



**International Human Rights  
Instruments**

Distr.: General  
5 January 2026  
English  
Original: Arabic

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**Common core document forming part of the reports of States  
Parties**

**Egypt\***

[Date received: 19 November 2025]

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\* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



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## I. General information concerning the Arab Republic of Egypt

### A. Basic information concerning location and geography

1. Egypt is located at the crossroads of continents of the Old World: Africa, Asia and Europe. It borders two seas – the Red Sea and the Mediterranean – and overlooks two gulfs – the Gulf of Suez and the Gulf of Aqaba. The Suez Canal, one of the world's most important international waterways, runs through its territory. Egypt is a transcontinental country, as it is situated in the northeastern part of the African continent but, with the Sinai Peninsula, also extends into Asia. The country is traversed by the Nile River, the lifeline of the Egyptian people.
2. The Arab Republic of Egypt lies between latitudes 22° and 32° north of the equator and between longitudes 24° and 37° east of the Greenwich meridian.
3. Egypt is located in the northeastern corner of the African continent. It is bounded to the north by the Mediterranean Sea, with a coastline of 995 km, and to the east by the Red Sea, with a coastline of 1,941 km. In the northeast, a 265-kilometre-long border separates it from Palestine and Israel. To the west it borders Libya along a 1,115-kilometre-long frontier and to the south a 1,280-kilometre-long border separates it from the Sudan.
4. The Arab Republic of Egypt covers an area of approximately 1,002,000 square kilometres, of which 78,990 square kilometres, or 7.8 per cent of the total, are inhabited.
5. The Arab Republic of Egypt is divided into administrative units, each of which has legal personality, including governorates cities and villages. There are 27 governorates in total.
6. The current national flag of Egypt dates from 1984 and symbolizes the country's independence. It consists of three horizontal rectangles of equal dimensions, each twice as long as it is deep, of three different colours. The top rectangle is red, the middle rectangle is white with a golden eagle facing right and the bottom rectangle is black.
7. Arabic is the official language of the State and Islam is the State religion.
8. Egypt lies in a time zone that also includes Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine and Sudan. It is located east of the Greenwich meridian and is 2 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time: (Cairo +2).

### B. Four main areas of the Arab Republic of Egypt

#### Nile Valley and Delta

9. The Nile Valley and the Delta account for less than 4 per cent of the total area of the country, or approximately 33,000 square kilometres. In the south, the Nile Valley begins from north of Wadi Halfa and extends up to the Mediterranean Sea. Along its length, it is divided into Upper Egypt (Al-Sa'id), which stretches from Wadi Halfa to south of Cairo, and Lower Egypt (the Nile Delta), which extends from north of Cairo to the Mediterranean. The Nile River itself runs for a length of around 1,532 kilometres from the Egyptian border in the south to its mouth in the Mediterranean Sea. North of Cairo, the Nile splits into two main branches: the Damietta branch and the Rosetta branch. The two branches enclose the Delta triangle, which is a highly fertile agricultural region.

#### Western Desert

10. The Western Desert, which covers an area of around 680,000 square kilometres, accounts for about 68 per cent of the total land area of Egypt. It extends from the Nile Valley in the east to the Libyan border in the west, and from the Mediterranean Sea in the north down to the country's southern border. It is divided into two areas. The northern section includes the coastal plain, the northern plateau and the great depression region which

encompasses the Siwa Oasis, the Qattara Depression, the Natrun Valley and the Bahariya Oases. The southern section includes the oases of Farafra, Kharga and Dakhla, and, in the far south, the Uwaynat Oasis.

### **Eastern Desert**

11. The Eastern Desert, which covers an area of around 225,000 square kilometres, accounts for about 28 per cent of the total land area of Egypt. It extends from the Nile Valley in the west to the Red Sea, the Gulf of Suez and the Suez Canal in the east and from Lake Manzaleh on the Mediterranean Sea in the north to the border with the Sudan in the south. The Eastern Desert is notable for its mountainous elevations, which overlook the Red Sea and reach heights of about 3,000 feet above sea level. The Desert is rich in natural resources, including mineral ores such as gold, coal and petroleum.

### **Sinai Peninsula**

12. The Peninsula, which covers an area of around 61,000 square kilometres, accounts for about 6 per cent of the total land area of Egypt. It is a triangular plateau with its base running along the Mediterranean Sea to the north and its apex at Ras Muhammad to the south. To the east it is bordered by the Gulf of Aqaba and to the west by the Gulf of Suez and the Suez Canal. The Peninsula has three principal topographical sections. The southern part is extremely rugged and rocky with granite mountains; in particular, Mount Catherine, at a height of 2,637 metres above sea level, is the highest peak in Egypt. The central part consists of a plateau known as the Tih Plateau with valleys sloping gently down towards the Mediterranean Sea. The northern part is bounded by the Mediterranean to the north and the Tih Plateau to the south; it consists of flat low-lying terrain with abundant rainwater resources that flow down from the southern highlands and the central plateaus.

### **Climate**

13. The climate of Egypt is affected by several factors – most notably location, topography, barometric pressure patterns, low-pressure systems and bodies of water – as a result of which the country has divided into several distinct climatic regions. Egypt lies in the dry tropical zone, with the exception of its northernmost regions which fall within the warm temperate zone. The latter is characterized by a Mediterranean climate, hot and dry during the summer, mild in winter and with light rainfall that is greater along the coast. The climate of the rest of Egypt has two distinct seasons: a hot dry summer which lasts from May to October, and a mild dry winter which lasts from November to April. Temperatures in January range from a low of 9–11 degrees Celsius to a high of 20–24 degrees Celsius. In July and August the low ranges from 21–25 degrees Celsius and the high from 37–42 degrees Celsius.

### **Water resources**

14. Egypt is one of the driest countries in the world and is reliant almost exclusively on the Nile River for its renewable water resources, around 80 per cent of which are used for agriculture, which constitutes a livelihood for more than 60 million people or 60 per cent of the total population. Annual per capita water availability in Egypt does not exceed 560 cubic metres, while the United Nations has defined water scarcity as 1,000 cubic metres per capita per year. Egypt is one of the driest countries in the world and is reliant on a single source, the Nile River, which provides 98 per cent of the country's water needs.

## **C. Brief historical overview**

15. The recorded history of Egypt began thousands of years ago when the inhabitants established the first centralized State known to humankind. Humans thus came to settle along the banks of the Nile River across successive eras and at different stages. Over the course of many centuries, the Egyptian people have made great contributions to human civilization, interacted with other peoples and achieved unprecedented accomplishments in many fields. Across the ages, Egypt has maintained its distinctive culture and civilization, which set it

apart from other nations. This unique identity is, to a large extent, linked to the cultural and human heritage that the people of Egypt have given the world, as well as to the role the country has played throughout its history, the roots of which stretch back into the depths of time. Egypt, in fact, has traversed many historical epochs, beginning with the Pharaonic era, which spanned nearly 3,000 years; then the era of the Greeks, which lasted for around three centuries; this was followed by the overlapping Roman and Coptic eras, then the Islamic era. Finally comes the modern era, which began under Muhammad Ali Pasha, the founder of modern Egypt, more than two centuries ago.

16. Given its unique geographical location at the crossroads of continents of the Old World – Africa, Asia and Europe – Egypt has served as a bridge across which the three Abrahamic religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam have passed. It has also been a hub for cultural exchange between East and West, and between North and South. At the same time, and by virtue of its status within the Muslim world, Egypt has for centuries been a beacon of Islamic thought and civilization, embodying the values of moderation, tolerance and coexistence that lie at the heart of the teachings of Islam. Egypt is a major cultural, intellectual and political player in the Arab world, and plays a significant role in promoting stability, peace, progress and renewal among the Arab nations and across the wider Middle East.

### **Pharaonic era**

17. The Pharaonic period in Egyptian history spans approximately 3,000 years, from B.C. 3200 until the invasion of Egypt by Alexander the Great in B.C. 323. During that time, Egypt traversed periods of great progress and advancement, which have left a vast legacy of civilization, architecture, science and the arts. Historians divide the Pharaonic era in Egyptian history into three successive periods with a total of thirty ruling dynasties: the Old Kingdom, the Middle Kingdom and the New Kingdom.

### **Greek era**

18. The Greek period in Egyptian history lasted for around three centuries. Having defeated the Persians in Asia Minor, Alexander the Great went on to conquer Egypt in B.C. 332. He drove out the Persians, crowned himself king after the manner of the pharaohs and founded the city of Alexandria. Following Alexander's death, one of his generals, Ptolemy, established the Ptolemaic dynasty in Egypt, which lasted until B.C. 30. The dynasty remained strong under its early kings but eventually weakened when the Egyptians rose up against them and the rulers became enfeebled. Rome exploited these conflicts to extend its own influence over Egypt and overthrew the Ptolemies in B.C. 30 during the reign of Queen Cleopatra. This marked the beginning of the Roman era in Egyptian history.

### **Roman era**

19. The Romans conquered Egypt in B.C. 30 and made it a province of the Roman Empire. In fact, Egypt became the Empire's most valuable possession owing to its unique geographical location, the fertility of its land which yielded abundant crops, its urban civilization and its culture. Agriculture flourished during the Roman era, and the capital of Egypt, Alexandria, became the largest commercial and industrial centre in the eastern Mediterranean and the second-largest city in the Roman Empire. During the Roman era, the University of Alexandria continued to serve as a centre for academic research and a hub for scholars from around the world.

### **Coptic era**

20. Christianity arrived in Egypt in the middle of the first century A.D., with the arrival of Saint Mark in Alexandria in A.D. 65, who established the first Coptic church. In the late third century A.D., Christians suffered persecution under the Emperor Diocletian, and the Copts subsequently adopted the year in which Diocletian ascended the throne (A.D. 284) as the starting point of the Coptic calendar. One of the most notable features of this period was the spread of asceticism among Christians, which led to monasticism and the establishment of monasteries throughout Egypt. Coptic architecture flourished as a continuance of the spirit of ancient Pharaonic art, thus adding a link to the chain connecting the art of the Pharaonic,

Greek and Roman civilizations in Egypt. The churches built in the fifth century A.D. are seen as exemplary of Coptic art and architecture, while the painting of the Coptic era was an extension of the tradition handed down from earlier periods in Egyptian history. The ancient Egyptians were familiar with music, and a form of church music emerged during the Coptic era that followed the artistic musical style of those ancient Egyptian melodies. Even today, the music performed in Coptic churches bears Pharaonic names.

### Islamic conquest of Egypt

21. Egypt was conquered by Amr ibn al-As in the year A.H. 20 (A.D. 641), during the reign of Commander of the Faithful Omar ibn al-Khattab. That year marked the beginning of an important phase in the political history of the country, that of Islamic Egypt. The country then went on to play a significant role throughout the various stages of Islamic history as part of several States and empires, beginning with the Umayyad Caliphate, followed by the Abbasid, Ikhshidid, Fatimid, and Ayyubid dynasties, then the Mamluk era and finally the Ottoman Empire, of which Egypt was a province for nearly three hundred years.

## D. Demographic, economic, social and cultural characteristics of Egypt

Table 1  
**Demographic indicators**

<i>Demographic indicator</i>	
Population of Egypt	107.9 million
Rural population	57.1%
Urban population	42.9%
Male inhabitants	51.4%
Female inhabitants	48.6%
Live birth rate per 1,000 inhabitants	19.4
Death rate per 1,000 inhabitants	5.5
Average life expectancy at birth for males	69.1
Average life expectancy at birth for females	74.1
Number of households	26.2 million
Proportion of population aged under 15	31.7%
Proportion of population aged between 15 and 29	25.5%
Proportion of population aged between 30 and 64	37.1%
Proportion of population aged 65 and over	5.7%

Table 2  
**Economic indicators**

<i>Economic indicator</i>	
Gross domestic product (GDP)	20.4 trillion Egyptian pounds (LE)
Annual growth rate	4%
Workforce aged 15 and over	31.1 million
Proportion of inhabitants of working age	61.6%
Unemployment rate	6.4%
Proportion of inhabitants below the national poverty line	29.7% and 4.5% in extreme poverty
Gini coefficient (distribution of income or household consumption expenditure)	0.3

Table 3  
**Social expenditure as a proportion of total government spending**

<i>Social expenditure</i>	
Public expenditure on nutritional assistance	5%
Public expenditure on housing	1.2%
Public expenditure on education and academic research	21.2%
Public expenditure on health	15.1%
Direct cash support	1.2%
Public expenditure on pensions	9.9%
Public expenditure on salaries and wages	19.5%
Average consumer expenditure (by households) on food, housing, health and education	LE 49 016.8

### **Infant and maternal mortality rates**

22. Between 2011 and 2023, the under-5 mortality rate ranged between 19.1 and 24.2 per 1,000 live births. Between 2000 and 2020, the maternal mortality rate in Egypt fell to 17 deaths per 100,000 live births, placing Egypt among the ten countries with the largest decline in maternal mortality.

23. The leading cause of death in 2022 was cardiovascular diseases, which accounted for 53.7 per cent of the total. This was followed by respiratory diseases at 14.6 per cent, cancer at 5.4 per cent, infectious diseases at 4.9 per cent and digestive system diseases 4.7 per cent.

24. Also in 2022, the leading cause of death among children was cardiovascular diseases, which accounted for 30.1 per cent of the total. This was followed by respiratory diseases and pneumonia at 29.5 per cent, congenital heart defects at 7.8 per cent and sepsis at 3.5 per cent.

