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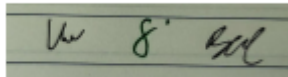
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Declaration

I declare that this assignment is my own work and does not involve plagiarism or collusion. The sources of other people's work have been appropriately referenced, failing which I am willing to accept the necessary disciplinary action(s) needed to be taken against me.

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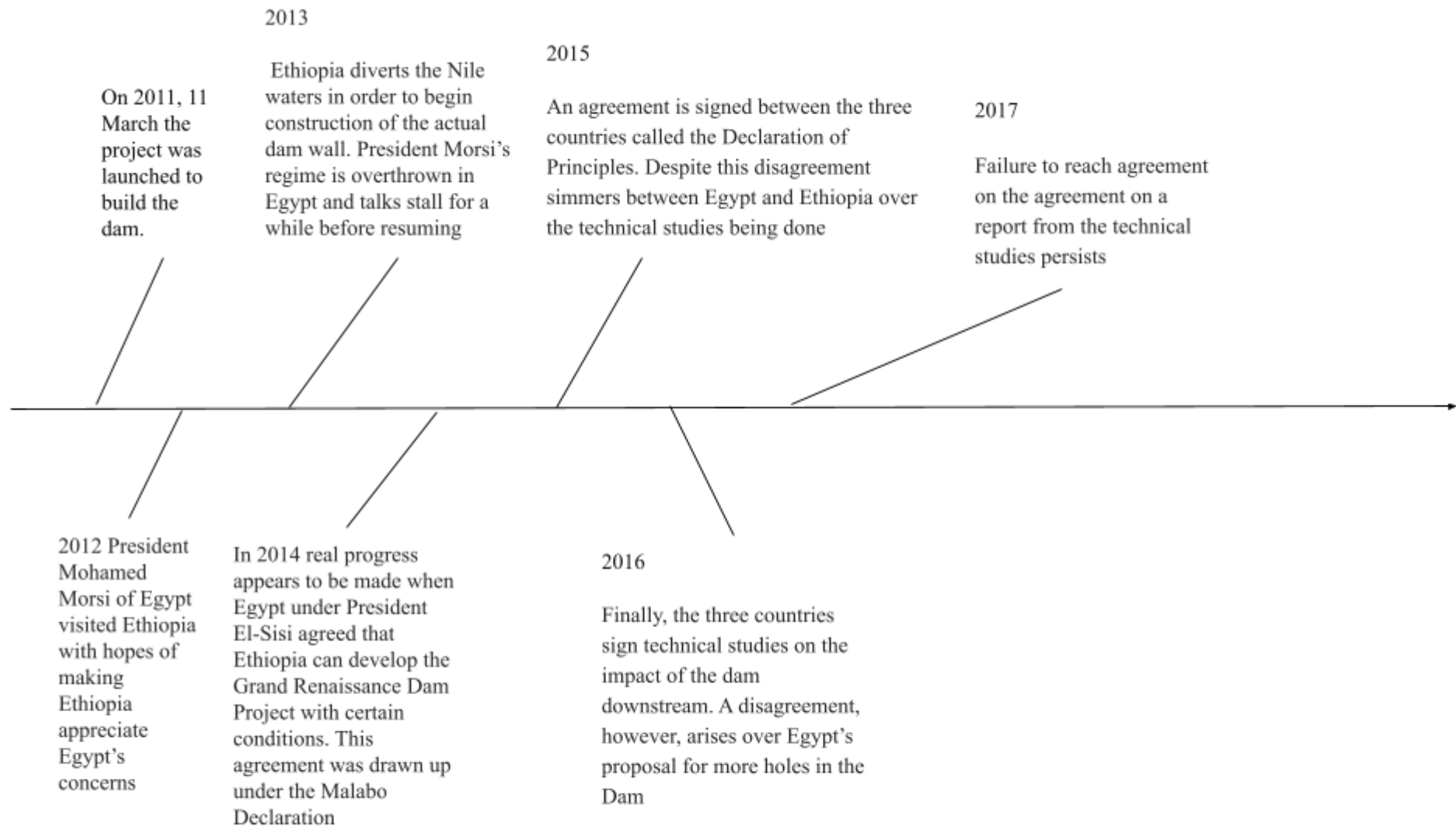
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1. Background

