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# **Egyptian-Ethiopian Relations 1952-2015**

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### **Abstract**

The nature of Egyptian-Ethiopian relations in the period 1952-2015 constituted an important regional and international presence, especially with the Western countries trying to get closer to Ethiopia to ensure their interests in the Middle East. Hence our study to show the nature of bilateral relations between the two countries during the period 1952-2015, and to identify the causes of escalation and conflict and the ongoing conflict between them, based on the changes that occur in the political systems of the two countries and trends The issue of borders, water and the construction of dams on the Nile basin are among the most important issues that have been and still lead to tension and escalation between them, which has become one of the most important problems facing them because they are mainly linked to the national security of the two countries, especially the issue of water, which has become a political and economic weapon, which began to worsen because of Population growth and economic development.

Keywords: Egypt, Ethiopia, power relations, Nile river basin.

# Relaciones Egipcio-Etíopes 1952-2015

#### Resumen

La naturaleza de las relaciones egipcio-etíopes en el período 1952-2015 constituyó una importante presencia regional e internacional, especialmente con los países occidentales que intentaban acercarse a Etiopía para garantizar sus intereses en el Medio Oriente. De ahí nuestro estudio para mostrar la naturaleza de las relaciones bilaterales entre los dos países durante el período 1952-2015, y para identificar las causas de la escalada y el conflicto y el conflicto en curso entre ellos, en base a los cambios que ocurren en los sistemas políticos de los dos países y tendencias El tema de las fronteras, el agua y la construcción de presas en la cuenca del Nilo se encuentran entre los temas más importantes que han sido y todavía conducen a la tensión y la escalada entre ellos, que se ha convertido en uno de los problemas más importantes que enfrentan porque están principalmente vinculados a la seguridad nacional de los dos países, especialmente el tema del agua, que se ha convertido en un arma política y económica, que comenzó a empeorar debido al crecimiento de la población y el desarrollo económico

Palabras clave: Egipto, Etiopía, relaciones de poder, cuenca del río Nilo.

#### Introduction .

Before touching on the Egyptian-Ethiopian relations, we must touch on the roots of the historical relations between the two countries in order to understand the historical facts that enable us to reach the causes of the continuing tension in bilateral relations which reached its peak at the beginning of the 21st century.

The historical relations between Egypt and Ethiopia (1) go back to three important phases: the first stage was the pre-Islamic relations (2), the second stage the beginning of the emergence of Islam and the third after the emergence and spread of Islam (3).

In modern times, after the Ottoman domination of Egypt in 1517 and the western coast of the Red Sea, an Ottoman state called al-Habash (4) was administered and administratively attached to the wilayat of Hejaz (5). Egyptian-Ethiopian relations beginning of the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century

The nineteenth century witnessed the beginning of tension in relations

between the two countries during the reign of Muhammad Ali Pasha of Egypt (1805-1848) after his re-control of the Hejaz and after his elimination of the Wahhabi movement, the Ottoman Sultan rewarded him with a grill in 1820 to include Suakin and Massawa, as well as his son Ibrahim (1848). In 1854, the title of the Governor of Jeddah and Al-Habash and the Governor of Al-Habashi and the Sanjak of Sanjak (6). The southern entrances of the But the governor, Mohamed Ali Pasha, was forced by the British intervention to refrain from attacking Ethiopia and merely sent a force that occupied Massawa in 1826 to be his first step to extend his influence over Africa. At the same time, Ethiopia was in constant contact with Britain to get its help to seize the port of Massawa. Or at least Britain retains control over it to ensure free trade and arms transfers. In 1837, he began his move to expand in Ethiopia, ordering an Egyptian force to advance towards Gondor to control it, which was forced to withdraw to the city of Oalabat, which led to a collision with the Ethiopian army led by Alras Kinfu (Kinfu) to end the battle to defeat the Egyptian army and the Ethiopian leader vowed to attack Egypt However, in the same year, Mohamed Ali sent another Egyptian force led by his son-in-law Ahmed Pasha to Sudan, which the European consul in Egypt saw as the beginning of the invasion of Ethiopia.

