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EGYPT – OLD ALLY, NEW STRATEGY

by

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Biography

COL Joshua D. Wright is a career regular Army officer and an academic year 2017 student at the Air War College, Air University, Maxwell AFB, AL. COL Wright is a graduate of Eastern Illinois University, earning a Bachelor of Science degree in geology. COL Wright is also a graduate of Troy University, earning a Master of Science degree in management leadership and organizational effectiveness. COL Wright has served as a commander at all levels of the Army through battalion and in staff assignments through the multinational and NATO level. COL Wright will command at the brigade level upon graduation from the Air War College.



Abstract

Arguably, since the end of the Cold War the United States has lacked a comprehensive and cohesive overarching organizing principle or grand strategy that prioritizes goals, identifies means, and applies the proper tools of power to guide the United States through the geopolitical challenges of the first half of the 21st century.¹ As a result, crucial decisions regarding war and peace are made on an ad hoc, muddling-through basis with mixed results at a significant cost in lives and treasure. The failings of international relations theory, the unmatched role of key individuals in developing and implementing a grand strategy of containment for the Cold War, and issues of statecraft are relevant contributing factors in maintaining this general condition.²

The United States can best support Egypt in its struggle against terrorist and insurgent forces in the Sinai by employing smart United States power because an appropriate mixture of developmental, diplomatic and defense assistance will further establish favorable democratic reform, provide for the defeat of violent extremist organizations and ensure lasting stability in the sub-region.

¹ See James R. Clapper, DNI "Unclassified Statement for the Record on the Worldwide Threat Assessment of the US Intelligence community for the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence," Statement for the Record, Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Washington, DC, January 31, 2012. Last accessed February 14, 2012 at http://www.dni.gov/testimonies/20120202_testimony_wta.pdf.

² Smart Power and US National Strategy, JSOU University Press, JSOU Report 13-3, MacDill AFB, Florida, 2013, Dr. Francisco Wong-Diaz, pg 6.

Introduction

At 0630 on Friday morning, the merchant ship Lundy approached the northern entrance to the Suez Canal, a routine task for the captain and crew, a task completed too many times to recall for this veteran crew. As the Lundy began to negotiate the entrance to the canal, the ship was rocked by two large explosions, one to the broad side just above the water line ripping a gaping hole in the ship's hull, another one on the stern destroying the ships propulsion capability. The Lundy was dead in the water, threatening to sink by beginning to list badly to the starboard side.

At the southern end of the Suez Canal, the USS Smith was approaching the southern canal holding zone, she was preparing to transit the canal to begin the final legs of her tour of duty in the Red Sea area of operations. The crew of the Smith were excited for their beginning journey home as the team just completed a series of successful missions in the region supporting anti-piracy missions as well as support to the multi-national effort to restore peace to Yemen. It was 0645 on Friday morning when the first of four anti-ship missiles rocked the USS Smith. The attack had emanated from the East and the normally quiet southern Sinai banks of the Canal Zone. The Smith was heavily damaged and on the verge of total loss as the crew battled to save the ship, again.

By 0900 hours on Friday morning, militants from a transregional violent extremist organization had seized key terrain in the Sinai Peninsula at Malta Pass, Port Said, and Ismailia. Funded and armed by state sponsored networks, this violent extremist organization not only seized key terrain, disrupted sea lines of communication, commercial traffic through the Suez Canal and Red Sea global commons but also employed anti-ship and anti-aircraft missile systems to consolidate its new found strangle hold on global commerce transiting the region.

Thesis

The United States can best support Egypt in its struggle against terrorist and insurgent forces in the Sinai by employing smart United States power because an appropriate mixture of developmental, diplomatic and defense assistance will further establish favorable democratic reform, provide for the defeat of violent extremist organizations and ensure lasting stability in the sub-region.

This essay will begin with a brief description of Sinai history, then discussion on traditional soft and hard power, then introduce the concept of smart power. Next, this essay will provide a description of the three elements of smart power followed by recommendation of strategies within each element that best support Egypt's efforts in the Sinai. Finally, this essay will summarize the recommendations in one holistic strategy.

