

EGYPT
UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW
MIDTERM EVALUATION REPORT

Prepared by
Groups of Civil Society Organizations
representing
[Joint Submission 4](#)
Submission on Economic and Social Rights for UPR-Egypt¹

¹ Please see annex for full list of organizations

BACKGROUND

The human rights situation in Egypt was reviewed under the UN human rights monitoring mechanism, Universal Periodic Review, on February 17th 2010. During the Working Group session, Egypt received 171 recommendations in total and accepted 135 of them. The revision of Egypt was concluded by the 14th Human Rights Council session, which took place 31 May-18 June 2010.

The first cycle revision for Egypt was not a genuine opportunity to review the human rights conditions as the Working Group session was overshadowed by the Egyptian government's use of its diplomatic relations to limit a constructive debate, preventing real concerns from being raised while denying all human rights abuses. The review still touched upon several issues in Egypt, including political and civil rights, including the State of Emergency, the future anti-terrorism legislation, monitoring of elections, the legislation addressing torture, sectarian violence, and the NGO law. Nevertheless, Egypt's compliance with its economic and social rights obligations were hardly addressed. Indeed, by the end of 2010, the peoples' uprisings in Egypt marked the seriousness of these violations and people's quest for a new development model based on human rights respect, protection and promotion.

Civil society organizations engaged in the first cycle revision of Egypt's human rights records and working in areas of human rights, democracy and development in the Arab region present this report, which covers the period since the first cycle revision of Egypt up until 2012 September.

We believe follow-up of the UPR process, close monitoring and evaluation of the steps taken and related advocacy by civil society groups is crucial and necessary. Indeed, potential added value of civil society's engagement with the UPR process extends beyond the development and preparation of a report on human rights conditions. Such engagement can contribute to enhancing the role of civil society organizations in monitoring and evaluating rights conditions, related public policy making, and levels of governmental accountability.

In this regard, this report stands as a midterm evaluation of the recommendations received by Egypt during the first review. It focuses specifically on economic and social rights, following [the joint submission of civil society groups active in Egypt on economic and social rights](#).² Moreover, the report presents the clear stance of the civil society groups involved to their concrete commitment to use UPR as a tool to promote economic and social rights. The information and data compiled for this report will set the background for the second cycle submission as well.

The report follows an initial issue-based categorization³ of recommendations accepted on economic and social rights (i.e. general, women, children, poverty, employment...etc). Then the progress/regress on implementation of each recommendation will be elaborated with references to actions taken and related policy

²The report is available as well at :

<http://www.annd.org/userfiles/file/UPR/UPR%20Egypt%20submission%20English.pdf>

³ In case of multiple issues covered in one recommendation, the report details the recommendation under one issue and refers to other, in order to eliminate the duplication and repetition of data and information.

recommendations from civil society groups for further progress.

Recommendations Accepted Regarding International Instruments
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- *Allow the visits of human rights **special procedures** that are pending to take place in a timely manner and consider issuing a standing invitation to the human rights special procedures*
- *Continue to expand the cooperation with the **special procedures** of the Human Rights Council*
- *Respond positively to the repeated requests for a visit by the **Special Rapporteurs** on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment on the independence of judges and lawyers on the situation of human rights defenders, on freedom of religion or belief on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and by the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention*
- ***Submit overdue reports** to the treaty bodies*
- *Improve its cooperation with the United Nations Treaty Bodies by **submitting overdue reports** as a matter of priority*
- *Issue an open **and standing invitation to all special procedures***
- *Issue an open and **standing invitation** to all special procedures, particularly to the Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Punishment or Treatment*
- ***Ratify** the Optional Protocols to the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the Rome Statute*
- *Consider prompt **accession to the Optional Protocol** on the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*
- *Consider **ratifying** the Rome Statute, Optional Protocols to the International Covenant on civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discriminations against Women, the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*
- *Consider **withdrawing the reservations** to CEDAW articles 2, 16 and 29 and ratify OP-CEDAW*
- *Continue its ongoing review of **reservations** entered to international human rights instruments*
- *Fulfill its pledge to review **the reservations**, which it has entered to human rights treaties with a view to withdrawing them*
- ***Withdraw the reservations** to articles 2 and 16 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discriminations Against Women*
- *Remove all **reservations** to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*
- *Continue **harmonizing** its legislation with international human rights treaties by taking into consideration specificities of its society and requirement of modernization*
- *Continue its ongoing review of **national laws** to ensure that they are in line with its international human rights law obligations*
- *Establish an effective and inclusive process to **follow-up on the universal periodic review recommendations***

