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خوش آمدید

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Arab Republic of Egypt

Dear Delegates of the Egypt committee,

I am your chair, Tomas Blanco, and I would like to extend my warmest welcome to PICSIM 2006. PICSIM is unique in its kind and by far the most intense and fun MUN experience you could be involved in. As an MUN veteran myself I have participated in over 17 conferences, having served as a committee chair in about 7 occasions. Given all this experience I can honestly say that I have never had more fun than while at PICSIM.

You will be engaged in one of the most realistic war games and crisis situation in the MUN circuit. To that effect you should focus your research efforts on studying more concrete and current aspects of international relations that would in fact steer the foreign policy of nations, on your case, that of Egypt.

I am very excited to be your chair and if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

Once again, I'm excited to have the opportunity to be your chair and I look forward to meeting you.

See you in March!



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Princeton Interactive Crisis Simulation 2006



Committee Positions

President: Muhamad Hosni Mubarak

The committee Chair will fulfill this post. He will be in charge of making all executive decisions and of facilitating the debate amongst the country delegates.

Prime minister: Ahmed Nazif

A delegate will fulfill this position. This delegate will act as the direct assistant to the President and helping to coordinate the efforts of the different delegates of course providing important input and insight into all situations.

Foreign minister: Ahmad Ali Abu-al-Ghayt

A delegate will fulfill this position: This is an extremely important position as this delegate will have to be extremely knowledgeable in Egyptian foreign policy. He/she must be versed in international relations and regional politics. If the committee needs to form alliances this delegate will be the one most involved in the process. This delegate will be the main person involved in diplomatic negotiations (going out of committee to talk to delegates from other committees)

Finance and Trade minister: Yusuf Butrus Ghali

A delegate will fulfill this position. This delegate will be in charge of national and international financial issues. As the simulation will function throughout a short time period, managing the economy of the country will not be an issue, instead, this delegate will have to be very aware of Egyptian trade partners, trade relations, and international trade treaties.

Media Minister: Ahmed Abu Salif

A delegate will fulfill this position. Egyptian Media is often regarded as one of the most influential of the region. Though the current political system outlaws religious parties and makes it very easy for the current president to hold on to power, important steps have been taken toward the liberalization of the press and Egypt will play a very important roll in the Middle East in shaping and controlling the Arab public opinion.

Defense Minister: Yeslam Al-Zaabi

A delegate will fulfill this position. This is an extremely important position because this delegate will be in charge of the defense of the nation. This delegate will have to research Egypt's military capabilities and topography for he/she will be the main source of strategic information when planning military operations.

Commander General of the Air Force: Rohul Al-Nawal Azma

A delegate will fulfill this position. After the shameful defeat of Egypt in the Yom Kippur war, President Mubarak made it a personal mission to improve the air force and it is now regarded as one of the most advanced in the region. This will be a crucial element in military operations. This delegate will have to research the Egyptian Air Force capabilities as well as those of neighboring countries.

**Commander General of the Army: Barsoum Azzem El-Farhat**

A delegate will fulfill this position. This delegate will have to research the ground army capabilities of Egypt and its neighbors. This position is very important because this delegate will provide most of the information and tactical know how of ground operations inside and outside Egypt. The Army is the first line of defense of the Egyptian frontiers. Also, if there were internal turmoil, the army would be deployed and this delegate would have to deal with this situation.

Commander General of the Navy: Falahi Dahleh Al-Darr

A delegate will fulfill this position. This delegate will have to research the naval capabilities of Egypt and its neighbors. This position is very important because this delegate will be in charge of the Suez Canal and its safekeeping, therefore research into the Suez Canal falls on this delegate. If Egypt decided to close down the Canal, this delegate would be in charge of the operation.

Military Intelligence Minister: Ali Haddar Gohar

A delegate will fulfill this position. This delegate will be in charge of covert operations and intelligence. Bear in mind that most of the punctual intelligence will be provided by the crisis room, but the ideas of what to request and in what manner will come primarily from this delegate. For instance, the intelligence resulting from a spy plane flying over another country will be provided by the crisis staff, but the original idea should be put forth by the Military intelligence delegate.

Interior Minister: Mahmud Farouk Dim Gahayr

A delegate will fulfill this position. This delegate will be in charge of domestic population issues. He/she will have to research demographics and should pay special attention to religious issues. What religions are present in Egypt? In what proportion? What are the national sentiments toward the issues in international relations right now?

Oil and Industry Minister: Farak Ismet Al-Matout

A delegate will fulfill this position. Egypt is one of the biggest oil producers in the world. This delegate will be in charge of looking after Egypt's oil interests, OPEC relations and other industrial issues that may arise, such as protecting industrial complexes or trying to gain opportunities for industrial development.

National Welfare and Health Minister: Nejhad Saeed Zahal

A delegate will fulfill this position. This delegate will be in charge of looking after the domestic population. Whenever attacks take place or a crisis arises, the first thought on this delegate's mind should be: "how does this affect Egyptians?" and then "How do we solve it?" This minister should be especially concerned with the handling of humanitarian and health crisis.

Islamic Liaison Minister

A delegate will fulfill this position. Though Egypt is regarded as a very westernized state, for instance by accepting Israel in the region, it cannot deny its Islamic roots and identity. In this times of fundamentalism, Egypt will have to deal with a lot of issues regarding Islam and the Islamic world. This delegate should be very versed in religious issues and Islamic moral.



Introduction

Egypt, whose official name is “Arab Republic of Egypt” is located in northeastern Africa with the Sinai Peninsula lying in southwestern Asia. The bulk of the Egyptian territory consists of deserts and its main geographical feature is the Nile river which runs south-to-north in the eastern part of the country. The valley and delta of the Nile are the main centers of habitation. The capital and largest city is Cairo.

History

Though Egypt became a modern and independent state only in 1922 when it obtained its freedom from Great Britain, it has been a coherent political entity with a recorded history since about 3200 BC. One of the first civilizations to develop irrigated agriculture, literacy, urban life, and large-scale political structures arose in the Nile Valley. The annual flood of the Nile provided for a stable agricultural society. Egypt’s strategic location between Asia and Africa and on the route between the Mediterranean basin and India and China made it an important hub of international trade. Although present-day Egypt is an overwhelmingly Arabic-speaking and Islamic country, it retains important aspects of its past Christian, Greco-Roman, and ancient indigenous heritage.

