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**A DELICATE BALANCING ACT:
EGYPTIAN FOREIGN POLICY AFTER THE REVOLUTION**

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INTRODUCTION

Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi faces a convergence of challenges that threaten to derail the country's political transition. Yet, the new Egyptian president—having inherited a stagnant economy, polarized domestic political climate, and dysfunctional set of state institutions—has vigorously pursued foreign policy objectives amidst mounting internal instability. Whereas President Mubarak seldom traveled abroad during his last decade in power, President Morsi has visited ten countries and attended six international summits during his first ten months in office.[1] This paper seeks to explain the new Egyptian government's foreign policy activism and, unlike the vast majority of academic writings on post-revolution Egypt, attempts a systematic study of Egypt's foreign relations since President Morsi's election in June 2012. We examine the relative impact of economic, international, and political pressures on the Egyptian government's foreign policy decision-making—and determine whether the Islamist orientation of the new government is causing significant changes in the conduct of Egyptian foreign policy.

Although dramatically reshaping Egypt's domestic politics, the 2011 revolution has not significantly reoriented Egypt's international relations. Rather, it has intensified domestic insecurity and entrenched longstanding trends in Egypt's foreign policy—namely economic rent-seeking, strengthening relations with the West, and preserving regional security. Despite its deep antipathy toward Israel and malignant views of U.S. foreign policy, the Muslim Brotherhood—now a governing actor—has so far subordinated ideological objectives to the imperatives of consolidating domestic control and restoring economic stability. Moreover, pressure from

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[1] President Morsi's state visits include Saudi Arabia (July 2012), Ethiopia (July 2012), China (August 2012), Iran (September 2012), Turkey (September 2012), Germany (January 2013), India (March 2013), Pakistan (March 2013), Sudan (April 2013), and Russia (April 2013). He attended the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) summit in Mecca (July 2012), African Union summit in Addis Ababa (July 2012), Non-Aligned Movement summit in Tehran (August 2012), 67th Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York City (September 2012), and Arab League summit in Doha (March 2013). President Morsi hosted the November 2012 OIC summit in Cairo.

competing institutions—namely the Military and General Intelligence Service (GIS)—has prompted the Morsi government to preserve existing relationships and emphasize national security objectives in the near term.[2] Whether compelled by the absence of ideological objectives or the inability to pursue them, the Egyptian government has forged a risk-averse and pragmatic foreign policy, focused on preserving international commitments, obtaining financial aid and political support, and maintaining and building alignments with a diverse array of actors.

Moreover, Egypt's current foreign policy priorities are unlikely to change in the foreseeable future. Over time, political and economic pressures may fade—but will not evaporate. Egypt is fundamentally dependent on foreign aid, and an empowered public sphere represents a long-term constraint on Egypt's foreign policy. Consequently, the Egyptian government will remain bound to the interests of domestic and international constituencies, even upon the lessening of current pressures.

While domestic changes are unlikely to significantly reorient Egyptian foreign policy, cataclysmic international events could force the Egyptian regime to reconsider its international alignments. A large-scale Palestinian uprising or a comprehensive Israeli military campaign in Gaza, for example, could generate considerable domestic pressure on the Egyptian regime to abrogate the Camp David Peace Treaty with Israel. Conversely, increased Gaza-based militancy in the Sinai would further strain Egypt-Hamas relations and possibly compel the Egyptian government to curtail movement across the Gaza border. Driven primarily by domestic political pressures and national security concerns, these policy shifts would support our analysis of Egyptian foreign policy decision-making. Yet, regardless of the Egyptian regime's ideological

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[2] Anonymous Senior Egyptian diplomat (X), interview by authors, March 13, 2013; Issandr El Amrani, interview by authors, March 14, 2013.

orientation, economic and national security considerations will likely remain the preeminent drivers of Egyptian foreign policy for the time being.

METHODOLOGY AND STRUCTURE

By integrating international relations theory with insight gained from oral interviews, we seek to elucidate the aims and determinants of Egypt's emergent foreign policy. In addition to reviewing the academic literature on alliance theory and revolutionary state behavior, we conducted twenty-five oral interviews from February to April 2013, including nineteen interviews with Egyptian diplomats, political party officials, academics, journalists, and political commentators and six interviews with U.S. diplomats and academics. These interviews provided valuable insight into Egypt's evolving foreign policy and the strategic thinking of key decision-makers. In particular, one week of fieldwork in Cairo, Egypt afforded numerous high-quality interviews along with the opportunity to observe Egypt's difficult domestic circumstances.

The first section of this paper reviews the academic literature on revolutionary state behavior, in order to examine the 2011 revolution's impact on Egypt's foreign relations. In particular, the works of Stephen Walt and Fred Halliday help to illuminate Egypt's divergence from the typical outcomes of mass revolutions. The second section analyzes the platforms and statements of the Morsi government, to lay out the objectives of Egyptian foreign policy after the revolution. Next, the third section reviews the various state institutions involved in foreign policy decision-making, emphasizing the president's dominant role in crafting Egypt's foreign policy. By assessing the interplay of competing institutions, this section forms the basis for interpreting Egyptian foreign policy decision-making. Finally, it explains the prevalence of competing

domestic narratives as a major factor impeding the construction of Egypt's post-revolution foreign policy.

The fourth section compares the current government's policies with those of the past regime, highlighting the shifts in Egyptian foreign policy. This section devotes particular attention to the Morsi government's posture on the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty and relations with the GCC states. Furthermore, the fifth section renders Egypt's vital role in the region as a balancing act between its domestic and international obligations. This section explores the impact of domestic, international, political, and economic pressures on the execution of Egypt's foreign policy initiatives. Lastly, the final section summarizes our analysis of Egyptian foreign policy after the revolution, emphasizing the significant contributions of our research.

I. THE FOREIGN POLICY BEHAVIOR OF REVOLUTIONARY STATES

The Internal Focus of Egypt's Revolution

Fixated on domestic regime change, the slogans and demands of Egyptian revolutionaries narrowly focused on toppling Mubarak and abolishing the authoritarian police state. The Egyptian revolution lacked an international dimension, despite widespread popular antipathy toward Israel and suspicion of U.S. policies. Instead, the revolution maintained an inward focus, ensuring that economic and political issues would fundamentally shape the policies of Egypt's post-revolution government.

A yearning for justice, dignity, and economic opportunity—not a desire to confront the 'Zionist enemy' or the American-backed regional order—galvanized the Egyptian masses in January 2011. In stark contrast to the 1979 Islamic revolution in Iran—which combined anti-imperialism with transnational Islamism[3]—the Egyptian revolution lacked a coherent and exportable set of ideological objectives. Gawdat Bahgat, an Egyptian political scientist, identifies a crucial distinction between the two revolutions: "The Iranian revolution was not about economic concerns. It was about U.S. and Israeli penetration of Iranian society. This is very different from the Egyptian revolution, which was about food and economics—not about Suez and Israel. This is why in the first few months no one burned an American or Israeli flag."[4] Indeed, the Egyptian masses were not mobilized by power-seeking elites espousing grandiose ideologies, but were rather compelled to join leaderless protests with the common aim of overthrowing an authoritarian regime. In the absence of an external dimension or universal ideology held by the Egyptian people, the revolution's effects on the international system were

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[3] Halliday, *Revolution and World Politics,* 124-125.
[4] Gawdat Bahgat, interview by authors, February 1, 2013.

minimal. Rather, polarizing battles over Egypt's electoral and constitution-writing processes dominated the Egyptian political scene.

The Paradox of Egyptian Foreign Policy

The 2011 Egyptian revolution introduced far-reaching internal transformation, abolishing the existing political order and empowering a host of new actors in Egyptian society. Primarily, the Islamists—who were politically repressed under Mubarak—rose to assume governing authority, while elements of the deposed regime faced marginalization and exclusion. Immediately following the revolution, divisions broke out along numerous (often ideological) fault lines—mainly between Leftists and Islamists, as well as between the government and opposition.

Yet, Egypt's tumultuous and deeply polarized political climate did not produce a confrontational or ideologically-charged foreign policy. Instead, domestic instability heightened the importance of alignment-building and economic rent-seeking objectives. Contrary to the prototypical behavior of revolutionary states, the post-revolution Egyptian regime has neither sought confrontation with other states nor aimed to export its revolution abroad. In the realm of foreign policy, the Islamist-led Egyptian government has displayed a preference for balance, cooperation, and continuity. Resembling the behavior of a status quo actor rather than a revolutionary state, the Morsi government's foreign policy orientation is largely devoid of ideological content.

The Literature

The foreign policy behavior of post-revolutionary regimes is an under-represented area of international relations. While numerous authors have examined the international dimensions of revolutions,[5] few have focused explicitly on the foreign policies of revolutionary states. A revolutionary state, according to David Armstrong, "is one whose relations with other states are revolutionary because it stands…for fundamental change in the principles on the basis of which states conduct their relations with each other."[6] Revolutions tear down the existing societal order, fundamentally alter state-society dynamics, and often produce a regime with radical, new concepts of international relations. Indeed, status quo states—those states intent on preserving the current international order—are apt to perceive security threats emanating from the revolutionary state's domestic upheaval. From a realist perspective, Stephen Walt argues that internal transformation disrupts the regional balance of power and creates uncertainty over the revolutionary state's intentions and capabilities—thereby increasing the potential for misperception and conflict.[7] Critiquing the realist approach, Fred Halliday emphasizes the revolutionary regimes' attempts to export ideology abroad and mobilize the domestic populations of nearby states.[8]

Proposing a theory of revolution and war, Walt asserts that revolutions can abruptly shift the regional balance of power and alter the threat perceptions of other states. Walt proclaims: "Revolutions cause sudden shifts in the balance of power, alter the pattern of international alignments, cast doubt on existing agreements and diplomatic norms, and provide inviting

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[5] See Peter Calvert, *Revolution and International Politics, second edition* (London, UK: Pinter, 1984); David Armstrong, *Revolution and World Order: The Revolutionary State in International Society* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1993).

[6] Armstrong, *Revolution and World Order*, 3.

[7] Walt, *Revolution and War*, 1-21.

[8] Halliday, *Revolutions and World Politics.*

opportunities for other states to improve their positions."[9] Initially, revolutions alter a state's

material capabilities, reducing its economic fortitude and military strength. This temporary

weakness provides an exploitable window of opportunity for other states seeking to enhance

their regional positions.[10]

In addition to opportunities, states may also act on perceived threats emanating from

revolutionary regimes. Since revolutionary movements seek to fundamentally change the nature

of the state, new regimes tend to adopt aims and preferences divergent from the deposed regime.

