



# Summary of Mid-Term Report Submitted To The United Nations Human Rights Council

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## **Introduction**

- Egypt underwent its second Universal periodic Review during the 20<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council, during which Egypt received 300 recommendations; 223 were fully accepted and 24 were partially accepted, therefore, Egypt endorsed 82.4% of the recommendations received.
- Within the context of ensuring effective cooperation with the United Nations human rights mechanisms, the voluntary mid-term report of the Arab Republic of Egypt comes to indicate what has already been achieved before the third periodic review in 2019. The report has been prepared on basis of comprehensive consultations process involving all competent governmental and non-government agencies and representatives of civil society, in order to emphasize Egypt's keenness on promoting human rights.
- The report is divided into 13 sections that document Egypt's actual efforts to meet with its international human rights obligations and to promote civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights / respect, protection and empowerment of women / children's rights/ rights of persons with disabilities/ empowerment of youth/ fighting against corruption/rights of refugees, migrants and expatriates/confronting illegal immigration/ confrontation of human trafficking /upholding human rights while combating terrorism / and cooperation with international human rights mechanisms. This report documents some of the efforts carried out by the government of Egypt from 2015 until the end of 2017 in this



regard.

### **1. Egypt's International Human Rights Treaty Obligations**

- The Constitution reaffirms the State's commitment to the international conventions and covenants it ratifies, and gives them the force of law. The Constitution also obliges the State to establish a political system that respects human rights and fundamental freedoms.
- The Egyptian legislative environment embraces number of laws that confirm the State's commitment to its international human rights obligations.
- The Egyptian Government is in the process of reviewing the few reservations on the international human rights treaties and instruments, and has already withdrawn its reservation to article 21, paragraph 2, of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and Welfare of the Child, relevant to the prohibition of marriage under the age of 18.

#### **Civil and Political Rights**

- The final step of the political roadmap was achieved in late 2015 when free and fair parliamentary elections were held under the observation of non-governmental local and international organizations and foreign embassies.
- The establishment of an independent National Elections Committee (NEC) with the membership of judges. The NEC is responsible for supervising all elections and referendums to ensure the transparency, freedom, neutrality and fairness of the electoral process and to ensure implementing the will of voters.
- The Supreme Council of Media Regulation (SCM), the National Agency for the Press (NAP) and the National Agency for the Media (NAM) were established as independent entities aiming at ensuring and protecting the freedom of the press and the media. The Media Syndicate Law was also issued for the purpose of the promotion of freedom of opinion and expression.
- In 2017, Egyptian legislator turned a more advanced approach safeguarding the right to peaceful assembly by amending the law governing public meetings and demonstrations by Law no. 14 of the



year 2017, which stipulates that demonstrations shall be allowed by prior notification to Ministry of Interior, in case of the objection of the Ministry to allow the demonstration, the issue shall be referred to the judiciary who has the final word.

- Law no. 80 of the year 2016 relevant to the construction and renovation of churches was issued in an effort to enhance the right to free practice of religious rituals.
- Al-Azhar established an International Observatory to monitor sources which spread ideas of intolerance, violence and radicalism. The Observatory also aims to rectify misconceptions about religion and to reconsider the religious discourse in a modern way so as to be well received by youth.
- In the framework of the State's keenness to activate the mechanisms of monitoring and accountability, as serious examination of the complaints raised regarding individual violations by some police officers including torture. The statistics from 2014 to 2017 reveal the trial of 72 policemen charged with torture and ill treatment and the conviction of many of them with final sentences of imprisonment. The Ministry of Interior is also responsible for the prosecution of 31 policemen for individual offenses that did not amount to criminal accountability. This confirms the State's keenness on facing these abuses, which are very limited compared to the size of the police force and the huge amount of their daily dealings with thousands of citizens across Egypt.
- Amendment of the Law of the National Council for Human Rights in 2017 to grant it the right to visit prisons and places of detention, and to listen to prisoners in order to ascertain their proper treatment and enjoyment of their rights, in addition to the competence of judges and prosecutors to supervise prisons and places of detention to ensure the preservation of the life, health and dignity of those sentenced.
- The National Council for Human Rights (NCHR) and the National Council for Women (NCW) and the Human Rights Committee of the House of Representatives have carried out several inspection visits to prisons and police stations and published their reports on these



visits.