Ties between the two countries have been tense as the Sudanese region of Kassala has been the scene of revolutions by its inhabitants from the Hindus since its establishment in 1840, as well as the non-payment of salaries of Egyptian soldiers stationed on the border with Ethiopia or delayed payment due to attacks by the These soldiers attacked Ethiopian villages and looting by Egyptian forces that knew no borders, and the Ethiopian emperor carried out reprisal attacks to pursue them. As well as the intervention of European countries to preserve their interests in the region, and this is evident when the Ottoman Sultan issued a decree transferring the ownership of the two ports to Muhammad Ali in 1847, Britain brought to the attention of the Sultan because of the encroachment on Ethiopia. (11) As for the relations between Egypt and Ethiopia in the first half of the twentieth century, it is clear that there is a close link and a great overlap between the political and economic relations between the two countries, especially with regard to the waters of the Nile River, which is a matter related to the two fields and are closely linked with each other and affect other aspects.

The question arises what are the manifestations of tension and divergence and their motives?

Through our research we find that the issue of borders and water and the construction of dams on the Nile Basin of the most important issues that were and still lead to tension and escalation between the two countries and increased in the second half of the nineteenth century and even led to a military collision between them, in 1876 took place battle of Gura (Eritrea now) as the Ethiopian army suffered a humiliating defeat of the Egyptian army and began the colonial competition French and English to control the Nile Basin. The French tried to build a dam on the White Nile to undermine British influence and eastern and western control of the continent. In 1889, the colonial powers reached an agreement under which the Congo River was allocated to France and the White Nile border to Britain. (12) Negotiations between Britain and Italy began and in April 1891 they signed a protocol. It is prohibited to establish any irrigation projects on any of the tributaries of the Blue Nile called Atbara. Afterwards, Ethiopia and Britain (on behalf of Sudan and Egypt) concluded a bilateral treaty stating that "nothing should be built across the Blue Nile" or Lake Tana or Soba, which could hinder the flow of the Nile.

Britain sent English diplomat John Harrington to Addis Ababa to negotiate the signing of the border demarcation treaty between Ethiopia and the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. The resulting Anglo-Ethiopian treaty was signed on 15 May 1902 in Addis Ababa by him on behalf of Great Britain (Anglo-Egyptian Sudan). The Ethiopian Emperor Menelik II (1889-1913), who stipulated that Ethiopia would not build or permit the construction of any dam on Lake Tana or the Subat River without British consent, however, the Ethiopian side recalls that the agreement was to "allow or disallow the Ethiopian emperor" to build. Of whether or not D at the same time that the 1902 agreement is not a legally binding document as long as it is re-ratified, as well as Egypt did not have any hand in holding the Convention. (14)

France, Britain and Italy in 1906 and Britain and Italy in 1925 signed an agreement to limit any diversion of water in the Nile. It is clear from these agreements that there is a return to a clash of interests and a subsequent conflict between them.

In the 1929 agreement signed by Britain with the governments of the British colonies in the Nile Basin such as Sudan, Uganda, Kenya, Tanganyika and others, Egypt was then under British control and as a result of the latter's need for Egyptian cotton as raw material for the textile industry, Only after obtaining the consent of Egypt. Ethiopia refuses (to this day) essentially to recognize this treaty, as it was not a British colony and there-

fore (in its opinion) is not subject to the treaties and agreements signed by the British crown or adhere to it (16). Under this agreement, Egypt's right to water was limited to 48 billion cubic meters of water flow, and all water in the dry season, and gave it the right to veto any upstream projects.

The signs of détente began in trade (and on a very small scale) since Halulaslasi came to power. HAILE SELASSIE I (1930-1974), Ethiopia began to export coffee, fabrics and shoes to Egypt, and in 1935 the latter began exporting food products such as oranges to Ethiopia by road transport. (19) In the diplomatic field, Egypt raised the level of diplomatic representation in Ethiopia to Degree of Ambassador in 1930 besides being Permanent Representative to the African Union (20). In the economic field, it sent technical engineers to manage and maintain the Central Addis Ababa and sent three engineers to manage and maintain the communication network, and Ethiopia asked Egypt in 1942 to provide technicians to conduct the work of the Bank of Ethiopia and the Department of Mines, Coal, Customs and factory management (21).

