



International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families

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**Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All
Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families**

**Combined second to fourth periodic reports
submitted by Egypt under article 73 of the
Convention, due in 2019***

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* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



Introduction

1. As part of its commitment to cooperate with international human rights mechanisms, and in expression of its readiness to fulfil its treaty obligations, Egypt is submitting the present report which covers the period from the submission of its previous report through to the end of 2023, in implementation of the provisions of article 73 (b) of the Convention.

2. The report addresses the progress made in ensuring the enjoyment of the rights enshrined in the Convention within the territory of the Arab Republic of Egypt. It reviews changes to legislation as well as to judicial and administrative practices that have had a bearing on the implementation of the Convention since the issuance of the Committee's concluding observations on the initial report of Egypt in May 2007, and in particular the period between the promulgation of the 2014 Constitution and 2023.

3. With regard to internal developments in Egypt, reference is made to paragraphs 3–7 of its fifth periodic report to the Human Rights Committee ([CCPR/C/EGY/5](#)). Egypt, in fact, has continued to fortify its institutional human rights framework through the operationalization of the Supreme Standing Committee for Human Rights in early 2020. The Committee's tasks consist in monitoring the country's implementation of its international obligations under relevant international agreements and protocols, proposing the necessary legislative measures and procedures, and supervising the action taken to ensure their implementation. The Committee operates as a sustainable national framework, in cooperation with diverse international and regional human rights mechanisms.

4. The Supreme Standing Committee for Human Rights developed the National Human Rights Strategy (2021–2026), the first such strategy in Egypt, which was launched in September 2021. The vision behind the strategy is to continue efforts to promote and protect human rights in accordance with the Constitution and the law, in line with the international obligations of Egypt. The strategy has four main areas of focus: civil and political rights; economic, social and cultural rights; human rights of women, children, persons with disabilities, youth and older persons; and human rights education and capacity-building. In addition, the strategy seeks to achieve progress in three directions: legislation, institutions and education/capacity-building. One of the intended outcomes of the strategy is to develop advanced training programmes in specialized areas of human rights.

5. As a country of origin, transit and destination, Egypt takes a comprehensive strategic view of migration-related issues that covers all stages of migration. Since the adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in December 2018, the Egyptian Government has intensified its efforts to regulate migration and address the challenges that accompany it. In doing so, it places migrants and their human rights at the core of its efforts, in order to strengthen protection for migrants' human rights and to enhance their contribution to sustainable development. The Government has adopted a sustainable development strategy entitled Egypt Vision 2030, which envisages the provision of services to specific groups within society, including migrants and refugees.

6. The period covered by the report has witnessed radical changes in the situation of migration and in the position of Egyptians abroad. This has taken the form of the consolidation of civil, political, economic and social rights for Egyptians outside their country, the strengthening of their ties with their homeland and their increased involvement in efforts towards national development. The most significant of these changes has been the participation of Egyptians abroad in the elections and public referendums that have taken place since the revolution of 25 January 2011. For its part, the Constitution includes a provision under which the State is obliged to attend to the interests of Egyptians living abroad, protect them, uphold their rights and freedoms, and enable them to perform their public duties towards State and society and contribute to national development. Under the laws that regulate the exercise of political rights and elections, a number of seats on the House of Representatives have been allocated for persons representing Egyptians living abroad. Moreover, the Ministry for Migration and Egyptian Expatriates was reinstated in 2015.

7. The Government has also rolled out a range of projects in the governorates aimed at creating job opportunities, supporting small entrepreneurs and enabling young people to find

work in the public and private sectors. The goal is to minimize the negative structural factors that force individuals to leave the country.

8. Improvements are constantly being made to the procedures for registering Egyptians abroad with embassies and consulates, to enable them to obtain consular assistance and to update their information. In addition, consulates and embassies are responsible for issuing and renewing identity documents for Egyptian migrants abroad.

9. The Egyptian State has signed a number of bilateral agreements aimed at supporting regular migration channels for the movement of labour. It has also promoted educational reforms to ensure that skills are linked to the requirements of the labour market, while at the same time facilitating fair and ethical employment and ensuring decent working conditions. The Ministry of Labour monitors and inspects all enterprises to ensure that workers are fully able to enjoy their rights and that their contracts of employment duly envision all the provisions set forth in national legislation.

10. The Ministry of Labour has expanded and renovated a number of vocational training centres to enhance the skills and employability of young Egyptians and migrants. The Government is working to create job opportunities for young persons in several different sectors by investing in skills development and facilitating mutual recognition of skills and qualifications.

11. In order to create conditions in which migrants and expatriates can contribute fully to sustainable development, the Ministry for Migration and Egyptian Expatriates is working on a national migration governance policy as well as a strategy and action plan for the engagement of Egyptians abroad. Another purpose of the initiative is to keep up contact with Egyptian communities abroad and to maintain cultural, social and economic ties between them and their country of origin. The Ministry is also developing tools to provide information to Egyptian migrants who wish to invest in their homeland.

12. The Ministry of Labour is in the process of finalizing a manual on procedures for employment abroad, the aim of which is to regulate the procedures for employing Egyptian workers outside the country, in line with the changes that have taken place in the external labour market and the challenges it faces. In the context of the programme entitled “Towards a Holistic Approach to Labour Migration Governance and Labour Mobility in North Africa”, the Ministry of Labour is cooperating with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and other international partners to build capacity at the national level in the drafting, negotiation and implementation of bilateral labour migration agreements.

13. Egypt has concluded a number of bilateral agreements regarding the employment of Egyptian workers abroad, including the seventh operational programme of the workforce cooperation agreement between Egypt and Jordan 2023–2024 and a bilateral agreement with Greece for the employment of seasonal workers in the agricultural sector. In addition to this, the Egyptian government has signed a number of memorandums of understanding regarding vocational exams intended to verify that workers have the skills necessary to join the foreign labour market. It has signed a vocational examination agreement with Saudi Arabia as well as several bilateral labour and employment agreements with Italy. In the case of Jordan and Libya, an online link has been made available.

14. In October 2020, the Ministry of Labour set up a pre-departure guidance unit to educate young persons about their rights and duties before leaving the country to work abroad. The aim of the unit is to provide advice and information to people before they leave to take up job opportunities abroad, explain administrative procedures and migration services and help them to achieve their goals properly and without resorting to illegal methods.

15. The Ministry of Labour has completed the modernization and expansion of 130 out of a total of 300 recruitment bureaux and has provided them with an online link to the Ministry itself. Recruitment firms are monitored and kept under supervision, and a total of 251 such firms have been licensed to engage in the activity of finding work abroad for Egyptian workers. A further 1,231 firms have had their licences renewed while 112 licences have been revoked. This brings the total number of licensed firms to 1,482. Work is currently underway to launch a national labour market platform to regulate the supply and demand for Egyptian workers on the labour market at home and abroad.

16. Egypt has a long-standing “out-of-camp policy” that allows for the integration of migrants and refugees into host communities, including the health and education systems, on an equal footing with Egyptian citizens. Moreover, all migrants and refugees are provided with comprehensive primary health-care in national public health care facilities, likewise on an equal footing with Egyptians. They are also included State-wide health campaigns and initiatives, including the presidential initiative entitled “100 million healths” and national polio campaigns. Egypt is host to some 420,000 refugees and asylum-seekers registered with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Since the outbreak of the recent crisis in Sudan, facilities have been provided for an estimated 380,000 Sudanese citizens to cross into Egypt. Currently, Egypt hosts more than 9 million foreigners (regular and irregular migrants and refugees), including 5 million from Sudan who have been living in Egypt for decades.

17. The Government provides primary health care to all foreign residents. Also, as a way of enabling migrants and migrant communities to integrate fully into the social fabric, Egypt does not impose restrictions on the movement of migrants, and it cooperates with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) on a body of youth-focused community events aimed at promoting social cohesion. In addition – and with a view to eliminating all forms of discrimination and to promoting narratives to influence public perceptions of migration – the national coordinating committee to combat and prevent irregular migration and human trafficking runs constant awareness-raising campaigns on migration-related topics and works to strengthen reporting mechanisms. The Committee also runs training programmes for media workers.

18. The Egyptian Government also provides facilities to migrants of various nationalities in the field of education, especially basic education. In that regard, children of Arabic-speaking refugees and migrants are treated on an equal footing with Egyptian students and are integrated into the Egyptian educational system. In addition, certain migrants are granted facilities in the field of higher education. These matters are regulated by instructions from the Office of the President according to which tuition fees are to be reduced for foreign students who obtain an Egyptian high school diploma and meet the minimum requirements for admission to Egyptian universities and institutes of higher education. Tuition fees are also reduced for foreign students from Syria, Palestine, Sudan and South Sudan who did not pursue their education in Egypt.

Section I

General information

Data disaggregated according to the characteristics and nature of the migratory flows affecting the State party (outbound migration, transit and inbound migration). If no precise data is available, please provide estimates of the momentum of migratory flows in the State party

19. According to the latest census in Egypt (2017), around 10.02 million Egyptians live outside the country, including temporary, semi-permanent and permanent migrants. Most Egyptian migrants are concentrated in the States of the Arab region where, at the end of 2016, their numbers stood at about 6.2 million, or about 65.8 per cent of the total number of Egyptians abroad. In second place stand the Americas with 1.6 million Egyptians or 16.7 per cent of the total, in third place Europe with about 1.2 million or 13.2 per cent, followed by Australia with 340,000 or 3.6 per cent.

