



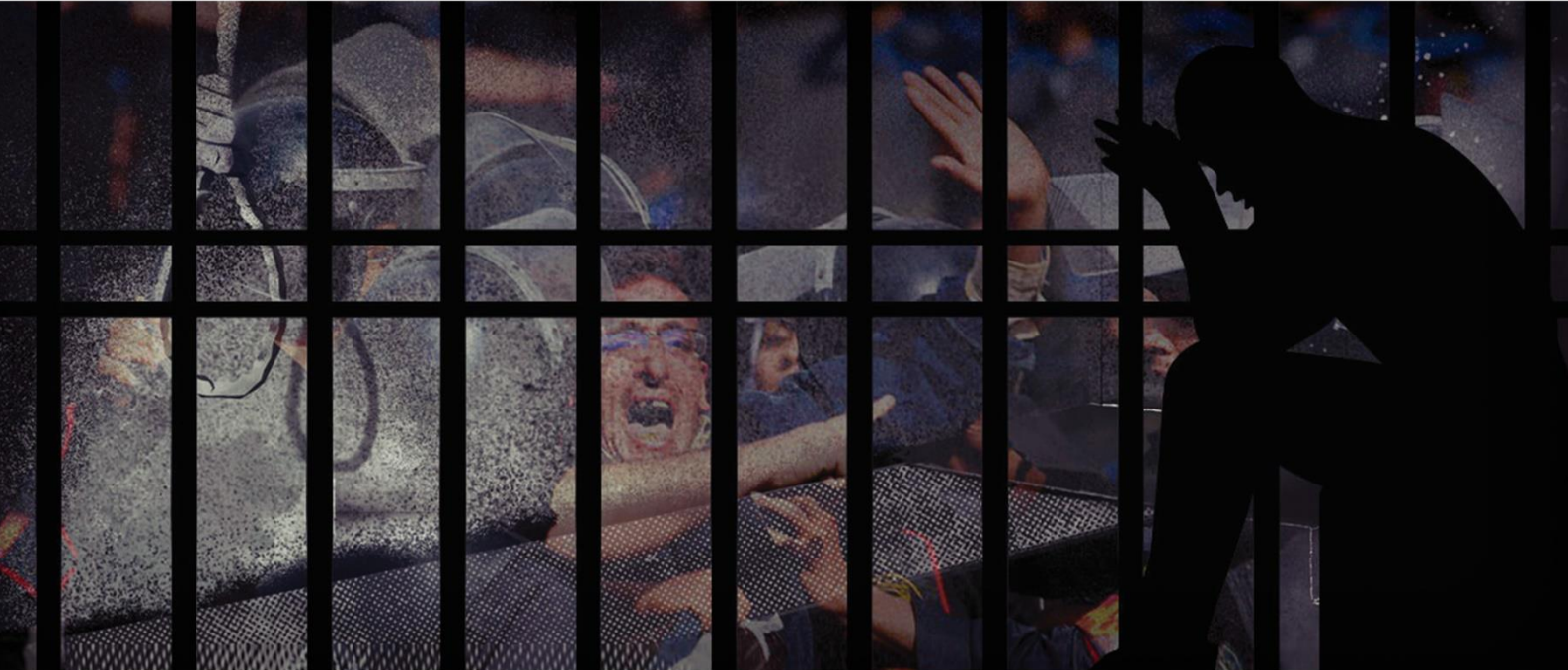
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Human Rights In Egypt Between Law And Reality (2)

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Human Rights In Egypt Between Law And Reality (2)

Dr. Noura El Hafiane

The previous part of the study addressed the key rights and freedoms that are widely violated by the authorities in Egypt despite the international and regional treaties, agreements and covenants as well as the Egyptian Constitution itself, where they all stipulated and highlighted these rights. Among these rights are the right to life, physical and mental integrity; the right to freedom of opinion and expression; the right to peaceful assembly and demonstration; and the right to a fair trial.

This part of the study handles the human rights situation in Egypt, in light of the positions and reports of international and regional institutions, including human rights organizations, as follows:

Several international and regional institutions concerned with human rights have issued inclusive reports on the human rights situation in Egypt, documenting a set of violations by the Egyptian authorities and crackdown on political and human rights activists, journalists and other targeted groups. In light of these reports, many organizations condemned the crimes committed by the Egyptian regime, including the extrajudicial executions, torture in all forms and manifestations, and escalation of arbitrary arrest and enforced disappearance at record rates, in addition to practice of repression and infringement of freedom of expression and opinion and depriving detainees of trial guarantees.

Following are the positions of the most prominent international and regional institutions and human rights organizations on the human rights situation in Egypt:

1- UN bodies concerned with human rights

From 2013 to 2021, the United Nations Human Rights Council (HRC) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), have recurrently criticized the Egyptian regime, during their periodic and extraordinary meetings, for the massive violations of the basic rights of the Egyptian citizen, and the deterioration of the human rights situation in Egypt, most notably the suppression of public freedoms by stifling the freedom of opinion, expression and the right to peaceful demonstration, in addition to the widespread killing, torture, enforced disappearance and arbitrary detention, in addition to the unfair trials that result in issuance of unlawful and unfair sentences,

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mostly death sentences, which ultimately leads to a high number of victims killed outside the framework of law and justice.

Following the steady escalation of implementation of death sentences (executions) in Egypt, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights expressed its condemnation of the rise in executions in one case, such as the one related to the killing of the Egyptian Prosecutor-General Hisham Barakat, calling on the Egyptian authorities to stop all executions and review all cases related to death sentences in line with the obligations associated with the covenants concerned with the protection of human rights. Emphasizing the Egyptian authorities' lack of commitment to legal procedures related to the principle of fair trial, The OHCHR pointed out that the majority of detainees were subjected to arbitrary arrests, detentions and enforced disappearances, in addition to the systematic use of torture to force them to confess under pressure and coercion committing these crimes. The OHCHR stressed the need for Egypt to abide by international standards in the field of human rights and to conduct credible investigations while calling the government for the independence and impartiality of the judiciary in all cases brought before it¹.

UN experts have also confirmed that the mass death sentences in Egypt were based on flawed and unfair grounds, which constitutes a violation of international human rights law. In light of the use of torture of all kinds and methods to extract confessions, all the detainees confirmed that they confessed to fabricated charges under the threat of torture and killing².

In the wake of the rise in arbitrary arrests, or the retaliatory arrests, according to the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the OHCHR confirmed that the policy of arrest and detention pursued by the Egyptian authorities is part of a broader pattern of intimidation of opponents and human rights defenders, in addition to tightening restrictions on freedom of expression and peaceful

¹ UN concern over execution of 15 people in Egypt this month, UN News, February 22, 2020, [link](#)

² Egypt: United Nations experts condemn the execution of nine men after "confessions under torture", United Nations News, February 25, 2019, [link](#) / See also: Egypt: UN experts call for the abolition of death sentences, UN News, June 30, 2014, [link](#)

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assembly, through the use of various legislative pretexts such as those related to national security or counter-terrorism³.

In an unprecedented move, 31 countries issued a joint declaration during the 46th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council expressing their deep concern about the trajectory of human rights in Egypt and sharing the concerns expressed by the High Commissioner for Human Rights and Special Procedure mandate holders. They slammed the regime's restrictions on freedom of expression and the right to peaceful assembly, the constrained space for civil society and political opposition, and the application of terrorism legislation against peaceful critics.

They called on the regime to release all political detainees and journalists unconditionally, and to lift all restrictions on freedom of opinion and expression imposed on the media. The statement also called on Cairo not to practice a policy of intimidation and revenge against civil society, especially human rights defenders. The statement also affirmed the deliberate violations by the Egyptian authorities of the legal procedures required by fair trials, calling on the Egyptian regime to ensure accountability and an immediate end to the policy of impunity⁴.

Although the reality confirms that the policy of interests between states outweighs considerations related to human rights, yet legal and human rights experts considered this step as an indication of the beginning of changing the policies of the signatory states towards the Egyptian regime, especially those that have strong relations with Egypt at the level of military cooperation, amid calls from human rights organizations upon these countries to stop their arms sales to the Egyptian regime, in light of persistence of its practices and violations that have led to the deterioration of the human rights situation in Egypt to tragic levels⁵.

