

Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam Completed Amidst Ongoing Nile Water Dispute

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Ethiopia has announced the completion of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) on the Blue Nile, with official inauguration anticipated in September. This milestone intensifies the long-standing dispute over Nile River water rights with Egypt and Sudan, who rely heavily on the river.

Egypt has consistently expressed strong opposition to the GERD, citing concerns that the \$4 billion hydropower project will significantly reduce its vital water supply, essential for its agriculture and burgeoning population of over 100 million. Egyptian officials have labeled the dam's completion "unlawful" and a violation of international law, accusing Ethiopia of unilateralism and seeking "water hegemony" over a shared international watercourse.

Despite over a decade of negotiations since construction began in 2011, Ethiopia and Egypt have failed to reach a binding agreement on the dam's operation, particularly concerning water release during droughts. The GERD is projected to eventually generate over 6,000 megawatts of electricity, doubling Ethiopia's current output.

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, addressing lawmakers, reaffirmed his nation's commitment to "shared progress, shared energy, and shared water," assuring that Ethiopia's growth would not come at the expense of its downstream neighbors. However, Egypt's Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation dismissed these statements as "superficial attempts to improve its image," asserting that Ethiopia's actions contradict its stated willingness to negotiate.

In response to its water security concerns, Egypt continues to invest in domestic solutions, including

expanding agricultural wastewater treatment and improving irrigation systems. The nation is also strengthening water-related cooperation with other Nile Basin countries.