




## US Aid to Egypt: The Challenge of Balancing National Interest and Human Rights

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### Abstract

The United States provides generous aid to developing countries around the world. However, one of the conditions for aid giving is to first make sure that the receiving country is not involved in human rights violations. In this respect the US has also passed legislation in 1970s that clearly forbids aid, both economic and military, to a country involved in human rights violations. While such legislation is in place, the actual practice of aid giving often ignores the human rights violations. In this article, we focus on the US aid giving to Egypt and explore whether the US took into consideration the aspect of human rights violation by the latter. Examining US economic and military aid to Egypt over an extended period of several decades covering various regimes including that of President Sisi, we conclude that the US has consistently ignored the aspect of human rights violations as the country is vital for safeguarding US foreign policy goals in the region.

**Key words:** Economic Aid, Egypt, Foreign Policy, Human Rights Violations, Military Aid, the United States.

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**Introduction**

Different bilateral donors (states especially) and multilateral organisations have been advocating various principles and conditionalities for the aid-receiving governments to follow and implement to be eligible for international aid. With the passage of time, along with economic conditionalities like liberalisation of economic and trade policies, political conditionalities including democracy, human rights, non-proliferation, and good governance, freedom of the press and judiciary and the rule of law started to be considered key benchmarks by bilateral aid donors. Among these, democracy and human rights have emerged important policy conditionalities and most bilateral aid donors and multilateral organisations have given it immense significance, particularly after the end of the Cold War when there was little rationale for aid aimed at promoting political and geostrategic considerations. However, as a whole it is a sorry fact that most bilateral donors have consistently ignored issues like violation of democratic values and norms and blunt disrespect for human rights and have allocated official aid to governments which have been consistently accused of committing grave human rights abuses when it comes to donor countries' geostrategic, trade and security considerations.<sup>1</sup> Aid allocation literature has immense evidence which shows that aid providers pursue their foreign policy objectives and national interests and neglect human rights considerations in recipient countries.

In the case of the US, one of the largest and important bilateral aid donors, most studies indicate that foreign aid policies of respective US administrations have been influenced by strategic, security, political and trade interests and least by recipient domestic regimes. This was largely the policy that various US governments pursued during the Cold War era<sup>2</sup> but more are less afterwards as well because the US has only selectively emphasised on democracy and human rights considerations.<sup>3</sup> Overall, the US has rarely punished human rights offenders, particularly if the aid-receiving governments are important strategic partners of the US.

The paper has been structured as follows: we give a legal framework in which the aid giving supposedly operates; a literature review of the existing takes on our thesis; an exploration of the status of human rights in Egypt and its relationship with US aid to Egypt; commenting on the Arab Spring and the election of Morsi and

the US policy response; a further comment on President Sisi and the state of democracy in the country; and a analysis of the US-Egypt ties in a new era.

### **Legal framework: US Aid and its Linkages with Respects of Human Rights**

If we focus on aid allocation policies of large aid-provers, the US was one of most progressive bilateral donors as it was the first country that passed specific laws and amended the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961. After these amendments, US foreign assistance was, officially at least, linked to how aid-recipient governments performed concerning respect for internationally agreed norms and values of human rights.<sup>4</sup> To achieve this lofty ideal of dignity of human rights, in the 1970s, an eventful decade in the country's history, the US Congress approved revisions binding aid to respect for human rights in aid-receiving countries. The regulation that links the provision of US civilian assistance with respect for human rights is identified as the Harkin Amendment. The said regulation bars the US government to allocate development aid to governments which are engaged in human rights abuses. The provision, which was made part of the Foreign Assistance Act in 1974 clearly asserts:

No assistance may be provided under this part to the government of any country which engages in a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights, including torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment, prolonged detention without charges, causing the disappearance of persons by the abduction and clandestine detention of those persons or other flagrant denial of the right to life, liberty, and the security of person, unless such assistance will directly benefit the needy people in such country.<sup>5</sup>

Following the above, a corresponding revision about security or military assistance was introduced, named the 'Humphrey-Cranston Amendment', and was approved in 1974. This regulation tied the supply of US military aid to human rights situations in aid-receiving countries. Named as section 502B, this regulation states unequivocally that:

Except under circumstances specified in this section, no security assistance may be provided to any country the government of which engages in a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights.<sup>6</sup>

Given the above, human rights advocates aptly stated that the US demonstrated its commitments by taking these policy measures and made it clear that the US would not provide any economic or military cooperation to abusers of human rights.<sup>7</sup>

