



**National Association for the Defense of Rights and Freedoms
(Respect for human rights in the context of combating terrorism)
A report to the Human Rights Committee
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights ICCPR
The 137th Session (27 February 2023-24 March 2023)**

The international community has realized that terrorism is a global, multi-dimensional and cross-border phenomenon, after the terrorist wave the world has witnessed during the past years and has realized that terrorism has become a threat to society and undermines development gains, which requires collective action to confront the terrorist phenomenon in all its forms and manifestations and to address its root causes from a comprehensive perspective.

During the third round of the Universal Period Review 2019, Egypt received 9 recommendations in the field of combating terrorism, and those recommendations included a call to continue efforts to protect citizens from terrorism and to take the necessary measures to protect people's lives and to reconsider the definition of terrorism used in the Anti-Terrorism Law No. 94 of 2015 to prevent its use in Restricting rights and freedoms, such as freedom of opinion and expression, and other freedoms, and aligning it with international human rights standards, in addition to following up the implementation of national initiatives aimed at establishing reparation and compensation mechanisms for victims of terrorism.

In the light of these recommendations and based on the constitutional commitment to combating terrorism, the Egyptian legislator has developed a package of national legislation that is consistent with Egypt's regional and international commitments to combat terrorism, and that are also compatible with the United Nations strategy to combat terrorism and its financing. Consequently, Law No. 14 of 2020 amending some provisions of terrorist entities No. 8 of 2015 was issued to align the

provisions of this law with international standards. In addition to the issuance of Decision No. (457) 2020, the aim of this decision is to develop detailed and interpretive frameworks for the provisions of Law No. (80) of 2002 regarding combating money laundering, and to amend this law in line with and in line with international developments issued by the Financial Action Task Force.

Law No. (15) of 2020 was also issued amending Law No. 94 of 2015. This law was issued with the aim of amending the Anti-Terrorism Law and included the following: The law replaced the definition of funds or assets to include all virtual and physical assets, their return, and economic resources, and included virtual assets, with the intention of complying with the law with the amendments made to the evaluation methodology of the Financial Action Group related to virtual assets and service providers, and replacing what is meant by financing terrorism in Article 3 to include all funds resulting from any terrorist act, whether individual or collective, organized or unorganized, internal or external, directly or indirectly, as well as other amendments that have been added to this law in order to harmonize with international standards and enhance respect for human rights.

On the other hand, Prime Minister Decision No. (104) of 2021 was issued: regarding the executive regulations of Law No. (149) of 2019, which regulated the controls not to exploit civil work in the exercise of any terrorist or money laundering activities.

In 2013, the Egyptian government decided to allocate special departments for terrorists in the courts to hear terrorism cases, with the aim of achieving adjudication and speedy issuance of judgments and justice.

The decision to form these circuits came from the criminal courts of Cairo and Giza, after the approval of the Minister of Justice, after the repeated refusal and relinquishment of some courts from considering cases assigned in this regard. It is subject to the text of the decision defining its work, and no other ordinary criminal cases are assigned, out of keenness to achieve the goal of these departments, which is the speedy adjudication and completion of terrorism cases. These circuits were held by the criminal courts in Egypt, which indicates impartiality in these cases on the part of the judges, as trials in terrorism cases are carried out according to the Criminal Procedure Code, just like any other ordinary criminal cases. Therefore, the judiciary cannot be abused and accused of lack of impartiality, as the judiciary is an integrated system that works to achieve justice and ensure the protection of human rights, combat crimes and state stability.

As for the range of crimes that these departments undertake, it relates to crimes harmful to the public interest and state security internally and externally, communication and cooperation with foreign entities and countries with the aim of harming the country's interests, divulging state secrets related to national security, establishing and establishing groups that violate the provisions of the law, assaulting the personal freedom of a citizen or Other public freedoms and rights guaranteed by law and the constitution, and other crimes of terrorism and violence.

