Title of research article

The Implications of South Sudan's Secession on Arab National Security – Egypt as a Model

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Abstract

The secession of South Sudan from the North in 2011 represented a historical turning point whose repercussions were not limited to Sudan's internal affairs but extended to cast their shadows on Arab national security in general, and on Egypt in particular. Sudan has long been, due to its strategic geographical location and its historical and cultural ties with the Arab sphere, a strategic depth for Egypt and a gateway to the Horn of Africa.

Therefore, the fragmentation of Sudan did not only create a political vacuum but also raised a set of security, economic, and political challenges that require in-depth analysis to understand their dimensions and their impact on the vital interests of Arab states. This article aims to review and analyze the implications of South Sudan's secession on Arab national security, focusing on Egypt as a case study, by examining the direct and indirect repercussions on its water security, borders, and regional stability.

Introduction

Despite Southerners obtaining the right to self-determination through the referendum held in January 2011, this did not put an end to Sudan's problems. On the contrary, the manifestations of secession began to reflect negatively not only on Sudan but also on its Arab and African neighbors, who share intertwined borders as well as ethnic and tribal overlaps with it. Furthermore, some movements and ethnic groups in neighboring states, inspired by South Sudan, have also demanded secession, which may create a state of political instability that will, in turn, affect Sudan's relations with its Arab and African surroundings.

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The secession of South Sudan created a new situation with economic, political, and security dimensions. This secession has had repercussions, consequences, and risks at various levels, the most important being its implications for Arab national security in general and Egyptian national security in particular. This is what the present article aims to address.

Significance of the Study

The importance of this study lies in highlighting the features of the threats facing Arab national security in general and Egyptian national security in particular as a result of South Sudan's secession. It also emphasizes the necessity of functional integration among the units of the Arab regional system, since Egyptian national security does not conflict with Arab national security but rather complements it.

Research Problem

The research problem revolves around the following main question: *What are the implications of South Sudan's secession for Arab national security in general, and for Egyptian national security in particular?*

Research Questions

From this main issue emerge several sub-questions, including:

- What is Arab national security?
- What are the threats to Egyptian national security following the secession of South Sudan?
- Could Egypt's share of Nile waters be affected by the secession of South Sudan?

Hypotheses
In order to answer these questions, the following hypotheses are proposed:

- The secession of South Sudan represents a new phase in the threats facing Arab national security.
- There is a complementary and interdependent relationship between Egyptian national security and Arab national security.
- The creation of the state of South Sudan has added a new actor to the Nile Basin system, threatening the water interests of both Sudan and Egypt.

Methodology of the Study

The methodologies and tools used in analyzing this topic are as follows:

- **Historical Method:** This was used to study, analyze, and trace the repercussions of South Sudan's secession on Arab national security, with particular focus on Egyptian national security.

Descriptive Method: This method relies on description, which is the essential feature of most scientific research, through describing the phenomenon or subject under study and identifying its characteristics [1]and we relied on this method because it provides us with a general descriptive picture of the repercussions of secession on Arab national security and Egyptian national security.

Case Study Method:

The case study method is considered one of the most important approaches in the humanities and social sciences, as it focuses on a specific phenomenon while relying on both material and moral foundations. Its purpose is to comprehensively address the subject under study and to uncover its underlying dimensions. This method examines the details in relation to the whole that encompasses them, based on the idea that particulars are merely one aspect

or manifestation of the overall reality[2]. **We will address** the repercussions of South Sudan's secession on Arab national security in general, with a particular focus on Egyptian national security as a model or case study.

Structure of the Study
This article has been divided, in line with the study requirements, into several key sections:

- **Section One:** Security and National Security (Concept and Characteristics).
  o Arab National Security (definition, dimensions, levels).
- **Section Two:** The repercussions of South Sudan's secession on Egyptian national security.
- **Section Three:** Egyptian water security.

Thus, we have structured our article into these main axes. In Section One, we address the nature of national security by presenting different definitions of the concept. Section Two, titled *The Repercussions of South Sudan's Secession on Egyptian National Security*, discusses the direct threats posed to Egypt's national security. This focus on Egypt is not incidental but is based on several considerations, foremost among them its geographical proximity and the interconnectedness of Egyptian national security with Sudanese national security on the African level. Given the wide-ranging and multifaceted nature of Egyptian national security, we will concentrate particularly on the issue of Egyptian water security.