### **Literature Review: The Role of Human Rights in US Foreign Aid Policy**

After incorporating these Congressional provisions, a considerable body of empirical research has focused on the extent to which various US administrations have implemented these laws in letter and spirit. Most available empirical evidence reveals that because of US foreign policy considerations, which at times have remained incompatible with human rights values, respective US governments both Democrats and Republicans have seldom stopped aid to countries whose government were involved in serious human rights matters.<sup>8</sup> For example, Schoultz (1981) examined US economic and military aid policies vis-à-vis about two dozen countries of in South America in the 1970s. Based on his empirical evidence, the author came to the conclusion that respect for human rights and democratic norms were not key elements in foreign aid provision and these factors played little role because “during the mid-1970s United States aid was clearly distributed disproportionately to countries with repressive governments”.<sup>9</sup> In another study, Stohl, Carleton and Johnson (1984) assessed US civilian and security aid to numerous countries comprising 10 governments in Latin America, 10 in Asia and the Middle East (covering important regional actors such as India, Pakistan, Indonesia, Thailand from Asia and Egypt and Israel from Middle East). This study examined US foreign aid policies covering the reigns of President Nixon as well as that of President Ford. As per the results of this research, “under Presidents Nixon and Ford foreign assistance was directly related to levels of human rights violations, i.e. more aid flowed to regimes with higher levels of violation”.<sup>10</sup> Likewise, focusing on the regimes of President Carter as well as that of President Regan, Carleton and Stohl (1998) come up with their findings that during these years there was largely “a positive relationship between aid and human rights violations: the more abusive a state was, the more aid it received”.<sup>11</sup> These authors asserted: “at no point during either administration does it appear from our analysis that human rights concerns significantly

influenced the distribution of United States foreign assistance, whether it be military or economic aid".<sup>12</sup>

In a very detailed research study examining connection between US foreign aid policies and respect for human rights, Apodaca and Stohl (1999) have probed US international assistance to 140 countries during the 1976-1995 years. This research focuses on the periods of various presidents comprising Carter and Reagan as well as Bush and Clinton. The key findings are that "human rights concerns are not the only, nor the largest consideration" in the allocation of US aid.<sup>13</sup> The main argument of the study is that those countries and governments which are pivotal to safeguard and advance US foreign policy goals in their respective regions "receive aid regardless of their human rights records".<sup>14</sup> By and large, there is a dominant consensus backed by empirical evidence that the US has rarely punished governments accused of gross human rights abuses because it has either turned a blind eye to such violations of strategically important countries<sup>15</sup> or the US has given generous aid packages to governments considered potential US allies irrespective of their bleak record concerning human rights usurpation.<sup>16</sup>

Similarly, there are studies that have examined US foreign aid policies and practices vis-à-vis human rights performance of specific countries. For example, Ali (2015) has examined US aid policies towards Pakistan in three distinctive periods comprising the Cold War era, the 1990s post-Cold War decade and the "war on terror" years.<sup>17</sup> His research has shown that the US has rarely linked the provision of economic and security aid to Pakistan with the country's human rights performance. Rather, research has clearly illustrated that the US has provided more economic and military assistance to Pakistan when the country was ruled by military dictators.<sup>18</sup> This is because whenever and wherever US foreign policy interests are at stake, the US ignores lofty ideals of promotion of democracy and respect for human rights and prioritises its foreign policy considerations in the allocation of foreign aid.

### **The Status of Human Rights in Egypt**

Table I shows the human rights record of Egypt from 1976 to 2020. As per the reports of credible international bodies such as the Amnesty International (AI) and US State Department, all countries are graded from 1 to 5 on Political Terror Scale (PTS). This categorisation provides a record of all countries scaled as per the

personal integrity rights. This scaling and grading from 1 to 5 reveals how countries or governments protect or violate physical integrity rights of their inhabitants and natives. This measurement is based on several parameters including practices comprising arbitrary imprisonment or putting people behind bars due to their political views or affiliations, forcefully and unlawfully disappearing people or torturing citizens and involvement in extra-judicial killings.<sup>19</sup> A country scoring 1 implies that there is little or no desecration of personal integrity rights. In contrast, if a country scores 5 it shows that there are serious human rights violations and that the government is engaged in grave abuses such as torturing, political custody, incarceration either lawfully or sans any legal mechanism, forced disappearances and ruthlessness political murdering of its opponents or rivals.<sup>20</sup> Hence, a PTS 1 means that a country or territory is under an appropriate rule of law, citizens are not normally imprisoned for their views, and political repression and torture is rare or exceptional and political murders are a rarity. In contrast to this, a score of PTS 4 or 5 is an indication that the violation of civil and political rights are widespread and that such practices are not limited to specific groups but have expanded to large segments of the population. Murder as well as unlawful disappearances, and pervasive torture are a common part of life. Based on these data sets, the paper examines to what extent the US has been actually implementing its human rights policies while allocation economic and military aid to Egypt.

