

EGYPT UPDATE No. 24

31 October 2013

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CHRONICLES OF THE CONTINUED EGYPTIAN REVOLUTION OF 25 JANUARY 2011



Figure 1 Egyptian military officers blocking entrance to Tahir Square. (Photo credit: AP/Hassan Ammar).



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Request for Feedback

On February 7, 2011, I started this periodic assessment, referred to as **The Chronicles of Egypt's January 25, 2011 Revolution**. It was suspended for a year during the Morsi presidency and resumed again on July 17, 2013.

Initially there were some 200 recipients on my list, which grew to over 2,000 and some passed it on to others. I have never had enough feedback to know whether these updates were useful or not. In view of the effort and time required to obtain the information, verify the sources, write out and distribute these updates, I would appreciate hearing from the readers.

For the record, this was a purely individual undertaking. It received no funding or support from anyone else and the work was done by me. I tried to remain as objective and fair as possible, and as informative and clear in my analysis as I could.

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The 1973 War: Commemorating Egyptian Military Pride

1. On October 6, 1973, in a meticulously planned pre-dawn attack, Egyptian military forces crossed the Suez Canal, establishing a foothold on part of the Sinai that had been occupied by Israel since 1967. The Israeli Defense Forces were taken by surprise, as this was the day of Yom Kippur, the most important Jewish holiday of the year. It was Egypt's first military victory over Israel since the first war of 1948. Egypt then lost the 1956 war, but because that was an act of aggression by the UK, France and Israel, the UN Security Council ordered a ceasefire that took place on November 6, 1956 and the complete withdrawal of all foreign forces from Egypt that took place by March 1957. This was a rare act of cooperation between the US and the USSR during the Cold War.¹ In November 1956, the first UN Emergency Force (UNEF) was established by the first emergency special session of the UN General Assembly to supervise the cessation of hostilities, including the withdrawal of Israeli, UK and French forces from Egyptian territory, and to act as a buffer between Egyptian and Israeli forces. This UNEF was withdrawn in May-June 1967 at the Egyptian government's request.
2. After the 1956 war (a war in which I participated as a Platoon leader in the National Guard) an observer mission was established in the Sinai, and no hostilities took place between Egypt and Israel until 1967, when Israel attacked Syrian planes over the Syrian Golan, causing President Gamal Abdel Nasser to close the Suez Canal to Israeli vessels and order the UNEF to leave, thus ushering in a pre-war climate with Israel. The latter seized the opportunity to engage in a pre-emptive strike, which destroyed Egypt's air force on the ground. Nasser's military commanders, particularly the Minister of Defense, Field-Marshal Abdel Hakim ^c Amer, who was largely the cause of the poor performance of the armed forces in the 1956 war, was simply an incompetent officer who was presumptuous, vain and arrogant. Abdel Nasser, however, had a fondness for him since their days together in the Military Academy, and he left him in his position after the 1956 war.¹
3. The 1967 war was probably one of military history's fastest and most decisive victories. The war lasted six days, and it was dubbed the "Six-Day War."² Egypt's much heralded military capabilities before the war, at least in the Arab world, were totally destroyed, notwithstanding that the USSR had fully armed and trained the Egyptian military and maintained an estimated 30,000 advisers and technicians in the country to support the Egyptian military. Nasser offered to resign, but that was too much embarrassment for the Egyptian people to accept. ^c Amer committed suicide. Israel occupied all of the Sinai, preventing Egypt's usage of the Suez Canal with enormous losses of annual revenue. Egypt was humiliated, its military forces destroyed, its Suez Canal shut down, and its economy in a bad condition.
4. The 1973 War redressed the image of the 1956 and 1967 defeats. For once, Israel the undefeated was partially defeated, Egypt's land was restored, and in the course of time, because of President Anwar al-Sadat's peace policy, Egypt was once again the Arab world's nominal leader and a highly respected

¹ See Herman Finer, *Dulles Over Suez* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1964); Hugh Thomas, *Suez* (New York: Harper, 1966); Winthrop W. Aldrich, "The Suez Crisis," *Foreign Affairs*, 45 (April 1967:541-52); Kenneth Love, *Suez: The Twice-Fought War* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1969); Eugene M Fisher, M Cherif Bassiouni, *Storm over the Arab World* (Chicago, USA: Follett Publishing Company, 1972), 82-93; William Roger Louis and Roger Owen (ed.), *Suez 1956* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1989); Anthony Gorst, Lewis Johnman, *The Suez Crisis* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 1997); Derek Varble, *The Suez Crisis* (Wellingborough, UK: Osprey Publishing Limited, 2003).

² Anthony Nutting, *No End of a Lesson: the Story of Suez* (London: Constable, 1967); Eugene M Fisher, M Cherif Bassiouni, *Storm over the Arab World* (Chicago, USA: Follett Publishing Company, 1972), 250-267; Mohamed Hassanein Heikal, *The Cairo documents: The Inside Story of Nasser and His Relationship with World Leaders, Rebels, and Statesmen* (New York: Doubleday Publishing, 1973); Michael Oren, *Six Days of War: June 1967 and the Making of the Modern Middle East* (New York: Presidio Press/Ballantine Books, 2003); William Roger Louis, Avi Shlaim, *The 1967 Arab-Israeli War: Origins and Consequences* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

state in the world. But this was all due to Sadat's peace policy, which was made possible because of the October 6 crossing of the Suez Canal and the limited victory it produced. The war was a "game-changer", but it was nothing like Egyptian revisionist historians, politicians and journalists embellished it to be. Indeed, no sooner had Egypt's forces crossed the Canal, remaining under Russian missile range cover to protect against Israel's Air Force superiority, than the Israelis counter-attacked.³ Lieutenant-General Moshe Dayan, Israel's military commander, developed a counter-attack plan led by Major-General Ariel Sharon, which inflicted on Egypt a tactical defeat that counterbalanced the initial tactical victory. The Sharon-led forces crossed the Suez Canal in reverse by exploiting an unexplainable military gap between the Second and Third Army on the east side of the Canal.⁴ The Israeli operation was the reverse of the Egyptian one. Both were of a tactical nature, and neither was strategically outcome-determinative. This outcome occurred through diplomacy, as discussed below.

5. The Sharon-led crossing of a reinforced armored division with an estimated 10,000 troops took place in three days, at a location called the *Deversoir*. During this daring crossing, Sadat was at the Ismailia headquarters assuming his role as commander-in-chief. Operations were, however, commanded by Lieutenant-General Saad el-Din el-Shazly, who was at the time Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces.⁵ But, it was Sadat's military decision that did not allow el-Shazly to counter-attack the Sharon crossing at the time it was still vulnerable. In fact, for years, el-Shazly accused Sadat of his reckless decision, while Sadat similarly blamed el-Shazly. El-Shazly was removed from his command by Sadat who promoted Major-General Mohamed Abdel-Ghani el-Gamasi to Lieutenant-General and made him Chief of Staff.
6. By the time, Sadat and his generals came to the realization of what had happened at the *Deversoir*, the Sharon forces on the Canal's west side were behind the Egyptian Third Army, which then faced Israeli forces on the east and west sides. It was trapped. Without supplies and any possibility of reinforcement, it was doomed. Some 60,000 troops could have died or been imprisoned. Israel acted wisely and in concert with US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, who saw this military stalemate as an opportunity for both sides to claim partial victory and to negotiate a step-by-step settlement.
7. The first Sinai agreement was signed by Lieutenant-Generals Mohamed Abdel-Ghani el-Gamasi and Major-General Ariel Yariv under a tent at Kilometer 101 along the west side of the Suez Canal, and that saved the Third Army. The Second Sinai Disengagement Agreement was signed at the United Nations in Geneva on September 4, 1975 in the presence of representatives from the US (former Ambassador Alfred "Roy" Atherton), Egypt (Major-General Taha el Magdoub)



Figure 2 Egyptian President Anwar Sadat with his Commander of the Air Force and Deputy Minister of Defense Hosni Mubarak survey battle maps of the war Sadat launched on 6 October 1973.

³ During that campaign, Israel obtained field operational support from the US, which flew planes with supplies not only into Israel, but also into the Sinai.

⁴ See Walter Boyne, *The Yom Kippur War and The Airlift that Saved Israel* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2002); Howard Blum, *The Eve of Destruction: The Untold Story of the Yom Kippur War* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2003); Nigel Ashton (ed.), *The Cold War in the Middle East: Regional Conflict and the Superpowers 1967-73* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2007).

⁵ See Saad Shazly, *The Crossing of Suez* (San Francisco, USA: American Mideast Research, 1980).

and Israel (presidential advisor Mordechai Gazit and General Herzl Shaffir).⁶ Two years later, Sadat made his extraordinary trip to Israel to address the Knesset on November 20, 1977. In 1978, the Camp David Agreement was signed,⁷ leading to the 1979 Peace Treaty between Egypt and Israel.⁸

8. The war of 1973 did not produce a strategic victory over Israel, but a tactical one that was sufficient to pave the way for the diplomatic steps that ensued. The 1979 Peace Agreement is still in effect, and even though there was mostly a cold peace between the two countries, their militaries and intelligence agencies have cooperated quite well. Israel supported former President Hosni Mubarak, even after his renunciation of power on February 11, 2011 that was announced by the then-Vice President Omar Suleiman, former Major-General and head of the General Intelligence Agency with the rank of Minister.⁹



Figure 3 Anwar Sadat assassinated in 1981 by radical Islamists during the annual parade celebrating Egypt's crossing of the Suez Canal in 1973.

⁶ I was present in Geneva at that time.

