

The NILE RIVER TODAY
a curriculum unit

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This set of lessons is for grade 8-10, including students of varying academic abilities.

1. Lesson Overview
2. "Who Owns the Nile?" Do Now
3. "The Nile" Poem
4. Mini-Lecture Notes and Resources
5. Simulation Sheets for Class Activity
6. Two articles that can be used for the homework

1. LESSON OVERVIEW

This lesson explores the Nile River dispute. This was done as part of a larger unit exploring the geography of Africa and in preparation for a future unit on ancient Nubia. The intent was to engage the students in geography in a way that initiated discussion in the classroom and allowed for a student-centered learning model. This lesson took roughly a class and a half (the class period being 85 minutes long). It can likely be used across three class periods or less if activities/research are taken outside of the classroom.

Objective: This lesson is designed to address the National Geography Standards specifically standards 1,3 6, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18:

1. How to use maps and other geographic representations, geospatial technologies, and spatial thinking to understand and communicate information.
3. How to analyze the spatial organization of people, places, and environments on Earth's surface.
6. How culture and experience influence people's perceptions of places and regions.
13. How the forces of cooperation and conflict among people influence the division and control of Earth's surface.
14. How human actions modify the physical environment.
15. How physical systems affect human systems.
16. The changes that occur in the meaning, use, distribution and importance of resources.

17. How to apply geography and interpret the past.

Additionally, students will be able to critically look at a situation from a variety of perspectives; develop note taking skills and annotation skills—both supporting student study habits

Do Now: “Who Owns the Nile?” worksheet (attached)-as students walk in class, have them take the handout to work on. This allows students to access the material visually. It will help to post the map using the projector (and highlight the Nile River) while students are working on this. The question is simple enough but encourages students to think deeply early on. This proves to be a good entrance point into the conversation/lesson and because of the simplicity of the question, lends itself to a variety of knowledge levels. As a class, students will debrief their conclusions about the prompts.

Activity: Students will be provided with the poem, *The Nile* that they will annotate according to the instructions. The directions on the attached worksheet are leveled so that all students have access to the same information without feeling rushed for time. Additionally, the directions indicate that students will search for evidence to support their conclusions about the author’s feelings. Once done, students will discuss their conclusions as a class. The intent is to show, through art, the significance of the Nile River. This lends itself to a larger discussion about the importance of the Nile’s resources. It also provides perspective about the cultural weight placed on the River. For students who take for granted their access to water, this allows them to see how other groups interact with natural resources.

Activity: Teacher will conduct a mini-lecture. This was done to provide background information and get all students familiar with the same information. *Modifications may include guided notes or independent research if students are provided prompts.* The mini-lecture covered the following definitions:

- Natural resource: a non-living raw material that appears from the earth without human intervention
- Transboundary natural resource: a natural resource that is intersected by a national border and involves the mobility of the resource over the national boundary, such as the Nile River (not the case with diamonds, gold).

The lecture continues to give the history of the region and the significance of the Nile River resources to the people living in Northeastern region of Africa. While the teacher is talking, notes should be provided on the board for students to copy. This will help the practice of taking notes. Students should also reference the map provided in the “Do Now” for context. In discussing this, I projected the map on the board and zoomed in when needed. (See attached documents for lecture points and visuals).

Activity: Teacher will divide the class into country groups. Each country group will get the entire packet (attached) and is responsible for reading and annotating the country group specific to them. The International Community group is responsible for being familiar with the whole packet. This differentiates the lesson plan for students of different reading and comprehension levels. After students are given the opportunity to read and annotate and go through discussion questions the larger simulation begins. One student may be designated

as the “moderator” or the teacher can take on this role. Students are asked to speak on behalf of their country and explain why their country should control the resources of the Nile River. Each group goes around and explains their country’s perspective—this has proven to generate enough dialogue and students then try to come up with different solutions themselves. Organically, students will typically come up with solutions of collaboration themselves, but if not, that question can be posed to the class.

