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## ORAL STATEMENT

### Item 4: General Debate

UN Human Rights Council

52<sup>nd</sup> session

27 February – 4 April 2023

Mr. President,

In **Egypt**, authorities recently [sentenced](#) 82 people, including children, to prison terms ranging from five years to life in a grossly unfair mass trial for protesting. Badr 3 prison was [opened](#) to much fanfare ahead of COP27, but evidence is emerging that prisoners are being subjected to torture and other ill-treatment and being deliberately denied healthcare and visits or other contact with their families or lawyers. The embattled Egyptian human rights movement faces a looming deadline in April to register under the restrictive 2019 NGO law or face closure.

We welcome the appointment at this session of the Council's first Special Rapporteur on **Russia**. Russian authorities continue to suppress criticism of their invasion of Ukraine, including by criminalizing expression of opposition to war or sharing information that contradicts official statements. They continue to toughen laws on “foreign agents”, “undesirable organizations”, “extremism” and “terrorism” and to use them to crack down on their critics, like leading opposition figure [Aleksei Navalny](#), human rights groups, such as Russia's oldest human rights organizations [Memorial](#) and [Moscow Helsinki Group](#), and independent journalists.

In **Saudi Arabia**, authorities have executed 16 people this month alone. In 2022, authorities [sentenced](#) at least 15 people to prison terms between 10 and 45 years for peaceful online expression. Authorities have [arbitrarily detained and forcibly returned](#) hundreds of thousands of Ethiopian migrants after holding them in indefinite detention and subjecting them to torture and other ill-treatment. Despite being touted as a major victory for women's rights, our [detailed analysis](#) found that the personal status law in fact perpetuates the male guardianship system and codifies discrimination against women in most aspects of family life.

Thank you, Mr. President.