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EGYPT'S 'DECADE OF SHAME': UNRELENTING ASSAULT ON HUMAN RIGHTS SINCE RABAA MASSACRE

Ten years ago today, when security forces unlawfully killed over 900 people during their dispersal of sit-ins at Rabaa al-Adawiya and Nahda squares in Cairo (the “Rabaa massacre”), it was a critical turning point for human rights in Egypt. Since then, the human rights situation has deteriorated, reaching new lows, as the authorities have intensified their all-out assault on peaceful dissent and shielded officials from accountability.

To date, the authorities acting under President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi have failed to bring a single official to account for the massacre. Instead, they have imprisoned thousands of people in an attempt to silence, intimidate and collectively erase the memory of the appalling events that day, 14 August 2013.

In the “decade of shame” that has followed the lethal dispersal of sit-ins by supporters of former president Mohamed Morsi, who the military ousted on 3 July 2013, Egyptian authorities have trampled on human rights with the aim of eradicating any challenge to their iron grip on power.

The crackdown initially targeted members and supporters of the ousted president and the Muslim Brotherhood, but quickly extended its reach to cover anyone who dared to bear witness or question the authorities’ brutal crackdown, criticize them or seek to revive the demands of the “25 January Revolution” of 2011 for freedom and social justice.

Under the guise of countering terrorism and restoring stability, in the decade since the Rabaa massacre, the authorities have [passed](#) and [implemented](#) draconian legislation that essentially criminalizes peaceful protests, online criticism and independent human rights, civic or political work, and erodes fair trial safeguards.

Egypt continues to be plagued by mass arbitrary detention of dissidents and critics, including those who took parts in protests in August [2013](#). Emergency, military and special terrorism circuits of criminal courts have convicted and sentenced hundreds of people to death or long prison terms, including life imprisonment, in grossly unfair mass trials. Enforced disappearances, torture and other ill-treatment targeting opponents are routine.

The mass persecution of Muslim Brotherhood members and supporters contrasts sharply with the failure of prosecution authorities to investigate and hold to account anyone who ordered, planned or committed human rights violations in relation to the violent dispersal of sit-ins on 14 August 2013.

Simultaneously, the Egyptian authorities have intensified efforts to conceal their grim human rights record and mislead the international community and public opinion. Such efforts include the launch of the [National Human Rights Strategy](#) in September 2021 and the National Dialogue in May 2023, as well as piecemeal releases of prisoners. These limited steps cannot obfuscate the reality that Egypt’s human rights and impunity crisis persists.

Without addressing the legacy of the mass unlawful killings 10 years ago, Egypt cannot emerge from its human rights crisis. Members of the international community must not allow the Egyptian authorities to erase the memory of this darkest of days in Egypt’s recent history, and should instead echo the demands of survivors, victims’ families and human rights defenders for truth, justice and reparations.

Given the lack of political will in Egypt to end the crackdown and the impunity for crimes under international law and other serious human rights violations, states should support meaningful pathways for accountability such as the establishment of a monitoring and reporting mechanism on the human rights situation in Egypt at the UN Human Rights Council. They should also put pressure on the Egyptian authorities in public and in private to address the human rights crisis in Egypt,

starting by releasing the thousands of government critics and opponents arbitrarily detained, including those with links to the Muslim Brotherhood.

TEN WAYS IN WHICH THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION HAS DRASTICALLY DETERIORATED IN THE “DECADE OF SHAME”

The brutal dispersal of sit-ins on 14 August 2013 marked a turning point for the Egyptian authorities’ approach to dissent. Below is a summary of 10 human rights concerns that have increasingly plagued Egypt in the 10 years since the massacre.

1. ERADICATION OF STREET PROTESTS

Following the military’s ousting of President Mohamed Morsi in July 2013, security forces ruthlessly cracked down on sit-ins and protests using unlawful [lethal force](#) and [mass arrests](#). The deadly dispersal of the [Rabaa al-Adawiya](#) and Nahda sit-ins on 14 August 2013, which led to the unlawful killing of at least 900 people and thousands of injuries, sent out a chilling message to deter future protests.

Since 2013, the government has shown zero tolerance of any street protests and introduced draconian laws that effectively criminalize the right to freedom of peaceful assembly. Chief among them is [Law No. 107/2013](#) that grants security forces free rein to ban protests and use excessive and lethal force against peaceful protesters.

The crackdown has effectively eradicated street protests. Even the rare peaceful gatherings that had taken place in previous years have been met with brutal force and mass arrests. When people took to the streets nationwide in September [2019](#), the authorities used excessive and unnecessary force, rounding up at least 2,300 people. Of these, only 103 were tried – in relation to protests in the city of Suez. In January 2023, an [emergency court](#) convicted 82 of the 103, including 28 who were children at the time of the events, and issued prison sentences ranging from five years’ to life imprisonment. The remainder of those arrested in connection to the September 2019 protests were either released without charge, remain in abusive pretrial detention or were convicted in grossly unfair trials on charges unrelated to the 2019 protests.

Similarly, in response to calls for peaceful protests on 11 November 2022 during the UN Climate Change Conference (COP27) in Sharm El-Sheikh, the authorities made hundreds of [arbitrary arrests](#). The only protests that took place at the government-designated protest site in [Sharm El-Sheikh](#) were organized by government supporters condemning the campaign for the release of Egyptian prisoners at COP27.

In today’s Egypt, there is no right to peacefully protest. Muslim Brotherhood members and supporters who took part in the Rabaa al-Adawiya and Nahda sit-ins – as well as human rights defenders, journalists, lawyers and others who criticized the government’s brutal response and sought to defend the human rights of those most affected by the crackdown – have paid a heavy price. Some have been killed during protests or died in custody. Some remain unjustly behind bars. Some have been forced into exile or silence.

2. ARBITRARY DETENTION

The Egyptian authorities have misused the criminal justice system, counter-terrorism legislation and other repressive laws and practices to arbitrarily detain thousands of people solely for peacefully exercising their human rights.

The years following the Rabaa massacre witnessed a proliferation of violent attacks by armed groups, particularly in North Sinai governorate, that targeted ordinary residents, members of the judiciary as well as military and security forces. The authorities have used security threats as a pretext to clamp down on peaceful opposition and human rights.

In the wake of the murder of Public Prosecutor Hisham Barakat in June 2015, authorities adopted draconian new counter-terrorism legislation that arbitrarily restricts the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association. They have since used this legislation to keep thousands of people in abusive, pretrial detention pending investigation into unfounded terrorism-related charges.

Although hundreds have been released since the reactivation of the Presidential Pardons Committee in 2022 including high-profile human rights defenders, journalists and politicians who should have never been behind bars in the first place, actual or perceived members and supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood have been [excluded](#). Other prominent activists at the forefront of the “25 January Revolution” in 2011, including [Alaa Abdel Fattah](#) and [Ahmed Douma](#) have also been excluded.

Several of those released [told](#) Amnesty International that National Security Agency (NSA) officials ordered them to remove critical content from their social media, summoned them for interrogation, banned them from travel and threatened them with re-arrest. Not heeding these instructions led to re-arrests. For example, [Sherif al-Ruby](#) was arrested in September 2022 only three months after his release. His “crime” was to complain in a media interview about the hardships faced by former prisoners.

Despite talk of reform and the launch of the long-awaited National Dialogue with elements of the political opposition in May 2023, arrests of actual or perceived critics and opponents continue. At least 1,482 people were arrested and appeared before the State Supreme Security Prosecution (SSSP) for questioning on terrorism-related charges or for spreading “false news” between 1 January and 31 July 2023, according to information recorded by Amnesty International. Among them is Egyptian activist [Moaz al-Sharkawy](#), who was arrested on 11 May 2023 at his Cairo home and forcibly disappeared for 23 days, during which he was beaten while blindfolded and interrogated without the presence of his lawyer. He then appeared before a SSSP prosecutor who ordered his pretrial detention pending investigations into bogus charges of joining and funding a terrorist group. He remained in detention at the time of writing.

3. LACK OF DUE PROCESS AND UNFAIR TRIALS

Amnesty International has repeatedly documented the use of [prolonged pretrial detention](#) to keep thousands of actual or suspected critics or opponents in jail without charge or trial, sometimes for periods exceeding the maximum limit under Egyptian law of two years. Prosecutors with the SSSP and judges routinely renew the pretrial detention of thousands of detainees pending investigation into bogus terrorism-related accusations, without allowing suspects to meaningfully challenge the legality of their detention.

Fair trial guarantees were further eroded in 2022 when the authorities introduced a new videoconference system to conduct pretrial detention hearings in front of courts remotely, with detainees not physically present in the same courtroom as judges and lawyers. In May 2023, this system was extended to interrogations by prosecutors of newly arrested suspects. Such hearings take place under coercive circumstances in the presence of prison guards, and detainees are prevented from communicating privately with their lawyers. Further, they expose detainees to risks of reprisals from guards for complaining about torture or other ill-treatment, and impede the ability of judges to notice visible bruises or other injuries.

SSSP prosecutors also frequently bypass decisions by judges or prosecutors to release individuals from prolonged pretrial detention by ordering their detention in new cases on similar charges in a practice known as “rotation”. For example, [Anas al-Beltagy](#), son of imprisoned Muslim Brotherhood leader Mohamed al-Beltagy, has been in prison since December 2013 despite being acquitted by courts in four different cases, and being provisionally released by a judge in a fifth case. The SSSP ordered his detention pending investigations into a sixth case. He must be immediately and unconditionally released as he is solely held because of his family affiliation.

Members and supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood arrested during the protest and sit-in dispersals in 2013 or the subsequent crackdown, as well as human rights defenders, political opponents, journalists, lawyers and others, who were eventually tried after spending years in abusive pretrial detention, have faced grossly unfair proceedings in front of emergency or military courts, or terrorism circuits of criminal courts. For instance, over [440 people](#) were convicted and sentenced in a grossly unfair mass trial in connection to protests by supporters of Mohamed Morsi in August 2013 in the vicinity of the Fath Mosque in Cairo, including unjustly jailed [Badr Mohamed](#) who was just 17 years old at the time of the events.

4. DEATH PENALTY

Since the ousting of Mohamed Morsi in 2013, Egyptian authorities have used the death penalty as a tool of repression to consolidate their grip on power, punish opponents and spread fear. Over the past decade, [courts](#) have imposed more than 4,000 death sentences, and over 400 people have been executed, mostly following grossly unfair mass trials.

In September 2018, in relation to the Rabaa al-Adawiya sit-in, the [Cairo Criminal Court](#) imposed 75 death sentences and 47 life sentences as well as heavy prison sentences of five to 15 years on 612 people convicted in a grossly unfair mass trial of participating in unauthorized protests and violence against security personnel and others. On 14 July 2021, the [Court of Cassation](#) upheld the death sentences against 12 people, including senior Muslim Brotherhood figures, who remain on death row. Meanwhile, security forces continue to evade justice for the hundreds of unlawful killings they committed in dispersing the sit-in.

After a spike in executions between October 2020 and September 2021, when 150 people were put to death, many following grossly unfair trials, the number of [executions dropped](#) to 24 in 2022. The decline has continued in 2023, with two executions recorded up to 31 July. However, Egyptian courts continue to sentence hundreds of people to death after proceedings falling far short of international standards for fair trial, with 538 sentenced in 2022 and 388 in the first seven months of 2023.

The recorded executions are likely to be an underestimate, as Egyptian authorities do not publish statistics on executions or the number of prisoners on death row, and do not respond to Amnesty International's annual requests for this information.

5. ATTACKS ON THE MEDIA AND OTHER FORMS OF EXPRESSION

Minutes after the ousting of Mohamed Morsi on 3 July 2013, the authorities forced at least [six pro-Muslim Brotherhood TV](#) channels off the air, raided their offices and arrested media workers. Since then, the authorities have further suppressed independent reporting, consolidated their grip on the media landscape and intensified their crackdown on journalists daring to deviate from the official narrative using a wide range of [repressive tactics](#). These include online censorship, raiding and closing independent media outlets, and controlling content in both public and private media.

