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Egypt Security Sector Reforms

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I. Introduction

Exploring the field of security sector reforms in Egypt is a vital mission in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals at the Egyptian level. The Arab Reform Initiative, a non-governmental organization linking together ten partner organizations among which the Al Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies, held a workshop on this issue in Cairo in March 2008. It was attended by representatives from the Arab world, as well as from Egypt. It focused on a comprehensive agenda regarding security and development¹. In line with this workshop and the overall goals of the Arab Reform Initiative, this research is an attempt to analyze the security sector in Egypt, and the reforms it requires if the recent national, regional and international challenges are to be addressed.

Security is a fundamental prerequisite for improving the everyday life of Egyptians, reducing poverty, promoting economic and social development. It is also essential for the protection of human rights and the improvement of governance. In Egypt, the security sector constitutes the major contributor to personal and state safety; it enables access to social services and political processes. With its diverse components, it is a core government responsibility. In general, inappropriate security structures and mechanisms can lead to weak governance, instability and violent conflict, since the functions performed by the security sector in any society aren't only to protect the society and assure its survival on the short run, but also to guarantee its components are competitive and effective on the long run.

In studying the security sector reforms in Egypt, this research will adapt and apply the theoretical framework initiated by the Geneva

Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) for Studies of the Security Sector in Developing Countries². It is also essential to understand the legal framework that governs the mission of the security sector in Egypt³, and the possibilities of reforming it.

The study will adopt Chutter's definition of the security sector⁴ and adapt it to the specificity of the Egyptian case since the regime has used the security sector as a privileged power to protect its status in Egypt. In fact, this was the case in certain incidents that will be further elaborated in the paper. As for the security sector reform, the research will adopt DAC guidelines established by the OECD in 2005⁵. The research tends to apply

² The theoretical framework of the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces for Studies of the Security Sector in Developing Countries is based on the following criteria: description of the security apparatus and its functioning in the country under review, analyzing challenges to Security Sector governance, investigating the civil management and control of the security apparatus, in addition to the reforms possibility and requirements from a legislative and applicable perspective. (DCAF 2004)

³ The legal approach will analyze the legal framework of the components of the security sector and whether there is an overlap, cooperation, competition, and possibilities of reforms being manifested.

⁴ Chutter Definition to The Security Sector "of all those institutions whose primary role is the provision of internal and external security, together with bodies responsible for their administration, tasking and control. In practice, this means the military, the police, the intelligence services, paramilitary forces and the government agencies responsible for them". (Chutter 2006: 6)

⁵ DAC guide lines established by OECD in 2005: 'Security System Reform' is a term used to describe the transformation of the 'security system' – which includes all the actors, their roles, responsibilities and actions – working together to manage and operate the system in a manner that is more consistent with democratic norms and sound principles of good governance, and thus contributes to a well-functioning security framework." (OECD 2005)

¹ Workshop Report, Security and Development: Case Study Egypt, Egypt: Arab Initiative, Egypt: 2-3 March 2008: <http://arab-reform.net/spip.php?article5010>.

the specific criteria of effective security sector in examining the security sector in Egypt⁶.

I – Description of the Security Sector in Egypt

This section will first describe the Egyptian security sector by focusing on its performance, composition, hierarchical structure, size, and budget, as illustrated in four main components: the Military, the Police, the Central Security Forces, and the General Intelligence Service. It will elaborate on the legislative framework within which the functions assigned to the security sector have maintained in: the constitution, the laws and procedures applied. The extent of cooperation, coordination and competition among the four components of the security sector as well as the legislative, judicial, and executive powers will be reviewed. The paper will also address the legislative framework of the security sector as regards both soft and hard threats.

To fulfill the later purpose the following questions will be addressed: do the four components of the Egyptian security sector exert mutual control over each other, and how? Is there a clear division of labor among actors of the external security sector (i.e. the Military and the General Intelligence Agency) and internal security actors (i.e. the Police, Central Security Forces and partially the

⁶ Specific Criteria of Effective Security Sector: The core values for SSR are to be people-centered, locally-owned and based on democratic norms and internationally accepted human rights principles and on the rule of law. They should seek to contribute to an environment characterized by freedom from fear. SSR should be seen as a framework to structure thinking about how to address diverse security challenges facing populations and states through more integrated development and security system reform policies. It should also be managed according to the same principles of accountability and transparency that apply across the public sector in particular through greater civil oversight of security processes. As far as possible, SSR processes should address the three core requirements of a well-functioning security system which are cooperation, coordination, and effectiveness (OECD 2005: 21, 22)

General Intelligence Agency)? Are these role assignments respected? Which safeguards are supposed to prevent the use of the Egyptian security sector by members of the government against their domestic political opponents, be they opposition political parties, NGOs, or groups with a religious background such as the Muslim Brotherhood? Does the Egyptian government report on security matters to the parliament and/or to the public on a regular basis? What are the processes for approving the budget of the various government agencies and for auditing expenditure?

1. The Military

The military is one of the four components of the security sector in Egypt. It is headed by the president of Egypt, acting as the Supreme Commander of the armed Forces, and under him by the Commander in Chief (the minister of Defense) and the Chief of Staff. The social composition of the Egyptian army is the result of obligatory military conscription, which brings together soldiers from different social classes. Yet most officers, especially those serving in the General command of the armed forces, come from the military command line, which ensures a good level of social cohesion. No restrictions on religious background have been imposed in the social composition of the armed forces. The officers of the armed forces represent a cross-section of the Egyptian society (Bakr, Saif, 2008).

Connections based on school and family ties — *shillas*⁷ — remain important for advancement and as a source of competition. Despite these differences, the Egyptian command mechanism has always been capable of acting decisively and coherently at key moments (Cook 2008: p.7). The period of time between the defeat of Egypt in 1967 and the 1973 war provided very good lessons. At the external level, Egypt was part of the Desert Storm coalition formed in 1991 to

⁷ “*Shillas*”: peer group network, or kinship that supports in work advancement, not necessarily in exchange of favours.

liberate Kuwait after the Iraqi invasion. At the internal level, the Egyptian Army interfered three times during the last three decades in order to restore stability in the streets, but without an excessive use of force. This was first illustrated on 17 and 18 January 1976, at the time of food riots; then during March 1987 riots, when the Central Security Forces rebelled against their accommodation conditions; and for the third time, more recently, in Summer 2008, upon the bread

scarcity crisis, when the military interfered by providing and distributing bread to all deprived areas. Such intervention meant that the armed forces constituted the last resort for defending the legitimacy of the regime. During the above-mentioned incidents, only the armed forces were capable of handling the crises, but it is noteworthy that they didn't use any unnecessary excessive force; the armed forces used and employed minimal legally sanctioned force to quell the three crises.

The following table shows the distribution of the armed forces' staff by corps, compared to the overall population in 2004.

Egypt	Population	Military	Naval Forces	Air Forces	Total
Figures	71,931000	320,000	20,0000	30,000	370,000

(Sipri 2005: p.242)

As for the military expenditure of Egypt, it is showed in the following table

Year	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Million L.E	7164	7986	8154	8312	8312	9124	9975	10717	11824	134000

(Sipri 2005)

In 2009, Egypt's military expenditure amounted to USD 5.85 billion (in addition to USD 1.3 billion of US military aid), which represents 3.12 % of GDP⁸. In July 2009, the Egyptian population was estimated to 83,082,869⁹.

⁸ See <http://www.janes.com/articles/Janes-Sentinel-Security-Assessment-North-Africa/Defense-budget-Egypt.html>.

⁹ See <http://www.all-about-egypt.com>.

The Naval Forces: The Egyptian Navy is a branch of the Egyptian Armed Forces. The navy's missions include protection of more than 2,000 kilometers of coastline of the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea, defense of the Suez Canal, and support for army operations. The navy is formed of about 20,000 personnel, including the Coast Guard members. The navy's most significant action occurred in October 1967, a few months after the cease-fire, when an Egyptian missile boat

sank one of Israel's two destroyers in Egyptian territorial waters off Port Said. The blockade by Egypt of ships heading toward Israel through the Strait of Tiran helped precipitate the June 1967 War. In the October 1973 War, Egypt blocked commercial traffic to Elat in the Gulf of Aqaba¹⁰. The Egyptian Navy Shipyard is located in Ras-El-Tin Alexandria (Egypt). It is able to conduct many types of ship repairs for the military and civilian ships.

