

PERIODIC REPORT OF EGYPT TO THE AFRICAN
COMMISSION ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES
RIGHTS
FOR 2017

Introduction:

Since the submission of its last report, Egypt has witnessed tangible progress in the field of human rights, in line with the provisions and spirit of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, civic, political, economic, social and cultural rights, with particular emphasis on the rights of women, children and physically challenged persons. Based on its convictions and commitment to the principle of equality without any discrimination, Egypt has spared no efforts in guaranteeing human rights for all its citizens to preserve their human dignity within the context of a democratic society founded on freedom liberty and justice.

In a regional environment characterised by volatile internal developments, Egypt witnessed the eruption of the popular revolution of 25th January 2011 when the people of Egypt demanded the overthrow of the regime and the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms, raising the banner of freedom, decent living and social justice. Political events then unfolded, leading to the election of a President from the Muslim Brotherhood in June 2012. The turnout in that election was 51.8% and the candidate won 51.7% of the votes. However, the people were surprised that the new president continued to pursue despotic policies that undermined the rule of law and ran counter to the objectives of the January 25 Revolution.

These policies entrenched the concentration of power in the hands of the President's party. The President issued a constitutional declaration by virtue of which he shielded his decisions from judicial oversight and attacked the independence of the judiciary with the removal of the Attorney General. He equally failed to enforce court rulings that did not favor the political interests of his group,

His supporters also besieged the headquarters of the Supreme Constitutional Court to prevent it from performing its work. The President and his party adopted political rhetoric that incited hatred and violence among the citizenry and discriminated against them according to their political and religious affiliations. Also, the committee formed by the President to develop a constitution consisted solely of the supporters of the President's political group, chosen on religious grounds. Despite a judicial ruling that nullified the formation of that committee for violating democratic standards, a constitution was drafted on December 25, 2012, that was largely exclusionary and contained blatant aberrations from the power of constitutional legislation; this was followed by the dismissal of a number of judges of the Supreme Constitutional Court.

When the people discovered that the President had deviated from the objectives of the January revolution which he promised to achieve, and that he was jeopardizing the rule of law, a movement of popular protests and demonstrations began. Although a popular campaign to collect citizens' signatures in support of an early presidential election was initiated, attracting around 22 million citizens, this was dismissed by the President. His supporters met these peaceful demonstrations with violence and intimidation. Faced with this rejection, nearly 30 million citizens took to the streets on June 30, 2013 to demand the overthrow of the existing regime and correct the course of their revolution. Thus, the political and popular forces agreed on a national road map to rebuild constitutional institutions and establish a democratic system that addresses the shortcomings of the previous phase. A 50-member-committee of members of Egyptian society was formed to amend the constitution. A revised constitutional draft was adopted in a popular referendum

that won the support of 98.1% of the electorate, with women participating to an unprecedented degree in the referendum process.

An amended constitution was issued on January 18, 2014 which represented a victory for the objectives and principles of the revolution. This new constitution also constituted a quantum leap towards improving the human rights situation in Egypt. This was followed by presidential elections held in mid-May 2014 in the second phase of the roadmap. The participation rate of Egyptians at home and abroad reached 47.45% of the total number of voters with the currently serving president winning with 96.91% of the total vote, amid high participation by women. By the end of 2015, the final form of the road map was completed with the election of members of the House of Representatives. The country witnessed presidential and parliamentary elections which were monitored by a host of civil society organizations and representatives from the African Union, as well as a number of regional and international organizations, with observers unanimously agreeing that the electoral process met all the criteria of transparency, neutrality and integrity, culminating in the creation of an institutional basis for the establishment of a democratic system based on respect for human rights and basic freedoms.

This report submitted to the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights covers the period from 2001 to 2017. It reflects the efforts and actions taken by the state during that period to promote and protect human rights, taking into account all the commission's observations regarding the previous report, each of which we will mention.

This report includes two main parts: The first revolves around general rules to ensure the respect and protection of human rights in Egypt, while the second deals with the rights contained in the African Charter, as follows:

Part One

General rules to ensure the protection and respect of human rights in Egypt

This section includes:

Introduction: Statistical Indicators.

First: Egypt's contribution to international human rights charters.

Second: Legal Framework for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in Egypt.

Third: The Legal Status of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights.

Fourth: Authorities guaranteeing the effective enforcement of human rights principles and available remedies.

Fifth: Declaration and publication of human rights conventions

Introduction: Statistical indicators

2017 2006 Statement

997.7 Land size (1000 km²)

94,798,827 72,613,352 Total Population

2.56% 2.4% Rate of population growth

13.6% 10.6% Population ratio under the age of 5 years

11.1% 10.5% population ratio from age 5-9

9.5% 10.6% Population ratio (Age 10-14)

58.9% 62.1% Population ratio (Age 15-60)

6.7% 6.0% Population ratio over 50 years

42.2% 43.0% Urban population ratio

57.8% 57.0% Rural population ratio

Population features

Education Status

Statement	2006	2017
Illiteracy rate at 10 years and over	%29.7	%25.8
Percentage of university degree holders	%9.5	%12.4

Workforce

Statement	2016
Percentage of the labor force of the population	%31.8

Social Status

2017	2006	Statement (Percentage of total population)
% 65.6	Unavailable	Percentage of married
% 26.5	Unavailable	Percentage of never married

% 6.5	Unavailable	Ratio of divorcees and widows
4.0	4.2	Average family size

Economic Indicators

Statement	2016/2015	2017/2016
Annual growth rate of GDP	%4.3	Unavailable
Average per capita GDP at prices Current (EGP)	29762	Unavailable
Ratio of State budget deficit to GDP	%12.3	Unavailable
Ratio of external debt to GDP	%18.1	Unavailable
Inflation rate (in fiscal year)	10.7	24.6
Unemployment rate	%12.2	%11.5

Evolution of the number of employees:

)(Unit in hundreds)	
Year	Number of Employees
2014	242987
2015	247788
2016	253311

Distribution of workforce

Statement	2006	2017
Percentage of females in the labor force	Unavailable	%23.6
Number of employees (million)	Unavailable	25.3
Percentage of the labor force of the population	Unavailable	%31.8
Total work force (in hundreds)	Unavailable	289335

Women and the right to work (2015/2016):

Statement Total number of employees

(males and females) Number of workers

(Female) Percentage of female workers

%

Public Sector 5771915 1161625 20.1

Occupants of senior management positions

In public sector 9232 1769 19.2

Contribution of women to jobs

Primary schools 418944 257556 61.5

Contribution of women to jobs

intermediate schools 253305 131052 51.7

Contribution of women to jobs

General Secondary schools 106237 4349340.9

Contribution of women to jobs

Secondary schools Industrial 955754147043.4

Contribution of women to jobs

Secondary schools Agricultural 137495236 38.1

Contribution of women to jobs

Secondary schools Commercial 396012258657.0

Educational indicators

Basic Education:

Statement	2016/2015
Number of Primary schools	18085

Number of Secondary schools	11466
Class density in primary school stage	45 students per class
Class density in se school stage	42 students per class

Higher Education Indicators

Unit in number

Statement 2016/2015

Number of students admitted to public and private universities 2368441 2368441

Number of university graduates 261803

Number of students enrolled in technical institutes of Ministry of Education 116858

Number of Graduated Students in Technical Institutes of

Ministry of Education 50438

Number of students enrolled in post - graduate studies 127198

The State's efforts in the provision of health services and raising awareness in 2016:

Statement	Males	Females
Life expectancy at birth for males and females	70.5	73.3
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 births)	25	27
Mortality rate for children under five years of age (Per 1,000 births)	30	30
Rate of vaccination of children (all vaccinations)	%90.9	%91.2

Statement	2014
Total Fertility Rate *	
According to the latest Egyptian health survey in 2014	3.5

* Definition of Total Fertility Rate: The average number of births per woman in her reproductive life.

Number of cases treated at state expense:

Statement	2015	2016
Domestic (number in thousands)	1808	2264
Overseas (in numbers)	54	62

<u>Governorate</u>	Social Rehabilitation offices for persons with disabilities		Social Rehabilitation offices for persons with disabilities Internal/external		Intellectual Education Institutes Internal/external		Family guidance and counselling offices		Institutions for children deprived of family care	
	Number of homes	Number of occupants	Number of homes	Number of occupants	Number of homes	Number of occupants	Number of homes	Number of occupants	Number of homes	Number of occupants
Total	204	69 959	25	547	68	3 313	184	13 951	473	9 597
Cairo	22	8 219	4	251	32	1 029	11	600	223	3730
Alexandria	8	6 556	-	-	12	1 454	8	863	36	698
Port Said	2	478	-	-	1	33	2	362	6	94
Suez	3	615	2	7	1	98	5	911	2	26
Damietta	4	1004	2	9	10	279	5	389	2	69
Dakahlia	11	4 185	1	1	-	-	16	485	13	289
Alsharqia	12	5 050	1	-	3	29	16	780	12	562
Kaleiyobeah	8	4 862	1	32	2	202	7	472	12	422
Kafr El Sheikh	11	1 518	-	-	1	39	10	671	2	54
Algharbia	9	2 982	2	34	-	-	9	2 001	25	610
Monoufia	8	2 869	1	24	-	-	8	225	5	135
Elbehaira	7	2 618	-	-	2	44	10	1 180	11	282
Ismailia	6	1521	2	21	-	-	7	187	4	169
Giza	10	5 494	-	-	2	83	9	938	63	1 149
Bani Sweif	7	2 695	-	-	-	-	9	715	11	207
Fayoum]	5	1 177	-	-	-	-	1	50	4	144
Minya	9	4 128	1	3	2	23	12	825	11	165
Assiut	12	1 416	2	22	-	-	9	761	6	341
Sohag	11	3 323	1	10	-	-	4	275	4	99
Qena	8	2 202	1	-	-	-	7	173	7	74

Aswan	7	2 797	2	122	-	-	4	846	3	44
Luxor	5	1 617	-	-	-	-	3	30	8	182
Red Sea	5	506	1	6	-	-	4	14	-	-
New Valley	2	560	-	-	-	-	3	47	-	-
Matrouh	4	689	-	-	-	-	1	80	1	18
North Sinai	6	659	1	5	-	-	3	60	1	24
South Sinai	2	219	-	-	-	-	1	11	1	10

social care homes and the number of occupants in accordance with the type of home in the governorates 2015

Governorate	Elderly care institutions		Expatriate homes		Beggars care		Delinquent minors remand		Welfare associations for prisoners and families		Total	
	Number of homes	occupants	number of homes	Number of occupants	Number of homes	Number of occupants	Number of homes	Number of occupants	Number of homes	Number of occupants	Number of homes	Number of occupants
Total	167	3 961	233	16 627	7	403	37	5 589	7	982	1 405	124 929
Cairo	69	1 431	52	2 006	1	69	11	4 632	-	-	425	21 967
Alexandria	21	1275	12	1 202	2	124	6	314	-	-	105	12 486
Port Said	2	101	15	2 184	-	-	1	25	1	37	32	3 314
Suez	1	26	7	781	-	-	1	6	-	-	22	2 470
Damietta	2	23	1	53	-	-	2	61	-	-	28	1 887
Dakahlia	5	72	12	689	1	40	2	52	-	-	61	5 813
Alsharqia	1	-	4	249	-	-	1	53	1	72	51	6 795
Kaleyo-beah	6	115	7	404	-	-	-	-	-	-	44	6 509
Kafr El Sheikh	2	25	3	308	-	-	2	13	-	-	31	2 628
Algharbia	9	89	6	386	1	31	1	24	1	26	63	6 184
Monoufia	2	28	8	414	1	73	1	34	-	-	34	3 802
Elbehaira	5	69	3	398	-	-	1	-	-	-	39	4 591
Ismailia	2	26	-	-	-	-	1	17	1	500	23	2 441
Giza	23	510	7	317	-	-	1	203	1	307	115	9 001
Bani Sweif	4	44	8	484	-	-	1	18	-	-	40	4 163
Fayoum	1	10	15	591	-	-	1	7	-	-	27	1 979
Minya	4	45	18	769	-	-	1	24	1	9	59	5 991

Assiut	2	15	9	777	1	66	1	44	1	31	43	3 473
Sohag	1	4	8	1 247	-	-	1	26	-	-	30	4 984
Qena	3	38	11	896	-	-	-	-	-	-	37	3 383
Aswan	1	6	9	1 425	-	-	1	36	-	-	27	5 276
Luxur	1	9	3	145	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	1 983
Red Sea	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	526
New Valley	-	-	4	357	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	964
Matrouh	-	-	4	305	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	1 092
North Sinai	-	-	5	195	-	-	-	-	-	-	16	943
South Sinai	-	-	2	45	-	-	-	-	-	-	06	285

First: Egypt's contribution to international human rights conventions:

In light of the global willingness to establish binding international rules to promote respect for and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, Egypt has been keen to adhere to most regional and international conventions issued both before and since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In addition to the international conventions enumerated in the previous report, during the current reporting period Egypt has acceded to the following African conventions:

- African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, ratified by Presidential Decree No. 33 of 2001.
- The African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption, ratified by Presidential Decree No. 204 of 2014.

Second: The legal framework for the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Egypt

1. Human rights and fundamental freedoms:

Articles 1 through 18 include rights pertaining to human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to equality before the law; the right to respect for the dignity inherent in every human being and to the recognition of his/her legal status; the right to liberty and personal security; the right to resort to competent local courts; the right to freedom of belief and the exercise of religious rituals; access to information; the right to form associations with others; the right to freedom of movement and choice of residence; the right to freely participate in the management of public affairs in the country; the right to property and to inviolability excepting only cases of necessity or public interest, and the right to work under equal and satisfactory conditions, as well as the right to receive healthcare, education and family protection, as detailed in those texts.

In order to ensure that citizens enjoy all those rights, Egypt has taken several measures, as follows:

Egypt's commitment to respecting these rights has been reflected in the Egyptian legal system, where the Constitution is the fundamental law governing the arms of the state, the system of government, the powers of the state, and its jurisdictions, the regulation of the legal relationship between them, and the rights and fundamental freedoms of individuals, as well as the guarantees in place for the protection of those rights. The Constitution guarantees all the rights and responsibilities that Egypt has recognized and adhered to, according to the regional and international conventions to which it has acceded. The national legislation has been included in accordance with the provisions of the constitution.

These rights are enshrined in the Egyptian Constitution of 1971 and in the amendments to Articles 40 to 63, which remained in effect until the revolution of January 25, 2011. A number of constitutional declarations were issued afterwards, followed by the 2012 Constitution and finally the 2014 Constitution which provided for those rights and obliged the state to safeguard them, as furnished in the provision of Articles 7 to 26 related to social issues, Articles 27 to 46 concerning economic issues, Articles 47 to 50 pertaining to cultural matters, and Articles 51 to 93 dealing with rights, freedoms and public duties, with all of these collectively protecting the principles of equality before the law and ensuring no discrimination for any reason.

