

Fault Lines: Sinai Peninsula

20 OCT 2017



The Sinai Peninsula is a complicated operational environment (OE). At present, there are a number of interconnected conditions creating instability and fostering a favorable environment for the growth of Islamic extremist groups. Egypt is battling this situation with large-scale security operations, yet militant activity is not diminishing. The Egyptian government, in coordination with the Israeli government, is placing renewed interest on countering insurgent actors in the region and establishing a lasting security. Despite its best effort, Egypt has been largely unsuccessful. A variety of factors have contributed to the continued rise of the insurgents. We submit there are four key fault lines contributing to instability. These fault lines are neither mutually exclusive nor are they isolated to the Sinai. In fact, they are inexorably intertwined, in ways between Egypt, Israel, and the Sinai Peninsula. Issues related to faults create stability complications, legitimacy concerns, and disidentification problems that can be easily exploited by interested actors. It is essential to understand the conditions creating the faults, the escalation that results from them operating at the same time, and the potential effects for continued insecurity and ultimately instability in the region.

FAULT LINES are “exploitable sources of instability in the human domain; they can be real or perceived.”

Source: GCKN Fault Line Methodology, 2017

Egypt-Israel Relations - Enduring geopolitical tension between Egypt and Israel, and complex coordination needs between dissimilar and traditionally untrusting cultures, has potential for explosive effects on regional stability.

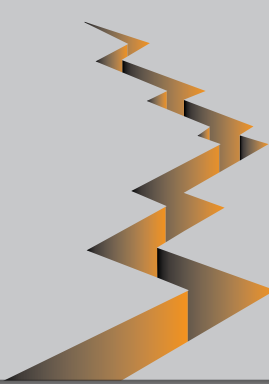
Political Instability - Continued political instability, generated from leadership turmoil, mounting security concerns, and insufficient efforts for economic development may lead to an exponentially dire security situation and direct and violent challenges to the government.

Political Alienation - Years of neglect combined with a decade of Israeli occupation has created an environment where the Sinai people feel politically disenfranchised, indignant, and desperate and this puts the population in a vulnerable position to be influenced by external stakeholders.

Economic Deprivation - A lack of economic opportunities, discrimination against the Bedouins for rightful employment, and the growth of an illicit economy fosters an ideal operational environment for insurgent activity.

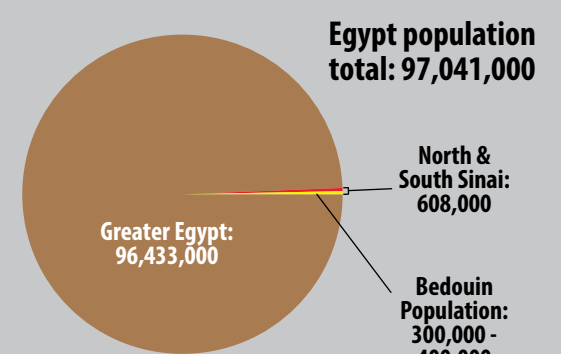
FAULT LINES

(if exploited)
Assessment of impact



Proportion of households below lower poverty line (%)

