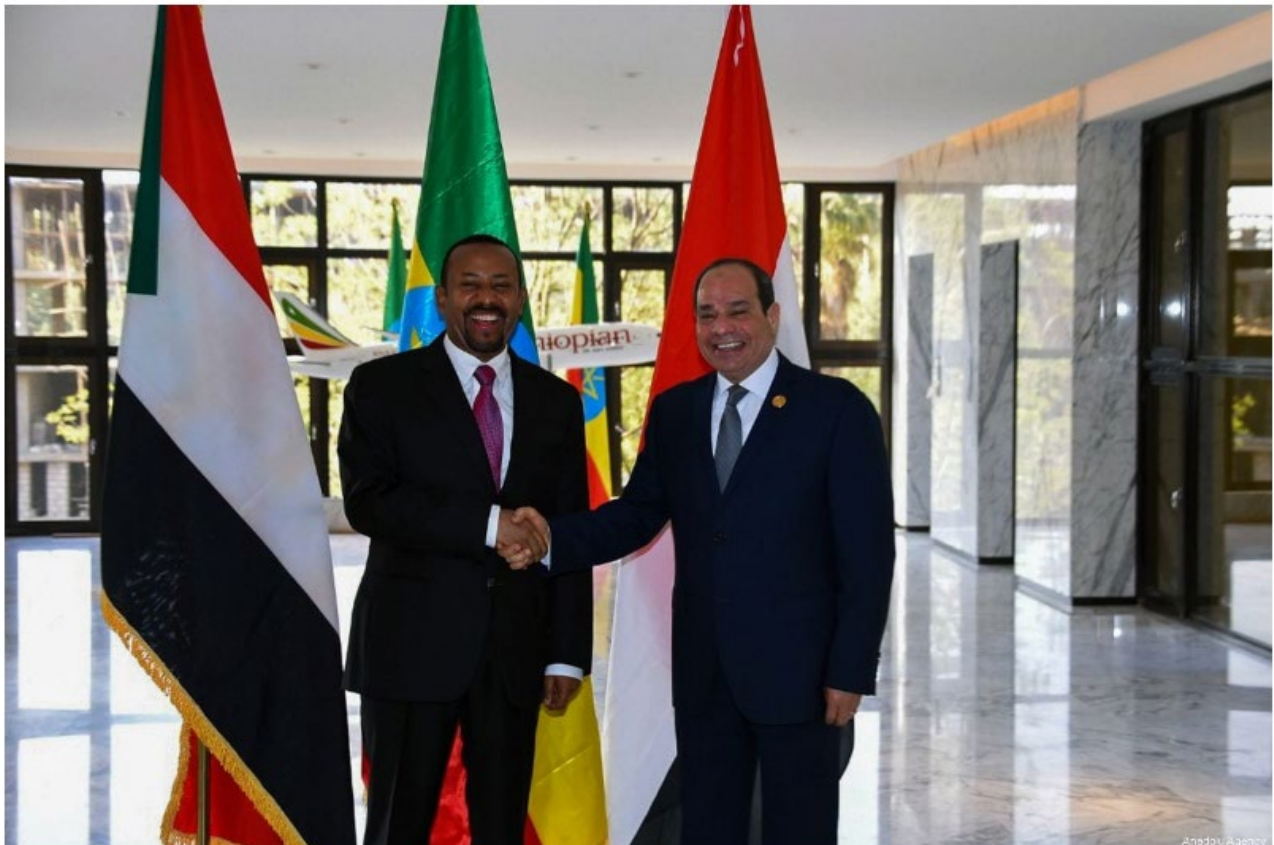


# The Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam: Ethiopia's wildcard to change the game

A media analysis of the applied soft-power mechanisms in the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam and how these contributed to a changing power balance in the Blue Nile River

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# A media analysis of the applied soft-power mechanisms in the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam and how these contributed to a changing power balance in the Blue Nile River

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As Ethiopia's Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi, asserted (*Al Jazeera* 19 May 2010): *“Some people in Egypt have old-fashioned ideas based on the assumption that the Nile water belongs to Egypt, and that Egypt has a right to decide who gets what, and that the upper countries are unable to use the Nile water because they will be unstable and they will be poor. These circumstances have changed and changed forever. Ethiopia is not unstable. Ethiopia is still poor, but it is able to cover the necessary resources to build whatever infrastructure and dams it wants on the Nile water.”*

## Abstract

The Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam project has evolved to a heavily politicized case over the last decade. The project originally designed to supply Ethiopia's households with electricity is now the middle of a diplomatic warfare between Egypt and Ethiopia. Egypt, in history, was considered as the hegemon in the Nile Basin and had developed multiple political instruments to remain in this position. However, this hegemony has become unstable and the case of the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam is considered to be an influential case on the balance of power relations between the two countries. This thesis aims to identify how Egypt and Ethiopia utilize soft-power mechanisms in the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, and how these contribute to a changing power balance in the Blue Nile River. The research makes use of a media analysis of the Daily News Egypt, The Egyptian Independent, The Addis Fortune and the Ethiopian News Agency to identify these soft power mechanisms. The research shows that Ethiopia established "facts on the ground" in the disputed case and effectively used counter-frames and bargaining power strategies to counter Egyptian hegemony.

Key words: Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, Soft-power, Hegemony, Counter-hegemony, Collective action frames, Diplomacy

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## List of Abbreviations

CFA: Cooperation Framework Agreement

DoP: Declaration of Principles

GERD: Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam

IPoE: International Panel of Experts

NBI: Nile Basin Initiative

TECCONILE: Technical Cooperation Committee for the Promotion of Development and Environmental Protection of the Basin

NRBAP: the Nile River Basin Action Plan



## 1. Introduction

With rising populations, seasonal droughts, climate change following intensified irrigation and soil erosion the Blue Nile River is now more than ever the industrial and agricultural lifeline of its riparian countries (Yang et al., 2021; Kim & Kaluarachi, 2009; Dile et al., 2016; Woldesenbet et al., 2017). Being described the lifeline of multiple countries, and ever growing in importance has created tensions and conflicting interests between its users. These tensions often revealed themselves locally, in the form of scarcity and drought conflicting different tribes, but more recent also regional in the case of the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (Abteu & Dessu, 2019). Even though the Nile is often described as an area of low water stress and low conflict possibility, the political tensions are rising between Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia over the newly developed project that is the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) (Turhan, 2018; Gebreluel, 2014). The Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, which I will abbreviate as GERD, is a project from the Ethiopian government anticipating on growing demands especially for electricity as a result of population growth. The projects construction started in April 2011 in the in the region Benishangul-Gumuz close to the border of Sudan (Abteu & Dessu, 2019). The dam is expected to generate as much power as 6 power plants, supplying electricity for up to 6 million households (Turhan, 2018). Other riparian's of the Blue Nile's water like Sudan and especially Egypt claim that the Nile is existential for their survival (Daily News Egypt, 2020). 95% of the water flowing towards Egypt during the flood period originates from the Ethiopian highlands and lake Tana and Sudan needs the water for agricultural purposes and for hydro-electrical purposes (Swain, 2008 ; Turhan, 2018) (See Figure 1 for the catchment area of the Blue Nile and figure 2 for the location of the GERD). The GERD is described as a potential game changer in the water relations between the three countries and other riparian's of the Blue Nile's water (Egypt and Sudan), quickly responded on Ethiopia's unilateral decision to build the dam (Abteu & Dessu, 2019; Swain & Chen, 2014).

Egypt reacted hesitatively towards the project arguing it would create water shortages for the two downstream countries (Turhan, 2020 ; Abteu & Dessu, 2019). Sudan's reaction was more positive as it saw some beneficial attributions the GERD could supply electricity and reduction of flow and sediments (Salman, 2016). The reaction of Egypt did not come out of the blue (Swain, 2008). The country always has been the hegemony within the region, and till recently did not got any resistance affecting this position (Swain, 2008). This position is threatened by the construction of the GERD because it has the potential to influence the water distribution to downstream Egypt (Gebreluel, 2014). Egypt being a country with major water stress needs the river for agricultural and economic purposes (Swain, 2011). This importance has shaped the policy of the Egyptian government towards the Nile in the past. Egypt developed the most infrastructural projects and played a political dominant role to maintain its hegemony over the river (Waterbury, 2010 ; Cascão, 2008). Furthermore, the Nile still remains to have a central role through the history of Egypt and also has a symbolic position (Gebreluel, 2014). The unilateral decision of Ethiopia with building the GERD therefore threatens the established hydro hegemonic position of Egypt over the Blue Nile (Abteu & Dessu, 2019). This thesis aims to investigate how the recent unilateral decision of Ethiopia to construct the GERD contributed a change in the hydro-political power balance in the Nile River.

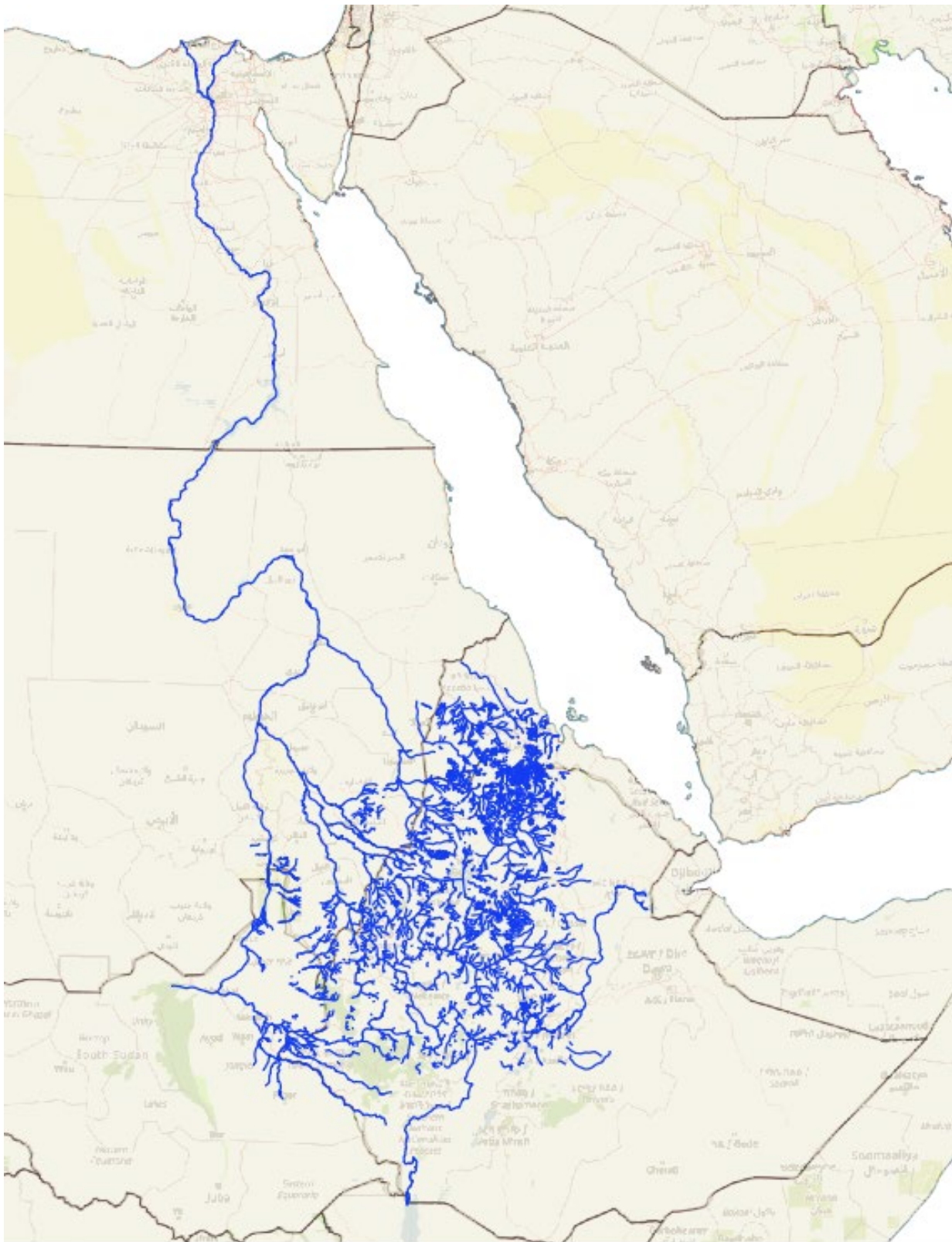


Figure 2: Catchment area of the Blue Nile River



Figure 3: Location of the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (red dot)

### 1.1 Social and scientific relevance

The social relevance of this thesis starts with the impact the new GERD project has on the economy and the standard of living in Ethiopia. Currently, the GERD is Africa's most influential and politically contested water project (Brookings, 2020). According to the Ethiopian government the project creates hydro-electricity giving millions of people access to electrical power that are now cut off (Turhan, 2018). The dam also influences seasonal drought affecting the rural community, and it helps reducing floods in the rain season. For Sudan the project is relevant because of hydro-electricity, water access and flood prevention (Turhan, 2018). Lastly, to Egypt the project is relevant because the Blue Nile water influences their downstream water access (Swain, 2009). Thus, for living conditions in each of the three countries the water access provided by Blue Nile is a priority. Furthermore, the economic dimension of the project for domestic interests creates diplomatic and political tensions. Egypt as well as Ethiopia withdrew from negotiations on the case, and both countries form political alliances to influence the negotiations (Getachew, 2018). Sudan on its turn does not regard the dam as being fully safe (Reuters, 2020). These events are examples of bargaining strategies of the countries involved in the GERD. Furthermore, all parties involved also try to set their diplomatic discourses to maintain their interests. It is relevant to categorize these different discourses of the GERD to conclude how they contributed to how power has shifted or maintained within the Blue Nile river. This thesis can help identifying the domestic narratives as well as the bargaining disputes in the GERD and how it affects the riparian countries water relations. Identifying these narratives and bargaining strategies helps international observers, mediators involved in hydro-politics, but also policy makers involved transboundary water management. To international observers or mediators

this thesis can contribute by providing them more detailed information on the GERD so that mediation will be more effective. The specific case investigated can also contribute to mediators in future transnational water disputes. Soft power strategies are important for actors involved and having in-depth information about the process of establishment of these strategies can finetune mediating processes. Adding to that, to foreign policy makers especially in the field of water this thesis contributes to what strategies are effective to create leverage. It does this by identifying the used strategies in this specific case.

Some research is already established on the power distribution within the Blue Nile. For example, Swain (2008) gives a historical overview about the hydro-hegemonic position of Egypt and how this developed over time. Illustrative, as he calls it, is the fact that Ethiopia is left out in old treaties regarding the water distribution of the Blue Nile in 1959 (Swain, 2008). This is deemed as illustrative because Egypt is mostly regarded as a hegemon in the Nile Basin and it could afford it to keep Ethiopia out of agreements (Swain, 2008). It had material as well as political leverage over Ethiopia. However, temporary research that focusses more on the current power distribution gives a different overview. Cascão and Nicol (2016) analyse the situation in the Blue Nile and argues that Egypt still has a superior material and political leverage over the countries of Sudan and Ethiopia. However, she also states that the hegemonic position of Egypt became more fragile. The current situation, is not the one Swain described regarding the old hegemonic position of Egypt. Ethiopia now has gained more political leverage to influence the power distribution (Gebreluel, 2014). The GERD project is seen as the decisive factor in the shift of Ethiopia being dominated by Egypt (Abteu & Dessu, 2019; Tawfik, 2016). That the power distribution changes is something many authors agree on. However, not much research has been conducted on the specific role of discourses in facilitating this shift. There is however been set a first step towards this: Cascão (2008) and Cascão & Zeitoun (2010) established a framework on counter hegemonic alternatives and described this framework with the case of Ethiopia-Egypt relations. Their framework is based on the different factors involved in the power position of the two countries. Within this framework they give an overview in how Ethiopia and Egypt both have different tactics to overthrow or maintain the status quo (Cascão, 2008). Cascão (2008), in her research, dived further into the position of Ethiopia and gives an overview of different strategies Ethiopia could use to change the Egyptian hegemony. These strategies as she argues are the more soft power mechanisms of bargaining and the creation of alternative discourses (Cascão, 2008). This thesis will use these soft power mechanisms of bargaining strategies and discourse formation to help clarifying how specifically the GERD contributed to the shift in power distribution. It will do this by using the method of framing developed by Benford & Snow (2000) that influence the type of discourses in the GERD. To zoom in on the role of bargaining power this thesis uses 4 types of bargaining power strategies developed by Cascão & Zeitoun (2010).

It is interesting, to create a clearer overview of the GERD as it is seen as a potentially decisive case in the power change between the countries of Egypt and Ethiopia (Tawfik, 2016 ; Adteu & Dessu, 2019; Swain & Chen, 2018). With regards to the case of the GERD no clear structured research has been conducted to give the overview of different soft power mechanisms that could assert the power structure. Furthermore, Cascão and Zeitoun (2010) did claim that the bargaining power of Ethiopia created a shift in the power distribution in the Blue Nile, but did not give detailed empirical evidence to support this claim. This thesis thus, wants to fill in this gap by providing a clearer overview of the different soft power mechanisms (bargaining strategies and developing discourses) of Egypt and Ethiopia in the case of the GERD. It also, if possible wants to provide more detailed categories in the bargaining strategies seen as the game changer within the Blue Nile. Cascão and Zeitoun (2010) did develop a framework of bargaining strategies for Ethiopia to overthrow the power balance in the Blue Nile but not for the specific case of GERD. The research therefore, wants to contribute to the



notion Zeitoun et. al. (2019) made regarding transboundary water arrangements. The authors claim that the necessary steps for conducting research now is to “understand and engage with the processes and structures that maintain transboundary water arrangements, and identify potential for their transformation (Zeitoun et. al., 2019 p. 369).” This thesis wants to identify the processes and structures formed in the case of GERD, and how they will maintain or change the power balance of the Blue Nile river.

## 1.2 Research question

To contribute to established literature on soft power in the Nile Basin and to contribute to the knowledge on the applied soft power mechanisms in this case I will answer the following research question: *How did the soft power mechanisms of Egypt and Ethiopia, in the case of the GERD, influence the power balance in the Blue Nile river?*

This research is made up of three parts; first a historiography by analysing established literature and legal frameworks which shaped the context of the current discourses in the Blue Nile river. Secondly a critical media analysis on the bargaining power strategies of Egypt and Ethiopia with regards to the GERD. And thirdly a critical media analysis on the different utilized diagnostic, prognostic and motivational frames of Egypt and Ethiopia in the case of the GERD.

Sub questions:

- *How have the historical relations between Egypt and Ethiopia and the established legal frameworks in the Nile Basin before the case of the GERD shaped the context of soft power in the Blue Nile river?*
- *What are the bargaining power strategies set by Egypt and Ethiopia in the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam?*
- *What are the diagnostic, prognostic and motivational frames set by Ethiopia and Egypt in the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam?*

## 2. Theory and hypotheses

This chapter summarizes the already established literature on the concepts of this thesis. From this literature the conceptual model will be drawn.

### 2.1.1 Theories of power and hegemony

For centuries geographers have been interested in the relation between power, politics and water. Water for example shapes political advantages in the form of accepted discourses in the dictatorship of Franco in Spain. (Ekers & Loftus, 2008) Another example could be witnessed in the work of Gandy where the clean water discourse contributed to the modernisation of cities (Gandy, 2006 in Ekers & Loftus, 2008). Much of the more recent research on these relations between water, power and politics are analysed by combining Gramsci's theory of hegemony and Foucault's theory of power and the role of discourse (Ekers & Loftus, 2008).

Critical authors like Barnett argue that the combination of these concepts is difficult because the concepts of both thinkers have to been seen through different lenses. The nature and mechanisms of both theories are too incomparable to make the concepts work together (Barnett, 2005). Ekers & Loftus (2008) argue that careless combining of these two concepts has its pitfalls as it gives no correct overview of the empirical world. However, different authors still claim that with more care for the different natures the theories got produced in, some concepts could be combined for an

analysis (Ekers & Loftus, 2005; Jessop, 2007; Marsden, 1999; Driver, 1985). The concepts that could be combined are also the concepts that overlap each other as central concepts of their theories. Ekers & Loftus (2008) use for example the more actor based level of thinking from Gramsci about accepting directives that creates a situation of rules and limitations. Foucault thinks more structure based, (although Foucault does not describe himself as a structuralist) in this sense but argues that the power relations and accepting them as a population paved the way for the industrial revolution. In this sense both overlap in the different power relations within a society, and argue that there is a group that gets dominated (Ekers & Loftus, 2008). To Gramsci the concept of hegemony is what creates the group that dominates and the group that accepts this (Bates, 1975).

The concept hegemony from Antoni Gramsci as Bates writes it “means political leadership based on the consent of the led, a consent which is secured by the diffusion and popularization of the world view of the ruling class” (Bates, 1975 p. 352). Regarding the process of securing there need to be two concepts distinguished. There is the civil society and the political society. Civil society for example consists schools or churches, but also clubs and other private organisms. The political society is made up of the police, army, government and courts. The political society dominates the civil society in this as is seen through the rule of law (Bates, 1975).

Foucault theory on power is more difficult to understand as he does not set clear examples of which institutions dominate the accepting group like Gramsci does. Foucault talks about power as “the strategies, the networks, the mechanisms, all those techniques by which a decision is accepted and by which that decision could not but be taken in the way it was” (Foucault, 1988 p. 104). These techniques of power could for example result in the system of imprisoning people as a punishment, to social control, to certain urban neighbourhoods were different groups belong, or overall surveillance of norms and values (Foucault, 1988). A technique central in Foucault’s work to produce power is discourse (Foucault, 1995). Discourses are “the social processes and the systems of knowledge through which meaning is produces, fixed, lived, experienced, and transformed”. (Barnett, 2006 p. 55) Creating discourses can give social reproductions and this creates a sense of meaning in social identities. It works at the boundaries of these social identities and according to Barnett (2005) discourse can chance the balance of power between social identities, but this will always come with tension (Barnett, 2005).

### 2.1.2 Applying hegemony and power to international relations

Moving further, Foucault’s theory of power and Gramsci’s theory of hegemony are used in international relations today. The first author to apply the theory of hegemony on international relations was Robert Cox. Robert Cox uses the theory of hegemony with the notion of Gramsci which was that the international relations follow from more structural changes in the domestic social structures. This could be technical and military innovations for example (Cox, 1983). For Gramsci this were more “basic changes” as Robert Cox called them (Cox, 1983 p. 8). The state still was the decisive factor and retained the power in the vision of Gramsci. But within his lens, Gramsci did acknowledge that powerful state underwent revolutions like the French one, the state development of the USSR and the US (Cox, 1983). And furthermore that these powerful states could influence the domestic developments of other states.

Foucault’s theory of power and especially discourse as a key tactic is also used by scholars of international relations. Even though the usage of discourse in international relations was often seen as a non-testable, empirical lacking or a different method compared to the established international relations scientific methods Milliken defines it as useful but also dangerous (Milliken, 1999). Discourse analysts need to be critical and need to understand the shortcomings of the method, also compared to already established research methods in the field that shaped the playing field of social

sciences (Milliken, 1999). Discourse, nevertheless is useful as it comes to doing research in the creation of meanings and power positions. It is also used as the method of studying different meanings and how they influence each other (Doty, 1997). Barnett (2005) even argues that the power production of international relations is often seen through the tactic of discourse, with the fixing of understandings or setting them and when and how to act. This discourse tactic has had historical importance with famous examples of discourses like nuclear weapons in the cold war era, or the terrorist discourse after nine-eleven (Verkoren, 2020). These examples did create a type of constraining framework for setting up policy, and influenced how to act towards the 'other'. The result of successful productive power, and the tactic of discourse, is that what is taken for granted now in global political understandings as Barnett calls it (Barnett, 2005).

Combining the concept of hegemony and discourse as the factor of influencing structure within international relations is the following step to be taken. Foucault thinks that "we need to identify discourse as the violence which we do to things, or impose on them as a practice" (Foucault, 1987). Discourses violate the structure and thus the power positions of the actors involved in this structure. (Doty, 1997). The discourses thus, especially the more relevant ones, make the structure defined as power in international relations unstable (Doty, 1997). Moreover, studying the discourses within a power domain can help with defining how certain actors can or try to overcome this current power balance (Doty, 1997). This is possible because within the concept of discourse there is room for other discourses that overlap, conflict or challenge the hegemonic discourse (Doty, 1997). Resistance thus, often can create dominant alternatives. This is exactly why this thesis will use the concept of discourse. Discourses are used as a way of describing how the different actors, Ethiopia and Egypt, give meaning to their governance on the GERD. Therefore, discourses could help identifying the different governance approaches regarding the GERD of the two countries. Discourses then, could also help giving a clearer overview in how they influence power balance in the Blue Nile river. This could be done by identifying these discourses and the way they constantly shape and reshape the structure in the Blue Nile river. This is especially interesting for the Blue Nile river, where the power distribution shifted in the last decade (Swain, 2008). The GERD has been described as the decisive factor in this shift (Abtew & Dessu, 2019). It is therefore usable for giving an overview of the different discourses affecting the power structure.