### **Net enrolment in education**

25. Net enrolment in pre-university education is 28.5 million students. For primary education, the attendance rate is 99.8 per cent and the dropout rate 0.2 per cent. The student-teacher ratio in government-funded schools is 18.6:1, and the adult literacy rate is 86.3 per cent.

### **Public spending in Egypt by sector (2013/14–2023/24)**

26. The State budget has grown significantly over the past decade, with total public spending rising from around LE 789.4 billion in the fiscal year 2013/14 to around LE 2.99 trillion in the fiscal year 2023/24. This is a reflection of the State's growing capacity to mobilize resources and expand its spending base to meet increasing development needs. The key sectors in which spending has increased are outlined in the following paragraphs.

27. In the public service sector, spending rose from LE 270 billion (34.21 per cent) in 2013/14 to around LE 1.52 trillion (50.97 per cent) in 2023/24, with increased outlay on institutional infrastructure and efforts to enhance administrative efficiency.

28. Public spending on social protection rose from LE 187.4 billion (23.73 per cent) in 2013/14 to approximately 293.4 billion (9.81 per cent) in 2023/24, a reflection of the State's determination to strengthen its social protection and support programmes.

29. Public spending in the health sector went up from LE 42.4 billion (5.37 per cent) in 2013/14 to about LE 147.9 billion (4.94 per cent) in 2023/24, an increase which served to consolidate the healthcare system. Spending on education rose to LE 229.9 billion (7.69 per cent) in 2023/24, compared to LE 94.4 billion (11.95 per cent) in 2013/14, a reflection of the State's determination to consolidate the school system.

30. Public spending on housing and utilities rose from LE 21.9 billion (2.78 per cent) in 2013/14 to LE 116.3 billion (3.89 per cent) in 2023/24. The increase came in the context of efforts to support urban expansion and enhance infrastructure.

31. Spending on young persons, culture and religious affairs went from LE 28.4 billion (3.59 per cent) in 2013/14 to around LE 60.7 billion (2.03 per cent) in 2023/24, the aim being to support community participation and promote cultural and sporting activities.

32. Public spending on environmental protection rose from LE 1.9 billion (0.25 per cent) in 2013/14 to approximately LE 4.0 billion (0.13 per cent) in 2023/24, a reflection of the Government's ongoing commitment to that sector.

## **E. Constitutional, political and legal structure**

33. Egypt is a sovereign State and a democratic republic based on citizenship and the rule of law. It is the people who exercise and protect sovereignty as their exclusive prerogative. Likewise, the people maintain national unity, which is underpinned by the principles of equality, justice and equality of opportunity for all citizens. The political system is based on political and party pluralism, the peaceful transfer of power, the separation and equality of powers, the intrinsic link between power and responsibility, and respect for human rights, in accordance with the Constitution. Power in Egypt is divided across three branches: the legislature, the executive and the judiciary.

### **Legislative branch**

34. The legislature consists of two chambers: the House of Representatives and the Senate. The House of Representatives is responsible for legislation, the adoption of public policy, general development plans and the State budget, and it exercises oversight over the executive branch. It has 568 members elected by the people through direct secret ballot. The President of the Republic may appoint no more than 5 per cent of members of the House, and at least one quarter of the total number of seats is to be reserved for women, with further quotas for workers, farmers, Christians, persons with disabilities, young persons and Egyptians residing abroad. The term of membership on the House of Representatives is five years, beginning on the date of its first meeting. For its part, the Senate is responsible for studying and proposing any measures it deems necessary to consolidate the foundations of democracy, support community peace, uphold the fundamental pillars and values of society, safeguard rights, freedoms and public duties, and deepen and expand the democratic system. The Senate is also called upon to give its opinion vis-à-vis proposals to amend the Constitution, drafts of socioeconomic development plans, peace treaties and alliances, treaties that have a bearing on sovereign rights, bills and any draft laws to supplement the Constitution. The Senate has 300 members, two-thirds of whom are elected by direct secret ballot, while the others are appointed by the President of the Republic. At least 10 per cent of the total number of seats is reserved for women, and the term of office is five years.

35. Under article 122 the President of the Republic, the Council of Ministers and each member of the House of Representatives has the right to make proposals for laws. Any bill submitted by the Government or by one-tenth of the members of the House is to be referred to the relevant House committees. They then review the matter, also by calling on the assistance of competent experts, before submitting a report to the House. Article 123 grants the President of the Republic the right to promulgate or contest laws. If the President contests a bill approved by the House of Representatives, it is to be returned to the House within 30 days. If the bill is not returned within that period, it passes into law and is duly enacted. If it is returned to the House within the statutory period and the House approves it again by a two-thirds majority, it passes into law and is duly enacted.

36. According to article 124, the draft State budget, setting forth all revenues and expenditures, is to be submitted to the House of Representatives at least 90 days before the start of the fiscal year. The budget cannot come into effect unless it has been approved by the House, which is to vote on it, chapter by chapter. The House can amend the expenditures envisaged in the budget, except for those arising from a specific obligation of the State. If an amendment results in an increase in total expenditure, the House must reach an agreement with the Government on revenue-generating measures in order to restore the balance. The budget is to be enacted by a law, which may include amendments to existing laws to the extent necessary to achieve balance. The same article also stipulates that the approval of the

House is required for the transfer of any amount from one budget heading to another, as well as for any expenditure that is not included in the budget or that is in excess of estimates. Such approval is to be enshrined in law.

37. Under article 125, the final accounts of the State budget must be submitted to the House of Representatives within a period not exceeding six months from the end of the fiscal year, together with the annual report of the State Authority for Accountability including its own observations on those accounts. The final accounts are then voted on, chapter by chapter, and enacted into law. According to article 127, the executive is not authorized to take out loans, obtain financing or undertake a project that is not included in the approved general budget and that would result in expenditures from the State treasury, except with the approval of the House of Representatives.

38. Under article 129, every member of the House of Representatives has the right to pose questions to the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, a minister or a deputy minister, on any matter falling within their purview, and the persons thus questioned must reply during the course of the same session. The member concerned may withdraw the question at any time; however, the question may not be turned into an interrogation during the same session. For its part, article 130 grants every member of the House of Representatives the right to interrogate the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, a minister or a deputy minister, on any matter falling within their purview. The House is to meet for the interrogation no less than 7 and no more than 60 days after the matter was raised, except when the House considers the matter to be urgent and with the approval of the Government.

39. Article 131 stipulates that the House of Representatives may pass a vote of no confidence in the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, a minister or a deputy minister. A motion of no confidence may be brought only following an interrogation and at the proposal of at least one-tenth of members. The House then issues its decision following a discussion of the outcome of the interrogation, and a motion of no confidence is adopted by a simple majority. In no case may a motion of no confidence be introduced on a matter that the House has already decided upon during the same session. If the House decides to pass a vote of no confidence in the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, a minister or a deputy minister and, before the vote, the Government has declared its solidarity with the party concerned, the Government must submit its resignation. If the vote of no confidence concerns a single member of the Government, that member must resign.

40. Under article 132, a request for a debate on a public matter may be made by at least 20 members of the House of Representatives, in order to clarify government policy on that matter. Article 133 stipulates that every member of the House of Representatives may voice a proposal regarding a public matter in the presence of the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, a minister or a deputy minister. At the same time, according to article 134, every member of the House may request a briefing or an urgent statement regarding matters of public interest from the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, a minister or a deputy minister.

41. Under article 135, the House of Representatives has the right to form a special committee or to task one of its existing committees to undertake a fact-finding process concerning a particular issue or to scrutinize the activities of an administrative body, a public authority or a public works project. It is then to inform the House about the real financial, administrative or economic situation of the matter in hand or to conduct investigations into any matter related thereto. It is then up to the House to decide upon the appropriate action to be taken in that regard. In the exercise of its functions, the committee may gather whatever evidence it deems necessary and request testimony from whomsoever it wishes. All parties must comply with the committee's requests and provide any documents, records or other materials the committee might request. In all cases, any member of the House of Representatives has the right to obtain data or information from the executive branch that pertains to the performance of their functions in the House.

42. Under article 136, the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, a minister or a deputy minister are authorized to attend sessions of the House of Representatives or of any of its committees. Their attendance is mandatory if requested by the House, and they may be accompanied by senior officials of their choosing. They must be given the floor

whenever they request to speak and they must respond to the questions being discussed, but they do not have the right to participate in any eventual vote.

43. Under article 137, the President of the Republic may dissolve the House of Representatives only when necessary, by a reasoned decree and following a popular referendum. The House cannot, in any case, be dissolved for the same reason as the previous House.

44. Section III of Chapter XIII (House Affairs, arts. 402–410) of the rules of procedure of the House of Representatives, and Section II of Chapter XI (Senate Affairs, arts. 262–270) of the rules of procedure of the Senate, detail the rules that govern debate on the budgets and accounts of the two chambers, in a manner that ensures the financial independence of both.

45. The Constitution permits citizens to submit written proposals to the House of Representatives on matters of public interest. They also have the right to file complaints, which the House then refers to the relevant minister. The latter must then provide clarifications regarding the complaints, if the House so requests, and the person concerned is to be informed of the outcome.

### **Executive branch**

#### *(a) President of the Republic*

46. The President is Head of State, head of the executive branch and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. He safeguards the interests of the people and preserves the independence, unity, and territorial integrity of the nation. The President is to abide by the Constitution and to exercise the powers prescribed therein. He is elected for a six-year term by direct, secret universal suffrage. Together, the President and the Council of Ministers formulate general State policy and oversee its implementation.

47. The President of the Republic represents the State in its foreign relations and concludes and ratifies treaties, once they have been approved by the House of Representatives. Such treaties have force of law after they have been published in accordance with the Constitution. In addition to this, the President appoints and removes civilian and military officials and political representatives and accredits political representatives of foreign States and organizations, in accordance with the law. The President delegates the Prime Minister to form a government and to present a programme of work to the House of Representatives. The President also has the authority to undertake a ministerial reshuffle, having first consulted with the Prime Minister and obtained the approval of the House of Representatives. Likewise, it is the President of the Republic who holds the authority to declare a state of emergency, with the approval of the Council of Ministers and the House of Representatives, and the President may – also with the approval of the Council of Ministers – grant a pardon or commute a sentence. The President of the Republic has the power to issue decree-laws when the House of Representatives is not in session. Such decrees are to be submitted to parliament for approval within 15 days. Lastly, the President may call for a referendum on matters relating to the supreme interests of the nation.

#### *(b) Government*

48. This is the highest-ranking executive and administrative body of the State and consists of the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, ministers and deputy ministers. The Prime Minister, who oversees and directs the work of government, is delegated by the President of the Republic to form the Government and to present a programme of work to the House of Representatives. If the Government fails to secure the confidence of a majority of members of the House, the President appoints a Prime Minister nominated by the party or coalition holding a majority of seats. Simultaneous membership of the Government and of the House of Representatives is not allowed.

49. The Government exercises a number of functions including formulating general State policy and overseeing its implementation, jointly with the President of the Republic. The Government also directs the operation of ministries and of the public agencies and bodies under its authority, and it coordinates and monitors their activities; it also drafts bills and decrees and prepares general draft plans and the general State budget. The Prime Minister

can issue decrees aimed at establishing and regulating the operation of public facilities and services. For their part, ministers are to formulate, implement, monitor, guide and oversee the policies to be applied by their ministries within the framework of general State policy. The senior administrative posts in each ministry include provision for a permanent deputy, thereby ensuring institutional stability and enhancing effective policy implementation.

(c) *Local administration*

50. The local administration consists of administrative units that enjoy legal personality, including governorates, cities and villages. Local administrative units have independent financial budgets. The conditions for the appointment and election, and the powers of governors and the heads of other local administrative units, are established by law. Each local unit elects a council through direct, secret, universal suffrage for a term of four years, with half of the total number of seats being allocated to young persons under the age of 35 and one quarter to women. In addition, workers and farmers are to hold no less than 50 per cent of all seats, and Christians and persons with disabilities must be appropriately represented. These councils are responsible for following up on the implementation of the development plan and wielding tools for exercising oversight over the executive, also by making proposals, posing questions and requesting briefings and explanations. In addition, they may bring a motion of no confidence in the heads of local units. Local councils may not be dissolved by a collective administrative measure. The manner in which they can be dissolved and re-elected is established by law.

**Judicial branch**

51. The judiciary is an independent authority, and its powers are vested in courts of various types and degrees, which issue their judgments in accordance with the law. The powers of the judiciary are defined by law, and interference in the administration of justice is an offence not subject to the statute of limitations. The judicial branch consists of the ordinary courts, the State Prosecution Office, the Council of State, the Supreme Constitutional Court and the military courts. The ordinary courts – which are responsible for adjudicating all disputes, save for those that fall under the jurisdiction of another judicial body – are administered by a supreme council, the composition and functions of which are established by law. The State Prosecution Office is an integral part of the judiciary and is responsible for conducting investigations and for initiating and pursuing criminal proceedings.

52. The Council of State is an independent judicial body with exclusive powers of adjudication in cases involving administrative disputes and disputes relating to the implementation of its own rulings. It is also responsible for adjudicating disciplinary cases and appeals, issuing opinions on legal matters referred to it by other bodies, reviewing bills and decrees of a legislative nature and examining draft contracts, including those in which the State or a public entity is a party. Its other areas of competence are prescribed by law.