Section One: Security and National Security (Concept and Characteristics)

To begin, it is essential to define *security*, *national security*, and *Arab national security*.

First:
The concept of security is among the most complex concepts addressed in scientific analysis, due to its relative, changing, and multidimensional nature, involving various levels. It faces both direct and indirect challenges from different sources, varying in degree, type, scope, and timing whether related to the security of the individual, the state, the regional system, or the international order. It is one of the central concepts in the field of international relations, which has been marked by great ambiguity since its emergence as an independent academic discipline after World War II.

The study of national security cannot be fully understood or interpreted without first clarifying the general concept of security and then analyzing the notion of national security.

The meanings of *security*, both linguistically and terminologically, converge on the idea that security entails achieving calm, reassurance, and stability at the level of the individual, the community, and the nation. It stands in opposition to fear, and is essentially equivalent to the absence of threat or danger[3].

Henry Kissinger defines security as: *"Any action through which society seeks to achieve its right to survival."* He also describes it as *"the ability to free oneself from a major threat to the higher individual and collective values, through all possible means to preserve at least the right to survival,"* or as *"the absence of threat to fundamental values[4]."*

Second:
The concept of national security is relatively modern in political science, and for this reason, it remains one of the most ambiguous concepts. It has not yet crystallized into a fully developed field of political science governed by the rules of epistemology—starting from formulating hypotheses, defining appropriate research methods, selecting scientific verification tools, establishing rules of proof and refutation, and eventually reaching a general theory and a law that governs the phenomenon of national security.

The term *national security* emerged as a result of the rise of the nation-state in the 16th century AD. It is defined as the state's ability to protect its territory and its fundamental and essential values from external threats, especially

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military ones. Ensuring the protection of the state's territory against foreign aggression, and safeguarding its citizens from attempts to harm them, their property, beliefs, and values, constitute its core. With the evolution of the concept of state capacity, the notion of national security expanded to encompass the state's comprehensive ability to protect its values and interests from both external and internal threats.

National security has political, economic, social, military, ideological, and geographical dimensions, each with its own characteristics that demonstrate their interconnection and complementarity.

A significant number of Arab scholars and thinkers have addressed the concept of *Arab national security*. Among these, Amin Houidi defined national security as: *"A set of comprehensive measures taken by the state, within the limits of its capacity, to preserve its entity and its interests in the present and the future, while taking into account international variables.[5]"*

Hamed Rabie emphasizes that the concept of national security, in its essence, is a **military concept** rooted in the defensive characteristics of the national territory. However, in its theoretical formulation, it evolves to establish rules for collective and leadership behavior with a **political dimension** that is not limited to internal dealings [6].

National security is a comprehensive concept whose threats are not confined to the presence of an external military danger, nor is its protection limited merely to increasing the state's military capabilities, as was commonly assumed in the traditional view of the concept.

Third:
Arab National Security is the ability of the Arab nation, collectively, to defend itself and its rights, to safeguard its independence and sovereignty over its territories against any external aggression, and to confront challenges and risks by developing Arab capacities and resources in all fields within the framework of comprehensive Arab unity. This ensures a secure future for its people and enables them to contribute to the building of human civilization[7].

Among the clearest definitions of **Arab national security** is that proposed by the General Secretariat of the Arab League in its study on Arab security. It defined it as: *"The ability of the Arab nation to defend its security and rights, safeguard its independence and sovereignty over its territories, and develop Arab capacities and resources in all political, economic, and social fields, relying on military and diplomatic power, while taking into consideration the national security needs of each state, which in turn affect Arab national security.[8]"*

In brief, national security can be defined as the safeguarding of the state's borders, interests, values, and culture from looming threats. These threats may be external—emanating from neighboring states or major powers or internal, such as threats to the state's legitimate system or the safety of citizens caused by the loss of one of the core elements of security: military strength, economic development, and political stability.

There are numerous internal and external dangers and challenges threatening Arab national security, linked to the resources, wealth, and natural characteristics of the Arab world. These factors have made the Arab region of immense economic, political, strategic, and civilizational importance.

