

**COMBINED EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH PERIODIC REPORTS OF THE ARAB
REPUBLIC OF EGYPT**

Submitted to the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights

Introduction

1. As part of its ongoing commitment to cooperation with regional mechanisms for the promotion and protection of human rights, and as a demonstration of its willingness to fulfil its treaty obligations, the Arab Republic of Egypt is submitting its eighteenth (18th) periodic report to the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, in accordance with the provisions of Article 62 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. This report covers the main legislative and practical developments that have ensued between 2019 and 2024 in the implementation of the provisions of the Charter, in the light of the comments made by the Commission following its review of the previous report.
2. This report was drafted by the High-Level Standing Committee on Human Rights, an interministerial body established by decision of the Council of Ministers and operational since the beginning of 2020. The Committee is chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and brings together all ministries and public institutions concerned with human rights issues. It is responsible for monitoring the implementation of Egypt's international commitments under relevant regional and international legal instruments, proposing applicable legislative and regulatory measures, and developing a database of recommendations addressed to Egypt by international and regional mechanisms. It also analyses progress made, reviews human rights-related legislation and public policies, and monitors the implementation of the National Human Rights Strategy. Furthermore, the Committee provides technical support to national institutions, particularly for the creation of specialised human rights units within ministries and Governorates, and for the implementation of training programmes aimed at promoting a culture of human rights in sectoral policies and programmes.
3. In September 2021, Egypt launched its first National Human Rights Strategy (2021–2026) which was attended by the President of the Republic, demonstrating the importance ascribed by the Government towards attaining the objectives set out under the strategy. The strategy was developed by using a participatory approach involving ministries, public institutions and non-governmental organisations and was based on consultations with civil society representatives, and consistent with international best practices. It proposes a comprehensive and rigorous approach to

strengthening fundamental rights, taking into account the opportunities and challenges related to achieving its objectives in four main areas. It aims to make progress simultaneously on three complementary fronts: legislative reform, institutional strengthening and capacity building in the area of human rights. An annual report is published to assess the progress made, with three editions having been released to date.

Legislative developments relating to the implementation of the Charter during the period under review

- Law No. 148 of 2019 promulgating the law on social insurance and pensions;
- Law No. 151 of 2020 on the protection of personal data;
- Law No. 200 of 2020 establishing the "Capable in Different Ways" Fund for persons with disabilities, amended to strengthen its capacity to provide support and care services in all domains;
- Law No. 214 of 2020 regulating clinical medical research;
- Law No. 189 of 2020 amending certain provisions of the Criminal Code to introduce criminal penalties for acts of psychological harassment (intimidation);
- Law No. 10 of 2021 amending the Penal Code to impose tougher penalties on perpetrators of female genital mutilation;
- Law No. 141 of 2021 amending the Penal Code to combat sexual harassment.
- Law No. 22 of 2022 amending certain provisions of Law No. 82 of 2016 on combating irregular migration and migrant smuggling.
- Law No. 165 of 2022 amending Law No. 143 of 1994 on civil status, lowering the legal age for applying for a national identity card from sixteen to fifteen.
- Law No. 14 of 2022 amending Law No. 396 of 1956 on the organisation of prisons.
- Law No. 28 of 2023 amending Law No. 26 of 1975 on granting Egyptian nationality to children born to Egyptian mothers.
- Law No. 161 of 2023 allocating one billion Egyptian pounds to the "Capable in Different Ways" Fund, earmarked to support persons with disabilities.

- Law No. 182 of 2023 reorganising the National Childhood and Motherhood Council, raising its legal status and expanding its mandate as an independent constitutional body.
- Law No. 185 of 2023 amending the Penal Code, instituting tougher penalties for offences of assault and harassment (Articles 306a A and 306a B).
- Law No. 186 of 2023 amending the Children's Act, imposing tougher penalties for failure to register births.
- Law No. 171 of 2023 establishing the National Development Associations Alliance.
- Law No. 1 of 2024 amending the Code of Criminal Procedure No. 150 of 1950, allowing appeals against judgments handed down by Criminal Courts.
- Law No. 19 of 2024 on the protection of the rights of Older Persons.
- Law No. 164 of 2024 on the right of asylum for foreigners.

Policies and Measures aimed at Strengthening Human Rights Protection and Implementation of the Charter:

4. The Egyptian Government launched a national rural village development project dubbed "*Life with Dignity*" on 1 July 2021. This ambitious programme, structured in three phases, is intended to revitalise 4,500 villages and 28,000 hamlets spread across 175 administrative centres in twenty Governorates across the country. It is aimed at improving the living conditions of nearly 58% of the national population.

