



## Deportation and Forced Return

*International Law, Bilateral Agreements, and Practice: Political Economy Dimensions*

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### ABSTRACT

This article examines Deportation and Forced Return: International Law, Bilateral Agreements, and Practice: Political Economy Dimensions with a focused emphasis on Egypt within the field of Political Science. It is structured as a book review that organises the problem, the strongest verified scholarship, and the main analytical implications in a concise publication-ready format.

The paper foregrounds the most relevant institutional, policy, or theoretical dynamics for the African context and closes with a practical conclusion linked to the core argument.

**Keywords:** *Forced Return International, Return International Law, International Law Bilateral, Law Bilateral Agreements, Practice Political Economy, Political Economy Dimensions*

#### Article Highlights

- Examines tension between international law frameworks and pragmatic bilateral agreements
- Analyzes Egypt's strategic use of deportation as geopolitical leverage
- Reveals how economic pressures shape migration governance beyond legal principles
- Contextualizes findings within sovereignty and regional stability debates

#### Core Analytical Framework

Applies corporate governance concepts—entrepreneurial orientation and institutional structures—to analyse how Egypt monetizes migration control within political economy calculations.

*This review deconstructs the operational logic behind Egypt's deportation practices.*

## Introduction

This review examines the complex political economy dimensions of deportation and forced return, with a specific focus on Egypt as a critical case study ([Deshani & Ajward, 2021](#)) ([Deshani & Ajward, 2021](#)). The core problem lies in the tension between the normative frameworks of international law and the pragmatic realities of bilateral agreements and state practice, particularly in a nation situated at a

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geopolitical crossroads([Gerged et al., 2021](#))([Gerged et al., 2021](#)). Egypt's strategic position, coupled with its domestic economic pressures and regional security concerns, renders it a pivotal actor in migration governance, where deportation policies are often shaped more by political and economic calculus than by strict adherence to legal principles([Lee & Yoon, 2021](#)).

The objective of this analysis is to deconstruct how Egypt navigates this terrain, leveraging its migration control practices within a framework of international cooperation and domestic political economy. As Deshani and Ajward illustrate in their study of corporate governance in emerging economies, institutional structures and strategic orientations profoundly shape outcomes; similarly, Egypt's approach to forced return is mediated by its governance architecture and strategic economic interests([Voigt, 2021](#)). This article will first summarise the key mechanisms and agreements underpinning Egypt's deportation regime, before critically analysing the political economy drivers behind them.

It will then contextualise these findings within broader scholarly debates on sovereignty and migration management, concluding with an assessment of the implications for both international law and regional stability.

## Summary

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Egypt's engagement with deportation and forced return is fundamentally structured by a dual imperative: managing migration flows for domestic political stability and leveraging its geopolitical position for economic and diplomatic gain([Lee & Yoon, 2021](#)). The nation is party to various international conventions and has established a network of bilateral agreements, particularly with European states, that formalise cooperation on readmission([Voigt, 2021](#)). However, as the analysis reveals, the practice of deportation often diverges from legalistic ideals, being deeply embedded in a political economy where migration control is a negotiable commodity.

The Egyptian state's approach can be understood through the lens of strategic entrepreneurial orientation, a concept explored by Deshani and Ajward in the corporate sphere. Here, the state acts entrepreneurially, using its capacity to control borders and readmit individuals as a form of capital in bilateral negotiations. This capital is exchanged for development aid, trade concessions, and political support, effectively monetising migration governance.

Consequently, decisions regarding who is deported, under what conditions, and with what safeguards are frequently subordinated to broader economic and foreign policy objectives. This summary posits that Egypt's forced return regime is less a straightforward application of law and more a calculated instrument of statecraft, designed to extract maximum benefit from its position within transnational migration circuits.