53. The Supreme Constitutional Court is an independent judicial body with its own budget. It has the authority to review the constitutionality of laws and regulations, interpret laws and adjudicate on conflicts between its own members and on conflicts of jurisdiction between judicial bodies and other bodies holding judicial authority. It is also competent to adjudicate on disputes arising from the enforcement of two final and contradictory judgments (one issued by one judicial body or body holding judicial authority and one by another) as well as on disputes concerning the enforcement of its own rulings. The rulings of the Supreme Constitutional Court are binding on all the authorities of the State.

54. Under article 204 of the Constitution, the military courts constitute an independent judicial body, while members of the military judiciary are subject to the same eligibility requirements as those set forth in Judiciary Act. Moreover, the Code of Military Justice states that judges in military courts are independent, that they are subject to no authority other than that of the law, that they cannot be dismissed save by disciplinary proceedings and that they have the same duties as those of civilian judges and prosecutors under the Judiciary Act. The military courts have exclusive powers of adjudication over all crimes related to the armed forces, their officers and enlisted personnel; offences committed by members of the General Intelligence Directorate during and in connection with the performance of

their duties; and offences committed inside facilities protected by the armed forces or in military or border zones, in accordance with the Constitution.

55. Civilians may not be tried before military courts, save only for the offences specified in article 204 of the Constitution, which defers to the law for the definition of such offences. In obedience to the principle that persons should be tried before their natural judge, domestic legislation regulates the rules and procedures wherewith civilians can be referred for trial before military courts. Such referral depends upon objective criteria that concern only the nature of the crimes committed, and the perpetrators are subject to the same laws as those applied by the ordinary courts.

56. Proceedings before military courts envisage full fair trial guarantees, which are the same as those applied in ordinary courts. Thus, accused persons before military courts enjoy the same safeguards as accused persons before ordinary courts, such as the right to a defence, to examine the case file, to public hearings and to appeal against a ruling before a higher court. Under the law, civilians being tried before military courts have access to the same degrees of justice as those envisaged in the Code of Criminal Procedure. Moreover, they have the right to lodge an appeal with the military misdemeanour appeal court against a ruling handed down by a military misdemeanour court. In addition, final rulings on offences under ordinary law, handed down by military misdemeanour courts or military criminal courts, can be appealed before the Supreme Military Court of Appeal.

### **Independence of the judiciary**

#### **Constitutional and legal provisions safeguarding judicial independence**

57. Under the Constitution and the existing legislative framework, and in accordance with international standards, the State undertakes to uphold the independence of the judiciary and the immunity of judges in all matters pertaining to the administration of their affairs, including selection, appointment, training, promotion and eligibility to continue in office. In fact, the legislators who drafted the Constitution duly enshrined the independence of the judiciary in articles 94, 184 and 186. Specifically, one of the most notable manifestations of judicial independence is contained in article 189 of the Constitution, which recognizes the independence of the State Prosecution Office as a component of the judiciary. Following an amendment to article 189 (2), the President of the Republic now has the right to appoint the Public Prosecutor from among three candidates nominated by the Supreme Judicial Council – itself an independent judicial body – from among the Vice-Presidents of the Court of Cassation, the Presidents of the Courts of Appeal and Assistant Public Prosecutors. Appointment is for a single term only and lasts four years or until the person concerned reaches retirement age, whichever comes first. As regards the legislative approach to judicial independence, the Constitution envisages this as operating on two levels: firstly, the institutional independence of the judiciary and, secondly, the personal or individual independence of judges themselves in the exercise of their functions.

58. The Supreme Constitutional Court has handed down numerous rulings upholding the principle of judicial independence. It has recognized that the right of recourse to law can only be realized through an independent judiciary that provides remedies against any alleged violations and stipulated that such redress must be consistent with the Constitution.

#### **Financial independence of the judiciary**

59. The current Constitution reaffirms the financial independence of all judicial bodies and entities. The relevant provision is contained in article 185 (1), as amended, which states: “All judicial bodies and entities are to administer their own affairs; they are to be consulted on any draft laws that have a bearing on those affairs, and each is to have an independent budget.” Article 191 stipulates: “The Supreme Constitutional Court is an independent and autonomous judicial body. It is based in Cairo but, if necessary, may convene anywhere else in the country, with the approval of its own General Assembly. It has an independent budget, the items of which are discussed by the House of Representatives and, once approved, are incorporated into the general State budget as a single item. The General Assembly of the Court is responsible for administering the Court’s affairs and is to be consulted on any draft laws that have a bearing on those affairs.” In accordance with the laws that regulate judicial

bodies and entities, the President of the Supreme Judicial Council and the head of each body or entity has authority equivalent to that of the Minister of Finance as concerns the expenditure of the allocated budget.

### **Enforcement of sentences**

60. Since the current Constitution came into force following the revolution of 30 June 2013, there has been a strong commitment to upholding the concept of rule of law, and this entails an obligation on the part of the State to enforce definitive court rulings. These principles are set forth in detail in articles 97 and 100 of the Constitution. Under article 123 of the Criminal Code, it is an offence for public officials not to enforce a ruling that it is their responsibility to enforce. It should be noted, furthermore, that sentences are issued and enforced in accordance with court rulings and that Egyptian courts have handed down numerous important rulings against other authorities, which have been duly enforced. In 2000, for example, in a ruling concerning judicial oversight of elections, the Supreme Constitutional Court concluded that a judge must be assigned to each polling station in order to supervise the voting process effectively. In the same way, other rulings issued by the courts in general – and by the Supreme Constitutional Court in particular – have led to the dissolution of local and representative councils when the courts determined that the provisions under which those councils were formed were unconstitutional. This ultimately resulted not only in the dissolution of the councils concerned but also in the amendment of the relevant laws.

### **Role of the Supreme Constitutional Court**

61. According to article 194 of the Constitution: “The President and Vice-Presidents of the Supreme Constitutional Court, and the President and members of the Court’s board of commissioners, are independent and may not be dismissed. In the exercise of their functions, they are subject to no authority other than the law, and the conditions they must fulfil are likewise specified in the law. The Court is responsible for disciplinary accountability, as set out in the law, and they have the same rights and duties and enjoy the same safeguards as other members of the judiciary.”

62. Article 195 stipulates that the rulings and decrees issued by the Court are binding and authoritative for all persons and for all the authorities of the State. The same article states that the effects of a ruling declaring a legislative text to be unconstitutional are to be regulated by law. The functions of the Supreme Constitutional Court and the procedures regulating its operation are comprehensively set forth in Act No. 48 of 1979.

63. The rulings and decrees issued by the Court are final and not subject to appeal, and its rulings in constitutional cases and its interpretive decrees are binding on all State authorities. A ruling declaring a provision of a law or a regulation to be unconstitutional means that, from the day following the publication of the ruling, the provision in question can no longer be applied. The Court enjoys financial independence and has an independent annual budget modelled on the general State budget. The President of the Court drafts the budget then, once it has been reviewed and approved by the General Assembly of the Court, submits it to the competent authority. As concerns the Court’s budget, the General Assembly exercises the same legal powers as those vested in the Minister of Finance. For his part, the President of the Court exercises the same powers as those vested in the Minister of Administrative Development and the President of the State Authority for Organization and Administration.

### **Supreme Council for Judicial Bodies and Entities**

64. The independence of the judiciary is upheld in the Constitution, under which each judicial body is able to administer its own affairs. The relevant provision is contained in article 185, as amended, which states: “All judicial bodies and entities are to administer their own affairs; they are to be consulted on any draft laws that have a bearing on those affairs, and each is to have an independent budget.” The President of the Republic appoints the heads of judicial bodies and entities from among the seven most senior deputies. Appointment is for a single term only and lasts four years or until the person concerned reaches retirement age, whichever comes first, as regulated by the law. All joint matters are overseen by the Supreme Council for Judicial Bodies and Entities, which is chaired by the President of the

Republic and has as members the President of the Supreme Constitutional Court, the heads of judicial bodies and entities, the President of the Cairo Court of Appeal and the Prosecutor General. The Supreme Council has a secretary-general to be appointed by decree of the President of the Republic for the period specified by law, with the post to rotate among the bodies that compose the membership of the Council. If the President of the Republic is absent, his place is to be taken by the head of one of the judicial bodies or entities.

65. The Council is responsible for considering the conditions governing the appointment, promotion and disciplining of members of judicial bodies and entities, and its views are to be canvassed vis-à-vis all proposed legislation regulating matters affecting those bodies and entities. The Council issues its decisions by a majority of members, one of whom must be the Council President. It also coordinates among judicial bodies, including the Administrative Prosecution Service and the State Lawsuits Authority, over which, however, it has no powers of oversight.

### **Political system and free electoral competition**

#### *Legislation governing political and electoral rights*

66. As a way of upholding constitutional prerogatives, a number of laws have been enacted or updated to ensure that citizens are able to exercise their political rights. These include the Exercise of Political Rights Act, the Political Parties Act, the Act regulating the House of Representatives, the National Electoral Commission Act, the Presidential Elections Act and the Division of Electoral Districts Act. In particular, the Exercise of Political Rights Act (No. 45) of 2014 constituted an important qualitative step towards guaranteeing the exercise of political rights. It includes a number of reforms regulating the process of political participation, notably that of using the national identity card as a basis for revising the electoral registers. This contrasts with the previous system under which Egyptian citizens had to obtain a voter registration card during a specific period prior to elections in order to participate in the ballot. The electoral registers, moreover, are now open to public scrutiny. Another change entails facilitating matters for voters, who can now identify their polling station via the Internet or text messages. The voting process has also been made easier for persons with disabilities. Other reforms include the use of transparent ballot boxes and phosphorescent ink; the counting of ballots at polling stations; the announcement of results in the presence of party delegates, media representatives and civil society; judicial oversight of polling stations; and election monitoring by Egyptian civil society organizations and international missions.

67. The National Electoral Authority was established as a standing body that manages the entire arc of the electoral process up to the announcement of results. Responsible for overseeing presidential, parliamentary and local elections, the Authority has its own full-time technical and administrative staff and an independent budget. This marks a change with respect to the past when temporary bodies were formed to oversee elections. The National Electoral Authority – which is regulated under articles 208–210 of the Constitution – also designates the competent bodies to oversee the electoral appeals process. In this way, it resolves what were previously overlapping jurisdictions regarding the adjudication of electoral appeals between parliament, the administrative judiciary and the Court of Cassation. Lastly, the National Authority regulates electoral financing and campaigning in a way that guarantees impartiality and transparency.

#### *Electoral system and administration of the electoral process*

68. Over recent years, numerous legislative and procedural reforms have helped enhance the transparency and integrity of the electoral process in Egypt. These include, most notably, revising electoral registers, regulating campaign financing and advertising, strengthening the electoral oversight role of civil society organizations and establishing the National Electoral Authority. The electoral appeals process is governed by article 107 of the 2014 Constitution, while article 29 of the Act regulating the House of Representatives stipulates that the Court of Cassation has jurisdiction to rule on the validity of the membership of both elected and appointed members of the House. Appeals must be filed with the Court, accompanied by the relevant evidence, within a period not exceeding 30 days from the date of the announcement

of the final election results or the publication of the decree of appointment in the Official Gazette. The Court is then to issue its ruling within 60 days of receiving the appeal. If it rules that a membership is invalid, that invalidation takes effect from the date the House is notified of the ruling. Similar provisions are contained in article 31 of the Act regulating the Senate. This means that the constitutional and legal system of Egypt is in line with prevailing trends in comparable legal systems, which grant the courts authority to rule on appeals regarding parliamentary elections.

*National Electoral Authority and electoral integrity*

69. The characteristics of the National Electoral Authority, as outlined in the Constitution, serve to ensure its impartiality and integrity, notably via the following features: The Authority is an independent body with exclusive jurisdiction to run referendums and presidential, parliamentary and local elections. It has sole jurisdiction over drafting and updating electoral registers; proposing the division of electoral districts; establishing regulations for campaign financing and advertising and election spending, and monitoring and publicizing such activities; facilitating voting procedures for Egyptians residing abroad; and overseeing other procedures until the final results of the election are announced. The Constitution stipulates that the National Electoral Authority is to be administered by a ten-member council consisting of delegates allocated equally from among the Vice-Presidents of the Court of Cassation, the Presidents of the Courts of Appeal and the Vice-Presidents of the Council of State, the State Lawsuits Authority and the Administrative Prosecution Service. These persons are to be selected by the Supreme Judicial Council or the councils of judicial bodies and entities, as applicable, and they may not be members thereof. Their appointment is to be confirmed by decree of the President of the Republic. In this way, members of the National Electoral Authority are selected from among members of judicial bodies to serve on the Authority on a full-time basis for a single six-year term. The Authority is headed by its most senior member from the Court of Cassation, and half of its membership is renewed every three years. Under the Constitution, the Authority has the right to call on the assistance of independent public figures, specialists and electoral experts. Such persons do not have voting rights. Under the Constitution, the Authority is to have a standing executive body, and the composition of that body, its operating procedures and the rights, duties and safeguards of its members are to be determined by law in a manner that guarantees impartiality, independence and integrity. The body is responsible for administering voting and vote-counting processes in referendums and elections. Members of the Authority operate under the supervision of its administrative board, and the Authority may enlist the assistance of members of other judicial bodies.

70. In the 10 years since the Constitution came into force, voting and vote-counting processes in referendums and elections have been conducted under the oversight of members of various judicial authorities and bodies. In fact, the Constitution envisages judicial oversight over the activities of the National Electoral Authority. In that regard, the Supreme Administrative Court has authority to rule on appeals against decisions taken by the Authority regarding the conduct or results of referendums and presidential or parliamentary elections. Appeals regarding local elections are to be brought before the administrative courts. In order to ensure prompt adjudication and prevent disruption of the electoral process, a final ruling on such appeals is to be issued within 10 days of the date the appeal was filed.

*Political parties*

71. The Constitution stipulates that the political system is to be based on party pluralism (art. 5). Amendments to the Political Parties Act have led to the creation of a large number of political parties, and a commission has been set up to review incoming notifications that a political party has been created. The commission is made up entirely and exclusively of judges and has no members from the executive branch. A political party can now be formed merely by informing the authorities, and no party can be dissolved save by court ruling.

72. Political parties can be registered by means of written notification to be submitted to the independent Political Parties Commission. The Commission, which is purely judicial in nature, is chaired by the First Vice-President of the Court of Cassation, and its membership is made up of six judges from the Court of Cassation, the courts of appeal and the Council of

State. The Commission studies the notification, and a political party is considered to have been authorized if, 30 days after the submission of the notification, the Commission has raised no objection. If the Commission does raise an objection, it can be brought before the Supreme Administrative Court to be either upheld or overturned.

73. A notification of the establishment of a political party is to be accompanied by the signatures of 5,000 founding members, who must come from at least 10 different governorates. The establishment or continued existence of a political party is conditional upon certain factors. The party's principles, goals and methods must not conflict with basic constitutional principles or with the requirement to protect national security and to maintain national unity, social peace and the democratic system. Moreover, the party's principles, programmes and activities are to be public and must not have a religious, class, sectarian, factional or geographic basis or be based on sex, language, religion or belief. In addition, the party's goals, methods, organization and sources of funding must all be publicly announced. The party's methods must not entail any kind of military or paramilitary formation and it must not be a branch of a foreign political party or organization. Under the law, the authority to dissolve a political party lies with the Supreme Administrative Court, which is the highest court under the Council of State. In that regard, the Court acts on an application made by the Political Parties Commission following an investigation and report by the Public Prosecutor showing that the conditions stipulated under the Act no longer subsist.

74. For the 2025 elections to the Senate, there were 69.333 million voters registered in the voter database. Citizens, in fact, are automatically entered into the database when they reach the age of 18. The number of nationally recognized political parties stands at 104.

75. All elections – including those for the Senate, the House of Representatives and the President of the Republic – have been held on the constitutionally ordained dates. The House of Representatives elections produced 165 women members, or 27 per cent of the House. Also elected were 123 young members (under the age of 40), 9 persons with disabilities, 8 Egyptians living abroad and 38 Christians. The following 13 political parties were elected to the House of Representatives in 2020: Future of a Nation Party with 314 seats, Republican People's Party with 49 seats, New Wafd Party with 25 seats, Homeland Defenders' Party with 23 seats, Modern Egypt Party with 13 seats, Reform and Development Party with 9 seats, Congress Party with 8 seats, Egyptian Freedom Party with 7 seats, Egyptian Social Democratic Party with 7 seats, Al-Nour Party with 7 seats, National Progressive Unionist Party with 6 seats, Will of a Generation Party with 2 seats and Justice Party with 2 seats. Women account for 27.7 per cent of members of parliament.

76. The Senate elections produced 41 women members, 35 young persons (under the age of 40), and 25 Christians. Presidential elections were held in December 2023, with four candidates running. The President of the Republic Abdel Fattah Al Sisi won. The voting rate was 66.8 per cent, with women making up 60 per cent of voters. The election was held under full judicial supervision, with open media coverage and monitoring by various international, regional and local organizations.

### **Media and the press**

77. Article 67 of the Constitution safeguards freedom of the press, printing and publication via print, audiovisual or electronic media, and it grants Egyptians the right to own and publish newspapers and to set up audiovisual and digital media outlets. The Constitution stipulates, moreover, that newspapers can be founded merely by notifying the authorities, as regulated by law, and it prohibits any censorship on newspapers and media except in times of war or general mobilization. In addition to this, no custodial penalty is admissible for publication-related offences unless they incite violence or discrimination or defame others, save where the law provides otherwise (art. 71). The State must guarantee the independence of its own press institutions and media outlets so as to ensure that they remain impartial, express all political and intellectual opinions and leanings, cover all social interests and guarantee equality and equal opportunities for addressing the public (art. 72).

78. The Supreme Media Regulatory Council was established under the Constitution as an independent body responsible for regulating audiovisual, print, digital and other media institutions. The Council seeks to maintain the independence, impartiality, pluralism and

diversity of such institutions; prevent monopolistic practices; monitor the integrity of funding sources; and establish the necessary controls to ensure that the press and the media adhere to professional standards and ethics (art. 211). The National Press Authority was also established under the Constitution as an independent body responsible for managing and developing State-owned press institutions, increasing their assets, ensuring their independence and impartiality, and upholding their commitment to sound professional, administrative and economic practices (art. 212). For its part, the National Media Authority, which was likewise established as an independent body under the Constitution, is responsible for managing and developing State-owned visual, radio and digital media platforms, increasing their assets, ensuring their independence and impartiality, and upholding their commitment to sound professional, administrative and economic practices (art. 213).

79. Acts No. 178, No. 179 and No. 180 of 2018 together constitute a body of laws that regulate the press and the media and seek to make them more independent, in accordance with the Constitution. Under those Acts, newspapers can be founded merely by notifying the authorities, while opinions expressed by journalists or media professionals cannot constitute grounds for prosecution. The Acts also uphold the right of journalists and media professionals to obtain and disseminate information and not to be under any obligation to reveal their sources. It is prohibited, moreover, to confiscate, suspend or close print or online newspapers or audiovisual media outlets, or to impose custodial penalties for the publication of works, except in cases envisaged in the Constitution. Furthermore, it is forbidden to search the office or residence of a journalist or media professional in the context of offences committed via newspapers or media outlets, save in the presence of a public prosecutor. In addition, journalists and media professionals cannot be punished for using written or broadcast media to challenge the actions of public officials, public representatives or persons entrusted with public service, unless it is proven that they did so in bad faith or if their claims were unfounded or unrelated to the work of the individual concerned. The media landscape in Egypt is characterized by its diversity, with a total of 580 registered newspapers, 27 licensed private satellite channels, 94 websites and 29 radio networks. This is in addition to the radio and television networks affiliated with the National Media Authority, including 21 television channels.

### **Freedom to form civil society associations**

80. Under Act No. 149 of 2019 regulating the activity of civil society associations and institutions, such bodies have the right to be registered merely by notifying the authorities. They can operate in all fields and they enjoy certain financial benefits and tax exemptions, including the right to receive grants and funding, including funding from abroad. The Act does not envisage any custodial penalties for violations of its provisions. The grace periods for civil society organizations to regularize their status have been changed more than once, and no association or institution may be dissolved save by a court ruling. An integrated electronic system has been launched to regulate and facilitate civil society activity. It provides services for documentation, case management, complaints and more. There are currently 35,770 recognized non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

## **II. General framework for the protection and promotion of human rights**

### **A. Acceptance of international human rights norms**

81. Under article 151 of the Constitution, the legislature, the judiciary and the executive are required to abide by ratified international treaties as if they were national laws. This means that persons who have suffered harm due to the non-implementation of a treaty provision may appeal to the courts. In this connection, the 2014 Constitution goes further than previous constitutions in that it recognizes (art. 93) a special status for ratified international human rights treaties, conferring upon them force of law and bestowing constitutional protection on the fundamental rights and freedoms enshrined therein. Thus,

any interested party may have recourse to the Supreme Constitutional Court to challenge the constitutionality of a piece of legislation. The Supreme Constitutional Court has upheld this right in Case No. 131 of judicial year 39, issued on 6 April 2019, and in Case No. 114 of judicial year 29, issued on 14 January 2017. In its reasoning the Court explained that the enforcement of article 93 entails an obligation to amend domestic laws to bring them into line with obligations under international human rights treaties. Rulings handed down by the Court are final and enforceable for all State authorities.

82. The Constitution surrounds human rights and fundamental freedoms with specific safeguards. Under article 92, the rights and freedoms of citizens may not be violated or downgraded, and no law regulating such rights and freedoms may restrict them in such a way as to encroach upon their essence or substance. Article 99 of the Constitution considers any infringement against citizens' personal freedom or the sanctity of their private lives, or against any other public rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution and the law, as an offence not subject to the statute of limitations. Under the same article, the National Council for Human Rights may inform the State Prosecution Office of any violations and may enter a civil lawsuit on the side of the injured party, at the latter's request. For its part, article 121 gives laws regulating human rights and freedoms the status of laws complementing the Constitution, meaning that the issuance of any such law requires a majority of two thirds of the House of Representatives.

83. The Supreme Constitutional Court has had occasion to refer to international human rights treaties in the context of rights-related disputes upon which it has ruled; for example, it has exercised its constitutional oversight on the extent to which legislation conforms to the principle of non-imprisonment on grounds of inability to fulfil a contractual obligation, as enshrined in article 11 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The Court has also reconfirmed the principle that accused persons are innocent until proven guilty in a fair and legal trial in which their right to defend themselves is duly safeguarded, as per article 14 (2) of the Covenant. Furthermore, the Court has issued two sentences enshrining the right to form civil society associations, which cannot be dissolved merely by an administrative ruling, as per article 22 of the Covenant.

#### **Nature and scope of reservations**

84. Egypt enters reservations to provisions that conflict with the principles of Islamic sharia which is, according to article 2 of the Constitution, "the primary source of legislation". At the same time, however, Egypt has indicated on more than one occasion that its position and its reservations do not affect the substance of the rights and safeguards that are already envisaged, without discrimination, in the Constitution and the law.

85. In Egypt, regular reviews of position on treaties are conducted in the light of national priorities. Using the Constitution as its guide and thus ensuring a harmonized approach to its international commitments, the Government reviews its position on the international instruments to which it has not acceded or the provisions to which it has entered reservations. It is important to note that the question of accession to an international treaty pertains to the sovereign right of each State to determine its own position based on its own specificities. In the context of these periodic reviews of reservations in the light of the Constitution, and in order to ensure consistency and harmony with international obligations, reservations to a number of international treaties and covenants have been withdrawn, as follows:

#### **Withdrawal of reservations**

- The reservation to article 9 (2) of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women – granting women equal rights with men to acquire, retain or change their nationality and to transmit their nationality to their children – was withdrawn with effect from 4 January 2008. The Secretary-General of the United Nations was notified of the withdrawal on that same day.
- The reservation to articles 20 and 21 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child – concerning alternative care and the placement of children deprived of family care – was withdrawn in June 2003. The Secretary-General of the United Nations was notified of the withdrawal on 31 July 2003.

- The reservation to article 21 (2) of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child – prohibiting marriage for children under the age of 18 – was withdrawn with effect from 13 March 2015.

### **Exceptions, restrictions and limitations on treaty provisions**

86. The 2014 Constitution sets forth the rules and procedures for declaring a state of emergency, while fully recognizing the exceptional nature of such circumstances. The procedures in question are surrounded by numerous safeguards designed to ensure that a state of emergency is, in fact, justified. Under those safeguards, the President of the Republic may not proclaim a state of emergency without first consulting the Council of Ministers and submitting the proclamation to the House of Representatives. If a majority of members of the House approve, a state of emergency is then declared for a period of not more than three months, which may be extended for one equivalent period, with the approval of two thirds of members of the House of Representatives.

87. The Supreme Constitutional Court has affirmed that the Emergency Regulation Act is a special provision intended to support the executive branch by providing it with certain mechanisms to restrict public rights and freedoms in order to address emergency circumstances that menace public safety or national security, such as war, foreign threats, disturbances that threaten internal security, pandemics and similar situations that have an intimate bearing on public safety and national security. In that respect, it is an entirely exceptional piece of legislation designed to achieve a specific goal; it may not be enforced broadly, and a narrow interpretation of its provisions must be adhered to. The Supreme Constitutional Court has ruled article 1 (1) of Emergency Regulation Act No. 162 of 1958 to be unconstitutional. That provision had allowed the President of the Republic, during a state of emergency, to order the arrest and detention of suspects and of any person responsible for endangering security and public order, and the search of persons and places without complying with the provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure. In its reasons for the ruling, the Court came down against a broad interpretation of the Emergency Regulation Act, arguing that it should be implemented only within the narrowest limits and strictly in compliance with established legislative rules, the most important of which is non-violation of other provisions of the Constitution. The Court stressed that the fact that the Emergency Regulation Act had been enacted under the Constitution did not mean that the Act could violate other provisions of the Constitution. On the basis of that ruling, administrative detention orders are no longer allowed, and persons can be imprisoned only under a judicial warrant.

88. The Emergency Regulation Act does not in any way derogate from the obligations set forth in article 4 (2) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Nor does it suspend any provisions of the Constitution or curtail any rights or freedoms.

## **B. Legal framework for the protection of human rights at the national level**

### **Constitutional protection for the rights and freedoms set forth in international human rights treaties**

89. The Egyptian Constitution is the fruit of a process of development that began with the adoption of the country's first constitution in 1882 and continued with the "Independence Constitution" of 1923. In terms of its legal standing, the Constitution of Egypt is the ultimate and supreme document in the national legal system as well as being the only document to be enacted following approval by popular referendum. The preamble and the body text of the Constitution of Egypt of 2014 form a coherent and indivisible whole, an organic unity (art. 227) that gives pride of place to the human rights principles and fundamental freedoms that are globally recognized in international human rights law and in the international and regional human rights treaties to which Egypt has acceded.

