

Narrative as an instrument to increase Egyptian margins for manoeuvre in the run-up to and during the Suez Crisis (1955-1956)



BA Thesis History

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Date: 22-01-2021

Words: 8071 (excluding figures, list of abbreviations, table of contents, bibliography, footnotes and annexes)

Cover photo: Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser gives a speech in Alexandria on July 26, 1956, during which he announced the nationalisation of the Suez Canal Company.¹

¹ *Nationalisation du canal de Suez*. [online]. Photograph. Keystone. 26-07-1956. A5372/43. Retrieved from <https://www.cvce.eu/s/5x> (Source first accessed: December 2020)

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Summary

This thesis considers the Egyptian perspective in the run-up and during the Suez Crisis with the following main research question: How did Nasser define a narrative of the Egyptian struggle between foreign and national interests, as an instrument to increase Egypt's margins for manoeuvre in the run-up to the Suez Crisis (1955-1956)? A combination of historical study and linguistics enabled an enhanced understanding of the Suez Crisis through an anti-colonial lens. Primary sources in the form of three speeches given by President Nasser were analyzed from a cross-disciplinary linguistic perspective. What follows from the conclusion is that Nasser stretched Egyptian margin's for manoeuvre without military strength, but by using his narrative of the Egyptian struggle between foreign and national interests to garner international support, which build on the shoulders of the universally applicable espoused UN Charter values.

List of abbreviations

AHD	Aswan High Dam
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CUN	Charter of the United Nations
PDA	Political Discourse Analysis
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
UCSMC	Universal Company of the Suez Maritime Canal
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
US	United States
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
SCUA	Suez Canal Users Association

Introduction

The Suez Crisis (October 1956 – March 1957) carries the connotation as the ‘true end of the British Empire’.² Six decades after the event, this association is still so omnipotent that during the ongoing COVID-19 epidemic, the Washington Post wrote an article titled ‘The Suez crisis toppled the British Empire. The pandemic will bring down ours’.³ Naturally, the event involved much more than a colonial convulsion. The Suez Crisis was, in fact, an intricate historical event during the Cold War that involved many actors among Egypt, Israel, France, the United Kingdom (UK), the Soviet Union (USSR), the United States (US) and the United Nations (UN).⁴

This thesis will explore the Egyptian perspective in the run-up and during the Suez Crisis. It does so by assessing Egyptian President Nasser's speeches from a cross-disciplinary linguistic perspective. As will follow from the historiography, a focus on the Egyptian perspective is worthwhile to pursue due to the lack of research dedicated to the Egyptian perspective. A combination of historical study and linguistics enables an enhanced understanding of the Suez Crisis through an anti-colonial lens. Therefore Political Discourse Analysis (PDA) is brought into the research, adding to the analytical strength of the project.

As a leader and symbol of anti-colonialism and the later Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), President Nasser makes a thought-provoking individual to analyse. Hence, this thesis focuses on the following research question: How did Nasser define a narrative of the Egyptian struggle between foreign and national interests, as an instrument to increase Egypt’s margins for manoeuvre in the run-up to the Suez Crisis (1955-1956)? Two sub-questions are employed to answer the main research question. The first sub-question is concerned with Nasser's politics shortly before the Suez Crisis. During the Bandung Conference (April 1955), before the formation of the NAM, Nasser appealed to ‘international legislation’ and ‘self-determination’ as guaranteed by the UN. Nasser also mentions how he wants to do justice to Egypt as a small state in the Cold War setting, which fits nicely within the small state theory framework.⁵

² ‘The Memory of the Suez Crisis Is Still Strong in Britain’, the Guardian, 31 October 2006, [http://www.theguardian.com/world/2006/oct/31/worlddispatch.egypt.](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2006/oct/31/worlddispatch.egypt;);

³ Stephen Marche, ‘Perspective | The Suez Crisis Toppled the British Empire. The Pandemic Will Bring down Ours.’, *Washington Post*, accessed 29 December 2020, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2020/03/25/british-empire-suez-coronavirus-america/>.

⁴ Philip Zelikow and Ernest May, *Suez Deconstructed: An Interactive Study in Crisis, War, and Peacemaking* (Brookings Institution Press, 2018).

⁵ ‘Summary of the Introductory Speeches at the Bandung Conference (18–19 April 1955)’, Texte, CVCE. EU by UNI. LU (CVCE.EU by UNILU, 1 March 2017), https://www.cvce.eu/en/obj/summary_of_the_introductory_speeches_at_the_bandung_conference_18_19_april_1955-en-831656d3-62e4-4978-a44f-c043c8fb9011.html.

Therefore, the first sub-question is: How did Nasser define a narrative of the struggle between foreign and national interests in Egypt during the Bandung Conference? The second sub-question relates to the beginning and course of the Suez Crisis. Nasser gave some illustrious speeches that hopefully provide insight into the following sub-question: How did Nasser define a narrative of the struggle between foreign and national interests in Egypt during the Suez Crisis?

The UK's perspective during the Suez Crisis represents most available academic literature on the Suez Crisis itself. Similar to famous analogies in written media, the essential historiographical debate is centred around British imperial decline. Publications argue if the Suez Crisis influenced or precipitated the British Empire's end and Britain's influence and power worldwide.⁶ Two opposite camps of historians on this question exist. Brian Lapping represents the group that argues that the Suez Crisis was a starting point of British decline. Lapping contends that a new anti-colonial movement started with Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser as its leader and most important symbol. The UK's failed attempt to reassert imperial control in Egypt humiliated its status to a subordinate position in world affairs compared to the US. Anthony Low represents the side of the debate that argues that the Suez did not affect the falling apart of the British Empire, pointing towards decolonisation that either happened before the crisis such as the Gold Coast (1957) or was already planned after it, e.g., Malaya (1957) and Nigeria (1960). A second historiographical debate within the dominant literature focuses on the Suez Crisis's influences on Britain's foreign policy regarding the US and Europe after the conflict.⁷ Pressure on the belligerents from the US, the USSR and the UN has also received scholarly attention.⁸ A significant book was published in 2012, devoted entirely to the perspective of the US alone.⁹ Publications on the UK, the superpowers and the UN in regards to Suez are available in abundance. The perspective of Egypt on the Suez Crisis and Nasser's influence, in particular, remains less researched. This research gap is quite remarkable because Nasser's importance as a leader and symbol in the movement of anti-colonialism is stressed within the dominant literature on the UK's perspective by historians such as Brian Lapping.¹⁰ Recently historians have pointed out that Cold War studies, in general, need

⁶ Anthony Low and Brian Lapping, 'Did Suez Hasten the End of Empire?', *Contemporary Record* 1, no. 2 (1987): 31–33.

⁷ Nicholas White, *Decolonisation: The British Experience since 1945* (Routledge, 2014). P.114-115

⁸ Zelikow and May, *Suez Deconstructed*.

⁹ David A. Nichols, *Eisenhower 1956: The President's Year of Crisis--Suez and the Brink of War* (Simon and Schuster, 2012).

¹⁰ Low and Lapping, 'Did Suez Hasten the End of Empire?'

to start accounting for smaller states' perspective in terms of international relations between states. Besides, smaller powers outnumber great powers by far.¹¹

The Egyptian perspective deserves proper attention, especially in light of recent developments in academic historical writing that allows historians to draw a more thorough understanding of small states in the Cold War era, such as Egypt. The standard narrative of the Cold War is known as the superpower paradigm. In this paradigm, the tension between the superpowers dominated international relations during the Cold War in a bipolar world. Laurien Crump and Susanna Erlandsson's '*Margins for Manoeuvre in Cold War Europe*' challenges this conventional picture.¹² The book disregards the common assumption of viewing small states as pawns in a game for the superpowers. Its authors argue that the Cold War has more to offer than the competition between the USSR and the US. Therefore, the individual chapters start from the perspective of smaller powers. The volume aspires to analyse and compare the strategies, goals and capacity for manoeuvre of smaller European states during the Cold War period without a priori notions about restrictions intrinsic to their East-West stances. By considering the influence of diverse actors and factors on the margins for manoeuvre of smaller states, the book intends to understand European Cold War dynamics better. It also enables and inspires further research on other areas of the world during the Cold War, such as this thesis.¹³

The theoretical framework of margins for manoeuvre allows for an analysis of a small state such as Egypt to explain its foreign policy behaviour before and during the Suez Crisis. With its concept of margins for manoeuvre, small state theory serves as the theoretical framework of this thesis. Margins refer 'to the space in which a small power could manoeuvre and pursue their goal as a margin'.¹⁴ The concept of margins for manoeuvre replaces the dominant frame of power in small state studies by emphasising small states' agency. The conventional analytical structure of power concentrates on military strength and strong-arming. A focus on military force means that it does not leave room for other strategies that small states pursue to preserve their interests and autonomy. Likewise, margins for manoeuvre circumvents the connotation of reactive or passive behaviour suggested by the analytical frame of defensive power, which has often been used in small state studies to characterise a small state's power instead of great powers.¹⁵ The historian can define margins for manoeuvre in terms of interests,

¹¹ Laurien Crump, Susanna Erlandsson, and Susanna Erlandsson, *Margins for Manoeuvre in Cold War Europe : The Influence of Smaller Powers* (Routledge, 2019), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429425592>. P. 3

¹² Crump, Erlandsson, and Erlandsson.

¹³ Crump, Erlandsson, and Erlandsson. P. 1-2

¹⁴ Crump, Erlandsson, and Erlandsson. P.4

¹⁵ Crump, Erlandsson, and Erlandsson. P.2

goals, and influence. The concept can research strategies to stretch those margins as well.¹⁶ The concept also serves to research the interrelationship between individual and state levels and the system level of influence on a small state foreign policy.¹⁷ Because the conceptual frame moves beyond the rigid notion of power, it allows for different forms of instruments to be analysed used by small states in their scope for manoeuvre, such as a narrative. This thesis emphasises the individual level of influence on foreign policy by Nasser.

Primary sources in the form of Nasser's speeches are analysed in this thesis to answer the sub-questions and form a satisfactory answer to the main research question in conclusion. In the process of developing a research project, primary sources turned out to be scarce. Lack of primary sources was not entirely a surprise since Nasser's native language was Arabic, not English; thus only a selected number of speeches have been translated in English up to an academic standard. Historians can find a great selection of Nasser's speeches at an Egyptian archive, made by the New Library of Alexandria called the 'Gamal Abdel Nasser Digital Archive'.¹⁸ These speeches have not been translated into English professionally. Therefore, the Nasser archive has not been taken into account in the research of this thesis. Should the library be translated into English in the future, this could offer a more nuanced view of historical reality. The word limit inherent to this thesis also limits the selection of sources and, therefore, the project's scope.

The primary sources in this thesis are analysed using PDA. PDA is a practically usable method or framework to analyse political discourse, such as political leaders' speeches, as argumentative discourse.¹⁹ This method is especially suitable because PDA can get much information from little source material; from a relatively short speech discourse academics, Norman and Isabela Fairclough can extract multiple analysis pages. Given the limited availability of primary source material, this analysis has proven to be the most useful for this thesis.²⁰ In the book '*Political Discourse Analysis: A Method for Advanced Students*' Fairclough and Fairclough combine Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) with the political dimension (now called PDA). The combination is innovative in its 'integration of critical discourse-analytical concepts with the analytical framework of argumentation theory, based on

¹⁶ Crump, Erlandsson, and Erlandsson. P. 4

¹⁷ Crump, Erlandsson, and Erlandsson. P.2

¹⁸ New Library of Alexandria, 'Gamal Abdel Nasser Digital Archive', accessed 2 January 2021, <http://nasser.bibalex.org/Home/Home.aspx?lang=ar>.

