

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC STATEMENT

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EGYPT: COP27-LINKED SESSION SHOULD OPEN WAY TO ROUTINE CONSULTATIONS

On 12 November, for the first time in years, representatives of 12 independent Egyptian, regional, and international human rights organizations met in person in Cairo for a roundtable hosted by the Egyptian Commission for Rights and Freedoms (ECRF), to discuss opportunities to promote and protect human rights in Egypt in the months and years ahead.

Participants in the meeting welcomed the opportunity, made possible by the government's partial easing of restrictions on travel into Egypt for international civil society organizations during the UN Climate Change Conference (COP 27), to resume in person consultations between partners that should be a routine part of our work.

The participants believe that opening civic space and enabling engagement between human rights experts are prerequisites for Egypt to be able to meet the many challenges currently facing the country in the civil, political, economic, social and environmental rights spheres. This is being demonstrated now at COP27, where the slogan "No Climate Justice without Human Rights" has gained currency. We encourage all national, regional and international actors to support the basic rights and freedoms of people in Egypt.

The participants look forward to future constructive engagement with the Egyptian government. We hope that Egypt will soon emerge from the human rights crisis that has undermined essential human interaction and creative collaboration to the detriment of the Egyptian human rights NGOs and the international community.

Since the continuing crackdown on human rights organizations intensified after 2013, the Egyptian government has sometimes blocked travel to Egypt for international human rights organizations. During the COP27 conference, a representative of the Danish Institute against Torture was barred from entering Egypt at Cairo International Airport, preventing the organization from participating at the roundtable. Moreover, several leading Egyptian NGO directors and staff remain arbitrarily banned from travel abroad, some stemming from the notorious Case 173 of 2011 (foreign funding case), which continues to impair the free functioning of independent civil society.

ORGANIZATIONAL SIGNATORIES:

Amnesty International

Al-Nadeem Center

Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS)

Egyptian Commission for Rights and Freedoms (ECRF)

Egyptian Front for Human Rights (EFHR)

Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights (EIPR)

EuroMed Rights

Freedom Initiative

Human Rights Watch (HRW)

International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)

DIGNITY - Danish Institute against Torture [not physically present]