- The Ministry of Interior has taken a series of measures to provide health and social care of prisoners and their families. The most important of these measures was the renewal of detention rooms, the disbursement of pensions and assistance to 22,956 members of prisoners' families, in addition to the provision of 16618 scholarships to the children of inmates and the developments of prisons' hospitals.
- The Egyptian legislator has decided to impose the death penalty, like many countries in the world, for the perpetrators most serious crimes. The legislator surrounded this penalty with numerous guarantees such as the consensus of all members of the court and after the consultation of the Mufti as well as a mandatory appeal by the public prosecution office. On the other hand, Law of the Child prohibited the application of the death penalty on any individual who committed a crime while below the age 18. The same law also postpones the execution of pregnant women for 2 years after giving birth. Additionally, the law prohibits executions on public holidays and religious occasions.
- The President pardoned 1072 prisoners between 2014 and mid 2017.

### **3. Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**

- Based on the commitment of the State in accordance with the Constitution to achieve social justice and social solidarity to ensure a decent life for all citizens, the State has implemented a package of projects and programs:
- The "Takaful and Karama" program was launched, in cooperation with NGOs, aiming to provide a fair and effective social protection network for the needy. Number of beneficiaries of this program has reached almost 10 million.
- The number of beneficiaries of monthly social security was 1,750.00 at 2016 at a cost of 8,875 billion EGP.
- Increasing pensions under social insurance laws by about 35% during the period from 2015 to 2017.
- Implementation of the system to provide subsidized bread and goods



to 70 million citizens.

- A number of housing projects has been implemented covering different sectors of the community. Housing units have been allocated with a nominal monthly rent for low-income citizens, as well as the development and improvement of housing for the most families in need. The housing units were also provided with a symbolic rent for urgent cases. The State is also providing 74651 social housing units for the middle income citizens, while taking into consideration the citizens of the border provinces through constructing Bedouin homes and housing units in the governorates of Sinai, Red Sea and the New Valley. A total of 19700 units are planned to be constructed by 2024 at the aforementioned areas.
- The State has adopted a grand social housing project to create one million housing units in all governorates and new cities at a total cost of 150 billion EGP. 13000 housing units have been completed as an alternative to the units located in the hazardous areas within the frame of the project for developing the unsafe and slum areas. In total, 56 slum areas are being developed and renovated in various governorates.
- In compliance with article 18 of the constitution Law no. 2 of the year 2018 on the comprehensive social health insurance system was issued. The Law constitutes an important step in the strategic plan for the development of the healthcare system by 2030.
- The manufacture of the Virus C drug helped treating the patients of the hepatitis C virus in Egypt by reducing the cost of treatment to all patients by 85%. The waiting lists were ended, and the recovery rate was four times higher than the global cure rates. All governorates are being inspected now to provide treatment for all patients to eradicate hepatitis C virus in Egypt once and for all.
- In order to ensure the right of those unable to seek treatment are respected, the number of treatment on the expense of the State decrees during the past year reached 2,773,678 to treat 1,500,020 patients with a total expenditure of about 5 billion EGP.

#### **4. Empowerment of Women and Respect and protection of their Rights**

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- Out of the Egyptian State keenness on empowering women and elevating their role and status in society, and enhancing their leadership. In this context, the state took several measures:
- Decree Law no. 46 of the year 2014 on promulgating the Law on the House of Representatives was issued stipulating adequate representation for women in the House of Representatives. Number of elected women representatives is 76, in addition to 14 appointed women representatives, with total of 90 women representatives. Henceforth, women representation in the House of Representatives exceeds 15% compared to 1.5% in the 2012 parliament, the constitution also provides 25% of the seats of local councils for women.
- The President of Republic declared 2017 as the year of women. Besides, the strategy of women empowerment 2030 was launched, in cooperation with civil society organizations, parallel to the Sustainable Development Strategy: Egypt Vision 2030. This in addition to launching a campaign to combat violence against women, and national strategies to combat Female Genital Mutilation FGM and early marriages.
- Female was appointed for the first time as the national security adviser to the president of the Republic. In the meantime, the Cabinet includes 6 female ministers, they hold the offices of international cooperation and investment, planning and administrative reform, social solidarity, immigration and Egyptian expatriate's affairs, culture and tourism. Thus, women representation in the ministerial cabinet increased to 20%. A woman candidate was appointed for the first time as a deputy for the Central Bank governor, as well as a female as governor for the first time, 4 females as deputies of governors, mayors in some villages, deans in a number of colleges, 66 female judges, in addition to others in judicial authorities.
- Issuance of a law criminalizing the deprivation of inheritance of women, and the further intensification of the penalty for FGM by making it a felony instead of a misdemeanor.
- A total of 34 Equal Opportunities Units have been created in different ministries to ensure the provision of equal opportunities for both men and women in employment and at the workplace, in addition to



the provision legal awareness programs on the rights of working women.