¹⁹ Isabela Fairclough and Norman Fairclough, *Political Discourse Analysis: A Method for Advanced Students* (Routledge, 2013). P.2

²⁰ Fairclough and Fairclough.

viewing political discourse as primarily argumentative discourse'.²¹ Fairclough and Fairclough argue that politics is most importantly about making decisions about how to act in response to goals and circumstances, e.g. Nasser's decision to nationalise the Suez Canal. Politics is about deciding on policies, and such choices and the action which follow from them are grounded upon what the authors describe as practical argumentation or deliberation. Practical argumentation is argumentation for or against specific ways of behaving, argumentation that can establish choice. In deciding what to do agents, e.g. political leaders, imagine arguments that support a particular procedure or reasons against it, along with explanations in favour or against another course of action. Politicians deliberate over various probabilities of action.²² PDA of a text emphasises the whole text's broad features instead of isolated traits of the text and above all on the action, not on representation. In the volume, PDA is applied to political discourse in which politicians and others are proposing ways of acting on crisis. Different models of PDA are found in the publication. This thesis works best with the 'simple model of single-agent informal deliberation' since this thesis focuses on a single actor, Nasser's speeches. Therefore, it leaves out the model meant to analyse multi-agent deliberation in contexts such as parliaments.²³ To analyse political discourse, Fairclough and Fairclough argue that researchers must ask the right questions. These questions critically question the relationships between the aspects. For a to the point reconstruction of the argument, the analysis considers a claim for action, value premises and goal premises. Because speech is considered to be a form of deliberation, an indication is made of what alternative proposals could have been considered and why they were rejected. What thus follows out of this single-agent informal deliberation model are the following steps.²⁴

1. A claim for action, proposal or solution.
2. (An assumption of) circumstances or representation of problematisation.
3. A certain goal.
4. Values underlying a goal.
5. Means to achieve that goal.
6. (Optional) Alternative options named.
7. (Optional) How to target these alternative options.

²¹ Fairclough and Fairclough. P. 17

²² Fairclough and Fairclough. P. 1-2

²³ Fairclough and Fairclough. P. 52

²⁴ Fairclough and Fairclough. P. 88

The core structure is visualised below and depends, as written earlier, on the political research object.

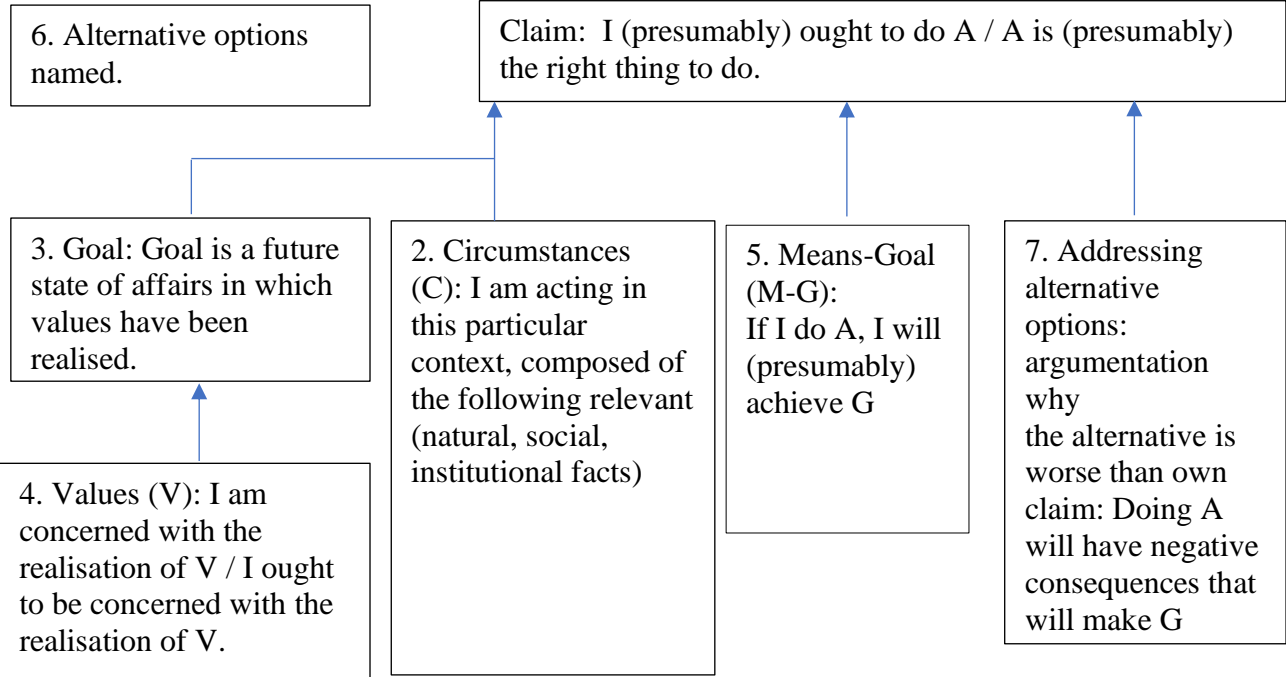


Figure 1: The Fairclough and Fairclough single-agent informal deliberation model

This first chapter draws the origins of the struggle between foreign and national interests over the Suez Canal back to the late 19th century. The Arabi revolt paragraph represents a compelling historical parallel to Nasser's future struggle over Suez. The Suez Crisis itself forms the finale of this chapter. The second chapter analyses opening statement made by the Egyptian Delegation at the Bandung Conference (18-24 April 1955). The third and final chapter analyses two speeches made in the beginning and during the Suez Crisis. The first speech was held on July 26, 1956 and the second speech on September 15, 1956.

Chapter 1 Historical context

1.1 The Suez Canal as a source of national and foreign conflict

The Suez Canal has a lengthy history of Anglo-French foreign domination with an equal counterpart of Egyptian resistance against external control. French developer Ferdinand de Lesseps inaugurated the Suez Canal in 1869. The Suez Canal is an artificial waterway connecting the Mediterranean and the Red Sea.²⁵ De Lesseps found the private joint-stock Universal Company of the Suez Maritime Canal (UCSMC) simultaneously. French shareholders held 56 per cent of its shares while the Viceroy or *Khedive* of Egypt held 44 per cent of shares. Egypt had supplied forced unpaid labour, customs exemptions and land grants for the construction of the Suez. A claim developed among Egyptians that their contribution to the Suez Canal development in terms of lives, money and labour was far more significant than any other country.²⁶ The UCSMC held a concession to operate the Suez Canal until the year 1968. At that moment in time, Suez and its facilities would revert to Egyptian control.²⁷

In the 19th century, France and the UK competed for influence in Egypt for geostrategic reasons. The Suez Canal was vital for the British Empire in connecting its various parts. In response, France unsuccessfully invaded Egypt (1798-1801) to tear the British Empire.²⁸ France and Egypt kept their cultural and political ties intact, and French capitalists invested in Egyptian modernisation programs.²⁹ From the late 19th to the mid 20th century, the UK enjoyed a monopoly of influence over Egypt. In the context of decolonisation of the 20th century, the Suez's importance moved from connecting Empire to Middle Eastern Oil delivery. The UK and the rest of Western Europe depended on this oil. In fact, in the late 1950s, two-thirds of Western European oil passed through the Suez.³⁰

²⁵ Max E. Fletcher, 'The Suez Canal and World Shipping, 1869-1914', *The Journal of Economic History* 18, no. 4 (1958): 556-73.

²⁶ Anthony Gorst and Lewis Johnman, *The Suez Crisis* (Psychology Press, 1997). P. 1

²⁷ Gorst and Johnman. P. 2

²⁸ Ian Coller, *Arab France: Islam and the Making of Modern Europe, 1798-1831* (University of California Press, 2010). P. 11

²⁹ Robert L Tignor, *Modernization and British Colonial Rule in Egypt, 1882-1914* (Princeton University Press, 2015). P. 11

³⁰ Gorst and Johnman, *The Suez Crisis*. P. 57

1.2 The Arabi revolt

Egyptian Viceroy Ismail, ruling from 1863-1879, brought Egypt to the verge of bankruptcy in 1875. Ismail had borrowed heavily from European financiers for modernisation programmes. To avoid insolvency, Ismail mortgaged Egyptian resources and sold Egyptians shares in the UCSMC to the UK.³¹ The UCSMC was now entirely in the hands of France and the UK, with a meagre residual obligation to Egypt of 30,000 francs every year.³² While Britain had no real wish to govern Egypt, it could not allow the French to gain the upper hand. Being nearly bankrupt led France and the UK to increase their control over Egypt's internal affairs until foreign Europeans virtually led the government. Administrative chaos was a byproduct. The combination of financial and administrative struggles gave birth to the proto-nationalist movement known as the Arabi revolt.

The Arabi revolt was led by Ahmed Arabi, who was a non-European native Egyptian army officer from peasant upbringing. First of all, the movement wanted to end French and British influence over Egypt and depose Khedive Tewfik. Determination to end Anglo-French presence forms the first parallel with Nasser's anti-imperialism policy, who was similarly annoyed with European power over the country. Secondly, the Egyptian peasantry was upset with tax-exempt Europeans and the wealth of landlords. Upper class educated Egyptians were agitated because a separate legal system for suing Europeans had been set up by the British. The general population also resented the privileged position of Turks, Albanians and Circassians who controlled most elite positions in military and government.³³ In conclusion, Egyptians resented European domination and certain ethnic groups with a high-level disproportional representation in government and critical functions.

The Arabi revolt led to the British Conquest of Egypt in 1882. The British choice to do so rested on a strategic calculation: the UK occupied Egypt to protect the route to India and to prevent any other European power from invading. The Arabi movement threatened the security of the Suez Canal.³⁴ The leading British goal was to create conditions that enabled them to withdraw without risking vital interests. Evacuating from Egypt would turn out to be unfeasible since conditions were never as such to permit the British to evacuate in safety.³⁵ The British occupation of Egypt constitutes an intriguing parallel to the invasion of Egypt in 1956. On both

³¹ Tignor, *Modernization and British Colonial Rule in Egypt, 1882-1914*. P. 11

³² Caroline Piquet, 'The Suez Company's Concession in Egypt, 1854—1956: Modern Infrastructure and Local Economic Development', *Enterprise & Society* 5, no. 1 (2004): 107–27. P. 112

³³ Tignor, *Modernization and British Colonial Rule in Egypt, 1882-1914*. P. 13-20

³⁴ Tignor. P. 11

³⁵ Tignor. P. 391

occasions, the geostrategic location of Egypt played a significant role. Additional reasons to occupy Egypt were to guarantee British investments.³⁶ Egyptian efforts to keep resources in national hands versus foreign efforts to exploit them caused armed conflict in both cases.