The principles of human rights in the Egyptian legal system are equal to the constitutional rule, which derives its powers from the Constitution. The legislative authority commits to including these principles in all items of national legislation. Any exception to this would violate the constitutional rules which are higher than the legal ones, with fundamental freedoms included in the Egyptian Constitution. As a result, human rights and fundamental freedoms represent constitutional rules that are superior to other legal norms and enjoy constitutional and judicial protection through the Supreme Constitutional Court, which is empowered to adjudicate on the constitutionality of laws in order to ensure legally binding legislation for all. This is a basic guarantee to ensure that no laws can be passed which are contrary to these founding principles.

Legislative authority, in addition to stability.

The Egyptian legislature was keen to introduce legislative amendments to the previous laws in order to pass the new constitution, to ensure compliance with its provisions, to criminalize certain acts that constitute violations of human rights, and to impose appropriate penalties in accordance with international human rights conventions pursuant to Article 151 of the 1971 Constitution and Article 93 of the Constitution of 2014, which ensures the state's compliance with international conventions and international covenants on human rights ratified by Egypt, which have the force of law. These include the Child Act No. 12 of 1996, amended by Law No. 126 of 2008, the Labor Law No. 12 of 2003, the Egyptian Nationality Law 26 of 1975, as amended by Act No. 154 of 2004, and the Environment Law No. 4 of 1994, amended by No. 9 of 2009, Law No. 64 of 2010 on Combating Human Trafficking , and the Immigration Law No. 82 of 2016, as well as the amendment of some provisions of the Penal Code No. 58 of 1937 and the Code of Criminal Procedure No. 150 of 1950.

Several laws and resolutions have been issued since 2011 to enforce Egypt's international obligations under human rights conventions. Among the most important laws issued during this period are the following:

- a. Law No. 10 of 2011 to criminalize acts of intimidation, and disturbance of the peace.
- b. Law No. 11 of 2011 and Law No. 50 of 2014, introducing harsher penalties for crimes of violence against women.

- c. Law No. 34 of 2011 to criminalize the violation of the right to work and vandalism
- d. Law No. 111 of 2011 amending the provisions of the Press Law to establish the right to share information.
- e. Law No. 130 of 2011 to approve the electoral system for Egyptians abroad in the general elections and referenda, and
- f. Law No. 14 of 2012 on the Integrated Development of the Sinai Peninsula.
- g. Law No. 23 of 2012 for the approval of a health insurance system for dependent women.
- h. Law No. 86 of 2012 on health insurance for children under school age.
- i. Law No. 106 of 2013, prohibiting the conflict of interests of state officials to combat corruption.
- j. Law No. 107 of 2013, regulating the right to hold public meetings, processions and peaceful demonstrations.

Following the implementation of the Constitution of 2014, after the conclusion of the parliamentary elections, Parliament worked to amend some national legislation in line with the new provisions of the constitution, including:

1. Law No. 8 of 2015 regarding the organization of terrorist entities and terrorists.
2. Law No. 94 of 2015 on Combating Terrorism.
3. Law No. 78 of 2016 amending the Penal Code to increase the penalty against FGM, in recognition of the right to bodily integrity and the fight against violence against women.

4. Law No. 80 of 2016 on the regulation of the construction of places of worship to guarantee the freedom of Christian citizens to practice religious rituals.
5. Law No. 81 of 2016 promulgating the Civil Service Law, concerning the right to work.
6. Law No. 92 of 2016 on the Institutional Organization of the Press and Information, and the establishment of the Supreme Council for Media Regulation as an independent body with technical, material and administrative independence and prohibition of interference in its affairs in compliance with the constitution.
7. Law No. 93 of 2016 establishing an independent media syndicate.
8. Law No. 14 of 2017 amending the Law on the Right to Public Meetings, marches and Peaceful Demonstrations promulgated by Law No. 107 of 2013, as ruled by the Supreme Constitutional Court.
9. Law No. 197 of 2017 amending certain provisions of Law No. 94 of 2003 establishing the National Council for Human Rights in order to boost the powers of the Council in accordance with the Constitution.
10. Law No. 198 of 2017 concerning the establishment of the National Electoral Commission as an independent body in accordance with the Constitution.

In the context of ensuring the protection of children's rights, Presidential Decree No. 75 of 2015, approving the withdrawal of Egypt's reservation to Article 21/2 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child of 1990, which prohibits the marriage of minors and sets the minimum age for marriage at 18 years, also made marriage registration mandatory.

In the framework of combating and preventing human trafficking, illegal immigration and smuggling of migrants, Egypt ratified the Arab Convention against Transnational Organized Crime on November 20, 2014. In an effort to combat corruption, which is a major impediment to development and an obstacle to administrative reform, Egypt joined the African Union Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Corruption in 2017.

The aforementioned procedures and other measures too numerous to be catalogued here are all aimed at preserving social peace and public order and promoting the enjoyment of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights by all citizens without discrimination due to gender, color or creed, in addition to promoting the spirit of tolerance in society. Equally, in line with its efforts to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, the Council of Ministers approved in November 2017 a comprehensive national vision that includes the following:

- a. To form a committee to develop a national strategy for human rights in order to maximize and streamline all efforts in this domain, with the participation of all governmental and non-governmental bodies concerned with human rights.
- b. The rapid completion of other draft laws relating to fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution, in line with Egypt's international obligations in the area of human rights, and the presentation of these before the House of Representatives.
- c. Effective communication with national independent councils and national human rights NGOs, as partners with the government in this area.

- d. Spreading the culture of human rights among citizens and raising awareness about the importance and means of practicing these in society.
- e. Establishing a human rights unit within each ministry and governorate to monitor their implementation, to receive complaints and to strive to resolve and deal with these.
- F. To develop and implement programs and training courses for civil servants in order to enhance their knowledge and practical skills in the field of human rights.
- G. To strengthen the government's involvement with local NGOs in providing basic services to citizens by including a representative of the Regional Union of Local NGOs in the Executive Council of each governorate.
- H. To support continuous communication with international human rights organizations, and participate in their activities, as well as dealing diligently with the reports issued by these organizations and responding in a timely manner.

In light of these proposals, Egypt has implemented the Committee's second and eighth recommendations, in response to the previous report.

2. People's Rights:

Articles 19 to 24 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights included people's rights which must be observed by member States. These articles proclaim that all people are equal, with the same dignity and the same rights, including the right to existence, that all people have an absolute and firm right to

self-determination, and that all people are entitled to freely exercise their natural wealth and resources,

To comply with these provisions, Egypt has taken the following measures:

The Declaration of the 2014 Constitution clarified and elucidated the basic principles and objectives that Egypt must adhere to in its foreign policy and which it seeks to achieve in its relations with all other states, while protecting the rights of other peoples and the freedoms which must be protected in order to achieve progress and development. These rights, principles and objectives are summarized as follows:

1. Peace based on justice.
2. Equality in all fundamental rights and freedoms.
3. The political and social progress of all peoples.
4. People's' right to take their own decisions independently.
5. The universal struggle against all forces of underdevelopment, domination and exploitation.
6. Human dignity and political, economic, cultural and intellectual liberation.

These basic principles have become parameters of Egypt's foreign policy, which informs the position and role of Egypt in all international efforts within the framework of the African Union or international organizations.

3. Duties of individuals:

Articles 27 to 29 of the African Charter include the general duties of individuals towards their families, society and the state, including respect for and observance

of its other members without any discrimination, the maintenance of relations that allow for the promotion of mutual respect and tolerance, the harmonious development of the family and ensuring its cohesion and respect, the preservation of national security and the strengthening of national and social solidarity, the maintenance of national independence and safety, and the utilization of capacities and payment of taxes levied by the state.

Egypt has taken the following steps to realize these public duties, as follows:

The 1971 Constitution, including the amendments to Section 3, guarantee the rights, freedoms and general duties of individuals. These articles include citizens' commitment to:

- a. defending the homeland and its territories as a sacred duty.
- b. Maintaining national unity and protecting state secrets.
- c. Tax payment and performance of public duties
- d. Contribution to public life and expressing opinion in referenda and elections.
- e. Addressing public authorities.

The constitution also guarantees the various social components of society, including social solidarity, the protection and preservation of the family as the cornerstone of society, the protection of motherhood and childhood, the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities and facilitating access for them.

The aforementioned points illustrate that the provisions of the African Charter concerning the duties of individuals towards their societies, families and countries, have been included in the Egyptian Constitution, which has enshrined them as

constitutional rules and principles to be adhered to, about which State authorities should raise awareness. These are the same duties and rights as those guaranteed by the 2014 Constitution in articles 51 to 93. These rights will be elucidated in some detail later in this report, along with analysis of the laws, decisions and regulations governing them.

Third: The legal status of the African Charter of Human Rights in Egypt

The 2014 Constitution affirms what is stated in previous constitutions in the sense that Section 1 of Article 151 of the 1971 Constitution states: "The President of the Republic shall represent the State in its foreign relations, and signs treaties following the approval of the People's Assembly, These shall have the force of law after their publication in accordance with the Constitution."

In accordance with the above points, following formal ratification and promulgation by the legislative authority, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights became law on April 23, 1992. As such, its provisions are considered to be Egyptian legal texts applicable to all authorities in the state,

whether legislative, executive or judicial. Thus, the human rights and fundamental freedoms enshrined in the charter enjoy superior protection in Egypt, including:

Protection under constitutional rule:

The inclusion of the principles of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the constitution, as stated above, should ensure the prescribed protection of the constitutional rule. These provisions came into effect at the time of the promulgation of the Constitution, while anything contrary to these principles or contravening them is considered unconstitutional. This also applies to any laws that may be issued by the legislature later once the constitution comes into force. Accordingly, any concerned stakeholder may, at any time and in the prescribed circumstances, refer to the Supreme Constitutional Court to obtain a ruling on the unconstitutionality of the relevant infringing legislation. The judgments of that court shall be final and enforceable against all authorities and shall be published in the Official Gazette.

Protection prescribed for legal rules:

All provisions of international treaties, including the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, enjoy full legal status in the country, in terms of direct and immediate applicability and enforceability before all authorities in the state. These authorities are bound by the provisions of the charter and the rules laid down therein. This directly grants those affected the right to resort to the competent court in accordance with the nature of the violation, and the conditions prescribed for obtaining the rights arising therefrom.

Criminal Protection:

All the rights and freedoms provided for in the constitution shall enjoy criminal protection, while any infringement of one of these rights or freedoms shall be considered as an offense, and the criminal or civil proceedings arising therefrom shall not be subject to any statute of limitations, with the state committing itself to compensating those affected.

Fourth: Authorities guaranteeing effective enforcement of human rights principles and available remedies

The levels and means of available remedies vary nationally, regionally and internationally, since this, rather than the more rigidly inflexible legal texts, is the executive tool that makes the provisions of human rights principles enshrined in international and regional conventions effective. At the international level, there are treaty committees formed to implement human rights conventions to which Egypt is a party, as well as the periodic review mechanism of the UN Human Rights Council and its special procedures system, with which Egypt interacts positively. At the regional level, there is the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, established under the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. At the national level, meanwhile, the judiciary is the primary source of remedy for ensuring the effective enforcement of all human rights principles and fundamental freedoms, in accordance with the constitutional and legal principles and rules underpinning the Egyptian legal system.

The national remedies available to individuals in the Egyptian judicial system are as follows:

The Supreme Constitutional Court:

This is an independent, judicial body, with the General Assembly bearing responsibility for its affairs. Its opinions are taken into consideration in draft laws relating to its affairs.

The Supreme Constitutional Court is exclusively competent to decide on the constitutionality of laws and regulations; interpret legislative texts, and adjudicate in disputes pertaining to the affairs of its members; adjudicate in disputes between judicial bodies and entities that have judicial mandate; adjudicate in disputes pertaining to the implementation of two final contradictory rulings, one of which is issued by any judicial body or an agency with judicial mandate and the other issued by another body, and in disputes pertaining to the implementation of its rulings and decisions.

The law sets out the other competences of the Court and regulates the procedures followed, as provided for in Article 192 of the Constitution.

Parliament:

Article 135 of the Egyptian Constitution states that the House of Representatives may form a special committee or entrust one of its existing committees to examine a public issue, or the activities of any administrative department, public agency or

public enterprise, for the purpose of fact-finding regarding a specific issue, and inform the House of Representatives of the actual financial, administrative or economic status for conducting investigations into a past activity, or for any other purpose; the House is empowered to decide on the appropriate course of action. In order to conduct its mission, such a committee would be entitled to collect the evidence it deems necessary and to summon individuals to give statements. All bodies shall respond to the committee's requests and place at its disposal all the documents, evidence, or anything otherwise required. In all cases, every member of the House of Representatives is entitled to obtain any data or information pertaining to undertaking his work at the House from the executive authority.

Judiciary:

Courts of all kinds and at all levels are responsible for adjudication, with their rulings issued in accordance with the law. The law sets out the powers of the judiciary and it enjoys full independence. Any interference in the affairs of the judiciary or its cases is considered an offense which is not covered by any statute of limitations. Every judiciary body shall administer its own affairs, with each to be allocated an independent budget whose items are all discussed by the House of Representatives. After approving each budget, this is incorporated in the state budget as a single figure, and these bodies' opinions are consulted on the draft laws governing their affairs. Judges are independent, cannot be dismissed, are subject to no other authority but the law, and are equal in rights and duties. The conditions and procedures for their appointment, secondment, delegation and retirement are regulated by the law, which also regulates their disciplinary accountability. They may not be fully or partly delegated except to bodies and to

perform tasks that are identified by law, provided that all the foregoing maintains the independence and impartiality of the judiciary and judges and prevents conflicts of interest.

Court sessions are public, unless, for reasons of public order or morality, the court deems them confidential. In all cases, the verdict is given in an open session. The judiciary adjudicates in all disputes and crimes except for matters over which another judicial body is competent. Only the judiciary may settle any disputes relating to its members' affairs, and its affairs are managed by a higher council whose structure and mandate are defined by law, as detailed in articles 185 to 188 of the Constitution.

Public Prosecution:

The Public Prosecution service is an integral part of the judiciary. It is responsible for investigating, pressing charges and prosecuting all criminal cases, except those exempted by law. The law establishes the public prosecution's other competencies. Public prosecution is carried out by a Prosecutor General who is selected by the Supreme Judicial Council from among the Deputies to the President of the Court of Cassation, the Presidents of the Court of Appeals or the Assistant Prosecutor Generals, by virtue of a presidential decree, serving for a period of four years, or for the period remaining until retirement age, whichever comes first, and only once during a judge's career. The Public Prosecution service is the main constitutional means to protect the rights and freedoms of individuals and to protect public property against any acts of aggression, or unconstitutionality. The Public Prosecution service has never failed to fulfill this

important role, and has always been a protector of constitutional and legal legitimacy.