Brief Sinai History

It is important to understand, at least at the cursory level, the modern struggle for control of the Sinai. In recent modern history the area was torn by war between Egypt and Israel witnessed by the indigenous peoples of the peninsula. The real modern day turbulence in the area began following the conclusion of World War II and the conclusion of the 1948 Arab-Israeli War that left the Arab world in turmoil. A million people had been turned into refugees and five years after the armistice there was little change, many feared a reopening of hostilities.³ Those fearing more hostilities would not have to wait long as the Revolution in Egypt would bring about more hostilities but also see the loss of backing from great western powers, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

The Revolution in Egypt began as a result of King Farouk, the tenth monarch of the dynasty that had begun with Muhammad Ali. King Farouk seemed to enjoy the glamorous lifestyle of monarchy with little regard for the grinding poverty of the *fellahin*. King Farouk was also considered a puppet for the United Kingdom and was consumed by corruption. All of these factors; lifestyle, puppet regime, corruption, compelled a group of Egyptian Armed Forces officers to create the Free Officers Movement to overthrow King Farouk.⁴ The movement was organized as a cell within the Muslim Brotherhood and remained secret even during the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. The movement announced the revolution on 22 July 1952 following a period of internal crisis, King Farouk was ordered to abdicate in favor of his son, Fuad II. General Gamal Abdel Nasser introduced a new constitution, forming a government based on pan-Arab nationalism and not Islamic principles.⁵

In June 1956, the Aswan Dam project gave rise to a new resurgent Egypt and the Suez Crisis. The project was an ambitious plan by the new Egyptian government to industrialize the country and provide a means to control the waters of the Nile River. The goals were to prevent annual flooding, manage irrigation, generate hydro-electric power and industrialize the nation.⁶ The United States and United Kingdom offered Egypt a \$270 million loan to finance the Aswan Dam project but conditions were attached to the deal. Those conditions meant that Egypt had to work with its neighbor Israel to solve the problems between the two countries. Egypt's leader, Nasser wanted United States military equipment and weapons at which the United States insisted that the equipment only be used for defense. The deal soured and with USSR backing the Egyptians conducted a military campaign to expel the United Kingdom from the Suez Canal zone.⁷

The region again saw conflict during the Six Day Wars of 1967 and again during the Yom Kippur War of 1973. "The Bedouins of the Sinai were stigmatized as collaborators of Israel's

fifteen-year occupation of the peninsula after the 1967 war, and some complain that Cairo continues to view them as a "potential fifth column," wrote Economist reporter Nicolas Pelham".⁸ In the end, diplomacy was sought by both the Arab Armies and the Israeli Army during the peace process known as the Camp David Accords of 1978. Two main results from the accords were that Israel returned the Sinai to the Egyptians and the Egyptians became the first Arab nation to officially recognize Israel as a nation.⁹ These two profound key points of diplomacy bring us to present state.

Since 1982 and the full activation of the Treaty of Peace and Protocol, the two states of Egypt and Israel have enjoyed an observed peace between nations and specifically on the peninsula that hosted the conflict between the two states.¹⁰ The triparty agreement between Egypt, Israel and the United States is monitored by the Multinational Force Observers (MFO) stationed throughout the Sinai Peninsula.

Smart Power

Since the end of the Cold War in 1991, the world has been dominated by the unipolar, sole superpower of the United States. Over the last decade, the US and the greater world community has seen an increasingly complex global security environment brought on by a number of factors such as energy, natural resources, cyber, terrorism, demographics, climate, sociopolitical disorders (globalization, lack/failed governance). We have seen a rise in the arc of instability which includes the Arab Spring, rise of violent extremist organizations (AQI, ISIS) and failed governments (Yemen, Libya, Syria). We are also witnessing the Asia pivot, not what we commonly would refer to as US foreign policy shift but rather the rise of Asian power – economic, diplomatic and military.

Arguably, since the end of the Cold War the United States has lacked a comprehensive and cohesive overarching organizing principle or grand strategy that prioritizes goals, identifies means, and applies the proper tools of power to guide the United States through the geopolitical challenges of the first half of the 21st century.¹¹ As a result, crucial decisions regarding war and peace are made on an ad hoc, muddling-through basis with mixed results at a significant cost in lives and treasure. The failings of international relations theory, the unmatched role of key individuals in developing and implementing a grand strategy of containment for the Cold War, and issues of statecraft are relevant contributing factors in maintaining this general condition.¹² To remain secure, economically viable and diplomatically relevant, the United States must emerge from this dark period and once again assume a responsible, measured and statecraft enabled leadership role in the region.

Statecraft is the art of the employment and inter-relationship of three key national levers; defense, diplomacy and development. The wielding of statecraft is much more than within one department of government, but rather the wielding of the whole of government in a synchronized and synergistic manner.

