

# International Dimensions of Authoritarian Persistence in the MENA Region: Revisiting US Foreign Aid to Egypt in the post-2011 Arab Uprisings Era

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# International Dimensions of Authoritarian Persistence in the MENA Region: Revisiting US Foreign Aid to Egypt in the post-2011 Arab Uprisings Era

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## Abstract

The majority of studies that examine political liberalization and democratization in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region concentrate on internal factors such as Islamic or patriarchal culture, oil rents, socio-economic structures and patrimonialism. This article argues instead that external factors under the cloak of aid represent one of the main dynamics impeding democratic transformation in the region, and precisely supports authoritarian regime consolidation. In this regard, Egypt can be described as a case of authoritarian stability in the post-2011 Arab Uprisings era in which politics and stability rather than democratization and/ or development agenda have become the main motive behind donor decisions hitherto. In this article, Egypt has been selected as a case study to illuminate how the increased hopes and dividends of democratic transition from the Arab Uprisings can swiftly turn into upholding authoritarian rule.

**Keywords:** MENA region, Arab Uprisings, Egypt, US Foreign Aid, Authoritarianism

## MENA Bölgesinde Otoriter Kalıcılığın Uluslararası Boyutları: 2011 Arap Ayaklanmaları Sonrası Dönemde Mısır'a ABD Dış Yardımı Üzerine Yeniden Düşünmek

## Özet

Orta Doğu ve Kuzey Afrika (MENA)'daki ülkelerin demokratikleşme süreçlerine neden olan zorlukları bazı yazarlar, İslami veya ataerkil kültür, petrol rantları, sosyo-ekonomik yapılar ve patrimonyalizm gibi iç faktörlerle ilişkilendirme eğilimindedirler. Bu makale, bu görüşün yanı sıra, yardım amaçlı dış faktörlerin bölgedeki demokratik dönüşümü sınırlayan dinamiklerden birini temsil ettiğini ve otoriter rejimlerin konsolidasyonunu desteklediğini ortaya koymaya çalışmaktadır. Bu bağlamda makale, Mısır'a sağlanan dış yardımın bugüne dek demokratikleşme ve/ veya kalkınmayı hedeflenmekten çok siyaset ve istikrar etrafında şekillenmekte olduğunu öne sürmekte ve 2011 Arap Ayaklanmaları sonrasında ülkenin daha ziyade otoriter istikrarla tanımlanabileceğini ortaya koymaktadır. Bu noktadan hareketle, bu çalışma Arap Ayaklanmalarından sonra demokratik geçişle artan umutların nasıl hızla otoriterleşen bir duruma dönüşebileceğini Mısır örneği üzerinden incelemektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** MENA bölgesi, Arap Ayaklanmaları, Mısır, ABD dış yardımı, Otoriterlik

## Introduction

Representing the second-largest recipient of US foreign assistance in the world, Egypt has been supplied with 80 billion USD in economic and military aid in the last four decades.<sup>1</sup> Notwithstanding that American aid to Egypt, *inter alia*, embraced democracy promotion, Egypt has not, up to now, conformed to the parameters of democratic transition. With the onset of the Arab Uprisings in 2011, Egypt has been rather characterized by authoritarian stability or upgrading.<sup>2</sup> In this regard, the 2021 Freedom House report records that Egypt's score for civil liberties is 12 out of 60, and 6 out of 40 in political rights. Egypt's overall rank is 18 out of 100, which puts the country in the category of "not free".<sup>3</sup> For Hawthorne, despite a 28-billion-USD economic investment in Egypt since 1975, the US surprisingly has not managed to encourage a more transparent, participatory, and responsive government in the country.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, politics rather than the development agenda has become the main motive behind donor decisions hitherto. The dramatic change in the behaviour of international and Arab donors towards Egypt in the post-2011 era is clear evidence supporting this statement.<sup>5</sup> In this article, the post-Arab Spring period will be explored with the aim of illustrating the extent to which American aid had continued direction in light of the lessons learned from the 2011 uprisings, or has continued in the former directions of prioritizing military aid over economic aid to Egypt, combined with decreasing aid to democracy support. The question of "What accounts for the willingness of aid donors to exert pressure only on some recipients?"<sup>6</sup> occupies a central place in foreign aid literature. As stated by Thomas Carothers, the political survival of "useful non-democratic regimes allied with the West" has been more central than democracy promotion in those same regimes.<sup>7</sup>

Within this context, this article does not neglect or undervalue the existing literature that explains the democracy deficit of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region through internal factors; however, it will attempt to analyse the impact of foreign aid in sustaining authoritarian regimes since the 2011 Arab Uprisings specifically during the Trump administration, using Egypt as a case study. As the corollary of this aim, this article makes the argument that, with the help of US foreign aid, the role of the military has been calibrated in post-2013 Egypt and the country has shifted from a hybrid 'semi-authoritarian' regime type towards authoritarianism under Abdul Fattah Al-Sisi. This research draws its main data from the existing literature on the impacts of foreign aid on Egypt, as well as international and US donor reports and records on this particular case.

1 Jeremy Sharp, *Egypt Background and US Relations*, Report no. RL33003 Congressional Research Service, 2020. Available at <https://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc822658/m1/25/> (Accessed 21 February 2021).

2 Bruce K. Rutherford, "Egypt's New Authoritarianism under Sisi", *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 71, No 2, 2018.

3 Freedom House, *Freedom House Report for Egypt, 2021*, <https://freedomhouse.org/country/egypt/freedom-world/2021> (Accessed 15 July 2021).

4 Amy Hawthorne, *Rethinking U.S. Economic Aid to Egypt*, Washington D.C, Project on Middle East Democracy (POMED), 2016, p. 4.

5 Samir Amin, "International Assistance to Egypt after the 2011 and 2013 Uprisings: More Politics and Less Development", *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 19, No 3, 2014, p. 411.

6 Bann Sen Tang, *International Aid and Democracy Promotion, Liberalization at the Margins*, London, Routledge, 2021, p. 1.

7 Thomas Carothers, "Democracy Aid at 25: Time to Choose", *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 26, No 1, 2015, p. 71.

