The uprisings across the Middle East are on-going, but now have different speeds and levels of intensity, and they are now display-ing different patterns and pathways. Whereas some Arab states such as Libya and Syria degenerated into civil war, Egypt and Tunisia coped with their respective transitions in a less brutal way. None of the political processes is complete, however, and much remains to be determined.

The focus of this study is Egypt in the period 2010-2012, where the first 'phase' of the revolt is technically over – at least as far as the audience in the 'West' is concerned. The masses are no longer demonstrating on the streets to oust a dictator, but activists are still organising themselves against challenges to the democratic transition.

Egypt is a pivotal state in many security-related respects, linking Africa, the Middle East and Europe and therefore deserves our continuing attention.

When Still Waters Fizz: the Fall of the 'Republican Monarchy' in Egypt

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Abstract

This study explores Egypt's current security posture. It starts from the notion that the end of the Mubarak era and the transformative change towards democratic governance will lead to a new security role for Egypt in the years to come. It is certain that there is no turning back to a Mubarak-style era of governance. However, some of the geopolitical postures that Mubarak pursued will continue under the current President, Muhammad Morsi, such as Egypt's cooperation with Israel and the United States. In order to understand Egypt's new security situation, this study examines the broader question of whether the region has become more or less stable in terms of security since the transformation. A number of factors are examined: 1.) Egypt's 'soft' and 'hard' power capabilities; 2.) the main political actors inside Egypt; and 3.) Egypt's current geopolitical outlook, based on its main domestic and regional challenges. The way these challenges are addressed will be decisive for its security posture. If the democratic turn goes in the right direction future stability can be expected.

Keywords: Arab Spring, Arab uprisings, popular revolts, revolutions, Egypt, Geopolitics, Middle East, Maghreb, North Africa, security policy, Muslim Brotherhood, hard power, soft power.

Synopsis

Denna studie undersöker Egyptens nuvarande säkerhetpolitiska tillstånd. Studien finner att det inte finns någon återvändo till den politik som bedrivits under Mubarak, även om delar av den tidigare försvars- och utrikespolitiska strukturen kommer att bestå under Morsi. För att förstå Egyptens nya säkerhetspolitiska tillstånd undersöker denna studie den bredare frågan om regionen har blivit mer eller mindre stabil i termer av säkerhet till följd av Egyptens politiska förändring. Utifrån denna aspekt granskas ett antal faktorer i studien: 1.) förändringar i Egyptens 'mjuka' respektive och 'starka' maktförmåga; 2.) nuvarande roll för de huvudsakliga politiska aktörerna inom Egypten; 3.) samt Egyptens nuvarande geopolitiska förhållningssätt på nationella och regionala utmaningar. Detta sker dels genom att beakta traditionell säkerhetspolitik samt icke-militär säkerhet. Studien konstaterar att landet är i en brytningspunkt (alt. övergångsprocess) och behöver övervinna ett antal kortsiktiga och långsiktiga utmaningar. Hur dessa utmaningar kommer att hanteras under de närmsta åren blir avgörande för Egyptens säkerhetspolitiska tillstånd. Viktigt att konstatera är att skiftet mot demokrati fortskrider trots bakslag. Detta i sig tyder på att Egyptens säkerhetspolitiska identitet kommer att vara folkligt förankrat och inte bestämmas av enskilda personer inom ramen för en 'republikansk monarki'.

Nyckelord: arabiska våren, arabiska revolter, revolution, folkligt uppror, Egypten, geopolitik, Mellanöstern, Nordafrika, Magreb, säkerhetspolitik, Muslimska brödraskapet, Hård- respektive mjuk säkerhet.

Acknowledgement

Preface

Among those concerned with the uprisings in the Arab world, attention is currently being devoted to the collapse of the Syrian regime and the sectarian violence unfolding in that country. A symptom of the political storyline and the narrative sequencing of events in the 'Arab revolts' has been its 'volatile' character, starting with the Jasmine revolution in Tunisia, travelling to Egypt and the downfall of Mubarak and the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood, followed by the civil wars in Libya, political struggle in Yemen and now Syria.

However tempting it is to think of this chain of events as the falling tiles in classical domino theory (based on Eisenhower's notion of a Communist takeover and the fall of the South East Asian states under Soviet dominion), the Arab uprisings have unfolded very differently in each country. Although connected along several dimensions, for example, through trans-border support and social media campaigns, political pressure by states and civil society in the region, and so on, events in each country have had their own distinct dynamics. The domino analogy does not seem applicable as each Arab state is based on a different political and societal order, and political history, which has resulted in its current situation.

The uprisings across the Middle East are ongoing, but now have different speeds and levels of intensity, and they are now displaying different patterns and pathways. Whereas some Arab states such as Libya and Syria degenerated into civil war, Egypt and Tunisia coped with their respective transitions in a less brutal way. None of the processes is complete, however, and much remains to be determined.

The focus of this study is Egypt, where the first 'phase' of the revolt is technically over – at least as far as the audience in the 'West' is concerned. The masses are no longer demonstrating on the streets to oust a dictator, but activists are still organising themselves against challenges to the democratic transition, and thus Egypt deserves our continuing attention. After all, it is a pivotal state in many security-related respects, linking Africa, the Middle East and Europe.

Today, the relationship between Sweden and Egypt proceeds through a number of channels. Tourism is important, not least in acquainting Swedes with Egypt and the 'East', but there are also considerable commercial relations. Egypt is the second largest market in Africa (after South Africa) as well as in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region (after Saudi Arabia).[1] Trade exports amounted

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[1] Estimates from the Swedish Foreign Ministry (see the website of the Swedish embassy in Egypt).

to about SEK 6.6 billion (mainly in telecommunications, wood and medicine). A stable Egypt is therefore vital for Sweden and Europe.

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1   Introduction

Uprisings are continuing in Arab countries throughout the Middle East and North Africa. A number of states have been deeply affected and are likely to be so for some years to come. This study however is focused on Egypt. To portray what led the Arab revolt to erupt in this state, this introductory chapter outlines Egypt's transformation from a broader security perspective. More specifically, the chapter provides an introduction to events taking place in the Middle East and North Africa, and how developments came to lay the ground for the ousting of President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt.

The background observations presented below are followed by methodological considerations used in the ensuing part of this study.

1.1   Background

In the autumn of 2012, the political upheaval in the Arab world continues with the same intensity as when it began in 2010.[3] However, the processes from which these political transformations began, that is, non-violent resistance and campaigns of civil disobedience, have changed considerably in some states. States in the region, as well as outside, have accumulated considerable experience of the revolts and begun to accustom themselves to the political and geostrategic implications that have started to shape the region. Concerned governments and external stakeholders have been able to reformulate their strategic goals in the region and to produce better geostrategic estimates of the political scenarios that can be anticipated.

In contrast to the early development of the popular demonstrations in the Arab world, the current uprisings unfolding are now meeting far greater resistance from stakeholders interested in a particular political outcome (e.g. by governments inside and outside the region not directly affected by the revolt). Whereas in the days of the Arab revolts foreign governments were mostly *reactive* to the rapid political events that unfolded, governments with an interest in the region are now being more *proactive*. The fall of Ben Ali in Tunisia and of Mubarak in Egypt were essentially a learning process for many governments in the region and beyond.[4] The large crowds that sought to bring down the 'republican monarchies' seemed unstoppable because of the unity of all the segments that formed the protests, bringing together Islamists, Christians,

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[3] For an early scholarly assessment of the Arab revolt see the thematic issue of *Globalization* (October 2011). See also *Foreign Affairs Journal* (May/June 2011).

[4] US engagement may prove slightly different given its big incentive to foster strategic relations with Egypt.

liberals, secular groups, women's groups, minorities, and so on. The major powers in the international system, such as the United States, the European Union, Russia and China, could do little but ensure that their own strategic partnerships with states in the region were kept. On a practical level external actors also had to ensure that their citizens were protected from violence and insecurity, that trade flows to and from the region were kept open.[5]

As the process of democratic diffusion spread and intensified in character, for example into countries such as Syria, increasingly complex geostrategic implications began to emerge on a different level. The fall of the republican monarchs in Tunisia and Libya was probably acceptable to non-Western stakeholders such as Russia, China, Syria, Saudi Arabia and Iran, but a number of strategic 'what if scenarios' began to arise as the uprisings spread deeper and it seemed that the Middle East might experience genuine geostrategic change (all states having their own specific interests to protect and advance). While the fall of Ben Ali in Tunisia would have little strategic impact on the security dynamics of the region, and with the fall of Qaddafi removed an unpredictable state actor, it was evident that the fall of Mubarak would have stronger ramifications right across the Middle East.

While Western powers held some sway in Libya when pushing for a United Nations Security Council resolution to set up a no-fly zone under the principle of the 'responsibility to protect', states such as Russia and China quickly learned the political cost of allowing too much domestic interference by liberal democratic states in the Arab uprisings (i.e. allowing western states too much influence over the developing political process).[6] Thus, when violence escalated in Syria and Western powers (and their allies) once again began to garner support for regime change, Russia, Iran and China made it clear that they would not accept such a process.[7] They clearly believed that the fall of the Assad regime would mostly benefit Western states' strategic interests.

The main point was that regardless of the form of the continuing unrest in the region, the rules and orders of engagement shaping the political processes will now involve more practical and hands-on engagement by concerned actors. The Middle East will not be left to its own fate. Hence, in sum, while the early outbreaks were local, self-organised and people-based, current political processes

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[5] This does not rule out small scale efforts to steer events in one way or another for political, economic or strategic reasons.

[6] It is certainly open to debate whether the military engagement in Libya was a preplanned move to oust Qaddafi, an attempt to protect the Libyan people, or simply a logical step to achieve the goals of the uprising that had broken out in the country.

[7] This standpoint became clear in the debates leading up to the blocking of a UN Security Council resolution on Syria. Russia and China continued to block a number of attempts to pass such a resolution throughout 2012.

in the Arab countries are increasingly conditioned by more central forces, elite and interest groups, and external actors, such as foreign governments and international organisations including the UN, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).[8]

1.1.1 The Egyptian transformation

Egypt is some 250 days into its new political rule, following the overthrow of the Mubarak dynasty which has been characterised as a republican monarchy.[9] In its place, Egypt has embarked on an unsteady political process of moving from classical authoritarian Arab governance to something which, at least on paper, could be characterised as a democratic regime.

In the years to come, Egypt is likely to be led by an Islamic administration under President Muhammad Morsi. One question yet to be answered is what this will yield for the groups behind the uprising that toppled Mubarak. Will Morsi move Egypt to a classic Islamist form of governance or towards a new, at present unknown, 'post-Islamic' form of governance in which power forces a movement such as the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) to make liberal compromises? A number of issues currently remain unresolved. The political process has been complex, and continues to be so.

Sofar, two main features have shaped the Egyptian transformation: the role of the military and the role of the Muslim Brotherhood. Questions arise over the role these groups will play in the post-Mubarak era and their level of legitimacy.

The military changed its position from supporting Mubarak to supporting the people on the street. For the Egyptian people, the military's stance during the early part of the uprising was very important to its subsequent progress, and the military proved reliable during the months of great uncertainty.[10]

> *There comes a moment in a revolution when the men with the guns and those in command of the state's fearsome machinery of oppression decide to turn them on the crowds in the streets, or they stand down, risking the wrath of a dictator. And more often than not, that moment decides the matter.[11]*

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[8] Note, however, that this varies from state to state, e.g. more so for Yemen than for Libya and Syria.

[9] The term republican monarchy is used here to denote the absolute power vested in the Egyptian presidency and the intended family succession, similar to conventional monarchical systems and governance systems seen in different parts of the Middle East and North Africa.

[10] See International Crisis Group (2012).

[11] Kitfield, 31 Nov. 2011. This demonstrates that the Egyptian military was in close dialogue with the US administration during the crisis (i.e. informing each other how they tackled the situation).

However, as the process of democratisation unfolded, the military began to stand in its way. By late 2012, the complexity of the Egyptian revolution had begun to display its true colours, and the military, including six ministers of the former Mubarak regime, returned to power. This reflected the fact that the MB and the democratically elected MB President had negotiated with the military elite and its Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) to preserve a military presence in Egypt's political affairs.[12] During the demonstrations in late 2012, analysts argued that it was increasingly clear that Morsi enjoyed the support of the military.

Among pro- Mubarak factions and secular opposition, there was a strong narrative being presented on the implications of the rise to power of the MB. Essentially this fear drew many paralells to Islamic theocracy similar to that of Iran. Reference has been made to the fact that the MB made illiberal proposals during the election campaign, including intolerant statements about Israel, the role of women and Egypt's Christian minority. Such views were thought likely to have far-reaching implications for Egyptians should the MB come to power. The MB was thus an uncertain political card when it came to power. This uncertainty was still felt by the end of 2012. However, there are actual few signs that the MB is acktually seeking to transform Egypt into a theocracy.[13]

The democratic process continues to move ahead in the spirit of the early uprising. The main support and approval will continue to be given by the 'street force'.[14] It is also worth recognising that legitimacy is also brought by the US (in its capacity as a world hegemon).[15] Needless to say, however, the record of previous illiberal statements will haunt the MB and its political branch, the Justice and Freedom party, in the years to come.

Nonetheless, as is noted above, it is too early to tell where the new rulers in Cairo will take Egypt. Both the MB and the military elite are accommodating themselves to the new situation. For example, speaking on general political and economic issues in the media, a foreign affairs adviser to the MB made the following telling comment:

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[12] This development also demonstrates a tacit form of acceptance by the US government, given its strong leverage with the Egyptian military.

[13] Towards late 2012, the *The National Salvation Front*, the main opposition argued that the Muslim Brotherhood were overstepping democratic processes as Morsi called for a referendum on a new constitution. Not only did the opposition argue that the Presidential decree that vested the President power to override Supreme Court decision were undemocratic, but also that the drafting of the constitution were democratically illegitimate.

[14] This street force looks different in each country.

[15] For example, the process has been endorsed by Leon Panetta, the US Secretary of Defense, who backed Morsi and his team after meeting with them.

> *Remember, for 60 years we were working underground and now we've come out into the light and are staring directly into the sun. We're all blinking and rubbing our eyes, like the Chilean miners. To adapt to this takes time and we don't have time.*[16]

It is clear that there are many challenges ahead for the state, its institutions and its people. A main puzzle is whether the military, the MB and the opposition is fighing for Egypt's interests or simply their own.

1.2   Overall aim

The objective of this study is to contribute to an understanding of Egypt's security posture in the light of its ongoing political upheaval. Analysis is provided of some of the main security challenges that Egypt faces or is likely to face in the years to come. In doing so, the study also attempts to distil the main security repercussions for Egypt's immediate neighbours. Finally, the role of neighbouring states in the region in shaping Egypt's security is discussed. The insights provided by this study aim to inform practitioners and scholars alike. The time-focus of the study is the process leading up the overthrow of Hosni Mubarak in early 2011, until late 2012.

1.3   Research question

The general question this study seeks to answer is: what security implications have recent political developments in Egypt generated. A basic assumption on which this question is based is that the upheaval in Egypt is likely to have significant consequences for the country's own stability, but also far beyond that. The specific research question was thus: *has the domestic political change that took place in Egypt in 2011–2012 left the region more or less stable in terms of security, and what are the likely security challenges facing Egypt's posture, its neighbours and its allies in the years to come?* The question examines both the present and the future.

To operationalise the research question, domestic *political change* here refers to the period encompassing three phases: (1) the demonstrations and pre-election phase; (2) the elections phase; and (3) the post-election phase. The *domestic* aspect of transformation noted in this research question is demarcated as the changes taking place in Egypt as opposed to regional and international actions taken by concerned parties to shape Egypt's political outcomes. *Stability* and *security* are defined as increases or decreases in experienced or perceived threats

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[16] *Wall Street Journal* (2012).

to state-based interests, overall foreign policy goals and sovereignty (e.g. changes in relations, increased uncertainty, crises, new patterns of trade, new security dilemmas, new patterns of perceived influence, etc.). More specifically, the focus of this study is on both *hard* (military- and geostrategic security) and *soft* security (non-military). *Future security challenges* for Egypt, its neighbours and allies are considered to be state-based security aspects for states in North Africa, the wider Middle East, the EU and the US.

1.4   Method

The study was based on a qualitative methodological approach in which the unit of analysis was the state. Process tracing was used as a means for explaining the current state of affairs in Egypt. As indicated above, the study departed from the overall idea that domestic political rivalries will shape Egypt's security stance. To analyse the research question, the study relied on analysis of secondary material produced by experts on Egypt and non-governmental bodies (including government think tanks), as well as scholarly assessments of the political turmoil in Egypt and the Arab region. No particular theoretical framework was used beyond the security paradigms outlined below. Finally, the study partly relied on quantitative indicators (e.g. regarding military expenditure and economic aspects). Descriptive data were based on the collection of long-term import-export statistics kept in database form at the Swedish Defence Research Agency.[17]

1.5   Scope, delineation and operationalisation

The main focus of this study is state security and interstate relations, that is, Egypt's security and defence policy and capacities. A number of different paradigms explore modes of security. In focusing on state security, the study examines only one of the many different explanatory dimensions of security (none of which can be taken at face value). A state-centric and materialist approach was used here as the revolt in Egypt came down to challenges to the *governance* of Egypt, the state's *monopoly on the legitimate use of force* (e.g. a revolt against the army and the police) and *threats to state institutions* through the storming of various government institutions. The political process during much of 2012 came close to sparking a strong spiral of violence. As noted by Hamdi Hassan, an expert on Egyptian politics, the violence in Egypt was on a scale not seen since the great Cairo fire in 1952. The violence, partly ordered by the police, the army and violent activists, led to considerable injury. The

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[17] Contact the author for further information about this data.

complete change in the modus operandi of political life in Egypt has also had considerable implications for Egypt's foreign policy relations. Taking a state-based security perspective meant that other security filters were only briefly touched on, such as inter-communal and human security paradigms.

With regard to inter-communal security, there are certainly reasons for raising the security implications of Egypt's societal divides.[18] There are clear gulfs within Egyptian society between: those classes that in economic terms 'have' and those who 'have not', those who are educated and those who are not, religious groups and secularists, urban dwellers and rural agriculturalists, the different geographical territories within Egypt, the army and civil society, different tribes and clans and the different generations of Egyptians. Security experts also refer to the existence of communal tensions, often leading to violence, between Muslims and Christians and the implications this could have for Egypt, including its identity. However, these communal and societal differences are complex and subtle, and therefore worthy of a more in-depth study than that which is provided here. The significance of these rifts is difficult to decipher in the light of the recent political upheaval. It should also be noted that the scale of inter-communal violence has been relatively low, and clashes have mostly been confined to villages and between families.

Taking a human security perspective as the starting point, on the other hand, would have raised the question of whether Egyptians have become more or less secure in their daily lives following the country's change in political governance.[19] Methodologically, this would have required in-depth interviews with a sample of average Egyptian citizens. A related question would be whether there is a greater sense of security and personal safety. For example, media reports indicate that demand for stun guns and knives has rocketed as a result of the revolution. The obvious explanation for such trends is that people feel unsafe and want to protect themselves.[20] Moreover, a human security perspective raises questions of whether the uprising has led to an increase or decrease in personal representation, tolerance, recognition and participation, as well as legal security (e.g. due process), the ability to alter livelihood, personal freedom, and so on. Arab women's security and their participation in daily political life is one example of how a human security analysis could be applied to get a better sense of how deep the political transformation may have gone. Like inter-communal security, human security analysis is highly complex and would require a methodology that included both in-depth personal interviews and national

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[18] The Uppsala Conflict Data Programme (UCDP) defines violence between non-state groups as: 'The use of armed force between two organised armed groups, neither of which is the government of a state, which results in at least 25 battle-related deaths in a year' (see. www.peace.uu.se).

[19] See also the definition of the UCDP (see. www.peace.uu.se).

[20] *The Egyptian Gazette*, 21 November 2011.

surveys. While some such studies have already been done, and some important work is currently being undertaken, it is still too early to get a good impression of any new patterns.[21] Thus, it will be left to future studies to take such questions further. A general problem with applying a human security- or communal security-based perspective is that it can easily end in explanations based on the state-based approach. As the uprising in Egypt was a protest against Egypt's state institutions, any analysis using human security and communal security would be 'measured' against the state and the inability of its institutions to meet citizens' demands. After all, it was the state that changed, not its people. Moreover, it is the state that provides its citizens with security.

In sum, this study took a state-based perspective which means that it did not take the full security picture into consideration. On the other hand, it is difficult to make the case that state, communal and human security paradigms are distinct paradigms or separate perspectives, and such an approach would have been difficult analytically, in particular given the limited scope of the research project.

1.6   Variables

The dependent variable examined was Egypt's new security stance. The independent variables included: the role and function of the main *actors* shaping security and stability both domestically and externally; Egypt's *immediate security* challenges, both domestically and externally; and Egypt's domestic and external long-term structural security challenges and other structural security challenges. As is noted above, both military and non-military aspects are covered.

Because of the number of factors within each variable, either a selection of the main factors had to be made or the level of analysis was moved higher up the ladder of abstraction (Sartori 1970). For example, a number of political actors demonstrated in Tahrir Square and they all formed an important counterweight to overthrow the Mubarak regime. However, not all of them will play an important role in shaping Egypt's role as a security actor. Finally, in order to answer the research questions accurately, a number of background variables needed to be tackled, in particular the role of globalisation as a phenomenon affecting Egypt's governance, the role of the global financial system, the implications of climate change and the role of political Islam.

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[21] A number of books have been published since the fall of Mubarak. Many of these provide personal accounts of the revolution in Egypt. See e.g. Ghonim (2012), Soueif (2012).

1.7   Readers' guide

The chapters in this study can be read as standalone papers. Different themes related to Egypt's security posture are covered. Chapter 2 is a more theoretical treatment of what led to the Egyptian transformation. Chapter 3 is a more detailed overview of the key events that led to the fall of Mubarak and the rise of President Morsi. Chapter 4 analyses Egypt's hard and soft power capabilities and how these shape Egypt's security posture. Chapter 5 provides a brief discussion of the key elements of the domestic political scene and how these will shape domestic politics in the short term. As a contrast to the domestic dynamics, chapter 6 provides a longer examination of Egypt's foreign relations in the region. Finally, chapters 7 and 8 analyse a selection of Egypt's short- and long-term security challenges. Chapter 9 provides some conclusions and revisits the research question set out above. A summary is provided to highlight the key findings of the study. This summary is intended to inform policy practitioners.

2 Situating Egypt's revolt in the so-called Arab Revolts

Since December 2010, developments in North Africa and the Middle East have created a new geopolitical reality linked to new and changing interstate relations. This chapter examines how this transformation proceeded and the elements that contributed to it. It discusses the broader processes leading up to the uprisings in the Arab states, and how Egypt came to be involved in this process of political change. The discussion serves as background to the more detailed discussion in chapter 3.

2.1 Arab governance and the process that led to the uprising in Egypt

It will be up to historians to identify the precise sequence of events that led to the new modes of political governance in the Arab world. The causes are many and not easily summarised. A number of fundamental factors contributed to these events and to the end of the era known as 'Arab exceptionalism'.[22] Some of the factors which, alone or in combination, led to the revolutions of the past two years were: unfinished state building processes, partly linked to colonial legacies; unimplemented land reform in some countries; and inadequate political and economic reforms. A unique factor in Egypt was the increasing links between the political, economic and military elites in the country and their increasing distance from the ordinary Egyptian citizen.[23]

Structurally, North Africa and the wider Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region came late to the globalised era that now forms the basis for international relations. While Asia and Latin America adapted their political and economic systems to the new world order that emerged after the Cold War in the 1990s, the MENA countries continued their politically traditional mode of governance without much change. A number of Arab regimes perpetuated the post-colonial discourse that emerged in the 1960s and 1970s, when their mode of governance was characterised as either 'revolutionary' or 'nationalistic', or both. At that time a number of Arab regimes played an important role on the international stage, not

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[22] A concept that followed on from the intellectual debate around Samuel Huntington's thesis of a Clash of Civilizations, which suggested that a clash between the West and the Arab world was inevitable as the latter was immune to modernisation. See also Bellin (2012).
[23] *International Crisis Group* 2011: p. 1, 17.

least in the context of the ideological rivalry between *East* and *West*.[24] Often hailed domestically, this Arab nationalism generated support for its rulers. However, over the years this support underwent change and decline.

During the 1980s and 1990s (but beginning in the late 1960s with the military defeat of Egypt in the war with Israel), the political legitimacy that Arab leaders had enjoyed among their citizens increasingly turned to mistrust. Leaders had increasingly distanced themselves from the masses, amid abuses of power, corruption and ever-increasing economic inequalities. Meanwhile, Arab leaders made frequent calls for respect, legitimacy and support from non-Arab governments around the world. This in turn generated increasing differences between the elites and the public, reinforcing existing gaps.

While democratisation and globalisation took off in other parts of the world, many Arab leaders became increasingly authoritarian and sought to closely align or balance military and political interests, both domestically and internationally, in order to maintain power (e.g. Ben Ali, Mubarak and Qaddafi). However, when attempts were made to initiate some form of liberalisation or democratisation, for example in Egypt, these were quickly challenged by Islamic movements, which often became the voice of perceived injustice. Such 'Islamist' challenges, often by members of the trans-boundary Muslim Brotherhood, were often met with repression and used as an excuse by leaders to tighten their grip on power. In turn, this repression gave birth to new grievances and fostered a generation of extreme Islamic movements. Thus, in order to maintain their power, Arab leaders in many countries were transformed into republican monarchies where surrounding family cronies waited in line to take power.[25]

2.2　Globalisation processes

In the early 1990s, in step with the end of the Cold War and the growing forces of globalisation, US hegemony strongly imposed itself on the world and in the MENA region in particular.[26] Ideas of liberalism, democracy, human rights and capitalism had a direct impact on Arab governance systems. These forces of globalisation increasingly affected the traditional and conservative societies of North Africa and the Middle East. At least among the urban classes, these forces of globalisation led to a growing acceptance of the outside world, including the

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[24] In this equation, oil played an important role, as the answer to growing energy demands around the world, giving Arab leaders wider sway.

[25] For example, in Egypt commentators were increasingly indicating that Gamal Mubarak would take over after Hosni Mubarak, similarily in Libya Saif al-Islam was planned to take over from Qaddafi.

[26] Globalisation is by no means an uncontested concept and different interpretations persist. See e.g. Dessouki and Korany (2008: 53–63) and Falk (2000: 23–42).

liberal paradigm associated with Western lifestyles such as a desire for human rights and democracy.[27] In most Arab countries, young people make up the vast majority of the population, and this young Arab population seems to have provided the necessary preconditions for liberal ideas to take root.

Thus, the advent of globalisation in the MENA region meant that traditional political thinking was confronted with the modernity of the West. Consequently, the old imagined *Orient* was no longer what it used to be. Most notably, social networking came to play a crucial role in events, not least in Egypt (as is discussed below). The Internet and telecommunications generally reduced the importance of geographical distance, facilitating the exchange of views between people. Through the Internet and international satellite television stations such as *al-Jazeera*, young Arab men and women increasingly followed everything from Anglo-Saxon and Francophone soap operas to the music, sports and cultural events watched elsewhere. This appears to have significantly fragmented the traditional world view in this corner of the world. Technological advances generally gave the young Arab population an opportunity to follow events in their own region, as well as global developments, on their own and not through the filter of an authoritarian regime.

In this process, it is no overstatement to speak of an 'identity crisis' taking hold in the Arab world between traditional and modern, or postmodern, liberal values, which helped drive the uprisings in various Arab countries. For example, the demonstrations held in Egypt in early 2011 were marked by secular and liberal values and not, as had previously been the case, by religious and anti-liberal slogans. Moreover, like elsewhere in the Arab world, the chants in Tahrir Square were about *dignity*, an element of identity that was buried in the shadows of Mubarak's authoritarian rule. Close observers of the Arab world had realised for some time that these forces had begun to change Arab societies, and that the revolts erupting in 2010 were simply a logical consequence of these developments.

2.3   Egypt and the Arab revolts

The political outcomes in Egypt following the revolution are by 2013 still in their formative stages and the new regime has yet to display its full political agenda. There are differing views on the significance of the actual change that has taken place, but the events were profound and have uprooted Egyptian state identity.

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[27] There were also strong domestic forces that survived in opposition despite outright suppression and which, despite their partly illiberal ideological foundations, backed calls for the observance of human rights and for the introduction of democratic governance. The Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, for example, lived long in the shadow of authoritarian governance.

According to *Amnesty International*, in its publication on the state of the world in 2011:

> *It was a year of unprecedented popular uprisings and tumult, a year in which the pent-up pressures, demands and protests of a rising generation swept aside a succession of veteran rulers who, almost until they fell, had appeared virtually unassailable. Others, at the year's end, were still clinging to power but only through the most ruthless means, their futures hanging in the balance.*[28]

In the characterisation of the change that has taken place so far in Egypt, the numerous commentators engaged in the debate have aligned themselves with two general standpoints.[29] Some suggest that Egypt is going through a profound transformation and has gone a long way towards a transition to democracy, while others take a more critical stance – that Egypt has still to root out authoritarianism and that the liberalisation process so far has been disappointing.

The 'transformative' standpoint suggests that the authoritarian era in Egypt finally came to an end with the ousting of Mubarak. This era began with Nasser in 1952 and continued with Sadat and Mubarak. That the revolt was genuine can be verified by the broad public participation in the anti-government protests. Furthermore, the Egyptian revolt was unique because citizens from different societal backgrounds, classes and religious and ethnic identities joined hands in a non-violent effort to bring down Mubarak and his associates.[30] Notably, the protestors came from both older and younger generations, and included liberals, secularists, Christians and Muslims. Widespread participation in the protests in 2011 by women brought about considerable change to societal norms in an otherwise male-dominated public sphere, and women's participation has helped to change the Arab identity.[31] Though noting in this context that the participation of women in the revolt do on the otherhand not automatically translate into future empowerment in the political process (especially not given the victory of the social-conservative Muslim Brotherhood).

Furthermore, the long suppressed political, economic and social grievances expressed in Egypt echoed those that existed elsewhere in the region, such as the need to deal with class differences, everyday poverty, high levels of unemployment, the lack of social services, high levels of corruption and a lack of trust in the state. Most importantly, some of the most popular slogans concerned the need for greater degrees of democracy and human rights. Significantly, there was no anti-Western or anti-Israel rhetoric.

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[28] Amnesty International 2012: 41.

[29] Based on the authors own reading of how events have been portrayed in the popular media.

[30] For a critique of this view of the non-violent aspects of the Egyptian revolt see Hussein (2012).

[31] Biggs (2011).

Overall, the proponents of the transformative standpoint argue that the 2011 uprising in Egypt set new political standards for political activism and was therefore a game changer that is unlikely to permit a return to authoritarianism in the future. As noted by Dr Hassan (2011), protestors produced an unstoppable wave of political energy that would push for political transparency and efficient civil political processes. The fall of Mubarak was in a sense the end of Egypt's first republic.

The other, more pessimistic, standpoint suggests that the revolution was unable to rid Egypt of its deep-rooted state-within-state problems, that is, the informal power of the Egyptian military over daily political life. Although Mubarak was deposed and jailed, many commentators note that the new regime must still cater for the interests of the military elite in an informal compromise. The ruling families and individual leaders may have been challenged politically by the popular demonstrations, but critics argue that a number of former regime's beneficiaries still cling to power, in particular senior military leaders, and therefore that not much has changed. The MB under President Morsi is accused of horse trading with the generals in order to secure power.[32] Similarly, while the label 'popular protests' may be a correct depiction of the uprising in Egypt, there were different interest groups with individual agendas. These group-based interests came to the fore in the parliamentary election, when the idea of a popular anti-regime mass movement fragmented into issue-orientated politics.

Finally, the more pessimistic standpoint suggests that while there may be an outspoken aspiration for democracy in Egypt, an incumbent regime led by the MB in the government and the presidency is not necessarily attuned to liberal democracy. In other words, the political parties may have been elected by democratic means, but the agendas of some of these political parties may not be democratic in the liberal sense. The MB in Egypt, for instance, has routinely called for the introduction of Sharia law, which in itself does not fit well with liberal democratic norms and traditions. In fact, it generally argues for a kind of democratic system in which God is more in focus than the individual. This system is not necessarily a liberal democracy. The illiberal practices of Morsi became even clearer during the stand-off concerning in the lead up to the constitutional referendum in December 2012. An illiberal system of governance could be unstable, leading to renewed societal chaos or provoking a military coup, which in turn might lead to unstable geostrategic security relations. For example, on the eve of elections the entire political game was stalled by the military's political intervention in the electoral process, which thereby derailed public aspirations.

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[32] See e.g. the analysis by Daragahi (2012).

In sum, a comparison of the two opposing standpoints on the nature of the political change in Egypt suggests that the outcome of events in Egypt is yet to be determined. A number of uncertainties over where Egypt is heading make predictions difficult, if not impossible. This in turn highlights the challenge of trying to understand Egypt's geopolitical role. As is the case with all the Arab uprisings that took place in 2011, especially those which are taking a democratic turn, political change will inevitably take time to take root and will remain a 'work in progress' for some years to come. The domestic political process will remain ongoing, involving setbacks as well as advances. However, the occurrence of democratic setbacks should not be seen as a total breakdown, but as a set of obstacles that must be overcome as part of the political transformation to democratic governance. Such a transformation will ultimately have implications for how Egypt interprets its new foreign policy and security identities.

2.4   Conclusions

Revolutions take time to unfold and settle. While emotions often peak when the wall of fear is brought down and people demonstrate en masse, the path to a fully normalised situation can take many years.[33] Too little time has passed to make sense of events in Egypt. As one researcher into Egyptian politics notes: 'Revolution is a process of the condensation of history'.[34] A great number of political and security-related events have occurred in a short period of time, and power vacuums are being formed and filled. New configurations of political alliances are being created. At the moment the main actors swinging power domestically are the military, the Muslim Brotherhood and the opposition (e.g. the National Salvation Front). What takes place in the black box of a revolution is therefore not easily deciphered. Whatever the outcome, the Egyptian political turbulence creates uncertainties that therefore have implications for Egypt's security stance. Chapter 3 provides a more detailed and events-based overview of the Egyptian uprising.

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[33] The Wall of fear is here confined to the ability of suppressed groups to overcome their fear of challenging the government. Usually there is no limit to such challenge, i.e. groups are prepared to make great sacrifices. Once the challenge is made to the state (i.e. its rulers) there is usually no turning back. In parallel with this challenge the legitimacy of the rulers disintegrates.

[34] Quoted by Abdel Moneym Said Aly, Director, al Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies, in a lecture given at the Institute for Foreign Affairs, Stockholm, in the spring of 2012.

3 Key events in Egypt and their implications

In a bid to open up democratic practice in Egyptian politics, Mubarak announced early in 2005 that the country's election laws would be reformed. This followed open and increasing domestic opposition to Mubarak's political rule and his constant interventions in Egypt's political and economic life (e.g. human rights abuses).[35] At that time, demonstrations were not new to Egypt, but had become more frequent than before.[36] Domestic pressure gave rise to Egypt's first multi-candidate elections with representation from various parties (the MB gained nearly 20 per cent of the vote), as well as a constitutional referendum, in 2005.[37]

Nonetheless, although the plan to open up the political system was put into practice, the election held in September 2005 was considered neither free nor fair by the international community. Less than 25 per cent of the country's 32 million registered voters (out of a population of more than 72 million) turned out to vote, which gave the outcome little legitimacy.[38] However, the campaign did help the participating political parties to organise political platforms. This mobilisation would have significant implications for future political reforms.

Sensing the increased challenge from pluralistic political participation, Mubarak changed political course on 19 March 2007, essentially by ensuring that the parliament passed numerous constitutional changes that, among other things: prohibited political parties from using religion as a basis for political activity; sped-up the adoption of new anti-terrorism laws, which for example granted the police sweeping powers to arrest and spy on civilians; and gave the President the power to dissolve the parliament. These political decisions were viewed by several commentators as an effective strategy to pave the way for a transfer of power from Mubarak to his son, Gamal Mubarak.[39] It was also a strategy for

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[35] Opposition towards the leadership has existed throughout Egypt's political history, but increased during the late 1960s and early 1970s. This in turn had Mubarak to turn increasingly to human rights abuses, in particular of the opposition.

[36] The growing opposition was led in part by the broadly based *Egyptian Movement for Change* and the Kifaya ('Enough') pressure groups. Some of these demonstrations voiced opposition to Egypt's US friendly policy, as well as US intervention in Iraq and Israel's conflict with the Palestinians (International Crisis Group 2011: 1).

[37] The Muslim Brotherhood was excluded from most political arenas and was simply not allowed to engage in in any political activities.

[38] Some commentators suggest that this figure is much higher. For example, during the election in 2011–2012, nearly 51.6 million Egyptians were eligible to vote.

[39] Azis and Hussein (2002).

Mubarak to further marginalise the MB from political power given its increasing support in Egypt.

The sections below discuss some of the main developments that led to the fall of Mubarak, the rise of popular protest and the subsequent elections. An attempt is made to outline these developments chronologically.[40]

3.1 Demonstrations and the pre-election phase

Inspired by, and to some extent coordinated with, events in Tunisia at the time, demonstrations erupted across Egypt on 25 January 2011.[41] Non-violent street protests were to a certain extent organised through social media such as *Twitter* and *Facebook*.[42] At the same time, the media reported the first lethal confrontation between demonstrators and police. The US, one of Egypt's closest allies, quickly called for an end to government violence.

On 29 January 2011, after the so-called Day of Anger (Rage) Mubarak responded in public for the first time to the anti-government demonstrations. Mubarak announced that he had effectively discharged the government. However, to quell the mounting demonstrations, a national curfew was announced later in the day. This was widely ignored and a national strike was initiated, directly contrary to government orders, on 31 January. The EU responded to the Arab spring in February 2011 with initiatives across the region (aid, emergency relief, humanitarian support, reintegration, evacuation, etc.).

On 1 February 2011, Mubarak publicly declared his intention to remain in power, but not to stand as a candidate for a further Presidential term. However, by this time the intensity of the demonstrations had increased. The demonstrations culminated in Tahrir Square, where the protestors vowed to stay until Mubarak left office. The following day, the violence intensified considerably as non-violent protestors were met by mobs allegedly organised by pro-Mubarak forces, which sought to disperse the protestors. An estimated 1500 demonstrators were injured in a single day, during what was became known as the battle of the camels, raising the temperature of the anti-government protests.[43] By now, the

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[40] *Keesing's Contemporary Archive* (online edition) was used to assemble some of the key events unfolding in Egypt. This online Archive is located at http://www.keesings.com.

[41] International Crisis Group 2011: 3.

[42] Demonstrations drew support from many different sectors, not least protest movements and Internet discussion groups discussing issues such as corruption, social welfare and the conflict between Israel and the Palestinian people.

[43] See for example Fathi (2012). During the autumn of 2012, officials and generals held accountable for instigating the Battle of the Camel were acquitted, leading to street protests in central Cairo.

global media was reporting on events.[44] In this context it is worth noting that the military had been present on the streets of Cairo since late January. However, it did not actively participate on either side.

In the days that followed street protests continued, although the mood of the demonstrators changed from optimism to pessimism with regard to the success of their strategy for ousting Mubarak. One factor that contributed to the changing mood was Mubarak's defiant television address on 10 February, in which he declared his intention to stay in power. Mubarak, however, stepped down the next day. Omar Suleiman, Egypt's intelligence services chief, who had been appointed vice President on 29 January 2011, became Egypt's de facto President for a short while.[45] Two days later, power was transferred to SCAF, which formed a caretaker government until it formally handed over power to a democratically elected President on 30 June 2012.

3.1.1   The SCAF administration

SCAF began by declaring (in an indirect way) that the 1979 Peace Treaty with Israel would remain in force.[46] This was important to the unfolding of the revolt, and signalled to the wider international community that agreements with Israel would be honoured and that there would not be any major shift in foreign policy while SCAF was in power. This decision was welcomed by segments of Israeli society, as well as some of Israel's allies, many of which had been afraid that the turbulence in Egypt could be used to provoke Israel.

Importantly, on 15 March 2011 the US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, visited Cairo and publicly supported the democratic actions of the opposition and SCAF. US policy was cautious, having to perform a balancing act to avoid antagonising new groups that might later find themselves in power, while at the same time not completely breaking ties with long-term allies.[47]

As a sign of its attempts to pave the way for a democratic transition, on 13 February SCAF suspended the national parliament and the constitution and announced procedures for the election of a People's Assembly and the Shura (upper house). In addition, SCAF appointed a committee to set out guidelines for

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[44] At this stage, it is important to note, not least for the continued development of Egypt's transformation, that the Egyptian army remained neutral and did not involve itself on either side. To end the power struggle, a panel of 'Wise Men' was established to work out ideas for the political future of Egypt. However, the panel did not achieve very much (*International Crisis Group* 2011: 10).

[45] Suleiman later died in a hospital in the US.

[46] It was indirect in the sense that the SCAF suggested that all international treaties would be honoured.

[47] *International Crisis Group* 2011: 26.

new constitutional changes. At this time no decisive decisions were taken on which democratic path Egypt would go down and when (election laws were constructed many months later). The transitional period was based on Supra-Constitutional Principles, that is, principles that would set the terms for the transitional period Egypt had to go through before a new constitution was written and adopted by a national referendum

On 19 March 2011, a national referendum was held on the proposed constitution, with 77.3 per cent of the votes cast in favour.[48] Over 40 per cent of the electorate participated, marking a turning point in Egyptian politics. In essence, the reforms: (a) limited a President to at most two six-year terms; (b) provided for judicial supervision of elections; (c) set out a requirement for the President to appoint a deputy; (d) set up a commission to draft a new constitution; and (e) gave easier access to Presidential elections for prospective candidates. The outcome of the referendum meant that the National Democratic Party (NDP) lost considerable influence in the political life of Egypt (the NDP was dissolved by a court on 16 April). Meanwhile, actors such as the EU imposed targeted sanctions on members of the previous regime to block them from further political participation (e.g. an assets freeze was imposed on 21 March 2011).[49]

Although significant political steps had been taken towards democracy, street demonstrations continued. Different interest groups such as trade unions and the student movement signalled their discontent with the proposed reforms and the speed of their implementation. Public discontent further fuelled the revolutionary flames and it was suggested that the streets would be occupied until reforms were completed in Egypt. Probably sensing a growing threat to its power base, SCAF made demonstrations illegal on 1 April. This move was greeted by a 'Save the Revolution' demonstration in central Cairo, during which hundreds of thousands protested. Similar mass rallies were held throughout the spring. For example, on 27 May 2011 protesters organised Egypt's so-called second revolution. By this time, the slogans had become calls for faster and more profound reform, efforts to tackle widespread corruption and demands for the regime to bring Mubarak to trial (Mubarak was detained on 13 April).[50] In addition, increased discontent was voiced at SCAFs continued rule, especially as it enforced emergency laws, criminalised strikes, circumvented human rights and used the military courts to silence opposition voices.

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[48] *International Crisis Group* (2012).

[49] See Council of the European Union (2011) for the latest published overview of restrictive measures provided by the Council.

[50] Calls were also made for more profound constitutional reform and, by some demonstrators, for the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces to limit its cooperation with the Muslim Brotherhood.

Calls for democratic progress continued during the autumn of 2011, involving different pushes from street demonstrations and interest groups. Some of the mass rallies held were a direct response to political initiatives by SCAF, which made various proposals to amend constitutional principles that would give it increased powers. Time and again, orders were given to rid symbolic locations such as Tahrir Square of protestors, only to be met with further and larger demonstrations. Importantly, the demonstrations continued to include participants from different groups, communities and trade unions. For example, Coptic Christians stood side-by-side with Muslim protestors.

Although full attention was paid to addressing issues in and around the major cities, the breakdown of law and order became increasingly visible elsewhere in Egypt. This was also raised as a major challenge in the popular discourse of the time (note for example that the police were ordered to withdraw from the streets in late January and that the army was given authority to conduct traditional police work).[51] Already overlooked parts of the border with Israel became inflamed, on occasion leading to skirmishes between tribal communities, Islamic radicals, Egyptian security forces and Israeli forces. On 9 September 2011, following the killing of several Egyptian soldiers, a mob attack took place on the Israeli embassy in Cairo, leading Israel to withdraw its ambassador. This increased friction between Egypt and Israel.

Late in November 2011, around seven tonnes of teargas arrived in Egypt, intended for the Egyptian Ministry of the Interior. It was one of a series of shipments by US defence logistics companies granted licences by the US authorities. These shipments of teargas received much criticism from Amnesty International:

> *These licenses were authorized during a period where the Egyptian government responded to protests by using excessive and often lethal force. It is inconceivable that the US authorities did not know of evidence of widely documented abuses by the Egyptian Security forces. These licenses should not have been granted.[52]*

Whether such activities were meant to favour the SCAF or simply ensure that the situation did not get out of hand remains unclear.

Summarising the main events leading up to the fall of Mubarak, a number of preliminary observations can be made with regard to the character of the protests. The revolt in Egypt was marked by: (a) the absence of any clear protest leaders;[53]

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[51] The traditional state security apparatus under Mubarak was replaced by the Egyptian national security agency.
[52] *All Africa* and *Amnesty International* (2011).
[53] A point also made in *International Crisis Group* (2011: 15).

(b) early campaigns of mass disobedience and non-violent direct action; (c) the absence of any stated party political interests in favour of a multi-partisanship;[54] (d) a general sense of fatigue among Egypt's citizens with regard to the ruling President and his party; (e) its civic character, in the sense that it had a secular agenda despite de facto practices during the demonstrations of prayer by Christians and Muslims; (f) a common purpose in wanting to oust Mubarak from power; and (g) protestor resilience to government countermeasures. In addition, demonstrators were drawn from many different classes and interests, albeit not evenly represented. In retrospect, the International Crisis Group noted that the middle and upper middle classes and urban groups were disproportionately represented in Tahrir Square.[55] History, in this sense, has yet to be written. All of these factors helped shape the identity of the revolt. It also laid ground for the post-Mubarak political landscape.

One important question to pose in retrospect with regard to the military is whether it really abided by the popular revolt or in effect carried out a palace coup? The military's stance was actually highly ambivalent as it stood by both sides (Mubarak and the opposition) but all the way through mainted its own powerbase. In any case it was very effective at building a narrative that it was on the people's side. Finally, the role of the MB requires further examination. As is noted above, it opted for a cautious approach and did not actively take a lead in the uprising. Was this a strategic decision not to frighten the liberals and secularists away from participating in the revolt? After all, if the MB had taken the lead, many internal and external actors might have withdrawn their support for the transformation that was taking place.

3.2   The elections phase

Parliamentary elections were held in Egypt in late 2011 and early 2012. The major winners were the Freedom and Justice Party (FJP), which gained 43 per cent of the seats in parliament, and the Salafist *Al-Nur* party, which gained 24 per cent. The People's Assembly held its first constitutional meeting on 23 January 2012, at which time power was formally transferred from SCAF. The Assembly created a constitutional committee (i.e. the Constituent Assembley of Egypt) consisting of 100 parliamentarians in order to rewrite Egypt's constitution. However, the constitutional group only existed until 12 April, when an

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[54] This is not to say that all parties demonstrated with no interest in gaining political influence or pushing its agenda.

[55] For example, the Muslim Brotherhood was not at the forefront of the demonstrations, instead taking a very cautious approach. The Brotherhood delayed its participation and was later represented mainly by its younger activists. When participating, it focused mainly on democracy and social justice (see *International Crisis Group* no. 101. 2011: pp. 23–25).

administrative court suspended it. The argument was made that elections had to be held prior to the drafting of a new constitution (Kirkpatrick 2012). It was also suggested by the opposition that the real problem for some political actors was that the parliament and the committee were dominated by members of the MB, giving the FJP too much influence.[56]

Towards the end of the spring of 2012, Egypt held the first round of voting in its Presidential election.[57] The outcome was characterised as a vote against the former regime, rather than a favourable view of the Islamist candidates. The pro-Mubarak opposition feared that if Shafik came to power[58], Egypt would face renewed political turbulence. Members of the MB feared prosecution and a return to the repressive situation they had experienced under Mubarak. On the other hand, a vote for Morsi was framed as continued uncertainty with regard to liberal democratic progress. Minorities such as Christian voters (e.g. Egypt's Coptic group) feared the uncertainty arising from the election outcome. Hence, while Shafik's supporters used slogans tackling issues of law, order and fear of Islamists, Morsi's supporters used slogans around fear of a return to the former regime. In the end, 65 per cent voted against former regime loyalists and 57 per cent voted against Islamist candidates. The two main contenders went through to the second election round, with Morsi and Shafik each gaining about 25 per cent of the votes.

Despite some democratic progress during the early summer of 2012, the political path to democracy encountered several obstacles. SCAF intervened in politics on a number of occasions, on issues it feared were damaging its power base. These continued interventions not only threatened to derail democratic efforts, but also caused considerable political uncertainty. For example, SCAF imposed martial law on 13 June 2012, making it possible for the military to arrest civilians and have them tried in military courts (this decision was later upheld by a court order). On the following day, the Supreme Constitutional Court, widely thought to be loyal to SCAF, upheld the National Assembly's parliamentary power, thereby obviating threats that risked ending Shafik's candidacy for presidency.[59] In effect, SCAF resumed full legislative authority, which gave it: (a) control over all laws, including the national budget; (b) immunity from any oversight body; (c) the power to veto any declaration of war; and (d) control over the process of writing a permanent constitution. The strong measures taken by SCAF led to

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[56] Again in early June, parliamentarians agreed to form a new committee (the so-called Constituent Assembley of Egypt) but, as selection was under way, a number of secular parliamentarians boycotted the event, claiming that representatives of the FJP would dominate the group.

[57] In a bid to control the political outcome, SCAF used the presidential commission to disqualify 10 candidates on 14 April.

[58] Shafik was an Egyptian politician and Prime Minister under Mubarak.

[59] This only relates to the one-third of the parliament that allowed independent parties as candidates.

considerable political confusion, with some claiming that SCAF was carrying out a constitutional revolution, while others feared that Egypt was heading towards a violent spiral.

The run-off vote in the Presidential election took place on 16–17 June 2012. Morsi won 51.7 per cent of the vote, to Shafik's 48.3 per cent. On 18 June, Morsi declared himself the winner. The election results suggested that the MB had a strong grassroots presence and the ability to organise itself in an effective way.[60] Meanwhile, SCAF established a 100-member panel to draft a permanent constitution for Egypt. This would be written within three months and then be subjected to a public referendum. The SCAF declaration also stated that once the referendum was put in place, a new parliamentary election would be held to replace the existing parliament.

3.3   The post-elections phase

Morsi was formally sworn in as Egypt's new President on 24 June. One of his first decisions, made on 8 July, was to order the National Assembly to reconvene. The order was a direct challenge to SCAF's previous ruling. Legislators gathered for a brief session on 10 July. SCAF suggested that Morsi could be brought to court for not abiding by the ultimate ruling of the Supreme Constitutional Court.[61] The row led to a number of legal appeals but in effect the courts declined to make any ruling until the new constitution was ready – a process that all sides recognised would take time.

In mid-July 2012, Hilary Clinton paid a second visit to Egypt since the overthrow of Mubarak, nearly one year after her first visit. This visit was important as the direction of the constitutional process was still unclear and tensions were mounting between President Morsi and SCAF. It was also an important visit because it would signall more clear which side the US was likely to back.[62] At the end of her visit, Clinton held separate meetings with Morsi and Field Marshal Tantawi of SCAF, thereby sending mixed signals. As the *New York Times* noted, the meetings in Egypt '…appeared to be a triumph of pragmatism over idealism within the Obama administration, and perhaps even within the secretary herself'.[63]

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[60] Noting that Morsi is not an official candidate of the MB.

[61] Kirkpatrick (2012-07-10).

[62] Though as noted, the US has kept an open line of communication with the Egyptian military throughout the crisis.

[63] Having initially been tough in its rhetoric, i.e. calling for the military to step down from power and confine itself to matters relating to the defence of Egypt, following the meeting with Tantawi the US view was that it supported a political process in which *all* actors built consensus across the

Another high-level US visit was paid on 31 July, when US Secretary of Defense Panetta visited Egypt. Concluding his team's visit, having also met with SCAF, Panetta said Morsi was 'his own man', a statement which commentators suggested could be interpreted as a declaration of US support.[64]

On 24 July, once Morsi had effectively assumed power and positioned himself as acting Head of State, he appointed Hesham Qandil as Egypt's new Prime Minister. Qandil took office on 2 August. Six former ministers in the Mubarak regime were included in the 35-minister government formed by Morsi. The post of Defence Minister was given to Mohamed Hussein Tantawi and there were five more ministers from the MB, as well as two women and one Coptic Christian.[65] This inclusiveness, including bringing on board a number of members of the former regime, including Tantawi, faced criticism but followed the pattern set by Morsi and the FJP – seemingly signalling that they were not interested in pursuing a confrontational policy that would antagonise segments of Egyptian society or concern external actors.

Since coming to power, Morsi's and his administration has undertaken a number of political reforms. By late 2012 the main challenge has been the future of the country's constitutional process. The process of drafting a new constitution for the country was initiated on 26 March 2012. However, following a majority of Islamists in the democratically elected National Assembly, and the influence this block would have on the constitutional drafting process the opposition boycotted further engagements to signal its discontent.

To push the constitutional proposal through parliament, Morsi decided in late November 2012 to extend his powers by declaring all laws issued by decree since he took office on 30 June 2011 to be binding until the new constitution had been adopted. Large oppositional crowds marched Cairo's streets to protest against Morsi's decision. The opposition argued that Morsi had granted himself unlimited power. However, the presidential administration's position was that the

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Egyptian political spectrum to resolve the political stand-off. Moreover, Clinton discussed both political and economic issues with Tantawi, including the importance of a peace treaty with Israel; the protection of individuals, women's and minority rights, migration, weapons smuggling, etc. Equally importantly, the US administration would work with Congress and the Egyptian government on the details of delivering the USD 1 billion aid package that President Obama had previously promised (i.e. it was about writing off USD 1 billion in US debts). However, as the *New York Times* reported, there was '…no indication that the administration planned to make any of the aid contingent on a full handover of power to civilians. Congress has already required Mrs Clinton to certify that Egypt is taking steps toward democracy in order to keep delivering the current $1.5 billion in annual aid, which includes $1.3 billion in military equipment (*New York Times* online 2012).

[64] See *New York Times* online (2012).
http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/international/countriesandterritories/egypt/index.html
[65] The rest of the government was made up of a number of technocrats.

decree was needed to prevent former Mubarak loyalists (including in the courts) undermining parliament and the reform initiatives taken to establish democracy in the country.

Ignoring the complaints of the opposition, the the Islamist-dominated parliament passed on 30 November 2012 a proposed draft of the new constitution, and Morsi set 15 December as the date for a national referendum on the constitution.

Experts such as Hamdi Hassan, suggests that many critics believe Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood lack the required political vision to run, or a cadre capable of running, a country of Egypt's size, and with its economic problems, political complexities and strategic importance. Hassan argues that, so far, Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood have done little to prove their critics wrong.[66] Regarding the constitutional process and the rush of the proposal through parliament, critics say that Morsi failed to reach out to the wider public to anchor it. Meanwhile, Omar Ashour, a research associate at the *Brookings Doha Center*, makes the point that normally in a country in political transition, the kind of decree issued by Morsi to override judicial authority and gain comprehensive executive power would lead to dictatorship, but that with a judiciary filled with remnants of the former regime, this was the only logical step open to him. After all, the decree issued by Morsi was intended to protect a democratically elected institution, remove the national prosecutor appointed by Mubarak, ensure that security officials from the Mubarak era were brought to trial, and pay compensation to all the victims of the revolt and thereafter.[67] Competing views like this builds into the larger narrative on Egypt's political transformation, i.e. it goes in the 'right or wrong' political direction (see introductory chapter).

As the referendum was held on December 15 2012, and with a majority of Egypt's judiciary boycotting the referendum, it became clear that the Islamists had won over opposition voting no to the new constitution (mainly lead by the National Salvation Front). The referendum on the constitution paves way for a parliamentary election to be held in February 2013.

3.4   Conclusions

The Egyptian political system is seeking a new mode of governance. After nearly two years of political turmoil and with a new President in power, the challenge for the new Egyptian administration is to convince Egyptian citizens and the international community that the political process has not become stuck at the hybrid democracy stage, leading to a pseudo-democracy or a semi-authoritarian

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[66] Interview with the author on 2012-12-10.
[67] Ashour (2012-12-03).

democracy (or even a theocracy). Politically, it is important for the new administration to show that government institutions function efficiently in order to avoid further political turbulence that would undermine the new government and put further strain on the battered economy. In particular, it will be important to provide protection for societal institutions such as the courts and the media.[68] The signs from Morsi and the new government are that the MB is seeking to demonstrate its power across different state sectors (including the free media). It remains to be seen whether this is for the purpose of rooting out former Mubarak loyalists, or in preparation for running the state apparatus by decree. As commentators generally contend, the MB seems to perform best when it is pushed against the wall. While much progress has been made a number of illiberal practices by the presidential administriaton have rasied fears that Egypt is going in a wrong political direction. Moverover, overcoming the military (in an incremental way), in order to undermine the military's influence could be a motivating factor as this is the institution that poses the main threat to its power. However, it cannot be a long-term motivator. In the end, the MB also has to meet the Egyptian people in a new election round.

In sum, it is clear that while Morsi has formally taken office and even been able to challenge the military leadership, Egypt's senior military elite continues to play a decisive role in Egypt's political life. The question that will have to be answered in the future is whether a deal has been made between the two groups. However, it is also clear that the post-election environment will continue to involve heated rhetoric and to pit interest groups against each other, which may lead to new waves of violence and domestic instability. In terms of immediate concerns over Egypt's security stance, one must bear in mind that Egypt has long been considered a cornerstone of stability in the Middle East. However, in the immediate post-Mubarak era, relations between Israel and Egypt have become frosty. This has upset key stakeholders, most notably the EU and the US.

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[68] Eriksson 2011: 21.

4 Egypt's 'hard' and 'soft' power capacities

In recent academic thinking the concept of 'smart power' is receiving increasing recognition. It suggests that to pursue an effective foreign policy, the government of concern must calculate the benefits of using either coercion or appeal to convince other actors to support its position. The smart power concept further suggests that the government should use coercion wisely, and in such a manner that the party exposed to its policies believes it is acting out of free will. The smart power therefore uses a combination of both hard and soft power to achieve its goals, as relying on only one capability is generally inadequate.[69] Such an analytical approach would be valuable in the study of Egypt's power capabilities. In this study however, two clear-cut possibilities are used that examine Egypt through its *soft* and *hard* power capabilities.

According to a common understanding of harder forms of power in the international system, that is, when means are actively used by 'actor A to get B to do something it would not otherwise do' (Baldwin 1979), influence can be achieved through either coercion or money, or a combination of both. The military or the police are commonly used to control the public and to secure the interests of the regime. At certain other times, economic pressure (e.g. pressure on trade) is applied. Soft power, on the other hand, refers to the capacity to persuade actor B to take a measure or adopt a position to the benefit of actor A.[70] Cooptation is a common outcome of the soft power capacity of a state.

A brief discussion of how Egypt has manifested its hard and soft power is provided below.

4.1 Egypt and its hard power capabilities

The overall responsibility for outlining Egypt's hard security posture rests with the President and his administration.[71] In support, he has his government including the minister of defence, and the army. The National Defence Council of Egypt is the deciding body on major security affairs. President Morsi acts as its Chair, although military officers have the power to decide on some issues by majority voting. Moreover, President Morsi is vested with the power to declare war, although the National Assembly must approve any such declaration.

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[69] Nye (2009).
[70] Nye (2004).
[71] Although subject to change given the ongoing constitutional process.

Regardless of the formal power structures, Egypt is in a state of power hybridism, where formal power structures are akin to informal power.

As the course of the revolution made clear, the Egyptian armed forces possess strong informal power, not only in hard national security matters but also in domestic political affairs. The main forum is headed by the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF). Here, about 19 of the highest ranking military figures are represented from across the military, that is, the air force, the intelligence services, the army and the navy.[72] The relationship between the Egyptian political and economic elites and the military elite has been strong and should be understood as symbiotic. The strong influence of the SCAF over national security matters can partly be explained by SCAF members own vested interests, privileges and status in Egyptian society. In particular, SCAF's members have strong institutional and private influence over much of Egypt's economic infrastructure, giving them access to strong loyalties for preserving this control. Popular estimates suggest that it controls 10–30 per cent of the economy.[73]

The Army's continued role in Egypt's domestic political affairs will have considerable impact for future politics in the country. Not only will it continue challenge the legitimacy of the civilian rule government, but also remain a symbol and painful reminder that the revolt never got to be completed. In fact, the polarisation between President Morsi and the opposition in late 2012 could be read through the lens of this unsolved aspect of the revolt (i.e. Morsi's attempt to reform the state are, by some commentator's analysis, suggested to be undermined by the continued influence of the military and former Mubarak loyalists).

4.1.1   Egypt's military establishment

The position of the military in Egypt was considered by several commentators to be a 'state within the state' under Mubarak (or at least a powerful actor with influence over government policies).[74] Although its role and influence are changing under Morsi, it continues to have a strong presence inside Egypt. Owing in part to the fact that the modern republic of Egypt was partly created by an officers' coup, the military establishment has often considered itself the guardian of the state and thus also ensured its place in the inner circle of power

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[72] For example, for a long period the SCAF was dominated by six leading figures, of which the former Chair Field Marshal Tantawi was one. However, following Morsi's inauguration as President, Thantawi together with other senior figures were retired and younger officers from within the SACF have allegedly been promoted.