Muslim Arab invaders conquered Egypt in AD 641, and Egypt has been a part of the Muslim and Arab worlds ever since. The foundations of the modern state were established by Muhammad Ali, who served as viceroy of Egypt from 1805 to 1849, while the country was a province of the Ottoman Empire. Britain occupied Egypt in 1882. After 40 years of direct British colonial rule, Egypt became an independent monarchy in 1922. However, British policies enforced by a continuing military occupation limited its independence. In 1952 a group of military officers led by Gamal Abdel Nasser overthrew the monarchy and established Egypt as a republic. Nasser negotiated the evacuation of the last British troops from Egypt by 1956. In 1979, under President Anwar al-Sadat, Egypt became the first Arab nation to sign a peace treaty with the Jewish state of Israel. Egypt remains an important political and cultural center for the entire Arab world. In 2005 Egypt held its first-ever multiparty presidential election. The current president is Muhamad Hosni Mubarak.

Recent History

In July 1952 a secret society in the Egyptian army called the Free Officers, led by General Gamal Abdel Nasser, took control of the government in an almost bloodless coup. They forced King Faruk to abdicate and replaced him as head of state with General Muhammad Naguib. Naguib promised to restore democracy and rid the country of corruption. The new government’s first action was to issue a decree that no person could own more than 80 hectares (200 acres) of agricultural land. This action had the effect of breaking up huge estates and redistributing the land to thousands of peasants who owned no land. In the course of the next year the Free Officers took over government ministries to implement other reforms. They banned the old political parties, tried many politicians for corruption, and postponed indefinitely the restoration of parliamentary rule. In June 1953 they put an end to the monarchy by declaring Egypt a republic. Naguib was named the first president of the republic.



When Naguib voiced support for the old parties and the Muslim Brotherhood, most of the Free Officers, under the leadership of Nasser, opposed him. In early 1954 Nasser became prime minister, while Naguib retained the presidency. A failed attempt by the Muslim Brotherhood to assassinate Nasser in late 1954 gave him a reason to clamp down on the Brotherhood and on other groups thought to favor Naguib, who subsequently was dismissed from the presidency and placed under house arrest. Nasser became acting head of state. He was formally elected president in 1956.

The revolutionaries gave precedence to domestic reforms, but they soon turned their attention to foreign affairs. They secured an agreement by which the British would evacuate the Suez Canal bases by June 1956. They also agreed to let the people of Sudan choose between union with Egypt and independence. The Egyptian government fiercely opposed attempts by the Western powers, especially the United States and Britain, to create a Middle Eastern alliance against Communism. In particular, the Egyptians condemned the British-sponsored Baghdad Pact, which brought together Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Pakistan against the USSR. An Israeli raid into the Egyptian-administered Gaza Strip in early 1955 underscored Egypt's military vulnerability and hence its need to buy arms from abroad, ultimately Egypt was able to buy over \$200 million in weaponry from Czechoslovakia.

The Suez Crisis

After a series of heated events regarding loans from the USA and Britain to build a dam in the Nile, Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal Company as a response to the western powers. The Company ran the Canal and was owned by the British and the French. The takeover of the canal company infuriated the British, for whom the Suez Canal was a vital waterway. It also angered the French, who had built and managed the canal. Both governments threatened to force Nasser to relinquish the canal, despite the U.S. government's opposition to military action. After diplomatic efforts to resolve the crisis failed, Britain and France entered into a secret alliance with Israel, which was already considering military action against Egypt. Egypt had refused to allow Israel to use the Suez Canal and since 1951 had blocked Israel's access to the Red Sea from its port of Elat through the Egyptian-controlled Strait of Tiran, which lies at the entrance to the Gulf of Aqaba. Furthermore, Egypt was sponsoring Palestinian raids into Israeli territory.

Israel attacked Egypt in October 1956 and soon captured the Gaza Strip and most of the Sinai Peninsula, while Britain and France invaded Port Said and began occupying the canal zone. Within a week, however, the United Nations, at the urging of both the USSR and the United States, demanded a cease-fire, forcing Britain, France, and Israel to withdraw from the lands they had captured.

War with Israel

In June 1967 Israel, unable to secure military assistance from the United States or any European nations, launched surprise air attacks against its Arab enemies, virtually destroying the air forces of the United Arab Republic (official name of Egypt at the time), Jordan, Syria, and Iraq. In the



ensuing Six-Day War, Israel captured the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula from the UAR. Nasser retaliated by breaking diplomatic relations with the United States, which he accused of aiding Israel, and again closing the Suez Canal. Jordan and Syria likewise suffered defeat and lost territory to the Israelis.

In the wake of its defeat, the UAR sought more weapons and military advisers from the USSR. It also began to make peace with Saudi Arabia, on whom it had to rely for economic assistance. Under the terms of a peace plan for Yemen, Egyptian troops were at last withdrawn from Yemen in December 1967. As Saudi influence increased, the Egyptian government began to move from Arab socialism toward a more Islamic orientation.

In November 1967 the UN Security Council passed Resolution 242, a peace proposal that called for Israel's withdrawal from lands taken in the recent fighting. In 1968 UAR and Israeli forces began firing regularly at each other across the Suez Canal, leading Nasser in March 1969 to declare a War of Attrition against Israel. Israel responded with air and land attacks on the UAR. Nasser, in turn, requested more Soviet military assistance.

In 1970 U.S. Secretary of State William Rogers proposed a peace plan that would have extended Resolution 242 by requiring Israel to give back almost all the land it had taken in 1967 in return for peace treaties with its Arab neighbors. Israel rejected the plan, while Nasser decided to join Jordan in accepting the plan. Palestinian commandos who opposed the plan challenged Jordan's King Hussein. Nasser called another Arab summit in Cairo and managed to reconcile the two sides. He died of a heart attack within hours after the meeting ended. Nasser's death and funeral led to an outpouring of grief throughout the Arab world.

Egypt under Sadat

Anwar al-Sadat, who had been vice president under Nasser, became president upon Nasser's death. Sadat was generally assumed to be too weak to hold power for long. He surprised everyone in May 1971 by removing Nasser's most trusted lieutenants from key leadership positions. Sadat quickly gained popular support by repealing many censorship policies, calling for a new constitution, and changing the country's name to the Arab Republic of Egypt.

Sadat's early initiatives in foreign policy were less successful. He proposed peace with Israel, calling for an Israeli pullback from the Suez Canal in exchange for Egypt's renunciation of war. His proposal fell on deaf ears. Libya desired union with Egypt, and in 1971 there was hope for a broader federation including Syria and Sudan, but no union ever occurred. In 1971 Sadat signed a friendship treaty with the USSR, but it did not enable him to buy from Moscow the weapons he wanted. Frustrated that the USSR was not providing Egypt with enough weapons, Sadat asked in 1972 that most of the Soviet military advisers in Egypt leave the country.