As per the PTS scale, Egypt's ranking below in Table I shows that the country has a dismal record vis-à-vis respect for human rights. Data in the Table also confirms that instead of bring any improvements concerning human rights norms and values, the overall picture looks more abysmal. The data clearly shows that the conditions have deteriorated in recent years where the country has consistently scored 4. Cairo's ranking on the PTS is specifically alarming following the regime change when Hosni Mubarak was ousted as a result of unprecedented mass uprisings in the Arab world now known as the Arab Spring.

Table I: Annual PTS scores of Egypt

Year	PTS Score	1986-92	3/3.5	2005	3.5
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1976	2	1993-95	4	2006	4
1977-79	2.5	1996	3.5	2007-08	3.5
1980	2	1997	4	2009-11	4
1981-83	3	1998-2000	3	2012	3
1984-5	2.5	2001-05	3.5	2013-19	4

Political Terror Scale, the ranking is from 1 (best) to 5 (worst).

Source: Freedom House (2020)<sup>21</sup>

### **Democracy and US aid to Egypt**

Egypt has a dismal record concerning democracy. Although there is no monarchy like other Arab countries in the region, there is no democracy as well. The country got rid of hereditary monarchy when Nasser ousted King Farook in 1952. However, since then in the last seventy years, there have been only five changes in the country's top leadership. Shirbiny has aptly stated that since the 1952 military coup, the institution itself emerged a major political actor and it became a fundamental element in the country's political affairs.<sup>22</sup> While comparing the US and Egypt, the author states that since the army's coup in 1952, the US has had ten presidents (three of whom held office for two terms) while Egypt has had only four and all from the military including Mohamed Naguib (1953-1954), Gamal Abdel Nasser (1954-70), Anwar Sadat (1970-1981), and Hosni Mubarak (1981-2011). Now President Sisi is another addition to this list who has a military background. Given this situation, it is appropriate to quote Kassem (2004, p. 1) who argues that "personal authoritarian rule in Egypt survives and has been maintained" for several decades.<sup>23</sup> This is the situation of democracy in America's close ally for the last seven decades. Anderson (2001) has argued that the US and its western allies have turned a blind eye to this situation who have always backed autocratic regimes friendly to them to get their own goals accomplished. In the words of the author, "this is particularly true of the Middle East, where access to oil and the security of Israel have trumped the desire for human rights and democracy" (Anderson, 2001, p. 56).<sup>24</sup>

**Table II: US economic and military aid to Egypt (US\$ Millions)**

Year	Economic aid	Military aid	1990	1649	1955
			1991	1451	1893
1980	2692	1166	1992	1324	1846
1981	2376	1158	1993	1,044	1806
1982	2095	1775	1994	835	1801
1983	1894	2500	1995	1,297	1782
1984	2007	2484	1996	1,075	1792
1985	2274	2071	1997	1,040	1673
1986	2225	2143	1998	1,055	1651
1987	1702	2182	1999	1,077	1690
1988	1420	2115			
1989	1515	2036			
2000	909	1634	2010	301	1,301
2001	498	1556	2011	240	1,298
2002	1,058	1528	2012	90	1,302
2003	474	1501	2013	330	1,239
2004	745	1451	2014	179	300
2005	296	1403	2015	222	1,345
2006	524	1355	2016	133	1,105
2007	687	1332	2017	173	1,302
2008	201	1290	2018	233	1,306
2009	688	1,301	2019	112	1,306
			2020	125	1,300
			Total	40,264	64,975

