

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

## PUBLIC STATEMENT

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**Egypt: Amnesty International calls on the government to lift the state emergency and to guarantee freedom of expression, association and assembly.**

### *Human Rights Council adopts Universal Periodic Review outcome on Egypt*

During the Universal Periodic Review, Egypt claimed to have already implemented a recommendation by Chile to guarantee the exercise of freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly, and the right to participate in public life and politics.<sup>1</sup> These rights are, in reality, limited under the state of emergency, renewed again on 11 May 2010, despite recommendations that it be lifted as soon as possible.<sup>2</sup> Amnesty International has documented the violent dispersal of several recent demonstrations by the security forces. On 6 April 2010, more than 90 people were detained in Cairo for taking part in demonstrations calling for political reform and the end of the state of emergency.

Egypt described a USA recommendation to “cease arrests and detentions of political activists” as “factually inaccurate”.<sup>3</sup> However, Amnesty International frequently documents the use of emergency powers to arrest and detain political activists. These include members of the Muslim Brotherhood, many of whom face charges of membership of a banned organization, possession of leaflets promoting its ideology, and participation in demonstrations. On 8 February 2010 Mahmoud Ezzat, deputy chairman of the Muslim Brotherhood, was arrested and held in administrative detention until 9 April 2010. In 2008, the administrative detention of 26 members of the Muslim Brotherhood was ruled as arbitrary by the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention.

Egypt also claimed it had implemented a recommendation by Germany to “provide for a free and independent media”,<sup>4</sup> and supported a recommendation by the Czech Republic to ensure “laws and practice comply with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, including for bloggers”.<sup>5</sup> In practice, the peaceful exercise of freedom of expression in Egypt remains subject to severe sanction: blogger Ahmed Mostafa, although a civilian, was brought before a military court in February 2010, and blogger Hani Nazeer has been held in administrative detention since October 2008 for peacefully expressing his views. Another blogger and activist, Musaad Suliman Hassan Hussein, known as Musaad Abu Fagr, has been held in administrative detention since February 2008 on account of his peaceful expression of his views. The detention of blogger Karim Amer was declared arbitrary by the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention in November 2008.

Amnesty International reiterates its calls on the Egyptian authorities to truly uphold their international human rights obligations.

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<sup>1</sup> A/HRC/14/17, paragraph 95, recommendation 102 (Chile)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, paragraph 95, recommendations 79, 112-114; paragraph 97, recommendation 13; and paragraph 98, recommendation 6.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, paragraph 98, recommendation 2 (USA)

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, paragraph 95, recommendation 100 (Germany)

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, paragraph 95, recommendation 10 (Czech Republic)

**Background**

The UN Human Rights Council adopted the outcome of the Universal Periodic Review of Egypt on 11 June 2010 during its 14<sup>th</sup> session. Prior to the adoption of the report of the review Amnesty International delivered the oral statement above. Amnesty International also contributed to the information basis for the review through its submission on Egypt: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE12/008/2009/en>

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