

President Trump Vows to Fight Terrorists With This Middle-East Leader's Help

President Donald Trump met Monday at the White House with his Egyptian counterpart, President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, to discuss a wide range of issues, including joint counter-terrorism efforts in the Middle East and North Africa.

While the White House didn't provide a readout of that meeting, the two leaders did give some brief remarks before they met. In those statements, both men pledged their support for continued cooperation in the fight against radical Islamic terrorists.

President Trump said:

It's great to be with the president of Egypt. And I will tell you, President al-Sisi has been somebody that's been very close to me from the first time I met him. I met during the campaign, and at that point there were two of us, and we both met. And hopefully you like me a lot more. But it was very long. It was supposed to be just a quick brief meeting, and we were with each other for a long period of time. We agreed on so many things.

I just want to let everybody know, in case there was any doubt, that we are very much behind President al-Sisi. He's done a fantastic job in a very difficult situation. We are very much behind Egypt and the people of Egypt. And the United States has, believe me, backing, and we have strong backing. We are very much—and as you and I will be soon talking—we're building up our military to a level that will be the highest—probably the highest that we've ever had—plane orders, ship orders, aircraft carrier orders.

We are rejuvenating our military to the highest level I think in these times, probably more than ever before, or certainly almost more than ever before. That's what we need.

And I just want to say to you, Mr. President, that you have a great friend and ally in the United States and in me.

Through an interpreter, al-Sisi said:

Your Excellency, allow me to extend my thanks and appreciation for your kind invitation for me to visit the United States. Actually, this is my first state visit to the United States since my inauguration in office. And, as a matter of fact, this is the first visit in eight years from an Egyptian president to the United States.

Your Excellency, since we met last September, I've had a deep appreciation and admiration of your unique personality, especially as you are standing very strong in the counterterrorism field to counter this evil ideology that is claiming innocent lives, that is bringing devastation to communities and nations, and that is terrorizing innocent people.

Your Excellency, very strongly and very openly, you will find Egypt and myself always beside you in this, in bringing about an effective strategy in the counterterrorism.

The second point, Your Excellency, is that you'll find me supporting you very strongly and very earnestly in finding solution to the problem of the century. And I'm quite confident that you will be able to bring a solution to this issue.

Before going into their meeting, Trump said the U.S. and Egypt will "do that together," saying the two nations will be "friends for a long, long period of time." Noting the bond that exists between Egypt and America, he said they would be having some "interesting conversations." {eoa}