

Document #1445039

USDOS – US Department of State

Country Report on Terrorism 2017 - Chapter 5 - Gama'a Al-Islamiyya

aka al-Gama’at; Egyptian al-Gama’at al-Islamiyya; GI; Islamic Gama’at; IG; Islamic Group

Description: Gama’a al-Islamiyya (IG) was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on October 8, 1997. Formed in the 1970s, IG was once Egypt’s largest terrorist group. In 2011, it formed the Building and Development political party that competed in the 2011 parliamentary elections and won 13 seats. The external wing, composed mainly of exiled members in several countries, maintained that its primary goal was to replace the Egyptian government with an Islamist state. IG’s “spiritual” leader Omar Abd al-Rahman, or the “blind Sheikh,” served a life sentence in a U.S. prison for his involvement in the 1993 World Trade Center bombing and died in prison in February 2017.

Activities: In the 1990s, IG conducted armed attacks against Egyptian security, other government officials, and Coptic Christians. IG claimed responsibility for the June 1995 attempted assassination of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The group also launched attacks on tourists in Egypt, most notably the 1997 Luxor attack. In 1999, part of the group publicly renounced violence. IG is not known to have committed a terrorist attack in recent years; the group remained dormant in 2017.

Strength: At its peak, IG likely commanded several thousand core members and a similar number of supporters. Security clampdowns following the 1997 attack in Luxor and the 1999 cease-fire, along with post-September 11, 2001 security measures and defections to al-Qa’ida, have likely resulted in a substantial decrease in what is left of the group.

Location/Area of Operation: Unknown

Funding and External Aid: Unknown

ecoi.net summary:

Brief description of Gama'a Al-Islamiyya (Excerpt of chapter 5 of the country report on terrorism 2017)



Country:

Egypt

Source:

USDOS – US Department of State (/en/source/11558.html)

Original link:

<https://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2017/282850.htm> (<https://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2017/282850.htm>)

Document type:

Periodical Report

Language:

English

Published:

19 September 2018

Document ID:

1445039 (former ID [367367 \(/en/document/367367\)](/en/document/367367))

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ecoi.net is run by the Austrian Red Cross (department ACCORD) in cooperation with Informationsverbund Asyl & Migration. ecoi.net is funded by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Austrian Ministry of the Interior and Caritas Austria. ecoi.net is supported by ECRE & UNHCR.

