Council of Advisors on Science and Technology, and special envoy for science to the Middle East) 5 Nov 2014 **Updated** 5 Jan 2015, HUFFINGTON POST, “Why It Would Be a Big Mistake for the U.S. to Cut Aid to Egypt,” <https://www.huffingtonpost.com/ahmed-zewail/us-egypt-aid-sisi_b_6075224.html> (accessed 21 May 2022)

Today, the U.S. needs Egypt’s partnership more than ever. In addition to the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel, which is crucial to U.S. interests both domestically and in the Middle East, the U.S. has had and will continue to need Egypt’s collaboration in the war on terrorism. The U.S. has full access to the Suez Canal, and the military joint exercises already in existence are necessary for such wars and for the free flow of oil. Last month, northern Sinai was struck by terrorists groups, killing more than 30 Army personnel and wounding tens of innocent Egyptians. The Islamic State to the country’s east must be stopped from getting into the Sinai and the oil fields in Iraq and Saudi Arabia.

Link & Brink: Friendly Egypt is “critical” and “indispensable” to US military forces in the Persian Gulf

David Schenker 2021 (Senior Fellow at The Washington Institute and director of the Program on Arab Politics. He is the former Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs) Getting Tough with Egypt Won’t Work 25 May 2021 <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/getting-tough-egypt-wont-work> (accessed 21 May 2022)

 A friendly Egypt is also critical for U.S. military requirements. In particular, Cairo’s provision of regular overflight rights and priority access to the Suez Canal in times of crisis is indispensable to maintaining a flexible and responsive U.S. force posture in the Red Sea, Persian Gulf, and other areas.

Link: Assuring flow of oil from the Persian Gulf is in the US national interest, even if we don’t import oil ourselves, because of the big economic impact

Robert E. Hunter 2019. (served as US ambassador to NATO (1993-98) and on the National Security Council staff throughout the Carter administration) “The Persian Gulf Crisis: Beyond the Carter Doctrine” 23 Sept 2019 <https://lobelog.com/the-persian-gulf-crisis-beyond-the-carter-doctrine/> (accessed 21 May 2022)

Assuring the flow of oil from the Persian Gulf is clearly in the U.S. national interest. That has continued to be so even though the United States is, at least for now, a net exporter of hydrocarbons and is not deeply dependent on Persian Gulf oil supplies for its own domestic needs. But given the integration of the global economy and oil markets, a shutting-in of a major part of these regional oil flows would damage not just customers for that oil, notably in Europe and Japan, but also the United States. At a minimum, the rise of global oil prices, which has already been taking place in the last few days, would heavily impact the U.S. economy.

Link: If the U.S. cuts aid, it could lose its military privileges in the region

Janosch Delcker 2013 (contributor to Deutsche Welle (DW), which is Germany’s international broadcaster) 10 July 2013, “US arms industry profits from aid funds to Egypt,” <http://www.dw.com/en/us-arms-industry-profits-from-aid-funds-to-egypt/a-17142225> (accessed 21 May 2022)

It seemed to be a difficult answer for Barack Obama. The US president appeared to weigh every word when he was asked during a TV interview in August why the US has not cut military aid to Egypt. “What we’re doing right now is a full evaluation of the US-Egyptian relationship,” he replied. “There’s no doubt that at this point we’ve got to take a look and see what is in the interest of the Egyptian people, and what is in the interest of the United States.” The US annually sends Egypt $1.5 billion (1.1 billion euros) in aid funds, and a hefty $1.3 billion of that goes to the military. Military aid has been under criticism since Egypt's military ousted President Mohammed Morsi in July – but the US government has held firm. Observers say the US could lose its military privileges in the region if it cuts aid, thereby endangering America's security interests.

Egypt allows fly-over rights for U.S. aircrafts and expedited access through the Suez Canal for U.S. Navy

Seth Binder and William D. Hartung 2018 (**Binder**—an expert in security assistance and Middle East affairs at Strategic Research & Analysis. **Hartung**—Director of the Arms and Security Project at the Center for International Policy and the author of Prophets of War: Lockheed Martin and the Making of the Military-Industrial Complex) 28 Mar 2018, “Time To Rethink U.S. Military Aid To Egypt,” <https://lobelog.com/time-to-rethink-u-s-military-aid-to-egypt/>

**What Egypt Gives the US**Washington expects Cairo to return the favor for U.S. aid by providing fly-over rights for U.S. aircraft, expedited access through the Suez canal for the U.S. Navy, counterterrorism cooperation, and maintenance of the peace treaty with Israel.

Link & Brink: The U.S. military is heavily dependent on Egypt’s airspace and access to the Suez Canal

Jim Michaels 2013 (contributor to USA Today) 17 Aug 2013, USA TODAY, “U.S. military needs Egypt for access to critical area,” <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2013/08/17/egypt-morsi-obama-hagel-gulf-heritage-brookings/2665903/>

The U.S. military is heavily dependent on Egypt to move personnel and equipment to Afghanistan and around volatile parts of the Middle East, complicating U.S. efforts to place pressure on the Egyptian military in the wake of its violent crackdown on protesters. “Egypt has been a cornerstone for the U.S. military presence in the Middle East,” said James Phillips, an analyst at the Heritage Foundation. During the past year, more than 2,000 U.S. military aircraft flew through Egyptian airspace, supporting missions in Afghanistan and throughout the Middle East, according to U.S. Central Command, which is responsible for the region. About 35 to 45 U.S. 5th Fleet naval ships pass through the Suez Canal annually, including carrier strike groups, according to the Bahrain-based fleet. Egypt has allowed U.S. warships to be expedited, which often means getting to the head of a very long line of ships waiting for access to the canal.