⁷ I proposed the first text of this plan in 1975 after the Geneva Second Sinai Disengagement Agreement was signed in Geneva. This plan was made public in 1977, after its submission in 1976 to President Anwar Sadat and Gerald Ford. See M. Cherif Bassiouni and Morton Kaplan, *A Mid-East Proposal* (Monograph: University of Chicago, 1975). During the 1977 US presidential campaign, it was given in Chicago to Governor Carter. In February 1977, President Carter sent Secretary of State Cyrus Vance to the Middle East. Upon his return, he asked Ambassador L. Dean Brown, then President of the Washington-based Middle East Institute, to propose a plan for the convening of a conference. Ambassador William Kontos and another ambassador were part of the group to which I was invited to work on preparing a conference plan. Secretary Vance found Israel's Prime Minister Golda Meir not favorable, Syria's President Hafez el-Assad not favorable, President Sadat open but skeptical, and through unofficial channels, Yasser Arafat expressed opposition to these efforts. To his credit, President Carter persevered, and on March 26, 1979, the agreement was signed on the White House lawn, and it was my privilege to have been present there. The text of the official agreement had several aspects of what I had proposed in 1977. I also had the privilege of attending the closing dinner, hosted by President Carter for the three official delegations and a number of US high-ranking officials. One of the high-ranking Israelis at Camp David was Major-General Avraham "Abrasha" Tamir, who was then Director-General of PM Begin's office. He was second in command to Major-General Sharon in the 1973 *Deversoir* crossing. From that point on, he was an advocate of peace. Between 1995 and 2003, he was a member of Israel's delegation to the Track II negotiations on establishing a WMD-free zone, which I chaired. Egypt, Jordan and the US all played a role in this process. During the 1979 peace treaty negotiations, I assisted the Egyptian delegation and was after present at the White House lawn. For the official signing ceremony, I also attended several formal dinners hosted respectively by Presidents Sadat and Carter, and similar formal events during the presidencies of Hosni Mubarak and Ronald Reagan.

⁸ It was not until 1994 that Jordan signed a similar peace treaty with Israel. Fatah leader Yasser Arafat signed the Oslo Agreement with Israel in 1993, which was to start the path toward a two-state solution and a peace agreement. But, that has not materialized so far.

⁹ Suleiman died of an unexpected and mysterious heart attack at the Cleveland Clinic, where he went for a routine check-up, on July 19, 2012. He was a capable person expected to succeed Mubarak had it not been for the jealousy and antipathy of the then Field Marshall Hussein Tantawi, who prevented it. He is also believed to have sabotaged his candidacy to Egypt's presidential race of 2012 in favor of former Lieutenant-General Ahmed Shafik, who was Air Force Chief of Staff under Tantawi and Mubarak's last Prime Minister, between January 31, 2011 and March 3, 2011. Shortly after his death, it was rumored that he had been working on his memoirs, which could have contained many secrets. He was Egypt's lead negotiator with Israel and with the Palestinians, both from Hamas and the Palestinian National Authority, and had close connections to the US and to the UK. This led to speculations of possible assassination. Suleiman was someone I knew quite well and met with regularly over the last 20 years.

9. The celebration of October 6, 1973, has always been a national event of much pride and an opportunity for the Armed Forces to display themselves with pomp and circumstance and to show their indispensability to the security and stability of the nation. This was the case for the ceremony on October 6, 1981, when Sadat was assassinated by the brother of an Islamist who had been killed under torture by the security forces, and 2013 was no exception to the importance of the celebration for Egyptians, and more so for the Armed Forces. Egypt's political and cultural elite, including Jehan Sadat, the widow of Anwar Sadat, attended the event commemorating the 1973 war at a military stadium that was broadcast on television and widely watched across Egypt. This event added to the hyper-nationalism that has gripped Egypt since the military takeover in July 2013. General al-Sisi, Minister of Defense and *de facto* leader of Egypt, spoke at the event and reminded Egyptians of their authorization via mass protests for the military regime to fight violence and terrorism. This is also the justification for the current crackdown by the military-backed government against Islamists, and particularly the Muslim Brotherhood. The 2013 ceremony elevated General el-Sisi to the level of a historic national hero, even though he was never in any combat role in 1973, or in any war, for that matter, since he graduated from the Military Academy and became a Second-Lieutenant in 1977. He then spent most of his career in military intelligence. But General el-Sisi stepped in decisively after the June 30, 2013 protests that led to the forceful removal of former President Mohamed Morsi, Egypt's first freely elected president in a fair and open election. And, as the saying goes, the rest is history.



Figure 4 General Abdel Fattah el-Sisi. (Photo credit: Khaled Elfiqi, EPA).

The Muslim Brotherhood vs. Security Forces and the Military: Violence and Repression

10. Following the events of June 30, 2013 in which millions demonstrated in streets across the country, counter-demonstrations in support of the MB grew in number and intensity, leading to confrontations between MB demonstrators and protestors and security forces as well as military forces in some cases.¹⁰ This was marked by two major events: the dispersals by security and military forces of two large MB sit-ins at *Rabaa al-'Adawiya* mosque and at *al-Nahda* Square in Cairo on August 14. Security officials had given a warning prior to the dispersals, but they had failed to provide a clear timeframe and therefore a safe exit for protesters. The sit-ins had been converted into makeshift towns with field

¹⁰ See The Guardian, *Killing in Cairo: the full story of the Republican Guards' club shootings*, July 18, 2013, available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/interactive/2013/jul/18/cairo-republican-guard-shooting-full-story>.

hospitals, tents and pharmacies, and traffic around them had been restricted for weeks, as described in Paragraph 7 of Update 22. At *Rabaa*, authorities used excessive lethal force, resulting in the death of an estimated 300 persons, including a large number of women and children. In addition, over 4,000 persons are estimated to have been injured between August 14 and 18, 2013 at both locations and others. Government pronouncements indicate that 43 police officers were also killed. At those locations, and others, the MB had a number of persons who used firearms and who made significant use of throwing cobblestones and bricks and other objects at the police, having fortified themselves behind barricades and makeshift walls of such materials and others.¹¹

11. Since the military takeover on July 3, 2013, the MB have continued to conduct demonstrations, some of which remained peaceful, others resulting in violence. Since there is a shortage of reliable sources for this ongoing situation, each side blames the other for violent outcomes. What is clear is that security forces have tried to break up these demonstrations, and this is an infringement on the demonstrators' right to peaceful assembly and expression of opinion. Security forces present a different position, however, namely that these demonstrations are unauthorized, disturb public order and include violent elements that attack government and private property. On October 7, 2013 Islamists attacked more government targets, including a shooting that killed six soldiers near the Suez Canal, a car bomb that killed three police officers and injured dozens of others near Red Sea resorts, and the launching of a rocket-propelled grenade, which exploded in the Cairo neighborhood of Maadi. Many police stations have been attacked in several governorates.¹²
12. Since mid-August, which is when two large pro-MB sit-ins were dispersed, hundreds of supporters of the MB have been killed. In the week preceding October 6, MB supporters had called for anti-coup protests to march on Tahrir Square, the stronghold of anti-Morsi protesters. They issued a statement saluting "the soldiers who fought the October war – so our brave army regains its commitment to the true Egyptian military doctrine and knows the difference between the enemy and its people, before it turns into militias that do not have any other mission but killing its own people." On October 4, 2013, at least six people were killed and dozens were injured in numerous clashes. Four of those were civilians who were killed as they participated in marches by supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood, some say as a result of clashes with other civilians, but others say as a result of tear gas and live ammunition from security forces. The other two casualties were soldiers who were killed in an attack by Islamists on an army convoy near Ismailia.¹³ Among those injured was liberal activist Khaled Dawoud, who was stabbed by Islamist protesters.
13. On October 6, at least 51 people were killed and over 250 injured in clashes in several Egyptian cities.¹⁴ This was the highest death toll since the dispersal of the MB sit-ins. As thousands of Egyptians celebrated the national holiday in Tahrir Square with music and fireworks, security forces attacked anti-military coup Islamist protesters with tear gas and live ammunition, killing tens without much resistance from the Egyptian public. President Adly Mansour had called on all Egyptians to celebrate the national holiday everywhere in the country, but when peaceful demonstrators went to Tahrir, they were met with violence, and as mentioned above, at least six were killed, dozens were injured and there have been reports that some have jumped into the Nile to protect themselves from the violence. As several marches converged on Tahrir Square, which was placed off-limits by security forces and the military, Islamist protesters clashed with security forces and armed civilians in several Cairo neighborhoods. Near the train station, security forces fired tear gas to prevent armed clashes between Islamist and pro-military protesters. In Dokki, a photographer from the Associated Press reported seeing nine bodies in a clinic,

¹¹ See Paragraphs 6-14 of Update 22 and Paragraphs 14-28 of Update 23.

¹² It is difficult to ascertain the exact number of police stations that have been attacked in recent months.

¹³ New York Times, *6 die in Egypt as Islamist opposition tries to re-energize movement*, October 5, 2013.

¹⁴ New York Times, *Dozens Are Killed in Street Violence Across Egypt*, October 7, 2013.

most of which had gunshot wounds. The MB in this and other situations have much higher numbers. It is likely that both the government and supporters of the MB play with the numbers, which tend to be deflated on one side and inflated on the other. On October 22, Egypt's General Prosecutor ordered the trial of four police officers who are charged with killing 39 MB members in August 2013, after teargas was fired in the back of a police van in which the detainees were being held.¹⁵ If they materialize, however, these are likely to be only token prosecutions.

14. The MB have continued trying to maintain a momentum for their protest movement against the ouster of former President Mohamed Morsi and the military takeover on July 3, 2013, albeit with progressively fewer numbers. They will likely continue to demonstrate and thus invite attacks by the security forces. The MB's "anti-coup" alliance, as it stands, continues to call for new protests against the military-backed government and do not believe the Egyptian judiciary will help their cause. But they have also gone underground as in the Nasser years of the early 1960s. The same pattern is resurfacing, though a slim chance exists at working out an accommodation of sorts, as discussed below in Section III.



Figure 5 Supporters of the MB and Morsi display the Rabaa gesture, in reference to the police clearing of Rabaa Adawiya sit-in in August 2013. (Photo credit: Reuters, Muhammad Hamed).

15. Retired Major-General Mohamed Farid el-Tohamy, who was the head of the Administrative Oversight Authority (the government's main anti-corruption agency) and who was dismissed by Morsi from this position under allegations that he was covering corruption by figures from the "old regime," has now been reinstated with the rank of Minister to head Egypt's general intelligence service.¹⁶ El-Tohamy is one of the principal advocates of the crackdown on the MB. At this time, most of the MB's leaders are either in jail or have fled the country. They include Mohamed el-Beltagi, secretary-general of the MB's Freedom and Justice Party (FJP); Mohamed Badie, Supreme Guide of the Muslim Brotherhood; chairman of the FJP, Saad el-Katatni; and leading member Khairat el-Shater. Mohamed Morsi is to face trial on November 4, 2013 for charges of inciting the killing of opponents.¹⁷ On September 30, 2013, a military court in Suez handed MB leader Mohamed Mongey a ten-year prison sentence on charges of

¹⁵ Reuters, *Egypt orders trial of four policemen over killing of Islamist detainees*, October 22, 2013, available at: <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/10/22/us-egypt-police-arrests-idUSBRE99L0G220131022>.