The Air Force was established on May 22, 1932, at Hatfield airfield. The first flight was performed by five Egyptian planes that took off with 3 Egyptian pilots along with two British pilots and landed at Almaza Airbase in Cairo. In 1932, a British squadron leader called Colonel "Victor Tit" was appointed as the first commander of the Egyptian Air Force. The High School for Flying was established in 1938, during the British occupation of Egypt. This necessitated the presence of instructors, technicians, training aircraft and curriculum. The cadets of the school were from army, police and non-commissioned officers who were medically fit for flying¹¹. When Egypt initiated the October 1973 War, the air force had been much prepared for its mission. Egypt's air reconnaissance along the Suez Canal and its air strikes against Israeli strong points provided essential support to the ground forces that were crossing the canal. Egypt currently has the largest air force in the Arab world, with over 550 airplanes from the US, France, Russia and China, as well as aircraft manufactured in Egypt¹².

The Air Defense: The establishment of the Egyptian Air Defense Artillery goes back to

¹⁰ See <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/egypt/navy.htm>.

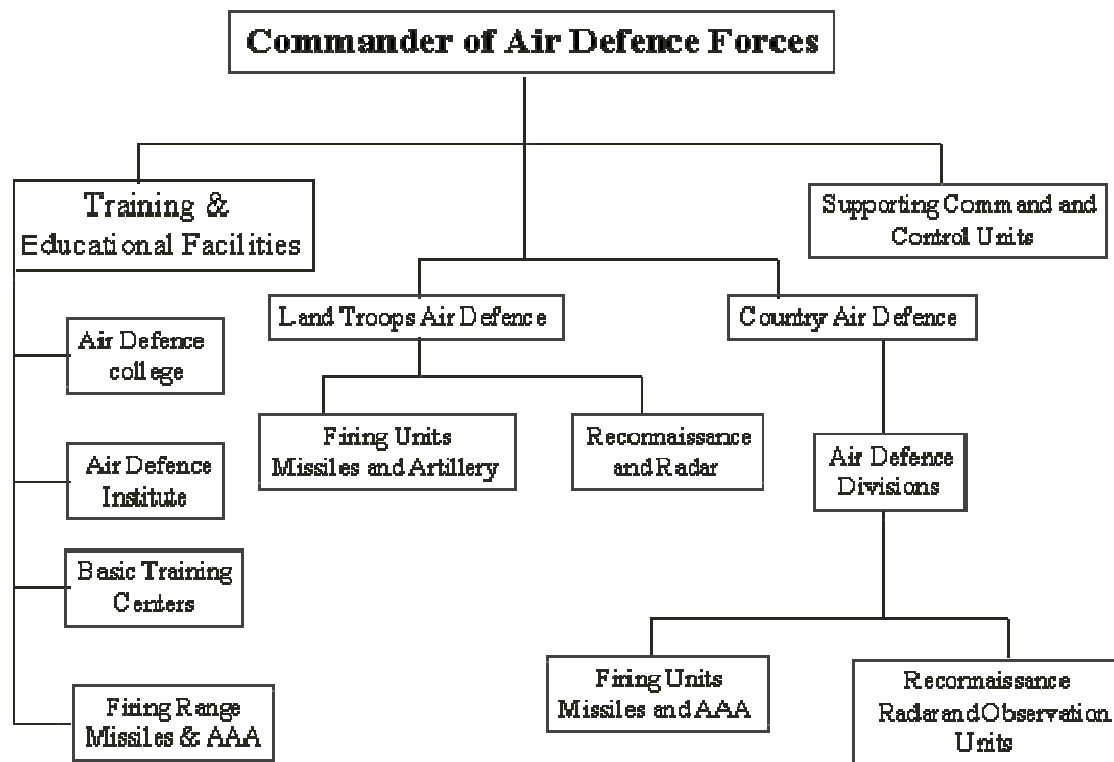
¹¹ See the Ministry of Defense website: <http://www.mmc.gov.eg>.