This project is part of a comprehensive approach to promoting economic and social rights, particularly in historically marginalised rural areas. It provides for a series of integrated interventions, including the establishment of essential infrastructure such as access to drinking water, sanitation, housing, the expansion of the school network and health centres, and the establishment of mechanisms to improve incomes and ensure a decent standard of living for rural communities. It contributes directly to the achievement of the objectives of the National Human Rights Strategy. The first phase, scheduled for completion in 2024, has a budget of 400 billion Egyptian pounds and covers 1,477 villages in 52 centres, impacting approximately 19 million citizens.

The second phase, which will begin in the 2024/2025 financial year, will cover an additional 1,667 villages and require an estimated investment of 700 billion Egyptian pounds. Furthermore, the electronic project monitoring system for the "*Life with*

Dignity" initiative has been integrated into the platform for initiatives to accelerate the Sustainable Development Goals, under the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA).

5. During the reporting period, several national strategies were adopted or updated with the aim of integrating human rights principles and concepts in their broadest sense across relevant sectors of intervention. As part of the strengthening of the national public strategies monitoring system, the Information and Decision Support Centre, which is responsible to the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, has compiled an inventory of nearly ninety (90) national strategies identified up to May 2024, with a view to improving monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. Among the strategies adopted and implemented are:
6. The update of the National Sustainable Development Strategy: Egypt Vision 2030, revised at the end of 2023, places human beings at the heart of the development process and emphasises the interdependence between economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. It includes strategic indicators to monitor progress towards each objective.
 - The third phase of the National Strategy on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings for the period 2022–2026.
 - The National Alternative Family Care Strategy (2021–2030), which aims to ensure that children are cared for by families or guardians, in accordance with the 2009 United Nations Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children, rather than being placed in institutions.
 - The National Population and Development Strategy (2023–2030), which is focused on striking a balance between population growth and development through the promotion of reproductive health, empowerment of women, investment in young people, improving access to education and raising awareness of population issues, while working to achieve socio-economic well-being for all citizens.
 - The National Strategy for Early Childhood Development and its 2024–2029 Action Plan.
 - The update of the Ministry of Education and Technical Education's Strategic Plan (2024–2029), which aims to ensure equitable access to quality education for all, without any form of discrimination.

- The National Anti-Corruption Strategy (2023–2030), the third phase of which has been officially launched.

The report is divided into two parts: the first presents legislative developments relating to the implementation of the provisions of the Charter, in accordance with the order of Articles 1 to 26, supplemented by data covering the years after 2019; the second part provides responses and clarifications to the Concluding Observations made by the Commission following its review of Egypt's Combined Report covering the period 2001–2017.

Article 2 – Principle of non-discrimination

7. The Egyptian Constitution, in its preamble and all its provisions, forms a coherent and indivisible legal framework, guaranteeing equality and non-discrimination through an integrated organic structure. It enshrines national unity based on the principles of equality, justice and equal opportunities for all citizens (Article 4), commits the State to ensuring equal opportunities without discrimination (Article 9), and guarantees equality between women and men in the exercise of their civil, political and cultural rights, in accordance with constitutional provisions. The State is required to take the necessary measures to ensure adequate representation of women in legislative assemblies, in accordance with the law, and to guarantee their right of access to public office, management positions and judicial functions, without discrimination (Article 11).
8. The Constitution affirms that all citizens are equal before the law and enjoy the same rights, freedoms and obligations, without distinction based on religion, belief, sex, origin, ethnicity, colour, language, disability, social status, political or geographical affiliation, or any other grounds. Under this constitution, any form of discrimination or incitement to hatred constitutes a criminal offence (Article 53) and it establishes equality between men and women in the granting of nationality, specifying that it is granted to any person born to an Egyptian father or mother (Article 6). Affirmative action measures are provided for in favour of women, including the allocation of at least a quarter of the seats in the House of Representatives (Article 102), while the Senate Act guarantees a quota of at least 10% of seats for women. The Constitution also guarantees the rights of persons with disabilities and dwarfs in all areas of activity, in accordance with the principles of fairness, justice and equal opportunity (Article 81).
9. The Egyptian legislative framework prohibits all forms of discrimination on any basis. The Penal Code provides for penalties against any person for any act of commission

or omission resulting in discrimination between individuals or against a group, based on sex, origin, language, religion or belief, when such discrimination compromises the principle of equal opportunity, social justice or public peace. The penalties incurred include imprisonment, a fine, or both.

