

Together With Our Old Friend Egypt Once Again

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Politics is a sensitive subject. It sometimes makes things rough, sometimes even brutal. When politics come between friends, this rough side of politics can be quite damaging. It is for this reason that we should not compare true friendships with the cold face of politics. True friends should resolve their problems amicably, leaving cold-faced concepts like “political interests” out of their dealings.

Turkey and Egypt have been two halves of the same apple for a very long time. Their alliance is based on brotherhood, not political calculations. Almost every Egyptian has some kind of connection, a relation, a bond with Turkey, and every Turk with Egypt. This brotherhood-based alliance is significant not just for these countries, but also for the entire region. For this reason, Turkey and Egypt are the two countries whose alliance and friendship must never be tainted.

After Turkey’s Prime Minister Binali Yildirim’s statement on the improving relations with Egypt in 2016, last year saw a year where small but positive steps were taken towards this goal. Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry’s positive remarks about Turkey, published in the Egyptian newspaper *Akhbar el-Yom*, resounded worldwide. Shoukry, expressing his desire for the normalization of relations between the two countries, **said**, “There is no doubt that there are a lot of bonds between the Egyptian and Turkish people. We hope relations will return [to normal] and we are always open to this.”

Undoubtedly, both countries responded quite positively to these statements. It was a very positive step towards the long-overdue elimination of any resentment between the two brotherly countries.

Speaking to a Turkish newspaper, the *Al-Ahram* newspaper managing editor Mohamed Sabreen said that they desire to have good relations with Turkey in the economy and other fields within the bounds of mutual respect, and **continued**, “We have no requirements for this. We just demand equal relations between the two countries as it should be. ... Egypt hasn’t yet completely burned the bridges with Turkey. An agreement can be reached in consideration with the interests of the two countries. Looking out for the interests, welfare and development of the two countries is indeed an important

matter but the important thing is to restructure the good relations within the framework of friendship.

Sabreen's [statement](#), "In negotiations, media/press can play a positive role in establishing mutual relations and can lay the groundwork for countries to sit around the same table. Turkish people are our brothers. We want good relations." was quite positive and promising. Both the Turkish and the Egyptian people are already longing for the day when the two countries will stand together as friends. The press should make it their job to make their voices heard around the world and urge the politicians of the two countries to act in this regard.

Pointing out that certain powers are trying to create a conflict between Muslim countries by dragging the region into an overall Sunni-Shiite division, the Turkey and Iran expert Bashir Abdel Fattah continued with the [following statements](#): "Egypt is aware of the problems experienced with Turkey, but also knows for a fact that this will never make these countries enemies. ... Turkey and Iran shouldn't be the enemies of Egypt. We need to normalize the relations immediately. ... A unity between Turkey, Iran and Egypt will solve the problems."

The above statements of Fattah have a special significance. Turkey and Egypt should stand united, not only as a manifestation of brotherhood, but also for the peace in the region. There is a serious policy of division at work in the region, and as Fattah correctly pointed out, the Sunni-Shiite conflict is being encouraged. The only purpose of this effort is to weaken the Islamic community. The two long-standing countries of the region, Turkey and Egypt, must not allow it to succeed; this responsibility lies on these two important countries. This alliance is needed, not only for the betterment of these two countries, but for the Muslims and non-Muslims in the region and all over the world to be able to live in peace and be protected from policies of terror, violence and destruction.

In fact, treacherous attacks on mosques and churches in Egypt show us that not only Muslims, but people of all faiths, are in need of protection. Establishing an alliance in the region is essential for this protection. This union should include all the countries in the region and it should stand as a barrier against the intended attacks on the Islamic world. No doubt, everyone knows how much power such an alliance would govern in the region. This opportunity should not be wasted due to unnecessary resentments; Turkey and Egypt must take immediate action in this regard. Turkey, in particular, should demonstrate that it embraces all the people of Egypt. The concerns of the Egyptian people should be relieved in this regard.

The recent developments concerning Jerusalem and the tensions brought about by the Syrian conflict have caused these two countries to better understand the need for such an alliance. Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry's participation in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation's recent emergency meeting regarding Jerusalem is an important positive step.

The Former director of the Egyptian Armed Forces Research Center, Major General Gamal Mazlum, stated that "Syria's interests are more important than our dispute with Turkey. Egypt would never hesitate to sit down at a negotiation table where Turkey is one of the parties" and this is the way as it should be. It does not seem possible for the countries in the region experiencing problems to recover by their own means. The new US policy has, unfortunately, put a hold on a possible peace settlement between Israel and Palestine. All these facts are a clear sign that the solutions in question can only be achieved with an alliance between the leading countries of the region. Any further hesitation in this regard will lead to more people losing their lives in the region and terrorist organizations finding more opportunities and space to operate, which will turn the Middle East into an even greater nightmare. Instead of being responsible for this, a flame of friendship must be rekindled to overcome the flames of violence and brutality in the region.

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