20. Saudi Arabia is the country with the highest number of Egyptian workers, 2.9 million, followed by Jordan with around 1.15 million. Next come the United Arab Emirates with 765,000 Egyptian workers followed by Kuwait, which employs nearly 500,000 Egyptians, and Qatar where there are 230,000. A large proportion of the migration to Europe is to Italy, where there are about 560,000 Egyptians, followed by France with 365,000, Germany with 77,000, England with 62,000 and the Netherlands with 45,000. The smallest number of Egyptian migrants is in Africa where they number just 46,872, 85 per cent of whom are in South Africa.

21. To supplement the information given in paragraph 16 of the present report, it can be stated that Egypt takes in many foreigners. According to IOM estimates, in July 2022 there were more than 9 million migrants in Egypt, including regular and irregular migrants and refugees, making up around 8.7 per cent of the country's total population. Over the past few years, Egypt has taken in around 40,000 asylum-seekers each year, of whom less than 10 per cent have resettled in third countries. Moreover, 70 per cent of new arrivals come from countries facing protracted crises, meaning that safe returns are unlikely in the short term, a state of affairs that has economic repercussions.

22. Migrants from Sudan, Syria, Yemen and Libya account for about 80 per cent of all foreigners resident in Egypt, with 4 million, or 44 per cent, from Sudan; 1.5 million, or 16.6 per cent from Syria; 1 million, or 11 per cent, from Libya; and 1 million, or 11 per cent, from Yemen. The rest of the foreign community is made up of 1.5 million individuals, or 17 per cent, of more than 130 different nationalities.

23. In all, 56 per cent of migrants reside in just five governorates: Cairo, Giza, Alexandria, Damietta and Daqahliyah, while 28 per cent live in governorates in Lower Egypt. The average age of foreigners living in Egypt is 35.2 years, while 2.4 per cent are over 60. The ratio of males to females is 50.4 per cent male to 49.6 per cent female. As concerns the length of time that migrants spend in Egypt, the data shows an average stay of 11.2 years, with only 5.7 per cent of migrants remaining longer than 15 years.

24. Studies and data by IOM show that more than a third (37 per cent) of migrants residing in Egypt hold steady jobs in well-established companies, demonstrating that part of the migrant population contributes positively to the labour market and the growth of the Egyptian economy. For example Syrians, who make up 17 of foreigners in Egypt, are among the nationalities that contribute most to the labour market and the national economy.

25. As concerns length stay in Egypt, estimates show that 60 per cent (5.5 million people) of foreigners living in the country have been well integrated into society for more than 10 years while 6 per cent (including second generations) have been integrated into Egyptian society for 15 years or more.

Ratification of international instruments and treaties

26. During the period covered by the present report, Egypt acceded to a number of international human rights treaties, enacted several pieces of legislation and rolled out a number of public policy measures regarding the implementation of the Convention. The State has acceded to the following international and regional instruments:

- Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, on 6 February 2007
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, on 14 April 2008
- Arab Charter on Human Rights, on 24 February 2019.

Court rulings concerning the protection of migrant workers and members of their families under the Convention

27. The Ministry of Justice collects the rulings handed down by the courts in cases of human trafficking and unlawful migration from which it extracts statistics that it then uses to develop specialized training programmes for judges on the judicial and legal implications of human trafficking and illegal migration. The Egyptian courts have issued a number of relevant rulings, including, by way of example, the following:

- A ruling handed down by the Administrative Court in case No. 25883, judicial year 74, sitting on 22 August 2021. The Court ruled to overturn a decree of the Minister of the Interior under which a foreigner was placed on a no-entry list despite the expiry of the three-year period stipulated in Decree of the Minister of the Interior No. 2214 of 1994, which regulates travel-ban lists. The reasoning of the Court of Administrative Justice was as follows: In 2016, the plaintiff had violated the legal

conditions regulating the residence of foreigners in the country, as a consequence of which legal measures were taken against him, he was deported and his name was placed on a no-entry list. The Court pointed out that the Decree regulating travel-ban lists stipulates that names entered into the lists are to be automatically removed after three years. Following the expiry of that period, the administrative authorities did not receive a request from the competent authorities for the person in question to remain on the no-entry list. Thus the decree against which the appeal had been entered was, in fact, unlawful and should be abrogated.

- A ruling handed down by the Supreme Administrative Court in appeal No. 428, judicial year 48, sitting on 21 April 2007. The Court ruled to overturn a decree of the Minister of the Interior under which a foreigner was to be deported and placed on a no-entry list. The Court ruled to overturn that decree and suspend its enforcement.
- A ruling handed down by the Administrative Court in appeal No. 10891, judicial year 66, sitting on 29 September 2012. The ruling establishes the principle of equality between Egyptians and non-Egyptians vis-à-vis the allocation of temporary or occasional work by public-sector companies, under the same rules, regulations and contracts of employment. It should be noted, furthermore, that the same principle has been established in a number of other court rulings since 2008. A ruling handed down by the Supreme Administrative Court in appeal No. 12251, judicial year 57, sitting on 6 April 2013, states that freedom of movement is one of the principal public freedoms and that restricting it without legitimate cause divests individual freedom of certain characteristics and affects its essence, because freedom of movement should constitute the norm and the prohibition of such freedom the exception applicable only in case of need. A ruling handed down by the Supreme Administrative Court in appeal No. 2476, judicial year 56, sitting on 27 October 2018, suspends and overturns a decree of the Minister of the Interior which fails to grant Egyptian citizenship to a child of a foreign “migrant” worker married to an Egyptian woman. A ruling handed down by the Supreme Administrative Court in appeal No. 11776, judicial year 58, sitting on 27 October 2018, overturns a decree of the Minister of the Interior for the deportation of a female migrant worker married to an Egyptian man. It also recognizes the right of her husband to request her return for the purposes of family unity and states that the decision to deport her from the country had irreparable negative effects on her and her husband who resides in Egypt.

Legislative changes affecting the implementation of the Convention

28. During the reporting period, a number of laws were enacted that have a bearing on the Convention, including the following:

- Anti-Human Trafficking Act No. 64 of 2010
- Act No. 81 of 2016 promulgating the Civil Service Act
- Act No. 82 of 2016 promulgating the Irregular Migration and Migrant Smuggling Act
- Act No. 197 of 2017 amending certain provisions of Act No. 94 of 2003 establishing the National Council for Human Rights
- Act No. 213 of 2017 promulgating the Trade Unions Act
- 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
- Act No. 148 of 2019 promulgating the Social Insurance and Pensions Act

Policies and measures to provide greater protection of human rights and to implement the Convention

- Adoption of the National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women (2016–2030), in 2016

- Creation of the human rights department in the State Prosecution Office, in 2017
- Creation of the Supreme Standing Committee for Human Rights, in 2018
- Adoption of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy (2019–2022), in 2018
- Creation of the National Council for Persons with Disabilities, in 2019
- Adoption of the National Human Rights Strategy (2021–2026), in 2021
- Adoption of the Third National Strategy on Combating and Preventing Trafficking in Persons (2022–2026), in 2022
- Launch of the updated Egypt Vision 2030, in November 2023

Procedures to assist victims of human trafficking, especially women and children

29. Acting under article 89 of the Constitution; the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime of 2000; the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the Convention; and the Anti-Human Trafficking Act, Egypt has joined the Blue Heart Campaign against Human Trafficking. Since 2015, the Government has taken a body of measures to combat this offence the most important of which are as follows:

- A national strategy to combat human trafficking 2016–2021 has been adopted with a view to establishing an integrated anti-trafficking system, tackling the phenomenon at its roots, taking security measures, launching judicial proceedings in accordance with the rights and safeguards enshrined in the Constitution and the law, and protecting and rehabilitating victims. The strategy's mid-term report has been completed.
- The concept of combatting human trafficking has been broadened to include corruption and money laundering, and agencies that deal with those offences have been integrated into the national coordinating committee to combat and prevent irregular migration and human trafficking.
- Penalties for violations of the Human Organ Transplant Act have been increased, depending upon the nature of the offence.
- Criminal chambers have been set up in courts of appeal to examine human trafficking offences.
- A map has been drafted showing the extension of human trafficking offences across the governorates in the years 2014–2017.
- A guide on protection from human trafficking for Egyptian workers abroad has been prepared and disseminated via embassies, consulates and the Ministry of Labour. In addition, a guide has been drafted to help members of the State Prosecution Service who investigate human trafficking offences and another on evidence gathering in the investigation and prosecution of human trafficking offences and the protection of victims under the law. The guides have been disseminated among law enforcement officials. A booklet has been drawn up to help persons working in the media cover human trafficking-related matters correctly.
- The subject of human trafficking has been introduced into Police Academy curricula; officers studying for diplomas as the Academy's higher studies faculty are conducting research on the subject and the Academy library has been enriched with books, academic journals, research papers and relevant international documents.
- Training has been imparted to staff at Egyptian embassies and consulates abroad to help them identify victims of human trafficking, provide them with consular services, coordinate with the relevant national authorities and refer victims to the competent bodies with a view to their return.
- A social media campaign to raise awareness about the dangers of human trafficking has been run in collaboration with civil society.

- The technical capacity of hotlines run by national human rights associations to receive reports of human trafficking has been increased.
- Work has begun to open a secure shelter for women and child victims of human trafficking, and a referral mechanism is being developed to facilitate communication between the parties involved and law enforcement agencies.

30. The Government has also taken various steps to protect the interests of domestic workers:

- A model contract for domestic workers has been adopted to standardize guidance and regulate relations between worker and employer.
- A system of rules for gauging skill levels and professional capacity has been applied to domestic workers, with certification of their profession included in their national identity card. In addition, they can be covered by social insurance.
- A bill regulating domestic work is being drafted; it covers training for domestic workers, working hours, holidays, wages, insurance, home inspection mechanisms and the submission of complaints, in addition to other provisions that take account of their interests and the specific nature of that form of work.