- *Implement the accepted recommendations of the universal periodic review in cooperation with the National Council on Human Rights, NGOs, and the civil society*

Implementation of Recommendations on International Instruments
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The uprisings in Egypt in late 2010 clearly demonstrated that mere ratification of the international human rights instruments are not satisfactory to ensure the full enjoyment of human rights by Egyptian citizens. Thus being already a state party to core international human rights treaties including ICESCR, ICCPR, CEDAW, CAT, CRC, CRPD, ICRMW Egyptian authorities failed to promote and protect the rights of Egyptians including those of economic, social, cultural, political and civil rights.

This, alongside the failure of political governance and failure of the economic and social policy choices of the previous regimes, derived from lack of harmonization the national legislation with international human rights treaties, adoption of laws neglecting the obligations deriving from international treaties and moreover lack of structured national monitoring mechanisms on the implementation of treaties.

Since the UPR revision in 2010, **Egypt showed no progress regarding the ratification of treaties recommended.** Optional Protocols to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discriminations against Women, the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which would strengthen the normative framework for human rights in Egypt remain not ratified.

Although On 6 March 2011, former International Court of Justice judge Nabil El Arabi was appointed foreign minister of Egypt and mentioned **ICC ratification as a priority⁴, up to date no valid initiative is taken.**

Regarding the submitting the due reports to treaty bodies, Egypt submitted the third and fourth periodic reports of States parties (due in 2007) and initial State report to the CRC-OP SC (due 2004) and initial State report to the CRC-OP AC (due in 2009) during 2010. Nevertheless **the following reports regarding the implementation of the international treaties remain overdue:**

- CESCR: 2nd and 3rd report overdue
- CCPR: 5th report overdue
- CERD: 17th to 21st report overdue
- CEDAW: Follow-up report overdue
- CAT: 5th and 6th report overdue
- CMW: 2nd report overdue
- CRPD: initial report overdue

Regarding issuing an open and standing invitation to all special procedures, Egypt took no action. Whereas in Tunisia, where the uprisings of peoples reflected the people's quest for a new social contract and development model and resulted in toppling down the old undemocratic regime (as in Egypt), a successful step towards engagement with human rights monitoring mechanisms is undertaken and a standing invitation is issued on February 2011.

The reservations on human rights treaties, particularly those on CEDAW (arts. 2, 16 and 29), on ICRMW (articles 4 and 18, paragraph 6) still persist. Indeed

⁴ <http://www.hrw.org/news/2011/04/29/egypt-important-commitment-ratify-rome-statute>

these articles are core to the object and purpose of these Conventions, thus lifting the reservations would ensure sincere reflection of the respect to human rights that should be accompanied by genuine implementation. Moreover, **the competences on individual and inter-state complaints of the treaties Egypt is a state party to, including ICERD, ICCPR, CAT, ICRMW remain not accepted by Egypt.**

During the HRC plenary session, whereby Egypt's revision was finalized by the adoption of the Working Group, the Delegation present in Geneva pledged to set up an **“institutional structure” to follow up the implementation of the recommendations accepted by the government with the participation of the National Council for Human Rights and civil society organizations.**⁵ It is true that by the end of 2010, the national agenda focused on the uprisings of Egyptian peoples rather than the implementation of the recommendations, however the occasion of request of change in the system should be profited to bring in sincere implementation towards international human rights instruments in the aftermath of the Mubarak regime, to set a strong normative framework in Egypt which would initiate a response to demands of Egyptian people supported with genuine action.

