

Egypt Security Watch Monthly Briefing



Summary

June 2015 marked **another month of over 100 reported terror attacks**, with 130 reported attacks. While this figure represents a 9% decrease from May, it marks the continuation of an overall trend of increasing terror attacks since the start of 2015. This brings the total for 2015 thus far to 721 attacks (compared with 155 in the same period in 2014 and 36 in the same period in 2013; see Figure 1).

On June 29, **Prosecutor-General Hisham Barakat was assassinated** when a car bomb hit his armored convoy in the Heliopolis neighborhood of Cairo. Barakat was the most senior official to have been assassinated in the country since the assassination of the Speaker of Parliament Rifaat Mahgoub in 1990. After Barakat's assassination, **Raba'a al-Adaweya Square was renamed Hisham Barakat Square**.

The **Allied Popular Resistance Movement (APRM) claimed 14 attacks** (10 of which took place in Fayoum); Afnan Misr did not claim any attacks in June; and **Wilayat Sinai claimed 14 attacks**, all in North Sinai (Figure 4).

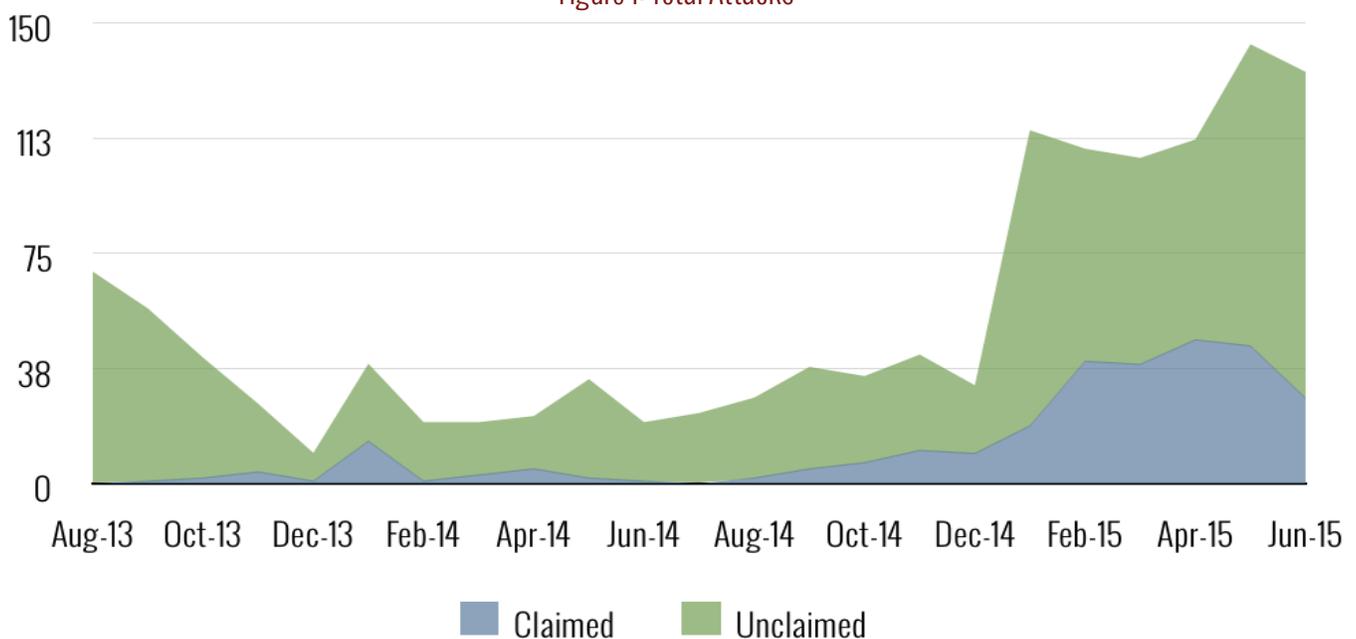
While Wilayat Sinai claimed only around half the number of attacks in June that it had in April and May, this may have been due to the fact that it was in preparation for its largest operation: a July 1 coordinated attack on over 20 locations across North Sinai. For more information on this assault, see TIMEP's ["Assault in Sheikh Zuweid: A Turning Point in Egypt's Fight against Terrorism."](#)

Wilayat Sinai released a video entitled "Extermination of the Judiciary," documenting the May drive-by assassination of judges in Arish. The group also publicized its **first use of Kornet anti-tank guided missiles**.

The **Revolutionary Punishment (an APRM affiliated group) released its first execution video**, featuring for the first time a nasheed (Islamic chant) and the first instance of executing a civilian. The man was allegedly a police informant reporting on the activities of protestors.

Unclaimed attacks in the country remained high, with **68% of all reported attacks going unclaimed** in May. The trend in the number of claims has been increasing steadily since July 2014, although there was a decrease in the number of claimed attacks from 45 claimed attacks in May to 28 claimed attacks in June 2015 (Figures 1 and 4).

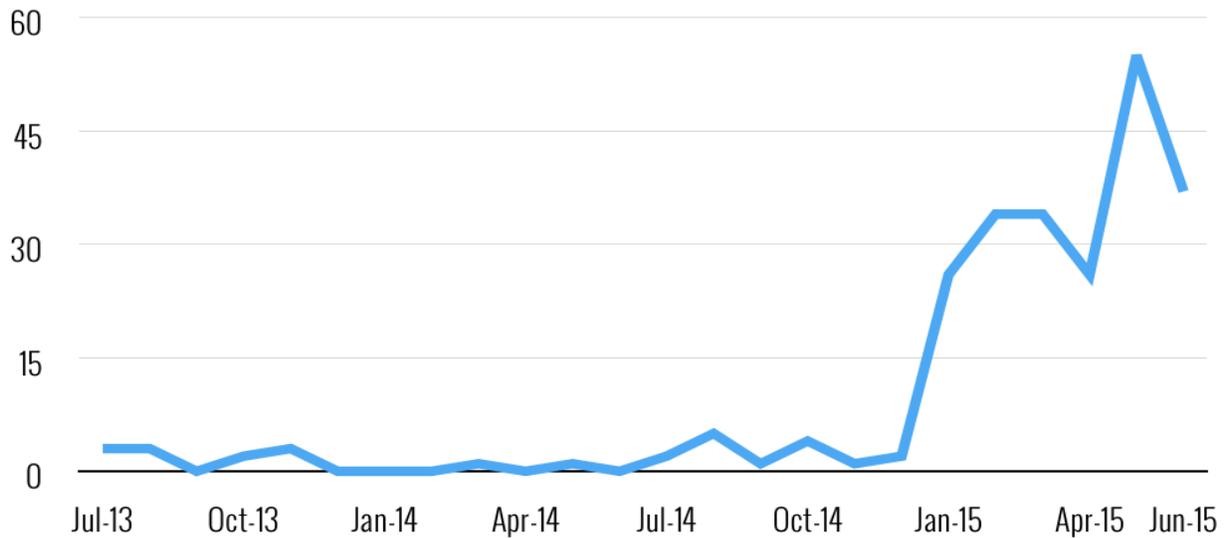
Figure 1: Total Attacks



Summary

Thirty-seven attacks on property targets were reported in June, primarily on electricity infrastructure, security officials' personal property, police stations, and transportation (Figure 2).