North Sinai: 16.2%
South Sinai: 1.2%



1 Egypt-Israel Relations

MODERATE

Improbable with major consequence

2 Political Instability

HIGH

Very likely with major consequence

3 Political Alienation

SIGNIFICANT

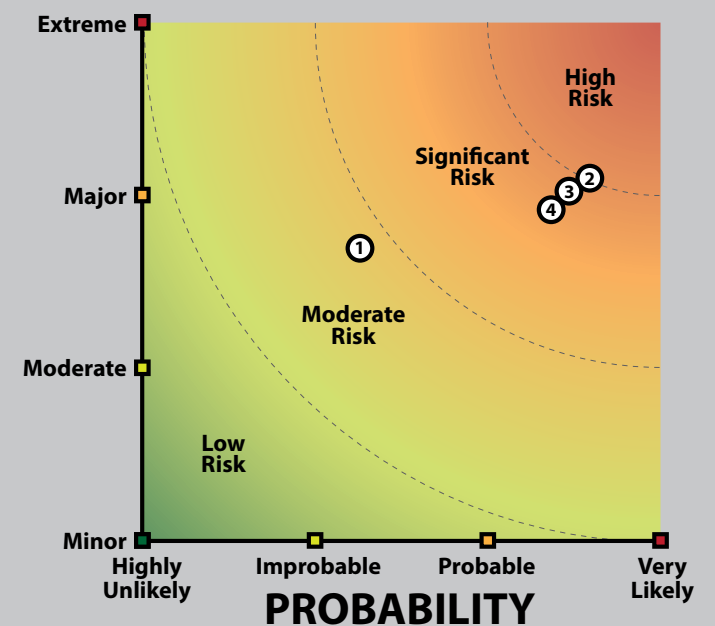
