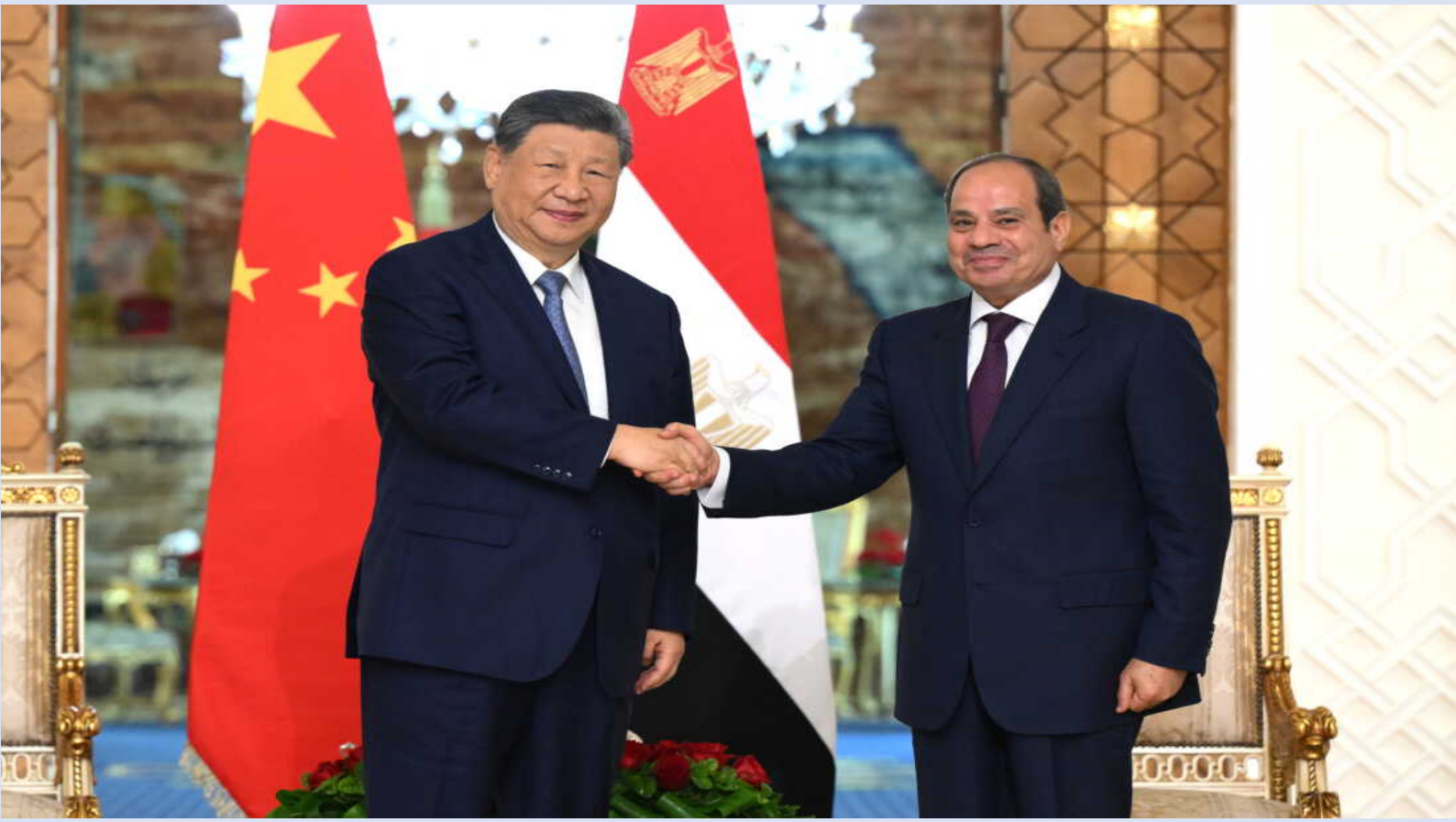


› ANALYSIS / RAMIL JALILOV NOVEMBER 2026

THE CHINA–EGYPT MULTILATERAL PARTNERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVES IN GLOBAL GEOPOLITICS

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Introduction

Within the framework of its 2049 vision, China aims to become a global leader, and significant efforts are being directed toward this goal. China's economic growth has accelerated further, particularly since Xi Jinping came to power. During this period, China has continued to expand its cooperation with nations worldwide, driven by its growing economic strength and the broadening scope of its various projects. China's rising influence has had a profound impact on other countries, leading them to deepen their cooperation with China across a range of sectors. A key factor in establishing these extensive relations is the Chinese government's pragmatic foreign policy, which is rooted in the principle of mutual trust. Africa is one of the primary regions where China has expanded its sphere of influence in recent years, particularly in areas such as energy and trade.

