

WORKING PAPER 31

SEPTEMBER 2014

The Islamist Insurgency in Egypt – Mind the Gaps

Challenges to Legitimacy, Security and Capacity

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ICTWPS September 2014 [31]

Abstract:

Not far from the Syrian and Iraqi theaters, another Islamist insurgency is taking root in an undergoverned space – the Sinai Peninsula. Shaken by political turmoil during these past three years, Egypt is now facing increasing attacks from Salafi-Jihadist militants both in the Sinai and Nile Delta. A weakened economy and continuing domestic opposition contribute to a situation of instability in the country. This paper attempts to define the concrete challenges that Egypt is facing by looking at gaps in security, capacity and legitimacy. It then sets out to develop policy responses, addressing both the Egyptian government and the international community, arguing that the challenges identified each warrant a separate logic of response and that conflating them risks rendering the policy instruments inefficient. The paper concludes by explaining how a coherent policy response can address the stagnating economy, underprivileged minorities and an exclusive political system, while still providing Egypt with the necessary military assistance in its struggle against militant Islamist extremism.

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Not far from the Syrian and Iraqi theaters, another Islamist insurgency is taking root in an undergoverned space – the Sinai Peninsula. Shaken by political turmoil during these past three years, Egypt is now facing increasing attacks from Salafi-Jihadist militants both in the Sinai and Nile Delta. According to a government tally between the July 3, 2013 ousting of ex-President Mohamed Morsi and May 2014 (Ahram Online, 25.5.2014), approximately 500 members of the Egyptian police and security forces were killed in shootings and bombings carried out by Islamist militants. Just recently, on September 2, 2014, an incident made headlines in which 11 Egyptian soldiers were killed by a roadside bomb and an ensuing ambush on a military convoy in the Sinai (Georgy, 02.09.2014).

More worrisome than sheer numbers, however, are the scope and sophistication of the attacks. Whereas the Salafi-Jihadist groups used to be predominantly active only on the Sinai Peninsula, they have more recently become infamous for carrying out attacks in the greater Cairo area (Dunne & Williamson, 24.3.2014). Notably, the group Ajnad Misr claimed responsibility for an attack on the Giza Campus of Cairo University, in which one policeman was killed and five others injured (Barnett, 2.4.2014), as well as for the attempted bombing of the presidential palace at Heliopolis in which two policemen died trying to diffuse the explosives and 13 others were wounded (Fick, 30.6.2014). An illustrative example of the increasing sophistication of

attacks is the downing of an Egyptian military helicopter in northern Sinai by the group Ansar Beit Al-Maqdis, using a surface-to-air missile (Barnett, 26.1.2014).¹

In this all-too-familiar Egyptian tale of Islamist militant activism, the government of Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi has employed the tried and tested methods of his predecessors. Much like Nasser suppressed the Muslim Brotherhood and executed many of its leading members in the 1950's, and just like Mubarak cracked down on Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya and the Islamic Jihad during the wave of Islamist terrorism in the 1990's, Al-Sisi has initiated a large-scale military and policing campaign against those groups that follow an Islamist ideology. In doing so, the government has not only not distinguished between political dissent and military activism; on the contrary, it has held political groups, most prominently the Muslim Brotherhood, responsible for inciting and organizing terrorist violence, despite the fact that the leadership of the Muslim Brotherhood has denied connections to militant groups and that no publicly disclosed evidence for such links has surfaced yet (Fadel, 10.2.2014). The independent statistical website WikiThawra counts 2,588 people dead as a result of protests and clashes in the period from July 3, 2013 to January 31, 2014, and places the number of political detainees at 41,000 as of May 15, 2014 (WikiThawra, 2014). In two mass trials in early 2014, 683 and 528 political opponents of the current regime, respectively, received death sentences in the first instance, though many were acquitted of charges later on (Reuters, 21.6.2014).² Nevertheless, the trials serve as a powerful indicator of the political course that the post-Morsi Egypt has embarked on.

Despite the ongoing crackdown by the government, however, the Islamist insurgency only seems to grow in scope, sophistication and intensity. Militant groups, who were formerly active

¹ A more comprehensive list of attacks carried out by Islamist militant groups in Egypt is to be found in the ICT database, available at: <http://194.153.101.136/interface/approve/organizations.cfm> (Last accessed: 16.07.2014).

