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The Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been one of the manifestations of the Egyptian state's exercise of sovereignty in the international sphere and one of the manifestations of political authority formation, which is a prerequisite for the idea of the State along with the region and the people.

In the wake of the July 1952 revolution, Egypt witnessed a general trend towards escalating penetration of the military into the civilian apparatus, where the army since then has been the main supporter of the regime.

During Sadat's reign, we witnessed consolidation of the principle that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is a state institution and not a regime-affiliated institution that is always keen on defending it. At the time, three veteran diplomats resigned from their posts as foreign ministers in less than two years to protest Sadat's policy and his way of managing the relationship with the Zionist entity, as the most important issue of Egyptian foreign policy at the time.

From November 1977 to December 1978, Egypt witnessed a state of rejection and indignation among diplomats and the political elite. Foreign Minister Ismail Fahmy resigned on November 17, 1977, two days before Sadat's visit to Jerusalem, followed by Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Mohamed Riadh a few hours later. The post of Foreign Minister remained vacant for some time until Mohamed Ibrahim Kamel was appointed as Minister of Foreign Affairs. However, Mohamed Ibrahim Kamel also resigned on 16 September 1978, one day before the signing of the Camp David Accords.

During the Mubarak era, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs witnessed a major reorganization, where the Diplomatic and Consular Corps Law was amended for the first time in nearly 30 years. The situation regarding fears of a strong role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the regional files related to peace with Israel or the Egyptian-Arab or even the Egyptian-African relations, continued, particularly those related to strategic issues such as water, with emphasis on reducing the roles of the State Department as a priority.

After the January revolution, the Egyptian foreign policy under the military junta witnessed a severe turbulence in vision and behavior in light of the worsening local crises in coincidence with Arab

revolutions. The military junta and the revolutionary youth remained engaged in internal issues and neglected foreign policy. At the time, we did not witness any attempt to crystallize a new foreign policy to go in line with the changing situation in the region. The worst Foreign minister ever during the Mubarak era remained in office for nearly a month after Mubarak stepped down. Also, the foreign affairs were ignored, and the effect of the foreign world, in the regional and international context, was denied as an important determinant of the track of the revolution.

But with the appointment of Mr. Nabil Elaraby as foreign minister, we have seen an attempt to regain a special area of influence for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, away from the traditional conservative orientations of the military junta. At the time, we started to notice a slightly different discourse on the need to revise the Camp David Accords, that they are not sacred, that they are subject to change according to their terms, and that they will not hinder Egypt's regional role. There was also a different discourse on the agreement to export gas to Israel and the relationship with Iran and the position on the Palestinian issue. These remarks were considered a new orientation to the Egyptian Foreign Ministry, which found in the revolution an opportunity to recover the files that the Mubarak regime had looted in favor of General Intelligence Service.

During President Mohamed Morsi's one year in power, from June 2012 to June 2013, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs under Minister Mohamed Kamel Amr enjoyed a considerable space for movement in the files of the 'Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam', the recovery of Egyptian funds smuggled abroad, and reassuring the governments of Gulf countries with regard to the new system of governance. In this regard, despite the good signals sent by the Foreign Ministry through media outlets, the Egyptian-Gulf relations, where the UAE and Saudi Arabia campaigned against President Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood. However, the new regime was able to build a new regional support network manifested in boosting strong relationship with Qatar, Turkey, Iraq and Libya.

After the July 3 coup (2013), the coup authorities appointed Nabil Fahmy as Minister of Foreign Affairs for a year that he spent in trying to promote the legitimacy of the new regime and linking it with the war on terror. Fahmy also worked to unfreeze Egypt's membership in the African Union, repeating Egypt's rhetoric of fighting terrorism instead of working to bring in more resources through activation of tourism and investments. Nabil Fahmy was later succeeded by Sameh Shoukry, the current Minister of Foreign Affairs, both of whom turned the ministry into secretarial offices of the security services.

Efforts to militarize the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were strengthened after the July 3, 2013 coup, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs experienced extensive structural changes. This phenomenon was exacerbated after Sameh Shoukry assumed office as foreign minister, where he carried out a systematic and gradual removal of diplomats and administrative staff whose loyalty to the Sisi regime was questioned, relying mainly on security investigations.

Despite the emergence of major foreign policy issues such as the issue of the Eastern Mediterranean gas, the issue of Tiran and Sanafir, the issue of moving the US embassy to Jerusalem and the intensification of the water crisis, all these issues did not entail one case of resignation in the ranks of the Foreign Ministry. On the contrary, we have noticed non-diplomatic actions at all, such as removing the Al-Jazeera TV microphone several times on air during press releases of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and some Egyptian officials. Accordingly, the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has become the focus of ridicule on social networking sites after failing in important files and being used in promoting the waiver of Egyptian islands of Egypt, Tiran and Sanafir, to Saudi Arabia.

With the emergence of any opportunities for a likely change in the roles and tools of diplomacy in Egypt, we should take into account the current state of Egyptian diplomacy in the system of foreign policy making and implementation as only secretaries and executors of the sole ruler's orientation. Those who seek conducting changes in the course of Egyptian diplomacy should henceforth consider possible opportunities to turn this role in the right direction, so that the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs would be a real State institution, not a regime-affiliated institution.

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