### 2.1.3 Applying power, hegemony and discourse to transboundary hydro-politics

The concepts of power, hegemony and discourse are helpful to study different domains. It gives an overview of relationships of actors and structure. This also applies for the domain of water relations. The concept of hydro-hegemony for example is well known within the domain of water. Zeitoun & Allan (2008) apply the concept of hegemony to transboundary water analysis. The mechanism that creates hegemony within water relations for them is the abundance of resources and power of a riparian with the combination of the lack of international institutions to constrain actions. This results in this hydro-hegemonic position of some riparian. What moderates within this mechanism is the information asymmetry of the international domain, which can give false perceptions on power positions (Zeitoun & Allan, 2008). Today there is a critical approach in this construction of hydro-hegemony, and discourses play a role in this. Multiple scholars like Trottier (2003) or Guzzini (2005) study the discourses within this power distribution of international water relations. Trottier did this for Israel-Palestinian water conflict where discourses create political shifts, or donor contributions towards one of the actors. Guzzini (2005) argues that creating discourses could redirect the power position of the hegemon to less important. The hegemon usually will not let this happen and tries to weaken this discourse (Guzzini, 2005). According to Mirumachi (2015) powerful actors maintain discourses to achieve policy outcomes that are more lasting. Hegemonic discourses reflect the needs and interests that the hegemon has (Mirumachi, 2015).

Zeitoun & Warner (2006) however argue that researches have to be critical applying the theory of hegemony. The understanding of the concept of hegemony often lacks, and this will lead towards misuse. It for example leads to understanding the term as domination (Zeitoun & Warner, 2006). Instead of simply speaking about domination the hegemon has abilities in the soft power and hard power domain that can help keeping or extending its power position. According to them “the outcome of competition over water resources is determined by the exertion of power of the hegemon” (Zeitoun & Warner, 2006 p.) The hegemon has multiple ways of exertion. For example, the hegemon could also use this power in a more guiding manner (Zeitoun & Warner, 2006). Discourses, then, in hydro-political power structures, influence the asymmetry of power between the hegemony and the hegemonized. Zeitoun & Warner (2006) have developed a concept for the hegemonic discourse and labelled it a ‘sanctioned discourse’ that counters the alternatives to overthrow the power balance. The sanctioned discourse has to create a legitimized narrative of consent by its own population as well as other state and non-state actors involved in the power domain. Soft-power approaches of this ‘sanctioned discourse’ also include media coverage of events that could assert the power balance. The goal of sanctioned discourse is to create a stable and accepted environment in which the waters are controlled in a shared manner.

Figure 2 from Zeitoun & Warner (2006) summarizes the types of interaction most commonly known to hydro-hegemony. On the left side of the figure there is a situation of cooperation. The hegemony is stable and the control of waters is shared. Cooperation can be used by the hegemon to blur the feeling of injustice by placing the non-hegemon on perceived equal position, but de facto controlling the situation without competition (Zeitoun & Warner, 2006). This can also serve to prevent weaker actors from forming counter alliances (Zeitoun & Warner, 2006). However, cooperation can also be used by non-hegemon to counter the power differences by establishing frameworks. Furthermore, according to Zeitoun & Warner multi-beneficial projects that promote cooperation also reduce tensions and make relations more stable. On the right side of the figure, control is competitive and exhaustive and there is a fight for hegemony. The goal of the hegemon is to utilize its tools like the sanctioned discourse, and exert power to keep the model on the left side. The hegemon may also produce acts of securitization in which more rigorous interferences or even militarized acts are legitimated

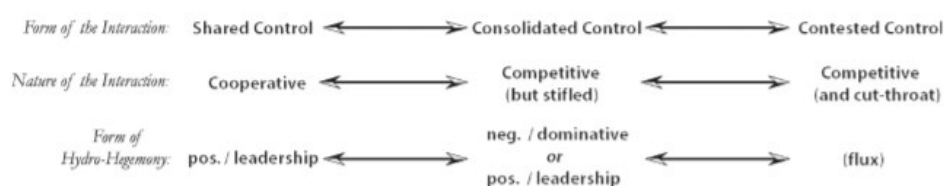


Figure 4: Continuum of forms of interaction over transboundary water resources (Zeitoun & Warner, 2006)

These sanctioned discourses for manufacturing consent mainly focus on the hegemon and this point of view creates little room for understanding the counter hegemony's behaviour (Cascão, 2008). Theories of counter hegemony are less established, but still provide a useful framework for understanding the different approaches to change the hydro-power asymmetry. It is however needed to speak of the following notions: firstly, counter-hegemon or hegemonized behaviour is deeply influenced by the behaviour of the hegemon (Zeitoun & Warner, 2006). The hegemon has more freedom in choosing its behaviour and for example negative behaviour could create tensions in their relations (Zeitoun & Warner, 2006). Choosing for a more cooperative approach could help with setting up relations, but could also help with blurring the feeling of a power asymmetry and thus



helping with conflict reduction. Secondly, the hegemon often has historical discursive power (Getachew, 2018; Cascão, 2008). With regards to Egypt it had invested more in material power in history, but also in the discursive leverage. Most articles on the Blue Nile river are from Egypt (Cascão, 2008). But as Cox (1981) acknowledged, these relations are not set and only formed by the hegemon. Hegemony always creates resistance. If we take the school of constructivism in international relations for example one of the basic assumptions is that the power domains are constantly shaped and reshaped (Theys, 2018). This is also the idea of critical hydro-politics. Power distribution is fluid, the current situation can change (Cascão & Zeitoun, 2010).

Building on the theory of counter-hegemony Cascão and Zeitoun (2010) developed a framework in which hegemony and counter hegemony are included in hydro-political relations. Cascão and Zeitoun (2010) argue that due to the power position of the hegemon the counter hegemon is limited to change the power distribution in water basins. Especially when the gap in power is severe this helps the hegemon to maintain its position. The four different forms of power Cascão and Zeitoun (2010) categorize in hydro-politics are illustrative for this argument. First there is more structural material power of the hegemon, which is almost always bigger. Second, there is geography as a type of structural power as it could be used strategically when a country is located upstream. Third, there is ideational power and this could be called the power over ideas, where normally the non-hegemon accepts discursive ideas set by the hegemon. But it can also be used to challenge the sanctioned discourse by providing narratives, or ideas that alter the relations. This is a communicative and soft form of power (Carstenen & Schmidt, 2015). The concept of ideational power is deeply influenced by the concepts of hegemony and discourse from Gramsci and Foucault. Fourth, the bargaining power however, is different. Bargaining power is the capacity of the actors to set the agenda in negotiations, or to influence the playing field and its rules and norms. It is the type of power that is most fluid, as well as a more soft form of power, and a well-used strategy for counter hegemony (Cascão & Zeitoun, 2010). Even without a big material power this bargaining power can be used to influence the hegemonic actor (Zeitoun & Allan, 2008). Also, using the bargaining power strategy could influence the ideational power, and the overall normative or symbolic power (Barnett & Duvall, 2005). The hegemon usually has more structural power like military power, and often ideational leverage to create sanctioned discourses for maintaining or discourses to even expand this power position (Zeitoun & Warner, 2006). The strategy of the counter hegemon however, is more about bargaining to influence political decision making or agenda setting. But the ideational power can also be affected by the counter-hegemon by setting alternative discourses and creating perceptions can shift the ideational power structure (Cascão and Zeitoun, 2010). A further notion set by Cascão and Zeitoun (2010) was that bargaining power not only influences ideational power but also that geography for instance is a well-known bargaining strategy. Upstream riparian's can use their geographical position as a bargaining tool in diplomatic talks. It is important to remember that the bargaining power thus, can also be derived from the structural power and that they overlap. The ideational power, and bargaining power combined are part of the soft power mechanisms described by Cascão (2008). Cascão argues that these soft power mechanisms are the communicative types of power concepts that the counter-hegemon is more equipped to use for changing the power structure. It is more difficult to assert hard power like military capacity and therefore the soft power mechanisms are the most convenient tactic for non-hegemons in trying to alternate the status quo (Cascão, 2008).

#### 2.1.4 Ideational power and framing

This thesis defines ideational power as the soft power mechanism over ideas, in which the hegemon tries to uphold a sanctioned discourse and the counter hegemon tries to overthrow this sanctioned discourse by offering alternative discourses (Cascão, 2008). Both parties try to create leverage and legitimize their narratives. As Warner (2012) states facts are 'stacked by frames and narratives' in which meaning is constructed and obtained when believers of a frame appear. Meaning thus in international hydro-politics is created and obtained through social construction in which actors try to create leverage. Cascão (2008) argues that for a counter discourse to emerge and to have leverage coalitions are formed to establish narratives. This is in line with Hajek's conception of discourse coalitions that are being established to sustain a particular discourse (Hajek, 1997 p.13). These coalitions emerge from the national level. The media does influence this coalition forming, and gets more and more involved in this process (Cascão, 2008). The media is often a good source for providing framed information that reinforces discourses (Chomsky & Herman, 1994; Hajek, 1997). Framing is a well-known tactic for developing the desired narratives as well as counter narratives. If we apply the tactic to international water relations this would mean that it could change or maintain the discourses in the power balance. Framing then, as defined by Goffmann, are 'schemata of interpretation that enable individuals to locate, perceive, identify, and label, occurrences within their life space and the world at large' (Goffman, 1974 p. 21). In international water relations this concept is often used but in a state actor approach. To fit this approach, the concept of collective action frames is more applicable. Collective action frames have the same function as the concept of framing from Goffmann but they are also trying to mobilize support and demobilize opponents (Benford & Snow, 2000 p. 614). These frames legitimate certain decisions, actions, campaigns of the certain social movement (Benford & Snow, 2000 p. 614). These frames are not considered to be attitudes of individuals but have constructionist attitudes within them. The collective action frames are also outcomes of the construction of shared opinions or meanings (Benford & Snow, 2000 p.614) (Gamson 1992a:111).

Within the concept of collective action frames there are three types to be distinguished: Diagnostic framing, prognostic framing and motivational framing (Snow & Benford, 1988). Diagnostic framing is linked with the 'injustice frame'. Victimization of a certain occurrence and creating a 'them' and 'us' frame is crucial within the process of diagnostic framing because it sets a boundary between parties involved (Benford & Snow, 2000 p.615 & p. 616). Gamson states that this frame of injustice is always a frame of the interpretation. Studies gave empirical evidence but there is no clear theoretical evidence for this claim (Benford & Snow, 2000 p. 615) (Gamson et. al., 1982). But overall, these frames of injustice are the universal way for influential actors in dealing with political or economic change of interests (Benford & Snow, 2000 p.616).

The second task in the process of framing is the formation of a prognostic frame. This frame creates a perceived solution for the problem that was diagnosed (Benford & Snow, 2000 p. 617). It is good to know that the universe of the prognostic frame, that consists of other stakeholders and their interests, influences the prognostic frame of the individual actor. The prognostic frame often partly is a counter frame of the others prognostic frame. It hereby creates a rationalisation within its prognostic frame and the counter frame also forces the other stakeholder to develop a different frame (Benford & Snow, 2000 p. 617).

The last frame task is the motivational frame. It mobilizes for collective action by the construction of a legitimized motive (Benford & Snow, 2000 p.617). It is the frame that actually mobilizes people to do something about the status quo (Benford & Snow, 2014).

Master frames, however need different variables to occur. One is a large problem that involves a large group of affected people helps. The second and third are flexibility and inclusiveness which also broadens the catchment of people. The influence and scope of the frame matters. When a small group has a frame this does not often create enough leverage to get towards an influential motivational frame. At last a frame needs to appeal to people, it has to create resonance. For this Benford & Snow (2000) label credibility and relative salience as the key factors within the framing process. (Benford & Snow, 2000 p.618 & p.619) To reach credibility a frame needs to be consistent, empirical credible and at last the 'shapers' of the frame have to be credible in the eyes of the public opinion. The salience of the frame also has three dimensions. The first being centrality which could be explained as the essentiality of the frame perceived by its receivers. The second being experiential commensurability. This means that frames ought to be close to lived and perceived experiences and not to abstract.

Applying the framework of hydro-power developed by Zeitoun & Cascão (2010) with the concept of framing can help with the formulation of discourses and counter discourses. As Benford (2000) argues frames "are inherent to public discourse, erupting especially when events undermine hegemonic interpretations of reality". Framing thus, can be used as a tactic by the counter-hegemon in water relations within the framework of bargaining to challenge the hegemon's power position (Benford, 1997). The hegemon then, also frames his point of view to create a sanctioned discourse of consent to maintain its position. Frames furthermore prove to be a useful method for examining news discourses (Pan & Kosicki, 1993). They are helpful in defining the discourses that play a role in certain events and how the parties try to influence the narratives within the media. The frames thus help with setting up favourable discourses by narrowing down alternatives in the media. They are "concrete elements of discourse" and a tool to alter these discourses (Pan & Kosicki, 1993 p. 59). This thesis focusses on the deliberate use of the framing concepts of hydro-politics. Framing is used strategic or deliberate (Benford & Snow, 2000). The frames used by Ethiopia or Egypt are politically oriented in the sense that they have a certain goal. Namely for Ethiopia to overthrow the hegemony of Egypt, and for Egypt to maintain this (Cascão, 2008).

### 2.1.5 Bargaining power strategies

The other part of the soft power mechanisms is the bargaining power. It is the power to set agenda's and influence the rules of the game in which negotiations are conducted. This includes diplomacy in a pro-active or a reactive manner according to the strategy applied in circumstances (Getachew, 2018). Reactive diplomacy for example is always a reactive strategy by using for example international law to influence other parties behaviour or to set the agenda. Pro-active diplomacy is a pro-active strategy for example in the form of alliance forming to increase power. Bargaining power is according to Cascão and Zeitoun (2010) the most relevant type of power to be exploited by Ethiopia as it is very useful for non-hegemons. Furthermore, Cascão and Zeitoun (2010) developed the 4 strategies a counter-hegemon can use for obtaining this form of power: claiming the moral high ground (using international water law); public media and legal advocacy campaigns against unilateral projects; issue-linkage; and cooperation initiatives (Cascão and Zeitoun, 2010 p. 36).

The first tactic of claiming the moral high ground is a bargaining theory that is mostly derived from the International Law. Analysing the established laws on the Blue Nile river gives an overview of how Ethiopia and Egypt can use both for their bargaining power position. Daoudy (2008) does this for the riparian's of the Euphrates and the Tigris and argues that the leverage over International Law helps determining the bargaining power of countries. Getachew (2018) argues that Ethiopia's used international water law to assert Egypt that its unilateral development is not against established

rules. According to him Ethiopia uses for example established frameworks in a pro-active matter to claim the moral high ground (Getachew, 2018).

Secondly campaigning against unilateral projects can assert the bargaining power position (Cascão and Zeitoun, 2010). The GERD is unilateral developed by Ethiopia and this led to a response of Egypt. This response to unilateral projects is a form of reactive diplomacy according to Getachew (2018). The effectiveness of this response is lays within the capacity of diplomatic and media or other discourse coalitions to influence actors. Getachew (2018) adds to this that the other way around can also assert the bargaining power. Unilateral development by Ethiopia with the GERD can increase the bargaining power. But as Getachew (2018) argues Ethiopia maintains this tactic by also campaigning for funds through diplomacy and the media.

Third, issue-linkage is about the potential to link the case, which is the GERD, with other political events or discourses in the political domain. Linking these events or wide-spread discourses helps in creating bargaining power (Cascão and Zeitoun, 2010). Daoudy (2008) examines this for the Tigris and Euphrates. This case describes that linking war or alliances with the case centric issue can help with expanding the power. An example of issue linkage in the GERD negotiations according to Getachew (2018) and Cascão & Nicol (2016) is the potential benefits the GERD would have on mitigating climate change or to provide for electricity.

The fourth and last strategy is cooperation initiatives, often in combination with involving other riparian countries or actors. The Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) is an example of this cooperation tactic as it grouped countries together to solve issues in the Nile river (Swain, 2011). It can help multiple counter-hegemons to form a block against the hegemon. A current example of this today is the Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA) in which upstream countries form an alliance (Salman, 2013). The idea is that these riparian's create bargaining power with combining their diplomatic resources in a pro-active way to create cooperation initiatives. In the GERD, according to Swain (2011) Egypt can use its bargaining power for example to form a coalition with the Arab League of which it is a member.

Concluding, Zeitoun & Warner (2006) and Cascão (2008) did identify the different components within the hydro-political power structure. The hegemon uses its "sanctioned discourses" for maintaining discourses and the non-hegemon using counter-hegemonic strategies formulating alternative discourses (Hussein & Grandi, 2015; Cascão, 2008). But the concept of framing and how it affects the ideational power (the power of discourse) is not yet applied for the case of the GERD. There is also limited established literature that gives an overview of the different bargaining power strategies involved in the negotiations of the GERD. I will therefore, conduct a media analysis in chapter 4 of how the different modes of framing affect the ideational power structure in the GERD. I will also give a detailed overview of the bargaining power strategies involved in the GERD based on the framework of Cascão and Zeitoun (2010).

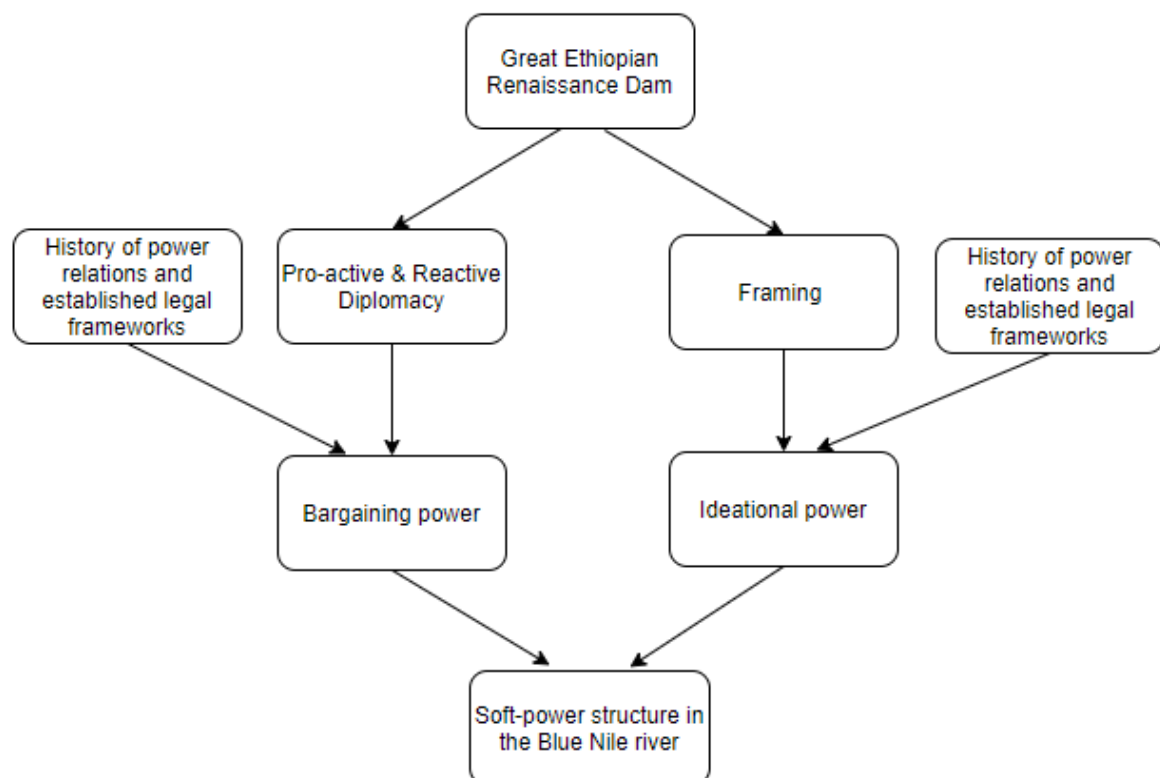
## 2.2 Conceptual model

The conceptual model is based on the theoretical chapter. It applies the theory of hegemony by Gramsci in a hydro-political relation between Egypt and Ethiopia. Furthermore, the conceptual model uses Foucault's theory of power relations and the role of discourse. It uses the theory of hydro-hegemony of Warner & Zeitoun (2006) and the counter hegemony theory of Cascão (2008) with the contribution of Hussein & Grandi, Getachew (2018) and Warner (2012). Collective action frames from Benford & Snow play a central role in the ideational power structure of hydro-politics. Lastly, the

conceptual model uses the hegemon's bargaining strategies derived from the framework set by Cascão and Zeitoun (2010). The bargaining strategies are subdivided into pro-active diplomacy and reactive diplomacy in accordance with Getachew's (2018) framework.

The conceptual model starts with the case of the GERD. This is because this thesis wants to know how the GERD influences the power structure in the Blue Nile river. The power structure is the central concept which is always fluid building according to the school of constructivism. To make the power relation structure change both Ethiopia and Egypt have their tactics. Power is measured with the 4 hydro-power characteristics of Cascão and Zeitoun (2010). (material, geographical, ideational and bargaining) However, this thesis only wants to investigate the change of power relations by diving into the ideational (discourse) and bargaining power. These two combined are the soft power mechanisms. The strategy of the counter-hegemon then is to use these soft power mechanisms to break the consent and thus challenge the status quo (Cascão, 2008). The hegemon wants to use both mechanisms to keep or even expand its power. It therefore "sanctions" the non-hegemonic actors involved (Cascão, 2008)

Lastly, according to Cascão (2008), Cascão & Zeitoun (2010), Getachew (2018); and Swain (2011) Egypt has in history developed more ideational power and the historical context of discourse narrows down the options of Ethiopia now in setting up discourses. This is also included in the conceptual model.



## 3 Methodology

In this chapter the different steps are described that have been taken while conducting this research. The steps include the research design, the data collection and analysing methods and lastly, the data analysis and approach.

### 3.1 Single case approach & case selection

This thesis goal is to identify the soft power mechanisms (discursive and bargaining strategies) in the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam and how the two concepts relate and contributed to a change in the power balance of the Blue Nile river. This thesis focusses specifically on the GERD and the approach is a single case design. The single case design allows to investigate a case more in-depth to acquire new understandings (Yin, 2009). The new understandings resulting from in-depth study of the discursive and bargaining strategies are needed to answer the main question: is *“How did the soft power mechanisms of Egypt and Ethiopia, in the case of the GERD, influenced the power balance in the Blue Nile river?”* The case of the GERD is argued labelled as a deviant one as it is seen as the case that has the possibility to overthrow the Egyptian hydro-hegemony in the Blue Nile basin (Abteu & Dessu, 2019; Tawfik, 2016; Swain & Chen, 2014). Deviant cases have a combination of certain characteristics that is different from other cases (Babbie, 2004). These different characteristics in the GERD case are exactly the characteristics that can contribute to the case being deviant to other cases. As argued by Cascão & Zeitoun (2010) Ethiopia’s developed potential to use its bargaining power and more recently also its ideational power act as a counter to Egyptian hegemony (Getachew, 2018). Analysing the GERD and the usage of the soft power mechanisms by both countries can explain what characteristics in the form of soft power mechanisms contributed to an overthrow in power relations between Ethiopia and Egypt.

### 3.2 Research methods and data collection

#### 3.2.1 Literature review

Chapter two consists of a literature review on the central concepts this research is built on to build the conceptual model. The focus of this thesis is on the power relations between Egypt and Ethiopia and therefore begins with the central concepts of power from Foucault and the concept of hegemony from Gramsci. These are crucial for determining the framework in which the research was conducted in. Since this research is specific about hydro-political relations I retrieved the framework of Cascão & Zeitoun (2010) and the counter-hegemonic framework of Cascão (2008). Bargaining power, and recently also ideational power are relevant tactics for Ethiopia to counter the hegemon’s power. Therefore I used the concept of bargaining power as a counter-hegemonic tactic developed by Cascão (2008). Because bargaining power in the form of diplomacy is pro-active as well as reactive I retrieved Getachew (2018) which argues that Ethiopia and Egypt make use of both in their bargaining power strategies. The concept of ideational power has been described as ‘the power over ideas’ (Cascão 2008). These ideas are often mobilized by discourse coalitions and reproduced (Hajek, 1997). The mobilization tactic, to create power over ideas is important to make the idea salient. Therefore I retrieved the framework of Benford & Snow (2000). Benford & Snow (2000) developed collective action frames in the form of diagnostic framing prognostic framing and motivational framing. These frames are all types of mobilization tactics (Benford & Snow, 2000) This is in line with the post-structuralist stance of seeing language as a mean of constructing, not as reflecting the

reality (Vaara, 2015). This is also the framework I tried to apply in this thesis and therefore use the concepts of ideational power and bargaining power as a mean of constructing power through language. The literature I used for the literature review is retrieved from Google Scholar, RUQuest (the library of the Radboud University), the archive of Water Alternatives (interdisciplinary journal on water politics and development), and Web of Science. The literature has been used to draw the conceptual model, to provide the constructivist framework this thesis is written in and to give definitions on concepts.