² In comparison, 90 Islamist militants were sentenced to death during 30 years of Mubarak's rule, of whom 68 were executed (Nakhoul, 11.4.2014).

only on the Sinai Peninsula, have now increasingly carried out strategically advanced attacks in Cairo and its surroundings (Shay, 2014), and possess advanced weapons likely smuggled across the Libyan border (UNSC, 2014). It is evident that a response focusing solely on the security challenge that these insurgents pose does not yield effective results. Instead, it is essential to address the causes underlying the insurgency and the factors that fuel it, which can be attributed to questions of political legitimacy of the government as well as its capacity to provide public services.

This paper will analyze how gaps in security, capacity and legitimacy interplay to produce conditions conducive to the development of the current Islamist insurgency in Egypt. Based on this analysis, it will then develop a number of policy recommendations for internal and external actors. Specifically, it will be argued that the growing security gap is fueled by both legitimacy and capacity gaps, and that the Egyptian government needs to address security and legitimacy gaps distinctly in order to prevent a deterioration of the security situation. External actors can be most helpful by supporting capacity building, as well as by tying non-military assistance to conditions of integrating disadvantaged minorities and inclusive governance. While taking into account long-term underlying developments, the main part of this analysis will focus on the time frame starting with the ouster of ex-President Mohamed Morsi in July 2013 up until today. The policy recommendations address the current Egyptian government of Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi, who took office on June 8, 2014 and the broader international community (Ahram, 8.6.2014).

Analyzing State Weakness – Legitimacy, Security and Capacity Gaps

In order to understand the conditions conducive to the flourishing of Islamist militant activity in Egypt, it is essential to analyze the country's political situation through a theoretical framework that allows for a multifaceted approach to the issue. Moving away from the rather universalist concept of the 'failed state' (Krasner & Pascual, 2005; Rotberg, 2003; Zartman, 1995), numerous scholars and institutions have developed more nuanced categories to conceptualize instability and state weakness (Cliff & Manning, 2008; Eizenstat et al., 2005; Ghani et al., 2006). This paper will apply the theoretical framework set out by Charles T. Call, who proposes to look at the challenges that a state faces by identifying legitimacy, security, and capacity gaps (Call, 2010) within that state. A legitimacy gap exists, according to Call, when "*a significant portion of [a country's] political elites and society reject the rules regulating the exercise of power and accumulation and distribution of wealth*" (Call, 2010, p. 308). Legitimacy in this case refers to domestic legitimacy, operationalized by whether the rules and processes given by a regime are sufficiently transparent and accountable to permit free expression and participation by the population. A security gap exists when "*states do not provide minimal levels of security in the face of organized armed groups*" (Call, 2010, p.307). At the same time, Call emphasizes the strong relation between security and legitimacy, saying that a regime can only close a security gap if it addresses the concerns of both armed insurgents and the civilian population that identifies itself with those groups. Lastly, a capacity gap is present when "*the institutions of a state are incapable of delivering minimal public goods and services to the population*" (Call, 2010, p. 306). Capacity refers to both the scope and the strength of the

functions that the state carries out, which include providing security, rule of law, public finance management, and other public goods such as education and healthcare.

Naturally, these gaps are interconnected, and changes in one field often affect state performance in the other two³. A legitimacy gap, for example, may very easily foster the rise of armed challengers to a regime, leading to an increasing security gap. Similarly, protracted internal armed conflict often diminishes state capacity, and a low state capacity may in turn erode the legitimacy of the regime. However, Call makes clear that all three gaps are sufficiently distinct to warrant a particular strategic response. Closing a capacity gap requires strengthening the reach and effectiveness of state institutions, enabling them to supplant informal networks of public service provision that may have developed in the absence of formal state structures. This can be done through a variety of policy instruments, such as training civil servants, employing international technical advisors in ministries, or developing a merit-based promotion system in public agencies. In order to address a security gap, two approaches are possible – Firstly, following the logic of peacebuilding, concerns of both parties need to be addressed through a process of confidence-building measures and guarantees of political inclusion, thus linking this aspect of reestablishing security closely to political legitimacy. Secondly, one can approach security gaps through the lens of capacity building, increasing military and policing capabilities of the state. Evidently, choosing one method over another risks a trade-off between legitimacy and capacity.⁴ Lastly, regime legitimacy rests on a process of free and fair elections, allowing for political participation and the inclusion of dissenting groups in society. External interventions should provide assistance especially to oppositional groups presenting a counterweight to the government.