### **5. Child Rights**

Egypt pays special attention to the rights of children, and has taken several executive and legislative measures in this respect:

- The government has, in collaboration with the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood and the civil society organizations, launched a national strategy for motherhood and childhood until 2023.
- Withdrawal of Egypt's reservation on Article 21/2 of the African Charter on Child Rights prohibiting effectuating marriages for persons under 18.
- Amendment of the age of children living with foster families to be 3 months instead of 2 years.
- Amendment of the Law organizing prisons to allow female prisoners to keep company of their children until the age of 4.
- Establishment of the first model court for children in Egypt.
- Development of the system of "alternative families" for children deprived of their own families. The number of alternative families reached 9794, caring for 9910 children.
- Establishment of a shelter facilities system for the shelter of children aged 6 to 18 years who have been deprived of family care. The number of such institutions is 345, serving 9082 children.
- Expansion of free school feeding programs to accommodate more than 11 million students to cover up to 81% of students enrolled in basic education in public schools.

### **6. Rights of People with Disabilities**

- The Egyptian constitution stipulates the obligation of the State to guarantee the rights of persons with disabilities to healthcare, as well as to ensure their economic, social, cultural, recreational, sports and education rights, and to integrate them with other citizens. It also obliges the State to take all necessary measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination against them. Among those measures are:



- The law of the House of Representatives reserved seats for persons with disabilities on all electoral lists. The number of elected and appointed MPs with disabilities reached 9 (8 elected and 1 appointed).
- The House of Representatives passed the law on the rights of persons with disabilities in 2018, guaranteeing their political, health, educational, cultural, social and sports rights, giving them many privileges such as, allocating a 5% quota for admissions to educational institution and the allocation of the exact percentage in each work place.
- The Civil Service Law no. 81 of the year 2016 was issued, and it includes the allocation of 5% of the total government jobs for persons with disabilities. The number of those employed has reached 40 thousand persons with disabilities until mid-2016.
- Allocation of 5% of social housing units for persons with disabilities and the preparation of special design codes that support the needs of persons with disabilities.
- The design of schools buildings in compliance with the specifications indicated in the disability code since 2005, and the implementation of the curriculum digitization project in order to transform the academic curricula of the disabled into high availability curricula to serve 18000 students with hearing and visual disabilities. In addition to the completion of the training of 12943 teachers in special education schools during 2015 and 2016.
- Provision of 75% discount on train tickets for the handicapped and the blind, with most railway stations providing wheelchairs for people with disabilities.
- Facilitating access to information on official websites by providing the advantage of reading all content on these sites in the voice program for people with visual disabilities .
- Necessary measures to prepare judicial courts to keep up with the needs of persons with disabilities were taken, in addition to measures to facilitate dealing with people with hearing disabilities through the training of special court officials on sign language.
- Allocation of a number of wards in some prisons for people with dis-



abilities, as well as the provision of number of vehicles equipped to transport people with disabilities, along with providing them facilities in a number of police stations, and the training of a number of officers on the sign language .

- Exemption of handicapped cars from customs and value added tax.

### **7. Rehabilitation and Empowerment of Youth**

- The Constitution of 2014 provides special care for young people, ensures the discovery of their talents, develops their cultural and scientific capacities, encourages them to grouping and voluntarily work, and enables them to participate in public life. Moreover, 25% of seats in municipal councils are allocated to youth. The State has also adopted the following measures:
- The law of the House of Representatives allocates a number of seats in each electoral list for young people. The number of young MPs under age 35 reached 39.
- The launch of the first political program for the rehabilitation and the training of young people on leadership skills and raising their competence to empower them to assume offices in various institutions of the State, in addition to the launch of the program of rehabilitation of middle leaderships of the state administrative apparatus so as to enable them to assume leadership positions, it is noteworthy that 2016 was the year of youth in Egypt.
- Convention of five national youth conferences during the years 2016 and 2017 with the aim of achieving direct communication between young people and senior officials of the State and to present their views in various fields, with the participation of nearly 8,000 young men and women from different governorates. The conferences were attended by the President, the prime minister, and the cabinet ministers along with number of parliamentarians. The conferences came-up with several recommendations, such as: the release of a number of prison young inmates upon a presidential pardon and the invitation of youth from all over the world to attend the "International Youth Forum" in Sharm El-Sheikh.

### **8. Fight against Corruption**



- For the first time, the Constitution of 2014 dedicates a whole chapter to independent and monitoring bodies, and confirms the State's commitment to combating corruption and promoting the values of integrity and transparency. This also includes some measures, among them are:
- Amendment of the law of the Administrative Control Authority to be in charge of the fight against corruption in all its forms and take the necessary measures to prevent it in compliance with the provisions of the United Nations Convention against Corruption.
- Launch of the National Strategy for Combating Corruption 2014-2018, which is being implemented by all concerned governmental and non-governmental bodies.
- Establishment of the National Committee of the recovery of stolen assets.
- Establishment of a national commission for the recovery of looted state land.

