

**AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL
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Egypt: New President must restore rule of law, govern for all

Amnesty International today called on Egypt's new president to rise to the challenge of breaking the cycle of abuse perpetuated under Hosni Mubarak and the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF). The organization urged him to take decisive action in his first 100 days to put Egypt firmly on the path of the rule of law and respect for human rights.

Amnesty International will be closely monitoring whether he is serious about delivering human rights change, and will take stock of his human rights achievements during this critical time for reform.

Ahead of President Mohamed Morsi's swearing-in ceremony, the organization has presented him with a [memorandum](#) detailing what it considers the key human rights priorities for Egypt.

"Since the uprising in January last year, Egyptians have heard many promises that their demands would be listened to and that things would change, but so far their hopes have largely been frustrated," said Salil Shetty, Amnesty International's Secretary General. "We hope, as they do, that this stage of the transition might herald a turning of the corner."

"It will be important to scrutinise the early months of the new President, and hold him to account for the actions he takes, or does not take, to get to grips with the pressing human rights priorities in Egypt."

"Egypt deserves a leadership which is prepared to confront the abuses of the past, restore the rule of law in the present and set out a vision of human rights for all for the future."

Key priorities include ending the military's power to police civilians, reforming the security forces, launching independent investigations into violations of the past – both under Mubarak and the SCAF – and putting in place measures to stop discrimination against women and religious minorities, Amnesty International said.

But the organization warned that the road to human rights will be made difficult by the army's attempts to hold on to its powers and to remove itself from civilian oversight.

The commitment of the Freedom and Justice Party (FJP), which Mohamed Morsi chaired until recently, to human rights remains unknown. [The FJP were the only major party not to sign Amnesty International's Human Rights Manifesto for Change ahead of parliamentary elections last year](#), giving no indication of which elements they could support. Mohamed Morsi has, however, now formally resigned from his position from both the FJP and its parent organization, the Muslim Brotherhood.

"The President must now dispel any uncertainty about his commitment to uphold human rights in all circumstances, and for all Egyptians," said Salil Shetty.

END ARMY POWERS

As a first step, Amnesty International is urging the new President to release all prisoners of conscience. The organization is further calling for the President to ensure that thousands of civilians imprisoned by military courts are either released, or else are charged with recognizable criminal offences and given fair trials before civilian courts.

Amnesty International is calling on the President to end immediately the power of the military to arrest, detain and try civilians.

“The army’s powers to arrest, detain and investigate civilians, and its refusal to put its forces under civilian oversight, are the most urgent threat to the rule of law,” said Salil Shetty. “If President Morsi is serious about human rights, he should not call on the army to police the streets, but instead move to strip it of its authority to arrest and detain civilians once and for all.”

REFORM SECURITY FORCES

Amnesty International is calling on President Morsi to take two immediate steps to reform the security forces. Firstly, the creation of an independent body with the power to investigate allegations of abuses by the security forces and to oversee their vetting. Secondly, the organization is urging Egypt’s President to make public the structure of the security forces, as well as the orders which govern their use of force.

INVESTIGATE ABUSES

Amnesty International is calling for independent and impartial investigations into the human rights violations that marked the 31-year rule of Hosni Mubarak, and into the sixteen-month rule of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (the SCAF).

Hosni Mubarak was this month sentenced to life in prison for his involvement in the killing of protesters in the “25 January Revolution.” But victims of prolonged arbitrary detention, torture and other ill-treatment during his rule have yet to see any semblance of truth, justice or reparation.

The SCAF did nothing to challenge the legacy of Hosni Mubarak. Instead, their rule has been marked by a sustained and often brutal crackdown on human rights. To date, army investigations have not succeeded in holding a single member of the armed forces to account for abuses.

“For Egypt to now look to the future, there must be truth, justice and reparation for the past,” said Salil Shetty, “There has to be a guarantee that the brutal and systemic human rights violations of Hosni Mubarak and the SCAF will never be repeated.”

UPHOLD FREEDOMS OF EXPRESSION, ASSOCIATION AND ASSEMBLY

Amnesty International said that urgent measures are needed to end systematic restrictions on the rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly, imposed in crackdowns under both Hosni Mubarak and the SCAF.

Journalists, bloggers and others who spoke out against repression have faced arbitrary arrest and prison terms. Egyptian human rights organizations have also faced reprisals, including a government-ordered criminal investigation into their registration and funding. Protesters calling for an end to repression have been brutally dispersed in a series of lethal crackdowns.

“As recognition of the vital role played by human rights organizations, all impediments to their activities in law and practice should be immediately lifted,” said Salil Shetty.

END DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN AND MINORITIES

“President Morsi has said he will be a President for all Egyptians and has said he will appoint a woman and a Copt as his two Vice Presidents,” said Sali Shetty. “We look to the leadership to undo the damage

wrought by repressive laws, and to combat discriminatory practices.”

Egyptian law continues to discriminate against women in terms of personal status, and does not punish crimes like marital rape. Sexual harassment remains widespread and often goes unpunished. Only a handful of women were elected to the now-dissolved Parliament.

Amnesty International is also calling on President Morsi to end discrimination against minorities in Egypt, including Coptic Christians. Copts continue to be under-represented in relation to appointments to high public offices, positions of university presidents, as well as key security positions, including at the level of the National Security Agency or the General Intelligence.

HOUSING

Many of Egypt’s 12.2 million slum-dwellers live in fear that the authorities will forcibly evict them from their homes, a common practice. Many slum-dwellers are left homeless, or are resettled far from their homes, their families and their livelihoods.

Amnesty International called on the new President to end the policy of forced evictions.