1.3 The Suez Crisis

Before the Suez Crisis, it is evident that the Egyptian resentment of foreign control kept growing steadily. With the creation of the Jewish state of Israel in 1948, Egyptians felt betrayed after the British withdrawal from Palestine. Tensions rose even further when discussions of independence for Egyptian Sudan did not come to fruition. King Farouk was considered to be a collaborator with the British for favouring an ongoing British military presence.³⁷ In July 1952 the Free Officers, led by Gamal Abdel Nasser and Muhammad Naguib, overthrew the Egyptian monarchy. The Free Officers consisted of about three hundred men from the military who essentially shared no explicit ideology. The military junta did share the wish to end decades of Egyptian occupation, similarly to the anti-imperialist Arabi revolt. The new government considered remaining British influence and the defeat by Israel in the 1948 Arab-Israeli War as a humiliation of Egypt. President Naguib publicly called for Egyptians to ‘get rid of the last traces of British Imperialism’.³⁸ Two broad policy goals came into existence. The first goal was strengthening the newfound independence against the threat of foreign occupation through the buildup of a post-colonial army. The second goal was to end the British occupation of the Suez Canal Zone.³⁹

Two important foreign policy goals were that of non-alignment and cultivating influence in the Arab world. Non-alignment came into existence before the military coup. Egypt had refused to side with the West in the United Nations Security Council vote on the Korea War. Non-alignment precluded any formal alliance with either the West or the USSR. However; it did not prevent the Free Officers from leaning on either the US or the USSR for tactical reasons. Between 1952 to 1954, Egypt leaned more towards the Western alliance system, believing that the British would seize influence over the Suez.⁴⁰ In April 1955 Indonesia hosted the Bandung conference in which Nasser was a prominent participant. The twenty-five Afro-Asian countries

³⁶ A. G. Hopkins, ‘The Victorians and Africa: A Reconsideration of the Occupation of Egypt, 1882*’, *The Journal of African History* 27, no. 2 (July 1986): 363–91, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0021853700036719>. P. 388

³⁷ White, *Decolonisation*. P. 107

³⁸ Nichols, *Eisenhower 1956*. P. 32

³⁹ Nichols. P. 33

⁴⁰ William Joseph Burns, *Economic Aid and American Policy toward Egypt, 1955-1981* (Suny Press, 1985). P. 9

that participated proclaimed to be neutral and anti-colonial. By 1956 the non-aligned was represented by India's Jawaharlal Nehru, Egypt's Nasser and Yugoslavia's Josip Broz Tito.⁴¹

A reason for expanding Egyptian influence in the Arab world was found in heritage and deemed necessary by the Free Officers. Egypt shared a sense of colonial injustice, language and religion with other Arab nations. The Free Officers considered Egyptian hegemony over an independent Arab foreign policy a necessary factor to preserve Egyptian freedom and foreign power encroachment.⁴²

The goal of ending British occupation seemed to have been solved in 1954 when in October the UK agreed with Egypt to withdraw its last troops from the Suez Canal Zone by 1956.⁴³ For the second policy goal of building up a post-colonial army, Nasser looked towards the US for an arms deal. The US was hostile towards a possible arms deal with Nasser for two reasons. First Nasser's frequent anti-Israeli speeches and support of raids into Israel. Secondly, President Eisenhower feared a Middle Eastern version of the arms-race.⁴⁴ A possible US arms deal was off the table. Consequently, Nasser leaned towards the USSR. In September 1955 the resulting Czechoslovakian arms deal supplied Egypt with millions worth of Soviet weaponry.⁴⁵ News of this arms sale shook Israel, fearing national survival.⁴⁶ The 1950 Tripartite Agreement between the UK, France and the US, aimed at limiting arms sales into Israel and Egypt and guaranteeing the Arab-Israeli armistice line of 1949, was gravely undermined by the Czech deal.⁴⁷

The US and the UK feared that Nasser would fall entirely in the Soviet sphere of influence. To keep Nasser in the Western camp and undercut Soviet efforts to fund the project, the US and the UK offered to finance the Aswan High Dam (AHD), a proposed hydroelectric project on the Nile.⁴⁸ Poverty, endemic diseases and illiteracy were widespread in Egypt. Nasser set high hopes on the AHD project to counter poverty. A study of the proposed AHD promised to improve Egyptian agricultural output by over 50 per cent. The higher agricultural output would help with economic development.⁴⁹ Nasser did not distance himself from the Soviet bloc, further agitated the West by recognising Communist China and an Egyptian-Israeli settlement

⁴¹ Zelikow and May, *Suez Deconstructed*. P. 17

⁴² Burns, *Economic Aid and American Policy toward Egypt, 1955-1981*. P. 10

⁴³ Zelikow and May, *Suez Deconstructed*. P. 72

⁴⁴ Burns, *Economic Aid and American Policy toward Egypt, 1955-1981*. P. 32

⁴⁵ Zelikow and May, *Suez Deconstructed*. P. 28

⁴⁶ Zelikow and May. P. 46

⁴⁷ Zelikow and May. P.70

⁴⁸ Zelikow and May. P. 76

⁴⁹ Zelikow and May. P. 114

seemed further away than ever. The UK and the US consequently cancelled plans to finance the AHD.⁵⁰

In June 1956 the UK completed the last evacuation of troops from the Suez Canal Zone.⁵¹ The UK did not comprehend that Nasser would nationalise the UCSMC after being denied Western financing for the AHD. Britain did note it was in a precarious place should Nasser requite due to its 'dependence on Middle Eastern oil and the Suez Canal'.⁵² On July 26, 1956, Nasser ordered the Egyptian military to seize the Suez and nationalise the UCSMC. With this move, the Suez became Egyptian public property. Besides ending foreign influence, Nasser believed that the toll paid to pass through the Suez could entirely finance the AHD.

The UK tried to regain control of the Canal peacefully but failed. After failing to do so, military force became an option. France, Israel and the UK conspired and signed the secret Protocol of Sèvres on October 24 1956, containing plans for military intervention in Egypt.⁵³ Israeli forces launched their attack on Egypt on October 29. The UK and France wanted to regain control of the Canal and therefore used the Israeli attack as a *casus bello*. France and the UK invaded Egypt under the pretence to keep the peace between Egyptian and Israeli forces. The US and the USSR were both critical of the invasion and condemned it in a UN resolution. America started pressuring the UK and France with economic sanctions. Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev went as far to threaten the UK, France and Israel with nuclear warheads should they not withdraw. British and French troops left Egypt on November 23.⁵⁴ Israel withdrew four months later with regained access to the Straits of Tiran. A United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) was deployed in the Sinai desert to secure an end to the Suez Crisis.⁵⁵

⁵⁰ Zelikow and May. P. 85-86

⁵¹ Zelikow and May. P. 86

⁵² Zelikow and May. P. 86

⁵³ Gorst and Johnman, *The Suez Crisis*. P. 100

⁵⁴ John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History*, Revised ed. edition (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998). P. 170-173

⁵⁵ Isaac Alteras, *Eisenhower and Israel: U.S.-Israeli Relations, 1953-1960* (University Press of Florida, 1993). P. 246

Chapter 2 Bandung

2.1 Introduction

At the Bandung Conference delegates from recently independent Asian and African nations voiced their refusal to align with the superpower blocks and encouraged independence. Representatives from 23 Asian and 6 African countries attended. The nations had three broad demands. First decolonisation and emancipation in Asia and Africa. Second economic development and peaceful coexistence. Third non-interference in internal affairs. The Conference underlined colonised countries' fundamental rights and manifested Third World countries' arrival on the international stage.⁵⁶

This chapter concentrates on the first sub-question: How did Nasser define a narrative of the struggle between foreign and national interests in Egypt during the Bandung Conference? On April 18, 1955, the Conference's opening session took place. The Egyptian Delegation, headed by Nasser, looked at the issues involved in self-rule and decolonisation in African and Asian nations.⁵⁷ Based on PDA, the primary source is analysed by identifying bits of text from the Egyptian Delegation statement and placing them in the core scheme. The Charter of the United Nations (CUN) is used as a second primary source emphasising the values on which the President relies throughout his speech. A final analysis follows at the end connecting to small state theory.

2.2 Analysis

A call is made to expand cooperation between African and Asiatic countries in social, cultural and economic fields. Accordingly, the shared history of foreign political and economic influence is stressed as a unifying similarity, enabling and justifying closer cooperation between the attendees.⁵⁸ Moreover, cooperation is envisioned to ease international tensions and promote world peace and prosperity.

⁵⁶ 'The Bandung Conference - Decolonisation: Geopolitical Issues and Impact on the European Integration Process', CVCE.EU by UNI.LU, accessed 5 January 2021, <https://www.cvce.eu/en/education/unit-content/-/unit/dd10d6bf-e14d-40b5-9ee6-37f978c87a01/c28105d8-8f82-4f57-b077-7e87dfbc7205>.

⁵⁷ Asia-Africa speak from Bandung, 'Statement by the Egyptian Delegation at the Opening Session (Bandung, 18 April 1955)', Speeches and hearings, CVCE.EU by UNI.LU (CVCE.EU by UNI.LU, 1 March 2017), Indonesia, Bandung, <https://www.cvce.eu/en/education/unit-content/-/unit/dd10d6bf-e14d-40b5-9ee6-37f978c87a01/c28105d8-8f82-4f57-b077-7e87dfbc7205/Resources>.

⁵⁸ Bandung. P. 2

Several problems are noted in the statement. First is the growing insecurity in the world due to the 'development of mass-destructive weapons capable of effecting total annihilation'.⁵⁹ This is an apparent reference to the nuclear missile arms race between the USSR and the US. Secondly, colonial powers have obstructed specific obligations towards non-self-governing territories placed upon them by the CUN. The administering powers have failed in their duty to 'take due account of the political aspirations of its peoples and to assist them in the progressive development of their political institutions'.⁶⁰ The third problem is described as the 'game of power politics' in which 'small nations can be used as tools' by some 'big powers'. It is argued that 'power politics' has to disappear in order to ease international tension.

Big powers seem to refer to the US and the USSR, as they influenced recently decolonised countries to join either block. The 'great powers' are also charged, referring to the superpowers and the former European Great Powers, with hindering the UN's progress. The creation of Israel is framed as an example in which the UN did not act out its role as guardian of international law and justice. According to the Delegation the 'big powers', referencing the US and USSR who voted in favour of the creation of Israel, had an influential role in the injustice towards the Palestinian cause, constituting a 'brutal and immoral violation of human principles'.⁶¹ This aligns with the Egyptian feeling of betrayal after the British withdrawal from Palestine described in the historical context. Finally, the big powers are condemned for isolating small nations, weakening ties and unity between small nations and causing them 'to fall under the grip of foreign domination'.⁶² Instead, it is claimed that all countries have the right and are obliged to independently play their constructive role in improving international relations and alleviating international tensions.

Although it is not clear at first glance, goals in the statement can be divided into Egyptian foreign policy aims and general objectives for Asian-African cooperation. The first explicit Egyptian foreign policy aspiration is the firm application of the colonial powers' responsibilities by the CUN.⁶³ The second aim is to support the UN and its Charter, which inaugurated a 'new international order' as an instrument for the maintenance and promotion of international peace, security, and world prosperity.⁶⁴ The third foreign policy target is Egypt's dedication to 'expand the scope of cooperation among the Asiatic-African group'.⁶⁵

⁵⁹ Bandung. P. 3

⁶⁰ Bandung. P. 2

⁶¹ Bandung. P. 3

⁶² Bandung. P. 4

⁶³ Bandung. P. 2

⁶⁴ Bandung. P. 2

⁶⁵ Bandung. P. 2

The first wish for Asian-African cooperation is the Conference's responsibility to restore worldwide faith in the 'reality of international justice' and the 'workability of international cooperation'.⁶⁶ The second is an envisioned world peace. 'Liquidation of colonialism' is the third objective. This follows from Nasser's conviction that colonialism is the root of many conflicts.⁶⁷ The fourth intention is putting modern science and technology, emphasising atomic energy, to peaceful use; disapproving of the Soviet-American arms race. The fifth and final ambition is not to thwart nationalism but to deal with it 'wisely and realistically' to get a response of 'friendship and generosity'.

Unsurprisingly, values underlying the goals laid out are emphasised on the values espoused in the CUN, the document explicitly mentioned nine times throughout the speech. The CUN emphasises the following values: human rights, equal rights, self-determination of peoples, human dignity, universal peace, freedom, social progress and better standards of life, all of which appear in Nasser's speech.⁶⁸ Anti-imperialist sentiment voiced by the Free Officers and earlier by the Arabi revolt is also an underlying value, emphasising Egypt's sentiment of colonial injustice, as described in the historical context.