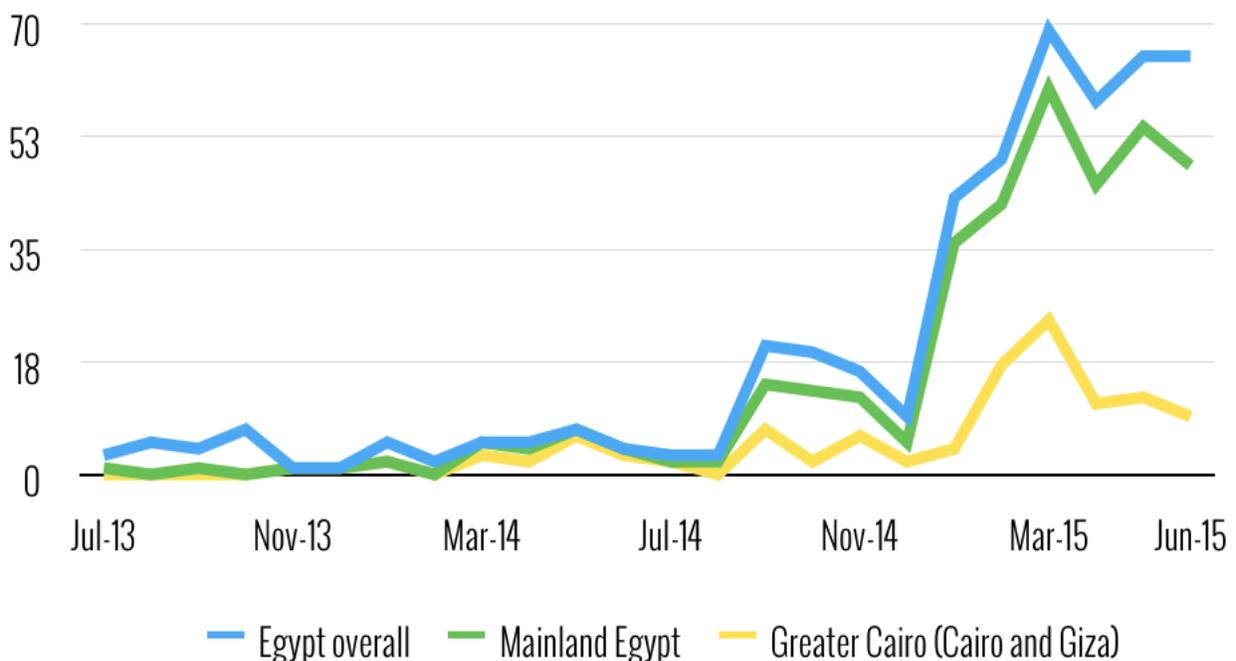
Figure 2: Attacks on Economic/Property Targets



Reported deaths in terror attacks decreased from 43 in May to 26 in June (with 10 in North Sinai, six in Cairo, and the rest throughout Egypt), dropping below the monthly average for 2015. Reported civilian casualties also decreased from May to June, with six civilians reported killed in June (Figures 8 and 9).

Overall, reports of improvised explosive device (IED) attacks remained high, with 65 attacks in June. North Sinai saw 17 of these; Gharbia, eight; and seven were reported in both Cairo and Fayoum (Figure 3).

Figure 3: IED Attacks



Summary

Reports of counter-terror operations decreased slightly, with **reports of 260 counter-terror operations** in June (after 312 in May). Of these, **155 were reported by official government spokespersons** (military, Ministry of Interior, or State Information Service); the others were reported in the news media or from security officials' statements (Figure 12).

Notably, **the official military spokesperson did not report on monthly activities** as he had in prior months.

Of all counter-terror operations, 47 were specifically reported in North Sinai, 33 in Greater Cairo, 16 in Gharbia, and 16 in Fayoum (Figure 15). The vast majority (222 of the 260 operations) were reported arrests of alleged terrorists.

News media reports indicated that **1,614 alleged terrorists were arrested** in June 2015, a marked decrease from May's figure of 3,070. Of these, **921 were alleged members of the Muslim Brotherhood and 146 from Wilayat Sinai (Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis)** (Figures 13, 14, and 16).

Adel Habara, who was sentenced to death on May 26 for the massacre of conscripts in North Sinai in August 2013, had his **death sentence revoked and a retrial ordered**. During the retrial, Habara and a co-defendant **declared their allegiance to Islamic State** leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.

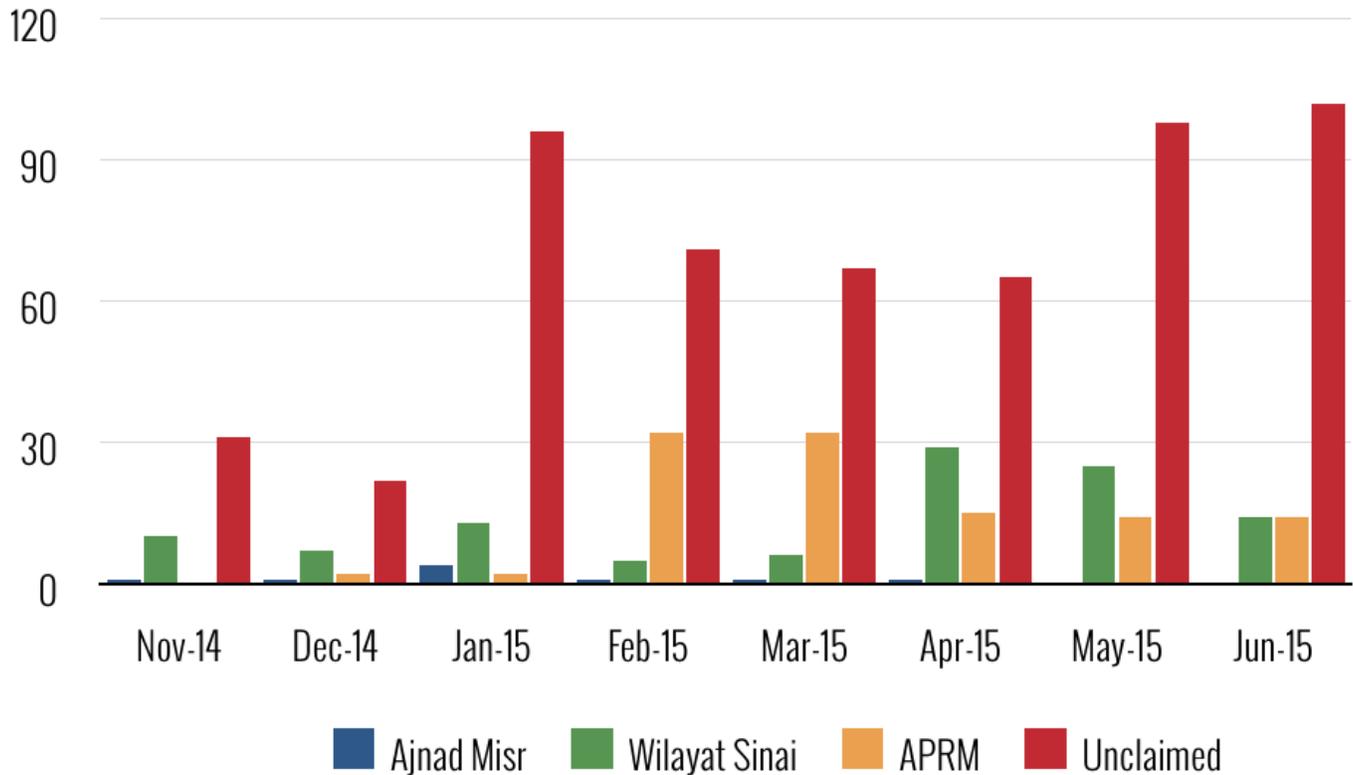
The **military began to dig a 10-meter wide trench** along the Rafah-Gaza border, purportedly to better detect cross-border smuggling and terrorist operations.

This report highlights developments in terror groups and security sector activity, as well as the changing trends in location and character of terror attacks and counter-terror operations, and a description of methodology.¹

1 All data in the TIMEP briefings and TIMEP Egypt Security Watch project has been gathered from news reports, Egyptian state (military or ministry of interior) social media statements, terror group social media, and data drawn from the Armed Conflict Location and Event Dataset. Figures from previous months' reports are constantly reviewed and revised for further accuracy. For more information on the project's methodology, please see the methodology section of this report.

Terror Groups' Notable Developments:

Figure 4: Number of Attacks by Group



(Allied) Popular Alliance Movement

The **Allied Popular Resistance Movement** claimed **14 activities**, all of which were claimed by the Revolutionary Punishment group. These included ten attacks using small arms against police; one execution of an alleged civilian informant; one IED attack on a city council building; and a coordinated attack on a security checkpoint. Ten of the attacks took place in Fayoum, with the others occurring in Cairo, Beni Suef, Alexandria, and Assiut.

The Popular Resistance Movement account issued one statement via Twitter, **refuting reports that it had carried out the assassination of Prosecutor General Hisham Barakat** and confirming its exclusive social media account.

On *Thursday, June 25*, Revolutionary Punishment published a video entitled “Confessions of Traitors” that shows the **apparent execution of alleged state informant Walid Ahmed Ali**. This video follows the **same formulaic progression as Wilayat Sinai videos**: the introduction of the groups’ imagery set to *nasheed* (Islamic chant), video footage of security forces using violence against civilians, a videotaped confession from the alleged state collaborator, his warning of the consequences of his actions, and finally his execution. In this video, the alleged conspirator describes his collaboration with police officers operating in Helwan, providing information about demonstrations that were happening there; the **corresponding video footage portrays scenes of pro-Morsi protests**. Notably, the final footage of the execution does not provide immediate evidence that the man being shot is the same man as in the video.