Sadat came under increasing domestic pressure to initiate a new war against Israel to recapture the territories lost in 1967. He had hoped that the expulsion of most Soviet military advisers in 1972 would prompt the United States, now Israel's chief ally, to seek reconciliation with Egypt, but there was no such move on the part of the United States. Meanwhile, the leaders of Israel believed that the lack of Soviet expertise would reduce Egypt's war-making potential, and so



they discounted the possibility of an Egyptian attack. In September 1973, during an Israeli election campaign in which the leading candidates favored keeping the captured territories, Sadat made a secret agreement with Syria to attack Israeli positions in the Sinai and in the Golan Heights, Syrian territory that Israel had captured in the 1967 war.

The joint attack, begun on the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur and it quickly broke through the Israeli defenses. Egyptian forces advanced into the Sinai as Syrian forces retook part of the Golan Heights. Neither Egypt nor Syria fully capitalized on their initial gains, however, and soon the Israelis, completely mobilized and rearmed by the United States, went on the offensive. After 18 days of fighting, Israel broke through the Egyptian lines, crossed the Suez Canal, and seized portions of the canal's west bank down to Suez City. The UN Security Council passed resolutions calling for immediate negotiations between the warring parties. A Soviet threat to attack Israel and a U.S. threat of nuclear war finally ended the conflict. After the fighting ended, Egyptian and Israeli officers met in an attempt to disengage their troops.

Following negotiations the Egyptian and Israeli governments agreed to a peace conference in Geneva, Switzerland, in December 1973. Both countries reached a disengagement agreement that allowed Egypt to keep territory it had recaptured east of the Suez Canal and established a buffer zone separating the Egyptian and Israeli forces in the Sinai. Sadat agreed to reopen the Suez Canal and to allow the passage of ships to and from Israel. The two governments reached an interim agreement whereby Israel withdrew from additional Egyptian territory in return for a pledge by Egypt not to go to war with Israel.

In 1977 Sadat made a historic visit to Israel's parliament in Jerusalem to offer a peace settlement. Sadat's visit to Jerusalem produced no immediate progress, but his initiative led to further meetings and negotiations between Egypt and Israel. In September 1978 U.S. President Jimmy Carter invited Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin to the presidential retreat in Camp David, Maryland, to continue negotiations. Although the Palestinians and almost all the other Arab governments opposed Sadat's actions, Sadat signed the Camp David Accords, a framework for peace that provided for Israel's phased withdrawal from the Sinai in return for full diplomatic ties with Egypt. Further negotiations led to a comprehensive peace treaty between Egypt and Israel in 1979.

Most Egyptians hailed Sadat's peace policy, mainly because they hoped that it would improve economic conditions. Instead, the economy suffered further from a boycott by Arab nations that opposed Egypt's separate peace with Israel. Egypt also became politically isolated from the Arab world. It was expelled from the Arab League, and the league's headquarters was moved from Cairo to Tunis, Tunisia.

On October 6, 1981, while reviewing a military parade in Cairo commemorating Egypt's victory in the 1973 war, Sadat was assassinated by a group of Islamist officers. Egyptian security forces unearthed a widespread conspiracy of terrorists alienated by Sadat's peace with Israel and the socioeconomic problems.

Egypt under Mubarak



Vice President Hosni Mubarak succeeded Sadat as president. Mubarak promised to stress continuity in foreign policy and betterment of economic conditions in Egypt. One of his first acts was to release the politicians whom Sadat had jailed. While maintaining Egypt's close ties with the United States, Mubarak also pursued closer ties with other Arab countries and kept his distance from Israel. By 1987 most Arab states had restored their diplomatic ties with Egypt. Egypt was readmitted to the Arab League in 1989 and the league's headquarters was moved back to Cairo.

Within Egypt, Mubarak allowed new political parties to form and eased some curbs on press freedom, but he maintained the state of emergency that Sadat had imposed in 1981 to prevent the Islamist groups from gaining power. Yet the government seemed less able than the Islamists, who maintained a traditional Islamic social services network, to deliver medical, educational, and social benefits to poor people.

In 1990 Iraq invaded Kuwait, and Mubarak supported the U.S.-led allied coalition that was formed to reverse the occupation. Egypt's intellectuals widely criticized his support of the coalition, and many Egyptians sympathized with the Iraqis. Between 1990 and 1997, radical Islamist groups engaged in violent action to overthrow the government. Mubarak himself barely escaped an assassination attempt in 1995. The government responded by imprisoning or executing numerous radicals. The peace policy with Israel and Egypt's close ties to the United States remained widely unpopular. Nevertheless, the Egyptian government formally upheld the peace treaty with Israel and on occasion sponsored meetings aimed at promoting peace between Israel and the Palestinians.

During the early 2000s Mubarak continued his policies of suppressing radical Islamists and permitting only weak opposition from other political parties. He was quick to condemn the September 11 attacks on the United States, and in the wake of those attacks reaffirmed the importance of his crackdown on Islamic fundamentalists. In the meantime more moderate Islamic groups were demanding a more overtly Islamist state based upon Sharia (Islamic law). The holding of relatively free elections by Palestinians and in Iraq in early 2005 led to some publicly expressed Egyptian sentiment in favor of more democracy at home. As Mubarak's fourth six-year term drew to a close in 2005, some groups called for changes in the constitution, including a two-term limit on the presidency. In May 2005 voters approved a constitutional amendment that allowed for multiparty candidates and direct election of the president by secret ballot.

As presidential elections approached, Egypt became the scene of several terrorist bombings. In October 2004 suicide bombers at two resort towns in the Sinai Peninsula killed 34 people, many of them Israeli tourists. Then in July 2005 three explosive-filled trucks driven by suicide bombers detonated in the Red Sea resort town of Sharm al-Sheikh at the tip of the Sinai Peninsula.

Nevertheless, Egypt's first multiparty presidential election took place without violence in September 2005. Mubarak was easily reelected with more than 85 percent of the vote, although voter turnout was low with only about 7 million votes cast from a pool of 32 million registered voters. The turnout of about 22 percent contrasted with a turnout of more than 53 percent in the



referendum on the constitutional amendment. Opposition parties charged election fraud and said Mubarak's campaign dominated the state-owned media.

Defense

Egypt's armed forces in 2003 totaled 450,000, with 320,000 in the army, 30,000 in the air force, and 20,000 in the navy, and the remainder in the air defense or shared commands. Affiliated with the armed forces are the reserves, the Central Security Forces, and the National Guard. Each branch is headed by a commander, above whom stands the commander in chief of the armed forces. The president has ultimate authority over the military as its supreme commander. There is a three-year period of selective military service. The officer corps exercises great political influence.

Army

The army has always been the largest and most important branch of the armed forces. The army had an estimated strength of 320,000 in 1989. About 180,000 of these were conscripts. Before the June 1967 War, the army divided its personnel into four regional commands. After the 1967 debacle, the army was reorganized into two field armies--the Second Army and the Third Army, both of which were stationed in the eastern part of the country. Most of the remaining troops were stationed in the Nile Delta region, around the upper Nile, and along the Libyan border. These troops were organized into eight military districts. Commandos and paratroop units were stationed near Cairo under central control but could be transferred quickly to one of the field armies if needed. District commanders, who generally held the rank of major general, maintained liaisons with governors and other civil authorities on matters of domestic security.

The army's principal tactical formations in 1988 were believed to include four armored divisions (each with two armored brigades and one mechanized brigade); six mechanized infantry divisions (each with two mechanized brigades and one armored brigade); and two infantry divisions (each with two infantry brigades and one mechanized brigade). Independent brigades included four infantry brigades, three mechanized brigades, one armored brigade, two air mobile brigades, one paratroop brigade, and the Republican Guard armored brigade. These brigades were augmented by two heavy mortar brigades, fourteen artillery brigades, two surface-to-surface missile (SSM) regiments, and seven commando groups. Each consisted of about 1,000 men.

Although disposition of the forces was secret, foreign military observers estimated that five Egyptian divisions were in camps west of the Suez Canal while half a division was in Sinai. The Second Army was responsible for the area from the Mediterranean Sea to a point south of Ismailia; the Third Army was responsible from that point southward to the Red Sea. The government deployed the armies in this way partly because of a desire to protect the canal and the capital from a potential Israeli invasion and partly because the housing facilities and installations for the two armies had long been located in these areas. The commander of the Western District controlled armored forces supplemented by commando, artillery, and air defense units (possibly totaling the equivalent of a reinforced division) that were stationed at



coastal towns in the west and in the Western Desert (also known as the Libyan Desert) facing Libya.

Even though the Egyptian military became oriented toward the West after the October 1973 War, it still had large amounts of Soviet equipment in its arms inventory. As of 1989, an estimated five of the twelve divisions and portions of other units had made the transition to American equipment and order of battle. The stock of main battle tanks consisted of 785 M60A3s from the United States, together with more than 1,600 Soviet-made T-54, T-55, and T-62 models. Some of these older Soviet tanks were being refitted in the West with 105mm guns, diesel engines, fire-control systems, and external armor. Armored personnel carriers (APCs) consisted of 1,000 M-113A2s from the United States, more than 1,000 BTR-50s and OT-62s from the Soviet Union, and about 200 Fahds, which were manufactured in Egypt based on a design from the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany). The army also had more than 700 infantry combat vehicles that were manufactured by the Soviet Union and Spain. Egypt also launched a program to increase the mobility of artillery and rockets by mounting them on the chassis of tanks and APCs.

The army possessed a variety of antitank rockets and missiles, including older Soviet models, Egyptian rocket systems derived from the Soviet ones, and Milan missiles from France, Swingfire missiles produced in Egypt under British license, and TOW (tube-launched, optically sighted, wire-guided) missiles from the United States. The army mounted the TOWs and Swingfires on locally built jeeps. A plan to add TOWs to Fahd APCs was still at the prototype stage (see table 13, Appendix).

During the 1980s, the armed forces implemented a program to improve the quality and efficiency of its defense system by introducing modern armaments while reducing the number of personnel. The army was expected to lose more personnel than the other branches of the military. The army, however, had little incentive to cut its enlisted strength because doing so would further reduce the need for officers, who were already in excess of available positions. Moreover, service in the army helped relieve the nation's unemployment situation and provided some soldiers with vocational training. Nevertheless, plans called for a reduction in army strength by as much as 25 percent.

During each of the wars with Israel, the army had demonstrated weaknesses in command relationships and communications. Under the influence of Soviet military doctrine, higher commanders had been reluctant to extend operational flexibility to brigade and battalion commanders. Rigidity in planning was another shortcoming. Commanders reacted slowly in battlefield situations; the system did not encourage initiative among frontline officers. Prior to the October 1973 War, the army made many improvements in the way it prepared officers for combat. Moreover, the complex planning that preceded the Egyptian crossing of the Suez Canal and the execution of the initial attack demonstrated a high level of military competence. Later, however, when Israel launched its counterattack, the Egyptian high command reacted with hesitation and confusion, enabling Israel to gain the initiative in spite of determined Egyptian resistance.



Decision making in the army continued to be highly centralized during the 1980s. Officers below brigade level rarely made tactical decisions and required the approval of higher-ranking authorities before they modified any operations. Senior army officers were aware of this situation and began taking steps to encourage initiative at the lower levels of command.

A shortage of well-trained enlisted personnel became a serious problem for the army as it adopted increasingly complex weapons systems. Observers estimated in 1986 that 75 percent of all conscripts were illiterate when they entered the military and therefore faced serious obstacles when trying to learn how to use high-technology weaponry. Soldiers who had acquired even the most basic technical skills were eager to leave the army as soon as possible in search of higher-paying positions in the civilian sector. By United States standards, the army underutilized its noncommissioned officers (NCOs), many of whom were soldiers who had served a long time but had not shown any special aptitude. Officers with ranks as high as major often conducted training that would be carried out by NCOs in a Western army. In a move to retain well trained NCOs, the army in the 1980s started providing career enlisted men with higher pay, more amenities, and improved living conditions.

The Frontier Corps, a lightly armed paramilitary unit of about 12,000 men, mostly beduins, was responsible for border surveillance, general peacekeeping, drug interdiction, and prevention of smuggling. In the late 1980s, the army equipped this force with remote sensors, night-vision binoculars, communications vehicles, and high-speed motorboats.

The 1991 Gulf War, in which Iraqi equipment, several generations newer than Egypt's Soviet equipment, was badly outclassed by Western types, convinced the Egyptian military that it must devote more effort to replacement than upgrading of old equipment. The arms reductions following the CFE treaty and the end of the Cold War provided the means. Talk of upgrading T-55 MBTs gave way to scrapping them, one-for-one, as surplus US Army M-60s were acquired and converted to M-60A3 standard. Even so, while some 700 M-60s had been acquired by mid-1992, updating fell behind schedule and more than half the Army's equipment was still of Eastern origin. A replacement APC, able to keep up with M1A1, was the main priority. It was announced in October 1992, that major purchases of new US military equipment would be postponed until 1997 or later.