The national efforts to combat terrorism and move practically regarding the awareness and preventive part seek the following:

- Al-Azhar International Conference for the Renewal of Islamic Thought and Sciences. As a result of this conference, the Sheikh of Al-Azhar created a new body called "Al-Azhar Center for Heritage and Renewal", this body includes a group of university professors and specialists in the fields of knowledge.
- Formation of a committee comprising representatives of the ministries (Awqaf, Culture, Education, Youth and Sports) with the aim of preparing a moderate religious curriculum for students. In addition to many cultural convoys to contribute to confronting extremist ideology.
- In 2021, the Ministry of Awqaf intensified its efforts through sermons, lessons, training programs, or works of authorship, translation, and publishing, with the aim of confronting terrorism and intellectual extremism, in addition to providing Islamic centers and universities in various countries of the world with publications of the Ministry of Awqaf in Arabic and foreign languages, according to the language of each country. Cooperating with authorities concerned with combating terrorism and extremist ideology.
- Translating some of the series "Refuting Extremist Thought" and "The Truth of Islam" and other works with the aim of combating extremist thought and strengthening peaceful coexistence.

At the international level, Egypt expanded security cooperation agreements with countries to coordinate and develop security cooperation in various fields, especially combating terrorism. Egypt also included the most prominent elements fleeing abroad on terrorist lists, freezing their funds, and limiting their ability to implement their plans aimed at the domestic arena. In addition to cooperating with the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) and regional and Arab entities to issue red notices for fugitive leaders and elements at the international level.

Regarding the security aspect, according to the anti-terrorism security strategy, many measures have been taken to pursue terrorist organizations with the aim of undermining their ability to commit criminal operations, including:

- The discovery of many armed formations of terrorist elements.
- Monitoring the use of social media for many materials that attract young people to extremist and terrorist ideas by spreading rumors and accusing society of being infidels to achieve clear terrorist goals.
- Sharing information on highly dangerous elements of terrorism who have fled abroad through coordination with the Public Prosecution to prepare recovery files for them based on the frameworks of cooperation approved with countries of the other world.
- Providing the committee concerned with reservations with information related to economic institutions that support the Brotherhood financially, in preparation for issuing reservation decisions.
- Combating cross-border infiltration, confronting gangs smuggling weapons, ammunition, and explosives, and preventing them from reaching terrorist elements.
- Taking regulatory and legal measures to combat the illegal possession of firearms and ammunition to limit the ability of extremist elements to commit hostilities.
- Combating the phenomenon of foreign terrorists by tightening control over the legal outlets and discovering any attempts to enter the country by terrorist elements.
- Intimidation of citizens was monitored in places where the presence of terrorism increased, specifically in Sinai, which led to the assassination of many citizens for their dealings with the state and mutilation of their bodies.

Combating terrorism in Sinai and tightening security control there, which led to limited terrorist operations during the recent period compared to previous years, as law enforcement forces were able to eliminate the infrastructure of Ansar Bayt Al-Maqdis, which is present in an area in North Sinai.

Consequently, the Egyptian government has made a great effort in the field of combating terrorism, whether from a legal, security, or educational and preventive point of view, but there are some laws that restrict rights such as freedom of opinion and expression and freedom of assembly. Entities and individuals are considered terrorists based on police investigations only and without the occurrence of terrorist acts, and because of these amendments, the names of politicians were added to the terrorism circle, their money was seized, and they were prevented from traveling before verifying the charges against them, which requires consideration of these amendments so that penalties are imposed on them. Entities and persons after investigation with them and not vice versa. Other materials that were appropriate to the period in which they were issued but are no longer appropriate considering the decline in terrorist operations.

Despite the great efforts made by the Egyptian state in the field of combating terrorism and extremism and the multiplicity of initiatives and resolutions issued by the Security Council, society still suffers from the spread of this phenomenon, which requires enhancing the effectiveness of the efforts made by adopting a comprehensive approach to confront the phenomenon of terrorism so that it is not limited to security confrontation, but includes the economic, social, cultural, educational and development dimensions, in addition to focusing on the ideological dimension, which is considered the main catalyst for the commission of terrorist acts, with an emphasis on the lack of association of terrorism with any religion, culture or geographical area.

Based on the foregoing, the Egyptian state must:

- Continue to combat terrorism and take the necessary measures and actions to confront extremist activities.
- Amending the Anti-Terrorism Law in line with international standards for combating terrorism and in a way that enhances human rights.
- Canceling laws that restrict rights and freedoms that were issued for a specific purpose and are no longer necessary.
- The state is keen to ensure that the measures it takes to combat terrorism respect the basic rights and freedoms of citizens.
- Complete the disbursement of compensation to the victims of terrorism who were evacuated due to the terrorist operations that took place near their areas of residence.