Article 3 – Equality before the Law

10. The Egyptian Constitution enshrines the principle of equality for all before the law and guarantees everyone the right to benefit from its protection. All citizens are equal before the law, and the rule of law is the foundation of the governance system. The State shall, in accordance with the law, ensure the protection of victims, witnesses, defendants and whistleblowers, when circumstances so require. The right of access to justice is recognised for all persons without distinction (Articles 52, 94, 96 and 97 of the Constitution). The Supreme Constitutional Court has, in numerous decisions, reaffirmed that all Egyptian constitutions have incorporated the principle of equality before the law and guaranteed its application to all citizens. This principle is considered the foundation of justice, freedom and social peace, and is essentially aimed at protecting the rights and freedoms of citizens against any form of discrimination that could compromise or restrict their exercise.

Article 4 – Right to life and personal integrity

11. Egypt reaffirms its commitment to the right to life, which is considered the supreme and inviolable right inherent to the human person and the foundation of all other rights and freedoms. Under Egyptian law, this right enjoys absolute protection against arbitrary deprivation in all circumstances, as specified in the previous report submitted to the Commission.

12. Just like in many States, Egyptian law provides for the death penalty for the most serious offences, such as premeditated murder, poisoning, acts of terrorism or espionage. However, this penalty is subject to a set of safeguards designed to reconcile society's right to general deterrence with the individual's right to life. These safeguards include compliance with fair trial standards, protection against inhuman or degrading treatment, and consideration of the psychological needs and religious beliefs of the condemned person prior to execution.

13. It is worth noting the adoption of Law No. 1 of 2024, which establishes a two-tier system of jurisdiction in criminal matters. Thus, any person sentenced to death may appeal to a criminal court of appeal and then lodge an appeal with the Court of Cassation. Furthermore, judgments imposing the death penalty must be submitted

to the Court of Cassation, even if the convicted person does not appeal, in order to verify their compliance with the law, in recognition of the seriousness of this penalty and with a view to ensuring that it is imposed only in strict compliance with the facts and the law.

Main safeguards governing the enforcement of the death penalty:

- a) The death penalty is reserved for extremely serious criminal offences, which means that the accused benefits from the procedural safeguards provided for in criminal courts (Articles 366 to 397 of the Code of Criminal Procedure).
- b) The death penalty may only be imposed by a unanimous decision of the judges (Article 381 of the Code of Criminal Procedure), contrary to the general rule of a majority decision. This requirement is intended to ensure that the conviction is based on an incontrovertible verdict of the accused's guilt, the strength of the evidence and the consistency of the proceedings. If any of the judges express doubt, the death penalty cannot be imposed.
- c) The public prosecutor is required to refer cases resulting in a death sentence to the Court of Cassation, even in the absence of an appeal by the convicted person, in accordance with Article 46 of Law No. 57 of 1959 on cassation appeal procedures. This procedure is intended to enable the Court of Cassation — which is at the top of the judicial hierarchy — to verify that the judgment imposing the death penalty complies with legal standards.
- d) The Minister of Justice is required to forward the file of any case resulting in a final death sentence to the President of the Republic, who may exercise his right to pardon or commute the sentence (Article 470 of the Code of Criminal Procedure).
- e) The presence of a defence lawyer is mandatory before the public prosecutor and throughout the judicial proceedings (Articles 275 and 376 of the Code of Criminal Procedure).
- f) It is prohibited to impose the death penalty on an accused person who is under the age of 18 at the time of the offence, in accordance with Article 111 of the Children's Act No. 12 of 1996, as amended by Act No. 126 of 2008.

- g) The execution of the death penalty against a pregnant woman is suspended until two years after childbirth, in accordance with Article 68 of the Law on the Organisation of Penitentiary Institutions, as amended by Law No. 106 of 2015.
 - h) It is prohibited to carry out the death penalty on official or religious holidays specific to the convicted person's religion, in accordance with Article 475 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.
 - i) In accordance with Article 472 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, a person sentenced to death has the right, if they so wish, to meet with their relatives or a minister of religion on the day set for the execution of the sentence, outside the place of execution. Where the religion of the convicted person requires specific rites, such as confession or any other spiritual obligation, the competent authorities are required to make the necessary arrangements to allow access to a religious representative.
 - j) The execution of the death penalty must be carried out under the supervision of a representative of the public prosecutor's office, in the presence of the director of prisons and a doctor, in accordance with Article 474 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. The presence of the doctor is intended to guarantee respect for the dignity of the body before and after the execution, and to ensure that it is carried out without unnecessary prolongation of suffering.
 - k) The convicted person's lawyer must be allowed to attend the execution. The sentence and the title of the offence must be read out publicly at the place of execution. If the condemned person wishes to make a statement, it shall be recorded in a report drafted by the representative of the public prosecutor's office. The latter must also prepare a report of the execution, including the medical certificate of death and the exact time of death (Article 474 of the Code of Criminal Procedure).
14. The body of the convicted person is buried at the expense of the State, unless their relatives express a wish to pay for the funeral. The burial must take place without ceremony (Article 477 of the Code of Criminal Procedure).