*Statecraft translates national interests and concerns into national goals and strategies. It is the strategy of power. It guides the ways the state deploys and applies its power abroad. These ways embrace the arts of war, espionage, and diplomacy. The practitioners of these three arts are the paladins of statecraft. The military are the fists of statecraft. Espionage is the sixth sense of the state. Spies are statecraft's hidden eyes, ears, and hands. Diplomats are statecraft's visible eyes, ears, and hands. They are the voice of their state in foreign lands. Diplomacy is the form that statecraft takes in times of peace.*¹³

A trinity of “hard, soft, and smart power” catchwords has entered the political lexicon in recent years regarding the nature, composition, and use of the toolbox of statecraft.¹⁴

The methods of employing statecraft are expressed in this essay as hard, soft and smart power. Soft power is indirect or coopted power behavior and is the ability to get what you want by attracting and persuading others to adopt your goals.¹⁵ Hard power is associated with realist and neorealist thinking as a strategic reliance on military power, economic sanctions and coercive diplomacy. Smart power is a synthesis of soft and hard power tools that reinforces or enables both in a manner that achieves national policy goals.

Egypt – Present Day

Egypt, like much of the Middle East region, is experiencing a large youth population that is under employed, under paid and underrepresented in local, regional and national level governmental systems. Egypt has seen an unemployment rate increase over the last several decades from 5.2 percent in 1980 to 12.8 percent in 2016.¹⁶ In addition to population growth, several other factors contribute to this rise, United States Agency for International Development (USAID) highlights a policy environment that is complicated, costly and time consuming, workforce development that lacks in real educational opportunities with linkages to employment opportunities, and lack of private sector innovation and growth through entrepreneurship.¹⁷ The unfortunate result is a large healthy, middle aged population that is not aptly prepared nor employed, resulting in discontent with elected officials at all levels. See Figure 1 for Egypt at a glance.

Figure 1 Egypt at a Glance¹⁸



Egypt at a Glance

Size: 16th Largest country in the world
 Population: 88,487,396 (July 2015 est.)
 Population under 25: 49.5% (2015 est.)
 Urban population: 43.1% total population (2015)
 Cairo (capital): 18.772 million; Alexandria: 4.778 million (2015)
 Population below the poverty line: 25.2% (2011 est.)
 Literacy: 73.8% total population (male: 82.2% female: 65.4%) (2015 est.)
 Youth Unemployment: 34.3% (2013 est.)
 Labor Force by occupation: agriculture: 29%, industry: 24%, services: 47% (2011 est.)



Development

The United States currently provides \$200 million in Economic Support Funds to the state of Egypt in the form of developmental aid allocated from the Egypt bilateral foreign assistance budget (FY2014). According to the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the United States has worked in partnership with Egypt for nearly four decades providing developmental aid to promote an environment where all groups within Egyptian society can live healthy and productive lives. Just USAID's program alone in Egypt has contributed nearly \$30 billion since 1978.¹⁹ Agriculture is a major component of the economy, accounting for 14.5 percent of GDP and 28 percent of all jobs (45 percent employed are women)

in the country.²⁰ Agriculture development is a large component with many subsets where great work has already taken hold. Agriculture development subsets include crop production, marketing, transport, storage capacity and workforce development. Understandably, this developmental focus on agriculture has taken place primarily in the Upper Egypt or the Nile River basin region. Similar developmental success may be feasible in the northern Sinai areas that border the Mediterranean Sea.

