



ENTIRE
Stakeholders Dialogue in
IWRM
Case Study



Essam Nada
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Background

Nile is the longest river in the world, measuring over 5584 km. It flows through ten countries located in Central, East and North Africa: Uganda, Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Kenya, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sudan and Egypt.



Background

However, no analytical research has been conducted to date focusing on efforts of negotiation using people-to-people diplomacy to address Ethiopia's and Egypt's disagreement in utilizing the Nile water. This is because no such action has been taken by both countries till the 25 January 2011 Egyptian revolution.



Ethiopia-Egypt Relations in Utilizing the Nile Water

The issue of equitable access to the Nile water has particularly impacted negatively on the relationship between Ethiopia, the highest contributor of the Nile water and Egypt, the biggest consumer of the Nile water.

Nile waters: Cooperation versus mistrust

BY HAILEMELEKOT AGZEW

This piece is an extract from a paper Ambassador Girma Amare presented to the 8th Nile Conference 2002.

What makes the Nile River unique and challenging among most international basins, besides its remoteness and the manifestation of disproportionate level of development within the basin, is the almost total absence of any meaningful cooperation and comprehensive agreement among the ten watercourse states. This negative feature which is peculiar to the Nile has become an obstacle, so far, for any effective cooperation, development of joint projects and investment in the basin—thus causing the Nile to flow without any significant contribution to the welfare of its close to 300 million inhabitants who are among the most impoverished and where five of the world's ten Least Developed Countries are found.

The major impediment on the road towards effective cooperation on the Nile, has been the position of some lower riparian states who are bent on appropriating the entire flow of the river to the detriment of other rightful states. There seems to be an entrenched desire not to accept the legitimate rights of other riparian states to share in its bountiful resources. Both history and nature have collided to lend credence to this deep-seated desire, sustained by a myth that "Egypt is the gift of the Nile" to assert monopolistic claim over the entire course of the river.

Historically, the reasons giving rise for such unfair status quo could be attributed to British colonialism which had a deep interest in the control of the Nile for its cotton plantation to supply its industries in Europe. "The colonial treaties and the condominium over Sudan were designed mainly to protect Egypt's interests in the basin, since for many strategic and economic reasons Egypt had become the most important Nile basin riparian state for the British colonizers."

After independence Egypt pursued more or less similar goals in securing the flow of the river to meet its own interests. In contrast, upper riparian countries who were embroiled in endless conflicts and general instability were unable to give full attention to the development of their water resources. In the absence of formidable challenge, Egypt in particular, carried out series of major water projects that had the consequences of not only appropriating large portions of the Nile waters, but also bringing the flow within its sovereign jurisdiction. It deployed all human, material and scientific resources to put in place the legal and institutional structures that could enable it acquire full monopoly over

the river.

In this connection, some of the major step taken by Egypt, by co-opting Sudan, was the conclusion of the 1959 Agreement to appropriate all the waters of the Nile between themselves. In the agreement Sudan as a junior partner, was allotted 18.5 billion cubic meters of water while Egypt retained 55.5 billion cubic meters—which is the lions share. Egypt and Sudan have made a provision in the Agreement "to study together" and adopt unified view" on other riparian claims to share in the Nile waters. "If such studies result in the possibility of allocating an amount of the Nile waters to one or the other of these territories, then the value of this amount as at Aswan shall be deducted in equal shares from the share of each of the two Republics." Neither of the upper riparian states were consulted nor given advance notice. Nevertheless, all the upstream states have duly rejected the 1959 Agreement and have expressly stated, at different occasions, that they are not bound by it on the basis of the cardinal principle in the Law of Treaties: res inter alios acta.

Egypt and Sudan, however, continue to act as if the Nile starts in Sudan and ends in Egypt. They have refused to heed to the call by other riparian states for the equitable utilization of their shared resources. Despite divergence of views between the two downstream countries in the use of the Nile waters, they have, however, found it in their common strategic interest to forge common positions and challenge any move by upstream countries to utilize water from the Nile. This uncompromising attitude has always marred relations between the upper and lower riparian countries of the Nile. With the aim of consolidating absolute control over the Nile, Egypt has proceeded with the construction of the Aswan High Dam within its own territory by rejecting other less controversial projects like the Century Scheme. In the words of Arun "The Nile as a hydrological unit

In contrast to geo-political considerations and national interests of states, the hydrological natures of river basins do not encourage or lend support to separate or unilateral developments. By its own nature, the utilization of trans-boundary rivers dictates joint and cooperative management to attain optimal and sustainable development. River basins form systems which need to be managed as an integrated whole to derive maximum benefits. Unlike sovereign territories of states, international watercourses do not follow geographical or political boundaries. They are anathema to geographical boundaries and do not recognize political divisions of States.

