Mitigating the Impact of Media Reporting of Terrorism: Countering Terrorism through Media in Egypt

ICCT International Centre for Counter-Terrorism - The Hague

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This report is part of a wider project, led by the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (ICCT) – the Hague, and funded by the EU Devco on "Mitigating the Impact of Media Reporting of Terrorism". This project aims to produce evidence-based guidance and capacity building outputs based on original, context-sensitive research into the risks and opportunities in media reporting of terrorism and terrorist incidents. The role of media reporting on terrorism has been under investigated and is an underutilised dimension of a holistic counter-terrorism strategy. How the media reports on terrorism has the potential to impact counter-terrorism (CT) perspective positively or negatively.

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Counter-Terrorism - The Hague**

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Key Findings

- A near constant state of emergency since 1958 has allowed successive Egyptian presidents to exercise control over the role and content of both state- and privately-owned media.

- Under President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, all aspects of Egyptian life, including the media, have been unprecedentedly militarised by the state and subject to terrorism and emergency courts, over which the President has sweeping power, including the ratification of the courts' decisions.

- A lack of independent access to information regarding Egyptian military operations, including the site of terrorist activity, makes it impossible to report on terrorism-related events or to verify official information.

- The ever-broadening definition of terrorism and shifting government redlines mean that media outlets and journalists are often in danger of being tried for terrorism-related charges due to their reporting without knowing exactly what their offence is.

- A vastly-shrinking space for civil society, and consequently independent media, to operate makes it extremely difficult, if not impossible, for up-and-coming or established journalists to receive training and funds to operate.

Introduction

In Egypt, the ruling regime[1] today exerts strong control and an outsized influence over the media landscape in the country. Indeed, multiple interviews and secondary research reveal a picture in which Egypt's current regime, through a web of intelligence services, emergency courts and draconian counter-terrorism laws ordered by President al-Sisi, effectively controls both state-owned and private media. This scenario begs the question: What is the impact of such strong state control on the media's reporting on terrorism?

To set about answering this question, it is necessary to look back through Egypt's history and examine the evolution of state control over the media, beginning with Egypt's first president following the overthrow of the monarchy in 1952. It was also necessary to examine the evolution of terrorism in the country—both actual terrorist movements as well as the creeping expansion of the definition of terrorism by successive Egyptian governments. The goal of examining these two phenomena was to attempt to understand (1) whether the two played off each other to create the current circumstances, and (2) the impact they have had on media reporting on terrorism.

There were multiple constraints in undertaking this research. The research climate in Egypt today is highly challenging. Access to high-level officials is difficult to obtain, particularly if the topic is perceived by the government as being sensitive or may result in criticism; terrorism in particular is a sensitive topic. Attempts to interview high-level government officials and to interview security or intelligence officials were strongly discouraged by journalists as well as other Egypt-focused researchers for security purposes. In the end, the findings in this paper were based on a mixture of primary and secondary research – interviews with current and former Egyptian journalists, advisors to Egypt's religious institutions, and Egypt analysts (both based in Egypt and abroad) focused on the media and counter-terrorism affairs. All interviews were conducted under strict assurances that names and identifying information would be kept confidential.

The Context: A Near-Constant State of Emergency

The year 1958 saw the start of emergency rule in Egypt, which would remain in place almost constantly until today.[2] At the behest of Egypt's second president, Gamal Abdel Nasser, emergency Law No. 162 enshrined the presidential ability to declare emergency rule under extreme circumstances.[3] Article 3 of the emergency law specifically gives the president the power to monitor newspapers, booklets, and other publications which express opinion, and to stop their distribution if desired. Two years later, in 1960, all press had to surrender ownership to the country's only legal political organisation, the National Union (later the Arab Socialist Union), effectively nationalising the Egyptian press.[4] Enabled in part by the near constant emergency laws since the birth of the Republic, successive presidents have gradually added constitutional amendments, penal codes, and new legislation (or added new language to existing legislation) to allow the state to legally control the media and widen the definition of, and punishment for, terrorism.

For example, Article 86 of the Egyptian Penal Code defines "terrorism" as broadly as "preventing or impeding the public authorities in the performance of their work," among other

1 The term 'regime' is used in this paper to refer to the ruling elite in Egypt today, which includes the President, the military, and the intelligence and security services.
2 Auf, Yusuf. *The State of Emergency in Egypt: An Exception Or Rule?* Atlantic Council, 2018. https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/menasource/the-state-of-emergency-in-egypt-an-exception-or-rule/.
3 *Law no. (162) of the Year 1958 Concerning the State of Emergency,* (1958). International Centre for Not-For-Profit Law. https://www.icnl.org/research/library/egypt_162-1958-en/
4 Mabrouk, Mirette. *Changing the Channel: Egypt's Evolving Media Landscape and its Role in Domestic Politics*: Brookings Institution, May 2010: 2. https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/05_egypt_media_mabrouk.pdf

vague qualifiers.[5] The law also established very harsh penalties, including the death penalty under some circumstances. An International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) report commented,

> the law strays away from its supposed initial objective, combating terrorism, and tackles other issues. The law moved from the narrow conception of anti-terrorism legislation to one of repressing freedom of thought and expression as well as peaceful political activities. This dubious nature is clear when considering the fact that the law does not limit acts of terrorism to armed violence but could imply "any threat or intimidation" used in order to "disturb peace or jeopardize the safety and security of society". Such a definition can be interpreted to include a variety of political activities, for example, union organized activities like strikes, protests or demonstrations, and could even result in unacceptable restrictions to freedom of expression.[6]

In 2005, following a strong showing by Muslim Brotherhood-aligned members in parliamentary elections, the constitution was rewritten to include anti-terrorism legislation that gave the security forces sweeping powers to detain suspects and restrict public gatherings was introduced.[7] In March 2007, the government again amended the constitution.[8] Newly amended Article 179 confirmed the state's responsibility to counter terrorism, but also permitted the state to pass counter-terrorism legislation allowing for the suspension of freedoms related to house and body search, arrest and detention, and private communications.[9]

In August 2015, the government enacted a key piece of national legislation – the Counter-Terrorism Law.[10] The law placed very harsh punishments upon convicted terrorists, although it also widely expanded the definition of terrorism to acts which should be considered organised political opposition rather than extremism. Indeed, the 2015 Counter-Terrorism Law broadened the definition of a "terrorist act" to include "harming national unity," a term that could be, and has been, used to arrest and jail journalists critical of the government or its actions.[11] Shortly after, Amnesty International released a report calling the then-draft law "deeply flawed" and warning that the legislation "effectively bans rights to freedom of expression,"[12] among other things, thereby particularly affecting journalism and the media. An Egyptian analyst based in Egypt described the law as a cover for state-sanctioned persecution of a portion of the population:

> The [2015] CT law provided cover for what was already an ongoing practice on the part of the Egyptian government, which was to sweep under charges of terrorism an array of legal opposition activities. This has been used to target human rights defenders, members of opposition political parties, individuals who have sought to run for office, and is part of a long-term strategy on the part of the government to try to legalize its authoritarianism so that it can cite an enforcement of the law as opposed to arbitrary heavy-handedness.[13]

Journalists, human rights defenders, and public and private figures who criticise the regime may now be held legally accountable on terrorism charges. This decree also levies fines against journalists if they print a narrative which contradicts the state regarding any

5 El-Sadany, Mai. *Legislating Terror in Egypt*. TIMEP. 2014. https://timep.org/esw/articles-analysis/legislating-terror-in-egypt/
6 Gilmore, Aideen, Federico Allodi, and Stephanie David. *Egypt: Counter-Terrorism Against the Background of an Endless State of Emergency*: FIDH, 2010: 13. https://www.fidh.org/IMG/pdf/Egypt_Antiterro_EN.pdf
7 Brown, Nathan J., Michele Dunne, and Amr Hamzawy. *Egypt's Controversial Constitutional Amendments:* Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, March 2007: 3. https://carnegieendowment.org/files/egypt_constitution_webcommentary01.pdf
8 Brown, Nathan J., et al. *Egypt's Controversial Constitutional Amendments*: 11.
9 Ibid: 13.
10 "Egypt's Al-Sisi Imposes Strict Anti-Terrorism Laws." *BBC News,* 08-17-2015. https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-33955894.
11 *Memorandum: Egypt's Draft Law on Counter Terrorism*: Amnesty International, August 2015: 1. https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/MDE1222692015ENGLISH.pdf
12 *Memorandum: Egypt's Draft Law on Counter Terrorism*: Amnesty International: 3.
13 Interview 7 (see Appendix 1 for list of interviews)

terrorist attack. It is here that counter-terrorism and media censorship start becoming intertwined and countering terrorism becomes as much about controlling public narratives as it is about interdicting attacks and arresting perpetrators.[14]

Three years later, in August 2018, President al-Sisi ratified Law No. 180 of 2018, the Law Regulating the Press, Media, and the Supreme Council for Media Regulation, after it was approved by the House of Representatives in June of that year.[15] This legislation specifies that independent presses may not violate the Egyptian Constitution, professional ethics, and public order or morals; calls for breaking the law; or inciting discrimination, violence, racism, hatred, or extremism.[16] It also allows the government to prevent a publication from being issued or distributed from abroad if there are national security concerns.[17] This law has since been used to restrict, fine, monitor, and repress media outlets, including the six-month shut-down of weekly newspaper Al-Mashed's website, which the Egyptian government accused of disrupting public order.[18]

Terrorism in Egypt: From the Muslim Brotherhood to ISIS

Since Abdel Nasser's rule, successive Egyptian administrations have grappled with the rise of political Islam and jihadism. As Egypt's population became gradually more religious over the years, Egyptian leaders have become increasingly threatened by organisations such as the Muslim Brotherhood (henceforth also Brotherhood), whose slogan, "Islam is the

Solution" threatened the very mandate and credibility of Egypt's more secular leaders. The result is that political Islam and jihadism have both come to be regarded as threats by successive regimes in Egypt, leading to a conflation of terrorism and political activism in legislation and state security/counter-terrorism policy.

After the rise of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), the terrorist threat in Egypt expanded to include the now ISIS-affiliated militants primarily operating in the Sinai Peninsula, a sparsely populated but strategic area in the northeast of Egypt that was designated as a buffer zone between Egypt and Israel as part of the 1979 Peace Treaty between the two countries.[19] The Peninsula is home to approximately 600,000 people, or 0.7 percent of Egypt's population, mostly Bedouins who have historically been neglected by the state. Since the rise of Wilayat Sinai in the area, the government has struggled to contain the threat, despite military assistance from the United States as well as what al-Sisi himself described as unprecedented security cooperation with Israel.[20] The militants, who initially came together in 2011 under the name Ansar Bayt al Maqdis, pledged allegiance to ISIS in 2014 and began operating under the name Wilayat Sinai (Sinai Province). Wilayat Sinai's priority is the Egyptian state, rather than the overall global jihad effort, and its operations mainly target Egypt's minority Coptic Christian community and state security services. The group's methods are brutal, in keeping with the ISIS brand: looting, burning villages and their inhabitants, and the use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and suicide bombings.[21] Between 2019-2020 alone, Wilayat Sinai has claimed 234 attacks,

14 The theme of "controlling the narrative" was raised extensively in interviews 1 and 7-11.

15 Aziz, Mahmoud. "Sisi Ratifies New Law on Press and Media in Egypt." *Ahram Online,* 1 September, 2018. http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/310663/Egypt/Politics-/Sisi-ratifies-new-law-on-press-and-media-in-Egypt-.aspx.

16 *TIMEP Brief: The Law Regulating the Press, Media, and the Supreme Council for Media Regulation*. TIMEP. 2019. https://timep.org/reports-briefings/timep-brief-the-law-regulating-the-press-media-and-the-supreme-council-for-media-regulation/

17 TIMEP. *TIMEP Brief: The Law Regulating the Press, Media, and the Supreme Council for Media Regulation*.

18 Ibid.

19 Laub, Zachary. *Security in Egypt's Sinai Peninsula*: Council on Foreign Relations, 2013. https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/security-egypts-sinai-peninsula.

20 Pelley, Scott. "Egypt's President El-Sisi Denies Ordering Massacre in Interview His Government Later Tried to Block." *CBS News,* January 6, 2019. https://www.cbsnews.com/news/egypt-president-el-sisi-denies-ordering-massacre-in-interview-his-government-later-tried-to-block-60-minutes-2019-01-06/.