[73] *Daily News Egypt* (2012-02-05). However, the military has a long history of not revealing its true power and influence. Because of this lack of transparency, little is known.

[74] See Hashim (2011) for a good analysis of the Egyptian Military under Mubarak.

and national affairs. Over time, it has also enjoyed a great deal of recognition by ordinary Egyptians, as the military has been able to provide numerous jobs. As one recent report by the *International Crisis Group* puts it, the military has a: '…deeply ingrained conception of its own role as protector of stability and the national interest − a role it has grown to believe it alone has the experience, maturity and wisdom to play'.[75]

As is noted above, military influence also extends to both the formal and the informal economy. For example, with regard to ownership in the formal sector, senior military officials own chains of gas-filling stations, real estate, cinemas, banqueting halls and food production units, among other things. Retired generals also tend to be appointed head of a regional government, granting the military a great deal of economic and political influence throughout Egypt. With regard to the informal sector, that is, the huge-military industrial complex, the army as an institution is entitled to own all unused land in Egypt. Conscripts contribute cheap labour, for example, when it comes to the production or construction of all items and services required for the army. Wealth ends up in the hands of senior army members.

The explanation for how and why the military-industrial complex became so influential goes back to the days when President Nasser sought to bolster the Egyptian economy through full industrialisation programmes.[76] This process also meant that the economic security of Egypt became deeply ingrained with its national security.[77]

While the control and influence of the military seemed to have persisted through the early phase of the revolution, the ousting of Mubarak led many to begin to question the leading role of the senior military in daily political and economic affairs. Again, as is noted by the International Crisis Group:

> If, during the Nasserist era, the young officers who toppled the monarchy represented a generation of political outsiders gaining for the first time access to power and resources, the SCAF today is a far older, status quo-oriented actor bent on perpetuating its worldview, protecting its vision of the national interests and preserving its institutional privileges against a new generation of (civilian) contenders.[78]

For example, towards the end of his reign, even Mubarak had sought to counterbalance the influence of the military inside Egypt. Hard figures suggest that in preparation for the transfer of power to his son, Mubarak had begun to

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[75] *International Crisis Group* (2012: 16).
[76] Ibid.
[77] Ibid. p. 21.
[78] Ibid. p. 18.

buy loyalties in the police force. Moreover, in the last decade of his regime the police budget was increased more than six-fold.[79] Internal security forces act as a counterweight to the military, and the military is not what it was in the 1950s and 1960s (Bradley 2012: 204). This suggests that Mubarak may have begun to shift the power dynamics inside Egypt.

The influence of the military has also faced increasing opposition from within the military itself. For example, in April 2012, according to media accounts, nearly 500 military officers revolted against their commanders in Alexandria. While senior military officers enjoyed power, influence and wealth, lower ranking officers had to live with poor pay and conditions.[80] In addition, outside groups have increasingly begun to threaten the military. During the revolution, an online movement, 'Boycott Them', started to compile lists of the products and services controlled by military institutions in an attempt to gain support for the removal of SCAF from power.[81]

Since taking office, President Morsi has taken several political steps to challenge the military's political influence. These include rearranging the military structure by firing and retiring military officials. It remains to be seen how far Morsi is willing to go to challenge the military.

4.1.2   Egypt's military hardware

In addition to the political power that determines Egypt's security posture, its hard power capabilities play an important role. Egypt has one of the Arab world's most advanced defence industries. However, it is heavily subsidised by US financial aid and, as a consequence, there is low domestic demand for research and development in this field. The arms industry in Egypt also suffers from a lack of diversification, and an estimated 3.4 per cent of gross domestic product is spent on the military. Given the current progress towards modernisation, however, increasing demand for defence research and development can be expected.[82] The Egyptian military has gone through a substantial modernisation, including some satellite projects such as the emissary satellite EgyptSat 1 and the planned launch of EgyptSat2 and DesertSat1 and 2. Although the uprising in Egypt may have undermined efforts to engage with these programmes from an economic perspective (as the overall economy is in poor shape), increasing levels of insecurity in the region may have accentuated the need for them and others.

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[79] Ibid. p. 10.
[80] *Business Monitor International Country Reports* (2012-05-18).
[81] *Daily News Egypt* (2012-02-05).
[82] *Business Monitor International Country Reports* (2012-05-18).

According to recent market analysis, Egypt has the capacity to produce a number of military weapons, such as artillery pieces, surface-to-air missiles, M1A1 tanks, and fighting vehicles.[83] Its manufacturing base mostly benefits from joint ventures or coproduction with US firms.[84] Currently, hardware is produced under licence from the Arab Organization for Industrialization, which was previously a regional consortium in the Middle East but is now a wholly Egyptian organisation.[85] However, recent research suggests that nearly 70 per cent of Egypt's imports of major arms came from the US in the period 2001–2010.[86] Hence, Egypt is far from being self-sufficient. In fact, Egypt's hard military capability cannot be understood unless US support and US policy are taken into account.

According to various accounts, the US has provided Egypt with a total of USD 64 billion in economic and military aid since 1979, or nearly USD 2 billion per annum,[87] of which USD 1.3 billion has tended to be in military grants.[88] US military grants to Egypt followed on from the signing of the Camp David Accords, when military and economic grants were paid to Israel and Egypt to facilitate the cessation of hostilities and the return to Egypt of the Sinai Peninsula. Initially, nearly USD 7.5 billion was paid under the 1979 Special International Security Assistance Act, in a 3:2 ratio favouring Israel.[89]

The military aid provided by the US is not the only transfer to Egypt. US Foreign Military Sales (handled by the US Defense Security Cooperation Agency) also transfer considerable amounts of hardware to Egypt. This makes Egypt the second largest military trading partner of the US in the region – after Israel.[90] The main US defence industries in the Egyptian market are General Dynamics, Boeing, Lockheed Martin and Sikorsky Aircraft.

The rationale for US support to Egypt, in addition to the Camp David Accords, rests on the mutual strategic dependency that exists between the two countries. Egypt is dependent on US financial support for its economy and military industrial complex, both of which are crucial to domestic stability. The US is strategically dependent on Egypt for its involvement in the Middle East. For

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[83] Ibid.

[84] Ibid.

[85] Ibid.

[86] *Inter Press Service* (2012-01-16).

[87] These figures are subject to change as inflation needs to be accounted for.

[88] *Inter Press Service* (2012-01-16).

[89] Sharp (2012: 28).

[90] *Business Monitor International Country Reports* (2012-05-18). Note that in this context US foreign assistance to Israel since World War II amounts to USD 115 billion. In recent years, US foreign military assistance to Israel amounted to USD 3.1 billion (see Sharp 2012).

example, during certain regional and international crises involving the US, Wood notes that:

> *American forces have depended heavily on Egyptian facilities built with US aid to US specifications to accommodate US forces as they move from the United States and Europe to Africa or westward across Jordan and Saudi Arabia to the Persian Gulf.*[91]

This is not only vital to US protection of Israel and its management of Iran, but also for its overall involvement in the Middle East (sees 'US-Egyptian relations' for a further analysis of this relationship). A number of military exercises also take place between the two countries – the most notable being the biannual Bright Star military exercise.[92]

4.1.3   Egyptian forces

The current strength of the Egyptian Armed Forces is around 438,000 active personnel. Egypt has a system of conscription, amounting to 12–26 months for men between the age of 18 and 30.[93] In 2011, the reserve base was 479,000 soldiers. This makes Egypt one of the largest forces in the region. Not only does this make Egypt a pivotal state, but also a potential threat to countries in the region (e.g. Israel) should the government in Cairo evoke confrontational policies.

Egypt has recently been participating in a number of UN missions, including in Ivory Coast (UNOCI), the DRC (MONUSCO), Liberia (UNMIL), South Sudan (UNMISS), Sudan (UNAMID) (UNISFA) and Western Sahara (MINURSO).[94] If Egypt intends to portray itself as a reliable member of the democratic family it is not unlikely that it could increase its participation in future multilateral peacekeeping missions.

In terms of the import and export of arms, the trade ratio is very clear and speaks for itself. Egypt is a large importer and a weak exporting nation (see Figure 1). This is strongly linked to US-Egyptian relations in this sector, as outlined above.

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[91] Wood (2011-02-05).
[92] Ibid.
[93] CIA World Factbook (2012).
[94] *The Military Balance* (2012).
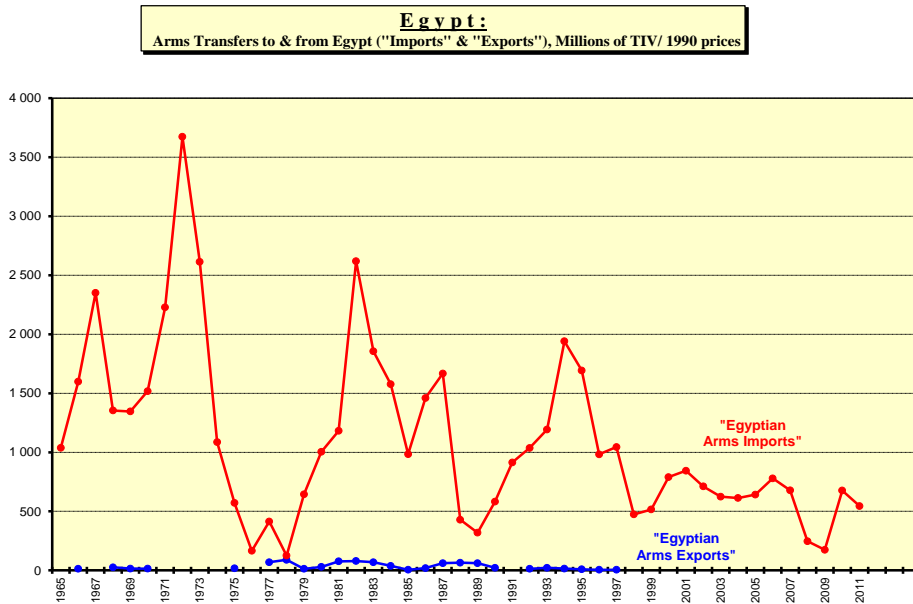
Figure 1 Volume (million TIV) of arms transfers to and from Egypt, 1996–2011
Source: SIPRI arms trade data (based on 'Trend indicator value'). These are indicators of levels of arms trading. Following the complexity of coding, the precise methodology is published on the SPRI website: 'Background information and explanations' > http://www.sipri.org/databases/armstransfers/background. Data collection based on SIPRI data was carried out by B-G Bergstrand at the Swedish Defence Research Agency in July 2012.

Egyptian-US trade relations are further illustrated in Figure 2 (below), where arms imports are disaggregated to the country level. Figure 2 shows how Egypt's imports of arms have shifted over time. Essentially, there was a clear shift in trading partners in the 1970s. Having been supported by the Soviet Union until then, its alignment with the US has been steady ever since. The data suggest that the level of transfers on average has been quite stable, with only minor fluctuations taking place. An interesting feature is that while the Chinese and British presence in the Egyptian market has declined, Russian involvement has recently begun to increase. Trade relations with Russia in this sector may be subject to change following President Morsi's election, although not in a major way. While some modernization of its military materiel is expected no significant change of trade patterns in this sector is expected.

Egypt:
Arms Transfers to Egypt ("Imports"), Millions of TIV/ 1990 prices - By Countries
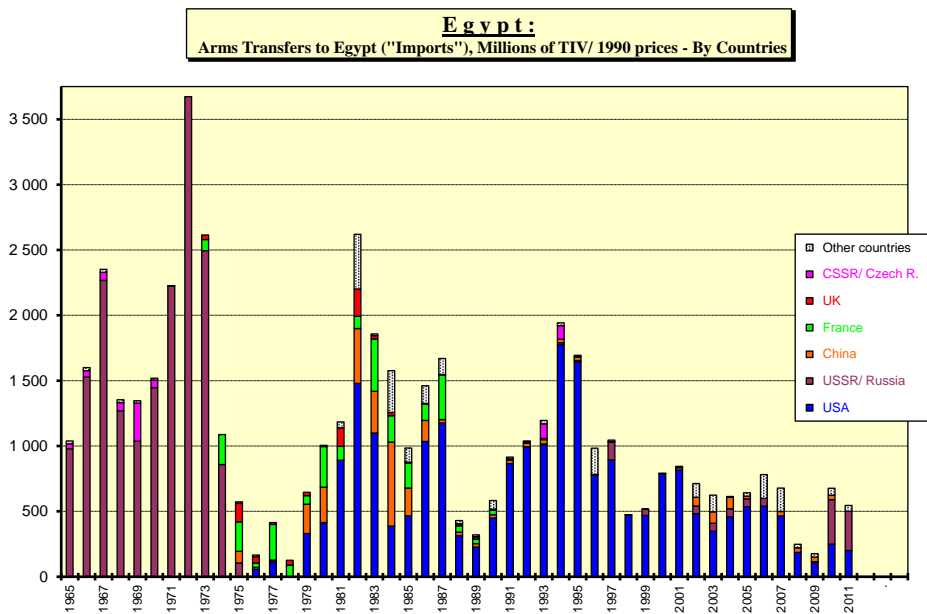
Figure 2. Countries of origin of arms transfers to and from Egypt, 1996–2011
Source: As Figure 1.

Besides the strategic relationship Egypt has with foreign actors, the type of armaments it is acquiring is equally important when trying to understand Egypt's past, present and likely future security posture. As the data in Figure 3 show below, Egypt's weapons imports are dominated by aircraft, combat vehicles and air-defence systems. Notably in this context, Egypt currently possesses far more tanks than Israel. From a technical perspective, however, Israel retains the upper hand.
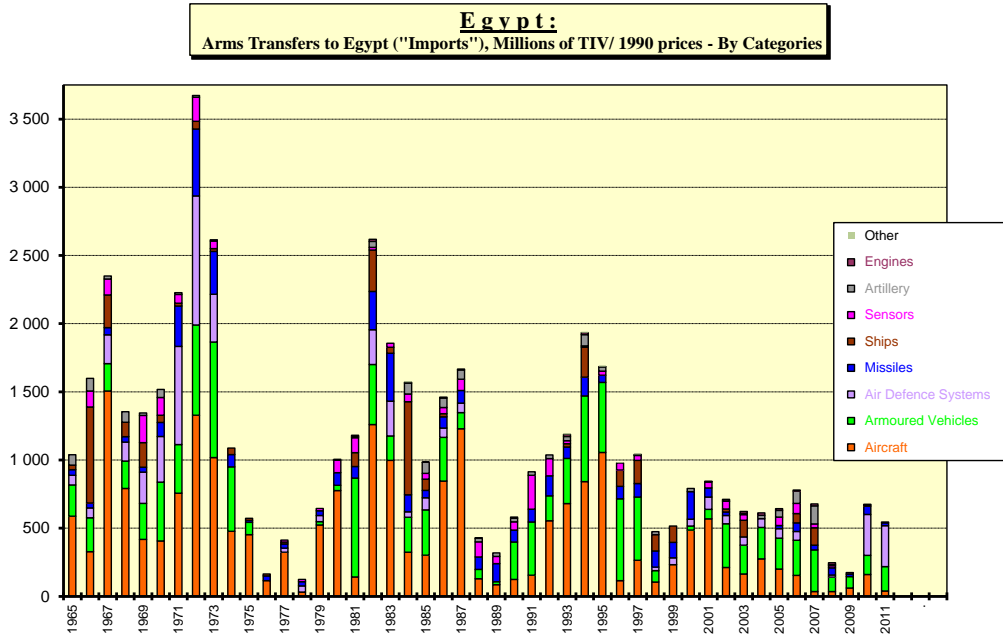
Figure 3. Types of arms transfers to and from Egypt, 1996–2011
Source: As Figure 1.

Egypt's major period of arms exports was the 1970s and 1980s. These exports were fairly limited and were directed towards Sudan and Iraq. In the 1990s, Algeria received some military exports, but Egypt's export trade in military equipment ceased in the mid-1990s (see Table A1.).

Moving on to the financial infrastructure that shapes Egypt's hard military capabilities, the SIPRI data show that Egypt's military expenditure declined between the late 1980s and 1996. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, military expenditure rose to an estimated USD 2.8 billion, a level at which it remained for some years. In the period 2009–2011, Egyptian military expenditure decreased to an estimated USD 2.3 billion. While there have been no significant changes, military expenditure as a percentage of GDP has declined over time from an estimated 3.4 per cent in 2000 to 1.9 per cent in 2011. Although military expenditure has recently begun to increase, this recent increase was in line with Egyptian economic growth and as such has not led to any increase in military expenditure as a proportion of GDP.
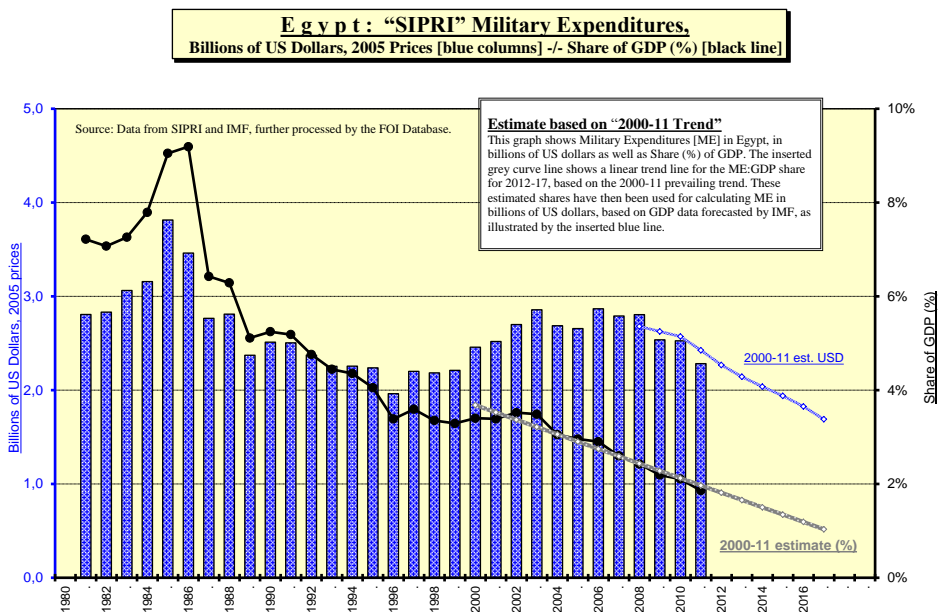
Figure 4. Military expenditure by Egypt, 1980–2012
Source: As Figure 1.[95]

Assuming that this trend continues in the coming years, Egyptian military expenditure as a proportion of GDP is likely to continue to decline, to an estimated 1 per cent in 2017. Relating IMF forecasts for future GDP to the projected levels of military expenditure suggest that Egyptian military expenditure will decline from its 2011 level, estimated to be USD 2.3 billion, to an estimated USD 1.7 billion in 2017. The projected decline in military expenditure is consistent with IMF forecasts of a reduction in government expenditure in the coming years. However, the recent turmoil in Egypt, recently negotiated loans and the financial aid received might alter such forecasts in the coming years.

In sum, Egypt will continue to be a pivotal power in the region, at least if seen from the so-called hard military perspective. The presence of the army in leading economic and political positions will safeguard its interests. Moreover, Egypt will remain a powerful state in the years to come simply by its large military size (conventional terms). Its security arrangements with the US will further keep it on a strong competitive edge (e.g. by support and training agreements with the US the Egyptian army is likely to remain a professional army). Finally, in terms

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[95] For further detail on methodological issues, contact the author.

of arms trade and military acquisition, Egypt will be dependent on US support and cooperation agreements.

4.2 Egypt and soft power

Egypt has had a long tradition of being a soft power in the Arab (and Islamic) world. As a pivotal state in the MENA, it has made substantial scientific achievements and attracted scholars from across the region.[96] In particular, Egypt has had enormous influence in the region when it comes to shaping cultural identity and affinity.[97] In recent times it has produced world famous singers and writers as well as popular soap operas – aspects that should not be underestimated. Beyond establishing itself as a regional node for strong scientific and cultural achievement, Egypt has been critical in fostering Islamic thinking and philosophy.[98]

4.2.1 Al-Azhar

Egypt has been an important educational hub for Muslims for many centuries, not least when Muslim scholars have sought guidance in the interpretation of Islam. One of the more important religious institutions is Al-Azhar University. The University is the oldest university institution in Egypt, and since the 1960s has broaden its faculties to provide education in numerous fields beyond traditional religious teachings (e.g. medicine).

In particular, the Al-Azhar mosque has enormous informal authority, and the preaching and issuance of Fatwas by Imams at the grand mosque have had far-reaching implications for Muslims worldwide and the Egyptian society in particular.[99] It has long been a major centre for teaching and researching Islam and the Arabic language.