³ OHCHR expresses concern over the arrest of 3 activists in Egypt, UN News, November 27, 2020, [link](#)

⁴ Joint declaration regarding Egypt, United Nations Human Rights Council: 46th session Item 4: General discussion, March 12, 2021, [link](#)

⁵ 31 countries condemn the human rights situation in Egypt in an indication of the beginning of a policy change towards Cairo, Al Jazeera Mubasher, March 15, 2021, [link](#)

2- Human Rights Watch

In a series of reports published on Egypt, Human Rights Watch confirmed that the Egyptian authorities have committed crimes against humanity against citizens. In response to the dispersal of the Rab'a and Nahda sit-ins on 14 August 2013, Human Rights Watch said in a report it issued immediately after the massacre that the Egyptian security forces used excessive lethal force to disperse sit-ins organized by protesters in the Rab'a and Nahda squares, which "led to the most serious incident of mass unlawful killings in modern Egyptian history"⁶.

In a lengthy report of more than 50 pages that HRW issued on 12 August 2014 after an investigation it carried out over a year since the 3 July coup, the rights organization revealed facts about the systematic killing and field executions carried out by the Egyptian security forces that led to the killing of at least 1,150 demonstrators between July and August 2013, which "likely amounted to crimes against humanity, given both their widespread and systematic nature and the evidence suggesting the killings were part of a policy to attack unarmed persons on political grounds", especially those related to the dispersal of the Rab'a sit-in on 14 August 2013, during which at least 814 of the protesters were killed in one day, according to HRW.

The Human Rights Organization confirmed, providing evidence, that the army and police forces were deliberately and systematically involved in the use of excessive lethal force, which led to the killing of protesters on an unprecedented scale in Egypt. The HRW report came after the organization had examined the available evidence based on the investigations that its team carried out at the sites of events and interviews with more than 200 witnesses of all walks, ultimately concluding, based on documented physical evidence, that the systematic killings and attacks on defenseless peaceful protesters were based on political grounds, and that the use of sophisticated weapons, constituted not only serious violations of international human rights law, rather, they amounted to crimes against humanity⁷.

⁶ Egypt: Security Forces Used Excessive Lethal Force, Human Rights Watch, 19 August 2013, [link](#)

⁷ All According to Plan, The Rab'a Massacre and Mass Killings of Protesters in Egypt, Human Rights Watch, 12 August 2014, [link](#)

In a report published in June 2015, marking the one-year anniversary of Sisi's access to power, the rights organization emphasized that since Sisi took power, Egypt has witnessed a flagrant violation of human rights, following the escalation of violence rates due to the widespread violations of the security forces, including the expansion of field executions, mass detentions, the escalation of trials of civilians before military courts, and the prevention and suppression of the right to peaceful demonstration, the issuance of flawed sentences in light of politicized trials with life and death sentences, in addition to the forced displacement of thousands of families from the Sinai Peninsula. The HRW said that Sisi actually sought to terminate the human rights gains of the January Revolution (2011) by issuing decrees and laws that largely reduced civil and political rights. "Over the past year, al-Sisi and his cabinet, governing by decree in the absence of an elected parliament, have provided near total impunity for security force abuses and issued a raft of laws that severely curtailed civil and political rights, effectively erasing the human rights gains of the 2011 uprising that ousted the longtime ruler Hosni Mubarak," the report said. Meanwhile, the Western countries have turned a blind eye to the widespread human rights violations in Egypt, adding that the "Continued silence from the United States and Europe legitimizes al-Sisi's flawed logic that the state's clampdown on its own citizens will yield stability," the report added⁸.

In the context of the constitutional amendments that Egypt witnessed in 2019 - which almost allows Al-Sisi to indefinitely remain in power - Human Rights Watch emphasized that the amendments, which included certain articles, strengthen the authoritarian rule in Egypt, undermine the independence of the Egyptian judiciary, which, along with the public prosecution, has actually become dependent on the executive power, and expand the army's monopoly of and interference in political life. The HRW report also stated that these amendments put the army above the constitution and law, which stifles the hopes of the Egyptian citizen to live in dignity under a civil and democratic state⁹.

The periodic reports of the Human Rights Watch confirmed the high rate of enforced disappearances and arbitrary arrests in Egypt, noting that the security forces use widespread, systematic torture

⁸ Egypt: Year of Abuses Under al-Sisi, Human Rights Watch, 8 June 2015, [link](#)

⁹ Egypt: Constitutional Amendments Entrench Repression, Human Rights Watch, 20 April 2019, [link](#)

methods against the victims, including beating and electric shocks, and even sometimes rape of women who have been disappeared or arrested¹⁰.