## **Theoretical Framework: Foreign Aid as an External Dimension of Authoritarian Persistence**

Many scholars have discussed the reasons behind the democracy deficit in the MENA region. The key factors named for the lack of or weak democratic institutions (liberalized autocracies) in the region have primarily been political and economic dimensions and mechanisms of re/making authoritarian persistence and upgrading,<sup>8</sup> along with socio-cultural characteristics in the form of neopatrimonialism<sup>9</sup> or Oriental despotism.<sup>10</sup> Notwithstanding these explanations, generally speaking the reasons why the regimes in the MENA region exhibit authoritarian forms of governance and/or a democracy deficit can be sorted into four categories. The political culture perspective that gives attention to the region's patrimonial and patriarchal structure, as well as its colonial past, has mostly dominated the literature of the authoritarian myth in the MENA region. In this regard, this perspective that takes the nature of Islam as essentially "fixed and uniform"<sup>11</sup> treats the region as culturally *authentic* and *peculiar* as compared to other regions. For instance, according to Elie Kedourie, for two of the protagonists of this group, "Democracy is alien to the mind-set of Islam",<sup>12</sup> and for Yahya Sadowski the civil society in the region is not the harbinger of democracy, but instead of authoritarianism.<sup>13</sup> Secondly, the economic factors have also found resonance in exposing the (*semi-*)rentier states, and also the implications of the economic relations established between extra-regional actors such as the US and the incumbent authoritarian regimes.<sup>14</sup> The international context and the policies of the external actors – primarily the US and USSR/Russian Federation – have also demarcated the democratization attempts of the MENA regimes.<sup>15</sup> Needless to say, the political and socio-economic environment that has arisen in the post-World War II era, shaped and limited by the persistence of the protracted Arab–Israeli Conflict and subsequent inter-state and intra-state wars in the MENA region, was *not* favorable to democratization either.

All in all, authoritarian persistence in the MENA region has been explained as a matter of a weak middle class in an environment of predation,<sup>16</sup> patrimonialism, and clientelism.<sup>17</sup> Development specialists in democracy promotion took these assumptions to heart and began to work on civil society-building, training of technical electoral specialists and civic education trainings.<sup>18</sup> The Arab Spring has explicitly unpacked this phenomenon and illustrated that while training provided activists

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8 Nazih Ayubi, *Over-Stating the Arab State: Politics and Society in the Middle East*, London, Tauris, 1995; Steven Heydemann, "Upgrading Authoritarianism in the Arab World", The Saban Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institute, 2007.

9 Hisham Sharabi, *Neopatriarchy: A Theory of Distorted Change in Arab Society*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1988; Katerina Dalacoura, "Democratic Transitions in the Levant: Prospects for Restoring a Regional Order", *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, Vol. 15, No 60, 2018, p. 31-44.

10 Samuel Huntington, "Will More Countries Become Democratic?", *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 99, No 2, 1984.

11 Raymond Hinnebusch, "Authoritarian persistence, democratization theory and the Middle East: An overview and critique", *Democratization*, Vol. 13, No. 3, 2006, p. 375.

12 Elie Kedourie, *Democracy and Arab Political Culture*, Washington, DC, Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 1992.

13 Yahya Sadowski, "The New Orientalism and the Democracy Debate", J. Beinun, and J. Stork (eds.), *Political Islam*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1997, p. 33–50.

14 Nader Habibi, "Prospects for Economic Integration in Levant", *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, Vol. 15, No 60, 2018, p. 59-73.

15 Beverly Milton-Edwards, *Contemporary Politics of the Middle East*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2011, p. 191.

16 Simon Bromley, *Rethinking Middle East Politics*, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1994; Nazih Ayubi, *Overstating the Arab State: Politics and Society in the Middle East*, London: I.B. Tauris, 1995, Alan Richards & John Waterbury, *A Political Economy of the Middle East*, Boulder: Westview Press, 2007.

17 Ellen Lust, "Competitive Clientelism in the Middle East", *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 20, No 3, 2009, p. 122–135.

18 Augustus Richard Norton, *Civil Society in the Middle East*, Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1995.

in the region with tools,<sup>19</sup> by and large, these popular revolts erupted to the great surprise of both donors and politicians.<sup>20</sup>

Even though Egypt can look back on a comparatively long history of political institution development, informal, personalist or neo-patrimonial processes have limited the extent to which such institutions have structured political dynamics. Today, despite the Arab Uprisings, for instance, it has become evident that authoritarian regimes *still* persist in the region. In the case of Egypt, Abdul Fattah al-Sisi did not build and calibrate his autocratic rule with a ‘mass’ political party, as the previous Egyptian leaders had (during the Nasser, Sadat, and Mubarak eras), which is a sign of authoritarian upgrading. As argued by Bader and Faust, neither foreign aid nor democracy aid prop up political transformation, but “their effectiveness depends on the particular survival strategy of the recipient country’s political regime”.<sup>21</sup> Given that aid is a fungible resource, the recipient country’s endogenous factors also matter. In light of the aforementioned theoretical framework, foreign aid as a tool does not offset all the factors that favor authoritarianism in the region, but *rather* it evolves as an important factor that has not been taken deeply into consideration by many scholars in the post-2011 era. Thus, besides the factors mentioned above, particularly in the aftermath of the Arab Spring, it is foreign aid that has helped the situation move towards authoritarianism in the specific case of Egypt.

As Raymond Hinnebusch argued, a paradoxical relationship exists between global powers’ efforts in the region and the outcome of targeted democratic consolidation. Accordingly, a state becomes more accountable to transnational capital and less to its citizenry.<sup>22</sup> Thus, the external powers of the core, guided by neoliberal trends, determined the fate of democracy in the periphery by impeding the economic rights of the people and supporting trade pacts based on rivalry, which may not ask for democracy or human rights.<sup>23</sup> In this regard, the case of Egypt illustrates that this local *pact* includes the business community, the army and the media monopolies. The political parties benefit from this system; therefore, they are not part of the powers of change, which are left to unorganized and non-united social factors in consideration of the sharp rift characterizing Egypt between *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin* (the Muslim Brotherhood) and secular groups. In this context, global and regional aid to Egypt targeted the mentioned *pact* with the aim of preserving stability rather than democratization *per se*.

The modern history of Egypt since the 1952 Free Officers Revolution – during Abdul Nasser’s era – has been one of “army-led authoritarianism”.<sup>24</sup> This civil-military bureaucracy has continued until today, with the exception of 2012–2013, when President Mohammad Morsi was popularly elected for the first time in the country’s history. During this period, some aspects of competitive authoritarianism<sup>25</sup> were seen in Egypt, including holding periodic elections in which parties under

19 Francesco Cavatorta, “No Democratic Change ... and Yet No Authoritarian Continuity: The Inter-Paradigm Debate and North Africa After the Uprisings”, *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 42, No 1, 2015, p. 135–145.