Terror Groups' Notable Developments:

[Wilayat Sinai \(WS\)](#) - Formerly Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis

Islamic State affiliate **Wilayat Sinai continued activity in North Sinai throughout June**. The group claimed to have carried out 14 attacks throughout the month.

While this figure was greatly reduced from the number of claims in April and May (29 and 25 respectively), this may be due to the fact that **the group was preparing for its largest operation yet**, an assault on Sheikh Zuweid and other sites in North Sinai, which took place on July 1. TIMEP has issued a report analysis of this attack, "[Assault in Sheikh Zuweid: A Turning Point in Egypt's Fight against Terrorism.](#)"

On *Tuesday, June 9*, the group released a **video of the execution of Ahmed Hamdy, an Egyptian Homeland Security official**. In the video, entitled "War of Minds," Hamdy attempts to infiltrate Wilayat Sinai as an undercover agent. He is discovered, and the video depicts him in an orange jumpsuit (in a manner reminiscent of other Islamic State execution videos) as he digs his own grave before being executed by gunfire.

On *Monday, June 29*, the group released a video entitled "Extermination of the Judiciary," showing footage of its [May 16 killing of judges in Arish](#).

On *Tuesday, June 23*, Wilayat Sinai (WS) published a statement of its monthly activities.² These included nine claimed activities in June:

- A small/medium arms attack on three military vehicles in southern Sheikh Zuweid. Deaths and injuries were unreported.
- A sniper attack on a soldier at the Abu Tawila checkpoint in Sheikh Zuweid, North Sinai governorate. The soldier's condition was not immediately clear.
- An attack in which its operatives exploded an IED as an M113 armored vehicle passed in the city of Rafah. [Four soldiers were reported injured](#).
- A [mortar attack against the military checkpoint at Gorah airport](#), south Sheikh Zuweid, North Sinai governorate. The group claimed to have used six 60-mm mortars and two 107-mm rockets.
- A [sniper attack on a soldier at the Masoura](#) checkpoint in Rafah, North Sinai. The soldier died from his injuries.
- Two IED attacks in separate neighborhoods in Arish. In one attack, [one soldier was reported injured](#); in the other, [one police officer was reported dead](#).
- An attack in which it destroyed an M60 tank using a Kornet anti-tank guided missile (ATGM) near the Karm al-Qawadis checkpoint. **This was the first known instance of the group having used this weapons system; its origin could not be verified**, though the weapon has been reported use in conflicts in Libya and Syria. Deaths and injuries were unreported.

² This represents an incomplete summary of June activity, given the non-correspondence of the Hijri and Gregorian calendars. Activity occurring between June 17 and June 30 is extracted from unofficial WS media organs. When independent reports or security responses corroborate or conflict with these accounts, these are noted or included as reference links.

Terror Groups' Notable Developments:

- A 60-mm mortar attack against a security installation in Rafah, North Sinai governorate. Deaths and injuries were unreported.
- An attack against a military contingent in al-Mahadya. No deaths or injuries were reported.
- [An IED attack targeting a police armored](#) vehicle in Arish. One police officer was killed and at least three conscripts were injured.

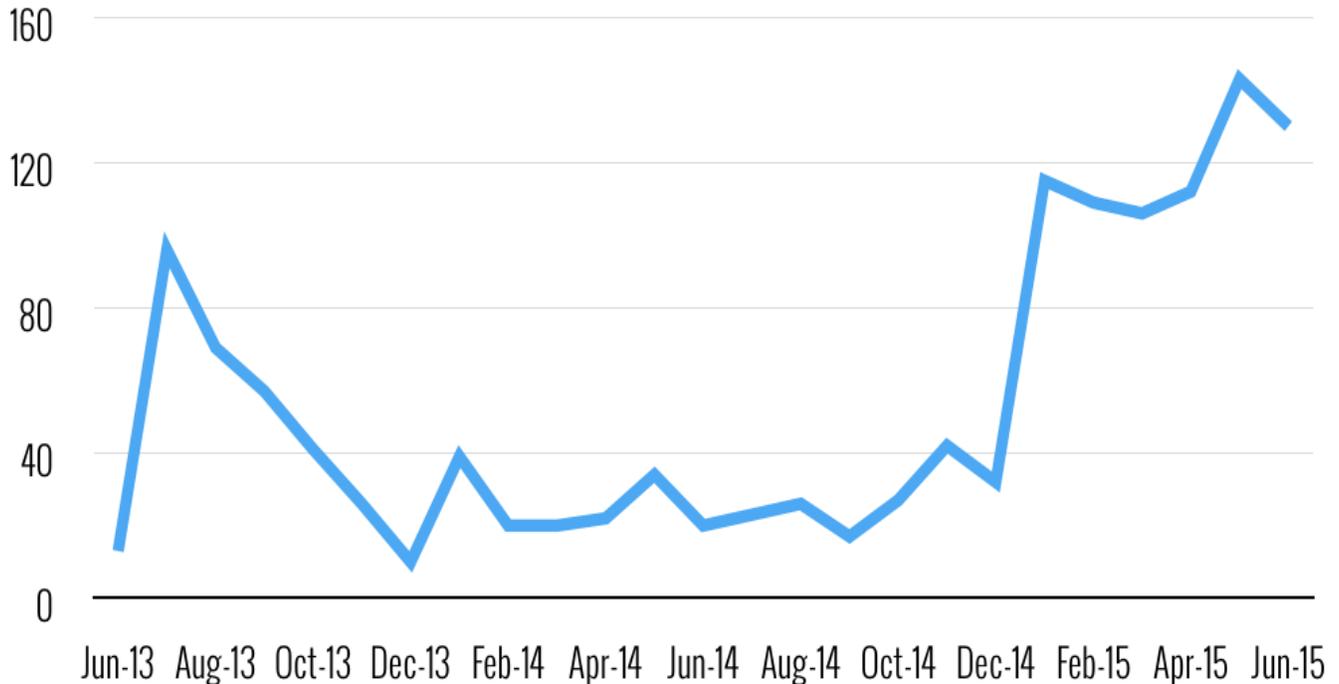
[Ajnad Misr](#)

Ajnad Misr claimed no attacks in June, marking the second month in a row with no attacks.

Terror Attacks Trend Report:

June saw 130 reported terror attacks. It was the sixth month in a row that over 100 attacks were reported in the country, bringing the **monthly average for 2015 to 119 reported attacks**, almost four times the rate of last year's average of 30 attacks per month (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Number of Attacks Countrywide



Reported attacks in North Sinai decreased slightly, with 34 attacks in June, compared to 40 in May. The total for reported terror attacks in the province in 2015 is 213, or 30% of all reported attacks. North Sinai accounted for 42% of all attacks in 2014, and 67% of all attacks in 2013, demonstrating its lessening share in overall attacks, as more attacks are occurring outside of the province each month (Figures 6 and 7).

In the Greater Cairo area, 20 attacks were reported (versus 22 in May); after Cairo and North Sinai, the provinces of Fayoum and Sharqia saw the greatest number of attacks, with 23 and 14, respectively (Figure 6).