The constitutional legislator has established for the Public Prosecutor's Office the constitutional framework within which its powers are exercised. The legislator has also guaranteed to provide it with the tools at its disposal to enable the performance of its duties. Respect for and protection of human rights is a central element of all actions taken by the Public Prosecution service within the framework of its constitutional competence. It also provides periodic and unexpected supervisory visits and inspections of prisons and other places of detention to ensure that the law is enforced and that detainees enjoy their legal rights. In this context, the Attorney General issued Decree No. 1221 of 2005 establishing the Human Rights Protection Section in the Department of International Cooperation in the Office of the Attorney-General, making it his mandate to receive and investigate complaints of human rights violations, if necessary, follow up on human rights and to implement the relevant international and regional conventions and treaties, as well as to coordinate with bodies concerned with human rights with a view to preserving them.

The State Council

The State Council, established in 1946, is the means of judicial redress accessible to all citizens to appeal against all decisions issued by the executive authority, whether in a positive or negative manner or by abstaining from issuing a decision or carrying out a required action, with the council possessing exclusive competence to adjudicate in administrative disputes . This is done by requesting the revocation of decisions contrary to the law according to jurisdiction, form, or any flaw in application, interpretation or abuse of power. The authority also deals with requests for compensation, all in the context of exercising its powers and the

consequent decisions or regulations concerning the interests of individuals or groups, whether these are related to the services they render or are committed to serving citizens. They must naturally comply with all constitutional principles and legal rules in force in the country and serve citizens, in accordance with legal principles, and in keeping with human rights standards within the framework of Egypt's commitment to the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights.

Administrative Prosecution Authority:

The Administrative Prosecution is an independent judicial body that investigates administrative and financial violations, as well as others referred to it. In respect of such offenses it shall have the powers vested on it to impose disciplinary sanctions. Appeals against its decisions are heard by the relevant disciplinary court at the Council of State. This authority shall also move and initiate disciplinary proceedings and appeals before the courts of the Council of State, in accordance with the law.

Independent National Councils:

National Council for Human Rights:

The Council, established by Law No. 94 of 2003, and amended by Law No. 197 of 2017, seeks to achieve human dignity, and to define and defend human rights, as well as to coordinate with all State bodies in order to achieve its objectives in accordance with international human rights conventions ratified by Egypt. Representatives of the Council are entitled to visit prisons to ensure that all detainees enjoy their rights guaranteed by the Constitution and the law, as detailed in the aforementioned legislation, which guarantees the Council full independence in accordance with the Constitution. Its members are also allowed access as participants in judicial proceedings involving victims of any violation of human rights.

National Council for Women:

The Council was established by Presidential Decree No. 90 of 2000 to work for the advancement of women in Egypt, to resolve their problems and to eliminate all forms of discrimination against them in order to implement Egypt's obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. The Council shall develop and follow up national plans and propose policies in the field of women's development, helping to enable women to play their vital role in society and in comprehensive development programs. It also coordinates with non-governmental organizations and equal opportunity units within the relevant ministries to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women.

National Council for Childhood and Motherhood:

The National Council for Childhood and Motherhood is the supreme national authority responsible for establishing the general policy for childhood and motherhood in Egypt, as well as being charged with planning, coordinating, monitoring and evaluating activities related to the protection and development of children and mothers. The Council, established in 1988 by Republican Decree No. 54 of 1988, operates through cooperation, with non-governmental organizations, as well as coordinating governmental and local efforts. The Council serves disadvantaged children, non-school children, under-age workers, street children with disabilities and other children living in difficult circumstances.

National Population Council:

The National Population Council was established by Republican Decree No. 19 of 1985, as amended by Presidential Decree No. 32 of 1996, No. 218 of 2002 and No. 139 of 2007. The Council is responsible for developing population-related policies to help achieve the highest possible rate of economic development and social welfare. It also formulates annual programs for population projects instituted by the National Plan for Family Planning. The council is also tasked with providing nationwide family planning services and with working to curb illiteracy and implementing other population-related projects. Its other duties include assessing the annual achievements of these projects and providing guidance to remove any obstacles they may encounter. In addition, this council sets annual budgets and determines the role of all the ministries, agencies, governmental, public or private institutions involved in implementing the annual population-

related programs and projects. The Council establishes its own regulations and projects concerning its operations, as well as creating its own institutions in connection with these. Its decisions shall apply to all ministries, public bodies, local government units and public sector companies in their respective fields of competence. These bodies shall provide the Council with the reports, data or statistics required for its activities, and thus also represent means of remedying national challenges in the areas within the council's areas of competence.

National Council for Physically Challenged Persons:

The National Council for Physically Challenged Persons was established by Prime Ministerial Decision No. 410 on April 17, 2012. It is affiliated to the Prime Minister and is headquartered in Cairo. It is entitled to establish branches at the national level, and has a wide range of coordinative, advisory and supervisory powers. It reviews draft laws, resolutions and international conventions and monitors the application of laws and regulations for physically challenged persons in all state bodies. It has competent departments to review regulations and laws from experts, legal advisers and other authorities and to follow up, coordinate and monitor their implementation. The Council, which plays an important role in the formulation and monitoring of disability-related policies and strategies in Egypt, also represents one of the bodies offering legal redress.

Human rights departments in the executive branch of the state:

1 General Directorate for Human Rights Affairs, Ministry of Justice:

The General Directorate for Human Rights Affairs was established by the Minister of Justice's Decree No. 3081 of 2002 in order to contribute to the promotion of human rights in Egypt and to liaise with all State ministries and civil society organizations to achieve this goal.

2. Human Rights Sector of the Ministry of the Interior:

The Ministry of the Interior established the Human Rights Sector, which includes specialist departments for the protection of human rights, including

a department for monitoring crimes of violence against women. It includes a number of scientifically and professionally qualified officers, as well as a number of female psychiatrists to offer support to the victims. The sector has also opened new units aimed at combating human trafficking which are entrusted with providing all the necessary information about and conducting investigations on the perpetrators of these crimes along with similar offences, including various forms of sexual exploitation of minors and forced labor, as well as apprehending and instituting legal action against them.. A permanent committee was established under the chairmanship of Major-General Ass'ad al-Wazir, Assistant Minister for Human Rights Sector, with the membership of representatives from the concerned ministry sectors to monitor the security performance of the ministry's organs in the framework of respect for human rights and implementation of the Ministry's strategy adopted in this field.

Fifth: Declaration and publication of human rights conventions

The ratification of Egypt's accession to the African Charter was published in the Official Gazette. The importance of publishing in the official gazette is due to its authoritative ability to raise awareness about new legislation and to enable readers to determine when laws come into effect. The Official Gazette is issued in sequential editions and in special numbers. It is sold in all centers dedicated to the sale of government publications and is available to all. It is also sent to subscribers by mail and is sold at prices below the cost of its publication to ensure accessibility. The Official Gazette is considered to be one of the most important periodicals for all law-enforcement professionals, as it is published in accordance with Article 225 of the Constitution, which stipulates that "Laws are published in the Official Gazette within 15 days from the date of their issuance, to be effective 30 days from the day following the date of publication, unless the law specifies a different date."

The second part

The objective review of the rights contained in the Charter

This section includes:

First: Civil and political rights.

Second: Economic, social and cultural rights.

Third: Family rights and the most vulnerable groups (women - children - persons with disabilities - youth).

Fourth: Contemporary challenges facing Egypt.

Fifth: Raising awareness about human rights at the national level.

Sixth: Charter enforcement efforts at the external level.

First: civil and political rights

In articles 2 to 13, The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights deals with civil and political rights. These include: the right to equality before the law, the right of all citizens to respect for their dignity and recognition of their legal status, the right to liberty and security, the right to resort to competent national courts, the right to exercise one's faith and religious rituals, the right to access information, the right to form associations with others, the right to freedom of movement and residence, and the right to freely participate in the administration of public affairs in the country, as detailed in the relevant texts.

In order to ensure that its citizens enjoy these rights, Egypt has taken the following measures:

1. National legislation contained provisions calling for full respect for Egypt's obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and related articles of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. In accordance with this, Law No. 40 of 1977 on the Political Parties Regime was amended in 2011, whereby the formation of parties is announced by straightforward notification, as affirmed in article 74 of the 2014 Constitution. The formation of the concerned committee became restricted to the judges, not including members of the executive branch, and it is not permissible to dissolve any party except by a judicial ruling. This has increased the number of political parties to 93. With the promulgation of the Law on the Regulation of Political Rights No. 45 and the House of Representatives Law No. 46 of 2014, the rules, procedures and regulations of the electoral process have been reformulated to ensure greater transparency and impartiality in accordance with international standards.

2. At the end of 2015, the final prerogative of the political road map was completed with the holding of free and fair elections for the House of Representatives. These elections were witnessed by many representative of many NGOs, international organizations and foreign embassies. The

turnout was remarkably high both at home and abroad. At the age of 18, citizens are automatically registered on the electoral rolls. These elections resulted in the appointment of 90 women to the Council, with 39 of the members aged under 35, nine members with disabilities and eight Egyptians abroad.

3. In pursuit of democratic reform, and in compliance with the 2014 Constitution, which for the first time stipulated the establishment of an independent national authority to run all elections or referenda, Law No. 198 of 2017 established the National Electoral Commission, making it an independent body technically, financially and administratively. It is exclusively responsible for conducting referendums and presidential, parliamentary and local elections, from the preparation and supervision of voters' databases to the announcement of results, through voter education and awareness. The National Electoral Commission defines campaign regulations, and rules for funding and electoral spending, as well as being responsible for election announcements and oversight. The legislature has made the composition of the Board of Directors of the Commission purely judicial, taking into account, inter alia, the independence, neutrality and impartiality of all members. It also introduced legislation making it mandatory for all state agencies to assist the Commission in discharging its functions and responsibilities. The council also establishes the duties, rights and guarantees for members of the electoral commission and its employees to ensure independence and impartiality in the administration of the election process.

4. In accordance with Article 9 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, Egypt is keen to protect the right to freedom of thought, opinion, expression and information. Article 47 of the 1971 Constitution, which was in force until 2011, guarantees freedom of opinion and expression. Article 48 prohibits censorship of the media, except in cases of emergency or wartime, in which event it authorized the imposition of specific controls in matters related to public safety or national security purposes. All this is in accordance with Law No. 96 of 1996 regulating the press, which was amended by law no 12 of 2003. Law No. 82 of 2002 was passed regarding the Protection of Intellectual Property. In accordance with the Constitution of 2014 (Articles 70, 71, 72, 211, 212 and 213), Law No. 92 on the Institutional Organization of the Press and Information was promulgated in 2016, with terms including the establishment of the Supreme Council for the Regulation of the Press and Information as an

autonomous body with technical, financial and administrative independence established to ensure that nobody interferes with the organisation's affairs. This body has also been assigned to manage all aspects of issues related to the regulation of audio-visual, digital and press media and ensuring press and media freedom as enshrined in the Constitution, and with preserving media independence, neutrality, pluralism and diversity, to prevent monopolistic practices, to monitor the safety of funding sources for press and media institutions, and to establish the necessary controls and standards to ensure that media are committed to professionalism. The law includes the establishment of the National Press Authority and the National Media Authority to manage and develop state-owned media, radio and digital media institutions, and ensure their modernization, independence, neutrality and commitment to professionalism in administrative and economic performance.

Law No. 93 of 2016 on the Syndicate of Journalists was also passed as a framework for the promotion of freedom of opinion and expression, as well as respect for freedom of association. The law grants the syndicate members independence in the conduct of their work in order to guarantee the freedom of the media to perform their mission and ensure media workers rights, and to protect these rights during the practice of the profession or in cases of dismissal, illness, incapacitation or disability. This is in the framework of the Media Code of Conduct issued by the general assembly of the union which constitutes a guide for professional conduct, and establishes the principles and obligations that govern the media, to ensure the right of society to professional and responsible media.

5. Article 8 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights affirms freedom of belief and the exercise of religious rites, ensuring that nobody should be subject to measures restricting the exercise of these freedoms, as provided for in article 46 of the 1971 Constitution and Act No. 34 of 1972 on the Protection of National Unity, Law No. 37 of 1972, which is still in force up to the present day, and other relevant articles of legislation. Articles 3, 64 and 235 of the 2014 Constitution guarantee the freedom of belief, freedom to practice religious ceremonies, and the establishment of houses of worship. The Parliament also required the promulgation of a law to regulate the construction and restoration of churches. Law No. 80 of 2016 was introduced to protect the right of Egyptian Christian citizens to build and repair churches and to ensure that they are free to practise their religious rituals. It also introduced legislation that included, for the first time

since 1856, specific rules and procedures to be followed to obtain a license for any construction work related to the church, as well as establishing means of resolving previous administrative violations and regulating the conditions for structures where religious ceremonies have been held previously. The regulations ensure that existing churches shall remain and may be used for holding religious ceremonies and licensed as churches provided that they are structurally safe.

In furtherance of the principles of tolerance and understanding, many practical steps have been taken to combat intolerance, negative stereotyping, stigmatization, discrimination and incitement to violence based on religion or belief, notably:

- a. The establishment of a forum for the moderation of the Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs affiliated with the Ministry of Awqaf to spread a culture of dialogue, and to renounce violence and intolerance, terrorism and religious hatred, as well as promoting human rights and holding seminars and religious conferences that emphasize freedom of expression and respect for human rights.
- b. The Ministry of Awqaf issues its publications in Arabic and translates them into different languages to promote the concepts of human rights, citizenship rights, peaceful coexistence and fighting fanatical and extremist ideologies locally and internationally. This includes works on the protection of churches in Islam and on mistaken ideological concepts that must be corrected.
- c. Al-Azhar Al-Sharif has developed a course on various stages of Azhar education, through instilling the values of Islamic religion and their practical applications and teaching scholars about the guarantees that protect these rights for the betterment of individuals under religious and cultural pluralism. This is in addition to the role of Azhar scholars in spreading the principles of the tolerant Islam and acceptance of the other, both at home and abroad.

- d. The senior clerics of Al-Azhar and the Egyptian Orthodox Church continue to work together under the umbrella of the "Egyptian Family House" initiative to affirm the values and principles of citizenship for all and to combat discrimination and incitement to violence due to religion, and to promote a culture of tolerance among citizens. The same applies to the implementation of the 'Together for the Sake of Egypt' project, which seeks to deepen relations between imams and priests, with a number of preachers and priests trained in recent years in promoting moderate religious discourse, characterised by tolerance and accepting the other, avoiding extremism and intolerance and developing the culture of citizenship and the affirmation of rights and duties.
- e. Al-Azhar Al-Sharif World Observatory was established in 2015 to monitor all the ideas, opinions and suspicions promoted by heretical and violent groups via social media platforms, to correct false ideas in a modern, progressive manner suited to the mindset of young people, as well as communicating messages in several languages including English, French, German, Italian, and a number of African languages, to reflect the highest human values, human rights and fundamental freedoms and emphasize the practical principles elucidated by Islam, such as respect for others, etc. This contributes to correcting misconceptions based on racism, intolerance, hatred, bigotry and disrespect for human dignity on sectarian, ethnic, or class-based grounds, which are antithetical to the tolerance in Islam and its teachings.

6. In accordance with Article 10 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, Law No. 84 of 2002 regulating the work of NGOs in Egypt was passed. In December 2017, Law No. 213 of 2017 was issued to amend Law No. 35 of 1976 on the organization of trade unions and the protection of rights in trade union organization.

The Ministry of Social Solidarity coordinated meetings with representatives of Egyptian civil society and held workshops and various meetings for them to discuss assorted visions for amending legislation regulating the work of NGOs in light of the provisions of Article 75 of the 2014 Constitution

concerning the right of citizens to form civil associations and institutions on a democratic basis, which shall have legal status as soon as notice is served, and are entitled to exercise their activities freely. Administrative authorities may not intervene in these bodies' affairs or dissolve them or their boards of directors except by a judicial ruling. Over the course of government's consultation with national NGOs on the amendments to the law, and in implementation of their constitutional right to exercise their legislative role, a number of MPs introduced Draft Law No 70 of 2017 prepared by the House of Representatives, which establishes these civil society bodies' attainment of legal status through serving notice and asserts that they may not be dissolved except by a court order from a competent court.

Article 11 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights provides for the right of everyone to freely associate with others. The exercise of this right shall be limited only by the necessary restrictions specified by laws and regulations, in particular those relating to the interests of national security and safety, health and morality of others or the rights and freedoms of persons.

Article 54 of the 1971 Constitution, which was in effect until 2011, guaranteed this right, but the Constitution of 2014 provided for a more advanced approach to safeguarding the right to peaceful assembly and other rights. Article 73 states that citizens have the right to organize public meetings, marches, demonstrations and all forms of peaceful protest, so long as they are not carrying weapons of any type and have provided prior notification as regulated by Law No. 14 of 2017, which amended the Law on the Right to Public Meetings, Processes and Peaceful Demonstrations promulgated by Law No. 107 of 2013, in accordance with the ruling of the Supreme Constitutional Court, where the amendment stipulated the issuance of a judicial order for the revocation, postponement or transfer of the place of public meeting, procession or demonstration or change of course in the event of the availability of serious information or indications of the existence of threats to security and peace before the time set for the start of the event. This legislation withdrew the option of licensing as a condition for the exercise of these rights and introduced a requirement for the exercise of notification only, which equated the citizens and the administration before the judiciary. Therefore, the administration no longer has the right to prevent a meeting or demonstration by a unilateral decision.

8. In line with the recent standards of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights regarding police strategy for dealing with rallies and demonstrations, the Ministry of the Interior is already taking a number of steps to ensure that law enforcement agencies comply with the criteria set for the use of force, which include a gradual enforcement of the law by extending the warning period for violators through the use of water canons in protests to allow for dispersal of the majority of protesters, and to ensure that tensions are not escalated until after exhausting the means of negotiation. This should also be achieved through the introduction of a system of regulations for orders to emanate from the highest security leadership. Different methods of treatment should be implemented in dealing with children, women and the elderly, Forces should also be trained in the protection of installations, and in means of controlling riots through the use of pepper spray. Efforts should equally include the circulation of periodic books and sustainable instructions related to legal procedures for the protection of human rights, while performing security functions; and organizing seminars for officers including strengthening their legal understanding in relation to their duties and use of force within the framework of international human rights standards. The Police Academy also trains its students to observe human rights by simulating a number of practical situations (arrest, detention, deportation, and prisoner treatment) The training module of college students and trainee officers contains mechanisms for securing peaceful demonstrations, and dealing with riots and sit-ins, as well as disruption or vandalism of public facilities, taking into account the principles of human rights and the expansion of training in the use of modern technology in the investigation and the collection of evidence.

9. Articles 4 and 6 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights stipulates that the rights of human beings are inviolable. Every human being shall be entitled to respect for his life and the integrity of his person. Every individual shall have the right to the respect of the dignity inherent in a human being and to the recognition of his legal status. All forms of exploitation and degradation of any human being, particularly enslavement, involvement in any form of slave trade, torture, cruel, inhuman degrading punishment and mistreatment, shall be prohibited. Every individual shall have the right to liberty and to the security of his person. No one may be deprived of his freedom except for reasons and conditions previously laid down by law. In particular, no one may be arbitrarily arrested or detained.

Article 7 guarantees the right of every citizen to have his cause heard and defended. Egyptian legislation and laws are designed to safeguard these rights, stating that any arrests or detentions must be immediately reported and the accused has the right to seek legal aid or insist that the investigating authority appoint a lawyer to appear with the accused in all proceedings if he/she does not have a lawyer. In relation to criminal procedures, Law No.150 of 1950, amended by law 145 of 2006, regulates the rights of the accused and the detainee in remand. Article 134 clarifies the necessity of proving the risk of dangerous behaviour which constitutes the basis on which the freedom of the accused is restricted. An objective criterion has been specified focusing on the type of crime and the prescribed punishment. An objective criterion focuses on the type of crime and the penalty prescribed for it, as well as the limitation of the possibility of remand for crimes and misdemeanors punishable by a period of not less than one year.

Successive Egyptian constitutions have given due consideration to the basic safeguards for the protection of personal freedom. Article 41 of the 1971 Constitution, as amended by successive items of legislation under the Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure and Article 54 of the 2014 Constitution, stipulates that Personal freedom is a natural right which is safeguarded and cannot be infringed upon. Except in cases of in flagrante delicto, citizens may not be apprehended, searched, arrested, or have their freedoms restricted without a causal judicial warrant necessitated by an investigation. All those whose freedoms have been restricted shall be immediately informed of the causes therein, notified of their rights in writing, be allowed to immediately contact their family and lawyer, and be brought before the investigating authority within twenty-four hours of their freedoms having been restricted. Questioning of the person may only begin once his/her lawyer is present. If he/she has no lawyer, a lawyer will be appointed for him/her. Detainees with disabilities shall be provided with all necessary aid, according to procedures stipulated in the law. Those who have their freedom restricted and others have the right of recourse to the judiciary. Judgment must be rendered within a week from such recourse, otherwise the defendant shall be immediately released.

10. In accordance with articles 7, 14 and 15 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and article 37 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child with respect to the observance of minimum standards, article

55 stipulates that all those arrested, imprisoned or restricted to their dignity shall be treated respectfully, and that they should not be intimidated, subjected to force or physically or mentally harmed. The violation of any of these conditions is a crime punishable by law which is not subject to statute of limitations. The accused has the right to remain silent and any statement proved to be obtained from a detainee under duress or coercion or the threat thereof or which breaches any of the aforementioned conditions is disregarded. This is reflected by Article 126 of the Penal Code which classifies torture as a crime. This criminalization of torture has been in force in Egypt since 1883, when Article 212 of the Penal Code of 13/11/1883 outlawed the offense of torture. Article 129 of the Penal Code also criminalizes any other attack not for the purpose of torture, making any such offence punishable with the penalty of misdemeanor.

The Public Prosecution and supervisory bodies of the Ministry of the Interior monitor and take into account any complaints relating to allegations of excessive use of force or abuses by police officers for violations of citizens' rights, crimes of torture and cruelty, with such offences subject to criminal and disciplinary trials in accordance with the gravity of the case and evidence of the seriousness and evidence of its occurrence. Statistics from 2014 to 2017 reflect the state's keenness to confront abuses, which are very limited given the number of police personnel and the daily dealings with thousands of citizens. The trials of 72 police officers and officers took place during this period, most notably on charges concerning torture and cruelty, with many of those convicted subjected to final sentences of imprisonment. The last time such a report was issued it concerned a case in which six officers and police officers were sentenced to prison sentences ranging from four to seven years. Thirty-one officers and members of the police were disciplined for individual abuses that were not found to merit criminal prosecution.

Article 56 of the 2014 Constitution places prisons and places of detention under judicial supervision, ensuring that detainees' human dignity and health are preserved and not compromised. Article 42 of Law No. 150 of 1950 on criminal procedure, as well as article 85 of Law No. 396 of 1956 on the organization of prisons and article 27 of Law No. 46 of 1972 on the judiciary, affirmed the jurisdiction of the Public Prosecution in supervising prisons and places of detention, to ensure the application of the provisions of the law and the preservation of the life, health and dignity of those sentenced.

In accordance with Egypt's ratification of the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, Law No. 152 of 2001 was passed, amending certain provisions of the Prisons Regulation Act., including the abolition of flogging as a punishment for prisoners. Law No. 95 of 2002 further amended certain provisions of the Penal Code, including the abolition of the penalty of hard labor, which was replaced with imprisonment. Law No. 6 of 2009 amended the law on the organization of prisons, as well as introducing provisions for special medical treatment of pregnant women prisoners.

In November 2016, the Ministry of the Interior held a cultural forum at Al-Marj Public Prison, which dealt with the principles of punitive treatment in Egyptian prisons and efforts geared toward improving and modernising prisons. The forum was attended by a number of senior Ministry of Interior officials and representatives of civil society organizations working in the field of human rights, as well as representatives from the Human Rights Committee of the House of Representatives. The event included a visit to prison facilities by representatives of Egyptian and foreign media, and an inspection of some activities carried out by prisoners. The Ministry of Interior has also taken a number of other steps, including:

a. Renovation of remand facilities to ensure a healthy environment for detainees.

B. Providing various types of medical care, both preventive and therapeutic, to prisoners through the establishment of a local hospital for each prison, which includes treatment clinics in all specialties, as well as a central hospital in each geographical area, equipped with an operating room and specialist clinics and dispensaries.

C. The implementation of national campaigns to vaccinate against epidemics and diseases in prisons, as well as referring prisoners with life-threatening chronic diseases to forensic committees for release on health grounds.

In this context, five new digital X-ray devices were installed in the prisons in Port Said, Assiut, Wadi El-Natroun No. 1, the new Minya and Liaman Tura, while artificial ventilators were installed in the children's nurseries in Al-Qanater prison to deal with cases of premature babies. An operating theatre and surgical suite was provided in Assiut general prison, and six new kidney dialysis units were provided to the Lehman Tura hospital, along with two others in Borg El Arab prison and Assiut prison. A program was also initiated to conduct a comprehensive survey of the prevalence of the Hepatitis C virus among inmates in coordination with the Ministry of Health,

as part of the state's efforts to determine the incidence of such cases and accordingly provide the necessary treatment.

As part of the social welfare program for prisoners and their families, annuities were distributed to the families of 22,956 prisoners, while 16,618 scholarships were given to prisoners' children. Also, a number of initiatives were taken to improve the conditions of prison inmates, including the provision of training for prisoners. In this regard, cooperation protocols were signed with the Misr Al-Kheir Foundation, the Association for the Care of Child Prisoners and the Lyons Club for the establishment of productive projects to rehabilitate the prisoners and achieve a positive material return for them. These efforts also included the establishment of exhibitions of arts and handicrafts produced by prisoners to display their handiwork, as well as the establishment of theater and film shows, concerts and seminars, and the provision of 95,947 books for prison libraries, along with the distribution of 2,826 television sets to prisons. The Ministry of the Interior also presents gifts to female inmates and their children when they give birth, organizes special visits for inmates' families, organizes parties for visitors in cases of engagement, or marriage of their children, renders various types of educational services for learners among inmates in various stages of education (including basic literacy tuition and pre-university education), with a total of 6,416 inmates participating in educational programs at all stages of education in 2016.

11. In order to ensure that trials and pre-trial detention comply with the provisions of the ICCPR and Articles 54 and 55 of the 2014 Constitution, Article 3/16 of Law No. 197 of 2017 on the amendment of some provisions of the National Council for Human Rights Law contained a provision by council authorising council members to visit prisons and other places of detention as well as therapeutic and correctional institutions, in order to listen to prisoners and inmates at the detention facilities mentioned in order to ensure their good treatment and enjoyment of their rights. In this context, members of the National Council for Human Rights periodically visit prisons where they meet with prisoners to ensure that suitable living conditions are available, to allow them visits, to ensure the availability of various forms of care and to verify that the inmates are well treated by the prison administration. The council issues reports on each visit, containing observations and recommendations in order to improve the conditions of prisoners and detainees. The Human Rights Commission of the House of Representatives also makes visits to police units and prison facilities.

12. Article 7 of the African Charter guarantees the right to litigation for all, and includes the right to resort to competent national courts in order to consider legal action on any violations of the recognized fundamental rights contained in conventions, laws, regulations and customs. The Egyptian legislature has established many guarantees in accordance with international standards for fair trial, including the provisions of the 1971 Constitution and its amendments in Articles 64 to 72, and 165 to 178, which stipulate that the state is subject to the rule of law and affirms the independence of the judiciary and its immunity and jurisdiction to settle disputes and crimes. It also affirms that the penalty is suited to the individual, and ensures that no crime or penalty should be prescribed except by law, and that no penalty is imposed except by a court order. Punishment is only applicable to acts that follow the date of the law's coming into force and is not applicable retroactively. Decisions are issued by competent, independent, permanent courts, whose hearings are held in public. This article also provides for speedy adjudication.

In line with the principle that an accused individual is innocent until proven otherwise, Law No. 145 of 2006 amended certain provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure. This legislation now decrees that the Public Prosecution should publish every ruling of innocence of an accused person who has already been held in custody, as well as any order issued in the absence of a criminal case before it, in the two most widely circulated newspapers at government expense. It also obliges the state to guarantee the right to the principle of material compensation for preventive detention in the two aforementioned instances. The terms of the 2014 Constitution include the same provisions in Chapter 4, in articles 94 to 100, and from 184 to 197. Article 97 clearly states that litigation is a protected and guaranteed right and prohibits exceptional courts, as well as protecting any administrative action or decision from judicial oversight. No person shall be tried except in front of a qualified judge. In accordance with Article 155 of the Constitution, the President of the Republic issued 23 presidential decrees during the period from 2014 to mid-2017 pardoning these individuals for the original penalty or the remainder thereof, and the accessory penalty for 1,072 of those sentenced.

13. Article 204 of the 2014 Constitution stipulates that The Military Judiciary is an independent judiciary that adjudicates exclusively in all crimes related to the armed forces, their officers, personnel, and their equals, and in the

crimes committed by general intelligence personnel during and related to the service. Civilians cannot stand trial before military courts except for crimes that represent a direct assault against military facilities, military barracks, or whatever falls under their authority; stipulated military or border zones; military equipment, vehicles, weapons, ammunition, documents, military secrets, public funds or military factories; crimes related to conscription; or crimes that represent a direct assault against military officers or personnel related to the performance of their duties.