The security characteristics of the Arab homeland have made it a focal point of global attention, especially from major powers, due to its abundant material and human resources, as well as its unique geographical position that grants it a significant geostrategic role in the global order. Furthermore, cultural, social, and religious bonds tie the peoples of the Arab world together, rendering it an indivisible unit. Although it is based on the concept of the nation-state, these bonds unify its peoples like a single body: if one part suffers, the rest responds in solidarity.

From the perspective of national security, South Sudan is of great importance because of its direct connection to Arab security in general, and its tangible impact on the vital interests of some influential Arab states in the region directly on Sudan, and indirectly on Egypt.

Thus, the repercussions and consequences of South Sudan's secession will be profound and immediate, affecting both the near and distant neighbors. In fact, the secession of South Sudan can be likened to a fragmentation bomb whose shrapnel will inevitably strike all nearby states.

Section Two: The Repercussions of South Sudan's Secession on Egyptian National Security

First: The Importance of Sudan in the Equation of Egyptian National Security
Sudan is considered Egypt's backyard and its southern front, which Egypt constantly seeks to keep secure. Dr.

Kamal Amer stated that national security is linked to the comprehensive power of the state, which is built on several important elements, including the **geopolitical factor**, represented in the shape of the state and its geographical location. From this perspective arises the vital importance of Sudan, which shares with Egypt a border of approximately **1,273 km** [9].

Sudan lies within the sphere of Egypt's **direct national security**, given the shared borders, geographical proximity, and unity of destiny between the two countries. The Egyptian-Sudanese border extends approximately **1,273 km**, with Sudan representing Egypt's southern strategic depth. Therefore, Sudan's security and stability are integral parts of Egypt's national security.

The importance of Sudan to Egypt also stems from the intertwining of the two countries' relations across multiple shared issues that require constant coordination. In addition to the multidimensional bilateral relations, there are numerous regional files and issues for which the coordination of both countries' positions is vital to the national security of both states, their peoples, the Arab nation, the African continent, and the entire region. Chief among these is, of course, the issue of **Nile waters and the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) crisis**.

On January 1, 2020, Sudan's transitional Prime Minister, Dr. Abdalla Hamdok, declared that Sudan occupies a key position in the GERD issue and would not allow any harm to befall Egypt. He stressed Sudan's awareness of the importance of the Nile River, thereby underlining that Sudan's stance on the dam carries great significance for **Egypt's water security** [10].

There are also other areas of cooperation between Egypt and Sudan, such as the issues of **security and stability in the Red Sea Basin and the Horn of Africa**, as well as coordination on African affairs whether through the African Union and other continental and regional organizations, or in dealing with influential issues such as **combating terrorism and extremism**, among others.

The importance of Sudan in the equation of Egyptian national security is further reinforced by what Sudanese journalist Rajab stated in an exclusive interview with *Sputnik* on January 18, 2018: that all attempts to sow discord between Egypt and Sudan will fail, because the historical roots binding the two countries are deeply entrenched. Regardless of differences, the two ultimately form one entity, each serving as the other's strategic depth, with Egypt considered a gateway of national security for Sudan [11].

Second: The Pillars of Egyptian National Security

These can be summarized as follows:

- **Focus on Sinai:** The defense of Egypt's northeastern borders must be anchored in the Levant, where the first line of defense is located in the far north, the second line in Palestine, and the third line at the Suez Canal. This is why Pharaonic Egypt conducted annual campaigns in the Levant aimed at eliminating any hostile power that could threaten Egyptian national security.
- **Egypt's security begins with Palestine:** The Zionist threat to Egypt originates from there, and therefore confronting it must also begin from that point.
- **The Nile as the lifeline of Egypt:** The centrality of the Nile to Egyptian life necessitates a specific type of cooperative relations with the states where its sources lie in Ethiopia or Central Africa. It is essential to prevent any power from controlling the Nile's sources or from establishing a presence in Sudan that could threaten Egypt's southern belt.
- **The necessity of strategic alliances:** Egypt must ally with one great power against another when needed, without compromising Egyptian sovereignty or domestic affairs. No leadership can afford to ignore the concept of balance of power among the great powers [12].

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Egypt's security begins with its Arab identity: Arabism is not a burden on Egypt but rather a security shield for its interests. Egypt can never afford the luxury of isolation or withdrawal into itself, because detaching Egypt from its natural Arab sphere is a sure warning sign of its vulnerability to internal destabilization[13].

Egyptian national security has never, at any point in its history, been in conflict with the concept of Arab national security. On the contrary, overlap, interaction, and cooperation have been the defining features of the relationship between the two.

Security Circles of Egyptian National Security

Egypt's security circles can be identified in three main directions:

1. **The Northern Direction:** Referring to the dangers posed by the Zionist presence in Palestine, and the role of Sinai in Egyptian national security.
2. **The Southern Direction:** Relating to the sources of the Nile River.
3. **The Western Direction.**

In this study, our main focus is on the **southern dimension and the Nile sources**, while also acknowledging the importance of the other directions for a comprehensive understanding of Egyptian national security.

The secession of South Sudan will have **direct negative repercussions on Egypt**. Egypt views this secession as a factor that will lead to the fragmentation of Sudan, a development that will negatively affect Egyptian national security especially concerning Nile water issues, migration, the reduction of trade and employment opportunities, and the spread of small arms and organized crime[14].

The realities of geography, the facts of history, and human ties have imposed a special relationship between Sudan and Egypt, one that perhaps no other two peoples in the region have experienced. There has long been a strong bond between the two brotherly nations, and the Nile will forever remain the eternal link between the Sudanese and Egyptian peoples. Indeed, many families in Aswan trace their roots back to Sudan, reflecting ties of kinship, marriage, and blood.

Sudan represents Egypt's southern strategic depth; thus, Sudan's security and stability are integral parts of Egyptian national security. Egypt's security, in its African depth, is tied to Sudan's security and stability. From this perspective, Egypt's policy toward Sudan gains importance, aiming to preserve Sudan's unity, stability, and cohesion, while also enhancing relations of integration between the two sides.

Egypt's security is organically linked to Sudan's security. If Sudan is stable, Egypt is stable as well. This connection also extends to Egypt's **water security**, which is a cornerstone of its **food security**, and consequently a guarantee of its political independence. Egypt cannot achieve autonomy in political decision-making without attaining self-sufficiency in food, which is in turn linked to water resources. Moreover, Sudan is a country of great importance within the constellation of states forming the **Horn of Africa**, serving as one of the guarantees of security in the Red Sea, the Bab al-Mandeb Strait, and the Gulf of Aden[15].

From a geopolitical and economic perspective, Sudan represents Egypt's southern strategic depth. Current crises and conflicts plaguing Sudan, which increasingly threaten its very existence, have direct repercussions on Egyptian national security. Egypt is, in fact, one of the first countries to be directly affected by developments on its southern borders. The secession of South Sudan carries numerous implications for Egypt, including:

- **Dependence on the Nile:** Egypt relies heavily on the Nile River to sustain its economy, as the Nile constitutes the lifeline of Egypt. With the birth of the state of South Sudan, Egypt will inevitably be affected by the situation in the Nile Basin. This event represents a genuine threat to Egypt's water security, since the newly established South Sudan is likely to exploit and utilize Nile waters to drive its development—supported by the United States and Israel. These two powers may in the future use water as a means of pressure and blackmail against Egypt.
- **Economic burdens from Northern Sudan:** The secession will also impose economic challenges on Egypt, as oil from the disputed Abyei region has become part of South Sudan's share. Moreover, international actors

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backing the South are keen on ensuring that Abyei does not fully belong to it, a situation that carries negative consequences for the Egyptian economy[16].

- **Loss of the African market:** The secession of South Sudan provides a favorable platform for American interests to counter Chinese economic expansion in Africa. As a result, African markets will be flooded with Chinese goods arriving from Asia, alongside American–Israeli products manufactured in South Sudan[17].

In reality, Egypt is the biggest loser from the secession process after Sudan, due to the grave implications for both Egyptian and Arab national security. The fragmentation of Sudan into weak mini-states opens the door to foreign intervention and threatens Egypt's security and stability. This is particularly concerning as South Sudan is expected to adopt a non-Arab orientation, one that is likely to be characterized by hostility toward Egypt and opposition to its interests especially regarding its vital water interests in the Nile River. This stems from the longstanding ties between South Sudanese leaders and Israel, ties that are expected to deepen further following South Sudan's independence[18].

Water is an integral part of national security, as it has become one of the fundamental factors for economic growth and a constant concern for all countries of the world. This concern has come to be known as *water security*, which has developed into a security issue with multiple dimensions: economic, geographical, political, and legal.

The economic dimension is evident in the role of water in agriculture, energy, transportation, and industry. Water is, therefore, an existential necessity its absence inevitably means the absence of economic development. Yet economic development itself is one of life's essential requirements, as stated by Allah the Almighty: ("And We made from water every living thing")[19].

Strategists agree that the lack of sufficient water and food in any country constitutes a threat to its national security. If water equals life, then the Nile River is the life of Egypt and the secret of its existence. Hence came Herodotus's famous phrase: *"Egypt is the gift of the Nile."* Undoubtedly, without that river, Egyptian civilization would not have arisen since the dawn of history, nor would it have flourished or advanced.

Axis Three: The Impact on Egyptian National Security through Its Water Lifeline, the Nile River

Water security is considered one of the most important pillars of the national security of any state. The importance of water security emerges as one of the strategic issues directly related to national and collective security, particularly since it touches upon the very existence, life, identity, and sovereignty of peoples. Because water is among the most essential cross-border resources, countries compete to secure sufficient quantities to sustain their development plans. Therefore, nations enact water legislations, treating it as a national asset. In light of continuous population growth, and the consequent need for forward planning in population, agriculture, and other policies closely linked to the water sector, the issue becomes even more critical.

Water Security: The importance of water security lies in the fact that it is one of the fundamental components of the national security of any nation. In today's world, water has become one of the elements of international conflict. The growing imbalance between states that possess water resources and those that are in need of them has led to intensified disputes, giving rise to expressions such as *"blackmail through water"* and *"the use of water as a weapon.[20]"*

Water security means preserving the available resources, using them in the best possible way, preventing their pollution, and rationalizing their use in drinking, irrigation, and industry. It also entails striving by all means to search for new water sources, developing them, and enhancing their investment capacities. Water security is no less important than any other form of security; on the contrary, its importance surpasses all others, given that it is possible to produce more food through various agricultural and industrial methods, whereas the possibilities for increasing sources of fresh water remain limited[21].

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Military security cannot be achieved by any state without economic security, and economic security cannot be realized without food security, the backbone of which is water. With the broadening of the concept of national security which is no longer confined to military aspects alone but has extended to include food and water security the concept of water national security has emerged as one of the most important dimensions of national security, given its vital role in development and state stability. Consequently, many studies have defined the concept of water security as "the individual's water needs throughout the year," which came to be known as the *water stress index*, i.e., the annual per capita share of renewable fresh water resources used for productive purposes such as agriculture and industry, as well as for domestic consumption.

Water security thus means preserving the available water resources, using them in the best possible manner, preventing their pollution, rationalizing their use in irrigation, industry, and drinking, and striving by all means to search for new water sources, develop them, and enhance their utilization[22].

The interests of Egyptian national security are closely tied to safeguarding and protecting water national security, embodied in the Nile River. These interests can be summarized as follows:

- **Survival:** The Nile represents a primary and fundamental source of Egypt's existence and continuity.
- **Development:** It is the most important source of Egypt's economic development.
- **Stability:** The Nile is the foundation of stability in Egypt.

Sources of Threats to Egyptian Water Security:

The threats to Egyptian water security can be divided as follows:

- **Threats from within the Nile Basin region:**
1. **Ethiopia and the construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD):** It is worth noting that 33.0% of Ethiopia's territory lies within the geographic boundaries of the Nile Basin, and 11.7% of the Nile Basin's total area is located within Ethiopian land[23].

2- The State of South Sudan:

Since its secession, South Sudan has maintained close relations with the upstream countries, which consistently support it in its disputes with Sudan. Consequently, its position aligns with the upstream states against Egypt and Sudan regarding the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), and it supports the Nile Basin countries' framework agreement.

This stance is governed by several influencing factors, most notably:

- The lack of need for water in South Sudan, as nearly **5,000 billion m³** of rainfall occurs within its territory.
- Its need for upstream states' backing and regional support in its disputes with Sudan.
- Its hostility toward Sudan and the contentious issues between them.
- Its strong ties with Israel, which seeks to weaken Egypt's position in the Nile Basin in order to achieve its ambitions of controlling the Nile waters.

The countries of **Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi** refuse to recognize Egypt's historical rights to the Nile waters. They argue that the agreements on which Egypt bases its claims were signed during the colonial era, and they do not acknowledge them. These states seek to **redistribute the Nile waters** and to diminish Egypt's regional standing.