21 In January 2019, the Egyptian government tried to prevent the airing of an interview given by President al-Sisi to the US network CBS. In his interview with the host of the CBS show 60 Minutes, Sisi himself lauded the "unprecedented"

with nearly 600 civilian and security force casualties.[22] While the Egyptian population is divided on the designation of the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist organisation, there is no such debate over the designation of Wilayat Sinai. Rather, much of the criticism of the government surrounding Wilayat Sinai is due to media censorship of government operations and the use of the ISIS threat to vastly expand the definition of terrorism and related laws and punishments.

Doubling Down on State Control over the Media

In addition to emergency laws, President al-Sisi also inherited a tradition of control over the media, dating back to Nasser. A year after taking power, Nasser, who was a skilled and charismatic orator and recognised the power of narrative, launched the Voice of the Arabs radio show, which he used to promote his brand of pan-Arabism throughout the Arab world.[23] In 1979, Egyptian media was placed under the jurisdiction of the Egyptian Radio and Television Union (ERTU),[24] which was later amended in 1989 to give near-total control of the media landscape to the state.[25] Under this act, broadcasters must publish any content which the state tells them to, which essentially subordinates national broadcasting to the president and the military. The state later

allowed for private broadcasting through the designation of a free zone around the Media Production City.

After the assassination of President Anwar Sadat in 1981, Hosni Mubarak's presidency passed a number of laws designed to reign in the press, such as subjecting newspapers to legal penalisation for independent reporting and encouraging journalists to self-censor in order to avoid consequences. During the Mubarak administration, officials used the presence of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt to justify the state of emergency, arguing that Egypt's war on terrorism warranted the application of extraordinary power and the curtailment of rights on an essentially indefinite basis.

In September 2013, an Egyptian court ordered the closure of four major news stations, including Ahrar 25 (the Muslim Brotherhood's news station) and the Egyptian branch of Al-Jazeera (owned by the State of Qatar, which is frequently accused by Egypt of supporting and/or sponsoring terrorism), among others.[26] In May 2017, Egypt banned access to a large number of commonly viewed news websites, including Mada Masr,[27] the country's largest independent daily, the Huffington Post and, temporarily, BBC Arabic.[28] The next year, the government passed the Cybercrime Law, which affords it broad leeway to control online space, including banning sites which it considers

cooperation with Israel against ISIS in the Sinai, a previously taboo topic in Egypt. The interview was subsequently aired by CBS, much to the ire of the Egyptian government. See: BBC News Staff. "The Interview Egypt 'does Not Want Aired'." *BBC News,* 4 January, 2019. https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-middle-east-46757766.

22 McManus, Allison. *ISIS in the Sinai: A Persistent Threat for Egypt*: Center for Global Policy, 2020. https://cgpolicy.org/articles/isis-in-the-sinai-a-persistent-threat-for-egypt/.

23 James, Laura. *Whose Voice? Nasser, the Arabs, and 'Sawt Al-Arab' Radio* The American University in Cairo, 2006. https://www.arabmediasociety.com/whose-voice-nasser-the-arabs-and-sawt-al-arab-radio/.

24 *English language text of Law no 13 of 1979 Establishing Egyptian Radio and Television Union,* (1979). http://www.lw-democracy.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/Law.ERTU_.No-13-of-1979.pdf

25 Mendel, Toby. *Political and Media Transitions in Egypt: A Snapshot of Media Policy and Regulatory Environment*: Internews, 2011: 9. https://www.internews.org/sites/default/files/resources/Internews_Egypt_MediaLawReview_Aug11.pdf

26 BBC News Staff. "Egypt Shuts Down Four TV Stations." *BBC News,* March 9, 2013. https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-23941208.

27 Mada Masr is an independent, online English and Arabic language newspaper that was, in their own words, borne in 2013 out of "a crisis" where numerous journalists lost their jobs on one particular media organization in what was then a "highly politicized environment" in Egypt. The idea behind Mada Masr was to provide a space for independent journalism that no longer seemed to have a place in mainstream organizations.

28 Sayadi, Emna. *Egypt: More than 500 Sites Blocked Ahead of the Presidential Election*. Access Now. 2018.https://www.accessnow.org/egypt-more-than-500-sites-blocked-ahead-of-the-presidential-election/

offensive or promoting anti-state views.[29] The law also significantly increases censorship capacity by forcing service providers to archive content for 180 days, which can then be accessed by authorities.

Findings

Research for this paper revealed that four main factors have negatively impacted media reporting on terrorism in Egypt: the near-total government control of the media and the evolution of laws that govern it; a shrinking information space; an ever-expanding definition of "terrorism"; and an ongoing campaign to silence independent journalists.

Government control of the media has always existed in Egypt, as evidenced by the long list of laws and decrees listed above, but the practice has grown even more under President al-Sisi, who analysts and journalists describe as believing he has a "green light" from Western countries to "do whatever he needs to do" to clamp down on terrorism in Egypt as he defines it.[30] For example, at an EU-Arab League summit in Sharm El-Sheikh in 2019, European Council president Donald Tusk stated in his opening remarks, "I am aware that there are differences between us. We are not here to pretend that we agree on everything. But we face common challenges and have shared interests."[31] In the United States, where previous American presidents have included criticism of repressive Egyptian policies in their talking points with Egyptian government officials, President Trump instead joked that President al-Sisi was his "favorite dictator" and declined to place pressure on Egypt on human rights-related issues.

A review and analysis of the current environment in Egypt reveals several lines of effort that the state under the al-Sisi regime

has deployed vis-à-vis the media when it comes to coverage of terrorism. These include: controlling the information; controlling the media; and manufacturing their own narrative vis-à-vis terrorism.

First Line of Effort: Control the Information

Here, the goal is to limit the amount of information that is not supplied directly by the government so that the government can fill the space with its pre-determined narratives. In discussing the process, one interviewee noted: "this phenomenon in itself is not new, nor is it unique to President al-Sisi, it is the rapid expansion of the phenomenon both in quantity and magnitude."[32] When it comes to terrorism specifically, there is a lack of information about groups operating in Sinai and the scope and effectiveness of government operations there, something that journalists say makes it impossible to report objectively or even, at times, with confidence. The same interviewee, a former journalist in Egypt, describing the increasing level of clamping down on research and how it differed from the past:

> Even at the height of the days of terrorist activity [under Mubarak], you knew who the Islamist groups operating in Egypt were; research was allowed, there was some level of knowledge [of the nature of the threat], we had names, we knew what they were doing. There was academic scholarship, which you need when you are reporting on terrorism.[33]