Activity: Teacher will ask students to refer to the theme, “the artists role in society” and brainstorm a list of ways an artist could introduce solutions. Once that list is completed, teacher will project the “The Nile Project” (www.nileproject.org) onto the board and play a clip from it. Teacher should explain the objective of the organization and how, through music and education they work to generate solutions to the conflict around Nile resources. *This lesson was done at an arts school and students were excited that their art could be purposeful.*

Homework: The attached article was distributed for homework. Students were asked to answer the prompts: Do you think this is fair? What problems do you see with this scenario? Think about this from all perspectives. Are there clear winners and losers in this conflict? *A more recent article has been provided that includes updated information. This can be used in lieu of the original article.*

Materials: All materials needed are attached.

Lesson Reflection: After conducting this lesson I think modifications could have been made to the materials used and the length of time allotted for students to conduct their “research.” An alternative to the materials provided could have been interviews or primary sources (such as news clips) from the various countries involved in the simulation. This would have helped students find a human connection to the controversy being presented. Additionally, more visual aids or a manipulative may have helped students understand the severity of the dispute for people in this region. This could have also been conducted in stations to allow students more time with the material and allow them the opportunity to interact with other students more than in the original lesson plan.

2. Reference Material for Mini-Lecture

(In class, the mini-lecture comes after the activity “Who Owns the Nile?” but is placed here to provide an introduction to the topic.)

The instructor should project this in the front of the classroom.



Source: <http://www.globalresearch.ca/hydropolitics-propel-balkanization-in-africa/5338492>

Background information:

Modification: Depending on the discretion of the instructor, these notes can be provided in a graphic organizer or in handouts that can be provided to the students and annotated, rather than providing these as a mini-lecture.

The Nile River is perhaps one of the most famous international rivers because of its role in the history of Egypt. The Nile, however, does not flow through only Egypt. The Nile, while it is not large in volume, is one of the longest rivers in the world at 4,132 miles long! It passes through Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia, Uganda, Zaire, Kenya,

Eritrea, Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi. It is one of the central rivers in the area and a main source of water in this arid part of the world.

In Northeastern Africa, water is a scarce commodity. Yet it is also a vital one, as it is needed for irrigated agriculture, industrial expansion, and human consumption. In the Nile basin, the river remains the only reliable source for renewable water supplies.

For 7,000 years the Nile has been used for agriculture, however, the international issues surrounding the Nile today have become important in the last hundred years or so. Egypt and Sudan both want to continue to use the Nile for agricultural purposes, expanding outward into the desert. Ethiopia and Uganda use the river for hydroelectricity. The water from the Nile is of good quality and the soil around the river is fertile.

In addition, development projects that are aimed at increasing the flow of the Nile remain endangered by tension and instability in the region, as well as by environmental and financial concerns.

In ancient Egypt, the Nile, and its delta, were worshiped as a god. The god Hapi, who came in the shape of a frog, represented the Nile delta. Several times throughout history, Egyptians have tried to unify the Nile valley under their rule by conquering the Sudan. The lands to the south of them that bordered the river were in constant danger. The Sudan was invaded during the reign of Queen Sheba, during the Roman rule of Nero, and countless other times. This is because the Egyptians have always feared that one day the Nile's waters would no longer reach their country. People believed, that since the flow of the Nile was so unpredictable, something had to have been affecting it. A legend says that during one particularly bad famine in Egypt, the Egyptian Sultan sent his ambassadors to the king of Ethiopia in order to plead with him not to obstruct the waters. A Scottish traveler in the 18th century recounted a story that the King of Ethiopia had sent a letter to the pasha in 1704 threatening to cut off the water. Given this fear it is quite natural that the Nile countries desire to secure their water supplies. (Collins, 3-4)

Egypt is constantly worried about the threat from other nations to end the flow of the Nile through Egypt. As a result, there have been many agreements made between Egypt and the rest of the nations through which the Nile flows:

- In the days of Ancient Egypt, rulers sent messengers down the Nile to present gifts in return for the continuing flow of the Nile.
- In 1902 Ethiopia and Britain signed the Addis Ababa Agreement. This was an agreement that Ethiopia would have to consult Britain before any project that could effect the flow of the Nile.
- In 1929 Britain and Egypt signed a treaty which provided that nothing could be built on the Nile which would prevent water from flowing into Egypt, gave Egypt the right of the Nile from January to July, and gave Egypt 48 bcm (billion cubic meters) annually.
- In 1957 Ethiopia asked the US Bureau of Reclamation to access the potential of the Blue Nile Basin while Egypt and Sudan negotiated for an agreement over building dams.
- In 1959 Egypt and Sudan signed the **Agreement for the Full Utilization of the Nile Waters**, which dealt with dam projects of both countries and redefined the amount of water which was given to each country. During the negotiations for this treaty, Ethiopia firmly stated that it was allowed to use its allotment of water as well, for the benefit of its people.
- In the 1970's the states of Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, and later in 1981 Uganda, created the **Organization for the Management and Development of the Kagera River Basin**. This was the area of the Nile which flowed through these countries. This was meant to give a say in the use of water in their part of the Nile, but because of the inner conflicts of these countries not a lot has been accomplished.
- During the late 1970s and the early 1980s Egypt and Ethiopia continuously squabbled over the use of the Nile River. Part of this was due to the backing of Egypt by the United States and Ethiopia by the Soviet Union. In 1980 Egypt threatened war with Ethiopia after Ethiopia accused Egypt of misusing the water of the Nile.
- In 1991 Ethiopia signed an agreement with Sudan and in 1993 with Egypt regarding the ability to use the Nile waters. Neither agreement, however, allocated specific amounts of water to either country.

Today there are shortages of water in the Nile, due to the unavoidable use of the water by many different cultures. The population of the area is growing rapidly as is the need for water. Each of the countries in for which the Nile is an important source are interested in improving the uses of that source. Supply, unfortunately, is becoming greater than demand. The ten countries of the Nile basin must continue to work together to improve upon the condition of the rivers.

Source: <https://www.mtholyoke.edu/~aagreenb/worldpolitics/nile.html>

Source: <http://www1.american.edu/ted/nile.htm>

As a way to reach students on a more personal level, it would be helpful to incorporate the images below into the mini-lecture. *A modification may include asking students to create interviews asking the people in the pictures questions about their use of the Nile and its importance.*



Sudanese farmer using an irrigation pump; Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agriculture_in_Sudan



Abdel Aziz Mohammed, 16, works in an irrigation ditch at his family farm in Giza, Egypt; Source: http://www.ticotimes.net/layout/set/print/More-news/News-Briefs/Egypt-sees-Ethiopian-dam-as-risk-to-water-supply-threatens-direction_Wednesday-June-12-2013



A farmer takes water from the Blue Nile to water his plants north of Bahar Dar, Ethiopia; Source: <http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/regions/africa/120409/photos-nile-river-only-miles-away-ethiopias-farmers-struggle-wat>

3. The Nile River Discussion: who owns the Nile, part 1

- **If you are part of the EGYPT group, you should be aware of the following facts:**

Egypt is a nation of bread eaters (and its population is growing). Its citizens consume 18 million tons of wheat annually. Lack of access to Nile River resources would threaten Egypt's ability to put bread on the table because all of Egypt's grain is either imported or produced with water from the Nile River, which flows north through Ethiopia and Sudan before reaching Egypt (since rainfall in Egypt is negligible to nonexistent, its agriculture is totally dependent on the Nile).

The Nile Waters Agreement, which Egypt and Sudan signed in 1959, gave Egypt 75 percent of the river's flow, 25 percent to Sudan and none to Ethiopia. At the time the treaty was signed, every country involved was colonized or semi-colonized by Britain except for Ethiopia, which did not have the political, economic or social power to dispute the agreement.

Because Egypt is so reliant on the Nile River resources, the Nile River is considered a national security issue. In 1995, when Sudan suggested it was going to review the 1959 agreement, Egypt threatened military action.