In this regard we call the Egyptian authorities to:

- *Clearly signal the shift in respect to human rights and adherence to promotion and protection of human rights aftermath of the peoples' uprisings and in line with their demands through ratification of core international human rights treaties, namely OP-ICESCR, ICCPR-OP1, ICCPR-OP2, OP-CEDAW, OP-CAT, CRPD-OP, and CED.*
- *Lift all reservations made to relevant international human right treaties, which are hindrance to the genuine implementation of the essence of these treaties, particularly the reservations made regarding CEDAW*
- *Take immediate steps to endorse Egypt's commitments towards international human rights treaties in the new constitution and reform national laws and adopt new laws with respect to obligations deriving from being state party to international human rights treaties*
- *Prioritize the ratification of the Rome Statue which allow Egypt to assume a role in advancing human rights, accountability, justice and an ending impunity for grave crimes*
- *Report regularly to treaty bodies within given deadlines not only to comply with the obligations deriving by being state party to, but in order to ensure the smooth implementation of the treaties at national level with an overall aim to ensure promotion and protection of human rights*
- *Take immediate steps to ensure the implementation of the recommendations received during the UPR first cycle revision, through adoption of a nationally owned human rights action plan with clear timelines that would clearly differentiate from previous regimes commitment toward the UPR, that was composed of “commitments merely stylistic fragmented phrases that do not carry any content to measure and assess the achieved progress”⁶*

⁵ <http://eipr.org/en/pressrelease/2010/06/12/915>

⁶ <http://www.maatpeace.org/en/node/630>

Recommendations Received Regarding Right to Work

- *Accelerate programs aimed at job creation, particularly for young people*
- *Effectively address poverty and unemployment, in cooperation with international community*
- *Intensify employment programs for youth*

Implementation of Recommendations on Right to Work

Although Egypt received only a limited number of recommendations on right to work-mainly on unemployment-, peoples' revolution in Egypt reflected peoples' rejection of political repressions, corruption, and lack of accountability and legitimacy of the political regime, as well as the rejection of the failed social and economic model that have been established under the previous regime. This model resulted in continuous inequalities in enjoyment of right to work, including wages and opportunities for men and women, urban and rural areas and high and constant unemployment rates especially among the youth.

Indeed alongside unemployment it is important to focus the real problem regarding the right to work in Egypt, that is underemployment. **Underemployment is Egypt's prime problem with secondary and university graduates.** According to the recent UNDP report⁷, the Egyptian economy has been producing jobs; as a matter of fact it was among the first ones in generating jobs. **The problem was not with the quantity of job created (thus not only at unemployment rate) but rather with the quality.** Therefore, aside from unemployment challenge, **the lack of "decent jobs" in Egypt remains critical.**

The vast majority of jobs were created in the informal sector with zero job security, low productivity and thus low wages. In Egypt, the informal sector hosted more than 60% of total jobs created while the private sector (the formal sector) just produced 15 or 16% of the total.

Furthermore, although Egypt witnessed unprecedented waves of strikes and labor protests since 2004/2005 and the protests are still going on as the prime expression of the **Egyptians' discontent with the neoliberal developmental model, the violations with regard to freedom of association and union formation remains not tackled in Egypt.** During the Working Group, only a recommendation addressed this issue but rejected by Egypt, even though it is on the very top of the list of violations of Egypt's commitments under the ILO and according to the International Covenant and the international declarations.

Taking into consideration as well the recommendations received by Egypt, it is obvious that unemployment is a consistent challenge for Egypt, resulting mainly from the insufficient economic and social policies to address it. As of latest data by CAPMAS, the 1st quarter for **2012 unemployment rate stands at 12.6%** (was 12.4% in the 4th quarter in 2011), thus is an increase. Given the national context in 2011 and 2012, the consistent unemployment rate can be understandable but together with the

⁷ Arab Development Challenges Report, issued in February 2012 available at http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/HDR/UNDP-ADCR_En-2012.pdf

recommendations made toward intensifying employment generating policies, addressing unemployment must be a priority in the Egyptian agenda that necessitates a rethinking of the economic policies related to job-generating sectors, including industrial sector, agricultural sector, and services.

Moreover, although not covered through the recommendations, **the inequalities and discrimination in the enjoyment of the right to work must be tackled** as⁸:

- Unemployment rate among males reached to 9.3% of total males in labor force, while it was 9.1% for previous quarter, 9% for previous quarter of previous year.
- Unemployment rate among females reached to 23.8% of total females in labor force, while it was 23.6% for previous quarter, 21.8% for previous quarter of previous year.
- Unemployment rate in urban areas reached to 15.9% of total labor force in urban areas, while it was 16.4% for previous quarter, 15.9% for the same quarter of previous year. It reached in rural areas to 10.1% of total labor force in rural areas, while it was for previous quarter 9.3%, 8.8% for the same quarter of previous year.
- Unemployment rate among males in urban areas reached to 12.3%, while it was 12.4% for previous quarter, and 12% during the same quarter of previous year. It reached among males in rural areas to 7.1%, while it was for previous quarter 6.6%, and 6.7% for the same quarter of previous year.
- Unemployment rate among females in urban areas reached to 27.5%, while it was 29.1% for previous quarter & the same quarter of previous year. While it reached among females in rural areas to 20.7%, while it was 18.8% for previous quarter, and 16.1% for the same quarter of previous year.