To derive maximum benefits, avoid wastage, and save water, it is absolutely essential that states sharing international watercourses forge closer cooperation among themselves to optimize this finite commodity. It is in their own

storing annual difference between real needs and total discharge". The proposed projects on the Nile were expected to benefit all the countries on the entire course of the river i.e. both the upper and lower riparian states. The projects had the ardent support of the Sudan and the upper riparian States... However, all the proposals under the Century Scheme were abandoned in favor of the construction of a single giant Aswan High Dam which would provide Egypt with adequate supply of water and complete control over the whole of the Nile. The main objective of the High Aswan Dam was to secure a source of water within Egyptian territory and creating a strong bargaining position in future hydro-politics with neighbours.

Branded as Nasser's "pyramid" by some critics, and "the most recent (and surely not the last) manifestation of Egypt's struggle to dominate rather than coexist with the Nile Valley, the dam has drawn fire and acclaim since its very inception in the late 1950s". In the words of Arun "The Century Storage Scheme had a major flaw from the Egyptian perspective in that all of the proposed projects were to be located outside its territory. This did not sit well with the highly nationalistic leadership that came to power in Egypt under Nasser in 1952."

The multi-project Century Storage Scheme proposal of 1946 was thus mostly put aside in favor of the plan for one giant water project within Egyptian territory. Thus the Century Storage Scheme which if pursued to successful completion would have opened wide opportunities for fostering interstate cooperation between the countries of the Nile, was dashed simply to satisfy the monopolistic desire of one single country—Egypt.

Based on the natural phenomenon of rivers, a number of countries in many parts of the world have devised various means and ways, depending on their relative advantage to share and develop international watercourses traversing their territories. It is estimated that there are close to 300 agreements between states dealing with the sharing of this vital resource.

The Nile can not be an exception to this general law of international rivers. It is incumbent upon the ten riparian states to sit and negotiate a workable formula for the sharing of the Nile bounty. Unfortunately, hydro politics has taken the front seat in the inter-play of forces among the riparian States of the Nile. Their relationship is marred with suspicion and misunderstanding. There is, mistrust and recrimination among the Nile States regarding each others motives. It is not uncommon for Egypt to always find an 'Israeli conspiracy' on

national interest to conserve and develop their shared natural resources through mutual consultation and cooperation. Water after all is most essential biological need and valuable economic good. Competition and rivalry will only help to deplete it and cause permanent damage to the very resource on which livelihood and welfare of the people depend. Hence, states bordering international watercourses have no other option but to cooperate.

The greatest dilemma and challenge, however, under international law in the use of international water resources is how best to strike a balance between this inherent natural attribute of water as a hydrological unit and the conflicting interests of states to utilize its waters to serve their ever increasing demands. The dilemma is even more compounded, today, considering the rapid growth and advancement in technology which can enable one country to appropriate all waters of a given shared river for itself. The search for solution then should, out of necessity, be compatible with the environmental, ecological sustainability of the whole basin while at the same time satisfying the vital needs of each riparian state for the use of water.

It is only in the proper understanding and appreciation of this inherent nature and complexity of rivers, that states are compelled to assume their concomitant obligation to try, no matter what, to resolve their differences and enter into cooperation to achieve optimal and sustainable development of their common fresh water resources. In this regard, water in its own nature, having multiplicity of use can afford a number of possibilities in the search for solutions.

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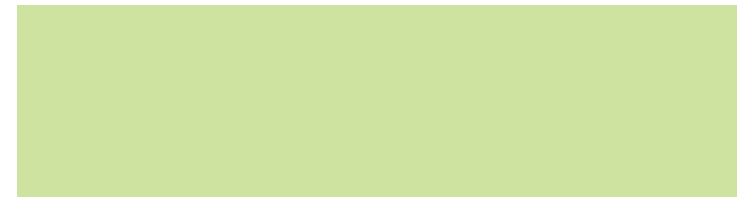
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Ethiopia-Egypt Relations in Utilizing the Nile Water

These altercations indicate the existing rough relations between the two countries. After the 25 January Egyptian revolution, however, the trend seems to change particularly from the Egyptian side focusing more on people-to-people relations and negotiation instead of citing the 1929 and 1959 treaties.



Stakeholders Dialogue

Case Study:

(Egyptian Public Diplomacy
Delegation)

This is evidenced by the visit of an Egyptian
Public Diplomacy Delegation, from 29 April
to 2 May 2011 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Members of the delegation were 48 public
figures including three presidential
candidates, parliamentarians, scholars, and
representatives of revolutionary youth
movement of January 25th.



Stakeholders Dialogue

Case Study:

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The purpose of the visit was to promote and encourage a more collaborative approach on issues related to the Nile Basin water distribution and to strengthen initiatives that contribute to such collaboration.

The Delegation met with different high level government officials including the Prime Minister. The Public Diplomacy Delegation visit was followed by a high level delegation led by Egyptian Prime Minister, Mr. Essam Sharaf, from 13 May to 14 May 2011.



The Ethiopian Government reacted positively to the move by the Egyptian Government and people. Consequently, Ethiopia has agreed to hold the ratification of the Common Framework Agreement (CFA), until Egyptians establish a Government.

Moreover, the Ethiopian Government reconfirmed to the officials and the Egyptian public that the recently started Renaissance Dam, will not cause any harm on the water flow.