The Nile River dispute has taken place because of Ethiopia's decision to build a dam on the source Nile River for hydropower upstream, reducing the amount of water flow that Egypt will get. This will affect Egypt's economy (3) as we will later elaborate on. Sudan is also affected similarly by this (3.3) and tensions have been on the rise between the two countries, with both sides sending out threats of potential war or fighting, but none of them have stayed true to their threats yet. As quoted by the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Abiy Ahmad, **"If there is a need to go to war, we could get millions readied. If some could fire a missile, others could use bombs."** With these threats and suggestive comments, this shows the tensions that have brewed over the Nile River. However, conflict seems to be far from ever taking place, with all parties in the Nile River conflict seemingly preferring a diplomatic and peaceful solution rather than an armed conflict to strong-arm the opposing side into submission. Why is this the case? We believe that this is due to all sides being democracies, with the Democratic Peace Theory being the reason for our firm belief that armed conflict is highly unlikely to happen.

1.1 Timeline of the events:



2018 June

President El-Sisi said he agreed with the Ethiopian Prime Minister Ahmed to enhance confidence and cooperation between the two countries, and that the two countries would work on a final agreement on the GERD issue that would ensure development and prosperity to the Ethiopian people and at the same time upholding Egypt's water needs and rights.

2018 September

After months of suspension, Egypt's request for a new round of negotiations between the 3 countries on the filling of the GERD reservoir and its rules of operation is granted and the negotiations are launched in Cairo.

In mid-May 2019, USA affirmed its commitment to working with international partners to find a solution to the differences between Ethiopia, Sudan, and Egypt over the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD).

2018 January

Ethiopia rejected Egypt's proposal to involve the World Bank as a technical party with an impartial view to decide on the differences in the work of the Tripartite National Committee.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry announced that an agreement has been reached during the tripartite summit on ending the technical studies of the Grand Renaissance Dam within a month, and further emphasized Egypt's commitment to the Declaration of Principles.

2019 In late February, Ethiopia's Minister of Water, Irrigation and Energy Engineer Seleshi Bekele announced that Ethiopia is keenly working on completing the construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) project by 2023

2019 June

Egypt's Foreign Minister Shoukri called for negotiations on the Dam to pick up pace and further demanded that the agreements reached between the three involved countries be respected.

2019 October

In late July, Ethiopia announced that it had completed filling the reservoir of the GERD for a second year and the plant may start generating power in the next few months.

A tripartite technical committee finalized a four-day talks in Khartoum, Sudan and presented their final report on the outcomes to the three countries' irrigation ministers. Soon after, a new round of meetings between the irrigation and water resources ministers kicked off in Khartoum.

2019 In Early November, Sudan, Egypt and Ethiopia resumed talks. The week-long negotiations held via videoconference included: water ministers from the three countries, as well as representatives from the African Union, the European Union and the World Bank.

In Mid-March 2021, Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah al-Sisi and his counterpart of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) Felix Tshisekedi discussed the Nile dam dispute between Egypt, Sudan, and Ethiopia over the phone.

2019 In August, Sudan, Egypt and Ethiopia concluded a new round of talks without reaching consensus on a draft deal to be presented to the African Union (AU) regarding the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam

2019 In October, Ethiopia's minister of Water, Irrigation and Energy, Dr. Seleshi Bekele, announced that Ethiopia is set to start generating electricity from the controversial Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) over the coming 12 months.

In July 2020, the conflict over the commencement of the filling of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) moved to the African Union (AU) for resolution after Ethiopia strongly opposed arbitration by the United Nations Security Council during a video conference on June 29.

In mid-April 2021, Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed announced that the second filling of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) will proceed as planned for July/August.

1.2 Significance of our paper and research.

Why do we choose the Nile conflict specifically? We want to find out whether the the Democratic Peace Theory will hold true in all cases of conflict, including one type, being water wars and whether the different risks and severity of fight over water will disprove this theory, as when there is a fight over such a crucial asset as water, lives and entire economies are at risk. Our goal is to allow people who read our paper to learn more about the Nile River conflict and have a clearer picture on what is really happening, and more importantly, have them realise that countries' being democracies is essential in keeping peace.