Terror Attacks Trend Report:

Figure 6: Number of Attacks in Key Areas

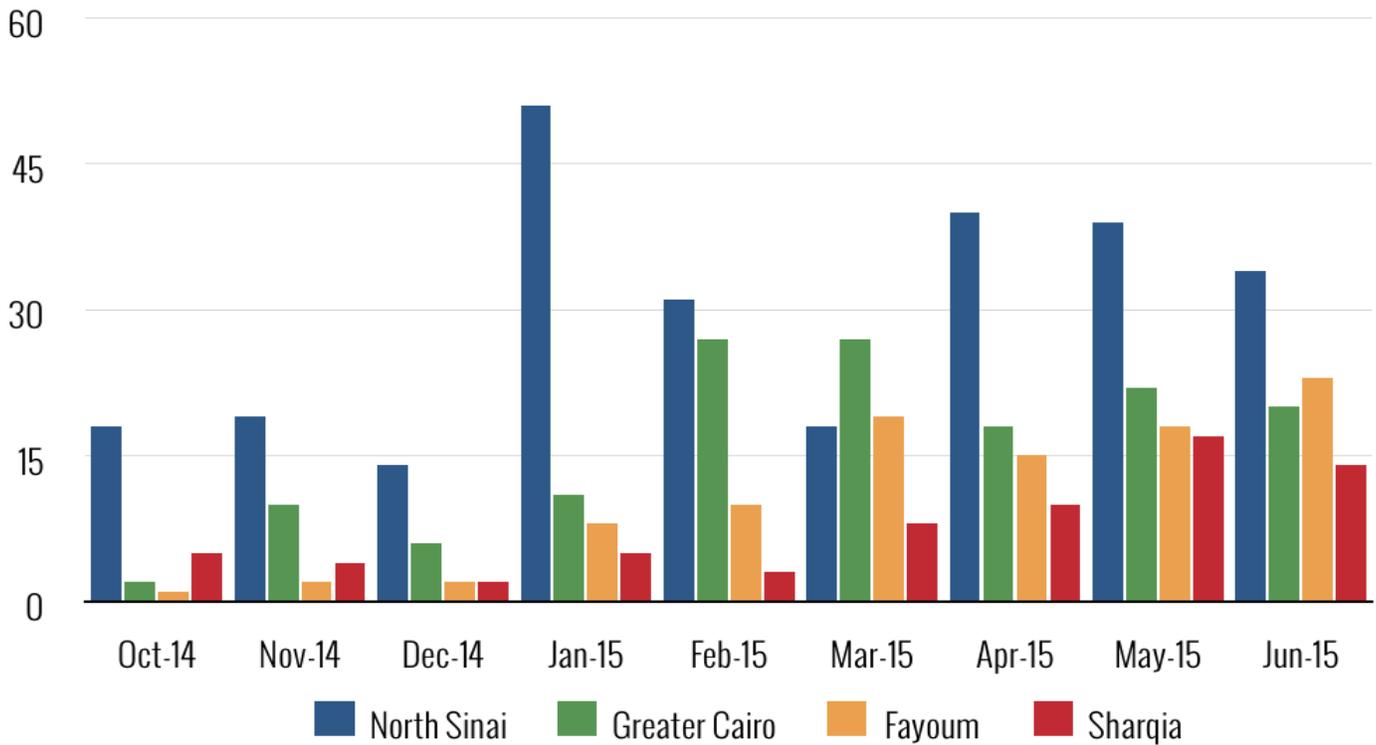
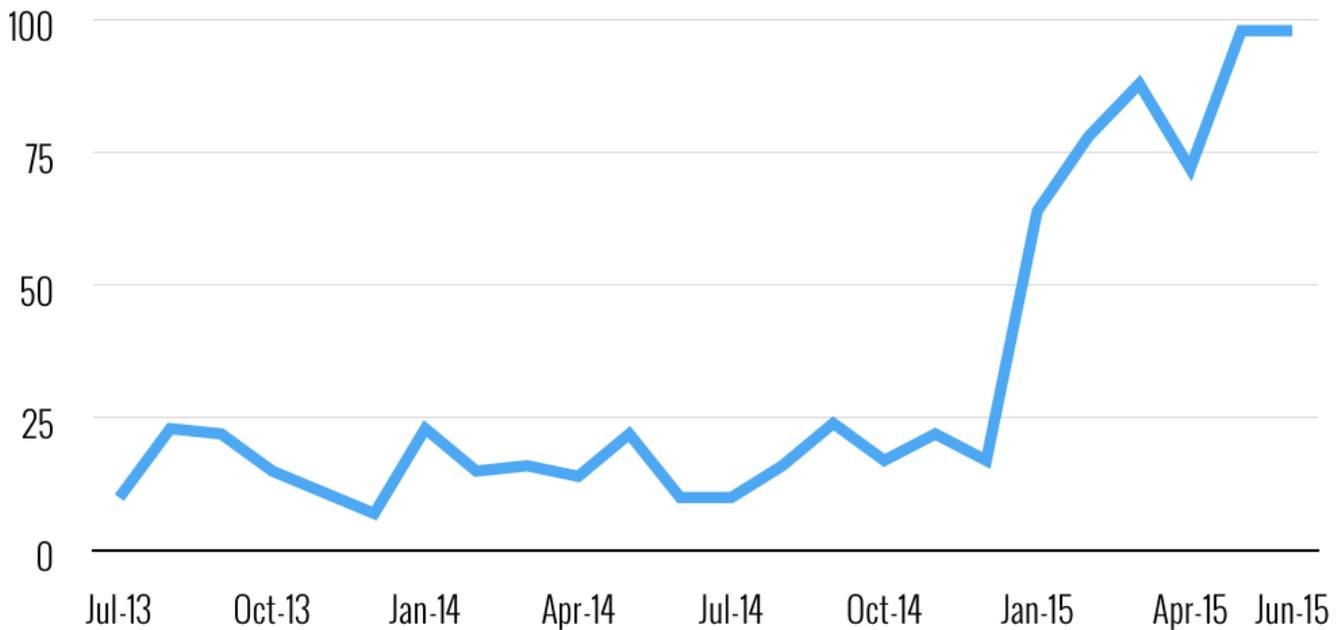


Figure 7: Attacks Outside North Sinai



For the second month in a row, **the number of reported deaths in terror attacks dropped**, with 26 reported killed in attacks in June, 10 of which were in North Sinai. **The number of reported civilian deaths also dropped**, with six civilians reported killed in attacks in June (Figures 8 and 9).

Terror Attacks Trend Report:

Figure 8: Number of Deaths in Attacks (by location)