### 3.2.2 Historiography

Chapter 4.1 consists of a historiography that was conducted by retrieving established literature on the history of legal frameworks and soft power relations between Ethiopia and Egypt. The historiography describes the history of ideational and bargaining power relations between Egypt and Ethiopia before the case of the GERD. The historical overview will also examine what caused a change in these power relations between Egypt and Ethiopia and what the facilitating conditions were. The analysis answers the first sub question: *How have the historical relations between Egypt and Ethiopia and the established legal frameworks in the Nile Basin before the case of the GERD shaped the context of soft power in the Blue Nile river?*

The historiography is written in an inductive approach in the sense that specific events shaped the broader framework of power relations between Ethiopia and Egypt. Firstly, According to Getachew (2018), a historiography can uncover discourses and knowledge that are silenced by hegemonic ideational and bargaining power. Secondly, the historiography explains the general historical background of asymmetrical power relations between Egypt and Ethiopia in the favour of Egypt (Cascão 2009). Thirdly, the historiography describes historical events, such as the treaty of 1959, that are still relevant in explaining today's hydro-political tensions between Egypt and Ethiopia. The literature retrieved in the historiography consists of Google Scholar, RUQuest (the online library of the Radboud University) and Web of Science. The search terms I use for retrieving this articles are: Egyptian hegemony in the Blue Nile river; Nile agreement 1959 Egypt Ethiopia; History of hydro-political relations in the Blue Nile river; Hydro-politics in the Blue Nile river; Ethiopian Egypt Nile river dispute history; Geo-politics in the Nile; Nile Basin Initiative Ethiopia and Egypt; the Cooperative Framework Agreement in the Nile Basin.

Furthermore, I retrieved documents of the existing legal frameworks established on the Blue Nile river. According to Firat (1987) documentation "involves the process of how the specific culture perceived the world and its facts". In this sense we can understand the historical culture of Ethiopia and Egypt better by retrieving the legal documents on the Nile River. I outlined the relevant historical legal frameworks for Ethiopia and Egypt in table 1.

Treaty, agreement or cooperation	Brief outline
1993 Framework for general cooperation between the Arab Republic of Egypt and Ethiopia	"Consolidating the ties of friendship to enhance cooperation between the two countries and to establish a broad base of common interests (Getachew, 2018)."
Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA)	The treaty on the CFA is signed and ratified by Ethiopia, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. On April 13 of 2010 Egypt and Sudan rejected the CFA.



1959 United Arab Republic (Egypt) and Sudan sign an agreement for the utilization of the Nile waters.	This agreement is signed without Ethiopia. It is the outline for determining how the waters of the Nile will be distributed in the two countries. The agreement was signed on 12 December 1959 (Swain, 2008).
Declaration of Principles agreement between Sudan, Egypt and Ethiopia	Signed in Khartoum on March 23 2015. The declaration outlined 10 principles on which policy regarding the Blue Nile must be based (Aman, 2015). This declaration is, however, non-binding on core matters in which Ethiopia and Egypt disagree.
1929 Treaty between Great Britain and Egypt on the distribution of the water of the Nile River.	The agreement left out Ethiopia, and gave Egypt the right to begin the construction of their Aswan High Dam, and Sudan the right to construct the Rosarie Dam (Waterbury, 2002).
The African Union where the countries of Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan are all represented.	The broad overarching agreement between African countries for development and cooperation in Africa. The chairing country, the Democratic Congo, wants to regenerate negotiations between the countries of Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan (African Union, 2021; Egypt today, 2021).
Report of the International Panel of Experts of 31 May 2013	The IPOE produced a report on the benefits and burdens of the GERD. Their final report is often cited by Ethiopia because the final outcome favoured a continuation of the construction (Getachew, 2018).
Nile Basin Initiative (NBI)	Signed in Dar-es-Salaam on 22 February 1999 the NBI provided a framework for all riparian countries to create a situation of multi beneficial and sustainable usage of the Nile (NBI, 2021).
UNDUGU initiative of 1983	Group consisting of all Nile riparian countries except Ethiopia and Kenya. The group is mostly considered as a hegemonic tool of Egypt to gain control over the countries (Brullée & Toope, 2002). The UNDUGU and TECCONILE are seen as the initiatives that paved the way for the NBI (Bulto, 2009).
TECCONILE initiative of 1992	A technical framework of the countries of Egypt, Sudan, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Ethiopia, Eritrea, Burundi and Kenya acted as observers (Waterbury, 2002).

*Table 1: Established frameworks on the Nile River between Egypt and Ethiopia*



The original text of the Cooperative Framework of 1993 is outlined in appendix 2. Furthermore, the CFA's (Collective Framework Agreement) article 14b is put into appendix 3. Article 14b is according to Salman (2013) the main reason why Egypt did not accept the CFA and is still the main reason in today's hydro-political dispute. Chapter 4.1.5 will describe more in-depth the importance of article 14b. Lastly, The agreement of 1959 is outlined in appendix 4, and the Declaration of Principles of 2015 is outlined in appendix 5.

The original text of the CFA can be retrieved on the international water law documentation website ([https://www.internationalwaterlaw.org/documents/regionaldocs/Nile\\_River\\_Basin\\_Cooperative\\_Framework\\_2010.pdf](https://www.internationalwaterlaw.org/documents/regionaldocs/Nile_River_Basin_Cooperative_Framework_2010.pdf))

The 1929 treaty concerning Sudan and Egypt can be retrieved from the international water law documentation website ([https://www.internationalwaterlaw.org/documents/regionaldocs/Egypt\\_UK\\_Nile\\_Agreement-1929.html](https://www.internationalwaterlaw.org/documents/regionaldocs/Egypt_UK_Nile_Agreement-1929.html))

The International Panel of Experts (IPoE) document of 2013 on the safety of the GERD can be retrieved from [https://www.scidev.net/wp-content/uploads/site\\_assets/docs/international\\_panel\\_of\\_experts\\_for\\_ethiopian\\_renaissance\\_dam\\_final\\_report.pdf](https://www.scidev.net/wp-content/uploads/site_assets/docs/international_panel_of_experts_for_ethiopian_renaissance_dam_final_report.pdf)

### 3.2.3 Media discourse analysis

A discourse analysis by retrieving media articles is conducted in chapter 4.2 and 4.3 to answer the second sub question: *What are the bargaining power strategies of Ethiopia and Egypt in the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam?* and third sub question: *What are the diagnostic, prognostic and motivational frames set by Ethiopia and Egypt in the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam?* The media analysis aim was to identify the bargaining strategies utilized by Ethiopia and Egypt in the GERD, and the frames that are utilized by Ethiopia and Egypt in the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam. Furthermore, the media analysis identifies when and how the two countries interact with each other.

The data is based on media articles from around the countries of Ethiopia and Egypt. I chose for newspapers of these countries because, as argued by Cascão (2008), that for discourses to emerge the parties involved try to get into a process of clientelism. This clientelism also needs the media as an actor in forming discourse coalitions (Cascão, 2008; Hajek, 1997). To build up frames, and to give them salience frames are often reproduced through media. Salience as Benford & Snow (2000) call it helps with the reach of a frame. The media of both the countries thus, helps with the reproduction of certain narratives.

The media articles are retrieved from the Radboud University article databank Lexis Nexis. Each of the articles are coded with the three code-categories of prognostic, diagnostic and motivational frames. The articles will be retrieved from the moment that Ethiopia started constructing the dam around January 2011 until June 2021. The search terms I used for analysing the results are: Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam; Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam negotiations; Great Ethiopian Renaissance dam agreements; Blue Nile river Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam.

Using the broad search term of Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam obtained 948 results from international news agencies all over the world. I used the Boolean AND function that grouped the words. The news agencies that were best represented were the Ethiopian News Agency (ENA); MENA English; All Africa Web Publications; Africa News; The BBC monitoring International Reports; The Addis Fortune and the Daily News Egypt. Narrowing the reports down to only the countries Ethiopia and Egypt (Daily News Egypt; Ethiopian News Agency (ENA); Egyptian Independent; Addis Fortune)

gave 195 results. The results, however favoured the Ethiopian newspapers. The Ethiopian News Agency had an output of 67 articles and the Addis Fortune responded with 105 results.

Changing the term of 'Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam' into the 'Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam' created over 10000 results for the Daily News Egypt. To narrow this down I applied the searching terms of 'dispute' and 'rights' within the results. These words thus are within the articles I searched. This gave 91 results for the Daily News Egypt and 30 results for the Egypt independent.

The search term of Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam agreements resulted a different amount of results. Adding the term Blue Nile river narrowed it down, but still the results were around 7000 articles regarding the 4 newspapers. However, adding the Boolean operator AND function on Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam and agreements showed no results.

Given the more evenly distributed outcome of newspapers for the search term of 'Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam' and Grand Ethiopian Renaissance dam in combination with the terms 'dispute' and 'rights', and the better manageable results it gave I conducted the media-analysis with these search terms. The following news outlets will be retrieved: Daily News Egypt; Ethiopian News Agency (ENA); Egyptian Independent; The Addis Fortune. An overview of the newspapers, the country of origin and there affiliation is provided in table 2.

Name of Newspaper	Country of origin	Affiliation	Article count
Addis Fortune	Ethiopia	Independent	105
Daily News Egypt (DNE) <sup>1</sup>	Egypt	Independent	91
Egyptian Independent <sup>2</sup>	Egypt	Independent	30
Ethiopian News Agency (ENA)	Ethiopia	Official news agency of the Government of Ethiopia	67

*Table 2 Newspapers retrieved in the media analysis*

### 3.2.4 Data analysis and coding approach

The data analysis of the media articles has been done in an inductive way. The analysis started with the coding of 5 broader code groups: pro-active diplomacy and reactive diplomacy for bargaining power; and prognostic framing, diagnostic framing and motivational framing for ideational power. These broader terms were eventually narrowed down in the analysis when patterns appeared in the data after coding it more exploratory with the broader terms.

All 5 code groups are coded in separate documents for all the newspapers (Daily News Egypt, Addis Fortune, Egyptian Independent, Ethiopian News Agency.) The individual newspapers are coded separately as well as for each individual year (January 2011 until June 2021) to identify quantity differences in code occurrences. These differences are depicted in figure 2, 3, 4 and 5. Heavy politicization of the GERD in 2020 involving multiple actors like the UN, the US and the African Union that pushed to reach an agreement influenced the quantity of codes in 2020 (Daily News Egypt, 2020). More frequent diplomatic efforts in 2014 by Ethiopia to establish a non-binding agreement

<sup>1</sup> The Daily News Egypt was published by the Egyptian Media Services between May 2005 and 21 April 2012. From 12 June onwards the Business News for Press, Publishing and Distribution Company began publishing under the name.

<sup>2</sup> The Egyptian Independent acquired its own right to publish in 2012

(the Declaration of Principles in 2015) and to influence Sudan's stance regarding the GERD project let to a peak in codes for this particular year (Addis Fortune, 2014; Getachew, 2018).

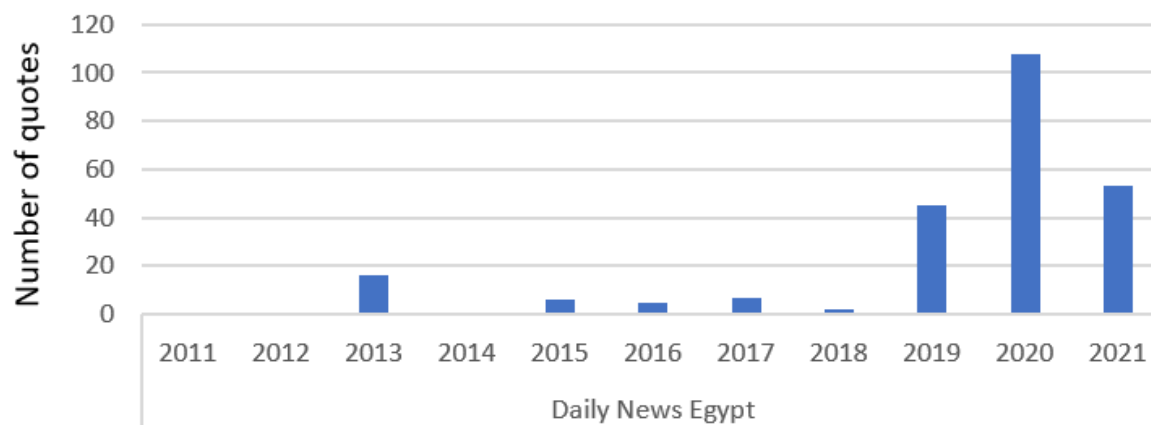


Figure 4: Number of quotes Daily News Egypt

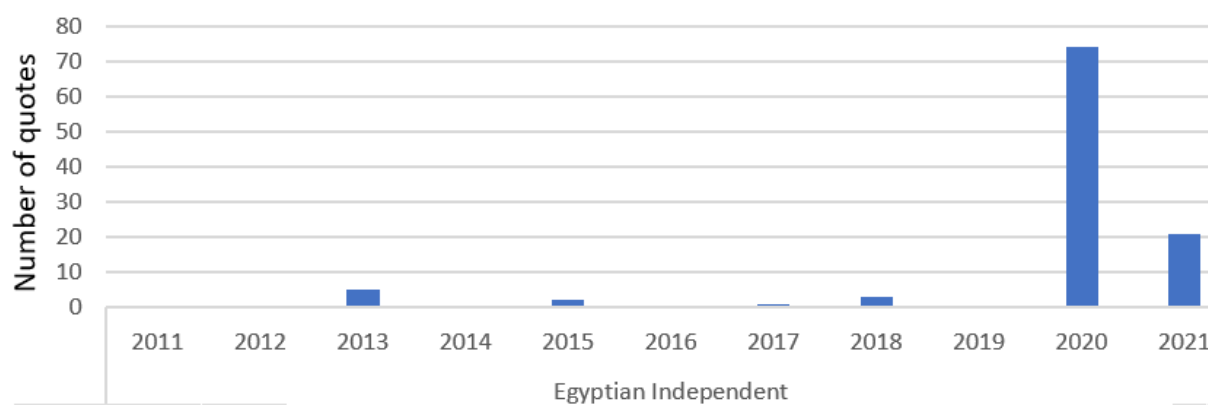


Figure 5: Number of quotes Egyptian Independent

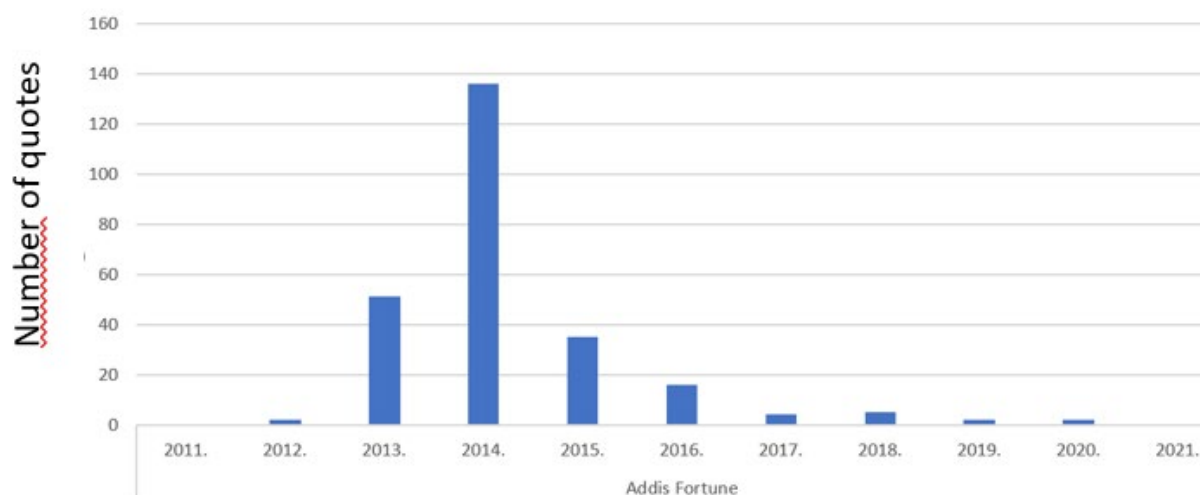


Figure 6: Number of quotes Addis Fortune

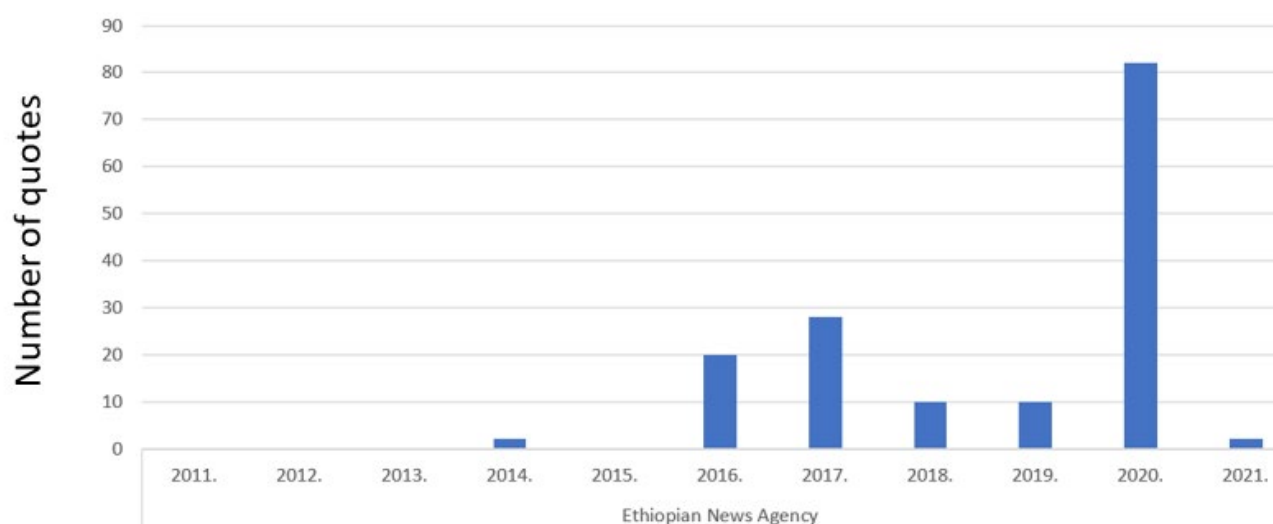


Figure 7: Number of quotes Ethiopian News Agency

To elucidate more on the coding process, I will shortly explain which code groups appeared in the coding process. I identified two different tactics within the code group of pro-active diplomacy for Ethiopia. These are: establishing and alliance with Sudan and pro-active diplomacy through legal frameworks. These two are the subcodes in the code group of pro-active diplomacy. To be clear, the remaining code groups that have codes within them for Ethiopia are the same for the Addis Fortune as well as the Ethiopian News agency. I conceptualized the code book the same for the two papers. With regards to reactive diplomacy I identified three subcodes; Asserting intentions to develop unilateral, alternative funding strategies and advocacy campaigns against Egyptian behaviour and established legal frameworks.

Moving over to the three code groups of framing of Ethiopia. Within the code group of diagnostic framing three subcodes were identified. These are: Right to utilize own natural resources, the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam not causing significant harm and asserting the upstream water needs. Within the code group of prognostic framing of Ethiopia two subcodes were identified. These are: Framing cooperation as the only solution and the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam as a multi-beneficial project. The last group which is motivational framing has two subcodes: the Great

Ethiopian Renaissance Dam develops the nation and the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam as the national pride.

In addition to these codes used attribute codes in the form of events, citing intellectuals, and the names of the presidential leaders at that time. Adding to that, each year has specific code groups that shapes its bargaining power and ideational power. For example, in 2014 Egypt-Eritrea ties concerned Ethiopia (Addis Fortune, 2014). This resulted in a code for that specific year but this certain code is not enough relevance or influence to be included in the results discussed in chapter 4.2 and 4.3. To give a better and easier overview of the coding scheme the scheme of this particular year has been put in Appendix I. 2014 serves as a good example because it provided the most codes of all of the years and papers that were analysed for Ethiopia. Adding to that, the code book with separate yearly frequencies of codes is depicted in appendix II. It gives an overview of the subcodes of Ethiopia in the GERD.

In the coded articles of the Egyptian Independent and the Daily News Egypt I identified two pro-active diplomatic strategies. These are: pro-active diplomacy to establish a binding legal framework on the GERD project and involving other actors to mediate the negotiation process of the GERD. Within the code group of reactive diplomacy I also identified two strategies. These include firstly, asserting Egypt's hydrological rights on the Nile's water and secondly, making Ethiopia adhere to international water law and established frameworks.

With regards to diagnostic framing I identified three frames Egypt utilized in the GERD. These are: Framing the Nile as the life-line of Egypt, the GERD harming the water demands of its population and Advocacy campaigns against Ethiopia's non cooperative stance. In the code-group of prognostic framing I identified the frame: Cooperation must serve all interests of the three nations involved in the GERD. The coding scheme and coding book of the Daily News Egypt and the Egyptian Independent are put in appendix III and IV

To conduct the critical discourse analysis in the form of a media analysis the software-program ATLAS.ti (version 8) was used to code the media articles. Atlas.ti gave the opportunity to code and categorize the different frames each of the three countries created for asserting their goals. The software program also gave the opportunity to identify which codes interact with each other. These interactions will be described in 4.2 and 4.3. Furthermore, I also provided a frequency table of the analysed codes in chapter 4.2 and 4.3 which I discuss in combination with the results.

## 4 Results and discussion

### 4.1 Soft power distribution of Egypt and Ethiopia and established legal frameworks before the GERD case

In this chapter is designed to explain the balance of soft power between Egypt and Ethiopia that was established before the GERD. The chapter will give an overview of historical treaties, agreements or cooperation initiatives and how they influenced the power balance. Furthermore, This chapter also describes the historical discursive narratives and bargaining strategies that were used by Egypt and Ethiopia to shape and reshape the soft power balance in the Blue Nile before the GERD. The chapter firstly, aims at explaining the historical background of asymmetrical power relations between Egypt and Ethiopia. Secondly, the chapter describes historical events that are still relevant in explaining today's hydro-political relations between Egypt and Ethiopia. Third and last, the chapter gives more context of historical events and thus, gives better understanding on the recent behaviour of Ethiopia and Egypt with regards to the GERD that is partly shaped by historical relations.

#### 4.1.1 The treaties of 1929 & 1959

Before the GERD multiple treaties, agreements and cooperation initiatives (partly) shaped the balance of soft power in the Blue Nile river. The first that is of historical importance, and that still contributes to the Egypt narrative, is the treaty of 1929 (Swain, 1997). The treaty of 1929 was established between Egypt and the colonial power of Great Britain. According to Swain this was until 1959 the decisive factor in the regulation of water flows in the Blue Nile river (Swain, 1997). Ethiopia was left out in this treaty. The treaty gave Egypt a claim of 48 billion cubic metres of water and Sudan got away from the negotiation table with roughly 4 billion cubic metres. What most authors claim, is that the treaty of 1959 gave Egypt the capacity to secure its water needs and to expand its political control over the Nile River (Swain, 1997; Salman, 2013). This is because it gave Egypt the right to 48 billion cubic metres of water that would help them with future population growth, but also because the treaty condemned every dam construction or other material system that would harm the water access of Egypt (Brunnée & Toope, 2002). Furthermore, the 1959 agreement gave Egypt the capacity to fill the Aswan Dam with an amount of water that would be three years of the legal decided cubic metres (Cascao, 2009). At last, but not least, it gives Egypt a current historical claim that it uses until this day (Cascao, 2009).

The process that formed the treaty was complicated. Ethiopia condemned the treaty as unsustainable. According to Brunnée & Toope (2002) the Ethiopian government argued that exploitation of its own water resources were needed to develop the nation and to secure a good life for next generations. Sudan became an independent country in 1959 and had plans to exploit the Nile river with their Roseires dam. Especially Sudan's attitude was aggressive until the point that conflict was something that seemed a reasonable outcome (Brunnée & Toope, 2002).

Result of diplomatic negotiations was the newly established treaty of 1959. In this treaty Sudan received more cubic metres of water and also got permission to build the Roseires dam (Swain, 1997). Ethiopia was left out of the treaty. Overall the treaty established better relations between Sudan and Egypt. Sudan got what it wanted; to build the Roseires dam. But also, cooperation between Egypt and Sudan became reality on multiple aspects. The countries cooperated on the burden sharing of water evaporation, and also on political front after both countries got involved in

socialism (Swain, 1997). This relation will be described more in depth below. Another interesting outcome of this treaty is the attitude of Ethiopia towards it. Ethiopia has never acknowledged the treaty and mostly condemned it as exploitable and colonial (Brunnée & Toope, 2002). It also argued that the treaty was based on inequitable principles that only favoured the hegemonic Egypt and even broadened its influence (Getachew, 2018).

