



## Vote Yes to Human Rights, Say No to Oppression:

*Electing the Egyptian government to the Human Rights Council will reward brutal repression and undermine the international human rights system.*

**We, the undersigned civil society organizations, urge all UN member states to refrain from voting for Egypt in the upcoming elections to the United Nations Human Rights Council (HRC) for the 2026–2028 term.**

Membership in the Human Rights Council comes with a solemn responsibility to uphold the highest standards of international human rights and strengthen the UN human rights system. Defying this responsibility, the Egyptian government has used past membership to **evade** accountability by **denying** grave and widespread human rights violations it has committed, while simultaneously **violating** universal human rights standards.

On the national level, arbitrary detention, torture, enforced disappearances, and restrictions on expression, association, and assembly remain endemic, as shown by the UN **Human Rights Committee** and the UN **Committee Against Torture**. Indicators on the rule of law and **justice** are in freefall.

Egypt is continuously one of the **top 10** jailers of **journalists** globally with 17 journalists behind bars in 2025. It has also continued to repress civil society and human rights defenders, subjecting them to reprisals, including intimidation and prolonged **detention** for **engaging** with UN mechanisms. The authorities refuse to cooperate meaningfully with Special Procedures, rejecting or ignoring requests for country visits and failing to provide substantive responses to communications. Furthermore, Egypt has outstanding reports with treaty bodies and has not ratified or accepted individual complaint mechanisms.

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During its fourth Universal Periodic Review in July 2025, Egypt received 343 **recommendations** from UN member states spanning civil, political, social, economic rights, justice and redress. Yet Egypt only committed to take practical steps in relation to 5 recommendations, a mere 1.4 % of the total. In 134 cases, Egypt responded by “noting” a recommendation but refusing to commit to any concrete or measurable action, including with regard to calls to release political prisoners or halt arbitrary detention. It likewise rejected or omitted response to recommendations calling for an end to violence and discrimination against women, minorities, and LGBTIQ+ individuals. The government also ignored recommendations to take action to ensure accountability for widespread and systematic **torture**, including in relation to the murder of Italian citizen Giulio Regeni.

Despite years of constructive engagement attempts, training, and technical assistance by the UN, the human rights environment in Egypt is worsening. In this regard, we reiterate the **call** for the creation of an independent international monitoring and investigative mechanism on human rights violations in Egypt. Such a body should be empowered to document gross violations, report to the UN, and support accountability efforts for such violations.

Rewarding the Egyptian government with a seat on the Human Rights Council will only encourage Egypt to further its widespread violations, ignore calls for reform and accountability and undermine the universality of human rights. The international community must act decisively and refuse to vote for Egypt in the upcoming Human Rights Council elections.

## Signatories

1. Committee for Justice.
2. Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS).
3. HuMENA for Human Rights and Civic Engagement.
4. MENA Rights Group.
5. EgyptWide for human rights.

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6. World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT).
7. Egyptian Front for Human Rights.
8. Egyptian Commission for Rights and Freedoms.
9. Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights.
10. Sinai Foundation for Human Rights
11. EuroMed Rights Network
12. Civicus - Vuka Coalition
13. Réseau des Organisations de la Société Civile pour l'Observation et le Suivi des Élections en Guinée - ROSE
14. Cedar Centre for Legal Studies
15. Nouvelle Dynamique de la Societe Civile en RD Congo, NDSCI
16. Egyptian Human Rights Forum (EHRF)
17. West African Human Rights Defenders' Network
18. Organisation Tchadienne Anti-corruption
19. Karapatan Alliance Philippines
20. PEN America
21. Espacio Público
22. Skyline International for Human Rights
23. Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ)

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