



CAIRO INSTITUTE
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS STUDIES
Institut du Caire pour les études des droits de l'homme
مركز القاهرة لدراسات حقوق الإنسان

United Nations Human Rights Council: 28th Session
Item 6: UPR Egypt- Oral Intervention
Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS)
20 March 2015

Thank you Mr. President,

The Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS) on behalf of ten leading Egyptian Human Rights Organizations, would like to remind the government of Egypt that the ultimate success of the UPR process is measured by improvement of the human rights situation on the ground through the implementation of its recommendations, and not on how many promises are made.

Egypt received a total 319 recommendations from 121 states during its review session. We acknowledge the provisional release of 3 journalists from arbitrary detention and amendments to the Child Law in Egypt. Yet, despite the government welcoming the UPR review as a step to improve the country's human rights record, the overall practices of Egyptian authorities over the last four months continue to propagate rights violations and ignore almost all UPR recommendations made during Egypt's review.

Egypt received 38 recommendations in relation to the rights to peaceful assembly and association. Still, violations of these freedoms are on the rise. The majority of assemblies are met by excessive use of force.

On January 24, a protest of activists holding banners and flowers was attacked by the police resulting in the killing of the woman human rights defender Shaimaa Al-Sabbagh. On 8 February, the police forcefully dispersed a few thousand football fans resulting in the tragic death of some 22 people.

Thousands of individuals, including children, are still in prison since July 3rd 2013 for protesting against government policies; including prominent

activists like Ahmed Douma, Ahmed Maher, Mohamed Adel, and Alaa Abdel Fattah.

Women rights defenders Yara Sallam and Hend Nafea, researchers with two of the co-signatories organizations, have received a two year sentence and life imprisonment respectively for allegedly participating in peaceful protests. These are but a few examples.

More than a hundred detainees were killed as a result of torture in detention facilities throughout the past two years with little investigation into these crimes.

Concerning freedom of association, attacks against NGOs continues unabated. Such attacks include judicial harassment- such as the issuing of travel bans, criminal investigations for rights related activities, the continued imprisonments of NGO workers, and the very real threat of a complete crackdown against independent civil society in Egypt. This has resulted in some organizations transferring portions of their programs outside the country, while others have decided to shrink their scope of work leading to downsizing their workforce. The intentions of the government are clear: Do away with the independent human rights community in Egypt through every tool at its disposal.

On 17 February, the Egyptian president issued a decree on terrorist entities. The decree's criminalization of what it refers to as "advocating by any means the disruption of public order and national unity", is yet another piece of vague legislation that poses the grave threat of criminal sanctions against civil society.

The government of Egypt's ability to combat terrorism and poverty will not be realized unless its citizens and civil society enjoy the full array of civil, political, economic and social rights. It is rights and representation that hold the key to stability and prosperity in Egypt, and not the model of government brutality and repression we are currently witnessing.

The signatures:

- 1. Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies**
- 2. Andalus institute for tolerance and anti-violence studies**
- 3. Arab Network for Human Rights Information**
- 4. Association for Freedom of Thought and Expression**
- 5. Center for Appropriate Communication Techniques**
- 6. Center for Egyptian Women's Legal Assistance**

- 7. Egyptian Center for Economic and Social Rights**
- 8. Egyptians Against Religious Discrimination**
- 9. El-Nadeem Centre for the rehabilitation of victims of violence and torture**
- 10. Nazra for Feminist Studies**
- 11. The Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights**