



» EGYPT

EMHRN Factsheet: ENP Progress Report 2013

EMHRN summary of ENP Egypt Progress Report and recommendations for the next report.

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According to the EU, 2013 was a politically challenging year for Egypt and as a result, “no particular progress can be reported in relation to the action plan.” The EU calls on Egypt to implement its new constitution, adopted in January 2014, in full respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and to ensure the compliance of its national legislation with the constitution and international standards. Furthermore, it calls upon Egypt to organise genuine democratic presidential and parliamentary elections that are in line with international standards. In particular, the EU calls on Egypt to address the following issues:

Freedom of Association and Assembly

Given the growing restrictions on the freedom of assembly and the press, coupled with a deteriorating situation for NGOs, the EU calls upon Egypt to:

- Create conditions conducive to an active and independent civil society, adopt legislation on NGOs and amend the law regulating assemblies in line with international standards;
- Abide by the UN Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials and the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials in the policing of protests, and refrain from dispersing protests on the sole basis of their lack of legality and from using firearms against protesters;
- Conduct prompt, impartial and independent investigations into allegations of excessive use of force, ill treatment and other human rights violations by law enforcement forces during protests, punish those responsible, grant redress to the victims and establish an independent mechanism for monitoring and investigating the behaviour of the security forces.

Given the growing number of violations of freedom of association and assembly in Egypt, EMHRN calls on the EU to keep the above mentioned recommendations as a high priority in its next ENP Progress Report.



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Gender

The ENP Progress Report 2013 points out that cases of sexual violence against women, particularly during demonstrations, reached an unprecedented level in 2013. In light of this, the EU calls on Egypt to:

- Ensure the protection of women's rights and equality;
- Ensure that investigations into cases of violence, including sexual abuses, are carried out and the perpetrators are promptly brought to justice.

EMHRN calls on the EU to recommend concrete measures, such as the adoption of a national strategy to combat sexual violence, the reform of the penal code to punish all forms of sexual violence and ensure its implementation and access to justice.

Justice

The report contains strong language criticising the lack of progress made on reforming the justice system, pointing out to its “significant dysfunction” and the lack of judicial independence. The EU calls upon Egypt to:

- Stop trying civilians in military courts;
- Ensure that investigations of the numerous cases of violence, including sexual abuses, are carried out and that the perpetrators are promptly brought to justice.

EMHRN calls on the EU to prioritise the issue of lack of separation of powers in Egypt. In this regard, judicial reform is crucial for establishing a genuine separation of powers, and the prohibition of an unwarranted interference of the executive in judicial matters.

Migration

As far as the issue of migration and refugees is concerned, the ENP Progress Report on Egypt contains stronger language than that used for other countries in the region. The EU demands that Egypt:

- Addresses the serious situation in the Sinai by closing down torture camps and dismantling the criminal networks operating on the trafficking/smuggling routes within and towards the Sinai;
- Ensures that regulations on the right of asylum are in line with the constitution and international standards.
- Cooperate effectively with UNHCR/IOM, including granting them full access to detention facilities.

Although EMHRN welcomes the prioritisation of the issue of migration in the Progress Report, the EU should address longstanding structural issues relating to Egypt's treatment of refugees, such as its detention policies and lack of access to education and work for recognised refugees.

The **Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network** is a network of more than 80 human rights organisations, institutions and individuals based in 30 countries in the Euromed region. The Network is deeply attached to universal human rights principles and convinced of the value of cooperation and dialogue across and within borders.

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