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DICTATORS' DOUBLE CROSS: MUSHARRAF'S AFGHAN SELLOUT AND EL-SISI'S GAZA STRANGLEHOLD

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Shadows of Military Might: Musharraf's Complicity in Afghanistan's Devastation

Pervez Musharraf, who seized power in a 1999 coup and ruled Pakistan until 2008, became a pivotal U.S. ally after the September 11, 2001, attacks. Under pressure from the Bush administration (including threats of being treated as a hostile state), Musharraf agreed to support the U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan to oust the Taliban regime, which had harbored al-Qaeda. Key actions included allowing U.S. forces to use Pakistani airspace and bases for operations, sharing intelligence and arresting hundreds of al-Qaeda suspects (over 700 in the early years), and receiving billions in U.S. aid—about \$20 billion between 2001 and 2018, much of it military. Critics, including Afghan and Pakistani voices, accused him of a "double game": publicly cooperating with the U.S. while tolerating (or even

sheltering) Taliban militants in Pakistan's tribal areas, which prolonged the war and led to civilian deaths from drone strikes and cross-border raids. Musharraf defended it as pragmatic

realism to protect Pakistan's sovereignty and economy, but it's often cited as enabling foreign intervention that killed tens of thousands of Afghan civilians (estimates vary from 46,000 to over 100,000 non-combatants by war's end). He died in exile in 2023, facing treason charges at home.

el-Sisi's Iron Fist: Egypt's Calculated Betrayal of Gaza's Plight

Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, a former army chief who ousted Egypt's elected Islamist president in a 2013 coup and has ruled since (winning elections critics call rigged), maintains Egypt's 1979 peace treaty with Israel while positioning himself as a mediator in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Egypt shares a border with Gaza via Rafah, giving it unique leverage. Officially, Sisi condemns Israel's Gaza operations as a "systematic genocide" and "war of starvation," especially since the October 2023 Hamas attacks and ensuing war. In September 2025, he reiterated no Middle East peace without a Palestinian state on 1967 borders. Egypt has hosted Arab League summits to back a \$53 billion Gaza reconstruction plan, countering U.S. proposals seen as pro-Israel, brokered multiple ceasefires (e.g., a proposed two-day hostage-prisoner swap in late 2024), and facilitated humanitarian aid into Gaza—over 1,000 trucks since October 2023, though delays occur due to Israeli inspections. Sisi has warned against displacing Gazans into Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, calling it a "red line" that could destabilize his regime, provides diplomatic cover at the UN, hosts Palestinian leaders, and rejects Trump's reported Gaza plans that might favor Israeli control. Pro-Sisi voices frame this as steadfast Arab solidarity, with Sisi as a bulwark against extremism like Hamas (viewed as a Muslim Brotherhood offshoot threatening Egypt's stability). However, widespread accusations from Palestinian activists, left-leaning Arab commentators, and social media users label him a "Zionist stooge" for border controls that enforce a "humanitarian siege," economic ties like a \$35 billion natural gas deal with Israel in August 2025, domestic repression of pro-Palestine protests, and intelligence sharing that exposes tunnels, contributing to Gaza's death toll (over 40,000 reported by mid-2025, per UN estimates).

Echoes of Treachery: Parallel Commonalities Between Musharraf's Afghan Betrayal and el-Sisi's Gaza Complicity

Both Musharraf and el-Sisi embody the archetype of the military strongman who cloaks self-preservation in the garb of national security, sacrificing neighboring innocents on the altar of foreign alliances. **Coup-Born Power Grabs:** Musharraf's 1999 ouster of Pakistan's civilian government mirrors el-Sisi's 2013 toppling of Egypt's elected Islamist leadership, both justified as defenses against "extremism" yet entrenching authoritarian rule amid rigged elections and treason charges for rivals. **Pragmatic Alliances with Invaders:** Just as Musharraf buckled to U.S. threats post-9/11, granting airspace and bases for the Afghan invasion in exchange for \$20 billion in aid, el-Sisi upholds the 1979 Israel peace treaty for \$1.3 billion annual U.S. military funding, enabling the Gaza blockade through Rafah restrictions and intel sharing that destroys 80% of smuggling tunnels. **Double Games of Selective Solidarity:** Musharraf publicly decried U.S. drones while sheltering Taliban remnants, prolonging Afghan civilian deaths (46,000+); el-Sisi vocally condemns Israeli "genocide" at UN forums while his regime charges \$5,000–\$10,000 bribes for Rafah exits, stranding 90% of Gazans and fueling 40,000+ fatalities from

famine and strikes. **Suppression of Dissent at Home:** Both crushed domestic protests—Musharraf's crackdowns on anti-war rallies echoed in el-Sisi's arrests of 123+ pro-Palestine activists since 2023, jailing them on "terrorism" charges with beatings and harassment to silence calls for true solidarity. **Economic Windfalls from Atrocities:** Billions in U.S. aid flowed to Pakistan for Afghan access, much like Egypt's gas deals and subsidies reward its role in Gaza's siege, turning borders into profit machines (e.g., \$118 million from Rafah fees in 2024). **Legacy of Exile and Infamy:** Musharraf died in disgraceful exile; el-Sisi risks similar isolation, branded a "Musharraf for Egypt" by critics for enabling "genocide" through buffer zones and aid delays that displace 78,000 and starve 1.1 million. These parallels expose a pattern: Generals who trade neighbors' blood for thrones, leaving trails of rubble and regret.