Established in 970 AD, students at the mosque over the years have become Presidents and ministers in their home countries, while maintaining a strong affiliation with Egypt.[100] In particular, Islamic preaching at the mosque has generally tended to have implications for how other Imams in the Islamic world interpret Sharia law and how they take up standpoints on day-to-day issues.

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[96] A project is currently under way to build a large science city on the outskirts of Cairo to revive the production of knowledge in the light of the Arab awakening epoch, as noted by Nobel laureate Dr Ahmed Zewail (The Middle East 2011-12-01).

[97] For example in the presidential election Amr Moussa stated how he positioned himself on cultural issues as: 'Culture and art represents Egypt's soft power' (*Aswat Mariya* 2012-05-21).

[98] Competition has historically mainly come from Persia/Iran and Ottoman/Turkey.

[99] Brown (2011).

[100] It was granted university status as recently as the 1960s.

Thus, the importance of this religious institution in Egypt and for the Islamic and Arabic world cannot be overestimated.

One testimony to its importance is that Nasser took control of it in the 1960s, changing it from an independent institution to a branch of the Egyptian state. This allowed the government to ensure that Al-Azhar did not become a court for Islamic opposition to the government. Nonetheless, Al-Azhar still developed into a domestic opposition voice in the Egyptian state by the early 1990s.[101] One partial explanation for this is that Al-Azhar found some followers in the well-established MB. However, despite the fact that they share an Islamic world view, the MB should not be equated with Al-Azhar. While the latter is mainly driven by a religious agenda, the MB is driven by a political agenda with religious foundations. Moreover, some commentators suggest that there are even historic rivalries between the Al-Azhar and the MB. As noted by Dr Hamdi Hassan, there are also some challenges to overcome between the two when it comes to the current constitutional process. Accordingly, Al-Azhar is against the mainly MB proposition in the new Constitution that the Grand Imam should be elected, as was the case before 1961. Al-Azhar is very critical of that proposition and some within Al-Azhar sense that it is an attempt by the MB to dominate the age-old institution.

Political activity at Al-Azhar has increased since the Egyptian uprising. Although its leadership did not publicly call for demonstrations in favour of the removal of the Mubarak regime (or take sides in the Tahrir Square protests), it did call for religious autonomy from the state and expressed its concern over public disorder.[102] Thus, demonstrations were held at the campus in a way that had not been seen for a long time. Another feature of its political activity is that it became a hub for political actors contesting the national election, in particular as Presidential candidates sought the support of the religious establishment. Finally, and importantly for its future role in Egypt, there is the formulation of the so-called *Al-Azhar document*.[103] In this document, a number of religious scholars and liberal intellectuals agreed to a set of principles on the way to conduct and interpret Islamic teaching. These principles were closely in line with the liberal values and democratic practices echoed in the national political debate.[104]

Following the revolution in Egypt, the country's soft power capacity will continue to be an important factor in its security posture. It is likely that Egypt's

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[101] Brown 2011: 8.
[102] Ibid: p. 10. Some commentators also suggested that senior members of the Al-Azhar sided with Mubarak and received criticism for that reason.
[103] See *Egypt State Information Service* [undated].
[104] Brown 2011: 13.

soft power will have an increasingly religious framework that projects the values and interests of Islam. The role of the MB in the region (not least connecting with local factions of the MBs) as well as institutions such as the Al-Azhar will both be influential. Al-Azhar University will now enjoy greater freedom in Egypt, no longer subject to government instructions, and it is likely to play an important role in domestic and external politics. President Morsi is not likely to change Egypt's scientific and cultural status in any significant way (apart from being supportive of Islamic framings). In terms of politics and security, Egypt is likely to be supportive financially and socially to domestic movements and those abroad that favour Egypt's interests and Islamic values. Unlike its hard power capabilities, which are usually externally dependent, soft powers is exclusively handled domestically, that is, without preconditions and restrictions set by other security actors.

4.3   Conclusion

Egypt is a pivotal state in the Middle East and North Africa. Measured by its military capabilities, it is the strongest country among the Arab states. However, its security posture is determined in large part by its strong strategic links with the United States. President Morsi is not attempting to change this relationship as it is would be too costly for Egypt. The US gives Egypt a strong security position, and the annual financial support from the US stabilises the Egyptian economy. This in turn has implications for the military elite, as it can maintain its influence over political, economic and military affairs. It also has implications for the social stability of Egypt. However, the strong alliance with the US comes at a price: the need to keep peace with Israel. Without the support of the US, it is unlikely that the relationship between the two states would be so amicable. However, geopolitically, the arrangement with the US and Israel (still essentially regulated through the Camp David Accords) is favourable to Egypt – as Israel's military would outperform Egypt in any war. With the MB in power, however, Egypt might favour giving support to other Islamic governments and groups in the region.

Egypt does not face any immediate geopolitical threats with regard to national security.[105] However, though Egypt is a superior military power in the region (apart from Israeli and US forces) it cannot, given the current security environment, bring to bear much influence in the region except as a deterrent. Its capabilities could be put at the disposal of the Arab league if it were asked to

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[105] Aside from the need of water access from the Nile River that is essential for the survival of the Egyptian state.

intervene as part of a broad coalition in a country such as Syria, but this would be a risky political adventure given the tremendous challenges it faces at home.

On the other hand, Egypt's soft power capacity can project influence in the region. This could result in the co-optation of states and actors in their own national interests. Hence, soft power could prove valuable in the long run. The economic, cultural and religious strength of Egypt could in future make it a pivotal state in the region.

5 The domestic perspective

Domestic political dynamics also shape a state's security posture. It goes without saying that the uprising in Egypt during 2011-2012 has created an entirely new political dynamic in the country since Mubarak left power. In attempting to fill the existing power vacuum, new and old political actors are struggling to have an input into the country's democratic political awakening.

On the one hand, there are those who are trying to make themselves relevant to Egypt's domestic affairs, for example members of and senior officials from the former party of Mubarak, the National Democratic Party; but also established political opposition groups such as the National Salvation Front and radical Islamic groups. On the other hand, a number of revolutionary groups are now seeking to survive under the influence of a politically well-positioned Islamic government. Democratically elected political parties will make coordinated efforts to limit the influence of former regime loyalists and what they see as illiberal parties. Together, old and new political actors will shape Egypt's new political order and thereby also its security identity.

Formally, the main forum for official political interaction is the bicameral Assembly. The lower house is the important legislative platform, whereas the upper house, the Shura Council, has only a consultative role. In the political process and power-struggle between the SCAF and Morsi, the entire People's Assembly was dissolved following a Supreme Constitutional Court (SCC) ruling on 15 June 2012. In its ruling, the SCC argued that one-third of its MPs elected to single-winner seats were chosen on an unconstitutional basis. The verdict was considered final and didnot need to go through any further procedures or ratifications before being implemented.[106]

An overview of some of the key political actors in Egypt is provided below.[107]

5.1 Domestic political entities

Following the first free parliamentary elections in Egypt, a number of political blocs emerged in the National Assembly (e.g. the lower house), which has 508 seats. These are: (a) the Democratic Alliance; (b) the Islamist Bloc; (c) the Egyptian bloc; (d) the Revolution Continue bloc; and (e) the Coalition of Socialist Forces. At the same time, the upper Shura Council, which has 270 nominated seats, is composed of: (a) the Democratic Alliance; (b) the Islamist Bloc; (c) New Wafd; (d) the Egyptian Bloc; (e) Justice (f) Democratic Peace; (g)

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[106] This clarification should be credited to Dr Hamdi Hassan of International IDEA.
[107] A selection has been made and there is no intention to cover all issues and actors.

independents; and (h) Presidential appointees. The next parliamentary election is to be held in February 2012. Given that Islamist parties have more or less been isolated from politics in recent decades had lead them to orgarnise on a grassroot level thereby gaining a lof of support. Durign the 2011 parliamentary and presidential elections the Islamist Bloc was the principal winner. Not only did the Muslim Brotherhood gain a majority of the popular vote through the Justice and Freedom Party, but more radical Islamist groups such as the Salafi group (e.g. the al-Nour Party) also won a significant share of the vote. The domination of Islamic parties in both parliament and the Presidential administration would come to have a strong impact on domestic affairs, and on foreign affairs and defence matters. In this context it is important to remember that Islamist parties in Egypt span from the very radical to the very moderate, for example, the JFP functions as a conservative party with a neoliberal agenda and the Nour party serves as a far-right conservative party on social policy but with a leftist view on economic policies.[108] Understanding nuances is therefore crucial in this context.

5.1.1   The Muslim Brotherhood and radical Islam

For much of its existence, the MB has been an underground movement in Egypt.[109] Its role in Egypt's contemporary political history cannot be underestimated (Zahid 2010). Not only has it helped shape religious and political thinking among large segments of the Egyptian population (Muslim groups), but it has also played a major role in meeting needs unmet by the state (e.g. as a provider of social security). Mubarak's political agenda was to keep the MB out of political life. The underground, nationwide grassroots activities pursued by the MB partly explain its political success today.[110]

When it became clear that the MB, and the Justice and Freedom Party which informally represents it in the political arena, was gaining the upper hand in the parliamentary and Presidential elections, the primary security fear was that peace with Israel would be jeopardised. However, early on in the political transformation, representatives of the MB spoke out about the need to preserve peace with Israel.

Moreover, once in power it became clear that the MB would pursue a fairly pragmatic political line in order to avoid alarming the public or losing foreign

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[108] This point is owed to Dr Emin Poljarevic.

[109] It is important to consider regional political dynamics. The MB has also branched off into different Arab countries where it is currently gaining stronger influence as democratic reforms take place. These ties are also guiding Morsi's foreign relations in the region.

[110] It should also be noted that they benefited immensely from the process of Islamization in Egypt under the regime of Sadat, using state institutions to Islamize society and initially co-opting some members of the MB (see Hassan and Olsson 2011).

legitimacy. Although charged with being an Islamist party that would go the way of Iran, the political line of the MB has gone in other directions. Rather than actively prohibiting un-Islamic values, it is engaging in *supporting* Islamic issues. It has managed to bring to the political scene a framework based on religious accounts.[111] However, beyond the Islamic framework of the MB lies the question of how it has played its political cards and with what implications. Its dominance of Egypt's political life is considerable. For example, it dominates the Constitutional Assembly set up to write a new constitution. This dominance of the process and the lead up to the constitutional referendum in late 2012 has been subject to much much criticism.

As of November 2012, some months into President Morsi's administration, a narrative is emerging which suggests that the MB, through the Justice and Freedom Party, is seeking to pursue a political course that intends to secure its access to political power. In fact, ever since the revolt in Egypt started, the MB has carefully balanced how it could participate in political life without damaging its informal legitimacy among Egypt's political layers. This line of political action had already emerged in the first weeks of the revolution, when the MB (at least the senior figures in the MB) decided not to participate in the anti-Mubarak demonstrations, fearing that this would harm the movement. Pragmatic alliances, for example with SCAF, and pragmatic attitudes towards liberal and democratic issues have paved the way for its domination of Egyptian politics, alongside the legitimacy it gained when working underground. Such pragmatism may well support the view that a form of post-Islamic governance is emerging in Egypt.

So far, President Morsi has so far put the economy at the centre of his activity.[112] The administration has negotiated important loans from the IMF and foreign states, such as the Gulf countries. President Morsi has also brought several foreign investors to the country and travelled to China in a bid to secure Chinese investment in Egypt, but also to signal to the US that Egypt will not be as totally reliant on it as Mubarak was. This focus on the economy has not directly changed Egypt's security direction, but it is essential to Egypt's immediate stability.

In the end, however, the influence of the MB on Egypt's political life has caused some resentment and insecurity. The tyranny of the majority has raised questions about whether the MB is becoming too powerful across Egypt's various political, economic, social and media sectors, thereby setting its norms and principles as standard. After all, ever since its establishment, the MB has had issues with liberals, Christians, secularists and democrats. Since Egypt is still in transformation it remains difficult to answer where the MB stands on democracy.

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[111] *Australian Broadcasting Corporation* (2012-05-24).
[112] Kinninmont (2012-05-16)

5.1.2 Religious groups and others

As is the case in several of the other Arab countries experiencing popular uprisings, Salafi groups in Egypt have gained an increasing presence in daily political life.[113] For example, along with the Justice and Freedom Party, the Al-Nour party has gained considerable influence in parliamentary affairs. This is likely to pave the way for more Islamic laws in Egyptian society. Yet, the post-Mubarak political scene has brought about a greater fear of radical Islam's impact on popular security. This has caused some alarm, not only in Egypt but also abroad. Two factors are important in this regard.

First, the growing competition between moderate and radical Islamic groups is likely to increase. This will lead to increasing social tensions and polarisation. Domestic groups in Egypt, and probably also cross-boundary movements, are likely to shape such divisions. Opportunities will be taken by groups such as the Salafi to mobilise communities against liberal tendencies. Some strategies might aim to directly undermine the political rule of the MB, while others could be directly confrontational.

Second, accounts by minority groups and the media suggest a growing fear of possible tensions with non-Muslims. For example, both during the revolt and in its aftermath, there have been accounts of inflammatory speeches by Salafi groups against members of the Coptic community (e.g. Salafi Imams called for the taxation of non-Muslims).[114] Reports during 2011-2012 describe how Salafi groups arranged demonstrations against active churches and called for their closure.[115] Meanwhile, Salafi groups allegedly violently targeted the commercial enterprises of Coptic Christians, and there were hostile protests against Coptic politicians for opposing the introduction of Islamic law. Even more serious have been reports of direct and violent confrontations in different villages in Egypt. In some cases, Salafi members have mutilated Copts and burned down churches.[116] Events like this have led to further confrontations, including killings.

Although there is evidence of violent events, it is difficult to conclude that there has been a nationwide coordinated attack by Salafi groups on Christians. Nor do

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[113] It is important to note, however, that neither the MB nor the Salfi groups are homogeneous. Both movements have moderate conservative views on Islam in society. For example, the Salafi groups are not a united political force in Egypt, despite the popular impression that this is the case. During elections, different wings have supported different presidential candidates, in particular after the Salafi preacher Hazim Salah Abu Abu-Isma'il left the election race (*BBC Monitoring the Middle East* 2012-04-19). *BBC Monitoring the Middle East*. 'Al-jazirah.net report discusses role of Salafism in Arab spring countries'; originally published on the *al-jazeera.net* website on 14 May, 2012-04-19).

[114] See islamopediaonline.org.

[115] Ibid.

[116] See Marshall (2011-05-16).

the party programmes of al-Nour allow for violence and hatred against Christians. In fact there are several factions within the Salafi community that support the Nour party, whereas others do not. What is important, however, is that some groups may be against the presence and practices of the Coptic community, but certainly not the majority. Root causes such as marginalisation, stigmatisation, lack of understanding, separation, unemployment, grief and grievances may be powerful explanatory factors.[117] There are also sharply contrasting examples of Salafi Imams intervening to calm tensions between Salafi practitioners and the Coptic community, and of teaching, for example, by Sunni Imams on the need to be inclusive, respectful and tolerant towards the Coptic Church. During the revolt, Muslims and Christians cooperated a great deal in their resolve to oust Mubarak.

5.1.3 Revolutionary groups

Of the revolutionary groups that formed part of the anti-Mubarak uprising, some have perished, while others have established more formal party programmes and begun a new life in national politics.[118] However, the revolutionary youths have generally been marginalised. This is verifiable by the simple fact that the average age of the main political candidates favoured the older generation. One explanation for this may be that the Tahrir Square demonstrations in themselves were not a representative sample of voter sympathies across Egypt. Another complementary explanation is that some revolutionary groups, such as the April 6 Youth Movement, never had a formal political agenda or political ambitions and was therefore almost guaranteed not to survive in the new competitive political landscape to participate in national politics as a formal party.[119] Instead, activism often established new movements through social media networks such as Facebook and Twitter to organise political opposition. A number of the revolutionary groups and new opposition groups that played an active role in removing Mubarak from power were mainly issue-orientated and lacked political experience and leadership. These groups included the Kifaya group (established in 2000 to campaign against US and Israeli policies in the MENA region), Shabab al-Thawra, We are all Khaled Saeed[120] and Democracy Now.

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[117] This is not to disregard the fact that elements of these groups are de facto in favour of the killing of impious persons.

[118] For a good introduction and overview of the main actors in the Egyptian revolution see *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*. 'Guide to Egypt's Transition'.

[119] This movement started its activism back in 2008 to support low-paid and marginalised industrial workers.

[120] *International Crisis Group* 2011: 1.

5.2   Conclusion

The domestic political life of Egypt has been turbulent for the past two years. A number of political parties and networks have been formed, some old parties still exist but others ceased to exist after the most recent elections. A process of deeper democratisation is ongoing though it has encountered a number of setback not least with regard to the constitutional process. However, the democratisation of Egypt will take time. Frustration will continue to surface for some time to come as layers of Egyptian society want complete change now, with all the benefits that come with it. Change in Egypt, however, is intimately linked to economic progress and growth. Unless the government is able to secure jobs and reduce unemployment, social tensions and political frustration will grow – challenges that in the end may undermine democratic efforts. Fortunately, Egypt, unlike Libya, has a number of democratic watchdogs that will scrutinise the administration's efforts to make Egypt more democratic. These watchdogs include strong trade unions, domestic and international NGOs, virtual networks and social media, independent media organisations and a vibrant parliament.

One of the more important formal challenges ahead is the handling of the new constitution. The constitution will set important limits on executive and legislative power. The question is how President Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood will handle the opposition's call for participation. Again, their political actions will be examined at all levels and they will certainly be challenged over every political initiative. Challenges will not only come from liberals, but also from Islamic conservatives. So far, Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood seem to have focused on securing power and control over state institutions, but increasing control has also been taken over the Egyptian media. Meanwhile, the administration has been able to outmanoeuvre large segments of the opposition that was active in the initial months of the revolt, including key personalities. Whether this quest to consolidate power is intended to bring Egypt stability or simply for the purpose of achieving maximum influence remains to be seen. It is the future direction of these political processes that will ultimately decide Egypt's overall security posture.

6 Egypt's geopolitical outlook in the region and beyond

From a general point of view, little has changed in the Middle East as a consequence of the Arab uprisings. No new formal alliances have been established, no state has vanished and no new state has come into being. Furthermore, no military aggression has been instigated by one state against another.[121] Syria is an exception, as the country is currently in a state of civil war. From this perspective, Egypt has not experienced any profound shift in its security environment.[122] However, changes in domestic political systems and forms of governance in a number of Arab states have altered the way in which interstate relations are being pursued. This is particularly true of some of Egypt's more immediate neighbours, most notably Sudan and Libya. The international community has seen a number of authoritarian regimes lose power and a number of constitutional processes put in place, as well as some new actors and changed behaviour in old actors, it is evident that new security dynamics are under way.

6.1 Key foreign relations

This section provides an overview of Egypt's geopolitical outlook.[123] It is impossible to cover every aspect.[124] Therefore, a more general overview of Egypt's foreign relations is set out below to give an overall sense of its geopolitical outlook.[125]

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[121] Eriksson (2012).

[122] There are several accounts of complaints among Egyptians about the lack of police presence and increasing crime rates.

[123] Much has been written on Egypt's foreign relations, including the character of international relations in the Middle East. See e.g. Dessouki (2008: pp. 167–194); Halliday on power, politics, ideology and theory (2005); and Ismael (ed.) (2000).

[124] Different approaches can be adopted when trying to categorise Egypt's foreign relations (and thereby its posture). These can be grouped according to: ethnic and religious affinity; ideological ties; structural dependencies (resources and infrastructure); political arrangements (old and new alliances); historical animosities (regional rivalry); regional competition (animosity); neighbourhood insecurity; political designations of 'friends and foes' (usually following dynamic changes in the international and regional system), among others. Foreign relations can also be understood as structural and temporary conditions of the state, the incumbent regime's ideology or the state's history and the role it is *expected* to perform in the international system.

[125] Besides being engaged in a number of bilateral relationships, Egypt is a vibrant member of pan-Islamic and pan-Arabic forums such as the Arab League and the Islamic Banking Group. Following the Arab revolt it has also received an invitation to participate in the Gulf Cooperation Council.

6.1.1　The United States

Egypt's security posture is formed by its special relationship and security cooperation with the US. These ties grew increasingly strong in the midst of the Cold War, when both the Soviet Union and the US competed for its support. Although it declared itself part of the Non-Aligned Movement, it increasingly formed a favourable relationship with the US after 1979. A key turning point was the Camp David Accords, negotiated by former US President Jimmy Carter. In recognition of Egypt's decision to sign the Accords, the US favoured Egypt as a key partner in the Middle East, next to Israel, in its strategic maintenance of stability in the region.

