

**Security Council**

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Letter dated 1 September 2024 from the Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Arab Republic of Egypt, Badr Abdelatty, regarding the fifth consecutive unilateral filling of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (see annex).

I would be grateful if you 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**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



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With reference to Egypt's correspondences to the Security Council ([S/2020/355](#), [S/2020/566](#), [S/2020/617](#), [S/2021/354](#), [S/2021/565](#), [S/2021/607](#), [S/2021/627](#), [S/2022/134](#), [S/2022/586](#), [S/2022/587](#) and [S/2023/664](#)), Egypt is compelled for the fifth consecutive year to apprise the Security Council of Ethiopia's repeated violations of international law, including the 2015 Agreement on Declaration of Principles (DoP) on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD).

On 26 August 2024, Ethiopia's Prime Minister announced the unilateral fifth stage of the first filling of the GERD reservoir and the operation of the third and fourth turbines of the GERD. Egypt categorically rejects such unlawful unilateral Ethiopian actions that constitute a continuous material breach of the DoP, which obliges Ethiopia to reach a legally binding agreement on the rules that govern the filling and operation of the GERD before commencing such filling and operation. Moreover, these actions are in total disregard of the statement by the President of the Security Council of 15 September 2021 ([S/PRST/2021/18](#)), in which Egypt, Ethiopia and the Sudan were encouraged to finalize expeditiously the text of a mutually acceptable and binding agreement on the filling and operation of the GERD.

It is essential to recall that Ethiopia initiated the GERD construction unilaterally in 2011, without prior consultations with co-riparians or conducting socioeconomic and environmental impact assessment studies or ensuring the safety of the dam, as is incumbent upon Ethiopia under international law. Egypt gave, in its aforementioned correspondences to the Security Council, a detailed account of Ethiopia's violations of its obligations under customary and conventional international law, such as noncompliance with the principle of prior consultation and notification. Overlooking this obligation is not only a violation in itself, but also obstructs the realization of the cardinal principles of equitable and reasonable use and no significant harm, which requires riparian States to "take all appropriate measures" to prevent significant harm. Ethiopia violates these principles in numerous other ways, including by deliberately failing to take measures to prevent significant harm when such measures are clearly available to it, thus rendering the GERD project inherently inequitable.

For more than 13 years, Egypt has made every possible diplomatic effort to reach an amicable solution on the GERD, yet to no avail. The prolonged and futile rounds of negotiation demonstrated clearly that Ethiopia lacks the requisite political will to reach a balanced agreement. Ethiopia's intransigent posture has undermined all efforts to broker an agreement, whether under the auspices of the World Bank and the United States in 2019 and 2020, or – since then – under the umbrella of the Chairperson of the African Union and its international and regional partners. The obstinate positions of Ethiopia have not changed over time, including in the latest tripartite negotiations from August to December 2023, revealing beyond doubt Ethiopia's lack of any political will, thus marking the end of all negotiation tracks.

Egypt firmly believes that the interests of the parties are not mutually exclusive. There are multiple legal and technical compromise solutions that do not prejudice the core interests of the two downstream riparian States, while fulfilling Ethiopia's pronounced interests, including optimum power generation from the GERD, and future Nile development projects, as long as such projects are constructed in accordance with the applicable rules and principles of international law. It is worth mentioning that Ethiopia has repeatedly rejected Egypt's endeavours

to construct and mobilize international funding for joint Nile development projects, in accordance with the established cooperative policies of the World Bank.

In an attempt to conceal its lack of political will, Ethiopia claims that none of the proposed compromise solutions fulfils the interests of its people. It employs legal arguments that are unfounded either in law or in international practice, then rejects putting to the test the validity of its legal positions by resorting to any arbitral or binding dispute resolution mechanism. It has become evident that Ethiopia's rigid GERD positions are, regrettably, designed to mobilize the Ethiopian people against a fictitious external adversary and divert the international public attention from its unlawful policy in the region, particularly its unilateral exploitation of shared water resources, which has repeatedly harmed Ethiopia's neighbours in the basins of the Omo River, the Jubba River, and the Shabelle River.

Egypt is almost entirely dependent on the Nile River for its renewable water resources, which are indispensable for the vital human needs and fundamental rights of Egyptians. Even though the Nile River has experienced consecutive above-average flood seasons in recent years, which has given Egypt relative protection from major harm, the continuation of the Ethiopian policies, as those declared by Ethiopia's Prime Minister on 26 August 2024, could result in an existential threat to Egypt, as well as the rights and interests of the 150 million citizens of both downstream countries, and would consequently jeopardize regional and international peace and security.

After having exhausted all amicable means, including by repeatedly resorting to the Security Council, in hopes of persuading Ethiopia to desist from its unlawful unilateral policies and accept any of the existing compromise solutions that balance the interests and rights of all parties, the Government of Egypt, therefore, stands ready to exercise its right to defend and protect the rights and interests of the Egyptian people, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

Egypt urges the Security Council to assume its responsibilities under article 24 of the Charter, by taking appropriate measures to ensure that Ethiopia ceases its unlawful unilateral practices in the Nile basin.

(Signed) **Badr Abdelatty**
Minister of Foreign Affairs, Emigration and Egyptian Expatriates
Arab Republic of Egypt