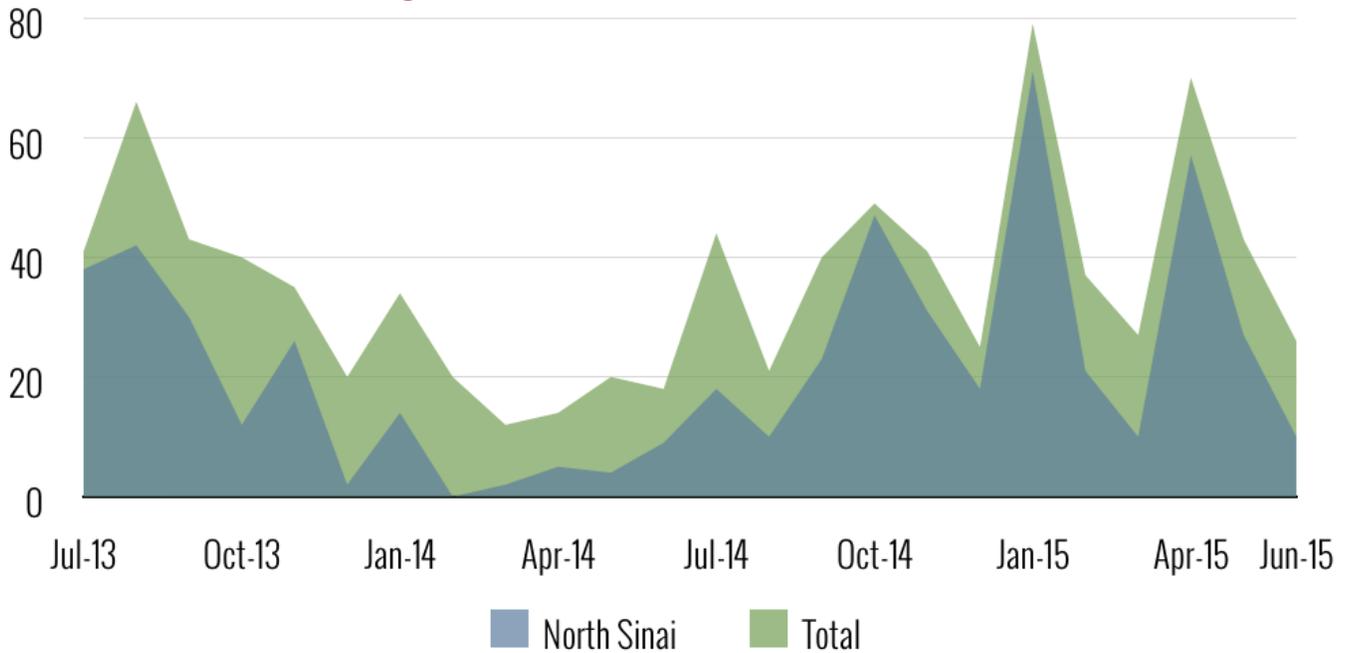
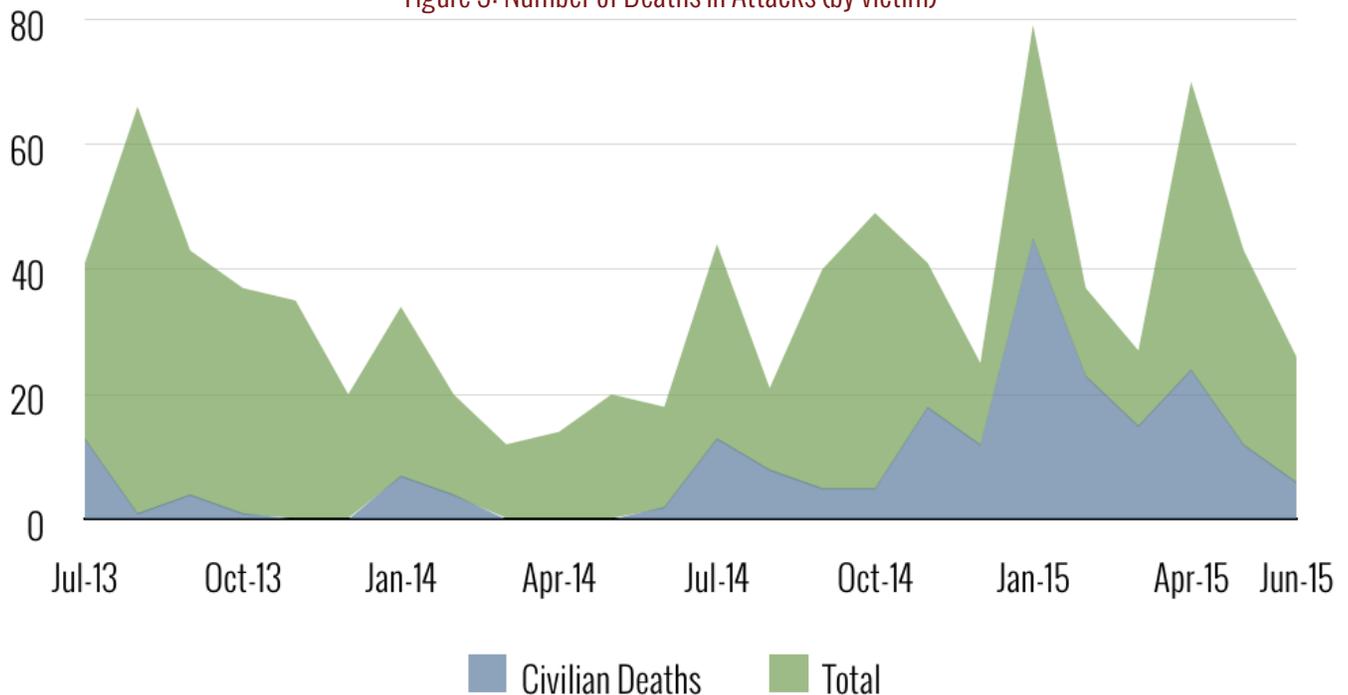


Figure 9: Number of Deaths in Attacks (by victim)



Attacks using IEDs remained steady, with 65 attacks in both in May and June. **Reports of IED attacks in North Sinai increased slightly** from 11 attacks in May to 17 in June, and decreased in Greater Cairo, from 12 in May to 9 in June (Figures 4 and 10).

Aside from IED attacks, reported **shootings, arson, and mortar attacks were predominant** throughout the month of June, in line with previous months (Figure 11).

Terror Attacks Trend Report:

Figure 10: Trends in IED Attacks (by Percentage of Attacks)

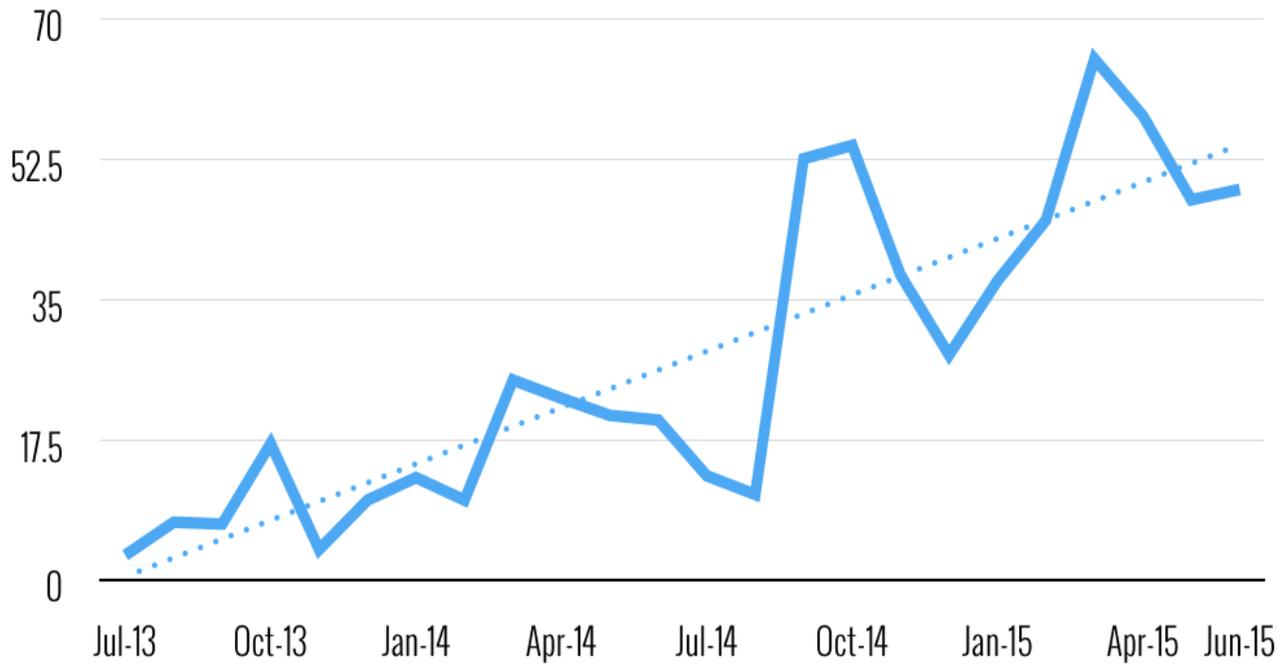
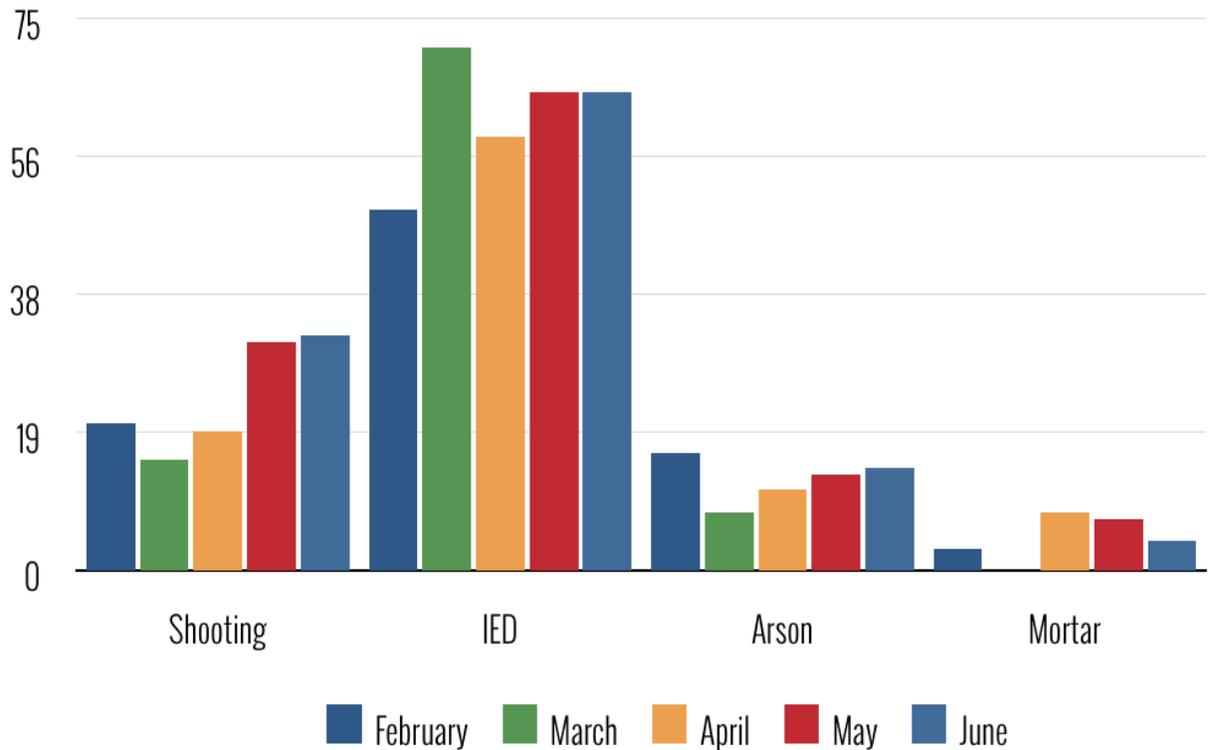


