

Egypt Withdraws from Trump's 'Arab NATO' Group

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Egypt has reportedly withdrawn from U.S. President Donald Trump's "Arab NATO" initiative following President Abdel-Fattah Al-Sisi's visit to Washington.

According to the Reuters News Agency, Egypt has made the decision to withdraw from the U.S.-led "Middle East Security Alliance", which has been dubbed "Arab NATO".

This NATO-like group that has been formed by the U.S. administration is composed of a number of Arab states, including Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, Kuwait, and Qatar.

Furthermore, sources from Reuters said the Egyptian authorities were partially motivated by uncertainty over President Trump's re-election and whether his successor would scrap the entire initiative — just like Trump himself scrapped the Iranian Nuclear Deal.

Cairo's decision is believed to have inflicted a blow on Trump's strategy of curbing Iranian influence in the region, Reuters report says.

It is worth noting that Egypt has been flirting with the idea of purchasing the Russian-made Su-35 stealth jets; this has prompted outrage from the Trump administration.

According to Secretary of State Mike Pompeo,

"We have made clear that systems were to be purchased that... would require sanctions on the regime," Pompeo told the Senate Committee on Appropriations. "We have received assurances from them, they understand that, and I am very hopeful they will decide not to move forward with that acquisition."

Egypt is the most densely populated country in North Africa; it also possesses one of the strongest militaries in the Arab world.

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