The persistent effort by the government to control the information flow as it relates to terrorism is evident in the Sinai Peninsula. The inability of the government to resolve the terrorist threat over a span of eight years is a sensitive topic in Egypt and threatens al-Sisi's carefully crafted image as a strong, competent

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29 English-language summary of the Cybercrime law, see: TIMEP. *TIMEP Brief: Cybercrime Law*. Timep. The Tahrir Institute for Middle East Policy, 2018. https://timep.org/reports-briefings/cybercrime-law-brief/
30 Interview 7.
31 Tusk, Donald. *Opening Remarks by President Donald Tusk at the EU-LAS Summit in Egypt* Council of the European Union, 2019. https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/02/24/remarks-by-president-donald-tusk-at-the-eu-las-summit-in-egypt/.
32 Interview 9.
33 Ibid.

guardian of Egypt's security. Under al-Sisi's watch, media reporting on Sinai has become ever more constrained, with journalists complaining of increasingly restricted access and intimidation campaigns that make reporting on terrorism in the Sinai nearly impossible.[34]

In his 2016 book Sinai: Egypt's Linchpin, Gaza's Lifeline, Israel's Neighbor, Muhannad Sabry wrote, "since the Egyptian uprising in 2011, I have travelled and reported in a dozen countries, and have reported extensively in Egypt's most marginalized governorates. Throughout this, I have not experienced a region as blacked-out in terms of the flow of information as the Sinai Peninsula."[35] Sabry relays a conversation between him and a prominent Sinai activist who warned Sabry that "there will be an inevitable price that you will pay for taking such a step [writing this book]."[36] Sabry goes on to write that "when considering who the book would anger, I was told that it would be easier to look for those who the book would not infuriate."[37] Sabry recounts the sentencing of fellow journalist Muhamed Sabry by a military tribunal in 2013 for filming in Rafah (Muhamed Sabry was sentenced to a suspended jail term and subsequently released) and, subsequently, the crackdown on journalists reporting from the Sinai. In September of the same year, a reporter, Azza Moghazy, and a photographer, Sabry Khaled from the Egyptian Shorouk newspaper were arrested while on a reporting mission in Arish; their arrest was condemned in a public statement put out by the North Sinai Journalists and Reporters Union.[38] In the same month, military authorities detained Egyptian journalist Ahmed Abu Deraa, accusing him of publishing false information about the military.[39] "By the beginning of 2014, reporting in North

Sinai became as deadly as living in the villages regularly bombed by the military and Islamist militants," wrote Sabry in his book.[40] Indeed, in December 2015, Egyptian authorities detained Ismail Iskandarani, an Egyptian researcher and investigative journalist. In 2018, a military court sentenced Iskandarani to ten years in prison for belonging to an illegal organisation and spreading false news regarding national security in the Sinai.[41] His arrest instilled a sense of foreboding in many Egyptian journalists, one of whom expressed dismay at the regime's targeting of academic work as though it was a genuine threat to the state: "Ismail did really good reporting, and [he faced] a military trial... he was just doing it for the scholarship, not even for Al-Jazeera or one of the state's known foes."[42]

In 2018, the lack of objective information on the terrorism threat in Sinai spawned the hashtag #seenakharegeltaghteya (Sinai is outside the limits of coverage) on social media. In May 2018, the Arabic-language Human Rights Watch Twitter account shared a video of alleged human rights abuses by the Egyptian military in Sinai, writing, "The government has reported the death of 3,076 armed individuals and 1,226 security forces during the fighting in Sinai....but what about the civilians? Why don't any figures exist?"[43]

The regime's control over information coupled with harsh laws targeting those who attempt to seek the facts themselves has created a climate in which objective reporting on terrorism by independent media outlets is impossible. Even if journalists are able to get to places like Sinai without being attached to a government convoy or press trip, they fear the

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34 Interview 9.

35 Sabry, Muhannad. *Sinai: Egypt's Linchpin, Gaza's Lifeline, Israel's Neighbor*. 1st ed. The American University of Cairo Press, 2015.

36 Ibid.

37 Ibid.

38 MENA. "Sinai Journalism Union Condemns Latest Media Arrests." *Egypt Independent,* June 9, 2013. https://egyptindependent.com/sinai-journalism-union-condemns-latest-media-arrests/.

39 Daily News Egypt. "Labour Rights Lawyer and Sinai Journalist Detained." *Daily News Egypt,* September 6, 2013. https://dailynewsegypt.com/2013/09/06/labour-rights-lawyer-and-sinai-journalist-detained/.

40 Sabry, *Sinai: Egypt's Linchpin, Gaza's Lifeline, Israel's Neighbor*, 2015.

41 Egypt Today Staff. "Military Court Sentences Iskandarani to 10 Years in Prison." *Egypt Today,* 22 May, 2018. https://www.egypttoday.com/Article/1/50656/Military-court-sentences-Iskandarani-to-10-years-in-prison.

42 Interview 9.

43 Arabic-language tweet from Human Rights Watch, May 28, 2019: https://twitter.com/hrw_ar/status/1133367365899304496

consequences of doing so. An Egyptian analyst who has worked both inside Egypt and abroad described a state of constant self-censorship as a result of recent laws:

> The [2015 CT law and 2018 Cyber Crime] law has been effective in instilling a fear factor, coupled with the state carefully crafting a state of fear around civil society that has seeped into the media. It changes your risk assessment and, if you live in Egypt, it changes your threat perception level…it makes you self-censor, it makes you change the way you work.[44]

Second Line of Effort: Control the Media

In addition to the actual information related to terrorism, local media outlets report that information has gradually come under government control, in some cases being outright owned by government-affiliated individuals or organisations. This has allowed the government, having decided what information should get out, to also control how the information is relayed to the public. Control of the media is done in two ways: direction (from the government) and acquisition (of media outlets).

Direction

Despite the existence of an Information Minister, Minister of State for Media and Minister of State for Information, actual control of the media under President al-Sisi largely rests with the intelligence agencies and the State Information Service (SIS). The Ministry of Interior's National Security Sector (MoI NSS) is responsible for engaging with editors of both national and private newspapers as well as satellite channels regarding their content. Under al-Sisi, the NSS' control has tightened

significantly, whereas the MoI body dictates in no uncertain terms what editors are and are not permitted to cover, as well as the timing and tone of that coverage. Every journalist and analyst interviewed for this paper relayed the same understanding of the role that the General Intelligence plays in the Egyptian media landscape, with one former journalist stating that "they [the media] take orders from General Intelligence. A Colonel runs the Whatsapp group for state-owned media. Egypt is all Whatsapp groups now."[45] In perhaps the most prominent public example of this, Egyptian anchor Noha Darwish was caught on-camera while reading an announcement from a teleprompter announcing deposed president[46] Mohamed Morsi's death. While reading the report, Darwish, apparently inadvertently, ended with, "and this [report] was sent by a Samsung device."[47] The gaffe brought to the public eye the level of control the security and intelligence sectors have over the media's reporting on sensitive issues, particularly those related to terrorism.