31. The introductory paragraph of the model employment contract for Egyptian domestic workers includes a list of laws affecting the rights of such workers. This is considered to be an integral part of the contract that complements and supplements its provisions. In particular, mention is made of the Anti-Human Trafficking Act No. 64 of 2010 and of Act No. 82 of 2016 promulgating the Irregular Migration and Migrant Smuggling Act.

Measures to prevent irregular migratory movements and the employment of irregular migrants

32. In line with obligations arising from the Organized Crime Convention and its Trafficking in Persons Protocol, the law criminalizes all forms of migrant smuggling and enshrines the right of voluntary return. Moreover, the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood is designated as the legal representative of unaccompanied children whose own families or representatives cannot be identified, and the Government has an obligation to protect the rights of such children. A fund has been set up to combat irregular migration and protect migrants and witnesses, also taking account of the social aspects of measures to combat irregular migration and migrant smuggling.

33. A national coordinating committee to combat and prevent irregular migration and human trafficking was set up in 2017. Its job is to coordinate policies, plans and programmes and to provide care and services for smuggled migrants. The committee has conducted several field studies to identify governorates that are the source of the irregular migration of young people and unaccompanied children. With the involvement of civil society, it has also carried out community-based awareness-raising activities in target governorates under the name “Egypt is your future”. Since 2018, 57 training courses have been run for 1,120 judges, public prosecutors, administrative inspectors, police officers, social workers, civil society organizations and journalists.

34. As soon as it began operating, the committee launched its national strategy to combat irregular migration by 2026. The aim is to promote cooperation between the Government and non-governmental, regional and international stakeholders with a view to curbing irregular migration, raising public awareness, mobilizing resources and strengthening the legal framework to help combat the phenomenon. The strategy focuses on development as a key factor and seeks to support regular forms of migration. The committee has drawn up a map of the governorates that are the main sources of irregular migration so that they can be more easily targeted by the strategy. The first action plan for the implementation of the strategy has been completed and the second will continue to be applied until 2020. As a result of these efforts, no vessel carrying irregular migrants has left Egyptian shores since September 2016.

Refugees and migrant affairs

35. In line with the provisions of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, articles 62 and 63 of the Constitution guarantee freedom of movement, residence and migration. In addition, article 88 requires the Government to protect the interests of Egyptians who reside abroad, while article 244 states that such persons should be suitably represented in the first elected parliament. This, in fact, is what happened at the 2015 elections when 139 polling stations were set up in Egyptian embassies and consulates in 123 countries, and 8 Egyptians residing abroad were duly elected. Their continuing representation in the House was enshrined in the constitutional amendments of 2019.

36. Under the Constitution, the Ministry of Migration and Egyptians Abroad was created in 2015. Other measures have also been taken, including the following:

- A web portal has been launched via which to communicate with Egyptians abroad; the portal is used to advertise government services, receive complaints and suggestions, and either reply to users or refer them to the competent authority.
- As a service to citizens, a web portal and hotline have been launched to help resolve the difficulties faced by Egyptians abroad, more than 1.6 million citizens have availed themselves of this service.
- There has been cooperation with the National Council for Human Rights to examine the issues and resolve the problems facing Egyptians who reside abroad.
- Ministries and government offices now have special counters for services offered to Egyptians abroad, which have benefited more than 3.5 million persons.
- The work of companies offering to facilitate and support Egyptians wishing to emigrate permanently has been regulated in order to protect the rights of such persons and to avoid them falling victim to fraud.

Section II

Specific information (for each article of the Convention)

A. General principles

Non-discrimination

37. Egypt remains committed to respecting the rights envisaged in articles 1 and 7 of the Convention for all migrant workers and members of their families present on its territory, without discrimination. The State takes all necessary legislative measures to give effect to those rights. International human rights treaties have special status under article 93 of the Constitution, which stipulates: “The State shall be bound by the international human rights agreements, conventions and instruments ratified by Egypt, which are to have force of law once they have been published in accordance with the prescribed norms.”

Right to an effective remedy

38. The Egyptian legal system incorporates a comprehensive human rights-protection framework and guarantees the availability and effectiveness of remedies in the case of a violation of any of the rights protected under the Convention or national law. Institutional structures include mechanisms to promote respect for and protection of human rights, including the courts and other national redress mechanisms, as described in paragraphs 6–12 of the replies of Egypt to the list of issues in relation to its fifth periodic report submitted to the Human Rights Committee ([CCPR/C/EGY/RQ/5](#)).

39. As part of efforts to protect against and penalize discrimination, in June 2019 the State Prosecution Office referred two accused persons to the criminal courts on charges of bullying a child from South Sudan. The two were charged with having insulted the victim and denigrated his honour, thereby practising discrimination on the basis of origin, and with

violating the victim's private life without his consent by posting a video of him being assaulted. The court ruled to sentence the defendants to 2 years' imprisonment and to payment of a fine of 100,000 Egyptian pounds (LE). The incident aroused widespread condemnation across social media and came to the attention of the President of the Republic, who insisted on hosting and honouring the child victim at the Sharm el-Sheikh World Youth Forum to draw attention to the seriousness of acts of discrimination, hatred and bullying, all of which are penalized under Egyptian law.

40. Following this incident, the Government submitted an amendment to the Criminal Code, which has been approved by the House of Representatives. Under the amendment, bullying is defined as a display of power or control by the perpetrator who exploits the weakness or particular situation of the victim, or the victim's sex, religion, race, physical characteristics, state of physical or mental health or social status. Those qualities are then used – according to the definition – with the intent to intimidate, ridicule or belittle the victim or exclude him or her from the social environment. This constitutes bullying, which is punishable by a prison term of not less than 6 months and/or a fine of between LE 10,000 and 30,000.

Implementation of the Convention

41. Reference is made to paragraph 11 of the fifth periodic report of Egypt to the Human Rights Committee ([CCPR/C/EGY/5](#)).

B. Part III of the Convention: Human rights of all migrant workers and members of their families

Persons' right to leave any State, including their State of origin, and to return thereto

42. Article 62 of the Constitution stipulates that: "Freedom of movement, residence and emigration is guaranteed. No citizen may be expelled from State territory or prevented from returning. No citizen may be prevented from leaving State territory, forced to reside there or prevented from residing in a specific location, except by a reasoned court order for a fixed period of time and in the cases specified by law." As concerns the regulation under the law of the right to reside and the right to leave, reference is made to paragraphs 67–70 of the initial report of Egypt to the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families ([CMW/C/EGY/CO/1](#)).

Right to life and prevention of torture and inhuman or degrading treatment

43. Reference is made in this regard to paragraphs 22–25 of the fifth periodic report of Egypt to the Human Rights Committee ([CCPR/C/EGY/5](#)) and to paragraphs 11–17 of the fifth periodic report of Egypt to the Committee against Torture ([CAT/C/EGY/5](#)).

Prohibition of slavery and forced labour

44. Reference is made to paragraphs 85–89 of the initial report of Egypt to the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families ([CMW/C/EGY/1](#)).

Freedom of opinion and expression, freedom of thought, belief and religion, and the right to join trade unions

45. As concerns freedom of opinion and expression, reference is made to paragraphs 110–113 of the fifth periodic report of Egypt to the Human Rights Committee ([CCPR/C/EGY/RQ/5](#)).

46. As concerns freedom of thought, belief and religion, reference is made to paragraphs 105–108 and 146–148 of [CCPR/C/EGY/RQ/5](#). It should also be noted that freedom of religion and belief is also upheld in the National Human Rights Strategy, which sets itself a number of goals to be achieved in the period 2021–2026. These include intensified awareness-raising campaigns targeting young people in particular to promote coexistence, tolerance and acceptance of others; the rejection of hatred and violence; activities intended

to shape societal awareness about religious freedom; the rejection of intolerance and extremist ideas; greater coordination among religious institutions on plans to renew religious discourse; disseminating tolerance and respect for religions; reviewing religious curricula in schools to remove elements that do not contribute to the promotion of tolerance; and monitoring material broadcast via the media that might amount to discrimination or incitement on religious grounds. At the same time, the committee for legalizing the status of churches is continuing its efforts to bring churches and service buildings that have not yet been regulated under the umbrella of the law.

47. As concerns the right to join trade unions, the core provisions of relevant ILO conventions are all enshrined in the 2014 Constitution, article 76 of which stipulates: “The establishment of democratic unions and federations is a right guaranteed by the law. Such entities are to have legal personality, to exercise their activities freely and to contribute to honing the skills of their members, while defending their rights and protecting their interests. The State guarantees the independence of unions and federations, the boards of which may not be dissolved save by a court ruling.”

48. Act No. 213 of 2017 promulgating the Trade Unions Act, as amended, is consistent with international standards for the formation of unions and grants all trade union organizations – whether a trade union committee, a general trade union or a trade union federation – legal personality. Article 10 of the Act sets forth the different levels of trade union activity, which are: trade union committees, general trade unions and trade union federations, and it places no requirement on unions of a lower level to join those of a higher level. The right of workers to form, join or withdraw from trade unions is enshrined in articles 4 and 21 of the Act, and workers who practise more than one profession have the right to join more than one trade union organization.

49. In order to ensure that trade union organizations remain free to manage their own affairs, articles 59 and 64 of the Act stipulate that such organizations are to be financially and administratively independent with no oversight or supervision by labour federations or trade union committees. Article 7 states that the board of a trade union organization cannot be dissolved save by a court ruling, while article 30 affirms that the general assembly is the organization’s supreme authority, which sets policy and supervises all matters in accordance with union statutes.