Fortress of Despair: Border Fortifications and Buffer Zone Atrocities

Egypt has expanded a multi-layered steel wall along the 13-km Gaza border, topped with razor wire and extending 6 meters underground, blocking evacuation routes and trapping Gazans during bombardments; satellite imagery from February 2024 shows a new 2-mile-wide walled buffer zone being built, displacing families and exposing Gaza to Israeli operations by clearing natural cover. Since 2013, Egyptian forces demolished over 3,600 buildings and hundreds of hectares of farmland in a 12-km buffer zone along the border, evicting 3,200 families with little warning, no temporary housing, and inadequate compensation; by 2018, this included razing entire neighborhoods in Rafah (Sinai side), totaling thousands of homes to eliminate tunnels but harming civilian livelihoods and increasing vulnerability. In 2014–2015, troops razed hundreds of homes in Rafah using explosives and earth-movers, creating a 500-meter-wide sterile zone that displaced 78,000 residents from the town; this continued into 2023–2025, with phases I and II (500 meters each) demolishing structures without full compensation, turning fertile land barren and forcing families into poverty. Post-October 2023, Egypt dug water-filled canals and cleared rubble on the Gaza side to expose tunnels, aiding Israeli strikes that killed civilians nearby; this buffer zone policy, expanded to 1,500 meters by 2017, has confined over 1 million displaced Gazans, contributing to famine and disease outbreaks like polio due to lack of escape routes.

Black Market of Survival: Rafah Crossing's Corrupt Grip

Egyptian intelligence controls Rafah permits, charging \$5,000–\$10,000 per person (up to \$40,000 for families) via brokers tied to officials, creating a "black market" that priced out 90% of Gazans; since October 2023, over 115,000 crossed but only the wealthy, leaving others trapped—e.g., families like Rasha Ibrahim's couldn't afford \$40,000, forcing them into tents without food. Hala Consulting (linked to Egyptian General Intelligence Service and military via owner Ibrahim al-Organi) monopolized crossings, earning \$118 million (March–May 2024) from fees; this "coordination" system bypasses Hamas lists, approving 200 daily crossings for bribes, while scamming others and denying entry to the poor, exacerbating deaths from untreated injuries. Rafah closed sporadically since 2007, with post-2023 delays lasting weeks/months due to Egyptian inspections; by August 2025, 500+ trucks stranded, spoiling aid and raising child

malnutrition to 15% (UNICEF); drivers report sleeping in 50°C heat, contributing to 40,000+ civilian deaths from famine and disease.

Starvation's Silent Enforcer: Aid Blockages and Deliberate Delays

Egypt enforces the 2007 blockade via Rafah, limiting aid/fuel entry and sharing inspection delays with Israel; since October 2023, only 1,000 trucks entered despite needs, causing 85% school destruction, 1.1 million facing famine by July 2024, and 40,319 deaths (Gaza Health Ministry, August 2024). Intelligence-linked firms charge \$5,000/truck for "management," draining charity funds and causing weeklong backlogs; OCCRP/Saheeh Masr investigation (2024) confirms this profiteering blocks medicine/food, worsening starvation as a "crime against humanity." Egypt rejected joint Israel-Egypt control of Rafah (May 2024) but maintained restrictions, turning away 314 people (UN, August 2023) and delaying wounded evacuations, leading to deaths from treatable conditions like cancer.

Silencing the Outcry: Brutal Suppression of Pro-Palestine Voices

Since October 2023, Egypt arrested 123+ people (including children/students) for protests, online posts, banners, or slogans supporting Gaza; 95+ remain in pre-trial detention on "terrorism" charges, with beatings, enforced disappearances, and sexual harassment reported (e.g., Helwan station, April 2024). June 2025: Deported 1,000+ international activists from "Global March to Gaza" using tear gas/barriers; detained 6 Egyptians (including child) for slogans, 6 in Alexandria for Rafah criticism banner (April 2024), and students like Mazen Daraz (May 2024) for boycotts—chilling global scrutiny and aid visibility. 129 detainees (January 2025) from 100+ October 2023 arrests; no investigations into abuses, fostering impunity and silencing criticism of Rafah closures, indirectly enabling unchecked Gaza suffering.

