

ADVANCE QUESTIONS TO EGYPT

DENMARK

- Will Egypt ensure that all allegations of torture or other ill-treatment are promptly, thoroughly and impartially investigated and those responsible brought to justice? Will Egypt regularly provide disaggregated data on complaints of torture and other ill-treatment and action taken in response? When will Egypt adhere to OPCAT? Does Egypt intend to invite the Special Rapporteur on Torture and accommodate other outstanding visit requests from special procedures?
- Denmark is concerned by the seemingly increased level of discrimination and violence against the Egyptian Copts.
- Which steps does the Egyptian Government plan to prevent discrimination against religious minorities?
- Although Egypt has ratified CEDAW, it has upheld reservations to articles 2, 9 and 16. The UN considers articles 2 and 16 the core articles in CEDAW. Does Egypt intend to lift its reservations to the two core articles?

LATVIA

- According to the information by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, 65 countries from different regions of the world have issued standing invitations to all special procedures of the Human Rights Council. Considering previous cooperation with special procedures mandate holders and despite several still pending requests by special rapporteurs to visit Egypt - would your country consider extending a standing invitation to all special procedures of the Human Rights Council in the future?

SWEDEN

- According to credible information, including from the National Council for Human Rights in Egypt, torture remains one of the most serious human rights problems in Egypt. Torture has been reported on numerous occasions. Concerns have been raised that perpetrators of torture have not been brought to justice, but appear to enjoy impunity. Sweden takes note that most of the alleged torture cases take place in pre-trial detention. Of further concern to Sweden is that attempts to strengthen accountability for police officers charged with torture, as requested by the Egyptian Parliament, was rejected by the Ministry of Justice during 2009.

- Sweden would like to recall that torture and ill-treatment are among the most serious violations of human rights and human dignity. According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights no one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. No exceptions are permitted under international law. All countries are obligated to comply with the unconditional prohibition of all forms of torture and ill-treatment.
- Sweden would like to ask Egypt to elaborate on the reasons why the proposals for strengthened accountability were not accepted, and what strategy the Government of Egypt has adopted to eradicate torture, in line with its commitments under the Convention against Torture and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights? What in particular has been done to fight torture in pre-trial detention?
- Sweden is concerned regarding freedom of expression on the Internet in Egypt and notes with deep concern that censorship and monitoring of bloggers and others using the Internet have increased in recent years. In Egypt, one person currently serves a long prison sentence for his blogging activities but many others have been detained during shorter or longer periods of time. A very recent example is the one-day detention of a group of bloggers who in mid-January attempted to visit the location of the violent incident at the Coptic diocese in Naga Hammadi. Other bloggers have been harassed and threatened.
- Deprivation of liberty of persons solely for exercising their freedom of opinion and expression on the Internet is contrary to human rights law. Restrictions on the freedom of expression on the Internet must be in accordance with international human rights law, as laid down in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, art 19(3).
- Sweden recalls that the UN Human Rights Council at its twelfth session in October 2009 adopted by consensus a resolution on freedom of opinion and expression (A/HRC/RES/12/16) which recognises the importance of the Internet in the exercise, promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression and expresses its concern that Internet users are being censored.
- Could the Government of Egypt explain why harassment and detention of people using the Internet has increased in recent years? Sweden asks Egypt to elaborate on the actions taken to stop harassment, and to ensure freedom of expression on the Internet.
- Many credible reports, including from the National Council for Human Rights in Egypt and Amnesty International, conclude that a fundamental problem for implementation of human rights in Egypt rests with the continued enforcement of the State of Emergency, in force since 1981. This emergency legislation provides broad executive powers thereby effectively limiting the application of human rights and weakening credible accountability mechanisms.
- What action is taken by the Government of Egypt to ascertain that the planned anti-terrorism law, which is supposed to replace the emergency legislation,

will protect the enjoyment of human rights in line with Egypt's obligations under international law?

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN & NORTHERN IRELAND

- How often does Egypt meet or propose to meet with representatives of independent civil society to discuss their human rights concerns? How does Egypt propose to address their concerns for example on torture, freedom of religion and expression?
- Egypt asserts that the judgements of the courts, of the State Council and the Constitutional court have broken new ground on human rights and freedoms in the country. Could Egypt elaborate and provide an example where this has been the case?
- Have any of the recommendations made by the National Council for Human Rights not been implemented? Which ones and why not?
- How does Egypt plan to ensure that human and other rights are fully observed in the conduct of forthcoming elections, particularly freedom of expression association and assembly?
- What was the outcome of each of the cases cited in the National Report where the Office of the Public Prosecutor referred cases of torture and cruel treatment to the criminal courts and the disciplinary tribunals?
- When plans does Egypt have to ratify the Optional Protocol on the Convention Against Torture?
- How does Egypt define "threat to public security and public order"? Under what criteria is someone charged with this offence? And how many people are currently detained under this offence?
- What is the timescale for the new counter-terrorism law to be enacted? And what plans are there for full consultation with civil society
- Could Egypt provide details of the number and nature of incidents from 2007 involving people crossing the Egypt Israeli border, especially those that involved injury or death.
