



EGYPT

PRESENTATION

This review is part of a larger two-part study on **freedom of assembly in the Euro-Mediterranean region**.

Following an overview of the international standards relating to the freedom of assembly, Part I examines the legal frameworks in 11 countries of the Mediterranean and in the European Union and their compliance with international human rights standards. Part II examines the implementation of laws and the exercise of the freedom of assembly and demonstration in practice.

In order to assess the compliance of national legislations with international standards relating to the exercise of freedom of assembly, objective indicators were used as a reference throughout this study. A gender-sensitive approach was incorporated to determine whether women enjoy freedom of assembly to the same extent as men or face more restrictions.

This study was conducted in consultation with members of the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN), which includes 80 human rights organizations in 30 countries. It thus reflects the active involvement of EMHRN's working group members on freedom of association and assembly, as well as other civil society organizations and experts.

The study is meant to provide human rights defenders, civil society organizations, international organizations, and state institutions with an analysis that allows them to compare national laws and policies with those of other countries and assess their conformity with international conventions, with a view to advocating for reforms and guaranteeing freedom of assembly across Euro-Mediterranean area.

The chapters are also available separately: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco and Western Sahara, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, and the EU.

Introduction

On 25 January 2011 in Cairo, an immense popular uprising calling for freedom, social justice, and human dignity began. Whilst Egyptians have courageously been demonstrating since, those who have dared to publicly criticise the authorities have seen their human rights deteriorating. The disproportionate use of lethal force by security forces and the lack of police protection during protests over the past three years have resulted in pervasive grave human rights violations, including violation of the basic right to life and to be free from torture and other inhuman acts.

The declaration by the Minister of the Interior on 9 January 2014, stating that “every Friday no less than 500 to 600 get arrested [...] at the beginning, we used to wait for the demonstration to turn violent, but now we confront them once they congregate. When we confront them, there are some who run, but, whoever we can grab, we detain,” is a worrying show of contempt towards basic human rights standards and the rule of law.

“We are in a de facto state of emergency where the authorities assault, rather than protect, individuals taking part in protests. It is so ironic that since the country’s 2011 revolution, successive governments have constantly failed to remember that it is the people – through their active and courageous participation in peaceful assembly – who brought them to power” said Moataz El Fegier, EMHRN board member, in May 2014.

1. Restrictions Imposed on Freedom of Assembly

Egyptian officials have seen, and continue to see, peaceful protests as a threat for the stability of the country. Since January 2011, successive governments have all attacked those expressing dissent, restricted individuals’ ability to communicate freely,¹ used lethal force against peaceful assemblies, and arbitrarily arrested and tried protesters before military courts.

On 24 November 2013 the authorities enacted a new law on public demonstrations, the so-called “Protest Law”, following similar attempts to revise in a restrictive way the legislation on assemblies under the previous President Mohamed Morsi, a member of the Muslim Brotherhood.

The new Law 107 on the Right to Public Meetings, Processions and Peaceful Demonstrations requires demonstrators to give the authorities advance ‘notice’ before holding public meetings, and continues to make spontaneous assemblies illegal. The law grants security officials the power to ban any protest on very vague grounds, which turns the notification procedure into a de facto authorization. The law also provides for heavy penalties, including prison sentences for minor and vaguely defined offences, including cases where protesters “impede the interests of citizens” or “influence the course of justice”.² Finally, the law does not repeal, nor amend other problematic provisions concerning public assemblies, in particular the Law 109 of 1971 which grants police forces the authority to use fire power on very vague grounds to disperse assemblies.³

1 ANHRI, 30 January 2012, <http://www.euromedrights.org/eng/2012/01/30/anhri-investigating-the-crime-of-cutting-down-connections-how-they-escaped-punishment>

2 The United Nations (UN) and the European Union (EU) have criticised the new legislation and called on the Egyptian authorities to revise it: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=14029&LangID=E>; [https://spdb.ohchr.org/hrdb/24th/public_-_UA_Egypt_03.12.13_\(16.2013\).pdf](https://spdb.ohchr.org/hrdb/24th/public_-_UA_Egypt_03.12.13_(16.2013).pdf); European Commission, 27 March 2014, http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/pdf/2014/country-reports/egypt_en.pdf

3 Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN), *The Right to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly in the Euro-Mediterranean Region – Legislative review*, 2013. Egypt chapter: http://www.euromedrights.org/eng/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/FOA2013_EN_EGYPT2.pdf