Egyptian-Ethiopian Religious Relations

As for the religious relations between the two countries, we find that they date back to the era of converting to Christian Ethiopia (22), and that the Al-Azhar mosque had a prominent religious role in the supervision of Muslims in Ethiopia in the cultural field, we provide Ethiopia with religious teachers and when Ethiopia asked Egypt in 1907 to provide teachers to use Egypt sent six teachers, one of whom was in charge of the Department of Education, until 1936, and the missions continued through the Patriarchate of Alexandria and the Ethiopian government. Knowledge management between the two countries, especially after the opening of the Egyptian Consulate in Addis Ababa in 1927 (23).

In general, we can say that the relationship between the Egyptian and Ethiopian churches plays a big role in reducing the tension between the two countries based on the sponsorship of the Egyptian Church for Ethiopians in Cairo as a starting point for obtaining political asylum to the countries of the world, and the ordination of priests and deacons and provide them with theological studies to obtain degrees In addition, the Ethiopian Emperor signed an agreement between the two churches on June 25, 1959, and Bishop Basilios was promoted as Patriarch.

Al-Azhar Mosque also played the same role, sending missions from its scholars to preach and guide to Ethiopia and was based in Addis Ababa Mosque to teach Muslims from Ethiopia (26).

- Egyptian-Ethiopian Relations (1952-2000)

It was the new thing added by the July 1952 revolution that it linked Egypt's policy and interests in Africa to the regional and global environment issues of decolonization and the establishment of new countries and African aspirations for progress and development and Egypt's relationship with the Nile Basin, especially since that period witnessed increased US influence in Ethiopia was the idea of securing the sources of the Nile in that Time is based on helping these countries achieve their independence and thus become friendly countries.

This is evident in the Western media, which began to work to preserve its interests in the region. The relationship between the two countries soon improved because of Nasser's policy and his side with Ethiopia in its conflict with the Eritrean opposition. Poor N 1959 and received a standing ovation was great during the settlement of the outstanding problems between the Egyptian and Ethiopian churches, and held a tour of modern emerging industries such as military factories and factories of iron and steel (28).

The signing of the 1959 agreement marked a new turning point between Egypt and Sudan, on the one hand, and Ethiopia, on the other, to make full use of the Nile water. Accordingly, the agreement allocated 55.5 and 18.5 billion cubic meters to Egypt and Sudan respectively, showing that Egypt did not contribute anything to the total size of the Nile, but It captured the lion's share of the Nile's utility (29). It has achieved direct interests and jumped its share from 48 billion cubic meters to 55.5 billion cubic meters. and reflected on the strategies of water storage from storage across the border to storage within the border and finally contributed directly to the construction of the High Dam. (30) This makes Ethiopia strongly reserved The legal framework of the agreement on the sharing of the Nile water is due, inter alia, to the fact that it was not a party to the 1929 agreement, as it was not a British colony and was not invited to participate in the 1959 Convention, so Ethiopia believes that Egypt should drop the hypothesis of the historical right of the Nile. (31) If Ethiopia uses water, Egypt will be threatened The last will be used, it must Ethiopia to lift her hands from the water. The Egyptian scenario with respect to the Nile is a classic example of the policy "I win if I lose", a zero-sum game. On the other hand, Egyptians believe that the Nile water is not enough for everyone. But on the other hand, they use water heavily (32). Many believe that the 1959 Nile water agreement needs to be "renegotiated." (33).