20 Timur Kuran, “Now out of Never: The Element of Surprise in the Eastern European Revolution of 1989”, *World Politics*, Vol. 44, No 1, 1991, p. 7–48.

21 Julia Bader, and Jörg Fausti, “Foreign Aid, Democratization, and Autocratic Survival”, *International Studies Review*, Vol. 16, No 4, 2014, p. 583.

22 Raymond Hinnebusch, “Globalization, Democratization, and the Arab Uprising: The International Factor in MENA’s Failed Democratization”, *Democratization*, Vol. 22, No 2, 2015, p. 338.

23 Ibid.

24 Marina Ottaway, *Authoritarian Governance in Egypt: A Return to the Past*, Italian Institute for International Political Studies, 2020.

25 Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2010.

control participated. In light of these developments, this article argues that external aid is an important dynamic in promoting authoritarianism in Egypt under Al-Sisi rule. This shift has taken place since the 2014 modification of the Constitution, which allowed President Al-Sisi to stay in power until 2034. The concept of Sultanistic regimes<sup>26</sup> was primarily used among those regimes which build relations with their citizens on the basis of personal and patron-client relations, rather than fostering institutional ones. Moreover, Al-Sisi’s rule sustained its authoritarian character by increasing the amounts of grants and loans that the regime receives particularly from the US and the Gulf countries. This makes Egypt more accountable to these donors than being accountable to Egyptians themselves.

## Historical Trajectories of US Aid to Democracy in Egypt

The first phase in analyzing US aid to Egypt traces back to the period after the Second World War, which basically covers the end of the monarchy and the rule of Nasser.<sup>27</sup> The amount of aid covers the period between 1946 and 1967. During this period, the US provided Egypt a total of nearly one billion USD in economic assistance, with the bulk of it provided through the Food for Peace Program, including 772,801,000 dollars in economic assistance during the period of 1953 to 1967, with Nasser continuing until 1970.<sup>28</sup>

**Table 1.** U.S. Foreign Assistance to Egypt: 1953–1967

Year	Military	Economic	Annual Total
1953	n/a	\$12,900,000	\$12,900,000
1954	n/a	\$4,000,000	\$4,000,000
1955	n/a	\$66,300,000	\$66,300,000
1956	n/a	\$33,300,000	\$33,300,000
1957	n/a	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
1958	n/a	\$601,000	\$601,000
1959	n/a	\$44,800,000	\$44,800,000
1960	n/a	\$65,900,000	\$65,900,000
1961	n/a	\$73,500,000	\$73,500,000
1962	n/a	\$200,500,000	\$200,500,000
1963	n/a	\$146,700,000	\$146,700,000
1964	n/a	\$95,500,000	\$95,500,000
1965	n/a	\$97,600,000	\$97,600,000
1966	n/a	\$27,600,000	\$27,600,000
1967	n/a	\$12,600,000	\$12,600,000
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$772,801,000</b>

**Source:** Jeremy Sharp, *Egypt Background and US Relations*, Report no. RL33003 Congressional Research Service, 2020.

26 Houchang Chehabi and Juan Linz, *Sultanistic Regimes*, Baltimore and London, John Hopkins University Press, 1988.

27 Judith Miller. “Egypt Misses an Interest Payment on \$2.1 Billion Arms Debt to US”.

*The New York Times Archives*, 22 July 1983 <https://www.nytimes.com/1983/07/22/world/egypt-misses-an-interest-payment-on-2.1-billion-arms-debt-to-us.html>

28 See numbers in Table 1. Military assistance for the same period was not available; this table has been excerpted from the original table mentioned in the Congressional Research Service reference.

According to the Table 1, economic assistance to Egypt was around 66 million in 1955, but dropped in 1957 to one million after the Suez Canal War. Later, it rose again to 44 million in 1959, then dropped again to around 12 million in 1967, the year of the Six-Day War. The US intention of support to the Nasser regime was to contain Egypt from the expansion of the communist threat during the Cold War. It was during the Nixon and Carter Administrations – while Egypt was under Anwar Sadat’s rule – that the US came to perceive Egypt as one of its key “strategic partners”. With the acceleration of the *neo*-liberal economic transformation, US aid in the form of development assistance to Egypt has become primarily tied to military assistance, and in turn to the purchase of US weapons. Most military aid either came from the US State Department or from the Pentagon. Egypt began receiving US military aid precisely after signing the Camp David Peace Accords with Israel in 1978. The amount spent on civic spheres went to education, health and economic development, with a minor amount spent on democracy and governance. Between 1945 and 2017, USAID grants to democracy only reached 5.2 million USD annually.<sup>29</sup>

Between 1978 and 2020, Egypt received 80 billion USD<sup>30</sup> in aid from the US. The annual amount was 1.3 billion for the military, and 850 million in economic aid. The latter was decreased annually beginning in 2010,<sup>31</sup> dipping to just 125 million in 2020.<sup>32</sup> This economic aid was used in three basic areas: direct budget support for the government, large infrastructure projects, and also a variety of development projects.<sup>33</sup> In light of these figures, US aid to Egypt was spent largely on the Egyptian government and its military unit. It was during Clinton’s presidency that US aid implemented democracy promotion projects in Egypt for the first time. By 2015, however, Egypt was one of the five largest recipients of US military aid in the Middle East.<sup>34</sup> Although democracy and human rights are included under the economic aid segment of American aid to Egypt, US economic aid to the country was described as a “shield for American military aid”; in other words, without economic aid, military aid could come under scrutiny, criticism and questioning in Congress.<sup>35</sup>

Furthermore, US aid to Egypt had gone through two transitions; the first took place during the Cold War and was focused on buying loyalty and ensuring stability. The second transition was during the post-Cold War era. American aid to Egypt passed through three stages: the first stage can be called the ‘democracy promotion’ stage, and this was during the Clinton and George W. Bush presidencies (1993–2009). The second stage can be called the ‘stability first’ stage, and characterized the presidential terms of Obama and Trump (2009–2021). The third stage started with the Biden presidency in 2021, and it can be described as ‘incentivizing democracy behavior’; hereafter we will discuss these three stages in detail. Table 2 (in the Annex) shows American support to Egypt from 1946 through 2020. Egypt remains an important partner/ally to the US because it has been a “pillar

29 USAID, 2017, U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants: Obligations and Loans Authorized July 1, 1954–September 30, 2017 (Document ID number PB-AAJ-725), p. 16.

30 Sharp, *Egypt Background and US Relations*.

31 Abdel-Fattah Abdel-Moneim, “The Story of US Aid from the July 23 Revolution So Far”, *Al-Youm Al-Sabea*, October 3, 2017.