Source: USAID (Greenbook)<sup>25</sup>

The US support to different regimes in Egypt since the 1970s has allowed the political system of the country to raise lofty slogans, adopt various cosmetic reforms and embark on ambitious initiatives while the sad and harsh reality is that poor Egyptians have not seen any “genuine change with regards to the country’s personal authoritarian system of rule”.<sup>26</sup> Dunne (2003, p. 115) asserts that there was increasing frustration at what President Mubarak feigned to allure external actors that his country was making a steadfast progress towards inclusive democratic norms “while Egyptians themselves wonder when they will ever arrive”.<sup>27</sup> Mubarak had broken his pledge that he made in 1984 when he had affirmed that the ruler, whether it was him or someone else, would not vie for a third term in office. He had promised that starting from himself, no President would contest for more than two terms. Although he reneged on his pledges, he skilfully exploited his close alliance with



the US as respective US administrations consistently extended their full support in the form of economic, military and political succour. Cook (2002, p. 3) exposes the double standard of the US by recalling President Clinton's tough stance towards Pakistan when General Musharraf ousted a democratic regime in 1999 and its stance towards Egypt: "the irony of rolling out the red carpet for a man who recently presided over the renewal of martial law in Egypt".<sup>28</sup>

Fast forward to the 21<sup>st</sup> century Egypt and how opportunities to strengthen democracy were wasted. In this regard, there is a consensus that out of the three elections conducted, the two of these conducted in 2005 and 2014, were considered extremely "spurious". Prior to the 2005 ballots, ex-president Hosni Mubarak was chosen four times in a unique referendum where voters would just record 'yes or no'. He ruled the country from 1981 until he was ousted in 2011 following a popular uprising that not only toppled his government, but which had engulfed the entire region. What is now known as the Arab Spring, there were unprecedented massive mass uprisings which shook numerous countries in the Arab region resulting in the downfall of several dictatorial regimes in Tunisia, Libya, Egypt and Yemen. Following the ouster of Hosni Mubarak in 2011, the presidential elections held in 2012 were regarded as the first truly transparent polls in country's checkered history. In these elections, a total of 13 candidates competed during the preliminary stage. In the second and final round, Morsi emerged victorious after he secured slightly more than 50 percent of the total votes that had been polled. Nevertheless, Morsi's regime was disrupted by another cycle of military interventions when he was ousted by Sisi-led military coup. The Sisi-inspired military coup and his dominant position since then as the sole ruler of the country is a sad reminder that politics in Egypt has been "largely a one-man show, akin to the god-king of ancient times".<sup>29</sup>

It is worth mentioning here that since the first military coup in 1952, Egypt has been in the grip of military rulers and this important Middle Eastern nation has witnessed a meagre change of six rulers since then. Rulers who presided over Egypt are: Mohamed Naguib whose tenure was a brief one (1953-1954); followed by Gamal Abdel Nasser whole ruled from 1954 to 1970; Anwar Sadat whose regime lasted from 1970 to 1981; Hosni Mubarak who was president from 1981 to 2011; Mohamed Morsi was in office from June 2012 to July

2013 and now Sisi has been ruling the country since 2014. It is instructive to note that out of these six rulers, five presidents have come from the country's strong military. Regarding the history and prospect of democracy-promotion in the country, Kassem (2004, p. 1) validly argues that "personal authoritarian rule in Egypt survives and has been maintained for more than [seven] decades".<sup>30</sup>

### **Human rights and US aid to Egypt: Rhetoric and Reality**

In the preceding paragraphs it was discussed that US aid has not been affected by the presence or absence of democracy. Rather, the US has supported and still supports authoritarian regimes compliant to its demands and plays active role in safeguarding US foreign policy goals. This section discusses how much the US values human rights while allocation economic and military aid. As it is obvious from the data given in Table I, since the Nasser era to the present regime of President Sisi, there have been little improvements in the status of the human rights. Recalling the regime of President Nasser, Waterbury (1983) asserts that his tenure witnessed unprecedented political arrests and the regime was brutal regarding political opponents.<sup>31</sup> The author claims that groups that the regime specifically targeted included Muslim Brethren (MB) as well as people having communist orientations. By quoting different sources, the writer states that in December 1968, during a single day more than 25,000 followers and people having an association with MB were detained and a majority of those taken into custody were imprisoned in prisons run and managed by the military.

The state of human rights did not improve but rather further deteriorated during the Sadat tenure. In the words of Waterbury "Sadat imposed such severe restrictions on all forms of political activity that he seemed to have reverted to the Nasserist style he nominally abhorred".<sup>32</sup> Ajami asserts that in a huge crackdown carried out on the orders of President Sadat in 1981, people belonging to various professional classes such the law, journalism, and educational institutes were taken into custody.<sup>33</sup> Looking at Table II, Egypt was getting about \$2 billion aid per year during this period. It implies that the US did not care for human rights matters and political freedom of Egyptian citizens. In contrast, Sadat's policies rather appeased the US government because most of the detainees were pro-MB Islamists who vehemently opposed the regime's pro-American overtures.