Egypt and Ethiopia both used narratives to assert their position with regard to the 1959 treaty. Egypt framed the water access as a matter of securing the existence of the country (Getachew, 2018). It also used the narrative that Ethiopia did not get harmed with the treaty and this will make it more reasonable (Bulto, 2009). Ethiopia on the other hand framed the treaty as a threat to the development of an upcoming nation, and harming the economy of the country. More important, diplomats assured Egypt that Ethiopia will unilaterally use the waters for developing the nation. They also framed the injustice that the treaty created with leaving out the country that contributes most of the water for downstream access (Bulto, 2009).

#### 4.1.2 Complicated regional alliances

In the decades following the two treaties the Ethiopian and Egyptian relations remained strained. Especially ties with other countries were some major bumps in the road. For example Egypt's ties with Israel or its suspected relations with Eritrea made Ethiopia anxious of the regional power (Brunnée & Toope, 2002). Also the 1977 UN Water Conference made it clear that Ethiopia's stance did not change regarding the Blue Nile (Bulto, 2009). Ethiopia publicly attacked the treaties and argued that unilateral development and usage for the benefit of its people was reasonable (Swain, 1997).

Egypt on the other hand remained stubborn to acknowledge Ethiopia's right to use the Nile. The following citation gives a good summary of Egypt's stance towards the water distribution issue at that time.

*"Egypt in 1981 at a meeting of international river organizations asserted that 'each riparian country has the full right to maintain the status quo of the rivers flowing in its territory ... it results from this principle that no country has the right to undertake any positive or negative measure that could have an impact on the river's flow in other countries ... a river's upper reaches should not be touched lest this should affect the flow of quantity of its water (Bulto, 2009 p. 306)."*

Egypt thus, remained using this narrative of security to control any unilateral decisions that could create a lower or bigger flow of water into the country. This attitude of Egypt was deemed reasonable and even rational at that time. It had Sudan on its side, also due to the socialist brotherhood the two countries shared, as well as multiple western allies (Swain, 1997). This soft power dominance in combination with bigger material power did not gave room for any change in the near future.

The relationship with Ethiopia over the Nile Basin deteriorated further with Egypt signing a new peace treaty with Israel in Washington, and when Egypt proposed to construct a pipeline under the Suez Canal (Bulto, 2009). This was perceived as a major threat by Ethiopia and it responded with the option to reduce downstream waterflow if this unilateral project was constructed (Swain, 1997).

Furthermore, Egypt's soft power dominance helped the regime to block much of the developing projects of Ethiopia. An example of this was the project of 1990 in which Ethiopia applied for a loan from the African Development Bank (Bulto, 2009). Egypt blocked this idea as it was perceived as a project that would harm their territorial water access (Bulto, 2009).

The domination of Egypt in soft as well as hard power was non-questionable. However, not only the ties with Sudan or western powers shaped this balance also the internal situation in Ethiopia was fragmented due to independence movements or minorities in Eritrea as well as in the northern province of Tigray. Egypt was accused of financing and overall maintaining the Eritrean conflict, and however hard evidence is difficult to find, Egypt's interest were met (Brullée & Toope, 2002). Ethiopia was fragmented, infrastructure was damaged and the rule of law was not maintained in mainly peripheral areas. Internal problems accumulated when the border dispute with Somalia got militarized (Brullée & Toope, 2002). The Ethiopian army was supported by the Soviet Union in that war which gave them some technological military advantage. What further marginalized Ethiopia's financial position with regards to western donor aid was that it was a socialist supported republic for a considerable time (Brullée & Toope, 2002).

Egypt's dominance on soft power was also seen in ties with Sudan. The relation with Sudan became more important to Egypt after signing the treaty of 1956. Especially in times of Soviet influence the ties between the two countries became stronger. In 1970 Anwar Sadat, president of Egypt at that time, even intervened in Sudan to keep the socialist regime (Swain, 1997). It could also be argued that this intervention was more strategic than loyal because in return Egypt obtained permission to construct another dam in the Blue Nile basin (Swain, 1997).

This changed after the regime change in Sudan. The new more radical Islamist dictatorship helped proxies in Egypt that wanted to overthrow the regime (Swain, 1997). The regime was keen on other companions like Iran and Saddam Hussein's Iraq. Furthermore, the Egypt-Israel ties harmed the relationship between Egypt and Sudan (Swain, 1997). A more direct and impactful event was the assassination attempt on Hosni Mubarak in 1995. Egypt claimed that Sudan was involved in this attempt at the airport of Addis Ababa (Swain, 1997). This event further weakened the relationship between Sudan and Egypt.

#### 4.1.3 Egypt's lasting hegemony

Worsening relations between Egypt and Sudan gave Ethiopia some room to alter its potential strategies in the Blue Nile. Especially after the Soviet era when the country became more stable and peaceful new opportunities arose (Swain, 1997). But still, Ethiopia did not have the financial, ideational or technical abilities to compete with Egypt. Therefore more focus was put on the diplomatic tools Ethiopia could use to gain power. The direct effect was not that noticeable. For example, the initiative of UNDUGU was found and still left out Ethiopia. This group, founded by Egypt, provided a framework for further cooperation in the Nile Basin. It could also be described as a hegemonic instrument of Egypt to steer the process and control the actors (Brullée & Toope, 2002). Cascao (2009) goes even further arguing that the framework gave Egypt opportunities to initiate alternatives for the Nile in other riparian countries. With this action Egypt can built ideational leverage over other riparian's and even a 'sanctioned discourse' according to Zeitoun & Warner (2006). The UNDUGU initiative however could be considered as a milestone. Not in the sense that it created respectable economic growth, but more in the sense that it was the first basin wide platform for information sharing and negotiation (Waterbury, 2002). It thus paved the way for more cooperation in the Nile Basin, but with leaving out Ethiopia a near future of cooperation with this particular country was nearly impossible. Even when in 1992 a new more technical initiative of TeccoNile was born Ethiopia and Kenya did not accept it. The trust in Egypt's terms remained low and the degree of grievance of the colonial agreements remained high (Brullée & Toope, 2002). Thus, even though it seemed like a more reasonable opportunity to start cooperation initiatives in the Nile



Ethiopia still declined (Brullée & Toope, 2002). Instead of accepting in-depth cooperation Ethiopia thus, only acted as an observer in the UNDUGU as well as the 1992 TeccoNile initiative (Bulto, 2009).

#### 4.1.4 The long road to cooperation and the proposal of the CFA

The TeccoNile initiative group, without Ethiopia, held multiple meetings to discuss future cooperation and development of the Blue Nile in 1993 '94 and '95 (Swain, 1997). These meetings resulted in the Nile River Basin Action Plan (Brullée & Toope, 2002). Important for the Nile River Basin Action Plan (NRBAP) was that it contained all riparian countries of the Nile and not only in an observatory role (Brullée & Toope, 2002). It grouped 5 different actions plans for developing the Nile into one framework. It was also a framework that needed to create the institutions that were necessary to ensure cooperation and negotiation of political processes in the Nile Basin (Brullée & Toope, 2002). Although the framework of the NRBAP paved the way for the later developed Nile Basin Initiative it still faced Ethiopian disapproval. Ethiopian condemned the framework as being not beneficial to its own economy and that of many other upstream riparian countries (Getachew, 2018). Its narrative remained that any agreement should help Ethiopia as a developing country. If this threshold is not met in any framework this would not be something acceptable. Ethiopia's stance thus remained mostly the same after the framework of the NRBAP was developed.

The way to cooperation did remain a long and slow path. The initiatives like TeccoNile or the NRBAP did help building confidence in the Basin by promoting problem solving, dialogues and giving information (Cascao, 2009; Getachew, 2018).

Furthermore, as Getachew argues:

*“Scholars have also highlighted that these initiatives went a long way towards creating the conditions that allowed for the beginnings of a rapprochement between the basin's two principal riparians”* (Getachew, 2018 p. 29).

The initiatives are however not sufficient to argue that these provided a full shift in attitude of Ethiopia regarding the Nile. There are three other circumstances that need to be identified which contributed to change. Firstly, The change of public discourse regarding Nile Basin issues in Ethiopia and Egypt also contributed to the actual decision to be more cooperative. Secondly and part of this change in discourse was the installation of a new government in Ethiopia led by the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). Third, the worsening relationship between Egypt and Sudan created an opportunity for Ethiopia to obtain more leverage (Swain, 1997; Getachew, 2018). A very clear turning point in the attitude towards the Nile can also be witnessed in the 1993 Memorandum of Understanding between Egypt and Ethiopia. This memorandum could only be established because of the three changes in circumstances in combination with the new developed initiatives in the early 90's (Cascao, 2009b). The memorandum gave Ethiopia and Egypt a fundamental framework to talk about differences and interests in the Blue Nile and to obtain information. It is important to understand that this memorandum is not the framework that solely turned around the relationship between Egypt and Ethiopia. As Getachew (2018) argues the established literature regarding early cooperation in the Nile Basin between Ethiopia and Egypt often overlooks other circumstances that influenced the behaviour of Egypt and Ethiopia. The focus on a more intergovernmental stance towards early cooperation between Egypt and Ethiopia is necessary to get a fuller picture of the historical situation.

The memorandum of 1993 though still can be considered as a start of a new framework in which the foreign policy of both countries overlap or contradict each other. Both countries for example have

interests to control each other in the light of pollution, sediment disposal, flood and drought management (Arsano, 2004). As argued before the countries both have their interests of creating a mutual beneficial approach in the Nile but also have their differences. Building on multi-beneficial interests of all riparian countries the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) was designed and signed in Dar-es-Salaam in 1999 (Salman, 2013). The NBI is the initiative that flowed out of multiple years of a changed political discourse. With especially the World Bank as driving force behind this change in discourse with setting up a development programme and donating to the countries. The NBI's goal is "to achieve sustainable socio-economic development through the equitable utilization of, and benefit from, the common Nile Basin water resources" (NBI, 2021). The main fundament but also the factor that makes the agreement weaker is the interpretation of 'equitable utilization' (Getachew, 2018; Salman, 2013). The goal the NBI wants to reach in creating a shared framework is difficult in the sense that mainly Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia all have a very different interpretation of this equitable utilization. The framework however, gives room for dialogue and to settle this disputes diplomatically. But as seen through history, and even recent developments around the GERD, these disputes are not settled yet (Getachew, 2018).

These disputes remained and Ethiopia opted for a new framework. This framework became the Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA). The CFA was designed to replace the treaties of 1929 and 1959 and to create a new form of cooperation within the Nile Basin. However, the CFA is now often being described as an upstream alliance within the NBI. This is because it assesses different more in-depth aspects of equitable utilization of water then proposed by the treaties of 1929 and 1959.

The most important point of the CFA is the principle that each country can utilize the waters of the Nile in its own territory, if keeping multiple determinants of fair and reasonable usage (Salman, 2013). A second, also important, point that threw Egypt of the hook was that the CFA lets countries take on projects if they help preventing harm, like floods, to other riparian countries. Especially these two features of the CFA framework gave Egypt and Sudan the reason to opt for different articles. Article 14 for example, which states that the states should work cooperatively in the Nile to achieve sustainable goals, needed to be precised according to Egypt and Sudan. The disagreement on article 14 between the upper riparian's and Egypt and Sudan escalated in June 2010. Egypt and Sudan had already promoted their alternative in article 14 to include the section of security and water rights multiple times. However, in multiple meetings this proposal was not accepted. Furthermore, upstream riparian's demanded that the CFA needed to be installed even with objection of Egypt and Sudan (Swain, 2011). Even when Egypt and Sudan suggested that the Nile Basin Commission should be installed before voting on the CFA the stance of the seven upper riparian's remained adamant (Swain, 2011). This ultimately let to Sudan demanding that all NBI projects needed to be shut down. Also Egypt opposed the non-cooperative stance of the upstream riparian's heavily and condemned it as non-reasonable regarding their historical water rights. Ultimately, also Egypt left the NBI following multiple ineffective negotiations (Getachew, 2018). This empty chair crisis within the NBI was the result of a strong upstream countries alliance that Ethiopia promoted thoroughly to counter the downstream hegemonic treaty of 1959.

At current times there are 6 remaining countries that have signed the CFA without the amendment of article 14b proposed by Sudan and Egypt (Getachew, 2018). Four riparian's (Ethiopia, Tanzania, Uganda & Rwanda) signed the proposal on the 14<sup>th</sup> of May 2010. The remaining two riparian's (Kenya & Burundi) signed the CFA later. Kenya signed it five days after the convention in Entebbe and Burundi on 28 February 2011 (Kansal & Ekadu, 2018). Until this day Egypt and Sudan do not acknowledge the CFA (Kansal & Ekadu, 2018).

What can be concluded out of this single dispute within the CFA framework is that many old existing narratives, established in the early treaties, still remained (Salman, 2013). But the CFA framework did bring changes in the Nile Basin. The CFA was regarded by Ethiopia as an opportunity to alter the geo-politics of the Nile Basin, and therefore they influenced the process that led to its instalment. They used the CFA and its articles, like article 14, to make the historical rights narrative of Egypt and Sudan less relevant (Getachew, 2018). Also, the principle of the CFA that each country can utilize the waters of the Nile in its own territory was used to create an alliance of upstream riparian countries according to Getachew (2018). Lastly, the CFA provided more soft power to Ethiopia as it gave a legal basis to assert agenda's and basin wide discourses regarding the utilisation of the Nile. Furthermore, the CFA gave a voice to the upstream countries and according to Salman (2013) it helped balancing the power. The period of the development of the CFA and the NBI can be seen as the birth of a counter-hegemonic tendency in Nile Basin politics. It made the upstream countries question the old treaties of 1929 and 1959 and how they influenced the distribution of the benefits of the Nile.

The CFA itself can be used as a tool for the upstream countries. As Salman (2013) argues, the countries that signed the CFA (DR Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi & Tanzania) can cause major legal difficulties. This is because the countries that are not member of the CFA can still be influenced through its decisions. This has a chance to create new disputes or politicize already existing disputes (Salman, 2013).

Overall the CFA is mostly seen as the counter-part of the upstream riparian's within the NBI. The NBI as described above is the initiative that flowed out of a change in regional geo-political discourse. The next question we thus need to answer is if the NBI from its beginning until now has created a more cooperative discourse in the Nile Basin.

#### 4.1.5 The Nile Basin Initiative's shortcomings and achievements

If analyzing the actors involved in the NBI it is non-sufficient to speak only about the Nile riparian countries. According to different authors the World Bank heavily influenced the process in establishing the NBI and also pressured for cooperation after this (Salman, 2013; Swain, 2002; Getachew, 2018; Cascao, 2009). The NBI thus also has a neo-functionalist theoretical lens to it with a central institution pressuring for cooperation (Salman, 2013). Swain (2002) argues that the role the World Bank played in creating the institution is not to be underestimated. Also Getachew (2018) argues that third parties have influenced the promotion of a more cooperative climate by using financial incentives. The central question in this debate is, if the cooperation established by the pressure of the World Bank and international community would evaporate, what would be left? (Salman, 2013)

What we can tell of recent developments in the GERD is that the NBI still comes short in solving the historical disputes. Cascao & Nicol (2009) state this and argue that even though the NBI was established unilateral decisions and constructions remained. These constructions are also influenced by other actors like China or Japan. The NBI thus does not have that much capacity in steering decisions if other actors can provide financial interesting deals (Cascao & Nicol, 2009). Furthermore, the driving force behind the NBI, the World Bank's, independence became more questionable last decade. Like the EU commission the commission of the Nile, established by pressure of the World Bank, got critique as being too influential in the process (Cascao & Nicol, 2009). Things got more complicated as other donors saw potential in intervening and went on promoting this negative discourse. This then, was perceived as undermining the essential equal playing field by downstream countries (Cascao & Nicol, 2009). They argued that new influential actors chose the side of upstream countries. This helped the upstream countries in forming their bloc in the CFA opposing Egypt's and Sudan's hegemony.

The two main pillars of the NBI include; building mutual trust in the Nile Basin, and the CFA framework (Ibrahim, 2010). It is argued in this thesis that especially the CFA pillar does not operate the way it was designed to do mainly because of geo-political disagreements especially between Sudan, Egypt and Ethiopia. It is even argued by Ibrahim (2010) that the Nile Basin Initiative gave a platform for disagreeing upstream countries to influence Egypt's hegemony. However, we still can describe some accomplishments of the NBI since it has been installed.

Firstly, we can describe the Nile as the breakthrough regarding Nile Basin politics. It may have its shortcomings but the NBI is the first strong platform for all riparian's (except Eritrea) to discuss their concerns with regards to the Nile waters. It provides more cooperation potential than other historical frameworks established in the Nile Basin (Teshome, 2008). As Abadir puts it: "the NBI has meant that the riparian states are now talking about matters they deem important" (Ibrahim 2010, p. 294).

Secondly, the need for cooperation is a priority if we value a Nile Basin that is less conflict prone in the future. There still may, and will, be disagreements how to share the waters, but the framework is already in place that provides for future new cooperation. Many of the benefit-sharing authors also argue that this argument is essential for keeping the NBI as an important institution (Amdetsion, 2008; Swain, 2011; Sadoff & Grey, 2005). However, as Tawfik (2016) argues these authors also predicted that the GERD would reinforce cooperation in the basin (Chen & Swain, 2014; Salman, 2012). And looking into the status quo of the GERD it is heavily politicized and diplomatic and ideational warfare is well established (Getachew, 2018). Still, what can be argued is that the NBI set the foundation to install regular meetings where countries could give each other information. Furthermore, because all riparian's except Eritrea are member it had the potential to install a commission to mediate talks between Ethiopia and Egypt and to attract third party mediators (Salman, 2013). This could also lead to spill-over effects and cooperation in other sectors and an overall regional integration. Even Tawfik (2016) argues this could be possible but that these spill-over effects are not described detailed enough. These external improvements can help economic growth in the region. Thirdly, the NBI got approval of all member states regarding the Shared Vision Program (SVP). This program created seven projects that also focused on the building of trust (NBI, 2021). The program is still developing but the sign that all countries directly signed this shared vision program is positive in gaining in on the first pillar of mutual trust.

## 4.2 Egypt's and Ethiopia's bargaining power strategies in the GERD

In this chapter the bargaining power strategies of Ethiopia in the GERD will be discussed. As noted by Cascão & Zeitoun (2010) bargaining power is often the most relevant power for the counter-hegemon. Bargaining power is according to them the power that has the most potential to be altered in relative short time. Material power, geographical power and ideational power are less fluid (Cascão & Zeitoun 2010). As described in the literature review of bargaining power strategies many of the strategies can be subdivided roughly into two groups (Getachew, 2018). The first group is pro-active diplomacy and the second is reactive diplomacy. Within these two groups there are different bargaining power strategies that both countries have in their disposal worked out in chapter 2.5. These tactics have been, as described in the methodology, put into a codebook and investigated in a media analysis. This chapter thus identifies when and how Ethiopia's bargaining strategies were used in the development of the GERD from 2011 onwards in a media-analysis. The goal of this chapter however, is not only to identify the different bargaining power tactics but also to examine how they were operated and if they contributed to a change in the bargaining power balance between Egypt and Ethiopia. The chapter also investigates when codes are interconnected or contradict each other.

Before discussing the different bargaining power strategies both countries executed a frequency table is provided (table 3) of the most important bargaining strategies that were identified in the media analysis.

Code name	Newspaper	Code group	Sum	Sum of code
Pro-active diplomacy to establish a binding legal framework on the GERD	Egyptian Independent	Pro-active diplomacy	18	49
Pro-active diplomacy to establish a binding legal framework on the GERD	Daily News Egypt	Pro-active diplomacy	31	
Involving other actors to mediate the GERD negotiations	Egyptian Independent	Pro-active diplomacy	14	36
Involving other actors to mediate the GERD negotiations	Daily News Egypt	Pro-active diplomacy	22	
Asserting hydrological rights on the Nile's waters	Egyptian Independent	Reactive diplomacy	15	63
Asserting hydrological rights on the Nile's waters	Daily News Egypt	Reactive diplomacy	48	
Ethiopia must adhere to international water law and established frameworks	Egyptian Independent	Reactive diplomacy	11	45
Ethiopia must adhere to international water law and established frameworks	Daily News Egypt	Reactive diplomacy	34	
Establishing an alliance with Sudan	Addis Fortune	Pro-active diplomacy	24	32
Establishing an alliance with Sudan	Ethiopian News Agency	Pro-active diplomacy	8	
pro-active diplomacy through legal frameworks	Addis Fortune	Pro-active diplomacy	20	33
pro-active diplomacy through legal frameworks	Ethiopian News Agency	pro-active diplomacy	13	
Asserting intentions to develop unilaterally	Addis Fortune	Reactive diplomacy	4	10

Asserting intentions to develop unilaterally	Ethiopian News Agency	Reactive diplomacy	6	
Alternative funding strategies	Addis Fortune	Reactive diplomacy	17	33
Alternative funding strategies	Ethiopian News Agency	Reactive diplomacy	16	
Right to reasonably utilize own natural resources	Addis Fortune	Reactive diplomacy	20	37
Right to reasonably utilize own natural resources	Ethiopian News Agency	Reactive diplomacy	17	

Table 3 Statistics bargaining power in the GERD

The table gives an overview of the overall frequencies the codes appeared in the data. It also splits the data between the investigated news agencies. To add to the frequency table two code-occurrence tables of the statistics of code co-occurrences are outlined down here.

<b>Code co-occurrences</b>	<b>● Cooperation must serve all interests of the three nations involved in the GERD Gr=45</b>	<b>● Framing the Nile as the lifeline Gr=23</b>	<b>● GERD harming the water demands of Egypt's population Gr=50</b>	<b>● Making Ethiopia adhere to international law or established frameworks Gr=45</b>	<b>● Pro-active diplomacy by involving other actors to mediate the negotiations in the GERD Gr=37</b>
● Asserting hydrological rights on the Nile's waters Gr=63	8	4	8	6	4
● GERD harming the water demands of Egypt's population Gr=50	4	8	X	2	2
● Pro-active diplomacy to establish a binding legal framework on the GERD Gr=49	13	2	8	5	20

Table 4: Code co-occurrences in the Daily News Egypt and the Egyptian Independent

The tables below give an overview of the most relevant code co-occurrences identified in the media analysis. For example, the co-occurrence between cooperation and the GERD as a multi-beneficial project is mostly used (N=21). The relevant results of the co-occurrence table will be discussed below in the results.

	● Framing injustice because upstream also needs the water Gr=15	● GERD as a multi-beneficial tool Gr=73	● GERD integrating internal ties Gr=33	● GERD not causing significant harm Gr=15	● Public media and advocacy campaigns against unilateral projects or decisions Gr=42	● Right to use Nile water because it is reasonable Gr=37	● Establishing an alliance with Sudan Gr=32	● Pro-active diplomacy through legal frameworks Gr=33
<b>Code co-occurrences</b>								
● Campaigning for alternative funds Gr=33	0	1	6	0	0	0	0	0
● Cooperation as the solution Gr=45	2	21	3	1	7	4	3	5
● Establishing an alliance with Sudan Gr=32	0	4	0	1	0	0	X	7
● GERD as a multi-beneficial tool Gr=73	0	X	0	1	2	3	8	0
● GERD as the way to develop the country Gr=39	2	2	3	3	0	8	0	0
● Pro-active diplomacy through legal frameworks Gr=33	0	0	0	2	6	0	1	X
● Public media and advocacy campaigns against unilateral projects or decisions Gr=42	2	2	0	0	X	8	0	0
● Right to use Nile water because it is reasonable Gr=37	2	0	6	6	8	X	0	0

Table 5: Code co-occurrences in the Addis Fortune & the Ethiopian News Agency

#### 4.2.1 Pro-active diplomacy in the GERD

This section outlines Egypt's and Ethiopia's pro-active diplomacy in the form of bargaining tactics concerning the GERD. The bargaining tactics are derived from the media-analysis of the Addis Fortune, the Ethiopian News Agency (ENA), the Daily News Egypt and the Egyptian Independent.

##### 4.2.1.1 Ethiopia and Egypt involving other actors in the GERD

One of the most relevant strategies Ethiopia and Egypt used for obtaining bargaining power is consulting other actors in the negotiation process. Ethiopia mostly used the pro-active diplomatic strategy to assert its ties with Sudan. Egypt tried to involve actors like the US, the UN and the World Bank to mediate the negotiation process or to help establish a legal framework on the GERD (Daily News Egypt, 2020 & 2021; Egyptian Independent, 2020). Egypt also consulted the Arab League multiple times (Mokaddem & Mquirmi, 2020; Daily News Egypt, 2020). This section will give a more detailed overview of the different methods and co-occurrences that were identified in the media-analysis.

To start, the main strategy Ethiopia used is asserting its ties with Sudan. This bargaining strategy was mostly put to use in earlier stages of the GERD dispute (Getachew, 2018). With this strategy, Ethiopia is emphasizing the importance to create a lasting alliance with Sudan (Getachew, 2018). As identified in the media-analysis this strategy firstly reveals itself as an internal strategy to assure that all Ethiopians value the importance of cooperation with Sudan. An example of the Addis Fortune is hereby given:

*"Ethiopia needs to build on the goodwill it has gained from the Sudanese side, Girma Seifu, the lone opposition member of Parliament, who represents Medrek - a coalition of four parties, which has recently progressed to a front - said"* (Addis Fortune, 2014).

To assert the ties with Sudan regarding the GERD the Ethiopian government also consequently assured the importance of the historical ties the countries both share. An example of this tactic is the article from the Addis Fortune of March 30 2014:

*"There is a long historical relationship between Ethiopia and the Sudan, starting from the states of Axum and Merowe. There are also age-old ties between the two peoples, who have lived in one another's countries over the years."* (Addis Fortune, 2014)

Even though the countries actually share a very hostile past, in for example the border war or disagreements on the allocation of the waters of the Nile, the Ethiopian government thinks it is necessary to emphasize the common historical grounds the two countries share (Swain, 2011: Getachew, 2018).

Another example of this tactic provided by the Addis Fortune is outlined here:

*"Despite a difficult past, Sudanese-Ethiopian relations are better than they have been for a long time. Surging commercial interactions - including very substantial imports of Ethiopian products and livestock - have been facilitated by improved communications. Several connecting roads have been built, making it possible to drive from Addis Abeba to Khartoum, and there are plans underway to develop railway connections. There are also multiple joint commissions, including border issues and defence."* (Addis Fortune, 2014).

This quote partly overlaps with a third sub strategy the Ethiopian government used to assert its ties with Sudan. This other tactic is to assert multi-beneficial contributions the GERD will give. For



example initiating more economic cooperation with Sudan or cooperation in keeping the borders free from conflict and terrorization. Also, promoting joint energy initiatives is an example of asserting ties with Sudan. As identified in the co-occurrence table the codes overlapped eight times during the analysis. Some examples of this are outlined here:

*“Joint energy initiatives could provide a greater, cleaner and more reliable power supply for both Sudan and Ethiopia, as each country grapples with providing jobs for burgeoning populations and services to marginalised areas”* (Addis Fortune, 2014).

*“There is a strong case for building regional economic interdependence around an energy deal, exchanging Sudanese oil for Ethiopian electricity and thus providing a new framework for political relations”* (Addis Fortune, 2014).

*“Hence, energy linkages leading to economic integration would open the door to more concrete and justified institutional and political integration, drawing a collaborative effort in tackling problems and effectively utilising opportunities”* (Addis Fortune, 2014).

Ethiopia also created its own leverage, in earlier stages of the GERD, by assuring Egypt that Sudan is now friendly towards the GERD and that it understands the benefits it provides (Addis Fortune, 2013 & 2014). This strategy also includes reporting on newly established cooperation initiatives between Ethiopia and Sudan to let the world now that the relations are developing. This strategy is operated through media articles in which Ethiopia assumes that Sudan is fully backing the GERD or through articles that report on relationship developments. Here are some examples of analyzed articles:

*“Other basin countries, including Sudan, have subscribed to Ethiopia's construction of the GERD and are supportive of the project, so as to jointly embody regional integration through the development of green, renewable hydropower trade. This glaring fact is quite telling that Ethiopia's GERD narrative has won in the hydro-diplomatic battle”* (Addis Fortune, 2014).

*“Addis Ababa August 17/2017 The leaders of Ethiopia and Sudan have affirmed their commitment to work together to transform the existing all-round relations of the countries to a higher level. An Ethiopian high-level delegation led by Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn is on official three-day visit to Sudan where it held bilateral consultations with Sudanese high officials. Among the Ethiopian officials, Minister of Government Communication Affairs Office Negeri Lencho has conferred with his Sudanese counterpart Dr. Ahmed Bilal on media cooperation between Sudan and Ethiopia”* (Ethiopian News Agency, 2017).

What multiple authors conclude from this tactic is that it did pay-off for the Ethiopian government (Cascão & Nicol, 2016; Getachew, 2018). As the Addis Fortune stated:

*“Khartoum, the other signatory of the 1959 agreement, gives its diplomatic backing to the construction of the GERD after the study of the International Panel of Experts (IPOEs) report concluded the Dam would not cause significant harm to the downstream countries”* (Addis Fortune, 2014).

Ethiopia thus in 2014 already threatened the Egypt-Sudan alliance in the sense that Sudan backed the Ethiopian favorable outcome of the Panel of Experts (IPOEs) report (Cascão & Nicol, 2016). This coalition on the GERD helped Ethiopia creating more bargaining power in the Egyptian-Ethiopian relations.

Egypt on the other hand tries to involve the United States, the African Union, the United Nations and the World Bank pro-actively to establish a binding legal arrangement on the GERD (Daily News Egypt, 2020 & 2021; Egyptian Independent, 2017 & 2020). Both the pro-active diplomatic tactics of consulting other actors and promoting a binding legal framework on the GERD co-occurred 20 times in the media analysis. It was thus identified that Egypt used international actors regularly to promote the final binding legal framework (Egyptian Independent, 2018 & 2020; Daily News Egypt, 2020 & 2019 & 2021). For example, In 2017 the Egyptian government proposed that the World Bank should mediate the negotiation process to establish a legal framework (Egyptian Independent, 2018; Mokaddem & Mquirmi, 2020). Furthermore, Egypt consulted the United States in 2020 to reach a binding agreement on the GERD dispute (Daily News Egypt, 2021). The US and the World Bank accepted the Egyptian invitation and between 6 November 2019 and 27 February 2020 multiple meetings should have paved the way for a final legal agreement (Egyptian Independent, 2020). However, Ethiopia never signed the draft of the legal binding agreement. This objection led towards hostile reactions of the Egyptian president as well as the Minister of Foreign Relations (Daily News Egypt, 2020 & 2021). According to the minister of Foreign Relations:

*“Egypt and Sudan are calling for a binding agreement with Ethiopia regarding filling and operating the massive dam. This would take place with quartet mediation by the African Union (AU), the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU), and the US in the negotiations on the dam, which Addis Ababa rejects”* (Daily News Egypt, 2021).

Egyptian officials also promoted the mediation of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to intervene in the GERD negotiations (Daily News Egypt, 2020). According to the officials other actors like the UNSC should stop Ethiopia from unilaterally filling the dam (Daily News Egypt, 2020). The UNSC “has the power to recommend the restart of negotiations under UN supervision or any other international organisation to ensure a fair binding agreement is reached” according to Mohamed Sameh Amr (professor of International Law at Cairo University) (Daily News Egypt, 2020). According to Daily News Egypt (2020) the Egyptian government:

*“submitted a letter to the UN Security Council outlining developments in GERD negotiations that have lasted 10 years. Egypt called for the need to persuade Ethiopia to refrain from taking any unilateral measures, so as not to harm the other parties”.*

Lastly, the Egyptian government approached the Arab League to back its reactive diplomacy on the protection of historic rights and the principle of not harming downstream riparian's. According to the Egyptian Independent on 4 March 2020 the Arab League “urged Ethiopia to adhere to international law and not take any unilateral measures that could infringe on Egypt's rights and water interests.” In 2021 the Arab League also urged the UN Security Council to establish a meeting that would “affirm the water security of Sudan and Egypt which is an integral part of the Arab national security” (Egyptian Independent, 2021). Ethiopia reacted and accused The Arab League of blindly backing a member state without regarding key facts (Egyptian Independent, 2020).

#### 4.2.1.2 Egypt's and Ethiopia pro-active diplomacy on legal frameworks

Egypt as well as Ethiopia used pro-active diplomacy on legal frameworks. Ethiopia uses the strategy to promote established legal frameworks like the CFA and what is established in the DOP to provide an alternative for Egypt's old treaties of 1929 and 1959 (Addis Fortune, 2014 & 2015; Ethiopian News Agency, 2018 & 2019 & 2020; Getachew, 2018). Egypt on the other hand uses pro-active diplomacy to establish a legal framework on the GERD (Daily News Egypt, 2021 & 2020 & 2014; Egyptian

Independent, 2018 & 2020). As discussed in 4.2.1.1 this tactic regularly co-occurs with the consultation of other actors.

To start, the promotion of the CFA is an example of pro-active diplomacy used by the Ethiopian government to broaden its bargaining capacity. This promotion of the CFA often co-occurred in the media analysis with a diagnostic frame; Advocacy campaigns against Egyptian behavior and historical established legal frameworks. As depicted in the co-occurrence table the tactic co-occurred 6 times. The promotion of the CFA in the media-analysis co-occurred in the form that the CFA provides a fair agreement that respects equitable utilization of the Nile waters and assures Egypt that the old “colonial treaties” do not hold (Ethiopian News Agency, 2020). The goal of the Ethiopian government, also according to Getachew (2018), is to weaken these treaties and introduce a reasonable alternative.

Here are two examples of the CFA promotion in combination with condemning Egypt’s stance from the Addis Fortune:

*“Thus far, Ethiopia has done well diplomatically. It went ahead and put the CFA into effect with upstream nations, and has been flexible in accommodating Sudan and Egypt from the early stages, despite some aggressive rhetoric and a diplomatic campaign from Egypt”* (Addis Fortune, 2015).

*“On the other hand, a question arises as to whether Egypt is ready to relinquish its colonial crave for power on any water development project over the Nile, and to agree to provide a fair share of water to the Nile basin countries, as per the terms of the CFA”* (Addis Fortune, 2015).

As seen in the two examples Ethiopia tries to promote the CFA as reasonable and condemns the old colonial treaties as being unfair and one-sided power craving.

A second sub-strategy of the Ethiopian government was using the Declaration of Principles (DOP), signed in 2015, pro-actively to find solutions of the dispute surrounding the GERD. The Declaration of Principles is the first cooperative framework within the GERD signed by the countries of Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt. The DOP is non-binding and includes a set of 10 principles the countries are expected to hold on (Cascão & Nicol, 2016). What the DOP effectively means is that Egypt accepted that the GERD is something that is “a fact on the ground” (Getachew, 2018).

*Or as the Addis Fortune quotes “The DoP shows the 'official' acceptance of GERD by Egypt. It can be said with certainty that the GERD is now a fact on the ground to be reckoned with by all”* (Addis Fortune, 2014).

The DOP thus is by more positive oriented literature seen as a new more cooperative development in the Nile. Some authors like Cascão & Nicol (2016) argue that the DOP could be seen as a identification of the upstream gaining relevance in the Nile Basin.

To Ethiopia the DOP provided a framework in which the government could promote cooperation in settling disputes. The DOP is occasionally used as a tool to promote cooperation and is used to gain in on Egypt’s hegemony creating a more equal playing field between the two countries (Getachew, 2018). In the media-analysis the co-occurrence between cooperation and pro-active diplomacy on legal frameworks is identified seven times. The DOP is also used to refute Egypt if Ethiopia argues that Egypt’s unilateral decisions go against the DOP. It thus gives a legal framework to condemn Egypt’s behaviour.

An example of Ethiopia promoting their interests in the DOP is provided by the Ethiopian News Agency:

*“Addis Ababa November 23, 2017 Ethiopia has once again expressed its commitment to work with Sudan, Egypt based on the Declaration of Principles (DoP) with regard to the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD)” (Ethiopian News Agency, 2017).*

This promotion of cooperation, also through the DOP regularly co-occurs with asserting the multi-beneficial effects the GERD has and common grounds the three countries have and need to act upon regarding the GERD. The second point means that Ethiopia states that countries need to act cooperatively as written down in the DOP. Here are two examples of this of the same article:

*“The commitment of Ethiopia is based on mutual benefits of working on the principles of common gains, justice, reason, not harming others and cooperation, he added” (Ethiopian News Agency, 2017).*

*“Meles further stressed that the zero sum game diplomacy with respect to the dam is not useful to any country in the Nile Basin” (Ethiopian News Agency, 2017).*

Another instance the DOP becomes relevant is when a third party wants to intervene the process of the negotiations surrounding the GERD. As a principle states that an involvement of a third party must be agreed upon by all countries (Ethiopian News Agency, 2020).

A third strategy employed by Ethiopia is using the International Panel of Experts (IPoE) proactively. The IPoE has 2 representatives of each of the three countries plus four other experts that investigate the safety of the GERD and the benefits it has (Salman, 2016). According to Getachew (2018) the IPoE was mainly a technical agreement with little room for politization. But internally when the IPoE's report was released there were disagreements. Egypt argued that the report favoured Ethiopia even though they helped designing it (Cascão & Nicol 2016). It could be argued however, that the IPoE was an initiative mainly developed by Ethiopia to upgrade trilateral talks (Getachew, 2018). It is argued that this was beneficial because Ethiopia convinced Sudan of the benefits of the GERD, and that it could help pressuring Egypt (Getachew, 2018). According to Salman the acceptance of the IPoE by Sudan, was the acceptance of the GERD and its benefits like electrical energy (Salman, 2016). The IPoE's report is often used by Ethiopia as its result states that the dam would not cause significant harm to Egypt and Sudan (Salman, 2016). This makes the GERD a more legitimate act. Here are some examples in the Addis Fortune on how the panel's report is used pro-actively:

*“The panel's results, which were eagerly awaited by all three countries, came in May 2013, after a series of studies. The panel concluded that the dam would not be a source of threat for any nation, citing that it had a flood permeable canal and water leakage system. The result said that the dam increases hydroelectric supply in the riparian countries and helps to develop irrigation systems, especially in Sudan. Egypt rejected the results” (Addis Fortune, 2014).*

*“Ethiopian diplomats have persistently explained and detailed the report of the International Panel of Experts (IPoE), its recommendations, four successive Tripartite Water Ministers Meetings held in Khartoum, Sudan, over the implementation of the recommendations of the IPoE on the construction of the GERD, with a view to sowing the seeds of trust, mutual benefit and win-win results within basin country peoples” (Addis Fortune, 2014).*

*“On the other hand, the fourth tripartite meeting might bring what the previous three consecutive meetings could not bring, finding a negotiated way to implement the two recommendations proposed by International Panel of Experts (IPoE). In doing so, the Egyptian delegation has to stop*

*nullifying what has been achieved so far - the IPoE Report and the Tripartite Forum. This is me looking at matters as they ought to be” (Addis Fortune, 2014).*

The IPoE’s development is seen by some authors as not only a pro-active strategy in the form of legitimating the GERD, but also as a initiative that paved the way for the later approved Declaration of Principles (DOP) (Salman, 2016; Getachew, 2018; Cascão & Nicol 2016). According to Cascão & Nicol (2016) the gaining of mutual trust and holding multiple meetings between the three countries as a result of the IPoE created a more cooperative environment. Salman argues that the IPoE report resulted in new meetings and concessions of both countries that eventually made Egypt accept the GERD “as a fact on the ground” (Salman, 2016).

Egypt’s pro-active diplomacy on legal frameworks mostly centres itself on the promotion of a legal framework that needs to be signed on the GERD. According to Egypt’s president “the necessity of reaching a comprehensive deal needs to be stressed” (Daily News Egypt, 2020). Any unilateral construction is rejected when “no prior consensus is reached between the three parties” (Sudan, Egypt & Ethiopia) (Daily News Egypt, 2020). The diplomatic strategy Egypt maintains assures the urgency of a legal framework because the GERD causes harm to the Egyptian people (Daily News Egypt, 2018). Asserting the harm the GERD does to water access is another identified code. All together the two codes co-occurred 8 times during the analysis.

Furthermore, the legal framework would serve Egypt’s and Sudanese interests and still gives Ethiopia the right to construct the GERD but according to international law. Egypt argues even that “Ethiopia needs to refrain from any unilateral measure until such an agreement is reached” (Daily News Egypt, 2020). Egypt proposes an agreement where the filling of the dam would be slowed down to not harm the water accessibility in downstream countries (Getachew, 2018; Mokaddem & Mquirmi, 2020). According to Egypt this agreement will serve all interests of countries which makes it rightful (Daily News Egypt, 2020). It is therefore a “need to reaching a binding, legal and balanced agreement that includes clear rules over the operating and the filling of the Ethiopian dam and takes into consideration the interests of Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia” (Daily News Egypt, 2020). Ethiopia thus has all the rights to build the dam but any unilateral action that hurts Egypt’s and Sudanese interests is not accepted (Tayie, 2018). Therefore the Egyptian government concludes that a legal binding framework that guarantees “all interests of all nations involved” (Daily News Egypt, 2020). This is identified in the media-analysis through the co-occurrence analysis seen in table (4). The codes of “cooperation must serve all interests” and pro-active diplomacy to establish a legal framework in total co-occurred 7 times.

#### 4.2.2 Reactive diplomacy in the GERD

This section outlines Ethiopia’s and Egypt’s reactive diplomacy strategies to alter the bargaining power balance in the GERD. Adding to the media-analysis some literature from Cascao (2008), Getachew (2018) and Salman (2016) on Ethiopia’s reactive diplomacy will be discussed. This will help to identify the underlying reasons behind Ethiopia’s reactive diplomacy and helps reflecting on the identified bargaining strategies. Lastly, the section discusses co-occurring codes that are depicted in table 4 and 5

##### 4.2.2.1 Asserting Intentions to develop unilaterally vs international water law

Asserting the intentions to develop unilaterally, is the first form of reactive diplomacy that will be discussed in this chapter. According to Getachew (2018) the reactive form of diplomacy is mainly used to assert that Ethiopia will construct the dam (Getachew, 2018). According to Getachew (2018)

the strategy Ethiopia maintains is mainly important for non-hegemonic riparian countries as it can act as a counter to the hegemonic neglect of the GERD. Ethiopia uses the tactic to make the GERD a fact on the ground, and also to assure Egypt and all actors involved that it has the right to develop its own waters (Getachew, 2018; Addis Fortune, 2014; Ethiopian News Agency, 2018 & 2020). To cite a clear example:

*“The Ethiopian delegation has expressed its position during the negotiations that Egypt's belief that the construction of the Dam poses danger to its national security is misguided and unfounded. It has also indicated to the Egyptians that it will not pause construction or scale down the country's most important development project”* (Addis Fortune, 2014).

This strategy is cannot be seen separately from the usage of injustice frames by Ethiopia. These injustice frames of Ethiopia's are advocacy campaigns against Egyptian hegemonic behaviour and old colonial treaties. This anti colonial narrative of Egyptian domination contributes to the idea that Ethiopia has its own right to develop unilaterally. In total the two codes co-occurred 8 times during the analysis.

Ethiopia's intentions with asserting its rights to unilaterally develop the Nile undermines any interference in the development of the GERD as being illegitimate or unfair (Addis Fortune, 2014; Ethiopian News Agency, 2020). This tactic makes the other proposals to solve the dispute in the GERD less relevant as it attacks them as only serving the interests of that certain actor. Some examples of the Ethiopian News Agency are outlined here:

*“Ethiopian Political Parties Joint Council expressed today its firm rejection of any pressure orchestrated to delay the construction of the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD)”* (Ethiopian News Agency, 2020).

*“Therefore, as long as the activity Ethiopia is engaged in is not likely to cause significant harm to the downstream riparian countries, it remains to be an entirely legitimate national exercise, he underscored”* (Ethiopian News Agency, 2020).

#### 4.2.2.2 Attracting alternative funding

As a reaction to Egyptian pro-active diplomacy and other leverage strategies to block actors from investing in Ethiopia's unilateral projects Ethiopia uses a form of reactive-diplomacy to attract alternative donors to the GERD (Cascão, 2009). The marginalized position of Ethiopia to attract donors was mainly because of Egypt's hegemonic position also in the ideational and bargaining power tools it had developed over time. Ethiopia before 2011 thus did not had much potential in attracting donors if Egypt did not approve this (Cascão, 2009).

After 2011 Ethiopia has had three main approaches to secure alternative funds for the GERD. All three approaches are identified in the media analysis.

The first approach of Ethiopia is attracting its citizens and internal companies to invest in the GERD. This is mainly done by promoting to invest in bonds of the GERD. Here is an example of this:

*“The general public and private business operators in the country have been contributing through different means including donations either in cash or in kind and the purchase of bonds. Recently, different automotive dealers such as Marathon Motors and Nyala Motors have donated vehicles as contribution to the construction of the dam”* (Addis Fortune, 2014).

The Ethiopian government needs the investments to make the GERD project a success. Therefore articles report that these investments are needed or that the Ethiopians are the architects of the

GERD (Addis Fortune, 2014). As depicted in the co-occurrence table occasionally co-occurs with a frame of nationalism and pride surrounding the GERD. This helps the Ethiopian government to create a sense of belonging. Even more, it makes citizens more willingly to invest in bonds. This will be discussed more in-depth in chapter 4.3.

The second approach Ethiopia uses to create funds for the GERD is to invite the Ethiopian diaspora to contribute. The Ethiopian government wants support from the diaspora and obtain a financial injection, but also wants general support for more ideational purposes. An example where this tactic succeeded was Dubai citing the ENA:

*“The Ethiopian Diaspora living in Dubai have pledged to further consolidate their support for the construction of the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD)..... Ethiopians and foreigners of Ethiopian origin living in different parts of the world have reportedly vowed to continue contributing to the construction of the dam by extending financial and other forms of support, including the purchase of GERD bonds”* (Ethiopian News Agency, 2017).

There were some other reports mainly provided by the ENA of the Sudanese diaspora buying up to ninety thousand dollar of bonds or reports that asserted that the diaspora could really make a difference if their capital was better mobilized (Ethiopian News Agency 2016 & 2017).

The third approach is to attract external donors towards the GERD. Thus far, Chinese companies or Chinese government let companies mainly invested in the GERD. This type is also mostly described by the established literature (Cascão, 2009; Getachew, 2018; Swain, 2011). The literature discusses Chinese investments in hydrological projects or other infrastructure in history but also how Egypt denied donors from investing in hydrological projects in Ethiopia. Getachew (2018) however notes something very interesting in Ethiopia’s strategy. According to Ethiopia’s strategy the completion GERD is finished Ethiopia will have more leverage but also gained more trust of international donors (Getachew, 2018).

Without other international donors the main external donors stays China. Chinese companies like the China Poly Group have mainly contributed the transmission lines of the GERD between Ethiopia and Kenya (Asiatimes, 2021; Ethiopian News Agency, 2016). There are also reports of the Chinese Company MeTEC helping with the electro-magnetic construction of the GERD (Ethiopian News Agency, 2017). Furthermore, the Chinese Infrastructure Investment Bank (CIIB) provides even more investments in Ethiopia (Getachew, 2018). Ethiopia is member of the CIIB which gives it a more sustainable access to bigger and more Chinese investments.

#### 4.2.2.4 Right to equitable utilization vs historic rights

The right to equitable utilize own natural resources is a type of reactive diplomacy Ethiopia uses that contradicts the Egyptian historic rights diplomatic strategy and makes it less legitimate. It is identified in the media-analysis that the type of diplomacy is often a counter that co-occurs with the Egyptian diplomatic strategy that the people of the Nile ‘deserve’ water access and that historic rights on the Nile matter (Mokaddem & Mquirmi, 2020; Daily News Egypt, 2020). The Egyptian diplomatic strategy argues that Ethiopia’s unilateral construction “violates historic agreements” such as the treaties of 1929, 1959 and also the cooperative agreement of 1993 (Daily News Egypt, 2020). According to Egyptian officials article 5 of the 1993 agreement (Appendix V) says that “Each party shall refrain from engaging in any activity related to the Nile waters that may cause appreciable harm to the interest of the other side,” (Daily News Egypt, 2020). The no harm principle is central in Egypt’s reactive diplomacy as it argues that the dam does play a negative role in the “interests of downstream countries” (Daily News Egypt, 2020). Furthermore, Egypt asserts its rights by using



international water law in a reactive manner. According to Tayie (2018 p.471) “Egypt has the right to refuse the mega dams in upstream Nile countries, just as the UN Water law regulates”. Egyptian officials argue that each country has the right to develop the Nile waters. However, Ethiopia develops the waters of the Nile without the “accordance of international law” (Egyptian Independent, 2020). The Egyptian government thus does not value the unilateral construction as exploiting the rightful utilization. Therefore, the Egyptian government does not regard the utilization equitable as well as rightful.

Ethiopia counters this on a reactive manner that argues that within its territory it can rightfully utilize its own waters. This rightful utilization of its own waters aims to tackle the 1959 and 1929 treaties as not legitimate. It provides an alternative by assuring Egypt that the dam is built based on the “principles of equitable share of the Nile water” (Ethiopian News Agency, 2020). The treaties however, are condemned as “illegal, bilateral treaties” that will not be able to prevent Ethiopia’s “own natural rights” to develop the waters for hydro-power (Getachew, 2018). The treaties Egypt threatens Ethiopia are not legitimate and according to Ethiopian professor Yacob Arsano, from the University of Addis Ababa: “There is no international law and principle that prohibits countries from developing their own resources, according to the expert” (Ethiopian News Agency, 2020).

These principles of equitable share are consequently asserted by the Ethiopian government to form a counter to the Egyptian hegemonic historic rights. Some examples of this are outlined here:

*“Any contradiction stance riparian countries following would not affect Ethiopia's right to develop its natural resource on Nile water, according to Experts”* (Ethiopian News Agency, 2020).

*“Ethiopia will continue its maximum efforts in a bid to further clear confusions that might arise among the international community about its just rights regarding the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), according to Ministry of Foreign Affairs”* (Ethiopian News Agency, 2020).