In the aftermath of revolution, therefore, Walt asserts that "estimating intentions is harder, and

prior commitments and understandings are called into question as soon as the new leaders take

power."[11] Whereas new regimes are unaccustomed to conducting international affairs, other

states struggle to comprehend and predict the new regime's intentions. Walt writes, "the

revolutionary regime will rely on its ideology to predict how others will behave, while the other

powers will use the same ideology as a guide to the likely conduct of the regime."[12] Ideology

itself, however, is not principally responsible for initiating confrontation. Rather, *external*

perceptions of the revolutionary regime's ideological objectives may alter interstate relations or

precipitate conflict. Perceptions, Walt maintains, are more important than reality. Consequently,

the potential for confrontation and war increases when a revolutionary state's view of its own

capabilities and interests differs markedly from other states' perceptions. Amidst the tumult and

uncertainty of post-revolutionary situations, Walt argues, change in threat perceptions is the

decisive factor leading to confrontation and war.

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[9] Walt, *Revolution and War*, 1.
[10] Ibid, 21.
[11] Ibid, 30.
[12] Ibid.

Fred Halliday, on the other hand, emphasizes the internal dynamics of revolution as the cause of conflict. Rejecting shifting balance of power and threat assessments as the impetuses for war, he maintains that revolutions are "international events in their causes and effects"—thus invariably convulsing the international order.[13] Indeed, transformation of the international order is a central objective of revolutionary movements. As Halliday asserts, "revolutions have aspired to the internal transformation of societies, but equally they have sought to alter relations between states and nations."[14] Revolutionary movements do not end upon assuming control of the state, but rather aim to reproduce parallel societal transformations in other states. Exporting the revolutionary process, Fred Halliday contends, constitutes the dominant foreign policy objective of revolutionary regimes:

> The challenge they pose to the international system is not so much that they propound a new form of diplomacy, or conduct international relations in a distinct manner, but that they make the altering of social and political relations in other states a major part of their foreign policy and regard themselves as having not just a right, but an obligation, to conduct their foreign policies on this basis.[15]

Hence, revolutionary regimes primarily constitute an ideological threat to other states—not necessarily a military one. In the case of Iran's revolution, for example, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini called for its exportation throughout the Muslim world, by "confront[ing] the world with [its] ideology."[16] As a result, the revolution empowered Shia communities across the region, spurning demonstrations in the Arabian Peninsula and ultimately influencing Saddam Hussein's decision to invade Iran in 1980.[17]

Nonetheless, in the absence of a state-directed attempt to export revolutionary ideology, revolutionary processes remain contagious. Successful revolutions against established orders

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[13] Halliday, "'The Sixth Great Power,'" 213.
[14] Halliday, *Revolution and World Politics*, 3.
[15] Halliday, "'The Sixth Great Power,'" 214.
[16] "Khomeini: We Shall Confront the World with Our Ideology," *MERIP Reports*, 22.
[17] Nasr, *The Shia Revival,* 138-139.

provide a precedent for parallel undertakings in other societies. Indeed, Halliday argues that the impact of revolutions "lies not in the deliberate actions of states, but in the force of example."[18] Whereas the Bolshevik revolution showcased the ability of the 'oppressed' proletariat to overthrow a monarchical order, the Iranian revolution boasted the mobilizing potential of the Muslim masses. These revolutionary narratives can thereby galvanize other populations seeking similar societal and political transformation. Hence, revolutions are contagious by nature and do not require regime-led efforts of exportation to serve as a "catalyst" in "disturb[ing] established orders."[19]

While revolutionary states cannot eliminate the contagion effect emanating from within their borders, Halliday argues, they can offset the threat of revolutionary contagion through diplomatic efforts. He writes, "revolutions tend not to begin by immediately confronting the international system," but rather "tend at first to enjoy good relations with external forces."[20] These revolutionary regimes initially seek accommodation rather than confrontation with neighboring states, seeking first to vanquish opposing factions and consolidate domestic control. Thus, revolutionary states initially experience a "period of grace," whereby external powers peaceably observe the unfolding of revolutionary processes while internal actors compete for state control.[21] Throughout this period of internal contestation, the foreign policies of revolutionary states often display contradictory aims—maintaining a "dual commitment" to accommodation and promoting revolutionary ideology abroad.[22] Therefore, Halliday contends, revolutionary regimes aim to consolidate domestic political authority before challenging the international order.

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[18] Ibid, 218.
[19] Halliday, "'The Sixth Great Power,'" 218.
[20] Halliday, *Revolution and World Politics*, 135.
[21] Ibid, 134.
[22] Ibid.

Whereas Halliday envisions conflict erupting in the latter stages of revolutionary processes, Walt identifies the initial period of societal upheaval as the locus for confrontation and war. Walt's assertion that foreign powers do not idly observe a revolutionary state's development implies that war is most likely to occur in the immediate aftermath of revolutions—when misperception is commonplace and uncertainty prevails.[23] Conversely, the likelihood of conflict and war diminishes as revolutionary transformation nears completion and the new regime "socializes" itself with the international order.[24]

Expectations of Egypt's Post-Revolutionary Foreign Policy

In accordance with Halliday's theoretical model, the post-revolution Egyptian state has so far refrained from confronting the international order. Two years have elapsed since the revolution toppled President Mubarak, and Egypt's transition remains incomplete. Caught between "the impulse to promote conflict and revolutionary change abroad" and "the necessity of preserving and consolidating the revolutionary state at home," the Egyptian regime will likely seek to entrench itself domestically before pursuing ideological objectives internationally.[25] Consequently, according to Halliday's model, an alleviation of domestic pressures will eventually enable the Egyptian regime to challenge the international system. Acting in a manner more consistent with its ideology, the Islamist-led government would likely gravitate toward Hamas, adopt a more hostile posture toward Israel, and increasingly defy U.S. interests when formulating foreign policy.

Walt's framework, on the other hand, would project the continuation of accommodationist trends in Egypt's post-revolution foreign policy. Once the uncertainty surrounding the regime's intentions has subsided, the possibility of war between Egypt and its

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[23] Walt, *Revolution and War*, 44.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Halliday, *Revolution and World Politics*, 156.

neighbors will have likely elapsed. The new Egyptian regime, in turn, would become accustomed to the international system to which it belongs. Over time, Walt contends, "relations between the revolutionary states and the rest of the system will become increasingly 'normal', assuming of course, that each side is capable of evaluating and revising its policies in light of experience."[26] Thus, as Egypt becomes socialized within the prevailing international order, the regime will increasingly seek integration and normalization with its neighbors and key regional states. If the regime feels domestically secure, ideology could affect—but not decisively reorient—Egypt's alignment choices.[27] Instead, Walt's theory would predict, national security interests and threat perceptions will continue to dictate Egypt's foreign policy objectives until greater domestic stability is achieved.

The Case of Egypt: Confounding the Expectations

Deviating from the expectations of Walt and Halliday, Egypt's revolution proceeded without military or ideological confrontation with external powers, delivering governing authority to the conservative and security-minded Egyptian Military. Status quo oriented by nature, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) suppressed Egypt's revolutionary process externally and pursued normal diplomatic relations with Egypt's neighbors. Despite the uncertainty surrounding Egypt's domestic upheaval, the sixteen months of SCAF interim rule noticeably lacked interstate tension—let alone conflict. Furthermore, the ensuing period of Mohamed Morsi's presidency has witnessed the expansion of Egypt's accommodationist posture abroad. By committing Egypt to international norms and agreements and expanding diplomatic relations with regional actors, the SCAF and Morsi governments have ameliorated the contagion effect of Egypt's revolution. Contrary to Halliday's expectation of revolutionary state behavior,

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[26] Walt, *Revolution and War*, 43
[27] Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, 40.

however, the Brotherhood-led government has not pursued a "dual policy" consisting of both accommodationist and confrontational strategies. Instead, the Morsi government has vigorously renounced intentions to export either the revolution or its own ideological brand to other states or societies.

II. REDEFINING EGYPTIAN FOREIGN POLICY

Since the inception of the Morsi presidency in June 2012, the new government has not fundamentally altered Egypt's foreign policy priorities. Despite its Islamist orientation, the foreign policy positions of the Freedom and Justice Party (FJP)—the political party affiliated with President Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood—do not differ significantly from the former regime's conception of Egyptian national interests. Though officially independent of the Muslim Brotherhood, the FJP is still heavily influenced by the Brotherhood and receives counsel on both domestic and international issues. Thus, the FJP's foreign policy platforms and positions are mostly in agreement with with Brotherhood ideology and thinking.

Identifying the New Regime's Objectives

The FJP's 2012 electoral platform emphasized Egypt's desire of having an active role on multiple fronts. It asserts that Egypt can be "a pivotal power" based on its historic and cultural legacy, alluding to a Nasserist style of foreign policy. By blending nationalism with Islamism, the FJP's renaissance project, or *ennahda,* focuses on "restoring Egypt's leading role in the region…[to] protect the interests of Egyptians internally and externally".[28] Furthermore, President Morsi called for "the support of its citizens and the productive cooperation of both society and the country's institutions" to fully achieve Egypt's *ennahda*.[29] The objectives

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[28] "Dr. Morsi's Electoral Program-General Features of Nahda (Renaissance) Project," *Ikhwan Web*.
[29] *The Report: Egypt 2012*, 22.

established by the renaissance project and the 2012 election platform laid the groundwork for

formulating Egypt's post-revolution foreign policy, which strives towards three main goals:

achieving independence from foreign powers, attaining a regional leadership role, and rejecting

Western involvement in the Palestinian and Syrian conflicts.

The first goal advocates greater distance from foreign powers, but simultaneously

promises to maintain existing treaties with the international community. The common thread

underlying these elements is an attempt to increase economic growth and development by

attracting new investments and lessening Egypt's dependence on western aid. Furthermore, the

election platform outlines a foreign policy vision with five arenas in which Egypt can pursue its

economic objectives: 1) its approach to "affiliation circles" in the region; 2) U.S.-Egyptian

relations; 3) Egyptian-European relations; 4) Egyptian-Asian relations; and 5) Egyptian relations

with the rest of the world.[30] In each sub-section of the FJP's election platform, it identifies the

need for improved economic relations with other countries in the forms of strengthening trade

relationships, tourism exchanges, and development projects.[31]

The FJP defines its second objective through the exertion of Egypt's leadership role in

groups with which it already has relations. On the regional level, the FJP identifies three

"affiliation circles" in which Egypt could reassert a leadership role, namely the Arab, African,

and Islamic circles. This stems from a widely held belief—shared by the Muslim Brotherhood—

that Mubarak largely neglected foreign policy and subordinated Egyptian interests to those of

Israel and the West over the last thirty years. Contending that Mubarak maintained power

through illegal means and neglected his duty to foster growth in the Arab and Islamic circles, the

FJP platform asserts:

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[30] "Foreign Policy in Morsi's Election Platform," *Freedom & Justice Party*.
[31] Ibid.