1.3 Thesis Statement

The Core, main reason for the lack of physical conflict between the three nations is due to their democratic systems of government.

Research Questions

- **What conditions do countries need to fulfill to allow it to fit under the Democratic Peace Theory?**
- **Do the three countries fulfill the conditions?**
- **What other reasons could have prevented physical conflict from breaking out?**
- **Does Democracy Prevent War?**

1.4 Objective

The objective of our paper is to examine the various factors of the Nile River Conflict, and provide a concrete reason for their absence of armed conflict._

1.5 Why The Nile conflict?

We chose the Nile conflict specifically out of all the conflicts that happened/are happening in the following reasons

1. It is the longest river in the world at 4160 miles, supplying about 250 million people which is more than most rivers on earth, and is the water conflict that has affected the most people on earth.
2. The Nile provided fertile land to Egypt. Most of Egypt is desert, but along the Nile river the soil is rich and good for growing crops. Hence, the Egyptians need the Nile a lot more than, say, the people living along the Mekong River, who have adequate rainfall throughout the year. If not for the Nile, the Egyptians would starve.
3. Ethiopia relies on the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam for power, as 70% of its population is off the power grid, and the Dam will produce a projected 6000 megawatts, more than doubling its current power generation capacity.

2. Significance Of The Nile

2.1 Egypt's reliance on the Nile.

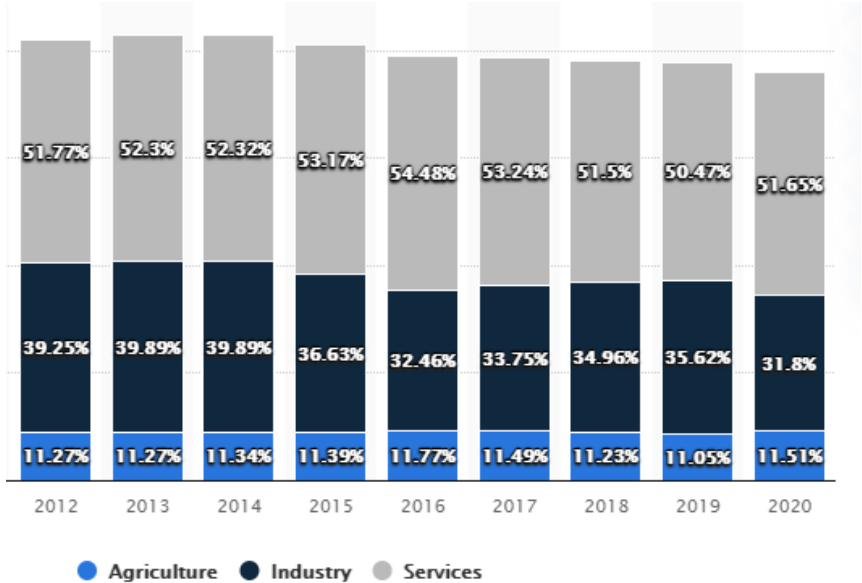
Egypt fears that the dam could restrict its already scarce supply of the Nile waters, which is almost the only water source for its citizens, as according to Egypt, the dam will severely affect water depths downstream.

This water would also affect crop yields downstream. Agriculture took up approximately 12% of Egypt's GDP, showing how large and important agriculture is to the Egyptian economy.

The graph below also shows that the agricultural sector is back on the rise and is slowly making up more and more of Egypt's GDP, with percentage being 11.27% in 2012, and in Abdelkader T Ahmad and Mohamed Helmy Elsanabary's publication,

water velocity will be reduced by 5%, 11%, 20% and 42% respectively. They also further concluded that the dam holds back sediments that will naturally replenish downstream ecosystems. The agricultural lands and scattering of millions of families can be affected due to the reduction in the water share of countries downstream, especially Egypt. They further add that it would also result in heavier pollution of the water streams and creating problems for the supply of water especially for drinking and industry. There will also be problems in transportation via the river, Nile tourism and threats to the fish farms on the Nile.