32 “The United States Provides \$125 million in Economic Assistance to Egypt”, US Embassy in Egypt, 1 November 2021 <https://eg.usembassy.gov/the-united-states-provides-125-million-in-economic-assistance-to-egypt/> (Accessed 22 March 2022).

33 Hawthorne, “Rethinking”, p. 6.

34 “US Releases Aid to Egypt Amid Human Rights Concerns”, *Reuters*, 5 September 2018. <https://www.voanews.com/a/us-releases-aid-to-egypt-amid-human-rights-concerns/4559335.html> (Accessed 7 May 2019).

35 Hawthorne, “Rethinking”, p. 7.

of the Israeli security matrix since the Camp David Accords”<sup>36</sup> due to its cooperation on counter-terrorism issues, as well as its strategic location. The full focus was placed on sustaining the Mubarak regime and combating Islamists between 1981 and 2011. By then, the US concluded that its values and way of life had won the battle. Accordingly, it started to play a unipolar global strategy aiming to re-engineer the world according to its own values and norms.<sup>37</sup> The US was torn between promoting democracy in the Middle East –which might bring to power Islamists who would reject Western values – and supporting despotic regimes in order to preserve the stability needed to preserve its interests in the region.<sup>38</sup> Accordingly, the democracy-promotion approach as a top-down re-engineering from the outside does not necessarily mean democratization; the latter is a bottom-up process that must be initiated by internal social groups.

US spending on democracy worldwide was 100 million dollars in the late 1980s but reached 700 million in 2000 and one-and-a-half billion under George W. Bush;<sup>39</sup> this last amount included 120 million dollars towards the Middle East Partner Imitative Program (MEPI).<sup>40</sup> Surprisingly, “the American democracy assistance in the Arab world are quantitatively lacking”<sup>41</sup>

The US administrations, primarily during the tenures of Clinton and Bush, operated an aid policy that focused on the private sector. The Clinton Administration (1993–2001) was, however, distinguished for its adoption of a policy of promoting democracy from above, or “institutionalizing mechanisms to promote democracy”<sup>42</sup> as one of the goals of aid. Consequently, the promotion of good governance from abroad was thought to be able to help advance the market economy that the US was pushing in Egypt. The Clinton administration focused on a strategy of Democratic Enlargement, which was based on legalizing humanitarian interventions through enforcing the relationship between democracy promotion and security.<sup>43</sup> This policy was subsequently used by the George W. Bush administration (2001–2009) to continue securitizing the democracy within its Greater Middle East program. This program aimed to support democratic micro-reforms through supporting civil society and youth, in addition to reforms in the governance systems.<sup>44</sup> Later, the Obama Administration (2009–2017) called for changes in both domestic and foreign aid,<sup>45</sup> and emphasized “promoting sustainable democracy”,<sup>46</sup> but was constrained by the effects of the recession after the 2008 financial

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36 Jordi Quero, and Dessi Andrea, “Unpredictability in US foreign Policy and the Regional Order in the Middle East: Reacting vis-à-vis a Volatile External Security-Provider”, *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 48, No 2, 2019, p. 9.

37 Michelle Pace, “The Construction of EU Normative Power”, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 45, No 5, 2007. See also Kristina Kausch (ed.), *Geopolitics and Democracy in the Middle East*, Madrid, FRIDE, 2015.

38 Ibid.

39 Larry Diamond. *The Spring of Democracy*, New York, Times Books Henry Holt and Company, p. 127

40 Ibid., p. 395.

41 Ahmad Badawi, “American Democracy Assistance in Egypt Understanding Neoliberalism in Decentralization and Democratic Governance”, Unpublished M.A. Thesis, The American University in Cairo, January 2012, p. 74.

42 Thomas Carothers, “The Clinton Record on Democracy Promotion”, *Democracy and Rule of Law Project Working Papers*, No 16, Carnegie, 2000, p. 4.

43 Rasmus Sondergaard, “Bill Clinton’s ‘Democratic Enlargement’ and the Securitization of Democracy Promotion”, *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, No 26, 2015, p. 534–551.

44 Khalil Shikaki, *The American Initiative for the Greater Middle East*, Ramallah, Palestinian Centre of Policy and Survey Research, 2004.

45 James McCormick, “The Obama Presidency: A Foreign Policy of Change?”, Steven Schier (ed.), *Transforming America: Barack Obama in the White House*, Lanham, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2011.

46 Eric Patterson, and Malcolm Fitschen, “Obama’s Sustainable Democracy Promotion: Assessing 7 years of Policy Performance”, *International Politics*, Vol. 58, No 1, 2021, p. 90–110.



crisis.<sup>47</sup> Thus, the Obama Administration continued the US's long-standing policy of supporting the stability of its allies in the region, even if they were authoritarian.<sup>48</sup> During the Obama Administration, USAID stopped funding civil society groups that were not registered in the bilateral aid funds.

The Trump administration (2017–2021) was, in fact, from the beginning skeptical about foreign aid. Therefore, as a response to China's Belt and Road Initiative – which was launched in 2013 to expand China's economic and political influence, and stretches from East Asia to Europe<sup>49</sup> – Trump signed the Build Act in 2018, a bipartisan legislation that created a new 60-billion-USD foreign aid agency to encourage US investments in developing countries.<sup>50</sup> Moreover, his administration did not demonstrate any interest in promoting democracy or reforming the Egyptian regime like previous administrations, which was seen in President Trump's description of Al-Sisi as “my preferred dictator”.<sup>51</sup> Having said that, the administration also prioritized US military ties with Egypt. In 2019, American aid to Egypt was 1.42 billion USD, wherein 1.3 billion USD went to the Egyptian army to fight terrorism, while the economy and the other civil spheres were granted 142 million USD.<sup>52</sup> Despite the fact that the Al-Sisi government did not meet US requirements, the US released the pending aid in 2018. The State Department justification was that a “strengthened security cooperation is important to US national security.”<sup>53</sup> Similarly, Egypt does not charge US airplanes to cross its airspace. Moreover, both governments have increased their cooperation against Islamist militants in the Sinai Peninsula. In 2020, the Trump Administration continued its policy of promoting good relations with the Al-Sisi government “by advancing military-to-military ties, trade, and investment”.<sup>54</sup> In the last decades, US aid has paved the way to strengthening the authoritarian regime in Egypt. As a matter of fact, during the 1990s, the US provided Egypt with about 2.2 billion USD in military aid and about 1.9 billion USD in economic aid, at a ratio of just over 1:1. When we look at the records in 2018, however, the US provided Egypt with about 1 billion dollars in military aid and about 230.1 million in economic aid, at a ratio of more than 4:1.<sup>55</sup>

The Biden administration's foreign policy since 2021 rests on renewing democracy – which seems to be under threat. US Secretary of State Blinken has said that they learned from the failure of democracy promotion under previous administrations through its military interventions and use of force. Instead, Washington's new policy will supposedly “incentivize democratic behavior” and “encourage others to

47 Nicolas Walle, “US Policy Towards Africa: The Bush Legacy and the Obama Administration”, *African Affairs*, Vol. 109, No 434, 2010, p. 1–21.