15. Article 111 of the Children's Act explicitly stipulates that no death penalty, life imprisonment or aggravated detention may be imposed on an individual who was under the age of 18 at the time of the offence. Egyptian case law emphasises the need to verify the age of the accused at the time of the offence, considering this verification to be essential. The Court of Cassation has overturned death sentences due to a lack of evidence regarding the age of the accused.
16. The National Human Rights Strategy includes among its objectives a review of the legal framework applicable to the most serious offences punishable by death, taking into account social realities, specialised studies and international and regional commitments ratified by Egypt.

Article 5 – Recognition of legal personality and prohibition of torture

17. Articles 6 and 80 of the Egyptian Constitution guarantee the right to nationality for any person born to an Egyptian father or mother. It also enshrines the right to legal recognition and the issuance of official documents certifying personal identity. The Civil Status Law No. 143 of 1994 establishes a comprehensive framework for birth registration and the issuance of national identity cards. It entrusts the Civil Status Authority with the creation of a national database assigning each citizen a unique identification number, valid from birth and throughout life, including after death. All State institutions are required to use this number in their interactions with citizens.
18. The law requires all citizens who have reached the age of 15 to apply for an identity card from the relevant Civil Registry Office within six months. The identity card constitutes official proof of the accuracy of the data it contains, and both public authorities and private entities are required to refer to it to establish the identity of its holder.
19. In accordance with Article 52 of the Constitution, torture in all its forms is an offence that is not statute-barred. The Egyptian Penal Code adopts a graduated and proportionate approach to criminalisation and punishment, depending on the seriousness of the violation of the protected right. It criminalises all forms of torture (Articles 126, 129, 375a and 375a), whether motivated by the search for information or confessions, punishment, intimidation, coercion or discrimination. Articles 117, 127 and 280 of the Criminal Code also punish inhuman or degrading treatment inflicted by a public official, whether physical, verbal or insinuating, which violates dignity or causes physical suffering. Article 40 establishes a general rule whereby any person who incites, agrees to or assists in the commission of a crime, including

torture, is considered a co-perpetrator. Article 41 provides that accomplices are liable to the same penalty as the principal perpetrator.

20. The national human rights strategy, in its first pillar devoted to civil and political rights, aims to promote the right to life and physical integrity. It seeks to disseminate an informed legal culture on practices that constitute cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. This approach includes the launch of awareness-raising campaigns to prevent and combat all forms of violence, as well as capacity building and professional awareness-raising for State officials working in this focal area.

(Article 6) Liberty and Personal Security

21. The Egyptian Constitution enshrines essential guarantees for the preservation of liberty and personal security (Articles 54 and 55), including the requirement that any arrest, search, detention or restriction of liberty may only take place in cases of being caught in the act or on the basis of a reasoned judicial warrant required by the investigation. Any person whose liberty is curtailed must be informed of the reasons for this measure, be notified in writing of their rights, and be able to contact their relatives and consult a lawyer immediately, from the evidence-gathering stage onwards, as well as during the investigation and trial stages. After questioning, the judicial police officer is required to present the arrested person to the competent authorities — the public prosecutor or investigating judge — within 24 hours, in order to proceed with the investigation and decide on their fate. The investigation may only begin in the presence of the person's lawyer; failing this, a lawyer must be appointed *ex officio*, with the obligation to provide the necessary assistance to persons with disabilities. The Constitution also recognises the right of any person deprived of their liberty — or any other person — to challenge this measure before the courts, which must rule within one week, failing which immediate release is required. In all circumstances, it is prohibited to try a defendant in a case punishable by imprisonment without the presence of a lawyer, whether appointed or assigned.
22. Article 99 of the Constitution stipulates that “any violation of personal freedom, the privacy of citizens, or other public rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution and the law constitutes an offence that is not statute-barred, both in criminal and civil matters. The victim may bring a direct criminal action. The State guarantees fair compensation to any person who has suffered injury. The National Human Rights Council is empowered to refer any violation of these rights to the public prosecutor and may intervene in civil proceedings alongside the victim, at the latter's request, in accordance with the law.”
23. The national legislative framework contains numerous provisions aimed at giving effect to constitutional guarantees relating to liberty and personal security. For exam-

ple, Article 22 of the Code of Criminal Procedure establishes that judicial police officers are responsible to the Attorney General and are subject to his supervision in the exercise of their duties.