Figure 11: Types of Attacks by Month



Terror Attacks Trend Report:

June saw a decrease in reported attacks on economic and property targets, from 55 in May to 37 in June (Figure 2). In June, these included reports of:

- six attacks on private property belonging to security sector individuals;
- three attacks on police stations or other security property;
- three attacks on public transportation;
- one attack on a court; and
- 12 attacks on electricity infrastructure.

Security Sector Notable Developments:

Shortly after the assassination of Prosecutor-General Hisham Barakat, Judge [Zakariya Abdel Aziz was named interim prosecutor-general](#). The following day, [President Abdel-Fattah El Sisi announced](#) that he would rename Raba'a al-Adaweya Square³ to Hisham Barakat Square.

Egypt received [two American-made fast missile boats](#), doubling the number in its fleet to four of the *Ezzat*-class vessels. The Egyptian Navy also received a [French-built FREMM frigate](#); after being outfitted for use in the Egyptian navy, the frigate [should be ready](#) for participation in celebrations to open the Suez Canal expansion project (scheduled for early August).

In an effort to curb smuggling, and thus theoretically hinder terrorism by further restricting illicit trade over the Gaza border, [the military has been digging a 20-meter \(65 feet\) deep](#), 10-meter (33 ft.) wide, U-shaped trench about two kilometers from the border that all vehicles and individuals will be required to pass through.

In mid-June, the [government announced its intention to distribute](#) 140,000 food parcels in North Sinai for the month of Ramadan.

On *Saturday, June 13*, a court revoked the death sentence of militant Adel Habara and ordered a retrial.⁴ During a June 16 court session, Habara and co-defendant Ammar Ali Ramadan declared their allegiance to the Islamic State, shouting that they would soon see Islamic State leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi "[ruling \[Egypt\]](#)."

Following the attack at Karnak Temple in Luxor, Sisi ordered "[intensified](#)" security presence at "vital sites."

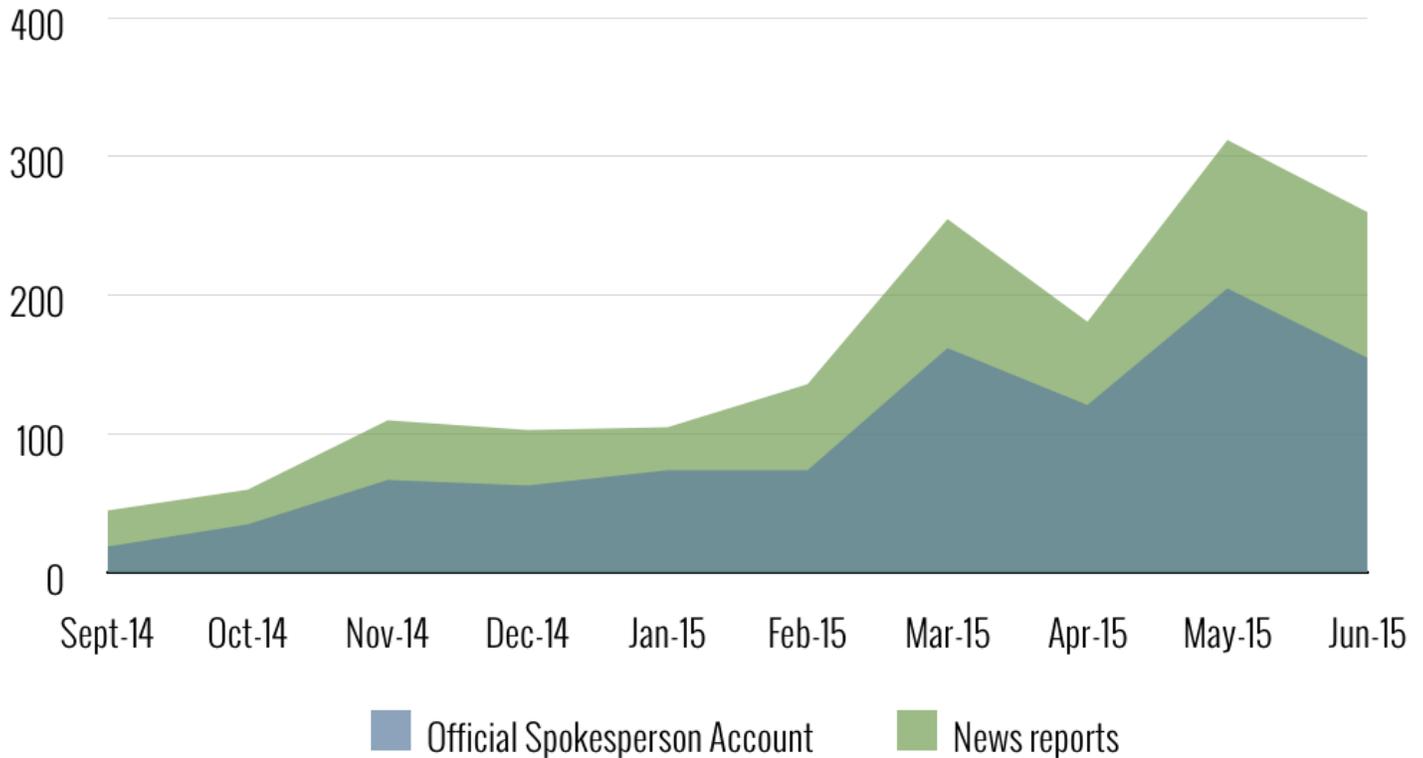
3 Raba'a Square was the site of the [violent dispersal of protests](#) where hundreds died in August 2013.

4 Habara had been sentenced to death on May 26, 2015, for crimes committed during the "second Rafah massacre" in August 2013, where militants stormed a police convoy and killed 25 conscripts in North Sinai.

Counter-terror Operations Trend Report:

June saw a decrease in reported counter-terror operations from 312 in May to 260 in June, with some discrepancy between official state security reports and news media reports. Of the 260 reported counter-terror operations, **official state security spokespersons reported 155 distinct counter-terror operations**⁵ (Figure 12).

Figure 12: Counter-terror Operations



A reported **1,614 alleged terrorists were arrested** in June 2015 (1,028 based on official security spokespersons); of these, **921 were alleged members of the Muslim Brotherhood** (686 based on official security spokespersons; see Figure 13).

News media reported that the military had killed **43** and arrested **146** members of **Wilayat Sinai/Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis** in preventative operations to stem terrorism during Ramadan. In one operation, unnamed [security sources reported that 113 individuals were arrested](#) at once. Totals from media reports through June 2015 indicate that 417 militants have been killed and 225 arrested in raids on the group since the beginning of the year (Figure 14).

⁵ In order to account for double-posting information on operations, TIMEP reviews each official report and cross-checks with news media reporting.