There was no sign of improvement in this domain during the rule of President Mubarak. Kienle observes that after Sadat was assassinated in 1981 and following the proclamation of emergency in the country, the government renewed the status of emergency every year.<sup>34</sup> In 1994, the Mubarak regime reimposed emergency for next three years, and the government renewed similar pronouncement in 1997 and again in 2000 to extend emergency for another term and the practice continued. Commenting on the repressiveness of the Mubarak government, Alterman claims that from 1989 to 1997, over 17,000 pro-MB Islamists were detained without charges and their trials were carried out in military courts.<sup>35</sup> Between the period 1992-1994, asserts the same author, there were 74 death sentences. Most human rights organisations including Human Rights Watch, the AI and US State Department reports portray a bleak picture of the human rights abuses in the country.

Annual reports of AI and Human Rights Watch have consistently criticised the regime for its human rights abuses. These reports have highlighted flaws regarding how people have been tried in military courts as well as in special emergency courts where they have no access to fair trials. In addition, about 18,000 people who have been detained on the orders issued by the Interior Ministry have been languishing in jails in miserable conditions. The reports assert that many of the detainees had been in custody for over a decade and these also include captives about whom courts have issued orders of their release from prisons. Similarly, according to annual reports of Transparency International (TI) for various years, Egypt has scored very low on the TI Corruption Perception Index (CPI), which means that corruption and misuse of power and authority are quite rampant. But despite all this, the US has been giving ample official aid to Egypt for years.

From the preceding discussion, it can be safely concluded that the US has rarely demonstrated any serious concern for democracy promotion and human rights while allocating bilateral aid to Egypt. Regarding the US attitude of turning blind eyes to these issues, it is relevant to quote Cook (2000) who argues that Washington sees in Cairo only what it is pleased to see and overlooks what is unpleasant in the country regarding human rights.<sup>36</sup> Highlighting this dichotomy, Yefet-Avshalom and Roniger (2006) point out that the

US and its European allies intentionally ignored the plight of those people who were detained and who underwent unfair trials in military-managed courts but the West abruptly intervened and were united in the case of Saad al-Din Ibrahim, a faculty member teaching at American University of Cairo when the said professor was accused of defaming the country.<sup>37</sup> These authors are of the view that the US and its allies need to shun these double standards.

Human rights conditions witnessed further sharp deterioration during the so-called US-led 'war on terror'. While the Mubarak regime had pledged in 2005 that it would put an end to the emergency laws in the country, he reneged once again and re-imposed emergency law in May 2010.<sup>38</sup> The AI annual reports highlighted the miserable status of human rights abuses in the country. The human rights body confirmed that the State Security Investigations (SSI), Egypt's premier security agency, was involved in the crackdown on Islamic groups and the organisation was responsible for 'disappearing' political activists<sup>39</sup>. Given the situation, "the year 2010 saw increases in the number of trials of civilians before military courts and in reliance on special courts that do not meet fair trial standards".<sup>40</sup>

Somehow people became optimistic that the ousting of Hosni Mubarak following the Arab Spring would result in a new dawn, it was not the case. In its report, the Amnesty International lamented that "a generation of young Egyptian activists that came to the fore around the ousting of repressive ruler Hosni Mubarak in 2011 is today languishing behind bars".<sup>41</sup> The report asserted that once again, Egypt has become a nightmarish place for human rights advocates and civil society organizations who are demanding and raising slogans for their genuine rights.

### **Arab Spring, election of Morsi and US policy response**

Although there was immense hopefulness after the long rule of Hosni Mubarak, all this optimism proved to be transitory. Although one long night passed, instead of a bright day Egypt is faced with yet another long and uncertain dark night. Following the ouster of Hosni Mubarak, presidential elections held in 2012 were deemed to be truly free polls conducted in the country's history. While Morsi was elected in a truly democratic way, his regime was abruptly ended by the military. In July 2013, "the military unilaterally dissolved Morsi's government suspended the constitution that had been passed during

his rule, and installed Sisi as interim president".<sup>42</sup> While the Arab Spring brought regime changes in several countries including Tunisia, Libya, Egypt and Yemen that got rid of dictators and monarchs and the region witnessed unprecedented socio-economic and political transformations, the journey for millions of young men and women in Egypt seemed to be back to where they were prior to the Arab Spring. Recent reports by Amnesty International lamented that a whole generation of young Egyptian civil society activists who were at the forefront to get rid of the authoritarian regime of Hosni Mubarak in 2011 has been suffering behind bars in the regime of President Sisi.<sup>43</sup>

