



Briefing Notes Summary

Group 62 – Information Centre for Asylum and Migration

Egypt – July to December 2025

31. December 2025

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07. July 2025

Detention of six people for supporting the "Global March to Gaza"

On 30.06.25, the Supreme State Security Prosecution ordered the detention of six Egyptians and one Egyptian woman for 15 days after they were interrogated for their support for the Global March to Gaza.

The six people were arrested in mid-June 2025, coinciding with a crackdown by the authorities on foreigners who had travelled to Egypt to join the "Global March to Gaza" (cf. BN of 16.06.25). According to the human rights organisation Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights (EIPR), which is providing legal assistance to some of the detainees, they were visited at home and arrested. Security forces forcibly disappeared the six defendants before they appeared before the public prosecutor a few days later, who charged them with membership of a terrorist organisation and publishing false news.

During the detention extension hearing, the prosecution rejected a complaint against the continued detention of one defendant, who is 67 years old and suffers from several health problems such as high blood pressure and diabetes, according to EIPR. The lawyers' arguments regarding the lack of evidence for the accusations against the defendants were also ignored.¹

14. July 2025

RSF: Call on German authorities to protect journalist in exile from transnational repression

On 07.07.25, Reporters Without Borders (RSF) issued a public statement calling on the German authorities to protect Egyptian journalist Basma Mostafa from alleged surveillance, intimidation, and harassment by the Egyptian authorities in Germany.

Mostafa, who has spent over ten years exposing cases of police torture, extrajudicial executions, and sexual violence against women in Egypt, has been arrested three times and left the country in 2020. She currently lives in Berlin after being granted protection status in Germany in 2022. According to a report by the UN Special Rapporteur dated 23.12.24, the Egyptian authorities persecuted and harassed the journalist in exile through continuous surveillance and smear campaigns on social media. They also threatened her with serious violence, including rape. According to the UN report, on 18.07.22, she was threatened by several people on the sidelines of a demonstration against the visit of Egyptian President al-Sissi to Berlin and beaten by a man with connections to the Egyptian embassy in Berlin. She then received threatening letters at her home address and there were calls on social media to rape her. She was also followed and attacked by several people.

Following the UN report, Luise Amtsberg, the then Federal Commissioner for Human Rights, issued a statement on 16.04.25, condemning the attempts to intimidate Basma and calling on the Egyptian government to respond. According to RSF, dozens of media workers and other human rights defenders in exile on German soil are being persecuted, with many of them feeling that they are not adequately protected by the German authorities.

The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) accuses Egypt of playing a leading role in transnational repression, for example through the arrest of relatives of dissidents, the blocking of exile media, the surveillance of media workers with spyware, and the denial of consular services.²

28. July 2025

Growing resistance to the government's diplomatic stance in the Gaza war

According to media reports, on the night of 25 July 2025, a group called "Iron 17" stormed the state security headquarters at the Ma'asara police station in Helwan and detained several security officers for several hours. Videos of the raid were reportedly shared widely on social media.

The Egyptian Interior Ministry immediately issued a statement denying the authenticity of the videos and claiming that they had been faked as part of a conspiracy by the Muslim Brotherhood. Although the arrest of the perpetrators was announced, no details were given about the background to the incident. Another video from "Nation's Flood," distributed via the same social media channel, showed one of the young men covered in blood and with torn clothing, insisting that they were not terrorists and had only used an alarm pistol to send a message. He asked one of the arrested officers for assurances that nothing would happen to them if they were released. However, communication with the group was abruptly cut off shortly afterwards and all previous messages on the channel disappeared. Prior to this, an audio message in the style of a manifesto had been distributed, calling for an end to the war in Gaza and an end to political oppression in Egypt.

According to media reports, the incident was an expression of growing anger among the population over Egypt's role in the ongoing humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip and the closure of the Rafah border crossing. The Egyptian government faces accusations that it is not exerting sufficient pressure for the crossing to be reopened and is therefore partly responsible for the situation of the Palestinian civilian population.

Shortly before that, according to media reports, the Egyptian government had pressured the leadership of Al-Azhar University to withdraw a statement published on 22 July 2025 condemning Israel's "genocide by starvation" in Gaza. In response, the university issued a public statement on 23 July 2025 saying that it had deleted a strongly worded appeal regarding the situation of the Palestinian population in Gaza because it could have an impact on the ongoing ceasefire negotiations. Al-Azhar justified the decision on the grounds of a perceived moral responsibility, stating that although the statement was true, its publication could be used by Israel as a pretext to obstruct the negotiations or delay the entry of humanitarian aid workers. Nevertheless, the move was interpreted by supporters of the Palestinians as capitulation to political pressure and triggered fierce reactions.