Threats to Egypt's water security from outside the Nile Basin region:

- The role of the United States in supporting Israel, which aims to weaken Egypt's power, using the water issue as a bargaining chip within the framework of other files, foremost among them the reorganization of the Middle East.

    The competition between **China and India** with Europe in Africa in the fields of agricultural investment and the implementation of water and agricultural projects, which in turn **increases Ethiopia's demand for water**[25].

Israel follows a policy of **continuous incitement** of Egypt's strategic neighbors to participate in river basins, stirring feelings of injustice caused by what it describes as the unfair distribution of water. This has become evident in the Nile Basin, where Israel uses either its direct assistance or American aid to secure its influence over African countries located in the Nile Basin, such as **Kenya and Rwanda.**

With the escalation of Egypt's crisis with the Nile Basin countries and the disputes over the share of Nile water allocated to Egypt and Sudan, the hidden Israeli role became apparent in inciting the African upstream states to violate the international agreement governing the Nile Basin countries. The water crisis between the upstream African states and the downstream Arab states revealed the **true Israeli ambitions in the waters of the Nile River.**

Given the importance of water in sustaining Israel's presence in the Arab world, and its early realization of this fact, Israel's ambitions in Arab waters—particularly the Nile—date back several centuries. Since then, Israel has shown increasing interest in the Nile Basin countries, believing that the river could serve as a permanent water source for Israel, while at the same time constituting a **threat to Egypt's national security**[26].

Israel seeks to **encircle the Arab Republic of Egypt** by tightening its control over Egypt's southern flank, thereby depriving it of its strategic depth. Through its presence in the **Horn of Africa** and specifically in **South Sudan**, Israel aims to influence Egyptian national security and exert pressure on Egypt through its lifeline, the **Nile River**, which represents one of the most vital natural resources for the Egyptian economy, due to several considerations:

- The Nile River has contributed to the stability of Egyptian life in the Delta and the Valley, where cities and villages have arisen along its banks.
- Egyptians rely on it as a source of **fresh water** for various purposes, including drinking.
- The Nile is an important source of **electricity generation**, as the High Dam is used to produce hydroelectric power.
- Egypt's **industries** depend heavily on the waters of the Nile, and it is also used for inland water transport.
  - Through the Nile, canals have been dug to reclaim parts of the desert and establish new cities.
  - The Nile also hosts **tourist ships** with hotels and restaurants that attract visitors.
  - It is considered one of the key sources for providing **fish wealth**[27].

The major challenge for Egypt lies in its attempt to preserve its share of the Nile waters. In addition to this, the upstream states have repeatedly sought to **reformulate the previous water agreements.** Following the establishment of the State of South Sudan, a new challenge arose for Arab national security: compensating for the quantities of water lost due to the reduction of Sudan's territory. This coincided with the demands of Nile Basin countries to reconsider the **1959 Agreement**, which is a revised version of the **1929 Agreement** signed between Egypt and Sudan during the British colonial era that dominated both countries. It is evident that none of the Nile Basin states were parties to those agreements[28].

The birth of a new state through which the Nile flows represents a real threat to water security, particularly since this state may use the Nile waters for its future industries, which are internationally supported by the United States and Israel. This can be used as a weapon against Egypt and Sudan, leading to the loss of influence over Egypt's position in Africa within international forums, as well as the African market. The establishment of this state also poses a danger to the existing water projects, dams, and canals along the Nile River.

Therefore, it is necessary to avoid perceiving the establishment of South Sudan merely as a solution to the problems and conflicts that plagued Sudan before independence, which might enable the North to rebuild itself after shedding the burden of the South. Such a static perspective contradicts the dynamic reality, especially since the expected conflict boundaries will not remain confined to Sudan's geographic and political borders but will expand in accordance with local, national, regional, and international variables and stimuli[29].

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The future of water in Sudan and Egypt, as well as the challenges of potable water and other uses worldwide, in the Middle East, and in the Arab region, will inevitably be affected by the establishment of South Sudan once it resolves its political problems and turns toward development and cooperation with the other Nile Basin states, which are in many respects closer to it than Egypt and Sudan. This will undoubtedly affect the volume of the White Nile's waters, and the waters of the Blue Nile as well, particularly if Ethiopia continues implementing its water projects through the construction of the Millennium Dam or the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam[30].