#### **9. Rights of Refugees and Affairs Relating to Migration and Expatriates**

- In the framework of the State's keenness on the enjoyment of Egyptians living abroad of their political rights, the law of the House of Representatives includes the provision enabling Egyptians abroad to have a number of candidates in electoral lists. The recent elections resulted in the election of eight Egyptian members abroad.
- The State established a ministry for immigration and affairs of Egyptians living abroad. The Ministry plays an important role in supporting their rights.
- In the field of caring for refugees, the State continues to cooperate with the UNHCR by supporting and facilitating the work of its office in Cairo. In the meantime, Egypt hosts few millions of refugees, guaranteeing them freedom of residence, movement and employment, as well as access to all services enjoyed by every Egyptian citizen.

#### **10. Combating Illegal Immigration and Smuggling of Migrants**



- In view of the increasing dangers resulting from this phenomenon globally, and in line with Egypt's obligations under the United Nations Convention against Transnational Crime and its protocol, the Law on the prevention of Illegal Immigration and Smuggling of Migrants was issued in 2016. This law stipulates the criminalization of all forms of this crime, and obliges the State to provide appropriate measures to protect smuggled migrants, giving them the right to return voluntarily to their countries. While paying particular attention to women and children in the same year, the National Strategy for Combating Illegal Migration was launched to raise public awareness on this phenomenon aiming to build bridges of cooperation between all national, regional and international parties.
- These efforts resulted in a significant reduction of illegal migration rates across the Egyptian borders.

#### **11. Combating Human Trafficking**

- Recognition of the seriousness of human trafficking as a criminal practice incompatible with established human values, the State has taken many serious measures to combat this crime, among them:
- Establishment of the National Commission for the Prevention and Control of Illegal Immigration and Trafficking in Persons.
- Endorsement of a national strategy to combat human trafficking.
- Establishment of specialized judicial criminal circuits to confront such crimes.
- A protocol of cooperation with the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM) was finalized to provide safe premises for girls and women victims of trafficking.

#### **12. Respect for Human Rights while Countering Terrorism**

- Out of Egypt's commitment to the fight against terrorism in accordance with fair trial guarantees and human rights values, the laws against terrorism and terrorist entities have been enacted to regulate the provisions and rules on criminalization and punishment in the field of combating terrorism and its financing, guided by the international and regional experiences in this field.



- The National Council for Combating Terrorism and Extremism was established in order to mobilize all institutional and societal capacities to reduce the causes of terrorism and address its effects by adopting a comprehensive national strategy to confront terrorism and extremism.
- Egypt led the Committee on Terrorism in the United Nations Security Council during the term of (2016- 2017). Egypt also periodically submits to the Human Rights Council resolutions on the impact of terrorism on the enjoyment of all human rights.

### **13. Cooperation with International Human Rights Mechanisms**

- Out of Egypt's commitment to cooperating with International human rights mechanisms, a national committee was set to prepare Egypt's report on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) mechanism before the UN Human Rights Council and to propose policies and measures to implement the recommendations of the UPR. Also, another governmental committee was formed to respond to international complaints concerning human rights as well as various correspondence and inquiries received from the special procedures of the Human Rights Council, in addition the committee is to prepare periodic reports for UN Human Rights Council along with number of regional organizations, and inviting six special mandate holders to visit Egypt in the coming period.
- As a culmination of the State's efforts to support and promote human rights, the Egyptian Cabinet endorsed in November 2017, a comprehensive national vision for the promotion and protection of human rights that included the following:
  - Development of a national human rights strategy.
  - Speed-up the preparation of draft laws in support of the rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution in accordance with Egypt's international obligations in the field of human rights.
  - Dissemination of human rights culture among citizens.
  - Establishment of a human rights unit in every ministry and governorate.



- Continuous communication with international human rights organizations, and active participation in their activities.
- Participation of NGOs in the development of plans that uphold human rights values.
- Conclusion
  - The report shows Egypt's rapid and continuous steps to ensure the human rights of its citizens, which, if not perfect, are on the right track. Egypt is striving to implement its international human rights obligations despite all the challenges it faces which range from economic challenges to terrorist attacks attempting to cause the country's disintegration, the nation's division and preventing Egypt from achieving comprehensive development process.
  - In conclusion, Egypt submits its mid-term (voluntary) report confirming its commitment to fulfill the international obligations and countering terrorism and its determination to move forward to realize its people's aspirations for a democratic system based on respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and looks forward to further progress and development.