50. Article 36 of the Act states that members of the board of a trade union organization are to be elected by the general assembly, with no interference or supervision from any other trade union organization, even if affiliated. In recognition of the fact that workers’ right to strike constitutes a trade union freedom, article 14 of the Act recognizes the right of a trade union organization of any level to organize a strike, in accordance with its own statutes and without need for approval from an organization of a higher level.

Prohibition of arbitrary or unlawful interference in a migrant worker’s private life, home, correspondence or communications, and prohibition of arbitrary deprivation of property

51. As concerns the right to privacy, reference is made to paragraphs 47, 101 and 103 of the fifth periodic report of Egypt to the Human Rights Committee ([CCPR/C/EGY/RQ/5](#)). A number of pieces of legislation exist that guarantee and promote the right to privacy, including the Criminal Code, the Telecommunications Act, the Cybercrime Act, the Press and Media Act and the Personal Data Protection Act.

52. As concerns the prohibition of arbitrary deprivation of property, the right to property without discrimination and the right to inheritance are both enshrined in the Constitution. This right cannot be disregarded, save in exceptional circumstances and in the public interest. Moreover, any expropriation of property in the public interest must be fairly compensated in advance, in accordance with the law (art. 35). As further protection on private property and to safeguard against unwarranted attacks thereon, the Constitution places an absolute prohibition on any public appropriation of private assets. Private appropriation of assets is likewise disallowed, save by court ruling and under the law (art. 40). Egyptian legislation has precise structures that regulate the right to private property and the restrictions that can be placed thereon. In that regard, article 805 of the Civil Code states: “No one may be deprived

of property except in the circumstances and the manner prescribed by law, and in return for fair compensation.”

Right to liberty and security of the person, protection against arbitrary arrest and detention, and recognition of migrant workers as persons before the law

53. As concerns the right to liberty and security of the person, reference is made to paragraphs 110–113 of the fifth periodic report of Egypt to the Human Rights Committee ([CCPR/C/EGY/RQ/5](#)). The right to liberty and security of the person is guaranteed for all persons who are under the legal jurisdiction of the State, without discrimination.

Right to a fair trial

54. In this connection, reference is made to paragraphs 87–92 of the fifth periodic report of Egypt to the Human Rights Committee ([CCPR/C/EGY/RQ/5](#)). On the subject of equality before the law, the Constitution in fact emphasizes that all persons are equal and entitled to the same protection before the law. Moreover, rule of law is the basis of governance, and the State undertakes to protect victims, witnesses, defendants and informants, as necessary, in accordance with the law. In addition, the right of recourse to law is guaranteed for all persons (arts. 52, 94, 96 and 97 of the Constitution). The Supreme Constitutional Court has handed down numerous rulings underscoring the fact that all the constitutions of Egypt have incorporated the principle of the equality of all persons before the law. The right of recourse to the courts and of equality before the law has also been upheld in codes of civil, commercial and criminal proceedings and by the Council of State and the Supreme Constitutional Court. Under the law, anyone with a personal and direct interest, even if only a potential interest, has the right to have recourse to the courts and to submit any application or defence.

Prohibition of imprisoning migrant workers, depriving them of residence and/or work permits, or expelling them solely for failing to fulfil an obligation arising from an employment contract

55. Failure to fulfil a contractual obligation does not constitute justifiable grounds for imprisonment under Egyptian law. These matters are regulated by Act No. 131 of 1948 promulgating the Civil Code, as amended, which includes the following provisions:

(a) Article 147 (2) of the Act stipulates that, if exceptional societal events occur that were not foreseeable and as a result of which the performance of a contractual obligation becomes so burdensome to debtors that it threatens serious loss, a judge may intervene to reduce the obligation to a reasonable limit. The parties may not dispute the judge’s decision in this regard as it concerns public order and cannot be called into question.

(b) Article 157 (2) of the Act allows a judge to grant debtors a reprieve, if the circumstances so require. The judge can likewise refuse to annul a contract if the debtors’ failure to fulfil that contract is of scant importance in relation to their obligation as a whole.

(c) Articles 249 to 264 of the Act envisions a system whereby debtors can declare insolvency if their assets are insufficient to fulfil outstanding civil debts. Declaration of insolvency entails a court ruling, and insolvent debtors are liable to be penalized for breach of trust if they deliberately become insolvent to harm creditors, if they conceal certain assets or if they fabricate fictitious debts with the intention of harming creditors.

56. As concerns protecting personal documents against destruction or confiscation, Egyptian law penalizes the destruction of such documents which, moreover, cannot be withdrawn or confiscated save in cases stipulated by law where their validity has been called into question. This is done by the competent investigative authorities who are required to record the legal steps they take in the record of the investigation in order to protect the rights of the document holder. For its part, the Passport Department of the Ministry of the Interior issues smart cards with which to access high-technology systems for the issuance of residency permits to foreigners. In addition, the Government, in cooperation with IOM, maintains close ties with foreign embassies and consulates to ensure that foreign migrants are able to obtain valid personal documents, travel documents and new passports.

57. Egypt is working to promote consular protection and cooperation, and to facilitate unhindered access for migrants in Egypt to their embassies in the country. The Ministry of the Interior also provides facilities for diplomatic missions to visit reform and rehabilitation facilities. In fact, between January 2019 and June 2023, representatives of foreign diplomatic missions accredited in Egypt made 1,238 consular visits of inspection to inmates from their respective countries in order to verify what services they were receiving.

Equal treatment with regard to wages and other conditions of work and employment, social security and the right to urgent medical care

58. As concerns equal treatment with regard to pay and other conditions of work and employment, both Act No. 81 of 2016 promulgating the Civil Service Act and the Labour Code (Act No. 12 of 2003) include provisions guaranteeing hours of work and rest, paid leave, occupational health and safety rules and workplace protection for women, children and persons with disabilities. These provisions are applicable to all workers irrespective of their nationality. Under Egyptian law, moreover, the Ministry of Labour conducts inspections to all places of work to ensure that workers enjoy their rights and that the benefits envisaged in national legislation are duly reflected in their contracts. The national coordinating committee to combat and prevent irregular migration and human trafficking organizes training to familiarize labour inspectors of the Ministry of Labour with international labour standards and the protection of workers, especially women and migrants.

59. As concerns social insurance for migrant workers, Act No. 148 of 2019 promulgating the Social Insurance and Pensions Act opens the way for foreign workers to participate in the insurance and pension system. In this context, Egypt has concluded a number of bilateral agreements regarding the transfer of social security benefits to Egyptians working abroad.

60. As concerns urgent medical care, failure to provide treatment of any kind to persons with health emergencies or life-threatening conditions is illegal under the Constitution. Prime Ministerial Decree No. 1063 of 2014 envisages free treatment in emergency cases and accidents, for the first 48 hours in all hospitals. The Government also undertakes to provide primary health care to all foreign residents, and migrants have been included in health-care initiatives.

Right of children of migrant workers to a name, birth registration, nationality and equal treatment in education, and respect for the cultural identity of migrant workers and members of their families

61. Article 80 of the Constitution states that every child has the right to a name and to identification documents, while articles 4, 5 and 20 of the Children's Code stipulate that all children have the right to a name that distinguishes them, that is to be recorded at birth in the register of births and that may not be derogatory or insulting to the dignity of the child or contrary to religious beliefs. The Code also identifies the persons responsible for reporting a birth, the information to be reported, including in cases of the discovery of a newborn child, the criteria for obtaining a copy of the record and penalties for violations (art. 24). Articles 4, 6, 19, 20–27 and 29 of the Civil Status Code (Act No. 143 of 1994) deal with the registration of births inside the country, be it of Egyptians, foreigners or foundlings. The same provisions also set forth the penalty to which persons may be liable for failing to register a birth. An initial birth certificate is issued free of charge through the offices of the Ministry of Health and Population. Children of Arabic-speaking migrant workers also enjoy free education up to pre-university level. In the academic year 2020/21, there were 76,789 migrant and refugee students enrolled in Egyptian schools, of whom 42,805 in State-run schools.

Right of migrant workers to send their income, savings and personal property to their State of origin, and the right to be informed of their rights as envisaged under the Convention

62. Foreign currency dealing is regulated under articles 207–215 of Act No. 194 of 2020 promulgating the Central Bank and Banking System Act. Article 209 of the Act authorizes companies to provide money transfer services, while article 212 grants “all natural or legal persons the right to keep any foreign currency they hold, own or possesses, and to engage in currency dealing or perform any foreign exchange operations, including transfers in and out”.

Under article 215 of the Act, banks can “undertake all foreign exchange operations, including accepting deposits, currency dealing and transfers in and out”.

C. Part IV of the Convention: Other rights of migrant workers and members of their families who are documented or in a regular situation

Right of migrant workers, prior to departure from their State of origin, to be informed by the State of destination about the conditions applicable to their entry and about the remunerable activities in which they may engage

63. The Government makes migrant workers aware of all relevant conditions and procedures, either before they leave their country of origin or when they enter and settle in Egypt. They are also informed of residency conditions, the activities in which they may engage and the requirements they must fulfil before engaging in work in Egypt. In addition, they are told which authority they must contact in order to make any changes to those conditions and made aware of their rights and their status when they are selected for employment.