90. The Constitution reflects the nation's awareness of the universality and indivisibility of human rights and its absolute conviction of the need for equality among all citizens and of equality of opportunity in the exercise of rights, without discrimination on grounds of religion,

belief, sex, origin, race, colour, language, disability, social status, political or geographical affiliation or any other reason. It also reflects an awareness of equality of opportunity more generally, including equality between men and women.

91. Forty of these principles are enshrined in the Constitution, including self-determination; authority vested in the people; political freedom and political and party pluralism; peaceful transfer of power; separation of powers; authority accompanied by accountability; right to life and physical safety, prohibition of torture as an offence not subject to the statute of limitations; and prohibition of forced labour, slavery and human trafficking. In addition, the Constitution upholds personal freedom, which it recognizes as a natural right to be safeguarded, and it recognizes the right of persons deprived of their liberty and prison inmates to be treated humanely. It also guarantees the sanctity of private life and the right to privacy in all forms of correspondence and communication, the sanctity of the home and freedom of movement, residence and migration. Furthermore, the Constitution safeguards freedom of belief and the practice of religious rites; freedom of opinion, thought and expression; freedom of academic research and of artistic and literary creation; protection of intellectual property rights; freedom of access to information, data and statistics; freedom of the press, printing and publication; freedom of peaceful assembly; freedom to form associations, civil society organizations, professional and labour unions and political parties; freedom to participate in public and political life, including the right to vote, run for election and hold public office; and the right to political asylum for persons being persecuted for defending human and people's rights.

92. The Constitution also guarantees economic, social and cultural rights. It recognizes the right to work, prohibits forced labour and places an obligation on the State to protect workers' rights. In addition, the Constitution guarantees collective bargaining and the right to peaceful strike action. It also guarantees the right to health and to publicly funded healthcare and the right to education and academic research, and it makes the State responsible for ensuring social justice. Furthermore, the Constitution stipulates that the State is to guarantee the right to adequate, safe and healthy housing by developing a housing plan and addressing the problem of informal settlements. It upholds the right to sufficient healthy food and to clean water, as well as the rights of children to healthcare, family care, education and emotional and cognitive development. It also guarantees the rights, health and social, economic and cultural welfare of persons with disabilities and of older persons. The Constitution also includes – for the first time – undertakings to set aside a certain proportion of government spending, amounting to no less than 10 per cent of gross domestic product, of which 3 per cent is to be allocated to the health sector, 4 per cent to general education, 2 per cent to university education and 1 per cent to scientific research. Those proportions are then to increase gradually until they match international averages.

93. The Constitution includes provisions for the empowerment of women and for the care and protection of mothers, children and female breadwinners as well as of older, more vulnerable women. Further provisions protect the rights of workers and the right to peaceful strike action and envision social insurance and social security services for small-scale farmers, agricultural workers, fishermen and informal-sector workers. The Constitution also includes specific obligations regarding the care of children, young persons, persons with disabilities and older persons, and it upholds the right to engage in sporting activities.

94. The Constitution envisages the safeguards necessary to protect rights and freedoms. These include the independence and impartiality of the judiciary and the principle that penalties are applicable to the individual, that there can be no punishment save as prescribed by law, that no penalty may be imposed save by a court ruling and that accused persons are presumed innocent until proven guilty. The Constitution also upholds the right of recourse to the law, the right to be tried before a natural judge, the right to a defence in person or by counsel, the independence of lawyers, the right of access to justice for persons without financial means (legal aid) and the independence, integrity and impartiality of judges and their immunity from dismissal.

95. The 2014 Constitution of Egypt also envisages many other rights, including the right to development, social justice and sustainable development for all citizens without discrimination, the eradication of poverty and the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment. The Constitution also stipulates that the natural resources of the State belong

to the people and that they must be properly utilized with a view to development and the preservation of the rights of future generations.

96. The Constitution establishes as a general principle that no statute of limitations is to apply to criminal and civil action arising from violations of personal freedom, the sanctity of private life or other public rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution.

### **Legislative protection for the rights and freedoms set forth in international human rights treaties**

97. The legislative framework envisages numerous safeguards designed to promote and uphold human rights. Egypt has made significant progress towards harmonizing its national laws with the principles and safeguards enshrined in the Constitution and in the international and regional human rights treaties to which the country is a party. Ongoing efforts are being made to build on this legislative momentum, both through amendments to existing laws and the introduction of new ones.

98. Criminal laws, notably the Criminal Code (Act No. 58 of 1937), define crimes and their corresponding penalties. At the same time, the Code of Criminal Procedure reflects the legal and procedural safeguards which are enshrined in the Constitution and international human rights treaties and which the State must follow when dealing with offenders. The Code of Criminal Procedure also specifies the circumstances under which a preventive custody order may initially be issued, and it sets a maximum duration for such custody, accompanied by guarantees that the person concerned must immediately be released once that duration has elapsed. In addition, it regulates the procedures for appealing against preventive detention and envisages the right to financial and moral compensation in cases of wrongful detention. It also sets forth alternatives to custodial detention. All this takes place under the oversight of courts of various degrees. In addition to the foregoing, the Code of Criminal Procedure recognizes the right of accused persons to remain silent during evidence-gathering and investigation, and it states that trial proceedings are to be public, and that accused persons may attend such proceedings without shackles or restraints. The Code stipulates that any statement found to have been made under duress or threat is to be disregarded. It also forbids any form of abuse against accused persons and states that they may be detained only in designated correctional and rehabilitation centres and under a reasoned judicial warrant. Accused persons, moreover, may not be interrogated or placed on trial without the presence of a lawyer, and a lawyer must be appointed for persons who do not have one of their own. Accused persons may not be separated from their lawyer during the course of criminal proceedings. In cases that necessitate monitoring of communications, social media accounts and websites in the context of specific offences, the Code envisages the issuance of reasoned, time-limited court orders to that effect. Lastly, the Code includes comprehensive protection for victims, informants and witnesses, and it regulates the use of audiovisual means for the conduct of investigations and trials remotely.

99. Other relevant laws include the Emergency Regulation Act No. 162 of 1958 and the Counter-Terrorism Act No. 94 of 2015. The rights of inmates in correctional centres are enshrined in the most recent amendments, issued on 20 March 2022, to the Prisons Regulatory Act No. 396 of 1956.

100. Access to justice is governed by a body of laws, notably the Code of Civil and Commercial Procedure (Act No. 13 of 1968), the Judicial Authority Act No. 46 of 1972, Act No. 47 of 1972 regulating the Council of State and Act No. 48 of 1979 regulating the Supreme Constitutional Court.

101. Civil rights are regulated by civil codes such as the Personal Status Code, the Civil Status Code (Act No. 143 of 1994), the Nationality Act No. 26 of 1975, the Children's Act No. 12 of 1996 and the Civil Service Act No. 81 of 2016.

102. The Anti-Human Trafficking Act No. 64 of 2010 outlaws all contemporary forms of slavery while, for its part, Act No. 82 of 2016 promulgated the Irregular Migration and Migrant Smuggling Act. The right to form civil society organizations is governed under Act No. 149 of 2019, while the protection of personal data is addressed under the Personal Data Protection Act No. 151 of 2020.

103. Political rights are governed by the Exercise of Political Rights Act No. 45 of 2014, Act No. 46 of 2014 regulating the House of Representatives, Act No. 141 of 2020 regulating the Senate, the Political Parties Act No. 40 of 1977 and Act No. 174 of 2020 regulating the division of electoral districts for the House of Representatives, as amended.

104. Significant legislation in the field of economic and social rights includes the Social Insurance and Pensions Act No. 148 of 2019, the Trade Unions Act No. 213 of 2017 and the Labour Code (Act No. 14 of 2025).

105. The Foreigners' Asylum Act No. 164 of 2024 is consistent with the international obligations of Egypt and the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. It is designed to protect such persons and to enable them to enjoy all the rights and freedoms guaranteed under that Convention.

106. Further relevant laws include the Rights of Older Persons Act No. 19 of 2024, Act No. 94 of 2003 establishing the National Council for Human Rights, Act No. 10 of 2018 promulgating the Persons with Disabilities Act, Act No. 30 of 2018 promulgating the Act regulating the National Council for Women and Act No. 182 of 2023 reorganizing the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood.

#### **Status of human rights treaties in the legal system**

107. For information on the status of human rights treaties under the Constitution, reference is made to paragraphs 86–88 of the present report.

#### **Remedies available to individuals**

108. The Egyptian legal system incorporates a comprehensive human rights-protection framework and guarantees the availability and effectiveness of remedies in the case of violations of any of the rights protected under the international human rights treaties that the State has ratified. Institutional structures include mechanisms to promote respect for and protection of human rights. These include the judiciary (see paras. 49–54 of the present report), the National Council for Human Rights, other specialized national councils, human rights directorates and human rights units in ministries and other national mechanisms.

### **C. Framework for promoting human rights at the national level**

#### **Committees of the legislative branch**

109. The House of Representatives human rights committee is responsible for reviewing national legislation and international treaties pertaining to human rights, transitional justice, international humanitarian law and international human rights law. It also examines reports from the National Council for Human Rights and considers the human rights-related aspects of reports from other national councils, independent entities and oversight bodies. In addition, it looks into rights-related complaints from citizens and organizations.

110. The Senate committee on human rights and social solidarity concerns itself with rights and freedoms and with national legislation and international treaties pertaining to human rights, transitional justice, international humanitarian law and international human rights law. It too discusses reports from the National Council for Human Rights and the human rights-related aspects of reports from other national councils, independent entities and oversight bodies. It also follows up on rights-related complaints from citizens and organizations.

#### **National Council for Human Rights**

111. The National Council for Human Rights is a national institution for the promotion and protection of human rights. It was established by Act No. 94 of 2003, which was amended by Act No. 75 of 2013 and Act No. 197 of 2017 in order to align it with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles). The Council's multiple functions include, primarily: the duty to investigate

allegations of human rights violations; to receive and examine complaints; to refer them, where appropriate, to the competent authorities and to monitor the outcome; to visit prisons and other places of detention, as well as therapeutic and correctional institutions; and to inform the State Prosecution Office of any violation of the rights or freedoms that are guaranteed by the Constitution, the law and relevant international treaties. The Council has a special office for the receipt of complaints regarding human rights and has branches in a number of governorates. The Council has maintained its category A status from the Subcommittee on Accreditation of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI).

112. The National Council for Human Rights submits proposals and recommendations to the authorities on all matters pertaining to the protection and promotion of human rights including, in particular, draft laws and regulations related to the Council's own functions. It also investigates allegations of human rights violations and makes appropriate recommendations to the relevant State bodies. It is, furthermore, responsible for receiving rights-related complaints, coordinating with State-run human rights agencies, monitoring the implementation of international human rights instruments, disseminating a culture of human rights, raising public awareness and assisting in the development of human rights education programmes. The prerogatives of the Council were reinforced under Act No. 197 of 2017, which amended the Act under which the Council was established. The amendments have served to consolidate the Council's independence in terms of its composition, the exercise of its functions and the autonomy of its budget and accounts. The Council has now also been granted the right visit correctional and rehabilitation centres and other places of detention to ensure that inmates are being properly treated and are able to exercise their rights. After each visit, the Council drafts a report containing its comments and recommendations which it sends to the State Prosecution Office. The Council can also report any rights violation to the State Prosecution Office and intervene in civil proceedings on behalf of the injured party.

113. The country's institutional structure includes additional national councils, among them the National Council for Women, the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood and the National Council for Persons with Disabilities. The independence and impartiality of members of those councils and their right to report any violations falling within their jurisdiction are protected under the Constitution. There are complaint offices in each council that receive reports of violations of the human rights enshrined in international instruments, refer them to the competent investigating authorities and provide legal assistance to those concerned.

#### **National Council for Childhood and Motherhood**

114. The Council was established under Presidential Decree No. 54 of 1988 and subsequently restructured in line with the Constitution under Act No. 182 of 2023. Under the Act, the Council is an independent body that is answerable to the President of the Republic and that enjoys technical, financial and administrative independence. One of the functions of the Council is to formulate an integral view of childhood and motherhood with a view to achieving social justice, equality, non-discrimination and equal opportunities. Furthermore, the Council is to act as the national mechanism for children and mothers, and as the body with overarching responsibility for proposing public policies, drafting comprehensive national plans for childhood and motherhood, following up on and evaluating the implementation of policies and plans, collecting information and statistics, and conducting studies into issues of relevance to childhood. It also contributes to reports on the implementation of international human rights treaties, proposes legislation and regulations, and expresses its views on relevant bills and treaties. Moreover, the Council has the right to receive complaints, publish reports and provide legal assistance to victims of rights violations. The Council has a special fund – the Childhood and Motherhood Welfare Fund – which is independent and has its own budget.

#### **National Council for Women**

115. The Council was established under Presidential Decree No. 90 of 2000 and is regulated under Act No. 30 of 2018. It is an independent body that is answerable to the President of the Republic, it has legal personality and enjoys technical, financial and

administrative independence in the exercise of its functions. The Council aims to promote, develop, protect and raise awareness about women's rights, ensure that they can be properly exercised and consolidate the values of equality, equal opportunity and non-discrimination, in which regard it makes full use of all forms of audiovisual and print media. The Council also develops and monitors national plans and policies aimed at advancing and empowering women and enabling them to fulfil their vital role in society and in development. It also cooperates with NGOs and coordinates on a systematic basis with governmental institutions and equal opportunity units within ministries with a view to eliminating all forms of discrimination against women. Moreover, the Council can receive and review complaints regarding violations of women's rights and freedoms, referring them to the competent authorities. It then works with the parties concerned to resolve their problems, providing the necessary legal assistance and reporting any violations of women's rights and freedoms to public authorities.