Whereas the numbers indicate slight progress in urban areas, it is crucial to note the regress in rural areas, which indeed adds into increasing discrepancies among Egyptian citizens.

Moreover, the data signals the necessity of immediate policies to tackle the unemployment of youth, as unemployed rate of young people age between (15-29 years) reached about 77.7% of total unemployed as they reached:

*14% for age group (15-19 years)

* 39.3% for age group (20-24 years).

* 24.4% for age group (25-29 years).

Unemployed rates of intermediate, above medium, university and above of graduates reached about 77.8% of the total unemployed as it reached:45.9% among those, who have above intermediate and intermediate certificates (52.2% males, 47.1% females) and 31.9% among holders of university degrees and above (47.8% males, 52.2% females).⁹

Given that in addition to tackling unemployment, Egyptians brought forward in their demonstrations demands for respect of dignity, recalling the necessity to implement decent working conditions, especially with regard to their wages, fixing wages are critical. Indeed, the transition government raised the minimum wage to LE700

⁸ All data on unemployment is available at http://www.capmas.gov.eg/pepo/192_e.pdf

⁹ http://www.capmas.gov.eg/pepo/192_e.pdf

(including for private sector)¹⁰. It was stated by then Finance Minister Samir Radwan that this would enable a 1.9 million people move from under poverty line¹¹. In addition to minimum wage, a maximum wage ceiling to LE 50.000 is introduced aftermath of Mubarak era. Introduced as a step to respond to popular demands of the uprisings, as noted by Safwat El-Nahas, president of the Central Agency for Organisation and Administration¹² However both steps necessitate a complementary action, the adoption of the sustainable wage policy.

In this regard we call the Egyptian authorities to¹³:

- *Address the full enjoyment and realization of the right to work as a national priority in the Egyptian agenda through:*
 - *Rethinking of the economic policies related to job-generating sectors, including industrial sector, agricultural sector, and services and Ensure that the formalization of the informal sector is achieved through developmental and empowering policies, laws and regulations (given that the informal sector constitutes around 50% of the GDP and 60-70% of the labor force.)*
 - *Implementing institutional reforms to enable the effective rule of law and implementation of anti-corruption measures with an overall aim to bolster the efficiency of public policies in reducing unemployment*
 - *Focusing at ensuring gender equality and closing urban/rural discrepancies in enjoyment of right to work at the very core of the new employment policies to be implemented and strengthen this through empowerment of the judicial system to defend the rights of those whose rights are violated through discrimination in employment*
 - *Ensure that minimum wage/maximum wage requirements are monitored and genuinely implemented, especially through an effective work of the Complaints Committee set by the National Council for Wages (NCW), which is announced to be in charge of looking into workers and companies' grievances and to have the power to punish firms, which fail to adhere to pay employees wages¹⁴*
 - *Eliminating the barriers to entering the labor market - such as nepotism, corruption, and the lack of job market transparency*
 - *Focusing on the quality of education to ensure that the skills being taught match the needs of the labor market*
 - *Tackle youth unemployment as a structural and define a clear long-term macroeconomic strategy to provide solutions*
 - *Unification of social security systems to ensure the coverage of all wage earners,*
 - *Protecting trade union freedoms, and ensure the participation of trade unions in policy making process and social dialogue.*
 - *Adopting an inclusive policy to ensure the rights of people with special*

¹⁰ <http://thedailynewsegypt.com/other-top-stories/egypt-sets-minimum-wage-at-le-700-sees-26-pct-growth.html>

¹¹ *ibid*

¹² <http://english.ahram.org.eg/News/41222.aspx>

¹³ Certain number of these policy recommendations were raised <http://carnegie-mec.org/events/?fa=3158>