Probable with major consequence

4 Economic Deprivation

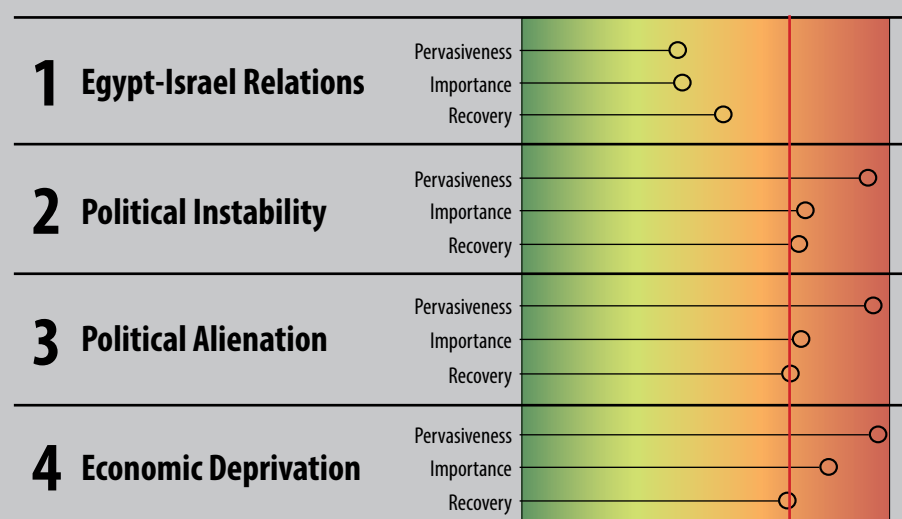
SIGNIFICANT

Probable with major consequence

CONSEQUENCE



Pervasiveness, Importance, & Recovery

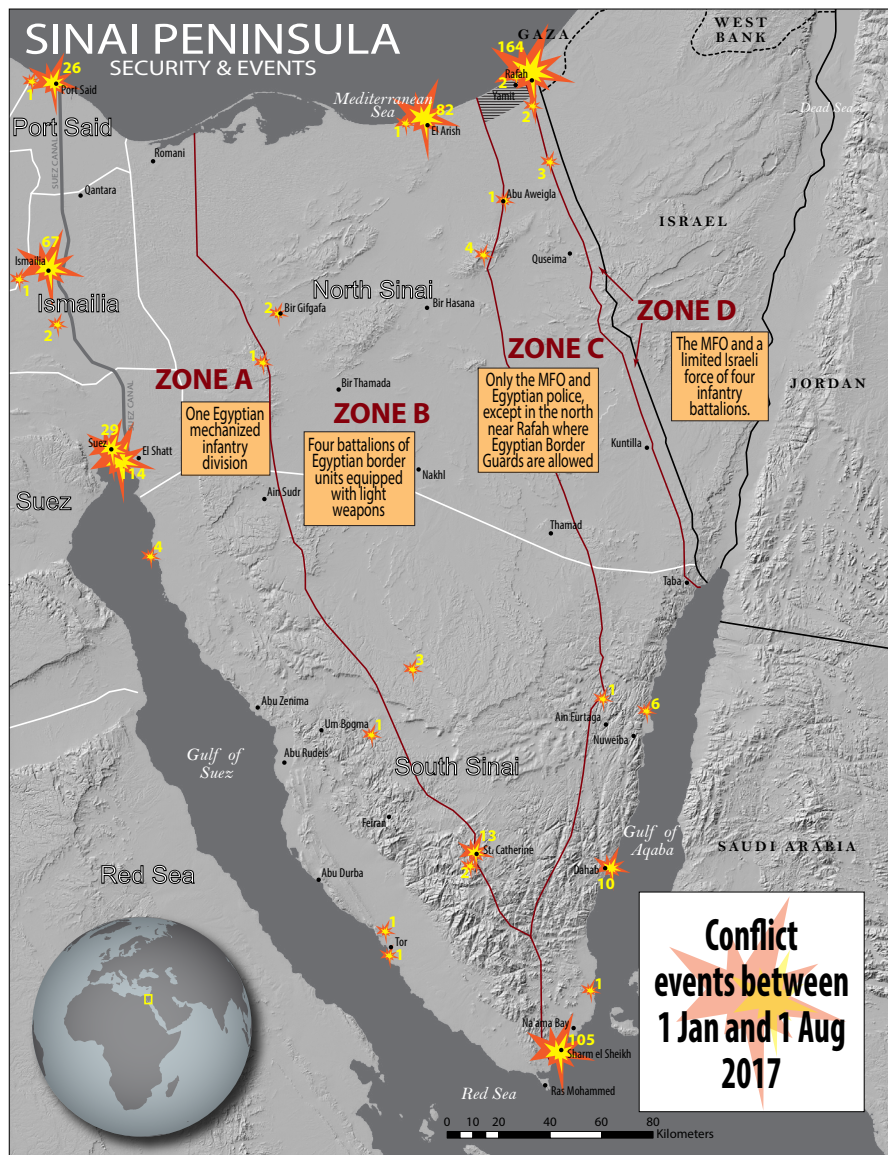
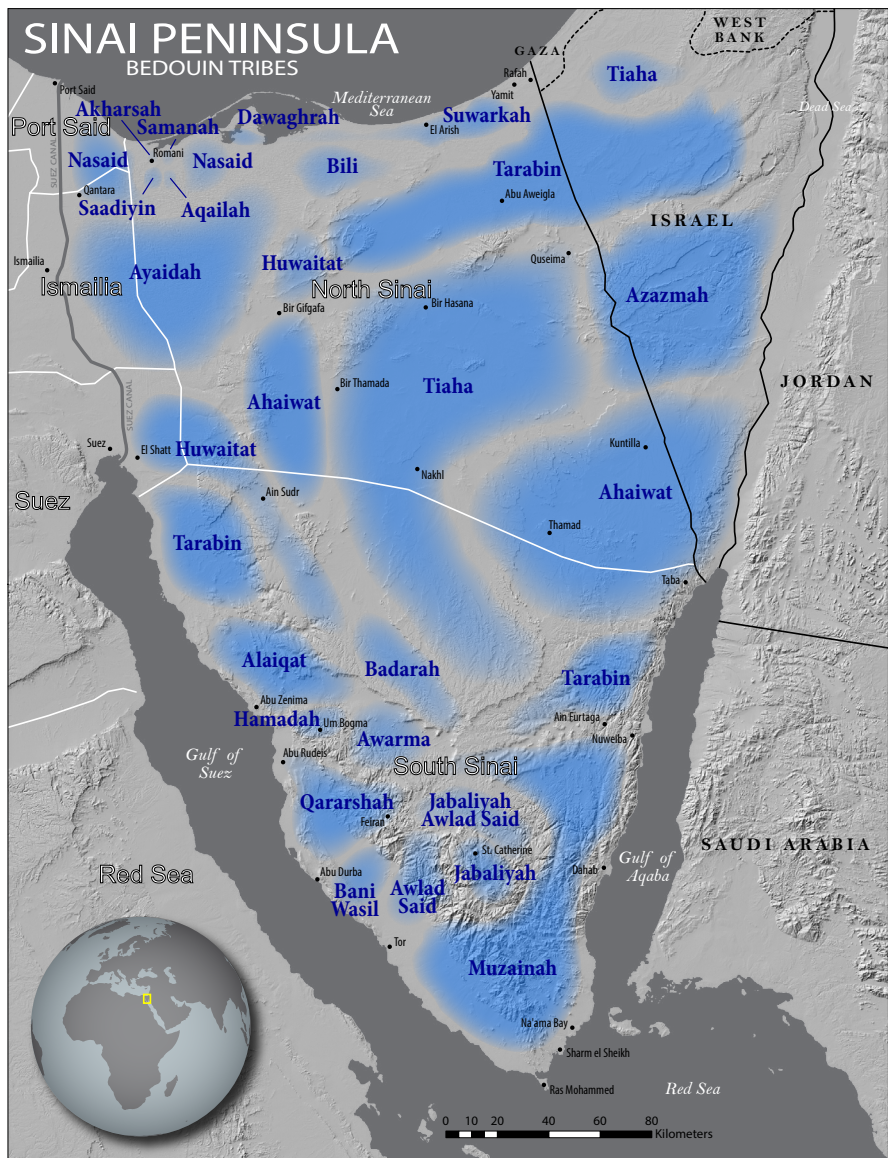