#### **National Council for Persons with Disabilities**

116. The Council was established in April 2012 under Ministerial Decree No. 410, as subsequently amended, under the name of National Council for Disability Affairs. It came into being under its current name pursuant to Act No. 11 of 2019. It is an independent body with legal personality responsible for proposing public State policies for the advancement, habilitation and inclusion of persons with disabilities. It coordinates with relevant authorities in the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and expresses its views concerning draft laws and decrees related to its mandate. It also serves to represent persons with disabilities and it receives and considers complaints regarding such persons and proposes appropriate solutions.

#### **National Coordination Committee for Combating and Preventing Illegal Migration and Trafficking in Persons**

117. The Committee – which was established under Prime Ministerial Decree No. 192 of 2017 and brings together a number of ministries and national bodies – is an expression of the Government's commitment to combating human trafficking and irregular migration. It is responsible for formulating an Egyptian vision of those phenomena and for supporting efforts to combat them via coordination among all competent State agencies. It has also been tasked with developing and giving effect to a legislative framework to consolidate these efforts. Its other responsibilities include protecting the groups most vulnerable to the dangers of irregular migration and human trafficking and providing protection and assistance to victims.

#### **Supreme Standing Committee for Human Rights**

118. The Supreme Standing Committee was established under Prime Ministerial Decree No. 2396 of 2018. It is headed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and its members include representatives from ministries and other governmental human rights bodies as well as from the State Prosecution Office, the Administrative Control Authority, the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood, the National Council for Women and the National Council for Persons with Disabilities. Details about the functions of the Supreme Standing Committee are to be found below in the section dedicated to the drafting of national reports.

#### **Ministerial-level units and committees**

119. Egypt has established committees and other administrative and institutional structures, at various levels and with varying mandates, to promote, protect and disseminate a culture of human rights. Those bodies, which operate under ministerial regulations and decrees, are also empowered to receive complaints. In all, human rights units and departments have been set up inside 11 ministries, including the following:

- The human rights division of the Ministry of the Interior is responsible for developing plans and programmes for the implementation of the Ministry's human rights framework, and it seeks to communicate with the public at large and with organizations and institutions that operate in the sector. It also works to strengthen community outreach frameworks between the Ministry's own divisions, State institutions, outstanding national figures in the area of human rights and the media,

political forces, religious leaders, civil society organizations and other public figures. Another of its functions is to consolidate relations with citizens and draw attention to the social role played by the police force and police officers, while also monitoring any rights violations that might occur inside police stations. Furthermore, the division coordinates with security agencies to follow up on the work undertaken by reconciliation committees in the security directorates to contain feuds and vendettas.

- The philosophy of crime and punishment that underpins the treatment and promotes the rights of persons deprived of their liberty in correctional facilities has been updated. One aspect of this change is that the word “prisons” has been replaced with that of “correctional and rehabilitation centres”, and a number of such centres have been established to replace the old prisons throughout the country. The centres, which have been designed using modern scientific methods and advanced technology, follow correctional and rehabilitation approaches that are based on the most up-to-date studies developed by specialists in the treatment, rehabilitation and social reintegration of prisoners and detainees. The correctional and rehabilitation centres adhere to international standards regarding ventilation, natural light and adequate space in cells and exercise areas and they envision the availability of cultural, sporting and recreational activities as well as special cells for persons with disabilities. They also run rehabilitation programmes to help inmates reintegrate once they have served their sentences, and they have facilities for regular visits from lawyers and families, without discrimination. The community protection division of the Ministry of the Interior exercises oversight of correctional and rehabilitation centres.
- The human rights, women and children division of the Ministry of Justice is responsible for compiling a database with information on all international and regional treaties, resolutions, recommendations and initiatives, as well as Egyptian laws, decrees and court rulings that have a bearing on human rights. The division also conducts research and legal studies on the extent to which national legislation and laws are consistent with international human rights instruments and, if requested, it expresses its views on human rights legislation.
- A human rights unit was set up in the Ministry of Local Development and has subordinate units in each governorate. These units are responsible for investigating complaints and for evaluating the available services that are relevant to the unit’s functions, including healthcare, education and the rights of children, women and persons with disabilities. Each unit at the governorate level develops its own vision for promoting and protecting human rights.

### **National human rights policies and strategies**

120. Several national strategies have been rolled out and updated to incorporate human rights principles and concepts in various areas. As of May 2024, the Information and Decision Support Centre of the Office of the Prime Minister had identified some 90 strategies for follow-up and assessment, including the following:

- In September 2021, Egypt launched its first national human rights strategy (2021–2026), which was prepared through a consultative process that included ministries, government agencies and NGOs. Meetings were held with civil society representatives, and use was made of international experiences and best practices from other countries around the world. The strategy takes a comprehensive and serious approach to the promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms, taking account both of opportunities and challenges relating to its targets, under four main themes. It aims to make progress on three parallel and complementary tracks: legislative development, institutional development and human rights capacity-building.
- The Egypt Vision 2030 sustainable development strategy, which was updated at the end of 2023, places the human being at the centre of development and emphasizes the interconnectedness between the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. The Egypt Vision incorporates several strategic indicators wherewith to monitor performance and progress.

- The national strategy for the empowerment of Egyptian women 2030 covers four integrated areas: political empowerment and the promotion of the role of women, economic empowerment, social empowerment and protection.
- The third national strategy to combat and prevent trafficking in persons (2022–2026) has been adopted.
- The national alternative care strategy (2021–2030) aims to provide family or foster care for the upbringing and protection of children as an alternative to institutionalization. This is in line with the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 2009.
- The national strategy for population and development (2023–2030) aims to strike a balance between population growth and development by promoting reproductive health, empowering women, investing in youth, increasing educational opportunities and raising awareness of demographic issues, and thus achieving socioeconomic well-being for all citizens.
- The national strategy for early childhood development (2024–2029) has been adopted along with its associated plan of action, while the strategic plan (2024–2029) of the Ministry of Education and Technical Education has been updated. These initiatives serve to ensure access to education for all persons, without discrimination, and to improve the quality of education.
- The national anti-corruption strategy (2023–2030) is entering its third stage.

#### **Publishing human rights instruments**

121. As soon as Egypt ratifies or accedes to any international or regional instrument, the text of that instrument is, as a matter of course, published in the Official Gazette, which serves as the authoritative reference in all legislative, judicial and legal matters. The instruments are also included as core subjects in modules and training programmes at the Police Academy and in Egyptian universities. This is part of an initiative on the part of the Government to integrate human rights principles into educational activities. In addition, the Supreme Standing Committee for Human Rights publicizes the provisions of international instruments and makes them known among ministries and national institutions. At the same time, many of the national councils responsible for particular aspects of human rights also disseminate treaties, either in printed form or by posting them on their websites.

#### **Raising awareness about human rights among public officials and others**

##### **State efforts to integrate human rights principles into training curricula and activities**

122. The national human rights strategy includes education and capacity-building as one of its four main themes. The aim is to build and coordinate efforts at the national level and align those efforts with international best practices while also reflecting national priorities. In this way, human rights concepts and principles have been incorporated into the basic school curriculum, which now covers women's rights, children's rights, democracy, citizenship, freedom of opinion and acceptance of others. Moreover, standards and indicators for certain subjects and activities have been amended to include behavioural norms and guidelines, which help students to express opinions without offending others while also building their character, consolidating principles of tolerance and acceptance of others and encouraging moderate religious ideas. The Ministry of Education has developed a training kit to promote religious freedom, foster a culture of tolerance and combat extremism within school communities.

123. The Police Academy has introduced a compulsory human rights module in its curriculum for students of all levels. It has also incorporated human rights-related subjects with specific reference to topics such as corruption, human trafficking and irregular migration.

124. On a separate front, the Criminal Research and Training Institute of the State Prosecution Office – which was detached from the Judicial Studies Centre in 2015 – provides training to members of the Office in the form of foundational and specialized courses on rules and safeguards for investigating various types of crimes.

125. Beginning in the academic year 2018/19, a pro-human rights and anti-corruption module was introduced in all higher faculties and institutes; it is a compulsory module, and candidates cannot graduate without having taken it. In addition, to this, brochures and leaflets on human rights have been published and distributed among police officers. They include the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and an educational booklet entitled “The Police in the service of the people”. For its part, the State Information Service publishes a quarterly bulletin entitled “Human rights studies”. The Ministry of Education has collaborated with stakeholders and international organizations on activities and programmes intended to promote a culture of human rights within the education system. These include a project to consolidate education and protect children and the renewal of an initiative to support human rights and develop civil society in Egypt. The Ministry has also been involved – in cooperation with the Ministry of the Workforce – in developing a national plan 2022–2026 to uphold gender equality in the workplace, as a human rights principle. In that connection, the Ministry has been formulating general goals, subgoals and activities, developing a time frame, defining roles and responsibilities and identifying funding mechanisms. A book entitled “Values and respect for others” has been taught to third-grade elementary students since the academic year 2020/21, and to fourth-, fifth- and sixth-grade elementary students since 2021/22.

126. In addition to the above, the Ministry of Education and Technical Education has signed a protocol of cooperation with the National Council for Human Rights, the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood and the National Council for Population. The protocol – which concerns the welfare of young persons and the reinforcement of social, humanitarian, educational and cultural values – aims to promote coexistence, tolerance and acceptance of others and to disseminate the values and principles enshrined in the Abrahamic religions. It also seeks to develop the ability of young persons to engage in critical analysis.

127. The Ministry of Education and Technical Education has also taken steps towards developing the institutional standing of equal opportunity and human rights units in the Ministry itself as well as in education directorates and departments, and in schools. It has also drafted an institutional guide for equal opportunity and human rights units in education directorates, which can be used to monitor and evaluate their activities. The units number 330 in all.

128. A national coordination committee has worked to develop and implement intensive capacity-building programmes for “first responders”. In addition to law enforcement agencies, this category also includes social workers, healthcare providers (particularly emergency-room doctors), civil society organizations and staff of the Ministry of Civil Aviation.

#### **D. Drafting of national reports**

129. The Supreme Standing Committee for Human Rights is the permanent national framework for cooperation with international and regional human rights mechanisms, and it is responsible for drafting the reports submitted to such mechanisms. It also monitors the implementation of any observations and recommendations the mechanisms might make and oversees compliance with treaty obligations. The Supreme Standing Committee has a technical secretariat, which collects and analyses data and information in order to create a database of the recommendations Egypt has received from international and regional mechanisms. The database serves to monitor progress in the implementation of those recommendations and to develop policies and plans to raise awareness and build capacity in the field of human rights. The Committee adopts a broad-ranging consultative approach to the report-drafting process, in which it engages with ministries, State agencies and civil society representatives. In this way, the Committee plays a pivotal role in consolidating the national human rights protection system by developing and monitoring the implementation of human rights policies and coordinating all aspects of government action in that regard.

130. The Supreme Standing Committee works to realize its vision by assessing how much constitutionally and legally protected human rights are upheld and the extent to which Egypt fulfils its international and regional human rights obligations. In this way, the Committee

seeks to highlight best practices and identify persistent challenges. The Committee uses a variety of means and tools to undertake its functions, including the collection, classification and analysis of data and information and a review of the content and implementation of human rights legislation and policies.

131. The Supreme Standing Committee proposes legislative, executive and institutional measures intended to promote the effective enjoyment of fundamental rights and freedoms. It is responsible for coordinating the functions of the executive branch in as much as they relate to the realization of human rights, to which end it engages in regular interaction with ministries and State bodies regarding the various issues and challenges that might arise in that regard. In addition to this, the Supreme Standing Committee monitors, categorizes and analyses recommendations from international, regional and national mechanisms, and it follows up with ministries and other national bodies on the progress made in implementing them. It also conducts ongoing and periodic assessments regarding the implementation of the national human rights strategy while also providing technical support to ministries and national bodies to help them integrate human rights standards and set up regulatory frameworks for their own human rights units and departments. Furthermore, the Committee designs and runs capacity-building activities in the field of human rights for various national agencies, and it led national efforts to develop the first national human rights strategy, which was launched in September 2021 and will be implemented over five years.

### **III. Non-discrimination, equality and effective remedies**

132. Numerous provisions in the Constitution come together to create a comprehensive framework for equality and non-discrimination. National unity is undergirded by principles of equality, justice and equal opportunity for all citizens (art. 4). The State is under an obligation to ensure equality of opportunity for all citizens, without discrimination (art. 9). The Constitution also stipulates that citizenship and rule of law are the bedrock of the State (art. 1), while education aims to instil the concepts of citizenship, tolerance and non-discrimination (art. 19). Under the Constitution, the State is required to preserve the various aspects of the cultural diversity of Egypt (art. 50). At the same time, the State is required to guarantee equality between women and men in all civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, as set forth in the Constitution. The State is also to take measures to ensure that women are adequately represented on legislative bodies, as prescribed by law, and to uphold their right to occupy public office and senior administrative positions in the State and to be appointed to judicial bodies, without discrimination (art. 11). The Constitution also envisages fair representation in the House of Representatives for young persons, Christians, persons with disabilities and Egyptians residing abroad (art. 244).