On 5 April 2014, two counter-terrorism bills were approved by the Egyptian Cabinet. If adopted by the next Parliament, these bills will severely restrict the rights to freedom of association and assembly based on very broad grounds, for example “belonging to a group that harms national unity or social peace”. The draft bills also enable security forces to detain an individual without any arrest warrant, and expand the scope of application of the death penalty. According to human rights organizations, these bills would codify a permanent state of emergency.⁴

Despite that, “given the importance of the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association in the context of elections, the threshold for imposing restrictions should be higher than usual”,⁵ in the days surrounding the 2014 presidential elections, protesters were prevented from demonstrating and were immediately scattered by use of force and with tear gas, as for instance on 30 May 2014, in Cairo and in Alexandria where 25 anti-military protesters were arrested.⁶

2. Facilitation of Assemblies by the Authorities

In law, as in practice, the continued lack of police protection during peaceful assemblies appears to be one of the most worrying trends in Egypt, despite recent recommendations by the UN Human Rights Council,⁷ and several UN Special Rapporteurs blaming the police for not protecting anti-government peaceful protesters against armed counter-demonstrators.⁸

The lack of protection of women demonstrators against sexual attacks is another appalling reality. According to the Egyptian NGO ‘Nazra for Feminist Studies’, “Gender-based violence and sexual violence have always been perpetrated in a systematic manner by both State authorities and non-State players even before January 2011. Since then, it is important to note that women of all political affiliations, and those who do not have any, have been targeted, in the midst of utter impunity”.⁹ The highest number of sexual assaults, according to Nazra and other groups, took place in 2013: on 25 January, 24 cases were documented, including gang rape and assaults with sharp objects requiring consequent surgical intervention;¹⁰ and from 28 June to 7 July during the demonstrations against Morsi’s rule in Tahrir Square, 186 cases were documented, ranging from sexual assault to gang rapes.¹¹

These attacks are facilitated by the failure of the authorities to protect peaceful demonstrators from attackers, and to prevent, combat, and punish violence against women.

Some groups such as Operation Anti-Sexual Harassment (OpAntiSH/A), HarassMap, “I Saw Harassment” or Tahrir Bodyguards have been formed to protect female demonstrators, but it must be stressed that the safety and protection of the population is one of the core obligations of the State.¹²

4 Joint statement by Egyptian NGOs, 5 April 2014, <http://www.cihrs.org/?p=8487&lang=en>; EMHRN, 27 March 2014, <http://www.euromedrights.org/eng/2014/03/27/terrorism-bills-further-stifle-peaceful-opposition-in-egypt/>

5 UN Special Rapporteur on the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association, A/68/299, 7 August 2013, para.25, <http://freeassembly.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/UNSR-elections-report-to-UNGA-Aug.-2013.pdf>

6 Al Ahram, 30 May 2014, <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/102549/Egypt/Politics-/Egypt-police-disperse-proMorsi-demos-in-Cairo.-gov.aspx>

7 UN Human Rights Council resolution 22/10 of 9 April 2013 urges States “to facilitate peaceful protests by providing protestors with access to public space and [to] protect them, where necessary, against any forms of threats”.

8 OHCHR Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council, “Alleged violence that unfolded in the context of protests in Cairo on 5 and 6 December 2012,” when protesters were attacked by pro-Muslim Brotherhood protesters, detained and extensively tortured; <http://freeassembly.net/rapporteurreports/egypt-communications/>

9 Interview with Nazra for Feminist Studies, 7 April 2014.

10 Amnesty International, *Egypt: gender-based violence against women around Tahrir Square*, February 2013, <http://www.amnestyusa.org/sites/default/files/mde120092013en.pdf>

11 CIHRS and Nazra for Feminist Studies, <http://www.cihrs.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Human-rights-violations-against-women-in-Egypt.pdf>; Nazra for Feminist Studies, 26 January 2013, <http://nazra.org/en/2013/01/testimony-survival-gang-rape-tahrir-square-vicinity>; New Woman Foundation, 8 February 2013, <http://nwrcegypt.org/en/?p=8251>

12 FIDH, Nazra For Feminist studies, New Woman Foundation and The Uprising of Women in the Arab World, *Egypt: Keeping Women Out, Sexual Violence against women in the public sphere*, April 2014, http://www.fidh.org/IMG/pdf/egypt_women_final_english.pdf