Decree No. 136 of 2014 on the protection of public and vital institutions means that military jurisdiction is restricted to the crimes committed against those installations under the protection of the armed forces in collaboration with the police forces, and makes this conditional on the duration of such protection.

In view of Egypt's experiences in terms of terrorist attacks against its citizens and vital installations, the duration of this decree was extended by five years, ending in October 2021. Accordingly, the criterion of jurisdiction of the military judiciary, in accordance with the Egyptian judicial system, is an objective criterion unrelated to the perpetrators of these crimes, but rather to the nature of the crimes committed. The same laws and rules applied by the ordinary judiciary are applied to these offences, as affirmed by Decree No. 21 of 2015, introduced to amend certain provisions of the military judiciary Decree, No. 25 of 1966, preventing the subordination of those not subjected to the Constitution and the law.

Accused individuals facing trial before the military judiciary shall have the same guarantees of fair trial as those before the ordinary courts, in terms of the right to defense, access to documents, public hearings, the right to appeal against a sentence before a higher court, including the application of the Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure, Cases and proceedings before the Court of Cassation No. 57 of 1959 on appeals before the military judiciary, in addition to the military judges' enjoyment of the guarantees enshrined in the Constitution in Article 204, which stated in its last paragraph that the Members of the Military Judiciary are autonomous and cannot be dismissed. These judges have all the guarantees, rights and duties established for all members of the judiciary. This constitutional immunity has been confirmed in article 3 of the Military Justice Decree No. 25 of 1966.

14. With regard to the death penalty, the Egyptian legislature has prescribed, like many other countries, that this punishment should be reserved solely for the most serious crimes, such as premeditated murder, murder, terrorism, and conspiracy, which the legislature has paid great attention to, with a view to achieving public and private deterrence. All the criteria contained in articles 6, 14 and 15 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, including the need for unanimity of opinion between the members of the Court and the need to take into account the view of the Mufti of Egypt and the challenge of the prosecution within 60 days. Article 111 of the Children's Act No. 12 of 1996 also prohibited the death sentence against any accused person who had not exceeded the age of eighteen by a full calendar year at the time of the offense. Article 68 of the Prisons Regulation Act No. 396 of 1956 called for a moratorium on the death penalty against pregnant women until two years after their delivery date. The law also prohibited the implementation of the death penalty on official holidays, or holidays of the convict's religion.

In light of the above, Egypt has implemented the twelfth recommendation of the Committee on the previous report.

Second: economic, social and cultural rights

The provisions of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, in articles 14 to 18 of the Constitution, stipulate economic, social and cultural rights. The right to property is invoked only by necessity or public interest, the right to work under equal and satisfactory conditions, and the right to health, education and family protection, among other rights, are detailed in those texts.

In order to ensure that its citizens enjoy these rights, Egypt has taken the following measures:

1. In response to the aspirations of the Egyptian people expressed in the January 25, 2011 and June 30, 2013 revolutions, the government adopted a comprehensive economic reform plan aimed at providing a decent standard of living for all citizens, as reflected in the provisions of the 2014 Constitution. The second and third articles affirmed the need for the State

to ensure the economic, social and cultural rights of the Egyptian citizen, including the right to housing, the right to healthcare, and the right to education. The Constitution also protects the rest of these rights under Articles 92 and 93 in line with Egypt's regional and international obligations.

2. In order to achieve comprehensive and sustainable development and raise the living standards and conditions of citizens, the government has introduced a series of measures aimed at achieving comprehensive development in all sectors. The decision to liberalize the exchange rate was necessary to complete economic reforms. The continued existence of two exchange rates negatively affects efforts to attract investment. Foreign exchange management was needed to provide food and petroleum products. This resulted in a noticeable improvement in the rate of economic growth. Investments increased to EGP 407.7 billion during the fiscal year 2015/2016 and reached EGP 530 billion during the fiscal year 2016/2017. The fiscal and monetary policy followed by the government led to a rise in net dollar reserves to US \$ 36,147 billion for the first time since 2013. The balance of payments surplus exceeded \$7 billion during the first half of the fiscal year 2016/2017, marking the best performance in six years. The unemployment rate fell to 12.4 percent during the first quarter of 2017, achieving the largest decline in unemployment rates in a five-year period. In this context, Investment Decree No. 72 of 2017 was issued to encourage attracting more cash flow for the development process and to reduce unemployment rates. The law affirms gender equality in investment opportunities, in addition to activating the social responsibility of investors through allocating licenses to investors not exceeding 10% of their annual net profits for use in establishing a system for community development outside the framework of their investment project in the following areas:

- a. Protection and improvement of the environment.
- B. Provision of health, social, cultural or other development services or programs.
- C. Support for technical education or funding of research, studies and awareness campaigns aimed at developing and improving production.
- D. Training and scientific research.

Another priority issue in ensuring economic growth is financial inclusion, especially with regard to the transformation of the informal economy into a formal economy, in order to increase gross national product and support growth rates, especially in light of the fact that around 80 percent of SMEs

in Egypt are operating in the informal financial sector. Financial inclusion also supports the non-monetary economy, which offers many advantages, the most important of which are the reduction of costs and financial burdens. This policy also has positive effects on social development through focusing attention on poor and low-income groups and the economic empowerment of women by overcoming obstacles to access to financial services fairly and transparently and at reasonable prices, in order to achieve the principle of equality. In this context, a number of measures were adopted to ensure financial inclusion, including:

- a. The Central Bank introduced a real estate finance initiative for low- and middle-income investors at reduced interest rates.
- B. Initiating initiatives to enable SMEs to obtain the necessary funding.
- C. Completion of the draft financial education strategy at the Institute of Banking.

4. In parallel, a number of laws have been adopted by the government and submitted to the House of Representatives, including Decrees No. 77, 78, 79 and 80 of 2017 in order to increase the income of the neediest families.

The government has also initiated a number of major national projects aimed at achieving comprehensive economic development in all sectors, notably:

- a. The establishment of a new administrative capital on an area of 170 thousand feddans which will accommodate 6.5 million citizens.
- B. The establishment of integrated development in the Suez Canal area, where the new Suez Canal was dug within a period of one year, in parallel with the start of work on the establishment of a global logistics center.
- C. Cooperation with Siemens Germany in the construction of three power plants in Beni Suef, Al-Burlus and the new administrative capital to add 14400 MW to the National Grid for Electricity, an increase of 45 percent. The first phase was implemented in 18 months.
- D. The construction of 2,405 km of roads up to April 2017 under a scheme to construct a new network of roads with a length of 5,415.5 km, representing a 22 percent increase to the existing road network.
- e. The launch of a fish-farming project on an area of 7,500 feddans to establish 4,000 fish-farming ponds to achieve self-sufficiency and export surplus production. The first phase of this project was completed on an area of 1,900 acres.
- f. The inauguration of a project to cultivate four million feddans in order to increase the current agricultural area and fill the food gap, along with the establishment of many businesses related to agricultural activity and

livestock, intended to increase exports of Egyptian crops and agricultural products.

G. The launch of a 400,000-acre plantation project in the heart of Sinai, as well as the construction of three tunnels south of Port Said, and three other tunnels near Ismailia to link Sinai with the Delta and Wadi.

H. The launch of the 'Golden Triangle' mineral wealth zone in the south of the country covering 10 percent of the total area of Egypt, incorporating four industrial zones, mining and logistics.

5. In light of Egypt's commitment under Article 15 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, and in view of the adoption of the right to work by the 2014 Constitution, all governmental and community efforts must be combined to create an atmosphere conducive to the exercise of this right.

a. The Minister of Manpower and Immigration's decree No. 397 of 2015 on the rules and procedures regulating professional hierarchy stipulates that vocational training shall include the duration of the training period not less than one year and not more than three years. Any employer implementing a vocational training program must provide the labor bureau with the names of trainees, along with details of training hours and rest periods, provided that the daily training hours do not exceed eight hours, with the trainees not being trained before they reach the age of 13. Training is not to be conducted during weekends or public holidays.

B. A number of vocational training programs were held during 2016, with a total of 4,704 men and women enrolled in 22 governorates. A total of 4,133 young men and women were provided with training in various trades and disciplines.

C. Implementing many programs and initiatives to develop professional planning skills for the future for young people and to support the concept of self-employment to achieve the best rates of employment and creation of new jobs, including a "Community Entrepreneurship" initiative and a "How to start your project" program in cooperation with Microsoft, providing programs and seminars for more than 10,000 young men and women.

D. Launching the "Professional Development and Planning" initiative in cooperation with UNICEF, and the implementation of the 'Do' initiative to provide rehabilitation and training for 100,000 young men and women to provide them with important information required by the labor market for various jobs.

e. The Mashari project was implemented in cooperation with UNICEF and Barclays Bank in 10 governorates, with the objective of establishing model

professional counseling centers to provide guidance and support services to young people to help determine their career path.

f.. The launch of the 'Training and Rehabilitation of Ghetto Youth', which benefited 1,200 young men and women from several randomly selected underprivileged areas, along with the implementation of a labor-intensive project for more than 200,000 young men and women during 2016/2017 through the employment of young entrepreneurs in infrastructure development of youth centers.

G. Launching the "Mawqi Masr Taamal" project, in cooperation with Microsoft, offering more than 63,000 jobs in the private sector, especially for young people.

H. The establishment of the Egypt Job Bank to provide training and employment services for young people, and the launch of the "Employ Yourself" initiative in cooperation with private sector companies.

I. The establishment of 'job search clubs' in 12 governorates in cooperation with the International Labor Organization to spread the culture of self-employment and career guidance.

In addition, Egyptian universities and institutes have organized a number of scientific activities in order to maximize the employment prospects of graduates and help tailor their skills to local and international market requirements, as well as monitoring actual labor market needs for the purpose of providing appropriate employment.

J. Implementing a number of developmental projects aimed at curbing unemployment and job creation with total funding of 190 million dollars, including the "Decent Jobs for Youth" project in cooperation with the International Labor Organization between the period from March 2011 to March 2016, which provided support for 500 new companies and benefited 40,927 young people. The project has now been extended until 2019. The programs include the 'Commercial Franchise Sector Support' project, financed by the African Development Bank, the 'Skills Development Project in Aswan' and the establishment of three advanced centers for the timber industry in Alexandria, Giza and 10th of Ramadan.

K. The establishment of the 'Egypt for Entrepreneurship and Investment Company' in cooperation with the Saudi Fund for Development and 'Earn Capital', with an initial investment of \$ 24.7 million to encourage start-up companies and entrepreneurship projects and provide training programs, and the implementation of the 'Support small and medium enterprises project' in cooperation with France.

6. In compliance with the provisions of the Constitution to achieve social justice and social solidarity, which seeks to ensure a decent life for all citizens, and in accordance with the Constitution and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, a number of projects and programs have been implemented,

a. The 'Takaful and Dignity Program' was launched in order to provide a fair and effective social protection network for the needy in cooperation with NGOs. The number of beneficiaries registered on the Takaful program was 2,168,365 citizens, with 9,057,638 applications recorded in Karama. The program aims to double the number of beneficiaries of current security assistance to more than 3 million families.

B. The number of beneficiaries of monthly social security assistance under Decree No. 137 of 2010 reached 1,753,000 at the end of 2016 at a cost of EGP 8.875 billion, while scholarships are offered to the children of the families benefiting from this assistance in order to prevent academic dropout amongst them.

C. The number of pensions provided under social insurance laws rose by around 35 percent during the period 2015-2017. The total amount of public and private sector employees' pensions was 144,382 billion pounds for a total of 8.1 million beneficiaries. The minimum pension level was set at EGP 500 as of July 2016. An exceptional pension is reserved for the families of victims of terrorist acts, and for every civilian who suffered a total or partial disability due to terrorist acts.

D. To reduce poverty and its negative consequences \$ 929 million in funding has been dedicated to development projects which aim to reduce poverty in the poorest regions, while several programs have been launched in cooperation with private sector and non-governmental organizations, including the subsequent care program aimed at employing those who are deprived of family care.

e. The implementation of a system to support the production of bread and rationed goods and provide subsidized goods to 70 million citizens benefiting from ration cards, along with the establishment of several marketing outlets to provide basic commodities for the citizen, as well as the distribution of food to the neediest families in Upper Egypt.

f. Providing a funding of \$3,882 million for projects in the field of drinking water, sanitation and electricity infrastructure, improving health services and combating pollution.

G. Securing \$ 550 million from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) to finance social housing programs.

7. In addition to the government's efforts to provide adequate housing, security and health for citizens to achieve social justice, several housing projects have been implemented in various sectors of society, with a number of Sakina units and a nominal monthly rent for low-income citizens, providing housing units at a symbolic rental cost for urgent cases that cannot be delayed. The Ministry of Housing is also cooperating with Egypt Good Foundation to improve the housing environment of some low-income citizens through the construction and reconstruction of housing units. The Social Housing Fund also provides units for citizens whose income does not exceed 2,500 pounds for a single person and 3,500 pounds for married couples, as well as providing 74,651 housing units for middle-income earners.

The 2014 Constitution included, for the first time, an obligation on the State to develop a comprehensive national plan to address the issue of slum housing, including refurbishment work, the provision of infrastructure and facilities, improving the quality of life and public health, and ensuring that resources are available for the implementation of these plans within a specified period of time (article 78). In this context, the position of Deputy Minister of Housing for Urban Development and Slums was instituted. The SDF policies also included a clear vision of "an urban society that is developed and safe for all", whose mission is to upgrade the existing urban, economic and social slum areas together with all development partners.

In this context, a number of projects were implemented to improve living standards for the underprivileged, in partnership with civil society, local and international development agencies and the private sector. The government adopted a social housing project to create one million new housing units in all governorates and new cities at a total cost of EGP 150 billion. The program includes the construction of 13,000 housing units as an alternative to existing units located in hazardous areas within the area covered by the project of development of unsafe and random areas, which has been completed.

Another program introduced during this period was the development of the Triangle Maspero and the transfer of some families with their consent to Al-Asmarat neighborhood based on their wishes as a comprehensive urban area with facilities and services ranging from schools to health unit

hospital. In addition, the Gheit Al-enab area was inaugurated after being developed and transformed from an empty area of land to a thriving zone with decent living standards. Meanwhile, 56 other areas in various governorates are undergoing development, while the governorates of Alexandria and Port Said, as well as the Red Sea and Suez provinces have been declared slum-free.

8. Pursuant to Egypt's commitment under Article 16 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, and in enactment of article 18 of the Constitution on the right of every citizen to integrated healthcare in accordance with quality standards, and its decision to allocate a proportion of government expenditure to health of not less than 3 percent gradually, until it meets international standards, the House of Representatives concluded its deliberations on a draft law on the introduction of a comprehensive social health insurance system by the end of 2017, which constitutes an important axis of the strategic plan for the development of the health system in all sectors, with the current program projected to run till 2030. The bill aims to make implementation of this program mandatory and gradual for all citizens in all governorates. The state must steadily increase the quality and efficiency of its health facilities by providing separate funds for different aspects of the healthcare system, providing services and supervising the quality of performance of these services through the establishment of three independent bodies to manage the Comprehensive social health insurance system , namely:

A

. The Comprehensive Health Insurance Management and Finance Authority, which manages and finances the system.