¹⁶ New York Times, *Ousted General in Egypt is Back, as Islamists' Foe*, October 30, 2013, available at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/30/world/middleeast/ousted-general-in-egypt-is-back-as-islamists-foe.html>.

¹⁷ Los Angeles Times, *Ousted Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi to stand trial next month*, October 9, 2013, available at: <http://www.latimes.com/world/worldnow/la-fg-wn-egypt-morsi-trial-20131009.0.6606595.story>.

inciting violence and attacking military property in August.¹⁸ In addition, Egypt's General Prosecutor's Office submitted a request to Interpol to arrest former Deputy Supreme Guide of the MB, Mahmoud Ezzat, who fled Egypt a few weeks ago.¹⁹ On October 30, Egyptian security forces arrested one of the few remaining leaders of the MB still at large, Essam el-Erian, after 26 failed attempts to find him.²⁰

16. On September 23, 2013 the Cairo Court for Urgent Matters (this is a first-level trial court) banned "activities of the Muslim Brotherhood organization and its non-governmental organization and all the activities that it participates in and any organization derived from it." The ban also extends to activities the MB supported in any way or financed, and orders the seizure of the group's assets.²¹ Most MB leaders were, by the time the court issued this ruling, already in jail, and more than a 1000 MB supporters have died in the ongoing military-backed crackdown on the group. This legal ban essentially gives cover for the crackdown campaign that started with intensity on August 14, 2013. This decision acts as an immediate injunction until a higher court confirms the ban²², and came as a result of legal proceedings initiated by the leftist Tagammu party, who accused the MB of terrorism and of exploiting religion for political gain. In the decision on September 23, the court did argue that the MB, since its founding in 1928, has exploited religion for political gain and has used violence as a tactic to pursue its goals. The court the MB had "violated the rights of the citizens, who found only oppression and arrogance during their reign," until they rose up "under the protection of the armed forces, the sword of the homeland inseparable from their people in the confrontation with an unjust regime."
17. The MB still faces several legal claims seeking to prohibit their work and to rescind their license, but it is unclear how long these will take to be resolved. On September 2, 2013, for example, the *Hay'at Qadaaya al-Dawla* (State Commissioners Authority), which advises the government on legal issues, issued an opinion recommending that the MB be dissolved, based on claims that the group had links to armed militias, in accordance with Law 84 of 2002, which prohibits the formation of paramilitary groups.²³ This was followed by a separate statement from the Authority on October 7, recommending that the MB's Freedom and Justice Party also be dissolved.
18. A member of the MB filed a request for appeal on October 1, and media reports suggest an Egyptian court will hear the appeal on October 22.²⁴ On October 7, the MB's legal representative, Othman al-Khateeb, submitted an appeal to an administrative court against Prime Minister Hazem al-Beblawi and Minister of Social Solidarity Ahmed al-Bora^c i, challenging the government order to seize the MB's

¹⁸ Ahram Online, *Egypt Muslim Brotherhood sentenced to 10 years in military trial*, September 30, 2013, <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/82890/Egypt/Politics-/Egypt-Muslim-Brotherhood-leader-sentenced-to--year.aspx>.

¹⁹ Ahram Online, *Egypt requests Interpol arrests Brotherhood's Mahmoud Ezzat*, October 7, 2013, <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/83456/Egypt/Politics-/Egypt-requests-Interpol-arrests-Brotherhoods-Mahmo.aspx>.

²⁰ New York Times, *Prominent Muslim Brotherhood Leader is Seized in Egypt*, October 30, 2013, available at: http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/31/world/middleeast/high-ranking-muslim-brotherhood-leader-is-seized-in-egypt.html?_r=0.

²¹ Reuters, *Egypt court bans all Muslim Brotherhood activities*, September 23, 2013, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/09/23/us-egypt-brotherhood-urgent-idUSBRE98M0HL20130923>.

²² New York Times, *Egyptian Court Shuts Down the Muslim Brotherhood and Seizes Its Assets*, September 23, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/24/world/middleeast/egyptian-court-bans-muslim-brotherhood.html>.

²³ Ahram Online, *Egypt court bans Muslim Brotherhood*, September 23, 2013, <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/82304/Egypt/Politics-/Egypt-court-bans-Muslim-Brotherhood.aspx>.

²⁴ Reuters, *Egypt court to hear appeal against Brotherhood ban on October 22*, October 1, 2013, <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/10/01/uk-egypt-brotherhood-idUKBRE9900OH20131001>.

assets as well as the establishment of a panel to administer these assets until the appeal has been heard.²⁵ Some lawyers who are affiliated with the MB have argued the Cairo Court for Urgent Matters is not competent to oversee such a case, and that the ruling should have come from an administrative court. It is unclear if the appeal will be heard, however, as on October 3, the government, following a hiatus for appeals, moved to seize MB's assets and formally banned or took over social services the MB had been providing.²⁶ The Ministry of Social Affairs is responsible for administering the ban. A spokesman for the ministry, Hani Mahanna, has stated the cabinet had formed a committee to investigate the MB's sources of funds so that they can more effectively seize their assets, and that if educational or medical charities were found to have direct or indirect links with the MB, they would be subject to the ban and the government would take them over.

19. The legal decision to ban the Muslim Brotherhood will likely impact communities around Egypt who have benefited from the MB's community and social services, which have also been banned. Importantly, however, the MB's political party, the Freedom and Justice party, has not been declared dissolved.
20. Unsurprisingly, the crackdown on the MB is extending to other political groups and non-Islamist protesters. Last week, state media reported a new government measure under which demonstrators would have to report their plans beforehand to the authorities, who could forbid or postpone any gathering, or announce no-protest zones around public buildings and other key sites. The measure has yet to be signed into law, but it has already caused outrage with political groups such as *Tamarrud*, the April 6 Movement and the Salafist Nour Party.²⁷
21. In the midst of this polarization, Egyptian activists have created a new group that is against both the MB and the military. The group is called the "Revolution Path Front," and aims to set the Egyptian revolution on the right path to achieve freedom, democracy and social justice. The front currently includes leading members of the April 6 movement, the Strong Egypt Party, the Revolutionary Socialists and the Justice and Freedom Youth.²⁸ It is unclear how effective or influential this group will be, and whether they will be able to build a momentum against the military-backed government. The October 6 celebration could have been an occasion for the beginning of a national reconciliation initiative, but it was not. Egypt remains a polarized and radicalized society, at a time in its history that it so needs to be unified.

The Future of the MB and Other Islamist Organizations

22. It is important to note that even though the MB and other Islamist organizations have occasionally forged political alliances, they each pursue different political agendas, have different external connections with constituencies, including states supporting them, and have different strategies. Over the years in Egypt, the principle Islamist organizations have been the Salafists, the *al-Jama'a al-Islamiya*, and *al-Takfir wal Hijra*. At present, there also appear to be elements of Hamas and other Al-

²⁵ Ahram Online, *Egypt's Brotherhood challenges court verdict that seized group funds*, October 7, 2013, <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/83420/Egypt/Politics-/Egypts-Brotherhood-challenges-court-verdict-that-s.aspx>.

²⁶ BBC News, *Egypt to take over banned Muslim Brotherhood assets*, October 3, 2013, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-24391796>.

²⁷ Los Angeles Times, *Egyptians irked by official bid to curb protests*, October 18, 2013, available at: <http://www.latimes.com/world/worldnow/la-fg-wn-egypt-protest-law-20131018,0,3316007.story#axzz2iTb6UDB9>.

²⁸ Ahram Online, *New 'anti-Brotherhood, anti-military' front launched to 'achieve revolution goals'*, September 24, 2013, available at: <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/82400/Egypt/Politics-/New-antiBrotherhood,-antimilitary-front-launched-t.aspx>.

Qaeda affiliated groups operating in the Sinai, including *Ansar Beit el-Maqdis*. On October 26, the latter released a video claiming responsibility for a car bombing that occurred in Cairo in September 2013 and seeking to recruit others to join them in a violent insurgency against the military-backed government that ousted Mohamed Morsi and the MB in July 2013.²⁹ The group also claimed responsibility for a series of attacks in Sinai, in addition to a car bombing that occurred in the city of Ismailia in late October 2013. *Al-Jama'a al-Islamiya* and *al-Takfir wal Hijra* were essentially involved in assassinations and bombings during the Sadat era, and have since then not had a visible presence. The *al-Jama'a al-Islamiya*, however, re-emerged during the Mubarak era, and were responsible for attacks on tourists in Cairo and Luxor. There has also been one major attack on foreign tourists in Sharm el Sheikh on July 23, 2005, which has been attributed to Sinai Bedouins, Hamas, and al-Qaeda-affiliated groups. These groups seem to persist today in the Sinai (see Section IX). *Al-Takfir wal Hijra* seems to have disappeared, *al-Jama'a al-Islamiya* seems to have remained and to have maintained a working relationship with the MBs, lending credence to speculations by the State Security police during the Mubarak era that both organizations were an offshoot of the MB.

23. The Salafists seem to have existed in Egypt for an undetermined number of years. They are Muslims who have an ultra-orthodox, puritanical interpretation of Islam that is quite similar to the *Wahabi* school of thought in Saudi Arabia. For this reason, many of them are Salafists by way of belief and conviction and therefore not necessarily as part of an organizational structure. However, in the last 30 years at least, Saudi Arabian religious and charitable organizations have strongly supported Salafists in Egypt and elsewhere, particularly financially, and at least in the last decade, also politically. During the Mubarak regime, State Security police downgraded the threat level presented by the Salafists to the regime to the point where there was even cooperation between the Salafists and State Security police against the MB. To everyone's surprise, the Salafist Nour Party won 27.8% of parliamentary seats in the legislative elections of late 2011-early 2012. Also to everyone's surprise, the Salafists aligned themselves with the MBs and supported the election of Morsi. However, after the dissolution of parliament, they made a complete turnaround and dissociated themselves from the MBs, probably on the instruction of their Saudi Arabian patrons, and they lent at least moral support to the secular democrats, and particularly to the military and security forces during the period between June 30-July 3, 2013. Subsequently, they made some public statements showing their dissatisfaction with the excessive violence committed by the security forces against the MB, particularly where sit-ins were held at *Rabaa al-Adawiya* mosque and *al-Nahda* Square. But they remain supportive of the new regime and of the military, though in a much less vocal way. The likelihood that they would support the MB in the foreseeable future is very remote.