48 Maria Arena, “Changing Foreign Policy: the Obama Administration's Decision to Oust Mubarak”, *Brazilian Journal of International Politics*, Vol. 60, No 1, 2017.

49 Andrew Chatzky and James McBride, “China's Massive Belt and Road Initiative”, *Council of Foreign Relations*, January 2020; Habibi, “Prospects for Economic Integration in Levant”.

50 Dominic Tierney, “Obama and Trump: Foreign Policy Opposites or Twins?”, *Foreign Policy Research Institute*, 2019, <https://www.fpri.org/article/2019/12/obama-and-trump-foreign-policy-opposites-or-twins/> (Accessed 6 February 2020).

51 Clark Mindock, “Where's is My Favorite Dictator?”, *Independent*, September 13, 2019, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/us-politics/trump-egypt-president-sisi-favorite-dictator-meeting-a9104951.html> (Accessed 6 February 2019).

52 Sharp, *Egypt: Background and U.S. Relations Report*.

53 Andrew Miller, “Five Myths about U.S. Aid to Egypt. Commentary”, *Reuters*, 2018, p. 3. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-miller-egypt-commentary-idUSKBN1KY1WJ> (Accessed 1 July 2021).

54 Ibid.

55 Tamara Wittes, “The Needed Reset for the US-Egypt Relationship”, *Brookings*, 2020, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2020/09/10/the-needed-reset-for-the-us-egypt-relationship/> (Accessed 10 July 2021).

make key reforms (and) fight corruption”,<sup>56</sup> and the US avoided provoking opposition movements to minimize the risk of instability; this policy means stopping the previous democracy-promotion program and focusing instead on attempts to create internal groups that will work for democratization. In this case, this means the focus is still on retaining authoritarianism versus democracy and human rights until the internal powers of democratization emerge. Recently, President Biden followed the traditional method of preferring stability with respect to the problems of the region as a whole, and contacted President Al-Sisi in order to work to restore stability and mediate between Hamas and Israel.<sup>57</sup>

As a matter of fact, as Hawthorne maintains, the citizens’ demands for democracy and human rights that sparked the 2011 Arab Uprising did not come from such foreign aid projects. These projects do not constitute “US support for democracy and human rights in Egypt”,<sup>58</sup> but rather provide resources for authoritarian actors to seize them.

## **US Aid in the post-2011 Uprisings Era**

The Arab popular protests that broke out initially in Tunisia and then swiftly echoed across the Arab world also engulfed Egypt. The anti-government movement demanding economic and political reforms converged at Tahrir Square in Cairo and culminated in ‘the January Revolution’. With the downfall of President Hosni Mubarak, who had ruled the country since 1981, Egypt then entered an era of transition. Muhammad Morsi, the leader of the *Ikhwan* movement and the head of the Freedom and Justice Party (FJP) in Egypt thereby became the first popularly elected president of the Republic. Morsi, however, was toppled by a military coup in 2013 led by General Abdul Fattah Al-Sisi.

As mentioned, US aid to Egypt, according to the Camp David Accords of 1979, included two components: the military and the economic. As shown in the first table, military aid continued to be the same over the years while economic aid went down from one billion in the 1990s to 125 million in 2020, during the years of the Trump administration. Throughout its existence, including the post-2011 uprisings era, US aid to Egypt prioritized stability, security and military cooperation over the issue of democratization, which opened the opportunity to foster the despotic regime. Democracy promotion projects were presented with minor funding to achieve some political liberalization but not democratization.

The tension with the Egyptian regime over democratization ended either by compromise, or by the US’s concession for the sake of security and stability in crisis situations with the following US administrations: George W. Bush, Barack Obama, and Donald Trump. The threat to cut aid in 2008 under the slogan of Egypt’s failure to advance in the areas of reform and democracy is politically linked to what Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said at the time: “We think that Egypt has to do more. Those tunnels need to be dealt with”,<sup>59</sup> and this is what Egypt has done to keep the aid flowing. The Obama administration was obliged to temporarily suspend aid in 2013, following the tragedy of

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56 Burhanettin Duran, “What is Biden’s New Democracy Promotion?”, *Daily Sabah*, March 8, 2021. <https://www.dailysabah.com/opinion/columns/what-is-bidens-new-democracy-promotion> (Accessed 10 July 2021).

57 The White House, Readout of President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. Call with President, 2021. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/05/20/readout-of-president-joseph-r-biden-jr-call-with-president-abdel-fattah-al-sisi-of-egypt/> (Accessed 14 July 2021).

58 Hawthorne, “Rethinking”.

59 “Rice: U.S. Can Help Egypt with Gaza Border”, *Reuters*, 8 January 2008, <https://www.reuters.com/article/idUSN08496570> (Accessed 5 July 2020).

the bloody dispersal of the Rab'a sit-in.<sup>60</sup> This time the threat to cut aid disguised concerns: "Egypt's flirtation with Putin's Russia and its unilateral actions in Libya cause more concerns in Washington than lack of political reform".<sup>61</sup> The Obama administration's suspension of aid was cancelled, and he resumed aid after finding a face-saving solution through two basic amendments that strengthened the US's control of military aid by adopting UN Resolution 3241.<sup>62</sup> One of these amendments was to impose restrictions on the use of military aid to be spent in four areas: counterterrorism, border security, Sinai security and maritime security.<sup>63</sup> More importantly, the administration resumed its aid programs to Egypt in March 2015 without changing the Egyptian human rights status.<sup>64</sup>

In 2018, the US State Department released 195 million USD in military aid that was frozen in 2017 based on the Egyptian Law on Non-Governmental Organizations; 64,000 associations and organizations threatened to crush their independent work in 2012–2013, including imprisoning workers for their peaceful work,<sup>65</sup> relations with North Korea and the prosecution of unresolved NGOs. The funds were released on the condition that Egypt would make progress in each area.<sup>66</sup> However, the only progress that has occurred is to stop the arms deal with North Korea,<sup>67</sup> the civil society organizations were marginalized and the above-mentioned demands for democracy were neglected. These examples show the American attempts to impose democratic reforms on the regime, and how they usually involve compromise for the sake of stability at the expense of democratization.