Finally, the authorities have failed to facilitate journalists' access to protests in Egypt since 2011 and failed to protect journalists covering them, when they have not actively prevented them from carrying out their work. Several journalists have been attacked, injured, or killed. In particular, an American woman journalist was sexually assaulted in February 2011 by a mob in Tahrir Square; according to the Committee for the Protection of Journalists (CPJ), six journalists were killed on 14 August 2013 while covering the dispersal at the Rabaa sit-in of supporters of ousted president Morsi, and several were arrested, amongst them Al Jazeera reporters who are still in prison. The CPJ also stated that 16 journalists are currently arbitrarily detained, in part for their covering of protests.¹³

3. The Use of Force and Detention

Use of lethal force in violation of human rights law

In most cases, the use of force seems to follow the same pattern. When a gathering is formed, police and security forces, sometimes in civilian clothing, provoke or attack demonstrators. In response to clashes, security forces then use tear gas and unwarranted live ammunition to disperse protesters.¹⁴ In most cases, security forces do not distinguish between peaceful, non-peaceful demonstrators, and even bystanders who may be caught up in the violence. Whilst some of the demonstrators may throw rocks or incendiaries, the very large majority of them behave peacefully, and the violent behaviour of a few people does not immediately justify resorting to lethal force, as according to international law, security forces should "as far as possible, apply non-violent means before resorting to the use of force and firearms".¹⁵

According to the Ministry of Health, 840 people lost their lives and 6,467 were wounded during the 2011 revolution.¹⁶ After the SCAF took power on 11 February 2011, grave violations of the right to life, liberty and security persisted.¹⁷ During Mohamed Morsi's term, protests were also the subject of disproportionate use of force, including lethal force: in January 2013, the police in Port Said killed 46 people who were protesting against the verdict related to the Port Said stadium incident of 2012.

Since President Mohamed Morsi was deposed on 3 June 2013, numerous protests held by Muslim Brotherhood supporters were met with brutal repression: since 30 June 2013, an estimated 1,400 people have died in protests or political violence.¹⁸ Grave human rights violations resulted from the use of lethal force by security forces, amounting to summary or extrajudicial executions, or from their failure to intervene in violent clashes between opposing political groups.¹⁹

The most dramatic event took place on 14 August 2013 in Cairo when security forces dispersed two protest camps of the Muslim Brothers in Rabaa al-Adawiya and Nahda squares. According to the Egyptian National Council for Human Rights, 632 people were killed in the dispersal of the Rabaa sit-in, but casualties could amount to more than 1,000 according to Egyptian and international human rights NGOs.

13 See CPJ: <https://www.cpj.org/blog/List.of.Imprisoned.Journalists.in.Egypt.pdf> and <https://cpj.org/reports/2013/12/syria-iraq-egypt-most-deadly-nations-for-journalis.php>

14 Amnesty International, 14 October 2013, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news/egypt-state-sanctioned-pattern-excessive-use-force-security-forces-2013-10-14>

15 UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials n°4 and n°7, 1990, <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/UseOfForceAndFirearms.aspx>

16 OHCHR, *Report of the OHCHR mission to Egypt 27 March - 4 April 2011*, http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/EG/OHCHR_MissiontoEgypt27March_4April.pdf

17 On 9-10 October 2011, 27 protesters, mostly Coptic Christians, were killed during a demonstration in Maspero. From 19 to 24 November 2011, 51 protesters were killed in or close to Mohamed Mahmoud Street. On 16-18 December 2011, clashes outside the Cabinet building in Cairo led to the deaths of 17 demonstrators.

18 Amnesty International, *Egypt: Roadmap to Repression, No End in Sight to Human Rights Violations*, 23 January 2014, page 7, <http://www.amnesty.org/fr/library/asset/MDE12/005/2014/en/cdd88fbf-6dcb-45b2-b411-6d12190b7583/mde120052014en.pdf>

19 As examples, on 8 July 2013, at least 61 protesters were killed when security forces dispersed pro-Morsi protesters gathering outside the Republican Guard Club headquarters in Cairo. On 27 July 2013, 95 protesters died on Nasr Street in Cairo. On 16 August 2013, clashes around Cairo's Ramses Square led to the death of about 120 people. On 6 October 2013, marches headed from Dokki and Ramsis towards Tahrir Square in Cairo led to the deaths to at least 57 protesters.