The humiliating decline in Egypt's status and its role regionally and internationally went so far that Egypt was supplying the Zionist occupiers of Palestine and Jerusalem with gas and oil, at the cheapest below-market prices, while Egyptians were in bad need of the same. We blockaded and antagonized freedom-fighters in Palestine. We failed in managing the Southern Sudan issue and the Convention on the Nile Basin. Our national security was in danger, even in the depths of Arab and African realms…[32]

In particular, the FJP emphasized the pivot to Africa as a complete departure from the former regime's foreign policy. The Muslim Brotherhood emphasized that Mubarak had completely neglected his continental neighbors following a 1995 assassination attempt while traveling to the Organization of African Unity summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. By contrast, President Morsi has exerted considerable efforts toward renewing bilateral ties with Egypt's African neighbors.[33] The president's personal visits to Sudan and Ethiopia, combined with the opening of the Egyptian embassy in Somalia, signaled the Morsi government's growing attention to Nile water issues.[34]

The third objective of opposing foreign intervention and occupation is reflected in the FJP's 2012 presidential election platform of Mohamed Morsi. On the international level, the FJP proclaimed Egypt's opposition to all forms of foreign meddling and the need for public consensus on all foreign policy decisions. Even before coming to power, the FJP sought to redefine the U.S.-Egyptian relationship in a "bilateral dimension." It asserted that the United States "should not impose on Egypt any specific agenda in its foreign policy as it seeks to open up to all countries…and preserve Egypt's right to evaluate its relationship with all parties based on Egyptian interests." This encapsulates a sentiment that is not unique to the FJP, but is rather a common belief among the Egyptian public.[35]

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[32] "Electoral Program: 2011 Parliamentary Elections," *Freedom and Justice Party* (2011).
[33] "Morsi holds talks with Eritrea and Sudan." *Daily News Egypt.*
[34] "Egypt Struggles to Reclaim Role in Africa," *Al-Monitor.*
[35] "Foreign Policy in Morsi's Election Platform," *Freedom & Justice Party.*

III. ORGANIZATION OF INSTITUTIONS

Institutionalization or Ikhwanization?

Although institutional relationships within the government are still evolving, foreign policy decision-making is heavily concentrated in the office of the Presidency. Other institutions—namely the Military—represent constraints on the Presidency's decision-making ability, but are not necessarily the most influential forces in Egyptian foreign policy-making. Furthermore, President Morsi has sought to balance his political appointments between Islamists and technocrats. This demonstrates that while he is trying to distance his government from the old regime, the president is seeking to avoid the charge of exclusively favoring Muslim Brotherhood members, or *Ikhwan,* over experienced technocrats. The Muslim Brotherhood's lack of experience with foreign policy issues has further bolstered the Morsi government's reliance on established institutions. Accordingly, the FJP has called for "an active role for all state institutions" in formulating and executing Egypt's foreign policy.[36]

Yet despite such rhetoric, the FJP's motives for reordering state institutions remain unclear. In a March 2013 interview, the president's top aide on foreign relations, Essam el-Haddad, stated, "Claims that Brotherhoodization or Ikhwanization exists is creating something out of nothing," rather they are "technocrats from different backgrounds."[37] When President Morsi came to power in the summer of 2012, he had four presidential aides and 17 advisors, the majority of whom possessed Islamist affiliations.[38] After less than one year in office, half of these aides and advisors, including the president's spokesman and vice president, have either resigned or been dismissed. Their discouragement likely stems from the power play between the presidency and the other government institutions. For example, President Morsi's November 22,

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[36] Darrag, "A Revolutionary Foreign Policy."
[37] Kasanwidjojo, "Interview with Egyptian national security adviser Dr. Essam Al-Haddad."
[38] "Morsi Reveals and Islamist-Dominated Advisory Team, Joined by a Few Technocrats," *Atlantic Council.*

2012 presidential decree—granting him full exemption from judicial oversight—aimed to consolidate presidential power and authority vis-à-vis other institutions.

Presently, there are four main government institutions involved in foreign policy decision-making: the Presidency, the Foreign Ministry, the Military, and the General Intelligence Service (GIS). Each of these government bodies handles specific foreign policy issues, or dossiers. According to the FJP, however, the president is the main actor in developing foreign policy, whereas the Ministry of Foreign Affairs executes the president's foreign policy directives.[39] The president's primacy in foreign affairs is also well reflected in Egypt's November 30, 2012 draft constitution, which gives the president a leading role in formulating the country's foreign policy. In particular, article 141 broadly states that "[t]he President of the Republic shall exercise presidential authority via the Prime Minister and the Prime Minister's deputy ministers, except those authorities related to defense, national security and foreign policy…" and article 145 stipulates that "the President of the Republic shall represent the State in foreign relations." Additionally, article 193 establishes a National Security Council "presided over by the President," while calling to account ministers of defense, foreign relations, and other government institutions.[40] Through these guidelines, the president is able to exert considerable leverage in the foreign policy arena over the Foreign Ministry, an arrangement that resembles the Mubarak era.[41]

Disputing the president's centrality in formulating foreign policy, some analysts maintain that the Military exercises preeminent authority over Egypt's foreign relations. According to these analysts, the Military has maintained the dominant role it previously occupied, as the former regime would reportedly outsource foreign policy decisions to his defense and

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[39] "Amr Darrag: Egypt Aspires to be a Regional Leader Again," *Today's Zaman.*
[40] Nariman, "Egypt's Draft Constitution Translated."
[41] Albrecht, "Unbalancing Power in Egypt's Constitution."

intelligence ministers.[42] According to Steven Cook of the Council on Foreign Relations, there is a "bifurcation in foreign policy decision-making" between the Presidency and the Military.[43] Yet this is not the case for the U.S.-Egyptian relationship, which is controlled by both the Military and the Presidency. While the president's top aides meet with U.S. government officials to secure economic and financial aid, the Military retains a strong say in terms of defense assistance from the United States. One senior U.S. military official commented on this relationship saying, "we need them a lot more than they need us." He maintains that the Egyptians want to be treated as equals, feeling that the U.S. and Israel "infringe on their sovereignty."[44]

Another view is that President Morsi bypasses the country's formal foreign policy decision-making bodies to conduct foreign relations with other countries. The Foreign Ministry continues to be marginalized, as it was especially in the last decade of Mubarak's presidency. Reportedly, Morsi announced the Syrian quartet initiative without consulting Foreign Ministry officials—catching Egypt's diplomats in Syria off-guard.[45] The president's August 2012 trip to the Non-Aligned Movement summit in Tehran was also likely coordinated without input from the Foreign Ministry.[46] Moreover, the president occasionally bypasses government institutions to conduct foreign policy through the use of his closest aides and advisors. These individuals include several key FJP members who have a strong influence in regulating Egyptian foreign relations.[47]

One of the most influential of Morsi's team of advisors is Essam el-Haddad, who serves as the president's top aide for Egypt's foreign relations. Essam el-Haddad has played a pivotal

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[42] Grimm and Roll, "Egyptian Foreign Policy Under Mohamed Morsi."
[43] Steven Cook, interview by authors, February 22, 2013.
[44] Anonymous Senior U.S. Military Official (Y), interview by authors, March 14, 2013.
[45] Anonymous Senior Egyptian diplomat (X), interview by authors, March 13, 2013.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Ibid.

role in the Brotherhood's outreach to the West, even before Mohamed Morsi was elected as president. He has made numerous trips to the United States and Europe along with other members of Morsi's team of advisors. Reportedly El-Haddad, rather than Egypt's foreign minister Mohamed Kamel Amr, receives foreign ministers of other countries.[48] And in several instances, he has attended functions abroad in place of the Egyptian foreign minister.[49]

Additionally, his son, Gehad el-Haddad, serves as the senior advisor on foreign affairs for the FJP. Both father and son are also close to Khairat el-Shater—one of the strongest leaders and businessmen in Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood and also the former presidential candidate for the FJP. Once el-Shater was disqualified from running in the presidential election, Essam el-Haddad became Mohamed Morsi's campaign manager while preserving close ties with the Brotherhood. Essam and Gehad have both become heavily involved in the public relations side of the FJP's foreign policy objectives, by giving interviews and attending domestic, regional, and international conferences. Other influential personalities include Khaled el-Qazzaz (foreign relations coordinator) and Amr Darrag (chairman of Foreign Relations Committee), who both play an important role domestically and internationally in representing the FJP's foreign policy interests.

Despite the FJP's statements on institutionalization of the state, there seems to be a tug-of-war in matters of foreign policy decision-making—with no clear divisions between the presidency and the existing government institutions. Gehad el-Haddad has defined the FJP's main objective to "institutionalize foreign policy decision-making." Furthermore, he asserts that the president, the foreign minister, and the president's foreign affairs aide are "collectively…the directors" of foreign policy decision-making, along with guidance from other government

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[48] Ibid.
[49] "Who's Who in the Muslim Brotherhood," *Washington Institute for Near East Policy.*

institutions, think-tanks, and general public sentiment.[50] Yet, there is no clear definition for the role of other institutions.

On regional issues related to Syria and the Palestinian territories, the Presidency takes charge of all major policies and initiatives. In these two realms, President Morsi and his team of advisors occasionally bypass the Foreign Ministry to consolidate their interests and project their foreign policy objectives.[51] Amr Darrag characterizes Mubarak's foreign policy as having been "in a sleeping mode and not taking any role in finding the solution to any conflicts in the area."[52] Hence, Egypt's initiative of the Syria Quartet with Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Iran, was partially an attempt to reassert Egypt's involvement in solving regional conflicts. At the same time, however, the Syria Quartet also appealed to the interests of the United States and the Gulf states to demonstrate Egypt's strategic value as a regional negotiator and problem-solver.[53] Although this initiative was not successful due to sectarian issues between the parties involved, it was one effort by the Morsi presidency to demonstrate a break from the former regime's foreign policy initiatives.