In addition, a sustained wave of protests began last week in front of Egyptian embassies abroad, triggered by a protest action by activist Anas Habib on 21 July 2025 in the Netherlands. Habib symbolically locked the gates of the embassy to protest against the closure of the Rafah border crossing.³

04. August 2025

Increase in deaths in custody

Various human rights groups are warning of a rise in deaths among prisoners in Egyptian prisons and police stations due to poor conditions and the use of torture. In May, the Geneva-based human rights organisation Committee for Justice (CFJ) reported that at least 15 prisoners had died in custody in 2025, most of them due to medical neglect. In July 2025, 15 prisoners reportedly attempted suicide in the notorious Badr 3 prison within just two weeks. Last week, an Egyptian human rights organisation reported that there had been two deaths in custody within a short period of time. First, on 25 July 2025, the death of a 21-year-old student was reported at the Belqas police station in the Dakhalia province northeast of Cairo as a result of several days of torture. His arrest on 19 July 2025, the reasons for which are unknown, had triggered local protests in front of the courthouse. Video footage of the clashes with security forces was shared on social media. On 27 July 2025, there was a report of the death of a 25-year-old man in the detention centre of the al-Saff police station in the province of Giza, shortly after he had been arrested together with his brother for allegedly attempting to steal a motorised rickshaw.⁴

08. September 2025

Rent control abolished

Egypt's parliament has abolished rent caps for contracts concluded before 31 January 1996. The adjustment is to take place in two phases: over five years for commercial properties and over seven years for residential properties. The reform will allow rents to rise up to 20-fold in some regions. Critics warn of impending displacement, housing shortages and overburdened households in the context of high inflation and stagnating real incomes.⁵

Women appointed as deputy delegates to the State Council for the first time

On 7 September 2025, women were appointed to the rank of deputy delegates to the State Council for the first time by presidential decree of 26 August 2025. The State Council (Majlis al-Dawla) is the highest administrative court in Egypt and is an independent judicial body that plays a central role in upholding the rule of law and protecting civil rights vis-à-vis the state. The presidential decree removes the last hurdle preventing women from holding all judicial offices in Egypt.

The presidential decree, published in the Official Gazette under number 447/2025, appoints a total of 207 law graduates from the class of 2021 as delegates. The 48 female judges appointed are the first to enter the Council of State through the regular channels, starting at the entry level of the legal career.⁶

15. September 2025

HRW: Repressive measures against media professionals

According to a report published by Human Rights Watch (HRW) on 10 September 2025, the Egyptian authorities have been carrying out mass arrests and prosecutions of online media professionals since July 2025.

According to the Egyptian Ministry of the Interior, between July and August 2025, the authorities arrested or prosecuted at least 29 people, including at least 19 women and one child, for online content. According to HRW, credible reports document eight additional cases. The authorities made vague allegations against those affected, such as violations of public morality, undermining family values and money laundering, which resulted from allegedly offensive videos they had made public on social media.⁷

22. September 2025

Draft amendment to criminal procedure law

On 21 September 2025, President al-Sisi initially rejected a parliamentary draft amendment to the 1950 Criminal Procedure Code. The draft, which he received on 26 August 2025, is to be revised again due to ambiguities in the wording of the law. In addition, better guarantees are to be formulated for the rights of defendants in investigations and court proceedings, as well as for the protection of privacy and the inviolability of the home. The controversial amendment to the law provides, among other things, for a reduction in the length of pre-trial detention, but otherwise expands the powers of the public prosecutor's office and investigative authorities. It gives the authorities far-reaching powers to monitor private communications, particularly on the internet, and enables them to impose travel restrictions.⁸

06. October 2025

Legalisation of 160 churches

On 5 October 2025, the Egyptian Cabinet's Main Committee for the Legalisation of Churches and Related Service Buildings approved 160 churches and service buildings that had already been built. This decision brings the total number of churches and related buildings legalised since the committee began its work in January 2017 to 3,621. Until 2016, the approval of construction or renovation work on churches was bound by outdated regulations, including the Hamayouni Decree of 1856 and the "Ten Conditions of al-Ezabi" of 1934, which imposed restrictions based on local population structures and proximity to mosques. As a result, many Christian communities were unable to obtain official licences, leaving thousands of churches operating without legal status. Law No. 80 on the construction and restoration of churches, passed by parliament in 2016 to implement Article 235 of the Constitution, transferred responsibility for approving church construction from the president to provincial governors and stipulated that decisions must be made within four months. Above all, it enabled the legalisation of existing unauthorised churches through a special committee chaired by the Prime Minister.⁹

13. October 2025

HRW report on the detention of Ismail Iskanderani

On 8 October 2025, Human Rights Watch (HRW) reported that Egyptian security forces had arrested well-known journalist Ismail Iskandarani on 24 September 2025 for several posts on social media.