“Police and army forces attacked the protest encampment at each of its five major entrances [...] with APCs and bulldozers and with government snipers on the tops of surrounding buildings [...] Security forces besieged demonstrators, leaving them without access to safe exit from the first minutes of the dispersal until the very end of the day, including for severely injured protesters in need of urgent medical attention and men, women, and children desperate to escape the violence. [...] Police detained over 800 protesters over the course of the day some of whom they beat, tortured, and, in several cases, summarily executed.”²⁰

Although there is corroborated evidence that over the weeks that the sit-in lasted, a few individuals were armed and committed violence, the indiscriminate shooting and the killing of hundreds of unarmed protesters is a blatant violation of international human rights law which authorises the use of lethal force only when three cumulative conditions are met: (1) when it is absolutely unavoidable; (2) as a last resort; and (3) to protect life.

There is also strong evidence that the level of lethal force used to disperse the sit-in had been planned and approved in the highest levels of the Egyptian government weeks before it happened. Indeed, the day after the dispersal, Interior Minister Ibrahim told newspaper Al-Masry al-Youm that “the dispersal plan succeeded 100%,” indicating that the manner in which it was carried out was centrally planned in advance and reflected a clear government policy.²¹ Based on these findings, the NGO Human Rights Watch “concludes that the killings not only constituted serious violations of international human rights law, but likely amounted to crimes against humanity, given both their widespread and systematic nature and the evidence suggesting the killings were part of a policy to attack unarmed persons on political grounds”.

Arbitrary arrests, detention and widespread use of torture

Thousands of individuals have, over the past three years, been arbitrarily arrested and prosecuted before military courts for participating in assemblies. Between January and February 2013 alone, the police arrested over 800 protesters outside the presidential palace, including 264 children.²²

In most cases, demonstrators were arrested in the demonstration location and detained for several days, before being released without charges, which tends to show that most of the arrests were baseless, or politically motivated. Many others, however, were released pending charges such as “taking part in an illegal gathering”, “obstructing the traffic”, and sometimes “assaulting police officers”, and thousands were brought before military courts (see part on *Sanctions* below).

A most worrying trend is the routine use of torture and ill-treatment against detainees by security forces. This situation has worsened since 2011, and human rights organizations documented numerous cases.²³ On 25 January 2014, more than 1,000 people who had gathered for the third anniversary of the 2011 revolution were arrested. According to several corroborating testimonies, arrested protesters, including women and children, were extensively beaten, subjected to sexual assaults and

20 Human Rights Watch, *All According to Plan. The Rab'a Massacre and Mass Killings of Protesters in Egypt*, August 2012, p.33-35; http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/egypt0814_ForUpload_0.pdf?mc_cid=0a6a8fe80d&mc_eid=f889183195

21 Human Rights Watch, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

22 Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2014, Egypt, op. cit.*

23 See for example Human Rights Watch, 19 May 2012, <http://www.hrw.org/news/2012/05/19/egypt-widespread-military-torture-protesters-arrested-may>; also see cases such as the stripping of a veiled woman by security forces in Tahrir Square, the torture of Ramy Essam, and the “virginity tests” imposed to 17 women detainees by military personnel on 9 March 2011.

electric shocks.²⁴ Between August 2013 and February 2014, thousands of people have been victims of police brutality in detention.²⁵

4. Accountability of Law Enforcement Forces

The Egyptian authorities have failed to investigate independently and hold accountable those responsible for grave human rights violations against protesters and provide redress to the victims. This is contrary to international instruments relative to combating impunity.²⁶

Since 2011, State authorities have formed three investigation committees, but these promising steps have not resulted so far in bringing perpetrators of rights violations to justice.

One committee was set up in 2011 to investigate the killing of protesters in January and February 2011. Some parts of the report were released but it was not published in full. Another fact-finding committee was formed in July 2012 to investigate violence against protesters from January 2011 to June 2012. Its report was finalised in December 2012, but was not made public either. So far, only a handful of low ranking soldiers have been convicted for the unlawful killing of protesters. Only 5 out of the 38 police officers tried for killing protesters in January 2011 received prison sentences and only 3 actually served time in prison. In March 2013, a court sentenced one officer to three years in prison for shooting at protesters' eyes in Mohamed Mahmoud Street in Cairo in November 2011. In March 2012, a military judge acquitted the only army officer on trial for sexual assault under the guise of 'virginity tests' against female protesters in March 2011.²⁷

On 2 June 2012, former President Mubarak was convicted and sentenced to life in imprisonment for his part in the bloody repression of the 2011 demonstrations, but the decision was overturned in January 2013 by an appeal court which ordered a retrial.

