

Sudan says it is open to conditional interim deal on Ethiopia dam

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Sudan is open to a partial interim agreement on Ethiopia's multi-billion-dollar dam on the Blue Nile, with specific conditions, irrigation minister Yasir Abbas said on Monday, 14 June.



Ethiopia's Grand Renaissance Dam is seen as it undergoes construction work on the river Nile in Guba Woreda, Benishangul Gumuz Region, Ethiopia, 26 September 2019. Reuters/Tiksa Negeri

While Ethiopia is pinning its hopes of economic development and power generation on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), Egypt fears it will imperil its water supply and Sudan is concerned about the impact on its own water flows.

Sudan and Egypt agreed last week to coordinate efforts to push Ethiopia to negotiate "seriously" on an agreement on filling and operating the GERD.

Cairo and Khartoum had been aligned on the need for any agreement to be comprehensive, but Abbas's comments mark a potential shift in Sudan's position.



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"[The] conditions include the signing-off of everything that has already been agreed on in negotiations, ... provisions to ensure that the talks continue even after the filling scheduled for July, and the negotiations adhering to a definite timetable," Abbas told a news conference, citing a time crunch.

Ethiopia has said it will begin a second filling of the reservoir behind the dam during the rainy season this summer.

Talks overseen by the African Union, aimed at reaching a binding agreement, have repeatedly stalled.

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