¹² See also <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/egypt/airforce.htm>.

the period preceding World War II. In 1938, the Air Defense Artillery was formed as a main component of the artillery service when the British 3-inch Cannon went into service. The air defense artillery elements took part in securing Cairo and the seaport of Alexandria during World War II. Since then, it has developed to reach the following structure¹³:

¹³ See the Ministry of Defense website: <http://www.mmc.gov.eg>.

Organization of Air Defence Forces



(Ministry of Defense Site: <http://www.mmc.gov.eg/>)

After the June 1967 war, the Air Defense Forces was introduced as a new military corps. The Air Defense Organization works in integration with other military services. It has been equipped with all the necessary elements to ensure the complete protection of the Egyptian air space and guarantee efficient engagement at different ranges, altitudes and under all environmental conditions.

The Air Defense College covers continuing upgrading of engineering subjects, electronic circuits and mathematical problems, electronic designs and drawings, automating as well as data processing and reporting using main scales computer systems, and continuity of upgrading transitional materials that links engineering subjects and practical training for the final year students. The logistic side in the Air Defense Forces covers all the logistical

concerns of the combatants, as well as the enhancement of their living conditions¹⁴.

2. The Police

The second component of the Egyptian security sector is the Police. On the top of this component is the Minister of the Interior. The ministerial system in Egypt dates back to 1805 when Mohamed Ali Basha, the ruler of Egypt (*Wali Misr*) established a department (*Dewan*) called the Ruler's Department (*Dewan al-Wali*) with a specific mandate "to keep law and order in the city (the Capital) and settle disputes that may arise among the citizens and the foreigners alike". On 25

¹⁴ See the Ministry of Defense website: <http://www.mmc.gov.eg>.

February 1857, Mohamed Said Basha issued a decree upgrading three departments (Interior, War and Finance) to the level of ministries with a minister appointed for each.

The general mandate of the Police states its mission is to preserve public order, security and morals; protect lives, honors and properties as well as to prevent crimes and seize criminals. It is also responsible for providing tranquility and security to all citizens in all fields, and for performing all the duties stipulated by laws and regulations¹⁵. Police Authority is divided into major and regional sectors formed by virtue of a decision issued by the Minister of Interior. Each sector is headed by a First Assistant/Assistant to the Minister. The president of each sector might be assisted by one (or more) vice-president to act on his behalf when he is absent. Competences of the vice-president(s) of the sector are detailed by virtue of a decision issued by the Minister of Interior. The Minister of Interior must be a descendant of Egyptian parents and a graduate of Police College¹⁶.

The legislative framework governing the functioning of the Police is as follows: article n°184 of the Egyptian Constitution specifies the nature and competences of Police Authority. It stipulates that "police are a civilian disciplinary authority, the supreme commander of which is the President of the Republic"; it performs its functions and competences under the leadership of the Minister of Interior, who issues all the decisions regulating its affairs and ways of working.

The Police Authority has played several roles inside Egypt. It has not only maintaining the security internally, but also externally by taking part in several UN Peace Keeping

¹⁵ Article 3 of the Police Authority Law n°109 of 1971, as amended.

¹⁶ See the Ministry of Interior website: <http://www.moiegypt.gov.eg/English>.

Forces in conflict areas (it has generally showed great excellence in this domain). The Police Authority has most of the time been accused of human rights abuses by the media, in addition to its role in managing national elections.

3. The Central Security Forces

The third component of the Egyptian security sector is the Central Security Forces (CSF). Their soldiers and civilian agents are deployed in the city centers and around critical locations such as foreign embassies or public universities in order to maintain peace and order. In 1986, the Central Security Forces showed discontent of their living conditions and payments. This discontent was expressed in an extremely violent and destructive manner during demonstrations in Cairo. In return, the executive system showed cooperative feedback by improving the Central Security's payments and living conditions.

4. The General Intelligence Service (GIS)

The fourth component of the Security Sector in Egypt is the General Intelligence Agency (GIS). The decision to set up an Egyptian intelligence service was taken by President Gamal Abdel Nasser in 1954. The GIS did achieve many successes, a few of which were released and dramatized in Egyptian TV and Cinema. A famous Egyptian movie showed that the GIA managed to infiltrate Egyptian agents among Jewish immigrants to Israel and succeeded to hit an Israeli oil rig while being shipped from Canada to occupied Sinai in 1970. The major success of the GIS was the handling of an Egyptian deception plan during the 1973 October War. The GIS has also played a major role in curbing terrorism phenomena at the national and international level.