Counter-terror Operations Trend Report:

Figure 13: Number of Arrests in Counter-Terror Operations Countrywide

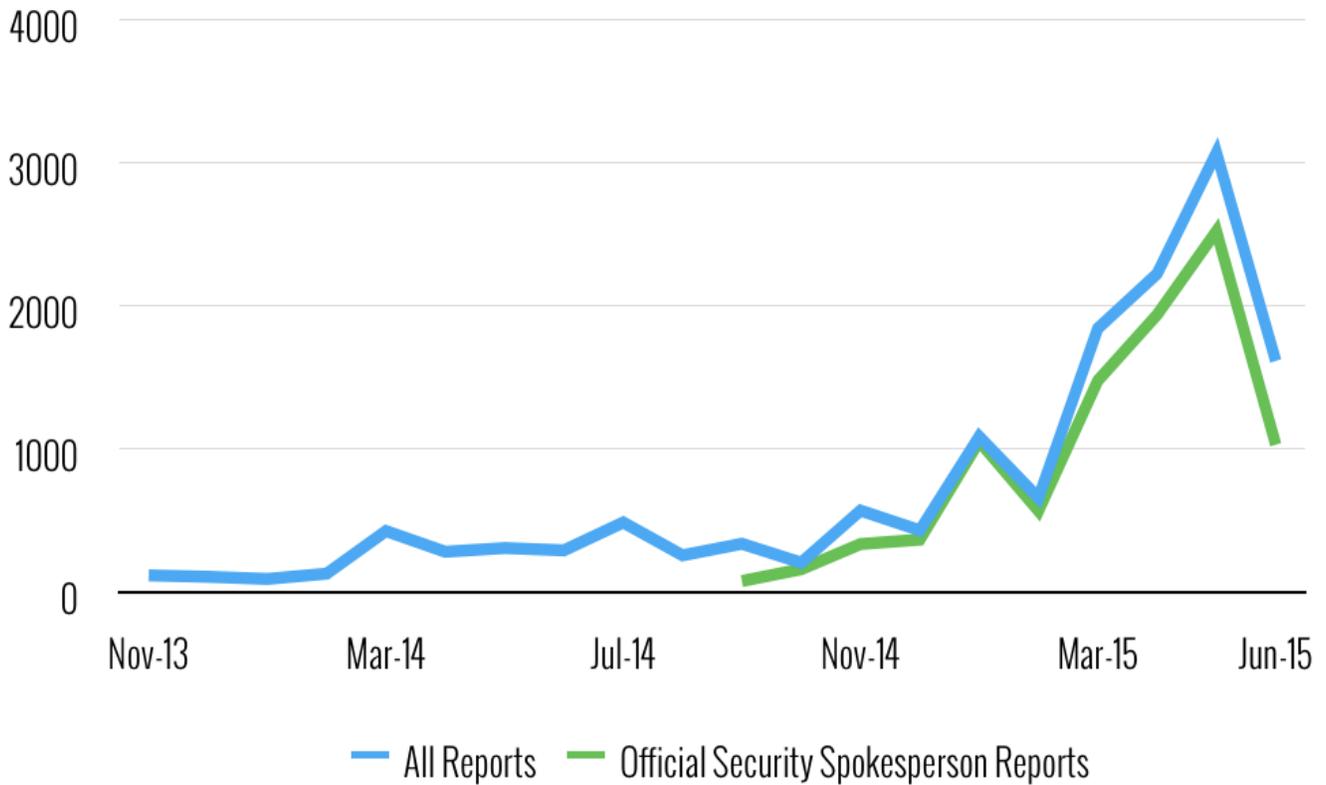
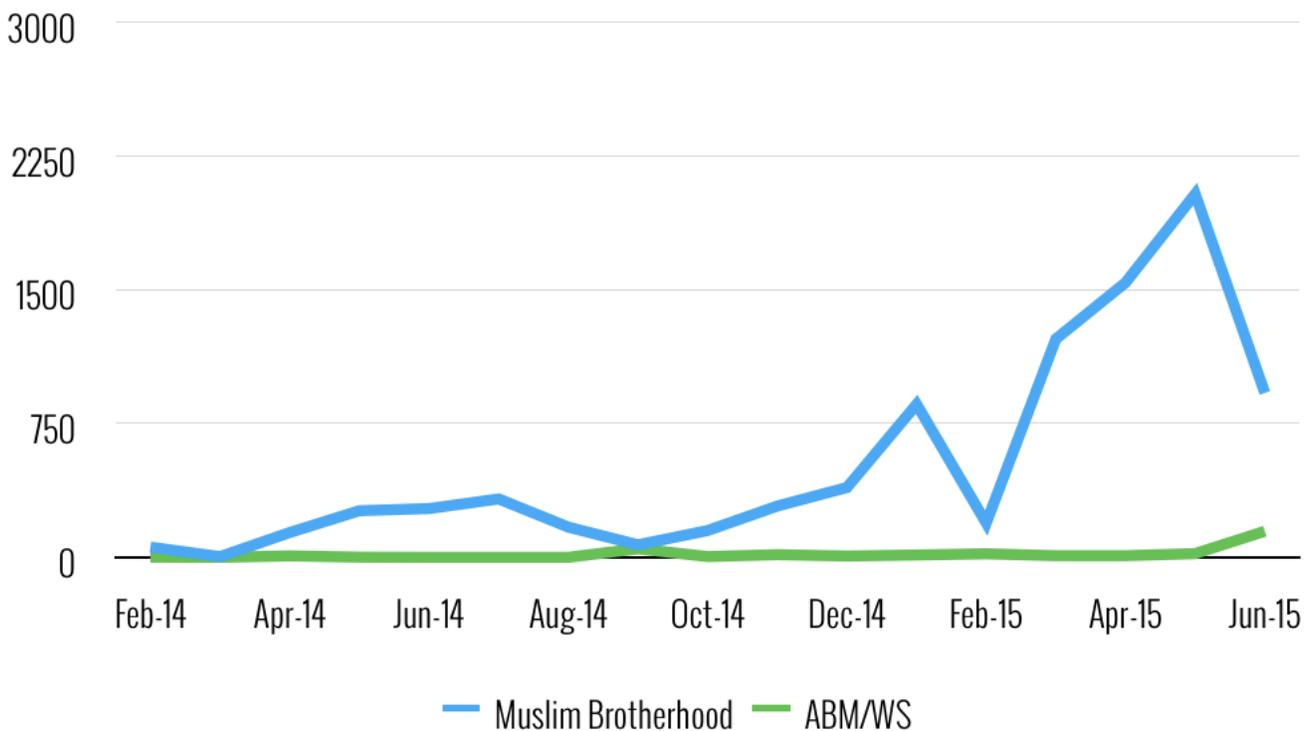


