

Egypt's Remilitarized Sinai Is a Future Powder Keg

by [David Schenker \(/experts/david-schenker\)](/experts/david-schenker)

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Cairo needs to hear from Israel, the United States, and the Multinational Force & Observers that its security violations erode the Egypt-Israel peace.

In early May, the Islamic State–Sinai Province killed 11 Egyptian soldiers and damaged a natural gas pipeline. Far from demonstrating the Islamic State’s power in the strategic peninsula, the attack was the first major incident in almost a year, a far cry from the full-blown jihadi insurgency that had gripped Sinai only a few years ago. The Egyptian military finally appears to be making progress in rolling back the group. Not only have there been fewer attacks, but Cairo’s funneling of economic development funds to the peninsula has also generated some goodwill among the long-restive population. In March 2021, a coalition of Bedouin tribesmen, armed civilians, and Egyptian military killed the region’s Islamic State leader.

Egypt’s apparent success has been, in part, a result of Cairo’s shift away from a heavy-handed military approach replete with collateral destruction and civilian casualties to a nimbler counterinsurgency strategy with a heavy emphasis on checkpoints and curfews. Israeli tactical air support has also played an important, if less publicized, role. Egyptian-Israeli cooperation contributed in another even more important way: by mutually agreeing to substantial violations of their 1978 peace treaty—or, more precisely, the treaty’s security annex limiting Sinai’s militarization. Not only has Egypt allowed Israel to operate over Egyptian territory, but Israel also allowed Cairo to flood Sinai with troops and heavy equipment substantially in excess of the treaty’s limits...

[Read the full article on the Foreign Policy website. \(https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/06/03/egypt-israel-peace-sinai-islamic-state-military-terrorism-treaty/\)](https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/06/03/egypt-israel-peace-sinai-islamic-state-military-terrorism-treaty/) ❖

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