



Written by [James Heiser](#) on September 24, 2012

Egyptian President: U.S. Not Our Ally

After nearly two years of support from the Obama administration for the “Arab Spring” movement that Islamists used to gain power, the new president of Egypt is rewarding his American ally with the retort: “You’re not an ally — you’re a friend.”

A September 22 article for the *New York Times* highlights a host of problems with the relationship between the United States and Egypt with its headline: “[Egypt’s New Leader Spells Out Terms for U.S.-Arab Ties.](#)” Egypt — the most powerful nation to have its previous government swept away by an Islamist insurgency in the past two years — is now set forth as the gatekeeper to American foreign policy in the entire region. And the relationship between the United States and Egypt will now be determined by that party which had been previously perceived to be the junior partner.



Unlike American neoconservatives, who presume that a prepackaged set of “democratic values” can be superimposed on any culture, Egyptian President Mohammed Morsi made it clear that his nation is not an outpost of American civilization, and has not any intention to be such. The *Times* reports:

“If you want to judge the performance of the Egyptian people by the standards of German or Chinese or American culture, then there is no room for judgment,” he said. “When the Egyptians decide something, probably it is not appropriate for the U.S. When the Americans decide something, this, of course, is not appropriate for Egypt.”

He suggested that Egypt would not be hostile to the West, but would not be as compliant as Mr. Mubarak either.

“Successive American administrations essentially purchased with American taxpayer money the dislike, if not the hatred, of the peoples of the region,” he said, by backing dictatorial governments over popular opposition and supporting Israel over the Palestinians.

Morsi’s retort comes in the midst of growing anti-American rhetoric and rioting sweeping through the Muslim world, and stands as proof that alliances purchased with taxpayer money are treacherous things indeed. For decades, Egypt has been the recipient of American largesse — only Israel receives more foreign aid on an annual basis. Egypt has received [\\$2 billion a year from the United States since 1979](#), when Egypt signed the Camp David Accords.

After decades of American support for the governments of Presidents Sadat and Mubarak — support which came primarily in the form of military aid — the new Egyptian president does not consider his nation an ally of the United States. After all, Morsi was an opponent of the military government which



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had been supported by American tax dollars. In the words of the *New York Times*:

When asked if he considered the United States an ally, Mr. Morsi answered in English, “That depends on your definition of ally,” smiling at his deliberate echo of Mr. Obama. But he said he envisioned the two nations as “real friends.”

In point of fact, earlier this month President Obama’s rhetoric began distancing the United States from its previous relationship with Egypt. As noted in [an article for the *Chicago Tribune*](#), “Obama told a Spanish-language network this month that the United States did not consider Egypt’s Islamist government either an ally or an enemy.” Obama’s comments came in the aftermath of attacks on American embassies in several nations and at a moment when the Egyptian government was perceived to have been slow to protect the U.S. embassy in Cairo. Since that time, American diplomats have tried to undo the damage of Obama’s remarks. As noted in an article for *Albawaba News*:

Following statements made by Obama against a backdrop of clashes outside the U.S. embassy in Cairo, several American officials tried to rectify the situation. The spokesman for the White House Jay Carney assured that Egypt was “a close and longtime partner to the United States,” while his counterpart at the State Department Victoria Nuland had stressed that Cairo remained “an ally of the United States.”

America’s role in the Middle East is changing: Cold War alliances, the aftermath of the Iraq War, and the fallout of the “Arab Spring” have substantially reshaped the region. What remains to be seen is how the United States will react to the new “facts on the ground” in Egypt — and throughout the Muslim world.

Photo: Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi gestures while speaking during a media conference at EU headquarters in Brussels, Sept. 13, 2012: AP Images



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