The rights organization accused Abdel Fattah al-Sisi of giving the green light to the security services to use all repressive torture methods against his opponents. Even the families of dissidents were not spared retaliatory repression and arbitrary arrests, as the HRW confirmed in a report in September 2019 that the Egyptian authorities carried out arrest campaigns, raids and travel bans against many relatives of dissidents residing abroad, in retaliation for their activities that put pressure on the regime. The organization also clarified that between 2016 and 2019, the Egyptian authorities sought to silence the voice of the opposition abroad through a retaliatory policy approach by punishing their families and relatives¹¹.

The Egyptian security forces continued to arrest and forcibly disappear dissidents, as the regime took advantage of the outbreak of the Coronavirus to tighten its security grip on Egyptian people, pursuing and arresting journalists, citizens and even health workers for criticizing the government's weak response to curbing the Covid-19 Pandemic, under the pretext of publishing false news¹².

In the same context, the rights organization confirmed in a report it published in July 2020, the widespread outbreak of the Coronavirus in prisons and police stations amid an official strict blackout from the Egyptian authorities, noting that at least 14 prisoners and detainees had died due to complications caused by Covid-19 infection in 10 detention centers until July 15, 2020, with hundreds of prisoners infected due to the absence of health care in prisons and the deliberate blackout of the widespread spread of the virus inside prisons amid over crowdedness that made social distancing impossible, and the lack of any procedures taken by the Prison Authority to contain the Coronavirus¹³.

¹⁰ Noura El Hafiane: Al-Sisi's Egypt Between Enforced Disappearance and Arbitrary Detention, Egyptian Institute for Studies, 30 December 2019, [link](#)

¹¹ Egypt: Families Of Dissidents Targeted, Human Rights Watch, 19 November 2019, [link](#)

¹² WORLD REPORT 2021, Human Rights Watch, [link](#)

¹³ Egypt: Apparent Covid-19 Outbreaks in Prisons, Human Rights Watch, 20 July 2020, [link](#)

Human Rights Watch also called for ending the frenzy of executions that the Egyptian authorities have consistently practiced since 2013, and accused the Sisi regime of using the judiciary to prosecute, imprison and execute political opponents. It is noteworthy that the rate of executions in Egypt rose to record rates, making Egypt the third among world countries after China and Iran in terms of the number of executions carried out in 2020. HRW stated that during the first half of 2021 only, no less than 51 executions were carried out, including nine People that were executed in the holy month of Ramadan, one of whom was an elderly person of 82¹⁴, which is considered a blow to international and regional conventions that stress the need to halt execution of death sentences against the elderly people, and a form of brutal treatment sponsored by the Sisi state.

Executions have unprecedentedly increased since 2017, when Sisi approved amendments to the Code of Criminal Procedure (Law no. 150 of 1950), law no. 57 of 1959 regulating appeals before the Court of Cassation, and others to circumvent the judicial power, where the court's role in abolishing flawed death sentences has significantly declined, and the Court of Cassation has even become a mere body to support the death sentences¹⁵.

Regarding the right to a fair trial, the Human Rights Watch emphasized in its annual report issued in January 2021, that judges and prosecutors keep the majority of defendants in pretrial detention without trial for the largest possible period of time, in violation of the maximum period of pre-trial detention stipulated in Egyptian law, which should not exceed two years!¹⁶ There are many examples of those who have exceeded the maximum period of pretrial detention without being sent to trial, most notably: the Al-Jazeera journalist Mahmoud Hussein, the journalist and researcher Hisham Jaafar, Ola Al-Qaradawi, daughter of Sheikh Yusuf Al-Qaradawi, former president of the International Union of Muslim Scholars (IUMS), and Abdel Moneim Abul-Fotouh, head of the Strong Egypt Party, as well as many others.

¹⁴ Amr Magdi, Egypt's Execution Frenzy Has to Stop, Human Rights Watch, 28 June 2021, [link](#)

¹⁵ Amr Magdi, Why Executions in Egypt are Skyrocketing and Why They Should End? Human Rights Watch, 25 March 2019, [link](#)

¹⁶ WORLD REPORT 2021, HRW, Op. Cit.

As for the situation in Sinai, the rights organization issued a report in March 2021, stating that the Egyptian military continued home demolitions and forced evictions during the armed conflict in North Sinai governorate. The report added that "Between late 2013 and July 2020, the army destroyed at least 12,350 buildings, mostly homes, most recently in the al-Arish area. The army has also razed, ruined, and closed off approximately 6,000 hectares of farmland, mostly since mid-2016".

