

U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO EGYPT: SEPARATING FACT FROM FICTION



Updated July 2020

THE QUICK & DIRTY DETAILS:

The United States has provided the Egyptian military with **\$51 billion in military aid** since 1979.

American taxpayers provide Egypt with **\$3.56 million/day | \$1.3 billion/year.**



Since 1985, all U.S. military aid to Egypt has been provided as grants (which do not have to be repaid).

And in 1990, the George H.W. Bush administration forgave all of Egypt's military debt—**\$7.1 billion**—in the lead up to the First Gulf War.

Egypt is the **2nd largest recipient of Foreign Military Financing (FMF)** funds after Israel. It receives more than **20%** of global FMF funds—and more than all countries in Europe, East Asia, Africa, and Latin America combined.



Egypt has tended to **buy equipment that is irrelevant or inappropriate** for its security challenges, including air defense, air-to-air combat, large naval vessels, and heavy armor equipment using U.S. assistance.



Congressional legislation has included human rights and political reform conditions for Egypt's military aid since 2008. In the FY20 appropriation law, **Congress conditioned \$300 million of FMF on human rights.**

A 2020 report by the U.S. Department of State reiterated that the Egyptian government has refused repeated U.S. requests to observe usage of U.S.-provided equipment in northeastern Sinai, where Egypt has been accused of employing **scorched-earth tactics** against the local civilian population.



There are credible reports that Egypt has used U.S. equipment in the commission of **extra-judicial killings.**



FACT & FICTION:

FICTION: *"The United States is required to provide Egypt a certain level of military aid by the 1978 Camp David Accords and the 1979 Egypt-Israel Treaty of Peace."*

FACT: Neither the Camp David Accords nor the Treaty of Peace commits the United States to providing any military assistance to Egypt. At the time of the Peace Treaty, U.S. officials informally established a 3:2 ratio between military assistance to Israel and Egypt, but this is not codified and the United States never indicated this arrangement would continue indefinitely.

FICTION: *"With U.S. military assistance, the U.S. receives preferential, head-of-the-line passage through the Suez Canal."*

FACT: The U.S. Navy, just like other militaries using this waterway, pays for each and every transit out of its own coffers. These payments are separate from the annual \$1.3 billion in military aid. The Egyptian authorities sometimes allow the U.S. Navy to give short notice ahead of a transit, but other countries may receive the same treatment.

FICTION: *"The aid provided by the United States is crucial to Egypt's fight against terrorism."*

FACT: In reality, the Egyptian military spends U.S. taxpayer-funded aid on a variety of systems unrelated to counterterrorism. For example, Egypt has acquired 1,300 M1A1 Abrams tanks with U.S. assistance; many sit unused in open-air warehouses.

FICTION: *"Egypt requires U.S. aid in order to afford U.S.-manufactured equipment."*

FACT: The Egyptian military has agreed to purchase military equipment with its own money (\$34 billion alone between 2012 and 2015) from countries including Russia, France, and Italy; this funding could have been used to procure U.S. equipment.

FICTION: *"American jobs supported by Egyptian purchases of U.S. equipment and weapons are irreplaceable."*

FACT: Other countries would be eager to spend more on U.S.-origin items if Congress appropriated more military aid for them.