Means to achieve the objectives set out in the speech are the following: First, every nation has to respect every other countries' territorial integrity and political independence and refrain from foreign intervention.⁶⁹ Second that every country has the right to choose its own economic and political system.⁷⁰ These means relate to the Egyptian foreign policy goal of supporting the UN and its Charter and applying responsibilities placed upon colonial powers by the UN. It also relates to the Bandung objective of eliminating colonialism. The Bandung ambition of an envisioned world peace is deemed possible via the UN. The UN's continued success in reduction, limitation, and reduction of armaments acts as a mechanism to stop the Soviet-American nuclear arms race. The UN could work as a tool to eliminate nuclear weapons.⁷¹ Atomic energy is established to be an instrument to lift people out of poverty in economically underdeveloped states. With the use of atomic energy, people's standard of living would rise, aligning with the CUN value of promoting world prosperity.⁷² The Conference and its possible successors are regarded to be a 'standing machinery' for closer Asian-African cooperation.⁷³

⁶⁶ Bandung. P. 3

⁶⁷ Bandung. P. 4

⁶⁸ 'UN Charter (Full Text)', 15 April 2016, <https://www.un.org/en/sections/un-charter/un-charter-full-text/>.

⁶⁹ Bandung, 'Statement by the Egyptian Delegation at the Opening Session (Bandung, 18 April 1955)'. P. 5

⁷⁰ Bandung. P. 5

⁷¹ Bandung. P. 3

⁷² Bandung. P. 3

⁷³ Bandung. P. 5

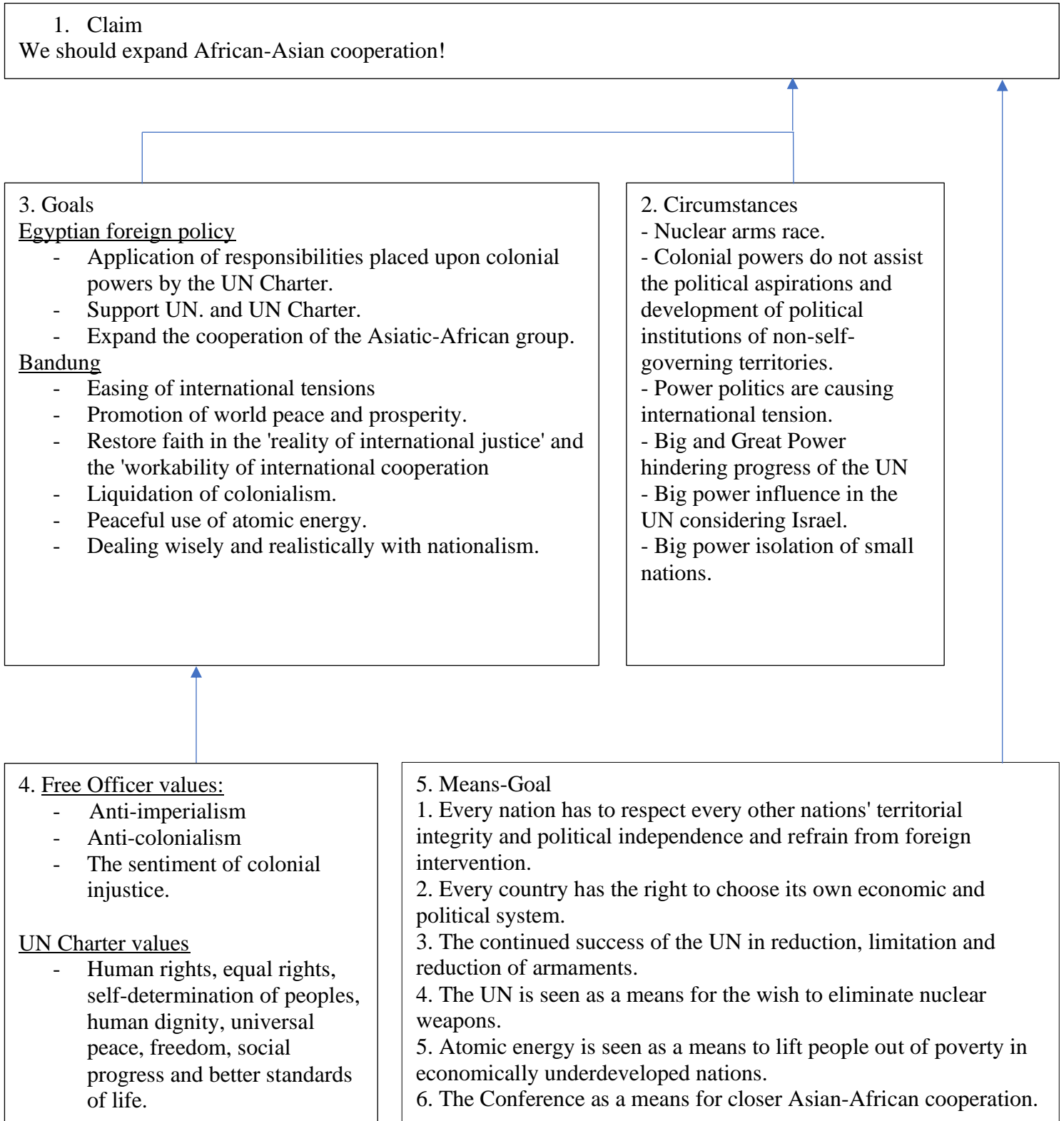


Figure 2: The completed framework for the analysis of Nasser's political discourse at Bandung

2.3 Answer to sub-question 1

‘Egypt which has long been a victim of foreign domination stands in defence of the cause of freedom and welfare whenever it arises and the principle of self-determination for all nations.’⁷⁴

What follows from the PDA of the statement at Bandung is that Nasser defines the struggle between foreign and national interests in Egypt by stressing international justice and self-determination. A good argument is made by aligning international justice and self-determination as warranted by the UN. The President skillfully utilises the UN Charter's espoused values and underscores that Egypt has long been subjugated to foreign interests. However, the statement's focus is not limited to Egypt itself, but that is precisely what he is aiming at, by emphasising the universal values of the CUN (human rights, equal rights, self-determination of peoples, human dignity, universal peace, freedom, social progress and better standards of life), he is building a broad international profile of possible supporters. The statement took place in the era of decolonisation. Hence, an emphasis on universal values that argues against foreign domination would pay out later in the Suez conflict with nations feeling sympathy towards Egypt's cause.

⁷⁴ Bandung. P. 2

Chapter 3 The Suez Crisis

3.1 Introduction

This chapter centres on the second sub-question: How did Nasser define a narrative of the struggle between foreign and national interests in Egypt during the Suez Crisis? Two speeches are analysed to answer this sub-question, followed by a conclusion. The first speech was held on July 26, 1956. After the UK and the US rejected to fund the AHD, the nationalisation of the UCSMC was announced. On September 15, 1956, the second speech was held in which the creation of a Suez Canal Users Association (SCUA) was condemned. The SCUA was a proposed grouping of 18 of the world's leading maritime nations that would jointly manage the Canal, introduced by US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles. Both primary sources are analysed utilising PDA. The CUN is used once more as a primary source for identifying specific values.

3.2 Analysis of the July 26 speech

According to the speech, foreign interests have long seized and held powers, functions, offices and places in possession by force and without right in Egypt. Therefore, the central claim for action is to restore the 'usurped rights' to build a 'strong and dignified Egypt, the Arab Egypt.'⁷⁵

The history of Egyptians under the influence of foreign subjugation is addressed throughout the declaration. The struggle between national and foreign interests is depicted as a problem in which Egypt lost out for more than a century to (in consecutive order) France, the UK and the US. The Suez Canal is alleged to be the primary source of the conflict of foreign and national interests: 'built for the sake of Egypt and for its benefits' but turning out to be a 'source of exploitation and the draining of wealth'.⁷⁶ The speeches' starting point of the history of foreign subjugation is the year 1854, in which Ferdinand de Lesseps arrived in Egypt. The Frenchman is portrayed as a man with low moral esteem who began to work 'cautiously and treacherously' for his own gain under false pretences once he arrived in Alexandria. According to De Lesseps, Egypt would benefit significantly from the yet to be constructed Suez Canal. This false pretence is linked to a recent conversation Nasser had with Eugene R. Black, President of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, about negotiating a loan to construct the AHD.

⁷⁵ United States Department of State, *The Suez Canal Problem, July 26-September 22, 1956: A Documentary Publication* (Department of State, 1956). P.28

⁷⁶ State. P. 29

‘I [Nasser] told him [Black] we have complexes from such matters [loans or foreign financial obligations], and we do not want to see another Cromer governing us again ... We have complexes from De Lesseps and from Cromer, and from political occupation through economic occupation.’⁷⁷

A reference is made here to the British colonial administrator Evelyn Baring, 1st Earl of Cromer. After the humiliating bankruptcy of 1876 and the British occupation of 1882, Baring had de facto control from 1883 to 1907 over Egypt's governance and finances. De Lesseps, supposedly, told the Khedive that the UCSMC was a private company that had nothing to do with imperialism, occupation, domination, or governments, factors attributed to the company by Nasser.⁷⁸ The story about how Egypt received 44% of the shares is quoted as is the widespread notion that Egypt's contribution to the Suez Canal development in terms of lives, money and labour was far more significant than any other country. During the 'corvee', the word used to describe the Suez's construction period, Egypt supplied labourers of which '120,000 died without getting paid'.

The assertion is made that the UCSMC operates as, and has become, a 'state within a state', ignoring Egypt's laws and regulations and humiliating its ministers and cabinets. This continues in the argument that 'result of the words of De Lesseps in 1856, the result of friendship and loans' was a direct cause of the British occupation in 1882.⁷⁹ The bankruptcy outlined in the historical context is also an important theme, which Nasser utilises to illustrate that Egypt was forced to sell 44% per cent of shares in the company to Britain ending with the question 'Is history to repeat itself again with treachery and deceit?'⁸⁰

A compelling contrast is generated by making public the offer the US and the UK would have offered him for help with financing the AHD (70 million dollars), which is opposed with the 100 million dollars of UCSMC yearly income going to foreign shareholders.⁸¹ By contrasting these numbers, one can read between the lines one of Nasser's aims, not yet revealed, namely his wish to finance the AHD with the income of the UCSMC.

The goals of the speech follow out the main claim for action to restore the usurped rights. First and most important are the restoration of Egyptian rights in the Suez. Second is building the AHD without foreign interference or financing; 'In this manner, we shall accomplish much

⁷⁷ State. P. 25

⁷⁸ State. P. 26

⁷⁹ State. P. 26

⁸⁰ State. P. 27

⁸¹ State. P. 27

and feel dignity and pride and feel that we are building up our country to suit ourselves... We build what we want and do what we want with nobody to account to'.⁸² Third, is political and economic independence. The fourth objective is genuine sovereignty, dignity and pride. The fifth aim is 'eradicating traces of the past', the traces of 'slavery, exploitation and domination', referring to foreign subjugation caused by 'imperialism through treachery and deceit'.⁸³ The sixth aspiration is the industrialisation of the economy.⁸⁴

Values underlying the aims set out are found in anti-imperialist values and a sense of colonial injustice (Free Officer values), which were experienced as 'humiliation and submission'.⁸⁵ Second is the value of a strong and dignified Arab Egypt.⁸⁶ The third value is dignity, freedom and pride. Dignity, freedom, and pride are reflected in Egypt's wish to 'march towards construction, industrialisation and creation'. The CUN values of self-determination of peoples, human dignity and better standards of life play a role. The CUN values are exhibited in the goal of political and economic independence and industrialisation to lift Egypt out of poverty through the construction of the AHD.

Means to restore the usurped rights are the nationalisation of the Suez Canal. Restoring rights to the Suez would 'compensate for the past and build up new edifices for pride and dignity'.⁸⁷ By nationalising the Suez, the profits could also finance the AHD without foreign interference and loans. With that, the goal of political and economic independence would be strengthened. So would the goals of sovereignty, dignity, pride and lastly the eradication of traces of the past. The industrialisation of the economy would likewise be sped up with the AHD according to the project's high hopes outlined in the previous chapter.

