

GERD and the Changing Hydropolitical Dynamics in the Nile Basin

1

**Tesfaye Tafesse
Addis Ababa University
College of Social Sciences
Centre for African and Oriental Studies
(CAfOS)**

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Contents

2

1. Introduction
2. Factors that propelled unilateralism
3. Cooperative Framework Agreement
4. The Changing Hydropolitical Dynamics in the Basin
5. Concluding Remarks

1. Introduction

3

- ❖ The institutional issues that the NB is grappling with include: **high environmental degradation, high sedimentation, lack of basin-wide cooperation** etc.
- ❖ The hitherto existing efforts in improving NRM in the basin have not been **all-inclusive** or **basin-wide**
- ❖ The proper management and utilization of the Nile water resources requires the creation of a **basin-wide legal and institutional framework**
- ❖ The study aims to: (a) explore factors that propelled unilateralism, (b) give updates on the CFA and (c) depict the changing hydropolitical dynamics in the basin

2. Factors that propelled unilateralism

4

- ❖ The single major factor that propelled unilateralism has been lack of basin-wide and comprehensive agreement on the utilization of the Nile waters
- ❖ The institutions that have been created to date (Hydromet, TECCONILE and NBI) failed to be all-inclusive
- ❖ As a result, they lacked inclusiveness and failed to anchor a comprehensive institutional setting
- ❖ That is why the basin is still yearning for the creation of a commission (e.g. NRBC)

3. The Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA)

5

- ❖ The Nile River Basin Cooperative Framework (CFA) has been going on since 1997
- ❖ It has laid down some **basic principles for the protection, use, conservation and development of the NB**
- ❖ So far, 6 upstream states (about 2/3rd) have signed the CFA that was tabled for signature for one year until May 13, 2011
- ❖ South Sudan has also shown an interest to sign the CFA soon
- ❖ Sudan, Egypt and DRC have not signed the CFA to date

4. The changing hydropolitical dynamics in the basin

6

❖ Of late, the hydropolitical dynamics in the basin has changed due to six factors:

(a) the construction of GERD in Ethiopia

(b) the joint/common positions of upstream states to assert their equitable rights on the Nile water resources,

(c) the increasing political and economic clouts of upstream states,

Changing hydropolitical dynamics (cont'd)



(d) mobilization of alternative funding for unilateral water infrastructure development from other sources (e.g. China) and less reliance on traditional funders (e.g. WB)

(e) Sudan's unexpected support for GERD – a diplomatic coup for Ethiopia and a political set back for Egypt and

(f) the reduction of the bargaining powers of Egypt over FIs

4. Concluding remarks

8

- ❖ The construction of GERD has compelled Egypt to think out of the box by changing its old attitudes that have led to the current dead end
- ❖ Egypt also seems to wake up to the new reality and the changing regional dynamics in the basin by accepting the rights of other riparian states
- ❖ It does also look that instead of fearing the dam Egypt is compelled to see it as an opportunity to forge close ties with co-basin states
- ❖ Of late, we see a civil, reciprocal and mutual dialogue among Egypt, Ethiopia and the Sudan (the recent DoP is a good example for this)

• **THANK YOU**