64. The employment of foreigners is regulated under the Labour Code, which specifies the conditions and procedures for obtaining or renewing work permits and the information required to that end. The Minister of Labour is responsible for determining which professions, jobs and trades foreigners are prohibited from undertaking. In that connection, the Minister issued Decree No. 146 of 2019 which, by stating that the list of such professions, jobs and trades is not to be extended, ensures that foreigners can continue to contribute to economic life and be integrated into society. Thanks to the publication of the conditions and procedures regulating the issuance of work permits, as set forth in the aforementioned Decree, migrant workers are informed of all the rights and duties arising from their employment. The Decree, moreover, excludes eight categories from the requirement to obtain a permit. In ruling on labour disputes regarding public sector workers, the Court of Cassation has established the principle of equality between foreign “migrant workers” and Egyptians vis-à-vis the allocation of temporary or occasional work, under the same conditions. Relevant rulings include appeal No. 7908, judicial year 85, dated 3 January 2016, and appeal No. 9132, judicial year 81, dated 4 November 2018.

Workers’ right to be temporarily absent without affecting their residency or work permits, right to freedom of movement and choice of residence in the State of employment

65. Egyptian legislation guarantees equal vacation rights for “foreign” and Egyptian workers, without discrimination. The law, moreover, guarantees that foreign workers do not suffer any effects on their residency or employment status as a consequence of taking temporary leave of absence due to family circumstances or obligations, or for any other reason, in accordance with the regulations and conditions set forth in labour legislation. Such leave of absence, then, has no effect on their permission to reside or work in the country, and they enjoy the same privileges and the same legally established official and unofficial holidays as Egyptian workers. Foreign workers and members of their families have the right to move freely within Egypt, and they are free to choose their place of residence without any restrictions save for those mentioned in article 39 (2) of the Convention regarding restrictions provided by law which are necessary to protect national security, public order, public health or morals, or the rights and freedoms of others.

Right of foreign communities to form associations and trade unions, their right to participate in public affairs in their countries of origin, to vote and to stand for election; institutions to meet the needs of migrant workers and the possibility of enjoying political rights in the country of employment

66. Act No. 149 of 2019 regulating the activity of civil society associations allows non-Egyptians who have permanent or temporary legal residence in Egypt to become members of such associations and of their administrative boards, on condition that they do not constitute more than 25 per cent of all members (art. 5). Moreover, any foreign

community in Egypt may establish an association to safeguard the interests of its members, subject to the condition of reciprocity.

67. According to article 4 of Act No. 213 of 2017 promulgating the Trade Unions Act, as amended, all workers have the right to form, join or withdraw from trade union organizations, without discrimination. Egypt allows all residents on its territory to participate in public affairs in their countries of origin, and Egyptians abroad participate in elections and referendums and have the right to stand for office and to vote, as per article 88 of the Egyptian Constitution.

Principle of equal treatment with nationals of the country of destination on specific matters: equal treatment with respect to protection against dismissal

68. The Unified Labour Code regulates compensation for arbitrary dismissal, which it sets at two months' full wages for each year of service. These rules apply to all workers under Egyptian jurisdiction.

Protecting the families and the family unity of migrant workers, consequences in cases of death or dissolution of marriage

69. To uphold the principle of family unity, spouses and children are granted residency for the same period of time as workers. Female migrant workers enjoy all the privileges accorded to female workers under Egyptian law, and they receive basic maternal health care including vaccinations and health check-ups. The State takes measures to protect the unity of migrant workers' families and, in the event of the death of a migrant worker or the breakup of a marriage, it gives due consideration to those factors when granting members of the worker's family leave to remain, in order to keep the family united and enable them to settle their affairs.

Equal treatment of migrant workers' family members; measures taken to ensure the integration of the children of such workers into the local school system; the right of migrant workers' family members to freely choose a remunerated activity

70. Decree No. 284 of 2014 of the Minister of Education concerns the enrolment of non-Egyptian "migrant" students in Egyptian schools. Article 6 of the Decree stipulates that all non-Egyptian migrant students are to be admitted to the different stages of education under the same conditions as, and on an equal footing with, Egyptian students in terms of age and cohort. Article 38, as amended, of Decree No. 218 of 2018 of the Minister of Education exempts Egyptian students who do not live in Egypt and are dual nationals holding a non-Arabic nationality from studying subjects taught in Arabic upon their return, and treats such persons on an equal footing with migrants. This demonstrates how the State grants all children of Egyptian migrant workers the opportunity to enrol in education on a basis of equality with other Egyptian students. In addition to this, the Egyptian authorities allow refugees holding Arab nationalities to obtain residency. A total of 87,696 migrant and refugee students of all nationalities are registered with the Ministry of Education as being enrolled in State-run or private schools, while Syrian, Yemeni and Palestinian students are exempt from tuition fees.

Exemption from import and export duties and taxes for certain property; the right to transfer income and savings from the State of destination to the State of origin or any other State; imposition of taxes and avoidance of double taxation

71. Egypt has concluded customs agreements with many countries around the world with the aim of facilitating customs requirements for Egyptian workers abroad and for foreign workers in Egypt. The agreements envisage exemptions intended to facilitate travel and return, strengthen ties with countries of origin and consolidate family contacts.

Residency permit, permission to engage in a remunerated activity, general prohibitions and conditions concerning expulsion

72. The employment of foreigners is regulated under the Labour Code (Act No. 12 of 2003). In fact, foreigners can work once they have obtained a work permit from the Ministry

of Labour or its affiliated directorates. Such persons must be authorized to enter and reside in the country. Egypt issues separate work permits and residence permits, and the residence permit must be linked to the work permit.

73. As concerns the deportation of foreigners, Act No. 89 of 1960 concerning the entry, residence and departure of foreigners regulates conditions and procedures for residency. Under the Act, foreigners who hold special residency cannot be deported unless their presence constitutes a threat to the internal or external security and safety of the State, the national economy, public health, public morals or public tranquillity. Deportation decisions are taken only after each case is considered on its own merits and in the light of the substantive and legal reasons for deportation. The person concerned is summoned, questioned and asked to provide the necessary clarifications in the presence of a lawyer, an embassy representative and an interpreter. Deportation orders are issued by the Minister of the Interior having first been approved by a committee made up of representatives from the competent bodies, including a judge (vice-president of the Council of State), which ensures that all legal safeguards have been duly represented in the case of the foreigner concerned. In all cases, deportation orders may be challenged, or an appeal against them may be lodged before the Council of State. A stay of enforcement may also be requested as a matter of urgency. The Minister of the Interior issued Decree No. 1888 of 2023 concerning the implementation of certain provisions of Act No. 89 of 1960. Under the Decree, foreigners holding special residency are granted residency cards valid for 10 years while foreigners holding ordinary residency are granted residency cards valid for 5 years. Foreigners who do not have, and are unable to obtain, a passport or travel document can nonetheless be granted a residency card.

D. Part V of the Convention: Provisions applicable to particular categories of migrant workers and members of their families. The State party should indicate the provisions or measures it has adopted in this respect

74. Egypt has concluded a number of bilateral agreements with other countries, such as the agreement between Egypt and Greece of 2022 which, during its first trial year, envisages 5,000 job opportunities for seasonal workers in the agricultural sector in Greece. These bilateral agreements help protect the rights of specific categories of migrant workers.

75. The Government of Egypt has also signed agreements with the Government of Germany regarding the growth of vocational education; the creation of an Egyptian-German job, migration and reintegration centre as a way of opening regular migration channels for young Egyptians; and the provision of modern technological equipment to national border control agencies. In 2021, a declaration of principles regarding support in the field of migration was signed by Egypt and the Netherlands, and there is ongoing cooperation in the realm of vocational training with the Government of Italy with a view to building skills among the groups most prone to migration.

E. Part VI of the Convention: Promotion of sound, equitable, humane and lawful conditions in connection with the international migration of workers and members of their families

76. Since the adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration ([A/RES/73/195](#)) in 2018, the Egyptian Government has intensified its efforts to regulate migration and address the challenges that accompany it. In doing so, it places migrants and their human rights at the core of its efforts, in order to strengthen protection for migrants' human rights and to enhance their contribution to sustainable development. The Government has adopted a sustainable development strategy entitled Egypt Vision 2030, which envisages the provision of services to specific groups within society, including migrants and refugees. Egypt believes that, notwithstanding the challenges they face in certain host societies, migrants also drive development in those societies, where their experience and skills help to build the economies of host countries. At the same time, they also contribute to the development of their countries of origin, thanks to their remittances and their expertise.

77. Egypt is determined always to honour its international obligations regarding migrants, and it adopts a comprehensive approach that takes account both of development and of the need to uphold regular migration, at the same time working to address the underlying causes that lead to illegal migration. Egypt Vision 2030 is rooted in the importance of achieving domestic development so that migration becomes a choice rather than a necessity. To this end, efforts are made to provide young persons with qualifications and to build their skills in line with the needs of internal and foreign markets, and migrants are not prohibited from engaging in non-exploitative work. The State has a strategic vision of migration that is consistent with the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and that seeks to strike a balance between the fact that Egypt is, at one and the same time, a country of origin, destination and transit. In fact, Egypt hosts more than 9 million foreigners (regular and irregular migrants and refugees) who left their own countries for a variety of reasons and found safe haven in Egypt, where they live side by side with the local population, enjoying basic services and freedom of movement.

78. Addressing the issue of migration requires global cooperation, participation, solidarity and the principle of burden and responsibility sharing among all parties. Partnership between countries of origin, transit and destination, and regional and multilateral organizations, is also vital in order to ensure clear and just rules on asylum and migration. This will help to reduce forced displacement, promote integration and tolerance, and spread a culture of peace, understanding and acceptance of others.