B. Hospitals and Health Care Authority which is tasked with providing primary and secondary services represented in basic health care units, clinics and family medicine centers and comprehensive clinics with current health insurance. This authority also provides advanced services through health insurance hospitals, hospitals of the medical institution, specialized medical centers, Ministry of Health hospitals and Educational Hospital Authority.

C. The Healthcare Services Oversight Authority is charged with overseeing and supervising medical and health services as well as having responsibility for the members of medical professions. It also supervises the safety and stability of the health sector, organizing and developing it,

improving its quality, safeguarding the rights of users, as well as regulating the provision of health insurance services in accordance with quality and accreditation standards.

The manufacture of the Hepatitis C drug in Egypt has helped reduce the cost of treatment for the patient by 85 percent, and the waiting lists have been completely reduced. The recovery rate has increased to four times the global average, with more than 1.5 million patients undergoing treatment. A comprehensive survey is currently underway in all governorates to provide treatment for all patients in order to eradicate the Hepatitis C virus completely in Egypt.

To ensure the rights of those who cannot afford treatment, a total of 2,773, 678 treatment decisions were issued by the Specialist Medical Boards during the period from 1/7/2016 to 30/6/2017 at state expense, benefiting 1,500,020 patients, with a total expenditure of about 5 billion pounds. In order to ensure the speedy delivery of medical service to the recipients of medical treatment at the expense of the state, several measures were introduced, including the automation of issuing these decisions, which is now carried out electronically, reducing the time between applications for and issuing of treatment decision to 48 hours for emergencies and 72 hours for other procedures. Specialist Medical Boards have been linked to a number of 13 medical sub-councils via a video conferencing network to enable discussion of cases that need to be presented to the specialist high committees and to establish strategies for new procedures such as prostheses and treatment of conditions affecting the immune system, with all these initiatives added to the package of measures for which state-funded treatment decisions are issued. The prices of the existing state-funded treatment programs have been increased, in line with the current market prices.

In order to reduce the incidence of infectious diseases and to reduce the incidence of epidemics and mitigate their effects as they occur, the Ministry of Health has been keen to update and develop all healthcare programs serving citizens, in terms of diagnostic tools and environmental systems to monitor diseases through provision of the latest technology for rapid exchange of disease data and online updating of health threats in order to ensure early detection and rapid intervention in a timely manner, with information on births, deaths, causes of death and vaccination notifications

also updated to electronic databases to complete the automation system in the country.

The Government has also taken a series of other steps, including:

- a. Providing 20 million immunization packages in Egypt to approximately 2.6 million children annually in all governorates. Parents of children who have been vaccinated are advised to ensure that all vaccinations are administered with the vaccination coverage rate now exceeding 96 percent.
- B. Providing vaccinations and vaccines for all vaccination target groups (children, schoolchildren, travelers, national campaigns, etc.).
- C. Launching National campaigns and limited campaigns against polio, German Measles and Mumps, providing up to 40 million annual vaccinations, with positive monitoring of all diseases targeted with vaccination.
- D. The provision of free anti-HIV drugs and periodic follow-up laboratory tests for AIDS sufferers through 13 specialist centers in a number of governorates, and the provision of voluntary HIV testing and laboratory testing via 23 fixed and mobile centers in 17 governorates, serving 4,602 recipients to date.
- e. Reducing the rate of serological transformation among renal dialysis patients from 27 percent before the establishment of the infection control structure and the associated implementation of infection control procedures to less than one percent in 2016.
- f. Supporting safe disposal of waste system products by providing 17 incinerators, with periodic sampling of the outlets at drinking water purification plants to control the drainage. Concerning the quality control and safety of drinking water, 34,194 samples were taken to ensure their fitness for human consumption.

The state also strives to provide safe drinking water in 27 governorates. Drinking water is now available to around 96 percent of the total population with a national project now underway to expand the availability of drinking water to include the entire population and meet the needs of all citizens. A number of monitoring and distribution stations have been opened across the country to regularly monitor the quality of the drinking water supply on a 24-hour basis in order to ensure compliance with international standards and specifications, complying with the guidelines of the WHO in terms of the number and regularity of samples tested from the water networks and their safety for consumers in all regions.

9. In accordance with Egypt's commitment under Article 17 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, articles 19, 20 and 21 of the Constitution affirm that every citizen has the right to education with the aim of building the Egyptian character, maintaining national identity, nurturing the roots of scientific thinking, developing talent, promoting innovation and strengthening cultural and spiritual values and the concepts of citizenship, tolerance and non- discrimination. The state is committed to upholding the excellence of education curricula and methods, and to providing education in accordance with global quality criteria. Education is obligatory until the end of the secondary stage or its equivalent. The state grants free education at different stages in state educational institutions in accordance with the law. The state commits to allocating a percentage of government spending of no less than four percent of the GDP for education. This will gradually increase this until it reaches global rates.

The state is also committed to encouraging and developing technical education and professional training and expanding all types thereof in accordance with global quality criteria, and in keeping with the needs of the labor market.

The state also guarantees the independence of universities, and of scientific and linguistic educational institutions, and is committed to providing university education in accordance with global quality criteria, and to developing free university education in state universities and institutes in accordance with the law. The state allocates a percentage of the government expenditure that is no less than two percent of Gross National Product (GNP), which will gradually increase until it reaches global rates.

Demonstrating the government's keenness to ensure access to all levels of education for women and girls, the state prioritises the provision of equal opportunities for the education of boys and girls. The proportion of girls in basic education has reached 48.5%, with the expansion of girls' schools and community education schools to combat the phenomenon of early academic drop-out rates.

In order to encourage outstanding students and provide more non-stereotypical educational opportunities, nine outstanding schools have been established since 2014, increasing the number of outstanding schools from just two previously to 11 at present. Around 18 centers of excellence

have been established for gifted learners in 10 governorates throughout 2016 and 2017. The online Egyptian Knowledge Bank is believed to be the largest Arabic digital library on the Internet, offering access to thousands of free periodicals, encyclopedias and specialized scientific journals (Article 25). The General Authority for Adult Education has also expanded its activities in partnership with civil society organizations in a bid to eradicate illiteracy among adults in all sections of society and every age group to all those over 15 years of age. It also seeks to provide students with various skills that offer the potential to help them achieve economic empowerment.

In the context of spreading the culture of human rights in society, the educational curriculum includes human rights education, women's rights, children's rights, democracy, legal awareness, globalization, life skills, international humanitarian law, citizenship education, etc., with a particular emphasis on the principles of human rights in the subject matter. The criteria and indicators for some subjects and activities have been modified to include behavioral practices and guidelines that must be followed in order to enable expression of opinions without offending others while building the students' character in order to consolidate the principles of tolerance and acceptance of the other. Cooperation was also extended between Egyptian educational authorities with many international organizations and national and foreign NGOs to establish activities and implement programs to support the practical implementation of human rights culture in the educational system. This includes a project which seeks to promote education and protect children from risks, implemented in cooperation with UNICEF and the UNDP in Egypt with a view to integrating human rights into higher education curricula, along with the preparation of a national plan of action for the training of university professors and students, which has been developed in order to familiarize academics and students with the principles of human rights.

In parallel with the aforementioned initiatives, levels of funding allocated to disadvantaged areas have also been increased, with the aim of increasing the rates of continuing education, reducing the rate of deprivation of education, making education compulsory until the ninth grade which marks the end of the basic education stage, as well as increasing the number of community schools to about 5,000 in order to serve disadvantaged communities. Cooperation with the international non-governmental organisation Save the Children has resulted in the launch of a project to combat the worst forms of child labor, in order to provide care for children

in pre-university education and to prevent the most vulnerable from dropping out of education, as well as providing financial and in-kind support to the families of students who are vulnerable to dropout, provided that attendance is no less than 80 percent of school days.

10. Egypt's tourism sector is one of the leading sectors in dealing with the human rights issue, in line with the 1979 Declaration of Acapulco and the Manila Declaration of 1980 which stipulate that freedom of travel and tourism is a human right. The Egyptian tourism sector continues to pay attention to the promotion of various tourism programs, most notably the Holy Family Program, which was inaugurated during Pope Francis' visit to Egypt on 24/4/2017, as well as the declaration of Sinai as a capital of religious tourism at a conference hosted in Sharm El Sheikh on 28 September 2017, during which Egypt succeeded in providing medical treatment to many people infected with the Hepatitis C virus, an initiative commended by the World Health Organization, which called on other countries to benefit from the Egyptian model. Egypt is also home to the shrine of Ahl al-Bayt and a number of Jewish shrines, all of which are open to all tourists of different nationalities.

Third: the rights of the family and the most favored groups

a. women :

In line with Article 18 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the rights of the family, including its members, Article 9 of the 1971 Constitution stipulates that "The family is the basis of society and is based on religion, morality, and patriotism." The 2014 Constitution ensures the implementation of international standards and of the African Charter in this regard, as reflected in Articles 9, 10 and 11 of the Constitution.

As a result of this, the State has taken numerous measures in accordance with its belief in the prestigious position of Egyptian women throughout the course of Egyptian history and culture, from the ancient civilisation of the country and up to the modern day as seen during the revolutions of Egypt on 25 January and 30 June. These measures are taken in recognition of women's achievements in upholding democracy and to serve the rights of Egyptians to human dignity, social justice and political reform, and of women's participation in social movements opposing and rejecting injustice

and tyranny. The Constitution guarantees equality before the law in terms of rights, freedoms and public duties. Article 22 provides that the state is committed to achieving equality between women and men in all civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights. In accordance with the provisions of this Constitution, the State commits to take measures to ensure the proper representation of women in parliament, and in assuming public functions and senior administrative positions in the State. At least 25 percent of local council seats are allocated to women. The state is also committed to protecting women against all forms of violence, to enabling them to reconcile family duties with work requirements, to providing care and protection for mothers, children, dependent women, the elderly, the disabled and women in need. In the same context, Article 214 of the Constitution provides for the establishment of independent national councils, including the National Council for Women, granting it technical, financial and administrative autonomy, and the right to inform the public authorities of any violation of its sphere of work.

In order to ensure the necessary opportunities for the advancement of women in society, the Government, together with the National Council for Women, has adopted a broad participatory process to implement the National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030, in keeping with the spirit of the Constitution and with the sustainable development goals adopted by the United Nations as the basis for development until 2030; these consist of three primary objectives: political empowerment, social empowerment and women's economic empowerment, while strengthening their leadership roles, as follows:

1. Political empowerment of women:

A) The House of Representatives Law No. 46 of 2014 included the allocation of a set number of seats in each electoral list for women. The number of elected women deputies has now reached 76, with 14 appointed as deputies from a total of 90 deputies in the House of Representatives. The percentage of women participating in the House of Representatives has thus increased to more than 10 percent after being 1.5 percent in the 2012 Parliament.

B) The President of the Republic proclaimed 2017 to be the Year of Women in Egypt. The 2030 Women's Empowerment Strategy was launched in cooperation with civil society organizations in parallel with Egypt's Vision 2030 initiative for sustainable development. In order to ensure the implementation of this strategy, the Egypt's Women

Observatory was established to monitor the implementation of the project, while a number of equal opportunities units were launched within various ministries.

C) Recent years have also seen the appointment of the first female national security adviser to the President of the Republic, along with the appointment of six female ministers, heading the ministries of international cooperation and investment, planning and administrative reform, social solidarity, migration and Egyptians overseas affairs, culture and tourism. This has increased the percentage of female appointees in ministerial positions from 15 percent to 20 percent. This period also saw the appointment of the first female deputy governor of the Central Bank, the first female governor and four female deputy governors, along with the appointment of women to serve as mayors in some villages and to the deanship of a number of universities' colleges. Meanwhile, Egypt currently has 66 female judges, as well as women serving in various senior positions in other judicial bodies.

D) Up to the end of 2017, at least 449,062 free national ID cards had been issued to women and disabled girls in different governorates under the "Your Card, Your Rights" program, which promotes women's political participation and the empowerment of their economic and social rights, and ensures that women and families benefit from government services and guarantees and various forms of support.

E) The government, in cooperation with the National Council for Women, has launched several initiatives and projects to increase the political empowerment of women, including the development of a database for women aspiring to run in upcoming local council elections, with a total of 10,000 female candidates running in these elections in 2017. Eighty-two awareness sessions have been held to date in 400 centers in governorates across Egypt targeting 12,389 citizens, to encourage women to participate strongly in the upcoming local elections as candidates or voters.

F) Holding training courses to build the capacity of 300 rural leaders in the field of rural women's awareness of women's rights.

G) Updating and extending the 'Government Initiatives and Partnership Program' grant agreement with the United States, including the human rights component, which aims to strengthen the capacity of the National Council for Women to update and adapt policies.

2. Social, health and cultural empowerment of women:

A) The Civil Service Law No. 81 of 2016 grants each female employee unpaid maternity leave per child for a maximum period of two years at a time and a maximum of six years in the duration of her career, with the administrative authority assuming the insurance contributions usually payable by the employee.

B) Combating violence against women by:

1) Launching three national strategies in 2015: the National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women, the National Strategy to Combat Female Genital Mutilation, and the National Strategy against Early Marriage.

The Penal Code was amended by Law No. 78 of 2016, which changed the crime of female circumcision to a felony rather than a misdemeanor, as well as introducing a penalty of imprisonment for at least five years and no more than seven years for female circumcision. The penalty shall be aggravated imprisonment if the act results in permanent disability, or if it leads to death. A new article was also introduced to punish with imprisonment for a period not less than one year and not exceeding three years each female circumcision carried out at the recipient's request.

3) The Ministry of Health has also developed a Medical Manual for victims of gender-based violence, copies of which are distributed to all hospitals, with medical personnel trained to use them. The Ministry of Social Solidarity is to develop its nine hosting centers to provide protection, accommodation, social, health, psychological and legal care for abused women without age restrictions.

4) The government, in cooperation with the National Council for Women, launched several initiatives and projects to protect women against all forms of violence, including the creation of anti-harassment units in six universities, and the launch of the 'Together for the Nation' program in cooperation with the Ministry of Awqaf and Churches with the aim of training and sensitizing female clerics about the importance of incorporating the message of reducing all forms of violence against women and correcting misconceptions, in parallel with the training of 120 preachers on 'Islam's position on violence against women' to correct misconceptions about violence against women.

5. The Public Prosecution service has issued guidelines to its members, as part of efforts to confront cases of violence against women, to clarify all measures to protect victims of violence and to increase the number of women police, as part of efforts by the Ministry of the Interior's Human Rights Unit.

6- Enhancing cooperation between the human rights sector and community communication at the Ministry of the Interior and the National Council for Women through renewing the cooperation protocol, modernizing protection mechanisms and providing legal and security support for women.