- Ensuring international cooperation with the aim of undermining the ability of terrorist organizations to include new terrorist elements.
- International cooperation to hold accountable the countries that sponsor terrorism, arm and train its members, and allow them to move across their lands.
- Limiting the classification of persons and entities as terrorists simply because they say something or do something that contradicts the prevailing system.



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(Violence against women in Egypt)
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Introduction:

Violence against women is defined as any violent behaviour practiced against them, based on intolerance to sex, and leads to harm to them on the physical, psychological, and sexual aspects. Violence against women constitutes a clear and explicit violation of human rights, as it prevents them from enjoying their full rights. Violence against women is not linked to a particular culture, custom, or social class, but rather it is a general phenomenon, which has increased alarmingly in Egypt during the recent times, as women have become exposed to a lot of abuse, whether in the street or in the work environment, and the matter has reached violence within the family.

First: Female Genital Mutilation

Female genital mutilation is an attack on the physical and psychological integrity of women. Therefore, it is prohibited by international human rights conventions, starting with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international conventions related to civil and political rights, as well as economic and social rights. The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women stipulated in 1993 also indicated that female genital mutilation is a form of violence that occurs within the family, and

Article 4 of the Declaration obliges states to condemn this violence against women and not to invoke any custom, tradition or religious considerations to evade their obligations to eliminate it. The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) also indicated that female genital mutilation is a practice harmful to women's health and rights and represents a form of violence against women, and the Committee recommended that the States Parties to the Convention take appropriate and effective measures to eliminate this practice of female genital mutilation.

The phenomenon of female genital mutilation in Egypt is one of the most criminalized phenomena by law, but a large number of people have not recognized its crime, especially in rural areas in Egypt. This phenomenon of "female circumcision" is not associated with the Islamic religion in any way, or the invocation of religion to justify it. Due to its association with a number of social concepts and customs that society is trying to correct and society's belief in its connection to sexual activity and social pressures. The term "female circumcision" was not widely used by everyone, but the common term among the people was "purity"; to believe that an uncircumcised girl is not pure, or that her faith is not complete. Female genital mutilation carries health, psychological and social harm, and it is generally a violation of human rights. Because it is a harmful practice for a child who cannot give informed consent, the citizens also did not have sufficient awareness to criminalize the phenomenon, especially the doctors' willingness to approve of this crime in the event that the people attempted to commit the crime. Aggravating punishment for offenses against the physical integrity of a person and not a crime in itself, and there are those today calling for the abolition of this aggravating circumstance of punishment despite its ineffectiveness in combating the phenomenon of female genital mutilation, in addition to the absence of an organized and continuous national campaign to educate workers in the health sector and citizens about the seriousness of circumcision and its harms that science reveals the talk. In Egypt in 1883, the Egyptian Penal Code at that time criminalized every assault on the physical integrity of a person, male or female, but the will to resolve the issue was never explicit and clear to the legislator. As for Egyptian Law No. 126 of 2008, it also added a text to the Penal Code stressing the necessity of punishing the crime of intentional harm if the wound

occurred through a female circumcision procedure, taking into account the provisions of Article 61 of the Penal Code regarding the case of necessity. In 2016, the Egyptian Penal Code adopted the national strategy to eliminate female genital mutilation (FGM).

According to what was raised in the case related to the phenomenon of female genital mutilation, we note that the Egyptian legislation strives to limit this phenomenon that violates human rights, but there is a failure to spread awareness of this crime and its seriousness, especially in rural areas that did not believe until this time that this phenomenon is a crime punishable by law, and that crime was not limited to the physical violence of women, but also the psychological harm to them. Because the customs and traditions in many rural areas have permitted this crime and even punished it from a rural point of view for those who did not accept to commit it. Therefore, spreading awareness is necessary to reach remote areas where ignorance prevails over what should be in matters related to women's health and women's rights human in general.