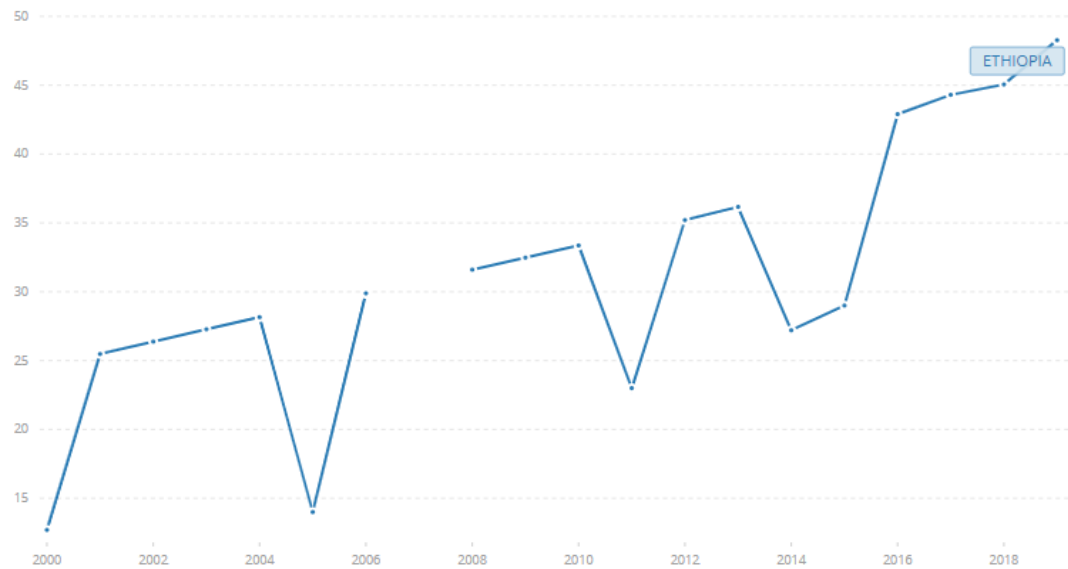
Egypt thus has interests in taking armed hostile action against Ethiopia as water levels of the Nile are key in keeping its agricultural sector alive, in addition to the tourism and water supply sectors.



2.2 Ethiopian reliance on the Nile.

_____The Great Renaissance Dam in Ethiopia is being constructed as a means of creating clean renewable energy to supply all of Ethiopia's electrical needs. As of 2019, only 48.272% of Ethiopia's population has access to electricity thus showing the critical need for energy for Ethiopia. There has been an overall increase in the percentage of population with access to electricity, increasing from less than 15% in 2000 to almost triple that to 48.272% at its peak in 2019. While this increase has been a huge step up for Ethiopia, its energy need problem is still not solved as it still lags behind many developed countries. By increasing the supply for electricity, this could allow for greater quality of life for many of its citizens, and could be a source of revenue as they can sell the excess energy generated by the plant to nearby countries. The dam is also a clean and renewable source of energy, and could help meet Ethiopia's climate goals of limiting Greenhouse Gas emissions in 2030 to 145 MtCO_{2e} or lower.

This critical need for energy can then be a good reason to protect its interests in the Nile with armed force and explain its refusal to reverse the decision of building the grand renaissance dam.