The authorities also continue to arbitrarily detain and prosecute journalists and other media workers simply for expressing critical views or carrying out their media work. At least 23 journalists are behind bars at the time of writing. Among them is [Tawfik Ghanem](#), a 67-year-old journalist, who has been detained since May 2021 in relation to his previous work with Anadolu Agency, a Türkiye-based news agency, pending investigations by the SSSP into “spreading false news”, “misusing social media” and terrorism-related accusations.

In 2018, the authorities enacted four laws consolidating their control of print, online and broadcast media. The [media and cybercrime laws](#) have enabled the authorities to censor and block media outlets, social media platforms and blogs, and to criminalize media content on vague and broad national security grounds.

The authorities have also blocked more than 600 news, human rights and other websites since May 2017, according to [rights groups](#). These include Mada Masr, Manassa and a few other national, independent online media platforms. [Staff](#) at these outlets have faced security raids at their offices, arrests, prosecutions on politically motivated grounds and other forms of harassment.

These draconian tactics not only violate media workers' right to freedom of expression, but also the general public's right of access to information.

6. HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS AND CIVIC SPACE

Since President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi came to power, the authorities have sought to control the human rights movement and restrict civic space. They have deployed multiple tactics, including repressive legislation, unfair prosecutions or other forms of judicial harassment, unlawful surveillance, inclusion on the "list of terrorists", travel bans and freezing of assets.

Independent Egyptian human rights NGOs bravely operate under the threat of closure or prosecution for failure to register under the repressive Law No. 149/2019, by the government-imposed April 2023 [deadline](#). The law gives the authorities [overly broad powers](#) to oversee the registration, activities, funding and dissolution of NGOs. It restricts the activities of NGOs by limiting their work to "societal development", a vaguely defined concept that could be used to effectively ban human rights work. The Arab Network for Human Rights Information, one of Egypt's oldest human rights organizations, [suspended its operations](#) in January 2022 after 18 years, citing the repressive environment and its inability to carry out human rights work under the draconian law.

In the over decade-long criminal investigation into the legitimate work of civil society organizations in Case No. 173/2011, known as the "foreign funding case", at least 14 NGO workers remain under investigation and banned from travel, with their assets frozen. Other human rights defenders are serving unjust prison sentences. For example, [Ezzat Ghoniem](#), founder of the human rights group Egyptian Coordination for Rights and Freedoms, human rights lawyer [Hoda Abdelmoniem](#) and 28 others were convicted on 5 March 2023 on absurd charges stemming from their human rights work or peaceful dissent, following a grossly unfair trial by an emergency court. They were sentenced to prison terms ranging from five years to life.

In December 2013, Egypt declared the Muslim Brotherhood a [terrorist group](#) and in August 2014 dissolved its affiliated Freedom and Justice Party. The authorities criminalized the group's activities and have arrested [thousands of people](#) on the basis of their actual or perceived affiliation with the party. They have also arbitrarily arrested scores of other opposition politicians, some of whom remain unjustly jailed, including former presidential candidate and founder of Masr al-Qawya party [Abdelmoniem Aboufotouh](#). On 29 May 2022, an [emergency court](#) sentenced him along with the party's deputy head Mohamed Al-Kassas to 15 and 10 years in prison, respectively, over trumped-up terrorism-related charges and for "spreading false news".

The stifling environment has led countless human rights activists, dissidents, journalists and opposition politicians to flee Egypt, but even that has not always ended their persecution. The authorities have continued to [carry out reprisals](#) against dissidents and critics abroad to punish them and force them and others into silence. They have targeted [Egypt-based families](#) of activists abroad through arbitrary detention and other forms of harassment. Egyptian consulates abroad have systematically refused to provide or renew dissidents' passports and other official documents, apparently to intimidate them and pressure them to return to Egypt.