Link: U.S. military would face huge costs and longer transit times to do military operations in Persian Gulf

Jim Michaels 2013 (contributor to USA Today) 17 Aug 2013, USA TODAY, “U.S. military needs Egypt for access to critical area,” <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2013/08/17/egypt-morsi-obama-hagel-gulf-heritage-brookings/2665903/> (accessed 21 May 2022)

If Egypt cut off its airspace and canal access, the U.S. military would face heavier costs and much longer transit times as it positions troops and equipment in the Middle East. For example, without access to the canal, which connects the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea, warships would generally have to sail around Africa in order to get to the Persian Gulf.

Brink: Middle East security threats pose risk to oil supplies

CNBC 2022. (journalist Natasha Turak) 18 Jan 2022 “Oil hits seven-year high as Houthi attack on UAE rattles regional tensions” <https://www.cnbc.com/2022/01/18/oil-hits-seven-year-high-as-houthi-attack-on-uae-rattles-regional-tensions.html> (accessed 21 May 2022) (brackets added) (UAE=United Arab Emirates)

Attacks by Houthi rebels — with whom the UAE has been at war in Yemen since a Saudi-led coalition began bombing the country in 2015 — have been common in Saudi Arabia, but this is the most significant strike by Houthis in the UAE, and is the first in the country since 2018. The UAE largely withdrew from the Yemen conflict in 2019, but continues to support forces in the country fighting the Houthis, who receive financial and military backing from Iran. The damage to fuel trucks and storage infrastructure “will concern oil market watchers who are also keeping a close eye on the trajectory of ongoing nuclear talks between the US and Iran,” [principal Mid East / North Africa analyst at risk intelligence firm Verisk Maplecroft, Torbjorn] Soltvedt added. “With negotiators running out of time, the risk of a deterioration in the region’s security climate is rising. Over the coming weeks, we expect oil’s Middle East risk premium to come more sharply into focus.”

Impact: Consumers harmed. Higher oil prices = higher gasoline prices, which leaves less money for the rest of the things you want or need

Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco 2007. “What are the possible causes and consequences of higher oil prices on the overall economy?” Nov 2007 <https://www.frbsf.org/education/publications/doctor-econ/2007/november/oil-prices-impact-economy/> (accessed 21 May 2022)

As a consumer, you may already understand the microeconomic implications of higher oil prices. When observing higher oil prices, most of us are likely to think about the price of gasoline as well, since gasoline purchases are necessary for most households. When gasoline prices increase, a larger share of households’ budgets is likely to be spent on it, which leaves less to spend on other goods and services. The same goes for businesses whose goods must be shipped from place to place or that use fuel as a major input (such as the airline industry). Higher oil prices tend to make production more expensive for businesses, just as they make it more expensive for households to do the things they normally do.

3. Lose Egypt as an ally

Link: AFF hurts US relations with Egypt

Obvious from their criticism and their plan mandates.

Brink: Egypt is already questioning U.S. relations

Wu Sike 2015 (Contributor to China-US Focus; member on the Foreign Policy Consulting Committee of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and member on the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference), 20 Jan 2015, CHINA-US FOCUS, “Egypt — Key to Stability in the Middle East,” <https://www.chinausfocus.com/peace-security/egypt-key-to-stability-in-the-middle-east> (accessed 21 May 2022)

Egypt has long been an important regional ally of the U.S. Yet in the past four years, the U.S.-Egypt relationship has been a dysfunctional roller coaster ride. The repercussions were repeatedly felt across the region. “Is the U.S. policy toward Egypt based on principles or interests? What position does the American public hold on what is going on in Egypt?” During my conversations with the Egyptian academic community, I can easily sense the importance they attach to Egypt-U.S. relations and the fact that they remain unsettled about the U.S. Middle East policy, despite the key U.S. role in regional matters.

Brink: Middle East on the brink of conflict, even small steps could trigger

Perry Cammack and Michele Dunne 2018 (Both are with the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Cammack - nonresident fellow in the Middle East Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Dunne is an expert on political and economic change in Arab countries, particularly Egypt, as well as U.S. policy in the Middle East) “Fueling Middle East Conflicts – Or Dousing the Flames?” Oct 2018 <https://carnegieendowment.org/2018/10/23/fueling-middle-east-conflicts-or-dousing-flames-pub-77548> (accessed 21 May 2022)

Scholars of international security policy warn of security dilemmas, in which steps taken by one state to increase its security result in countermeasures from an adversary who in turn feels less secure, thus risking a chain reaction leading to conflict. This dynamic well describes today’s Middle East.