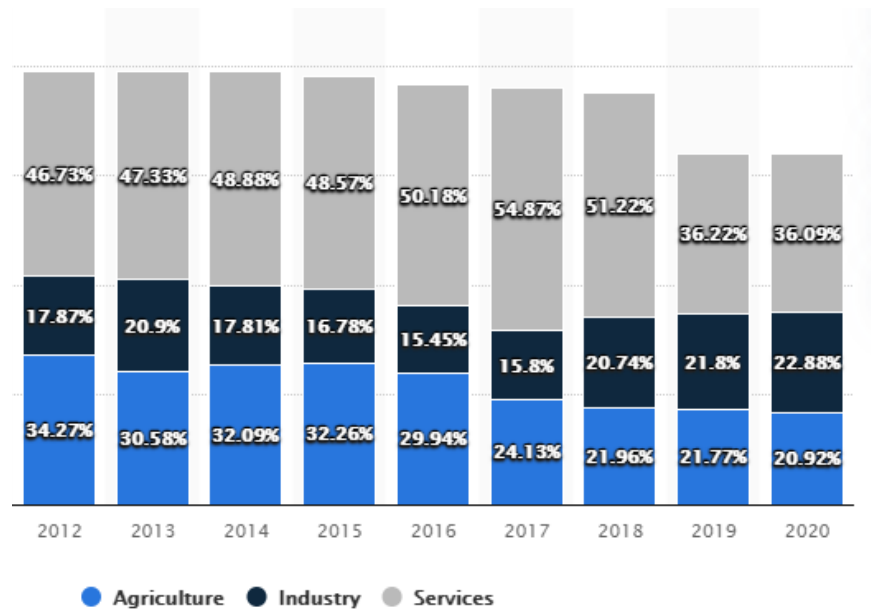


2.3 Sudan's reliance on the Nile.

_____The Nile provides a large portion of those living nearby with ample water for drinking and agriculture. Wetlands flanking the Nile cover almost 10% of the country, and support diverse riparian ecosystems. Others living in the more arid western region rely on wells or seasonal wadi to obtain their daily water. These wadis are dry stream beds for large portions of the year, but people are able to access the groundwater that accumulates underneath by digging wells.

In the graph below, the overall trend that can be observed would be Agriculture's share of the GDP, seeing an overall decrease from 34.27% to 20.92% from 2012-2020. The peak of agriculture's share of the GDP was in 2012, occupying 34.27% of the GDP and the lowest agricultural share of the GDP was in 2020, where it occupied only 20.92% of the GDP. While it has seen an overall decrease in its share of Sudan's GDP, it can be concluded that a somewhat large amount of the economy still relies on

the agricultural sectors, and that it has vested interests in protecting the agricultural sectors from any negative impacts, such as the Nile water levels falling according to the publication by Abdelkader T Ahmad and Mohamed Helmy Elsanabary, Sudan thus has reason to use armed forces to defend its economic prosperity.



2.4 Conclusion On River Nile’s Importance

In conclusion, the Nile is important to Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan in many economic sectors, including electricity and agriculture. This need and dependency for the Nile is further reinforced over the language and statements used by the Public Officials of both countries. In 2013, there were reports of a secret recording showing Egyptian politicians proposing a range of hostile acts

against Ethiopia over the building of the dam. Egyptian President Sisi has also been quoted as saying that Egypt would take all the necessary measures to protect their rights to the Nile waters.

In October 2020, Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed told MPs that "no force" could stop Ethiopia from building the dam. But why wasn't any action being taken by the two countries despite these threats and the seriousness of the situation? We suggest that this is due to the "Democratic Peace Theory"

3. Democratic Peace Theory.

3.1 Origin, and Definition.

Though the democratic peace theory was not rigorously or scientifically studied until the 1960s, the basic principles of the concept had been argued as early as the 1700s in the works of philosopher Immanuel Kant and political theorist Thomas Paine.

Kant foreshadowed the theory in his essay *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch* written in 1795, although he thought that a world with only constitutional republics was only one of several necessary conditions for a perpetual peace.

Kant's theory was that a majority of the people would never vote to go to war, unless in self-defense. Therefore, if all nations were republics, it would end war, because there would be no aggressors.

3.2 Limitations of the Democratic Peace Theory.

The limitations of this democratic peace theory is that this is more inclined towards truly “Free” Countries, with better democratic processes, with a more frequent change of power and not just the same ruling government officials being elected again. For example, two exceptions of the Democratic Peace Theory would be the Spanish-American war, and the Turkish invasion of Cyprus.

Let's start with the Spanish-American war. While the status of the United States as a democratic nation is undisputed truth, For instance, in Spain in 1898, two parties alternated in the government in a controlled process known as *el turno pacífico*, and the caciques, powerful local figures, were used to manipulate election results, and as a result resentment of the system slowly built up over time and important nationalist movements as well as unions started to form. As such, while the Spanish government was technically a democracy, it cannot be considered to be a "True" Democracy and hence is inapplicable to the democratic peace theory.