Figure 6 Pro-MB protesters returning to Rabaa al-Adawiya mosque after leaving for Eid ul-Fitr celebrations.

²⁹ New York Times, *Video Offered to Back Claim of Cairo Attack*, October 27, 2013, available at: http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/28/world/middleeast/video-offered-to-back-claim-of-cairo-attack.html?_r=0.

They remain subject to the political direction of Saudi Arabia, which at this point has not only dissociated itself from the MB, but has taken a definite position against them, as evidenced by the pressures put by them on Qatar to stop funding the MB, which the previous Qatari Emir, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, had done (his son, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, succeeded him in June 2013).

24. For the reasons stated above, the MB in Egypt are isolated, but they have strong constituencies abroad. These constituencies, while probably organized in the same way, nevertheless operate differently and have different degrees of influence in the countries in which they are located, and amongst each other. Thus, the Hamas movement, which is an offspring of the MB, has a different status as being in control of Gaza and a different political agenda than, for example, the Libyan MBs, who are also an offshoot of the Egyptian MBs, and whose objective is to increase their power base in that country in order to eventually seize power as their counterparts in Egypt did in the legislative elections of late 2011-early 2012 and the presidential elections of May-June 2012. But they also see the risks of acquiring power too fast and without the opportunity of consolidating that power before making a complete power grab over the country. In contrast, the MB organizations in the West, particularly in the US, Canada and the UK, are highly organized. More importantly, they have a much higher percentage of professionals whose educational and income levels allow them to have a much higher degree of influence within their respective communities.³⁰ At present, the UK-Egyptian MBs are working with members of parliament and the House of Lords to influence the Cameron government to take positions that are against the military regime in Egypt, and it is rumored that they are planning to present a complaint to the ICC Prosecutor in the Hague naming General el-Sisi and others for committing genocide and crimes against humanity against the MB in Egypt.
25. There have been reports in local Egyptian media that there continue to be attempts at reconciliation between the current government and the Muslim Brotherhood. Constitutional Law Professor Ahmed Kamal Aboul-Magd has said in a statement to the al-Masry al-Youm newspaper that he has met with Amr Darrag and Mohamed Ali Beshr of the Freedom and Justice Party and others of the Muslim Brotherhood to discuss national reconciliation.³¹ In a separate statement, Cabinet spokesman has reported to the portal Masrawy that the government has adopted Aboul-Magd's initiative and that the Ministry of Transitional Justice will work on propositions for reconciliation. Egyptian authorities have also attempted sending imams to mosques to deliver sermons in support of the government and to "correct the fallacies of extremist thought," in an attempt to promote a true "Egyptian Islam."³² This notwithstanding, it is unlikely that these are genuine attempts to reach reconciliation with the MB, or that the MB will reintegrated in Egyptian political life under a military-backed government. Both the regime and the MB are very suspicious of one another. The MB is convinced that a strong faction in the regime as well as among the Egyptian population is intent on seizing this historic opportunity to deal a fatal blow to the MBs. Indeed, such a trend exists, particularly in the Ministry of Interior and among some in the military. But it is inconceivable that they would succeed in suppressing an estimated 3 million core members of the MB in Egypt and maybe as many as 7 million sympathizers. Whatever the numbers may be, they are certainly large enough that such an outcome cannot be achieved, even if it is

³⁰ During the legislative and presidential elections of 2011 and 2012, the US MBs were able to marshal a large number of Egyptians to register in consulates and vote for the MB and Morsi. They were also active during Morsi's visit to the US, and were influential in the selection of those Egyptian-Americans who met with Morsi, which excluded many Egyptian-Americans representing Egyptian-American secular democratic organizations and an inadequate representation of Egyptian-American Copts.

³¹ Mada Masr, *Reconciliation initiative with Brothers remains murky*, October 10, 2013, <http://madamasr.com/content/reconciliation-initiative-brothers-remains-murky>.

³² Washington Post, *In Egypt, a campaign to promote an 'Egyptian Islam'*, October 9, 2013, available at: http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2013-10-09/world/42862552_1_mohamed-morsi-security-forces-muslim-brotherhood.

only political. It is simply impossible to suppress such a large number of people and maintain oppression for a prolonged period of time. But as stated above, the high level of polarization that exists and the strong distrust that has been built since the July-August 2013 events will likely not easily fade away. On the part of the regime, the reconciliation efforts seem to be only a formality. The regime has also rejected so far any form of fact-finding or truth commission, whether national or international. Thus, even the minimum acknowledgement of excessive use of force by the security forces is not being contemplated.³³

26. In the absence of reconciliation, the MB can activate the *al-Tanzim al-Sirri* (“secret organization”), which would be the last resort for them. This strategy has been in place for as long as the MB has been repressed, some 80 years. It consists of small autonomous cells (some say of five to ten plus a leader whose word is indisputable). These units are reportedly trained for guerilla tactics, including the use of explosives.³⁴ Alternatively, they can continue to have relatively peaceful protests and demonstrations on Fridays after prayers and at the same time activate their members and supporters in different countries to engage in a public relations campaign that would emphasize the military-dictator nature of the current regime. According to a former member of the MB who still maintains his contacts with the group, the MB has formed a crisis committee that is partially abroad, and some of the public statements that have come out were from the MB’s office in London.³⁵ They are likely to escalate their martyrdom, and the security forces and the military will intervene, inevitably leading to escalation. This, in turn, will lead to a loss of credibility for the regime before international public opinion. The MB will conduct public relations campaigns against the regime that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and internal propaganda agencies might be unable to effectively counteract.
27. No one knows how the regime is assessing the response by the MB and its linkages with other organizations, particularly the Salafists, who may very well decide to become more supportive of the MB, notwithstanding the official position of Saudi Arabia. It appears, however, that the security forces are preparing themselves for the type of relatively peaceful demonstrations that would follow Friday prayers in different parts of the country. There is also a heightened degree of concern for potential use of explosives and attacks upon public and private facilities as a way of increasing the sense of public insecurity and forcing the regime to take more repressive measures that can then be used against it internationally, but also internally. On the Sinai front, however, it is clear to the military that the alliance between some elements of Hamas, the Sinai Bedouins and some elements affiliated with al-Qaeda are intent on continuing to attack the Egyptian military and to further negatively impact on whatever little tourism exists in the southern Sinai. What the regime has not come to grips with until now is the prospect of that coalition of Islamist groups taking over portions of the Sinai, particularly the area around Rafah and el-Arish, which border directly on Gaza. With this prospect, it is understandable that Israel is allowing Egyptian military forces to exceed the level of troops and equipment brought into the Sinai as per the terms of the 1979 Peace Treaty, in the Appendix on the Organization of Movements in the Sinai. It is also possible that this would lead Egypt, with the encouragement of Israel and maybe

³³ It should be noted that prior to the attack by security forces on pro-MB sit-ins in August 2013, it appears that former Vice-President Mohamed el-Baradei had reached an agreement with General el-Sisi that there would be no attack on *Rabaa al-‘Adawiya*, the site of the largest pro-MB sit-in, before certain conciliatory steps were undertaken and before giving an opportunity for people there and at *al-Nahda* Square, the site of the other large pro-MB sit-in, to leave peacefully. It is believed that General el-Sisi gave such assurances to el-Baradei, who then felt betrayed when the security forces attacked without giving adequate notice to those who were surrounded and without giving them an opportunity to leave without being arrested, beaten or mistreated. Whether General el-Sisi misled el-Baradei, and whether the security forces attacked prematurely without clearance from el-Sisi, is not known.

³⁴ See Paragraph 16 of Update 22 and Paragraph 21 of Update 23.

³⁵ Washington Post, *For Egypt’s crippled Muslim Brotherhood, protests part of survival strategy under crackdown*, October 3, 2013, http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2013-10-03/world/42652472_1_muslim-brotherhood-brotherhood-s-president-mohammed-morsi.

some agencies within the US, to expand their military activities in Gaza itself, thus increasing the risks of a direct confrontation with Hamas.

Inhumane Prison Conditions

28. Since the days of Gamal Abdel Nasser, hundreds of thousands have been arbitrarily arrested, most of them mistreated, and a significantly large number of them tortured and killed. Nobody knows the cumulative number, but one can easily estimate in the Mubarak last decade that an average of 10-15,000 members were tortured on a yearly basis while an estimated 100,000 were rotated in prisons for periods ranging from weeks to years. The state security courts and the military courts routinely sentenced hundreds every year to long-term imprisonment. The government's charges were always that these individuals and the groups to which they belonged, whether they were the MBs or other smaller groups of Islamists were dedicated to violence and were therefore considered "terrorists." Everything was done to keep them away from legitimately exercising their political rights.
29. In the current crackdown on the MB and their supporters, hundreds of Islamists remain in detention on very broad and ill-defined charges, in appalling conditions that fall far short of international standards on the treatment of prisoners.³⁶ Thousands remain detained without charge, and they have routinely been denied access to their lawyers, families, and opportunities to challenge the bases of their detention. Many of them were sentenced by military tribunals to prison terms between 5 and 25 years after one-week trials, with hearings often taking place inside places of detention. Many human rights advocates in Egypt have continually stated that prison conditions in the country have not changed since Hosni Mubarak's ouster, since torture, inhumane and degrading treatment in detention remains as before the January 25 revolution.
30. What is new, however, post the military takeover on July 3, 2013, is an apparent willingness to subject Westerners to the same inhumane treatment many Egyptians routinely suffer from. This was illustrated in the ordeal that two Canadians, Tarek Loubani and John Greyson, went through following their arrest in Egypt on August 16th near Ramses Square, the site of clashes between security forces and Islamist protestors. Last month, a French citizen was arrested for violating an army curfew and subsequently died in custody at the downtown *Qasr el-Nil* police station, and on October 13, an American citizen who had been arrested in northern Sinai was found dead in what appears to be a suicide.³⁷ Loubani and Greyson, in addition to a Mohamed Sultan, a US Citizen who was also arrested, saw prisoners whose heads were shaved stripped and beaten. Leaked letters written during their detention said they slept "like sardines" on floors in cells that were cockroach-infested. They reported seeing a detainee with an open arm wound left oozing with blood, another suffering a heart attack without receiving any medical attention, and another detainee was 11 years old.³⁸ The two Canadians were subsequently released from detention on October 6, 2013 and have left Egypt, but thousands of Egyptians remain in detention and receive the same or more inhumane treatment.
31. In the last thirty years, Egypt's police system, which includes control over police holding stations as well as prisons, has consistently deteriorated. This was due in part to the decline in police professional standards, administrative and judicial oversight and other factors that created incentives towards

³⁶ See the *Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners*, available at: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/TreatmentOfPrisoners.aspx>.