Figure 14: Arrests by Alleged Affiliation

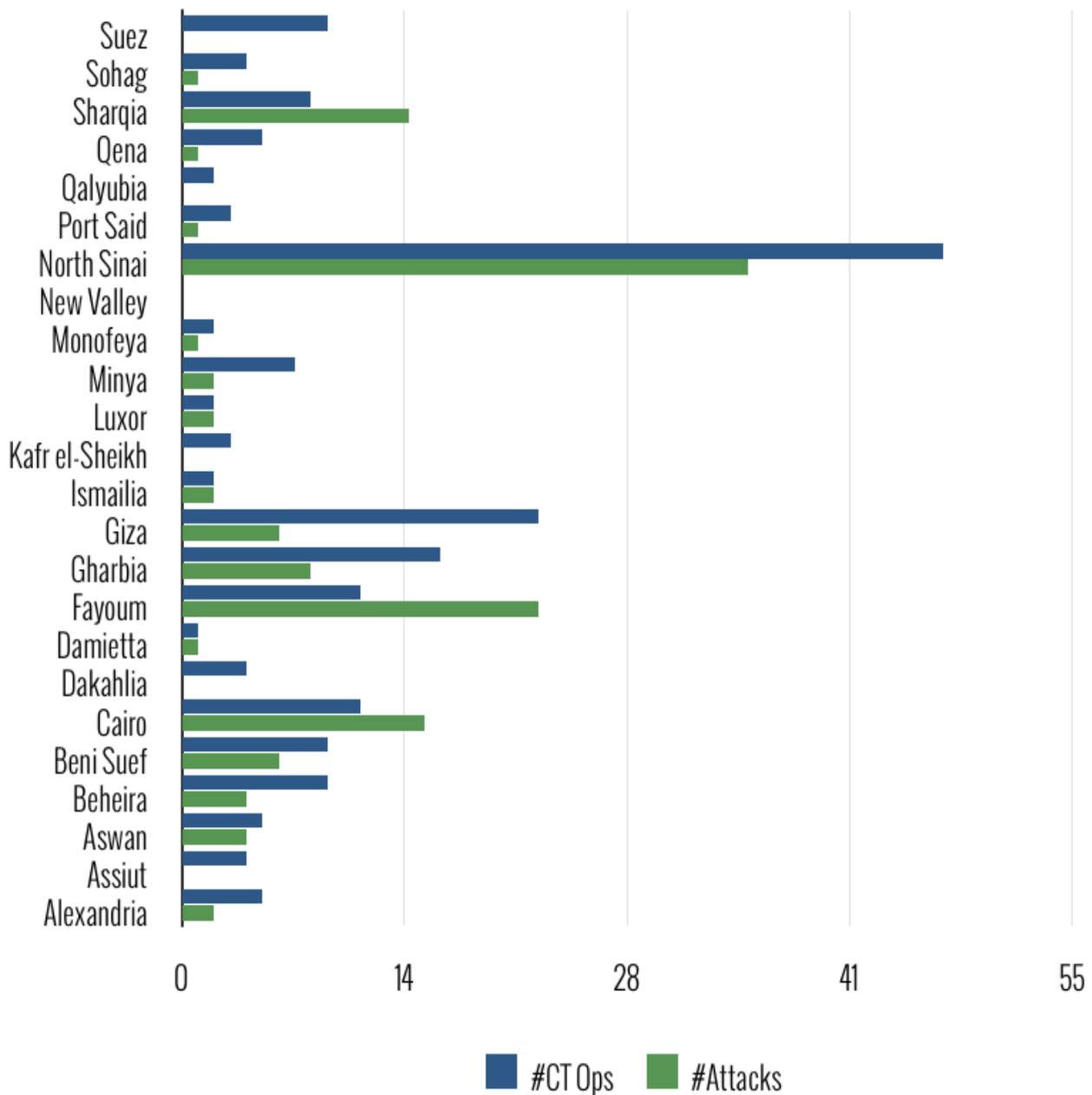


Counter-terror Operations Trend Report:

The **majority of reported counter-terror operations took place in North Sinai**. Forty-seven operations were reported, including the arrest of 344 suspected terrorists throughout June (Figures 15 and 16).

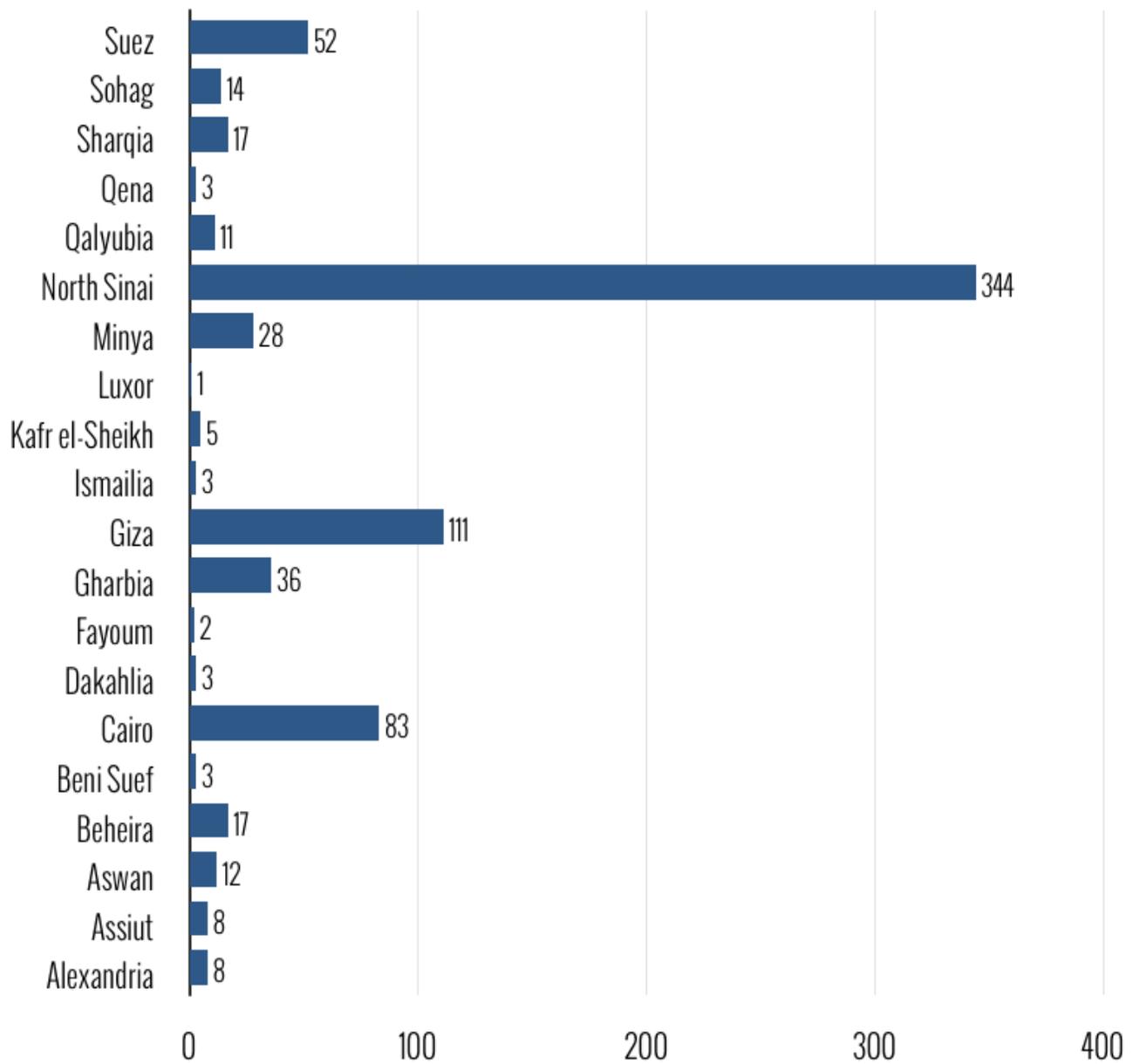
Eleven reported security operations took place in Cairo, where 83 were arrested; 22 took place in Giza, where 111 were reported arrested (Figures 15 and 16).

Figure 15: June Terror Attacks and Counter-Terror Operations by Province



Counter-terror Operations Trend Report:

Figure 16: Arrests By Province



Methodology

TIMEP engages in daily media monitoring to update its dataset as developments occur, tracking all English and Arabic language news reports of violence from state, private, and social media outlets.

At times, the project relies on statements and media published on the accounts of terror actors themselves. Access to these statements was obtained through monitoring of jihadi web forums and terror groups' social media pages.

TIMEP additionally independently monitors all statements on Egyptian Ministry of Interior and the Egyptian military spokesperson's social media accounts, where both institutions publish a record of their public activities.

In determining which events to record, the project tracks only those events which could reasonably be considered acts of "terrorism" or the state's proclaimed response to such acts. Yet, "terrorism" and "terrorist" are themselves heavily-contested terms.

Thus, in order to capture the current threat faced by Egypt, this project adopts a definition of "terror attack" as one that entails premeditated violence enacted for political ends. This does not include the threat of attack, but rather only enacted violence. Political ends may be defined as any which have a reasonable bearing on changing an established power dynamic. For this reason, premeditated targeting of religious institutions where it could be reasonably assumed that these were targeted in their political nature are included; however, religious institutions or religious minority civilians targeted as a result of local conflict are not included.

Likewise, "counter-terror operation" is ill-defined, particularly as many government actions (particularly in the legal arena) have been lately construed as part of a larger "war on terror." For the purposes of this project, only security actions taken to combat declared terrorist groups have been considered "counter-terror efforts." (This includes the Muslim Brotherhood only after their designation as a terrorist group.) This definition does not include judicial action.

Each act of terror or counter-terror operation is recorded, capturing the date of the attack, a brief description, the closest determinable coordinates, the province in which the attack or operation was carried out, the type of attack or operation, any casualties (or arrests in the case of counter-terror operations), and the targets. In the case of terror attacks, the perpetrator is designated where one was claimed, or, in the instance of a suspected perpetrator, this information was also recorded. The dataset represents the most comprehensive available, capturing all reported acts of terror or counter-terror operations as they occur.

TIMEP began independent data collection in March 2014: any events documented before this time were documented based on data provided by the Armed Conflict Location and Event Dataset (ACLED). Using ACLED data, TIMEP extracted a dataset unique to reference terror violence in Egypt. Accessing newswire reports or government statements corresponding to each individual event, TIMEP cross-referenced every data entry from ACLED before recording it in the TIMEP dataset.

Using TIMEP's unique data, monthly reports offers a quantitative analysis of trends in attacks and operations. The analysis is both diachronic and synchronic, in keeping with the goal of offering a holistic picture of the dynamic nature of Egypt's state of security.