7. TORTURE AND OTHER ILL-TREATMENT

[Torture and other ill-treatment](#) are widespread and systematic in Egypt's [prisons](#), [police stations](#) and NSA-controlled [facilities](#). Methods of torture consistently reported by victims and witnesses include electric shocks, suspension by the limbs, indefinite solitary confinement, sexual abuse, beatings, deliberate denial of healthcare and threats.

Amnesty International has gathered testimonies from former detainees and other informed sources who describe [cruel, inhuman and degrading](#) conditions of detention across Egyptian prisons, including overcrowding and inadequate accommodation, poor ventilation, substandard sanitation and hygiene, shortage of nutritious food, and little or no access to fresh air and exercise. Prison authorities also intentionally place some detainees held for political reasons in prolonged [solitary confinement](#) and bar them from family visits for years.

Since 2013, dozens of people have died in custody amid reports of denial of healthcare or torture, including over 100 suspicious deaths in custody in [2021](#) and [2022](#). From 1 January to 31 July 2023, Amnesty International recorded 18 deaths in custody involving credible reports of torture or prolonged denial of adequate healthcare.

Ousted President Mohamed Morsi [died in custody](#) on 17 June 2019. During his detention he was held in solitary confinement for almost six years and denied family visits and adequate access to healthcare. The then Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions Agnes Callamard and other UN independent experts found that Mohamed Morsi's death could amount to a [state-sanctioned arbitrary killing](#). Vice chairman of the dissolved Freedom and Justice Party [Essam El-Erian](#), arrested in 2013, also died in prison – in August 2020 – following years of unaddressed complaints of poor detention conditions and denial of healthcare.

The authorities have opened new prisons in recent years to great fanfare, only for the same [human rights violations](#) documented at the notorious Tora Prison Complex to be reproduced in them. For instance, in Badr 3 Prison, opened in 2022, prisoners are held in [horrific and punitive](#) conditions and denied regular contact with the outside world. Fluorescent lights and CCTV cameras are kept on around the clock and access to basic necessities such as sufficient food, clothing and books is denied. While conditions for some prisoners held for political reasons have improved in recent months, including for those transferred to the 10th of Ramadan prison in Sharqia in mid-2023, the authorities continue to reserve the most cruel and inhuman treatment for Muslim Brotherhood members and their families. For instance, [Aisha el-Shater](#), daughter of imprisoned senior figure in the Muslim Brotherhood Khairat el-Shater, continues to be held incommunicado and denied access to adequate healthcare despite suffering from aplastic anaemia, a rare and serious condition affecting the blood.

8. ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES

[Enforced disappearances](#) have plagued Egypt for the [past decade](#) as the NSA and other security forces routinely hold those accused of involvement in terrorism or protests incommunicado and deny any information about their fate and whereabouts to their relatives and lawyers for periods ranging from a few days to 23 months, according to Amnesty International's documentation. During this time, detainees are tortured and otherwise ill-treated, and coerced into "confessing" or incriminating others. Secret NSA reports, to which suspects and lawyers do not have access, are then used as evidence in prosecutions and trials, amid the abject failure of the [SSSP](#) to investigate allegations of enforced disappearance and torture.

In a particularly shocking case, the NSA forcibly disappeared [Manar Adel Abu al-Naga](#), her husband Omar Abdelhamid Abu al-Naga, and their then one-year-old son al-Baraa, from their home in Alexandria on 9 March 2019. Their family and lawyers spent 23 months searching for them until Manar Adel Abu al-Naga appeared on 20 February 2021 before the SSSP facing terrorism-related charges, and her son was handed over to relatives.

Authorities also regularly remove detainees held in political cases from their known places of detention following court orders for their release or completion of their sentences, and then subject them to enforced disappearance. Families and lawyers are denied any information until victims reappear in front of SSSP prosecutors, who routinely order their detention pending investigations in new cases over similar unfounded accusations.