³ For a more in-depth analysis of the interplay between a regime's loss of legitimacy, the erosion of public services and the rise of armed groups, see Ghani, Lockhart and Carnahan (2006).

⁴ For a detailed analysis of this trade-off, see Call (2006: 313).

As the three gaps often appear simultaneously, the challenge is not to conflate policy responses, but to find separate remedies for the issues at hand. Call recommends identifying the gap that is the most prominent, i.e. the gap that underlies the crucial challenges that a country faces, in order to best address state weakness.

Analysis of the Situation in Egypt

Applying the theoretical framework to the present situation in Egypt, evidence of all three gaps is to be found. The most visible indicator for the country's security gap is the Islamist insurgency itself. While terror attacks by Islamist groups resurfaced in the Sinai already in 2004 (ICG, 2007), they increased in numbers and intensity after the fall of the Mubarak regime in 2011, taking advantage of the security vacuum that developed in the region (Lloyd, 16.6.2014). One of the most prominent groups, Ansar Beit Al-Maqdis, started to be active in the Sinai in 2011, directing their attacks mostly at Israeli targets. However, after the ouster of ex-President Morsi and the ensuing forceful crackdown on Islamist groups, the organization initiated a campaign against the military-led regime and the Egyptian security forces. It was joined by two other organizations, which were first active in late 2013: the Furqan Brigades and Afnan Misr.⁵ Common to all of these groups is their Salafi-Jihadi ideology, pursuing an Egyptian state under Islamic authority, as well as their choice of targets, which include mainly police stations, checkpoints, government offices, and the gas pipeline between Egypt and Israel (MEI, 2014). The formation of insurgent groups was facilitated by the volatile conditions during the upheavals

⁵ These three are mentioned here because they are most prominent in targeting Egyptian military and political targets also beyond the Sinai. Note that there are other radical Islamist terror groups currently active in the Sinai Peninsula, such as the Mujahideen Shura Council, Al-Salafiya Al-Jihadiya, and Ansar Al-Jihad. For a more comprehensive list, see Tuitel (2014).

in Egypt since 2011. Many Salafi-Jihadists escaped from prisons, were released under the Morsi government, or returned from exile after the fall of Hosni Mubarak and joined local militant groups in the Sinai (Shay, 2014). Likewise, it is important to recognize the transnational element of the current Islamist insurgency: Despite the fact that Egyptian security forces are the main target of the attacks, there is a considerable influx of fighters and global Jihadi ideology from Palestinian militant groups in the Gaza Strip (Ben Barak & Siboni, 2014), and the insurgents rely heavily on weapons smuggled across the Libyan border, which has been lacking effective control since the fall of the Qaddafi regime in 2011 (UNSC, 2014). It is important to note that, while many of these groups are inspired by Al Qaeda in ideology and tactics, there is no evidence yet of any such group receiving concrete directives and funding from the organization. Nevertheless, many prominent Al Qaeda members have a personal connection to and interest in Egypt, first and foremost Al Qaeda's current leader, Ayman Al Zawahiri, who was born in Egypt and headed the Egyptian Islamic Jihad, the organization that assassinated President Anwar Sadat in 1981 (Shay, 2014b). Similarly, the former head of the Islamic State of Iraq (which later evolved into the Islamic State), Abu Omar Al-Baghdadi, is regularly featured in video messages of Ansar Beit Al-Maqdis (Sabry, 4.12.2013). Thus, while the Sinai has not yet developed into an official Al Qaeda theater, it is arguably on its way there, given favorable outside conditions.

One of these conditions – a receptive host population from which militant groups can recruit – is already present to a large extent. Suffering from a capacity gap that the Egyptian state has time and again refused to fill, the Bedouin population of the Sinai has become increasingly receptive to militant extremism against the government⁶. Inhabiting Egypt's periphery, the

⁶ The failure to integrate the Bedouin population can be seen both as a capacity and a legitimacy issue. Nevertheless, this paper will focus on the capacity challenges that the population faces, as economic hardship and exclusion from public services arguably weigh more than a lack of political participation in a community that understands its social organization as largely independent from state structures.