Alternative goals site within the contrast between the goal of economic independence and letting history repeat itself. Letting history repeat itself refers to allowing foreign economic domination and control in the form of the UCSMC and foreign financing of the AHD to continue destroying Egyptian political independence and freedom.⁸⁸

⁸² State. P. 30

⁸³ State. P. 27

⁸⁴ State. P. 29

⁸⁵ State. P. 28

⁸⁶ State. P. 28

⁸⁷ State. P. 30

⁸⁸ State. P. 27

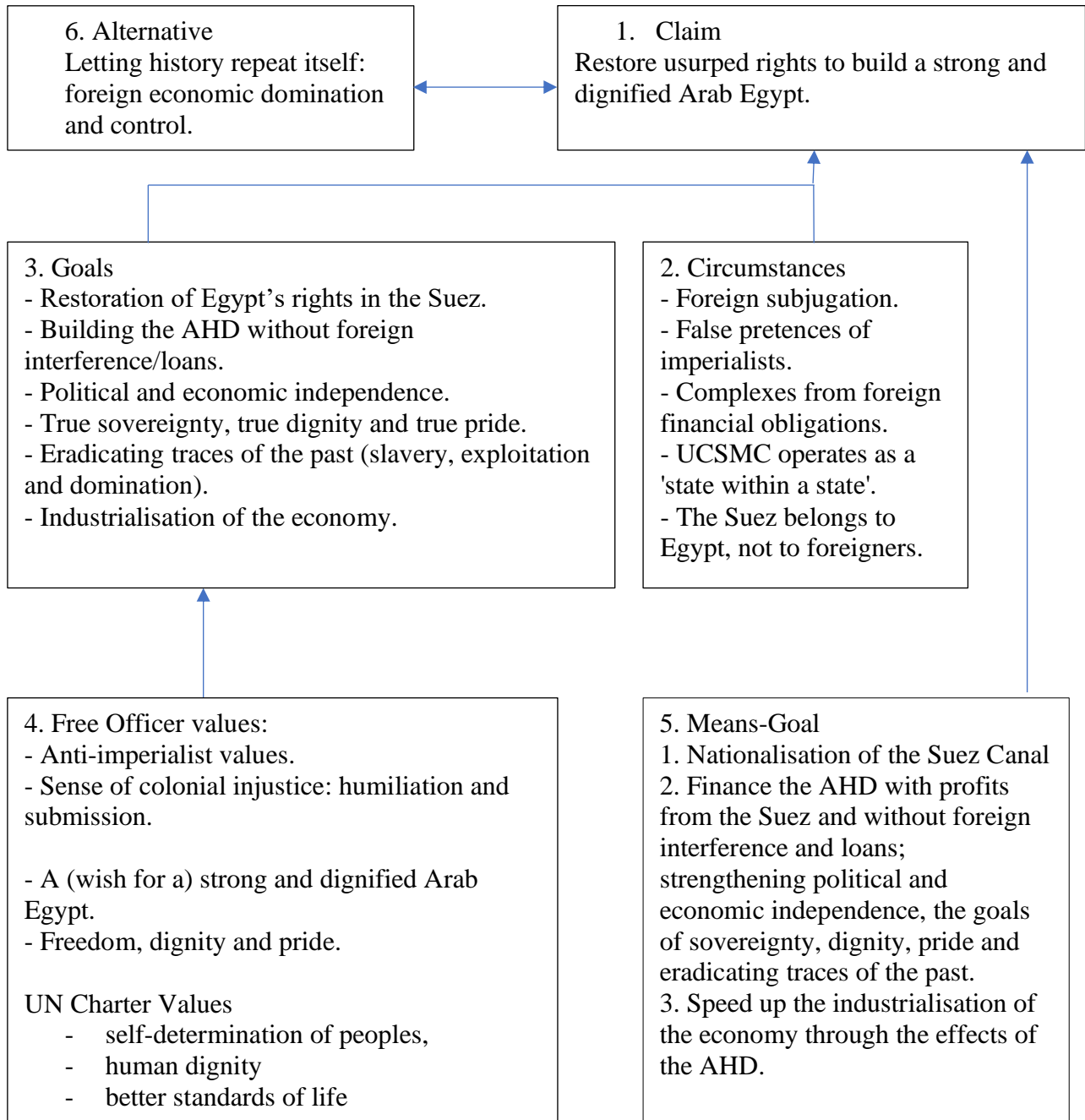


Figure 3: The completed framework for the analysis of the July 26 speech

3.3 Analysis of the September 15 speech

The central claim for action in this speech is that Egypt denounces the Suez Canal Users Association (SCUA). The alternative options named is the establishment of the SCUA.

‘Previously they [The UK and the US] had denied us loans and financial aid necessary for the High Dam project and they seemed bent on depriving Egypt of benefits she could derive from the canal to raise the standard of living of her people’.⁸⁹

It is argued that Egyptian rights to the Suez Canal are threatened by ‘imperialistic schemes of a number of nations who have uncovered their desires for domination and supremacy’.⁹⁰ Imperialistic schemes refer to the plans for an international body managing the Suez; the SCUA. The SCUA would steal the Canal from Egypt and ‘deprive her of rightful canal dues’.⁹¹ Therefore, the SCUA is seen as proof that Britain, the US and France are determined to stifle Egyptian attempts at industrialisation and progress. This argument relies on the wish that construction of the AHD paid for by Canal dues, would spur industrialisation of the economy and raise the standard of living.⁹² Above all the SCUA is seen as an attempt of foreign subjugation, derogating Egypt from sovereignty.

The goal set out in the statement is that Egypt should defend and maintain its sovereign rights and preserve its dignity.⁹³ What follows are the values that underly this specific aim. The Free Officer values outlined in the first chapter (anti-imperialism, anti-colonialism and sentiment of colonial injustice) appear throughout the speech and serve to support maintaining sovereign rights and preserving dignity. Explicit mentions to these values are made throughout the discourse as ‘objectives which we have proclaimed since the inception of the revolution’. Egyptian people are suffering through ‘the fetters of foreign domination, aggression and feudalism’ and are therefore more determined than ever to defend their sovereignty.⁹⁴ An emphasis is made that Egypt stands for international legislation and is not afraid to represent a small power standing ‘in the face of great powers threatening with armed might’.⁹⁵ Attacking the proposed SCUA is done by relying on international law.

⁸⁹ State. P. 346

⁹⁰ State. P. 345

⁹¹ State. P. 348

⁹² State. P. 347

⁹³ State. P. 345

⁹⁴ State. P. 346

⁹⁵ State. P. 349

An explicit comment is made on the matter of Bandung; 'Today we are victorious while we are serving every nation of the world. We are serving countries like India and Indonesia and we are victorious while we contribute toward world prosperity and development of world trade'.⁹⁶ What the President is doing here is appealing to a broad international profile of possible supporters of his cause, outlined in the chapter on Bandung: 'Free peoples, too, people who are really free will stand by us and support us against the forces of tyranny'.⁹⁷

Arab nationalism, of which Nasser aspired to be its leader, is also used as a value to support the goal. This aligns with one of the Free Officers' foreign policy goals outlined in the chapter on the Suez Crisis, namely Egypt's wish to expand its influence in the Arab world; 'The whole Arab nation will stand by us in our common fight against aggression and domination'.⁹⁸

'I am speaking in the name of every Egyptian Arab and in the name of all free countries and of all those who believe in liberty and are ready to defend it. I am speaking in the name of principles proclaimed by these countries in the Atlantic Charter.' [...] we believe in international law. But we will never submit'⁹⁹

The argumentation in the speech depends unambiguously on the values of the Atlantic Charter, which is used to call out the foreign aggressors who betray its values.¹⁰⁰ The Atlantic Charter is the predecessor of the CUN. First is the value of 'traversing the high seas without hindrance' this value appears in the promise not to discriminate between Canal users.¹⁰¹ Second is the values of 'safety within national boundaries, freedom from fear and want' to stress Egypt's rights to maintain and preserve its sovereign rights and dignity. The value of 'the right of every people to choose their own form of government' is used to call out the Bandung nations and countries that similarly aspire to anti-colonialism. The fourth value is anti-colonialism, illustrated by naming the ongoing French-Algerian war. The French-Algerian war also serves to illustrate foreign aggression and subjugation: '[...] of 8,000,000 Algerians, 10,000 are fighting half a million French soldiers. We have arms sufficient to equip those who can fight.

⁹⁶ State. P. 349

⁹⁷ State. P. 349

⁹⁸ State. P. 349

⁹⁹ State. P. 346

¹⁰⁰ '1941: The Atlantic Charter', August 25 2015, <https://www.un.org/en/sections/history-united-nations-charter/1941-atlantic-charter/index.html>.

¹⁰¹ State, *The Suez Canal Problem, July 26-September 22, 1956*. P. 348

We shall fight aggressors'.¹⁰² This sentence also demonstrates Nasser's commitment to supporting small powers under the yoke of foreign influences.

For Egypt to maintain its sovereign rights (emphasised on the Suez) and preserve its dignity, two means to achieve those goals are made explicit. First off is to resist any form of foreign aggression. Secondly is to take up the fight against 'those who attempt to derogate from our sovereignty'.¹⁰³ International jurisdiction is used throughout the speech to argue why foreign aggressors do not abide by international treaties. The 1888 convention on the use of the Suez is employed to argue why it is impossible to have two bodies organising navigation in the Canal.¹⁰⁴ The 1888 convention is also utilised to show that Egypt can run the Canal by itself: 'But Egypt has been executing provisions of the 1888 convention throughout past years till the present day. Between 1888 and 1956 ships have been sailing through the Canal and paying dues to a body responsible for its administration. Ships had always abided by measures and regulations imposed by the canal company'.¹⁰⁵ The concession between the Khedive and De Lesseps, in which the company was said to be an Egyptian company subject to Egyptian authority, is mentioned to justify why Egypt nationalised the UCSMC in the first place.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² State. P. 349