Despite overwhelming evidence, the [authorities consistently](#) deny their use of enforced disappearance. They insist that all detentions are carried out in compliance with Egyptian law, with state and pro-government media dubbing those denouncing the practice as “traitors”, “terrorists” and “members of the Muslim Brotherhood”. Authorities also carry out reprisals against those daring to seek truth and justice for their forcibly disappeared loved ones. For example, [Ibrahim Metwaly](#), a human rights lawyer, co-founder of the Families of the Disappeared in Egypt group and father of a victim of enforced disappearance, has been arbitrarily detained since his arrest on 10 September 2017 at Cairo airport while on his way to Geneva to address the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances.

9. DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS, RELIGIOUS MINORITIES, AND LGBTI+PEOPLE

Despite [self-congratulatory](#) statements about respecting and protecting the rights of women and minorities, the Egyptian authorities continue to violate the rights of men, women and children on the basis of their sex, gender identity, sexual orientation and religious beliefs.

Laws discriminate against women and girls in relation to marriage, child custody, inheritance, bodily autonomy and privacy. [Authorities](#) have failed to adequately prevent and investigate violence against women and girls or end abusive practices by the police, and have violated the confidentiality and privacy of survivors who seek to report rape or other sexual violence. In some cases, the police publicly blame victims of sexual violence, accusing them of “inappropriate” clothing or behaviour, further entrenching impunity for these crimes.

The authorities have also consistently [targeted](#) LGBTI+ individuals and activists through arbitrary arrests and prosecution for their real or perceived sexual orientation on charges of “habitual debauchery”, a term used to criminalize consensual same-sex sexual relations between adults and penalize those engaging in such activity. To allegedly “prove” they engaged in same-sex activities, the authorities subject those arrested to invasive [anal examinations](#), a practice that amounts to rape and torture.

A wave of sectarian [attacks](#) on Coptic Christians swept across Egypt on 14 August 2013 as the security forces violently dispersed protest camps set-up by supporters of deposed President Mohamed Morsi. The attacks damaged dozens of churches, church-affiliated buildings, schools and Coptic Christian-owned businesses. The authorities failed bring those responsible to justice in fair trials, repair the damaged churches, provide victims with reparations or protect them from further attacks. Although the authorities hailed [Law No. 80/2016](#) on the Construction and Repair of Churches, they have in fact used it to restrict or prevent Christians from building and repairing churches by requiring approval from security agencies and other state bodies, which involves lengthy and complicated procedures.

Meanwhile, members of the Baha’i community continue to live in the shadows in Egypt as their “public activities” are criminalized under discriminatory Law No. 263/1960 that bans Baha’i forums.

10. IMPUNITY

The Egyptian authorities [have refused](#) to carry out independent, impartial and comprehensive investigations or prosecute a single official in the 10 years since the Rabaa massacre . Instead, they have intensified their crackdown on anyone seeking truth and justice for the massacre and have shielded security forces from accountability.

A fact-finding committee established by the then interim president, Adly Mansour, in December 2013 has not released a full report. In 2014, it issued the [executive summary](#) of its findings, which largely blamed the killings in Rabaa on protest leaders although it did acknowledge that security forces had not only targeted protesters who were allegedly armed. Judicial investigations by the public prosecution focused solely on the alleged crimes of protest leaders and protesters.

Impunity was further [entrenched](#) when President Adel Fattah al-Sisi ratified a law in 2018 granting immunity from prosecution to top military leaders for any act committed in the course of their duties between 3 July 2013 and 10 January 2016.

Continuing a long-established pattern, the authorities have failed to investigate and prosecute any officials for the [unlawful use of force](#) against protesters since the Rabaa massacre, including on 16 August 2013 when the violent dispersal of protests around [al-Fath Mosque](#) in Cairo left over 100 people dead.

Additionally, the authorities have consistently failed in the past decade to conduct independent, effective and transparent investigations into crimes under international law and other serious human rights violations, such as extrajudicial executions, torture and other ill-treatment, and enforced disappearances, including in cases where relatives of victims and detainees [complained](#) directly to [prosecutors](#) or judges. No adequate investigations have been carried out into the causes and circumstances of the dozens of deaths in custody reported since 2013. Even in the rare cases when criminal prosecutions have been opened into suspicious deaths in custody, usually against low-ranking police officials, accountability has remained elusive. For instance, two police officials convicted of torturing to death lawyer Karim Hamdy in Mattareya police station in 2015 were acquitted on retrial and released in March 2017. In other cases documented by Amnesty International, [authorities prosecuted](#) those reporting torture instead of opening investigations into their claims.