It has become clear that the Morsi administration intends to maintain its relationship with the US. However, with the MB in power, several members of the US Congress are deeply sceptical about continuing support along previous lines.[126] Scepticism increased in some layers of the US Congress following the anti-US demonstrations in mid-September 2012, when the US diplomatic mission came under attack from mobs. This is likely to have been instigated by radical Islamic groups. Egypt is politically and financially in need of strong ties with the US, but the US also needs its partnership with Egypt. Relations are therefore expected to remain solid.

Strategically, Egypt is also crucial to US efforts to ensure the safety of Israel and the containment of Iran. As is noted by Wood (2011), Egypt is crucial to the US and a loss of this partnership would weaken the entire US defence strategy and network in the Middle East (the US has no military base in Egypt). According to Wood:

> *Without Egypt, they [the US] would find their options for shipping air and sea cargo, refuelling and repairing aircraft and consolidating troop movements narrowed to those along the Persian Gulf. The loss of landing rights in Egypt, for example, might mean that in a crisis, wide-body jets, each carrying hundreds of troops, would have to fly directly into congested Persian Gulf airfields, rather than into Cairo West, from which smaller transports would ferry troops into action.[127]*

Wood further argues that the loss of Egypt as a partner might force the US into:

> *...a greater reliance on long-range strike assets, striker fighters, bombers and missiles at a time when the US arsenal of such weapons is limited. In a Mideast war, fighters once might have launched from Egyptian airfields;*

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[126] It is worth noted that Morsi has also moved the entire dossier on relations with Israel to lower level administrators within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Such dealings with Israel also further augment the scepticism.

[127] Wood (2011).

without Egypt, they'd have to operate from carriers themselves vulnerable or fly exhausting air-refuelled missions from distant land bases in Turkey or Europe. And longer missions mean fewer daily sorties.[128]

In the midst of the early turmoil in Egypt, political uncertainties made the Obama administration initially hesitant about whether to 'sacrifice' Mubarak in favour of democratic forces on the ground, or maintain its ties to an undemocratic regime that had proved a reliable partner. After all, abandoning Mubarak could potentially lead to a loss of influence in the Middle East and cause considerable insecurity for Israel. The relationship between Egypt and the US is built on the US granting Egypt extensive financial and military support. However, this financial support must be viewed in a strictly security-oriented light, that is, as an investment in security. By providing its annual financial contribution to Egypt, the US enjoys overland flight rights (including access to the Cairo West airbase); transit rights through the Suez Canal (to and from the Mediterranean) and the Red Sea (e.g. for transfers of submarines, nuclear warships and military carriers transferring aircraft, etc.); and access to Egyptian naval facilities such as the base in Alexandria. Egypt is also important to the US as it serves as a strategic node for US engagement in Africa, the Middle East and Asia (e.g. Afghanistan).

In early April 2012, the US government announced it was resuming military aid to Egypt. This decision was not taken lightly, as domestic critics argued that Egypt did not deserve US aid.[129] President Morsi has not changed his position towards the US beyond the fact that he seeks a more *balanced* relationship and one not solely determined by the US.

6.1.2   Israel

Egypt and Israel have been at peace for nearly 34 years, following the US-brokered Camp David Accords. The deal included a number of carrots for both sides: an informal veto for both states over military movements in Sinai, gas supplies from Egypt to Israel and strong financial aid from the US.[130] Ensuring its

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[128] Ibid.

[129] There were a number of reasons for this. First, during the period of SCAF rule, there were tensions between the US and Egypt that soured relations. For example, a number of police raids were made against US think tanks and NGOs operating in the country (e.g. the National Democratic Institute, the International Republican Institute and Freedom House). Second, on 26 February 2012, 16 Americans and 27 democracy workers were put on trial charged with operating NGOs without a licence and making use of foreign funds. The more informal framing of this was that these actors were foreign agents using NGOs to destabilise the country (i.e. alleged espionage).

[130] Given its transition to democracy, Egypt and Israel now both feature in one of the most robust scientific findings in modern political science research: that democracies do not go to war or fight each other (see Doyle 1983).

relationship with Israel has been key to Egypt's geopolitical strategy ever since. Moreover, the border between the two countries is partially monitored by the 1500-strong multinational observer-force, an independent monitoring configuration of states (non-UN). The Force is based on the Camp David Accord.[131]

There are two main parts to the stipulations in the Camp David Accords. The first part deals with the Palestinian-Israeli dispute and ways to resolve it. This part is controversial in the sense that many Egyptian politicians believe it to be 'dead'. For example, according to Amr Moussa, the former Egyptian foreign minister and head of the Arab League, and one of the better positioned Presidential candidates in the post-Mubarak era:

> *Anyone who commits himself to reconsidering the Camp David Accord does not understand the facts. There is nothing to renegotiate because, as a document, it fulfilled its role and is no longer controlling either relations or the Middle East peace process. Quite the opposite, it has been replaced by the Arab League peace initiative and other bilateral agreements.*[132]

Then, there is an appendix to the Camp David Accords that outlines the security arrangements between Egypt and Israel. More specifically, the Accords set out the security arrangements for Sinai, whereby the peninsula is divided into a number of separate administrative security zones. Zone A (the western zone) is marked by the Suez Canal. In this area, Egypt can station an infantry division and build military installations and fortifications. In Zone B (the middle zone), Egypt is allowed to operate four battalions consisting of 4000 troops. Finally, in Zone C (the eastern zone closest to Israel), Egypt is allowed to deploy police forces carrying only light weapons. The multinational observer-force has been in place in Sinai for the past year to monitor zones B and C. However, as a result of increasing tribal tensions in the region, Israel has allowed increased levels of Egyptian troop deployment (see below).

In early 2012, following increasing insecurity along the border between Israel and Egypt, for the first time in nearly 30 years Israel deployed an infantry brigade in Sinai along its border with Egypt. An important factor leading up to this decision was the number of cross-border raids that took place along the border. For example, on 18 August 2012, eight Israelis were killed and Israel responded by engaging armed groups inside Sinai, resulting in clashes between Israeli and Egyptian troops.[133] These clashes led to at least five Egyptian soldiers

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[131] See http://mfo.org/. The force is mainly sponsored by the US, Israel and Egypt.

[132] *Voice of America* Press Releases and Documents (2012-05-21). The excerpt comes from an interview with presidential candidates in the Egyptian election. The Accords were often raised in debates during the election.

[133] *Middle East Reporter* (2011).

being killed. Israel claimed that the armed groups had a training camp in Sinai and had entered Gaza and then moved further into Israel, where the attack was carried out.

In the light of the turbulence in Sinai, President Morsi is likely to 're-examine' the Camp David Accords, without questioning the overall Accord itself. As is pointed out by Professor Scott Gartner, this poses a threat not to Israel, but to the Accords themselves.[134] However, as the US is providing strong financial aid to Egypt according to the terms of the Accords, there is a strong incentive for Egypt to keep them in place. Similarly, commentators suggests that the US cannot threaten financial withdrawal, since this was the basis for the US partnership in the Camp David Accords. If the US were to stop the financial aid, then Egypt would be free to withdraw from the Accords.

In addition to direct territorial and security concerns, trade concerns over energy exports have also been at the heart of Egypt's post-Mubarak relations with Israel. In particular, security concerns in Israel were evoked when, in mid-April 2012, Egypt announced that it had terminated a gas contract with Israel. This was a key contract between the two countries that for several years had provided Israel with nearly 40 per cent of its gas supply. Gas from Egypt began to be delivered in 2008 and the contract had a 15-year term. Officially, the deal was broken for commercial reasons rather than over any other issues.[135] One element in the decision to halt the supply of gas may have been that the pipeline had been tampered with 23 times, temporarily halting supplies to Israel and further into the Middle East region. Although there were some commercial tensions over the termination of the supply, the Egyptian government claimed that negotiations had been held with the Israeli government on stopping the gas exports, that the sale price was too low, that payments were outstanding and that ending the contract did not violate Camp David agreement.[136] The termination of the gas supply meant that Egypt lost a valuable source of income, but it is experiencing increasing domestic energy demand. In this context it is worth noting that Egypt announced in May 2012 that it will issue a call for tenders for gas exploration in its territorial waters in the Mediterranean Sea, close to the border with Israel and Cyprus.[137] Exploration of this kind could cause tensions between these governments.

Besides protection of its borders and trade in strategic resources, Egypt's relationship with Israel is determined by its support for Palestinian aspirations for a state. President Morsi is likely to continue to pursue mediation efforts between

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[134] *The Nation* (2012).
[135] *The Times* (2012).
[136] *BBC Monitoring Middle East* (2012).
[137] *Thai News Service* (2012).

Israel and the Gaza/West Bank factions (favouring Hamas). The MB has generally favoured a political line that supports the unification of the Palestinian groups to put pressure on Israel (although Fatah often claims that the bias towards Hamas will cause a split between the two). Hence, with President Morsi in power, it could be assumed that Egypt will pursue a more active and more pro-Palestinian policy. Notably in this context, Egypt dispatched its Prime Minister to Gaza in mid-November 2012 to protest against Israel's military attacks at the time.[138] More generally though, in being determined to keep Egyptian relations with Israel on a relative normal footing and to keep Sinai stable (fearing a possible increased al-Qaida presence), Morsi has taken greater control of strategic border intersections, such as the border with Gaza. For example, a number of alleged smugglers' tunnels have been closed on the orders of Egypt.[139] This in turn has had severely negative implications for the inhabitants of Gaza.[140]

6.1.3   North Africa

The turn of political events in North Africa in 2010–2012 had several security implications for the dynamics of the region. Today, three of the five states have democratically elected leaders. Understandably, this development is likely to yield further political cooperation among those states.

The military is still much in control of power behind the scene in Algeria. The Arab revolt fell short there, given its contemporary history of civil war that has left little tolerance for societal tensions of any kind. The relationship between Egypt and Algeria has been poor for the past two years but by mid-2012 it had begun to improve. Like in Egypt, the senior military cadre in Algeria has a strong informal power base. This power base also directs much of the country's security affairs. However, if President Morsi is to consolidate his legitimacy as a democratic actor, increasing criticism of Algeria's mode of governance can be expected, and such attitudes could worsen relations in the long run. Such a policy towards Algeria would be logical if newly 'freed' Egyptians want their elected leaders to put pressure on countries with authoritarian rulers. Algeria for its part will continue to be supported by external actors such as the US, due to its pivotal

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[138] *BBC World News* (2012-11-16).

[139] Since the Israeli blockade of Gaza following the Hamas takeover in 2007, smuggling from Egypt through underground tunnels has been widespread. Palestinians in Gaza have to some extent become dependent on smuggling, in particular for fuel. Industrial fuel to power generators is particularly important because it provides electricity to large numbers of Gaza inhabitants. Although not totally dependent on smuggled fuel, as there are some fixed supply lines from Israel and Egypt, the closure of tunnels by Egypt and Israel as well as an increase in Hamas taxation of smuggled fuel have led to fuel shortages in Gaza.

[140] See, for instance, media accounts in *Xinhua News Agency* (2012-02-15).

role in counterterrorism. This suggests that both Algeria and Egypt will maintain strong ties with the US and as such will indirectly share common interests.

Morocco has made progress with democratic reforms and the introduction of a more legitimate monarchical system. Morocco and Egypt enjoy a good relationship. Both receive strong outside support from the US and enjoy close cooperation with the Gulf monarchies, in particular Saudi Arabia. This in turn suggests that both states will maintain their strategic relations based on mutual reassurance.

Egypt's good relations with Tunisia are likely to continue. Both states now have democratically elected Islamic parties in power. However, they also share considerable economic challenges and structural problems, most notably growing public insecurity, high levels of unemployment and a large youth cohort. There are likely to be attempts to find common ground, not least by boosting trade, in the future.

Egypt is currently establishing relations with Libya. With Qadaffi gone and the election in July 2012, the real power house in Libya is now the Libyan National General Congress. Relations with the new congress will need to be built practically from scratch. However, following the breakdown of the state in Libya, continued insecurity around the country and the lack of democratic watchdogs, containment from the Egyptian side remains a viable option. Since these two countries share a long border, controlling organised crime and illegal migration, and the prevention of arms and drugs smuggling will be crucial problems for Egypt to handle. Without effective action, these problems could contribute to increased domestic insecurity in Egypt. In addition to general trade relations, a number of planned cooperation projects in the energy sector could bolster relations.[141]

6.1.4   Saudi Arabia

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has long enjoyed close cooperation with Egypt. Although historical ties were strained during the 1980s as a result of the Camp David Accords and Egypt's recognition of Israel, these were restored in 1987. One aspect of the good relations is the considerable population exchange that takes place between the two countries. For example, close to one million Egyptians live in Saudi Arabia and there is also a steady flow of pilgrims to Mecca (not to forget the general strong tourism exchanges between the two states). There has for a long time been a narrative that Saudi Arabia serves as a

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[141] Note for example that Libya hosts nearly 300 000 Egyptians.

strategic barrier to Iran's aspirations for regional dominance, that is, the spread of Shia Islam.[142]

Following the ousting of Mubarak, commentators suggested that Saudi Arabia had lost a reliable ally. President Morsi may bring about a sense of confidence linked to the Islamic identity that the new administration has brought to state politics. However, there may also be some long-term uncertainty due to the ideological differences and different geopolitical outlooks. For example, the MB does not share or even appreciate Saudi Arabia's support for Wahhabism and the Salafi movement. Moreover, Egypt's path to democratic governance poses a more general threat to the Saudi Arabian model of governance. In the immediate post-Mubarak period, relations between the two countries soured.[143] However, during the autumn of 2012 relations improved, and Saudi Arabia has granted Egypt a significant financial assistance package to help stabilise the Egyptian economy. At the strategic level, both states have joined in the call for the removal of President Al-Assad in Syria.

6.1.5   Sudan

Egypt was a strong supporter of a united Sudan before its partition for at least three reasons: the ethnic and religious affinity between Arabs and Muslims in Egypt and northern Sudan; the support provided from Israel to South Sudan; and existing joint visions on how to administer the Nile River based on agreements reached in colonial times. Water politics in particular are crucial as Egypt needs to find partners to counter what it perceives as an Israeli-Kenyan-Ugandan-Ethiopian bloc that undermines it interests.[144]

In the post-Mubarak period, pledges have been made to commence new cooperation initiatives between Egypt and South Sudan. A number of sectors have been identified as areas for cooperation, investment and development, including education, health, agriculture and commerce.[145]

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[142] See Atarodi and Eriksson (2011).

[143] In April 2012 Saudi police arrested an Egyptian human rights activist, claiming he was smuggling pills into the country (CNN 2012-05-05). As a result, crowds threatened to storm the Saudi embassy, leading the Ambassador to close the embassy and leave Egypt – although he returned one week later.

[144] This information is based on the documentary "Struggle over the Nile" broadcasted by *al-Jazeera English* (2012).

[145] *All Africa* (2012).

6.1.6   Jordan

Jordan has experienced severely negative economic consequences from the revolution in Egypt. Egypt has exported gas to Jordan from many years. However, the gas pipeline in Egypt, which divides to form the Ashkelon pipeline to Israel and the Arab gas pipeline supplying Jordan and Syria, has been subjected to numerous acts of sabotage. Jordan has been forced to buy energy from elsewhere at considerably higher prices. As a result, Jordan's overall energy bill in 2011 rose by 58 per cent.[146] Jordan currently imports 98 per cent of its energy needs and relies on Egyptian gas to generate 80 per cent of its electricity.[147] As a result of these interruptions Jordan has begun to look elsewhere for its long-term gas supply.

Beyond trade in strategic resources, the rise of the MB in Egypt is likely to give it greater access to political developments in Jordan, given the rise of the affiliated MB in domestic politics there. The MB in Jordan is gaining political in influence following the Arab revolts (partly throught its proxy party *The Islamic Action Front*), something that Egypt can only benefit from giving its ideological commonalities.[148]

6.1.7   Iran

Although the Arab uprisings and the electoral success of the MB were officially welcomed in Iran, which referred to it as an 'Islamic awakening', these events are not likely to lead to stronger political relations between Egypt and Iran.[149] Egypt's relations with Iran have been strained since Camp David and Egypt's rapprochement with the US, as well as the Islamic Revolution in Iran the same year.[150] On the other hand, the revolt in Egypt has led the new leadership to identify Iran as part of its neighbourhood and as an Islamic state. It is notable that commercial relations with Iran have increased.

The two states meet in various regional forums, such as the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the Developing 8 and the Non-Aligned Movement. Concretely, Egypt has made exceptionally positive overtures to Iran, for example, allowing Iran to pass through the Suez Canal for the first time since 1979, despite being advised not to do so by the Israeli government. Egypt does not directly oppose Iran's nuclear ambitions, instead recognising the state's need

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[146] *Reuters* (2012).

[147] This turbulence has led Jordan to seek new trading partners, and negotiations are under way on supplies of liquid gas from Qatar and natural gas from Iraq.

[148] See also Eriksson 2012: 51-53.

[149] Note that about 100 000 Shi'a people live in Egypt.

[150] Egypt has an embassy in Teheran headed by a Minister Plenipotentiary (i.e. not an ambassador). This has been the case for nearly 30 years (prior to that there was full diplomatic representation).

for a long-term energy supply. However, Gulf security is considered more important than any potential deal with Iran that might upset its Gulf partners. During the autumn of 2012, Egypt took a more nuanced view on President Assad of Syria, thereby working actively against the strategic interests of Iran. This suggests that limited political rapprochement between the two states can be expected beyond commercial relations.

6.1.8   The European Union

Egypt's relationship with Europe, European states and now the EU has, as is noted by Gad (2005), fluctuated between conflict and cooperation.[151] Following the uprisings in the Arab world, the EU is revisiting its relationship with Egypt.[152] A number of policy instruments have been used on EU's side to meet the democratic aspirations in the region.[153] As the EU Commissioner for Enlargement noted, on the Arab revolt:

> We have changed our approach and there is today much less tension between our interests and our values. However, we need to constantly reality check as to whether our policies and instruments can respond to the historical challenges.[154]

It is interesting in this change in attitude that the EU has recognised its errors of the past by acknowledging that '…our policy in the region has not always been right'.[155]

The EU bases its relations with Egypt on the principle 'more reform, more aid'. At the heart of the EU's new overall relationship with the Arab Spring countries is the three Ms: money, mobility and markets. It includes: the Spring Programme EUR 350 million in 2011–2012, support for partnership, reform and inclusive growth; an increase in European Investment Bank funding of EUR 2.5 billion lending per year; the opening of negotiations on so-called Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements with Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco and Jordan; and the Neighbourhood Civil Society Facility, nearly EUR 22 million per year in 2011–2013.[156]

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[151] Gad (2005: 64).

[152] For a discussion on some general challenges facing European and Arab states in the light of the Arab uprisings see Perthes (2012).

[153] See Eriksson and Zetterlund 2013 for an overview.

[154] Füle (2012-02-03).

[155] Füle (2012-02-03).

[156] See the European Commission Press Releases (2011-09-27) and (2011-12-14)

The EU is building its partnership with Egypt on the basis of its country strategy paper (2007–2013).[157] As a result of the revolt, the EU offered Egypt EUR 132 million in aid in 2011 to improve growth, trade, agriculture and Cairo's infrastructure.[158] The EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs, Catherine Ashton, described this as the largest amount ever granted to a single country. In early April 2012, a proposal for enhanced cooperation between the EU and Egypt was put to the European Council.[159] The aim was to intensify relations after years of slow-moving negotiations on a joint agreement. The proposed Association Agreement between the EU and Egypt will build on the 1995 Barcelona Declaration to promote peace and security in the region, including the stimulation of economic relations. Similar agreements have been signed with neighbouring countries under the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership Arrangements. The question is whether the support offered really amounts to the level needed to effectively help Egypt complete its democratic transition. Voices are already complaining that the support is no way near what was initially promised.

6.2 Conclusions

The contours of the security landscape in the Middle East will continue to be indistinct for some time because the new elements affecting the security dynamics in the region will have to come to terms with existing political structures and existing military interests. Depending on the political outcomes in some of the Arab states (e.g. the survival of old regimes), the implications for a state like Egypt could be either dramatic, such as a war in the Middle East, or negligible, that is, no significant change in the security environment. Although this analysis demonstrates that no profound geostrategic changes have occurred, it also recognises that old security dilemmas, strong political loyalties and existing armed conflicts persist.

A number of security developments that were unfolding before the Arab revolutions will continue to shape the region as well as the broader security agenda. The main challenges ahead that will affect the peace, security and stability of the region, including its relations with the international community, are: (a) a potential armed conflict between Israel and Iran, in which Egypt would side with Israel and the US; (b) possible military engagement in Syria, where Egypt will side with its Arab Gulf neighbours; (c) recognition of a government in exile for Syria, where Egypt will have to liaise with the Arab League before forming its position; and (d) tackling the increased domestic and regional threat

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[157] *Egypt Country Strategy Paper* (2007–2013).
[158] *Reuters News* (2011).
[159] *EUR-LEX*. Proposal for a Council Decision on the signing of a Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement (2012-04-01).

from Jihadist groups, where Egypt is likely to engage in different counterterrorism operations with regional and international actors.

