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**Egypt: Military Foreign
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Egypt: Foreign activity of the military (Oct.)

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This report monitors the main foreign interactions of the Egyptian military institution during the month of October 2018, in terms of patterns of these interactions, their basic issues, and the changes they underwent, as follows:

Egypt, Saudi Arabia

On Wednesday, October 03, 2018, Lieutenant General Mohamed Farid, the Chief of Staff of the Egyptian Armed Forces, received Lieutenant General Fayyad bin Hamed Al-Ruwaili, Chairman of the General Staff of the Saudi Armed Forces, and his accompanying delegation that were on a visit to Egypt at that time. An official reception ceremony was held at the headquarters of the General Secretariat of the Ministry of Defense and the military music played the national anthem of both countries.

1- The meeting was followed by a wide-ranging discussion on a number of common issues in the light of developments in the situation in the region and ways to support the prospects of military cooperation between the armed forces of both sides in many fields, as well as exchanging views on current developments and changes in the Arab and regional arenas, especially the developments on the Yemeni territories and the developments inside the Syrian territories.

2- The meeting discussed ways to support the prospects of military cooperation between the armed forces of both sides in many fields.

3- The two sides also presided over the meetings of the final session of the joint Egyptian-Saudi military cooperation committee to discuss a number of issues and

topics of common interest “in the light of historical partnership relations and military cooperation between the armed forces of the two fraternal countries”.

In the context of the Egyptian-Saudi relations on military affairs, during the month of October 2018, the joint Egyptian-Saudi training activities (Tabuk-4), carried out by elements of the Egyptian and Saudi armed forces in the southern military region, were concluded (19 Oct.) with the participation of observers from the countries of Oman, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates. The final phase of the training was implemented by the forces of a joint operation to eliminate an armed terrorist stronghold inside a residential area, purging it of terrorist elements, return to normalcy and to carry out joint shootings with live ammunition.

The events that continued for several days had started with many theoretical lectures to unify the concepts and learn about the combat experiences of both sides, and the implementation of many practical activities have been planned and prepared. The participating forces carried out a number of combat exercises during the basic training stages. The forces carried out a number of tactical training formations, and traditional and unconventional shootings, using light and medium weapons from different firing positions, which showed the efficiency, skill and homogeneity of the two forces during the exercise, accuracy and speed. In achieving the goals of stability and movement, in addition to improving the physical level and fitness and training in basic skills in the field and the exploitation of the nature of the land.

It is worth mentioning that the Egyptian and Saudi armed forces have carried out several joint exercises, most notably the “Faisal” exercise for the Air Force and “Morgan” for the Naval Forces were previously practiced by both countries. The Saudi

and Egyptian forces also participated in the exercises of North Thunder, Gulf Shield, Eagle Salute and Bright Star.

Egypt, Russia

Since the military coup in Egypt on July 3, 2013, the Egyptian-Russian relations have witnessed remarkable convergence on the political, military, and economic levels. Militarily, Russia has become a significant source for arming the Egyptian military since the U.S. withheld delivery of some military items to Egypt (Oct. 9, 2013) after the brutal dispersal of Rabaa and Nahda sit-ins. (The frozen military items at the time included Apache attack helicopters, Harpoon missiles, M1- A1 tank parts, and F-16 warplanes). Egypt and Russia have held more than 14 military deals to arm the Egyptian military so far, including: Yak 130, Mil Mi-17, Su-30MK, MiG-29, Mi-35, Alligator, and Ka-52 aircraft, Tor-M2, S-300 BM, and Kornet missiles, as well as T-90 tanks, RPG launchers, ships and boats.

The two countries have also expanded their joint military operations, most notably “Defenders of Friendship” military exercise. Although this exercise is not on the agenda of Egyptian army’s annual exercises, yet it has been conducted jointly by the Egyptian and Russian armies for the third year in a row.

Russian paratroopers have arrived in Cairo on Monday, 15 October, 2018 in preparation for the joint military training exercise from 15 to 26 October, a statement by the Egyptian military read. The Protectors of Friendship 3 exercises included exchanges of training experiences and training on special forces combat and on battling terrorism. The paratroopers' drills included the deployment of troops, equipment and vehicles, and the exchange of experiences.

In October 2016, Protectors of Friendship 1 took place in the Egyptian Mediterranean city of Alamein. In 2017, the second training took place between the forces within the same framework in the Russian city of Novorossiysk.

Egypt and Russia are currently working to put the Libyan East under the full control of the forces of Khalifa Haftar, which have almost controlled Eastern Libya with an Egyptian-Russian-Emirati support. It is expected that the Egyptian-Russian paratroops, which had previously carried out operations within the Libyan territory, will carry out future operations in the Libyan interior, specifically in the narrow areas where some of armed entities are located in Eastern Libya.

Egypt is keen to conduct joint exercises with major countries to improve performance of the Egyptian army in the face of the armed movements and that the training of Hama of friendship 2018 came at that time to rehabilitate and train the Egyptian army on modern methods and methods to confront the militants In the Sinai, which the Egyptian army is already facing when confronting these armed groups.