Lake Nasser, the second largest man-made lake in the world was created as a result of the construction of the Aswan Dam, on the Nile River. Currently, Lake Nasser is experiencing alarming rates of evaporation because the Lake was formed over a region that is very dry and hot. This has become a national problem for Egypt, which loses between 10-16 billion cubic meters every year, which is about 20-30% of Egypt's freshwater supply (That's like losing all the water found in 4,000-6,400 Olympic-sized swimming pools!)

As more of the nations in the Nile valley develop their economies, the need for water in the region will increase. And while the demand for resources increases, the supply is likely to remain unchanged, drastically increasing the chances for armed conflict over the waters of the Nile River.

Ethiopia has announced that its Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam project on the Blue Nile will begin diverting the Blue Nile at the end of 2014. Ethiopia's decision has set off alarm bells down river in Sudan and Egypt, which are both critically dependent on the Nile for drinking water, irrigation, and in the case of Egypt's Aswan High Dam, electric power. A 1959 agreement between Egypt and Sudan guarantees Egypt 70 percent and Sudan 30 percent of the Nile's water flow.

Egypt's government has warned Ethiopia, a historical rival, not to restrict the Nile water flow to the extent that it would adversely affect the Aswan Dam or Egypt's water supply. Sudan has voiced similar warnings. Cairo and Khartoum are also aware that their mutual enemy, Israel, has close relations with Ethiopia and the Republic of South Sudan, the world's newest nation.

Discuss: As decision-maker for Egypt, think about how access to the Nile River by one or many countries may affect you.

- What would you do to help your population get access to resources that you believe it owns?
- What reasons do you have for preventing the other countries from maintaining ownership? Does anything concern you?
- Do you think you should split ownership?
- What is the best solution in your opinion?
- Is your solution fair to other countries?

If you are part of the SUDAN group, you should be aware of the following facts:

Since ancient times, Sudan has used the Nile River for transportation and farming. It has been a central part of the region's livelihood.

Cotton, a major cash crop for the country and an important part of the economy, relies heavily on the Nile River for growth.

As global food prices rise and exporters reduce shipments of commodities, countries that rely on imported grain are panicking. Affluent countries like Saudi Arabia, South Korea, China and India have descended on fertile plains across the African continent, acquiring huge tracts of land to produce wheat, rice and corn for consumption back home, particularly in the Nile River Basin. These land grabs shrink the food supply in famine-prone African nations and anger local farmers, who see their governments selling their ancestral lands to foreigners.

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Sudan, with 44 million people, is growing which increases the need for water to produce food.

Because Egypt is so reliant on the Nile River resources, the Nile River is considered a national security issue. In 1995, when Sudan suggested it was going to review the 1959 agreement, Egypt threatened military action.

As more of the nations in the Nile valley develop their economies, the need for water in the region will increase. And while the demand for resources increases, the supply is likely to remain unchanged, drastically increasing the chances for armed conflict over the waters of the Nile River.

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Egypt's government has warned Ethiopia, a historical rival, not to restrict the Nile water flow to the extent that it would adversely affect the Aswan Dam or Egypt's water supply. Sudan has voiced similar warnings. Cairo and Khartoum are also aware that their mutual enemy, Israel, has close relations with Ethiopia and the Republic of South Sudan, the world's newest nation.

South Sudan:

Newly independent South Sudan is prepared to sign into an agreement sharing the Nile River water so that it can prosper from the Nile water.

Discuss: As decision-maker for Sudan, think about how access to the Nile River by one or many countries may affect you.

- What would you do to help your population get access to resources that you believe it owns?
- What reasons do you have for preventing the other countries from maintaining ownership? Does anything concern you?
- Do you think you should split ownership?
- What is the best solution in your opinion?
- Is your solution fair to other countries in the Nile River Basin?