¹⁰³ State. P.348

¹⁰⁴ State. P. 348

¹⁰⁵ State. P. 349

¹⁰⁶ State. P. 347

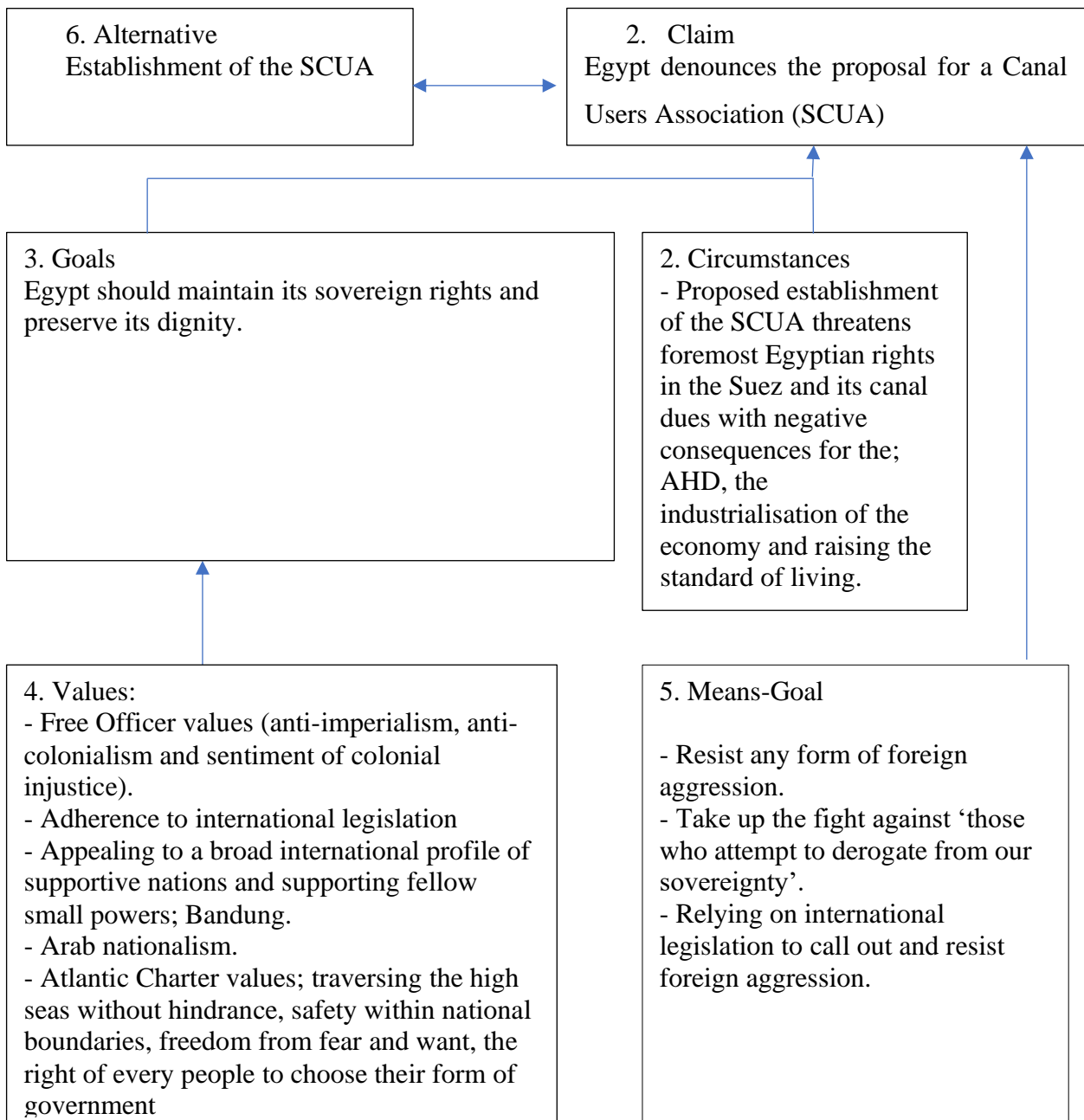


Figure 4: The completed framework for the analysis of the September 15 speech

3.4 Conclusion

What follows from the PDA of the July 26 speech is that the struggle between foreign and national interests in Egypt is defined by stressing international justice and self-determination, similarly to the approach taken at the Bandung Conference. Free Officer values, a wish for a strong and dignified Egypt, and three CUN values (self-determination of peoples, human dignity and better standards of life) are the underlying values throughout the discourse. A defining factor of this speech is that a significant emphasis is placed on Egyptian foreign subjugation history. A picture is drawn between national interests losing out to foreign imperialists, moving from the De Lesseps towards the Arabi revolt and the British occupation. In the September 15 speech, the proposed establishment of the SCUA is attacked by stressing Egypt's independence, sovereign rights, and dignity. Nasser highlights that the nationalisation is within Egypt's sovereign rights and that Egypt guarantees the right of free passage through the Canal and is thus not in breach of international legislation. In conclusion, during the Suez Crisis, the narrative of the struggle between foreign and national interest in Egypt is defined by continuing the approach started at Bandung: stressing international justice and self-determination.

Conclusion

In this conclusion, the answers to both sub-questions are evaluated and linked together to arrive at a satisfactory answer to this thesis's primary research question: How did Nasser define a narrative of the Egyptian struggle between foreign and national interests, as an instrument to increase Egypt's margins for manoeuvre in the run-up to the Suez Crisis (1955-1956)?

In the chapter on historical context Egypt's long history of foreign subjugation was elaborated. What comes forth from the chapter is that the Suez Canal has a lengthy history of Anglo-French foreign domination with an equal counterpart of Egyptian resistance against external control.

Following the chapter on historical context are two chapters considering three primary sources, analysed from a cross-disciplinary linguistic perspective. The second chapter starts with the Bandung Conference. The PDA of the statement by the Egyptian Delegation shows that the narrative was defined by laying emphasis on international justice and self-determination, as merited by the UN and its Charter. By pointing towards the universal values of the CUN in an era of decolonisation, a broad international profile of possible Egyptian supporters could be established.

In the third chapter the nationalisation speech was first studied. PDA of this particular speech shows that the narrative was defined similarly to Bandung; international justice and self-determination were utilized to justify nationalisation. A substantial weight is placed on the history of Egyptian foreign subjugation. In the second discourse, the September 15 speech, the SCUA was condemned by stressing Egypt's independence, sovereign rights, and dignity.

The PDA analyses of the three speeches have shown differences between the speeches on the matters of alternatives named, goals, claims, circumstances, values and means to achieve goals. The speeches' shared denominator is Nasser's emphasis on defining the struggle between foreign and national interests as follows: Egypt was humiliated by foreign aggression for over a century but was now resuming a position of strength by underlining the universal values of international justice and self-determination.

Nasser's narrative inspired the US, China, the USSR, Cuba, Iran, Peru and Yugoslavia to vote against France, Israel and the UK in the UN Security Council Resolution 119 on October 31 1956. In an article from the New York Times, accessed through the official archive, and published on the very same day, excerpts from the the debate within the UN Security Council are written down, from which the commitment of the supporting countries to

Egypt's cause is clear.¹⁰⁷ The US opens the agenda putting forth the draft resolution and stating their shock with Israel's invasion of the Sinai Peninsula;

‘We have asked for this urgent meeting of the Security Council to consider the critical developments which have occurred and which are unfortunately still continuing in the Sinai Peninsula as the result of Israel's invasion of that area yesterday [...] it comes as a shock to the United States Government that this action should have occurred less than twenty four hours after President Eisenhower had sent a second earnest personal appeal to the Prime Minister [David Ben-Gurion] of Israel urging Israel not to undertake any action against its Arab neighbours, and pointing out that we had no reason to believe that those neighbors had taken any steps justifying Israel's action of mobilization' [...] These events make the necessity for the urgent consideration of this item all too plain. Failure by the Council to react at this time would be a clear avoidance of its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security'.¹⁰⁸

The other supporting countries of Egypt follow a similar line of reasoning, namely that the Israeli attack had no solid grounding in international law, a recurring theme in Nasser's narrative. For example, Joza Brilej, the representative of Yugoslavia, states that Israel's attack is a ‘flagrant act of aggression within the meaning of article 39 of the Charter [any threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression]’.¹⁰⁹ Arkav A. Sobolev, representative of the Soviet Union, calls the attack an act of aggression against Egypt and demands the immediate withdrawal of Israeli troops. Sobolev continues to argue that the pledge made by France and the UK to police the Suez Canal area is purely an act to intervene in the Middle East without waiting for UN action. Eventually he calls for all UN members to ‘refrain from the use of force or threat of force in the area in any manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations’.¹¹⁰

By crafting his narrative, Nasser got other nations' support for Egypt in the UN resolution that condemned the tripartite aggression (Israel, France and the UK). Therefore,

¹⁰⁷ ‘Excerpts From Debate in U.N. Security Council on the Israeli-Egyptian Situation; Henry Cabot Lodge Jr., United States Dag Hammarskjold, Secretary General Dr. Joza Brilej, Yugoslavia Arkady A. Sobolev, Soviet Union Omar Loutfi, Egypt Abba Eban, Israel Sir Pierson Dixon, Britain Bernard Cornut-Gentille, France Second Statement By Mr. Lodge Second Statement By Mr. Sobolev Excerpts From Debate in U.N. Council’, accessed 22 January 2021, <http://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1956/10/31/88481070.html?pageNumber=8>.

¹⁰⁸ ‘Excerpts From Debate in U.N. Security Council’.

¹⁰⁹ ‘Excerpts From Debate in U.N. Security Council’.

¹¹⁰ ‘Excerpts From Debate in U.N. Security Council’.

Nasser increased Egyptian margins for manoeuvre with narrative as an instrument.¹¹¹ Nasser stretched Egyptian margin's for manoeuvre without military strength, but by using his narrative of the Egyptian struggle between foreign and national interests to garner international support, which build on the shoulders of the universally applicable espoused UN Charter values.

¹¹¹ 'S/RES/119(1956)', accessed 14 January 2021, [https://undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=S%2FRES%2F119\(1956\)&Language=E&DeviceType=Desktop](https://undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=S%2FRES%2F119(1956)&Language=E&DeviceType=Desktop).

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Annex 1

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Statement by the Egyptian Delegation at the opening session (Bandung, April 18 1955)

Mr. Chairman. Gentlemen.

In this Conference, we are meeting as representatives of the Asiatic and African countries. There is a striking similarity between the conditions prevailing in our countries; a similarity that operates as a unifying force; we have emerged from a long period of foreign influence, political as well as economic. At present we are faced with such problems as economic development, social and political reconstruction. It is not surprising therefore that we should feel close together; a fact that finds its expression in our concepts of world peace and international justice.

Mr. Chairman.

The preoccupation of Egypt with its pressing and most-needed social and economic reforms has not diverted her from carrying out her international responsibilities in such a critical epoch. Egypt which has long been a victim of foreign domination stands in defence of the cause of freedom and welfare whenever it arises and the principle of self-determination for all nations. This constitutes one of the cardinal features of our foreign policy. Egypt has always been identified with all efforts and initiatives designed to secure for dependent peoples the full enjoyment of the rights and benefits to which they are entitled under the Charter of the United Nations.

On the other hand, this Charter contains definite commitments on the part of the world organisation and positive responsibilities on the part of its members regarding non-self-governing territories. The Charter lays certain obligations on the administering powers. Among these is the obligation to develop in those territories self-government, to take due account of the political aspirations of its peoples and to assist them in the progressive development of their political institutions. However, the colonial powers have always obstructed any effective supervision of their administration of the non-self-governing territories. We have struggled and

we shall continue to struggle for the strict application of the obligations placed upon the colonial powers by the Charter.

The second feature of our foreign policy is our unshaken faith in the new international order which was inaugurated in the Charter of the United Nations and our sincere and continuous support of the world organisation as an effective instrument in the maintenance of the international peace and security and the promotion of the world prosperity.

In the tension between the great powers which has unfortunately hindered the progress of the United Nations, Egypt always stood for the Charter and its principles.

Although the Arab countries were among those who were most disillusioned in the failure of this organisation to act in accordance with human rights, especially with regard to the countries of northern Africa and Palestine, this did not cause us, however, to lose interest in it, nor did it deter us from cooperation in its activities or weaken our faith in its lofty principles and purposes.

The third feature of our foreign policy is to expand the scope of cooperation among the Asiatic-African group. It is my deep conviction that the cooperation among the Asiatic-African nations can play a dominant role in the lessening of the present international tension and the promotion of the world peace and prosperity.

At this time when the United Nations passes through what I may call a crisis, the Conference bears a special responsibility, that is to restore to the people of the world by practical steps and concerted action their faith in the reality of international justice and the workability of international cooperation.

All over the world there is a growing sense of insecurity. The fear of war has been aggravated by the development of mass-destructive weapons capable of effecting total annihilation. The stakes are high in terms of the very survival of mankind.

To achieve this noble objective, it seems that five conditions are essential: the first is the success of the efforts which the United Nations have been making for the regulation, limitation and reduction of all armed forces and armaments; also for the elimination of mass-destructive weapons. It is with a painful awareness of the extremely heavy burden of armaments which is tending to break the back of the world economy and which is distressingly hampering social progress in the world, that Egypt, and I trust all countries represented here and even other countries not represented here, ardently hope that a stop be rapidly made to this race of armaments and that the world will soon awake from the horrifying nightmare which it causes.

