

US: Critics urge Congress to block release of \$320m in military aid to Egypt

US military financing for Egypt is set to reach \$1.3bn in 2024, as Israel's war on Gaza continues

The Biden administration has decided to release \$320m in military aid to Egypt - a package previously contingent on improving human rights issues in the country.

Unless Congress steps in, this brings the total amount from Washington to Cairo this year to \$1.3bn. Egypt has long been the second-highest recipient of US military aid after Israel.

The administration notified Congress of the move on Wednesday, after Secretary of State Antony Blinken invoked his waiver power to approve the funds. The amount included a \$95m portion requiring special certification because it was conditioned on "clear and consistent progress" regarding the release of political prisoners in Egypt.

In a statement, the Middle East Democracy Center, a Washington-based advocacy group, called the decision a "betrayal" by an administration that pledged to make human rights central to the US-Egypt bilateral relationship.

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