7) The 'Taa Almarbouta, Secret of Your Strength' campaign, which attracted about 40 million viewers on social media and 498,000 followers in other media, was created to raise public awareness of the need to support women and protect them from all forms of discrimination and violence through the dissemination of awareness messages which address all segments of society across multiple media platforms.

8) The 'Women's Complaints Bureau and Family Advice' hotline was launched as a national initiative to combat violence against women, child marriage, human trafficking and female circumcision, and to raise awareness about reproductive health and family planning issues.

9) Forty-five seminars were held, attended by 1,277 people, to raise awareness about issues of violence against women, FGM, early marriage and family planning, as well as training workshops for media professionals on the role of information and awareness-raising in combating violence against women.

C) Cooperation between human rights bodies and the community outreach divisions at the Ministry of the Interior and the National Council for Women resulted in the establishment of a partnership between Islamic and Christian religious leaders to discuss community issues and raise awareness among women and society in general on issues affecting the rights and freedoms of women and girls.

D) The National Council for Women launched the 'Doorways' campaign, which targets women and girls in villages through field visits to have first-hand information about women's problems and provide information on

government service channels. The campaign targeted a total of 110,224 women and girls in 991 villages in all governorates.

E) The launch of the 'Women Can' initiative targeting women in remote communities through the provision of a package of health, education and service activities; and holding mobile "cultural salons" which toured all Egypt's governorates targeting women and youth to discuss women's issues in general and to assess the pressing issues in each province.

F) The production of radio and television programs and short films on leading female role models, in cooperation with the Radio and Television Authority, to raise public awareness about the role of women and the launch of an initiative to highlight successful female models of community development through social media platforms.

G) Several projects and initiatives were initiated with the objective of reducing illiteracy rates, including a project to support women in the governorate of Albuhairah, with nine phases of the project implemented to date, with the establishment of 1,208 classrooms providing lessons to 31,961 students, of whom 23,220 passed. The projects also include an initiative to eliminate female illiteracy in Qena governorate. Field visits were made to 200 families to encourage them to enroll in literacy classes.

H) Implementing a number of projects and initiatives aimed at improving the health conditions of women, including the provision of mobile medical units in various governorates to provide free medical tests for women as well as to provide medicine. The mobile unit personnel also aim to raise awareness among women about the principles of public health and early detection of breast cancer, along with various other issues related to women's health. The beneficiaries to date included 64,136 women during 2017. Meanwhile, awareness campaigns have been launched which aim to protect women from harmful cultural traditions and regressive practices based on cultural heritage, such as early marriage, early pregnancy, circumcision, ignoring family planning and performing deliveries of babies without medical supervision.

I) The Ministry of Health has launched the 'Health for Every Woman' initiative, which aims to establish health records for every woman based on the registration their national ID card, documenting any health service she has received to monitor her health on a lifelong basis. The initiative also

includes updating and extending the Human Rights and Civil Society Support and Development Initiative throughout Egypt, in partnership with the European Union Commission, with a view to promoting a culture of human rights and raising awareness of women's rights.

3. Economic empowerment of women:

A) A total of 34 equal opportunity units have been established in various ministries, which will focus on ensuring the constitutional equality of men and women at work and addressing any discriminatory practices that women experience; providing legal awareness programs on the rights of working women and assisting them in obtaining training and promotion opportunities in cooperation with the National Council for Women, to work on resolving problems facing women, including economic problems through the provision of social pensions.

B) Criminalizing the exclusion of women from inheritance through the amendment of Law No. 77 of 1943 by adding an article that proscribes the intentional withholding of any inheritance to female heirs and blocking or refraining from delivering the inheritance.

C) Launching the 'Check and Bills' initiative to reduce the percentage of indebted women through raising awareness about the risks of non-payment of debts on time.

D) Establishment of NGO Forum to include 117 NGOs in all development disciplines, with a view to exchanging experiences in the field of women's empowerment, identifying their needs and agreeing on specific priorities to promote women's issues.

E) The Government has implemented a number of projects and programs aimed at the economic empowerment of women, notably:

- 1) The implementation of 160 training courses with a total of 3600 beneficiaries to date in order to help build leadership and

administrative skills, and develop human resources for women working in the public and private sectors.

- 2) The introduction of a 'national training' program to train 50,000 job seekers in order to reduce unemployment, which has so far benefited 2,900 job seekers in 18 governorates.
- 3) The establishment of Community Development and Entrepreneurship Center in cooperation with Microsoft to enable talented young women to benefit from information technology training in the governorates of Cairo, Ismailia, Aswan, Luxor and Alexandria. The Center aims to build the capacity of 5,000 young women to strengthen their capabilities in the field of software and community entrepreneurship. It's hoped this will eventually bridge the gap between public education and labor market needs, as well as promote employment and entrepreneurship for girls in information technology.
- 4) Providing services to 29,399 girls and economic opportunities for more than 2000 girls and women through entrepreneurship, microenterprises and employment opportunities. In this regard, 110 training courses were implemented, benefiting 2,300 recipients to date to develop the research, marketing and managerial skills of women aspiring to establish small enterprises. The women were also provided with the necessary information and encouraged to benefit from information technology in the field of small enterprises.
- 5) Launching a social justice project to promote the economic empowerment of women with the signing of a cooperation protocol with the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in order to improve the economic situation of Egyptian women and ensure their participation in the development of society through training in some industries based on natural raw materials, textile and sewing, targeting about 500 poor and needy women during 2017.

- 6) Implementing the 'One Village Project' in order to boost women's cooperatives in rural areas through upgrading their technical and administrative skills, increasing productivity, raising the economic return of their activities and increasing female employment rates through the implementation of small and micro enterprises.
- 7) Launching the Village Saving and Loan Association (VLSA) project, which aims to provide microfinance savings and lending methodology for small communities. This is based on strengthening the traditional informal practice of lending and savings associations in governorates by forming groups of between 15 and 25 women, who are trained in savings strategies and in providing small loans to set up their own projects to improve their living standards. At least 18,000 men and women participated in the project, saving more than 8 million Egyptian pounds and lending to 2,200 members to date.
- 8) The launch of the Al-Khair Savings and Lending Program in the governorates of Beni Suef, Minya and Assiut, resulting in the implementation of 4,960 projects serving 18,844 beneficiaries to date.
- 9) Implementation of the 'Egyptian Cotton Project', with the aim of bringing about an agricultural renaissance of the renowned staple crop of Egyptian cotton through the implementation of training courses and technical consultations targeting rural leaders in Sharqia, Dakahlia, Kafr El-Sheikh, Gharbia and Beheira governorates to qualify them to raise awareness among women farmers about the proper means of farming and harvesting cotton and how to take care of seeds, and prevent against the occurrence of agricultural diseases.

The initiatives listed above reflect Egypt's implementation of the Commission's first recommendation on the previous report on gender equality.

B. Children:

The state is committed to observing the right of every child to enjoy the rights and freedoms recognized and guaranteed by all international instruments, in particular the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, regardless of race, color, sex, language, religion, political views, national or social origin, property, or birth or any other condition of the child, and to ensuring non-discrimination, among other ideal interests that Egypt has endorsed.

Article 10 of the 1971 Constitution provides that the state shall guarantee the protection of motherhood and childhood, provide care for children and young people and provide suitable conditions for the development of their talents. The Children's Act No. 12 of 1996, amended by Law No. 126 of 2008, is concerned with ensuring that the state serves children's best interests and ensures that their needs are considered in every aspect of their lives. This legislation was followed by the promulgation of Law No. 1 of 2000 on the regulation of certain conditions and procedures for litigation in matters of personal status. According to this law, couples wishing to divorce were required to reconcile if they had children to protect the children from the adverse effects of family breakdown. Decree No. 4 of 2005 provides for custody to be decided for children up to age 15, after which the child is deemed capable of deciding for himself or herself which parent they wish to live with.

2. The Constitution of 2014 ensures that the rights of the child are guaranteed (Article 80), defining a child to be anyone who has not yet reached 18 years of age. The constitution mandates the protection of children's rights, including those of disabled children, especially their right to name and identity papers, free mandatory vaccinations, health and family care or alternative care, basic nutrition, safe shelter, education and development of conscience, knowledge and education, as well as the protection of children from all forms of violence and abuse, ill-treatment, sexual and commercial exploitation, as well as establishing a judicial system for child victims. In the same context, Article 214 of the Constitution provided for the establishment of independent national councils, including the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood. The council is granted

technical, financial and administrative autonomy and the right to inform the public authorities of any violation of its sphere of work.

3. In affirmation of Egypt's care for children, the government, in cooperation with the Council for Childhood, Motherhood and Local Societies, has launched a National Strategy for Childhood and Motherhood for the period 2017-2023, which aims to enforce the rights of children and mothers from an integrated development perspective and to provide better services to improve the quality of life for Egyptian children and families, and to establish specific priorities in the upcoming period, with particular emphasis on child health and survival, development and education, protection, and participation in the public sphere. The strategy strives to prioritise fairness in ensuring that children of underprivileged families in rural and Upper Egypt have access to basic services. Several laws and ministerial decrees have been issued to intensify efforts in the context of protecting children's rights, notably:

- A) The issuance of Presidential Decree No. 75 of 2015 withdrawing Egypt's reservation to Article 21.2 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child of 1990 on the prohibition of marriage under 18 years of age.
- B) Law No. 6 of 2015 amending the provisions of the Children's Law No. 12 of 1996, lowering the minimum age for children included in the foster family system from two years to three months.
- C) Decree No. 7 of 2015 amended some provisions of the Children's Law No. 12 of 1996, including reducing the age of criminal responsibility for children from 21 to 18.
- D) Decree No. 84 of 2015 concerning the regulation of the 'Tahya Misr Fund' was promulgated and provides for the competence of the fund to assist state bodies in reducing the phenomenon of street children and displaced persons.
- E) Act No. 101 of 2015 on curbing cheating in examinations, which penalizes anyone who prints, publishes or broadcasts by any

means the questions in or answers to examinations related to different stages of education in order to maintain the level of education and ensure equal opportunities for all students.

- F) Law No. 106 of 2015 amended Law No. 396 of 1956 concerning prison reform to ensure that female prisoners are granted the right to keep their children with them until the age of four years, and to remain with them during the first two years.
- G) A decision by the Minister of Justice on 17/1/2016 allocated an integrated headquarters for the establishment of the Model Child Court in Cairo. This is the first model court for children in Egypt. It includes the offices of the two courts of law (primary and appellate), child prosecution offices, the offices of social workers, and quarters for children appearing in court, funded by the European Union.
- H) The establishment of the Child Fund for the Care and Protection of Street Children by the Ministry of Health and Population in December 2015 to combat child labor, and protect street children, reduce the spread of this phenomenon and to confront all those who abuse children in violation of the Children's Code.
- I) Decree of the Minister of Education No. 42 of 2015 on the admission of students with simple disabilities to public education schools.
- J) The Minister of Education's Decree No. 179 of 2015 on school discipline regulations defines the rights and duties of students and the responsibilities of parents, as well as the responsibilities of school personnel and the rights and responsibilities and duties of teachers and school management personnel towards students.

- K) Decision of the Minister of Education No. 224 of 2015 concerning the system of insurance for students against accidents. Its provisions apply to students in public schools at the basic and general secondary levels, as well as to private school students in international schools and to expenditures of various stages and types.
- L) Decision of the Minister of Education No. 224 of 2015 concerning an insurance system for students against accidents. Its provisions apply to students in public schools at the basic and general secondary levels, as well as to private school students in international schools and expenditures of different levels and types.
- M) The Government, together with the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood, implemented a number of programs within the context of a broad participatory process, notably:
1. The "Egyptian Child Forum" aims to enable children to practice democracy and participate in decision-making and to consolidate the values of citizenship, belonging and tolerance.
 2. Poverty Reduction Program: Improving the economic conditions of women, boys and girls by raising awareness about the concept of children's rights and human rights, and achieving equal access to basic economic and social services, while empowering beneficiaries economically and in terms of healthcare and education, as well as facilitating the issuance of identity documents and making them available to the target categories.
 3. The 'Girls Education Initiative' was launched to contribute toward the provision of quality and equitable education to all girls in girls' schools by the end of 2019, in tandem with the National Program for Quality Education: This initiative aims to

increase students' ability to achieve international competitiveness.

4. The 'Adolescent Health' program was created to raise awareness among students and parents about adolescent issues through awareness seminars, dialogues and activities to highlight issues and problems related to reproductive health and adolescence.
5. The 'Mitigation of Illegal Migration of Unaccompanied Children' initiative was introduced to combat illegal migration of children by raising awareness around the seriousness of this problem and finding positive alternatives to it.
6. The 'Protect and Rehabilitate Street Children' program was launched with a view to protecting and rehabilitating these vulnerable children and enable them to integrate into society in a manner that enables them to obtain their economic, social and cultural rights.
7. A 'Dropout Reduction' program was launched which aims to reduce the numbers of children dropping out of basic education by improving the capacities of those dealing with children vulnerable to dropout, educating families most in need of instruction, changing the negative perception of rural girls' education, combating harmful practices against girls, developing a guide for those dealing with children susceptible to dropping out to be used by school principals as well as teachers and social and psychological specialists in order to reduce the phenomenon of dropping out and make school more attractive and accessible for children.
8. A program was launched to protect young people from smoking and drugs, with the objective of deterring children from taking up cigarette-smoking or drug-use, and supporting the role of the family as a basic line of defense to address

the problem and early detection of substance abuse or addiction.

9. The establishment of the National Observatory for the Rights of the Child implemented a national strategy to monitor all services, indicators and violations related to children's rights in order to support a planning and coordination process to help improve the conditions of children in Egypt.
 10. A child hotline was launched to receive children's complaints as a free and accessible means for every child without discrimination to express their opinions on issues related to them. The helpline operates across all governorates on a 24-hour basis. This move has achieved a positive concrete outcome in providing a child protection umbrella, as guaranteed by law and international conventions, in addition to providing free legal assistance to children and helping them to return to education after a break.
 11. A number of 'Child Protection Committees' were launched as a national child protection mechanism with support from legal authorities, based on a number of measures, including coordination of contacts with the relevant government bodies, documenting the referral mechanisms between the child rescue line and the local coordinator in the governorate with protection committees; formation of committees and technical support from the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood to monitor the operations of protection committees, as well as promotion of these committees in media and at the local community level.
5. Further demonstrating the government's keenness on the protection of children's rights, it has implemented a number of programs and initiatives to ensure children's best interests. These include:

- a. A program to enable children to obtain adequate education for the first five years at kindergartens, in cooperation with UNICEF and the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA), as well as providing a unified curriculum for children in kindergartens, of a scientific and educational quality commensurate with the needs of children at that stage.
- b. Developing a system of foster families for children deprived of family care, and removing all obstacles and impediments to the increase in the number of foster families wishing to sponsor children; The number of foster families was estimated at 9,974 families, which cared for 9,910 children.
- c. Modernizing and extending the 'Support and Development of Human Rights and Civil Society in Egypt' initiative in partnership with the European Commission with the aim of promoting a culture of human rights and raising awareness about this initiative, as well as enhancing children's rights.
- d. Developing a program to combat child labor across those governorates which have recorded high rates of this phenomenon. Budgets estimated at more than EGP 4 million were earmarked as a first stage in fiscal year 2017/2018 to support the program to combat child labor in these governorates.
- e. Creating a program for the development of cultural awareness among children aged from six to 15 years through club activities and children's libraries during the half-term and end-of-year periods. Budgets estimated at more than three and a half million pounds were set aside as a first stage in FY 2017/2018 to support this program.
- f. The 'Players of Our Country' initiative was launched to attract homeless children to sports activities as a means of integrating them into society and creating conditions for them to generate positive energy in partnership with 89 NGOs.