Defense

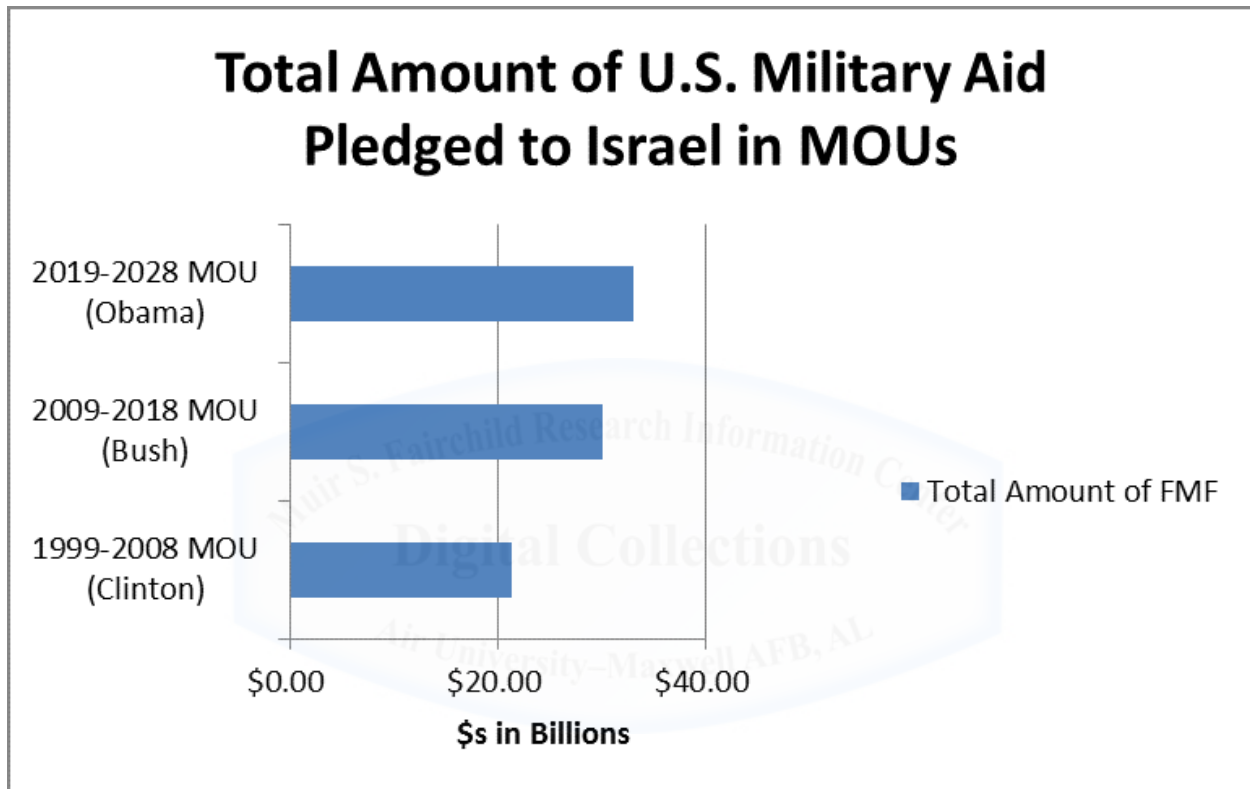
Successive U.S. Administrations have routinely justified aid to Egypt and Israel as an investment in regional stability, built primarily on long-running cooperation with the Egyptian and Israeli militaries and on sustaining the 1979 Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty.²¹

Between 1948 and 2015, the United States provided Egypt with \$76 billion in bilateral foreign aid (calculated in historical dollars—not adjusted for inflation), including \$1.3 billion a year in military aid from 1987 to the present.²² This investment to regional stability is not solely dedicated to the support of military aid to Egypt as investments to Israel certainly match in kind.

According to a December 2016 Congressional Research Report, Israel is the largest cumulative recipient of U.S. foreign assistance since World War II. To date, the United States has provided Israel \$127.4 billion (current, or non-inflation-adjusted, dollars) in bilateral assistance. Nearly all U.S. bilateral aid to Israel is in the form of military assistance, although in the past Israel also received significant economic assistance.²³ Most recently, the United States and Israel signed a new ten year memorandum of understanding on military aid to provide \$38 billion in military aid.²⁴ The United States administrations have demonstrated a desire to increase this aid over time, see Figure 2. President Clinton's administration orchestrated a deal

in excess of \$20 billion, President Bush in excess of \$25 billion and President Obama in excess of \$30 billion. The United States maintains a position to safeguard the Israeli state through military aid regardless of political affiliation of the US administration.

Figure 2 US Military Aid to Israel over Decades²⁵



Diplomacy

The United States currently provides full diplomatic capabilities to both Israel and Egypt to maintain full diplomatic capacity with the two countries. Two exceptions must be noted here. First, a lapse in diplomatic support during the Arab Spring events that occurred within Egypt. Second, the United States provides additional diplomatic capacity specifically in support of the MFO and the Treaty of Peace.

Recommendations - Smart Power

Defense

The United States provide in excess of \$1.3 billion in defense aid to the nation of Egypt. This aid comes in many forms; material, weapons, munitions, training, education and development through exercises.²⁶

The United States also contributes one third of the cost of implementation of the Treaty of Peace, roughly \$7 million annually. This cost is not the totality of maintaining strategic balance between the two countries, rather a figure contributed to the operational costs of ensuring the Treaty of Peace through the Multinational Force Organization. The mission remains a viable and necessary measure for the peace and stability between the nations, but there is room for adjustment provided the recommendations below are pursued.