Link: Lose Middle East stability. Stability and future of 22 countries depends on US engagement/influence in Egypt

R. Nicholas Burns 2013. (*professor of the practice of diplomacy and international politics at Harvard Kennedy School of Govt; US Foreign Service for 27 years; was Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs*) 5 July 2013 “Why Egypt matters to the US” <https://www.pri.org/stories/2013-07-05/why-egypt-matters-us> (accessed 21 May 2022)

First, Egypt continues to matter to the US. As the keystone state in the region, the fate of the Egyptian revolution will have a decisive impact on many of the other countries whose stability and future is very much hanging in the balance two and a half years after the start of the Arab revolutions. Washington cannot focus its energies on all 22 Arab states simultaneously, and Egypt should be the overwhelming priority. That is one reason why staying involved in Egypt, making a substantial increase in American economic aid, and resolving to make a much greater effort to support democratic forces there is so important.

Link: US/Egypt partnership vital to Mid East peace

Jeremy Sharp 2021 (specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs, Congressional Research Service) 30 Sept 2021 Egypt: Background and U.S. Relations <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/mideast/RL33003.pdf> (accessed 21 May 2022)

Successive Administrations also have expressed admiration for Egypt’s role in Middle East peacemaking (see the “Egypt, Israel, and the Palestinians” section above). According to U.S. Ambassador to Egypt Jonathan Cohen, “The U.S.-Egypt strategic partnership is vital to both nations and spans decades. We have cooperated with one another every day, across the administrations of eight U.S. presidents on a wide agenda which began with Egypt’s pioneering role in promoting Middle East peace.”

Link & Impact: Expecting or imposing US standards of democracy on Egypt would be destabilizing and harmful to them

Wu Sike 2015 (Contributor to China-US Focus; member on the Foreign Policy Consulting Committee of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and member on the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference), 20 Jan 2015, CHINA-US FOCUS, “Egypt — Key to Stability in the Middle East,” <https://www.chinausfocus.com/peace-security/egypt-key-to-stability-in-the-middle-east> (accessed 21 May 2022)

During my discussion with Egyptian scholars, some of them said that the lack of change and reform in Egypt had hindered social progress and improvement of living standards, which badly eroded stability and cohesion. However, change without order and violent street politics only resulted in a split society, protracted instability, and economic and social retrogression. The victims — the Egyptian people, having paid a heavy toll in a four-year struggle, have realized the importance of finding a development path suited to their own national conditions. How to achieve balance between reform, development and stability has thus become the key question for the Egyptian public. History is like a mirror. Having learned the lesson of the past four years, the Egyptians have sharpened their judgment about the overrated “Greater Middle East Initiative”. The system of democracy of a country must be based on its reality, history, culture, tradition and development stage. Otherwise, it could lead to disastrous consequences. This is not a theory, but already the daily reality for people in certain parts of the Middle East.

Impact: Overall, negative net benefits to losing Egypt as an ally by sanctioning them to improve their behavior

David Schenker 2021 (Senior Fellow at The Washington Institute and director of the Program on Arab Politics. He is the former Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs) Getting Tough with Egypt Won’t Work 25 May 2021 <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/getting-tough-egypt-wont-work> (accessed 21 May 2022)

In this situation, Washington may want to pause and reconsider its options before implementing sanctions and aid conditions that stand little hope of achieving their intended purpose. A wiser course may be to lower expectations, take a more hardheaded view of bilateral ties, and focus more narrowly on core interests. Egypt is no longer the regional powerhouse it once was, but it remains a consequential actor and critical security partner. Notwithstanding serious challenges, the bilateral relationship continues to deliver important, tangible benefits, from allowing overflight clearances and priority canal access to partially limiting Russian and Chinese inroads at a pivotal corner between Africa and Asia.

Impact: Middle East conflict = massive human rights violations and suffering

Perry Cammack and Michele Dunne 2018 (Both are with the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Cammack - nonresident fellow in the Middle East Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Dunne is an expert on political and economic change in Arab countries, particularly Egypt, as well as U.S. policy in the Middle East) “Fueling Middle East Conflicts – Or Dousing the Flames?” Oct 2018 <https://carnegieendowment.org/2018/10/23/fueling-middle-east-conflicts-or-dousing-flames-pub-77548> (accessed 21 May 2022)

By contrast, in the last six years alone, Arab states and Iran have intervened militarily in four Arab countries (Syria, Yemen, Libya—as well as a brief intervention to crush an uprising in Bahrain) as well as politically in others (notably supporting the 2013 military coup in Egypt). The blurring of lines between civilians and combatants, as well as a lack of international consensus about how these conflicts might be ended, has created an environment where massive violations of international humanitarian law have become commonplace, particularly in Syria and Yemen, but also in Iraq and Libya. These abuses include, but are not limited to, indiscriminate bombing of urban civilian populations, ethnic cleansing and civilian displacement on a grand scale, widespread sexual violence, use of chemical weapons, denial of humanitarian access and use of starvation as a weapon, and the bombing of hospitals and schools.

4. Lost US hegemony / Russia

Link & Brink: Cutting US military aid would push Egypt over the edge to ally with Russia

İsmail Numan Telci 2018 (Assistant professor at Sakarya University, Middle East Institute and SETA. Contributor to Daily Sabah, a Turkish newspaper) 19 Jan 2018, “A partnership at risk: Future of US-Egyptian relations,” <https://www.dailysabah.com/op-ed/2018/01/20/a-partnership-at-risk-future-of-us-egyptian-relations> (accessed 21 May 2022)

While Washington threatens to cut off its military aid to Egypt, political circles in the U.S. have been heavily criticizing the Sissi regime. Despite the occasional contacts between Trump and Sissi, it is obvious that relations between the countries are not at the desired level. [**END QUOTE**] This situation becomes increasingly apparent in the relations between the two countries and their approach to regional and global issues. The Jerusalem crisis of December 2017 was one of the indicators of this situation. Following Trump's declaration of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, Washington met Egypt's stance with criticism. **[HE GOES ON TO SAY LATER IN THE SAME CONTEXT QUOTE**:] The more disturbing issue for the U.S. with regard to Egypt is the gradual convergence of the Sissi regime with Russia. The transformation of relations between Cairo and Moscow into a strategic alliance is a source of great concern for foreign policy circles in Washington.