Role of Rhetoric

The Morsi presidency has used its foreign policy initiatives rhetorically as a branding tool for combatting challenges on the domestic front.[54] By undertaking initiatives abroad, President Morsi is able to compress domestic instability and demonstrate greater assertiveness than Mubarak. One of the main objectives of the 2012 presidential election platform was to be more

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[50] Abdel-Latif and Howeidy, "'We Will Not Let Egypt Fall.'"
[51] Anonymous Senior Egyptian diplomat (X), interview by authors, March 13, 2013.
[52] "Amr Darrag: Egypt aspires to be a regional leader again," *Today's Zaman.*
[53] Bahgat Korany, interview by authors, March 10, 2013.
[54] Issandr El Amrani, interview by authors, March 13, 2013.

proactive in cases of conflict and occupation, specifically to "support the Palestinian people to…establish their own State and liberate their land."[55]

In speeches and interviews, the FJP party members place the Palestinian issue at the forefront of their foreign policy concerns, followed by the conflict in Syria. Additionally, the issue of independence from other countries and absence of foreign influence are top priorities for the Muslim Brothers, as well as many other Egyptians. Amr Darrag, the chairman of the FJP's Foreign Relations Committee,[56] asserts that under Mubarak, Egypt's foreign policy "suffered a significant decline in its traditional role" and during Mubarak's three decades in power, "Egypt completely lost its cultural, religious, and political leadership positions …limit[ing it] to marginal mediator roles or to following other countries' policies."[57] Darrag advances the FJP's belief in Egypt using its "heritage" to assert its regional leadership position. The FJP considers this a top priority in advancing Egypt's regional foreign policy. Darrag has cited two instances in which Egypt has effectively projected its leadership role in the Arab world, specifically the Palestinian and Syrian issues. The main purpose of these initiatives is to develop "a solution from within the region, rather than something dictated from above," Darrag explains.[58]

Challenges in Reshaping Foreign Policy: Competing Ideologies

Since the fall of Mubarak in January 2011, the Egyptian population—let alone the Egyptian government—has struggled to find consensus on Egypt's national interests. One senior Egyptian diplomat identified the lack of consensus among both Egyptian politicians and the domestic population as constituting three different narratives.[59] The first represents the committed activists who seek to fulfill the aspirations of Egypt's revolution. These individuals

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[55] "Foreign Policy in Morsi's Election Platform," *Freedom & Justice Party*.
[56] The Foreign Relations Committee serves as President Morsi's consultative body on foreign policy issues.
[57] Darrag, "A Revolutionary Foreign Policy."
[58] "Amr Darrag: Egypt Aspires to be a Regional Leader Again," *Today's Zaman.*
[59] Anonymous Senior Egyptian Diplomat (L), interview by authors, February 1, 2013.

strongly believe that Egypt's regional role declined over the years, and that Egypt tailored its foreign policy objectives to serve the national security interests of other, more powerful states.[60]

The Islamists constitute the second narrative, and currently exercise the most influence on Egyptian foreign policy decision-making. While these individuals seem to be pushing for greater solidarity with the Muslim world, they recognize that they cannot jeopardize Egypt's national interests and international funding by pursuing other foreign policy objectives. This narrative has still not fully developed and remains submerged in a "grey zone of poorly articulated intentions."[61]

Lastly, the government officials who promote status quo foreign policy represent the third emerging narrative. These individuals believe in the strength of existing institutions, relying on the Foreign Ministry, the GIS, and the Military to handle the foreign relations track. These three divergent narratives compete to define the direction of Egypt's post-revolution foreign policy. Neither one of these narratives, however, is able to fully materialize due to Egypt's unstable and deeply polarized political environment.

Shifts from the Past

The FJP brands its foreign policy as a revolutionary, reform-inspired model. Amr Darrag has defined Egypt's foreign policy as "revolutionary," signaling a break from Mubarak's method of handling foreign policy issues. Although President Morsi's foreign policy closely resembles his predecessor's, there are a number of noteworthy shifts. The first of these shifts is reflected in President Morsi's approach towards the Islamic Republic of Iran. After the freezing of diplomatic relations between the two countries in 1979, Egypt and Iran began to communicate more closely on a multilateral level when Morsi came to power. President Morsi first traveled to

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[60] Ibid.
[61] Ibid.

Tehran for the Non-Aligned Movement summit in August 2012, and Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad came to Cairo for the Organization of Islamic Cooperation conference in February 2013. While the two countries have not formally reestablished ties, Egypt and Iran have attempted to increase economic and cultural exchanges. The Morsi government's efforts to normalize relations with Iran did not last long, however, due to opposition from Egyptian Salafists—hardcore Islamists who stridently oppose formalizing relations with a Shia Muslim state. Despite objections from Salafi groups, rapprochement with Iran offers political benefits, providing the Egyptian government with strategic leverage versus its allies. Specifically, Egypt's formalization of relations with Iran can be used as a bargaining chip to acquire additional economic aid from the Gulf states, as well as from the United States and Europe.[62]

The second noticeable shift is the Morsi presidency's pivot toward Africa. In particular, Morsi has tried to pick up where Mubarak left off in handling issues with the Nile River Basin and reconnecting economically with Sudan and Ethiopia. Lastly, the FJP had made clear indications of wanting to renegotiate the Camp David Peace Treaty. But this does not mean breaking the treaty. In almost all of Morsi's foreign policy speeches, he has emphasized the issues of Palestinian statehood and Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. Nevertheless, the issue of renegotiating Camp David is not ideological in nature, but merely demonstrates that Egypt is in control of its own foreign policy.

In order to measure the efficacy of President Morsi's foreign policy initiatives, one must examine how the Presidency handles international and regional crises. He has made several concerted efforts to favorably portray Egypt's leadership role in the region and distance his government from the policies of the former regime. The warming of relations with Iran, the Syria

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[62] Hatem Al-Haj, interview by authors, March 15, 2013.

Quartet Initiative, and the handling of the recent Gaza skirmish between Hamas and Israel demonstrate Egypt's desire to feel legitimized in the international arena and regain its role as a strategic prize in the region.

IV. CONTINUITY OVER CHANGE

Withering and stalling domestically, the revolution has not significantly imprinted on Egypt's foreign policy. Although the effects of revolution—namely economic crisis and heightened domestic political pressure—have fundamentally influenced the conduct of Egypt's foreign policy, the ideological components of the Egyptian revolution have failed to reshape Egypt's foreign relations. Valuing accommodation over confrontation and continuity over change, the post-revolution Egyptian government has adopted a pragmatic foreign policy focused on preserving existing relationships and cultivating closer ties with regional states. Two components of Egypt's foreign policy, in particular, highlight the current government's penchant for pragmatism—President Morsi's vigorous diplomatic outreach to GCC states and his commitment to international norms and agreements. Additionally, continuity in Egypt's foreign policy was crucially enabled by the survival of Egypt's key institutions throughout the revolutionary process.

Institutional Continuity

Despite Egypt's tumultuous political transition, the country's core foreign policy-making institutions remained intact throughout the revolution and interim period under the SCAF. The foreign intelligence apparatus continued to operate secret channels with key states, namely Israel, and the Military maintained its role as Egypt's security guarantor. Diplomatic channels between Egypt and its allies have remained open and, in some cases, have likely expanded since Mubarak's departure. Additionally, the Military's uninterrupted role in Egypt's foreign affairs

has enabled the survival and continuation of existing diplomatic channels—most notably with the United States. As one senior Egyptian diplomat claimed, "For the United States, a new channel with the Egyptian military was established on the 28th of January 2011—but suddenly the channel got much larger. Today, that channel is as large as it was in the past two years."[63]

Open diplomatic channels have helped to stabilize Egypt's external relations since the revolution. Given the inherently conservative and security-minded nature of the SCAF, the maintenance of diplomatic channels during Egypt's interim period was rather predictable. Intent on "perpetuating its worldview, protecting its vision of the national interest and preserving its institutional privileges," the SCAF focused on preserving the status quo at the expense of reorienting foreign policy objectives to address Egypt's economic needs.[64] By contrast, the Morsi government has aggressively pursued close and constructive relations with Egypt's allies, regional states, and important international actors. In desperate need of economic assistance and eager to demonstrate the Muslim Brotherhood's political pragmatism, President Morsi's early diplomatic offensive sought to affirm his government's commitment to international norms, treaties, and agreements.

Disavowing a 'Revolutionary' Foreign Policy

Seeking to project a non-threatening posture abroad and reassure its neighbors that Egypt remains committed to regional peace, the Morsi government has consistently extolled the norms of state sovereignty and non-interference, while disavowing a desire to export the revolution. In his July 1, 2012 inaugural address, President Morsi unequivocally announced his administration's commitment to international norms: "We are not exporting the revolution.

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[63] Anonymous Senior Egyptian diplomat (X), interview by authors, March 13, 2013.
[64] "Lost in Transition: The World According to Egypt's SCAF," *International Crisis Group Middle East/North Africa Report*,18.

Egyptians do not export the revolution. We do not interfere in anyone's affairs."[65] President

Morsi reiterated this position during his September 2012 address to the United Nations General

Assembly, proclaiming Egypt's desire to cooperate with the community of nations "in a spirit of

equality and mutual respect, entailing non-intervention in the affairs of other states as well as the

implementation of the international principles, agreements and conventions."[66] Similar rhetoric

signaling Egypt's benign intentions appears in the 2011 FJP electoral platform. The platform

prioritizes the following as normative foundations of Egyptian foreign policy:

1. Maintaining peaceful relations with all countries, nations and institutions of
   international regulation, promoting mutual respect and equal relations, and supporting
   international peace, justice and security.

2. Respecting the principles and regulations established by the international community
   to resolve and settle conflicts between nations…

3. Respecting international law covenants and conventions on human rights…[67]

Proclaiming the new government's willingness to embrace the existing regional order, President

Morsi's early diplomacy aimed to ameliorate concerns surrounding the exportation of Islamist or

revolutionary ideology abroad. This message was principally directed toward the Persian Gulf

monarchies—reactionary states wary of the Muslim Brotherhood's intentions and potential

ability to penetrate Arab societies in the Gulf.

Opposed to the departure of Mubarak, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates

strongly disfavored the advent of a Brotherhood-led government in Egypt. Saudi Arabia, in

particular, maintained a certain degree of cooperation with the Mubarak regime and considered

Egypt a key strategic ally against the 'resistance' axis of Iran, Hamas, and Hezbollah.[68] By

contrast, the Saudi monarchy viewed Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood as an impediment to regional

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[65] "President Mohamed Morsi's Speech at Cairo University," *Ikhwan Web.*
[66] "Statement of H.E. Dr. Mohamed Morsy," *The Permanent Mission of Egypt to the United Nations in New York.*
[67] "Electoral Program: 2011 Parliamentary Elections," *Freedom and Justice Party,* 35.
[68] Valbjørn and Bank, "Signs of a New Arab Cold War."

stability and ideological competitor with the Kingdom's puritanical brand of *Wahhabi* Islam.[69] Lamenting the Brotherhood's 'subversive' role in Saudi domestic affairs, the late Saudi Interior Minister Prince Nayef bin Abdul-Aziz declared in January 2002: "Without any hesitation I say it, that our problems, all of them, came from the direction of the Muslim Brotherhood."[70] Relations between the two countries continued to sour in the wake of Egypt's uprising, which alerted Saudi rulers to the possibility of revolutionary spillover into the Kingdom. Signaling its wariness over the Brotherhood's rising role in Egypt's political transition, Riyadh recalled its ambassador from Cairo in July 2012, following protests in front of the Saudi Embassy.[71]