Expanding relations with Egypt is highly significant for China in terms of gaining influence within the African region. At the same time, this move by China is of great importance for establishing a new foothold against its primary rival, the United States. The relationship between the two countries is viewed from various perspectives. Particularly over the last decade, the scope of their bilateral ties has expanded considerably. Following the events involving Israel and Hamas, certain complications have arisen in Egypt-US relations; against this backdrop, China-Egypt relations have advanced even further. While Egypt continues to maintain its ties with the US, it is simultaneously deepening its cooperation with China in the fields of infrastructure, trade, and defense.

Key Aspects Of Interstate Relations

The foundation of China's cooperation with Egypt has consistently centered on trade, infrastructure, and security; however, in recent years, new initiatives have also been taken in the sectors of technology and energy. The "Belt and Road" initiative, launched after Xi Jinping came to power in 2012, has had a positive impact on the development of relations with Egypt [1]. In 2014, relations between the two countries were elevated to the level of a "Strategic Partnership." As strategic partners, the countries signed a series of documents concerning cooperation in areas such as defense, technology, the economy, counter-terrorism, and cybercrime. One of the key indicators of the expanding relationship between the two nations is the increase in the number of official meetings held on a reciprocal basis. Egypt's sustainable

development strategy, known as “Vision 2030,” encompasses comprehensive reforms across economic, social, environmental, and institutional spheres. This vision aims to enhance Egypt’s global and regional competitiveness and to pursue a development path aligned with sustainable development goals [2]. The broad-ranging relations between the two nations can be examined through the lens of Egypt’s “Vision 2030” and China’s “Belt and Road” initiative. In this context, it is evident that both countries exert a significant influence on one another, consistent with their respective national interests. Furthermore, Egypt’s Suez Canal serves as a vital waterway connecting the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. With a population exceeding 100 million, Egypt also represents a substantial consumer base for Chinese goods. Consequently, China has made major investments in various infrastructure projects in Egypt, in line with its own strategic interests. The Suez Economic and Trade Cooperation Zone, established in 2008, is considered a key project that contributes significantly to the “Belt and Road” initiative since 2013, owing to its strategic location and logistical capacity [3].

According to figures released by China’s National Development and Reform Commission, the Suez Economic and Trade Cooperation Zone currently plays a strategic role as a conduit for Chinese exports. The 102 Chinese companies operating within the zone have invested a total of $1.2 billion [4]. This figure accounts for 40% of the foreign direct investment (FDI) in the region in recent years. Driven by the interest of Chinese firms in Egypt’s major projects, contracts worth billions of dollars have been signed across the infrastructure, energy, and technology sectors. These agreements have strengthened Egypt’s access to African and European markets while providing China with additional sources of revenue [5].

In order to support projects agreed upon at the third Belt and Road Summit held in August 2023, the China Development Bank (CDB) invested $956 million in the Central Bank of Egypt. By the third quarter of 2023, the total value of loans extended by the CDB to Egypt had exceeded $6.5 billion [6]. In 2023, the volume of Egypt's imports from China reached $14.1 billion, while its export volume to China stood at $834 million. According to official Egyptian data, Egypt's imports from China reached approximately 19.9 billion US dollars in 2025, while its exports to China stood at 819 million US dollars [7]. The total trade volume amounted to approximately 20.78 billion US dollars. In the first six months of 2026, Egypt's imports from China reached 10.4 billion US dollars, and its exports to China totaled 840.8 million US dollars. Compared to the same period in the previous year, Egypt's exports to China increased by 199.8%, while its imports rose by 14.3% [8]. These developments indicate an expansion in trade relations

between the two countries, while also revealing that the trade balance remains in China's favor. At the same time, positive developments between the parties and growing trade indicators play a supportive role in the advancement of various sectors of the economy.

