

# Iran-Egypt rapprochement



By Javad Mohammad Ali  
Staff writer

Public outcry against Israeli war crimes in the Gaza Strip is visibly evident across various cities in the United States, a staunch supporter of Israel. From large-scale street protests to online advocacy campaigns, there has been an unprecedented display of solidarity with Palestinians since Israel waged a devastating war against the besieged enclave in a disproportionate response to a surprise attack by Hamas on October 7. Surprisingly, findings from a survey conducted by Harvard University revealed that 51% of American youths desire the dismantling of the "state" of Israel, favoring its replacement with a Palestinian state. Could the influential role of public opinion potentially instigate changes in American policies? Iran Daily has spoken with Jahanbakhsh Izadi, an international relations expert and university lecturer to get his take on this matter.

Since the thaw in relations between Tehran and Riyadh, the wider region has been witnessing a series of rapprochements between countries. Apart from Saudi Arabia and Iran, Egypt has reconciled with both Turkey and Qatar, and the Arab League welcomed Syria back as a member after more than a decade. It also led to the end of a war between Yemen and Saudi Arabia.

Now, there are reports of the exchange of ambassadors between Cairo and Tehran after decades.



Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi (L) meets with his Egyptian counterpart Abdel Fatah al-Sisi on the sidelines of a meeting of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on November 11, 2023. [president.ir](https://www.president.ir)

A high-ranking Egyptian official said on Friday that the African country and Iran are expected to fully restore diplomatic ties and exchange respective ambassadors in the near future.

Member of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs, Rakha Ahmad Hassan, said in an interview with the Arabic service of Russia's Sputnik news agency that an exchange of ambassadors is likely to happen soon.

While the two countries have kept diplomatic channels open in recent years, they have not exchanged ambassadors.

He pointed out that Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi's congratulations to Al-Sisi after his victory in the recent presidential elections means that relations have reached the highest level.

In recent months, several Iranian officials, including Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei and President Raisi, have publicly endorsed efforts to mend ties between Tehran and Cairo.

In May, Ayatollah Khamenei endorsed normalizing ties with Egypt, the most populous Arab country, saying that Iran "welcomes Egypt's interest in restoring relations".

He made the remarks after a meeting with visiting Oman's Sultan Haitham bin Tariq.

Ayatollah Khamenei said that the Omani leader had told him that Egypt would be willing to resume relations.

"We welcome the Omani Sultan's statement about Egypt's willingness to resume relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran and we have no problem in this regard," Ayatollah Khamenei said.

The Sultan of Oman's visit came about a week after his visit to Egypt, during which he met the Egyptian president.

Diplomatic talks between Iranian and Egyptian officials in recent years and mediatory efforts by some regional countries, especially Oman and Iraq, have yielded results and have removed first obstacles on the path of reconciliation between Tehran and Cairo.

There have been several meetings between officials from both countries, mainly on the sidelines of regional and international events, that indicate their desire to restore relations.



Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian (R) shakes hands with his Egyptian counterpart Sameh Shoukry on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly meeting in New York on September 20, 2023. [mfa.gov.ir](https://www.mfa.gov.ir)

Meeting between Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian with the Egyptian president at the Baghdad Conference for Cooperation and Partnership in 2021, Amir-Abdollahian's talks with his Egyptian counterpart Sameh Shoukry on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly in September, Shoukry's meeting with Iranian Vice President Ali Salajegheh in Egypt in 2022, as well as Raisi's meeting with Al-Sisi on the sidelines of a meeting of Organization of Islamic Countries in Saudi Arabia are among the most important meetings which have been held between the two countries' officials in the past two years. During the talks, Iranian officials have repeatedly announced their country's readiness to take new steps to improve relations between the two Muslim countries. The issue of Israel's massacre of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip has also brought the two countries closer together.

Since the beginning of Israel's attacks on Gaza in October, Iran's top diplomat has held phone calls with his Egyptian counterpart regarding developments in the region, especially the Palestinian territory. Egypt is the only Arab state to share a border with Gaza and has been used by countries to deliver humanitarian aid to the people in the besieged Palestinian territory, which has been under Israel's heavy bombardment in recent weeks. Analysts believe that expansion of relations between the two countries can benefit their economies and people. Jafar Ghanadhashi, an Iranian political analyst, says that friendship between Iran and Egypt is necessary for the Arab country's national interest. On the other hand, Egypt can be a gateway for economic cooperation between Tehran and the rest of Africa, because Egypt is one of the most important countries in this continent.



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