During this period, relations between the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood and United Arab Emirates were equally tense. Emirate officials, like the Saudis, have long accused the Muslim Brotherhood of fomenting political unrest in the Arabian Peninsula. Fearing the emergence of Brotherhood cells in the UAE, the country's officials arrested a group of Egyptians allegedly belonging to a Brotherhood cell in January 2012. The arrests, according to Frederic Wehrey, underscored "the UAE government's concern that the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood may seek to export its ideology and political program to the Gulf."[72] Furthermore, destabilizing protests in Bahrain and emboldened expressions of political dissent throughout the Gulf further exacerbated Saudi and Emirate anxiety—paving the way for the Morsi government's unwelcome reception in the Gulf. Consequently, understanding the importance of Gulf economic and political support, President Morsi elevated rapprochement with the GCC states as a key pillar of Egyptian foreign policy. Indeed, Morsi's presidential election platform sought, as a foremost objective, to "consolidate and strengthen relations with the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC),

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[69] McDowall, "Rise of Muslim Brotherhood frays Saudi-Egypt ties."
[70] Al Qassemi, "Qatar's Brotherhood Ties Alienate Fellow Gulf States."
[71] McDowall, "Rise of Muslim Brotherhood."
[72] "Egypt-UAE Diplomatic Crisis Reflects Gulf-Wide Unease Over Arab Uprisings."

and revive political and economic cooperation and promote bilateral trade, cultural and scientific exchange to advance Egyptian-Gulf interests."[73]

In his first 100 days in office, President Morsi carefully formulated foreign policy with the Gulf's interests in mind, demonstrating his commitment to Gulf security through both words and deeds. President Morsi's July 2012 visit to Saudi Arabia—his first state visit upon assuming office—hoped to assuage Saudi anxiety over the new Islamist government and overcome historical animosity between the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood and Saudi monarchy.[74] Attending the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) summit in Mecca, Morsi proposed the Syria "quartet" initiative, which called for a regional solution to the Syria crisis. Joining together Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Iran, the initiative aimed to "articulate a vision on what a future free Syrian state would look like…[and] coordinate the efforts of relevant regional parties to end this bloodshed as soon as possible."[75]

Notwithstanding the initiative's ultimate failure, Morsi's support for the Syrian opposition firmly aligned Egypt with the Saudi and GCC position. Coinciding with his visit to Saudi Arabia, the timing and location of Morsi's announcement highlighted the GCC as the Syria initiative's prime constituent. Egyptian political scientist Bahgat Korany describes the Morsi government's position as "very explicit, radical, and immediate," principally intended to garner favor with the Gulf countries.[76] Yet, while staunchly condemning the Syrian regime's acts of violence against its citizens, President Morsi has refrained from publicly criticizing the suppression of demonstrations in Bahrain, or anywhere in the Gulf. This double standard reveals

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[73] "Foreign Policy in Morsi's Electoral Platform," *Freedom and Justice Party.*
[74] Knickmeyer and Bradley, "Egyptian Leader's Visit Sends Signal to Saudis."
[75] "Opening Statement by H.E. Mohamed Morsy President of the Arab Republic of Egypt," *Freedom and Justice Party.*
[76] Bahgat Korany, interview by authors, March 10, 2013.

an element of pragmatism in President Morsi's foreign policy, which prioritizes normalized relations with the Gulf over ideological consistency.

Disavowing an 'Islamist' Foreign Policy

While the Morsi government's commitment to non-interference in the internal affairs of states is primarily intended to secure Egypt's relations with the Gulf monarchies, its pledges to respect existing agreements seek to placate U.S. and Israeli concerns over the status of the Camp David Peace Treaty. U.S. and Israeli officials—like Saudi and Emirati leaders—viewed the election of Mohamed Morsi and rise of the Muslim Brotherhood with considerable apprehension. Inexperienced in the conduct of foreign relations and confined to the political opposition under the old regime, the Muslim Brotherhood had never developed firm convictions or ideas about foreign policy. Consequently, U.S. policymakers feared that the Brotherhood might abandon the status quo policies of Hosni Mubarak—a stalwart U.S. ally and custodian of the peace treaty with Israel for thirty-three years—and dramatically restructure Egypt's international alignments in accordance with its Islamist ideology. Abrogation of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty, lifting the siege on Gaza, and Egyptian-Iranian rapprochement were plausible courses of action for a Brotherhood-dominated government.[77]

Prior to the 2011 parliamentary elections, the Muslim Brotherhood focused scant attention on foreign policy issues. However, the Brotherhood's anti-Israel posture and commitment to pan-Islamic unity provided some insight into the organization's views on foreign affairs. Representing the Brotherhood's first detailed outline of its foreign policy perspectives, the organization's 2010 electoral program listed the Palestinian issue and regaining regional

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[77] For a discussion of Camp David's potential unraveling, see Shadi Hamid and Tamara Wittes, "Camp David Collapse," in "Big Bets & Black Swans: A Presidential Briefing Book," edited by Martin Indyk, Tanvi Madan, and Thomas Wright, *Brookings Institution* (January 2013), 80-84.

leadership as key foreign policy aspirations.[78] Taking an assertive stance on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the document affirms that "resistance against the occupier usurper of Arab and Islamic lands is a legitimate right prescribed by Islam and guaranteed by international, laws, charters, and norms." Moreover, the document calls for "resisting all forms of economic, cultural, political, and security normalization with the Zionist entity, abrogating all agreements that support normalization, and exposing the devastating effects of normalization."[79] Chiefly directed toward the Brotherhood's domestic political constituency, however, the 2010 platform offers the agenda of an opposition movement hopelessly pursuing elected office. On the other hand, the 2011 FJP platform reflects the aspirations of a well-organized party anticipating electoral victory. Intended for international as well as domestic political consumption, the 2011 platform offers a more balanced treatment of foreign affairs—calling for "peaceful relations with all countries" and "promoting mutual respect and equal relations"—yet retaining a rhetorical commitment to "Palestinian resistance against the Zionist usurper."[80]

Egypt's Posturing on Camp David

Despite the Muslim Brotherhood's litany of objections to Camp David, the Morsi government has adhered to the treaty's terms without publicly challenging its legitimacy. Aside from proclaiming his government's respect for international norms and agreements, however, President Morsi has rarely mentioned Camp David in his public addresses. His silence is noteworthy, conveying a tacit acceptance of the treaty's strategic logic. While perhaps fulfilling the Brotherhood's ideological aspirations and galvanizing popular support, abrogating the treaty entails innumerable risks. Most readily, abrogation would rupture relations with Israel—projecting hostile intentions perceived by Israeli officials as bellicose and warlike. Just as Gamal

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[78] "The Electoral Program of the Muslim Brotherhood for the 2010 Majlis Al-Sha'ab Elections," 34.
[79] Ibid.
[80] "Election Program," 36.

Abdul Nasser's closure of the Straits of Tiran, troop deployments near the Israeli border, and expulsion of the UN Emergency Force from Sinai triggered Israel's surprise attack in June 1967, cancellation of the peace treaty could precipitate a cascade of mutual hostilities that lead to war.[81]

Abrogation of the peace treaty would also critically damage Egypt's relations with the West and particularly with the United States, which has long considered Camp David the linchpin of the U.S.-Egyptian strategic alliance. By alienating Egypt's chief ally since 1978, breaking the treaty would jeopardize a major source of economic and military assistance. The E.U. and IMF would be equally unlikely to reward Egyptian belligerence with additional economic aid packages. Furthermore, by nullifying the treaty, the Morsi government risks confrontation with the Egyptian Military—the institution possessing supreme constitutional authority over matters of war and peace.[82] By threatening Egypt's external security and encroaching on the Military's constitutional prerogative, one senior U.S. military official asserts, the cancellation of the treaty represents a clear "redline" for the SCAF and could trigger an overt military intervention in Egypt's domestic affairs.[83]

Amidst persistent economic and political turmoil, abrogating the peace treaty would serve only to weaken President Morsi's internal control, alienate Egypt from crucial allies and donor states, and heighten the risk of unwanted war with Israel. Moreover, few benefits would accrue from canceling the treaty—a measure unlikely to significantly improve Morsi's domestic popularity. Contrary to common belief, the Egyptian population does not overwhelmingly support abandoning the peace treaty with Israel. According to the 2011 Annual Arab Public Opinion Survey conducted by Shibley Telhami, Egyptian public opinion is deeply divided on the issue of Camp David: nearly a third of Egyptians (37 percent) favor maintaining the treaty, while

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[81] Shlaim, *The Iron Wall*, 237.
[82] Anonymous Senior U.S. Military Official (Y), interview by authors, March 14, 2013.
[83] Ibid.

35 percent of those surveyed support its cancellation.[84] Likewise, a February 2012 Gallup Poll

indicates that 48 percent of Egyptians believe the peace treaty is a "good thing" for the country,

whereas 42 percent view it negatively.[85] Thus, breaking the treaty does not necessarily reflect a

dominant trend in public sentiment and would likely fail to build consensus in public opinion.

The Camp David Peace Treaty is no longer a salient concern for mainstream Egyptians—who

dwell instead on the country's deepening economic and political crises. Since canceling the

peace treaty would negatively impact the lives of Egyptians—cutting off foreign aid and possibly

initiating a costly armed conflict with Israel—the move would damage rather than strengthen the

Egyptian government's domestic popularity and ruling stability.

Understanding the innumerable risks of annulling the treaty, yet seeking a public position

more aligned with Brotherhood ideology, the Morsi government has proclaimed a tentative

acceptance of Camp David. Indirectly referencing the treaty, the 2011 FJP platform states,

"Agreements and treaties between countries must be popularly accepted. This is not achieved

unless these conventions and treaties are based on justice and serve the interests of the parties

concerned."[86] This position transcends the Muslim Brotherhood organization, however,

encompassing the views of various Foreign Ministry and political party officials. Echoing this

position, one senior Egyptian diplomat emphasized the Egyptian government's desire to adhere

to the peace treaty—but only if the treaty is popularly accepted and its terms are properly

reciprocated by the State of Israel.[87] He related to us in an interview that:

> [The Egyptian government does] not question our bilateral engagements and peace treaty
> with Israel. On this issue we do follow a relatively similar policy from before. The
> problem is that this cannot be maintained at any price. We cannot just keep telling our
> people that we need to live in peace with a neighbor that continues to build new

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[84] Telhami, Lebson, Lewis, and Medoff, "2011 Arab Public Opinion Survey.".
[85] Dalia Mogahed, "Opinion Briefing: Egyptians Skeptical of U.S. Intentions."
[86] "Election Program," 35.
[87] Anonymous Senior Egyptian Diplomat (T), interview by authors, March 14, 2013.

settlements in occupied Arab land…Our principles do not allow us to do this and public opinion will never accept this.[88]

The Salafist al-Nour Party offers a similar perspective. According to Dr. Hatem Al-Haj, a foreign affairs advisor to the al-Nour Party, the Camp David Peace Treaty "needs to be revisited periodically to see if it is in the interest of the country or if we need to negotiate certain elements in the agreement."[89]

Situated on the opposite end of Egypt's political spectrum, former presidential candidate and nationalist politician Hamdeen Sabahi states: "My platform is based on accepting in principle every treaty that maintains peace. However, it may be subjected to amendments or even cancellation if the people want, according to international law that gives the people the right to change their agreements."[90] Thus, discussion of "reviewing" or "amending" the treaty is commonplace and articulated by disparate political actors seeking to augment troop deployments in the Sinai, promote more equitable relations between Egypt and its neighbors, or appeal to public opinion. Populism and nationalism—not Islamism—drive the national conversation on the treaty's status.