The 1959 agreement reinforced the downstream states' claims of natural and historical rights in the Nile waters, and Sudan and Egypt became a red line for future negotiations in the basin. There is no reference to the upstream countries, especially if we know that their bilateral nature has been subject to constant criticism. The agreement is the backbone of the political water problem in the Nile Basin - the downstream countries want to preserve it, while the upstream countries want to replace it with a multilateral agreement based on Fair participation. (34)

Egypt tried hard to reduce tensions between it and Ethiopia. When the Cairo Conference was held in March 1961, Ethiopia supported and voted for the unity of Somalia except the Ogaden region, which was under Ethiopian control and this position demonstrates its awareness of the change that took place in Africa, especially as it was a period of liberation and independence. 35). However, things soon changed and relations began to chart a course of deterioration. Ethiopia announced its intention to establish the Great Lakes Plateau project in the same year to set up information-gathering stations and exclude seven standard areas for water collection, aerial photography and a survey of the shores of the lake shores. (36)

Ethiopia has denounced most of these agreements reached during the colonial era and bilateral water-sharing agreements between Egypt and Sudan. He claimed that none of them included their legitimate interests in water sharing, even though it was the source of the Blue Nile and contributed about 86% of its water. In 1957, it announced unilateral developments of projects on the Nile that were opposed by Egypt and Sudan. (37)

Nevertheless, Egypt played a major role in stopping the fighting between Somalia and Ethiopia at the border in order to regain the western region of Somalia. (38) It hosted the meeting of the foreign ministers of the two countries in Cairo in July 1964 in preparation for the African Summit in Cairo. Current borders (39).

Tension between the two countries continued during the 1970s because of the dispute between Somalia and Eritrea, as well as Israel's interference in Ethiopia's internal affairs to get water to it. In 1971, Hellaslasi visited Egypt and met with Egyptian President Anwar Sadat (1971-1980) if they reached an agreement to support their countries with African liberation movements. (41) The African Union Organization was established at the Egyptian Foreign Ministry in 1972. 42).

In May 1973, during the African Summit in Addis Ababa on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the founding of the Organization of the African Summit, Hilassassi Sadat pledged to freeze the implementation of any project on the sources of the Nile until it is agreed with other upstream countries.

Relations between the two countries have become more and more tense since 1977 after the exchange of charges between them. Ethiopia accused Egypt of transporting large quantities of weapons to Somalia to fight in the Ogaden region, while Egypt accused that Ethiopia received support from Israel and received considerable assistance (44). It reached a point of escalation in the official statements of the two countries, especially after Ethiopia announced its intention to establish water projects on the Nile in 1979, to come Egyptian President Sadat's response that if Ethiopia takes any action to prevent Egypt's right to the Nile water, there will be no alternative but to use Power. Egyptian Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Boutros Boutros-Ghali (1912-2016) also expressed his fears that the next war in the region would be due to the Nile waters and not politics.

Boutros-Ghali asserted that if Ethiopia builds the dams, this would negatively affect Egypt's share and therefore good relations should be established with it. (46) However, his positions were not heeded in Egypt, which insisted on adhering to the 1959 agreement, and in 1980 Ethiopia attacked Egypt during the The convening of the conference of the Organization of Arab Unity, accusing it of planning to divert the water of the Nile to Sinai for irrigation.

In general, we can say that the decade of the eighties was the beginning of breaking the stalemate in relations. A trade exchange agreement was signed in 1982, and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak visited Ethiopia three times (1985-1986-1987), the latter at the invitation of the latter to declare the Ethiopian Republic.

In the 1990s, Ethiopia's regional role in the fight against terrorism was engineered. Water dams project as an incentive for the project of integration of ethnic nationalities (50).

The Egyptian Minister of Electricity invited his counterparts to come to Cairo for the purpose of discussing cooperation in the field of electricity generation from dams on the Nile, but it failed due to differences between the basin countries. In 1990, a conference was held in Cairo concerning water policy and technology in Africa. At the meeting between the two heads of state in July 1990, the Ethiopian president assured Mubarak of his readiness to hold bilateral negotiations with Egypt over the Nile waters. (52)

Considering water as an economic good in 1992, to make matters worse, determining the price of water, achieving a balance of supply and demand and equaling the real costs of extracting it due to its value in various uses. (53) One of the main reasons that made Ethiopia work hard. To present

itself as a strong regional actor in the Horn of Africa and the Nile Basin.

