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## **Egypt: Morsi supporters denied rights amid reports of arrests and beatings**

Hundreds of pro-Morsi supporters arrested by the Egyptian authorities have been denied their legal rights, said Amnesty International in a new briefing published today. The organization has gathered testimonies from detainees who said that they were beaten upon arrest, subjected to electric shocks or hit with rifle butts.

The Egyptian authorities must respect the right to due process for those who have been rounded up and are facing accusations of inciting or participating in violence in the last two weeks. Allegations of ill-treatment must be investigated urgently.

“At this time of extreme polarization and division, it is more important than ever that the office of the Public Prosecutor demonstrates that it’s truly independent and not politicized,” said Hassiba Hadj Sahraoui, Deputy Middle East and North Africa Programme Director at Amnesty International. “These cases risk being seen as mere retribution rather than justice.”

Since the news of President Mohamed Morsi’s ousting on 3 July, lawyers have told Amnesty International that more than 660 men have been arrested in Cairo alone, including prominent leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood and its political wing, the Freedom and Justice Party (FJP). Many were arrested on 8 July during the violence around the Republican Guard Club, which left at least 51 Morsi supporters dead.

While release orders were eventually issued for some 650 suspects, lawyers have told the organization that an unknown number remain in detention due to their inability to pay bail ranging from 1,000 to 5,000 Egyptian pounds (US\$140-US\$700). The whereabouts of the deposed President and his team of aides are still unknown.

Amnesty International fears that their conditions of detention may amount to an enforced disappearance. Family members who have asked have been denied information on their relative’s whereabouts and fate, and they appear not to have been brought before a judge or given access to a lawyer.

“Establishing trust in the justice system will be impossible if only supporters of Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood are targeted while security forces are absolved of responsibility for unlawful killings and their failure to protect protesters from violence,” said Hassiba Hadj Sahraoui.

“Everyone has the right to due process, no matter what the authorities think of their political affiliation or their position. Mohamed Morsi and his team, like anyone, should be granted their basic rights, including immediate access to their lawyers and family.”

Under international law, all detained suspects must be released or promptly charged with a recognizable criminal offence. Anyone deprived of their liberty should also have the right to challenge the lawfulness

of their detention before a judge, as well as access to lawyers and their families, and receive any medical treatment that they might require. Lawyers must be permitted to assist their clients unimpeded.

Amnesty International urges the Egyptian authorities to launch full investigations into reports of detainees being beaten and ill-treated, particularly upon arrest, in the vicinity of the Republican Guard Club. This including being hit with rifle butts and given electric shocks. They also said that at police stations they were interrogated while blindfolded by men they believed to be intelligence officials from the National Security Agency, a practice that is eerily reminiscent of Mubarak-era tactics. Newly released detainees also complained about not being allowed to call their families or lawyers.

Former detainee Mostafa Ali said that he and his wife were made to crawl on broken glass by security forces after their arrest. They had been sheltering in a nearby building after the Republican Guard Club protest was dispersed. The security forces then forced him and other detainees to crawl along the ground handcuffed together. He said they were beaten and given electric shocks.

With at least nine senior Muslim Brotherhood leaders and supporters already detained, arrest warrants have also been issued for other prominent figures in the Muslim Brotherhood, including the group's spiritual guide. The Muslim Brotherhood's chief lawyer, Abdelmonim Abdelmaqsoud, has also been detained in Tora Prison, south of Cairo.

"The onus is on the prosecution and the authorities to charge and provide evidence to support the accusations against them," said Hassiba Hadj Sahraoui. "Without evidence that can be tested in court it is yet another crackdown on the Muslim Brotherhood."

Directly after the army announced the ousting on 3 July, at least six pro-Morsi television stations were taken off the air and then had their studios raided. The following day the FJP announced that the state's printing press refused to print the party's newspaper. On Sunday the Public Prosecution froze the assets of 14 men associated with the Muslim Brotherhood and parties supporting them.