The London-based Sunday Times newspaper said on 12 August 2001, that Egypt was considering sending its Third Army into the demilitarized Sinai Peninsula. The newspaper, quoting a senior Egyptian security source, said that the Egyptian Government would send in the army if Israel moved into Palestinian territories. President Mubarak had come under increasing pressure to help the Palestinians, the paper said. A Third Army exercise took place east of Cairo in September 2001. Israeli security sources said the prospect of an Egyptian military intervention is being considered. They told the Times that an Egyptian invasion of the Sinai would be regarded as a violation of the 1979 peace treaty with Israel.

In early September 2001, Egypt's Third Field Army held a major exercise near the Suez Canal. The exercise was meant to train the military to repel any attack from Israel.

Navy



Although the navy was the smallest branch of the military, it is large by Middle Eastern standards. After some years of neglect, in 1989 the navy was in the process of modernization. The navy's diverse and challenging missions included protection of more than 2,000 kilometers of coastline on the Mediterranean and Red seas, defense of approaches to the Suez Canal, and support for army operations. The navy had been built mostly with Soviet equipment during the 1960s but in the early 1980s acquired a number of vessels from China and Western sources. In 1989 the navy had 18,000 personnel, not including 2,000 members in the Coast Guard. Three-year conscripts accounted for about half of the personnel. Principal bases were at Alexandria (Al Iskandariyah), Port Said, and Marsa Matruh on the Mediterranean Sea, at Port Tawfiq (Bur Tawfiq) near Suez, and at Al Ghardaqaq and Bur Safajah on the Red Sea. Some fleet units were stationed in the Red Sea, but the bulk of the force remained in the Mediterranean. Navy headquarters and the main operational and training base were located at Ras at Tin near Alexandria.

The Egyptian navy was only peripherally involved in the series of conflicts with Israel. During the 1956 War, Egyptian destroyers and torpedo boats engaged larger British vessels in a move aimed at undermining the amphibious operations of the British and French. The Egyptian blockade of ships in the Strait of Tiran that were headed toward Israel helped precipitate the June 1967 War, but Egypt's navy played only a minor role in the overall conflict. 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.

In the October 1973 War, Egypt blocked commercial traffic to Elat in the Gulf of Aqaba by laying mines; it also attempted to blockade Israeli ports on the Mediterranean. When Israel succeeded in enticing Egyptian missile craft into action, Israeli gunboats equipped with superior Gabriel missiles sank a number of Egyptian units. Both navies shelled and carried out rocket attacks against each other's shore installations, but neither side experienced any extensive damage.

Egypt maintained satisfactory operational standards for older ships at its own naval workshops and repair facilities; many ships were outfitted at these facilities with newer electronic equipment and weapons. During the 1980s, the navy focused on upgrading submarine and antisubmarine warfare, improving minesweeping capabilities, and introducing early-warning systems. Libya's mining of the Red Sea in 1984 focused attention on the need to protect shipping lanes leading to the Suez Canal and the need for more advanced mine countermeasure vessels. The navy periodically tested its effectiveness during joint operations with friendly foreign fleets. Egypt regularly carried out exercises with French and Italian naval units and with ships of the United States Sixth Fleet in a series known as "Sea Wind." Exercises were also scheduled to be held with Britain in 1990.

The navy's main operational subdivisions were the destroyer, submarine, mine warfare, missile boat, and torpedo boat commands. The most up-to-date combat vessels of the navy were two Descubierta-class frigates built in Spain and commissioned in 1984. The frigates were equipped with Aspide missiles and Stingray torpedoes for antisubmarine operations and with Harpoon SSMs. The navy commissioned two Chinese frigates of the Jianghu class in the same period. The navy had ten Romeo-class submarines, of which eight were operational, four provided by the



Soviet Union and four by China. Four of the submarines were undergoing modernization in an Egyptian shipyard under contract with an American firm. Modernization included refitting the vessels so they could fire Harpoon SSMs and Mk 37 torpedoes. In 1989 Egypt purchased two Oberon-class submarines from Britain. These submarines would require refitting and modernization before entering Egyptian service. Most of the navy's considerable fleet of fast-attack craft armed with missiles or torpedoes came from the Soviet Union or China. The most modern of these craft, however, were six Ramadan-class missile boats built in Britain in the early 1980s and mounted with Otomat SSMs.

The Coast Guard was responsible for the onshore protection of public installations near the coast and the patrol of coastal waters to prevent smuggling. Its inventory consisted of about thirty large patrol craft (each between twenty and thirty meters in length) and twenty smaller Bertram-class coastal patrol craft built in the United States.

The navy lacked its own air arm and depended on the air force for maritime reconnaissance and protection against submarines. The air force's equipment that supported the navy included twelve Gazelle and five Sea King helicopters mounted with antiship and antisubmarine missiles. In mid-1988 the air force also took delivery of the first of six Grumman E-2c Hawkeye aircraft with search and side-looking radar for maritime surveillance purposes.

The Egyptian Navy has chosen the 60m, diesel-powered Ambassador Mk.III fast missile patrol craft; construction of the boats began in Spring 2001. Under the contract, Egypt would provide key weapons and sensors for the boats. Egypt already had the Ambassador patrol craft in service, but the new boats would contain an update in design meant to make the vessels more resistant to radar detection. The design was conducted with the assistance of Lockheed Martin.

Air Force

As of 1989, the Egyptian air force had more than 500 combat aircraft and 30,000 personnel, of which 10,000 were conscripts. Its front-rank fighters consisted of sixty-seven multimission F-16 A/Cs and thirty-three F-4Es from the United States, as well as sixteen Mirage 2000s from France. A large inventory of older MiG aircraft (some of which were Chinese versions assembled in Egypt) backed up the more modern fighters. The air force had fitted many of the MiGs with advanced Western electronics, including radars, jamming equipment, and Sidewinder and Matra air-to-air missiles. The Air Defense Force exercised operational control of about 135 MiG interceptors, although their aircraft and personnel remained part of the air force. Egypt also planned to exchange crude oil for fifty Pucara light ground-attack fighters from Argentina. The air force operated seventy-two combat helicopters and a number of electronic-monitoring, maritime-patrol, reconnaissance, and early warning aircraft. Some of these aircraft were capable of detecting low-flying targets at great distances.

When the Soviet Union became Egypt's principal arms supplier in the 1950s, it also played a preeminent role in advising and training the Egyptian air force. Much of the Soviet influence on the air force's structure and organization still prevailed in the 1980s, although training and tactics were affected by the changeover to Western equipment and the advanced training provided by the United States and other Western countries. Flying units were organized into air brigades that



were headquartered at a single base. Brigades officially consisted of three squadrons that each had sixteen to twenty aircraft. Many brigades, however, had only two squadrons. With its headquarters at Heliopolis near Cairo, the air force had about seventeen principal air bases out of a total of forty major installations, as well as reserve and auxiliary bases.

After the June 1967 War and again after the October 1973 War, Egypt had to rebuild totally its air force. Only a few hours after the June 1967 War began, Israel had virtually wiped out the Egyptian air force. The government later tried and imprisoned the commander of the air force and a few other officers and purged many other senior officers. The combat efficiency of the air force, which had dropped almost to nil as a consequence of the war and its aftermath, was restored by renewed deliveries from the Soviet Union and intensified Soviet-led training of pilots and crews.

When Egypt initiated the October 1973 War, the air force was much better 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. The air force then shifted to Israeli targets in Sinai and engaged in frequent dogfights over Suez and Port Said. Despite the courage and competence of the pilots, Egypt's air force suffered the loss of more than 200 aircraft in eighteen days of combat. Egypt and Syria together lost an estimated twelve aircraft for every aircraft lost by Israel.

When the war ended, Sadat repeatedly pressed the Soviets to replace Egypt's losses with more advanced aircraft that could rival the American aircraft being flown by the Israelis. Angered by Soviet delays, Sadat ordered Mirage 5 aircraft from France and, later on, F-4E fighters from the United States. Deliveries of the latter began in mid-1979. In addition, two batches of more advanced F-16s were delivered between 1986 and 1989. Delivery of a third batch, which would bring the total number of F-16s in operational units to 120, was to begin in 1991. As of 1990, Egypt was negotiating a fourth batch of forty-six aircraft. Egypt originally planned to purchase forty Mirage 2000s from France, but as of late 1989 no decision had been reached on acquiring the remaining aircraft. With the cooperation of Chinese and Western manufacturers, Egypt developed a major domestic industry that assembled aircraft and produced parts. The Air Force, meanwhile, has continued to receive a flow of F-16 fighter aircraft from the US. By 1995, the EAF had a total of some 170 F-16A/B/C and D variant fighters in service. Planning for a fifth batch of F-16C/Ds under Peace Vector V program, was underway by mid-1995. The EAF ordered an initial batch of 24 McDonnell Douglas AH-64 Apache attack helicopters in 1994. At the same time, the EAF began the process of trying to acquire ex-US Navy P-3C Orion maritime reconnaissance aircraft to replace its Tu-16 Badger-Gs. No decision has yet been made on this program.

The Egyptian and Pakistani governments reportedly agreed in November 2000 on a major bilateral defense trade agreement which involved the refurbishment of Egyptian Air Force (EAF) aircraft in Pakistan in exchange for the supply of Egyptian F-16A/B spare parts to the Pakistan Air Force (PAF). The deal, which had been in preparation for some time, was reportedly finalized by Pakistan Chief Executive Gen. Pervez Musharraf and senior Egyptian officials at the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) summit in Doha on November 13-14, 2000. What was agreed, reportedly, included:



- The provision by Pakistan Aeronautical Complex (PAC) at Kamra, near Islamabad, of major overhauls and upgrades of some or all of the airframes and engines of the EAF's 13 Dassault Mirage 5 E2 tactical fighters; appr. 45 Dassault Mirage 5 SDE tactical fighters; less than 6 Dassault Mirage 5SDR tactical reconnaissance aircraft; and 5 Dassault Mirage 5 SDD operational trainers at the Mirage Rebuild Facility, which is part of PAC;
- The provision by PAC of major overhauls and upgrades of some or all of the airframes and engines of the EAF's appr. 45 Chengdu F-7B Fishbed tactical fighters at the F-6 Rebuild Facility, part of PAC. [Although called the F-6 Rebuild Facility, it undertakes major work on A-5, F-6 and F-7 types.] As well, similar work would be undertaken on some or all of the EAF's appr. 400 Mikoyan MiG-21PFS, MiG-21PFM and MiG-21MF Fishbed tactical fighters; appr. 10 Mikoyan MiG-21R Fishbed tactical reconnaissance aircraft; and appr. 12 Mikoyan MiG-21UM/US Mongol operational trainers; as well as appr. 50 Shenyang F-6 Farmer tactical fighters; 5 Shenyang FT-6 Farmer operational trainers.
- The provision by Pakistan Ordnance Factories, at Wah Cantonment, near Islamabad, of a range of ordnance and munitions for the Egyptian Armed Forces;
- Other as-yet unidentified goods and services to be provided by Pakistan to the Egyptian Armed Forces;
- Provision by Egypt of spare parts for the PAF's appr. 35 F-16A/B fighters.

Egyptian Air Force sources indicated in January 2001 that the EAF was to acquire a significant quantity of Karakorum K-8 advanced jet trainer/light strike aircraft from Pakistan, basically to replace its appr. 25 Dassault-Breguet/Dornier Alpha Jet MS1 advanced trainers and appr. 12 Dassault-Breguet/Dornier Alpha Jet MS2 light attack aircraft.

Air Defense Force

After most of the country's aircraft was destroyed on the ground in 1967, the military placed responsibility for air defense under one commander. Responsibility had previously been divided among several commands. Egypt patterned its new Air Defense Force (ADF) after the Soviet Air Defense Command, which integrated all its air defense capabilities--antiaircraft guns, rocket and missile units, interceptor planes, and radar and warning installations.

In 1989 the ADF had an estimated 80,000 ground and air personnel, including 50,000 conscripts. Its main constituents were 100 antiaircraft-gun battalions, 65 battalions of SA-2 SAMs, 60 battalions of SA-3 SAMs, 12 batteries of improved Hawk SAMs (I-Hawk), and 1 battery of Crotale missiles. Each battalion had between 200 and 500 men, and from four to eight battalions composed a brigade. Gun and missile sites were located along the Suez Canal, around Cairo, and near some other cities to protect military installations and strategic civilian targets. The ADF deployed some of its more mobile weapons in the Western Desert as a defense against possible Libyan incursions.

Progress was being made on a national air-defense network that would integrate all existing radars, missile batteries, air bases, and command centers into an automated command and control system. The ADF planned to link the system to the Hawkeye early warning aircraft.