As described above, the media is also forbidden from using casualty figures resulting from terrorist attacks that are not sourced directly from the government. This is most evident in the reporting from Sinai, where reporters have been regularly intimidated, arrested or banned from the area because of their attempts at independently reporting on the military activities there, such as when Amina Ismail, then a New York Times reporter in Egypt, was detained while in Sinai for attempting to cover operations there.[48] In June 2020, the Supreme Council for Media Regulation issued a statement on their website stating that media outlets and social media sites were obligated to adhere to official directives when it came to topics associated with national security.[49]

44 Interview 8.

45 Interview 9.

46 Mohamed Morsi was Egypt's first democratically-elected president, but was ousted by the Egyptian military, led by then-Defense Minister Sisi, in July 2013 after just one year in power.

47 BBC News Staff. "Egypt Morsi TV Gaffe Puts Spotlight on Control of Media." *BBC News,* -06-19, 2019a. https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-48688723.

48 Interviews 1, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 revealed instances of colleagues being harassed or detained by Egyptian security forces for attempting to cover the terrorist threat and government operations in Sinai.

49 Mahmoud, Mohamed. الأعلى للإعلام يشدد على وسائل الإعلام ومواقع التواصل الالتزام بالبيانات الرسمية في الموضوعات (The Supreme [Council] for Media [Regulation] المتعلقة بالأمن القومي, المجلس الأعلى لتنظيم الإعلام - الموقع الرسمي, stresses to media and social media outlets the importance of adhering to official reports on matters related to national security), Supreme Council for Media Regulation. June 16, 2020. https://rb.gy/mxr5lh

In that directive, the media was specifically prohibited from covering the topic of Sinai, among others.

In another example, in July 2017, the Chairman of SIS, Mr. Diaa Rashwan, issued a directive to media offices abroad, the foreign correspondents' press centre and other SIS sectors to address the issue of terrorism inside and outside Egypt.[50] Mr. Rashwan urged foreign and Arab correspondents to "be accurate and adhere to the statements and information issued by the official quarters of Egypt" given that "these quarters are the only party that is present in the site of the events [and therefore knows the facts]." The guidance was derided by several of the interviewees for this paper, who described it as a thinly veiled attempt to control their reporting and analysis using objective, corroborated facts.[51]

The overwhelming challenge journalists have faced under the current level of government direction over the media is a lack of pre-set definitions from the government. There is no available published guidance on what constitutes "harm" to national security, nor is it clear to journalists what the government could deem as "reflecting badly on the military"—both topics that are off limits according to government directives and laws described in this paper. Journalists and analysts interviewed for this paper described the difficulty they have faced in effectively manoeuvring the thin and ever-changing line, between what is acceptable to the authorities and what falls under the abovementioned provisions. One former journalist stated:

> There was a finesse to Mubarak's autocracy that does not exist under al-Sisi; Mubarak always kept a certain amount of space in which we knew we [journalists, analysts and

academics] could operate. He knew to allow for a 'pressure valve' where some criticism was allowed...we all knew what the red lines were—the President and the military—whereas now the red lines are opaque.[52]

This was most recently illustrated when Egyptian analyst Bahey El-Din Hassan, head of the Cairo Institute, was sentenced to fifteen years in absentia by a terrorism court for "spreading false information," and "inciting against the state."[53] Neither accusation would have been obvious to Hassan but could technically fall under the vague categories mentioned above. While the state today has more laws on the books regarding terrorism and the media, it also still deploys quasi-legal or questionable rulings, often citing national security or some degree of "harm" to the spirit, morale or reputation of Egypt or Egyptians. An Egyptian analyst described the negative impact of the ever-changing standards imposed by the regime, stating that "[the regime] also creates heightened stress; you are doing a risk assessment every single time [you report] because the line keeps changing, a random act [makes you re-assess], it causes a lot of people to leave the field."[54]

In 2014, seeking to mollify fears of government interference in the media, then-Prime Minister Ibrahim Mehleb said that, "no free pen would be chopped down."[55] In response to actual government actions vis-à-vis the media, Ahmed Ragab, a managing editor of independent newspaper Al Masry Al Youm refuted Mehleb's statement, lamenting that, "pens are chopped down, columns discontinued and media is definitely silenced."[56] Journalists in Egypt agree with Ragab's statement, with a former journalist interviewed for this paper explaining that,

50 SIS Statement. *SIS Chief Urges Media Offices Abroad to Expound Egyptian War Against Terrorism*. Egypt State Information Service. 2017. https://www.sis.gov.eg/Story/114712?lang=en-us&lang=en-us
51 Interviews 1, 7, 9 and 11.
52 Interview 9.
53 Mustafa Al-Mashawi. "السجن 15 سنة لبهي الدين حسن في اتهام بنشر أخبار كاذبة وإهانة القضاء." (15 year prison [sentence] for Bahey el Din Hassan, accused of spreading false news and insulting the judiciary). *Shorouk News,* August 25, 2020. https://www.shorouknews.com/news/view.aspx?cdate=25082020&id=97b0017d-2755-49d2-833c-eb2cd32938df
54 Interview 8.
55 Elmeshad, Mohamed. *We Completely Agree: Egyptian Media in the Era of President El-Sisi*: Committee to Protect Journalists, 2015. https://cpj.org/2015/04/attacks-on-the-press-egyptian-media-in-the-era-of-president-el-sisi/.
56 Ibid.

the state absolutely believes that it needs to control information to control the population... they continue to expand the model. There is no independent reporting anymore--Mada Masr is the only exception—they've hollowed out everything.[57]

Acquisition

In this second prong of the government's strategy to control the media, certain sites and media outlets deemed to be offensive are shut down and others are acquired by state institutions or private companies close to them, such as the Eagle Capital investment firm.[58]