Since 30 June 2013, not a single member of the security forces has been convicted neither for using excessive force against protesters nor for the hundreds of deaths at Rabaa protest camp.

In December 2013, Adli Mansour, Egypt's interim President established a fact-finding committee to investigate the violence that has taken place since 30 June 2013, including the grave human rights violations committed in Rabaa.²⁸ However, further concrete measures should be implemented to ensure that perpetrators of human rights violations are actually held accountable,²⁹ as the justice system worryingly lacks the necessary independence from those it is investigating.

5. Judicial Sanctions against Organisers and Participants in Assemblies

Between January and September 2011, almost 12,000 civilians were tried in military courts,³⁰ and these numbers rose again after Morsi's overthrow.³¹ While the majority of demonstrators have been released, many still remain in detention in very poor conditions pending trial.

24 See for example Amnesty International, 4 February 2014, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news/walls-cell-were-smear-blood-third-anniversary-egypt-s-uprising-marred-police-brutality-2014-0>

25 See for example CIHRS, 12 February 2014, <http://www.cihrs.org/?p=8113&lang=en>

26 OHCHR, *Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law*, 60/147, 16 December 2005, <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/RemedyAndReparation.aspx>; and the *Updated Set of Principles for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights through Action to Combat Impunity*, E/CN.4/2005/102/Add.1, 8 February 2005

27 Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2014, Egypt*, *op. cit.*

28 See comments made by the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights (EIPR), http://eipr.org/sites/default/files/pressreleases/pdf/eiprs_commentary_on_the_presidential_decree_number_698_for_2013.pdf

29 See EMHRN, 3 March 2014, <http://www.euromedrights.org/eng/2014/03/03/silence-is-not-an-option-call-by-civil-society-for-the-united-nations-human-rights-council-to-address/>; and joint statement by 27 Member States, Human Rights Council, 7 March 2014, <http://fn.geneve.um.dk/en/news/newsdisplaypage/?newsID=EB280696-2F4F-427A-A721-5963916F2CB2>

30 Human Rights Watch, 10 September 2011, <http://www.hrw.org/news/2011/09/10/egypt-retry-or-free-12000-after-unfair-military-trials>

31 Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2014, Egypt*, *op. cit.*

It is of serious concern that the new Constitution adopted in January 2014 continues to allow for the military trial of civilians, which is not in compliance with international standards.³²

On the basis of the 2013 law on public assemblies, activists have been sentenced to jail and heavy fines. This is the case of Mohamed Adel, of the 6 April Youth Movement, and Ahmed Douma, sentenced to three years in prison on 29 November 2013; of human rights lawyer Mahinour Al Masry and eight other activists, sentenced to 2 years in jail on 7 April 2014;³³ of blogger and activist Alaa Abdel Fattah and 24 others, sentenced in absentia to 15 years in prison on 11 June 2014.³⁴ All these activists were tried by 'special courts' that are not independent nor uphold the guarantee of a fair trial.

On 24 March 2014, 529 supporters of ousted President Morsi were sentenced to death in a two-day trial related to the violent clashes of August 2013. On 28 April, the judiciary condemned 683 other individuals to death, including Mohamed Badie, the Muslim Brotherhood's supreme guide, for violent protests held on 14 August 2013 in Minya.³⁵ This severe crackdown on Muslim Brotherhood supporters, which has been denounced as a "mockery of justice" by UN independent experts,³⁶ falls short of international standards related to due process.

Civil organizations are also directly targeted by the authorities. The Egyptian Center for Economic and Social Rights was raided twice in December 2013 (in Cairo) and in May 2014 (in Alexandria). In January 2014, the government declared the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist organization. In April 2014, the 6 April Youth Movement, one of the main groups which called for protests against Mubarak in 2011, was banned.

6. Civil Society Initiatives and Good Practices

Even before the 2011 revolution, Egyptian civil society organisations had been active in promoting freedom of peaceful assembly and association. Since 2008, the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies has been leading an NGO coalition advocating legislative reforms in the field of public freedoms. The coalition's prominent role has on occasions greatly contributed to prevent the adoption of more restrictive legislation and to raise the awareness of international human rights bodies.