A large share of the ADF's anti-aircraft artillery, SAMs, and radar equipment was imported from the Soviet Union. As of 1989, the most modern weapons in the air defense system were the 108 medium-altitude I-Hawk SAMs acquired from the United States beginning in 1982. These weapons were supplemented by 400 older Soviet-made SA-2 SAMs with a slant range of forty to fifty kilometers and about 240 SA-3s, which provided shorter-range defense against low-flying targets. A British firm helped the ADF modernize the SA-2s. In addition, Egypt was producing its own SAM, the Tayir as Sabah (Morning Flight), based on the design of the SA-2. The ADF had mounted sixty Soviet SA-6 SAMs on tracked vehicles as tactical launchers. Sixteen tracked vehicles provided mobile launching platforms for its fifty French-manufactured Crotale SAM launchers. Egypt was also introducing its own composite gun-missile-radar system known as Amun (skyguard), integrating radar-guided twin 23mm guns with Sparrow and Egyptian Ayn as Saqr SAMs.

International Relations:

Egypt led in the formation of the Arab League and was a charter member of the United Nations (UN), both of which were formed in 1945. Egypt played a leading role in Arab opposition to Israel, participating in wars against Israel in 1948-1949, 1956, 1967, and 1973 and spearheading an Arab economic boycott against the Jewish state. In 1979, however, Egypt became the first Arab state to sign a peace treaty with Israel. This treaty led to a period of relative isolation, as Egypt was ostracized by other Arab governments. Egypt was ousted from the Arab League, whose secretariat was moved to Tunis. But because Egypt supported Iraq in its war against Iran and also mended its fences with Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat and with Jordan's King Hussein, relations gradually improved during the 1980s. In an Arab summit meeting held in Amman, Jordan, in November 1987, most Arab leaders agreed to resume diplomatic ties with Egypt, and the Arab League headquarters moved back to Cairo in 1990.

The Middle East peace process has remained a prominent part of Egypt's foreign policy, and it has sought to persuade other Arab governments to settle their differences with Israel. Although its efforts have often failed, Egypt has undertaken periodic negotiations to defuse Israeli-Arab crises, hosting a summit meeting at Sharm al-Sheikh on the Sinai Peninsula in February 2005.

From 1955 to 1972 Egypt relied primarily on the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and other Communist countries for military and economic aid. More recently the Egyptian government developed close political ties with the United States, particularly after the United States helped facilitate the 1979 treaty with Israel. Egypt receives substantial economic and military aid from the United States. Before the Persian Gulf War, Egypt sought to mediate disputes between Iraq and Kuwait in 1990. Egypt supported the anti-Iraq coalition after Saddam Hussein's forces occupied Kuwait in August 1990 and backed the UN resolutions condemning Iraq's actions. Egyptian troops joined the multinational force against Iraq in 1990 and 1991. In 2002 Egypt tried to mediate in the conflict between the United States and Iraq. It pressured Iraq to admit UN weapons inspectors and opposed the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003.

Land



Less than one-tenth of the land area of Egypt is settled or under cultivation. This territory consists of the valley and delta of the Nile, a number of desert oases, and land along the Suez Canal, which connects the Mediterranean with the Gulf of Suez, an arm of the Red Sea. More than 90 percent of the country consists of desert areas, including the Libyan Desert (also known as the Western Desert) in the west, a part of the Sahara, and the Arabian Desert (also called the Eastern Desert), which borders the Red Sea and the Gulf of Suez, in the east.

The Nile enters Egypt from Sudan and flows north to the Mediterranean Sea. For its entire length from the southern border to Cairo, the Nile flows through a narrow valley lined by cliffs. In the vicinity of Cairo the Nile Valley merges with the Nile Delta, a fan-shaped plain. Silt deposited by the Rosetta, Damietta, and other distributaries has made the delta the most fertile region in the country.

Although Egypt has 2,450 km (1,522 mi) of coastline, two-thirds of which are on the Red Sea, it has not ports in the Red Sea because of the lack of suitable indentations for harbors.

The climate of Egypt is characterized by a hot season from May to September and a cool season from November to March. Extreme temperatures during both seasons are moderated by the prevailing northern winds.

Natural Resources

Egypt has a wide variety of mineral deposits, some of which, such as gold and red granite, have been exploited since ancient times. The chief mineral resource of contemporary value is petroleum, found mainly in the Red Sea coastal region, at Al 'Alamayn (El 'Alamein) on the Mediterranean, and on the Sinai Peninsula. Other minerals include phosphates, manganese, iron ore, and uranium. Natural gas is also extracted.

Environmental Issues:

Egypt has many environmental problems, and some of them complicate efforts to promote economic and social development. The primary issues are water quality and quantity, soil loss, urban growth, air pollution, and the environmental effects of tourism.

Egypt gets almost all of its water from the Nile. The quality of the river water is seriously threatened by untreated industrial and agricultural wastes, sewage, and municipal wastewater. In addition, the Aswān High Dam, which was completed in 1970, has reduced the flow of the Nile and trapped the nutrient-rich silt, which once fertilized the country's farmland, behind it. To compensate for the loss of the silt, farmers make more use of chemical fertilizers, which add to the water pollution. To increase crop yields they use modern herbicides and pesticides, which also contribute to the pollution. Furthermore, the reduced flow of the river increases the concentration of pollutants in the remaining river water. The reduced amount of silt deposited in the Nile Delta has caused the delta to shrink, resulting in coastal erosion that threatens the lagoons, which are important sources of fish. Finally, year-round irrigation, using the water impounded behind the Aswān High Dam, causes salts to accumulate in the soil, leading to the loss of some agricultural land.



The size and rapid growth of Egypt's population have caused additional environmental problems. The expansion of urban areas into nearby farming areas infringes on the already limited agricultural land in the Nile Delta and Valley. Efforts to relieve this pressure by establishing satellite cities in the desert away from the Nile have been only partially successful because it is difficult to attract people and industries to these bleak environments. Dense urban areas such as Cairo, Alexandria, Al Minyā, and Aswān have poor air quality, worsened by lax enforcement of measures to reduce emissions from industrial plants and motor vehicles. In these overcrowded cities, streets are filled with pollution-spewing cars and trucks, public transportation is poorly developed, and factories contaminate the air.

Tourism provides an important source of revenue for economic growth. However, poorly controlled construction and waste disposal in new tourist centers along the eastern coast have seriously degraded the water quality of the Red Sea. In addition, large concentrations of tourists threaten the fragile desert areas and the marine corals along the coast.

People and Society:

The population of Egypt is 77,505,756 (2005 estimate). The people live almost exclusively in the Nile Valley, the Nile Delta, the Suez Canal region, and the northern coastal region of the Sinai Peninsula. There are small communities in the oases of the Libyan Desert and in the oil-drilling and mining towns of the Arabian Desert. There is also a small population of nomadic Bedouins.