Second: Abortion

Abortion is considered a misdemeanour in Egyptian law, but it may be a felony if it is carried out by means of violence or if it is carried out by a medical practitioner. The law does not require the lapse of a specific period from the beginning of pregnancy to criminalize abortion, and voluntary abortion is not permissible with the consent of the woman, and the law does not require a specific means for abortion. Egyptian law is strict in criminalizing abortion, but the incidents of abortion are not few in Egypt, despite the lack of convictions there. The insult in this crime is that it occurs in secret and is only discovered when the mother is exposed to death considering her conduct of this behaviour, and the severity of the punishment for abortion may push those wishing for it to resort to non-specialists, with the serious risks that this entails to the mother's health or to her life. Therefore, it may be appropriate to reconsider the ruling on some abortions while maintaining its criminalization. Therefore, we note that the Egyptian judiciary paid attention to this phenomenon of abortion, but the Egyptian legislation did not contain clear articles that helped criminalize those who commit this crime. However, this does not preclude the importance of the existence of laws and legislation, especially since the National Reproductive Health Strategy (2015) was recently adopted and

urges spreading awareness of the seriousness of this crime if the mother commits it, as well as stressing the punishment of those who help in carrying out this crime by illegal means.

Third: Sexual harassment

The phenomenon of sexual harassment is spreading in Egypt in a way that causes concern, and the Egyptian legal texts failed in deterring those who practice this behaviour. Regarding the Egyptian law dealing with the phenomenon of harassment of women, we note that there is no provision in the Egyptian law that explicitly uses the term sexual harassment, but there are several provisions in the Egyptian Penal Code that can punish most forms of harassment. The Egyptian Penal Code also dealt with the phenomenon of sexual harassment in several different aspects, but with regard to the text related to indecent assault, Articles No. 268 and 269 of the law dealt with sexual harassment in this form (indecent assault). In view of the exacerbation of the phenomenon (sexual harassment), Articles 306 (a) and 306 (b) of the Penal Code (2014) were amended to tighten the penalty for assaulting a female and introduce a new article for sexual harassment.

Fourth: Domestic violence

Domestic violence is considered as violence against women and includes physical, sexual, psychological and economic violence and was not limited to a specific group. Domestic violence is represented in several phenomena such as: mistreatment of women and the constant threat of assault on her, physical abuse by forcing her to do a specific behaviour such as circumcision, and sexual abuse represented by violating the immunity of her body through rape, indecent assault, sexual harassment, psychological abuse that undermines a woman's self-confidence, and economic abuse by depriving women of their financial rights. This requires consideration of the inheritance law. Wife rape also falls within the scope of the crime related to the felony of rape in the Egyptian Criminal Code. There is a legal movement in order to confirm the criminalization of the phenomenon of domestic violence against women in all its forms. In February 2021, the Egyptian Council of Ministers referred to Parliament an integrated proposal for the law, but it was met with societal controversy, and was criticized by many feminist

organizations, which justified their criticism by the fact that it did not resolve any procedural problem it suffered from. Women for many years, and this controversy resulted in the government withdrawing its project submitted to the Council.

Fifth: Violence against women in Egypt recently

1. Electronic extortion:

Electronic extortion is considered a crime punishable by law, through the blackmailer threatening and intimidating the victim by exposing him and publishing his privacy and violating it through social media or the internet in general, if he does not respond to what the blackmailer dictates to him, which are illegal demands, and the blackmailer intimidates the victim to implement it What he wants. With the increase in the number of women and girls using the Internet, not only did the percentage of cyber violence against them increase, but its forms varied, including online stalking, threats, extortion, sexual harassment, cyber bullying, surveillance, and computer spying. Although these risks to women and girls have become noticeable in the current period, there is still an acute lack of knowledge of some women and girls about ways to protect themselves and how to deal with these matters properly when they are exposed to any of these situations, which makes the matter worse. In Egypt, two cases recently committed suicide due to electronic blackmail. The first is B.K., a victim of electronic blackmail, who committed suicide in early 2022 because of the severe psychological pressure she was subjected to and fear of scandal. The blackmailer presented fabricated pictures of her with the aim of blackmailing and exposing her. From a legal point of view, Article 327 of the Egyptian Penal Code stipulates that anyone who threatens others in writing to commit a crime against himself or money shall be punished. This is a crime punishable by death, life imprisonment, rigorous imprisonment, disclosure of matters, or attributing matters contrary to honour, and the threat is accompanied by a request or waiver. He shall be punished with imprisonment if the threat is not accompanied by a request or order with an order, and whoever threatens another by speaking through another of the same thing mentioned, shall also be punished with imprisonment for a period not exceeding two years or a fine not exceeding five hundred pounds, whether the threat was accompanied by an authorization of an action.

Any written or verbal threat from someone else to commit a crime that does not reach the gravity shall be punished with imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months or a fine not exceeding two hundred pounds.