Realizing that the United States is striving to redraw the geopolitical map of Sudan and to recreate and reshape a new Sudan, the secession of South Sudan thus carries extremely grave consequences for Egypt's and Sudan's water security, and even for the national security of both states, if the developments in the Nile Basin are not handled with awareness. I believe that Egyptian policy after the revolution began to be managed according to a clear strategy that maximizes Egyptian interests, seeks to expand frameworks of cooperation, and avoids conflicts with Nile Basin countries—especially those with a direct impact on Egypt's water security.

Therefore, Cairo appears to be the biggest loser from the secession of the South. Its loss is not limited to Nile waters, though these are the most crucial, but also extends to other interests, such as the reduction of its strategic security depth to the south, the direct impact on its security, role, and regional standing, in addition to the potential risk of contagion spreading to other areas in the North, geographically and culturally closer, and perhaps even within its own territory[31].

Conclusion and Findings

Through the discussion of the preceding themes, we reached the following conclusions:

- It is evident that the secession of South Sudan will have significant effects on Arab–African relations, and even on Arab–Arab relations, as in the case of Sudan's relations with Egypt. Secession will lead to further complications regarding the water crisis in the Nile Basin, and the establishment of a recognized state in South Sudan will have profound legal and political consequences.
- The creation of the State of South Sudan casts negative repercussions on Sudanese national security as well as Arab national security. Such a step may encourage other ethnic groups and regions in Sudan and the Arab world to pursue secession, thereby creating instability, paralysis, fragmentation, and division. Consequently, colonial powers will use South Sudan as a base to implement their strategy of striking the entire Arab region and reshaping it to serve colonial interests.
- From the perspective of security threats, the establishment of the State of South Sudan poses a threat to Arab water security, as a new state will join the system of Nile Basin countries. This will threaten the safeguarding of Sudan's and Egypt's interests in the Nile waters through the likely alignment of South Sudan with upstream countries in their struggle with the downstream states, Sudan and Egypt. This aims to establish a new formula to govern their conflict with the two downstream countries.
- The addition of South Sudan as a new state to the system of Nile Basin countries threatens to secure Sudan's and Egypt's interests in Nile waters through its anticipated alignment with upstream countries, within the framework of their conflict with the two downstream countries, Sudan and Egypt, aiming to create a new formula for water distribution among the basin states.

Proposed Recommendations

- Activate the Arab League by granting it the full capacity to fulfill its role in serving joint Arab action.
- Activate **water diplomacy**, which is one of the new and non-traditional forms of diplomacy, in order to mitigate the harm of the Renaissance Dam on Egypt's water security. This can be achieved through negotiation rounds and intensifying bilateral visits with Nile Basin countries, whether at the presidential or ministerial levels.
- Egypt must adopt a **cooperative approach** (political, security, economic, and cultural) with the Nile Basin countries in particular and with Africa in general, as this constitutes one of the pillars of Egypt's water and national security.

- Work on gaining and securing Sudan's support as a strategic partner in negotiations and as a depth for Egyptian national security, especially since South Sudan supports the construction of the Renaissance Dam.
- Build a strong Egyptian economic base to be used and invested in its relations with African countries, serving as an element of attraction, alignment, and containment for those states. This would allow Egypt to play an influential and effective regional role on the African level.
- Intensify political and diplomatic efforts at the highest levels to strengthen regional and strategic alliances with groups of countries within African regional zones.
- Work on preparation, coordination, and cooperation within the framework of strategic partnerships with active states in the African scene, which have interests and influence in the continent, such as the United States, China, and France.

Final Note

The **Arab African Summit** constitutes an appropriate mechanism to strengthen Arab–African relations, provided that it is reinforced and founded on the principle of strategic partnership between Arabs and Africans under the conditions of equality, reciprocity, and mutual benefits, with the aim of safeguarding regional peace in Africa and advancing economic development.

This requires that Arab national security be a comprehensive, coordinated, and consultative process supported by genuine Arab efforts to build the national security system that is sought.

Finally, it can be said that the strength of Egypt or any Arab country lies in its unity and alliance against the conspiracies being devised against it, given the immense resources and economies it possesses, which can achieve economic and social security, ultimately leading to the realization of political and strategic security for the construction of a comprehensive Arab security system.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

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