During the incident, Iskandarani posted on social media that security forces had stopped him at a police checkpoint in the province of Matrouh. According to one of his lawyers, an officer from the National Security Agency then confiscated Iskandarani's mobile phone, blindfolded him and took him to an unknown location. After several hours, the officers took him to the Supreme State Security Prosecution (SSSP), where prosecutors questioned him about 17 posts on his Facebook page. In addition, the prosecution refused to allow his lawyers to inspect the investigation file and the charges, explaining them only verbally. The prosecutor's office ordered Iskandarani to be held in custody for 15 days and charged him with "spreading false news," "belonging to a terrorist organisation" and "using a website to spread ideas that incite terrorist acts." On 5 October 2025, the pre-trial detention was extended by another 15 days via video conference. According to HRW, lawyers are not allowed to speak confidentially with their client.

Iskandarani had previously been convicted in a military trial for his journalistic work and subsequently served a seven-year prison sentence between 2015 and 2022.

According to HRW, video conferencing systems have been misused in Egypt since 2022 to conduct remote hearings to extend pretrial detention without bringing detainees before a judge. This system undermines the principle of fair trial, as it prevents judges from assessing the legality and conditions of detention and the well-being of detainees. It also violates several guarantees of fair trial, including the right to legal counsel.¹⁰

03. November 2025

Attacks against Christian community in Minya province

According to reports from human rights organisations, on 22 October 2025, angry residents of a village in the municipality of Beni Mazar attacked the homes of several Christian families and destroyed their property.

The incident was triggered by rumours and the subsequent search for a Muslim girl who had been found in the house of one of the Christian families attacked. The family's 17-year-old son was accused of kidnapping the girl, whereupon an angry mob gathered in the village. Unknown individuals from the crowd allegedly threw bricks at the houses of several Christian families and set fire to several huts on agricultural land. Security forces are said to have intervened too late. After the incident, a traditional "community court" was convened, which reportedly fined the Christian family one million EGP and ordered them to leave the village after selling their property.¹¹

10. November 2025

Parliamentary elections

The first phase of a two-stage election process for the Egyptian House of Representatives begins on 16 November 2025. Egyptians living abroad were already able to cast their votes on 7 and 8 November 2025.

The House of Representatives has 596 seats. Of these seats, 284 are elected by direct, secret ballot. Another 284 seats are filled through a closed list system, while 28 members are appointed by presidential decree. A quarter of the seats must be filled by women.

According to Egyptian media, the election will be held in 5,606 polling stations. Fourteen governorates will vote in the first phase and 13 in the second. The first phase of the election covers the governorates of Alexandria, Assiut, Aswan, Beheira, Beni Suef, Fayoum, Giza, Luxor, Matrouh, Minya, New Valley, Qena, Red Sea and Sohag. The second phase of the election covers Cairo, Daqahlia, Damietta, Gharbia, Ismailia, Kafr El-Sheikh, Munoufia, North Sinai, Port Said, Qalyubia, Sharqia, South Sinai and Suez.

The results of the election are not expected to be fully announced until the end of December 2025. The term of office for members of the House of Representatives is five years. The House of Representatives elections follow the 2024 Senate elections and are expected to be the last elections in President al-Sisi's third and final term, which is currently scheduled to end in 2030.¹²

01. December 2025

Parliamentary elections in 26 constituencies declared invalid

On 29 November 2025, Egypt's Supreme Administrative Court declared the results of the parliamentary elections in 26 constituencies invalid due to violations. This meant that a total of 64% of the election results were declared invalid. On 10 and 11 November 2025, the first phase of the parliamentary elections was held to elect members of the House of Representatives in 14 of Egypt's 27 governorates (see BN of 10 November 2025). The court ruled to invalidate the election process and annul the results in 26 constituencies in nine governorates.

The court's decisions were based on appeals from candidates. The appeals heard pointed to widespread use of bribes, vote buying and ineffective control of campaign financing. Election committees were criticised for failing to document violations. The National Election Authority did not initially comment on the court ruling.

The ruling came after the electoral authority announced on 18 November 2025 that the election would have to be repeated in 19 of 70 constituencies, i.e. in half of the governorates included in the first phase, after fundamental violations had been identified. The court ruling brings the number of constituencies declared invalid to 45 out of 70. The repeat election is scheduled for December. The second and final phase of the election took place on 24 and 25 November 2025 in 13 governorates with 73 constituencies. The results of the second phase of the election are expected to be announced on 2 December.¹³

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