Backup Link: Russia already has a foothold, gaining influence with Egypt

İsmail Numan Telci 2018 (Assistant professor at Sakarya University, Middle East Institute and SETA. Contributor to Daily Sabah, a Turkish newspaper) 19 Jan 2018, “A partnership at risk: Future of US-Egyptian relations,” <https://www.dailysabah.com/op-ed/2018/01/20/a-partnership-at-risk-future-of-us-egyptian-relations> (accessed 21 May 2022)

Following a positive outcome of ongoing negotiations on the issue, Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoygu and his Egyptian counterpart signed an agreement in November 2017, allowing Russian fighter jets to use Egyptian air bases. This development was a demonstration that Russia has a serious impact on Egypt, which is also one of the U.S.'s most important allies in the Middle East. **[END QUOTE**] Reports and analyses in U.S. media after the agreement stress that Russia had made its greatest impact in the Middle East since the 1970s. The Trump administration was also criticized for not doing enough to stop Russia's strategic advance in the Middle East. In lights of these developments, Pence's visit to Egypt in the coming days is very important. [**HE GOES ON TO SAY LATER IN THE CONTEXT QUOTE:]** The shift by Egypt, which is historically one of the most important U.S. partners in the Middle East, to Russia has created concern for Washington. U.S. decision makers aim to prevent Egyptian-Russian rapprochement from continuing further by employing new instruments. By doing so, Washington would prevent the rising influence of Russia in the Middle East.

Backup Link: Russia exploits US unreliability in the Middle East, provides weapons quickly upon request

Dr. Nikolay Kozhanov 2018 (visiting lecturer in the political economy of the Middle East at the European University at St Petersburg; PhD in the economic security of the Middle East from St Petersburg State University ) Russia and Eurasia Programme | February 2018 Russian Policy Across the Middle East Motivations and Methods <https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/publications/research/2018-02-21-russian-policy-middle-east-kozhanov.pdf> (accessed 21 May 2022)

In other words, Russia exploits the shortcomings of Western policies in the Middle East. Thus, the US reluctance to protect Mubarak compared with the support Moscow provided to Assad encourages regional powers to consider Russia a more reliable partner. The fast dispatch of weapons to the Iraqi authorities in 2014 when they badly needed new equipment to fight a rising ISIS (while the US-led Western states were only thinking about whether and how they should help the Iraqi army) served to demonstrate Russia’s responsibility to an ally. The US and EU decision to limit weapons exports to Egypt in 2013 was one of the reasons behind the rise in sales of Russian arms in the region.

Backup Link: Russian influence and prestige worldwide grows as they succeed in the Middle East

Public Radio International 2017. “Russia’s influence in the Middle East is growing” 14 Dec 2017 <https://www.pri.org/stories/2017-12-14/russia-s-influence-middle-east-growing> (accessed 21 May 2022)

Russia now has a naval base in the Mediterranean in Tartus, a warm-weather port in Syria. It also has an airbase nearby. Now there’s talk of the Russian air force securing basing rights in Egypt. It already has access to an Iranian base. But this Russian effort in the Middle East is not so much about hard power, says Tharoor. “For Putin,” he explains, “it’s all about domestic optics more than anything else. He has staked his political legitimacy on being this world-historic figure who’s returning Russia to prominence on the world stage.”

Ukraine war doesn’t matter: Egypt still wants good relationship with Russia

Prof. Khalil Al-Anani 2022 (Senior Fellow at Arab Center Washington DC. He also serves as Associate Professor of Political Science at the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies in Qatar) 6 Apr 2022 “Russia’s War on Ukraine: Egypt’s Limited Room for Maneuver” <https://arabcenterdc.org/resource/russias-war-on-ukraine-egypts-limited-room-for-maneuver/> (accessed 21 May 2022)

The Russian war on Ukraine will have significant impacts on countries in the Middle East, ranging from strategic realignments to energy security and food supplies. For Egypt, the war is expected to have a major impact on its economy and foreign policy. As the world’s largest importer of wheat with a significant reliance on Russian and Ukrainian supplies, Egypt is bracing for a major food crisis in the coming months. Its good relationship with Russia puts it at odds with its western allies, particularly the United States and the European Union, which provide significant military, economic, security, and political support to Cairo.

Link & Brink: Blocking Russia in the Middle East is key to maintaining US leadership as a great power

Steven A. Cook 2018 (senior fellow for Middle East and Africa studies at the Council on Foreign Relations) 16 March 2018 FOREIGN POLICY “Russia Is in the Middle East to Stay” (accessed 21 May 2022) <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/03/16/the-middle-east-needs-a-steady-boyfriend/>

If the United States is, as Secretary of Defense James Mattis averred in January, in a new era of great power competition, it is time the United States treated the situation as seriously as it is. Putin must be disabused of the notion that the Middle East is the most propitious place to begin weakening the West and the United States. Americans once before contained and rolled back Moscow’s influence in the region; there is no reason to believe that they cannot do it again — but only if they have the wisdom to recognize what is important in the world right now and the collective stomach to meet the challenge.