If you are part of the ETHIOPIA group, you should be aware of the following facts:

As global food prices rise and exporters reduce shipments of commodities, countries that rely on imported grain are panicking. Affluent countries like Saudi Arabia, South Korea, China and India have descended on fertile plains across the African continent, acquiring huge tracts of land to produce wheat, rice and corn for consumption back home, particularly in the Nile Delta. These land grabs shrink the food supply in famine-prone African nations and anger local farmers, who see their governments selling their ancestral lands to foreigners.

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Ethiopia has announced that its Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam project on the Blue Nile will begin diverting the Blue Nile at the end of 2014. Ethiopia's decision has set off alarm bells down river in Sudan and Egypt, which are both critically dependent on the Nile for drinking water, irrigation, and in the case of Egypt's Aswan High Dam, electric power.

Ethiopia, with 83 million people, is growing which increases the need for water to produce food.

As more of the nations in the Nile valley develop their economies, the need for water in the region will increase. And while the demand for resources increases, the supply is likely to remain unchanged, drastically increasing the chances for armed conflict over the waters of the Nile River.

Discuss: As decision-maker for Ethiopia, think about how access to the Nile River by one or many countries may affect you.

- What would you do to help your population get access to resources that you believe it owns?
- What reasons do you have for preventing the other countries from maintaining ownership? Does anything concern you?
- Do you think you should split ownership?
- What is the best solution in your opinion?
- Is your solution fair to other countries in the Nile River Basin?

If you are part of the INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY group, you should be aware of the following facts:

- As global food prices rise and exporters reduce shipments of commodities, countries that rely on imported grain are panicking. Affluent countries like Saudi Arabia, South Korea, China and India have descended on fertile plains across the African continent, acquiring huge tracts of land to produce wheat, rice and corn for consumption back home, particularly in the Nile Delta.
- As more of the nations in the Nile valley develop their economies, the need for water in the region will increase. And while the demand for resources increases, the supply is likely to remain unchanged, drastically increasing the chances for armed conflict over the waters of the Nile River.
- Egypt's government has warned Ethiopia, a historical rival, not to restrict the Nile water flow to the extent that it would adversely affect the Aswan Dam or Egypt's water supply. Sudan has voiced similar warnings. Cairo and Khartoum are also aware that their mutual enemy, Israel, has close relations with Ethiopia and the Republic of South Sudan, the world's newest nation.

Discuss: As a member of the international community, think about how access to the Nile River by one or many countries may affect you.

- Could this create international conflict and wars? Do you find the problematic?
- Would it be easier to deal with one country that controls everything? Is that fair?
- If you had to choose one country to control the Nile, which would you choose? What factors would you consider in your decision-making?
- What would be a fair decision, in your opinion, that would best support your country?
 1. What if your country was in need of water and farmable land? What would you do?
 2. What if your country did not need these things, but you wanted to create a safe international environment? What would you do?

Name:

Date:

Who Owns the Nile? Part 2



We have discussed in class the significance of water to sustainability. Above you will see a map of the northeastern part of Afrika. The arrow is pointing to the Nile River that flows south to north. A tad difficult to see in the above image, the White Nile flows from Rwanda, through Tanzania, Kenya, Zaire Uganda, Burundi, South Sudan and then Sudan. The Blue Nile flows from its source in Ethiopia into southeastern Sudan where the two join into the Nile River that flows through Egypt to the Mediterranean Sea.

With the Nile flowing through all of these countries, who do you think should own the resources of the Nile and why?

4. The Nile, by Tsegaye Gebre-Medhin
Ethiopia's poet laureate

Directions:

- 1. In the time allotted, read the FIRST stanza of the poem below and annotate it. Circle unfamiliar words and underline things you find interesting.**
- 2. What do you think the author's opinion about the ownership of Nile is?**
- 3. Place a star next to the line or lines that support your thoughts.**
- 4. If you finish early, continue to read the poem. Place a star next to evidence that supports your response to #2.**

Directions:

- 1. In the time allotted, read the FIRST stanza of the poem below and annotate it. Circle unfamiliar words and underline things you find interesting.**
- 2. What do you think the author's opinion about the ownership of Nile is?**
- 3. Place a star next to the line or lines that support your thoughts.**
- 4. If you finish early, continue to read the poem. Place a star next to evidence that supports your response to #2.**