## Egypt in the *post-Revolution* Era: Foreign Aid as a Tool for Sustaining Authoritarianism

In the post-2013 era, Egypt during the presidency of Al-Sisi restored some of these characteristics of Nasser's rule since 1952, such as civilian-military bureaucracy – but with a much stronger military presence. For Hamzawy, since 2011 the public role of the military has been striking in a way that seems

60 Max Fisher, "Law Says the U.S. is Required to Cut Aid after Coups. Will it?", *Washington Post*, 2013, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2013/07/03/law-says-the-u-s-is-required-to-cut-aid-after-coups-will-it/> (Accessed 7 December 2020).

With the deposal of President Morsi by the military on 3 July 2013, Morsi supporters organized sit-in protests in in *Rab'a al-Adawiya* Square, located in eastern Cairo. The security forces crushed the sit-in protest on August 14 and the Ikhwan and the National Coalition for Supporting Legitimacy reported that the number of deaths from the *Rabaa al-Adawiya* Mosque sit-in alone was about 2,600.

61 Emiliano Alessandri et al., "US Democracy Promotion from Bush to Obama", Working Paper No. 1, *Euspring*, 2015.

62 Muhammad Al-Minshawi, *America and the Egyptian Revolution: From January 25 to Sisi Election, Testimony from Washington*, Cairo, El-Shorouk, 2014.

63 Robert Springborg and Pink Williams, *The Egyptian Military: A Slumbering Giant Awakes*, Carnegie, 2019. p. 5.

64 Yezid Sayigh, "The Owners of the Republic: An Anatomy of Egypt's Military Economy", *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, 2019, [https://carnegieendowment.org/files/Sayigh-Egypt\\_full\\_final1.pdf](https://carnegieendowment.org/files/Sayigh-Egypt_full_final1.pdf) (Accessed ???); Amr Hamzawy, "Legislating Authoritarianism: Egypt's New Era of Repression", *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, 2017, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2017/03/16/legislating-authoritarianism-egypt-s-new-era-of-repression-pub-68285> (Accessed 11 May 2019).

65 "US releases \$195 million in frozen military aid to Egypt", *Arab News*, 26 July 2018, <https://www.arabnews.com/node/1346136/middle-east> (Accessed 4 May 2019).

66 "U.S. Release of \$195 Million in Military Assistance to Egypt", *The Tahrir Institute for Middle East Policy*, 8 August 2018, <https://timep.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/US-Release195MillionPolicyBriefupdated2-6-19.pdf> (Accessed 4 April 2019).

67 Declan Walsh, "Need a North Korean Missile? Call the Cairo Embassy", *The New York Times*, 3 March 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/03/world/middleeast/egypt-north-korea-sanctions-arms-dealing.html> (Accessed 7 April 2019).

unprecedented – at a minimum one would have to go back to the first half of the 1960s to find such a prominent role for the military in public affairs.<sup>68</sup> For Brown and Hamzawy the role of the military is underpinned by the increased relationship between the military and the head of state, which has been the principal anchor of authoritarian power and the guarantor of regime durability.<sup>69</sup>

What is more, the Egyptian Constitution, which was amended on 16 April 2019, increased the term of the president from four to six years. This amendment thus allows Al-Sisi to remain in power until 2034 under Article 140. In addition, a transitional article stipulates that “after the end of the current president’s term of office, his term may be reinstated as stipulated in Article 140”.<sup>70</sup> Al-Sisi justified rule-by-military-order through the belief that security and economic development comes first before political freedoms. Also, he was afraid that a 25th of January-style revolution might take place again, this time against him. At the economic level, he started with digging a new branch of the Suez Canal, which would double Egypt’s revenue. However, it contributed to increasing the country’s external debt to 123.6 per cent of GDP, reaching 125.3 billion USD in September 2020<sup>71</sup> despite the influx of billions of dollars in aid, especially from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).<sup>72</sup>

As an integral part of national security matters, Al-Sisi opted to ban the Muslim Brotherhood, which led to the deaths of 1160 strikers who rejected the *coup*.<sup>73</sup> He also launched a campaign against terrorism, especially in the Sinai, and the achievements took a long time with heavy losses. Also, Al-Sisi called rhetorically for the renewal of religious teachings and modified religious curricula accordingly. During this time, the US and USAID did not clearly object to Al-Sisi’s authoritarian practices; however, the website of the American Chamber of Commerce in Egypt speaks openly about working with the Al-Sisi regime to enact reforms according to that regime’s plans.

By accepting the 2014 Constitution, the 2030 vision and the partnership with the Egyptian government, the US approved the authoritarian regime. With the new constitution came a modest amount of funding for micro-projects to cosmetically improve political liberalization without democratization. USAID included human rights and the governance section on its website on Egypt, such as a project for cities free of violence against women and girls implemented by UN-Women from 2013–2016, which had a 70-million-dollar budget.<sup>74</sup> Another project aimed to provide a “positive life alternative for Egyptian youth at-risk of irregular migration”,<sup>75</sup> by supporting the international organization of migration with 3.2 million USD to conduct the project from 2015 to 2017.

A third project for the promotion of partial political liberalization is civic education among the youth in North Sinai, with a budget of 1.9 million USD granted to a local community centre named

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68 Hamzawy, “Legislating Authoritarianism”.

69 Nathan Brown and Amr Hamzawy, “The Role of Egypt’s Armed Forces: A Military Empire”, *ISPI*, 24 September 2020, <https://www.ispionline.it/en/publicazione/role-egypts-armed-forces-military-empire-27403> (Accessed 3 December 2020).

70 “Egypt Constitutional Amendments”, *Human Rights Watch*, 20 April 2019, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/04/20/egypt-constitutional-amendments-entrench-repression> (Accessed 3 December 2020).

71 “Egypt External Debt reached 125.3 USD bn in Sep 2020”, 2021 <https://www.ceicdata.com/en/indicator/egypt/external-debt> (Accessed 10 June 2021).

72 Arab News, “US releases \$195 million”, 2018.

73 Azmi Bishara, “Revolution Against the Revolution and the Street Against the People and the Counter Revolution”, *Arab Politics Journal*, No 4, 2013, p. 6.