Nonetheless, Eric Trager, an expert on the Muslim Brotherhood at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, professes that "the Muslim Brotherhood *does* aim to scrap the treaty, which simply cannot be reconciled with the anti-Israel and anti-Semitic hatred in which every Muslim Brother is thoroughly indoctrinated."[91] Citing the statements of FJP officials seeking to combat normalization with Israel or annul the peace treaty, Trager contends that the Muslim Brotherhood's ideological pretensions are fundamentally incompatible with maintaining Egyptian-Israeli peace. The Brotherhood "has no intention of reconciling itself to the reality of

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[88] Ibid.
[89] Hatem Al-Haj, interview by authors, March 15, 2013.
[90] Azab, "Riding the Wave."
[91] Trager, "Think Again: The Muslim Brotherhood."

either the peace treaty or the very existence of Israel," Trager writes, and will promptly scrap the treaty upon consolidating domestic political control.[92]

Although Trager envisions a looming collision between the Brotherhood's inveterate hostility to Israel and the practical pressures of maintaining peace, the Morsi government has so far upheld Egypt's treaty commitments without compromising the Brotherhood's principled opposition to Israel. Reconciling the Brotherhood's ideological sentiments with the current political reality, Gehad el-Haddad, a senior foreign affairs advisor to the president, states: "Although we believe Camp David was one of the most disastrous things to have happened in the history of the region we will not be the ones to break the treaty and we believe that within current dynamics it serves Egyptian interests."[93]

By avoiding bilateral normalization and direct contact with Israeli officials, President Morsi has upheld Egypt's commitment to Camp David without conceding his ideological principles. President Morsi has instead delegated the conduct of Egyptian-Israeli relations to the Military and intelligence apparatus. As Issandr el-Amrani argues, the Morsi government compensates for its position on Camp David "by fixating on other things, like, for example, never saying the word 'Israel', or never meeting with Israeli officials. It gives them flexibility towards their base, but it empowers other foreign policy actors inside the country. If you cannot deal with [the Israelis] yourselves, you have to let general intelligence do it."[94] The Morsi government's diplomatic posturing on Camp David allows the government to achieve multiple strategic objectives and satisfy numerous audiences at once. Placating the United States and Israel, on one hand, while appealing to Egyptian popular sentiment, on the other, the Morsi

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[92] Ibid.
[93] Abdel-Latif and Howeidy, "Interivew with Gehad el-Haddad."
[94] Issandr El Amrani, interview by authors, March 14, 2013.

government's "tentative acceptance" of Camp David satisfies both domestic and international constituencies without alienating either.

The Brotherhood's ideological convictions might preclude political or cultural normalization with Israel, but will likely not, as Eric Trager proposes, compel the Morsi government to annul the Camp David peace agreement. Abrogating the treaty would deepen Egypt's economic crisis, diminish Egypt's international status, and rupture its relations with the West, thus seriously undermining the Morsi government's domestic ruling security. Facing the prodigious responsibilities of governance, Morsi and the Brotherhood have tempered anti-Israel rhetoric and embraced the notion that Camp David overwhelmingly serves Egypt's national interests. Leading the political opposition against the previous regime, the Muslim Brotherhood positioned itself as the most vociferous critic of Egyptian-Israeli peace. As Egypt's preeminent governing actor, however, the Brotherhood has subordinated its ideological sentiments to the practical exigencies of governance, upholding Egypt's commitment to international norms, treaties, and agreements.

V. A DELICATE BALANCING ACT

Operating in a volatile domestic environment, the Egyptian government has sought external alignments principally as a way to counter domestic threats. Rather than promoting an international order based on Arab and Islamic solidarity, as the Brotherhood's ideology pronounces, the Morsi government has cultivated closer relations with a diverse array of actors—including Turkey, Iran, China, Sudan, and Hamas—while upholding its crucial relationship with the United States and maintaining diplomatic channels with Israel. The Morsi government's actions toward Israel and Hamas, in particular, contradict the Muslim Brotherhood's deeply-held ideological convictions. Despite the Brotherhood's commitment to supporting "Palestinian

resistance against the Zionist usurpers,"[95] the Morsi government brokered a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas in November 2012, coordinated counterterrorism activities with Israeli military forces in the Sinai, and refrained from fully opening the Rafah border crossing between Egypt and Gaza.

While the Morsi government may contemplate ideological objectives, Egypt's persistent internal challenges seriously constrain the government's foreign policy choices and elevate the importance of alignment decisions. Indeed, this paper argues that the Egyptian government pursues external alignments primarily to solidify and consolidate its domestic political authority. Amidst the economic, political, and institutional challenges to regime security, external alignments can help to mitigate pressures facing the regime. As the political scientist Curtis Ryan argues, "Alignments are external solutions to both domestic and regional security problems...made and utilized by a ruling political elite in order to maintain its own security and survival."[96]

Domestic Sources of External Alignments

Departing from the realist paradigm of international relations, which posits that states form alignments to balance against power and external threats, a number of scholars highlight the primacy of internal threats in determining the foreign policy behavior of weak or developing states.[97] Indeed, regimes presiding over weak states facing tenuous economic and political circumstances are far more likely to be overthrown by internal coups or revolutions than by external invasions.[98] The preeminence of domestic threats owes to the nature of these regimes, which typically lack sufficient material resources or governing legitimacy to address internal

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[95] "Electoral Program," 36.
[96] Ryan, *Inter-Arab Alliances*, 12, 14.
[97] For an example of the realist argument, see Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987).
[98] David, "Explaining Third World Alignment," 238.

unrest. Facing a multitude of threats to regime survival, Steven David writes, "Third World" states must focus their limited resources on addressing the most severe threat, whether external or internal in nature. Consequently, "the most powerful determinant of Third World alignment behavior is the rational calculation of Third World leaders as to which outside power is most likely to do what is necessary to keep them in power."[99] Forming or strengthening external alignments is especially useful in countering internal threats to state security. Curtis Ryan contends, "An external alliance can generate resources (economic and military) to counter domestic threats by stabilizing the economy, providing economic payoffs to key domestic constituencies, or strengthening the power of the state security apparatus."[100]

In Egypt's case, foreign economic and political support helps to alleviate economic pressure, bolster the regime's legitimacy and prestige, and satisfy domestic demands for a more robust role in international affairs. Confronted with rapidly diminishing economic conditions and an increasingly disaffected public, the Morsi government struggles to mobilize internal resources to address domestic challenges. Instead, the Morsi government has relied on external actors to relieve Egypt's domestic insecurity. Whereas "the process of developing and producing resources within a threatened state can be slow and difficult," Michael Barnett and Jack Levy write, "alliance formation can bring a rapid infusion of funds and other resources."[101] Since July 2012, President Morsi's diplomatic outreach has paid dividends in the form of grants, bond purchases, and loans from Qatar, Turkey, Libya, China, the EU, and the U.S. These cash transfers, though far from a panacea to Egypt's domestic troubles, have critically bolstered Egypt's governing institutions and prevented economic collapse. Yet, Morsi's foreign policy agenda cannot be singularly reduced to economic rent-seeking. Dependent on external patrons

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[99] Ibid., 235.
[100] Ryan, *Inter-Arab Alignments*, 14.
[101] Barnett and Levy, "Domestic Sources of Alliances and Alignments," 374.

for vital financial assistance and beholden to an emboldened domestic population, the Morsi

government has carefully calibrated its foreign policy positions to satisfy numerous—and often

competing—constituencies.

Morsi's Balancing Act

Although rent-seeking is a primary objective of President Morsi's foreign policy, his

major diplomatic initiatives have sought to achieve multiple, competing aims—targeting both

internal and external audiences. Whereas the Mubarak regime conducted foreign policy absent

concern for public opinion, the Morsi government must increasingly consider popular sentiment

when formulating foreign policy positions. In the post-revolution period, no Egyptian

government can ignore the demands of an empowered population. One senior Egyptian diplomat

rationalized this new dynamic as the following:

> The revolution has created a situation where public opinion pressures the decision-making process. Before the revolution, the margin of maneuver of the Egyptian authorities was much wider. Pressure now emanates from the media, protestors, and activists defending causes. This creates real pressure and we have to take that into consideration.[102]

Moreover, unlike Mubarak, Morsi is a democratically-elected leader directly accountable to the

Egyptian population, which theoretically can vote the incumbent president out of office. Winning

only one-quarter of the first round votes in Egypt's June 2012 presidential election and narrowly

edging Mubarak's last prime minister, Ahmed Shafiq, in the final round, Morsi initiated his term

without a clear popular mandate to govern. Morsi's popularity has since plummeted, given his

government's failure to rescue Egypt from political instability and economic hardship.

Consequently, President Morsi must tailor foreign policy initiatives to popular demands.

Cautiously navigating the contours of Egyptian public opinion, Morsi's major diplomatic

endeavors—mediating a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas, launching improved relations with

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[102] Anonymous Senior Egyptian Diplomat (T), interview by authors, March 14, 2013.

Iran, and forming a quartet to resolve the Syria crisis—have aimed to achieve success abroad that might resonate domestically.

International pressures also decisively shape President Morsi's foreign policy objectives. This paper has already discussed the Morsi government's extensive diplomatic campaign to brand the new Egypt as a benign and dependable actor in the international arena. The Morsi government's strenuous efforts to project moderation and a commitment to international norms, treaties, and agreements aimed principally to satisfy the U.S., the Gulf states, and other international patrons. Unable to mobilize domestic resources to counter internal threats, the Morsi government has embraced diplomatic activism and external alignments as solutions to domestic problems.

Finally, the Morsi government must balance international and domestic pressures with its own ambitions and aspirations. Acute domestic pressures combined with constraints imposed by external actors have afforded the Morsi government minimal independent maneuverability on foreign policy. Adopting a radically new set of foreign policy ambitions or pursuing an ideological agenda abroad is simply untenable given Egypt's persistent domestic challenges, limited resources, and reduced capacity to influence regional politics. Dr. Gamal Soltan, an expert on Egyptian foreign policy, affirms that "there are constraints domestically and internationally that would not really allow the president of the new ruling elite in Egypt in a full-fledged way to develop [an independent] foreign policy. That is why we see more continuity than change. Change is costly, and very different from the Cold War era, when change was a strategy to generate more resources."[103] To the extent that President Morsi has forged an independent foreign policy, it has been "mostly aspirational," according to Issandr El Amrani. "Foreign policy is being used to announce a reboot of Egypt…, mostly signaling in what ways it would

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[103] Gamal Soltan, interview by authors, March 10, 2013.

like to be different" than the previous regime.[104] The Morsi government's policies toward Iran and Hamas have exemplified this approach.