5. The Nile by Tsegaye Gebre-Medhin
Ethiopia's Poet Laureate

I am the first Earth Mother of all fertility
I am the Source I am the Nile I am the African I am the beginning
O Arabia, how could you so conveniently have forgotten
While your breath still hangs upon the threads of my springs
O Egypt, you prodigal daughter born from my first love
I am your Queen of the endless fresh waters
Who rested my head upon the arms of Narmer Ka Menes
When we joined in one our Upper and Lower Lands to create you
bosom of my being
How could you so conveniently count down
In miserable billions of petty cubic yards
The eternal drops of my life giving Nile to you
Beginning long before the earth fell from the eyeball of heaven,
O Nile, that gush out from my breath of life
Upon the throats of the billions of the Earth's thirsty multitudes,
O World, how could you so conveniently have forgotten
That I, your first fountain, I your ever Ethiopia
I your first life still survive for you?
I rise like the sun from the deepest core of the globe

I am the conqueror of scorching pestilences
I am the Ethiopia that "stretch her hands in supplication to God"
I am the mother of the tallest traveler on the longest journey on Earth
My name is Africa I am the mother of the Nile.
O Nile, my prodigal daughter on the wilderness of the desert
Bringing God's harmony to all brothers and sisters
And calming down their noises of brass in their endless nakednesses

O Nile, you are music that restore the rhythm of existence
Into the awkward stampeding of these Middle Eastern blindnesses
You are the irrigator that cultivates peace
From my Ethiopian sacred mountains of the sun
Across to nod on the East of Aden and across Sinai
Beyond Gibraltar into the heights of Mount Moriah
O Nile, my chosen sacrifice for universal peace offering
Upon whose gift the heritages of Meroe and Egypt
Still survive for the benefit of our lone World
You are the proud daughter O Nile, who taught
The ancient world how to walk in upright grace
You are my prodigal daughter who saved and breastfed
Little lost Jacob whose brothers sold for food
You, who nurtured, fed and raised
The child prophet called Moses on your cradle,
You, who stretched out your helping hand and protected
The baby Christ from the slaughtering swords of their Herods,

O Nile, my infinite prodigal daughter
At whose feet mountains like Alexander bent
Their unbendable heads to drink from your life giving milk,
O Nile, at whose feet giants like Caesar Knelt
Conquerors like Napoleon bowed
Their unbowable heads to partake from your immortal bounty.
O Nile, you are the majestic blood line of my African glory
That shower my blessings upon the starved of the world
You are the eloquence that ring the Ethiopian bell across the deaf world
You are the gifted dancer of graceful rhythms
That harmonize with your sisters Atbara and Shabale
With your brothers Awash and Juba
To fertilize the scorched sands of Arabia
O Nile, without your gift Mediterranean shall be a rock of dead waters
And Sahara shall be a basket of skeletons
You are Africa's black soil that produce life
You are the milk that quench the thirsty multitudes
You are the messenger of my gospel, O Nile
That bring my abundant harvest to the mouth of the needy
You are the elegant pilgrim of my mercy.
You are the first fountain you are the first ever Ethiopia
You are the appeaser of the lustful greeds

You are the first Earth Mother of all fertility
Rising like the sun from the deepest core of the globe
You are the conqueror of the scorching pestilence
You are the source you the Africa you are the Ethiopia you are the Nile.

(August 1997)

6. Two articles:

Egypt-Ethiopia conflict over Nile waters flares

by Mey Dudin and Carola Frentzen, DPA

CAIRO, Egypt/ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia - When an Egyptian officer said recently on national television that the conflict with Ethiopia over the waters of the Nile was "not yet" a military one, his words sounded more threatening than reassuring.

Colonel Ahmed Mohammed Ali may have been trying to calm tempers, but long-standing animosities between the two countries have flared up with renewed bitterness.