approximately 200,000 Bedouins have never been fully integrated in the economic, political and social life of the country (Shay, 2014b). Whereas South Sinai is a much more developed region due to the larger number of tourist destinations, the Northern part of the peninsula, where most of the Bedouin population lives, is known for its poverty and lack of development. As Bedouins have no ownership rights over the land they live on, the government sold much of it to investment groups, pushing the local communities out of tourism areas. Following the resort bombings of 2004-2006, the Egyptian government banned Bedouin economic activity in tourism cities, as was the case in Sharm El-Sheikh in 2005, cutting off many Bedouins' main source of income. Simultaneously, in a brutal campaign aimed at finding the groups responsible for the terror attacks, the Egyptian police arrested around 3,000 locals and held them without charges under emergency laws. Excluded largely from the tourism industry, employment options for Bedouins are scarce, as they are not allowed to join the army or hold government positions. Even on the local level, political institutions are closely monitored by the government and community representatives are selected from above (Tuitel, 2014). Economic hardship, the perception of relative deprivation compared to the Egyptian heartland, and continued clashes with the Egyptian military have created a population receptive to cooperation with Islamist militant insurgents that are active in the region, especially because they are needed to provide knowledge of Sinai's infrastructure and are often key figures in the smuggling of weapons. Bedouins supporting Salafi-Jihadist groups are a prime example of what David Kilcullen, former counter-insurgency advisor to General David Petraeus, calls an 'accidental guerilla syndrome' – a situation in which *“transnational extremists infect an existing societal problem, and then through a process of contagion spread instability and violence into the broader society. This provokes an intervention (from the national government or the international community) which then alienates traditional*

societies, causing them to close ranks and to lash out in an immune rejection response that exacerbates violence, alienates social groups from the government and from each other, and further strengthens the hand of extremists.” (Kilcullen, 2009, p. 264). Kilcullen’s analysis describes a phenomenon common to the modus operandi of the Global Jihad movement, using a common enemy (usually the government of a country) to forge loyalties with disadvantaged communities.⁷ As long as the Bedouin population does not see an improvement of their situation, these dynamics are likely to carry on, especially because the insurgency gives them a continued, if little, income and is at the same time an opportunity to voice their anger about government policies.

Looking at the economic situation in Egypt, however, the future looks bleak. Continuous political upheavals and violence have taken their toll on the economy. The country’s GDP growth decreased from nearly 5 percent in 2010 to 2 percent in 2013, a growth rate that is far below the one required to create jobs for Egypt’s growing population – unemployment has increased from 9 percent to over 13 percent in the same time frame (World Bank, 2014). The tourism sector, in particular, is struggling: Whereas 14.7 million tourists arrived in 2010, before the Arab Spring revolutions started, this number decreased to a mere 9.4 million in 2013 (Auswärtiges Amt, 2014). These major economic challenges are set to exacerbate the capacity gap of the country and can potentially lead to a decrease in legitimacy of the Al-Sisi government.

The key challenge related to legitimacy, however, lies in the ongoing peaceful and violent opposition by Muslim Brotherhood supporters. Deemed a danger to the stability of the Egyptian state, the military-backed government has cracked down harshly on the Muslim Brotherhood and its associates. Demonstrations have been dispersed violently and an estimated 2,588 people were

⁷ Another useful example illustrating this process is the 2012 Touareg rebellion in Mali, which was later ‘hijacked’ by AQIM-affiliated militants trying to take control over the region.

killed as the result of protests and clashes between July 3, 2013 and January 31, 2014, 60 of them police officers and soldiers (WikiThawra, 2014). The harsh response to Brotherhood activism can be understood by looking at Egypt's long history of conflict between the state and Islamists. Through its provision of public services and infrastructure, especially to the poorer parts of Egyptian society, the Muslim Brotherhood has established itself as a considerable political weight in a country that sees Islam as a basic tenet of politics. In a poll conducted in 2012, 64 percent of Egyptians saw the role of Islam in politics as positive and 60 percent believed that laws should strictly follow the Quran (Pew Research Center, 2012). Even though largely committed to peaceful participation in the political process, the potential for violent activism of the Brotherhood is evident. Already in the 1950's, members of the Muslim Brotherhood, notably Said Qutb, were imprisoned by Nasser for plotting the President's assassination. Moreover, Qutb's ideas are an integral part of the basic ideology of Al Qaeda and the Global Jihad movement today. Looking at other branches of the Muslim brotherhood like Hamas in the Gaza Strip, it is evident how an ideology of political Islam created one of the most radical terror groups in the Middle East. Designating the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist organization on December 25, 2013 (Cunningham, 25.12.2013) enabled the military-backed government to legally prosecute Brotherhood members and supporters. In an unprecedented legal campaign, an estimated 41,000 people have been detained on political charges between July 3, 2013 and May 15, 2014 (WikiThawra, 2014), among them ex-President Mohamed Morsi, whose trial is still ongoing. Mass trials of political dissidents have resulted in death sentences of 683 and 528 people, respectively, though many were acquitted of charges in higher instances (Reuters, 21.6.2014). This legal assault, however, has not only angered traditional supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood, but also the liberal Egyptian elite, who fear a growing politicization of an

