

Challenges ahead for Suez Canal

The Suez Canal opened in 1869 as a vital shipping shortcut, but 150 years later vessels have other options available for traversing the seas

BRIEF TIMELINE

- **Nov 17, 1869:** **Suez Canal** opens under French control after 10 years of construction
- **1882:** Britain invades Egypt, with French support, and takes control of canal
- **1888:** Canal declared neutral zone under UK protection
- **Jun 13, 1956:** Suez Canal restored to Egyptian sovereignty, following British withdrawal
- **Jul-Dec:** Egypt's **President Nasser** nationalises canal and closes it to Israeli shipping, sparking **Suez Crisis** – UK, France and Israel occupy canal zone
- **Dec 22:** Canal zone restored to Egyptian control after UN intervention
- **1967-1975:** Egypt closes canal to international shipping following war with Israel
- **2008:** New rules allow for passage of taller and deeper-keeled ships, including those carrying dangerous cargoes such as radioactive waste