Defense initiatives play a significant role in China-Egypt relations. In 2024, training exercises were conducted between various military units of the two countries. Simultaneously, Egypt is continuing negotiations with China regarding the purchase of military equipment with various technological capabilities. The second phase of the "Eagles of Civilization 2026" joint air exercise was held in Egypt in August 2026, with the participation of the Egyptian and Chinese air forces [9]. The main objective of these exercises is not only to foster the development of relations between the countries on a political and economic basis, but also to support mutual development in the military sphere.

Important Meetings And Discussions Held For Development

Since 2024, there have been ongoing, reciprocal discussions between officials from the two countries. The most significant of these was the official visit by Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi to Beijing in May 2024, which coincided with the tenth anniversary of their strategic partnership. During this visit, President el-Sisi participated in the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum and a China-Egypt summit. On May 29, the two presidents held formal talks regarding bilateral relations and ways to further develop these ties across various sectors. The discussions covered a range of topics, including the strengthening of coordination between the two nations. On the same day, a "Joint Statement" was signed between the Arab Republic of Egypt and the People's Republic of China [10].

At the invitation of President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi of the Arab Republic of Egypt, President Xi Jinping of the People's Republic of China paid a state visit to the Arab Republic of Egypt on September 1–2, 2026 [11]. This visit was of great significance for the development of bilateral relations. During the meetings, the progress achieved in these relations since the establishment of a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between the two countries in 2014 was reviewed. The parties signed twenty-five bilateral agreements aimed at deepening cooperation in the fields of economy, trade, technology, security, and the military. They agreed to further deepen the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership by strengthening mutually beneficial cooperation across all sectors, maintaining high-level contacts, expanding coordination on global governance issues, and safeguarding the interests of developing countries and the "Global South" [12].

Scenarios For The Future Of Relations

When evaluating future scenarios, various factors must be taken into account. First and foremost, it should be noted that Egypt will maintain its relations with the United States. At the same time, its relationship with China will continue to be one of Egypt's top priorities. China not only provides credit to Egypt but also continues to make significant investments in the country. Furthermore, according to a 2022 public opinion poll conducted among Egyptians by The Washington Institute, 64% of participants expressed their support for strengthening relations with China [13]. In other words, the public views China as an important partner for the country. These indicators further underscore the significance of China to Egypt. Consequently, it can be anticipated that relations will expand even further over the next decade.

Secondly, the "Joint Statement" signed between the two countries in 2024 identifies the localization of industry and the prioritization of technology transfer as the core areas of cooperation. This signals an expected increase in the export volume of electric vehicles, electronic devices, solar panels, construction materials, and agricultural technologies. Given the technological innovations anticipated in China over the next decade, relations with Egypt in this domain are set to expand further. In addition to supporting the development of tourism in Egypt, China will also encourage direct Chinese investment in this sector. Furthermore, it is foreseeable that efforts to strengthen cooperation in the fields of media, culture, science, artificial intelligence, and academia will continue.

Third, China will play a significant role in developing Egypt's capabilities in the space sector. China will actively support Egypt's objectives to enhance its space-related capacities, particularly in the areas of satellite manufacturing, remote sensing, and telemetry tracking.

Fourth, Egypt's economic indicators and investment climate continue to pose obstacles for Chinese enterprises. It is foreseeable that adjustments will be made to the customs and tax policies of both nations to remove these barriers. Such a step would create favorable conditions for a more stable investment environment in the country.

Fifth, with the further deepening of defense cooperation between China and Egypt, it is anticipated that the ongoing negotiations regarding Egypt's procurement of Type 039A submarines and combat aircraft will reach a successful conclusion.

Conclusion

The golden decade of the China-Egypt Strategic Partnership has allowed China to gain a broader sphere of influence in Egypt, a longtime ally of the United States. China-Egypt relations are expected to continue developing positively in the future. Prior to the announcement of the comprehensive strategic partnership, economic relations between Egypt and China were stable. However, since 2014, the scope of economic relations has expanded. Since then, new trends have emerged in cooperation between Chinese and Egyptian companies. While Chinese companies earned $3.34 billion from cooperation with Egypt between 2005 and 2013, this figure has risen to $16.62 billion in the last decade. It raises concerns among multilateral institutions, including China and Egypt, as well as the United Nations, the Group of 20, the BRICS and the Shanghai Community. They often collaborate on issues. As a result, Egypt will remain the main ally among many allies for China.

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