³⁷ New York Times, *American Held in Egypt Killed Himself, Officials Say*, October 14, 2013, available at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/14/world/middleeast/egyptian-officials-say-american-killed-himself-in-prison.html?ref=egypt>.

³⁸ New York Times, *Westerners' Smuggled Letters Offer Glimpse of Egyptian Prisons*, October 1, 2013.

mistreatment of civilians with whom the police had encounters, and in particular with those it held in custody, whether before or after conviction.

32. Police professional standards started to go down during the Mubarak era when admissions to the police academy became based more on political connections than on merits. For all practical purposes, the sons of army and police officers and judges, as well as others in politics, were able to get into the academy with barely passing high school grades. The academic average in the academy fell to the fiftieth percentile, which is much lower than the entry requirements for law school, medicine and other faculties.
33. Graduates of the police academy were also given the equivalent of law degrees and allowed to practice. For years, anyone who could not get into law school because of low grades, as stated above, would go into the police academy, obtain the degree of Police Sciences and Law, and then apply for a transfer to the Office of the Prosecutor. Using political connections, they were able to obtain such lateral transfers, and then pursue a career in that office or in the judiciary (since it was possible to go from being a prosecutor to a judge). This led to many prosecutors, whose responsibilities include overseeing the propriety of police conduct, neglecting this responsibility. For all practical purposes, young prosecutors for the most part became extensions of the police. With the exception of less than 10 cases over the last thirty years, there have been no prosecutions for torture, police misconduct or abuse, even though there were thousands of documented cases by human rights organizations as well as cases that became notorious with the general public. The cases in which there were prosecutions received a great deal of public attention by the media, but rather than encouraging greater compliance by the police with legal norms, it brought about a contrary reaction of increased cover-ups. The Ministry of Interior had an office of the Inspector General, who routinely over the years ignored complaints or found them unfounded. And, over the years, the culture of impunity developed, torture and mistreatment in police stations became rampant along with an extraordinary level of corruption where the wealthy and powerful could receive almost anything they wanted while in prison, including daily food service from restaurants, the use of personal cell phones and sending their clothes to be laundered at home on a weekly basis. This was not the case for poorer prisoners and certainly not for political prisoners, who were mostly locked up for more hours than regulations allowed, many of them kept for days without being released from their cells, the food rations as well as blanket and clothes rations were usually half of what was allocated to them because prison guards and officials had arrangements with suppliers whereby half of the food and the supplies was received and given out to the prisoners, while the balance was divided among the officers and some of the soldiers, and to a much lesser extent, the prison guards.
34. For these and other reasons, prison conditions in Egypt have been appalling for years, international agencies and NGOs who inspected them routinely reported their international sub-standard conditions – and that is a term of art that hardly describes the cruel, inhumane and degrading conditions of Egyptian prisons.
35. Aside from the prisons, police stations have also been in the same situation, largely because police stations have never received budgetary allocations for their expansion, and almost all of those in the city of Cairo are facilities built between 30 and 50 years past, where a detention area that could house 20-30 persons at best routinely houses 60 to 80 persons. One can only imagine what the conditions of the one or two toilets per facility became. It was not only the cramped conditions, the unsanitary facilities and the stench, but also most of all the mistreatment by the guards and the officers. Routinely, poor suspects were beaten, and the answer by police officers was that they did not have enough police power to conduct investigations. The declining professionalism and the culture of impunity made it so that persons were not only routinely beaten in police stations, but also tortured, with many of them dying under torture but not being reported or reported as having committed suicide. Women were routinely raped, particularly foreign women who were so unlucky to have been arrested.

36. In January 2011, Human Rights Watch released in a report that documented many torture and death in custody cases in which legal proceedings were initiated by victims or their families.³⁹ The report argued that torture and ill treatment were used by the Egyptian regime in the previous two decades on deliberate, widespread and systematic basis, and showed the extent of the culture of impunity in Egypt surrounding torture and ill treatment in detention. This culture of impunity that fueled such mistreatment became crystal clear to the Egyptian public in the summer of 2010, with the death of Khaled Said in Alexandria. Said had been sitting in a cybercafé in June 2010, when two police officers walked in, took him out and reportedly beat him to death in the doorway of the building across the street from where he was. In the wake of this case, many important rallies were held in Cairo and Alexandria against police brutality. There is no doubt that the case of Khaled Said helped spark the uprising in January 2011 that unseated Hosni Mubarak.
37. Reports of prison and police station conditions were repeatedly made to the Minister of Interior who regularly disregarded them. When they were brought to the Minister of Justice, he also routinely disregarded them under the pretext that prison and police stations were operated by the Ministry of Interior, though admittedly recognizing that the Prosecutor's office had an oversight and a responsibility for the conditions of places of detention. The Prosecutor General, with a few exceptions, did not want to go, in a political sense, against the Minister of Interior, and the officers in the Ministry simply looked the other way. President Mubarak, to whom I personally reported many of these abuses over the years, simply did not believe them or pretended that he did not believe them.
38. In addition to all of that, egregious as it may be, were the practices of State Security Investigations (SSI - *Mabahith Amn al-Dawla*), which routinely tortured suspects, including those that it recurrently re-arrested.⁴⁰ It was possible to keep someone in custody for up to 6 months without a person being brought before a prosecutor or a judge, or without even being charged with a crime. Such persons known or suspected to act against the government, particularly Islamists, and more particularly the MB, were routinely incarcerated and mistreated up to and including torture, to the estimated level of 10,000-15,000 such cases per year. This was the way in which SSI controlled the MBs and other extreme groups, such as *at-Takfir wal Hijra* and *al-Jama'a al-Islamiya*. With respect to the Salafists, SSI treated them with kid gloves, partly because they were supported by Saudi Arabia and partly because the Salafists were known to support the Mubarak regime and to be antagonistic to the MB. This is why after the revolution, the Salafists only briefly aligned themselves with the MBs in parliament between 2011 and 2012, but then after the fall of Morsi, they promptly aligned themselves with the new military regime, even though on occasion they denounced some of the abuses by the regime against the MB. For the time being, they remain the military regime's supporters.
39. During the brief period of the Second Republic under President Mohamed Morsi (June 30, 2012 – July 3, 2013), the police realized that the MBs would take their revenge because they were in power, and the Ministry of Interior, in preparation for that contingency a few months before the legislative elections of 2011, which seemed certain to give the MBs a large percentage, adopted a regulation allowing police officers to take a four-year leave of absence. This proved useful after Morsi became president when an estimated one third to one half of the police officers took advantage of this and other forms of leaves of absence. After July 2013, when the military reasserted themselves, an unknown but large number of them are reported to have returned to their positions. The return of so many who had a vendetta with the MBs may explain why so much violence and excessive force took place at such clashes at places like *Rabaa al-'Adawiya*, *al-Nahda Square*, and other locations. This is not to say that there was also no use

³⁹ Human Rights Watch, ““Work on Him Until He Confesses”: Impunity for Torture in Egypt,” January 31, 2011, available at: <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2011/01/30/work-him-until-he-confesses-0>.

⁴⁰ In March 2011, the State Security Investigations Service was dissolved, and was replaced by *Qita' al-Amn al-Watani* (Agency for National Security).

of force at different times by the MBs nor provocation by them; there was, but certainly not enough to justify the excessive use of force that was displayed in these and other situations. The MBs responded with even worse violence against the police, in some cases attacking police stations and reportedly beheading policemen.

40. Since the January 25 revolution, succeeding governments (under four Prime Ministers: Essam Sharaf, Kamal el-Ganzouri, Hesham Qandil, and Hazem al Beblawi) have paid no attention whatsoever to prison conditions nor to the conditions of police stations, even though during the periods of January to March 2011, many police stations were attacked and destroyed, obviating the need to rebuild them, but there was no interest in rebuilding them in a way that provided for humane conditions of places of detention. There were no efforts by any of these governments, including the current one, to improve prison conditions, nor to improve police professional standards and to establish accountability for those who committed such violations. For all practical purposes, the prison and police stations, as well as the practices of the police, have simply fallen into a black hole of its own, and anyone who falls into it is uncertain of how he/she will be treated.
41. Conditions in military prisons are not any better, but they are less subject to public attention. The treatment of detainees and prisoners by military police and military prosecutors is covered by military secrecy, and the media is not allowed to cross that red line except when some brave journalist discloses something particularly egregious that is also known to other public sources. On occasion, when the media reports on a public incident, such as the incident in December 2011 where a female protester was dragged down the street and beaten by military officers with her torso bare and her bra showing, the military did not want to address the issue of inhumane and degrading treatment by Egyptian forces.
42. In conclusion, the disregard for the dignity of the human being up to and including torture and death has reached a level of acceptance by the police and military, and even by the general public. Impunity is the rule, and dissemination of information about such abuses is prevented. There isn't even a hint of concern by governments, Ministers of Defense, Ministers of Interior and other public officials about prison and police station conditions, whether civilian or military, and the cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment or punishment received by so many. There is no doubt that this is in itself an indication of how low Egyptian society has sunk in terms of human values and respect for human dignity. When claims about democracy are made, one should never forget that in the final analysis in any given society, it is not so much democracy and its processes that constitute a measure of how civilized it is. Instead, it is how the human beings who are members of that society are treated that constitutes the real measurement of civilization.



Figure 7 Burning Coptic church.