¹⁴ <http://www.thedailynewsegypt.com/economy/egyptian-returnees-raise-concerns-overremittances-unemployment.html>

needs

Recommendations Accepted Regarding Right to adequate standard of living

- *Continue and strengthen strategies and programs for comprehensive development, especially in **the rural and less developed areas of the country***
- *Continue promoting its successful cultural policies that have far-reaching social content, stimulate participation by the popular sectors of the population and extend culture to all as a mechanism to **combat exclusion and poverty***
- *Effectively **address poverty and unemployment**, in cooperation with international community*
- *Intensify its efforts to **wealth distribution and poverty eradication**, especially assistance to the marginalized and disadvantaged groups*
- *Intensify its programs to extend social and economic rights to all and **improve standard of living for those with limited income***

Implementation of Recommendations on Right to adequate standard of living

The economic policies preferred and followed by the previous regime, did not aim at either equal distribution of wealth nor focused on the root causes of the poverty. The benefits from the economic growth were only shared within a close circle linked to the ruling power. Nevertheless **the recommendations received during the first cycle revision did not envisage the increasing discrepancies thus remained limited to recommending continuation of short term and limited poverty reduction policies.**

The official statistics available on poverty in CAMPAS show the **inefficiency of the poverty policies implemented in the previous regime.** The increasing trend in poverty, for poverty headcount ratio in urban, rural and total from 9.3%, 22.1% and 16.7% in 2000 to 11%, 28.9% and 21.6% respectively in 2008 signals that despite the development policies with a “notable urban bias”¹⁵ mostly through subsidy policies to poor did not necessarily achieve success.¹⁶

In this regard we call the Egyptian authorities to:

- ***Revise the poverty reduction strategy from mere continuation of distributing subsidizes to concentrating on empowerment of poor and vulnerable people, through adequate job generating policies and education system***

Recommendations Accepted Regarding Right to education

- *Continue efforts in **eradicating illiteracy** and adult education and share its pioneering experience in this field*
- *Continue its efforts aimed at **eradication of illiteracy in rural areas***
- *Continue to strengthen policies that have led to a **decrease of the illiteracy rates***
- *In the spirit of a constructive dialogue and with the cooperation of the international community, continue efforts to enhance the quality of its educational and health system with a special focus on **combating illiteracy***
- *Make additional efforts in **eradicating illiteracy***

¹⁵ <http://www.egyptindependent.com/news/rural-egyptians-suffer-most-increasing-poverty>

¹⁶ http://www.capmas.gov.eg/pages_ar.aspx?pageid=851

- *Continue efforts on **human rights education** in order to guarantee enjoyment of all people of their rights*
- *Continue its efforts to provide training and capacity building in the area of human rights for police officers and members of the judiciary and prosecution as well as journalists*
- *Enhance **human rights education** and training programs for the general public and government officials*
- *Include the study of **human rights in the curriculum** of the various stages of free education provided in state institutions*
- *Increase public awareness on human rights and promote **human rights education and training***
- *Provide **human rights education** and training to members of the police, security services, prison and detention staff and judiciary with specific focus on protection of human rights of women, children, national and other minorities, refugees and persons with disabilities and to ensure accountability of security and other state personnel for possible violations of human rights*
- *Strengthen **education in the field of human rights***
- *Strengthen programs of capacity building in human rights field and **raise human rights awareness level***
- *Strengthen public education, awareness and capacity building programmes on **human rights***

Implementation of Recommendations on Right to Education

Whereas in 2010, the OECD and World Bank report entitled “Reviews of National Policies for Education: Higher Education in Egypt 2010” clearly stated that the Egyptian **higher education system is not serving the country’s current needs well, and without far-reaching reform it will hold back Egypt’s economic and social progress**”, the UPR revision in 2010 remained with a limited focus on eradicating illiteracy regarding the enjoyment of the right to education. Indeed it was the same year 2010 that Egypt won the UNESCO International Prize for Literacy.

Actually, **the education system in Egypt, at both the pre-university and higher levels suffers from endemic corruption and mismanagement.** Bureaucratic constraints, the lack of accountability or transparency and the lack of stakeholder involvement in agenda-setting or the monitoring of policy implementation, at even the basic school or university level, have resulted in **education programs and facilities that, in effect do not provide adequate access to quality education** for Egyptians. Those most adversely affected by inadequate or inaccessible (or, often, non-existent) facilities are girls and children from rural and low-income neighborhoods, who are now more exposed to violence after the announcement given by the Minister of Education giving the permission to teachers to beat children.