Sinai Defense Strategies Recommendation 1

Since April 1982, the Multinational Force Observers have monitored the Treaty of Peace between Egypt and Israel. This multinational force, backed by the United States, largely serves as a mainstay of peace between the nations. This force should be retained but modified for efficiency.²⁷

The MFO is employed to observe, verify and report potential violations of the Treaty of Peace and Agreed Activities and facilitate military dialogue between Egypt and Israel, to build trust, enhance transparency, and support enduring peace between Egypt and Israel in the Sinai Peninsula.²⁸ The MFO works for the countries of Egypt and Israel to impartially and transparently verify treaty compliance. As such, the MFO provides a mechanism for dialogue

between the parties. Since 2014, the MFO has executed its operations within a kinetic operational environment.

The Sinai Bedouin tribes have felt marginalized since at least 1982, a time period corresponding to the complete withdrawal of Israeli forces and the assumption of the MFO mission. The Sinai Bedouins have endured at least two major periods of combat operations for the control of the Sinai, 1967 and 1973 Arab Israeli Wars. During these conflicts, Egyptian leadership viewed the Bedouin tribes as facilitators or sympathizers for the Israeli military campaigns in the region. Whether this allegation is true or not is beyond the scope here, but is a key factor to the rise of violence in the area. As a result, the Wilayat Sinai (WS) emerge as a manifestation of the perceived marginalization. The Wilayat Sinai are most active in the northern cities of Sheikh Zuweid, Rafah and Al Arish within the Northern Sinai and adjacent to the Israeli and Gaza Strip borders. Wilayat Sinai has conducted limited activities in the central and southern zones of the Sinai Peninsula. The organization is assessed as a capable insurgent force with a history of successful attacks against Egyptian Army and Security Forces.²⁹

It is important to understand that even though the MFO operates in a kinetic operational environment, the MFO does not operate within a failed state therefore does not perform a variety of operational tasks common to the current generation of service members. The MFO does not perform counter insurgency operations, nor counter terrorism operations. The MFO is not directly involved in counter Islamic State operations, nor does the MFO provide security force assistance or building partner capacity.³⁰

The MFO modifications for efficiency should enable the protection of the force, facilitate counter terrorism operations by Egyptian Armed and Security Forces and ensure the main responsibilities of the MFO are maintained. In the Sinai Northeastern area of operations, known

as Zone C, see Map 1, MFO forces should maintain capabilities to monitor the Treaty of Peace through a light physical footprint but employ enhanced ISR capabilities to execute key monitoring responsibilities. An example of this modification would be a command, control and communication capability that employs a range of sensors placed in former observation posts to perform the task remotely with less physical presence. The task at hand is to convert manned observation of key routes entering and exiting Zone C with technical observation capabilities that provide similar capabilities as existing manned observation towers. An example of equipment necessary includes a solar power system, 11 meter fixed or 60 meter deployable tower, line of site communication network, closed circuit television cameras, servers and monitoring stations. This effort safeguards MFO forces but also enables the maintenance of responsibilities at the same time providing maneuver space for Egyptian Armed Forces to conduct counter insurgent operations.

Map 1: Sinai Zone C³¹



Sinai Defense Strategies Recommendation 2

Since 2014 the Sinai Peninsula has experienced the rise of Wilayat Sinai, an insurgent organization operating predominately in the Northeastern area of the peninsula. Since this rise, Egyptian authorities have requested increased military capabilities to be deployed into the area. The request sent to the parties of the Treaty of Peace, Israel and United States, was approved for the purpose of countering this movement and returning stability to the area. Egyptian efforts so far against this threat have yielded marginal progress and may be hampered by the counter terrorism approach utilized by the Egyptians.

The United States can better support Egyptian Armed Forces in the region by forming a Joint Task Force dedicated to supporting Egyptian Armed Forces and government objectives in the Sinai region. The development of a joint task force should be done with the following considerations in mind; authorities, responsibilities, capabilities, command-control-coordination, and guidance. This framework will be useful for strategic leaders to frame the problem with associated options to provide assistance to the Egyptian government. In this sense, authorities refers to the legal directives or permission to execute the specific mission. Responsibilities refers to the actual responsibilities and/or accountability afforded in the legal permission to execute the mission. Capabilities refers to the resources required to conduct the mission. Command-control-communication refers to the defined and approved organizational and command structure necessary to exercise unity of command and effort over the missions. Guidance refers to the issuance of clear advice or information provided by a higher authority to conduct the mission.³²

The Joint Task Force will require authorities from the Egyptian government in the form of a formal request for assistance in combating terrorists and/or insurgents in the Sinai Peninsula.