Link: Strengthens our enemy. Russia is more than just a rival to the U.S.; they are becoming an enemy

Prof. Daniel Byman 2018 (professor at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service ; research director and senior fellow at the Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution.) 11 Apr 2018 LAWFARE, “Pushing Back Russia in the Middle East: A Thought Experiment,” <https://www.lawfareblog.com/pushing-back-russia-middle-east-thought-experiment> (accessed 21 May 2022)

Russia is increasingly emerging as an enemy of the United States, not just a rival. Although President Trump generally seems to oppose any attempt to confront Russia—with the exception of a tweet this morning in which he warned the Kremlin to “get ready”—it’s worth considering how a more strategically minded administration might do so, particularly in the Middle East, where Moscow has vastly expanded its influence. During the height of the Cold War, the United States reflexively opposed the Soviet Union and the spread of communism. In addition to shoring up allies in Europe and Japan, the United States often sought to hinder or roll back Moscow’s influence in parts of Africa and Asia, regardless of the minor strategic significance of the areas in question. In the Middle East, the U.S. opposition to the Soviet Union often manifested in efforts to sway and topple governments in Iraq and Syria and a competition for influence in Egypt, among other locations.

Impact 1: World peace & prosperity at risk without US influence. US hegemony is key to global peace & prosperity

Capt. M. V. Prato 2009 (United States Marine Corps,Command and Staff College, Marine Corps Combat Development Command,Marine Corps University) “The Need for American Hegemony” 20 Feb 2009 <https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/citations/ADA508040> (accessed 21 May 2022)

The world witnessed a vast shift in the polarity of geopolitics after the Cold War. The United States became the world’s greatest hegemon with an unequalled ability to globally project cultural, political, economic, and military power in a manner not seen since the days of the Roman Empire. [**END QUOTE**] Coined the “unipolar moment” by syndicated columnist Charles Krauthammer, the disparity of power between the U.S. and all other nations allows the U.S. to influence the world for the mutual benefit of all responsible states. Unfortunately, the United States is increasingly forced to act unilaterally as a result of both foreign and domestic resentment to U.S. dominance and the rise of liberal internationalism. [**HE GOES ON LATER TO CONCLUDE QUOTE:]** The United States must exercise benevolent global hegemony, unilaterally if necessary, to ensure its security and maintain global peace and prosperity.

Impact 2: Civilizational collapse – with decline of US dominance and rise of Russia and China

Dr. Robert Kagan 2017. (PhD in American history; Stephen & Barbara Friedman Senior Fellow - [Foreign Policy](https://www.brookings.edu/program/foreign-policy/), [Project on International Order and Strategy](https://www.brookings.edu/project/project-on-international-order-and-strategy/) at Brookings Institution) 6 Feb 2017 ‘Backing into World War III” <https://www.brookings.edu/research/backing-into-world-war-iii/> (accessed 21 May 2022)

Think of two significant trend lines in the world today. One is the increasing ambition and activism of the two great revisionist powers, Russia and China. The other is the declining confidence, capacity, and will of the democratic world, and especially of the United States, to maintain the dominant position it has held in the international system since 1945. As those two lines move closer, as the declining will and capacity of the United States and its allies to maintain the present world order meet the increasing desire and capacity of the revisionist powers to change it, we will reach the moment at which the existing order collapses and the world descends into a phase of brutal anarchy, as it has three times in the past two centuries. The cost of that descent, in lives and treasure, in lost freedoms and lost hope, will be staggering.

Impact 3: US military personnel at risk. Russia will cause problems with operational security of U.S. military personnel

David D. Kirkpatrick 2017 (**Kirkpatrick—**International correspondent based in the London bureau of the NY Times; former Cairo bureau chief. **Contributors**: Andrew **Higgins** (master’s degree in Oriental Studies and also attended Middlebury College, where he studied Russian and Arabic), reporting from Moscow, Nour **Youssef** (reporter in the Cairo bureau of The NY York Times.) from Cairo, and Eric **Schmitt** (senior writer covering terrorism and national security for The NY Times.) from Washington) 30 Nov 2017, NEW YORK TIMES, “In Snub to U.S., Russia and Egypt Move Toward Deal on Air Bases,” <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/30/world/middleeast/russia-egypt-air-bases.html> (accessed 21 May 2022)

“Power abhors a vacuum and when the United States pulls back we can’t be under the impression that the world is going to stand by and wait for us,” said Matthew Spence, a former deputy assistant secretary of defense for Middle East policy under the Obama administration, which faced similar criticism for its policy toward the region. “The danger, and the reality, is that other countries will take advantage of the opportunity presented when America chooses to pull back.” In practical terms, the presence of Russian jets in Egypt would raise concerns about the operational security of American military personnel and require coordinating with American military planes in the same airspace. “It’s a major problem for the United States-Egypt defense relationship,” said Andrew Miller, a former senior State Department official who is now at the Project on Middle East Democracy.

