



AFRICAN NARRATIVES

Egyptian Diplomacy in West Africa: An Analytical Study of Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty's Tour and Its Strategic Implications



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Introduction

Amid accelerating regional and international transformations, strengthening cooperative relations between Egypt and other African nations has become a cornerstone of Egyptian foreign policy. This reflects a strategic commitment to consolidating African identity and achieving sustainable regional integration. In this context, the recent tour of six West African countries by Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty represents a calculated diplomatic initiative aimed at deepening partnerships across political, economic, and security dimensions.

Accompanied by a high-level delegation from both government and the private sector, the tour was marked by significant diplomatic and economic momentum. This approach signals Egypt's commitment to transforming traditional

bilateral relations into genuine partnerships based on mutual interests and sustainable development. The visit reaffirmed Egypt's dedication to supporting counter-terrorism efforts and capacity-building across the continent, while also enhancing its presence in critical sectors such as infrastructure, energy, education, and manufacturing.

This paper provides a comprehensive analysis of the tour, examining its political and economic motivations, assessing its successes and challenges, and evaluating its direct and indirect impacts on Egyptian-African relations. It seeks to understand the extent to which this initiative contributes to advancing Egypt's vision of a more integrated and cooperative African future.



1. Strategic Context of the Tour

The tour of Egyptian Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty to West Africa in July 2025 was part of a comprehensive strategic vision aimed at repositioning Egypt as a key player on the African continent. It represented a practical application of Egypt's foreign policy, which seeks to deepen bilateral and multilateral cooperation, particularly in light of the growing security and economic challenges facing the Sahel and West Africa.

The tour included six pivotal countries: Chad, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Niger, Mali, and Senegal. Mandated directly by the Egyptian political leadership, the visit underscored the strategic importance Egypt places on strengthening its ties with these nations, especially amid escalating regional conflicts, the repercussions of climate change, and the rise of transnational terrorism.

The tour began in **Nigeria** on July 21, 2025, where Minister Abdelatty met with his Nigerian counterpart, Yusuf Maitama Tuggar, and inaugurated the Egypt–Nigeria Business Forum to boost economic cooperation. A key outcome was the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding in agriculture between Egypt's "Future of Egypt for

Sustainable Development" authority and the Nigerian company "Dar Al-Halal Group."

The next stop was **Burkina Faso** on July 22, where the minister delivered an official letter from President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi to President Ibrahim Traoré and launched the Egypt–Burkina Faso Joint Business Forum with a delegation of 30 Egyptian business leaders. Discussions led to agreements on strengthening cooperation in counter-terrorism and promoting mutual investment.

From there, the minister proceeded to **Mali**, where he met with President Assimi Goïta, delivered another formal message from the Egyptian leadership, and held talks with Foreign Minister Abdoulaye Diop to explore avenues for enhancing security and economic cooperation.

The tour concluded in **Senegal** on July 24, where Minister Abdelatty held official discussions with senior government and private sector officials. The meetings focused on deepening economic partnerships and leveraging Egypt's expertise in training, infrastructure development, and capacity-building.

2. The Four Pillars of the Tour

Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty's tour was not a routine diplomatic mission but a multidimensional initiative grounded in a comprehensive vision to enhance Egypt's role in Africa. It represented a transformation in Egypt's foreign policy philosophy—moving from symbolic solidarity to a

pragmatic approach based on mutual interests and operational integration. The tour was built on four interconnected pillars, each with specific objectives and implementation strategies.