74 USAID-Egypt, 2019.

75 “Positive Life Alternatives for Egyptian Youth At-Risk of Irregular Migration 2015-2017”, *IOM Egypt*, 2015, [https://egypt.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbd11021/files/documents/iom-country-strategy\\_final.pdf](https://egypt.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbd11021/files/documents/iom-country-strategy_final.pdf) (Accessed 21 July 2019).

El-Gora Community Development Center. This budget extended from 2018–2019 with the aim of providing youth with alternatives to the extremism common in the Sinai area. There are three other projects under the scope of US aid, each of which has a budget of a few million to support the judiciary and elections training, as well as at-risk girls, all to be implemented by international organizations.<sup>76</sup> It is imperative to state here that five out of the six projects of the USAID democracy section for 2013–2019 were given to American and UN-affiliated organizations, while only one was given to a local organization, and it had the lowest budget. Also, some of the projects are directed to the prevention of terror, extremism and illegal migration.

The US administration treats Al-Sisi, who took over by military coup or a counter-revolution, as a ‘popularly elected’ president. He is therefore considered a “moderate” Arab voice leading the war against extremism.<sup>77</sup> Moreover, in the US FY17 budget request, they added that for “providing assistance in the national security of the United States”, democratic elections are not required.<sup>78</sup> This means that the executive branch exercises these concessions in a way that renders US law meaningless. It is a cover to justify its manipulation of the concept of democracy for the sake of its political interest. This manipulation is part of the international political situation where the 2011 revolution and the 2013 counter-revolution can be viewed from a transnational perspective. Al-Sisi’s policies can be assessed not only from the perspective of its counter-revolutionary intentions, but also as part of this global economic project whose effects are beginning to emerge internationally, such as populism, xenophobia, racism, and deep wealth and opportunity inequalities.<sup>79</sup>

The USAID support for democracy programs did not include protest movements that aimed to transform the authoritarian regime into democratic rule. Instead, they were micro-interventions that do not have the capacity to “upgrade its authoritarianism”,<sup>80</sup> and to maintain their trustworthy alliance with US interests in the region. American support to the Al-Sisi regime was revived in 2015 with the justification of helping the regime to combat terrorism. The secular opposition in Egypt supported the Al-Sisi coup in 2013 because they objected to the *Ikhwan*’s policies. This influenced the position of the subsequent 2016 Trump administration to return to its anti-Islamist position, and to the traditional American position of supporting authoritarian regimes. In other words, the Trump administration turned its back even on those gradual, partial democracy promotion reforms in Egypt that had been in place for the previous three American presidents: Clinton, Bush, and Obama. The result was also ceding ground to Saudi Arabia and the UAE to become the main donors to the Al-Sisi regime. These Gulf countries granted 23 billion USD covering the period of 2013–2014 and 21.5 billion in 2015, versus 2 billion USD only from the US in the same period.<sup>81</sup>

The positive aspects of US aid to Egypt can be seen at the micro-level, contributed over the past 40 years in various basic development fields, especially electricity and infrastructure, economic and political governance, some small projects to combat violence, gender equality and others aiming to promote democracy and human rights in both the political and the economic

76 USAID-Egypt, 2019.

77 Miller, “Five Myths about U.S. Aid to Egypt”.

78 The White House, 2016.

79 David Patel *The Egyptian Revolution After 10 Years*, The Crown Center for Middle Eastern Studies, Brandeis University, 2021.

80 Heydemann, “Upgrading Authoritarianism”.

81 Kausch, *Geopolitics*, p. 23.

structures in Egypt. Sherry Carlin, the director of USAID in Egypt from 2015–2020 confirmed that USAID worked with 13 different ministries (not with the civil society), providing consultations, studies and training to the private sector to develop its capabilities, and women’s support projects. In addition, USAID supported business organizations and helped small farmers to export their products to global markets.<sup>82</sup>

The main negative aspect of US aid is its support of authoritarianism. US aid goes to the government sector, which is dominated by businessmen loyal to the government. The Egyptian Center for Economic and Social Rights estimated that the corruption resulting from the businessmen’s involvement in the aid projects is about 40 billion Egyptian pounds annually.<sup>83</sup> Furthermore, Egyptian governments have contributed to reinforcing the American argument that aid contributes to “preventing the collapse of the Egyptian regime or ensuring political stability that suits the goals of the foreign policy of the United States”.<sup>84</sup> This manner of grants and aid distribution takes into account favouritism, and does not take into account Egypt’s problems, mainly debt and poverty. As reported by the World Bank, the poverty rates for the period October 2019–March 2020 were estimated at 29.7%.<sup>85</sup> The coronavirus crisis has also damaged the tourism sector, raising unemployment to 9.6 per cent.<sup>86</sup>

To support internal democratization in Egypt, the US should have cancelled undeclared conditions of aid, such as an official ban on expanding Egyptian agricultural lands, which reduces the import of US food products. This is what Abdel-Fattah’s study indicated, that aid programs ignore the priorities of Egyptian development planning, for example the US refusal to contribute to horizontal agricultural expansion.<sup>87</sup> As a result, there is “Egyptian government inaction in expanding agriculture in order to achieve self-sufficiency, which deepens aid dependency”.<sup>88</sup>

To support such democratization the US should cancel “tied aid”,<sup>89</sup> meaning that aid dollars must be spent to buy US goods or pay off US debt. Moreover, much of the economic aid goes to US organizations as well as companies, specifically to pay salaries to the US contractors who implement most of USAID’s projects, rather than directly to Egyptian citizens. Egyptians complain that these contractors are not aware of the Egyptian reality.<sup>90</sup> Finally, the US should have supported the internal social forces for democratization in Egypt, something that did not happen.

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82 USAID, “Egypt: Country Profile”, April 2022, [https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Egypt\\_CountryProfile\\_English\\_EN\\_2022.pdf](https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Egypt_CountryProfile_English_EN_2022.pdf) (Accessed 1 May 2022).

83 Amr, Adly, “The Economics of Egypt’s Rising Authoritarian Order”, *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace* 18 June 2014. <https://carnegieendowment.org/sada/55804> (Accessed 7 June 2019).

84 Zainb Abdel-Azim, *The Egyptian Policy Toward the United States 1981–1891*, Beirut, Centre for Arab Unity Studies, 1997.

85 The World Bank in Egypt, 16 May 2022, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/egypt/overview> (Accessed 2 June 2022).

86 “Egypt’s Unemployment Rate Records 9.6% in Q2 2020: CAPMAS”, *Egypt Today*, 14 May 2020, <https://www.egypttoday.com/Article/3/90916/Egypt-s-unemployment-rate-records-9-6-in-Q2-2020> (Accessed 21 April 2021).