independent judiciary reminiscent of an Egypt under authoritarian rule. Regardless of whether one sees the revolutions of the Arab Spring as a positive or negative development for Egypt's political future, it is clear that the experience of success of popular uprisings in bringing down a regime will not allow any Egyptian ruler a return to authoritarian forms of governance. Likewise, the international community, and the West with its pro-democratic agenda in particular, will not be able to support any steps away from what it has interpreted as demands by the Egyptian people for a liberal democratic order in 2011. Thus, continued suppression of the political opposition for the sake of stability is likely to increase the legitimacy gap, both with regard to domestic and international public opinion.

More than anything else, however, the harsh suppression of the Muslim Brotherhood may be a dangerous tactical mistake. By taking out the leadership of the movement, the Egyptian government has created a large, leaderless group of independent but deeply ideological Muslim Brothers, who are not able to cohesively change their strategy and may potentially side with the Salafi-Jihadist insurgent groups. Driven by dire economic conditions, ideological affinity to Salafism and the pursuit of a common enemy, the participation of Muslim Brotherhood youth could transform what is now a more or less territorially confined insurgency into a full-fledged militant uprising against the government.⁸

Policy Implications

The analysis has shown that the growing security gap is fueled by developments related to capacity and legitimacy of the Egyptian government. Thus, any policy response should not only focus on the purely military reaction to the Islamist insurgency, but address the economic

⁸ For a more detailed explanation of this argument and the organizational structure of the Muslim Brotherhood, see Trager (19.8.2013).

challenges of the country, promote the integration of the Sinai populations into Egyptian infrastructure, and search for a more sustainable way of Muslim Brotherhood political participation. It is important to keep in mind that these different challenges each warrant a separate logic of response, and that conflating them risks rendering the policy instruments inefficient.

Responding to the Security Gap

On the most basic level, combating the Islamist insurgency cannot be done without military countermeasures. Egypt has been fighting Islamist militants in the Sinai in several military campaigns since the fall of Hosni Mubarak in 2011, the latest of which started in July 2013. An important security-related issue that Egypt should focus more on, however, is to cut the supply lines of weapons from Libya into the country. Due to the use of military capacities in the Sinai, Egypt's Western border is largely uncontrolled and smugglers can cross easily. International military support to police the border between the two countries could likewise help to alleviate this security issue. On the Sinai Peninsula, it is important that Egypt and Israel continue their cooperation with regard to militant activity close to the border. Despite regulations in the peace treaty between the countries limiting the numbers of Egyptian troops near the border to a bare minimum, in practice Israel has allowed a heightened Egyptian military presence to combat cross-border terrorist threats. According to reports, operational and intelligence cooperation between the two countries has increased, with 10 Egyptian brigades being active in Sinai in January 2014 (Miller, 20.1.2014). However, Egypt is in great need of military aid from abroad, especially from the US and the EU, which have both suspended the delivery of military equipment on grounds of human rights violations, although the US has recently allowed an

exceptional delivery of Apache helicopters (Stewart, 23.04.2014). While it is indeed important to induce the Egyptian government to implement democratic procedures, it is certainly against Western interests if this comes at the expense of stemming the growing Islamist insurgency in the Sinai, also keeping in mind that the Egyptian army needs to secure the passage of ships through the Suez Canal, which has already been targeted by Jihadi groups. This withholding of crucial military aid is thus a prime example of a policy response that conflates security and legitimacy challenges and loses its effectiveness in the process, resulting in neither a military setback of the insurgents, nor a more democratic political system.

