



EURO-MEDITERRANEAN HUMAN RIGHTS NETWORK  
RÉSEAU EURO-MÉDITERRANÉEN DES DROITS DE L'HOMME  
الشبكة الأوروبية - المتوسطية لحقوق الإنسان

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## Two Years since Rabaa Massacre, Impunity still Reigns in Egypt

**Brussels, 14 August 2015:** *On this day two years ago, the Egyptian army and riot police launched a deadly onslaught on supporters of ousted President Mohamed Morsi, leaving hundreds dead and thousands injured.*

Our organisations call upon the European Union (EU) to strongly condemn the prevailing impunity and failure of the authorities to hold officials, police and army officers accountable for the use of excessive force against protesters.

The tragic dispersal of gatherings in al-Nahda and Rabaa al-Adawiya squares in Cairo marked a grim milestone in the crackdown on dissent, including civil society, peaceful protesters and human rights defenders. Instead of promoting “stability” as the Egyptian authorities claim, these heavy-handed actions have deepened a vicious cycle of violence and terrorism.

While Egypt paid lip service to a recommendation in the UN Universal Periodic Review to investigate excessive and lethal force by security forces to disperse peaceful protests, it has shown no commitment to conducting effective and impartial inquiries. Despite similar calls by the National Council for Human Rights for an inquiry into the Rabaa events, prosecutors have failed to thoroughly investigate any allegations of unlawful use of force by military or police officers. Since August 2013, only one policeman has been convicted for the murder of peaceful protester Shaimaa El Sabbagh.

Tens of thousands of protesters have been detained for alleged violations of the “Protest Law” whose draconian provisions breach the most basic international standards on freedom of association. Egypt also witnessed a sharp spike in death sentences over the past years, with 509 sentences in 2014 compared with 109 in 2013. Hundreds more are still on death row, including leaders of the outlawed Muslim Brotherhood movement as well as hundreds of alleged Morsi supporters. According to Amnesty International, seven men have been executed in Egypt in 2015 following grossly unfair trials, including in special military courts.

According to the “No to Military Trials for civilians” campaign, over 3,000 civilians were tried in military courts between April and December 2014. This trend was further consolidated by a series of legislative changes. In October 2014, the military jurisdiction was extended to apply to large parts of public spaces. Following an anti-terror law adopted in December 2014, another anti-terrorism bill is set to establish a special court with an exceptional judicial and appeal regime. This has taken place without parliamentary oversight as legislative elections, which were supposed to be organised in the summer of 2014, have yet to take place. According to the Tahrir Institute for Middle East Policy, 160 laws have been adopted by decree the last two years.



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Torture, ill-treatment and death in custody are rife in police stations and other places of detention. El Nadeem Center for Rehabilitation of Victims of Violence has documented at least 74 deaths in custody since the beginning of 2015, many as a result of inadequate medical care and torture. In June 2015, Freedom of the Brave, the outlawed April 6 Youth Movement and Students against the Coup reported an increase in enforced disappearances and arrests of young activists.

**In light of this, we urge the EU to:**

- Call upon the Egyptian authorities to conduct independent, impartial and effective investigations into alleged unlawful use of force by the police and the army;
- Call upon the Egyptian authorities to withdraw and review the Protest law;
- Ask the Egyptian government to impose a moratorium on the death penalty with a view to abolishing it;
- Urge the Egyptian judiciary to respect fundamental freedoms, including the right to a fair trial in accordance with international standards, and immediately release and drop the charges against all individuals detained solely for peacefully exercising their rights to freedoms of expression, association and assembly;
- Call upon the Egyptian authorities to revise the law on associations to comply with international human rights standards, including regarding access to foreign funding;
- Request the disclosure of the whereabouts of all detainees held incommunicado and immediately grant them access to their families, lawyers and doctors;
- Ban exports of surveillance technologies that could be used to spy on and repress citizens and uphold the ban on the export of security equipment or military aid which can be used for internal repression.

List of signatories:

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