The high illiteracy rate is a continuous problem for Egypt, as of June 2011 report of the Council of Ministers' Information and Decision Support Centre, **nearly 27% of Egypt's 85 million citizens remain illiterate. The female illiteracy rate is even**

worse -- some 20% higher than among males, particularly in the 15 to 35 age group.¹⁷

However, alongside tackling illiteracy the remaining challenges of the education sector in Egypt need to be addressed effectively, including¹⁸:

- narrow access and limited opportunities for students;
- poor quality of educational inputs and processes;
- deficiencies and imbalances in graduate output relative to labor market requirements; and
- under-developed university research capability and linkages to the national innovation system.

Since the UPR revision, whereas several initiatives and campaigns can be counted regarding tackling illiteracy by the General Authority for Literacy and Adult Education and the Ministry of Education, including: the National Campaign for Literacy and the Renaissance of Egypt 2012 – 2020¹⁹ the core challenges that necessitate a comprehensive education strategy remain unaddressed.

Moreover, despite developments in **academic curricula and assessment practices in recent years, curricula still favor students who can memorize and who can afford test-oriented private tuition, thus further marginalizing those who cannot afford such support.** Wide-spread teacher-training has not translated to the effective adoption of teaching and assessment practices that ensure quality education for children in public schools and this is largely due to the insular, top-down nature of the above-mentioned reform initiatives.

Whereas enrollment in low-quality schools still counts as a violation of children's right to education, it is important to note that **expanding enrollment by building more schools and training more teachers will not address the problem as long as there is an absence of effective monitoring and accountability mechanisms to guide schools on the right path.**

In this regard we call the Egyptian authorities to:

- *Enhance linkage of public expenditure and aid flows in the education sector to clear policy and targeting mechanisms, considering regional and gender disparities.*
- *Improve the quality of public education through a comprehensive approach including: teachers, curriculum building and management in parallel in order to obtain similar quality of the educational process in public and private schools and to achieve equal opportunities in education and the labor market.*
- *Ensure the involvement of multiple actors and stakeholders from both the government and social sectors, as well organized stakeholder groups such as teachers, parents, and students in the oversight process, as the mere government oversight via quality assurance standards has not proven effective in enabling positive systemic change*

¹⁷ http://al-shorfa.com/en_GB/articles/meii/features/main/2011/08/05/feature-01

¹⁸ These challenges are noted in the OECD-World Bank Report and available at <http://www.oecd.org/edu/highereducationandadultlearning/44820471.pdf>

¹⁹ The National Campaign for Literacy and the Renaissance of Egypt “Together We Can” was launched in September 2011 by UNESCO Cairo and Beirut Offices in cooperation with the Egyptian Ministry of Education and the Adult Education Authority

- *Ensure that the structural reform in education involves an opening up of decision-making so that routine procedures may be monitored more effectively by civil society and government oversight bodies and so that reform and structural changes initiatives be open to public debate and responsive to multiple interests rather than just those of high-level decision-makers.*
- *Enforce mandatory schooling and introduce new legislation to allow for school children and graduates in special programs to be mainstreamed into the formal education system.*
- *Focus reform efforts at increasing and maintaining enrolment rates, reducing dropouts, building new schools in poor and highly dense areas, giving incentive premiums for teachers to serve in poor areas and expanding maintenance of the existing education infrastructure.*
- *Develop structures through which competing stakeholder interests given the impending fiscal constraints on the public sector and the expected budget cuts in higher education, ensure that the transparency is increased in higher education policy*
- *Ensure that effective negotiation processes are undertaken together with University financial officers and student representatives in the transition period. Such structures must include, primarily, the articulation of government commitments around enabling access to quality higher education, also the criteria by which such education is to be assessed (oversight checklists), and the budgetary and financial leeway and tools with which universities and the government should allowed to address the coming changes.*
- *Consider developing curriculum to include human rights and training on skills relevant for the job market, including in the area of vocational education and reform learners' assessment tools, as well curricula on reproductive health for Egyptian women.*