133. The Constitution stipulates that all citizens are equal before the law. They are equal in rights, freedoms and public duties and there is to be no discrimination between them on grounds of religion, belief, sex, origin, race, colour, language, disability, social status, political affiliation, geographic location or any other grounds. Discrimination and incitement to hatred are crimes, punishable by law (art. 53). Nationality is conferred on men and women on a basis of equality, as anyone born to an Egyptian father or to an Egyptian mother is entitled to nationality (art. 6). In addition, the Constitution includes provision for positive discrimination on behalf of women, for whom it reserves no less than a quarter of seats in the House of Representatives (art. 102) and a quarter of seats on elected local councils (art. 180). The Act regulating the Senate also stipulates that at least 10 per cent of seats on the Senate are to be reserved for women. In addition, the Constitution includes guarantees for the rights of persons with disabilities and persons with dwarfism in various fields, in accordance with principles of equality, justice and equal opportunity (art. 81).

134. As numerous rulings of the Supreme Constitutional Court have made clear, all Egyptian constitutions have upheld the principle of equality before the law, which is applicable to all citizens as the very bedrock of justice, freedom and social peace. The Court has also recognized that the fundamental purpose of that principle is to safeguard the rights and freedoms of citizens against any form of discrimination that infringes upon or restricts the exercise of such rights and freedoms.

135. Article 53 of the 2014 Constitution stipulates – for the first time with respect to previous constitutions – that discrimination and incitement to hatred are crimes punishable by law and that the State is under an obligation to take measures to eliminate discrimination in all its forms. This provision goes to underscore article 161 bis (a) of Act No. 126 of 2011 amending certain provisions of the Criminal Code. According to that article, persons are liable to a term of imprisonment and/or a fine if they perform or fail to perform an action whereby discrimination arises among individuals or against a particular group of persons on grounds of sex, origin, language, religion or belief, where such discrimination violates the principle of equality of opportunity or social justice, or causes a breach of the peace.

In accordance with this constitutional provision, the call to eliminate all forms of discrimination, to end violence and to combat all forms of hate speech has been incorporated into numerous pieces of legislation, the most important of which are:

(a) The Exercise of Political Rights Act No. 45 of 2014, which prohibits any electoral propaganda that infringes upon the private lives of citizens or candidates, threatens national unity or uses religious slogans that call for discrimination among citizens or that incite hatred.

(b) The Association of Journalists Act No. 93 of 2016, which enjoins the Association to formulate a charter of media ethics and a code of conduct with principles and obligations governing the work of media professionals. These are to include, most notably, a prohibition on violating the private life or defaming the good name of individuals, inciting violence or discrimination or using or disseminating hate speech. In fact, a charter of media ethics and a code of professional conduct incorporating those principles have been issued.

(c) Act No. 180 of 2018 regulating the press, the media and the Supreme Media Regulatory Council, which prohibits press organizations, media outlets and websites from publishing or broadcasting any material or advertisement that conflicts with the Constitution or that incites discrimination, violence, racism or hatred. The Act also states that no newspaper may be published or licence granted to a media outlet or website, or permission be given for it to remain in operation, when its activity is based on religious or sectarian discrimination, or discrimination on grounds of sex, origin, religious community, ethnicity or regional origin, or if it practises activities that are contrary to democracy, are clandestine in nature, or incite, promote or permit licentiousness, hatred or violence.

(d) Act No. 149 of 2019 regulating the activity of civil society associations, which prohibits NGOs from calling for discrimination against citizens on grounds of sex, origin, colour, language, religion or belief, or from engaging in any activity that might promote racism or incite hatred.

## **Human rights of women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons**

136. The Constitution recognizes the principle of positive discrimination as a way of ensuring the adequate representation of all segments of society. In particular, it envisages positive discrimination on behalf of certain priority groups, in which regard it allocates women no less than 25 per cent of seats in the House of Representatives and on local councils, and 10 per cent of seats in the Senate. It also envisages seat quotas in the House of Representatives for workers, farmers, Christians, persons with disabilities, young persons and Egyptians residing abroad, in accordance with principles of equality, justice and equal opportunity (arts. 243 and 244).

137. Thanks to a political will that supports and champions women's issues, Egypt has made unprecedented progress in the field of female empowerment and gender equality. The Constitution contains upwards of 20 articles that guarantee women's rights in various aspects of life, and the President of the Republic declared 2017 to be the Year of Egyptian Women, a historic precedent that goes to reflect the status of women in Egyptian society. In addition to this, Egypt has launched the national strategy for the empowerment of Egyptian women 2030, which is consistent with the Sustainable Development Goals. The strategy was first adopted in 2017 and approved as a road map for the Government in the implementation of

programmes and activities aimed at empowering women. The strategy comprises four pillars: political empowerment and the promotion of the leadership role of women, social empowerment, economic empowerment and protection. The four main pillars are complemented by legislative measures and cultural activities.

138. Legislation has been introduced and existing legislation amended with a view to protecting and empowering women and providing them with equality and equal opportunities in all areas. The National Council for Women has established the Egypt National Observatory for Women, which is a mechanism to oversee the achievement of targets relating to the advancement of women in the period 2017–2030. The Observatory also serves as a tool to monitor the indicators of the national strategy for the empowerment of Egyptian women. The Observatory publishes reports on issues and policies affecting women in a number of different areas.

139. As concerns labour, in April 2022 the Ministry of the Workforce, in collaboration with the International Labour Organization (ILO), launched a national plan to promote gender equality in the workplace. The plan aims to achieve six objectives, including that of creating a framework to support workplace gender equality and helping women to join the workforce and occupy leadership positions. The plan also seeks to provide a secure working environment free from violence and discrimination, to develop labour-related knowledge structures, to strengthen support mechanisms and raise community awareness about workplace gender equality and to create permanent institutional mechanisms to regulate the national plan and integrate all relevant stakeholders.

140. In 2021, the Ministry of International Cooperation, in collaboration with the National Council for Women, the World Economic Forum and the private sector, launched a plan of action to accelerate the closure of the gender gap. Egypt is the first country in Africa and the Middle East to launch such a plan. A national plan to promote gender equality in the workplace was launched in 2022. Also, a total of 264 equal opportunity units have been created in ministries, governorates and districts to educate working women about their rights and the importance of participating in the development process.

141. Equal opportunity units are mechanisms that seek to mainstream gender equality in government agencies, help women gain access to leadership and decision-making posts and narrow the gender gap. They also serve to provide statistical data on women in leadership positions, to maximize the benefit women derive from projects implemented by ministries and other bodies, and to integrate the principle of gender equality and equality of opportunity into the drafting, planning, monitoring and evaluation of national strategies and plans.

142. As concerns child protection, Act No. 189 of 2020 amends certain provisions of the Criminal Code, notably with the addition of a new article – article 309 bis (b) – which defines bullying and sets forth the relevant penalties. A nationwide anti-bullying campaign has been launched to explain how bullying has been criminalized and now attracts severe penalties. It should also be noted that the judicial system in Egypt envisages special courts to deal with offences committed by juveniles.

143. In the field of education, Egypt managed to close the gender enrolment gap between the school years 2010/11 and 2021/22, with girls accounting for 48.7 per cent of children enrolled in primary education and boys 51.2 per cent. These figures are similar to those for middle school, where girls account for 48.5 per cent of enrolments and boys for 51.5 per cent. In secondary education, however, the proportion of girls exceeds that of boys, with the former accounting for 55.2 per cent and the latter for 44.1 per cent. The proportion of girls enrolled drops in industrial secondary schools to 36.1 per cent but rises significantly in commercial secondary schools to 56.3 per cent. Females also account for 68.2 per cent of all students enrolled in community education and, in the academic year 2019/20, they made up 52.5 per cent of all students enrolled in public universities and Al-Azhar. Women also account for 46 per cent of the total number of students enrolled in private universities.

### **Effective remedies**

144. The Egyptian legal system has a comprehensive framework to promote and protect human rights, and it guarantees the availability and effectiveness of remedies in the case of violations against any of the rights protected under the international human rights treaties that

the State has ratified. Institutional structures include mechanisms to promote respect for and protection of human rights. These include the judiciary, the National Council for Human Rights, other specialized national councils and the human rights directorates and human rights units in ministries and other national bodies.

145. Fair trial guarantees are enshrined in article 96 of the 2014 Constitution, which states: “Accused persons are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a fair and legal trial.” This means that accused persons continue to be presumed innocent of the charges against them until such time as their guilt is established through a definitive court ruling. Under the rule of presumption of innocence, accused persons are under no obligation to establish their own innocence; rather, the burden is on prosecutors to prove the charges against them. Consequently, in the indictment, prosecutors must specify the charges against the accused persons and set forth the evidence upon which those charges are based. The role of defence counsel is, then, to refute that evidence and demonstrate the innocence of their clients.

146. Another principle that has been established in rulings of the Court of Cassation is that accused persons are to be given the benefit of any doubt. One Court ruling states: “It is established that, if the court of first instance rules for an acquittal – either because it doubts the veracity of the charges levelled against an accused person or if it finds that evidence to be insufficient – the ruling of the court is to include a statement to the effect that it has considered the case and its circumstances, thereby guaranteeing the personal liberty of the accused party.” In order for accused persons to benefit from this, the law must guarantee their personal liberty so that they are not subjected to any treatment that would result in a violation of this right. If accused persons are being held in custody, they must be treated in a manner that distinguishes them from other inmates in the correctional facility. The relevant provisions are set forth in articles 14, 15 and 16 of Prisons Regulatory Act No. 396 of 1956. In addition to this, accused persons must be protected from any form of torture or cruel or inhuman treatment intended to coerce a confession.

147. The law protects accused persons if they appeal a ruling against them, as stated in article 417 of the Code of Criminal Procedure: “If an appeal is filed by a party other than the State Prosecution Office, the court may only uphold the judgment or amend it in favour of the appellant.” For the institutional aspects of this matter, reference is made to paragraphs 45–47 of the present report.

## List of major international human rights treaties

### I. Ratification of main international human rights instruments

<i>No.</i>	<i>Treaty</i>	<i>Accession</i>
1	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966	Signature: 4 August 1967 Ratification: 8 December 1981 Entry into force: 14 April 1982 Published in Official Gazette No. 14 of 8 April 1982
2	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966	Signature: 4 August 1967 Ratification: 9 December 1981 Entry into force: 14 April 1982 Published in Official Gazette No. 15 of 15 April 1982
3	International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, 1965	Signature: 28 September 1966 Ratification: 1 May 1967 Entry into force: 4 January 1969 Published in Official Gazette No. 45 of 11 November 1972

<i>No.</i>	<i>Treaty</i>	<i>Accession</i>
4	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 1979	Signature: 16 July 1980 Ratification: 18 September 1981 Entry into force: 18 October 1981 Published in Official Gazette No. 51 of 17 December 1981
5	Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, 1984	Accession: 25 June 1986 Entry into force: 25 July 1986 Published in Official Gazette No. 1 of 7 January 1988
6	Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989	Signature: 5 February 1990 Ratification: 6 July 1990 Entry into force: 2 September 1990 Published in Official Gazette No. 7 of 14 February 1991
7	International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, 1990	Accession: 16 February 1993 Entry into force: 1 June 1993 Published in Official Gazette No. 31 of 5 August 1993
8	Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, 2000	Accession: 6 February 2007 Entry into force: 6 February 2007 Published in Official Gazette No. 31 of 2 August 2007
9	Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, 2000	Accession: 12 July 2002 Entry into force: 12 August 2002 Published in Official Gazette No. 8 of 24 February 2005
10	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2006	Egypt acceded to the Convention pursuant to Presidential Decree No. 400 of 2007, published in Official Gazette, No. 27 of 3 July 2008 Signature: 4 April 2007 Ratification: 14 April 2008 Entry into force: 3 July 2008

## II. Other United Nations human rights treaties and related instruments

<i>No.</i>	<i>Treaty</i>	<i>Accession</i>
1	Slavery Convention, 1926, as amended in 1955	Egypt acceded to the Convention on 25 January 1928 and ratified the 1953 Protocol amending the Convention on 29 September 1954; the text was published in Official Gazette No. 73 on 22 September 1955 and entered into force on 7 July 1955
2	Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others, 1949	Egypt acceded to the Convention on 11 May 1959; it was ratified pursuant to Presidential Decree No. 884 of 1959 and published in Official Gazette No. 105 of 23 May 1959
3	Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, 1951, and its 1967 Protocol	Egypt acceded to the Convention on 28 June 1980; it was ratified pursuant to Presidential Decree No. 331 of

<i>No.</i>	<i>Treaty</i>	<i>Accession</i>
		1980 and published in Official Gazette No. 48 of 26 November 1981
		Egypt ratified the Protocol pursuant to Presidential Decree No. 333 of 1980, and it was published in Official Gazette No. 45 of 5 November 1981

### III. Regional human rights treaties

<i>No.</i>	<i>Treaty</i>	<i>Accession</i>
1	Organization of African Unity Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa, 1969	Ratification: 17 November 1980 Published in Official Gazette No. 20 of 20 May 1982
2	African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, 1981	Signature: 16 November 1981 Ratification: 3 April 1981 Entry into force: 21 October 1986 Published in Official Gazette No. 17 of 23 April 1992
3	Charter on the Rights of the Arab Child	Ratification: 30 January 1994 Published in Official Gazette No. 11 of 17 March 1994
4	African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, 1990	Signature: 30 June 1999 Ratification: 9 May 2001 Entry into force: 22 May 2001 Published in Official Gazette No. 44 of 28 October 2004
5	Arab Charter on Human Rights, 2004	Signature: 5 September 2004 Published in Official Gazette No. 24 of 13 June 2019 Entry into force: 24 April 2019 Egypt acceded to the Charter pursuant to Presidential Decree No. 429 of 2018, issued on 15 September 2018 and published in the Official Gazette

