



## Security Council

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### **Letter dated 29 July 2022 from the Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

Upon instructions from my Government, I would like to convey to you a letter from Sameh Shoukry, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Arab Republic of Egypt, regarding the third consecutive unilateral filling of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (see annex).

I would be grateful if you would kindly circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the Security Council in connection with the item entitled “Peace and security in Africa”.

*(Signed)* Osama **Abdelkhalek**  
Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations



## **Annex to the letter dated 29 July 2022 from the Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

I am writing to apprise the Security Council of the latest deeply concerning developments relating to the question of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). This is a matter of the greatest consequence for Egypt and has serious ramifications for peace and security in the region.

On 26 July 2022, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia informed the Arab Republic of Egypt, through an informal electronic message, that it has resumed, for the third consecutive year, the unilateral filling of the GERD. This process is being undertaken in the absence of an agreement with Egypt and Sudan that governs the filling and operation of this dam that ensures that downstream riparian States and communities are protected against its potential adverse effects.

Accordingly, the Arab Republic of Egypt has, once again, elected to inform the Security Council, pursuant to Article 35 of the Charter of the United Nations, that the question of the GERD and Ethiopia's persistent policy of unilateralism in this regard constitute a situation that, as stipulated in Article 34 of the Charter, is causing international friction, the continuance of which could endanger international peace and security. It is incumbent upon the Council to discharge its obligations under Article 24 of the Charter by taking appropriate measures to ensure that the question of the GERD is settled amicably, which would ensure the preservation of peace and security throughout the region.

Ethiopia's decision to resume the filling of the GERD is only the latest act in a systematic pattern of unilateral actions that constitute serious violations of its obligations under customary and conventional international law, including the 2015 Agreement on Declaration of Principles, which Ethiopia has materially breached on multiple occasions. Egypt categorically objects to and rejects Ethiopia's acts of unilateralism and its violations of international law, which threaten to undermine regional peace and security.

The continued unilateral filling of the GERD in the absence of an agreement with Egypt and Sudan also demonstrates Ethiopia's patent disregard for the statement by the President of the Security Council of 15 September 2021 ([S/PRST/2021/18](#)), which instructed the three countries "to finalize expeditiously the text of mutually acceptable and binding agreement on the filling and operation of the GERD, within a reasonable time frame".

Indeed, since the session convened by the Security Council on this matter on 8 July 2021 and the subsequent adoption of the aforementioned statement by the President of the Council, no progress has been achieved in the GERD negotiations, and despite the efforts of our partners, we are no closer to concluding an agreement on the GERD. The responsibility for this disconcerting state of affairs rests squarely with Ethiopia.

Throughout 11 years of fruitless negotiations, including during recent talks, Ethiopia adopted an uncompromising and obdurate posture that was calculated to engage Egypt and Sudan in a futile process of negotiations while it continued the construction and filling of the GERD in order to impose a fait accompli on its downstream co-riparians. Egypt, on the other hand, has exercised considerable restraint, it has repeatedly reaffirmed its acknowledgement of and support for Ethiopia's developmental needs and it has continued to negotiate in good faith with a view to concluding a mutually beneficial agreement on the GERD. Regrettably, however, Egypt's efforts, and those of our partners, have not been fruitful.

In this regard, Ethiopia's defiance of the collective will of the international community and its disregard for the rights and interests of its co-riparians have been abundantly clear in the official communications of its representatives. For instance, in a letter addressed to the President of the Security Council on 23 June 2021 (S/2021/600), the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia stated that "filling and operating the GERD without seeking agreement from Egypt and Sudan is the bare minimum of the exercise of the sovereign prerogative as a riparian country". Similarly, in a subsequent letter addressed to the President of the Security Council on 28 June 2021 (S/2021/613), Ethiopia's Foreign Minister claimed that "Ethiopia is not under any legal obligation to reach an agreement with Egypt and Sudan ahead of filling the GERD". These sentiments reveal Ethiopia's true intentions and its lack of political will to conclude a binding and mutually beneficial agreement on the GERD that balances and preserves the equities and interests of the parties.

I would also like to highlight that Egypt remains deeply concerned due to Ethiopia's failure to conduct the requisite studies on the environmental and socioeconomic impacts of the GERD, which is a further violation of its obligations under international law. In this regard, I must bring to the attention of the Security Council alarming information regarding the safety of the GERD. Recent satellite imagery has revealed that cracks have formed along the length of the concrete façade of the saddle dam that is associated with the GERD. This raises serious concerns regarding the structural stability and safety of this facility and the main dam. This poses an immediate risk to downstream communities in Egypt and Sudan. These dangers are compounded by the fact that Ethiopia has, to date, failed to provide Egypt with any information or studies relating to the GERD level II design.

Moreover, Ethiopia has sought to exploit the negotiations on the GERD to codify an unlimited and unfettered right to undertake future projects along the Nile. It is evident that Ethiopia has no interest in complying, whether presently or in the future, with the applicable principles of international law, including the obligation not to cause significant harm, the duties of prior notification, consultation and cooperation, and the principle of equitable and reasonable utilization of international watercourses. This attitude is reflective of Ethiopia's consistent opposition to the principle of effective and robust transboundary cooperation in relation to international watercourses, and was manifested on several occasions in Ethiopia's isolated position, which rejects the reiteration of this principle in United Nations declarations and resolutions.

The record of over a decade of negotiations on the GERD indicates that Ethiopia's objectives are not limited to the generation of hydropower for developmental purposes. Rather, Ethiopia appears intent on transforming the Nile into an instrument of political influence and control. For Egypt, the driest country in the world, which is entirely dependent on the Nile as its sole source of livelihood, this is a situation that would constitute an intolerable threat to its security and survival and would jeopardize regional peace and security. In this regard, while continuing to exercise restraint, the Government of Egypt will remain vigilant in upholding its commitment and responsibility to protect the rights, interests and existence of the Egyptian people.

In conclusion, Egypt has brought this matter to the attention of the Security Council in fulfilment of its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and as a responsible member of the international community. Given its unique responsibilities enshrined in the Charter, the Council should actively consider the question of the GERD to ensure that a peaceful resolution of this matter is reached forthwith, including through the full implementation of the statement by the President of the Security Council (S/PRST/2021/18). Resolving this matter is not only essential

to protecting and preserving peace and security throughout the region but will also contribute to our collective efforts to achieve greater prosperity for our peoples.

*(Signed)* Sameh **Shoukry**  
Minister of Foreign Affairs  
Arab Republic of Egypt

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