Recommendations Accepted Regarding Women and children

- *Advance in the promotion of the status of women in society in order to achieve full equality in rights between women and men in all matters*
- *Amend the Personal Status Law and Penal Code to guarantee equal rights for women and provide guarantees that domestic violence will be effectively prosecuted*
- *Consider elaborating an integrated national strategy to address the different forms of violence against women*
- *Consider further steps to ensure a high number of women in decision-making positions*
- *Continue its efforts to promote the political participation of women at all levels and to increase the representation of women in the judiciary*
- *Consider strengthening the Complaints Office of the National Council for Women and the helpline of the National Council for Children, building on past experience and with a view to strengthening the role and effectiveness of these two institutions throughout the Republic*
- *Continue efforts to improve the situation of women and their empowerment*
- *Continue implementing the National Illiteracy Eradication Project, giving priority to girls and women (check Education)*

- Continue its efforts in ensuring the improvement of the status of women, including through intensifying the implementation of programmes and activities for the **empowerment of women** and enhancing women's participation in the political field
- Continue its efforts to **eradicate female genital mutilation** and strengthen implementation of its laws and administrative decisions criminalizing its perpetrators
- Continue its policies in the area of the **promotion and protection of the human rights of women**
- Continue the implementation of effective programs for the **elimination of all forms of discrimination against women**
- Continue to adopt strategies to **combat discrimination** against women
- Further intensify its efforts to **promote gender equality, to combat violence** against women and girls, sexual harassment and abuse, and recognize the important role of non-governmental organizations in this field
- Increase cooperation and coordination between governmental institutions and the **National Council for Women** as the best framework to ensure that women's rights take root and promote women
- **Reform the Criminal Code** to punish all cases of sexual and domestic violence
- Strengthen efforts aimed at ensuring **equal rights** for women in the field of work
- Strengthen its policy on the **rights of the child**, with attention to the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children
- Implement programs **to fight against child labor**
- Strengthen the legal framework to fight all **crimes against children**
- Take concrete steps to increase the protection of women, ensuring that, complaints of **domestic violence** are properly registered and investigated by the police, and that perpetrators are prosecuted and convicted
- That the legislation related to **violence against women**, which would be promulgated based on the voluntary pledges made by Egypt, include provisions aimed at eliminating *de jure* and *de facto* discrimination against women

Implementation of Recommendations on Women and Children

Since 2010 UPR revision, especially during the peoples uprisings in Egypt **women's rights have been severely violated**. Women were at the forefront of the uprisings in the region. Their call was the same as men; including demand for dignity, freedom, democracy and respect for human rights. Nevertheless, the period of the people's uprising witnessed **severe discriminatory, abusive practices and violations of women's rights and derogation of women's dignity**. This included even the forced virginity tests undertaken to women activists in Tahrir Square and harassment and physical violence during March 8th 2011, International Women's Day.²⁰

On the contrary to the recommendation received on promotion of **women's political participation, the quota has been annulled and the representation of women in the last parliament came down to less than 2%**, also women remain excluded from the committee that formulated amendments to the constitution. Indeed, the committee's proposals included denying women the chance to run for the presidency.²¹ Moreover, **the number of ministerial positions held by women**

²⁰ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/mar/08/rival-protesters-clash-women-tahrir>

²¹ <http://www.amnesty.org.uk/content.asp?CategoryID=12069>

reduced to one from four.²² Following the call of women activists, the “Egyptian Prime Minister met with women's representatives and stressed the importance of women's participation in politics and public life but no concrete proposals for reform were undertaken”.²³ Even though the women’s activists, under Coalition of Egyptian Feminist Organizations, clearly stated their call²⁴ that:

- The forthcoming cabinet should include an adequate number of women whose efficiency and integrity has been proven, especially among those who courageously fought against the oppression and corruption of the former regime.
- Women should represent at least 30% of the members in all the committees formed, especially in the founding assembly that will be responsible of developing a new Constitution for Egypt.

The women’s political participation remains restricted aftermath of the revolution.