Egyptian-Iranian Relations

On the surface, President Morsi's August 2012 visit to the Non-Alignment Movement (NAM) summit in Tehran heralded the beginnings of Egyptian-Iranian rapprochement. Morsi's visit to Iran—the first visit of an Egyptian president since 1979—thawed a bilateral relationship frozen for over three decades. Tehran reciprocated Morsi's opening by sending Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to the February 2013 Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) summit in Cairo. Hoping to expand its regional influence, counter sanctions, and escape international isolation by aligning with the largest Arab state, the Iranian leadership has vigorously courted closer relations with Cairo. Hailing Egypt's uprising as an "Islamic Awakening," Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has exhorted the new Egyptian leadership to "adopt the Iranian model and join Tehran to build a new Islamic culture."[105] Iranian foreign minister Ali Akbar Salehi declared, "Egypt is a very important country in the region and the Islamic Republic of Iran believes it is one of the heavyweights in the Middle East. We are ready to further strengthen ties."[106] In addition to bolstering Iran's regional stature, an alliance with Cairo would compensate for the loss of Syria to protracted civil war and empower Iran vis-à-vis the West.

While aggrandizing Tehran's regional power and influence, Egyptian-Iranian rapprochement would likely diminish Cairo's regional position and damage its alignment structure. Deemed an international pariah by the West and mired in economic hardship, Iran is unable to offer Egypt levels of material and diplomatic support that rival Egypt's benefactors in the Arabian Peninsula. Furthermore, rapprochement risks alienating Cairo's key allies. Fearful of

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[104] Issandr El Amrani, interview by authors, March 14, 2013.
[105] Bar'el, "Iran reaches out to Egypt in bid for increased regional power."
[106] Fahim and El Shaikh, "Ahmadinejad Visits Egypt, Signaling Realignment," *The New York Times*.

Iranian political penetration and suspicious of Iran's regional agenda, the Gulf states would stridently object to an Egyptian-Iranian alliance. Full-scale normalization with Iran is also certain to anger important domestic constituents of the Muslim Brotherhood. Specifically, Salafi groups and Sunni religious institutions evince a deep mistrust of Iranian intentions and ardently oppose increased cultural and economic exchanges with the Islamic Republic. According to Dr. Hatem Al-Haj, the al-Nour Party strongly desires to "slow down the cultural normalization of relations with Iran," whose "doctrinal agenda" aims to sow sectarian tension in Arab societies.[107]

Although the preferences of important domestic and international constituencies militate against warming relations with Iran, a closer relationship perhaps serves the Morsi government's ideological and diplomatic interests. Historically, the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood has displayed ideological affinity for the Islamic Republic's defiant posture toward Zionism, imperialism, and the West. Mehdi Khalaji writes, "Islamists in Iran and Egypt have a strong ideological connection. They share anti-Israel sentiment, and support Hamas against the secular-nationalist Fatah in the Palestinians' internecine struggle. Committed to governance under Sharia (Islamic law), they both view Western culture as a threat."[108] Consistent with the Morsi government's quest for independence and unity among Muslim nations, alignment with Iran would symbolize Egypt's leadership of Muslim nations seeking freedom from Western influence and control. Since the Egyptian revolution, however, these ideological ties have sharply deteriorated. Bolstering the brutal dictatorship of Bashar al-Assad and systematically repressing domestic opposition actors, the Islamic Republic's conduct contradicts the themes of Egypt's revolution. Consequently, the Brotherhood has expressed reservations surrounding Iran's

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[107] Hatem Al-Haj, interview by authors, March 15, 2013.
[108] Khalaji, "The Enduring Egypt-Iran Divide."

regional behavior and ambitions. As Gehad el-Haddad states, "we have huge concerns about Iranian activities in the region in Syria, the Gulf and even in Egypt."[109]

On the diplomatic level, however, closer relations with Tehran provide Cairo with greater strategic leverage versus the U.S. and GCC states. Through its friendly overtures toward Tehran, Cairo signals its willingness to pursue alternative alignments if the U.S. and Gulf states fail to deliver on their promises. In effect, the Egyptian government leverages the threat of realigning with Iran to ensure continued support from its key donors and allies. Such a threat lacks credibility, however, given Egypt's overwhelming dependence on Western and Gulf economic support—and Iran's inability to replace the GCC as a leading provider of economic assistance.[110] Consequently, the Morsi government has resisted Tehran's efforts to normalize relations and remains firmly committed to preserving relations with its allies and external donors.

Understanding the risks of rapprochement, the Morsi government has imposed clear limits on Egypt's opening with Iran—confining high-level official interaction to multilateral encounters. Rather than signaling rapprochement, multilateral exchanges between Egypt and Iran have exposed sources of bilateral tension. In his speech at the NAM summit, President Morsi highlighted Egyptian-Iranian dissension on the Syrian issue. Announcing Egypt's "solidarity with the plight of the Syrian people against a repressive regime that has lost its legitimacy," Morsi unequivocally positioned Egypt at odds with Iran, which has lent considerable support to the Assad regime.[111] Tension similarly accompanied Ahmadinejad's Cairo visit, which instigated protests from Salafi groups and drew considerable opposition from Egyptian religious institutions. Most notably, Al-Azhar officials lectured Ahmadinejad on Iran's efforts to "spread

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[109] Abdel-Latif and Howeidy, "Interview with Gehad el-Haddad."
[110] Anonymous Senior Egyptian Diplomat (L), interview by authors, February 1, 2013.
[111] "Opening Statement of H.E. Mohamed Morsi."

Shi'ism in Sunni lands," and Grand Imam Ahmed Al-Tayyeb warned the Iranian President to "respect Bahrain as a brotherly Arab nation" and not to "interfere in the affairs of Gulf States."[112]

Balancing its desire to diversify Egypt's alignment structure with the interests of Egypt's various constituencies at home and abroad, the Morsi government has sharply decelerated its opening with Iran. This curtailment of Iranian-Egyptian rapprochement chiefly seeks to placate the Gulf monarchies and Egypt's Salafi population. Along with Egyptian national interests, Gehad el-Haddad identifies "Gulf interests" as a decisive factor limiting the extent of Iranian-Egyptian relations.[113] Domestic public opinion is also a determining factor. Recently, in response to pressure from Salafi activists and political party officials, the Egyptian government rescinded its decision to permit Iranian tourists in Egypt.[114] Thus, the extent of Egypt's opening is consistent with the Morsi government's goal of enhancing Egypt's regional stature without jeopardizing existing relationships or provoking domestic opposition. Constrained by its international commitments and dependence on external aid, the Egyptian government has adopted a similar balancing act in its relations toward the Hamas government in Gaza.

Egyptian-Hamas Relations

"The first issue which the world must exert all its efforts in resolving," President Morsi declared in his speech to the UN General Assembly, "is the Palestinian cause."[115] Reflecting the Muslim Brotherhood's solidarity with the Palestinian people and ideological affinity for Hamas, the Morsi government has consistently elevated the Palestinian issue as Egypt's top foreign policy priority. Since July 2012, however, the Egyptian government's policies toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and actions toward Gaza in particular, have revealed a stark divergence

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[112] "Al-Azhar Imam tells Ahmadinejad not to interfere in Gulf," *Ahram Online.*
[113] Abdel-Latif and Howeidy, "Interview with Gehad el-Haddad."
[114] "Egypt Suspends Tourism from Iran," *Ma'an News Agency.*
[115] "Statement of H.E. Dr. Mohamed Morsy."

between the Muslim Brotherhood's ideology as an opposition actor and behavior as a governing authority. Although the Brotherhood's 2010 electoral program declares support for Palestinian resistance against the 'Zionist entity' and for lifting the siege on Gaza, the Morsi government has so far subordinated its ideological objectives to the immediate priorities of ensuring regional and domestic security.

While supporting Palestinian resistance would enjoy widespread popular support, the Egyptian Military and GIS would strongly object to open alignment with Hamas—an action likely to damage Egypt's relations with the U.S. and Israel. Hence, the same pressures that compel Egypt's maintenance of Camp David inform the Morsi government's tentative acceptance of the status quo in Gaza. For the moment, American and Israeli interests happen to coincide with Egyptian security interests. All three actors seek to preserve regional peace and security and prevent Gaza's instability from spreading to neighboring countries. According to the International Crisis Group, Egypt's military-security establishment views closer Egyptian-Hamas cooperation as constituting a national security threat: "Instability and chaos in the Palestinian territory, they fear, will spill over into Egypt, with particularly dangerous repercussions in the Sinai. As it sees matters, Hamas has long been a problem, Gaza is a headache, and free movement between Gaza and Sinai would promote lawlessness and the back-and-forth smuggling of militants and weapons."[116] A border skirmish near the Gaza border in August 2012, which resulted in the deaths of sixteen Egyptian soldiers, further reinforced the position of Egypt's military and intelligence apparatus.

In accordance with this logic, the Egyptian government has refrained from lifting the siege on Gaza's borders with Egypt, continuing its tacit cooperation with Israeli authorities on containing Hamas in Gaza. More dramatically, Egyptian authorities blocked a series of tunnels

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[116] "Israel and Hamas: Fire and Ceasefire in a New Middle East," *International Crisis Group*, 15.

along the Egyptian-Gazan border in February 2013 in an effort to curb weapons smuggling into the Sinai. While this maneuver was likely executed by the Military or GIS, neither President Morsi nor his advisors objected to the decision. Indeed, Essam el-Haddad openly expressed his support for closing the tunnels: "We don't want to see these tunnels used for illegal ways of smuggling either people or weapons that can really harm Egyptian security."[117] Whereas the Morsi government's tunnel operations demonstrate the preeminence of Egyptian national security interests, Morsi's mediation of the Israel-Hamas ceasefire agreement in November 2012 epitomized his government's pragmatic tendency to balance competing interests.