II – Cooperation and integration among the various components of the security sector and within the society

In Egypt, neither the Police nor various Central Intelligence Services nor the Ministry of Interior's paramilitary Central Security Forces constitute a rival force in front of the Armed forces. The Republican Guards are responsible for securing Cairo and the Egyptian leadership in the event of a crisis. From the perspective of the armed forces, quelling outbreaks of public disorder or chasing down extremists is strictly a police function. In general, there is a space of cooperation between the Police Authority and the Armed Forces when it is necessary. Like Sadat and Nasser before him, President Mubarak believed that the armed forces possess the organization, the capacity and the technology to protect the country and drive its social transformation. Historically there were few moments of tension between the three presidents and the military. On the contrary, the intimate association between the military and the presidency ensured the continuity of Egypt's political system until 2011.

The Egyptian armed forces gradually became involved in various aspects of the Egyptian society. The military clubs, hospitals, and stores are always open to the civilians. From the early 1980s, the military establishment actually carved out its own significant and lucrative portion of Egypt's commercial and industrial sectors through "land reclamation". The military succeeded in transforming desert areas into viable green lands for economic use. More recently, the military has moved into electronics services, tourism and the aviation sectors. It also bottles and markets one of Egypt's most popular brands of bottled water, "Safi". In addition, it built and has been running a factory of cement, which is a strategic commodity to a country like Egypt, planning to expand its infrastructure. Economists as well as security sector analysts have debated the economic activities of the military since they have been viewed as an intervention of the military in the civil life, and also as an unfair competition to the private sector – in addition to the fact that the taxation process of such activities was not clear yet. In 2008, as Egypt was facing a

bread shortage, President Mubarak called upon the military-owned bakeries to increase their output to meet the demand and reduce prices. The status of Egypt's governors also reflects the integration between civilians and military. More than half of Egypt's governors are coming from the military or the police.

Egypt is the most important manufacturer of weapons and military components among the Arab countries. The Armament Authority is responsible for selecting, developing, and procuring military systems. Acting on behalf of the military's branches, the Authority assigns production to domestic factories or contracts with external suppliers. The National Organization for Military Production within the Ministry of Military Production supervised a number of manufacturing plants. The organization was, in particular, a vehicle through which the military embarked upon partnerships with American defense contractors and other industrial giants. The organization, which falls under the supervision of the Minister of Defense, who is also the Minister of Military Production, has, for example, become responsible for manufacturing the M1A1 tank that is central to Egyptian and American efforts to modernize the Egyptian armed forces.

Concerning the Police, its integration within the Egyptian Society has recently experienced several moments of high tension with the NGOs and the press and media because of human rights abuses. Bloggers on the internet have used these incidents to shed light on corruption cases within the police sector. Police officers who were caught red-handed were subjected to the judicial system and indicted with severe punishments. However the main controversy remains concerning those whose human rights were infringed and were not able to bring their cases to the light. The same would apply to the Central Security forces that were used to curb uprisings by using violence. Several incidents of physical abuses were recorded and posted on the internet and the press.

III – Control Over the Security Sector in Egypt

The third section of this report explores the management and control of the security apparatus. This involves “making security forces accountable to democratically elected civilian authorities; general adherence to the rule of law — both domestic and international; making the security sector adhere to the same principles of financial management and transparency as the non-security sectors; creating and embedding clear lines of authority which establish civilian and democratic control of the military; building capacity within civilian government and civil society to scrutinize defense policy and creating an environment conducive to the participation of civil society in security matters; and ensuring that the training of professional soldiers is in line with the requirements of democratic societies” (Sayigh 2007: 4)

In the case of Egypt, civil society control is expected to play an important role in encouraging the state to fulfill its responsibilities transparently and accountably. Civil society often seeks to influence policy, provide an alternative analysis and help educate and inform policy-makers and the society at large. The range of functions includes advocacy, education, informal oversight, independent monitoring, policy support and service delivery. In the Egyptian case, both the laws and the bureaucracy often impede deep and meaningful involvement, notably by restricting NGO law 84 to the year 2002. In addition, the head of state in Egypt exercises direct control over policy and key appointments and is the arbiter of disputes over mandates and of expenditure (Sayigh 2007: p.17). Some military officers were routinely deployed to ministries, government agencies and localities to exercise political control on the Egyptian bureaucracy (Said 2007).