Regarding **the female genital mutilation**, whereas Egypt was recommended to eradicate FGM practices, aftermath of the revolution the practices undertaken in certain villages create intense concern. For instance, in violation of Egyptian law, which criminalizes FGM and international treaties ratified by Egypt, the FGM practices were undertaken through medical examination in the village of Abu Aziz in the Minya governorate, south of Cairo.²⁵ Furthermore, the Secretary of the Freedom and Justice Party for the People’s Assembly issued statements promoting FGM, this indeed have been criticized by the National Council for Women.²⁶ Such statements and campaigns promoting FGM have been closely followed as well by several civil society groups that highlight “submitting proposals to legalize crimes against women is considered a legislative corruption and a deviation of the legislative power”.²⁷

In order to ensure the basic rights of women, following the revolutions in Egypt, a joint initiative²⁸ launched by the Ministry of State for Administrative Development, the Social Fund for Development and the Civil Status Organization, and supported by UN Women and UNDP is a positive step. Nevertheless, this initiative aiming at on **ensuring ID cards to women** needs to be followed by genuine steps to ensure women’s economic, social and political participation in Egypt.

Regarding the empowerment of women, it is important to note that **only 16% of Egyptian full time workers are female. The lack of equal access to labor market and accordingly equal conditions in enjoyment of right to work still remains valid.**

²² <http://www.economist.com/node/21532256>

²³ <http://www.amnesty.org.uk/content.asp?CategoryID=12069%20>

²⁴ These calls were sent to the Prime Minister in an open letter on March 2011, available at <http://www.wluml.org/node/7020>

²⁵ <http://www.bikyamasr.com/68750/egypts-brotherhood-mobile-fgm-convoys-condemned-by-womens-group/>

²⁶ <http://www.bikyamasr.com/68750/egypts-brotherhood-mobile-fgm-convoys-condemned-by-womens-group/>

²⁷ <http://www.ecwronline.org/english/press%20reless/2012/Legalizing%20FGM%20is%20a%20misuse%20of%20Legislative%20tools%20en.pdf>

²⁸ <http://www.unwomen.org/2012/07/the-women-citizenship-initiative-will-ensure-citizenship-rights-to-two-million-women-in-egypt/>

Regarding child labor, although Egypt is a signatory of ILO Convention 138 on the minimum age for work, and 182 on the worst forms of child labor, there is a high number of child workers. According to latest survey results by CAPMAS, over nine per cent of Egyptian children are involved in child labor. This makes around 1.6 million underage workers between 5 and 17 years old. Whereas most of the children work in difficult conditions, the sector that hires child employees at most is agriculture with 68 percent.²⁹

Supporting the calls of Alliance for Arab Women and Egyptian Women Coalition and accordingly the Women Charter³⁰ that was signed by around half million people in June 2011, we call the Egyptian authorities to:

- *Adopt a comprehensive women's empowerment strategy, which equally necessitates genuine implementation of CEDAW in addition to withdrawal of reservations on CEDAW that are against the nature of the treaty itself.*
- *Ensure the efficient and effective work of the National Council for Women, working to protect and support women's rights*
- *Respect and fully implement the treaties that Egypt is a state party to and ensure that further amendments made on Personal Status Laws and FGM do not challenge Egypt's obligations but rather are made to ensure the full enjoyment of women's rights*
- *Take necessary measures to ensure equal opportunities between women and men in different areas of work in pay, promotion and training.*
- *Ensure reproductive rights of women in the labor laws to ensure women's access to maternity leave and child care and the provision of nurseries.*
- *Regarding Child's rights, continue in good practice of reporting to the Committee on the Rights of Child, but ensure the implementation of all recommendation received by the treaty body, including the last reporting in 2011.*
- *Ensure the adoption of the National Plan of Action for Children, which is announced to be a comprehensive ten-year action plan which will give priority to pertinent child protection issues, including child labor, poverty alleviation and children in street situations. Ensure that this process includes all relevant stakeholders, including civil society groups active in children's rights to effectively address the concerns.³¹*
- *Given that the accountability for the abuses women have experienced during the uprisings remain challenges by the trials held,³² ensure that the independence of the judicial system is ensured to end impunity and hold accountable those responsible for the severe violence occurred against women (and men) protesters.*

²⁹ <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/3/12/16406/Business/Economy/-million-underage-workers-in-Egypt-Official-figure.aspx>

³⁰ <http://www.unwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/charter-egyptian-women-en.pdf>

³¹ As noted by the CRC Concluding Observations, 2011

³² <http://www.hrw.org/news/2012/04/07/egypt-military-impunity-violence-against-women>

ANNEX

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