79. The Ministry for Migration and Egyptian Expatriates is in the process of developing a national migration governance policy and a strategy for engagement with Egyptians abroad. The final document will constitute the first ever national migration governance policy in Egypt and will ensure a coordinated and whole-of-government approach to the regulation of migration and to the involvement of expatriates in development.

Measures to prevent and eliminate illegal or clandestine movements and employment of migrant workers in an irregular situation

80. A national coordinating committee has been established as part of efforts by the State to prevent, eliminate and combat all illegal or clandestine movements and employment. This is achieved by criminalizing such practices in all their forms, whether undertaken by persons, groups or entities that organize or manage illegal movements, or assist or mediate therein. All forms of violence, threats and intimidation against irregular migrant workers or members of their families are likewise criminalized.

Repatriation of the bodies of deceased migrant workers or members of their families to their State of origin, and issues related to compensation for the death of migrant workers

81. National legislation envisages procedures for the return of the bodies of migrant workers or of members of their family who die in Egypt to their countries of origin, just as it facilitates the return of the bodies and remains of Egyptian workers who die abroad. Act No. 5 of 1966 regulating cemeteries and its implementing regulations No. 418 of 1970 govern the measures for transferring bodies and human remains abroad. Article 4 of the Act makes reference to the procedures and precautions set forth in the International Convention on the Transport of Corpses, which was signed in Berlin on 10 February 1937 and which, pursuant to article 93 of the Constitution, is considered to constitute part of national law. Under that Convention, the Government is required to follow internationally agreed protocols for the transfer of corpses and human remains. Moreover, the Government provides the families and relatives of migrant workers who die in Egypt with assistance to settle all issues related to wages or residual wages and to financial or other entitlements.

82. By decree of the Prime Minister, the State may bear all or part of the costs of handling the bodies of indigent Egyptian citizens who die abroad and of transporting them back to their homeland. The decree, based on a case-by-case social assessment, is applicable irrespective of the reasons for their journey.

Section III

Reply to the Committee's concluding observations on the initial report

83. This section will focus on the replies of the Government of Egypt to the concluding observations of the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, issued on 25 May 2007.

Paragraph 8 of the concluding observations on the state of emergency and the adoption of anti-terrorism legislation

84. The period covered by the report, since the concluding observations were issued, has seen a number of changes to the legal framework, also in the light of the presidential decree of 25 October 2021 that lifted the state of emergency throughout the country. In this matter, the Government refers to paragraphs 13–20 of the fifth periodic report of Egypt to the Human Rights Committee ([CCPR/C/EGY/5](#)).

Paragraph 9 of the concluding observations on the Civic Associations Act No. 84 of 2002

85. A new law governing civil society work has been issued. The law, together with its implementing regulations, envisages the freedom to establish civil society associations and institutions; it also seeks to encourage the work of such bodies and to enhance their financial resources while granting a greater number of exemptions and advantages to support civil society activity. It also encourages the work of foreign organizations as well as foreign membership of civil society associations, and seeks to increase the scope for voluntary work.

86. More than 34,000 national and foreign non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have applied to regularize their status. These organizations are of various kinds, with civil society groups accounting for the largest portion (30,234) followed by civil society institutions (3,676). The number of area-specific federations has increased to 147, the number of foreign NGOs to 93 and the number of regional federations to 56, while unregistered bodies number 238.

87. Foreign funding has been steadily and gradually increasing. Financing from non-Egyptian donors and funding bodies reached LE 2.5 billion in 2021 as compared to LE 2.2 billion in 2020 and LE 1.1 billion in 2019. Grants and donations from local sources also increased to nearly LE 5 billion; i.e., double the foreign funding. NGOs were also widely consulted on the drafting of the National Human Rights Strategy, which seeks to enhance communication between the Government and civil society organizations working in the field of human rights.

Paragraphs 10–15 of the concluding observations on general measures of implementation in relation to reservations, declarations and accession to specific treaties

88. In the light of its national priorities, the Egyptian Government regularly examines and reviews its position vis-à-vis the human rights treaties. It also reconsiders the international instruments to which it has not yet acceded or to which it has entered reservations. It does so with a view to ensuring that the ongoing development of national human rights legislation is consistent with the country's international obligations at various levels.

Paragraphs 16 and 17 of the concluding observations on the collection of data and statistics, and the establishment of a database

89. In 2017, the Egyptian Government set up a migration data analysis unit as part of the State Authority for Public Mobilization and Statistics. The unit monitors developments in the phenomenon of migration as well as its economic, social, political and demographic impact on society and on the migrants themselves, and its effect on countries of origin and destination. In this context, the Ministry of Planning, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Labour, the State Authority for Public Mobilization and Statistics and IOM coordinate with one another in the context of a project entitled: “Development of planning capacity for trans-Mediterranean migration”. As part of the project, the State Authority for Public Mobilization and Statistics published the handbook: “Migration in Egypt” and, in March 2018 in cooperation with IOM, it issued a report on the labour market in Egypt entitled “Demographic trends and forecasting labour market needs (2015–2030).”

90. As part of a programme intended to improve migration management through institutional support, the national coordinating committee to combat and prevent irregular migration and human trafficking is running capacity-building courses for staff at the migration data analysis unit. In coordination with the State Authority for Public Mobilization and Statistics, the committee is also conducting a new study on irregular migration in Egypt, in order to update the map of the governorates of origin of irregular migrants.

91. A presidential decree was issued in 2018 for the creation of a national database of Egyptian expatriates. The decree reflects the importance attributed to obtaining accurate and disaggregated data in order to support human mobility and labour market demands, using a rights-based approach and an understanding of the drivers of irregular migration. The State also attributes great significance to regional and international cooperation and coordination between the producers and users of migration-related data. In this context, the second International Forum on Migration Statistics was held in Cairo from 19–21 January 2020. The Forum serves as a regular platform for discussions and exchanges between producers and users of migration data.

Paragraphs 18 and 19 of the concluding observations on training and dissemination of information on the Convention

92. The national coordinating committee to combat and prevent irregular migration and human trafficking launched its national strategy to combat trafficking in persons (2016–2026). Since 2018, and as part of the implementation of the strategy, 57 training courses have been run for 1,120 judges, public prosecutors, administrative inspectors, police officers, social workers, members of civil society organizations and journalists.

93. Between 11 October 2019 and 5 June 2023, the State Prosecution Office organized 29 training courses, attended by 577 prosecutors, on human trafficking and migrant smuggling. At the regional level, from 19–21 June 2023, the State Prosecution Office, in cooperation with the IOM office in Egypt, organized a regional forum for members of public prosecution associations in African and Arab States. The forum concerned the role of digital evidence in combating transnational crime committed by organized criminal gangs that specialize in human trafficking and migrant smuggling.

94. In addition to this, doctors from eight governorates attended a workshop on strengthening the capacity of health-care providers to treat victims of human trafficking. A second workshop focused on the role of civil society organizations in combating human trafficking and irregular migration.

95. The Ministry of Justice organized a workshop entitled: “Facilitating access to justice for victims in the context of the National Human Rights Strategy”. The event was attended by 30 presidents of courts of first instance as well as by technical staff of the Judicial Inspection Department. The Ministry also organized a number of training courses for specialists working in governorate-level authorities on aspects of juvenile criminal justice, women’s rights and combating violence against women, the rights of children with

disabilities in the realm of criminal justice, combating migrant smuggling and human trafficking, tackling corruption and addressing environmental issues and climate change.

96. In 2022, the national coordinating committee to combat and prevent irregular migration and human trafficking ran 70 training courses for 1,940 representatives of various ministries and other official bodies.

97. Between August 2020 and July 2023, the Ministry of the Interior held seven training courses for ministerial officials, in coordination with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The courses focused on crime scene management and the conservation of evidence in cases of migrant smuggling and human trafficking, techniques for interviewing victims and members of criminal gangs and the detection and examination of forged documents.

Paragraphs 20 and 21 of the concluding observations on non-discrimination

98. Article 53 of the 2014 Constitution makes it plain that all citizens are equal before the law and have the same public rights and duties. There can be no discrimination between citizens on the basis of religion, belief, sex, origin, race, colour, language, disability, social class or political or geographical affiliation, or for any other reason. The same article stipulates that discrimination and incitement to hatred are crimes punishable by law and that the State is to take the necessary measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination.

99. There are numerous provisions in the Constitution and in legislation that uphold the principle of equality before the law. The Constitution itself emphasizes the equal right of all persons to enjoy the protection of the law. The Supreme Constitutional Court has handed down several rulings underscoring the fact that all the constitutions of Egypt have incorporated the principle of the equality of all persons before the law. The principle of equality and non-discrimination has also been upheld in laws regulating labour, civil service, social insurance and comprehensive health insurance as well as in the Criminal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure.

100. Article 309 bis (b) of the Criminal Code criminalizes bullying, also on grounds of religion. This, in other words, is any use of words or show of force or authority on the part of an aggressor, or the exploitation of a weakness in a victim or of a condition the aggressor considers to be detrimental to the victim, on grounds of religion, that aims to intimidate, ridicule or belittle the victim or to exclude the victim from his or her social environment. This is a criminal offence that attracts a term of imprisonment of not less than 6 months and/or a fine. The penalty becomes imprisonment for not less than 1 year and/or a fine of not less than LE 20,000 if the crime is perpetrated by two or more persons, if the perpetrator is an antecedent of the victim or is responsible for the victim's upbringing or supervision, if the perpetrator has authority over the victim, if the perpetrator has been granted custody of the victim by law or by a court ruling or if the victim is a servant of the perpetrator. If two of these circumstances are combined, the minimum penalty is to be redoubled while, in the case of repeat offences, minimum and maximum penalties are to be redoubled.