The HRW report relied on official documents, testimonies and satellite images showing the massive demolitions, collected in cooperation with the Sinai Foundation for Human Rights, stressing in this context that what happened against the people of Sinai constitutes a serious violation of "international humanitarian law, or the laws of war", which "likely amount to war crimes"¹⁷.

3- Amnesty International

Like other international human rights organizations, Amnesty International has issued several periodic and exceptional reports on the situation of human rights in Egypt since the 3 July coup d'etat in 2013, emphasizing involvement of the Egyptian regime under Abdel Fattah El-Sisi and his security services in massive human rights violations against dissidents of all political spectra, including Islamists, socialists, secularists, liberals, and other political currents or civil society organizations; and even those who have no affiliation were not spared these brutal practices by the regime.

Through the Amnesty International's report on the events of the dispersal of the Rab'a and Nahda sit-ins, the rights organization stated that the security forces, beyond any doubt, used brutal methods in dispersal of the sit-ins, giving no consideration to human life, which constitutes a flagrant violation of standards of international law, and also in a flagrant violation of the right to demonstration and peaceful assembly through the use of lethal force by the Egyptian army and security forces.

Amnesty International has consistently denounced the impunity for the perpetrators of this massacre from the Interior Ministry and the army, as an unprecedented human rights crisis as a horrific turning point in human history. Amnesty also emphasized that the impunity issue has caused the deterioration of the human rights situation in Egypt by expanding the scope of violations since the 3

¹⁷ Egypt: Massive Sinai Demolitions Likely War Crimes, Human Rights Watch, 17 March 2021, [link](#)

July coup and the deadly violence that accompanied it, which led to the hike of field executions, arbitrary arrests, and enforced disappearances, as well as suppression of public freedoms¹⁸.

In a memo prepared by Amnesty International for submission to the UN Universal Periodic Review's 34th. session of the United Nations Working Group in November 2019, the rights organization stressed that the human rights situation in Egypt has witnessed a sharp deterioration, due to the Egyptian authorities' persistence to use the pretext of the repressive counter-terrorism law and other ambiguous laws in framing charges against dissidents, after failure, or rather deliberate failure to conduct thorough and impartial investigations, accusing the government of carrying out extrajudicial executions and the use of enforced disappearance, torture and all forms of inhumane treatment to extract fake confessions and punish the regime opponents¹⁹.

Amnesty also confirmed that the Egyptian authorities have arbitrarily imprisoned thousands of people and held them in custody pending cases on trumped-up charges that are not based on legal and realistic grounds, in retaliation for their use of freedom of expression and opinion through demonstration and peaceful assembly, where most of them were subjected to military trials. In light of the September 2019 demonstrations, Amnesty International condemned the serious human rights violations against peaceful protesters through the largest wave of mass arrests since Sisi came to power, where more than 2,300 people were arrested, including 111 children. According to the rights organization, the protests were an excuse for the regime to further maintain arbitrary arrests targeting lawyers, human rights defenders, journalists, and political activists²⁰. In the same vein, Amnesty condemned the use of excessive force, tear gas, and live ammunition, and the widespread arrests of protesters in the September 2020 demonstrations, where the security services adopted a policy of

¹⁸ Egypt: State-sanctioned pattern of excessive use of force by security forces, Amnesty International, 14 October 2013, [link](#)

¹⁹ Egypt: Gross human rights violations under President Al-Sisi, Amnesty International, [link](#)

²⁰ Egypt: Largest wave of mass arrests since President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi came to power, Amnesty International, 2 October 2019, [link](#)

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arbitrary arrest and enforced disappearance against at least 496 people, amid accusations of violating the flawed protest law that perpetuates the regime's repressive policies²¹.

Amnesty International also stated that health workers in Egypt have been subjected to harassment and intimidation amid the outbreak of the Coronavirus in the country, due to their criticism of government policies in managing the Covid-19 Pandemic crisis. Amnesty International also documented cases of health workers who were arbitrarily arrested and detained, where some of them were subjected to security and administrative threats, including dismissal from work, due to their comments on social media, which seriously undermines the freedom of expression in a time of sudden crises, where the Covid-19 Pandemic was exploited by the Egyptian regime to further tighten the screws on basic rights and freedoms²².