Principal Cities

Cairo is Egypt's capital and largest city. Including Giza, located on the west bank of the Nile adjacent to Cairo, the population of metropolitan Cairo was 6.8 million in 1998. Cairo serves as the commercial, administrative, and tourist center of Egypt. Other major cities include Giza, Alexandria, and Port Said. Giza is the location of three of Egypt's most famous pyramids. Alexandria is Egypt's principal Mediterranean seaport. Port Said, located at the northern entrance to the Suez Canal, is the site of an important free trade zone and various shipping services.

Ethnic Groups

The ancestors of the Egyptians include many races and ethnic groups, but the present-day population is relatively uniform in terms of language and religion. Most Egyptians are descendants of the ancient Egyptians, though through the many years of conquest and change of rulers, multiple other ethnicities have added to the Egyptian mix. Ultimately, as stated above, the entire population is very homogeneous.

A separate indigenous group, the Nubians, historically lived in northern Sudan and southern Egypt. Hundreds of their ancestral villages were flooded by the formation of Lake Nasser behind the Aswān High Dam. Today the Nubian population is concentrated in Aswān and Cairo. The government does not recognize the Nubians as an ethnic minority.



Also living in Egypt are small numbers of Greeks, Armenians, Italians, Syrian Christians, and Jews. Their numbers declined sharply as a result of emigration after the Suez Crisis of 1956, when rising Egyptian nationalism made them feel unwelcome. Many of those who remained in the country intermarried with indigenous Muslims or Christians.

Language

Nearly the entire population of Egypt speaks Arabic. However, only well-educated people easily understand standard Arabic. Colloquial Egyptian Arabic is the language of daily conversation. Many Nubians also speak their ancestral language. Berber is spoken in a few settlements in the oases of the Western Desert. Coptic Christians use the Coptic language, descended from ancient Egyptian, for liturgical purposes, but it is not a language in daily use. English and French are common second languages among educated Egyptians.

Religion

Islam is the official religion of Egypt. Approximately 94 percent of all Egyptians are Sunni Muslims. The largest religious minority consists of Coptic Christians, most of whom are members of the Coptic Church, officially called the Coptic Orthodox Church. Other Christian communities include Greek Orthodox, Armenian, Greek and Armenian Catholic, and several Protestant denominations whose members are mainly resident foreigners. Many Copts and others believe that official estimates undercount Christians and that Christians actually constitute about 10 percent of the population. Historically there was a small, but socially and economically significant, Jewish population. Most of that community left the country after the Suez Crisis of 1956, in which the combined forces of Israel, France, and Britain attacked Egypt.

Beginning in the 1980s, Islamic militants belonging to the Islamic Group (*al-Gama`a al-Islamiyya*) and Islamic Jihad were active, particularly in the Upper Egyptian provinces of Asyūt and Al Minyā. In 1992 they began a campaign of armed violence, centered in Cairo and Upper Egypt, with the goal of establishing a government based on strict Islamic law. The victims of their violence included Copts, government officials, and tourists.

Education

Historically, religious authorities provided basic education in local mosque schools. Higher Islamic studies became available at Al-Azhar mosque (founded in 970) in Cairo. In 988 Al-Azhar University was established. This is the oldest university in the world and the leading institution of Islamic higher education in the world today. Al-Azhar University operates a network of religious schools parallel to the state system.

In the first half of the 19th century Egyptian viceroy Muhammad Ali established state-run professional, technical, and foreign-language schools for boys. A network of state-run schools for boys was established in 1867. The first state school for girls opened in 1873. Since 1923, primary and intermediate education has been free, and it is now compulsory for children between the ages of 6 and 13. Public secondary and university education is also free but is not compulsory.



Cairo University, established in 1908, is Egypt's leading institution of higher education; women have been admitted since 1962. The American University in Cairo (1919) is the only private and fee-charging institution of higher education. The Institutes of Dramatic Arts, Cinema, and Ballet, run by the ministry of culture, offer higher education in the fine arts.

Social Issues

Egypt's most serious social issues are poverty and overpopulation. There are few wealthy people and many poor people. When adjusted for inflation, the incomes of peasants and working people rose only modestly between the mid-1970s and the end of the 20th century. Overpopulation has strained the physical infrastructure—including roads, sewer systems, water supply, and utility lines—and social service networks of Cairo and other cities. Middle-class housing is expensive and difficult to find. Violent crimes, relatively rare until the late 20th century, have increased as urban life has become more difficult.

Economy

For most of Egypt's history, its economy was based almost entirely on farming, despite the fact that more than 95 percent of the country's land area is infertile desert. Long an exporter of cereals, in the 19th century Egypt began to specialize in growing cotton, which is still an important cash crop. The first significant industries were set up only in the 1930s. Industrialization increased in the 1960s after much of the industrial sector was brought under state control. In the late 20th century other important sources of revenue included tourism, oil production, and remittances from the 3 million Egyptians working in the Persian Gulf states. Despite its economic and social development in the 20th century, Egypt was a relatively poor country in world terms, with a gross domestic product (GDP) in 2003 of \$82.4 billion, or \$1,220 per capita. Egypt is self-sufficient in energy. Its main sources of electricity are hydroelectric power plants at the Aswān High Dam and steam-driven power plants that burn natural gas. Egypt's own oil and natural gas provide almost all of the country's fuel needs. Pipelines supply gas to all major urban centers.

Foreign Trade

Before the revolution of 1952, Egypt's foreign trade consisted mainly of exports of raw materials, particularly long-staple cotton, and imports of manufactured goods. After the revolution, the regime pursued a policy of discouraging imports by using high tariff barriers to protect its growing industries. It also brought most of the country's commerce under government control. More liberal policies were introduced in the 1970s. However, it was only in the 1990s that steps were taken to open up parts of the Egyptian market to foreign competition. There was also a new emphasis on exports. Apart from exports of crude petroleum and refined petroleum products, this policy has not alleviated trade imbalances. In 2003 exports were sold for \$6.2 billion while imports cost \$10.9 billion. As a result, the country runs a trade deficit. Part of this deficit is offset by the money Egypt earns from tourism, Suez Canal tolls, and remittances from Egyptians working abroad.



Petroleum and petroleum products contribute roughly 40 percent of Egypt's export earnings, although the percentage changes from year to year. Other exports include textile yarn and fabrics, fruits and vegetables, clothing and accessories, and aluminum products. The principal imports are machinery and transportation equipment; basic manufactures, particularly iron, steel, and paper; food products, primarily cereals; and chemicals. The United States is Egypt's main trading partner, followed by Italy, Germany, and France.