Implications:

The failure of Egypt to govern and govern well in the Sinai is most readily exploited by groups like the Islamic State. This political miscarriage combined with a lack of economic opportunities is fostering an ideal vacuum for extremism (Fault Lines 2-4).

Moreover, exploitation may elevate a renewal of historical and cultural tensions disrupting peace and collaboration between critical stakeholders in the region (Fault Line 1).

Egypt/Sinai Timeline Since World War II

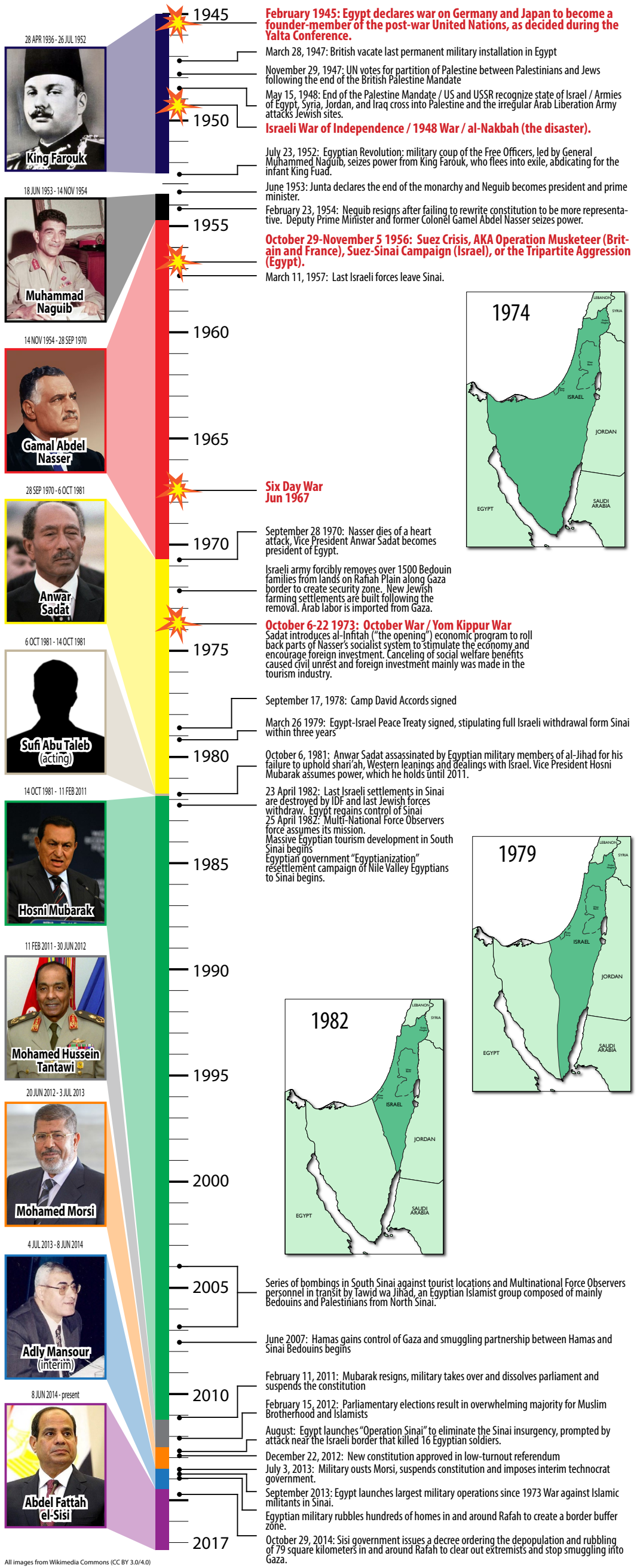


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A Fault Line Analysis is our methodology for identifying unstable and exploitable conditions within an OE.



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