Similarly, the Turkish intervention in Cyprus occurred only after the Cypriot elected government was abolished in a coup sponsored by the military government of Greece, causing the Turkish government to react.

Another limitation would be that the Democratic Peace Theory would also be mostly limited to more prosperous and richer democratic countries, that would stand to lose much of their wealth should they lose a war, causing their governments and people to be much less inclined to go to war, as they already have everything they need.

In short, the Democratic Peace Theory mostly applies to "True" Democracies, one free election fraud.

4. Examination of Political Systems.

4.1 Egypt's Political System.

The current political system was established following the Egyptian Revolution of 2011 and the resignation of President Hosni Mubarak. In the current system, the President is elected for a six-year term, where they are able to appoint up to 5 percent of the parliament.

The political system is based on political and partisan pluralism, peaceful rotation of power, separation and balance of powers, the inevitable correlation between powers and responsibilities, and respect for human rights and freedoms, as stated in the Constitution. With the constitution of Egypt ensuring peaceful rotations of powers are observed, it can be concluded that it is a democracy.

4.2 Ethiopia's Political System.

The government of Ethiopia is structured in the form of a federal parliamentary republic, whereby the Prime Minister leads the government.

Executive power is exercised by the government while legislative power is held by the Parliament. There are 10 ethnically based administrative regions and 2 self-governing administrations; the capital city Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa.

The president of Ethiopia is elected by the House of Peoples' Representatives for a six-year term. The prime minister is chosen by the parliament. The prime minister is designated by the party in power following legislative elections. The Council of Ministers, according to the 1995 constitution, comprises the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Ministers, various Ministers and other members which are determined by the House of Peoples' Representatives. At the current time, this includes the 20 members of the Council of Ministers.

The Federal Parliamentary Assembly has two chambers: the Council of People's Representatives with 547 members, elected for five-year terms in single-seat constituencies; and the Council of the Federation with 110 members, one for each nationality, and one additional representative for each one million of its population, designated by the regional councils, **which may elect them themselves or through popular elections.**

4.3 Sudan's Political System.

Currently, the **politics of Sudan** takes place in the framework of a Federal provisional government.

Previously, a President was head of state, head of government, and commander-in-chief of the Sudanese Armed Forces in a multi-party system. Legislative power was officially vested in both the government and in the two chambers, the National Assembly (lower) and the Council of States (higher), of the bicameral National Legislature. On 20 August 2019, the Sovereignty Council of Sudan gained power, who are planned to govern for 39 months until 2022, in the process of transitioning to democracy.

Sudan has a bicameral parliament, consisting of a 450-member National Assembly (with 60% of seats elected by majority voting in geographical constituencies and 40% by proportional representation, including 25% reserved for women) and a Council of States composed of two representatives elected by each state assembly.

4.4 Eligibility for the Democratic Peace Theory.

Basic Principles Of The DPT	Ethiopia	Sudan	Egypt
Holds periodic elections in which the opposition parties are as free to run as government parties	Ethiopia's parliament's 2nd chamber, the Council Of The Federation, is elected through popular voting.	Majority of seats elected by majority voting	The president is decided by voting and will then be put into a six-year term
Allows at least 10% of the adult population to vote,	37 million people voted in the recent 2021 elections	Their parliament's National Assembly has 60% of it decided by popular voting	Only 5% of the parliament is decided by the President, with the remaining number being elected through voting by citizens
Has a parliament that either controls or enjoys parity with the executive branch of the government	Executive power is exercised by the government while legislative power is vested in the Parliament.	Bicameral parliament system	Parliament meets for one eight-month session each year

4.5 Other Possible Reasons.

Civil strife (Civil War In Ethiopia, Coup in government in Egypt, Sudan just recovering from a civil war)

There have been multiple examples of civil strife and political instability within these 3 countries in recent years, and since Ethiopia has to deal with the Tigrayan conflict, where dozens were killed and 2.4 million people were displaced. Egypt and Sudan have their own internal conflicts to solve, this would make them less willing to declare war on each other. However, as they are dealing with a conflict of their own, they probably do not have the capacity to fight another nation. Their dealing with internal conflicts already will also mean that the general public will be less willing to go to war because they are already suffering and do not want to contribute to it more. However, this just links back to the Democratic Peace Theory, which reinforces that a majority of the public will not vote to go to war. As such, Civil Strife is not the main reason for the lack of conflict.