- g. The 'Shelter Enterprises' initiative was established to provide shelter for children aged between six and 18 who have been deprived of family care due to family disruption, bereavement or family inability to provide the necessary care for the child. A total of 345 of these shelters have been established to date, providing services for 9,082 children. A similar nursery program has been launched for younger children aged between two and six, with 145 nurseries providing services to 3,584 infants.
- h. The 'Children's Villages' system, which belongs to the Egyptian Children's Village S-O-S, and sponsors orphaned and abandoned children of both sexes from birth to enable them ultimately to be self-reliant through the provision of 'children's villages'.
- i. 'Social welfare institutions system for children at risk of delinquency' have been established to provide care for children between the ages of six and 18 who are considered to be at particular risk or vulnerable to aberrant behaviour. These children remain in these facilities until the age of 21, with 37 such facilities available in the country, 11 of which are for females and the other 26 for males.
- j. The launch of the 'Observation Centers' system is concerned with the detention of children under the age of 15 whom the Public Prosecution or the judiciary considers to be temporarily placed in protective custody pending the outcome of court cases against them so that they are not detained in police stations or prisons. These centres equally offer an integrated and comprehensive range of child services.
- k. The 'Social Control Bureaus' system examines cases referred by the Public Prosecution service or police or social, psychological and medical observation centers to identify problematic factors of deviation and design an appropriate

treatment plan for each case. These bureaus also provide care and financial support for children, with a total of 256 of these facilities across Egypt.

- l. The implementation of a strategy to "develop quality standards for orphanages" in order to review and update current management regulations related to these institutions and to social centers specializing in providing for orphans, which will also be concerned with preparing and formulating quality standards within institutions providing shelter for children.
- m. Expanding free school meals programs to accommodate more than 11 million students, including up to 81 percent of students enrolled in public sector primary schools. Importance is also attached to providing routine medical check-ups on children when they first start school or start a new school year. These check-ups are also administered to students engaging in sports activities, while regular health awareness programs at schools help to educate children about healthcare through various activities and public health programs are incorporated in schools, particularly the child inoculation program which sees children vaccinated against many diseases.

C. Physically Challenged Persons

1. Egypt ratified the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in March 2008; it has since become a law. Several other laws and decrees have been issued concerning this subject, including Decree No. 126 of 2008 amending certain provisions of the Child Law No. 12 of 1991. The Minister of Education issued Decision No. 42 of 2008 concerning the establishment of a committee to examine the integration of children with special needs in public education schools. He also issued Decision 264/2011 on the admission of students with simple disabilities in schools that are prepared for integration in public education. The National Council for Disability Affairs was established by the Prime Minister's Decision No. 410 on April 17, 2012. The Council formed specialist departments to review the regulations and laws by experts and legal advisers, and another committee to monitor, coordinate, and evaluate

them. At least 16 subcommittees were established to formulate disability policies and strategies in Egypt, with a number of subcommittee members being part of the 50-member-committee that drafted the 2014 Constitution.

Recognizing the importance of the promotion and protection of human rights of persons with disabilities in a way that ensures their full rights without discrimination and in order to eliminate all obstacles to their effective participation and integration in society, Articles 53 and 81 of the 2014 Constitution provide for the state's obligation to ensure their health, social, cultural and recreational rights and their access to sports and educational activities. The constitution also ensures their integration with other citizens, with a commitment to take measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination against them, as well as prohibiting any discrimination on the basis of disability. Article 214 of the Constitution stipulates that the National Council for Persons with Disabilities shall be technically, financially, and administratively independent and shall be consulted with respect to the bills and regulations pertaining to its affairs and fields of work. This particular care was reflected in the President's pronouncement of 2018 as the Year of Persons With Disabilities.

2. In implementation of these commitments, the House of Representatives passed a bill to regulate the rights of persons with disabilities, allowing them to participate actively in all aspects of life with the provision of many privileges and the facilitation of a number of benefits to them, along with ensuring a comprehensive reform of the National Council for Persons With Disabilities to strengthen its powers in discharging its functions. All governmental and community efforts have been combined to take the following steps and actions, which include:

- A. Taking necessary measures to equip courts, among other facilities, in such a way that they're accessible to the needs of persons with disabilities, and facilitate the treatment of people with hearing disabilities through the training of sign language personnel. Sign language interpreters are also provided for people with hearing disabilities within departments and prosecutors.
- B. Egypt's Radio and TV Corporation has introduced sign language translation for the deaf and hard of hearing for news programs and some daily TV shows, in addition to presenting

special programs dealing with different aspects of life for persons with disabilities.

- C. Providing accessible information to persons with disabilities on official websites and facilitating access to these sites through tailoring them for people with visual disabilities, in addition to presenting information materials and services translated into sign language.
- D. Establishing and implementing a 'Care and Protection of the Child with Disabilities' hotline as a national means for children with disabilities and their families and carers to access help and advice. This hotline seeks to provide the children and their primary care providers with information about the services provided by the state. It also enables them to access information on their health, educational or social rights for free, in cooperation with partner parties.
- E. Issuing a legal reference dictionary and a Unified Academic Sign Language Dictionary to eliminate the problem of sign language differences among students with hearing disabilities, and making available many electronic books provided by the Egyptian General Book Authority for Braille reading.
- F. Celebrating international events set aside for persons with disabilities, including World Day for Persons with Disabilities, World Autism Day, and World Down's Syndrome Day, with various national events and celebrations held to mark these occasions at state level to promote awareness about the rights of persons with disabilities.
- G. Allocation of five percent of social housing units to persons with disabilities, with ground-floor units being specifically allocated for physically challenged individuals. Egyptian construction regulations for the design of public and other buildings require accessibility for disabled users and braille signage facilities for the use of visually or otherwise disabled users.

- H. Public transport costs are reduced by 75 percent for disabled users, with most railway stations providing wheelchairs for persons with disabilities, as well as reducing the cost of metro passes by up to 93 percent and facilitating transport procedures for the disabled.
- I. The Ministry of the Interior took a series of measures to ensure the rights of prisoners with disabilities, including: the allocation of dormitories in some prisons for persons with disabilities.
- J. The Ministry of the Interior's strategy in the field of human rights to be implemented during the next three years includes the establishment of an integrated service center in the central region equipped to accommodate all persons with disabilities. It's also endeavoring to rehabilitate public service sites in various provinces to receive persons with disabilities, Unit heads are assigned to follow up the provision of services to persons with disabilities under their personal supervision, and to develop training courses in the use of sign language for employees of the Ministry of Interior in the field of public services. They are also required to develop a manual in Braille relating to public services provided by the Ministry of Interior for users with visual disabilities.
- K. The Ministry of the Interior is to provide a number of transport vehicles modified for accessibility of persons with disabilities, as well as providing accessibility at some police stations, in addition to teaching sign language to a number of officers in the Ministry of Interior.
- L. Articles 81, 180 and 244 of the constitution proclaim the obligation of the state to ensure the ability of persons with disabilities to exercise all political rights and to take measures to ensure that they are adequately and appropriately represented in parliament and local councils. Article 5 of the House of

Representatives Law No. 46 of 2014 stipulates that a number of seats shall be allocated to each electoral list for persons with disabilities. As such, numerous symposia and public meetings, including 39 symposia and awareness sessions about the importance of political participation, have been held. In addition, the National Council for Disability Affairs has coordinated with the Supreme Committee for Elections and the concerned authorities to ensure the participation of persons with disabilities in the electoral process and the removal of all obstacles they may face in Voting, in addition to enabling them - for the first time - to monitor the conduct of the electoral process. These efforts resulted in the election of 8 persons with disabilities in the House of Representatives in the 2015 elections and the appointment of one disabled person with a decision by the President of the Republic.

3. A Committee for Solidarity, Family and Persons with Disabilities has been created by the current House of Representatives. The committee has also been trained in providing the necessary services for people with motor, visual and hearing disabilities through the provision of suitable points of access to enter and exit the halls of the council easily and independently. Disabled members have been also provided with special washrooms and elevators in a way that enables them to exercise their parliamentary role like other MPs.

5. As part of efforts to facilitate the education process for persons with disabilities, the following initiatives have been implemented:

A) The establishment of a 'special education' unit within the administrative structure of the Ministry of Education, which specializes in providing educational services for students with disabilities of various types, and training them to acquire the appropriate skills suited to their abilities in accordance with carefully studied plans and special programs with a view to integrating them fully into society.

B) Issuing several decisions to regulate the integration of children with disabilities into public schools and technical education institutes (industrial, agricultural, commercial and hospitality).

C) Providing access to all special education schools without any tuition fees, along with free uniforms, free accommodation and subsistence payments for students in some of these schools.

D) Implementing a curriculum numbering project with a view to transforming the curricula of persons with disabilities into highly accessible curricula to serve 18,000 students with hearing and visual disabilities, and printing all textbooks for persons with visual disabilities in Braille.

E) Establishing specifications for exam papers for special education students in cooperation with UNICEF. Efforts are underway to develop a document of standards for special education curricula (visual, auditory and intellectual).

F) Training 12,943 teachers in special education schools during 2015 and 2016 in cooperation with the Professional Academy of Teachers.

G) Ensuring that the design of all buildings in all schools since 2005 is in accordance with the specifications contained in the Disability Code, which requires the provision of at least one classroom, a washroom and a wheelchair ramp where necessary for persons with disabilities on the ground floor.

H) The completion of 440 classrooms for special education requirements in 2016. Also, 3861 teachers of persons with disabilities have been trained on the uses and techniques of the computer for easy communication with students among persons with disabilities.

- I. Providing all schools for the blind with speech aids, and providing most of the auditory education schools with collective hearing aids.

J) Supporting 24 centers for persons with disabilities within 23 public universities, through the provision of computers, IBS licenses, Braille printers and projectors.

K) Implementing the 'Thousand Schools' initiative to support schools for persons with disabilities, through which 472 schools for persons with disabilities have been provided with support, divided into 26 schools for the

blind and the visually impaired, and 199 schools for the deaf and hearing impaired.

6. On health-related issues, the Ministry of Health has developed a health strategy for persons with disabilities with the participation of representatives from civil society organizations and local institutions, with a view to developing a suitable vision for a health services roadmap and taking a number of steps to provide affordable healthcare programs for persons with disabilities. The measures also include a screening program for newborns, to detect a thyroid hormonal syndrome, which currently provides screening for up to 94 percent of newborn babies annually. Other programs include a neonatal screening program for hearing problems, an early detection program for impaired vision and anemia among school children, a universal regular healthcheck program, an immunization program for children of school age, and the provision of therapeutic milk for children with various types of metabolic diseases, with the full support of the Ministry of Health which provides about 37 million pounds for these programs annually.

7. Meanwhile, 123 rehabilitation centres have been established across the country, with the program undergoing expansion , in addition to the development of physiotherapy centers in all health insurance clinics and hospitals. These facilities have been provided with the latest equipment. The 108 completed centers, which already monitor cases of physical disability, are also provided with earphones, mobility devices and prostheses, among other items.

8. In the area of the right to work, Civil Service Law No. 81, issued in 2016, stipulates that each administrative body should allocate five percent of its total manpower capacity to persons with disabilities. It also stipulates that disabled workers should be able to work an hour less daily than their able-bodied colleagues and offers a larger number of paid leave days to disabled employees. It should be noted that 40,000 people with disabilities have been appointed in the public sector until mid-2016, while only 10,000 employees with disabilities are currently employed in the private sector, mostly in specialist arts and cultural positions.

9. In the field of participation in sports, cultural and artistic activities, the Egyptian Paralympic Committee was established in 2006, replacing the previous Egyptian Federation of Disabled Sports. In 2017, the Sports Act No. 71 of 2017 was issued, which proclaimed the Egyptian Paralympic

Committee to be a sports body responsible for supporting the sports contained in the Paralympic program with the aim of regulating this activity in the country. The sport organizations covered by this law, are also committed to establishing centers for the gifted and disabled, depending on the type and degree of disability. In this context, many youth centers have been developed and equipped with the appropriate disability access regulations. In addition to these fields, the state also supports cultural and artistic activities for the disabled through the implementation of several programs to discover and nurture the artistic talents of persons with disabilities.

The state's support enabled the champions of the Egyptian Paralympic Games to win dozens of international and regional medals, the last of which was 12 medals at the Rio de Janeiro Olympics 2016. The percentage of women with disabilities participating in various sports activities and tournaments has also increased by almost 40 percent.

In the same context, the National Council for Disability Affairs organized various activities at the International Book Fair in cooperation with the Egyptian General Book Authority to raise awareness among visitors about the right of persons with disabilities to enjoy as rich and varied a cultural life as their able-bodied colleagues, highlighting their creativity and artistic talents. The Ministry of Culture has also implemented several cultural and technical programs to expand the participation of persons with disabilities in various cultural and artistic ventures through specialist programs or activities. A dedicated administrative unit has been created within the ministry to support the cultural and artistic empowerment of persons with disabilities through introducing several measures to ensure the participation of disabled people in cultural life, including the holding of an annual conference on issues pertaining to persons with disabilities and a review of the most important research presented in this regard. A number of prominent distinguished individuals among the disabled have been recognized for their achievements, while technical teams for persons with disabilities have been approved. A number of literary, cultural and technical competitions have been organized involving physically challenged persons. Artistic teams of persons with disabilities are encouraged by making theaters available to them to showcase their dramatic and lyrical performances, and to coordinate with competition organizers and artistic workshops to support and encourage artists with disabilities regardless of the type of disability.

In the field of tourism, a number of measures have been taken to facilitate tourist visits by Egyptian and foreign persons with disabilities, including training a number of tour guides in sign language and the signing of a memorandum of understanding with the ILO to implement a pilot program for the training and rehabilitation of persons with intellectual disabilities. Meanwhile, an international conference was held, entitled 'Tourism of persons with disabilities .. A vision to activate Egyptian tourism', in order to put Egypt on the tourist map of persons with disabilities.