5. US manufacturing jobs

Link & Impact: Egyptian weapon purchases (through the aid) keeps U.S. businesses open. We lose jobs without it.

Shana Marshall 2012 (Contributor to Foreign Policy, Research fellow at the Crown Center for Middle East Studies at Brandeis Univ), 29 Feb 2012, “Why the U.S. won’t cut military aid to Egypt,” <http://foreignpolicy.com/2012/02/29/why-the-u-s-wont-cut-military-aid-to-egypt/> (accessed 21 May 2022)

Although domestic interest groups are rarely invoked in the debate over military aid to Egypt, the $1.3 billion in annual assistance represents a significant subsidy to U.S. weapons manufacturers. For instance, the General Dynamics manufacturing facility in Lima, Ohio where the M1A1 Abrams tank is built will not have more work orders from the U.S. Army until 2017 when the current M1 tank fleet is up for refurbishing. Egypt’s latest $1.3 billion order of 125 M1A1s (Cairo’s 11th order since the late 1980s) will keep those production lines open until 2014 building knock down kits that are then shipped and assembled in Egypt. Although shipping fully assembled tanks to Egypt would employ more U.S. workers, without the contract the Lima plant (in a crucial electoral swing state) would shutter its doors and General Dynamics’s bottom line would take a serious hit.

General Dynamics is only one of several contractors that get sales boosts from Egypt

Shana Marshall 2012 (Contributor to Foreign Policy, Research fellow at the Crown Center for Middle East Studies at Brandeis University), 29 Feb 2012, “Why the U.S. won’t cut military aid to Egypt,” <http://foreignpolicy.com/2012/02/29/why-the-u-s-wont-cut-military-aid-to-egypt/> (accessed 21 May 2022)

General Dynamics is only one of several tier-1 contractors that will get a boost from the recent M1A1 sale to Egypt; others include Honeywell (of Arizona) and Allison Transmission (of Indiana). A cable from the U.S. embassy in Cairo released by Wikileaks demonstrates the interest that the U.S. Government has in using aid to Egypt to promote the interests of domestic weapons producers. In the cable, U.S. military planners are said to be “especially concerned” that without the tank sale to Egypt, Allison may not be able to “maintain its transmission line’s profitability.”

More than 1.3 million Americans work in the weapon manufacturing industry

Farah Najjar 2017 (Online producer at Al Jazeera English covering the Middle East region. James **Gelvin**—a professor of Middle East history at the University of California) 3 Oct 2017, “Why US aid to Egypt is never under threat,” <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/10/aid-egypt-threat-171002093316209.html> (accessed 21 May 2022)

The high amount of military aid, in particular, has also helped to create jobs and to reduce unemployment in the US. More than 1.3 million Americans work in manufacturing weaponry for defence companies, and more than three million others support the industry indirectly. The US is among the world's top five arms producers and distributors, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. “The United States does not give money to Egypt for military equipment; it gives the Egyptian military a list of equipment the American government will purchase on its behalf in the United States,” Gelvin told Al Jazeera.

The reason the aid subsidizes U.S. manufactures is because the money doesn’t leave the U.S.

Janosch Delcker 2013 (contributor to Deutsche Welle (DW), which is Germany’s international broadcaster) 10 July 2013, “US arms industry profits from aid funds to Egypt,” <http://www.dw.com/en/us-arms-industry-profits-from-aid-funds-to-egypt/a-17142225> (accessed 21 May 2022)

**The money never reaches Egypt** Under a military aid agreement, the aid for Egypt in fact never leaves the United States. As soon as the US Congress approves the payments, the money goes to an account at the Federal Reserve Bank in New York. The bank transfers the aid to a trust fund at the Treasury, and from there to US military contractors and suppliers. The contracting parties, some of them multinational groups with subsidiaries in the US, must be based in the US and it is essential that they employ personnel in the US. As a result, the financial aid does not go to Cairo, but to America's heartland, creating more or less state-subsidized jobs.

Foreign Military Sales help the U.S. economy

Bilal Y. Saab 2018 (Executive Director and Head of Research & Public Affairs of the Institute for Near East and Gulf Military Analysis (INEGMA) North America) 22 Feb 2018, THE NATIONAL INTEREST, “What Does America Get for Its Military Aid?,” <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/what-does-america-get-its-military-aid-24605?page=show> (accessed 21 May 2022)

Massive U.S. foreign military sales (FMS) to Arab partners throughout these years have also done wonders for the U.S. economy. They have generated trillions of dollars’ worth of revenue, created hundreds of thousands of jobs in the American defense industry and boosted efficiency in U.S. military budgets by reducing unit costs.

6. Lose the Peace Treaty (also known as the “Camp David Treaty”) with Israel

Link: Egypt/Israel peace is why the US maintains a balanced approach to Egypt

Jeremy Sharp 2021 (specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs, Congressional Research Service) 30 Sept 2021 Egypt: Background and U.S. Relations <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/mideast/RL33003.pdf> (accessed 21 May 2022)

Since taking office, President Biden has attempted to take a balanced approach to U.S.-Egyptian relations, praising Egyptian diplomacy while signaling U.S. displeasure for President Sisi’s continued domestic crackdown. In the year after the United States started facilitating the historic Abraham Accords between Israel and various Arab states, Egypt, which has maintained its peace treaty with Israel since 1979, has earned praise from U.S. officials by increasing its diplomatic outreach to Israel.

Link: U.S. aid is key to Egypt maintaining the Peace Treaty with Israel

Zvika Krieger 2012 (journalist; former correspondent for Newsweek based in Egypt and Lebanon, covering most of the Arab world; fellow at the Truman National Security Project; bachelor's degree in Middle East Studies from Yale Univ. and studied Arabic at American Univ, Cairo), 16 Feb 2012, THE ATLANTIC, “Egypt vs. Israel: How Congress Weighs the Risks of Cutting Our Aid to Cairo,” <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/02/egypt-vs-israel-how-congress-weighs-the-risks-of-cutting-our-aid-to-cairo/253193/> (accessed 21 May 2022)

U.S. aid to Egypt has historically been conditioned on Egypt meetings its obligations under the 1979 Camp David treaty, which ended three decades of intermittent war with Israel. As relations between the two countries have vacillated over the three and a half decades since, with particular nadirs since the overthrow of Hosni Mubarak last year, the funding has been seen as one of the chief protectors of the treaty.

Link: US military aid to Egypt is an investment in sustaining the Egypt/Israel peace treaty

Jeremy Sharp 2021 (specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs, Congressional Research Service) 30 Sept 2021 Egypt: Background and U.S. Relations <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/mideast/RL33003.pdf> (accessed 21 May 2022)

Since 1946, the United States has provided Egypt with over $84 billion in bilateral foreign aid (calculated in hist orical dollars—not adjusted for inflation), with military and economic assistance increasing significantly after 1979. Annual appropriations legislation includes several conditions governing the release of these funds. Successive U.S. Administrations have justified aid to Egypt as an investment in regional stability, built primarily on long-running cooperation with the Egyptian military and on sustaining the 1979 Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty.

Link: US military relationship with Israel is essential to maintaining Egypt-Israel peace

R. Nicholas Burns 2013. (*professor of the practice of diplomacy and international politics at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government; served in the US Foreign Service for 27 years; was Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs*) 5 July 2013 “Why Egypt matters to the US” <https://www.pri.org/stories/2013-07-05/why-egypt-matters-us> (accessed 21 May 2022)

Third, the US would be smart to maintain a strong link to the major power centers in Egyptian politics, especially the military. To ensure a continued peace between Egypt and Israel — one of the most important and enduring of all American interests — US officials will need to continue to cultivate and work closely with the Egyptian military, one of the few institutions in Egypt that is still effective in this revolutionary era.

Link: US military aid to Egypt for the peace treaty is the “cornerstone” of US/Egypt relations

Farah Najjar 2017 (Online producer at Al Jazeera English covering the Middle East region) 3 Oct 2017, “Why US aid to Egypt is never under threat,” <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/10/aid-egypt-threat-171002093316209.html> (accessed 21 May 2022)

**Why does Egypt get US aid?** For a country to become an eligible recipient of US aid, it must align itself with American interests and foreign policy, analysts say. In the case of Egypt, US aid granted since the signing of the 1978 Camp David Accords was "untouchable compensation" for maintaining peace with Israel. This deal is considered a cornerstone of US-Egyptian relations.

US military aid to Egypt sustains the Egypt/Israel peace treaty

Jeremy Sharp 2021 (specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs, Congressional Research Service) 30 Sept 2021 Egypt: Background and U.S. Relations <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/mideast/RL33003.pdf> (accessed 21 May 2022)

Since the 1979 Israeli-Egyptian Peace Treaty, the United States has provided Egypt with large amounts of military assistance. U.S. policymakers have routinely justified this aid to Egypt as an investment in regional stability, built primarily on long-running military cooperation and sustaining the treaty—principles that are supposed to be mutually reinforcing. Egypt has used U.S. military aid through the FMF to (among other things) purchase major U.S. defense systems, such as the F-16 fighter aircraft, the M1A1 Abrams battle tank, and the AH-64 Apache attack helicopter.

US military exports to Egypt were offered in context with establishing the Egypt/Israel peace treaty

Jeremy Sharp 2021 (specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs, Congressional Research Service) 30 Sept 2021 Egypt: Background and U.S. Relations <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/mideast/RL33003.pdf> (accessed 21 May 2022)

The 1979 Peace Treaty between Israel and Egypt ushered in the current era of U.S. financial support for peace between Israel and its Arab neighbors. In two separate memoranda accompanying the treaty, the United States outlined commitments to Israel and Egypt, respectively. In its letter to Israel, the Carter Administration pledged that it would “endeavor to take into account and will endeavor to be responsive to military and economic assistance requirements of Israel.” In his letter to Egypt, former U.S. Secretary of Defense Harold Brown wrote the following: In the context of the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel, the United States is prepared to enter into an expanded security relationship with Egypt with regard to the sales of military equipment and services and the financing of, at least a portion of those sales, subject to such Congressional review and approvals as may be required

Link & Brink: Egypt would cancel the treaty if they lost U.S. aid

Zvika Krieger 2012 (Former editor and writer at The New Republic and a former correspondent for Newsweek based in Egypt and Lebanon, covering most of the Arab world; fellow at the Truman National Security Project; bachelor's degree in Middle East Studies from Yale University and studied Arabic at the American University in Cairo), 16 Feb 2012, THE ATLANTIC, “Egypt vs. Israel: How Congress Weighs the Risks of Cutting Our Aid to Cairo,” <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/02/egypt-vs-israel-how-congress-weighs-the-risks-of-cutting-our-aid-to-cairo/253193/> (brackets in original) (accessed 21 May 2022)

