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## Egypt 'surprised' by exclusion from US-Africa

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CAIRO: Egypt said on Wednesday it was "very surprised" by a decision by its longtime US ally to exclude it from a high-profile African summit being convened by President Barack Obama.

Egypt joins international pariahs Sudan and Zimbabwe in the short list of African countries not among the 47 invited to the August get-together.

US officials said that Egypt was ineligible to attend because it is suspended from the African Union following the military's overthrow of elected president Mohamed Morsi last July.

Egyptian foreign ministry spokesman Badr Abdelbati said the US decision was a "mistake" and displayed a "lack of vision".

"Egypt was very surprised by the US statement about its reasons, especially as the summit is not being held under the auspices of the African Union and is simply a summit between the United States and African countries," the spokesman said.

Washington stopped short of describing last year's overthrow of Morsi as a coup, which would have triggered the automatic suspension of all aid.

But it halted a slab of its \$1.5 billion a year in mainly military assistance last October in protest at the army's failure to move more quickly towards a return to elected civilian rule.

Last week, Egypt held a referendum on a new constitution drawn up by the military-installed authorities but US Secretary of State John Kerry responded: "It's not one vote that determines a democracy."