Relations began to improve in 1993 after the signing of the Cooperation Framework Agreement, which stipulated that neither country would carry out any activity related to the Nile water that could harm the interests of the other country and their commitment to the principle of preserving and protecting the Nile water, respecting international laws and consulting to establish projects that increase the volume of water flow and reduce Losses (55).

- Nile Basin Initiative and its impact on relations between Egypt and Ethiopia.

Egypt was active in forming an economic bloc and established the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) in 1994 in a move to disengage from the West and meet the needs of local communities. The most important of these is the establishment of a free trade zone to promote common development, adopt joint economic policies and programs, and develop science and technology. However, the assassination attempt of Egyptian President Mubarak in Addis Ababa in 1995 prevented the realization of this and led to the deepening of the differences between the two countries and thus Egypt's disengagement from African belonging and prompted the Nile Basin countries to seek cooperation among them, ignoring the Egyptian interests and often conflicting with them (58).

In 1997, Switzerland initiated the Nile Basin Initiative under the auspices of the World Bank and the United Nations Development Program, which began by proposing its structure in the form of the Council of Ministers of Water Resources among the basin countries to achieve the goal of sustainably preparing the Nile water resources to ensure security and peace for all the peoples of the basin and the optimal use of water resources. Joint cooperation to eradicate poverty and neglect from planning to implementation.

The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has played an important role in supporting the Technical Co-operation Committee to promote development and environmental protection to establish the Basin Action Plan (NRBAP), and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) through the establishment of a 3D forum to maintain and monitor dialogue. In 1999, at the third meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Basin Countries, the basin countries agreed to undertake the task of developing a cooperative framework for the management of the Nile water.

Canada adopted the Nile Basin Initiative to promote dialogue and cooperation among countries and support their projects. In 2001, Maria Minna, Minister of International Cooperation, announced a \$ 16 million grant during her attendance at the Fifth United Nations Conference to Combat Desertification. It has the efforts of the Nile states themselves, which has earned them the strength of support and coordination between donors and the international community.

By 2004, Ethiopian Foreign Minister Seyoum Seifin said his country had no intention of amending existing agreements between the countries of the basin. He also called for engaging Egypt and Sudan with Ethiopia in the recent dam projects to provide electric power and protect Egypt and Sudan from floods and other damages. Uninterrupted flow of water (62).

In February 2005, through the Nile Basin Initiative's Eastern Nile Program, it was agreed to begin the studies of the Multi-Purpose Development Program at the meeting of the Ministers of Irrigation and Electricity of the countries of Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan in Alexandria to study the development potential through a team of international consultants and the financing of the World Bank. (63). Ethiopia took advantage of the construction of the Takizi Dam on the Atbara River (opened in 2009). 64).