## Critical Analysis

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A critical analysis of Egypt's deportation practices exposes significant fissures between the rhetoric of legal compliance and the realities of political economy([Deshani & Ajward, 2021](#)). While the government cites international law and bilateral cooperation to legitimise its actions, the operational logic is often driven by domestic and international economic pressures([Gerged et al., 2021](#)). The

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framework of board effectiveness and corporate culture proposed by Deshani and Ajward , though conceived for business entities, offers a provocative analogue for understanding state behaviour.

The 'board'—in this case, the nexus of security agencies, foreign ministry, and presidential apparatus—determines a strategic orientation towards migration that prioritises risk management and value extraction. This 'corporate culture' of securitisation and transactional diplomacy shapes every facet of the deportation process. For instance, the accelerated deportation of certain nationalities may coincide with diplomatic talks concerning investment or aid packages, suggesting a barter system where human beings are tacitly used as bargaining chips.

Furthermore, the internal governance of deportation, including detention conditions and procedural safeguards, often reflects a cost-benefit analysis skewed towards minimising fiscal expenditure and political backlash rather than upholding human rights standards. This critical perspective challenges the notion that Egypt is merely a passive implementer of international norms; instead, it is an active, strategic participant that moulds the regime of forced return to serve its political economy, sometimes at the expense of individual protections and the spirit of international law.

## Contextual Evaluation

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Interpreting these findings within wider scholarship underscores that Egypt's case is not an anomaly but a pronounced example of a global trend where migration governance is increasingly marketised([Lee & Yoon, 2021](#)). The political economy lens moves the discussion beyond legal compliance to the underlying structures of incentive and power that determine how laws are applied—or ignored([Voigt, 2021](#)). As Deshani and Ajward's work implies, the effectiveness and orientation of governance structures are paramount.

In Egypt, the centralisation of authority and the dominance of executive institutions create a governance model where deportation policy can be agile and responsive to political economic opportunities, but also opaque and unaccountable. The implications for Egypt are profound. This approach may yield short-term economic and diplomatic dividends, but it risks eroding the rule of law, damaging the nation's international standing on human rights, and fostering instability by treating vulnerable populations as mere economic variables.

Practically, it suggests that efforts by civil society or international bodies to improve deportation practices must engage with the economic and political incentives that drive the system, rather than solely advocating for legal reform. The relevance for scholarship is a necessary recalibration: understanding forced return requires analysing the 'corporate strategy' of the state—its risk assessments, its revenue streams (whether aid or political favour), and its operational culture—as much as it does parsing legal texts and bilateral agreements.

## Conclusion

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In conclusion, this review argues that the political economy dimensions are central to understanding Egypt's regime of deportation and forced return. The primary answer to the research problem is that practice is decisively shaped not by a hierarchical adherence to international law, but by a complex calculus of economic gain, diplomatic leverage, and domestic security management. The contribution of this analysis lies in applying a corporate governance framework, as elucidated by scholars like Deshani

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and Ajward , to state behaviour in the migration sphere, revealing the strategic, entrepreneurial logic underpinning Egypt's actions.

The most pressing practical implication for Egypt is the inherent instability and ethical hazard of this model, which commodifies human mobility and may ultimately undermine long-term governance legitimacy and regional cooperation. A critical next step for researchers and policymakers is to conduct granular, empirical studies that trace the direct linkages between specific deportation operations or bilateral readmission treaties and contemporaneous negotiations on aid, investment, or political alliances. Only by illuminating these concrete transactions can the full cost of a political economy-driven deportation regime be properly assessed and more principled alternatives be advocated.

## Contributions

This review highlights the book's significant contribution to the political science of migration governance. It provides a critical, interdisciplinary analysis of Egypt's deportation and readmission regimes, moving beyond a purely legalistic framework to expose their embeddedness in political economy.

By meticulously examining the interplay between international law, bilateral bargaining, and domestic practice from 2021 onwards, the study offers a novel template for understanding forced return as a tool of statecraft and economic negotiation. Its empirical rigour and theoretical synthesis establish a vital foundation for future comparative research in the region.

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