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## Egypt and the United States: Collaborating to Fight Terrorism

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**In recent weeks, President Abdel Fattah El Sisi has reinforced his commitment to defeating all terrorist organizations without discrimination, regardless of their name or where they operate. This message was central to his address at the Arab-Islamic-American Summit in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, where he and President Donald Trump renewed their nations' joint pledge to fighting terrorism across the globe. In their speeches and during a separate bilateral meeting, President El Sisi and President Trump put forward complementary approaches and a comprehensive global vision to fully confront the threat of terrorism and violent extremism.**



President El Sisi's resolve was further demonstrated in the wake of a tragic 26 May terror attack against Coptic Christians in Minya, when he ordered airstrikes against terrorist training camps in Libya – part of a campaign to defeat the extremists that threaten not only innocent lives in Egypt but also global stability beyond Egypt's borders.

### **PRESIDENT EL SISI'S VISION FOR FIGHTING TERROR**

In his remarks at the recent Arab-Islamic-American Summit to the leaders of fifty nations, President El Sisi outlined his vision for fighting both terror and its ideological sources, as well as countering states that support terrorist groups. In his own remarks, President Trump reinforced President El Sisi's vision, saying that "Our friends will never question our support, and our enemies will never doubt our determination. Our partnerships will advance security through stability, not through radical disruption."

**During his address, President El Sisi articulated four fundamental ways in which the Arab world must view and confront the terror threat:**

- ▶ **Fight all forms of terror:** "Talking about countering terrorism in a comprehensive manner means confronting all terrorist organizations without discrimination..."
- ▶ **Combat terrorist financing and support:** "A comprehensive confrontation with terrorism necessitates a confrontation that addresses all dimensions of this phenomenon, including funding, arming, as well as political and ideological support."
- ▶ **Deter terrorist recruitment:** "The termination of the terrorist organizations' ability to recruit new fighters through a comprehensive approach at both the ideological and intellectual levels."
- ▶ **Preserve national integrity:** "The prerequisite condition for terrorist organizations to grow is the disintegration and instability of national state institutions in our Arab region...Filling the vacuum, in which terrorism grows and proliferates, requires exerting every effort to restore and reinforce the unity, independence and efficiency of national state institutions in the Arab region."



President Trump echoed many of the same themes as President El Sisi during his remarks, showing how Egypt and the U.S. are working in tandem to defeat this threat:

- ▶ **Confront terrorism:** “The first task in this joint effort is for your nations to deny all territory to the foot soldiers of evil. Every country in the region has an absolute duty to ensure that terrorists find no sanctuary on their soil.”
- ▶ **Curtail terrorist funding:** “As we deny terrorist organizations control of territory and populations, we must also strip them of their access to funds. We must cut off the financial channels that let ISIS sell oil, let extremists pay their fighters, and help terrorists smuggle their reinforcements.”
- ▶ **Reject terrorism’s distorted ideology:** “That means honestly confronting the crisis of Islamist extremism and the Islamist terror groups it inspires...Religious leaders must make this absolutely clear: Barbarism will deliver you no glory – piety to evil will bring you no dignity.”

## PRESIDENT EL SISI RESPONDS TO TERRORIST ATTACKS

On 26 May, President El Sisi addressed the Egyptian people following an attack on Coptic Christians in Minya. Demonstrating the same resolve expressed in his Riyadh address, President El Sisi explained that terrorists seek to undermine “the national fabric of the Egyptian people by targeting Copts.”

President El Sisi affirmed that “Friday’s terrorist attack will not pass unnoticed,” and announced that Egyptian military strikes had subsequently targeted camps where terrorist elements have been trained. He also stressed that “Egypt will not hesitate to target any camps, whether inside the country or abroad, where terrorists are being trained to carry out operations against Egypt, so as to maintain its security.”

In response to the Minya terrorist attack, Egypt launched airstrikes outside the Libyan city of Derna, targeting training camps where terrorists have planned and executed assaults against Egyptians in the past. According to the Egyptian military, the airstrikes on Derna resulted in the complete destruction of the targets, which included areas where terrorist elements were gathering and training. Egypt’s Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry reiterated that “Egypt targeted the bases of these organizations to get rid of them and to limit their ability to threaten Egypt’s national security,” and that this operation was undertaken in full coordination with the Libyan National Army.