### **President Sisi and the End of Democracy: US-Egypt Ties in a New Era**

Since the Sisi-led coup, the political stage in Egypt has once again turned "largely a one-man show, akin to the god-king of ancient times".<sup>44</sup> After the military coup of 2013, Sisi was installed as interim president and then contested the 2014 elections after retiring from his military service. The elections were contested by only one opponent, Hamdeen Sabahi where Sisi won with huge victory by obtaining 97 percent of the votes polled and thus he was sworn into office as the 6<sup>th</sup> President of Egypt on 8 June 2014. Like his predecessors, Sisi rules like a typical authoritarian ruler where there is no room for dissent. In the 2018 presidential elections, Sisi faced only a nominal opposition as the state machinery ensure to terrorize and victimize all genuine contestants. Following the footprints of his totalitarian predecessors, President Sisi has a firm control as he has full backing of the military. Using his authority to bring a constitutional change via a referendum, President Sisi extended his second tenure from four to six years. So now he has firm control over the country's affairs, and he will be allowed to seek one more term in 2024, so he could rule until 2030. He also brought considerable changes to the constitution to further expand the military's power to interfere in domestic politics and provide additional power to the president over the country's higher judiciary.

Recent developments in the region have further enhanced political and geostrategic worth of Egypt. Following the signing of the historic Abraham Accords between Israel and key Arab states comprising the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain, Sudan and Morocco aimed at normalizing ties between the Jewish State and

these Arab countries, there has been an increase in Egypt-Israel diplomatic and political engagements leading to further enhancing the value and significance of US-Egypt bilateral ties. In view of this, a Congressional Research Service (CRS) report has acknowledged the latest bonhomie between Washington and Cairo as the report has stated that Egypt “has earned praise from U.S. officials by increasing its diplomatic outreach to Israel.”<sup>45</sup>

As a result of this closeness between the US and Egypt during the regime of President Sisi, as is evident from the USAID data provided in Table II, the US has been providing over a billion US dollars annually in military assistance to Cairo. The data clearly suggests that there has been a remarkable consistency in US security assistance to Egypt during the Sisi era, while there is negligible concern for violation of human rights in this important Middle Eastern county where people offered unprecedented sacrifices for the restoration of democracy during the Arab Spring. While respective US administrations have refrained from publicly censuring the Sisi regime over its human rights abuses, Egypt’s abysmal record on human rights and democratization has invited periodic criticism from certain US officials and some Members of Congress. As is usual with any such government, the Egyptian government regularly rejects foreign criticism of its human rights record as foreign interference in Egypt’s domestic affairs. Serious human rights issues of the current regime include unlawful or arbitrary killings, including extrajudicial killings by the government agencies, forced disappearance and unlawful detention. As data in Table I illustrates, during the regime of President Sisi, Egypt has scored regularly 4 on the PTS data, which indicates extremely deteriorating and dismal human rights record. After assuming power in 2014, the regime carried out a brutal assault “against the Muslim Brotherhood, resulting in police and army soldiers firing live ammunition against demonstrators encamped in several public squares and the killing of at least 1,150 demonstrators.”<sup>46</sup> Hence, with the arrival of Sisi, Egypt was ready for a new wave of repressive regime. However, the US has rarely linked the provision of foreign aid to Cairo with respect for internationally recognized human rights as Washington has continued to provide substantial military aid to the country.

## Conclusion

It is well known in international politics that states behave as rational actors. They act rationally based on their respective national interests. The above stated facts and figures suggest that the US being the sole hegemon of time has used economic and military aid for achieving its foreign policy interests in relation to Egypt. The records of various funding agencies and human rights organizations show violations of human rights on the part of Egypt. On the other hand, the US intervention in the Middle East through military and economic aid is based on the question of improving the state of human rights and democracy, but in actual practice the US didn't care much about them. In fact, what the US cared has been the promotion of its own foreign policy agenda based on security and provision of oil from the region. In other words, US foreign aid to Egypt has been driven by political and geo-strategic motives and covertly helping out its strategically important allies in the Middle East. Even after the revolutionary transformations following the Arab Spring, the US aid policy to Egypt hasn't changed much. There has been considerable increase in military and political aid to the Sisi administration despite the dismal situation of human rights in the country.

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<sup>5</sup> US Government, *Legislation on Foreign Relations through 2002* (Washington, D.C, 2003), 59.

<sup>6</sup> US Government, *Legislation on Foreign Relations through 2002*, 230.

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