Asserting that it is reasonable for Ethiopia to utilize the waters within its own territory is an approach that is often combined with the pro-active diplomatic strategy of using treaties and international water law pro-actively. The combination of both tactics contributed to making the CFA a serious alternative to the already established treaties. Making the discourse internationally salient and thus acceptable by internationally recognized groups is a process the Ethiopian government is trying to develop.

This type of reactive diplomacy is also identified by Getachew (2018) which argues that it helped Ethiopia level the playing field by making the “historic rights” of Egypt less salient. I like to add that Ethiopia maintains this strategy of reasonable utilization for all riparian’s because it also wants to strengthen the CFA, which provides a counter for the historic rights. The strategy makes CFA a more equal alternative to the established frameworks of 1959 and 1929. Furthermore, the upstream countries cooperating in the NBI thus can learn from each other and provide each other with information and alternatives to Egyptian hegemony (Getachew, 2018). This then, can be combined with another frame Ethiopia uses; cooperation as the solution, a prognostic frame (see code-occurrence table). This prognostic frame will be discussed in 4.3.2.2.

Lastly, the right to utilize own natural resource is often used in combination with the poverty reduction frame described in 4.3.3.1. This is also depicted in the code co-occurrence table where eight instances are identified in which these codes overlapped. Ethiopia argues that it has not only the right to utilize its own natural resources, it is also heavily needed because “the nation is striving to alleviate poverty by using its own natural resources” (Ethiopian News Agency, 2020). Furthermore, “electricity and clean potable water are inaccessible for almost half of the Ethiopian estimated over

100 million population, far more lagging behind Egyptians” (Ethiopian News Agency, 2020). What this frames wants to assert is that, beyond the right to utilize its own natural resources, Ethiopia has to utilize to reduce poverty. It frames this in combination with the injustice that Egypt prevents poverty reduction, and therefore makes the right to utilize own natural resource frame even more salient

### 4.3 Egypt’s and Ethiopia’s framing techniques in the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam

This chapter provides an investigation in the frames utilized by Egypt and Ethiopia in the geo-political conflict on the GERD. To identify specific types of discourses the conceptual framework of framing provided by Benford & Snow (2000) was used. In the method of framing Benford & Snow (2000) distinguish three types of frames: diagnostic framing; prognostic framing and motivational framing. As argued by Benford & Snow (2000) most of these frames do not stand on themselves but are an issue-linkage or a reaction on other frames. Ethiopia’s frames thus, are linked with each other or with Egyptian frames and thus reveal themselves as counter frames. This will be discussed more detailed below.

The different frames Ethiopia used during the process of the GERD are identified by a media analysis of articles from the Addis Fortune and the Ethiopian News Agency. The frames Egypt utilized are analysed through articles of the Daily News Egypt and the Egyptian Independent. Before discussing the most important frames Table 6, below, gives a statistical overview of the diagnostic, prognostic and motivational frames used by Egypt and Ethiopia.

Code name	Paper	Category	Sum	Sum of code
GERD harming the water access and the safety of Egypt's citizens	Egyptian Independent	Diagnostic frame	16	50
GERD harming the water access and the safety of Egypt's citizens	Daily News Egypt	Diagnostic frame	34	
Framing water as the life-line for Egypt	Egyptian Independent	Diagnostic frame	3	23
Framing water as the life-line for Egypt	Daily News Egypt	Diagnostic frame	20	
Advocacy campaigns against Ethiopian behaviour	Egyptian Independent	Diagnostic frame	15	37
Advocacy campaigns against Ethiopian behaviour	Daily News Egypt	Diagnostic frame	22	
Cooperation must serve all interests of the three nations	Egyptian Independent	Prognostic frame	14	45
Cooperation must serve all interests of the three nations	Daily News Egypt	Prognostic frame	31	
Advocacy campaigns against Egyptian discourses and historical legal frameworks	Addis Fortune	Diagnostic frame	39	42
Advocacy campaigns against Egyptian discourses and historical legal frameworks	Ethiopian News Agency	Diagnostic frame	3	
GERD not causing significant harm	Addis Fortune	Diagnostic frame	4	15
GERD not causing significant harm	Ethiopian News Agency	Diagnostic frame	11	
Asserting upstream water needs	Addis Fortune	Diagnostic frame	8	15
Asserting upstream water needs	Ethiopian News Agency	Diagnostic frame	7	
Cooperation as the only solution	Addis Fortune	Prognostic frame	34	45
Cooperation as the only solution	Ethiopian News Agency	Prognostic frame	11	
GERD as a multi-beneficial project	Addis Fortune	Prognostic frame	52	73
GERD as a multi-beneficial project	Ethiopian News Agency	Prognostic frame	21	
GERD as the way to develop the country	Addis Fortune	Motivational frame	20	39
GERD as the way to develop the country	Ethiopian News Agency	Motivational frame	19	
GERD integrating internal ties	Addis Fortune	Motivational frame	11	33
GERD integrating internal ties	Ethiopian News Agency	Motivational frame	22	

Table 6: Statistics of ideational power in the form of framing in the GERD

In table 4 and 5 the most and consistently occurring frames are lined out that Egypt and Ethiopia made use of in the GERD. I will discuss all the frames the countries utilized but I will also discuss how the frames interact with each other and what issue linkages both countries used to legitimize their frame. I begin with discussing the diagnostic frames the countries used. After that I discuss the prognostic and the motivational frames. The type of relation frames have to each other is outlined in appendix I and II. I will discuss this relations and interactions below.

	● Cooperation must serve all interests of the three nations involved in the GERD Gr=45	● Framing the Nile as the lifeline Gr=23	● GERD harming the water demands of Egypt's population Gr=50	● Making Ethiopia adhere to international law or established frameworks Gr=45	● Pro-active diplomacy by involving other actors to mediate the negotiations in the GERD Gr=37
<b>Code co-occurrences</b>					
● Asserting hydrological rights on the Nile's waters Gr=63	8	4	8	6	4
● GERD harming the water demands of Egypt's population Gr=50	4	8	0	2	2
● Pro-active diplomacy to establish a binding legal framework on the GERD Gr=49	13	2	8	5	20

Table 4: Code co-occurrences in the Daily News Egypt and the Egyptian Independent

	• Framing injustice because upstream also needs the water Gr=15	• GERD as a multi-beneficial tool Gr=73	• GERD integrating internal ties Gr=33	• GERD not causing significant harm Gr=15	• Public media and advocacy campaigns against unilateral projects or decisions Gr=42	• Right to use Nile water because it is reasonable Gr=37	• Establishing an alliance with Sudan Gr=32	• Pro-active diplomacy through legal frameworks Gr=33
<b>Code co-occurrences</b>								
• Campaigning for alternative funds Gr=33	0	1	6	0	0	0	0	0
• Cooperation as the solution Gr=45	2	21	3	1	7	4	3	7
• Establishing an alliance with Sudan Gr=32	0	4	0	1	0	0	X	7
• GERD as a multi-beneficial tool Gr=73	0	X	0	1	2	3	8	0
• GERD as the way to develop the country Gr=39	2	2	3	3	0	8	0	0
• Pro-active diplomacy through legal frameworks Gr=33	0	0	0	2	6	0	1	X
• Public media and advocacy campaigns against unilateral projects or decisions Gr=42	2	2	0	0	X	8	0	0
• Right to use Nile water because it is reasonable Gr=37	2	0	6	6	8	X	0	0

Table 5: Code co-occurrences Addis Fortune & Ethiopian News Agency

#### 4.3.1 Diagnostic frames in the GERD

The different diagnostic frames Ethiopia used in the GERD will be discussed in this section. The diagnostic frames are mostly understood as ‘injustice frames’ in which a problem is perceived or diagnosed (Benford & Snow, 2000).

##### 4.3.1.1 The GERD as not causing significant downstream harm

Framing the GERD as a non-damaging project has its main goal to make the injustice frame of Egypt less salient. It is a reaction on the injustice frame of Egypt is that the project will harm the water access of Egypt and the security of 100 million Egyptians (Daily News Egypt, 2020). The frame Egypt provides is that of a country that has water stress and that is for over 90% dependent on the Nile flowing out of the Ethiopian highlands (Daily News Egypt, 2020). The dam will make Egypt not only a country with severe water stress, but also a political tool of Ethiopia that can influence the country with the unilateral construction (Daily News Egypt, 2021). The dam according to Egypt has the potential to have

*“disastrous socio-economic effects that will diminish every dimension of the human security of Egyptians, including food security, water security, environmental security, and human health. It will also expose millions to greater economic vulnerability, leading to increasing rates of crime and illegal migration. It would reduce water quality, disrupt the riparian ecosystem, damage biodiversity, and aggravate the dangers of climate change”* (Daily News Egypt, 2020).

Egypt argues that only measures that protect downstream countries in case of drought can stop its narrative (Egyptian Independent, 2016).

Ethiopia however, argues that this discourse is mostly redundant because the GERD does not significantly harm the water access of Egypt. It expressed its stance on multiple meetings and negotiations that it “encourages equitable and reasonable utilisation of water resources and causes no significant harm to lower riparian nations” (Daily News Egypt, 2020). Also the worries of Egypt on the construction of the GERD are not legitimate according to the Ethiopian government. This statement makes this stance more clear:

*“The Ethiopian delegation has expressed its position during the negotiations that Egypt's belief that the construction of the Dam poses danger to its national security is misguided and unfounded”* (Addis Fortune, 2014).

The Ethiopian government also argues and suggests that “it has done enough” to assure Egypt that no significant harm will be caused by the construction of the GERD (Addis Fortune, 2014). Ethiopia says it has “made enough concessions” regarding the Nile waters (Mokaddem & Mquirmi, 2020 p. 6). Ethiopia thus concludes that the Egyptian discourse is not only redundant but also false. This frame is also combined with the technical study on the GERD that Egypt opted for in 2014 which favoured Ethiopia. Ethiopia frames that Egyptian worries are not legitimate according if the country would accept the study. According to the study:

*“Ethiopia's Great Renaissance Dam (GERD) is safer than the dams in Sudan and Egypt, which is important as its presence impacts Sudan the most due to its proximity to the country, the Sudanese Minister of Irrigation and Water Resources, Yasser Abbas said”* (Ethiopian News Agency, 2020).

#### 4.3.1.2 Discussing upstream and downstream water needs

In addition to the contradiction on the damage the GERD project will create Ethiopia and Egypt also clash on the claim both countries do on the Nile waters. Ethiopia argues that in the future it needs to provide for the needs of its citizens. This frame legitimizes the GERD as it will help dealing with the challenges the country will face in the following decades (Ethiopian News Agency, 2020).

Furthermore, the frame argues that Egypt blocks Ethiopia from battling these challenges and that Egypt cannot deny Ethiopia providing the goods and services its citizens need. To quote the ENA: “This underlines the right of Ethiopia to develop its water resources to meet the development needs of its people, the government added” (Ethiopian News Agency, 2019).

Egypt argues that it does “respect Ethiopian needs” and that the government has “respect for the rights to generate electricity” but this cannot affect the water flow towards the Egyptian main land (Egyptian Independent, 2016). Egypt frames the Nile as its lifeline. It assures Ethiopia that “The issue of water to us is that of our very life”.

The frame both countries utilize is often combined with the issue linkage of population growth and climate change. Regarding population growth the Ethiopian government mostly uses the future of food production and the way the GERD can help with securing jobs (Ethiopian News Agency, 2020; Addis Fortune 2014 & 2015). It also links this with historical events like extreme food shortages that citizens can have in the back of their mind (Addis Fortune, 2014). Regarding climate change the government wants to assure its citizens that the GERD can help resolving some of the consequences climate change has. What is important to understand is that this certain frame more nationally oriented. Also poverty reduction is one of the main issues that is linked with this diagnostic frame to assert the importance of the GERD (see code-occurrence table 5). In combination with poverty reduction the GERD could provide for more economic wealth or securing energy access. Egypt on its turn assures Ethiopia that its population is rising and even though it also seeks alternative water sources Ethiopia must understand that the Nile River remains Egypt’s lifeline (Daily News Egypt, 2020; Egyptian Independent, 2020)

The combination of all these features however, is the most used frame. Ethiopia blames Egypt for not valuing upstream needs and then links the upstream needs that are internationally recognized as being important for the future. This is outlined in the following example:

*“These assertions revealed the unilateral and unsubstantiated Egyptian voices claiming exclusive utilisation of the Nile, while abandoning the concerns of other basin countries, which include poverty, water shortages, energy deficits and food insecurity” (Addis Fortune, 2014).*

Ethiopia also argues that the Egyptian frame, of the Nile as being the existential lifeline of the country, is a non-sufficient explanation for Ethiopia to change its behaviour (Addis Fortune, 2014; Mohammed, 2020). Ethiopia argues that the water in Egypt is not used efficiently. 86% of the waters use goes to agriculture which only creates 14% of the GDP (Addis Fortune, 2014). Ethiopia thus states that the problem is not as existential as Egypt frames it.

#### 4.3.1.3 Egypt’s and Ethiopia’s injustice frames on binding agreements

This particular diagnostic frame identified in the media analysis is an injustice frame that condemns the non-cooperative behaviour of the other actor. Egypt for example uses the frame to legitimate that Ethiopia’s stance towards a lasting and definitive agreement is unjust (Daily News Egypt, 2020 & 2021 & 2018). The frame argues that Egypt offered “several opportunities for cooperation to reach a fair agreement” but even though Ethiopia did not opt for a final binding agreement it still unilaterally



constructed the dam and remained inflexible (Daily News Egypt, 2020). The frame became more salient when Egypt proposed a binding agreement with mediation of the US in 2020 (Getachew, 2018). ) (Ethiopia did not want to sign this agreement and labelled it as “totally unacceptable” (Ethiopian News Agency, 2020). The frame also was applied in 2017 when Egypt proposed that the World Bank should be involved in the negotiations (Mokaddem & El Mquirmi, 2020). Ethiopia turned this proposal down as well. Egypt however argued that Ethiopia “rejects several fundamental issues in the negotiations, including the provisions that reflect the legally binding nature of the agreement” (Daily News Egypt, 2020).

Ethiopia uses the injustice frame in the form of advocacy campaigns mostly to assert the injustice of the colonial treaties of 1929 and 1959 that Egypt still maintains to use to legitimate its strategy (Addis Fortune, 2014). According to Ethiopia the agreements “still maintain the status quo over the Nile” (Addis Fortune, 2014). Egypt’s behaviour is seen as “colonial” and not seeking integration in the Nile Basin. The Egyptian frame of “historic rights” does no longer hold and cannot stop Ethiopia from constructing the dam (Addis Fortune, 2015). The frame portrays Egypt as the non-cooperative actor in the disagreements on the GERD that does not integrate in the Nile Basin but that desires to remain the single hegemony (Ethiopian News Agency, 2020).

#### 4.3.2 Prognostic frames in the GERD

This chapter will give an overview of the different prognostic frames Ethiopia and Egypt used in the GERD. As Benford & Snow (2000) argue prognostic frames are perceived solutions for a perceived problem. This problem is firstly diagnosed in often multiple diagnostic frames which were described in 4.3.1. The prognostic frames in the GERD are, for Ethiopia and Egypt, a way to create perceived and by the international and national community accepted, solutions. It helps Ethiopia in providing alternatives and counterarguments against the sanctioned discourse Egypt tries to maintain.

The different prognostic frames are mainly derived from the media-analysis, but I will also discuss some of the literature on Ethiopian-Egyptian relations (Zeitoun et. al., 2016; Cascão and Nicol, 2016; Tawfik, 2016; Getachew, 2018) that also (partly) discussed soft power relations.

##### 4.3.1.2 Egypt’s and Ethiopia’s frame on cooperation

To create perceived solutions for the geo-political dispute between Egypt and Ethiopia the latter tries to frame cooperation as the only solution. Ethiopia’s strategy is mainly to shape a frame that sets a playing field of a zero-sum game in which cooperation is the only alternative besides the status quo or even growing tensions (Addis Fortune, 2014; Ethiopian News Agency, 2020 & 2019). It does not value other Egyptian proposals as being an option as this will threaten the established bargaining and ideational power. Egypt’s proposals on cooperation for example includes the lowering of the GERD or to slow down the filling of the dam to accept it (Getachew, 2018; Daily News Egypt, 2020). It also opts to create a lasting and binding solution in which cooperation must defend all interests of all countries involved in the case (Daily News Egypt, 2020). Not finding a binding solution would trouble the very existence and survival of Egypt (Daily News Egypt, 2020). Cooperation thus, needs to balance the interests of the three countries and needs to ensure “Egypt’s water needs and right to life” (Daily News Egypt, 2020). It also argues that Ethiopia believes “that its interests overwhelm the collective interests of the sovereign states that are members of the league (Arab League)” (Egyptian Independent, 2016). Cooperation is possible and Egypt wants to cooperate on the Nile but not if Ethiopia does not value the interests of other countries (Egyptian Independent, 2016; Daily News

Egypt, 2020 & 2021). Ethiopia's frame contradicts this frame as it argues that cooperation is always the solution and that wrestling on detailed cases of frameworks is not the way forward (Addis Fortune, 2014). The frame assures Egypt that cooperation is the way to resolve the deadlock (Ethiopian News Agency, 2020) Ethiopia approach is similar to the theoretical framework established by Tawfik (2016) which argues that cooperation is always better than not cooperating.

Adding to this non-hegemons, such as Ethiopia, can use or create accepted frames on cooperative institutions to, over time, balance the hegemon's power (Cascão, 2008). The NBI but also the CFA have the potential to serve Ethiopian interests to create a more equal playing field in the hydro-political power balance. Ethiopia's strategy has its main goal to create a kind of vacuum, or as Cascão (2008) calls it a 'shared control' of the Nile in which cooperation and mutual trust building between Sudan, Egypt and Ethiopia would shift the hegemonic pattern. Within this vacuum it tried to alliance with Sudan as described in chapter 4.2.1.1. Ethiopia hopes to achieve a situation in which its bargaining power could be optimally used to be granted concessions of other countries (mainly Egypt) (Cascão, 2009). Asmamaw Tedage (Associate Professor at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences) describes this strategy in an interview with the Addis Fortune (2015). He argues that the relation between Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia must be built on "genuine cooperation and mutual trust". He adds that the technical study of consultancy firms that will shine light on some of the threats of the GERD only reinforce the Egyptian stance and that the only lasting solution needs "true cooperation, understanding and compromise between important parties in order to break the deadlock and move into a cooperative future" (Addis Fortune, 2015). To break the deadlock thus, Egypt needs to do concessions. But, Egypt argues that concessions are not possible if these concessions will harm the access to water.

The Ethiopian frame is consistently put to use. Even at the height of the GERD dispute in 2013/2014 Ethiopian diplomats tried to maintain this strategy and to opt for Egyptian concessions (Getachew, 2018). The following example of this stance is derived from the Addis Fortune in the media analysis:

*"The Nile River can only work in the way that nature intended when all the riparian countries cooperate to jointly restore the relationship of human beings and the ecosystems of the basin within the spirit of Pan-Africanism and the ideals of the African Renaissance"* (Addis Fortune, 2013).

The zero-sum game Ethiopia plays with regards to cooperation has to be viewed in combination with pro-active diplomacy and. Promoting the CFA but also the NBI brought countries together under the umbrella of cooperation as the only way forward. In the code co-occurrence table (Table 5) seven instances are identified in which Ethiopia promotes legal frameworks like the CFA or the NBI in combination with the cooperation frame. The CFA is a framework Ethiopia uses to have a counter to the established frameworks of Egypt and Sudan (treaty of 1959 & 1929). According to Cascão and Nicol (2016) a lack of consistency and capacity of upstream countries was an important contributor for Egyptian hegemony. Thus the discursive approach of Ethiopia helped creating the boundaries of what was a future prove way in developing the Nile Basin relations that included more upstream countries. This combined with the promotion of legal frameworks like the NBI helped Ethiopia in establishing an environment in which more upstream expertise is being bonded. The newly cooperative framework is needed for Ethiopia to counter the expertise of Egypt it has gained over the years.

The discursive frame of cooperation as the only solution is used over the years and even though it does not provide concrete solutions it maintains a strong ideational tool for Ethiopia. It is often combined with the frame of the GERD as a multi-beneficial tool (N=21). As Ethiopia consistently argues "the solution is not to wrestle with each other, but to find innovative and constructive

solutions and look to the future” (Addis Fortune, 2014). Thus, what Ethiopia does by using this frame is that it assures Egypt that cooperation will be the only solution and that it proceeds with the GERD. As Sneddon & Fox (2006) note: “cooperation is perceived as the basis for proceeding the development of multi beneficial water resources” Thus, on the first hand the frame provides argues that cooperation is the solution based on “multiple benefits” instead of the Egyptian frame which argues that cooperation must defend all interests, and that a cooperative multi-beneficial agreement must protect Egyptian citizens (Daily News Egypt, 2020). But, adding to that Ethiopia’s frame establishes a cooperative framework that assures Egypt that Ethiopia will follow through with the project. Lastly, the frame only values cooperation as legitimate and thus does not approve of any material coercive instruments of Egypt to reach consensus.

#### 4.3.1.3 The GERD as a multi-beneficial project

Beyond trying to frame that cooperation is the only way forward for riparian countries Ethiopia tries to legitimate a multi-beneficial frame of the GERD project. As described above the frames also co-occur in many instances. Firstly, this discourse aims at creating a multi-beneficial lens through which other countries need to view the GERD project. The framing strategy wants to alter the zero-sum lens of mainly Egypt seeing the GERD project as a direct threat without considering the potential “shared benefits” the project has (Mokaddem & Mquirmi, 2020). In the words of Meles Alem (Spokesman for the ministry of foreign affairs): “that the zero sum game diplomacy with respect to the dam is not useful to any country in the Nile Basin (Ethiopian News Agency, 2017).” Instead of this the countries must “lay down the future together because it is the best path to regional development” (Addis Fortune, 2014).

*“Considering this deep affection of Ethiopians to the River and the latest commitment to using it for a better future, I believe mutual benefit is the way forward. It, therefore, is better for the Egyptians and the Sudanese to bet on love” (Addis Fortune, 2013).*

The frame is mainly been built on scientific evidence or the opinion of well-known experts that speak up for Ethiopia’s interests (Getachew, 2018). This is part of the second function the frame has. The frame is designed to counter the Egyptian and Sudanese remarks concerning the GERD with citing experts or scientific based information to make the counter more legitimate. Thirdly, Ethiopia wants to make the frame globally accepted even though Egypt and Sudan share some concerns (Getachew, 2018).

The first function of the frame, the multi-beneficial lens, can be subdivided in multiple dimensions in which the GERD would be beneficial for Ethiopia and Sudan. In the media-analysis two different subdivisions were identified: How the GERD would help mitigate climate change and how the GERD would create cooperation and economic integration. This second subdivision is part of the co-occurrence.

Firstly the climate part of the frame elaborates on the positive contributions the GERD will have regarding the process of climate change. In the future, as the Ethiopian government argues, the GERD will contribute to a reduction of flooding and drought (Ethiopian News Agency, 2020). The GERD can be used as a tool for altering floods that could create natural disasters that would mainly hurt Sudan (Swain, 2014). According to The GERD can also help with the reduction of downstream sedimentation. The GERD therefore, according to Ethiopia is a project that will not harm the water flow towards downstream countries but will help them with risk prevention of floods and mud streams following sediment disposals. In the words of Maarten Hajer (1997) Ethiopia tries to set a

discourse of a “positive-sum game to ecological problems” with the GERD contributing to this. This legitimizes the project because it is linked with a (perceived) wicked problem. The GERD is framed as part of the solution of this problem and therefore would be helpful to surrounding countries in battling climate change. This method of framing is in line with what Ferguson (1990) described as the anti-politics machine. Ferguson argues that certain interventions are legitimized because it is for urgent societal needs. Other actors are silenced by legitimizing an intervention as part of the solution.

Secondly the frame assures downstream countries that the project will contribute to economic cooperation and integration in the whole region. As depicted in the co-occurrence table the cooperation frame and the multi-beneficial frame co-occurred 21 times. The project will especially hold some major benefits in the energy sector for surrounding countries such as Sudan and Egypt (Addis Fortune, 2013 & 2014). Furthermore, Ethiopia argues that the project could be a start in overall wider economic cooperation in the Nile Basin (Chen & Swain, 2014).

Ethiopia tries to create leverage to make the frame more relevant. Getachew (2018) argues that it tries to attract donors like the EU and the World Bank to make economic integration also more attractable for other riparian’s. This co-occurrence with their reactive diplomatic strategy that tries to attract alternative donors is described in 4.2.2. This diplomatic strategy therefore is supported by the economic integration frame surrounding the GERD.

However, while Ethiopia tries to sell the project as being multi-beneficial it has to rely more and more on its counter frames to assure the other riparian’s that it is indeed multi-beneficial. The frame changed while the discourse surrounding the GERD changed. It began with the principles of “joint benefit-sharing” and promoting of regional integration through the legal framework of the ENTRO (Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office) (ENTRO, 2021; Getachew, 2018). According to Getachew (2018) the environment changed when Ethiopia regarded the developments as not moving forward fast enough.

Thus, the project of the GERD now is not only being framed multi-beneficial economically to influence interpretations of Egyptian or Sudanese citizens. It is also framed in this manner to influence global donors that may be interested in the economic opportunities that lay ahead of the infrastructural projects in the Nile Basin.

*“Ethiopia also aspires to be the green energy hub of East Africa. It has already signed contracts to sell electricity to Kenya, Djibouti, South Sudan and Sudan. Consequently, the GERD will provide an additional income of two million Euros in the sale of electricity to neighboring countries”* (Addis Fortune, 2014).

### 4.3.3 Ethiopia’s motivational frames in the GERD

In this chapter the motivational frames Ethiopia set in the GERD will be discussed. As Benford & Snow (2000) state the motivational frames act as the final step in the method of framing. It is the frame that is widely accepted and makes people act against the status quo (Benford & Snow, 2000).

#### 4.3.2.1 Poverty reduction and economic growth

Ethiopia’s government’s method to create a motivational frame firstly starts with framing that the GERD is the way to reduce poverty, improve national economic growth and access to electricity for its citizens (Addis Fortune 2013 & 2014 & 2015; Ethiopian News Agency, 2018 & 2020). The project improves economic growth in the sense that it will double the electricity generating power which

partly can be exported to surrounding countries (Getachew, 2018). It reduces poverty in the sense that it created 12000 jobs and provides future generations with access to electricity (Ethiopian News Agency, 2020; Yihdego et al., 2017). According to the Addis Fortune (2014) the GERD is “fundamental not only for our wellbeing, but also for economic growth and poverty reduction”. The GERD would also develop more infrastructure in the form of roads, energy networks and bridges in peripheral areas of Ethiopia like Benishangul-Gumuz (Addis Fortune, 2014; Getachew, 2018). Furthermore the Addis Fortune newspaper argues that the GERD has “associated benefits in health and quality of life provided by electrical services, such as lighting and refrigeration” (Addis Fortune, 2014). The reasoning thus is that if the dam will follow through, it will access more of the potential Ethiopia has in natural resources that will develop also the more rural parts of the nation.

Ethiopia links this frame with the injustice frame of 4.3.1.1 (right to utilize own natural resources) to create a common ground to make the project a success. It wants to mobilize its citizens to protect and help the project as it will take Ethiopia out of the poverty it still endures. Therefore, as the Ethiopian News Agency (2020) notes “Ethiopians need to have a bold stance for fair and equitable utilization of the shared water resources of Nile River in its move to overcome poverty”. Any interference therefore from other countries that will cause difficulties for reaching the common national goal needs to be prevented as it will weaken the development of the nation. This frame therefore counters and depoliticizes injustice frames from Egypt that will state that based on historical rights it has the right to access the waters of the Blue Nile (Getachew, 2018).

In combination with the economic development that the renewable energy of the GERD may bring Ethiopia’s government chooses to create an issue linkage with the ongoing climate discourse. Ethiopia links the GERD to Ethiopia being the regional renewable green energy hub (Getachew, 2018; Addis Fortune, 2014). The GERD has the central role to creating a frame surrounding Ethiopia of being the regional pioneer in green energy. It combines this with the development question it still faces but assures the international community that Ethiopia’s path out of poverty will be one that is supported by a green economic development. To cite the Addis Fortune (2015): “The construction of the hydropower project of the GERD is demonstrative of the challenge facing the development agenda, to realise in a sustainable manner, the Ethiopian Renaissance featuring a climate resilient green economy”.

Ethiopia does not only want to create a green developmental discourse it also wants to make sure potential buyers of their energy are assured the energy is green and therefore approved in global discourse. Ethiopia wants to assure energy trade contracts and attract nations to their energy. According to the Addis Fortune (2014) Ethiopia has already signed contracts with Kenya, Djibouti, South Sudan and Sudan to export green energy.

#### 4.3.3.2 GERD as the flag-ship project of Ethiopia

The GERD is often cited as the flag-ship project of Ethiopia by the government. The GERD is described ,in articles of the Ethiopian News Agency and the Addis Fortune, as “one of the major undertakings the country has ever engaged in”. The project therefore needs public support, patriotism and national unity to make the project a success (Addis Fortune, 2015). Not only Ethiopian officials but many legitimate experts, celebrities, sportsman etc. are asked to contribute to the motivational frame for Ethiopians to support the project (Getachew, 2018). Many fundraisers, but also concerts of these important actors all contributed to the political manifest of the government surrounding the GERD.

Adding to that, the government also uses the project to unify the very diverse cultures that co-exist in Ethiopia. The project is used as an instrument to unify all Ethiopian citizens to stay behind the

national government and their agenda. The GERD in this strategy is used as a unifier of cultures. As Minister Getachew Reda noted in 2016: “All Ethiopians irrespective of origin, age and sex have contributed to the construction of the dam” (Ethiopian News Agency, 2016). Furthermore, the frame is used to also convince the Ethiopian diaspora to unify behind the GERD project.

The flag-ship project also has a tendency of nationalism surrounding it. The project is being framed not only as the way to economic development, but also to a return as a regional powerhouse. Wars, ethnic differences and poverty that were part of the modern history of Ethiopia made the country instable. But, many fingers now are pointed at the project that will be a symbol of great return. Pressure has been put on this generation for providing the necessary tools (financial as well as social) to help making the project a success.

## 5 Discussion and Conclusion

In this thesis the soft-power mechanisms in the GERD are analysed through a media-analysis. The study distinguished between on the one hand bargaining power in the form of pro-active diplomacy and reactive diplomacy, and on the other hand collective action frames. It has been described in 4.2 and 4.3 that the identified soft power mechanisms of Ethiopia and Egypt are often linked with each other, or counter each other. The soft power mechanisms in the GERD thus, do not stand on their own but are shaped and reshaped by events and behaviour of the other actor. This is for example, seen in the reaction on events like the failed draft to reaching a binding agreement on the GERD in 2020. The article count as well as the code statistics increased significantly. Events can also shape new diplomatic strategies or make them disappear. An example of the data is the pro-active diplomacy Ethiopia established with Sudan before the Declaration of Principles (DOP), that declined after this declaration was signed.

After analysing the applied soft-power mechanisms through articles of the Daily News Egypt, The Ethiopian News Agency, The Addis Fortune and the Egyptian Independent Ethiopia and by conducting a historiography I would like to argue that the GERD is not only a hydro-electrical project but a politically loaded case. In the course of the research multiple instances are identified in which Ethiopia consequently denied Egyptian pro-active diplomacy that was designed to establish a treaty on the GERD. Furthermore, the Ethiopian reactive diplomacy asserted that throughout international law, and natural rights it had the full right to reasonably develop its own natural resources. Adding to that, Ethiopia reactively assured Egypt that it unilaterally will develop the dam and that it will not modify its height or alter the time interval of filling the dam. Ethiopia's early pro-active diplomatic efforts on the other hand created a partner (Sudan) in GERD negotiations that contributed to the establishment of the Declaration of Principles. Sudan was positive on the contributions the GERD would give in electricity. The declaration was the creation of a "fact on the ground" according to Getachew (2018). It was also a non-binding agreement something Ethiopia instead of Egypt desired. With this notion I would like to argue that the GERD has the potential of a resource capturing project. Zeitoun & Warner (2006) argue that resource capture, when an actor shifts the distribution of resources to their benefits, is mostly carried out by creating "facts on the ground" that gives the actor control over resource access. The media analysis showed that the project and the usage of soft-power by Ethiopia contributed to those "facts on the ground".

Adding to that, Ethiopia consistently used the frame of cooperation as the only solution and as a "zero-sum" game. Ethiopia argued that solutions lie in cooperating and accepting that the GERD is a multi-beneficial project that supports economic integration. Ethiopia with this frame of cooperation put itself in the position of an equal partner that had as much to gain from the waters of the Nile as former hegemony Egypt.

Furthermore, according to Zeitoun & Warner (2006) the hegemon normally has coercive resources like the tool of sanctioned discourses or alliances that make it difficult for the non-hegemon to finance projects (Zeitoun & Warner, 2006). Ethiopia, however made multiple internal as well as international efforts to create funding for the project. Chinese investment contributed, but mainly the Ethiopian diaspora and the inhabitants were invited to invest in the GERD and contributed significantly to the financing of the project (Ethiopian News Agency 2014 & 2015 & 2017 & 2020 & 2021). This is in line with the findings of Cascão (2009) and Getachew (2018)



Zooming in on Egypt's soft power mechanisms in the GERD I first want to cite Zeitoun & Warner: According to Zeitoun & Warner (2006) "the outcome of competition over water resources is determined by the exertion of power of the hegemon". The Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam has been cited by multiple authors as a threat to this hegemony (Swain & Chen, 2014; Abteu & Dessu, 2019). After the beginning of the construction of the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam in December 2010 Egypt's hegemonic sanctioned discourse as well as its pro and reactive diplomacy did not stop Ethiopia from unilateral constructing the dam. Drafts designed by the US in 2020 and efforts to involve other actors like the World Bank and the United Nations until this day did not coerce Ethiopia to concede major concessions, or to sign a binding treaty. Furthermore, frames Egypt adhered to that are designed to influence ideational power created reactions of protest and advocacy campaigns arguing that the "colonial" and historical behaviour and its treaties are not fair or justifiable (Addis Fortune, 2014; Ethiopian News Agency, 2020). Coercive diplomatic tactics and sanctioned discourse of Egypt thus, did not create "facts on the ground" to alter the Ethiopian counter hegemony. The DOP however, may be considered a fact on the ground but it only gave Egypt a legal basis for reactive and pro-active diplomacy. Instead, Ethiopia made use of multiple counter hegemonic tactics that nullified the potential of the hegemon Egypt to exert its soft power. It countered the frame of Egypt that the waters of the Nile are existential, and created an own anti politics machine of poverty reduction and nation development to make the Egyptian frame less urgent and legitimize the project. Ethiopia furthermore framed the project as a multi-beneficial tool instead of a damaging tool that also reinforces regional cooperation.

To compare these findings with the established framework of Zeitoun & Cascão (2010) I would like to argue that indeed the bargaining power is a well-functioning tool a counter hegemon can use to create a shift in power relations. Alternatives in alliances or to establish legal frameworks have served Ethiopia to "tighten the gap". The results also support the argument that geography of upstream countries can be used as a power tool. Ethiopia framed the upstream position the country had but with no freedom to influence the water access flowing to Egypt as unfair (Addis Fortune, 2014 & 2015). Ethiopia framed the colonial agreements that kept these dynamics as unfair and asserted that it served as Egypt's breadbasket without utilizing their own resources (Addis Fortune, 2013 & 2014).

The main question of this thesis is: *How did the soft power mechanisms of Egypt and Ethiopia, in the case of the GERD, influence the power balance in the Blue Nile river?* To answer this question on the basis of chapter 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 I want to argue that the soft power mechanisms of Ethiopia in the form of promoting the GERD as a multi-beneficial project in which cooperation is the only option, the early alliance establishment of Sudan and the usage of alternative frameworks contributed to the Declaration of Principles that made the GERD a fact on the ground. Also as identified in chapter 4.1, the more peaceful internal situation in Ethiopia, worsening relations between Sudan and Egypt and pressure of international actors created a stronger Ethiopia. This increasing power became more relevant after the establishment of the NBI, when Ethiopia had a leading role in forming the upstream coalition resulting in the CFA. The CFA established the fundamentals of a counter hegemonic up-stream alliance. As identified in the media-analysis Ethiopia promotes these alternatives pro-actively. Furthermore, the frame of cooperation as a zero-sum game changed the nature of interaction and made it difficult for Egypt to remain a leadership position in the Nile Basin. Egypt's pro-active diplomacy until this day comes short in establishing a binding legal framework on the GERD. However, I still want to argue that the material dominance of Egypt could be a decisive factor when there is a legitimate cause of conflict in future transboundary hydro-politics. Acts of securitization that frame the Nile waters as existential in combination with the broad alliance framework Egypt established in its diplomatic history has a potential of legitimizing armed force to

protect the water access of the country. But, until this day the “water wars” are still considered as a myth, as the research of Wolf (1995) assures, by scholars like Zeitoun, Warner, Waterbury, Cascão and Mirumachi and if this holds the GERD has the potential of being the project that changed the game forever in the Blue Nile River.

## 6. Limitations and future research

This chapter critically addresses the shortcomings and potential bias of the results found in chapter 4. The chapter also recommends some future research on the topic.

Firstly, the research is only limited to English spoken newspaper reports. Arab speaking media outlets could provide an alternative narrative or could report different events which alters the result of this thesis. To add to this, the analysed articles only include only the reports of the Addis Fortune, The Ethiopian News Agency, The Daily News Egypt & The Egyptian Independent. Furthermore, the analysed articles from The Daily News Egypt and The Egyptian Independent's articles have a different time-interval than the analysed articles of the Addis Fortune and the Ethiopian News Agency. The Daily News Egypt was published by the Egyptian Media Services between May 2005 and 21 April 2012. From 12 June onwards the Business News for Press, Publishing and Distribution Company began publishing under the name. The Egyptian Independent got its license to produce independent in 2012. I however, still would like to argue that the results are not heavily affected by these circumstances. Figure 4,5,6,7 depict that the analysed articles are particularly from 2020 and 2014. Adding to that, the researcher only analysed articles that are inside the data base of Lexis Nexis. This limits the scope of the research.

Second, the research operationalizes soft power in the forms of framing and bargaining power discussed in the theoretical chapter. The research therefore does not consider other developed frameworks of soft power. To add to that, the analysis is built on these forms of soft power which appeared analysing the data. Other forms of framing and bargaining power strategies that are not described in the data, but that also influence the soft power distribution, are not included in this research and form a potential bias to the research.

Third, the research mainly focused on regional hydro-political relations and partly national and international hydro-political dimensions surrounding the GERD negotiations. More local dynamics and frames are not described in-depth in this research. This is also partly because of the language barrier and the inability to travel due to the corona virus.

Fourth, and last qualitative media analysis and coding categories are always influenced by the decision of the researcher to group the codes in a certain category. The researcher decides which codes are overlapping enough to group them in a code group. This is a more general shortcoming of the program Atlas.ti and of qualitative research.

Here I will list some recommendations for future research. To start, Further research may focus on hegemonic resistance strategies in other cases to test if successful tactics that applied to this case are successful for other cases. Further research can herewith test or reject the effectiveness of counter hegemonic strategies and in what circumstances these tactics apply. This would also test the counter hegemonic framework established by Cascão (2009) and the framework of Zeitoun & Warner (2006) and Cascão & Zeitoun (2010). Further research may also dive into the threshold that needs to be reached for hegemonic resistance to gain widespread acceptance. This means providing a theoretical framework in which boundaries are set when frames and bargaining strategies become relevant and in which circumstances they do provide an alternative to hegemonic dominance. To finish, research can also investigate more local impacts the GERD has on rural living communities in Sudan, Egypt and Ethiopia.

To policy makers, and politicians involved in transboundary hydro-politics the research shows that alternative tactics to counter the hegemon can work out in certain circumstances. It is also shown

that bargaining power can be utilized as a changeable and more fluid form of power to assert demands or form alliances to legitimate resource capturing projects and establish concrete “facts on the ground”.

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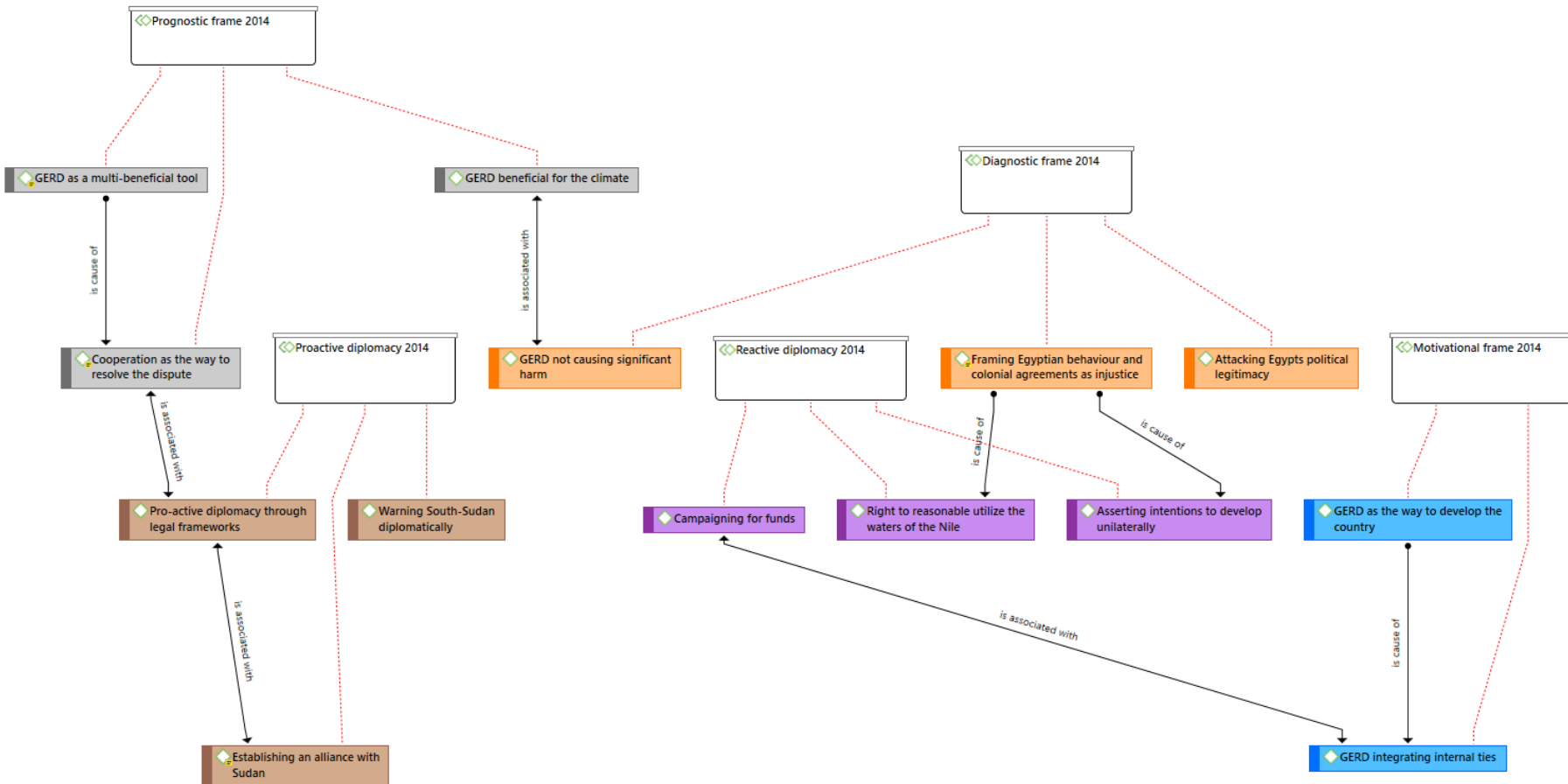
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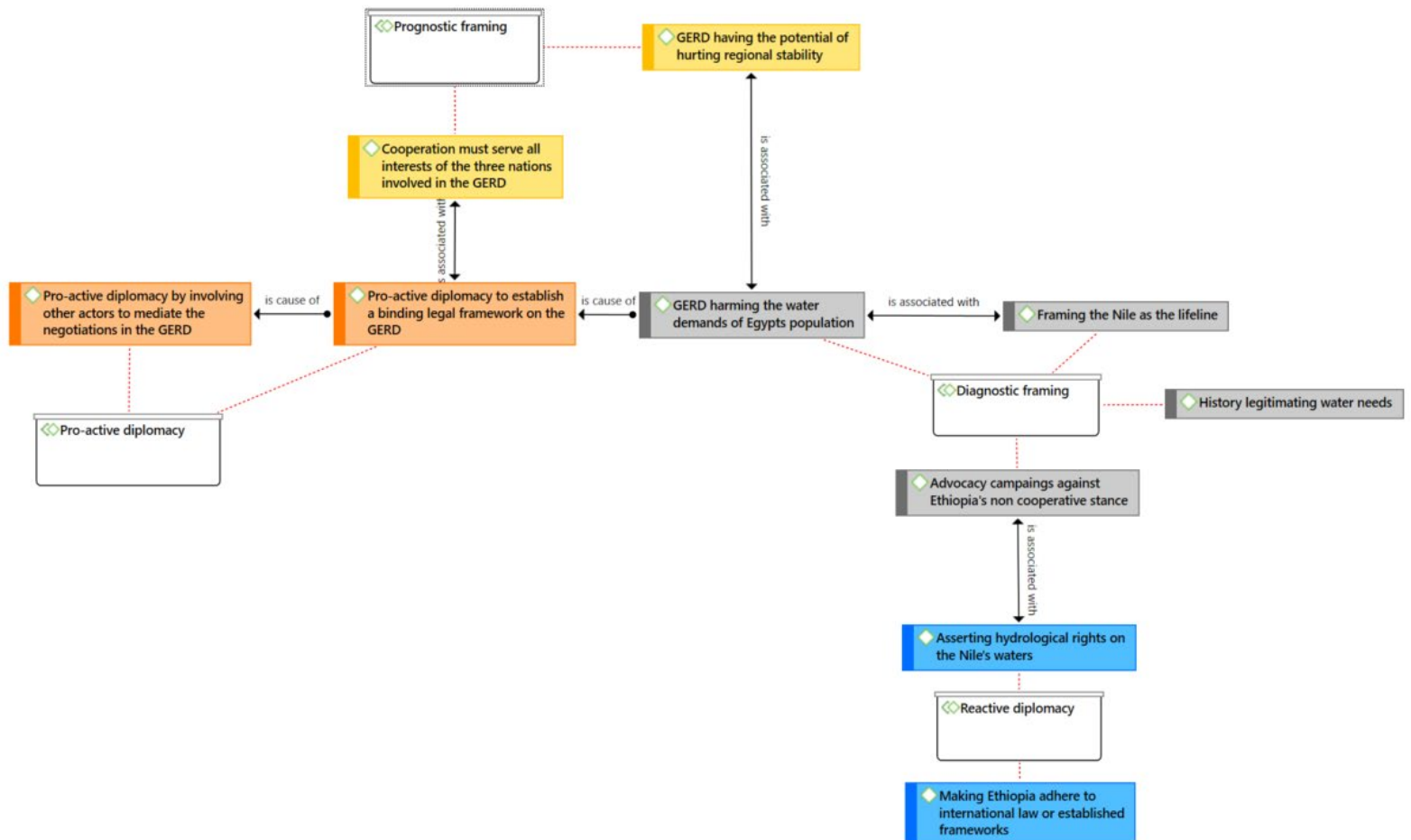
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## Appendix I – Coding tree of analysed articles of the Addis Fortune (2014)





## **Appendix II – Coding tree of analysed articles of the Daily News Egypt (2020)**



### Appendix III – Yearly overview of code statistics in the Daily News Egypt and the Egyptian Independent

Code name	Newspaper	Code group	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Sum	Sum of code
Pro-active diplomacy to establish a binding legal framework on the GERD	Egyptian Independent	Pro-active diplomacy	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	12	4	18	49
Pro-active diplomacy to establish a binding legal framework on the GERD	Daily News Egypt	Pro-active diplomacy	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	6	12	12	31	
Involving other actors to mediate the GERD negotiations	Egyptian Independent	Pro-active diplomacy	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	1	0	7	2	14	37
Involving other actors to mediate the GERD negotiations	Daily News Egypt	Pro-active diplomacy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	9	6	22	
Asserting hydrological rights on the Nile's waters	Egyptian Independent	Reactive diplomacy	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	11	2	15	63
Asserting hydrological rights on the Nile's waters	Daily News Egypt	Reactive diplomacy	0	0	7	0	2	2	3	0	8	17	9	48	
Ethiopia must adhere to international water law and established frameworks	Egyptian Independent	Reactive diplomacy	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	4	11	45

Ethiopia must adhere to international water law and established frameworks	Daily News Egypt	Reactive diplomacy	0	0	3	0	2	1	2	0	6	16	4	3	
GERD harming the water access and the safety of Egypt's citizens	Egyptian Independent	Diagnostic frame	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	5	1	50
GERD harming the water access and the safety of Egypt's citizens	Daily News Egypt	Diagnostic frame	0	0	2	0	1	2	1	0	2	17	9	3	
Framing water as the life-line for Egypt	Egyptian Independent	Diagnostic frame	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	3	23
Framing water as the life-line for Egypt	Daily News Egypt	Diagnostic frame	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	5	11	2	2	
Advocacy campaigns against Ethiopian behaviour	Egyptian Independent	Diagnostic frame	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14	1	1	37
Advocacy campaigns against Ethiopian behaviour	Daily News Egypt	Diagnostic frame	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	15	4	2	
Cooperation must serve all interests of the three nations	Egyptian Independent	Prognostic frame	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	11	2	1	45
Cooperation must serve all interests of the three nations	Daily News Egypt	Prognostic frame	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	9	11	7	3	