The Egyptians see the river as a gift from God - to them. Without the Nile there would have been no Ancient Egypt and its great heritage, only desert. The Nile remains a vital artery.

But Ethiopia, where most of the river's water originates, also wants to make use of it and has been planning a huge dam for years.

On completion the Renaissance dam, costing \$4.3 billion and spanning the Blue Nile at the border with Sudan, is to generate 6,000 megawatts of electricity.

At the end of last month, Ethiopia began to change the course of the river, displacing it by several hundred meters, in a move that has outraged Egypt and generated near panic over future water supplies.

Egypt depends on the Nile for 98 per cent of its water - and water is in increasingly short supply. The Arab world's most populous country has seen its population soar from 53 million in 1990 to more than 80 million today.

Wasteful use of water, for example in agriculture, has caused demand to rise.

It is closely watching developments on the Blue Nile, which rises at Lake Tana in northern Ethiopia and which contributes some 80 per cent of the river's water. In Sudan the Blue Nile joins the White Nile, which has its source in Lake Victoria in Uganda and carries much less water.

Water concerns have taken center stage in Egyptian politics, with President Mohammed Morsi stating he does not wish to "lose a single drop of Nile water," and adding ominously "all options remain open."

Ethiopia dismissed his remarks as "unconstructive propaganda" and "empty and violent rhetoric". Cairo's provocative comments constituted an attack on both Ethiopia's national interests and the attempts of its inhabitants to escape poverty, the Foreign Ministry said.

Egypt's Foreign Minister Mohammed Kamel Amr travelled to Addis Ababa for a two-day visit in attempt to ease the situation.

Egypt's attitude to "its" Nile has long caused irritation among other countries along the river's course, and Ethiopia has received support for its position on the dam project, from Uganda for example.

But Cairo is determined to uphold an agreement dating back to 1929 and the colonial era. This document provides for Egypt and Sudan to have rights to more than 80 per cent of the water, even though the Nile flows through 11 countries in all.

The two countries have right of veto on projects that could influence or change the river's course. The other countries aim to change this provision.

Ethiopia's parliament has now passed the ratification of a treaty intended to replace the old Nile Water Agreement, in terms of which a joint forum will decide on how the waters are used.

But Egypt has rejected this, insisting on its prior rights,

In the longer term, Cairo will have to make concessions to Addis Ababa. Military experts see the Egyptian army's options as limited, with US think tank Stratford noting the long distance to the proposed dam.

And as Egypt lacks refueling capabilities for its aircraft, it would be impossible to destroy the project from the air. -
Rappler.com

Source: <http://www.rappler.com/world/31553-egypt-ethiopia-conflict-over-nile-waters-flares>



At Khartoum, Sudan, the Nile combines before flowing into Egypt as one river. (Michael Freeman / Corbis)

Who Owns the Nile?

Countries along the famous Nile River fight to control its waters

By Zach Jones | October 14, 2010



TOP: Sudanese farmer tills land watered by the Nile.

BOTTOM: Countries the Nile runs through directly. Other countries like Kenya and Tanzania provide water that feeds into the Nile.

(Mohamed Nureldin Abdalrh / Reuters / Jim McMahon)

When many people think of the Nile River, they also think of Egypt. They think of pyramids, mummies, and ancient kingdoms that ruled the lush green Nile Delta for thousands of years.

But the Nile, the world's longest river, travels through several countries in East Africa before passing through Egypt. Many of these countries are now fighting for greater control of the river's waters.

What makes it so precious? The Nile cuts a green path of plant life through the Sahara Desert, giving life to otherwise dry countries that desperately need water for **agriculture** (farming and fishing), electricity, and human use. The whole region is now disputing who owns this important natural resource.

WATER POWER

Egypt was given ownership of the Nile in 1929 by Great Britain. At that time, Britain's powerful military controlled Egypt, and wanted to make sure they also had control of the Nile.

Britain no longer rules Egypt, but this **treaty** (official agreement) still gives Egypt final say over how the river is used today. In 1959, Egypt made a