Egypt under Morsi is likely to maintain Egypt's strong relations with the US. Egypt will strive to make them more symmetrical, but they will continue to be deep. Furthermore, Egypt will continue to keep the peace with Israel. A spiral of violence in the Palestinian territories could lead to popular violence in Egypt, which could at times lead to frosty relations between the two states. The Morsi administration will enhance Egypt's support for various groups inside the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Finally, Egypt is not likely to engage in any foreign policy adventures in the near future. Too much is at stake at home, not least economically. However, domestic turbulence sometimes has a tendency to make leaders focus on international affairs in order to alleviate the pressure at home.

7   Short term security challenges

An important task for the new administration is to restore public confidence in the state. A stable state will lead to a functioning economy, which in turn will attract foreign investors and foreign loans, and get daily economic activity such as the Egyptian stock exchange back on its feet. Stability would also bring back tourists to the vulnerable tourist sector.[160] Moreover, such a political course would signal not only that Egypt has overcome its most difficult transition process, but also that the government has retained control of state security. Thus the two most urgent short term security challenges for Egypt are getting the economy into shape (i.e. a non-military threat) and the protection of its borders (i.e. a military threat).

7.1   Economics and stability

At the peak of the uprising, political uncertainty saw the Egyptian economy in free fall. Reports suggest that foreign reserves fell by 80 per cent and the stock market lost 50 per cent of its value. Tourism was also badly hit, which had massive implications for those working in the sector (International Crisis Group 2012: 6). Thus, reinstating security and getting the economy back into shape will be one of Egypt's major short- and long-term challenges.

The economic turmoil had severely negative consequences for the Egyptian people. However, there are signs that the economy is recovering quickly. For example, commentators suggest that small business entrepreneurs have thrived since the fall of Mubarak and that the revolution has provided investment opportunities otherwise only available to medium-sized companies, such as access to office space and markets, lower rents, and easier access to bank credit.[161] Figures suggest that the fall in value of the Egyptian pound against the US dollar was not as far as experts had feared. The main challenges to come are a possible devaluation of the currency, and securing foreign investment and access to international loans. Domestically, tax reform is also important in the light of the regime change. Some of these problems have been tackled, not least with the allocation of a large IMF loans (and subsequent requests of USD 4.8 billion in August 2012).

Questions have been raised about whether the Muslim Brotherhood and its Justice and Freedom Party have an interest in taking responsibility for the

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[160] Estimates suggest that the uprising in Egypt shrunk the crucial tourism sector by one-third. The sector employs nearly 11 per cent of the workforce and is worth USD 13 billion USD per year (*Wall Street Journal* 2012-02-18).

[161] See also al-Jazeera's programme *Counting the Costs* (2012-08-13).

economy, or whether it is more concerned about pursuing a religious agenda. A *Wall Street Journal* article brings its own perspective to the question:

> Hard reality is steering that transformation. Confronted with a badly sinking economy, the Brotherhood doesn't have the luxury of harping endlessly about Zionist conspiracies, American hypocrisy, or bikini-clad tourists – not if it wants to put Egypt back together again.[162]
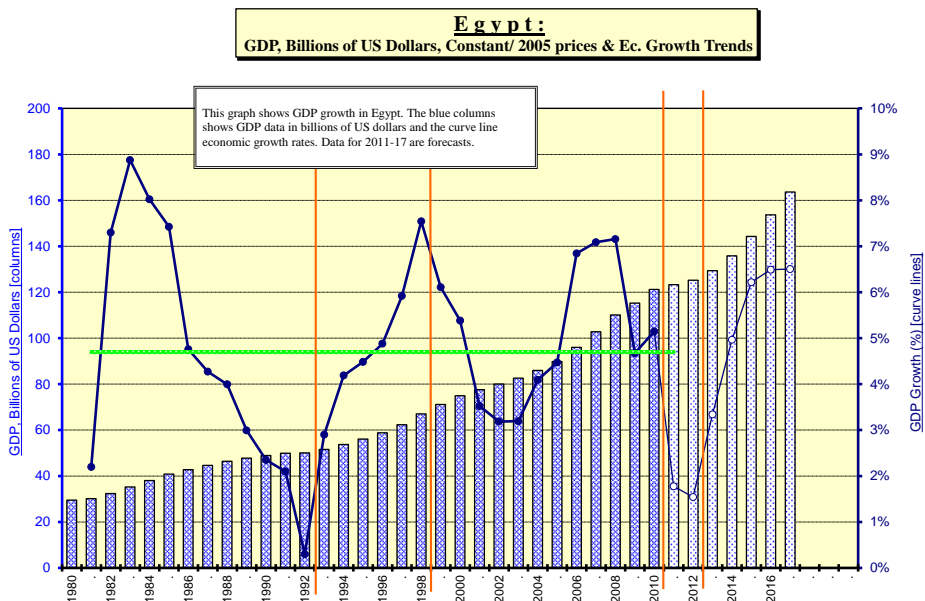
Figure 5. Changes in annual GDP in Egypt, 1980-2012.
Source: Ibid. figure 1.

How then has Egypt's economy coped, and what does this tell us about Egypt's role as a pivotal state in the region?[163] Figure 5 illustrates that Egypt has enjoyed continual economic growth for the past 37 years.[164] In the past 20 years Egypt's GDP has increased at an average rate of 4.7 per cent per year (highlighted in Figure 5 by the green line). Egypt's GDP in 2011 was more than four times higher than that it was in 1980. However, the pace of this growth has varied. During 2011, economic growth declined to an estimated 1.8 per cent, and it was an estimated 1.5 per cent in early 2012. The IMF forecasts that growth will increase in the coming years, reaching an estimated 6.5 per cent in the period

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[162] *Wall Street Journal* (2012).

[163] Not accounting for the informal economy.

[164] It is important to note that, taking population growth into account, Egypt has experienced some years of declining or negative GDP growth *per capita.*

2016–17. This forecast depends on a number of factors, not least President Morsi and his government delivering domestic security and stability. The challenge is that domestic stability (e.g. low levels of social tension) is likely to be dependent on steady economic growth, but economic growth is dependent on domestic stability. This provides contours to Egypt's short term security posture.

E g y p t :
GDP per capita, US Dollars, Constant/ 2005 prices & Ec. Growth Trends

This graph shows GDP per capita growth in Egypt. The blue columns shows GDP per capita data, and the curve line per capita economic growth. Data for 2011-17 are forecasts.
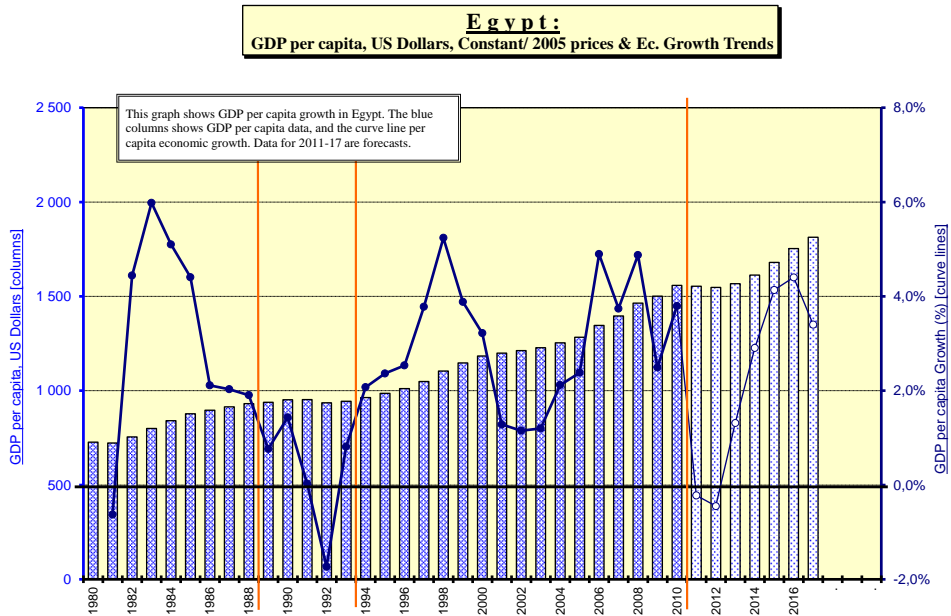
Figure 6. Changes in GDP per capita in Egypt, 1980-2012.
Source: Ibid. figure 1.

The IMF forecasts that government expenditure will gradually decline from its current (2012) level of an estimated 33 per cent of GDP to an estimated 25 per cent of GDP in 2017.[165] The main reason for this is the need to reduce the budget deficit. The level of the Egyptian pound has fluctuated, increasing in value during the 1980s and 1990s by 15–20 per cent and then decreasing sharply only to rise by 16 per cent in 2009. Following the uprising and the generally low level of economic activity, inflation fell and IMF forecasts suggest continued low inflation in the years to come. A decade ago, Egypt's gross government debt was an estimated 100 per cent of GDP. However, since 2006 the debt has been reduced by 30 per cent, seemingly through debt swaps and agreements to write-off debt. IMF forecasts suggest that by 2017 the budget deficit will be further

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[165] The IMF reports scarcely any data for the 1980s and 1990s. For the years for which data are available, government expenditure has always been higher than government revenue, meaning that the Egyptian government has a significant budget deficit.

reduced, to an estimated 60 per cent of GDP. These data suggest that there is not much room for increasing military expenditure.

Financial support has also been provided by the Gulf States. For example, in late 2011 the United Arab Emirates approved USD 3 billion in financial assistance to Egypt.[166] Moreover, in early May 2012, Saudi Arabia announced that it would provide Egypt with USD 500 million in aid and deposit USD 1 billion in Egypt's central bank.[167] Such contributions will foster new and profound loyalties in the region.

7.2   Border protection

Another short-term security issue relates to territorial sovereignty. Following the ousting of Mubarak from power, President Morsi and his administration urgently need to secure Egypt's borders. The uprising has caused turbulence in Egypt, and it has left the already volatile borders with Israel (and Gaza), Libya and Sudan without proper supervision.

On the border with Israel, a crisis erupted during the spring of 2012 because of a lack of supervision of events in the area. Critical infrastructure was subject ot bomb attacts, such as the Egypt/Israel pipeline, leading to its closure, and there have been open tensions and skirmishes between Egyptian and Israeli forces. In early 2012, an ambush took place in Sinai, on the border with Israel. At least 16 Egyptian soldiers were killed in the attack, allegedly carried out by Bedouins although there were also claims that they were armed Jihadists, and 'spillover' from the violence in Iraq and the Palestinian Occupied Territories.[168] Some of the attackers were killed during this ambush and some in a subsequent air attack by the Israeli air force. In response to the attack, President Morsi visited Arish and troops were deployed in the area for the first time since the 1979 Camp David Accords. It is likely that the military response was to avenge the killings, and to signal to the Egyptian people that the government was taking control of the area.[169]

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[166] *Reuters News* (2011).

[167] El Deeb (2012).

[168] Some members of the Bedouin tribes pose a challenge not only to Egypt's and Israel's security but also to the tourist sector through kidnappings, and so on. For example, 25 Chinese workers were temporarily abducted in a bid to press the Egyptian government to release detained relatives charged with bombings in the peninsula between 2004 and 2006 (*Agence France Presse* 2012-01-31).

[169] Operationally, the counter-attack has been difficult to verify. Some media accounts suggest that about 20 rebels were killed. Meanwhile, heavy tanks were deployed in the area and the mobile phone network was closed down. Interestingly in this regard, the crisis in Sinai gave Morsi and his administration a window of opportunity to rearrange the military's senior leadership by

However, as is noted above, control of Sinai poses an urgent security challenge because of the border with Gaza. Unless this environment is controlled, radical groups will find a safe haven on the Egyptian side of the border to attack Israel with rockets and shells. Israel, for its part, is installing an early-warning missile shield system to prevent such attacks.[170] Even with an Egyptian presence, the border with Gaza is volatile. Anecdotal evidence suggests that Egypt has seen an increase in weapons smuggling (Grad missiles and projectiles) by violent Islamists from Libya through Sinai into the Gaza strip. Analysts further suggest that Iran is facilitating this smuggling, thereby also inciting problems between Egypt and Israel.[171]

Egypt also urgently needs to take control of its western border with Libya, which has become a hub for the smuggling of arms. Substantial quantities of weapons have been smuggled from Libya into Egypt. While some of these stay in Egypt and fall into the hands of criminals, others go through the border with Sudan and Gaza. These weapons should be considered an urgent security concern for Egypt. They have also become a concern for other stakeholders in the region, such as the US. Media reports suggest that Bedouin tribes such as the 'Wlad Ali' had previously benefited from this trade, but that large scale arms flows have altered logistics patterns, including operators.[172] Such illicit transfers also tend to lay the ground for organised crime.

Finally, the border with North Sudan also needs urgent attention. Although Egypt's political relationship with Sudan is good, illegal migration from different parts of Africa remains a challenge. Not only does it undermine state functions and impose a costly economic burden, but it also incites social tensions among the different communities living in Egypt's southern regions. Even before the turbulence in Egypt, estimates suggest that the area contained nearly 3 million refugees as well as a high number of illegal migrants. These refugees come from parts of Africa, as well as areas of the Middle East such as Iraq and the Palestinian territories.

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sacking a number of generals. The political move came amid an intense political struggle between the military and the presidential administration. For example, the defence minister was sacked along with a number of other senior military leaders. Officially, these moves were described as Morsi retiring military officials such as Field Marshal Thantawi. Reports also suggest that the moves were taken in consultation with the SCAF. Ostensibly, older officers were replaced with younger ones. In addition to retiring military officials, Morsi annulled the constitutional addendum that SCAF had issued prior to Morsi coming to power and issued a new addendum bringing power back to the presidency.

[170] *Asharq Al-Awsat,* English edn (2012).
[171] Ibid. The story is also recounted in *BBC Monitoring Middle East* (2012-05-09).
[172] Sabry (2011).

An important ingredient of any state's security posture is its ability to protect its borders. Following the uprising inside Egypt, as well as revolutions and political instability in its neighbourhood, the risk of spillover is obvious. This could have negative implications for any new government in Egypt, and also for foreign relations with its neighbours.

7.3   Conclusion

A number of short term challenges need urgent political attention. Underestimating these could have a number of implications. If left unaddressed, they could undermine the new administration's overall aims. Criticism could be directed at Morsi for not making sure that the state has a full control over the territory of Egypt. These short term security challenges could also undermine the spirit of the revolution, leading to accusations of 'leaving order for chaos'. The short term security challenges noted above, if not addressed early, could become long-term security challenges and have considerable implications for the future.

8 Structural and Long-term Non-military Security Challenges

At the time of the most political turbulence in Egypt, the military was given a larger role in handling security matters. SCAF mainly focused on ensuring institutional security and damping social tensions. However, security priorities were mainly concentrated on the city centres, and the periphery was given less attention (e.g. the border with Israel). Still less attention was paid to long-term security issues. Even if not urgent from a day-to-day perspective, a number of structural factors will have a considerable impact on Egypt's long term security and stability. The most pressing of these challenges − a growing population, energy shortages and the impact on Egypt of climate change − are discussed below, together with some indications of the kind of policy responses (and their limitations) that can be expected in the years to come.

8.1 Egyptian population trends

Egypt has one of the largest populations in the Arab world.[173] One estimate suggests that around 81 million people live there, ignoring the additional number of unregistered migrants (the Egyptian government claims about 83.5 million plus around 7 million unregistered persons). An estimated 63 per cent of the population is aged between 15 and 64 years, and the youth cohort clearly dominates.[174] The population is currently growing at an annual rate of 1.8 per cent.

The population is concentrated in urban areas. The stability of Egypt in the long term is related to its ability to meet the demands of its growing population, in particular as regards economic growth, employment, energy supply and natural resources (food and agriculture). Figure 7 shows actual and predicted Egyptian population trends for the period 1950–2050. The Egyptian population roughly doubled in size between 1980 and 2011, from an estimated 40 million people in 1980 to nearly 79 million people in 2011. This suggests an average annual growth rate of nearly 2 per cent. In economic terms, this means that Egyptian GDP must increase at at least the same pace to avoid a fall in GDP per capita. An inability to meet this challenge could have considerable negative implications for social order. This suggests that a strong focus on building a stable and viable economy in combination with a well-managed population policy will be the key

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[173] See also the United Nations World Population Prospects database.
[174] Ibid.: World Population Prospects: (2010), Volume II: Demographic Profiles.

to Egypt's long-term stability. Together with other structural challenges, long-term population planning will contour Egypt's security posture.

E g y p t : Population trends 1950- 2050, Millions of People

This graph shows population trends for Egypt. Data for 1950-2010 refer to real developments, while amounts for 2011-50 are UN forecasts. The most probable trend, the so called the "medium variant", is supplemented by a "high" and "low" variant, creating a span between possible outcomes.

As this graph illustrates, Egypt's steady population increase, from ~21,5 million people in 1950 to 81,1 million people in 2010, will – according to the medium variant – continue during coming decades, tough at a gradually decreasing pace, suggesting an Egyptian population of ~123 million people in 2050.

The "high variant" suggests the Egyptian population will instead increase to ~142 million people in 2050, while the "low variant" suggest that Egypt will have a population ~106,7 millions in 2050.

High variant

Medium variant

Low variant

Source: UN: *World Population Prospects: The 2010 Revision.*

Figure 7. Population trends in Egypt, 1950–2050

8.1.1   Energy

A growing population and increasing domestic and industrial consumption mean that Egypt will face an energy shortage in the years to come. Shortages of natural resources are likely to affect Egypt's foreign relations, not least its trade relations.[175] Egypt has three main strategic energy infrastructures: the Suez Canal (oil and gas export routes), the Sumed pipeline (also known as the Suez-Mediterranean pipeline between Alexendria and Suez)[176] and the gas pipeline connecting Egypt to Israel and Jordan. Egypt is currently a net exporter of energy but it will soon become a net importer. However, newly discovered gas pockets in the Mediterranean might alter such negative trends. Egypt is a society currently dependent on gas and oil for its energy. This dependency is likely to continue for many years to come. Egypt is continuing to invest its own and foreign-owned resources in energy discovery. According to official figures, Egypt produces about 700 000 barrels of oil per day. Estimates and proven oil

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[175] For a good and recent overview of the MENA region's energy demands and the interplay with democracy see Hassan and Antola (2012).

[176] The Sumed pipeline provides an alternative to the Suez Canal for transporting oil from the Persian Gulf region to the Mediterranean. Its capacity is about 4 million barrels per day.

reserves stood at 4.07 billion barrels in 2009, making Egypt the sixth largest oil state in Africa.[177]

There is growing interest in renewable resources, such as solar and wind power. With a growing population, the demand for energy will continue to rise. According to Research and Markets and its *Egypt Power Report 2012*, Egypt is expected to increase its power generation by 4.48 per cent. The report notes however that in the period 2011–2016, the average annual growth rate in the demand for electricity is forecast to be 4.59 percent, and this will increase thereafter – partly because of population growth. Egypt has set a target of producing 12 per cent of its power from wind and a total of 20 per cent from renewable resources by 2020.[178] In this context, it is worth noting that the UAE is the only Arab country with a nuclear power plant on its soil, but that growing energy demand in Egypt raises the prospect of a need for nuclear power plants in Egypt.

Energy shortages will be a pivotal challenge to overcome in the next decade. Although Egypt shares this challenge with a number of states in the world, the situation in Egypt is particularly pressing. Economic growth and the development of a domestic energy infrastructure are therefore key. This suggests that Morsi will have to engage more actively with regional states to build long-term cooperation agreements. Regional energy interests may cause political friction.

8.2   Climate change, water and 'food' security

The potentially negative impacts of climate change represent a long-term security challenge for Egypt. According to current climate change data, North Africa is likely to suffer negatively from climate change in the decades to come. Although climate forecasts suggest different outcomes depending on the method and time span used, a number of respected studies suggest that states in the region will see an increase in temperature and a decrease in precipitation. For example, Haldén (2007), based on models presented by the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), notes that North Africa will be strongly affected by climate change given that regional temperatures are set to '…increase by 2.5ºC during the winter months and 4ºC during the summer months (2.5–3ºC in coastal areas)'. Coupled with this, '…precipitation levels are set to decrease by 20–30 per cent during the winter and around 40 per cent during the summer, with more severe effects in the

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[177] Figures based on media accounts, see *Agence France Presse* (2012-02-09).
[178] *Research and Markets* (2012-02-10).

western part of the region'.[179] The implications of such negative impacts include increased demand for access to water, a decline in access to hydropower and an increase in demand for energy and cooling systems.