87 Bashir Abdel-Fattah, *Horizons of Egyptian-American Relations*, Cairo, Cairo University Centre for Studies and Research for Developing Countries, 2001.

88 Abdel-Azim, *The Egyptian*, p. 108.

89 Katharina Michaelowa, “Who Determines the Amount of Tied Aid: A Public Choice Approach”, *HWWA*, Discussion Paper No. 40, 1996.

90 Hawthorne, *Rethinking*.

## Conclusion

This article has shown that the *neo*-liberal agenda of foreign aid in a globalized context to Egypt was aimed at rewarding it for its peace agreement with Israel, for combating terrorism, and for carrying out economic and political reforms that would be employed to promote a free-market economy capable of buying and consuming US products rather than promoting democracy and human rights. In this context, US aid to Egypt has two contradictions: First, it is based on military aid more than economic or social assistance, which eventually causes issues like respect for democracy and human rights to be perceived as irrelevant, and also civil society to be marginalized. In other words, foreign aid aims to support the incumbent regime and its mechanisms such as patronage to make authoritarianism durable.

If the US wanted Egyptian democratization rather than sustainable authoritarianism, it would have supported the Egyptian social forces for democratization, and it would support micro-projects for the poor in the state countryside, and it would cancel funding conditionality that obliges Egypt to purchase American equipment, or bans the expansion of the Egyptian agricultural lands.

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**Table 2.** US Foreign Assistance to Egypt: 1946-2020

Year	Military	Economic	Annual Total
1946	n/a	\$9,600,000	\$9,600,000
1948	n/a	\$1,400,000	\$1,400,000
1951	n/a	\$100,000	\$100,000
1952	n/a	\$1,200,000	\$1,200,000
1953	n/a	\$12,900,000	\$12,900,000
1954	n/a	\$4,000,000	\$4,000,000
1955	n/a	\$66,300,000	\$66,300,000
1956	n/a	\$33,300,000	\$33,300,000
1957	n/a	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
1958	n/a	\$601,000	\$601,000
1959	n/a	\$44,800,000	\$44,800,000
1960	n/a	\$65,900,000	\$65,900,000
1961	n/a	\$73,500,000	\$73,500,000
1962	n/a	\$200,500,000	\$200,500,000
1963	n/a	\$146,700,000	\$146,700,000
1964	n/a	\$95,500,000	\$95,500,000
1965	n/a	\$97,600,000	\$97,600,000
1966	n/a	\$27,600,000	\$27,600,000
1967	n/a	\$12,600,000	\$12,600,000
1972	n/a	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000
1973	n/a	\$800,000	\$800,000
1974	n/a	\$21,300,000	\$21,300,000
1975	n/a	\$370,100,000	\$370,100,000
1976	n/a	\$464,300,000	\$464,300,000
1976tq	n/a	\$552,501,000	\$552,501,000
1977	n/a	\$907,752,000	\$907,752,000
1978	\$183,000	\$943,029,000	\$943,212,000
1979	\$1,500,379,000	\$1,088,095,000	\$2,588,474,000
1980	\$848,000	\$1,166,423,000	\$1,167,271,000
1981	\$550,720,000	\$1,130,449,000	\$1,681,169,000
1982	\$902,315,000	\$1,064,936,000	\$1,967,251,000
1983	\$1,326,778,000	\$1,005,064,000	\$2,331,842,000
1984	\$1,366,458,000	\$1,104,137,000	\$2,470,595,000
1985	\$1,176,398,000	\$1,292,008,000	\$2,468,406,000
1986	\$1,245,741,000	\$1,293,293,000	\$2,539,034,000
1987	\$1,301,696,000	\$1,015,179,000	\$2,316,875,000
1988	\$1,301,477,000	\$873,446,000	\$2,174,923,000
1989	\$1,301,484,000	\$968,187,000	\$2,269,671,000
1990	\$1,295,919,000	\$1,093,358,000	\$2,389,277,000
1991	\$1,301,798,000	\$998,011,000	\$2,299,809,000
1992	\$1,301,518,000	\$933,320,000	\$2,234,838,000
1993	\$1,302,299,892	\$753,532,569	\$2,055,832,461

1994	\$1,329,014,520	\$615,278,400	\$1,944,292,920
1995	\$1,342,039,999	\$975,881,584	\$2,317,921,583
1996	\$1,373,872,023	\$824,526,772	\$2,198,398,795
1997	\$1,304,889,154	\$811,229,175	\$2,116,118,329
1998	\$1,303,343,750	\$833,244,554	\$2,136,588,304
1999	\$1,351,905,310	\$862,062,972	\$2,213,968,282
2000	\$1,333,685,882	\$742,458,662	\$2,076,144,544
2001	\$1,299,709,358	\$393,734,896	\$1,693,444,254
2002	\$1,301,367,000	\$1,046,193,773	\$2,347,560,773
2003	\$1,304,073,715	\$646,856,657	\$1,950,930,372
2004	\$1,318,119,661	\$720,241,711	\$2,038,361,372
2005	\$1,294,700,384	\$495,849,549	\$1,790,549,933
2006	\$1,301,512,728	\$351,242,865	\$1,652,755,593
2007	\$1,305,235,109	\$737,348,766	\$2,042,583,875
2008	\$1,294,902,533	\$314,498,953	\$1,609,401,486
2009	\$1,301,332,000	\$688,533,320	\$1,989,865,320
2010	\$1,301,900,000	\$301,154,735	\$1,603,054,735
2011	\$1,298,779,449	\$240,529,294	\$1,539,308,743
2012	\$1,302,233,562	\$90,260,725	\$1,392,494,287
2013	\$1,239,659,511	\$330,576,763	\$1,570,236,274
2014	\$300,000	\$179,300,000	\$179,600,000
2015	\$1,345,091,943	\$222,200,000	\$1,567,291,943
2016	\$1,105,882,379	\$133,300,000	\$1,239,182,379
2017	\$1,302,300,000	\$173,200,000	\$1,475,500,000
2018	\$1,306,800,000	\$233,700,000	\$1,540,500,000
2019	\$1,306,800,000	\$112,500,000	\$1,419,300,000
2020	\$1,300,000,000	\$125,000,000	\$1,425,000,000
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$51,045,162.162</b>	<b>\$33,136,725.695</b>	<b>\$84,181,887.860</b>

**Source:** Jeremy Sharp, *Egypt Background and US Relations*, Report no. RL33003 Congressional Research Service, 2020.

