



Is there a rapprochement between Cairo and Tehranand is Washington interfering?



Mahammad Gamal 'Arafa considers it a mystery that all of the initiatives to re-establish a diplomatic relations between Cairo and Tehran, which were suspended in 1979, have failed. The author contends that the parties disagree on regional issues that should not directly impact their bilateral relationship. Egypt, which the authors views as more intransigent, primarily objects to the *Shi'a* expansion and interference in Iraq and Palestine. At the same time, Tehran understands the importance of Egypt in counteracting the threat of an American strike against Iran and also seeks Egypt's support for its nuclear program. *'Arafa* sees Iran's several missions to Cairo as a sign of good will and an attempt to explain the Iranian position. The author contends, however, that Iran has been rebuffed by Egypt in deference to Washington. According to the author, Washington tries to fuel disagreement between relatively moderate Arab regimes and Tehran in preparation for an anticipated strike against the Iranian regime. **Although the author emphasizes the U.S interest in fostering disagreement between Iran and Egypt, it is also true that this disagreement stems from a long history of suspicion between the two countries. The Shi'a expansion and the veiled Iranian nuclear program are real problems for Egypt.**

Source:

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