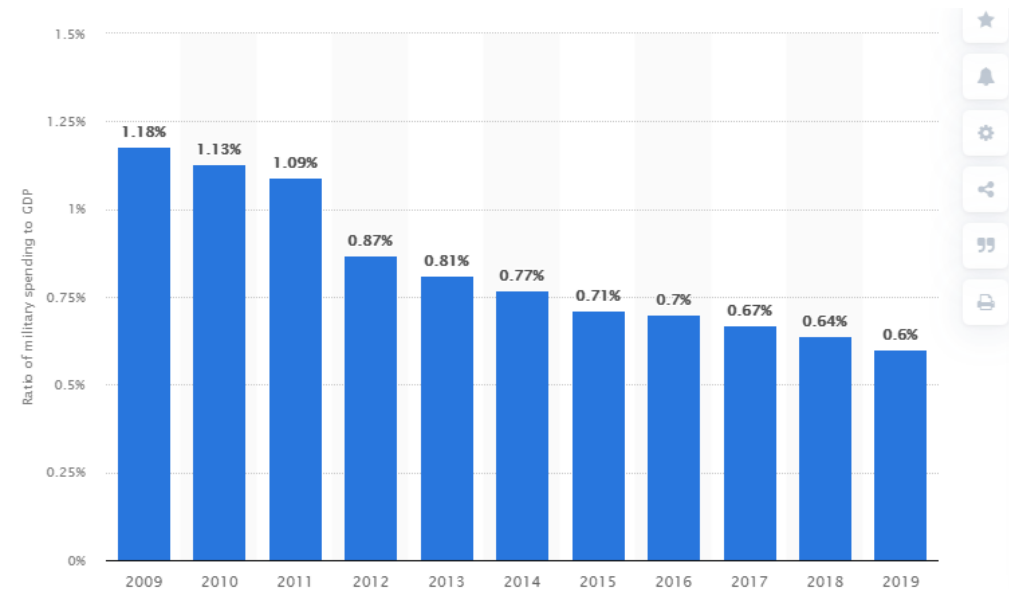
Decreased Military Expenditure

Another possible reason would be the gradual shift in military expenditure in all three parties in the Nile River Conflict, with all three nations decreasing their military budgets from 2009 to 2019.

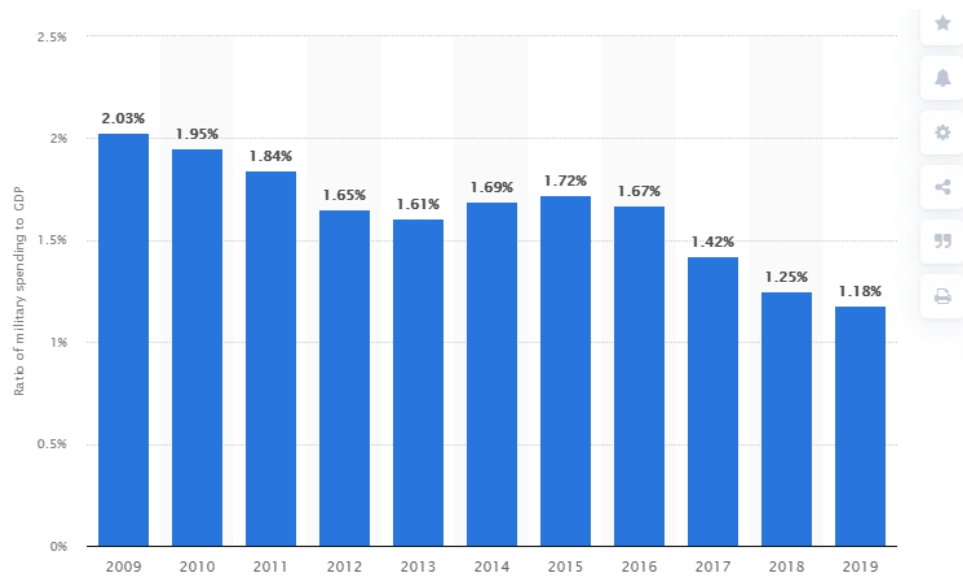
This gradual decrease in military expenditure is a sign of change for peace, as nations are shifting away their focuses for fighting.