24. The draft reform of the Code of Criminal Procedure addresses fundamental issues such as the regulation of pre-trial detention and the reduction of its duration, with the obligation to release immediately upon expiry of the maximum period. It also provides for the creation of mechanisms for appealing against pre-trial detention decisions, as well as material and moral compensation for persons unjustly detained. The text emphasises the application of alternative measures to detention, under judicial supervision at all levels.

(Article 7) Right to Judicial Remedy

25. The Constitution affirms that the right to judicial remedy is inviolable and guaranteed to all persons. The State undertakes to bring the courts closer to the citizens and to speed up the processing of cases. It is prohibited to remove any administrative act or decision from judicial review. No one may be tried except by their natural judge, and special courts are prohibited (Article 97). The laws relating to civil and commercial procedures, the Code of Criminal Procedure, the Council of State and the Supreme Constitutional Court enshrine the right of access to justice and equality before the law and the courts. Any person with a personal and direct interest, even if only potential, may bring a case before the courts by means of an action, a petition or a defence based on the law.
26. The Constitution stipulates that all accused persons are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a fair trial, with guarantees of defence (Article 96). When appearing before the public prosecutor, the identity of the accused is verified, they are informed of the charges against them, and the investigation is conducted by the public prosecutor's office. If the accused is a foreigner or has a disability, experts are appointed to ensure that they understand the facts and are able to defend themselves. They have the right to choose an interpreter. The accused is given the time and facilities necessary to prepare their defence and contact a lawyer of their choice. The law prohibits any questioning or cross-examination without the presence of a lawyer. If the accused does not appoint one or if the lawyer is absent, the investigator is required to appoint one for them. The lawyer may record all their means of defence in writing in the investigation reports. The accused has the right to communicate freely with their lawyer, to consult the investigation file and to obtain copies of it at least one day in advance of any questioning or cross-examination. Under no circumstances may the accused be separated from their lawyer during the investigation.
27. On 25 October 2021, the President of the Republic took the decision not to extend the state of emergency throughout the national territory, marking a major step forward in strengthening the guarantees of a fair trial. In January 2024, a reform of the Code of

Criminal Procedure was adopted, allowing appeals against decisions handed down by criminal courts. From now on, the accused will have the right to a second hearing, in addition to the right to appeal to the Court of Cassation. The law also regulates the procedures for appointing a lawyer for persons who are unable to hire one, with the fees being paid by the Treasury.

28. Since 2020, the Ministry of Justice has been implementing a comprehensive plan to modernise the legal system in its human, technical and technological dimensions, in order to strengthen the right to judicial remedy and ensure effective justice. This plan includes improving the skills of members of the judiciary through 440 training sessions organised in partnership with national and international institutions, which have benefited 10,808 magistrates. It also includes the modernisation of hundreds of courts, the opening of new courts, and the development of the infrastructure necessary for the implementation of electronic litigation at all stages, which is already operational in economic courts nationwide and is being rolled out to all courts.
29. As part of the effort to achieve effective justice, the average rate of enforcement of decisions handed down by Egyptian courts over the past two years stands at 85% for civil cases, 95% for family cases, 91% for disputes before the courts of first instance, 100% for criminal cases, and 70% for disputes before the economic courts.

(Article 8) Freedom of Worship and Conscience

30. The Egyptian Constitution enshrines the principle of freedom of belief, the exercise of religious rites and the establishment of places of worship. Articles 3, 53 and 64 stipulate that the principles of the religious laws of Egyptian Christian and Jewish citizens constitute the main source of legislation governing their personal affairs, religious practices and the choice of their spiritual authorities. All citizens are equal before the law and enjoy the same rights, freedoms and public obligations, without discrimination based on religion or belief. Freedom of belief is absolute, and the freedom to practise religious rites and build places of worship for monotheistic religions is a right enshrined in law.
31. Law No. 80 of 2016 on the organisation, construction and restoration of churches was promulgated, affirming the right of Egyptian Christian citizens to build and restore their churches, thus guaranteeing their freedom of worship. This law introduced for the first time a specific legislative framework defining the rules and procedures to be followed to obtain authorisation for work related to religious buildings. It also provides mechanisms for regularising previous administrative offences and legalising buildings where religious rites have been practised, considering any ecclesiastical building existing on the date of entry into force of the law as an authorised church, subject to proof of ownership by the applicant and the structural integrity of the building. By the end of 2024, 3,453 churches and buildings had been regularised under this

law. Furthermore, thirteen Jewish sites, including synagogues and heritage sites, have been restored.

32. Numerous initiatives have been launched to promote the values of tolerance and respect for cultural and religious diversity. These include awareness campaigns conducted by Al-Azhar to disseminate the principles of authentic Islam, particularly tolerance and acceptance of others, as well as the production of multilingual audiovisual content aimed at promoting a culture of respect for religious freedoms and the sanctity of places of worship. The campaign dubbed "A homeland that unites us - Love and peace" aims to train young people to counter rumours and spread tolerance among all components of society. The Coptic Evangelical Organisation has also launched similar initiatives, such as "Our value lies in our humanity", "Our unity in our diversity", "Our Heritage Unites Us," and "Message of Brotherhood, Dialogue and Tolerance." The "Salam Centre for Studies on Extremism," affiliated with Dar al-Ifta, was established, and a scientific guide to combating extremism was published, highlighting authentic religious texts and combating extremist abuses in the name of religion. Law No. 190 of 2020 was adopted to establish the religious property authorities of the Catholic Church and the Evangelical community.
33. The Ministry of Higher Education launched a national strategy to combat extremism and takfirist ideologies (based on the practice of excommunication) in Egyptian universities for the period 2019–2023, defining objectives, policies, programmes and plans aimed at identifying manifestations of these ideologies and analysing the strengths and weaknesses of the system in this regard.

(Article 9) Right of Access to Information

34. The Constitution stipulates that official information, data, statistics and documents belong to the people. It requires the State to disclose them and make them accessible to all citizens, in a transparent manner, from their various sources; the law also determines the terms and conditions of access (Article 68). It also guarantees freedom of the press, printing and publication in all its forms — written, audiovisual and digital — and recognises the right of Egyptian citizens to own and create newspapers, audiovisual media and digital platforms (Article 67). The publication of newspapers is authorised upon simple notification, in accordance with the procedures defined by law. The Constitution prohibits any censorship of newspapers and media, except in times of war or general mobilisation. It prohibits custodial sentences for offences committed through publication or public dissemination, with the exception of offences related to incitement to violence, discrimination or damage to the reputation of individuals, for which penalties are determined by law (Article 71). It guarantees the independence of public media institutions, their neutrality, their ability to reflect all political, intellectual and social opinions and orientations, and equality and fairness in access to public opinion (Article 72).

35. The Egyptian media landscape is characterised by its diversity, including both public and private institutions. There are more than 580 registered newspapers, more than 74 authorised satellite channels, more than 200 approved websites and more than 14 radio networks. The laws governing the press and media reinforce their independence by allowing publication upon simple notification and prohibiting the prosecution of journalists and media professionals for expressing their opinions. They guarantee the right of access to information, protect journalistic sources, and prohibit the confiscation, suspension or closure of print or electronic newspapers and audiovisual media. It is prohibited to search the office or home of a journalist or media professional for an offence related to publication, except in the presence of a union representative. No journalist or media professional may be prosecuted for criticising the actions of a public official, parliamentarian or civil servant, unless it is proven that the criticism is unrelated to the duties or mandate of the person concerned. The High Council for Media Regulation shall ensure a balance between press and media freedom, democratic principles, non-discrimination and the rights of readers and viewers.
36. The State undertakes to respect the constitutional prohibition of any custodial sentence for offences committed through publication or public dissemination, in accordance with international practices. In 2018, a law on cybercrime was adopted to strike a balance between freedom of expression, the right to privacy and the fight against the illegal use of electronic documents.
37. In terms of access to information, government ministries and institutions are making considerable efforts to facilitate access to certified official data. These entities include the Information Centre of the Council of Ministers and the Central Public Mobilisation and Statistics Agency, which provide data and statistics to meet the needs of State institutions, the private sector, universities, researchers, and human rights actors. The Official Gazette and official acts, available online, publish this information. The Presidency of the Republic, the Council of Ministers and all ministries have launched official websites and portals on the internet and social media to disseminate data. As part of the digital transformation, the State has expanded the creation of documentation and information centres within public administrations and institutions, using digital preservation technologies and disseminating this data via the "Egypt Information" portal, which is a channel for publication, access to information and receipt of requests.
38. In order to strengthen citizenship participation, the Council of Ministers has set up the interactive platform "Hiwar" (Dialogue), dedicated to identifying societal priorities and developing concerted solutions to the challenges faced by Egyptian society, with a view to sustainable development. This platform enables rapid interaction with citizens, while guaranteeing confidentiality and the protection of personal data. It aims to establish a space for dialogue between citizens and civil society organisations on the one hand, and State institutions on the other, in order to support the development

of public policies and the implementation of corrective measures in a participatory and effective framework.

(Article 10) Right to Freedom of Association

39. The Constitution guarantees citizens the right to form associations and civil institutions based on democracy, by granting them legal personality upon notification, while prohibiting the administration from interfering in their affairs, dissolving them or dissolving their boards of directors or trustees, except by judicial decision. It also prohibits the creation or maintenance of associations or institutions engaged in secret, military or paramilitary activities (Article 75).
40. Law No. 149 of 2019 on the formation of associations and its implementing regulations published in January 2021, were adopted following a consultation process involving more than 1,300 representatives of Egyptian and foreign non-governmental organisations from all regions of the country. This new legislative framework introduces unprecedented provisions that address concerns raised by previous legislation. It establishes the creation of associations and institutions by simple notification, abolishes all custodial sentences, facilitates the receipt of foreign funding, and sets up an electronic platform to support civil society organisations in their registration or regularisation. An integrated electronic system has been launched to organise and facilitate the work of associations, offering document management, case and complaint handling services, among others. The number of national and foreign organisations that have submitted applications for regularisation exceeds 35,770, of which 34,756 have completed their applications, in paper and electronic format, while the others are currently being reviewed. Furthermore, 60 foreign organisations have had their status regularised. The total volume of funding received by civil society institutions between 2019 and 2024 exceeds 24 billion Egyptian pounds.
41. The year 2022 has been proclaimed the "Year of Civil Society" in Egypt, in recognition of the vital role it plays. Pending disputes have been resolved, notably case No. 173, known in the media as the "foreign funding case", the investigation into which was definitively closed in March 2024. Additionally, the political authorities responded promptly to several demands arising from the national dialogue, particularly, regarding the release of convicted persons who fulfilled the conditions for a presidential pardon.

(Article 11) Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association

42. The right to assemble or demonstrate peacefully is a form of collective expression guaranteed by the Constitution. Citizens have the right to organise public meetings, marches, demonstrations and all forms of peaceful protests, subject to notification in accordance with legal provisions. The Constitution also guarantees the right to peaceful private assembly without prior notification and prohibits the security forces from attending, monitoring or listening in on such assemblies (Article 73).

43. Law No. 107 of 2013 on the organisation of the right to public assembly, procession and peaceful demonstration was promulgated, enshrining this right by simple notification. It authorises citizens to organise a public meeting, procession or demonstration, provided that they inform the police station with territorial jurisdiction at least three working days before the scheduled date, and no later than fifteen days before. In the case of an election meeting, this period is reduced to twenty-four hours. The notification must specify the location of the meeting or the route of the procession or demonstration, the start and end times, the theme, the objectives, the demands and the slogans used by the participants, in order to assess their compliance with the Constitution and the law, and to prevent any gathering aimed at inciting discrimination, hatred or the commission of offences (Article 8).
44. The law prohibits the organisation of public meetings of a political nature in places of worship, their annexes or their surroundings. It also prohibits any breach of public safety, damage to facilities, or the use of weapons that could endanger peoples' lives, property or infrastructure (Articles 5, 6 and 7).
45. The Minister of the Interior, in collaboration with the relevant Governor, is required to issue a decree defining a security perimeter around sensitive sites, such as the presidency, legislative assemblies, diplomatic representations and international organisations, government, military, security and control establishments, courts, public prosecutor's offices, hospitals, airports, oil installations, educational establishments, museums and archaeological sites, as well as other public infrastructure. Participants are prohibited from exceeding the limits of this perimeter (Article 14).
46. Security forces are required to take the necessary measures to ensure the safety of public meetings, processions or demonstrations that have been notified, and to guarantee the protection of participants, persons and public and private property, without hindering the purpose of the gathering (Article 11). If a reprehensible act or a breach of the peace of the gathering occurs during the gathering, uniformed security forces, on the orders of the competent field commander, may disperse the meeting or procession and arrest the perpetrators of the offences. Article 12 requires security forces to proceed as follows: First, invite participants to disperse voluntarily, issuing repeated and audible verbal warnings, specifying safe exit routes. Secondly, in the event of refusal, the security forces may resort to graduated measures: use of water cannons, then tear gas, then batons. If these measures prove ineffective or if acts of violence, sabotage or aggression are committed, the law authorises the progressive use of force: warning shots, stun grenades or smoke grenades, then rubber bullets, and finally non-rubber bullets.

In the event of the use of firearms by participants, creating a situation of self-defence, the security forces may intervene in proportion to the danger threatening persons, property or infrastructure.

(Article 12) Freedom of Movement and Residence

47. Freedom of movement and residence is a fundamental right that must be guaranteed to all citizens. Any restriction on this right must be based on a legitimate reason, otherwise, it constitutes an infringement on individual freedom. The Constitution affirms that freedom of movement, residence and migration is guaranteed, and prohibits the expulsion of any citizen from the national territory or the prevention of their return (Article 62).