Satisfying Egypt's foreign and domestic constituencies and asserting Egypt's regional influence, Morsi's successful diplomacy advanced multiple strategic objectives. In the opening days of the crisis, President Morsi dispatched the Egyptian prime minister to Gaza and expelled Israel's ambassador from Cairo, thereby symbolically demonstrating Egypt's solidarity with Hamas. Privately, however, the Morsi government retained open channels with U.S. and Israeli officials to reach a ceasefire agreement—which it achieved eight days after the fighting started.[118] Bolstering Egypt's regional stature and prestige, the Morsi government's role in brokering the ceasefire won accolades from U.S., Israeli, and Hamas officials alike. As the International Crisis Group contends, Morsi demonstrated his willingness to work "effectively with Washington, earning Obama's praise; mediating a ceasefire agreement; proving his usefulness to Israel; and all this without alienating Hamas."[119] U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton publicly thanked President Morsi for his "personal leadership to de-escalate the situation in Gaza and end the violence."[120] Likewise, Hamas political chief Khaled Meshaal lauded Egypt for "behaving

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[117] Taylor and Saleh, "Egypt flooded to cut Gaza arms flow: aide," *Reuters.*
[118] Mohamed Elmenshawy, interview by authors, February 8, 2013.
[119] "Israel and Hamas," *International Crisis Group,* 17.
[120] "Egypt and Morsy proved 'pivotal' in Gaza cease-fire talks," *CNN.*

responsibly," asserting that "Egypt did not sell out the resistance." Ismail Haniyeh, Hamas's leader in Gaza, also praised "Egypt and its believer president" for brokering the agreement.[121] Finally, preventing a broader military conflagration and spillover of instability into Egyptian territory, the Morsi government also successfully defended Egypt's national security interests. In doing so, Morsi's diplomatic actions placated Egypt's military and intelligence apparatuses— whose overriding aims were to prevent spillover and preserve stability in the Sinai.

The Primacy of Economic Considerations

While no single factor determines the Morsi government's foreign policy behavior, economic considerations critically underpin President Morsi's major diplomatic initiatives and foreign policy positions. Indeed, Egypt's economic crisis sustains high levels of popular mobilization and necessitates the constant courting of external donors. In the short term, financial transfers from abroad can rescue Egypt's ailing regime and ward off economic collapse. Reliant on external financial support and unable to satisfy Egyptians' basic economic needs, the Morsi government cannot afford to alienate domestic or international constituencies when formulating foreign policy endeavors. Thus, economic stability and budget security constitute the foundations for regime survival. As Laurie Brand argues, "Empty coffers mean no weaponry for the army to confront external enemies, no salaries for the security services to keep in check domestic opposition, and no subsidies to ensure the continuing loyalty of [domestic elements]. Hence, whoever the enemy may be, budget security is the first line of defense, for it alone can pay for all others."[122]

Accordingly, stable economic development could expand the Egyptian regime's ruling authority and drastically lessen domestic and international constraints. Sustained economic

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[121] Hendawi, "Morsi's Gaza Ceasefire Deal Role Secures Egypt's President as Major Player," *Huffington Post*.
[122] Brand, "Economics and Shifting Alliances," 395.

growth would not, however, permit the Egyptian regime to flout its treaty obligations or abandon its accommodationist posture without facing serious negative repercussions. Dependent on external aid, tourism receipts, and imported food and fuel, Egypt's economy is inextricably tied to the international system. Provoking donor states or confronting the international order would, therefore, critically threaten Egypt's economic health. As current conditions illustrate—economic stability is a vital prerequisite for political stability and regime control. Hence, present and future Egyptian governments will likely continue to prioritize rent-seeking and alliance building objectives as a means to bolster ruling authority at home.

VI. CONCLUSION

Final Analysis

The foreign policy behavior of revolutionary or post-revolutionary states has received insufficient attention from international relations scholars. Stephen Walt and Fred Halliday, whose works provide the most substantive contributions to the existing literature, identify the foreign policies of revolutionary states as inherently bellicose and confrontational. Whereas Walt links the unpredictability and unknown intentions of revolutionary states with war and conflict, Halliday argues that revolutionary states invite confrontation by deliberately or unintentionally producing a contagion effect in nearby states. Deviating sharply from Walt and Halliday's expectations, the post-revolution Egyptian state has sought integration and accommodation—while strenuously avoiding confrontation—with other powers.

Since June 2012, the Morsi government has directed Egypt's foreign policy objectives toward advancing Egyptian national interests without antagonizing allies, donors, or domestic political factions. Responsive to domestic public opinion and sensitive to the perceptions of external actors, the Morsi government's foreign policy initiatives reflect the competing interests

of multiple constituencies rather than the idiosyncratic interests of the Muslim Brotherhood. The Morsi government's outspoken commitment to international norms, treaties, and agreements and explicit disavowal of revolutionary or ideological ambitions aimed principally to placate Egypt's allies and cultivate warmer relations with the Gulf monarchies, in particular. President Morsi's Syria quartet initiative sought, first, to enhance the GCC states' perception of Egypt's new government and, second, to garner domestic political support. Likewise, the Morsi government's decision to limit and subsequently decelerate its opening with Tehran aimed to assuage the GCC states and Egypt's Salafi population, respectively.

Finally, the Morsi government's posture toward Israel and Hamas demonstrate the triumph of pragmatism in Egypt's post-revolution foreign policy. Suppressing its deep-seated anti-Zionism and sympathy for the Palestinian cause, the Muslim Brotherhood-led government has upheld the policies it had previously condemned. Rather than severing relations with Israel and bolstering Palestinian resistance, the Egyptian government has preserved Camp David, mediated a ceasefire between Hamas and Israel, and maintained closures and restrictions along the Gaza-Egypt border. Overall, the Morsi government has consistently prioritized alignment-building, rent-seeking, and national security objectives at the expense of ideological considerations.

Predicated on international relations theory and supplemented by oral interviews, our research seeks to clarify the objectives and drivers of Egypt's post-revolution foreign policy. Accordingly, we interviewed Egyptian and American academics, former and current Foreign Ministry officials, journalists, commentators, and political party officials from both Leftist and Salafi parties. Although we did not succeed in interviewing FJP or Muslim Brotherhood representatives, their positions and statements are prolific and publicly accessible. Representing

a wide cross-section of Egypt's foreign policymaking establishment, this broad survey of Egyptian society enhances the validity of our conclusions. Moreover, consistent areas of consensus among those we interviewed undergird the robustness of our findings. Specifically, the vast majority of interviewees highlighted the centrality of rent-seeking and alliance-building in President Morsi's strategic calculus, while rejecting ideology as a significant driver. Notwithstanding the overall validity of our research, our findings must be qualified by two variables—the role of inexperience and institutional overlap in government decision-making and the short timeframe on which our research is based.

Qualifications: Role of Inexperience and Short Timeframe

Our analysis has treated the Egyptian government as a 'rational' actor whose leaders formulate and execute decisions based on subjective assessments of risks, threats, and external perceptions. Nonetheless, the decision-making process is not always deliberative and is frequently prone to error. Since the Muslim Brotherhood has never before governed, political naiveté and inexperience have doubtlessly impacted the foreign policy decision-making process under the new regime. Moreover, relationships between institutions are still evolving and jurisdictions are often unclear—increasing the potential for miscommunication between Egypt's various foreign policy actors.

The lack of institutional coordination and overlapping realms of authority between the Presidency, Foreign Ministry, Military, and intelligence apparatus create confusion and may send mixed messages to external powers. Foreign policy actions and decisions are not always easily attributable to a single actor, but rather reflect the interplay of competing institutions. Hence, Egypt's convoluted decision-making process complicates, but does not preclude, the task of analyzing Egyptian foreign policy.

Furthermore, only ten months have elapsed since Mohamed Morsi's inauguration as Egypt's first democratically-elected president, and the country's political system remains in a state of tumultuous transition. Egypt's institutions are in a fragile state, wracked by revolution and protracted instability. Moreover, the looming threat of economic collapse and potential reemergence of massive street protests have placed inordinate pressure on the new regime. Faced with these pressing challenges, the Morsi government can ill-afford to dramatically reorient Egypt's foreign policy or embark on ideologically-driven initiatives. One could argue, therefore, that this study is premature or that it is too soon to observe trends or themes in the Morsi government's foreign policy. Indeed, Mohamed Morsi's reign as president might be short-lived, or the Military may reassume control.

Notwithstanding these distinct possibilities, our conclusions are not contingent on a specific regime or leader ruling the Egyptian state. Current conditions and pressures are likely to remain for the foreseeable future. Egypt's economic difficulties are likely to continue—if not worsen—in the near term, and the consolidation of a stable political system may take time. Additionally, domestic public opinion and the interests of external actors likely represent long-term, more permanent, constraints on Egyptian foreign policy-making. Emboldened by the revolution, the Egyptian public will remain a potent political force whose demands must be carefully taken into account. As the most populous Arab country and aspiring leader of the Arab world, Egypt must also closely consider the interests of regional states, allies, and key international actors. Thus, any individual or entity that exercises power in Egypt must contend with these multiple, competing interests and constituencies when formulating foreign policy.

The Future of Egyptian Foreign Policy

In the near-term, this paper posits the continuation of pragmatic and accommodationist trends in Egyptian foreign policy. Moreover, economic, political, and institutional pressures will continue to inhibit the pursuit of ideological objectives abroad. A significant reorientation of Egypt's foreign policy—though possible in the medium or long-term—is contingent on the trajectories of Egypt's economic crisis and political transition. First, the establishment of a stable and popularly-accepted system of government would grant Egypt's leaders greater legitimacy in executing foreign policy objectives. Second, and more important, economic recovery and development would expand the Egyptian government's ability to maneuver abroad by removing fiscal constraints. A more robust economy also would reduce Egypt's dependence on foreign aid and expand its distributive capabilities internally—thereby enhancing the regime's ability to downplay domestic and international objections when formulating foreign policy initiatives.

As economic and political pressures evaporate, ideology is likely to play a greater role in the conduct of Egypt's foreign relations. Ideological objectives, however, will likely reflect nationalist, not Islamist, themes. Whether secular or Islamist, Egyptian political parties and societal entities commonly call for a foreign policy rooted in nationalist conceptions. The Muslim Brotherhood is no exception. "Over the course of contemporary Egyptian history, the Brothers had held themselves up as the ultimate nationalists," Steven Cook argues. Founded as an anti-imperialist movement opposing British domination of Egypt, the Brotherhood organization has consistently promoted nationalism as a means to protect Egypt from foreign influence and control.[123] President Morsi has continued this trend by infusing his public addresses and foreign policy initiatives with nationalist themes, aimed at restoring Egypt's regional leadership role.

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[123] Cook, *The Struggle for Egypt*, 315-316.

Nationalist ambitions are not, however, incompatible with pragmatic political objectives. Indeed, the Morsi government has pursued rent-seeking and alignment building objectives while simultaneously bolstering Egypt's international prestige and influence. Mediating the Gaza ceasefire and initiating the Syria quartet not only satisfied international and domestic audiences, but also enhanced Egypt's claim to regional leadership. As Egypt's domestic situation stabilizes and a legitimate political system emerges, a resurgent Egyptian nationalism will increasingly influence foreign policy objectives—but will not steer Egypt's foreign relations far from its current course.

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