

Ships did not cut internet cables: Egypt

By [Global Research](#)

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Global Research, February 03, 2008

ABC 3 February 2008

Ships are not responsible for damaging undersea internet cables in the Mediterranean, Egypt's Government says.

Two cables were damaged earlier this week in the Mediterranean sea and another off the coast of Dubai, causing widespread disruption to internet and international telephone services in Egypt, Gulf Arab states and South Asia.

A fourth cable linking Qatar to the United Arab Emirates was damaged on Sunday causing yet more disruptions, telecommunication provider Qtel said.

Egypt's transport ministry said footage recorded by onshore video cameras of the location of the cables showed no maritime traffic in the area when the cables were damaged.

"The ministry's maritime transport committee reviewed footage covering the period of 12 hours before and 12 hours after the cables were cut and no ships sailed the area," a statement said.

"The area is also marked on maps as a no-go zone and it is therefore ruled out that the damage to the cables was caused by ships."

Earlier reports said that the damage had been caused by ships that had been diverted off their usual route because of bad weather.

A repair ship is expected to begin work to fix the two Mediterranean cables on Tuesday.

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