Attacks on Egyptian Christians by Islamists and the Failure of the Security Services to Protect Them

43. On October 20, 2013, gunmen opened fire on a wedding party outside a Coptic church in Cairo, killing three (including an eight-year-old girl) and injuring nine people.⁴¹ Egyptian Christians, their places of worship and other Christian-owned property have been targeted by Islamists in the aftermath of the sit-in dispersals in mid-August for allegedly supporting the removal of Morsi on July 3, 2013. In a report released on October 9, Amnesty International documents in detail attacks on Christians on and after this date. There have been violent attacks on 43 churches (some sources say 61) and over 200 Christian-owned property since August 14, the day revenge attacks against Christians by supporters of Morsi started, and how security forces have consistently failed to prevent these attacks.⁴² The attacked churches were completely destroyed, and 207 Christian-owned property were violently attacked, according by researchers at Amnesty, who visited sites of attacks in Al-Minya, Fayoum and Greater Cairo and spoke with eyewitnesses, religious leaders and government officials. In the report, the organization calls on the Egyptian government to conduct an impartial investigation into these sectarian attacks and to take all necessary steps to prevent their recurrence.
44. After the popular uprising that started on January 25, 2011, Christians were violently targeted on many occasions. One of the consequences of this has been the large-scale migration of Egyptian Christians out of Egypt with the resulting negative anti-regime sentiment of Egyptian Christians abroad. On October 4, 2011, security forces dispersed a mainly Coptic demonstration using excessive force. On Sunday, October 9, 2011, a shocking and disturbing confrontation pitted the Army against Coptic demonstrators who had rallied from several Cairo districts to the Corniche street to demonstrate outside the Radio and Television Building known as the Maspero area. The demonstration came after a sit-in in Maspero by Christian Egyptians protesting against the burning of a church in the Upper Egypt governorate of Aswan on September 30, 2011. These were peaceful demonstrators who criticized the government in a non-sectarian manner, and were met with excessive force. In the aftermath of this incident, the Minister of Information at the time called on “loyal” and “respectful” Egyptian citizens to support the army in “protecting Egypt.” These comments added fuel to the already existing tension between Muslims and Christians in the Maspero area and surrounding neighborhoods. On October 9, 2011, peaceful Coptic protestors were cordoned off by military police who used wooden batons, and clashes broke out. In the violence that ensued, 28 people were killed and 212 injured. Comments by the SCAF and the Government following these events followed the classic tone of alluding to “hidden hands” and “foreign agendas” aimed at causing instability in Egypt.



Figure 8 A relative of one of the victims of a shooting at a Coptic Christian Church in Cairo is comforted as she mourns at a morgue. (Photo credit: AFP Getty Images, Khaled Desouki).

⁴¹ BBC News, *Egypt gunmen open fire on Coptic Christian wedding in Cairo*, October 21, 2013, available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-24605130>.

⁴² Amnesty International, *Egypt: Christians scapegoated after dispersal of pro-Morsi sit-ins*, October 9, 2013, available at: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/for-media/press-releases/egypt-christians-scapegoated-after-dispersal-pro-morsi-sit-ins-2013-10-09>.

45. Egyptian authorities lost control of the town of Dalga in southern Minya to Islamists between July 3 (the day Morsi was ousted) and mid-September, during which time the town saw the worst sectarian violence in Egypt. The town has a population of about 120,000 of which 20,000 are Christians, and was overtaken by radical Islamists who twice fought attempts by the army in the above-mentioned period to regain control of the area. A 1650-year-old monastery and the two churches in the town have been burned or looted, about 1000 Christians fled, and those who remain in the town generally have been staying indoors for fear of harassment. Other residents of Minya have relayed to researchers that someone had been drawing black “X” marks on Christian-owned storefronts to distinguish them from Muslim-owned businesses so they could be easily identified and attacked. Following these attacks in early August, “reconciliation sessions,” some in the presence of local officials, were held to pressure Coptic Christians to withdraw complaints they had submitted against police stations in return for their safety. Some in Dalga said that some town residents have asked for money in exchange for protecting local Christians, in reference to a tax that was imposed on Christians centuries ago. These developments are in effect a breakdown of the rule of law, and a clear failure by the state to fulfill one of its most basic obligations, the protection of citizens from violence. When security forces brought heavy weapons to reclaim control of the town, it was not to protect Christians, but was rather to catch a fugitive Islamist, according to the Interior Ministry.
46. The governorates of Minya and Asyut are both Islamist strongholds; yet, they both have relatively large Christian populations. This rise in Islamist violent, sectarian activity against Christians, in addition to a growing militant movement in the Sinai Peninsula, shows the inability or unwillingness of the security forces to protect Christians. This violence significantly helps the current military-backed government to make the case for a crackdown on supporters of the MB, which may in fact give further momentum to militant activity in Upper Egypt and Sinai.
47. Many Copts believe the Government is lax in protecting their community and securing their rights. Egyptian Christians are estimated to number between 8 and 10 million, with another 2 million estimated to be living abroad. In the last 20 years of the Mubarak regime, it was not a priority for the Government to prevent attacks on Christians across Egypt. Church attacks and other attacks on Christians reveal a pattern in police response. The latter always downgraded such attacks and did not hold those responsible accountable. This climate of impunity has encouraged more of these attacks, and has justifiably made the Christian community in Egypt feel vulnerable and insecure. Discrimination against Christians is a highly important question facing the country and one that must be addressed in an unequivocal manner in order to reassure them and other religious minorities that their rights will be protected. The situation of Christians in Egypt remains worrying and unclear in this transitional period, as it is unclear whether the Third Republic will have an adequate legal framework and the political will to protect their human rights.⁴³

Internal Support for the Present Regime

48. The current military-backed regime enjoys widespread support from the Egyptian public (likely the majority of Egyptians). Many in Egypt feel as though the military, in removing Mohamed Morsi from power and subsequently engaging in a series of actions aimed at repressing the MB and their supporters, has saved them from a national enemy represented by the secretive and “terrorist” MB. *Tamarrud*, the group that mobilized millions of Egyptians to demonstrate against the Muslim Brotherhood on June 30, 2013, has come out in full support of the actions of the military in the aftermath of the military takeover on July 3, 2013. Other groups and figures supporting the military include the National Salvation Front,

⁴³ See Paragraphs 25-49 of Update 12, Paragraphs 135 and 175 of Update 13, Paragraph 39 of Update 14, Paragraph 32 of Update 18 and Paragraphs 29-32 of Update 23.

an alliance of secular political parties that was formed in response to Morsi's authoritarian November 22, 2013 constitutional declaration, the Grand Imam of al-Azhar Ahmed el-Tayeb, Pope Tawadros II of the Coptic Church, many labor unions and supporters of the Mubarak regime. Since the MB sit-ins were dispersed on August 14, 2013, Egyptian state media and most privately owned media have continually portrayed the government's actions as a justifiable fight by the military against anarchy and terrorism as represented by the MB, and for public order and stability. In dispersing two large pro-MB sit-ins, arresting thousands of supporters of the MB, locking up their leaders and banning their activities, many Egyptians see a clear victory. This has led to abundant praise for the actions of the military, even by public figures and groups who had been before and even during Morsi's rule staunchly against military interference in Egypt's political affairs.

49. General el-Sisi, as mentioned above, has now been elevated to the rank of a national hero. Posters of el-Sisi can now be seen on store windows around the country, Tahrir Square vendors proudly display his pictures alongside national flags, a support group recently announced that it had reached a million signatures in support of el-Sisi's candidacy for President of Egypt, and a publicity campaign by many groups seems to be going strong for him. El-Sisi has not ruled out formally running for President of Egypt, and if he does, the support he enjoys today could well win him the presidency.
50. The similarities between current events and events in 1954 cannot be ignored. The military regime in 1954, headed by Gamal Abdel Nasser, engaged in a fierce campaign of repression against the MB, as mentioned above in Section II, many of whose leaders were imprisoned and/or executed. Today, history is repeating itself. The military-backed government, with el-Sisi as *de facto* leader, is engaging in a similar campaign against the MB. But if the modern history of Egypt is to teach us anything, it is that these acts of repression will force dissident groups underground, which leads to further radicalization. This, at a time in which Egypt so needs a sense of national unity. The widespread support for the ongoing crackdown against the MB and their supporters is an indication that such national unity is far from being the reality.

International Support for the Present Regime

51. The regime feels strong in that it has the support of Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Kuwait, who have in the past and are likely to continue to support them financially. More importantly, the regime feels that the US has no choice but to support it, and so will the EU states. On 14 August, the day the pro-MB sit-ins were dispersed, US Secretary of State John Kerry said that the "bloody government crackdown on protestors in Egypt" was "deplorable," and the next day, US President Barack Obama delivered a public statement calling on leaders to lift the state of emergency in Egypt, and announced that the US would cancel military exercises with Egypt (though US aid to Egypt would continue). On October 9, 2013, however, the US stated it would cut a large part of the \$1.3 billion military aid it sends to Egypt annually until the Egyptian government takes the necessary steps to restore democracy and a democratically elected civilian government, in light of the continued crackdown on Islamists.⁴⁴ More particularly, the US has said it would withhold cash support and suspend the delivery of F-16 planes, Apache helicopters, M1A1 tank kits and Harpoon anti-ship missiles to a later time. In response to this, the Egyptian government has said this move was wrong and that Egypt "would not surrender to American pressure."⁴⁵ US Secretary of State John Kerry, however, has made clear that this cut in aid is not a withdrawal from relations with Egypt, and has not made clear what the necessary steps are to restore democracy. Since

⁴⁴ Bloomberg, *U.S. Cuts Military Aid to Egypt, Seeks Move to Democracy*, October 9, 2013, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-10-09/u-s-suspends-cash-and-equipment-assistance-to-egyptian-military.html>.

⁴⁵ BBC News, *Egypt condemns US decision to suspend military aid*, October 10, 2013, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-24471148>.

the 1979 peace treaty with Israel, Egypt has become one of the largest recipients of US military and economic aid. Egypt is too important for US strategic interests, and it is unlikely that relations between the two countries will change in any significant way based on the non-democratic policies or practices of the current or any future Egyptian government. In the meantime, the Egyptian “street,” as the term is used to describe public opinion, has turned against the US for this reason, but also because it believes that the US has supported the MBs and the Morsi regime. To complete public dissatisfaction, the MB believe the US has deceived them and has acted duplicitously by indicating support to Morsi, particularly during his visit to the US in September 2012, and yet at the same time abandoning him when the military removed him from office. The Egyptian public is deeply critical of current US foreign policy. It takes a strange genius to be able to displease all parties at the same time, but that is what has been accomplished.