Pillar	Objectives & Implementation
Political & Diplomatic	<p>Objectives: Strengthen bilateral relations, activate political consultation mechanisms, support regional stability, and enhance Egypt's presence in African political dynamics.</p> <p>Implementation: Delivered presidential letters to the leaders of Burkina Faso and Mali, held high-level talks with foreign ministers and economic officials, and coordinated joint positions within the African Union and Sahel alliances.</p>
Economic & Investment	<p>Objectives: Boost trade exchange, open new markets for Egyptian exports, attract mutual investments, and create direct public-private partnerships.</p> <p>Implementation: Hosted joint business forums in Nigeria and Burkina Faso with over 30 Egyptian companies, signed an agricultural MoU in Nigeria, and showcased the success of leading Egyptian firms like Arab Contractors, Orascom, and El Sewedy Electric to bolster credibility.</p>
Regional Security & Counter-Terrorism	<p>Objectives: Coordinate with conflict-affected countries, provide technical and training support, and combat the ideological roots of extremism.</p> <p>Implementation: Offered continued training programs through the Egyptian Agency of Partnership for Development, made commitments to build military and civil capacity in policing and border control, and discussed strategies for joint intelligence sharing.</p>
Cultural & International Political Support	<p>Objectives: Mobilize support for Egypt's candidate for UNESCO Director-General, strengthen Egypt's soft power, and expand its cultural and educational influence.</p> <p>Implementation: Secured formal endorsements from Nigeria and Burkina Faso for Dr. Khaled El-Anany's candidacy for UNESCO, promoted Egypt's development model, and highlighted its expertise in technical education, healthcare, and agriculture.</p>

The coherence among these pillars and the integration of their implementation mechanisms signal a well-defined strategic plan. Egypt's engagement now rests on a multifaceted approach that combines shared interests, economic comple-

mentarity, security coordination, and cultural expansion. This positions Egypt to play a more influential role in addressing critical continental issues, from counter-terrorism to global geopolitical competition in Africa.

3. Direct and Indirect Impacts of the Tour

The Foreign Minister's tour produced a set of multidimensional outcomes that can be classified into direct, immediate results and indirect, long-term strategic implications.

1. Direct Impacts and Outcomes

1. Strengthened Official Political Relations: The bilateral meetings and presidential messages elevated Egypt's political engagement, reaffirming its role as a stabilizing actor in the Sahel, particularly in countries like Mali and Burkina Faso undergoing complex political transitions.

2. Tangible Economic Partnerships: The signing of an agricultural MoU in Nigeria and the establishment of business forums created concrete pathways for Egyptian products to access new markets and for partnerships to be formed with resource-rich African nations.

3. Secured Support for International Candidacies: Egypt successfully leveraged its political capital to secure formal endorsements from Nigeria and Burkina Faso for its UNESCO candidate, strengthening its position in multilateral organizations.

4. Mobilized the Egyptian Private Sector: The active participation of leading Egyptian firms fostered direct links between Egyptian and African economic actors, raising awareness of investment opportunities and encouraging the internationalization of Egyptian industries.

II. Indirect Impacts and Strategic Implications

1. Reframing Egypt's Image in Africa: The tour helped reposition Egypt as a serious development partner, not just a historical power. This transformation is likely to enhance Egypt's soft power and give it greater leverage on strategic issues like Nile Basin security, counter-terrorism, and migration.

2. Counterbalancing Competing Influences: At a time when regional and global powers are increasing their presence in West Africa, Egypt's proactive engagement helps rebalance this competition and safeguard its traditional geopolitical sphere of influence.

3. Promoting Regional Integration: The tour's focus on transnational economic and social networks aligns with the African Union's goals of regional integration and accelerates Egypt's engagement with frameworks like the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

4. Generating Domestic Benefits: The success of external diplomatic and economic initiatives is expected to create new investment and employment opportunities in Egypt, fostering a more favorable business climate and enhancing public confidence in the state's foreign policy.





Conclusion:

Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty's tour of West Africa represents a paradigm shift in how Egypt manages its African relationships. By fusing a strategic vision with political, economic, security, and cultural tools, the initiative signaled a mature and multifaceted foreign policy. The tour opened new avenues for cooperation, strengthened Egypt's image as a reliable partner, and demonstrated its ability to translate diplomatic outreach into concrete outcomes.

More than a symbolic gesture, the tour established a practical model for South–South cooperation and activated multiple state and private actors in the pursuit of collective prosperity. This momentum positions Egypt not only as a historical African leader but as a proactive regional power that understands the strategic necessity of engaging with a continent to which it is intrinsically linked.

Ultimately, the tour affirms that building genuine partnerships with Africa is no longer just a diplomatic option for Egypt, but a national imperative for confronting regional challenges and unlocking long-term economic and developmental opportunities.

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