This formal request should also include a status of forces agreement to enable the joint task force to conduct operations by, with and through Egyptian Armed Forces. The Egyptian request will have to be approved by a responsible national command authority, Secretary of Defense, President of the United States. The Secretary of Defense can support the request and generate the Joint Task Force from existing US authorities to combat ISIS, formally known as Operation Inherent Resolve. It is the Operation Inherent Resolve that will provide the JTF with the necessary authorities to operate.

The Joint Task Force will have the responsibility to support counter insurgent and counter terrorism operations within the geographic area known as the Sinai Peninsula. The JTF will be accountable to the Operation Inherent Resolve authority in the region. The JTF commander will be responsible to provide advise and assist functions to the partnered Egyptian Armed Forces conducting counter insurgency and counter terrorism operations. The JTF commander will be responsible to provide counter insurgency forces to assist the partnered Egyptian Armed Forces. The JTF commander will also be responsible for providing enabling functions to support the JTF. Finally, the JTF commander will be responsible to provide for the protection of the force while operating in the area.

The JTF will require capabilities to provide advise and assist, counter insurgency operations, force protection, joint fires, joint sustainment, joint mission command, and partnered operations. The full range of possibilities for this JTF is beyond the scope of this recommendation but should be enough to thoroughly execute the mission profile assigned. As a general rule, the capabilities aligned to this JTF should not exceed that of a present day US Army brigade combat team, rather the totality of the capabilities should be less than a brigade combat team, anything more would unnecessarily strain US Army wide brigade combat team readiness.

The JTF will require command-control-coordination along three lines of effort. The JTF will be subordinate to the Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve commander with reporting responsibilities to the CJTF OIR HQ in Jordan. The command structure will be formed of a base line joint task force. The joint task force will contain a JTF headquarters complete with joint staff functions and command section. The JTF will be led by a Colonel/O-6 task force commander. The JTF will be composed of and control a an advise and assist battalion, a combined arms battalion (organized for counter insurgency), a joint fires battalion, and a sustainment battalion. Each battalion level organization will be led by a LTC/O-5.

Development

The United States can provide better support to Egypt, specifically in the Sinai, by explicitly providing developmental aide that produces economic micro engines as a result directly benefiting the people of the peninsula. Sinai Peninsula economics can be considered a micro economy or can be viewed as a subset of the larger Egyptian economic system. The settled population is engaged in agriculture, land reclamation, pastoralism, petroleum, mining, fishing and tourism industries. The Egyptian government should simultaneously pursue a program of reconciliation with the indigenous people of the Sinai to repair perceptions and grievances leftover from the 1967 war. "The United States and Israel were telling Mubarak for years that neglect of the Sinai was going to come back to haunt them," says CFR Senior Fellow Steven Cook. High-profile bombings of resorts between 2004 and 2006, which had a combined death toll of about 130, as well as a spate of clashes between Bedouins and police, tourist kidnappings, and other smaller attacks occurred after two decades of what were seen as malign policies.³³

Belgian exploration specialists M. de Bay and M. Barois were hired by the Egyptian government in 1883 to explore for oil in Ras Gemsa. After surveying the area, de Bay and his

team began drilling in November 1885 and struck oil with De Bay Well Number One yielding 10 barrels per day of oil and gas production.³⁴ Later discoveries by American geologists in the same area yielded little more benefit, left the effort in debt and caused the Egyptian government to suspend exploration until 1908.³⁵ Petroleum was first discovered in 1910 at Mount Tanakah in west Sinai. Egypt has been fortunate in 2015 due to a sizeable gas discovery, which will change the market dynamics in favor of the country. The government will need to encourage an increase in efficiency and diversification of domestic usage to improve stability.³⁶ The industry lacks reliable inter-peninsula transport to move the petroleum to ports in the Northern Sinai.