As for the legislative system control over the security sector in Egypt, the People's

Assembly is formally vested with wide-range of oversight powers on the military and security apparatus. However, there is no comprehensive real practice of actual oversight exercised on military and security establishments by the Assembly. The Egyptian Minister of Defense and Minister of Interior are formally required to make an annual presentation to the Assembly's Standing Committee on defense and national security, however in practice there is no real dialogue on security matters between the Parliament and the security authorities. Indeed, the Parliament lacks the intellectual and technical capacity to discuss military and security matters (Said 2007). In Egypt, the Assembly is constitutionally authorized to oversee defense budgets.

A further explanation for the lack of control on the Egyptian military raised by a number of observers is the experience of the military in running a large defense industry, operating in the agricultural, touristic, real estate, and manufacturing sectors and actively competing in the civilian economy. Although these activities are legal, it is not clear how much they are subjected to outside audit, and reveal of its turnover and profits, including pays taxes (Sayigh 2007: 26).

IV – Challenges Confronting the Security System in Egypt

This section of the paper addresses the environment that surrounds the security sector in Egypt, as well as the security challenges facing the country at the national, regional and global levels. To what extent do these challenges represent an obstacle to reforming the security sector in Egypt?

The challenges are manifested in several aspects. First in the collapsed or dangerously weak security apparatuses of neighboring countries, such as Sudan, Somalia and other African countries exporting refugees, with all the security drawbacks of such a phenomenon. Then in the weakness of the security sector in both Lebanon and Palestine,

which led to conflicts spilling on neighboring countries and opened the door to external interference (Kodmani 2008).

The border's problem between Egypt and Gaza also generated security challenges to Egypt. The exportation of Shiite hegemonic revolutionary ideas and ethnic conflicts or narcotic traffic are among the recent challenges that the Egyptian security sector has been confronted to. Second, extremist ideologies and terrorist groups target the society in Egypt and the security apparatus. The security sector confronts the spread of these ideologies and their attempts to manifest these ideas in action. These terrorist groups have basis internally, and externally and functions on the national and transnational level putting further pressure on the security apparatus in Egypt confronts. Money laundering is used to fund terrorists. There is also a need to modernize the security forces to confront novel challenges such as intellectual property theft, corruption, human trafficking, and illegal migration and drug trafficking.

V – Challenges Confronting Security Sector Reforms in Egypt

In Egypt, the first challenge facing the security sector reform is the fact that too much security means endangering civil rights of individuals, as the security apparatus in Egypt is the only sector that has the right to use force against individuals. However it can also use its powers against the ruler if it decides to override him. The first successful case was the 1952 revolution led by the free officers. There was also the assassination of the 2nd president of Egypt Anwar El Sadat by extremist Muslim groups from within the army. And then President Mubarak being forced to leave power in February 2011.

The second challenge in reforming the security apparatus is whether it is an independent target or it should be part of an overall reform process of the political and economic system? (El Ani 2008). In 2005, President Mubarak pledged to end the state of

emergency in effect since 1981 and establish counterterrorism law. He offered a package of amendments focused on political liberalization measures, but restricting the capacity of the Muslim Brotherhood or of any independent politician to run for the presidency. He also retained strong executive powers. Opposition groups and international experts were widely critical of these measures in terms of their contribution to democratization, and the excessive use of force that accompanied these amendments (Stimson 2007). The tight grip of the security system also manifested itself in the legislative elections of November 2010, which resulted in the almost complete elimination of opposition parties and ensured a sweeping majority to the ruling National Democratic Party.

The third challenge is whether security sector reforms are to be initiated from inside, dictated, or developed in cooperation with regional or international actors (Kodmani 2008). There is also a dilemma related to the extent to which foreign international donors should be allowed to finance or exchange expertise regarding reforming the Security Sector in Egypt. Numerous scholars and practitioners have addressed this controversy. They took into consideration the specificity of the Egyptian case (Abd El Salam 2008), the historical specificities, the institutional and constitutional arrangements, as well as the defense culture of the country (Sayigh 2007: 26). There also were strong calls from American think tanks that expressed open discontent to the Egyptian system, notably because of the November 2010 legislative elections.