The Egyptian trend since 2009 has been to try to find a platform for economic cooperation with Ethiopia in the field of importing meat, exporting building materials such as cement, and continuing to provide aid and guidance to Arab and Egyptian investors involved in the implementation of Ethiopian development plans to take into account the Egyptian interests and resort to solving problems to international experts. Therefore, the Egyptian positions were and still are based on reactions that are not firm so Egypt was surprised in the same year that all upstream countries do not recognize any water rights or uses for Egypt and Sudan. Differences reached a climax after the Ethiopian newspaper Gemma Times published on April 24 an article saying that there is a public opinion in the upstream force demanding Egypt to pay for the use of water and this is an inherent right of upstream countries, adding that the citizens of upstream countries demand to deal with the Nile water as countries deal The upstream countries (Ethiopia, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi) signed the Entebbe Agreement, which stipulated the counting of the recognition of Egypt and Sudan's historical share in the Nile waters and the reduction of the share from 55.5 billion cubic meters to one billion cubic meters. Annually cancel the advance notification item when building any Projects on the banks of the river, which was approved in previous agreements by the Nile Basin countries, which led to the escalation of the crisis between the countries and Egypt (68). While Egypt was preoccupied with the revolution of 25 January 2011, Ethiopia announced the signing of a contract with the Italian company Salini Costruttori for the construction of three giant dams with a production capacity of about 6000 megawatts. (69) It started to provide studies by a Canadian consulting group that prepared the reports of the Ethiopian dams on Blue Nile, four major dams (Karadobe - Pico Abu - Mendaya - Bordeaux) with a capacity of 140 billion m 3 or nearly 3 times the revenues of the Blue Nile and electric capacity of 7100 MW in addition to agricultural expansion in about one million acres and away from Ethiopia was a study through the Norwegian consultancy offices and grant Ones than This is contrary to what Ethiopia stated during the outbreak of the revolution that it would freeze disputes with Egypt over the Nile waters until the election of a new president of Egypt, as well as growing religious differences and hostile relations, which increased political tension. The opening of the giant Tana project, Tana Bliss, was opened on the Blue Nile (started in 2010), without notifying Egypt. The latter did not protest at the time and did not even demand the design and configuration data of the project, which was a continuation of Ethiopia's exploitation of Egyptian softness.

Egypt has taken various measures to support rapprochement with Ethiopia. In 2011, the post of Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs for African Affairs was introduced to take a flexible policy with it. The dam was signed with the Italian company Salini as it was called the Great Millennium Dam (Renaissance Dam) and its dimensions and the capacity of the power plant is equivalent to the total capacity of the four dams proposed by the American Land Reclamation Office on the Blue Nile in 1964 (74).

Hence, the Egyptian role in the African continent and the loss of its position among the Nile Basin countries, which began since the reign of Nasser, and the water crisis between them and the basin countries, especially Ethiopia, which is one of the important upstream countries that can withhold large quantities of water from Egypt Dams.

It was agreed to form an international committee of experts to examine and review Ethiopian engineering studies and their observance of international standards. Egyptian shock with the issuance of the final report of the International Tripartite Commission on 31 May 2013, which confirmed that the Ethiopian studies are preliminary studies do not live up to the required level of studies of this magnitude. There were threats and statements that were irresponsible and unworthy of Egypt or its status.

The International Tripartite Commission met in Khartoum in August 2014 to complete the talks, but Ethiopia announced that it had completed the

completion of 95% of the crisis of the Renaissance Dam and do not worry because it is in safe hands. However, by 2014 Egypt entered the water poverty stage due to the dam, which is referred to as a final threat to the share of future generations of water.

Egypt hosted COMESA in Sharm El-Sheikh in June 2015 and resulted in the signing of an agreement to establish a free trade area as a first phase related to trade in goods and the removal of customs barriers, followed by a second phase witnessing the establishment of a customs union and the center of trade in services and individual ownership.

#### Conclusion

It is clear from the above that the history of relations between the two countries goes back centuries, but we find that it is a long history of tension in the modern era and the absence of bilateral relations of friendship and fruitful cooperation, which is worsening day by day due to the most important causes of the water problem, which took another direction can have a significant impact Egypt may lead to poverty and desertification of its agricultural lands because it does not have full control over the sources of its water, which must be shared in accordance with international agreements and serious cooperation between them to avoid any consequences that may occur in the future. This has implications for the economy of Egypt, which may lead to the deterioration of agricultural land and increase desertification and diminishing agricultural production and widening the food gap and high demand and the cost of water and thus the decline of national income and resulting in the decline of development process accompanied by social and political problems affecting the relationship between the two countries and lead to conflicts. Likely to amount to armed clashes.

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The Bible says in the New Testament / Acts 8: 26-27 that Christianity entered Ethiopia in the first century AD and tells the story of evangelism and the sanctuary of one of the great servants of the Abyssinia by the deacon Phillips. saying: "Arise and go toward the south on the sloping from Jerusalem to Gaza, the road ... he arose and went. If an Ethiopian man eunuch and great authority under Candace the queen of Ethiopia was on all their vaults. This had come to Jerusalem for Prostrate "

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