101. Under article 161 bis of the Criminal Code, anyone who commits a discriminatory act or omission against individuals or groups on grounds of their religion or belief, the which act results in a violation of the principle of equal opportunity or social justice or a breach of the peace, is liable to a term of imprisonment and/or a fine. If such an offence is committed by a public official, public servant or any person entrusted with public service, the penalty is to be a term of imprisonment of not less than 3 months and/or a fine.

102. Article 176 of the Criminal Code envisages a term of imprisonment for anyone who incites discrimination against a group of people on the basis of their religion or belief, if such incitement is liable to disturb the peace.

103. The State promotes the concept of equality and non-discrimination by combating prejudice and social stigmatization against migrants and members of their families. As a bulwark against incitement to hatred and exclusion, it also seeks to raise awareness about aspects of our shared humanity. The State also acts to improve knowledge and build capacity

regarding the status and rights of migrants, while avoiding harmful stereotypes, and it takes effective measures to ensure that migrants are able to practise their religion and express their opinions freely, participate in community activities, and access education, health care, jobs, social security and community organizations.

104. The State is making every effort to disseminate a culture of human rights and acceptance of others within society. For example, beginning in the academic year 2018/19, the subject of human rights and anti-corruption is being taught in all colleges and institutes of higher education. It is a compulsory subject that students need to pass before they can graduate. In addition to this, human rights concepts and principles are being integrated into school curricula at the basic level. Moreover, standards and indicators for certain subjects and activities have been amended to include behavioural norms and guidelines for students to follow, helping them to express opinions without offending others while also building their character to consolidate principles of tolerance and acceptance of others.

105. The following points should be taken into account when considering the situation of migrant workers in Egypt:

- Foreigners have the right to enter the labour market in Egypt, under the restrictions set forth in the law, specifically those stipulated in articles 27–30 of the Labour Code (Act No. 12 of 2003), as amended. In 2019, the Minister of Labour issued a decree outlining the conditions and procedures for authorizing foreigners to work in Egypt.
- Data from 2020 indicates that 29,137 foreigners were issued with first-time work permits, 33,242 work permits were renewed and 18,332 foreigners who were working in the country in violation of the law and ministerial decrees were able to regularize their situation. In 2021, according to that year's annual bulletin of foreigners working in the private and investment sector in Egypt (published by the State Authority for Public Mobilization and Statistics), an estimated 11,718 foreigners of different nationalities held a permit to work in that sector. This figure represents a 2.8 per cent increase with respect to 2020, when their numbers stood at 11,404. The reason for this increase is to be found in the diminishing effects of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. In fact, 4,837 foreigners (41.3 per cent) obtained a first-time work permit in Egypt in 2021, while 6,881 foreigners (58.7 per cent) had their contracts renewed. In 2022, the Ministry of the Workforce announced the trial roll-out of a work permit bureau for foreigners in the town of Dabaa in the Matruh labour directorate. The bureau is part of a multifunction office that includes labour inspection services, occupational health and safety inspection, certificate registration, skills assessments and labour market studies, in addition to a labour relations service that helps workers resolve their problems within the workplace environment.
- The State provides health services to migrants, on an equal footing with Egyptians and without discrimination. According to the implementing regulations of Comprehensive Health Insurance Act No. 2 of 2018, service may be provided to foreigners residing or entering the Arab Republic of Egypt in accordance with the conditions set by the General Authority for Comprehensive Health Insurance, subject to the condition of reciprocity.
- Services available to women of reproductive age include premarital tests, monitoring during pregnancy, child delivery services and family planning. Since June 2018, the Ministry of Health, with support from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), has been running mobile clinics offering reproductive health and family planning services for Syrian migrants. Twenty-two such mobile units have been operating in five governorates, benefiting 2,792 Syrian migrants. Services for children under 5 include mandatory routine vaccinations, thyroid function testing and integrated paediatric care through referrals to hospitals run by the Ministry of Health. Other services are offered to adolescent refugees such as awareness-raising on health issues and a package of basic services delivered via youth-friendly clinics in primary care units. In addition to this, migrant students with disabilities are helped to achieve their full physical and health potential, thanks to the provision of habilitation services and assistive devices. Mental health services have been integrated into 40 primary health-care units in areas with high concentrations of refugee, and capacity-building

has been offered to medical staff working at those units to help them meet the refugees' particular needs. Moreover, the range of numerous health-care campaigns has been expanded to include refugees and asylum-seekers. These include the "100 million healths" initiative which aims to discover and treat the hepatitis C virus, as well as a national anti-polio campaign and campaigns against obesity, anaemia and dwarfism among primary school students.

- The Egyptian Ministry of Health and Population launched a regional action plan 2020–2021 to support refugees and migrants, which aims to promote the health of that group of persons and to prevent communicable and non-communicable diseases and epidemics. The plan also aims to provide refugees and migrants with high-quality health care, in line with international quality standards, and to reduce morbidity and premature deaths via a system whereby refugees are referred for treatment to hospitals run by the Ministry of Health. Efforts are also being made to develop the hospitals earmarked for such referrals, in governorates with the highest concentration of refugees. In addition, refugees who work in the area of food preparation are being given training on how to handle foodstuffs and conduct tests to ensure the absence of foodborne germs. Refugees who take the training are issued with a health and hygiene certificate.

106. Between 2015 and mid-2019, more than 300,000 foreign migrants, mostly women and children, received a range of primary health-care services at primary care units run by the Ministry of Health and Population. At the same time, using State-run hospitals, the Ministry cooperated with UNHCR and the World Health Organization (WHO) to provide advanced treatment to that category of persons. The Ministry has also signed protocols of cooperation for the supply of modern equipment for the early diagnosis of breast tumours as well as for incubators, dialysis machines, intensive care beds and ventilators.

107. From the very beginning of COVID-19 and as part of its efforts to handle the pandemic, the Government worked to provide protection and support to migrants and foreigners on national territory, giving them access to all health and medical services on an equal footing with citizens. In addition, foreigners residing in Egypt enjoyed freedom of movement that was unrestricted save for precautionary measures taken to contain the pandemic, which were, in any case, applicable to all persons. The Government also temporarily suspended the deportation or forcible return of irregular migrants, due to the health risks associated with movement during the situation as it was then. Furthermore, the authorities cooperated with international migrant and refugee organizations that operate in Egypt so that, with the support of the Government, those organizations were able to provide support and limit the spread of the virus among migrants, refugees and Egyptian host communities. In cooperation with the United Nations Office in Egypt, a "joint platform for migrants and refugees" was launched in November 2021 with a view to improving the quality and delivery of educational and health-care services for migrants and refugees, and contributing to their sustainable development.

108. As concerns education, and the request that all children of migrant workers, whether documented or undocumented, be granted access to schools on a basis of equality with Egyptian children, reference is made to the reply to paragraphs 36 and 37 of the concluding observations, below.

Paragraphs 22 and 23 of the concluding observations on effective remedies

109. On this matter, reference is made to paragraphs 5–14 of the fifth periodic report of Egypt to the Human Rights Committee ([CCPR/C/EGY/RQ/5](#)). To this can be added the fact that article 6 of the Labour Code (Act No. 12 of 2003) includes a provision exempting workers from court fees at every stage of judicial proceedings when they bring cases relating to disputes under the Labour Code. The Constitution enjoins that persons who are financially indigent are nonetheless to be given means to access the justice system and defend their rights. Exemptions for persons unable to pay court fees are regulated under Act No. 90 of 1944 on judicial and notarial fees in civil cases. Applications for exemption are to be submitted, as

required, to a committee composed of judges, while the Act regulating the legal profession also regulates the offices that provide legal assistance to persons who cannot afford it for themselves. Such legal assistance covers filing cases, attending court, participating in investigations conducted by prosecutors, giving legal advice and drafting contracts.

Paragraphs 26 and 27 of the concluding observations on the issuance of passport to women without the permission of any third party

110. The Government wishes to draw attention to a ruling handed down by the Supreme Constitutional Court in case No. 243, judicial year 21, sitting on 4 November 2000, according to which women in Egypt are entitled to equal rights under laws relating to the movement of persons. This comes following the abolition of certain provisions that had once been in force and that made the travel of a married woman conditional upon the consent of her husband.

Paragraphs 28 and 29 of the concluding observations on the provision of training and the conduct of investigations into all complaints of torture or ill-treatment

111. Reference is made to paragraphs 50–54 of the reply to the list of issues concerning the fifth periodic report of Egypt to the Committee against Torture. As concerns investigation and accountability, reference is made to paragraph 24 ([CAT/C/EGY/RQ/5](#)).

Paragraphs 34 and 35 of the concluding observations on the registration of children born in Egypt to migrant workers

112. Reference is made to paragraph 57 of the present report concerning the right of the children of migrant workers to be given a name and to have their birth registered.

Paragraphs 36 and 37 of the concluding observations on the enrolment in school of the children of migrant workers

113. Reference is made to paragraph 66 of the present report.

Paragraphs 38 and 39 of the concluding observations on the inapplicability of the Labour Code to domestic workers

114. The Government has also taken various steps to protect the interests of domestic workers and to ensure that no person is subjected to forced or compulsory labour:

- A model contract for domestic workers has been adopted to standardize guidance and regulate relations between worker and employer.
- A system of rules for gauging skill levels and professional capacity has been applied to domestic workers, with certification of their profession included in their national identity card. In addition, they can be covered by social insurance.
- A guarantee that they can set up a trade union to defend their rights and protect their interests, as per article 2 of Trade Unions Act No. 213 of 2017.