Fourth is the challenge of changing the security system's culture. Reforming all components of the security sector in Egypt requires the opening of the political space and the establishment of new rules setting out how security establishment people should deal with citizens who are looking at new horizons. In Egypt, there are tentative openings, such as loosening regulations for

access to internet and permitting blogging, which are negated afterwards by harsh security measures. However, security forces often operate out of the established protocol when they operate against political opposition figures and journalists, even when political leaders are signaling a willingness to tolerate more open political expression. The disconnection between political openings and the culture of security personnel trained to prevent change is disheartening to reformers and to their supporters in the international community.

A further cultural obstacle has to do with the issue of gender diversification in all four parts of the Egyptian security sector. First, is the culture of chauvinism and masculinity that dominates the security sector. Second is the stereotyping of women as weak, dependent, innocent victims, while men are seen as strong, independent, providers of security, being socialized within that context since their childhoods (Bakr 2011). In such a context, ensuring that the spirit of reform is encouraged consistently across the institutions of the state would improve the prospects for peaceful change, in the interest of both the leaders and the governed (Dunne 2007).

Fifth, Egypt is a major recipient of US foreign military aid, which it essentially uses to acquire US-made military equipment, as part of Cairo's bid to modernize its armed forces. Whilst Egypt lacks a substantial armament design industry, it remains one of the most prolific manufacturers of military equipment in the region. However, its defense industry remains limited to co-production deals made, again, primarily with the US. Egypt's military expenditure is likely to remain constant on condition there is no major disagreement between Cairo and Washington (The Egypt Defense & Security Report 2008). A major challenge for Egypt is to reduce its dependency on the US¹⁷ and be more open to

cooperation with other powers such as China as a possible counter-weight to the US.

VI – Recommended Reforms of the Security Sector in Egypt

This section of the paper addresses the agenda recommended to reform the different components of the security sector in Egypt. The core theme of reform is the creation of a professional security sector that is appropriately sized, based on an appropriate use of resources, with a precise mandate and subject to democratic control. A security sector structured this way can make a contribution towards the development of the country, whereas an unreformed security sector can become a burden. Security Sector reform encompasses the political dimension (civil control of actors), the economic dimension (consumption of resources for the security forces), the social dimension (actual guarantee of citizens' security) and the institutional dimension (professionalism of the security sector and institutional separation of the various actors). All these dimensions imply needs and potentials for reforms (Wulf 2000: 8).

The most urgent issues to be addressed by reform is the fact that the mere traditional reliance on existing structures within the Ministries of Interior and the Central Intelligence Services will not be a sufficient answer to the existing internal and external threats. Second, at the national level, reform will inevitably have political implications and may threaten the established domestic order (Sayigh 2007).

There is a serious need to subject the armed and security forces to a system of checks and balances at the state level that will help prevent abuse. In democracies, armed and security forces are accountable to all three branches of the state (the executive, the legislative and the judiciary). There must be

¹⁷ Egypt notably depends on the \$ 1.3 billion aid that was acquired after Camp David peace

treaty with Israel. It is the second recipient to US aid after Israel.

measures to subject the security organizations to effective oversight from parliaments. Budgets should be reviewed, procurement decisions monitored, appointments and dismissals approved, if not by the parliament as a whole, at least by a committee that would be assigned responsibility for it. This requires a strong system of good governance.

The political dimension of the security sector reforms in Egypt has to comprise the strengthening of civil society, the establishment of the Parliament as a monitoring, decision-making and control body, functions of planning and budgetary control, support and professionalization of non-governmental organizations and the press (Wulf 2000: 8). This should include reviewing Law n°84 of 2002 on the NGOs, which is viewed as restrictive, as well as the emergency law (Law n°168 of 1958).