With the Egyptian economy in shambles and its new rulers struggling to prove to its citizens that they can run the country effectively, losing U.S aid would be a disaster for Egypt. So much so that even though some Egyptian political actors have threatened to annul the treaty, most Egypt-watchers are confident that such threats are likely empty as long as U.S. aid is tied to the treaty. “[The Egyptians] would definitely say that the treaty is premised on the aid,” said one top Hill staffer who works closely on the issue. Cutting aid to Egypt could thus mean trouble for the treaty. “The aid was one of the commitments of the parties that signed the peace agreement so if there is a breach from one side it gives the right of review to the parties,” Essam el-Erian, the deputy leader of the Muslim Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party, the biggest group in the newly elected parliament, said this week.

Link & Brink: Egypt/Israel peace treaty is one of the most significant links to Arab-Israeli peace

Jeremy Sharp 2021 (specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs, Congressional Research Service) 30 Sept 2021 Egypt: Background and U.S. Relations <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/mideast/RL33003.pdf> (accessed 21 May 2022)

Following 30 years of intermittent war and enduring confrontation, Egypt’s 1979 peace treaty with Israel remains one of the single most significant diplomatic achievements for the promotion of Arab-Israeli peace.

Link & Impact 1: Cutting aid to Egypt jeopardizes the Israel peace treaty. Impact: Middle East peace at risk

Jill Dougherty 2013 (CNN contributor; former CNN Foreign Affairs Correspondent and Moscow bureau chief with expertise in Russia and the former Soviet Union; currently a member of the Advisory Council of the Woodrow Wilson Center's Kennan Institute) updated 6 July 2013, “Why Americans should care about Egypt,” (Zakaria is host of an international and domestic affairs program; editor-at-large and a columnist for TIME magazine, and a columnist for The Washington Post) <https://www.cnn.com/2013/07/05/politics/egypt-u-s--impact/index.html> (accessed 21 July 2022)

The United States helps Egypt because it's one of only two Arab countries -- along with Jordan -- that made peace with Israel. If Washington pulls its aid, it could affect prospects for peace in the Middle East. “All of these things are tied together,” says CNN’s Fareed Zakaria. “The aid is tied to Egypt's peace treaty with Israel, so if our aid gets cut off what happens to the peace treaty with Israel? It's a hornets' nest and that's why the administration is trying not to stir it too much.”

Impact 2: Israel’s national security is harmed—not just with Egypt, but with other neighbors as well

Dareen Khalifa 2013 (International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence (ICSR) Atkin Fellow; MA in Human Rights from University College London, and a BA in Political Science from Cairo University; consultant for Amnesty International in London. In Egypt she worked on human rights education and advocacy with the National Council for Human Rights.) Feb 2013, “Saving peace: The case for amending the Egypt-Israel peace treaty,” <http://icsr.info/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/ICSR_Atkin-Series_Khalifa-Paper.pdf> (accessed 21 May 2022)

The peace treaty between Israel and Egypt constituted a significant and groundbreaking change in Middle East politics. It laid the foundation for a fundamental change in the peace process, not only between Egypt and Israel but between Israel and its other neighbours. The termination of the state of war and installation of a state of peace in Article I of the treaty created a new legal and political framework in the region. The significance of the peace relationship between Egypt and Israel, and the fact that a generation of Egyptians and Israelis have grown up without the threat of war, is a central factor to the national security of both countries.

A/T: “Egypt won’t go to war” — Not directly, but it would still cause harm to Israel

Dareen Khalifa 2013 (International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence (ICSR) Atkin Fellow; MA in Human Rights from University College London, and a BA in Political Science from Cairo University;consultant for Amnesty International in London. In Egypt she worked on human rights education and advocacy with the National Council for Human Rights.) Feb 2013, “Saving peace: The case for amending the Egypt-Israel peace treaty,” <http://icsr.info/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/ICSR_Atkin-Series_Khalifa-Paper.pdf>

Even if Egypt annulled the treaty unilaterally without entering into a direct war with Israel, it would be a great loss for the Jewish state because it was only through the treaty that Egypt was taken out of the equation of the Arab-Israel conflict.

Impact: NATO, the U.S., the EU, and Russia’s last line-of-defense against Muslim terrorists—falls

Mark Langfan 2014 (Chairman of Americans for a Safe Israel (AFSI) and specializes in security issues), 21 May 2014, “Israel, the Cornerstone of the Western World,” <http://www.israelnationalnews.com/Articles/Article.aspx/15035>

So, the cold, hard reality is that Israel is protecting all of NATO, Western Europe, America, and Russia from an Iranian/Muslim nuclear-armed Colossus that will overrun them all before The Morning’s Call to Prayer. Therefore, Israel is NATO’s, the US’, the EU’s, and Russia’s first, and last, line-of-defense against an Iranian/Muslim 370m man-strong nuclear-armed Oil-rich Colossus. In conclusion, a safe and secure Israel is not the cause of world instability, and conflict, but the cornerstone of world peace, and security. And it is a light of democracy and of freedom unto the nations of the world.