■ میلیس زیناوی

Stakeholders Dialogue

Case Study:

(Egyptian Public Diplomacy Delegation)

The two countries also agreed to establish a committee comprised of experts from Ethiopia, Egypt, Sudan and other countries to evaluate the impact of the dam on the environment and other aspects.

After these visits, discussions about collaborating in investment, education and health has started between the two countries. This is a good start, which might lead to working together for the common good of the two countries. If Ethiopia and Egypt can work collaboratively, they will have mutual benefits in many ways.



Stakeholders Dialogue

Case Study:

(Egyptian Public Diplomacy Delegation)

For example, Egypt can have a more secured water resource as it depends entirely on the Nile for its fresh water needs. On the other hand, Ethiopia can benefit a lot from Egypt's technical support and expertise necessary to establish a more efficient irrigation system in utilizing its other river basins for sustainable food production.



نجاح كبير لوفد الدبلوماسية الشعبية المصرية في إثيوبيا

زيناوي يعلن تأجيل التصديق على الاتفاقية الإطارية لعين انتخاب رئيس جديد لمصر

في ظل ما يشهده مصر من أحداث، فإن وفد الدبلوماسية الشعبية المصرية الذي تم إرساله إلى إثيوبيا، برئاسة السفير الدكتور محمد عبد الناصر، نجح في تحقيق أهدافه، وذلك بعد أن تم توقيع الاتفاقية الإطارية بين البلدين، والتي تهدف إلى تعزيز العلاقات الثنائية بين الشعبين المصري والإثيوبي، وذلك في إطار الجهود المبذولة لتحقيق السلام والاستقرار في المنطقة.

المصرى
25/01/2011
مصر ترحب بتأجيل إثيوبيا التوقيع على اتفاقية حوض النيل

«الوزير رئيس الوزراء يوزر إثيوبيا وأوغندا والكوتجو الأسبوع المقبل»

في إطار الجهود المبذولة لتحقيق السلام والاستقرار في المنطقة، نجح وفد الدبلوماسية الشعبية المصرية في إثيوبيا، برئاسة السفير الدكتور محمد عبد الناصر، في توقيع الاتفاقية الإطارية بين البلدين، والتي تهدف إلى تعزيز العلاقات الثنائية بين الشعبين المصري والإثيوبي.

المصري اليوم
25/01/2011
الوفد الشعبي يعلن موافقة وزارة التعليم العالي على تبادل المنح الدراسية بين مصر وإثيوبيا

رسالة إثيوبيا. عادل الدرجلي أعلن وفد التطهريانية الشعبية المصرية التي يزور إثيوبيا حاليا، عن موافقة وزارة التعليم العالي المصرية على تبادل المنح الدراسية بين مصر وإثيوبيا من خلال المنح الدراسية للطلاب الإثيوبيين بالجامعات المصرية الحكومية والخاصة.

وزير الوفد، أمين، جامعة إثيوبيا ومركز الدراسات التابع لها، وتقدم للعرض التالي للمركز، التي يحتوي على التراث الإثيوبي ومراحل تطور الطبيعة والحياة البشرية، وشركاء أعضاء الوفد في ندوة بكلية الاقتصاد والسياسة بالجامعة بحضور عدد من أساتذة الجامعة والمتخصصين، ومن الجانب المصري ترأس الندوة الدكتور محمد أبو النوار، مؤسس حركة 9 مارس، وتضمنت حوارا حول مياه النيل تأويل الدراسات التي تجريها جامعة إثيوبيا في المجالات المتعلقة بترشيد المياه وعلوم جيولوجيا المياه والجوانب المتعلقة بسياسة تقسيم حصص مياه النيل.

وأكد عدد من الأكاديميين الإثيوبيين اعتماد النظام المصري السابق في موافقة تجارة مياه النيل على الشائعات والأكاذيب، وأحيانا كثيرة على المواقف الارتجالية والشخصية التي تحطم موقفه السياسي الشخصي. ولا تفر عن المصلحة العامة لأبناء النيل في كل من مصر وإثيوبيا.

ومن جانبها، أكدت الدكتورة كروت ويلد مومين، نائب رئيس قسم التخطيط الاستراتيجي في

والتشراكة الأفريقية جامعة إثيوبيا، أن الحكومة الإثيوبية تهدف إلى فتح مجالات جديدة للتنمية فيما يتعلق بمشروعات توليد الكهرباء، وأبدت مومين رغبتها في إيجاد فرص تعاون بين جامعة إثيوبيا والجامعات المصرية في جميع المجالات، لأن ذلك يعتبر خطوة أساسية على طريق إعادة العلاقات المصرية - الإثيوبية.

وأبدى كل من الدكتور عمرو حلمي والمهندس عبد الحليم عبد الناصر والكاتبة الصحفية سكينه فؤاد والدكتورة كريمة الحقاوي، رغبتهم في فتح صفحة جديدة من العلاقات بين مصر وإثيوبيا بما لا يتناقض مع مصالح البلدين، ووعد بعض أساتذة الجامعات المصرية بدراسة تبادل الخبرات بين مصر وإثيوبيا من



شكراً لكم