Good governance would imply greater transparency, a right to know about the functioning of the various security sector components and open discussions about their performance and possible alternatives. It would also imply greater inclusiveness of all those who have a stake in security sector governance: the civilian administration, the parliament, political parties, men and women whose security is directly affected, and a proper grievance procedure to redress violations. It would bring cases of corruption and nepotism into the limelight and hence have a dissuasive effect. This requires legislative efforts in order to modify laws hindering good governance and laws such as Law n°84 of 2002 (on the NGOs) or the Emergency law, which includes provisions that are condemned by civil society institutions for infringing human rights.

The military has an economic impact on the Egyptian state and society in several aspects. First, the consumption of resources by the military, and the issue addressed in various UN reports of whether those resources should be employed for other purposes (Wulf 2000: 14). Second, the economic role played by the

military should be tightly monitored and evaluated. The availability of cheap labor through general conscription has provided the armed forces with a competitive edge over the private sector that favored its expansion into the production of a wide range of civilian goods and services, including agricultural products, hospitals, tourist facilities, sophisticated electronic devices, joint ventures with private sector developers etc. It also secured its control over the bulk of Egypt's economy. As Springborg observes, "the military have its own sources of revenue for which they are not accountable and are under no observable political pressure either to think between utilizing its capital or to divest enterprises itself, as it is the case with regard to the civilian public sector" (Springborg 1998: 6)

Improving regional and international cooperation to achieve security sector reforms can be of great help to achieve the targeted goal. This can be first done through cooperation with the African Union and the Arab league. Such a process, when employed effectively, can assist the Egyptian internal reform process, and would also enable Egypt's security sector to stand more efficiently in the face of the various regional challenges and spilling conflicts. This cooperation can also allow for exchanging knowledge and experience gained from previous national reform processes throughout the region. It can also assist Egypt in developing new and adapted internal solutions. Second, the sharing of activities such as promoting interoperability of certain systems (i.e., air defense systems) at the regional level will fall in the domain of the Security Sector reforms. The US (in "Star War" operations) and NATO (through the Mediterranean Dialogue, but also individual NATO states) all engaged in defense cooperation and in aspects of defense modernization. However, cooperation with NATO or other external powers could be hindered by the public's perception that it infringes on their country's sovereignty in a most fundamental way (Laipson 2007). Third,

cooperation on the international level through training in international humanitarian and human rights law for members of the military, police, central security and central intelligence could be considered. This has already taken place in Egypt through a UNDP program.

Gender diversification in Egypt would enhance the security sector reforms outcome. Women share specific security challenges in Egypt, such as domestic and intimate partner violence, community violence, human trafficking; they are targeted by security forces aiming at destabilizing opposition movements. Integrating gender diversification in the security sector reforms will improve their outcomes in confronting such challenges.

Conclusion

To conclude, all states need to continually revise and reform their security policies and practices. Prosperous democratic states have a capacity to initiate such process internally. In the end, security sector reform is a choice, and it must reflect a political will on the part of the state. It must start from a conviction of the leadership that change is desirable and that state-society understandings need to be updated from time to time.

In fact, several constraints impede the study of the security sector in Egypt. First, the lack of academic literature and empirical material on the Egyptian security sector with regard to the timeframe addressed in this paper, since most of the available literature discusses the security sector in Egypt historically and not within the most recent era. Secondly, discussing security sector reforms raises the critical questions of why and by whom this reform should be accomplished. Any discussion of reforming of security services entails some reflection on external and domestic threats, and on the underlying state-society relationships. In Egypt, as well as in most of the Middle East region, states have seen their security services as extensions of

the executive power, often in a very personal way, so that services are loyal to individual leaders rather than to the notions of national interest or citizenry. Hence, when proposing reforms, you will be confronted with major obstacles if these reforms do not fit with the overall goals of the ruling system.

In discussing security sector reforms in Egypt, it is necessary to determine precisely which measures are appropriate for achieving that goal. It is also vital to select a comprehensive approach that encompasses the armed forces, the police, Central Security Forces, and Central Intelligence Services, the executive and legislative powers, the judicial and penal systems, and civil society. The process has to be time-framed, with a clear strategy and modeled policies and action plans. Any intended reforms have to rally the security sector behind them, in order not to have different security sectors taking a conflict stand. In other words, it is not an “*à la carte*” task: it has to take place in all components of the security sector and it must paralleled by wider reforms within the political system, as well as by the empowerment of civil society institutions. Yet time is needed to accomplish such a huge task.

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