2. Killing young girls in Egypt

Recently, the phenomenon of killing women has increased in Egypt, and there is evidence that the same issue occurred in Arab countries in the same manner as in the Arab world, such as Jordan. We are facing a dilemma that takes us back to the Middle Ages, especially with the spread of crimes that shake the human conscience, which reinforces the idea of the return of a patriarchal society once again. During 2022, the Egyptian student "Nira Ashraf" _ a student studying at Mansoura University in Egypt_ was killed by her colleague because she refused to associate with him, until he decided to chase her and take revenge on her in front of the campus of Mansoura University publicly, and the crime moved to Port Said as well about the killing of women. Regarding the legal procedure for this incident, Article 474 of the Egyptian Code of Criminal Procedure stipulates that "execution of a death sentence requires a special procedure in a public prison, in the presence of a representative of the Public Prosecutor, the prison warden, the prison doctor or any other doctor assigned by the prison."

Conclusion and recommendations:

According to what has been mentioned, the National Association for the Defence of Rights and Freedoms has monitored and documented violations against women in Egypt recently, and through its electronic platform (Grandmother Amna's Tales platform), which monitored the suffering of Egyptian women, confirmed that violations against women are still increasing, which leads to the necessity Addressing the wave of violence against women in Egypt, despite the introduction of many legislations that defend Egyptian women and give protection to women, the biggest problem lies in the large gap within Egyptian society between society itself and women and their rights, and with the increase of that gap due to some misconceptions about religion Or the ancient legacies that degrade women in favour of men, which justifies the increase in violence against Egyptian women. From our reading and monitoring issues related to violence against women, we have some recommendations that may contribute to reducing the severity of violence against women. These recommendations are: In the following:

- (1) Spreading awareness of the need to apply the law strictly to perpetrators of crimes of violence against women in its various forms (female genital mutilation, abortion, and domestic violence).
- (2) Establishing offices in all departments to receive reports of sexual harassment, and that the person assigned to that task be an Egyptian woman.
- (3) Emphasizing the confidentiality of victims' information and prompt reporting through specialized offices within each police station to receive reports of sexual harassment, rape, and other sexual violence against women in Egypt.
- (4) The need to educate the people on how to treat women well, and there must be a legal text that criminalizes domestic violence in Egypt.
- (5) The need to expedite the issuance of a legal text for electronic extortion and its implementation.
- (6) The United Nations hastening to create an agreement or protocol confirming the punishment for whoever accepts the act of electronic extortion and the extent of the danger that the blackmailer will be exposed to in the event of this criminal act. Which enhances the status of women as well as spreading awareness of the danger of doing this act.
- (7) The need to educate citizens about the penalty resulting from electronic extortion and stress the application of the penalty immediately as soon as the crime occurs.
- (8) Establish clear legal mechanisms to hold the blackmailer accountable and quickly respond to complaints submitted in these cases.
- (9) Attempting to reduce violence directed at women, which has spread recently, and to take measures that would spread awareness about the danger of this behaviour to society in terms of its disintegration and the absence of security. As a result of this behaviour, girls will be in a state of permanent panic.
- (10) The existence of strict measures that punish perpetrators of crimes of violence against women, and then spread awareness in science houses, schools and

- universities, and eliminate the offensive intellectual content transmitted by social media regarding the entitlement of men and the ineligibility of women, which degrades the status of women and gradually demolishes their status.
- (11) Eliminate customs and traditions associated with misconceptions and change the mechanisms of society that degrade women by raising awareness by clerics and issuing correct fatwas that enhance the status of women, and giving speeches on the importance of the status and value of women and awareness about the consequences resulting from the practice of violence against them.
- (12) The existence of a strong reaction from the state, such as the issuance of strict laws that punish perpetrators of crimes of violence against women, such as murder, and stressing them, and even the union of the state and clergy to promote these ideas, through legal procedures that implement the sentence for the perpetrators of that crime immediately; Until you stop arguing about punishment from others.
- (13) Spreading awareness of the articles in the Egyptian constitution that clarify the punishment related to the commission of various crimes against women; So that no one accepts the act of that crime or something similar.
- (14) In the year 2022, it was clear evidence of the spread of the murder crime, so the case must be dealt with forcefully at the regional and social levels, and to acknowledge that the death sentence for the perpetrator was not the issue, but the response of actions to the incident changed and there was sympathy for the perpetrator, which suggests the collapse of customs and traditions.



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