115. The Government is in the process of drafting a bill to regulate domestic work. It covers training for domestic workers, working hours, holidays, wages, insurance, home inspection mechanisms and the submission of complaints, in addition to other provisions that take account of their interests and the specific nature of that form of work. The bill also includes provision for the creation of a department for domestic workers in the Ministry of Labour; exemption for domestic workers from judicial fees if a dispute comes before the courts; licensing for domestic worker placement bureaux; a prohibition on the employment of anyone under the age of 18, except by ministerial decree; a prohibition on paying domestic

workers less than the minimum wage; and fines for persons who infringe any of the provisions of the law. Parliament is in the process of discussing amendments to the Labour Code which will cover all pending cases while, for its part, the Ministry of Social Solidarity has established a domestic helpers' service association to protect female domestic workers.

116. The National Council for Women has adopted an initiative that seeks to achieve "decent work for domestic workers, especially women", to which end it has formed a national working group to discuss issues affecting domestic workers in Egypt. The initiative includes awareness-raising campaigns aimed at improving the conduct of employers and changing a number of misconceptions such as, for example, the belief that a servant can be forced to work from morning to evening every day. Moreover, the domestic workers themselves are taught about reporting mechanisms and the competent authorities so that penalties and fines can be imposed on abusive employers. Penalties are then made public in order to convey the message that certain forms of behaviour are unacceptable.

Paragraphs 40 and 41 of the concluding observations on efforts to raise awareness of the rights arising out of the Convention among migrant workers and those seeking to migrate abroad to work

117. The Ministry of Labour and Migration has set up a pre-departure centre to train and qualify migrants and those seeking to migrate abroad, to help them acquire the knowledge they need of the language, customs, traditions and culture of the society of destination and thus facilitate their integration. The Ministry has also opened six migration counselling offices across a number of governorates to raise awareness about the risks of illegal migration and thus reduce that phenomenon. The number of such offices is currently being increased. The Ministry also provides support for Egyptians working abroad via a network of labour offices and it has created an online system linking those offices with the Ministry of Labour as well as with labour ministries in other Arab States. The system contains data about persons wishing to migrate abroad for work, their qualifications and experience, thereby enabling employers in countries of destination to pick the person they wish, while also enabling the Ministry to oversee labour contracts online.

118. The General Directorate for Foreign Labour at the Ministry of Labour works via the Ministry's labour offices to protect domestic workers from all forms of exploitation. Moreover, labour offices abroad carefully review all work contracts and visas, and they seek to block certain categories of domestic work abroad, such as "domestic servants" or "beauty salon employees" or other jobs that may place workers at risk of exploitation. Via the labour offices, the Directorate seeks to ensure that migrant workers receive the highest possible degree of social and health protection by striving to ensure decent working conditions and making Egyptian workers abroad aware of their rights, while also seeking to verify job offers made to workers through mechanisms such as online channels, etc.

119. In order to protect the rights of prospective migrants and to prevent them falling victim to bogus employment agencies, the Government regulates the work of companies and bureaux that provide services for persons seeking to migrate permanently. To that end, the Ministry of Labour prepares and publishes updated lists of licensed Egyptian labour placement firms, including the address of their headquarters and their contact information. The current list includes 850 companies. The Ministry also lists the firms with which all interaction is prohibited, which currently number 345, as well as the Egyptian labour placement firms that still need to regularize their status. The total number of regular firms stands at 1,503 while the number of firms with which interaction is prohibited stands at 426.

120. In 2016, the Ministry for Migration and Egyptian Expatriates launched a website describing the services available to Egyptians abroad including a body of guidelines for Egyptian migrant workers. The Government has continued its efforts to raise awareness among migrant workers about their rights under the Convention, in coordination with IOM, with which it signed an agreement on 4 May 2020.

121. On 30 June 2020, IOM issued its Glossary on Migration, which includes certain key terms relevant to that field and its related contexts and frameworks. The Glossary is designed to raise awareness in legislative, executive and judicial bodies and institutions at the national

level, as well as among civil society organizations, media workers and all persons with an interest in migration. For its part, the migrant assistance section of the IOM office in Egypt provides its own awareness-raising services, in partnership with the Government, in the form of training, education and activities related to migration and the protection of migrant workers. The Ministry for Migration and Egyptian Expatriates has cooperated with other authorities to run 18 programmes and forums for second- and third-generation Egyptians abroad, the aim being to engage with young persons abroad and learn about their situation and their needs. Thanks to direct coordination with the Ministry for Migration and Egyptian Expatriates, the first ever conference for Egyptian communities abroad was held in 2019. It served as an institutional mechanism to coalesce national understanding as the Ministry seeks to serve those communities, resolve their problems and tend to their interests. The conference came up with a number of recommendations, which the Ministry has begun to implement, notably the following:

- Spreading a knowledge of Egyptian domestic law among Egyptians living abroad, while highlighting the role played by the Ministry of Justice's bureau for international cooperation, which oversees investigations and trials involving Egyptians abroad and the enforcement of sentences in reform and rehabilitation centres (i.e., prisons), within the framework of international agreements.
- Increasing the number of offices responsible for producing identity documents in foreign countries with a large presence of Egyptian migrants, and striving to streamline operations via online delivery.
- Encouraging the banking sector to set up alternative online channels and mechanisms, using national banks, to facilitate procedures for opening “first time” accounts for Egyptians abroad, without a need for them to be present in person.
- Increasing the number of direct flights by national carriers to Egypt from places where Egyptians abroad are located, and facilitating online booking procedures and digital transformation in the field of tourism.

122. Egypt continues to work side by side with partners, particularly the European Union, on joint efforts to support workforce migration and mobility. This has taken the form of regional dialogues and cooperation through strategic partnerships, and has been reflected in the development of a comprehensive vision of the entire migration process and the implementation of two projects: on the one hand, the Egyptian-German job, migration and reintegration centre and, on the other, the THAMM project (Towards a Holistic Approach to Labour Migration Governance and Labour Mobility in North Africa), which is co-funded by the European Union. Egypt invests efforts in the fight against irregular migration by training and empowering young persons and providing job opportunities on local and foreign markets. It also seeks to reintegrate returnees and to find secure alternatives for them, including large-scale projects launched by investors returning from abroad in governorates of origin of irregular migrants. The aim is to make opportunities constantly available to young persons, thereby helping them contribute to human development and to become an asset both within Egypt and in any society to which they migrate.

Paragraphs 42 and 43 of the concluding observations on the exercise of voting rights by Egyptian migrant workers residing abroad

123. The legal system envisages the right of Egyptians living abroad to stand for election and to vote. Under the law, moreover, they are allocated their own quota on electoral lists.

Paragraphs 46 and 47 of the concluding observations on consular assistance and protection for Egyptian migrant workers abroad and members of their families

124. The Government makes concerted efforts in this field, via the Ministry of Migration, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Labour. In particular, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as Egyptian embassies and consulates play an important role in

assisting Egyptians abroad. In coordination with local authorities, consular tours are conducted to check on the situation of Egyptian communities and resolve any issues they might have. At the same time, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs engages with the Ministry of the Interior on campaigns for the issuance or renewal of national identity cards in several countries, and it coordinates with the Ministry of Defence which sends out committees from the military judiciary to regulate the conscription status of young Egyptians abroad.

125. Against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs worked with other authorities to extend the validity of passports of Egyptian citizens abroad who – during the period when air traffic was suspended and new passports could not be issued – held passports that had expired or were about to expire. During the course of the pandemic, the State was able to return and receive about 80,000 of its citizens from abroad. Several projects are underway with a view to developing consular services, including projects to automate consular transactions, to develop an integrated consular services development centre in the new administrative capital and to open certification offices.

126. Labour offices abroad seek to settle labour disputes between Egyptian workers and their employers, using amicable means to help the workers obtain their dues, either while still abroad or after returning to their homeland. If amicable settlement is not possible, the workers receive guidance about legal means to protect their rights; they are assisted before the competent courts and their cases continue to be monitored until they have obtained their dues. As of December 2023, there were 4,484,980 Egyptian workers in countries covered by the labour offices.

127. Several other measures have also been rolled out. They include the launch of an online portal to communicate with Egyptians abroad, explain the government services available, receive suggestions and complaints and refer them to the competent authorities. In addition, hotlines have been set up to receive reports, complaints and queries, and to provide solutions via the competent authorities at home and abroad. Legal advice offices have also been opened, as necessary. In March 2021, the Ministry of Labour launched the “Register Yourself” initiative to urge Egyptians working abroad to self-register using a link provided by the Ministry on its website. The data thus obtained is linked to information on national databases in order to facilitate matters for citizens and their families.

Paragraphs 48 and 49 of the concluding observations on the situation of migrant workers in countries that apply the *kafalah* system

128. The Government is pursuing diplomatic and amicable endeavours to resolve any dispute that may arise from *kafalah* in the States that use that system. Egypt seeks to cooperate with those States via bilateral agreements and memorandums of understanding.

Paragraphs 50 and 51 of the concluding observations on the absence of specific anti-trafficking legislation

129. Anti-Human Trafficking Act No. 64 of 2010 criminalizes all contemporary forms of slavery, as described in several sections of the present report. Between January 2020 and October 2023, 1,884 cases arose that concerned criminal networks involved in irregular migration and trafficking in persons. These included 1,194 cases of irregular migration and 654 cases of human trafficking. During the course of 2023 (up to 30 September of that year), the State Prosecution Office launched investigations into 67 incidents that constituted human trafficking, including 20 investigations into cases of sexual exploitation, 27 investigations into cases of forced labour and 20 investigations into other forms of exploitation.