The training activities focused on joint operations between paratroopers and armed groups. The final phase of the training included the launching of an armed checkpoint in a residential area and the clearing of armed elements. The final stage included the implementation of aerial reconnaissance and shooting of special targets Armed forces, and elements of the Egyptian and Russian parachute forces carried out acts of free jumping behind the enemy lines to check the information and ensure the aerial projection of the main force and control of the approaches to the village and secure part of the line International borders, isolate and cut off supplies to armed elements. These military trainings aim to exchange training experiences and establish military cooperation with friendly countries. "The training comes in light of the military

partnership and cooperation and the coordination of efforts between the Armed Forces of the two brotherly countries to reach the highest levels of efficiency and combat readiness,” the Armed Forces statement said.

In a related context, Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi headed for Moscow on Monday 15 October, 2018 on a three-day visit to Russia for talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin in the coastal city of Sochi. The two officials discussed ways to strengthen bilateral relations at all levels. They also maintained consultations and coordination on regional and international issues of mutual interest within the framework of strategic partnership between Egypt and Russia with an aim of further strengthening and expanding cooperation. Spokesman for the Presidency Ambassador Bassam Radi said that the visit represents a new impetus for the continuous constructive cooperation between Cairo and Moscow and the enhancement of the distinguished strategic relations between the two countries.

In Russia’s Black Sea resort of Sochi, the Russian and Egyptian leaders signed what officials describe as a strategic cooperation treaty designed to increase trade, military, and other ties between the two nations. Abdel Fattah al-Sisi hailed his talks with Russia's Vladimir Putin on October 17 and the cooperation agreement as opening a "new chapter in the history” of the countries’ bilateral relations. Putin said the talks encompassed "the whole spectrum of bilateral relations as well as key international and regional problems." He added that he and Sisi discussed expanding arms trade and military ties, pointing out that Russian and Egyptian paratroopers were conducting military maneuvers in Egypt. Sisi was on his fourth trip to Russia since taking office in 2014, and Putin visited Egypt in 2015 and 2017.

Egypt, the United States

On October 13, 2018, Lieutenant General Mohamed Farid, the chief of staff of the armed forces, left for Washington to attend a conference of chiefs of staff of the countries participating in the war against extremist organizations at the official invitation of the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The conference discussed a number of issues related to the coordination of regional and international efforts to eliminate terrorism and confront threats and challenges aimed at security and stability in the Middle East.

On the sidelines of the conference, Lt. Gen. Mohamed Farid held joint meetings with a number of Chiefs of Staff of the participating countries to discuss aspects of military cooperation. He also held a bilateral meeting with the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the United States for supporting military cooperation and coordination between the armed forces of both countries as well as the challenges facing the Middle East region. Lt. Gen Farid returned to Egypt on Saturday, October 20, 2018.

Egypt, Libya

A Libyan diplomatic source revealed mid-October that the Egyptian Committee for Libyan Affairs, headed by Major General Mohamed al-Kishki, assistant minister of defense for foreign relations, has concluded a new proposal to be presented to the Libyan military and officers in the coming days after they were invited to resume their meetings in Cairo in early November. Brigadier General Ahmad al-Mesmari, the military spokesman of the forces of Khalifa Hafer, has also confirmed that the talks on unification of the Libyan military institution will be soon resumed in Cairo, without giving a specific date. According to the source, the new Egyptian proposal for the unification of the Libyan military institution contains forming a military council that

represents all political parties, including the Gaddafi regime. The proposal adds that Khalifa Haftar will be head of the council but with limited authorities, according to the diplomatic source, as the decisions made by the council shall be unanimously approved by all its members. The proposal says that naval and air forces should be under the command of the defense minister, while others will be under the council's command. However, some articles of the draft agreement which resulted from the military negotiations in Cairo between officers from western and eastern Libya, on the unification of the army, raised various reactions including fears that the agreement only sought to impose retired General Khalifa Haftar as commander of the Libyan army. The draft agreement included formation of three Command Councils: The National Security Council; the Supreme Defence Council and the General Command Council, which were all agreed upon at Cairo meetings, as well as the organizational structure, tasks and duties assigned to each of the three councils.

Egypt had hosted several meetings to bring the Libyan conflicted factions to negotiations table, alongside members of Tobruk's House of Representatives, to resolve the Libyan crisis and amend the Skhirat agreement, which aims at ending Libya's civil war. In December 2016, Cairo hosted a conference attended by Libyan officials and representatives from the country's numerous factions, where they issued five proposed amendments to the agreement. The conference concluded with a decision to amend the eighth article of the Skhirat agreement that outlined the jurisdiction of the Libyan army chief commander. Negotiations to unify the Libyan military were held as a part of Egypt's initiative that kicked off in July 2017 to unify the military institutions.

Egypt, South Korea

During his visit to the United States, and on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly, Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi on 26 September met with South Korean President Moon Jae-in and agreed to further improve the countries' ties while expanding their bilateral cooperation to the defense industry. The two countries' bilateral ties have improved since they established a comprehensive cooperative partnership in 2016. The two parties stressed importance of supplying the Egyptian armed forces with the sophisticated K-9 Thunder, along with marine frigates. This came in the light of ongoing discussions between the two sides in this regard. Negotiations on the K-9 Thunder deal was launched immediately after Sisi's visit to Korea in 2016. In mid-2017, the cannon participated in the competition for performance tests on Egyptian territory, with Russian, French, South African and Chinese cannons. Subsequent indications were that the Korean cannon was superior to other rivals. The Korean company Hanwha Techwin, the manufacturer of the K-9 Thunder, has announced the establishment of a factory of 155mm Hautzer artillery in Egypt.