BACKGROUND

On 3 July 2013, amid growing public discontent and anti-government protests, the then minister of defence, Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, ousted President Mohamed Morsi from office on the grounds that he had to “prevent bloodshed after Morsi failed to meet the demands of the Egyptian people and unify them.” The former president and his aides were taken into military custody. His supporters staged protests and sit-ins in Cairo, mainly in Rabaa al-Adawiya and al-Nahda squares. After weeks of [unlawful killings](#) by security forces and violent clashes between supporters and opponents of the Muslim Brotherhood, and following a public call by Abdel Fattah al-Sisi for a nationwide show of support to give the army and police a mandate to crack down on “terrorism”, the security forces used unnecessary and excessive force, including lethal fire, to clear the sit-ins on 14 August 2013.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

To break the cycle of rampant human rights violations and impunity, Amnesty International reiterates the following recommendations, calling for:

The Egyptian authorities to:

- Conduct thorough, effective, impartial and independent investigations into allegations of enforced disappearances, torture and other ill-treatment, including forced anal examinations, extrajudicial executions and other unlawful killings and bring those suspected of criminal responsibility to justice through fair trials without recourse to the death penalty. Those reasonably suspected of committing crimes should be suspended from positions that would allow them to commit further violations, interfere in investigations or grant them immunity, pending investigations.
- Immediately and unconditionally release all those arbitrarily detained solely for the exercise of their human rights or for reasons of discrimination on any grounds including religion, gender identity and sexual orientation, including human rights defenders, political activists, members of opposition parties, trade unionists, workers, peaceful protesters, journalists, lawyers, social media influencers, members of religious minorities, and medical professionals. Release those held in prolonged pretrial detention pending investigations into unfounded terrorism-related or national security-related charges amid severe concerns over the lack of due process. Many of those held

in pretrial detention have exceeded the absolute two-year limit for pre-trial detention stipulated by Egyptian law and have been denied the right to meaningfully challenge the legality of their detention.

- Take measures to ensure that prisoners are held in conditions that meet international standards and ensure that all those held have access to timely and adequate medical care as well as their families and lawyers.
- Bring legislation in line with Egypt's obligations under international human rights law, including by repealing or amending laws that criminalize the exercise of human rights and erode fair trial guarantees.
- Establish an immediate moratorium on executions, commute all death sentences and reduce the number of crimes punishable by the death penalty, with a view to abolishing it.
- End reprisals against human rights defenders, civil society workers, journalists, activists and families of victims simply for standing up for human rights and for seeking justice.
- Repeal or amend all legislation that is discriminatory on the grounds of sex and/or gender; and stop prosecuting people on the basis of their real or perceived gender identity or sexual orientation.

The International community to:

- Privately and publicly call on the Egyptian authorities to take meaningful steps to improve the human rights situation in the country, starting by:
 - immediately and unconditionally releasing all those arbitrarily detained solely for the peaceful exercise of their human rights or for reasons of discrimination on any grounds including religion, gender identity and sexual orientation;
 - ending reprisals against human rights defenders and civil society workers; closing the criminal investigations into the legitimate work of human rights NGOs, known as Case 173/2011, lifting all arbitrary travel bans and asset freezes against civil society workers and human rights defenders, and guaranteeing a safe and enabling environment for human rights organizations, including by amending Law No. 149/2019 on NGOs to bring it in line with international human rights law and standards on the right to freedom of association; and
 - respecting the right to freedom of peaceful assembly, and issuing clear instructions to security forces to comply fully with international standards governing the use of force by law enforcement officials, as set out in the Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials and the Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials.
- Support efforts for the creation of meaningful accountability pathways, including the establishment of a monitoring and reporting mechanism on Egypt at the UN Human Rights Council.