One of the first orders then-Defense Minister al-Sisi gave after the removal of Mohamed Morsi was to shut down multiple privately owned, pro-Morsi/Muslim Brotherhood newspapers and television stations and jailing their employees and owners.[59] Under his presidency, in May 2017 the government blocked twenty-one websites, including rival al-Jazeera website, on the basis that they were supporting terrorism.[60]

Multiple reports over the last several years have mapped out the increasing influence of the General Intelligence Service (GIS) over Egyptian media outlets through direct or indirect (via equity funds or loyal former intelligence officials) acquisition.[61] Multiple interviewees for this paper described the August 2013 crackdown in Rabaa Square, where a standoff between the government security forces and Mohamed Morsi supporters

resulted in the Egyptian military storming the square and killing an estimated 800-1000 people.[62] They described this as a catalyst for the government's increasingly aggressive takeover of the media, with one journalist explaining that "August 2013 was a defining moment, the people in charge [today] are very different [from the ones before]. The level of sophistication is just not there anymore. [You are seeing] a wholesale purchase of private media by intelligence agencies."[63] Another analyst agreed, stating:

> In the last 24 months, this has been massively ramped up; what this means is that it's not even about channelling the message; it is only one message. I've spoken to TV presenters who have been told what to say; the same statement is used by everyone.[64]

Third Line of Effort: Manufacture a Narrative

After controlling the information and the media, the final line of effort is to replace objective information with a proactive, ultra-nationalist and urgent government narrative.[65] The "direction and acquisition" strategy flows from the deeply-held belief by al-Sisi that the Egyptian nation is at war and that the media is a critical element of—and should be a willing participant in—that war. One journalist interviewed for this paper contrasted this approach to that of Mubarak, stating that

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57 Interview 9
58 Bahgat, Hossam. *Looking into the Latest Acquisition of Egyptian Media Companies by General Intelligence*: Mada Masr, December 2017. https://www.madamasr.com/en/2017/12/21/feature/politics/looking-into-the-latest-acquisition-of-egyptian-media-companies-by-general-intelligence/; Eagle Capital tastahwith 'ala hessat Abu Hashima fi l'lam al masriyeen (Eagle Capital acquires Abu Hashima's shares in Egyptian Media Group), Al-Masry Al-Youm. December 8, 2017. https://www.almasryalyoum.com/news/details/1233740; AFTE. *Under Suspicion: Who is Monitoring the Ownership of the Media in Egypt*. Association of Freedom of Thought and Expression. Freedom of Thought and Expression Law Firm, 2018. https://afteegypt.org/en/media_freedom-2/2018/03/21/14887-afteegypt.html; Reporters Without Borders. *Egyptian Intelligence Services Extend Control Over Media*. Rsf. Reporters Without Borders, September 2017.
59 Elmeshad, Mohamed. *We Completely Agree: Egyptian Media in the Era of President El-Sisi*. https://cpj.org/2015/04/attacks-on-the-press-egyptian-media-in-the-era-of-president-el-sisi/.
60 Michaelson, Ruth. "Egypt Blocks Access to News Websites Including Al-Jazeera and Mada Masr." *The Guardian,* -05-25, 2017. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/may/25/egypt-blocks-access-news-websites-al-jazeera-mada-masr-press-freedom.
61 Ibid.
62 Shakir, Omar. *All According to Plan: The Rab'a Massacre and Mass Killings of Protestors in Egypt*: Human Rights Watch, 2014-08-12T14:15:10-0400. https://www.hrw.org/report/2014/08/12/all-according-plan/raba-massacre-and-mass-killings-protesters-egypt.
63 Interview 9
64 Interview 8
65 Interviews 1, 7-11

"Mubarak used to take pride that he presided over peace; al-Sisi actually believes Egypt is in a wartime context. He is re-creating and reviving tools of control...there is a required mass-media mobilisation."[66] The President's belief was on display in May 2014 when he was campaigning in the post-Morsi presidential elections and told a group of Egyptian media at his residence of the media's importance in unifying the nation.[67] The Supreme Council for Media Regulation cited the media's role in its June 2020 directive to the media, stating that,

> the country is going through a dangerous juncture and significant challenges in this sensitive stage related to the country's national security, and it required the concerted efforts of all national forces. In view of the importance of the media and press in forming public awareness and providing it with the facts [it needs] to realize the extent of seriousness of the situation, it is imperative that the media and the press be at the forefront of the ranks.[68]

An Egyptian counter-terrorism researcher described the government's narrative as laden with a sense of urgency: "The al-Sisi government's CT narrative is "we are under constant threat, hence it is necessary to have a state of emergency; it is for the protection of the Egyptian people. However, the military has it completely under control."[69] This narrative's last point, that the Egyptian military (and police) are valiantly fighting the terrorists and keeping the Republic safe from harm, has spilled over to the country's entertainment industry, where the government has ordered writers, directors and producers to depict police and military in all media, including films and TV series, in a heroic way, fighting the terrorists and winning, sometimes inserting itself into the process to ensure favourable results. Two Egyptian analysts interviewed for this paper commented: "you can't depict the police without some level of heroism; the military and security agencies are involved in actual production now."[70] One such show, aired during Ramadan 2020,[71] was Al Ikhtiar (The Choice). It portrayed the life and death of Egyptian Army officer Colonel Ahmed Mansy, who was killed during a reported ambush on his unit by militants in north Sinai. The show and others like it are indicative of a decision by the regime that expensive, glossy television and film is an effective investment in order to reshape the narrative among society when it comes to the police and terrorism. This point was reinforced by two people interviewed for this paper[72], one of whom noted that "[they] are pouring most of their money into film and TV, arts and production and closing [independent] art studios. From 2011-2013 there was a variety of art, [but] that whole era of criticism of the state is no longer."[73]

The narrative of a strong, proud Egypt fighting a valiant war against terrorism is led and personified by President al-Sisi himself. In setting this tone, al-Sisi casts out critics and activists as "the enemy", at best inadvertently doing the bidding of "the terrorists", or worse, enabling them. For example, in a 2019 speech that al-Sisi delivered on the sixth anniversary of the overthrow of Mohamed Morsi, he condemned any group or foreign party (referring to the Muslim Brotherhood) that "thought it could defeat the will of the Egyptian people," calling such attempts "black terrorism."[74] This narrative from the president has served to

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66 Interview 9.

67 Elmeshad, Mohamed. *We Completely Agree: Egyptian Media in the Era of President El-Sisi.* https://cpj.org/2015/04/attacks-on-the-press-egyptian-media-in-the-era-of-president-el-sisi/

68 Mahmoud, Mohamed المجلس الأعلى للإعلام يشدد على وسائل الإعلام ومواقع التواصل الاجتماعي بالالتزام بالبيانات الرسمية في الموضوعات المتعلقة بالأمن القومي)) (The Supreme [Council] for Media [Regulation] stresses to media and social media outlets the importance of adhering to official reports on matters related to national security). http://scm.gov.eg/الأعلى-للإعلام-يشدد-على-وسائل-الإعلام/

69 Interview 8.

70 Interviews 7 and 8.

71 Ramadan series, created specifically for that month when people gather around the television after breaking their fast, are incredibly popular in Egypt and with the Egyptian diaspora. One interviewee recounted how her family would split up and watch different shows so that they could share with each other afterwards, thereby not missing any of the shows.

72 Interviews 8 and 9.

73 Interview 9.

74 Al-Masry Al-Youm. "Sisi Delivers Speech on 6th Anniversary of June 30." *Egypt Independent,* June 30, 2019. https://

further widen the schism between pro- and anti-al-Sisi camps and has helped enable an environment conducive to dehumanisation by each side of the other.

Implication of Findings

An Uninformed Public

Under President al-Sisi's aggressive counter-terrorism strategy and three-pronged effort to control the media's reporting on terrorism, independent information has become ever more difficult for the average Egyptian to come by. Additionally, unprecedented levels of animosity between pro-al-Sisi and pro-Brotherhood camps have resulted in a biased lens through which Egyptians view events and, subsequently, media reporting. Conspiracy theories are rampant, and the term "ikhwani" (loyal to the Brotherhood) is used by pro-al-Sisi Egyptians to discount or undermine any information that does not fit the official government line. News coming out of media channels operating especially from Istanbul where many Brotherhood officials today reside, is viewed with extreme suspicion given high anti-Turkey sentiment in the country.

It is within this climate of distrust, paranoia and lack of objective information and outlets that Egyptian journalists covering terrorism find themselves operating, as described by an Egyptian analyst interviewed for this paper: "There is a lack of funding, it is not easy to train new journalists or for new faces to step in, it is draining space from that institutional knowledge. Plus [you have the] physical closure of space, the inability to actually travel, go to Sinai, talk to people there."[75]

The combination of a lack of credible information and an-ever shrinking space for journalists to operate bodes ill for the future of Egyptian journalism in general but specifically for terrorism reporting. The state essentially

controls all terrorism-related information and journalists who challenge the state's information face dire consequences. Moving forward, it is difficult to imagine a scenario where the Egyptian public is privy to the entire picture when it comes to terrorism in the country. This could make it easier for the state to not only continue, but in fact expand its efforts to silence dissent in other areas, such as human rights, under the guise of counter-terrorism policies, and report it as such through state-owned or influenced channels.

This near-total control that the regime has over the media has resulted in a severe lack of diversity in reporting. Egyptians must actively seek alternative sources of information if they wish to corroborate the state-controlled media's narrative, and even then it is difficult to find objective local sources; an Egyptian journalist interviewed for this paper underscored that "the only diverse space accessible for the general public are Muslim-Brotherhood-affiliated channels."[76]

In addition to an increasingly uninformed public, the shrinking space in Egypt to report independently on any topic, including terrorism, has also led to a level of brain-drain in the country. Following the 2011 revolution, and again after the 2013 overthrow of President Morsi, Egyptians of varying education turned to activism and, in some cases, reporting. After the unprecedented persecution and targeting of civil society and the media by the current regime, Egyptian activists can neither practice their trained profession nor their activism; they begin to think about leaving Egypt altogether, and in some cases, actually leave. As one Egyptian analyst who lives outside Egypt described, "the engineer who was involved in the green shoots of media, in civil society [and others like them]...have moved away to abandon everything. The quality and quantity of what is available has been reduced [and will be] much harder to rebuild."[77]

egyptindependent.com/sisi-delivers-speech-on-6th-anniversary-of-june-30/.

75 Interview 8.

76 Al-Masry Al-Youm. "Sisi Delivers Speech on 6th Anniversary of June 30." https://egyptindependent.com/sisi-delivers-speech-on-6th-anniversary-of-june-30/.

77 Interview 8.

Dehumanisation, and Polarisation and Extremism

Polarisation amongst Egyptians is not new under the al-Sisi regime but has skyrocketed in the last few years, particularly since the forcible removal of president Morsi in 2013. The coup effectively split Egyptian society into two camps, pro-al-Sisi and pro-Morsi/Brotherhood. This schism only grew deeper after the events in Rabaa square. Depending on one's view regarding al-Sisi and the Brotherhood, the events at Rabaa were either a massacre or a necessary intervention. Given the number of people who were killed, and the violence involved, the fact that Egyptians cannot agree on a narrative around the event has effectively split the country into two hostile factions, with each accusing the other of savagery and terrorism. Those who dare contradict the official narrative are promptly attacked; as an interviewee for this paper said, "anyone who challenges the only media we've got is a "terrorist," a "traitor," etc. The polarisation that we had before 2013 is growing more and more; its become a massive division in society."[78]

The polarisation amongst Egyptian society is not limited to views regarding the events in Rabaa square. Successive visits to the country over the last five years and numerous conversations with individuals of various socio-economic and political views reveal a deeply divisive rhetoric that now permeates across society. Words such as "vermin," "terrorist," "traitor," "agent," "dictator," and others have now become part of the national vernacular. The term "ikhwangi," is commonly heard in conversations with pro-al-Sisi or anti-Brotherhood individuals as a means to insult someone in a harsh manner, their opinions invalidated. The exact same invalidation process occurs on the other side, with pro-Brotherhood individuals dismissing al-Sisi supporters as traitors, Zionists and corrupt thieves draining the country of its national resources.[79] There are, of course, those who subscribe to neither camp and are simply

distrustful of anything they hear, according to several people interviewed for this paper, one of whom said, "while there's a lot of polarisation between Egyptians who are pro-al-Sisi and pro-Brotherhood, there's a growing number of people I think who hate and distrust them both."[80] It is that group that is more likely to seek information from an "unbiased" sources, i.e. channels that might be banned in Egypt but not affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood either.