Such a prognosis is highly problematic for Egypt as its resources are already overstretched. In particular, Egypt's agricultural sector is vulnerable to changes in natural precipitation.[180] The fact that the agriculture sector accounts for 85 per cent of annual water consumption in Egypt and also accounts for more than 20 per cent of its GDP suggests that fresh water access will pose enormous future problems that need to be tackled today, but even more so in the decades to come.[181] It is worth noting that food production is highly water intensive. Thus, for example, when the EU imports rice or wheat from climate-stressed regions, it contributes indirectly to draining a country of its fresh water.[182]. Making this daunting scenario even more complicated is the fact that only 4 per cent of land in Egypt is arable farming land. In addition, this land is being eroded at the rate of 3.6 acres per hour (or 11.736 hectares per year) due to urban encroachment, coastal erosion and desertification linked, among other things, to moving sand dunes.[183] At times in recent years, the prices of products such as milk, rice and beans have risen by up to 50 per cent in a short time, provoking disturbances and riots in several countries.[184] Some commentators have even suggested that some of the uprisings triggered in the Arab world in 2011 were as a consequence of increasing food-prices. Food security will be an important factor in shaping a viable resource supply system.[185]

Climate models also suggest that Egypt faces an increasing infrastructure challenge. Maas et al., cited in Sonnsjö (2011), outline a scenario in which: '… a sea level rise of 0.5 meters could result in salt water in the Nile up to 9 kilometers inland, destroying as much as 1,800 square kilometers of arable land, which is estimated to create a loss of over 38 billion US$'.[186] In sum, not only does Egypt face challenges related to climate change in the long-run, linked to the impacts on various resources, adaptation costs and infrastructural challenges,

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[179] The data refer to models for climate change in the period 2080–2090 relative to 1980–1999 (see Haldén 2007: 80–81).

[180] According to the World Bank, nearly 31 per cent of the Egyptian population is directly employed in this sector (Sonnsjö 2011: 30).

[181] Sonnsjö 2011: 28.

[182] Estimates suggest that nearly 3000 litres of fresh water is needed to cultivate one kilogram of rice. This point is owed to Dr Anders Jägerskog.

[183] *UN Integrated Regional Information Networks* (2011-07-11); and *The Middle East* (2011-12-01), based on UN report June 2011.

[184] Sonnsjö 2011: 28–30.

[185] In this context, it should be noted that in 2008, Egypt was responsible for almost one-third of total global imports of wheat. About 60 per cent of Egypt's food is imported.

[186] Sonnsjö 2011: 31.

but it may already be facing the negative consequences of climate change today, such as rising food prices.

The Nile

Another feature of Egypt's lack of water security is regional water management. Challenges in river management can bring a number of actors into conflict. Egypt's current Nile problem is that Morsi has inherited from previous administrations but needs to tackle as part of his new course in foreign policy. Water infrastructure poses an overarching security challenge for Egypt. An estimated 96 per cent of Egypt's available water has external sources.[187] The Nile that provides Egypt with nearly 95 per cent of its water resources.[188] Nearly 85 per cent comes from Ethiopia, but the Nile links a number of countries.[189] The water situation has shaped Egypt's regional foreign policy for a number of years.[190]

> The African sphere is a mainstay of Egypt's foreign policy, as the continent is correlated with Egypt's strategic interests on the political, cultural and socio-economic levels. Egypt's good relations with the Nile Basin Countries and the extension of the Nile River within those countries highlight the depth of Egypt's relations with the African countries in general and with the Nile Basin Countries in particular.[191]

After decolonisation, an agreement (overseen by the UK) was signed between Egypt and Sudan in 1959 to grant Egypt control over the Nile Basin.[192] The intention was that Egypt and Sudan should handle any claims on water usage. The 1959 agreement was built on the Nile Waters Agreement concluded in 1929 between Egypt and Ethiopia, which in turn built on earlier agreements, although different riparian states dispute the legality of different treaties.[193]

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[187] Carius et al. 2008: 38.

[188] *Egypt State Information Service* (2012-01-03).

[189] The Nile connects a number of countries: Rwanda, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Eritrea, South Sudan, Sudan and Egypt.

[190] Egypt's Nile water management dates back to the 1952 revolution, when it began to construct the High Dam Mega project to take better control of water access and domestic distribution. Since then, a number of mega projects have been completed and a number are under way for the purpose of drawing up a new 'urban production map'. Current projects are located in southern Egypt, the Suez Canal region and Sinai (*Egyptian State Information Service* 2012-01-03).

[191] *Egyptian State Information Service* 2012-01-03.

[192] See the Appendix in Granit et al. (2010) for an overview of the Nile Basin treaty timeline.

[193] A good point made by Tutwiler is that in the 1950s there were about 22 million Egyptians, 9 million Sudanese and 18 million Ethiopians. Today these figures are 82 million, 45 million and 85 million, respectively (*Voice of America* 2011-09-11).

The Nile Basin Initiative was established in 1999.[194] This body is '…dedicated to equitable and sustainable management and development of the shared water resources of the Nile Basin'. Part of the initiative was to work for the 'peaceful resolution of disputes'. However, in 2010 Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Tanzania signed an Agreement on the Nile River basin Cooperative Framework Agreement (Burundi signed in 2011).[195] The agreement also established a permanent joint mechanism, the Nile River Basin Commission.[196] The intention was to replace the Nile River Initiative as the signatory states did not agree with Egypt and Sudan on how to interpret the 1959 agreement. Egypt and Sudan were greatly opposed to this move.[197] One important challenge, not least for Egypt, is Ethiopia's Renaissance Dam project (the Grand Millennium Dam).[198] The dam is currently under construction and will become Africa's largest hydroelectric power plant.

However, since the revolt in Egypt, SCAF, Sudan and Ethiopia have begun to cooperate on the use of Nile water. This is a major shift in political attitude compared to Mubarak's policy.[199] A Tripartite Committee was formed to assess the impact of Ethiopia's planned Renaissance Dam. In early April, Sudan's President, Omar al-Bashir, gave his official support to the dam project.[200] Both Egypt and Sudan had previously been against it because it meant they would lose control over parts of the Nile which they had had control over since decolonisation. Work on the Dam began in 2011 at an estimated cost of USD 4.8 billion. One reason behind Sudan's acceptance was World Bank funding for a power line connecting Ethiopia and Sudan. The Dam project will also provide flood control mechanisms for Sudan and seek to ensure more effective water management.

In sum, Egypt's water shortage, whether as a result of climate change or a lack of fresh water sources, is likely to have multiple negative impacts on future food-production, resource distribution, health patterns, social tensions, urbanisation

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[194] The Nile Basin Initiative's member states are Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda. Eritrea is as an observer. See http://www.nilebasin.org

[195] Member states were able to sign up to the Commission between May 2010 and May 2011.

[196] Partly based on a series of Nile conferences in 2002, sponsored by the Canadian International Development Agency.

[197] Egypt and Ethiopia have a long history of rivalry. This rivalry harks back to historical identities and religious traditions (e.g. two countries carrying historical civilizations; Islam/Christianity, etc.). Furthermore, Ethiopia, Israel, Kenya and Uganda have cooperated in different formations in ways that Egypt sees as conflicting with its own regional interests.

[198] The Dam will essentially make Ethiopia a power-hub for the export of energy in the region, including the export of electricity to Sudan, Djibouti and Kenya, etc.

[199] One important factor was the personal animosity between that Mubarak and Zinawi in Ethiopia, and Basheer in Sudan

[200] *Sudan Tribune* (2012).

and migration. These will have direct consequences not only for Egypt's domestic security, but also for its security outlook in the region. Consequently, one would expect the new government in Cairo to formulate an agenda that demonstrates how it will face and tackle the increasing challenges posed by climate change.

Egypt will also need to think carefully about its long-term infrastructure needs when it comes to water access. The management of the Nile will be crucial in this regard. Most importantly, long-term security depends on how future regimes are able to initiate and build infrastructure projects with adaptive capacity to deal with the implications of climate change. How this develops will be crucial and is a 'wild card' that must be dealt with carefully in any analysis.[201] Under Mubarak, Egypt and the US set out a number of cooperation agreements to tackle climate change, not least with regard to the use of natural resources. For example, in 2010, agency-to-agency meetings were held between the two countries to launch technical and scientific cooperation to study climate and environmental change. Projects included space technology, such as satellite-based environmental monitoring. The meeting agreed nearly 30 priorities for scientific cooperation in areas such as agriculture, water, urbanisation, archaeology, space, weather and small satellites.[202] It is unclear whether these will continue or not.

8.3   Conclusions

Egypt faces five major long-term challenges, which are strongly interlinked: an increasing and more demanding population, energy shortages, a lack of water, food insecurity and climate change. Unlike the other challenges, the challenge of a growing population is not beyond its control. Population planning, including urban and infrastructural development, can alleviate domestic pressure and be turned into a positive trend. However, the need to satisfy increasing demand for energy will pose a crucial challenge. Although currently a net exporter of energy, it will soon have to import energy. Not only will this make Egypt more vulnerable and dependent on outside actors, but it is also likely to increase its economic burden. Competition over regional energy sources may lead to tensions. The development of domestic energy infrastructure is therefore particularly important. As with energy, Egypt is increasingly facing problems related to a lack of fresh water. This suggests that Egypt will have to engage more actively with regional states to build long-term cooperation agreements. For its long-term security, Egypt will have to engage increasingly in regional politics. Whether this will lead to further cooperation or increased conflict

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[201] Sonnsjö 2011: 29.
[202] US State Department 2010.

depends on the attitudes of the incumbent administration. The impact of climate change is not a problem that is unique to Egypt. Scientific data suggest that it will pose a challenge for the entire Middle East and North Africa region. However, Egypt is already vulnerable to changes in precipitation and agricultural conditions. This will require extensive investment in research and technology on areas related to climate change adaptation. It also suggests that Egypt must engage in regional and international collaboration to monitor, adapt and mitigate the effects of climate change.

9   Conclusions

At the outset of this study, the question was asked whether the domestic political change taking place in Egypt in early 2012 leaves the region more or less stable in terms of its security. The study also asked what implications this change might have for the region. The contours of the security landscape in the Middle East will continue to be indistinct for some time because the new elements affecting the security dynamics in the region will have to come to terms with existing political structures and military interests. Depending on the political outcomes in some states (e.g. the survival of old regimes), the implications for a state like Egypt could be either dramatic (e.g. a war in the Middle East) or negligible (no significant change in the security environment). Although this analysis shows that no profound geostrategic changes have occurred, it also recognises that old security dilemmas, strong political loyalties and armed conflicts persist. A number of security developments that were unfolding before the Arab revolutions will continue to contribute to shaping the region and its broader security agenda.

Egypt faces too many domestic challenges for it to participate in external interventions. Egypt will continue to dominate in terms of its hard military capabilities, but it is likely to attempt to increase its power and influence in the region using soft-power mechanisms. Egypt's political, economic, cultural and religious strength could be built on to further strengthen its role in the region as a pivotal state, in competition with states such as Turkey and Iran. Despite the high level of uncertainty, a number of short- and long-term security challenges can be identified that will shape Egypt's security posture.

9.1   Short- and long-term security challenges

Most urgently, Egypt's security posture will be determined by how well it manages its economy. Bringing the economy back on track under a new mode of political governance will be a major challenge. After all, the budget will set limits on defence and foreign affairs policies. The state of the economy may also hamper the new government's attempts to contain social tensions linked to poverty, unemployment and marginalisation.

This study finds that another important short term security concern for Egypt is to tighten its borders, thereby reducing friction with Israel and problems at the border shared with Libya. Moreover, organised crime seems to be thriving, as well as the smuggling of arms. An influx of arms into Egypt could cause further instability, exacerbating social tensions and a sense of human insecurity.

Egypt faces a number of long-term security challenges that will change its security posture. These include a growing population, reduced access to domestic

energy supplies, an increasing lack of fresh water, and the negative impacts of climate change. These challenges suggest that Egypt will have to engage both at the regional and the international level. It cannot isolate itself and hope to overcome such security challenges alone. The question is what attitude and what economic and political means the government will bring to these challenges. Cooperation over conflict seems to be the logical way forward.

Hanging over all these challenges are a number of exogenous factors that will require Egypt to reposition itself. The main challenges ahead that will affect the peace, security and stability of the region, including its relations with the international community, are: (a) a potential armed conflict between Israel and Iran, in which Egypt will side, not unconditionally, with Israel and the US; (b) a possible military engagement with Syria, in which Egypt will side with its Arab Gulf neighbours; (c) possible recognition of a government in exile for Syria, over which Egypt will have to liaise with the Arab League to agree a position; and (d) the need to tackle the increasing domestic and regional threat from Jihadist groups, where Egypt is likely to engage in different counterterrorism operations with regional and international actors.

9.2 Domestic and regional challenges

The revolution in Egypt and the overthrow of Hosni Mubarak changed Egypt's governance system, with huge implications for the Egyptian state, society and its citizens. The uprising came as part of a broader transboundary phenomena, in which most Arab states were struck by the popular disconnect with their incumbent rulers. As is argued above, the transformation of Egypt and much of the Arab world followed the greater forces of globalisation, which have begun to hit at traditional modes of governance and traditional lifestyles. As these processes are still unfolding, it is difficult to draw any definite conclusions about Egypt's new security situation and the implications that come with it. Many domestic and regional challenges and uncertainties remain.

First and foremost is the uncertainty over the Muslim Brotherhood's ability to govern. Having been in opposition and an underground movement for so many years, it will find that steering the country is something different. Although the MB has massive and well-coordinated grassroots support, it lacks necessary experience on how to rule and govern. The second uncertainty is the role of the military. Although the revolution in Egypt was as much a revolt against the military regime, the influence of the military remains profound. Morsi has challenged the military and begun a process of reconstructing it, but it still remains a state within the state. This not only tilts the political and economic rules in favour of the military, but also undermines democratic accountability, transparency and the legitimacy of the executive and legislative branches of the Egyptian state.

The third uncertainty is how much leeway Egyptian citizens are willing to give Morsi and his administration. There are vocal demands for profound political and economic change. Security, welfare and jobs are needed. If the administration is unable to tackle such demands, social tensions could bring renewed turmoil to Egypt – and quickly win support for the more extreme groups.

Finally, the perhaps most urgent uncertainty concerns the constitution. The constitution will set important limits on the exercise of executive and legislative power. There is a question though regarding how well President Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood will handle the ensuing constitutional process. So far, Morsi has recived much criticism for his way of handling it. Importantly, however, Egypt has a number of democratic watchdogs that can scrutinise the incumbent administration's efforts to make Egypt more democratic. These watchdogs include strong trade unions, domestic and international NGOs, virtual networks and social media, independent media organisations and a vibrant parliament. Egypt is not yet a consolidated 'liberal democracy', but a pluralistic and procedural democracy. The honesty of the MB will be crucial. Will they follow the democratic path they currently set out or are the Egyptians only seeing a government trying to mobilize a power grab? In addition: how will the MB be able to cope with power-sharing? It is of course where the political process is heading that will ultimately decide Egypt's overall security posture.

In terms of regional security and stability, the political turmoil in Egypt has at times led to tense political situations. In particular, uncontrolled developments in Sinai and harsh election rhetoric have left relations between Israel and Egypt frosty. However, Egypt's foreign policy stance towards Israel is likely to remain intact. No major changes in its relations are foreseen. Democratic practice may allow domestic constituencies to increase their criticism of Israel, and this in turn may lead to future tensions, but at present Egypt and Israel are in tune on how to deal with frictions along their shared border, arising mostly from tribal and jihadist insurgencies.

This study also finds that no major change in relations between Egypt and the US can be expected. The alliance is strong, although Egypt will try to rebalance it to make it less asymmetric. This continued cooperation (including military transfers and aid to Egypt) is the most important factor in Egypt's security policy architecture and hence its posture. Although there may be some hostility within the Muslim Brotherhood towards US engagement with Egypt, the region and Islam, it would be too politically and economically costly to let go of the strategic relationship it has with the US.

Egypt will continue to be a military power in the region, alongside Israel and the US. However, it does not pose a threat to states in the region, and nor does it seem to perceive any significant geopolitical threats in the current security environment. Syria is an important challenge. Developments in Syria may get out of hand and there may be calls for further engagement by Arab states. Although

there is conversely nothing to suggest that Egypt is either willing to engage or capable of engaging in a regional security adventure, this could change.

9.3   What are the implications for the EU and Sweden?

A window of opportunity has opened up for Sweden and the EU to cooperate with Egypt. Egypt is currently redefining its political and security identity and looking for partners in the democratic world. It faces a number of challenges in the short and long term. Sweden could become a partner in assisting both bilaterally and through EU platforms.

Both Sweden and the EU have vast experience of democracy. As Egypt is seeking paths to situate its democratic structures, further assistance, promotion and dialogue on issues linked to human rights and democracy will be invaluable. Increased support for various democracy-building initiatives, including work with civil society, trade unions and political parties, would be particularly crucial in the challenging period now facing Egypt. Sweden could play an important role in fostering democratic reform, not only as a donor country but also as a vocal actor with long experience of democracy-building and women's participation. Sweden could also offer advice, drawn from its own state-building process, on its traditions of transparency, accountability, decentralised government and consensus-based decision making.

Sweden has a number of business relationships in the region in terms of both exports and imports. Sweden is dependent on a stable Middle East and Egypt that can ensure trade and energy flows to, from and across the region.

With regard to the EU and its engagement in the region, a more politically active EU, that is, one that makes credible and long-standing commitments to support democratic efforts in the region, would be of vital importance to the progress of the democratic turn that has begun. The EU has an enormous opportunity to spread so-called soft values in a way that could positively affect the politics of other countries. Energy imports, trade, the regulation of migration and neighbourhood stability will continue to be its chief concerns. The EU could engage through different programmes, forums and initiatives. Egypt currently faces a number of long-term security challenges. The EU and Sweden could support joint ventures and joint research on water and food security, including new technologies and innovations in systems to tackle climate change.

In terms of contributing to the security sector, Sweden, alone or with the EU, could initiate a number of rule-of-law initiatives and security sector reforms in areas such as border protection, and police cooperation in combating human trafficking, small arms smuggling, organised crime, drugs, and so on. Sweden could also engage in a new dialogue on counterterrorism cooperation. It is not

only Sweden and Europe that face violence from extremists, but also the newly democratic administration in Cairo. Such cooperation however would need a shift in thinking.

In military cooperation, Sweden could become an active partner in UN activities, most notably along the borders with Israel and Libya. Sweden has a long history of border monitoring, including customs operations. In addition, the Middle East is badly in need of forums for advancing ideas, programmes and dialogues on conflict prevention and confidence building. Sweden could seek to draw on the goodwill it has in the region and its non-alignment in the eyes of most actors to build support for such processes.

The relationship with Egypt, and with the new North Africa, requires new thinking. The region has gone through a remarkable change, but the most important change will be required from Europe's leaders, who will not be able to continue to deal with the region in the same way as they have in the past.

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Appendix 1: Table 1. Value of arms exports from Egypt by country, 1965–2011[203]

	Afghanistan/ Mujahedeen	Algeria	Bangladesh	Bosnia-Herzegovina	Burundi	Cameroon	Central African Rep.	DRC (Zaire)	Iraq	Kuwait	Mali	Morocco	Nigeria	North Yemen	Oman	Palestinian Authority	Rwanda	Somalia	Sudan	Syria	Togo	USA	Total
1965																							
1966																				13			13
1967																							
1968													26										26
1969													15										15
1970													14										14
1971																							
1972																							
1973																							
1974																							
1975			14												3								17
1976																							
1977																		15				54	69
1978		3																32				54	89
1979																		3				10	13
1980							0		16			3										10	29
1981									33			13						13	18				76
1982	1				1				58									10	7		3		79

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[203] The figures shown are SIPRI trend indicators expressed in millions of USD at constant 1990 values. The figures may not add up due to the convention of rounding off prices. A '0' indicates that the value of deliveries was less than USD 0.5 million.

	Afghanistan/ Mujahedeen	Algeria	Bangladesh	Bosnia-Herzegovina	Burundi	Cameroon	Central African Rep.	DRC (Zaire)	Iraq	Kuwait	Mali	Morocco	Nigeria	North Yemen	Oman	Palestinian Authority	Rwanda	Somalia	Sudan	Syria	Togo	USA	Total
1983	1					3			58										8				69
1984	1																		37				38
1985	2								3														5
1986	2								14										3				19
1987	2								59														61
1988	2							1	59	2					1				1				65
1989	2								48	9									2				61
1990								3		12	1				2				3				22
1991																							
1992		11															2						13
1993		10	12																				22
1994		10														5							15
1995		9																					9
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Total	12	43	26	10	1	3	0	4	347	23	1	15	55	3	3	5	2	73	79	13	3	128	850