The mining industry is capable of extracting numerous mineral ores, those considered feasible for exploitation include manganese, uranium, building stones, dolomite, sands and gravels. Mineral ores account for diminishing annual revenue due to violence in the Sinai, but are capable of supporting a workforce of young workers. The industry lacks reliable inter-peninsula transport to move the mineral ores to ports in the Northern Sinai.

Nomadic Bedouin tribes migrate in search of water and pasturage but are increasingly attracted to industry and agriculture. This indigenous population provides a viable labor force in both industry and agriculture sectors but some skilled labor training must be accounted for when considering this labor force option.

In the agricultural industry, recent land reclamation and irrigation efforts using ground water and water pumped from the Nile River have enabled thousands of acres of land in the Northern coastal plain to be cultivated. Barley, fruits, market vegetables, dates, and olives are produced. Wood trees have been recently planted to establish small wood tree forests in the same region. The development of agricultural trade schools and skills development to enable the employment

of efficient farming practices is underway in the Nile River region. Similar water restoration efforts are underway by, with and through USAID and the Northern Sinai Initiative.

Sinai Developmental Strategies Recommendation 1

The development of water desalination plants in key locations within the five tribal regions will drive stability in the agricultural and pastoralism career fields, increase indigenous population viability, decrease reliance on imported fruits, vegetables, meats and will open export markets to Egypt proper, Gaza and Israel thus connecting the peninsula to its internal and external neighbors through viable and legal economic trade. These efforts will serve to reduce unemployment and also return the indigenous peoples of the peninsula back to their historic way of life. Currently, the USAID's North Sinai Initiative provides an illustrative example. The North Sinai project "increases access to potable water and improves sanitation for residents in the restive North Sinai area, where access to clean water and sanitation services is scarce."³⁷

The project has improved water access and infrastructure through the drilling of deep wells; construction of desalination plants, potable water transmission and distribution lines, and water reservoirs; as well as procurement of water distribution trucks.³⁸ The North Sinai Initiative is a bilateral agreement with a projected project life from October 2014 through September 2017. The project is estimated to cost \$50 million.³⁹ As this project comes to completion this fiscal year, it is important to ensure nesting developmental projects begin to take shape.

Nesting projects include agricultural development focused on reclaiming agricultural lands from the desert, training and employing smart farming skills-knowledge and equipment, developing water storage capacity and long haul capabilities and trading mechanisms in the North Sinai region is essential to leverage the development gained from the North Sinai

Initiative. Nesting projects will also include the installation of modern waste water treatment and sewage programs. This effort will decrease mortality rates in children while increasing generally population quality of health.⁴⁰

Sinai Developmental Strategies Recommendation 2

The development of natural resource reserves, petroleum and minerals, in the peninsula will drive employment opportunities at the point of extraction but also in transportation and port sectors as well. This development will again sever a key driver of instability in the region – place employment in the hands of a large, youthful population and also increase export trade with regional actors such as Israel, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), Palestine, Libya, Chad, etc. in an effort to tie together regional actors better through economic stability.

The development of natural resources is not limited to fossil fuels and ores, rather should also include the development of renewable energy sectors. The peninsula can leverage two great attributes to harness energy from nature, the wind and the sun. Annual sunlight in the peninsula is in no short supply. This vast yield of solar energy should be used to provide virtually free energy to the population of the peninsula and sold in the energy market to neighbors in Palestine (Gaza Strip), Israel (Southern) and portions of KSA. Trade winds blanket the peninsula with predictable winds in sufficient quantity to support a number of wind turbine fields in the western, northern and southern regions of the peninsula. Again, this energy yield can be used to provide relatively cost free energy to the people and support energy trade with neighbors.

Diplomatic

The United States can provide better support to Egypt, specifically in the Sinai, by explicitly providing diplomatic support/aide that produces sound culturally sensitive democratic necessities as an enriching benefit for the people of the peninsula.

For millennia the Sinai Peninsula has served as a bridge. A land bridge for people moving from one continent to another, but also a metaphysical bridge between man and God. The forbearers of the three great monotheistic religions are all said to have sought refuge in this Sinai desert. Moses received the word of God from the burning bush, spent 40 years roaming the Sinai desert, and received the Ten Commandments at Mt. Sinai, the current home of the oldest Christian Monastery in the world – St. Catherine’s Monastery. Muhammad took refuge in the Sinai, during the seventh century and lived at St. Catherine’s Monastery.⁴¹