Furthermore there is a close connection between raising the standard of living of the peoples and decreasing the armaments burden.

It is also evident that modern science and technology, if utilised for peaceful purposes, offer the possibility of greater well-being for the human race than has ever been known. Put to peaceful uses, atomic energy offers hitherto undreamed-of opportunities, especially for that vast majority of humanity that is still living in poverty in the economically under-developed areas of the world.

The second condition for world peace is the adherence by the United Nations to the Charter and its principles. All decisions and actions taken by the world organisation must be based on the Charter. Had this been the case the flagrant injustice inflicted upon the people of Palestine and the unprecedented aggression committed against them would not have taken place. Permit me to make but a few remarks on a subject which involves my deep regret. Under the eyes of the United Nations and with her help and sanction, the people of Palestine were uprooted and expelled from their fatherland, to be replaced by a completely imported populace.

Never before in history has there been such a brutal and immoral violation of human principles.

Is there any guarantee for the small nations that the big powers who took part in this tragedy would not allow themselves to repeat it again, against another innocent and helpless people? It is almost impossible to believe that such injustice could exist in the twentieth century, the age of world order, and under the eyes of the United Nations, the guardian of international law and justice.

Mr. Chairman.

No less important as a condition for a world peace is the full respect by all states of their international obligations.

Under the Charter of the United Nations and the universal declaration of human rights the treatment by any state of any national or ethnic group has ceased to be a matter of domestic jurisdiction as certain states still advocate. It has become a question of international jurisdiction and a matter of world concern. Discrimination in any of its forms does not only constitute violation of state obligations, it impairs friendly relations among nations. It is regrettable that racial discrimination is still practised in South Africa. This attitude was described by the United Nations Commission on the racial situation in the Union of South Africa in the following terms: "The doctrine of racial superiority on which the apartheid policy was based is scientifically false, extremely dangerous to international peace and security, and contrary to the dignity and worth of the human person".

Mr. Chairman.

There is another condition to which I would like to make reference and which is usually overlooked especially by some of the big powers. The game of power politics in which the small nations can be used as tools must be stopped if the existing international tension is to come to an end.

The imposition by the big powers of certain policies for the sake of their selfish interests has the damaging effect of isolating the small nations and weakening the ties of unity and community of interests existing between them, thus causing them to fall under the grip of foreign domination.

Small nations are entitled and bound to play independently their constructive role in improving international relations and easing international tension.

Mr. Chairman.

Last, but not least, is the liquidation of colonialism which has always been a source of friction and unrest. Since the days of colonial expansion, the problem of colonial rule by alien powers has lain at the roots of many wars.

We have been witnessing for some years the rising tide of nationalism not only in our part of the world but also in various parts of Asia and Africa.

Our own experience shows us that nationalism when thwarted creates difficult problems; but if it is dealt with wisely and realistically, it responds with friendship and generosity.

We greatly hope that this will be borne in mind in dealing with those remaining areas of the world where the natural urge of nationalism has not yet been satisfied. I hardly need to emphasise the fact that we live now in a different age and that the peoples have awakened and nothing can stem the tide of nationalism and progress.

On what grounds can anyone condone the fact that the countries of North Africa which, for centuries, were independent nations and the seats of great civilisations, are now being degraded to the status of non-self-governing territories? Are such policies conducive to peace and cooperation among the nations? Most of the calamities of wars and conflagrations which have brought untold sorrow to mankind were always due to the fact that the right decisions were not taken at the right time.

Mr. Chairman.

Besides aiming at lessening existing tension whether in the world at large or in our respective areas, the cooperation between the Asiatic and African Nations can lead these countries representing the biggest two continents of the world and more than half mankind towards progress and better standards of living.

For world peace is not merely the absence of war. It requires concerted endeavours to create conditions of political stability, economic development and social justice; all being essentials for the development of a healthy world society.

Mr. Chairman.

The cooperation we have come eagerly here to promote can never attain its full and effective ends unless we all believe in the fulfilment of the following fundamental principles:

First: Every country has the duty to respect the political independence and territorial integrity of every other country and also to refrain from intervention in the affairs of other countries.

Second: Every country has the right to choose freely its political as well as economic systems.

Guided by these purposes and principles our Conference can no doubt reach agreement on such concrete proposals and practical steps as may make it possible to have a standing machinery for putting into effect the cooperation among our countries in the cultural, economic and social fields.

I am confident that I interpret the desires of all our peoples when I express the fervent wish that the deliberations of this Conference may mark a decisive turning point towards the improvement of the international situation. This is a new landmark in the long quest for peace and justice.

Thank you!

Annex 2

State, United States Department of. *The Suez Canal Problem, July 26-September 22, 1956: A Documentary Publication*. Department of State, 1956. P. 25-30

Egyptian Nationalisation of the Suez Canal Company and Initial Western Reactions, July 26–August 2, 1956 Speech by President Nasser, Alexandria, July 26

[Extract]

[Speaking of a meeting with Mr. Eugene R. Black, President of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, with which Egypt had been negotiating for a loan to help finance the construction of a high dam on the Nile at Aswan, Mr. Nasser said:]

The Suez Canal I began to look at Mr. Black sitting in his chair imagining that I was sitting before Ferdinand de Lesseps.

I recalled the words which we used to read. In 1854, Ferdinand de Lesseps arrived in Egypt. He went to Mohamed Said Pasha, the Khedive. He sat beside him and told him “We want to dig the Suez Canal. This project will greatly benefit you. It is a great project and will bring excellent returns to Egypt.”

While Black was speaking to me, I felt the complexes which his words revived. I was again carried back to Ferdinand de Lesseps.

I told him we have complexes from such matters, and we do not want to see another Cromer governing us again. Loans and interests on these loans have ended in the occupation of our country. I requested him to take this into consideration. We have complexes from De Lesseps and from Cromer, and from political occupation through economic occupation.

That was the picture I had in mind, the picture of De Lesseps who arrived on November 7, 1854. He arrived in Alexandria and began to work cautiously and treacherously. On November 30, 1854, he had already contacted the Khedive and obtained the Concession for the canal from him. The Concession said: "Our friend De Lesseps has drawn our attention to the benefits which will accrue to Egypt by joining the Mediterranean and the Red Sea by a waterway for the passage of ships. He informed us of the possibility of forming a company for this purpose to comprise the investors of capital. We have approved the idea and have authorised him to form and to operate a company for the digging of the Suez Canal and to exploit it between the two seas.”

This was in 1854. In 1856, a hundred years ago, a Firman was issued whereby the company was formed. Egypt got 44% of the shares and bound herself with certain obligations to De Lesseps. The De Lesseps company is a private company! It has nothing to do with governments, domination, occupation or imperialism! De Lesseps told the Khedive "I am your friend, I have come to benefit you, and to dig a canal between the two seas for your advantage."

The Suez Canal Company was formed, and Egypt got 44% of the shares. Egypt undertook to supply labour to dig the canal by corvee, of whom 120,000 died without getting paid. We also paid De Lesseps in order that he might give up some concession. We gave up the 15% of the profits which we were supposed to get over and above the profits of our 44% of the shares. Thus, contrary to the statements made by De Lesseps to the Khedive in which he said that the canal was dug for Egypt, Egypt has become the property of the canal.

Article 16 of the agreement concluded on February 22, 1866, stipulated that in view of the fact that the Suez Canal Company is an Egyptian company, it is subject to the country's laws subject neither to the country's laws nor its regulations." It considers itself a state within a state. The disputes which arise between Egypt and the Company or between individuals of any nationality are to come before Egyptian courts in accordance with the regulations set forth by the laws of the country. Egyptian courts are competent in giving their verdict with regard to disputes which may come up between the Egyptian government and the company according to Egyptian laws. The result of the words of De Lesseps in 1856, the result of friendship and loans, was the occupation of Egypt in 1882.

Egypt then borrowed money. What happened? Egypt was obliged, during the reign of Ismail, to sell its 44% of the shares in the company. Immediately, England sent out to purchase the shares. I bought them for 4million pounds. Then, Ismail gave up his 5% of the company's profits against the ceding of some concessions by the company which were granted to it.

The [n?] Ismail was obliged to pay to Britain the 5% profit which he had relinquished. This amounted to over 4 million pounds. In other words, Britain got Egypt's 44% of the company's shares free. This was the history which took place a century ago.

Is history to repeat itself again with treachery and deceit? Will economic independence [words omitted?] or economic domination and control be the cause of the destruction of our political independence and freedom?

Brothers, it is impossible that history should repeat itself. Today, we do not repeat what happened in the past. We are eradicating the traces of the past. We are building our country on strong and sound bases.

Whenever we turn backwards, we aim at the eradication of past evils which brought about our domination, and the vestiges of the past which took place despite ourselves and which were caused by imperialism through treachery and deceit.

Today, the Suez Canal where 120,000 of our sons had lost their lives in digging it by corvee, and for the foundation of which we paid 8 million pounds, has become a state within the state. It has humiliated ministers and cabinets.

This canal is an Egyptian canal. It is an Egyptian Joint Stock Company. Britain has forcibly grabbed our rights, our 44% of its shares. Britain still collects the profits of these shares from the time of its inauguration until now. All countries and shareholders get their profits. A state within the state; an Egyptian Joint Stock Company.

The income of the Suez Canal Company in 1955 reached £E. 35 million, or 100 million dollars. Of this sum, we, who have lost 120,000 persons, who have died in digging the canal, take only £E. 1 million or 3 million dollars! This is the Suez Canal Company, which, according to the Firman, was dug for the sake of Egypt and its benefit!

Do you know how much assistance America and Britain were going to offer us over 5 years? 70 million dollars. Do you know who takes the 100 million dollars, the company's income, every year? They take them of course.

It is no shame that I may be poor and borrow money to build my country. It is no shame that I should attempt to get aid for the sake of my country. But, it is shameful that I suck peoples' blood and rights.

We shall not repeat the past. We shall eradicate it by restoring our rights in the Suez Canal. This money is ours. This canal is the property of Egypt because it is an Egyptian Joint Stock Company.

The canal was dug by Egypt's sons and 120,000 of them died while working. The Suez Canal Company in Paris is an imposter company. It usurped our concessions.

When de Lesseps came over to Egypt, his arrival was the same as Black who came to Egypt to talk with me. The same action.

But history will never repeat itself. On the contrary, we shall build the High Dam. We shall restore our usurped rights. We shall build the High Dam as we want it. We are determined to do it. £E. 35million the company gets every year; let Egypt take it. 100 million dollars are collected every year by the company which collects them for the benefit of Egypt. Let it be so, and Egypt will collect the 100 million dollars for the benefit of Egypt.

Thus, today, citizens, when we build the High Dam, we are actually building the dam to defend our dignity, freedom and pride, and to eradicate humiliation and submission.

We Shall Fight to the Last

Egypt the whole of Egypt—one national front—one unified and solid front—announces that it will fight to the last drop of its blood. Everyone of its sons will be like Salah Mustafa and Mustafa Hafez. We shall all fight to the last drop of our blood for building our country, for the sake of Egypt. We shall not let warmongers, imperialists or those who trade in human beings dominate us. We shall depend on our hands and on our blood. We are rich, but we were careless. We shall restore these rights. The battle continues. We shall restore these rights step by step. We shall realise everything. We shall build a strong and dignified Egypt, the Arab Egypt.

Nationalisation of the Company

Therefore, I have signed today the following law which has been approved by the Cabinet:
[reads text of decree *]

Citizens,

We shall not let imperialists or exploiters dominate us. We shall not let history repeat itself once more. We have gone forward to build a strong Egypt. We go forward towards political and economic independence. We go forward towards national economy for the sake of the whole people. We go forward to work. But, whenever we look behind, we do so to destroy the traces of the past, the traces of slavery, exploitation and domination.