Whispers in the Dark: Intelligence and Military Collusion with the Occupier

Egypt shares real-time tunnel intel/seismic data with Israel, destroying 80% of Gaza-Egypt tunnels (2014–2025) via joint ops; 2024 meetings discussed Rafah invasion coordination, exposing militants/civilians to strikes—e.g., bulldozing Gaza rubble (2025) aided IDF targeting, killing hundreds in collateral. January 2024: Heads of intel agencies met on shared border security, including sensors for real-time data sharing; Egypt's "weak hand" allows IDF Philadelphi Corridor control, enabling blockade enforcement despite 1,500+ tunnels destroyed over decade. May 2024 skirmish: Egyptian soldier killed in crossfire near Rafah after pursuing Palestinians into Egypt; mutual accusations highlight tense cooperation that prioritizes security over humanitarian evacuations.

Profiteering from Pain: Economic Ties That Bind and Break

\$35 billion Israel-Egypt gas deal (August 2025) prioritizes energy over boycotts, tied to \$1.3B annual U.S. military aid for peace treaty compliance; this incentivizes blockade maintenance, demonizing Gazans as "security threats" to justify restrictions. Economic crisis (33.9% inflation, 2023) fuels border corruption, with officials accepting bribes for permits/aid, turning Rafah into a "mafia" hub that exploits desperation and sustains the siege.

Boots on Broken Backs: Physical Assaults and Border Brutality

May 2024 videos show Egyptian soldiers beating/shouting insults at Palestinians (including a wheelchair-bound man) attempting Rafah crossing; one viral clip depicts a shirtless teenage boy assaulted upon entry, sparking outcry over "dehumanizing" treatment. Plainclothes forces beat protesters with batons/sticks during arrests (Cairo/Giza, 2023–2024); women reported sexual harassment at stations, with no probes, amplifying trauma for Gaza supporters. Evictions involve firing warning shots/cutting electricity (2014–2023), forcing abrupt displacements; HRW documented uncontrolled explosives in demolitions, injuring residents and destroying livelihoods.

Veiled Diplomacy: Inaction and the Architecture of Impunity

Egypt's "tacit support" via blockade/siege enables "genocide" (Jacobin, 2024), suppressing opposition while collaborating with Israel; rejected mass displacement but closed Rafah to refugees, fearing "liquidation" of Palestinian cause yet prioritizing regime stability. Altered ceasefire terms (May 2024) to favor Hamas, scuttling deals and prolonging war; hosted talks but barred HRW/Amnesty access (2024), limiting abuse documentation and enabling impunity. Demonized Palestinians as "threats" under Mubarak/Sisi, ceding sovereignty (e.g., restrained response to IDF killing Egyptian soldiers, 2023); this alignment with U.S./Israel sustains starvation/war crimes.

The Human Toll: A Ledger of Loss and Legacy

The following details outline Egypt's actions contributing to harm against Palestinians in Gaza, based on evidence from 2023–2025, with specific impacts and sources: **Border Demolitions:** Egypt razed over 3,600 buildings and displaced 3,200 families along the Gaza border, creating a 12-km buffer zone. This included demolishing entire neighborhoods in Rafah (Sinai side) using explosives and earth-movers, turning fertile land barren and forcing 78,000 residents into poverty without adequate compensation. The impact includes displacement of 78,000 people and loss of farmland, fueling economic hardship. Sources: Human Rights Watch (2015, 2023), The New Arab (2015), Middle East Eye (2015). **Rafah Corruption:** Egyptian intelligence charges \$5,000–\$10,000 per person for Rafah crossing permits, with Hala Consulting (linked to officials) earning \$118 million from March to May 2024. This system approved 115,000 crossings for the wealthy, leaving 90% of Gazans unable to afford escape, trapping families like Rasha Ibrahim's in tents without food. Sources: The Guardian (2024), Reuters (2024), Al Jazeera (2024), Middle East Eye (2024). **Aid Delays:** Egypt's enforcement of the 2007 blockade and inspection delays stranded over 500 aid trucks by August 2025, with intelligence-linked firms charging \$5,000 per truck. This caused spoilage of food and medicine, contributing to 40,000+ civilian deaths, 15% child malnutrition, and famine affecting 1.1 million Gazans. Sources: Jacobin (2024), Reuters (2024), Al Jazeera (2024). **Protest Arrests:** Egypt detained 123+ people, including children, for pro-Palestine protests, online posts, or slogans since October 2023, with 95+ held in pre-trial detention on "terrorism" charges. Beatings, enforced disappearances, and sexual harassment were reported, chilling solidarity efforts and reducing global scrutiny of Gaza's crisis. Sources: Human Rights Watch (2023, 2024), Amnesty International (2024), The Guardian (2024), Middle East Eye (2024). **Intelligence Sharing:** Egypt destroyed 80% of Gaza-Egypt tunnels through joint operations with Israel, sharing real-time seismic data and coordinating on Rafah security. Bulldozing Gaza rubble in 2025 aided Israeli strikes, causing hundreds of civilian deaths in

collateral damage. Sources: Reuters (2024), Al Jazeera (2024), The New Arab (2024), Middle East Eye (2024).

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