Sinai Peninsula Culture, People, Tribes, Religion. Bedouin tribes, largest permanent party population at a total estimated to be less than one million. The sparsely populated North and South Sinai are home to 550,000 people, or 0.7 percent of Egypt's population, on a landmass comprising six percent of Egyptian territory.⁴²

The Sinai is divided into two administrative areas, called muhafazahs or governorates; Shamal Sina (North) and Janub Sina (South). In a sense, the two administrative areas provide greater Egypt with a buffer from their neighbors, the Israelis and the Palestinians. This buffer has recently become a hot spot for dissent and also a home for violent extremist’s organizations with loose affiliation to ISIS. Hence the buffer previously afforded by these two administrative areas is in jeopardy. The choices are clear, manage the VEOs in a protracted low level conflict placing high risk on the population and economic viability or defeat the VEOs through a clear, hold and build approach that renders the two administrative areas better off in the end.

The United States should convene reoccurring Middle East peace talks involving the following countries; United States, GCC, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon and Palestine. The Six talks can and should be held in a variety of locations beginning in the United States and rotated as appropriate through the other contributing nations. The Middle East peace process has languished in recent years, since 2014, due to a variety of other competing global events but at this time provides a mechanism for world powers and their respective leaders to convene to solve the greatest global humanitarian crisis of our time. The process should be focused solely on a viable two state solution that provides viable co-existence for peoples of the region.

Middle East policy objective one should be the clear and recognized right of sovereignty of both the Palestine and Israel states. This should be held by the world powers as non-negotiable, each world power declaring in writing to support both states through defense, diplomacy and development.

Middle East policy objective two should be to create a deliberate pathway to conduct reconciliation between the Egyptian government and the Sinai tribes. This effort should be put forth as a democratic alternative to the violence plaguing the region currently. The efforts can be supported by regional and global interested powers so that effective governance, development and representative democratic principles are applied. The tribes involved in violent uprising and providing lethal aid and support to VEOs must discontinue these activities in trade for the democratic process. As a result, the two administrative areas of the Sinai should be granted full and inclusive access to the internal Egyptian democratic process. The elected Sinai provincial leaders should be afforded the responsibility to govern the areas as other elected officials do throughout Egypt.

Middle East policy objective three should be to counter ultra-right religious promotion of violence toward non-Muslim peoples. The only voices in this objective that will carry the weight of tolerance, respect and dignity for all is that of the senior clergy and senior national officials in the Middle East nations. As Egyptian President Al-Sisi recently stated to the clerics of Al-Azhar, the world's oldest Sunni University, "Is it possible that 1.6 billion people (Muslims) should want to kill the rest of the world's inhabitants – that is 7 billion – so that they themselves may live? Impossible! I say and repeat again that we are in need of a religious revolution. You, Imams, are responsible before Allah".⁴³



Conclusion

The United States can best support Egypt in its struggle against terrorist and insurgent forces in the Sinai by employing smart United States power because an appropriate mixture of developmental, diplomatic and defense assistance will defeat violent extremist organizations and ensure lasting stability in the sub-region.

The United States should maintain defense assistance to Egypt in the form of support to the Treaty of Peace, specifically to the Multi-National Force Observers, as a vehicle to maintain peace between Egypt and Israel. The United States should also actively pursue with Egypt the formation of a US Joint Task Force to better assist Egyptian Armed Forces in the defeat of violent extremist organizations operating in the Sinai Peninsula. The JTF will not only enable the defeat of VEOs in the region but also help to ensure the vital sea line of communication, Suez Canal, for global economic commerce.

The United States should consolidate defense recommendation gains in the improved security situation to bring sustainable developmental progress to the Sinai. The United States through its various alliances can wield impactful developmental progress in hydrological, agricultural, mineral and tourist fields to bring viable economic stability to the Sinai while connecting regional neighbors together economically. The developmental efforts will also significantly reduce the economic strain on the Egyptian government of a vastly unemployed youth population.

The United States once again should provide the bulwark of diplomatic leadership in the region to bring other powerful nations together to positively influence the stability in the region.

Together, powerful nations can accommodate, mediate and negotiate peaceful agreements to decade's old wicked problems so that the region can return to diplomacy, economic growth and viability, and globalization.

³ Kerr, Gordon, A Short History of the Middle East, Old Castle Books LTD, 2016, pg 135.

⁴ Kerr, Gordon, A Short History of the Middle East, Old Castle Books LTD, 2016, pg 136.

⁵ Kerr, Gordon, A Short History of the Middle East, Old Castle Books LTD, 2016, pg 137.

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