Today, citizens, rights have been restored to their owners. Our rights in the Suez Canal have been restored to us after 100 years.

Today, we actually achieve true sovereignty, true dignity and true pride. The Suez Canal Company was a state within a state. It was an Egyptian Joint Stock Company, relying on imperialism and its stooges.

The Suez Canal was built for the sake of Egypt and for its benefit. But it was a source of exploitation and the draining of wealth.

As I said a short while ago, it is no shame to be poor and to work for the building of my country. But it is shameful to suck blood. They used to suck our blood, our rights and take them. Today, when we regain our rights, I say in the name of the people of Egypt that we shall defend these rights and shall holdfast. We shall sacrifice our lives and our blood in defending them. We shall make up for the past.

Today, when we build the edifice of our dignity, freedom and pride, we feel that it will not be completely sound until we eradicate domination, humiliation and submission. The Suez Canal constituted an edifice of humiliation.

Today, citizens, the Suez Canal Company has been nationalised. This order has been published in the Official Journal. It has become a matter of fact.

Citizens, today we say our wealth has been restored to us.

Citizens; Today, the Suez Canal income is estimated at £E. 35 million or 100 million dollars per annum or 500 million dollars in five years. We shall not seek the 70 million dollar American aid.

Today, fellow-countrymen, by our sweat, our tears, the souls of our martyrs and the skulls of those who died in 1856, a hundred years ago during the corvee, we are able to develop this country. We shall work, produce and step-up production despite all these intrigues and these talks. Whenever I hear talk from Washington, I shall say “Die of your fury.”

We shall build up industry in Egypt and compete with them. They do not want us to become an industrial country so that they can promote the sale of their products and market them in Egypt. I never saw any American aid directed towards industrialisation as this would cause us to compete with them. American aid is everywhere directed towards exploitation.

On entering upon the fifth anniversary of the Revolution, as I said at the beginning of my speech, we feel stronger, more resolute and faithful than during the former years.

On embarking upon the fifth year of the Revolution, as Farouk was expelled on July 26, 1952, the Suez Canal Co. will depart on the very same day. We are conscious of accomplishing glories and achieving true dignity. Sovereignty in Egypt will belong only to her sons.

We shall march forward united ... one nation confident in itself, its motherland and its power, one nation relying on itself in work and in the sacred march towards construction, industrialisation and creation ... one nation ... a solid bloc to hold out treason and aggression and resist imperialism and agents of imperialism.

In this manner, we shall accomplish much and feel dignity and pride and feel that we are building up our country to suit ourselves... We build what we want and do what we want with nobody to account to.

Turning Towards Force

When we obtain our usurped and stolen rights, we shall turn toward strength. We shall become stronger each year, and, God willing next year we shall become more powerful with increased production, work and factories.

Now, while I am speaking to you, fellow countrymen, brothers o yours are taking over the administration and the management of the Canal Company, the Egyptian Canal Company not the foreign Canal Company. They are taking over the Canal Company and its facilities for

the direction of navigation in the canal, the canal which is situated in the territory of Egypt, cuts through the territory of Egypt, is a part of Egypt and belongs to Egypt. We now perform this task to compensate for the past and build up new edifices for pride and dignity.

May God guide you and peace be with you.

Annex 3

State, United States Department of. *The Suez Canal Problem, July 26-September 22, 1956: A Documentary Publication*. Department of State, 1956. P. 345 – 349.

Speech by President Nasser Denouncing Proposal for a Canal Users Association, September 15, 1956

In these decisive days in the history of mankind, these days in which truth struggles to have itself recognised in international chaos where powers of evil domination and imperialism have prevailed, Egypt stands firmly to preserve her sovereignty. Your country stands solidly and staunchly to preserve her dignity against imperialistic schemes of a number of nations who have uncovered their desires for domination and supremacy. In these days and in such circumstances Egypt has resolved to show the world that when small nations decide to preserve their sovereignty, they will do that all right and that when these small nations are fully determined to defend their rights and maintain their dignity, they will undoubtedly succeed in achieving their ends.

We are now hearing saber-rattling in Britain and France, those big powers which aim at derogating Egypt from sovereignty. I declare in the name of the Egyptian people who have smashed the fetters of foreign domination, aggression and feudalism that we are fully determined to defend our sovereign rights and preserve our dignity.

Conspiracies and threats attempted by big powers will never in intimidate us. We believe in our sovereign rights and we shall never allow imperialists to derogate them from us. These are objectives which we have proclaimed since the inception of the revolution. We shall never falter or be terrified by threats. We stick firmly to these principles and objectives and we shall defend them to the last drop of our blood.

I am speaking in the name of every Egyptian Arab and in the name of all free countries and of all those who believe in liberty and are ready to defend it. I am speaking In the name of principles proclaimed by these countries in the Atlantic Charter. But they are now violating these principles and it has become our lot to shoulder the responsibility of reaffirming and establishing them anew.

Now that we have effected complete evacuation of the British forces and purged Egyptian soil of the vestiges of foreign domination, it is our divine duty to defend our free and independent country against the conspiracies and vile desires of the imperialists.

Today we have practiced one of our sovereign rights and seen attempts made to derogate from our sovereignty.

Selwyn Lloyd declared at the London conference that we are living in an age in which a sovereign country may surrender some of her rights. But I believe this can be done only by countries practicing their sovereignty as well as that of other countries. A country that wishes to be really free and independent and that will not infringe on the sovereignty of others will practice its sovereign rights by itself and will never transcend them.

Egypt is now a sovereign country which will never transgress against other countries and she is fully determined never to allow others to infringe on her sovereignty. On August 2, Britain, the United States and France called for a conference which they labeled a conference on internationalisation of the Suez Canal.

They alleged Egypt could derive no benefits from the canal. Previously they had denied us loans and financial aid necessary for the High Dam project and they seemed bent on depriving Egypt of benefits she could derive from the canal to raise the standard of living of her people. The British Premier declared: "all our trouble is with Gamal Abdel Nasser," for naturally Eden is not interested in seeing a glorious and powerful army in Egypt.

What does all this amount to? They are determined to frustrate Egyptian attempts at progress and industrialisation. Economic pressure has been applied against Egypt to stifle the progress of her people and reduce them to submission. But I am fully aware we shall never submit to pressure or threats and that we can rely on our own resources and efforts.

Then came the London conference to which certain states were invited and where a number of resolutions were laid down with the concurrence of some of the states invited. This was followed by a visit to Egypt of the five-power commission headed by Menzies who declared he had come to reach an understanding with Egypt—an understanding under the threat of aggression and use of force.

We have tried by all possible means to cooperate with those countries which claim to assist smaller nations and which promised to collaborate with us but they demanded their fees in advance. This we refused so they started to fight with us. They said they will pay toward building the High Dam and then they withdrew their offer and cast doubts on the Egyptian economy. Are we to declaim [*disclaim?*] our sovereign right? Egypt insists her sovereignty must remain intact and refuses to give up any part of that sovereignty for the sake of money.

Egypt nationalised the Egyptian Suez Canal company. When Egypt granted the concession to de Lesseps it was stated in the concession between the Egyptian government and the Egyptian company that the company of the Suez Canal is an Egyptian company subject to

Egyptian authority. Egypt nationalised this Egyptian company and declared freedom of navigation will be preserved.

But the imperialists became angry. Britain and France said Egypt grabbed the Suez Canal as if it were part of France or Britain. The British Foreign Secretary forgot that only two years ago he signed an agreement stating the Suez Canal is an integral part of Egypt. Egypt declared she was ready to negotiate. But as soon as negotiations began threats and intimidations started.

Yesterday many ships arrived and for the first time in years fifty ships were piloted through the canal. The canal authority has today seventy Egyptian pilots. These Egyptian and Greek pilots who refused bribery and temptation worked day and night and were able to maintain navigation in the canal. As I speak to you now the canal, thanks to Egyptian and Greek pilots, is still open. We have succeeded in foiling a conspiracy of Britain, France and the pilots and we have proved to the world when a nation wants to preserve its freedom, it will be free.

Today in the name of the Egyptian people, in the name of each one of you, I honor those men by granting them the Egyptian Order of Merit.

Today we have won a battle of conspiracy and treachery. Today conspirators in moral and international anarchy have been defeated. Today as we win this battle through perseverance and will power we go forward to attain victories in other fields. Today we must defeat forces that are trying to mislead world public opinion.

Great powers are struck with the fever of greed, but we will nevertheless preserve our rights.

Eden stated in the House of Commons there shall be no discrimination between states using the canal. We on our part reaffirm that and declare there is no discrimination between canal users. He also said Egypt shall not be allowed to succeed because that would spell success for Arab nationalism and would be against their policy, which aims at the protection of Israel.

Today they are speaking of a new association whose main objective would be to rob Egypt of the canal and deprive her of rightful canal dues. Suggestions made by Eden in the House of Commons which have been backed by France and the United States are a clear violation of the 1888 convention, since it is impossible to have two bodies organising navigation in the canal.

It is equally impossible for the proposed organisation to remain abroad and continue to collect dues. If this were permissible we for our part would form an organisation for users of the port of London a situation which would spell international anarchy and the end of international law and relations.

We instructed our Ambassador to Washington to tell America's Foreign Secretary that America is helping Britain excite people in Egypt and engage them in a new war. The American President has been speaking of maintaining peace, so why does America support this proposal for the formation of an association which they call an association for users of the canal but which is in truth one for declaring war?

If the big powers are using threats to derogate from our independence we will have them know we happen to believe in this independence and that what we have done is purely within our sovereign rights. What users of the canal have a right to is free passage through the canal and this we guarantee.

They are threatening to use force against us. But we are fully determined never to surrender any of our rights. We shall resist any aggression and fight against those who attempt to derogate from our sovereignty.

By stating that, by succeeding, Abdel Nasser would weaken Britain's stand against Arab nationalism, Eden is in fact admitting his real objective is not Abdel Nasser as such but rather to defeat Arab nationalism and crush its cause. Eden speaks and finds his own answer. A month ago he let out the cry that he was after Abdel Nasser. Today the Egyptian people are fully conscious of their sovereign rights and Arab nationalism is fully awakened to its new destiny.

Then they claim they wish to apply such and such clauses of the 1888 convention. But Egypt has been executing provisions of the 1888 convention throughout past years till the present day. Between 1888 and 1956 ships have been sailing through the canal and paying dues to a body responsible for its administration. Ships had always abided by measures and regulations imposed by the canal company.

Of 8,000,000 Algerians, 10,000 are fighting half a million French soldiers. We have arms sufficient to equip those who can fight. We shall fight aggressors.

Those who attack Egypt will never leave Egypt alive. We shall fight a regular war, a total war, a guerrilla war. Those who attack Egypt will soon realise they brought disaster upon themselves. He who attacks Egypt attacks the whole Arab world. They say in their papers the whole thing will be over in forty-eight hours. They do not know how strong we really are.

We believe in international law. But we will never submit. We shall show the world how a small country can stand in the face of great powers threatening with armed might. Egypt might be a small power but she is great inasmuch as she has faith in her power and convictions. I feel quite certain every Egyptian shares the same convictions as I do and believes in everything I am stressing now.

We shall defend our freedom and independence to the last drop of our blood. This is the staunch feeling of every Egyptian. The whole Arab nation will stand by us in our common fight against aggression and domination. Free peoples, too, people who are really free will stand by us and support us against the forces of tyranny.

Today we are victorious while we are serving every nation of the world. We are serving countries like India and Indonesia and we are victorious while we contribute toward world prosperity and development of world trade.

This we have achieved by the efforts of Egyptian citizens who are working day and night so navigation in the canal will go on uninterrupted and even better than it ever was before. Today we are going forward armed with our belief in God, with our patriotism and with our self-confidence to attain for Egypt its dignity, freedom and honor.