### IV. Other United Nations human rights treaties and related instruments

<i>No.</i>	<i>Treaty</i>	<i>Accession</i>
1	Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, 1948	Egypt ratified the Convention on 28 January 1952 having acceded to it under Act No. 121 of 1951, published in Official Gazette No. 71 of 16 August 1951; the Convention was published in Official Gazette No. 100 of 3 July 1952
2	Slavery Convention, 1926, as amended in 1955	Egypt acceded to the Convention on 25 January 1928 and ratified the 1953 Protocol amending the Convention on 29 September 1954; the text was published in Official Gazette No. 73 on 22 September 1955 and entered into force on 7 July 1955
3	Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others, 1949	Egypt acceded to the Convention pursuant to Presidential Decree No. 884 of 1959 dated 11 May

<i>No.</i>	<i>Treaty</i>	<i>Accession</i>
		1959; it was published in Official Gazette No. 105 of 23 May 1959
4	Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, 1951, and its 1967 Protocol	Egypt acceded to the Convention pursuant to Presidential Decree No. 331 of 1980 dated 28 June 1980; it was ratified on 22 May 1981 and published in Official Gazette No. 48 of 26 November 1981

## V. Other United Nations human rights treaties and related instruments

<i>No.</i>	<i>Treaty</i>	<i>Accession</i>
1	Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, 2000	Accession: 31 August 2004 Ratification: Presidential Decree No. 297 of 2004, published in Official Gazette No. 21 of 26 May 2005
2	United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, 2000	Accession: 4 November 2004 Ratification: Presidential Decree No. 294 of 2003, published in Official Gazette No. 37 of 9 September 2004
3	Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, 2000	Accession: 4 November 2004 Ratification: Presidential Decree No. 295 of 2003, published in Official Gazette No. 37 of 9 September 2004

## VI. Conventions of the International Labour Organization

<i>No.</i>	<i>Treaty</i>	<i>Accession</i>
1	ILO Weekly Rest (Industry) Convention, 1921 (No. 14)	Accession: 18 March 1960 Ratification: Presidential Decree No. 498 of 1960, published in Official Gazette No. 85 of 14 April 1960
2	ILO Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29)	Ratification and entry into force: 29 November 1955
3	ILO Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81)	Accession: 23 May 1960 Ratification: Presidential Decree No. 9 of 1956, published in the Official Gazette (p. 2290) of 28 August 1956
4	ILO Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87)	Accession: 23 May 1960 Ratification: Presidential Decree No. 944 of 1960, published in Official Gazette No. 136 of 19 June 1960
5	ILO Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97)	Accession: 19 February 1993 Ratification: Presidential Decree No. 446 of 1991, published in Official Gazette No. 31 of 5 August 1993
6	ILO Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98)	Ratification: 3 July 1954
7	ILO Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100)	Presidential Decree No. 944 of 1960, published in Official Gazette No. 136 of 19 June 1960; ratified under Act No. 371 of 28 March 1957, published in Official Gazette No. 17 of 11 April 1957

<i>No.</i>	<i>Treaty</i>	<i>Accession</i>
8	ILO Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105)	Entry into force: 23 October 1958
9	ILO Weekly Rest (Commerce and Offices) Convention, 1957 (No. 106)	Accession: 6 October 1958 Ratification: Presidential Decree No. 1284 of 1958, published in Official Gazette No. 32 of 16 October 1958
10	ILO Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111)	Accession: 18 March 1960 Ratification: Presidential Decree No. 498 of 1960, published in Official Gazette No. 85 of 14 April 1960
11	ILO Equality of Treatment (Social Security) Convention, 1962 (No. 118)	Ratification: 12 January 1993
12	ILO Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention, 1969 (No. 129)	Accession: 21 August 2003 Ratification: Presidential Decree No. 3 of 2003, published in Official Gazette No. 34 of 21 August 2003
13	ILO Minimum Wage Fixing Convention, 1970 (No. 131)	Entry into force: 12 May 1976
14	ILO Holidays with Pay Convention (Revised), 1970 (No. 132)	Accession: 23 May 1960 Ratification: Decree of the Council of Ministers No. 4 of 1955, published in the Official Gazette (p. 160) of 12 January 1955
15	ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)	Accession: 21 February 1999 Ratification: Presidential Decree No. 67 of 1999, published in Official Gazette No. 35 of 3 September 1999
16	ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)	Accession: 23 March 2002 Ratification: Presidential Decree No. 69 of 2002, published in Official Gazette No. 30 of 25 July 2002

## VII. Treaties of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

<i>No.</i>	<i>Treaty</i>	<i>Accession</i>	<i>Ratification instrument</i>
1	Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict	27 April 1955	Act No. 236 of 1955, issued by the Acting Prime Minister and published in Official Gazette No. 34 bis (a) of 30 April 1955
2	Protocol to the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict		Act No. 236 of 1955, issued by the Acting Prime Minister and published in Official Gazette No. 34 bis (a) of 30 April 1955
3	Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property	6 January 1973	Presidential Decree No. 114 of 1973, published in Official Gazette No. 39 of 27 September 1973
4	Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage	2 January 1974	Presidential Decree No. 1965 of 1973, published in Official Gazette No. 45 on 14 November 1978

<i>No.</i>	<i>Treaty</i>	<i>Accession</i>	<i>Ratification instrument</i>
5	Second Protocol to the Hague Convention of 1954 for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict	8 July 2005	Presidential Decree No. 195 of 2005, published in Official Gazette No. 43 of 27 October 2005
6	Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage	30 June 2005	Presidential Decree No. 194 of 2005, published in Official Gazette No. 17 of 27 April 1973
7	Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions	23 June 2007	Presidential Decree No. 114 of 2007, published in Official Gazette No. 43 of 27 October 2005

### VIII. Conventions of the Hague Conference on Private International Law

<i>No.</i>	<i>Treaty</i>	<i>Accession</i>
1	Convention of 1 March 1954 on civil procedure	Accession: 10 May 1978; entry into force: 24 December 1978; ratification instrument: publication in Official Gazette No. 51 of 21 December 1987
2	Convention on the Service Abroad of Judicial and Extrajudicial Documents in Civil or Commercial Matters	Accession: 15 November 1965; entry into force: 10 February 1969; ratification instrument: publication in Official Gazette No. 20 of 15 May 1969
3	Convention on the Recognition of Divorces and Legal Separations	Accession: 1 June 1970; entry into force: 20 June 1980; ratification instrument: publication in Official Gazette No. 37 of 11 September 1980
4	Convention on Celebration and Recognition of the Validity of Marriages	Egypt signed the Convention on 14 March 1987 but has not yet ratified

### IX. Geneva Conventions and other treaties on international humanitarian law

<i>No.</i>	<i>Treaty</i>	<i>Accession</i>
1	Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field, 1949	Accession: 10 November 1952 Ratification instrument: The four Geneva Conventions were promulgated under Decree-Law No. 69 of 1952 and published in Official Gazette No. 87 of 26 May 1952
2	Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea, 1949	Accession: 10 November 1952 Ratification instrument: The four Geneva Conventions were promulgated under Decree-Law No. 69 of 1952 and published in Official Gazette No. 87 of 26 May 1952
3	Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War, 1949	Accession: 10 November 1952 Ratification instrument: The four Geneva Conventions were promulgated under Decree-Law No. 69 of 1952 and published in Official Gazette No. 87 of 26 May 1952
4	Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, 1949	Accession: 10 November 1952 Ratification instrument: The four Geneva Conventions were promulgated under Decree-Law No. 69 of 1952 and published in Official Gazette No. 87 of 26 May 1952

<i>No.</i>	<i>Treaty</i>	<i>Accession</i>
5	Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I), 1977	Accession: 7 December 1978 Ratification instrument: Presidential Decree No. 282 of 1992, published in Official Gazette No. 52 of 1 December 1992
6	Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts (Protocol II), 1977	Accession: 7 December 1978 Ratification instrument: Presidential Decree No. 282 of 1992, published in Official Gazette No. 52 of 1 December 1992

## **X. Regional human rights treaties and charters to which Egypt has acceded**

<i>No.</i>	<i>Treaty</i>	<i>Accession</i>	<i>Ratification instrument</i>
1	Organization of African Unity Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa, 1969	28 June 1980	Presidential Decree No. 332 of 1980, published in Official Gazette No. 20 of 20 May 1982
2	African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, 1981	27 February 1984	Presidential Decree No. 77 of 1984, published in Official Gazette No. 17 of 23 April 1986 and entered into force 21 October 1986
3	Arab Charter on Human Rights, 1983	27 September 1993	Presidential Decree No. 356 of 1993, published in Official Gazette No. 11 of 17 March 1994
4	Arab Convention No. 17 (1993) concerning the Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities	Ratified 1994	
5	African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, 1990	4 February 2001	Presidential Decree No. 33 of 2001, published in Official Gazette No. 44 of 28 January 2004
6	Convention of the Arab Women Organization, 2002	2002	Presidential Decree No. 133 of 2002
7	Arab Charter on Human Rights, 2004	15 September 2018	Presidential Decree No. 429 of 2018, published in Official Gazette No. 24 of 13 June 2019
8	African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption,	4 July 2017	Presidential Decree No. 204 of 2017, published in Official Gazette No. 34 of 22 August 2020

## **Reservations and declarations**

### **Reservations entered by Egypt to international treaties**

<i>No.</i>	<i>Treaty</i>	<i>Reservation</i>
1	Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, 1951	Under the heading "Personal Status", article 12 (1) states: "The personal status of a refugee shall be governed by the law of the country of his domicile or, if he has no domicile, by the law of the country of his residence."

No.	Treaty	Reservation
		<p>Under the heading “Rationing”, article 20 states: “Where a rationing system exists, which applies to the population at large and regulates the general distribution of products in short supply, refugees shall be accorded the same treatment as nationals.”</p> <p>Article 22 stipulates: “The Contracting States shall accord to refugees the same treatment as is accorded to nationals with respect to elementary education.”</p> <p>Article 23 reads: “The Contracting States shall accord to refugees lawfully staying in their territory the same treatment with respect to public relief and assistance as is accorded to their nationals.”</p> <p>Article 24 states: “The Contracting States shall accord to refugees lawfully staying in their territory the same treatment as is accorded to nationals in respect of the following matters: ... hours of work, ... remuneration, ... apprenticeship and training, ... social security, ... and the right to compensation.”</p>
2	International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, 1966	The reservation concerns article 22, under which any dispute between two or more States Parties with respect to the interpretation or application of the Convention is to be referred to the International Court of Justice for decision.
3	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966	Having ratified the Convention, Egypt issued the following declaration: “As subject to and consistent with Islamic sharia.”
4	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966	Having ratified the Convention, Egypt issued the following declaration: “As subject to and consistent with Islamic sharia.”
5	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 1979	<p>1. Article 16 of the Convention grants women equal rights with men in all matters relating to marriage and family relations, during the marriage and upon its dissolution. Egypt is of the view that this matter is governed by Islamic sharia whereby wives are accorded rights equivalent to those of their husbands in a way that ensures a just balance between them. This serves to uphold the sanctity of the marital bond, which is underpinned by deeply rooted religious beliefs that may not be called into question, and it reflects the fact that one of the most important foundations of that bond is an equivalency and complementarity of rights and duties, which guarantees true equality between spouses. This is preferable to a superficial form of equality that, far from benefiting wives, actually places additional burdens upon them. Under Islamic sharia, the husband is required to pay an appropriate dowry to his wife, meet all her expenses and provide financial support in the event of divorce, whereas the wife retains full rights over the disposal of her own assets and is not obliged to disburse anything on her keep. By way of contrast, sharia imposes restrictions on women regarding their right to initiate divorce, stipulating that such cases are to be regulated by the law, whereas no such restriction is imposed on men.</p> <p>2. Article 29 (2) of the Convention stipulates that each State Party may declare that it does not consider itself bound by article 29 (1) according to which any dispute between two or more States Parties concerning the interpretation or application of the Convention is to be submitted to arbitration. The reservation of Egypt serves to avoid being bound by the system of arbitration in this regard.</p> <p>3. While entering a general reservation to article 2 of the Convention, Egypt is prepared to comply with the content of that article, provided that such compliance does not run counter to Islamic sharia.</p>
6	International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, 1990	(a) Article 4 of the Convention reads: “For the purposes of the present Convention the term ‘members of the family’ refers to persons married to migrant workers or having with them a relationship that, according to applicable law, produces effects equivalent to marriage, as well as their dependent children and other dependent persons who are

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<i>No.</i>	<i>Treaty</i>	<i>Reservation</i>
		<p>recognized as members of the family by applicable legislation or applicable bilateral or multilateral agreements between the States concerned.”</p> <p>(b) Article 18 (6) of the Convention states: “When a migrant worker or a member of his or her family has, by a final decision, been convicted of a criminal offence and when subsequently his or her conviction has been reversed or he or she has been pardoned on the ground that a new or newly discovered fact shows conclusively that there has been a miscarriage of justice, the person who has suffered punishment as a result of such conviction shall be compensated according to law, unless it is proved that the non-disclosure of the unknown fact in time is wholly or partly attributable to that person.”</p>

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