52. The EU will most probably vote for normalization of relations with Egypt after having previously decided on August 21, 2013 to suspend export licenses for equipment used by the Egyptian government for its repressive practices. The EU will likely resume economic assistance to Egypt, though much less than in previous years, if for no other reason than Europe’s economic crisis. A Cairo-based western diplomat has told the website Global Post that it is unlikely that the suspension of some American aid will affect EU funding for Egypt.⁴⁶
53. This international support will embolden the regime to press on with its policies of non-reconciliation with the MB, continue its repressive actions, proceed with the trial of former President Morsi and other MB leaders, shut down the movement’s organizations, and freeze and seize their assets, all of which has already occurred. Morsi is to stand trial on November 4, 2013 for his alleged role in the killing of protesters in December 2012, the Muslim Brotherhood has been banned by a court order on September 23, 2013, and many of its leaders’ assets have been frozen or seized.
54. Moreover, international support for Egypt’s current government will enhance al-Sisi’s image as the country’s savior. Once again, Egypt’s longest historical product will continue: the making of pharaohs. The nest is already well in the making. Whether he will resist the temptation is yet to be seen. But irrespective of whether he runs for and gets elected president, or chooses someone and pulls the strings behind the scenes is not much different. Rumors have it that a few candidates are being considered, including Amr Moussa, currently the head of the Constitutional Committee of 50 and formerly Minister of Foreign Affairs and Secretary General of the League of Arab States, and Major General Mourad Moafi, formerly Director of Military Intelligence and of the General Intelligence Service, and Governor of North Sinai.

The Continuing Deterioration of the Economy

55. Continued violent events and other confrontations have not only brought the economy to a standstill, but also caused it to regress significantly. Its impact is felt by the population, but its gravity has not yet hit home. Succeeding governments since 2011 have been unable or unwilling to address the situation. Neither these governments nor the military have raised this matter publicly, probably fearing that this would fuel additional instability. Whilst Egyptians continue to feel the consequences of the dire economic situation in Egypt, many do not have an in-depth understanding of what it will take to remedy this situation. Most Egyptians have this unrealistic perception that somehow divine providence will somehow save Egypt from whatever danger or woes it may face. Has not the MB regime collapsed before it could become an almost irreversible theocracy? Has not Saudi Arabia and the UAE come

⁴⁶ Global Post, *US military aid freeze to Egypt is a symbol, not a blow*, October 14, 2013, available at: <http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/regions/middle-east/egypt/131013/us-military-aid-freeze-egypt-symbol-not-blow>.

through with billions of dollars of loans and grants in July and August of 2013 to shore up the country's faltering economy? Indeed, God protects Egypt, or so believe so many Egyptians. What else can be said other than how blessed are those who have such a confident view of the future. But if a dose of realism were to be interjected, this confident optimism would be significantly dampened. Still, most Egyptians would concede the existence of problems, but continue to opt for this wishful thinking. Any further insistence on the reality would be deemed unpatriotic.

56. Having said that, what follows are some important facts that the regime needs to face, the sooner the better:

- The 85-million population is increasing at an exponential rate, and in 20 years, it will be 100 million.
- At present, 50% of the 85 million are under 30 years of age, and in that age group, 60% are unemployed. That is an estimated 26.5 million, among whom is an estimated 20 million at or below the poverty level.
- An estimated 25% of the population (if not more) lives at or below the poverty level and within that group, an estimated 5 million people live below the hunger level.
- There are at least tens of thousands of street children on the streets of Egypt, mostly in Cairo and Alexandria, according to estimates by NGOs.
- An estimated 12 million people live in hundreds of slums across Egypt. They live in appalling squalid conditions, and many of them are without legal identities.⁴⁷
- It is estimated that between 16,000 and 20,000 hectares of agricultural land are lost annually due to illegal building and urbanization, which further aggravates the food deficit in Egypt.
- The situation in Egypt has made its ranking in the Global Competitive Index fall from 107 to 118 out of 148 countries, according to the World Economic Forum.
- The inflation rate doubled to 10% between December 2012 and August 2013, according to data from the IMF.
- The US Dollar-Egyptian Pound Exchange Rate rose from 6.1 to 7 in less than a year (between December 2012 and September 2013).

57. Two socio-economic factors have had an impact on the economy. The first is an indeterminate number of persons who have moved from rural to urban areas, particularly Cairo, where an estimated 2 million people have been added to the already over-populated city of an estimated 16 to 18 million (the numbers publicly available appear to be uncertain). Most of these rural migrants have added to already-existing shantytowns that have no sufficient municipal services to support the existing let alone the enhanced population, such as electricity, roads, sewage, water, public health services, and public safety. This is creating additional pressure on the city's administration and on public security. The second factor has to do with the expansion of unauthorized buildings and houses in rural areas, which encroach on agricultural land, thus reducing agriculture production. Even though this is in violation of the law, the authorities (namely, police, prosecution and the judiciary) are simply unable to address the situation.

58. The foreign currency reserves have gone down since January 2011 from \$39 billion to an estimated \$11 billion, of which \$5 billion is believed to be in treasury authorizations, and approximately \$5 billion in gold bullion. As a result, all Egyptian external financial transactions are now handled on a cash basis. For all practical purposes, Egyptian credit is at its lowest.

⁴⁷ IRIN News, *EGYPT: Taming the slum menace in Cairo*, June 28, 2011, available at: <http://www.irinnews.org/report/93086/egypt-taming-the-slum-menace-in-cairo>.

59. Income from the tourism industry has gone down from 2010 to 2013 by 70% to 75%. In addition to the revenue loss and the loss of jobs and taxes, there is also an unforeseen loss that has yet to hit the market. This relates to the inability of tourism projects to repay their loans, particularly the financing of land and buildings and related industries, which may cause a significant series of bankruptcies whose impact on the economy would be quite significant.⁴⁸

The Situation in the Sinai

60. The situation in the Sinai remains tense, with almost daily casualties of militants or security forces, particularly in or near the northern Sinai city of El-Arish and the border city of Rafah. On October 22, 2013, four roadside bombs killed two people and wounded five, according to army sources.⁴⁹ On October 7, a car bomb killed three police officers and injured dozens of others near Red Sea resorts. This is significant because it happened in southern Sinai, near Red Sea resorts, further threatening the tourist industry, one of the most important in the Egyptian economy.⁵⁰
61. Roadside bombs placed by militants to target security convoys have become common since the military takeover on July 3, 2013. Since then, and particularly following the assassination attempt against Interior Minister Mohamed Ibrahim on September 5, the armed forces have deployed many troops and heavy weapons into the Sinai to crush rising militant activity in the province. Dozens of soldiers and policeman have died in militant attacks. The military claims it has killed dozens of Islamist militants, many of whom declare their allegiance and support to Al-Qaeda.
62. The Sinai Peninsula has long been a haven for weapons smuggling and militant activity by radical Bedouins. The 1979 peace treaty between Egypt and Israel stipulates that only limited military presence in Sinai would be allowed. This, in addition to longstanding discrimination in government policies against the Bedouins, has made Sinai more conducive to militant activity. The security situation in Sinai is thus of immense importance and has more regional implications than other parts of Egypt. In October 2004, three bombings at tourist sites occurred, killing 34 people and injuring 171.⁵¹
63. Since January 2011, the situation in the Sinai has worsened, leading to an increase in Islamist militant activity, particularly in the north. In August 2011, militants crossed into Israel from Sinai and killed eight Israelis. In response, five Egyptian policemen were killed in an Israeli air strike targeting Palestinian militants along the Egyptian border, causing the most serious diplomatic crisis since the 1979 peace treaty between the two countries.⁵² A year later, in August 2012, militants captured a military post and killed 15 security personnel in Rafah, then crossed into Israel with explosives and drove an armored vehicle more than mile inside Israel before being struck by missile fired from an Israeli military plane, which killed eight militants.⁵³ Following the ouster of Morsi, who had released militants from prison and prevented military operations in Sinai, militant activity again increased, and

⁴⁸ See Section VIII of Update 23 for further details of issues discussed in this section. In addition, most previous Updates discuss the state of the Egyptian economy after the January 25, 2011 revolution.

⁴⁹ Ahram Online, *Bomb kills two in Egypt's Sinai*, October 22, 2013, available at: <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/84475/Egypt/Politics-/Bomb-kills-two-in-Egypt-Sinai.aspx>.

⁵⁰ See Page 18 of Update 21, Paragraphs 11-14 of Update 22, and Paragraph 21 of Update 23.

⁵¹ *The Guardian*, "Dozens killed in bomb blasts at Sinai resorts," October 8, 2004, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2004/oct/08/israel.travelnews>.

⁵² *Reuters*, "Egypt, Israel try to defuse tension over killings," August 21, 2011, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/08/21/us-egypt-israel-idUSTRE77J1Y620110821>.

⁵³ *Reuters*, "Islamists kill 15 Egyptians, Israel strikes attackers," August 5, 2012, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/08/05/us-egypt-idUSBRE8740JB20120805>.

many police stations have been targeted in several parts of the country. On September 16, 2013, militants set off a roadside bomb as a bus full of police conscripts drove by in north Sinai,⁵⁴ and on October 26, an Islamist extremist group, *Ansar Beit el-Maqdis*, released a video claiming responsibility for a car bombing that occurred in Cairo in September 2013 and seeking to recruit others to join them in a violent insurgency against the military-backed government that ousted Mohamed Morsi and the MB in July 2013.⁵⁵ The group also claimed responsibility for a series of attacks in Sinai, in addition to a car bombing that occurred in the city of Ismailia in late October 2013.

