

## AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC STATEMENT

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# EGYPT: EGYPT MUST URGENTLY ADDRESS HUMAN RIGHTS CRISIS

Amnesty International welcomes Egypt's support for 210 out of 343 recommendations made during the fourth Universal Periodic Review (UPR). Nevertheless, Amnesty International is concerned by Egypt's failure to act upon recommendations from previous reviews and calls on Egypt to urgently take steps to implement accepted recommendations with a view to addressing the human rights crisis in the country.

During its last UPR review in 2019, Egypt accepted recommendations to guarantee the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly in law and in practice.<sup>1</sup> In reality, the Egyptian authorities continue to repress dissent and stifle civil society. Since the last review, authorities have arbitrarily arrested thousands, including journalists, opposition politicians, relatives of dissidents abroad, protesters, trade unionists, lawyers and people critical of the human rights situation as well as the government's handling of the economic crisis.

On 15 July 2024, Amnesty International shared its UPR submission ahead of Egypt's review in January 2025, containing recommendations for the government to address the prolonged human rights crisis in the country.<sup>2</sup> In its submission to the Working Group, Amnesty International highlighted restrictions on the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly; torture and other ill-treatment; arbitrary detention and unfair trials; the death penalty; gender-based discrimination; impunity for serious human rights violations; and failure to co-operate with UN human rights mechanisms. Despite Egypt reaffirming its commitment to the right to life in accordance with its international obligations, authorities continue to sentence individuals to the death penalty and carry out death sentences, including following unfair trials. The Egyptian government has only noted all recommendations relating to abolishing the death penalty or, at a minimum, to establishing a moratorium on the death penalty.<sup>3</sup>

Moreover, the government has also only noted recommendations calling for the release of all detainees held for exercising their right to freedom of expression.<sup>4</sup> The government has also either noted or only partially accepted recommendations calling for an end to the excessive use of pretrial detention and the illegal practice of arbitrarily opening new cases against prisoners who are nearing the end of their sentence to keep them detained indefinitely, also called "rotation." Furthermore, the Egyptian government has not accepted recommendations calling for the immediate release of prominent Egyptian-British activist Alaa Abdel Fattah.<sup>5</sup>

Finally, the Egyptian government has failed to support recommendations calling for the lifting of restrictions on the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly and for the release of all individuals detained for exercising those rights.<sup>6</sup> Relatedly, the Egyptian government has regrettably only noted recommendations to stop restricting and criminalizing the work of human rights defenders, including through unlawful asset freezes, travel bans and arbitrary detention.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> UN Human Rights Council, Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review ( WG UPR), Report: Egypt, 27 December 2019, A/HRC/43/16, recommendations 31.182 (Canada), 31.134 (Mexico), 31.187 (Czechia), 31.171 (Spain), 31.189 (France), 31.192 (Italy), 31.199 (Mongolia), 31.174 (Switzerland)

<sup>2</sup> Amnesty International, Egypt: protracted human rights and impunity crisis, Amnesty International submission for the UN Universal Periodic Review, 48<sup>th</sup> Session of the UPR working group, January 2025 (Index: MDE 12/8552/20240, July 2024, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde12/8552/2024/en/>)

<sup>3</sup> Human Rights Council, report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review- Egypt, A/HRC/59/16, 1 April 2025 and Human Rights Council, report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review- Egypt- Addendum, A/HRC/59/16/Add.1, 13 June 2025, recommendations 42.76 to 42.85

<sup>4</sup> Human Rights Council, report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review- Egypt, A/HRC/59/16, 1 April 2025 and Human Rights Council, report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review- Egypt- Addendum, A/HRC/59/16/Add.1, 13 June 2025, recommendations 42.88 (New Zealand) and 42.89 (United Kingdom and Northern Ireland)

<sup>5</sup> Human Rights Council, report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review- Egypt, A/HRC/59/16, 1 April 2025 and Human Rights Council, report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review- Egypt- Addendum, A/HRC/59/16/Add.1, 13 June 2025, recommendations 42.90 (Luxembourg) and 42.91 (United Kingdom)

<sup>6</sup> Human Rights Council, report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review- Egypt, A/HRC/59/16, 1 April 2025 and Human Rights Council, report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review- Egypt- Addendum, A/HRC/59/16/Add.1, 13 June 2025, recommendation 42.98 (Germany) , 42.120 (United Kingdom and Northern Ireland) and 42. 123 (Belgium), 42. 140 (Estonia), 42.143 (Australia)

<sup>7</sup> Human Rights Council, report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review- Egypt, A/HRC/59/16, 1 April 2025 and Human Rights Council, report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review- Egypt- Addendum, A/HRC/59/16/Add.1, 13 June 2025, recommendations 42.148 (Belgium), 42. 150 (Costa Rica), 42.151 (Finland), 42.152 (Germany)

Amnesty International welcomes Egypt's support for recommendations aimed at combating gender-based discrimination as well as promoting women's participation in public affairs.<sup>8</sup> The organization also welcomes Egypt's support for recommendations to enhance the legal framework and protection services for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.<sup>9</sup> Amnesty international urges full implementation of these and other recommendations, and encourages Egypt to submit a mid-term report on progress towards the implementation of the supported recommendations under the Item 6 General debate.

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<sup>8</sup> Human Rights Council, report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review- Egypt, A/HRC/59/16, 1 April 2025 and Human Rights Council, report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review- Egypt- Addendum, A/HRC/59/16/Add.1, 13 June 2025, recommendations 42.241 (Albania), 42. 242 (Rwanda), 42. 243 (Colombia), 42.244 (Mali), 42.245 (Cameroon), 42.246 (Kyrgyzstan)

<sup>9</sup> Human Rights Council, report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review- Egypt, A/HRC/59/16, 1 April 2025 and Human Rights Council, report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review- Egypt- Addendum, A/HRC/59/16/Add.1, 13 June 2025, recommendations 42.331 (Senegal), 42.332 (Uganda), 42.333 (Mozambique), 42.334 (Zimbabwe), 42.335 (Bangladesh), 42.336 (Pakistan)