Since January 2011, several organisations monitor, document, and report on human rights violations committed during demonstrations. The NGOs Nazra for Feminist Studies and New Woman Foundation have done excellent documentary work on gender-based violence. The Arabic Network for Human Rights Information documented communications cut offs during the 2011 revolution, and since 2014 publishes monthly reports on the state of freedom of expression and assembly. In 2014, the Egyptian Centre for Economic and Social Rights and 17 Egyptian NGOs filed a lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of the 2013 Protest Law.

32 See UN Economic and Social Council, *Issue of the administration of justice through military tribunals*, E/CN.4/Sub.2/2005/9, 2 June 2005; UN Economic and Social Council, *Report of the independent expert to update the Set of principles to combat impunity*, E/CN.4/2005/102/Add.1, 8 February 2005.

33 EMHRN, 30 May 2014 <http://www.euromedrights.org/eng/2014/05/30/joint-letter-to-permanent-representatives-of-member-and-observer-states-of-the-un-human-rights-council/>

34 EMHRN, 12 June 2014, <http://www.euromedrights.org/eng/2014/06/12/egyptian-justice-brazen-crackdown-on-human-rights-defenders/>

35 The judges later confirmed the death sentences of 220 people and commuted the other sentence into life imprisonment.

36 See OHCHR, 31 March 2014, <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=14457&LangID=E>

Recommendations

1. Guarantee that the freedoms of assembly, expression and association can be exercised by any individual or group without any discrimination based on opinions, origins, sex, religion etc.;
2. Reform the Law of 2013 on public gatherings and peaceful demonstrations to conform with international law and ensure compliance with the commitments made by Egypt and the specific recommendations of international human rights bodies (see the first part of the Study);
3. Establish a genuine notification (rather than authorization) procedure for public meetings and demonstrations that potentially impact upon the rights and freedoms of others; ensure that this procedure is transparent, accessible and not unduly onerous, and that the administrative authorities comply with the law when it is implemented;
4. Make sure that any restrictions imposed comply with the law, respect the principles of necessity and proportionality and are communicated in writing to the organizers within a time frame that allows for an appeal before an independent tribunal or court before the scheduled date of the event;
5. Ensure that the authorities are always open to dialogue with the assembly organizers (both prior to and during gatherings) and where such dialogue occurs, that its purpose is to better facilitate the right of peaceful assembly;
6. Put an end to arbitrary arrests during peaceful demonstrations and also to the judicial harassment of citizens demanding their right to demonstrate peacefully;
7. Act upon the State's duty to protect peaceful demonstrators, and especially guarantee that women can effectively exercise their right of assembly without the fear of intimidation, harassment or violence threatening their security and integrity; ensure that the National Council for Human Rights and the National Council for Women actively defend the rights of women in the context of peaceful demonstrations;
8. Guarantee the safety of journalists and facilitate their access to peaceful gatherings;
9. Repeal decree no. 109 of 1971 on the use of firearms by security forces; adopt clear, detailed and binding regulations governing the use of force against protesters, in accordance with the United Nations Basic Principles on the use of force and firearms by law enforcement officials; train law enforcement authorities in the use of force and anti-riot weapons accordingly;
10. Ensure that any use of force by law enforcement officers follows the principles of last resort, necessity, progressiveness and proportionality; ensure that lethal force is strictly a last resort and used as a defence against an imminent threat endangering human lives;
11. Expedite prompt, independent and impartial investigations in the event of a complaint or information about possible breaches or violations of human rights committed by law enforcement authorities during any operations to maintain order, especially arbitrary detention or allegations of torture, ill treatment, and sexual violence; punish those responsible and enable victims to obtain redress as well as be given guarantees of non-repetition; to this end, establish an independent mechanism for monitoring and investigating the behaviour of the security forces;

12. Revoke any judicial decision and conviction handed down by special courts in the absence of guarantees of a fair trial, including the death sentence of 720 demonstrators;
13. Make public the findings of the three official commissions of inquiry and implement their recommendations (commission of inquiry into the murder of demonstrators between January and February 2011, into violence against demonstrators between January 2011 and June 2012, and finally into the violence related to demonstrations since 30 June 2013). Conduct a thorough, impartial and independent inquiry into the deaths arising from the dispersal of the Rabaa al-Adawiya and Nahda gatherings, aiming at establishing responsibilities, assessing the crimes committed, and granting redress to the victims.