Across all 3 countries, there has been an overall decrease in the military expenditure each year. For Ethiopia, their military expenditure has decreased from 1.18% of their GDP to only 0.6%, almost half of what their military spending was just a decade ago. Similar observations can also be found in the other 2 countries, Egypt and Sudan, where it is found that Egypt has decreased their military spending from 2.03% of their GDP in 2009 to only 1.18% after 10 years, and Sudan has reduced their military spending from \$1152 million USD (1.152 billion) to just \$457 million USD in 2020. These trends of a generally downward curve in military expenditure seems to imply that these countries think that their military will not be as important in the years to come, and that they want to focus on peace negotiations with other countries. If they wanted to prepare for war with one another, surely their military expenditures would be on an upward trend, not a downward one. However, this further reinforces the Democratic Peace Theory as a government will not prepare for a war that a majority of people would be against. As such, decreased military expenditure is simply a result of the majority of the population not voting for going to war, a key principle in the democratic peace theory.

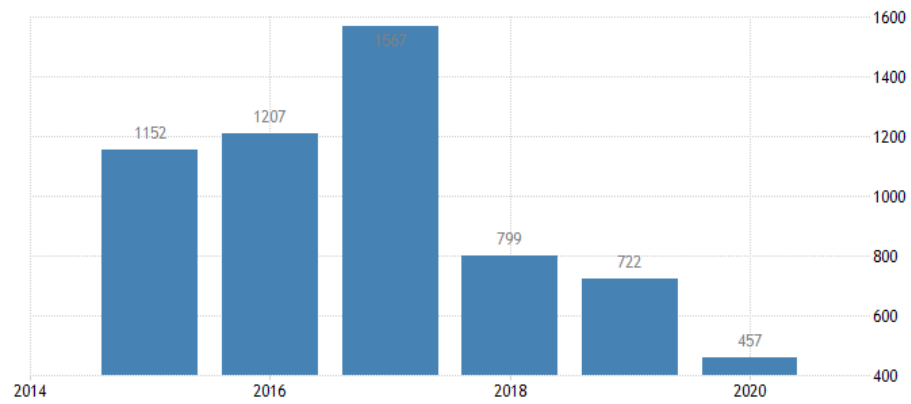
Ethiopia



Egypt



Sudan



SOURCE: TRADINGECONOMICS.COM | SIPRI

4.6 Resolution of Conflict.

As shown in 4.4, all three countries fit the conditions to become eligible for the democratic peace theory. This thus demonstrates the sheer amount of power democracy is in conflicts. Thus, we can also conclude that they are democracies.

Due to how democratic states work, countries will not go to war due to the general unpopular support of war in these countries. For example, in July 2021, it has been reported by BBC that Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt have all agreed to resume talks during a summit between the African Union and discussions between the countries will continue. This shows that the countries want to settle this conflict peacefully and through negotiations with each other, and not by war. Although they make threats to each other, none of them have executed these threats. This is perfectly in line with the definition of the Democratic Peace Theory that “democracies are hesitant to engage in armed conflict with other identified democracies.”, and will continue to try to resolve this dispute with peaceful intentions instead of war. We would even go so far as to say that we are 100% certain that this will be the eventual outcome.

5. Does Democracy Prevent War?

Yes, as shown by the steps taken by all three parties in the Nile River Conflict, they have avoided conflict so far while using peaceful and diplomatic approaches to solve this dispute. This can be shown above in 4.6.

"A fair and balanced solution to the problems of filling the reservoir and the use of the dam can be found, provided there's a proper political commitment by all parties," said Linda Thomas-Greenfield, US ambassador to the UN, after Thursday's Security Council deliberations. With these efforts to negotiate an agreeable deal, peace and friendship on the Nile River is in sight.

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