Amnesty International also strongly criticized escalation of executions in Egypt, where it revealed in a report issued in April 2021, the sharp rise in numbers of executions in Egypt, which increased more than threefold between 2019 and 2020, making Egypt, according to the rights organization, the third most country among world countries In terms of implementation of executions in 2020, as between October-November 2020 only, the Egyptian authorities executed at least 57 people, including 23 cases of political executions, following unfair trials based on forced confessions and inhumane treatment related to torture and enforced disappearances, which constitutes grave violations of human rights, especially the right to a fair trial²³. Amnesty also suggested that the real number of executions that were carried out is greater than what was announced, because there are inconsistencies in the statistics and a blackout on the part of the Egyptian authorities that do not

²¹ Egypt: Rare protests met with unlawful force and mass arrests, Amnesty International, 2 October 2020, [link](#)

²² Egypt: Health care workers forced to make impossible choice between 'death or jail', Amnesty International, 18 June 2020, [link](#)

²³ Death penalty 2020: Middle East and North Africa dominates list of world's top executioners, Amnesty International, 21 April 2021, [link](#)

reveal statistics on executions or the number of prisoners sentenced to death, nor do they inform the families of those sentenced and their lawyers on the date of execution of death sentences²⁴.

In a report marking the 10th anniversary of the January Revolution (2011), Amnesty emphasized that prisoners of conscience and expression and other detainees held for political reasons in Egypt are subjected to torture and cruel and inhuman detention conditions, where they are deliberately deprived of health care as a punishment for their stances. According to Amnesty, the Covid-19 crisis has been the greatest evidence of the failure of the prison administration, under the direction of the regime, to protect prisoners from this stormy epidemic, which led to deaths during detention and imprisonment, which amounts to intentional killing²⁵.

4- The European Parliament

Over years, the European Parliament, the key institution of the European Union, has criticized the human rights situation in Egypt, and warned on several occasions of the repressive policies practiced by the Egyptian authorities against political and human rights activists and bloggers, which constitutes a worrying development due to the escalating violations of human rights in Egypt. Also, the European Parliament has repeatedly called on the authorities of Abdel Fattah al-Sisi to respect fundamental rights and freedoms.

However, the European Parliament condemned (protocally) in a resolution issued in September 2013, the use of excessive force by the Egyptian security forces in the Rab'a and Nahda sit-ins, which claimed the lives of hundreds of protesters. He also called on the Egyptian authorities to open a transparent investigation into the dispersal of the two sit-ins and to identify the police and army personnel responsible for the mass killings in this massacre and hand them over to justice. The EP also called for the release of all political prisoners and the treatment of detainees in the wake of these events in accordance with international laws, with the resolution stressing the need to speed up the transfer of power to civil authorities. The EP condemns the disproportionate use of force by Egyptian

²⁴ Egypt: Chilling rise in executions reveals depth of human rights crisis, Amnesty International, 2 December 2020, [link](#)

²⁵ What Do I Care If You Die? Amnesty International, [link](#)

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security forces and the tragic loss of life during the dismantlement of the Rab'a and Nahda encampments; urges the Government of Egypt to ensure that the security forces establish adequate internal review procedures, so that responsibilities for the excessive use of force can be ascertained and those responsible be brought to justice," the resolution read²⁶.

In January 2015, the European Parliament issued a resolution condemning the mass arbitrary arrests, threats and restrictions on freedoms, with respect to the peaceful demonstration and freedom of opinion and expression, against critics of the regime from various political spectra. The resolution referred to the detention of more than 40,000 people by the Egyptian authorities since seizure of power by the military in July 2013, in addition to the killing of more than 1,400 people, as a result of the use of excessive force by army and police forces in dispersal of gatherings and demonstrations of unarmed protesters. The decision also condemned the passage of repressive laws since Abdel Fattah al-Sisi accessed power in June 2014, such as the Decree No. 136 of 2014, which designated all public facilities as military facilities, stating that any crime committed in these facilities would be subject to military trials. In fact, the decree questioned the independence of the Egyptian judicial system in light of the widespread impunity of officials who committed grave human rights violations²⁷.