#### Appendix IV – Yearly overview of code statistics of the Addis Fortune & the Ethiopian News Agency

Code name	Paper	Category	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Sum	Sum of code
Establishing an alliance with Sudan	Addis Fortune	Pro-active diplomacy	0	0	1	16	1	2	3	1	0	0	0	24	32
Establishing an alliance with Sudan	Ethiopian News Agency	Pro-active diplomacy	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	3	0	0	0	8	
pro-active diplomacy through legal frameworks	Addis Fortune	Pro-active diplomacy	0	0	3	6	7	2	0	2	0	0	0	20	33
pro-active diplomacy through legal frameworks	Ethiopian News Agency	pro-active diplomacy	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	1	7	1	13	
Asserting intentions to develop unilaterally	Addis Fortune	Reactive diplomacy	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	4	10
Asserting intentions to develop unilaterally	Ethiopian News Agency	Reactive diplomacy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	0	6	

Alternative funding strategies	Addis Fortune	Reactive diplomacy	0	0	2	9	1	0	0	1	2	2	0	1	7	33
Alternative funding strategies	Ethiopian News Agency	Reactive diplomacy	0	0	0	0	0	7	3	1	0	5	0	1	6	
Advocacy campaigns against Egyptian discourses and historical legal frameworks	Addis Fortune	Diagnostic frame	0	2	11	19	4	2	1	0	0	0	0	3	9	42
Advocacy campaigns against Egyptian discourses and historical legal frameworks	Ethiopian News Agency	Diagnostic frame	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	3		
Right to reasonably utilize own natural resources	Addis Fortune	Reactive diplomacy	0	0	0	13	4	3	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	37
Right to reasonably utilize own natural resources	Ethiopian News Agency	Reactive diplomacy	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	13	0	1	7	
GERD not causing significant harm	Addis Fortune	Diagnostic frame	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	4		15
GERD not causing significant harm	Ethiopian News Agency	Diagnostic frame	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	10	0	1	1	
Asserting upstream water needs	Addis Fortune	Diagnostic frame	0	0	4	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	8		15

Asserting upstream water needs	Ethiopian News Agency	Diagnostic frame	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	3	0	7	
Cooperation as the only solution	Addis Fortune	Prognostic frame	0	0	6	21	5	2	0	0	0	0	0	3	45
Cooperation as the only solution	Ethiopian News Agency	Prognostic frame	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	8	0	1	
GERD as a multi-beneficial project	Addis Fortune	Prognostic frame	0	0	18	26	5	3	0	0	0	0	0	5	73
GERD as e multi-beneficial project	Ethiopian News Agency	Prognostic frame	0	0	0	0	0	4	6	1	1	9	0	2	
GERD as the way to develop the country	Addis Fortune	Motivatio nal frame	0	0	3	14	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	39
GERD as the way to develop the country	Ethiopian News Agency	Motivatio nal frame	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	2	2	11	0	1	
GERD integrating internal ties	Addis Fortune	Motivatio nal frame	0	0	3	3	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	33
GERD integrating internal ties	Ethiopian News Agency	Motivatio nal frame	0	0	0	2	0	5	1	3	0	11	0	2	

## **Appendix V – The 1993 cooperation framework between Ethiopia and Egypt**

FRAMEWORK FOR GENERAL COOPERATION  
BETWEEN  
THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT AND ETHIOPIA

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THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT AND ETHIOPIA,

DETERMINED TO CONSOLIDATE THE TIES OF FRIENDSHIP, TO  
ENHANCE COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES AND TO  
ESTABLISH A BROAD BASE OF COMMON INTERESTS,

DESIROUS OF THE REALIZATION OF THEIR FULL ECONOMIC AND  
RESOURCE POTENTIALS,

RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE TRADITIONAL TIES  
EXISTING BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES THAT HAVE BEEN  
CONSOLIDATED DURING THEIR LONG HISTORY OF CLOSE RELATIONS  
AND LINKED BY THE NILE RIVER WITH ITS BASIN AS A CENTER OF  
MUTUAL INTEREST,

REAFFIRMING THEIR COMMITMENT TO THE UN AND OAU  
CHARTERS, PRINCIPLES OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, AS WELL AS THE  
LAGOS PLAN OF ACTION,

HEREBY AGREE ON THE FOLLOWING FRAMEWORK FOR  
COOPERATION:

#### ARTICLE 5

EACH PARTY SHALL REFRAIN FROM ENGAGING IN ANY ACTIVITY RELATED TO THE NILE WATERS THAT MAY CAUSE APPRECIABLE HARM TO THE INTERESTS OF THE OTHER PARTY.

#### ARTICLE 6

THE TWO PARTIES AGREE ON THE NECESSITY OF THE CONSERVATION AND PROTECTION OF THE NILE WATERS. IN THIS REGARD, THEY UNDERTAKE TO CONSULT AND COOPERATE IN PROJECTS THAT ARE MUTUALLY ADVANTAGEOUS, SUCH AS PROJECTS THAT WOULD ENHANCE THE VOLUME OF FLOW AND REDUCE THE LOSS OF NILE WATERS THROUGH COMPREHENSIVE AND INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES.

#### ARTICLE 7

THE TWO PARTIES WILL CREATE APPROPRIATE MECHANISM FOR PERIODIC CONSULTATIONS ON MATTERS OF MUTUAL CONCERN, INCLUDING THE NILE WATERS, IN A MANNER THAT WOULD ENABLE THEM TO WORK TOGETHER FOR PEACE AND STABILITY IN THE REGION.

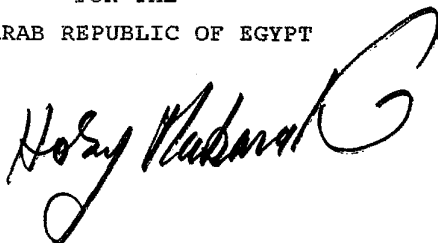
#### ARTICLE 8

THE TWO PARTIES SHALL ENDEAVOUR TOWARDS A FRAMEWORK FOR EFFECTIVE COOPERATION AMONG COUNTRIES OF THE NILE BASIN FOR THE PROMOTION OF COMMON INTEREST IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BASIN.

THIS FRAMEWORK FOR COOPERATION IS MADE IN TWO ORIGINALS  
IN THE ARABIC AND ENGLISH LANGUAGES, BOTH TEXTS BEING  
EQUALLY AUTHENTIC.

DONE AT CAIRO THIS 1<sup>st</sup> DAY OF THE MONTH OF JULY 1993.

FOR THE  
ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hosni Mubarak'.

HOSNI MOUBARAK  
PRESIDENT OF THE  
REPUBLIC

FOR  
ETHIOPIA

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be a stylized representation of 'Meles Zenawi'.

MELES ZENAWI  
PRESIDENT OF THE  
TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT

## **Appendix VI – Article 14b of the CFA**



**Annex on Article 14(b) to be resolved by the Nile  
River Basin Commission  
within six months of its establishment**

At the end of the negotiations, no consensus was reached on Article 14(b) which reads as follows: *not to significantly affect the water security of any other Nile Basin State*, all countries agreed to this proposal except Egypt and Sudan.

Egypt proposed that Article 14(b) should be replaced by the following wording:

*(b) not to adversely affect the water security and current uses and rights of any other Nile Basin State.*

The Extraordinary Meeting of the Nile Council of Ministers held in Kinshasa, the Democratic Republic of Congo, on 22 May 2009 resolved that the issue on the Article 14(b) be annexed and resolved by the Nile River Basin Commission within six months of its establishment.



**Appendix VII – Agreement of 1959 on the full utilization of the Nile waters between Sudan and Egypt.**

[TRANSLATION — TRADUCTION 'J]

**No. 6519. AGREEMENT<sup>o</sup> BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF THE SUDAN AND THE UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC FOR THE FULL UTILIZATION OF THE NILE WATERS. SIGNED AT CAIRO, ON 8 NOVEMBER 1959**

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As the River Nile needs projects, for its full control and for increasing its yield for the full utilization of its waters by the Republic of the Sudan and the United Arab Republic on technical working arrangements other than those now applied :

And as these works require for their execution and administration, full agreement and co-operation between the two Republics in order to regulate their benefits and utilize the Nile waters in a manner which secures the present and future requirements of the two countries:

And as the Nile waters Agreement concluded in 1929<sup>1</sup> provided only for the partial use of the Nile waters and did not extend to include a complete control of the River waters, the two Republics have agreed on the following :

***First***

THE PRESENT ACQUIRED RIGHTS

1. That the amount of the Nile waters used by the United Arab Republic until this Agreement is signed shall be her acquired right before obtaining the benefits of the Nile Control Projects and the projects which will increase its yield and which projects are referred to in this Agreement ; The total of this acquired right is 48 Millions of cubic meters per year as measured at Aswan.

2. That the amount of the waters used at present by the Republic of Sudan shall be her acquired right before obtaining the benefits of the projects referred to above. The total amount of this acquired right is 4 Millions of cubic meters per year as measured at Aswan.

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<sup>1</sup> **Translation by the Government of the** United Arab Republic.

**Traduction** du Gouvernement de la République arabe unie.

- Came into force on 12 December 1959, in accordance with article 7.
- League of Nations, *Treaty Series*, Vol. XCIII, p. 43.

*Second*

**THE NILE CONTROL PROJECTS AND THE DIVISION OF THEIR  
BENEFITS BETWEEN THE TWO REPUBLICS**

1. In order to regulate the River waters and control their flow into the sea, the two Republics agree that the United Arab Republic constructs the Sudd el .Kali at Aswan as the first link of a series of projects on the Nile for over-year storage.

2. In order to enable the Sudan to utilize its share of the water, the two Republic.s agree that the Republic of Sudan shall construct the Roseires Dam on the Blue Nile and any other works which the Republic of the Sudan considers essential for the utilization of its share.

3. The net benefit from the Sudd e1 Aali Reservoir shall be calculated on the basis of the average natural River yield of water at Aswan in the years of this century, which is estimated at about 84 Millions of cubic meters per year. The acquired rights of the two Republics referred to in Article "First" as measured at Aswan, and the average of losses of over-year storage of the Sudd El Aali Reservoir shall be deducted from this yield, and the balance shall be the net benefit which shall be divided between the two Republics.

4. The net benefit from the Sudd el Aali Reservoir mentioned in the previous item, shall be divided between the two Republics at the ratio of  $14\frac{1}{2}$  for the Sudan and  $7\frac{1}{2}$  for the United Arab Republic so long as the average river yield remains in future within the limits of the average yield referred to in the previous paragraph. This means that, if the average yield remains the same as the average of the previous years of this century which is estimated at 84 Millions, and if the losses of over-year storage remain equal to the present estimate of 10 Millions, the net benefit of the Sudd el Aali Reservoir shall be 22 Millions of which the share of the Republic of the Sudan shall be  $14\frac{1}{2}$  Millions and the share of the United Arab Republic shall be  $7\frac{1}{2}$  Millions. By adding these shares to their acquired rights, the total share from the net yield of the Nile after the full operation of the Sudd el Aali Reservoir shall be  $18\frac{1}{2}$  Millions for the Republic of the Sudan and  $55\frac{1}{2}$  Millions for the United Arab Republic.

But if the average yield increases, the resulting net benefit from this increase shall be divided between the two Republics, in equal shares.

5. As the net benefit from the Sudd el Aali (referred to in item 3 Article Second) is calculated on the basis of the average natural yield of the river at Aswan in the years of this century after the deduction therefrom of the acquired rights of the two Republics and the average losses of over-year storage at the Sudd el Aali Reservoir, it is agreed that this net benefit shall be the subject of revision by the two parties

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at reasonable intervals to be agreed upon after starting the full operation of the Sudd el Aali Reservoir.

6. The United Arab Republic agrees to pay to the Sudan Republic 15 Million Egyptian Pounds as full compensation for the damage resulting to the Sudanese existing properties as a result of the storage in the Sudd el Aali Reservoir up to a reduced level of 182 meters (survey datum). The payment of this compensation shall be affected in accordance with the annexed agreement between the two parties.

7. The Republic of the Sudan undertakes to arrange before July 1963, the final transfer of the population of Halfa and all other Sudanese inhabitants whose lands shall be submerged by the stored water.

8. It is understood that when the Sudd el Aali is fully operated for over-year storage, the United Arab Republic will not require storing any water at Gebel Aulia Dam. And the two contracting parties will in due course, discuss all matters related to this renunciation.

### *Third*

#### PROJECTS FOR THE UTILIZATION OF LOST

#### WATERS IN THE NILE BASIN

In view of the fact that at present, considerable volumes of the Nile Basin Waters are lost in the swamps of Bahr El Jebel, Bahr El Zeraf, Bahr el Ghazal and the Sobat River, and as it is essential that efforts should be exerted in order to prevent these losses and to increase the yield of the River for use in agricultural expansion in the two Republics, the two Republics agree to the following:

1. The Republic of the Sudan in agreement with the United Arab Republic shall construct projects for the increase of the River yield by preventing losses of waters of the Nile Basin in the swamps of Bahr El Jebel, Bahr el Zeraf, Bahr el Ghazal and its tributaries, the Sobat River and its tributaries and the White Nile Basin. The net yield of these projects shall be divided equally between the two Republics and each of them shall also contribute equally to the costs.

The Republic of the Sudan shall finance the above-mentioned projects out of its

own funds and the United Arab Republic shall pay its share in the costs in the same ratio of 50% allotted for her in the yield of these projects.

2 If the United Arab Republic, on account of the progress in its planned agricultural expansion should find it necessary to start on any of the increase of the Nile yield projects, referred to in the previous paragraph, after its approval by the two Governments and at a time when the Sudan Republic does not need such project,

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the United Arab Republic shall notify the Sudan Republic of the time convenient for the former to start the execution of the project. And each of the two Republics shall, within two years after such notification, present a date-phased programme for the utilization of its share of the waters saved by the project, and each of the said programmes shall bind the two parties. The United Arab Republic shall at the expiry of the two years, start the execution of the projects, at its own expense. And when the Republic of Sudan is ready to utilize its share according to the agreed programme, it shall pay to the United Arab Republic a share of all the expenses in the same ratio as the Sudan's share in benefit is to the total benefit of the project ; provided that the share of either Republic shall not exceed one half of the total benefit of the project.

#### *Fourth*

#### TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE TWO

#### REPUBLICS

1 In order to ensure the technical co-operation between the Governments of the two Republics, to continue the research and study necessary for the Nile control projects and the increase of its yield and to continue the hydrological survey of its upper reaches, the two Republics agree that immediately after the signing of this Agreement a Permanent Joint Technical Commission shall be formed of an equal number of members from both parties ; and its functions shall be :

- a) The drawing of the basic outlines of projects for the increase of the Nile yield, and for the supervision of the studies necessary for the finalising of projects-, before presentation of the same to the Governments of the two Republics for approval.
- b) The supervision of the execution of the projects approved by the two Governments.
- c) The drawing up of the working arrangements for any works to be constructed on the Nile, within the boundaries of the Sudan, and also for those to be constructed outside the boundaries of the Sudan, by agreement with the authorities concerned in the countries in which such works are constructed.
- d) The supervision of the application of all the working arrangements mentioned in (c) above in connection with works constructed within the boundaries of Sudan and also in connection with the Sudd el Aali Reservoir and Aswan Dam, through official engineers designated for the purpose by the two Republics ; and the supervision of the working of the upper Nile projects, as provided in the agreements concluded with the countries in which such projects are constructed.

- e) As it is probable that a series of low years may occur, and a succession of low levels in the Sudd el Aali Reservoir may result to such an extent as not to permit

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in any one year the drawing of the full requirements of the two Republics, the Technical Commission is charged with the task of devising a fair arrangement for the two Republics to follow. And the recommendations of the Commission shall be presented to the two Governments for approval.

2 In order to enable the Commission to exercise the functions enumerated in the above item, and in order to ensure the continuation of the Nile gauging and to keep observations on all its upper reaches, these duties shall be carried out under the technical supervision of the Commission by the engineers of the Sudan Republic, and the engineers of the United Arab Republic in the Sudan and in the United Arab Republic and in Uganada.

3 The two Governments shall form the Joint Technical Commission, by a joint decree, and shall provide it with its necessary funds from their budgets. The Commission may, according to the requirements of work, hold its meetings in Cairo or in Khartoum. The Commission shall, subject to the approval of the two Governments, lay down regulations for the organisation of its meetings and its technical, administrative and financial activities.

### *Fifth*

#### GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. If it becomes necessary to hold any negotiations concerning the Nile waters, with any riparian state, outside the boundaries of the two Republics, the Governments of the Sudan Republic and the United Arab Republic shall agree on a unified view after the subject is studied by the said Technical Commission. The said unified view shall be the basis of any negotiations by the Commission with the said states.

If the negotiations result in an agreement to construct any works on the river, outside the boundaries of the two Republics, the Joint Technical Commission shall after consulting the authorities in the Governments of the States concerned, draw all the technical execution details and the working and maintenance arrangements.

And the Commission shall, after the sanction of the same by the Governments concerned, supervise the carrying out of the said technical agreements.

2. As the riparian states, other than the two Republics, claim a share in the Nile waters, the two Republics have agreed that they shall jointly consider and reach one unified view regarding the said claims. And if the said consideration results in the acceptance of allotting an amount of the Nile water to one or the other of the said states, the accepted amount shall be deducted from the shares of the two Republics in equal parts, as calculated at Aswan.

No. 851c

The Technical Commission mentioned in this agreement shall make the necessary arrangements with the states concerned, in order to ensure that their water consumption shall not exceed the amounts agreed upon.

*Sixth*

TRANSITIONAL PERIOD BEFORE BENEFITING FROM THE  
COMPLETE SUDD EL AALI RESERVOIR

As the benefiting of the two Republics from their appointed shares in the net benefit of the Sudd el Aali Reservoir shall not start before the construction and the full utilization of the Reservoir, the two parties shall agree on their agricultural expansion programmes in the transitional period from now up to the completion of the Sudd el Aali, without prejudice to their present water requirements.

*Seventh*

This Agreement shall come into force after its sanction by the two contracting parties, provided that either party shall notify the other party of the date of its sanction, through the diplomatic channels.

*Eighth*

Annex (1) and Annex (2, A and B) attached to this Agreement shall be considered as an integral part of this Agreement.

Written in Cairo in two Arabic original copies this 7th day of Gumada El Oula  
1379, the 8th day of November 1959.

For the Republic  
of Sudan :

(Signed) Lewa Mohammed TALAAT FARID

For the United Arab  
Republic :

(Signed) Zakaria MoHi EL DIN

## ANNEX 1

ARTICLE 1  
SPECIAL PROVISION FOR THE WATER LOAN REQUIRED BY THE  
UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC

The Republic of the Sudan agrees in principle to give a water loan from the Sudan's **share in the Sudd e1 Aali waters, to the United Arab Republic, in order to enable the latter** to proceed with her planned **programmes for Agricultural Expansion.**

The request of the United Arab Republic for this loan shall be made after it revises **its programmes within five years from the date of the signing of this agreement.** ' And if

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' See p. 64 of this volume.

the revision by United Arab Republic reveals her need for this loan, the Republic of the Sudan shall give it out of its own share a loan not exceeding one and a half Millions, provided that the utilisation of this loan shall cease in November, 1977.

## ANNEX 2 A

*To the Head of the Delegation of the Republic of Sudan*

With reference to Article (Second) paragraph 6 of the Agreement signed this day, ' concerning the full utilization of the River Nile Waters, compensation amounting to 15 Million Egyptian Pounds in sterling or in a third currency agreed upon by the two parties, and calculated on the basis of a fixed rate of g2.87156 to the Egyptian Pound, shall be paid by the Government of the United Arab Republic, as agreed upon, in instalments in the following manner :

/ 3 million on the first of January, **1960**

/ 4 million on the first of January, 1961

/ 4 million on the first of January, **1962**

/ 4 million on the first of January, 1963

I shall be grateful if you can firm your agreement to the above.

With highest consideration.

Head of the United Arab Republic Delegation :

*[Signed]* **Zakaria** MoHiz Ex DIN

## B

*To the Head of United Arab Republic Delegation*

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated today and stipulating the following :

*{See Annex 2, A}*

I have the honour to confirm the agreement of the Government of the Republic of the Sudan to the contents of the said letter.

With highest consideration.

Head of the Delegation of the Republic of Sudan :

*[Signed]* **Lewa Mohamed TzLzzT Fuel D**

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<sup>1</sup> See p. 64 of this volume.

**The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia And  
The Republic of the Sudan  
On The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam Project (GERDP)**

**Preamble**

Mindful of the rising demand of the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Republic of Sudan on their transboundary water resources, and cognizant of the significance of the River Nile as the source of livelihood and the significant resource to the development of the people of Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan, the three countries have committed to the following principles on the GERD:

Principle of Cooperation

- To cooperate based on common understanding, mutual benefit, good faith, win-win, and principles of international law.
- To cooperate in understanding upstream and downstream water needs in its various aspects.



## Principle of Development, Regional Integration and Sustainability;

The purpose of GERD is for power generation, to contribute to economic development, promotion of transboundary cooperation and regional integration through generation of sustainable and reliable clean energy supply.

## Principle Not to Cause Significant Harm

- The Three Countries shall take all appropriate measures to prevent the causing of significant harm in utilizing the Blue/Main Nile.
- Where significant harm nevertheless is caused to one of the countries, the state whose use causes such harm shall, in the absence of agreement to such use, take all appropriate measures in consultations with the affected state to eliminate or mitigate such harm and, where appropriate, to discuss the question of compensation.

## Principle of Equitable and Reasonable Utilization

- The three countries shall utilize their shared water resources in their respective territories in an equitable and reasonable manner.
- In ensuring their equitable and reasonable utilization, the three countries will take into account all the relevant guiding factors listed below, but not limited to the following outlined:
  - a. Geographic, hydrographic, hydrological, climatic, ecological and other factors of a natural character;

- b. The social and economic needs of the Basin States concerned;
- c. The population dependent on the water resources in each Basin State;
- d. The effects of the use or uses of the water resources in one Basin State on other Basin States;
- e. Existing and potential uses of the water resources;
- f. Conservation, protection, development and economy of use of the water resources and the costs of measures taken to that effect;
- g. The availability of alternatives, of comparable value, to a particular planned or existing use;
- h. The contribution of each Basin State to the waters of the Nile River system;
- i. The extent and proportion of the drainage area in the territory of each Basin State.

#### Principle to Cooperate on the First Filling and Operation of the Dam

- To implement the recommendations of the International Panel of Experts (IPOE), respect the final outcomes of the Technical National Committee (TNC) Final Report on the joint studies recommended in the IPOE Final Report throughout the different phases of the project.
- The three countries, in the spirit of cooperation, will utilize the final outcomes of the joint studies, to be conducted as per the recommendations of the IPOE Report and agreed upon by the TNC, to:-
  - a) Agree on guidelines and rules on the first filling of GERD which shall cover all different scenarios, in parallel with the construction of GERD.

- b) Agree on guidelines and rules for the annual operation of GERD, which the owner of the dam may adjust from time to time.
- c) Inform the downstream countries of any unforeseen or urgent circumstances requiring adjustments in the operation of GERD.
- To sustain cooperation and coordination on the annual operation of GERD with downstream reservoirs, the three countries, through the line ministries responsible for water, shall set up an appropriate coordination mechanism among them.
- The time line for conducting the above mentioned process shall be 15 months from the inception of the two studies recommended by the IPoE.

#### Principle of Confidence Building

- Priority will be given to downstream countries to purchase power generated from GERD.

#### Principle of Exchange of Information and Data

Egypt, Ethiopia, and Sudan shall provide data and information needed for the conduct of the TNC joint studies in good faith and in a timely manner.

#### Principle of Dam Safety

- The three countries appreciate the efforts undertaken thus far by Ethiopia in implementing the IPoE recommendations pertinent to the GERD safety.

- Ethiopia shall in good faith continue the full implementation of the Dam safety recommendations as per the IPoE report.

#### Principle of Sovereignty and Territorial Integrity

The three countries shall cooperate on the basis of sovereign equality, territorial integrity, mutual benefit and good faith in order to attain optimal utilization and adequate protection of the River.

#### Principle of Peaceful Settlement of Disputes

- The Three countries will settle disputes, arising out of the interpretation or implementation of this agreement, amicably through consultation or negotiation in accordance with the principle of good faith. If the Parties are unable to resolve the dispute through consultation or negotiation, they may jointly request for conciliation, mediation or refer the matter for the consideration of the Heads of State/Head of Government.

This agreement on Declaration of Principles is signed in Khartoum, Sudan, on Monday the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March 2015, by the Arab Republic of Egypt, The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, and the Republic of Sudan.

**For the  
Arab Republic of Egypt:**

**Abdel Fattah El Sisi President of the Republic.**

**For the  
Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia:**

**Hailemariam Desalegn Prime Minister of the Republic.**

**For the Republic of the Sudan:**

**Omer Hassan Elbashir President of the Republic.**