Geopolitical Considerations

64. Egypt's Third Republic is unlikely to do anything that will upset its relations with Israel or endanger the peaceful relations between the two, which is indispensable to Egypt maintaining good relations with the United States. Egypt will work much closer with Saudi Arabia and through it with the United Arab Emirates and other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, particularly in the areas of economic cooperation and political support. Qatar, which was the principal funder of the MB, has a new Emir who will tow the Saudi line. It is already reported that Qatar has cut funding for the MB.
65. Due to the MB's marginalization in Egypt and the absence of major Qatari financial backing, the group's power in the MENA region will be reduced. In Libya, it is unlikely that the MB will increase their power. In Tunisia, whatever influence the MB had is also likely to ebb. The MB's strong support for Hamas no longer exists. That will weaken Hamas' relationship with Fatah, its secular opponent centered in the West Bank. In Jordan, where the MB had a strong presence, they will probably lose some momentum. As for the MB in Syria, they are far too engulfed in a protracted civil war that is not likely to come to a quick end to be able to weigh in on what happens to the MB in the region. In contrast, extremist groups usually referred to as linked with al-Qaeda are on the rise in Syria, Iraq, Libya, and Morocco.
66. A new alliance has been forged between Egypt's Third Republic, the United States, and the GCC under Saudi leadership, which from the perspective of regional policy will produce results substantially similar to those that existed under the Mubarak regime. The only danger is that the United States will make a mistake, as it is prone to do in the Arab World, by antagonizing the Egyptian masses that might then influence the military to change course in connection with its strong US relations. As stated in Update 20, this could turn into a golden opportunity that Russia is waiting for, much like with the Soviet Union in 1956, where each moved in after the United States withdrew. The blunder was that of Secretary of State John Foster Dulles who withdrew funding for the Aswan dam and caused Egypt to turn to the Soviet Union for assistance. Consequently, Egypt remained the Soviet Union's ally until 1972 when the late President ousted all Russian military and technical personnel from Egypt before embarking on the 1973 war with Israel. Surely the Obama administration is mindful of this historic lesson.
67. US Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel recently communicated to General al-Sisi that President Obama had ordered to delay the delivery of 4 F-16 fighter planes to the Egyptian Air Force. But the White House emphasized that the decision did not have implications for the \$1.5 billion in American aid to Egypt scheduled for the next fiscal year. Other military cooperation between the US and Egypt also remains in effect, including the major annual joint military exercise called "Bright Star."

⁵⁴ *New York Times*, "Egypt: Roadside Bomb Hits Police Bus," September 17, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/17/world/middleeast/egypt-roadside-bomb-hits-police-bus.html>.

⁵⁵ *New York Times*, *Video Offered to Back Claim of Cairo Attack*, October 27, 2013, available at: http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/28/world/middleeast/video-offered-to-back-claim-of-cairo-attack.html?_r=0.

68. For all practical purposes, this is the end of the “Arab Spring.” The only hotspot left is Syria, tragic as it is, with almost 100,000 casualties. The United States has faltered and proven unable to determine whether it can or wants to help topple the Assad regime. In a letter to Congress, Joint Chiefs Chairman General Martin Dempsey outlined a number of options for US action, ranging from small-scale training programs for opposition forces outside of the country to the “destruction of the country’s chemical weapons” which would likely involve the US military. But it is more likely that the situation in Syria will play itself out over death and destruction only to ultimately result in a settlement imposed from external forces.
69. The Arab World remains in a constant state of upheaval. Even though things may appear under control, they are always likely to explode for the most unexpected reason and at the most unexpected time. The situation in Syria is far from resolved, Lebanon is always capable of imploding with Hezbollah controlling the trigger, Morocco is seething, Tunisia and Libya are unstable, and Bahrain remains vulnerable. All of that to say in the most diplomatic of terms that the situation in the Arab World, as well as in Egypt, is fluid, unpredictable, and potentially explosive.
70. On Saturday October 26, 2013, U.S. National Security Council advisor Susan E. Rice presented President Obama with a new policy approach to the Middle East significantly shifting US priorities. Assuming this policy remains in place, after the U.S. Department of Defense and the CIA have an opportunity to assess it, it will mean that Egypt will no longer be a US priority. The New York Times reported on Sunday October 27, 2013 the following: “Mr. Obama, who hailed the crowds on the streets of Cairo in 2011 and pledged to heed the cries for change across the region, made clear that there were limits to what the United States would do to nurture democracy, whether there, or in Bahrain, Libya, Tunisia or Yemen. The president’s goal, said Ms. Rice, who discussed the review for the first time in an interview last week, is to avoid having events in the Middle East swallow his foreign policy agenda, as it had those of presidents before him. “We can’t just be consumed 24/7 by one region, important as it is,” she said, adding, “He thought it was a good time to step back and reassess, in a very critical and kind of no-holds-barred way, how we conceive the region.” Not only does the new approach have little in common with the “freedom agenda” of George W. Bush, but it is also a scaling back of the more expansive American role that Mr. Obama himself articulated two years ago, before the Arab Spring mutated into sectarian violence, extremism and brutal repression. The blueprint drawn up on those summer weekends at the White House is a model of pragmatism — eschewing the use of force, except to respond to acts of aggression against the United States or its allies, disruption of oil supplies, terrorist networks or weapons of mass destruction. Tellingly, it does not designate the spread of democracy as a core interest.”⁵⁶

Conclusions

71. In the midst of social radicalization and violent confrontations, the constitutional drafting and approval process continues in Egypt. Mohamed Salmawy, the spokesman for the 50-member Constitutional Committee charged with drafting the new constitution, said the Committee would discuss the prepared draft in the coming weeks before submitting it for a referendum in the first half of November 2013.⁵⁷ Each article in the new draft will have to receive 75% or more of the Committee members’ votes in order to be passed. The current draft contains about 200 articles, after removing, adding and amending

⁵⁶ New York Times, *Rice Offers a More Modest Strategy for Mideast*, October 26, 2013, available at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/27/world/middleeast/rice-offers-a-more-modest-strategy-for-mideast.html>.

⁵⁷ Egypt Independent, *50-member committee will vote on draft constitution in November: spokesperson*, October 13, 2013, available at: <http://www.egyptindependent.com/news/50-member-committee-will-vote-draft-constitution-november-spokesperson>.

articles from the 2012 Constitution. On October 27, 2013, the Committee began voting on the proposed amendments, as deep divisions remain over the role of Islamic law in government and the role of the military.⁵⁸

72. The state of freedom of expression after the military takeover on July 3, 2013 has worsened. Press freedom currently seems more restricted, and space for freedom of expression is dwindling when it comes to criticism of the military. In a confidentially leaked video of General al-Sisi addressing senior Egyptian army officers, and in a possible sign of things to come, the former called media coverage of the military dangerous and abnormal, and called for a restoration of a policy of “red lines” and encouraging a climate in which media outlets will practice self-censorship when it comes to the military.⁵⁹ On October 28, 2013, Egypt’s General Prosecutor ordered an investigation into a complaint that Egyptian comedian Bassem Youssef harmed national interests by poking fun at the Egyptian military on his Friday show, *Al-Bernameg*.⁶⁰ This is not much different from the state of press freedom and freedom of expression under Mubarak. Having said that, many, if not most Egyptians remain firmly behind the military in their crackdown campaign against the MB, so at this point in time, such a policy of “red lines” will not elicit opposition from many in Egypt. Given this political climate, the future of freedom of expression is worrying indeed. It remains to be seen whether under the new constitution that is currently being drafted the state of freedom of expression will change with the current role of the military, and given the history of the interference of military institutions in freedom of expression since 1952.⁶¹
73. Many Egyptians are losing hope that the goals of the January 25th Revolution will be accomplished, almost three years after it broke out, and feel defeated after the military coup that occurred on July 3, 2013 and unseated the Morsi and the MB. Egyptians are tired of the frustrations of daily life, and are increasingly considering leaving the country to pursue better lives abroad.⁶² One of the disturbing aspects of the present situation in Egypt is not so much the confrontation between the regime and the MB, the overall economic situation, and other social factors, but it is the strong perception among most Egyptians that there has been a substantial deterioration in what people refer to as “*qiyam*,” or values. Egyptian society had always been based on traditional values, mostly derived out of Islam, which are the same as Christian values, but also of traditional Egyptian values. These include a strong sense of social and family solidarity, moral courage, support for those in need, a sense of strong Egyptian patriotism, and linkage to one’s roots. During the popular uprising of early 2011, Egyptians exhibited a strong sense of unity as all Egyptians, young and old, rich and poor, Muslim and Christian, and Egyptians of all political affiliations protested in the streets demanding democracy and freedom. This unity seems to have eroded in a short period of time. However, as stated in an editorial in the Chicago Tribune, “Egypt’s heady experiment with democracy has fizzled, for now. But a generation of Egyptians has

⁵⁸ Washington Post, *Egypt’s constituent panel votes on first draft of charter amendments amid divisions*, October 27, 2013, available at: http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/egypts-constituent-panel-votes-on-first-draft-of-charter-amendments-amid-divisions/2013/10/27/564bb34e-3f0b-11e3-b028-de922d7a3f47_story.html

⁵⁹ New York Times, *In Leaked Video, Egyptian Army Officers Debate How to Sway News Media*, October 4, 2013, available at: http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/04/world/middleeast/in-leaked-video-egyptian-army-officers-debate-how-to-sway-news-media.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0.

⁶⁰ Washington Post, *Egyptian satirist Bassem Youssef to be investigated over jokes about military, government*, October 28, 2013, available at: http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/gunmen-kill-3-egyptian-policemen-in-city-north-of-cairo/2013/10/28/40be1984-3fad-11e3-b028-de922d7a3f47_story.html.

⁶¹ The power of the Egyptian military dominates the country’s political life and much of its economy, as discussed in extensive detail in Update 19.

⁶² New York Times, *Egyptians Abandoning Hope and Now, Reluctantly, Homeland*, October 22, 2013, available at: http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/23/world/middleeast/egyptians-abandoning-hope-and-now-reluctantly-homeland.html?pagewanted=1&_r=0&smid=fb-nytimes.

experienced freedom and, however imperfect, democracy. That memory can't be erased and that desire can't be quelled forever.”⁶³

74. The future for Egypt and Egyptians does not look good objectively, but then for some particular reason, some say supernatural, Egypt and Egyptians have always managed to survive. As the late President Sadat told me during an overnight visit at his hometown house at Mit Abu el-Kom, “don’t worry about Egypt, it has lived for 7,000 years and it will live for a long time to come.”

⁶³ Chicago Tribune, *Editorial: Cairo, are you listening now?*, October 14, 2013, available at: http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2013-10-14/opinion/ct-edit-egypt-20131014_1_muslim-brotherhood-egyptian-military-officials-president-mohammed-morsi.