In March 2016, the European Parliament maintained criticism of the Egyptian regime regarding its continuous violations in the field of human rights. However, what is new in the European Parliament's resolution this time is that it came after the killing of the Italian researcher Giulio Regeni, where it strongly condemned, with 588 yes, the assassination of Regeni in mysterious circumstances during a scientific trip he was on in Egypt required for his doctoral thesis on Egyptian labor movements and unions. The EP "Strongly condemns the torture and assassination under suspicious circumstances of EU citizen Giulio Regeni, and expresses its deep sympathy and condolences to the family," the resolution read. The European Parliament also accused the Ministry of Interior of complicity in the incident, in light of its refusal to accuse the Egyptian police of being involved in torturing and killing Regeni. In addition to the Regeni case, the resolution addressed the continuing violations by the Egyptian regime against its opponents, including politicians, journalists, human rights activists, and

²⁶ European Parliament resolution of 12 September 2013 on the situation in Egypt, [link](#)

²⁷ European Parliament resolution of 15 January 2015 on the situation in Egypt, [link](#)

others, denouncing the arbitrary arrests they were subjected to and the expansion of the scope of mass sentences, especially those related to executions in absence of fair trial conditions²⁸.

Whereas the volume of military cooperation between the Egyptian regime and several European countries, especially Germany and France, increased with the increase in the volume of weapons and security technology exports to Egypt, the European Parliament adopted in December 2018, a resolution condemning the continued violations of basic democratic rights in Egypt, calling on the Egyptian authorities to stop violations against defenders of rights and freedoms. The resolution also called on the Egyptian regime to suspend the death penalty and implementation of death sentences that reached record rates under Abdel Fattah al-Sisi. The European Parliament also described the presidential elections that were held in June 2018 as a major waste of the Egyptians' right to political participation²⁹.

In October 2019, European MPs voted on a resolution condemning the Egyptian authorities for the grave violations of human rights, especially the arbitrary arrests, that affected, according to the resolution, 4,300 demonstrators and opponents, in the aftermath of demonstrations and protests in many Egyptian governorates. The resolution also condemned the killing of up to 3,000 thousand Egyptians without legal trials, including women and children, since the coup d'etat of 3 July 2013, and the access of Sisi to power in June 2014. European Parliament MPs also called on the Egyptian authorities to put an end to all acts of violence and incitement and the use of intimidating reprisals against human rights defenders, activists, journalists and even university professors, and the release of all detainees who were subjected to arbitrary arrests and the forcibly disappeared in mysterious circumstances. The calls of the European Parliament did not stop there, but it also demanded that all those responsible for the inhuman violations be held accountable, regardless of their position in the state³⁰.

²⁸ European Parliament resolution on Egypt, notably the case of Giulio Regeni, [link](#)

²⁹ European Parliament resolution of 13 December 2018 on Egypt, notably the situation of human rights defenders, [link](#)

³⁰ European Parliament resolution of 24 October 2019 on Egypt, [link](#)

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In the same context, the European Parliament in December 2020 voted by 434 yes to 49 no and 202 abstained, on a draft resolution calling on the countries of the European Union to take firm measures against the Egyptian regime due to the Egyptian authorities' widespread violations of rights and public freedoms, amid the repressive campaigns against civil society, human rights defenders, journalists, academics, lawyers and even health workers in light of their criticism of the failure of government policies in dealing with the Covid-19 Pandemic. The European Parliament resolution also called for a deep and comprehensive review of the EU's relations with the Egyptian regime against the backdrop of these violations, as well as conducting a review of the material and development support provided by the EU countries to Egypt. In light of this resolution, the members strongly criticized the Elysee's decision to grant Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi the French Legion of Honor, against the principles and values that the countries of the European Union, including France, are keen to respect.

In this context, the resolution stressed the need to take a set of restrictive measures against high-ranking Egyptian officials for their involvement in committing serious violations against the Egyptian citizens, with the need to hold them accountable to ensure that there is no impunity, based on the Magnitsky Law. The European Parliament also stressed the need for EU countries to exert more pressure on the Egyptian authorities for the immediate and unconditional release of those arbitrarily arrested and convicted in political cases, in particular the case of the activists of the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights (EIPR). Since the July 3 coup, Parliament has repeatedly called on EU countries to suspend licenses to sell arms to Egypt and other security equipment used by the Egyptian government against protesters and human rights activists³¹.

The resolution also urged the Egyptian authorities to cooperate with their European counterparts in the investigations into the case of the murder of Italian researcher Giulio Regeni in 2016, and to cooperate in the investigations into the death of French language teacher Erbek Lang in prison in 2013.

³¹ European Parliament resolution of 18 December 2020 on the deteriorating situation of human rights in Egypt, in particular the case of the activists of the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights (EIPR), [link](#)

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(**Note:** The third and final part of this study will address figures and statistics on human rights violations in Egypt since 2013, as well as the mechanisms for prosecuting perpetrators of human rights crimes)

