





United Nations Special Rapporteurs convey profound concerns regarding the draft Egyptian Criminal Procedures Law

In a letter addressed to the President of the Arab Republic of Egypt on 8 November 2024, the following parties have expressed serious concerns regarding the amendments being undertaken by the Egyptian government to the Criminal Procedures Law:

- The Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression;
- The Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association;
- The Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders;
- The Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers;
- The Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism;
- The Working Group on Arbitrary Detention;
- The Working Group against Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances.
- They voiced concerns that the amendments would grant law enforcement officers and prosecutors expanded powers without adequate judicial oversight, noting the vague and overly broad wording of certain provisions, which could pose a serious threat to fair trial guarantees. In addition, we are concerned that some amendments appear to contravene the Egyptian Constitution, which could undermine constitutionally enshrined rights and freedoms.
- In their communication, they reminded the Egyptian government that Egypt ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights on 14 January 1982, committing to international standards for fair trial rights and judicial independence. They pointed to different provisions in the draft law which, if not revised, could place the government of His Excellency the President in conflict with its international human rights obligations, particularly under Article 9 (right to liberty and security and prohibition of arbitrary arrest), Article 12 (freedom of movement), Article 14 (right to a fair trial), Article 17

(right to privacy), Article 19 (freedom of opinion and expression), Article 21 (freedom of peaceful assembly), and Article 22 (freedom of association) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

The Arab Center for Independence of the Judiciary and the Legal Profession (ACIJLP), while welcoming the Special Rapporteurs' letter and their insights on the draft law and its repercussions, calls upon the President of the Republic and the Egyptian Parliament to consider these comments and concerns, alongside those raised by Egyptian human rights organizations regarding the draft law which could affect Egypt's international commitments in the field of human rights. The ACIJLP urges prompt action to amend the draft law in a manner that safeguards human rights and ensures the right to a fair and equitable trial - particularly given the Universal Periodic Review of Egypt's human rights record before the Human Rights Council taking place in 2024.

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