One of the potential implications of the findings that came up repeatedly in interviews was also the perception that President al-Sisi's counter-terrorism strategy was actually counter-productive, leading to a rise in extremism in pockets of society and in prisons across the country. The crackdown by security forces against Brotherhood members and supporters in Rabaa square triggered a deep sense of anger and victimisation amongst Brotherhood supporters and entrenched their point of view that they were at war with the al-Sisi regime. The four-finger "salute"[81] symbolised a hardening in the views of Egyptians who began to take extreme stances against one another; pro-al-Sisi Egyptians consider anyone who makes that gesture as a terrorist sympathiser or a terrorist themselves, whereas those who make or support the gesture view themselves as the victim of state terrorism.[82] An analyst interviewed for this paper who has lived in Egypt since 2008 described the language used by the media on both sides demonstrate as indicative of a rise in extremist views amongst at least parts of the population; "the [state] narrative very quickly shifted post-[2013] coup from 'the Muslim Brotherhood is inept, it wants to create an Islamic society like Iran' to a narrative of terrorism [the Brotherhood are terrorists]...that's how Rabaa was justified."[83] This narrative shift set the stage for the extremely militarised approach of the al-Sisi government towards the Muslim Brotherhood and its genuine supporters, as well as political critics, human rights defenders, or independent

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78 Ibid. This point was also raised in interviews 1, 7, and 9-11
79 Author observations over multiple trips between 2013-2020
80 Interview 7.
81 Holding up four fingers became a symbol of support for the Brotherhood after Rabaa, which means four in Arabic.
82 Author observations.
83 Interviews 1, 7 and 8.

journalists the government accuses of being Brotherhood supporters.

The Erosion of Public Trust

Most importantly, the public trust in the government when it comes to counter-terrorism communications via the media (whether state news channels or movies and television) has been eroded, and general attitude is sceptical even when the government is in fact addressing "real" terrorism. For one, the regime's labelling of even human rights defenders as terrorists appears to be backfiring; that, effectively, if everyone is a terrorist, no one is a terrorist.[84] An Egyptian analyst interviewed for this paper agreed, saying,

> there is a lot of disagreement in society about the issue of terrorism. [For example], Egyptians agree on how bad terrorism is in the Sinai, but are split over the extent to which they should believe the government's figures…..Egyptians agree terrorism is bad, but who is the terrorist? [Also] they blame everything on terrorism and terrorism is whatever they want it to be….its a very common charge now. Sometimes you have to ask, when someone is convicted of terrorism, is it real terrorism or is it a human rights defender? Or a journalist?[85]

Because he has linked himself so personally to the state's wartime narrative, the loss of public trust has begun to visibly seep into Egyptians' perceptions of President al-Sisi, potentially undermining his efforts to rally them to his cause. An Egyptian analyst interviewed for this paper explained:

> Compared to 2013-2015, yes, there is clear erosion in trust of the President. He built this himself. He created this regime based on the fact that he will save everybody. There was never really trust in government before. So when the trust begins to erode, it's on him [personally].[86]

Perhaps the greatest casualty of President al-Sisi's war on terror in Egypt is the lack of trust

Egyptians now feel towards one another. As one interviewee noted: "President al-Sisi has found a weak spot, which is [to] sow distrust in your neighbour. Besides the economic austerity, insecurity and instability, you now think your grocer could be Muslim Brotherhood."[87] The lack of trust coupled with the dire political and economic environment has led to a hopelessness amongst Egyptians that things could change, which is markedly different from the general apathy that was pervasive among citizenry under Mubarak (up until 2011).[88]

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84 Interview 3.
85 Interview 7.
86 Interview 8.
87 Ibid.
88 Author's observations; Interview 7.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the above, this paper concludes that the Egyptian media landscape, under complete control of the ruling regime – coupled with a grossly vague definition of terrorism – has had an overall negative impact on media reporting on terrorism in Egypt. In the context of Egypt in particular, this is due to two main points:

1. A vastly expanded definition of terrorism has created a lack of public trust and pitted Egyptians against each other (pro-Sisi versus pro-Muslim Brotherhood versus liberal activist groups), thus appearing to weaken the fabric of Egyptian society and making it less likely that one group will stand up for the violation of another group's rights. This in turn allows the government to exercise nearly limitless powers on the population. The resources spent on silencing the media could also be hindering the state from fully committing to the fight against actual terrorism and indeed aggravating extremism among Egyptians, neither of which are in the Egyptian government's interests.

2. The consolidation of control over the media under the auspices of intelligence services, and not the Ministry of Information, securitises the media and hinders press freedoms, leading to the mismanagement of information, as well as a militarised approach to journalists and analysts covering terrorism (among others).

Considering the abovementioned conclusions, this paper recommends that the EU take several steps to mitigate the harmful impact current Egyptian policies have had on media reporting on terrorism inside Egypt:

1. First and most importantly, like-minded states within the EU should maintain a unified approach vis-à-vis Egypt and take a strong stand, both publicly and privately, against the use of anti-terror legislation against journalists and analysts covering terrorism. Only a firm, united stance can send a strong message to the Egyptian regime that Europe is serious about its support for press freedom and human rights.

2. EU member states should consider a coordinated foreign policy approach to impose conditionality on various forms of assistance to Egypt pending a marked change of behaviour towards journalists and analysts, specifically on the release of those unjustly imprisoned, and invite like-minded allies to do the same. A policy of conditionality should include a refusal of state visits by high-level Egyptian officials to EU member states, thus denying Egypt the credibility that empowers it to enact regressive domestic policies.

3. The EU should make trainings and resources for Egyptian journalists available online to make up for the significant loss in funding, access, and freedom that have hollowed out Egypt's journalist community. In the absence of such resources, local media coverage of terrorism in Egypt will cease to exist.

Appendix 1

List of Individuals Interviewed

Interview Number and Role	Location	Type of interview
1: Egyptian journalist based in Egypt	Egypt	In-person interview
2: Government official in charge of media affairs	Egypt	In-person background interview
3: Media Advisor at Religious Institution	Egypt	In-person background interview
4: Religious advisor at Religious Institution	Egypt	In-person background interview
5: Official at Religious Institution	Egypt	In-person background interview
6: Former Egyptian Diplomat and current political analyst	Egypt	In-person background interview
7: Egyptian analyst	Egypt	Phone interview
8: Egyptian analyst	Requested not to be disclosed for security reasons	Phone interview
9: Former Egyptian journalist	Requested not to be disclosed for security reasons	Phone interview
10: Egyptian political analyst	United States	Phone interview
11: American analyst	United States	Phone interview

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