Increasing Government Capacities

In order to counteract cooperation between the insurgent groups and the Bedouin population living in Sinai, Egypt needs to invest in long-term development projects in the region, improving health care, housing, access to water and electricity, as well as infrastructure. These large-scale investment projects can only be stemmed with the help of foreign donors. This is an example where conditionality of foreign aid is likely to be beneficial – Connecting development funds to concrete investment projects in the Sinai does not have detrimental effects on Egypt's security and ensures at the same time that the money reaches Sinai's underdeveloped communities. Another option for the international community to help capacity-building is to deploy technical experts to help create local infrastructure in the Sinai.

On a macro level, Egypt needs to counteract the ongoing stagnation of its economy by increasing investment into the country's industry and businesses, which will also alleviate unemployment in the long run. Growing stability is needed to increase foreign direct investment, which is crucial not only for reenergizing the domestic industry while striving towards a

balanced budget, but also to create and stabilize trade relations with other states. Egypt needs to see the added value that lies beyond mere financial aid it receives from states like Qatar and Saudi Arabia, and reestablish good economic and political relations with the West, who has the possibilities and experience to revive ailing economies.

Stability, sustained first and foremost by a powerful answer to the jihadist militant threat, will in time revive the tourism sector, thus regaining one of the most significant parts of the Egyptian economy. Lastly, the Al-Sisi regime needs to consider the influence that bureaucratic elites are wielding over the provision of fuel and electricity, as well as over the deployment of police and security personnel. A lack of cooperation between those elites and the government under Morsi resulted in frequent fuel shortages and power outages, as well as reluctance within police deployment. All three components are vital to the creation of day-to-day stability for the rural and urban populations.

Addressing the Question of Legitimacy

While it is difficult to argue that increased political participation of the Muslim Brotherhood would further the spirit of liberal democracy in Egypt, it is certainly the lesser evil contrasted with an increased readiness for militancy among its members nourished by a complete exclusion from the political process. Considering the strong backing that the Muslim Brotherhood still enjoys from large parts of Egyptian society, the attempt to eliminate the organization, which Al-Sisi has stated as his goal in an interview with an Egyptian news network (Alkhshali, 6.5.2014), is unrealistic at best. Being the most difficult of all three challenges to address, any solution will likely be based on a period of trial and error. Nevertheless, a solution should involve a more restrained use of the judiciary to prevent antagonizing domestic and foreign public opinion.

Another possibility worth considering is that in the long term, Egypt could increase covert operations through its security services to infiltrate the ranks of the Muslim Brotherhood and attempt to direct its political strategy.

Solving the legitimacy problem also means keeping in mind that the Muslim Brotherhood earns its support largely through the provision of public goods and services. Decreasing its influence depends therefore on the government's willingness and ability to retake the capacity functions that the Muslim Brotherhood has stepped in to fill, most notably health care and education in Egypt's periphery.

Conclusion

This paper has shown that the current Islamist insurgency in Egypt is much more than a simple security challenge. An analysis of the situation using the theoretical framework of legitimacy, security and capacity gaps reveals that the security threat emanating from jihadist militant groups is exacerbated by the cooperation of an underprivileged Bedouin population in Sinai that has been ignored by the Egyptian government for years, by dire economic conditions and high unemployment, as well as by the systematic political repression of the Muslim Brotherhood and its supporters, although this last connection has not yet fully materialized. Looking at the current situation in Syria and Iraq, the precariousness of a full-grown Islamist insurgency manifesting itself in the undergoverned territory of the Sinai Peninsula is evident. The international community needs to work together with the Egyptian government to address the problem in a coordinated manner, choosing policy instruments that are tailored specifically to each of the challenges. A buildup of military capabilities should be paired with large-scale

investment in infrastructure projects in the Sinai to address the military challenge posed by Salafi-Jihadist militant groups in Sinai and simultaneously cut off the support of the Bedouin population that these groups rely on heavily. Investment into domestic industry and businesses, both in the form of FDI and government spending, is needed to revive the ailing Egyptian economy and alleviate unemployment. Stability is especially required to attract tourism, which has in the past been a reliable pillar of the Egyptian economy. Finally, in order to prevent an escalation of the insurgency through the participation of disillusioned Muslim Brotherhood radicals, the government needs to refrain from completely excluding the Muslim Brotherhood politically, while developing mechanisms to monitor its political activities.

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