Right to leave and return to the country

48. The Egyptian Constitution explicitly prohibits any ban on a citizen leaving the national territory, as well as any house arrest or restriction of residence in a specific area, except by virtue of a reasoned judicial decision, for a limited period and in the cases provided for by law (Article 62). Additionally, Law No. 97 of 2015 amending the legislation on illicit enrichment, as well as Law No. 175 of 2018 on combating cybercrime, authorise the competent judicial authorities — where there is evidence to support the seriousness of the charges — to prohibit a defendant from travelling abroad or to place their name on border watch lists, while guaranteeing their right of appeal before the competent court.

Right to seek political asylum

49. The Constitution grants the State the power to grant political asylum to any foreigner persecuted for defending the interests of peoples, human rights, peace or justice, and prohibits the extradition of political refugees (Article 91). Egypt's protection policy extends beyond political refugees to include persons displaced for humanitarian reasons, forced to flee their country due to armed conflict or internal unrest. No penalties may be imposed on them for entering or staying in Egyptian territory illegally, and their expulsion is only permitted on grounds of national security or public order. Refugees have the right to challenge any decision to expel or remove them before the competent court.
50. In Egypt, refugees enjoy enhanced guarantees against expulsion or repatriation, greater than those granted to foreigners on ordinary or temporary residence, due to their humanitarian situation, in accordance with the principle of human solidarity. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is responsible for determining refugee status, in accordance with the memorandum of understanding signed between the UNHCR and Egypt in 1954, ratified by Law No. 172 of the same year.
51. Egypt hosts 10.7 million foreigners, including migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, from 62 nationalities. It ensures their access to essential services and their integration into society, without requiring them to reside in camps or refugee centres.

Migrants and refugees, as well as their children, have equal access to health and education systems. They are provided with comprehensive primary health care and are included in national health campaigns and programmes. In response to the continuing increase in the number of refugees and asylum seekers, Law No. 164 of 2024 on the asylum of foreigners was promulgated. It is in line with Egypt's international commitments and the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, guaranteeing their protection and the enjoyment of all the rights and freedoms provided for in that Convention. The law established a National Commission responsible for managing refugee affairs and reviewing individual asylum applications within specified time limits, under full judicial supervision, with priority given to persons with disabilities, older persons, pregnant women, unaccompanied children, and victims of trafficking, torture and sexual violence. The law explicitly prohibits the refoulement or forced expulsion of refugees to a place where they would be exposed to danger, and guarantees their right to voluntary return to their country of origin or residence, voluntary resettlement in another country, or acquisition of Egyptian nationality.

(Article 13) Right to Participate in Public Life

52. The Constitution guarantees citizens the right to participate in the management of public affairs through referendums and general elections for the presidency of the Republic, the parliamentary chambers (House of Representatives and Senate) and local councils. It affirms that the people are the source of all powers and that the political system is based on political and partisan pluralism (Articles 4 and 5). It guarantees the freedom to form political parties and the right to participate in elections. The Constitution reserves at least 25% of seats in the House of Representatives and local councils for women, and 10% of seats in the Senate. It also provides for quotas for workers, farmers, Christians, persons with disabilities, young people and Egyptians residing abroad (Articles 243 and 244).
53. In accordance with these constitutional provisions, several pieces of legislation have been adopted or updated to guarantee citizens the exercise of their political rights, including the law on the exercise of political rights, the law on the National Elections Authority, the law on presidential elections, the law on the division of electoral constituencies, the law on political parties, the law on the House of Representatives and the law on the Senate.
54. The Law on the Exercise of Political Rights provides for the automatic registration of citizens on the electoral roll on the basis of their national identity card data from the age of 18. It facilitates voting for persons with disabilities and enhances the transparency of the electoral process through the use of indelible ink, transparent ballot boxes, the announcement of results at polling stations, and the presence of observers from the media and civil society.

55. The National Electoral Authority has been established as a permanent body responsible for supervising the entire electoral process, from its launch to the declaration of the results. It enjoys technical, financial and administrative independence. The legal framework governs electoral appeals, specifying the courts with jurisdiction to rule on the regularity of the vote, the declaration of results, or the validity of mandates. The law on the exercise of political rights also regulates electoral financing and propaganda, ensuring fairness and transparency among candidates.
56. Legislative elections for the House of Representatives and the Senate were held in October 2020, marking the first elections since the 2019 constitutional revision that established a second parliamentary chamber: the Senate. The elections to the House of Representatives resulted in the election of 165 women, representing approximately 27% of the members, 123 young people under the age of 40, 9 persons with disabilities, 8 Egyptians residing abroad, and 38 Christians. Altogether, there are 92 political parties, 13 of which are represented in Parliament. The senatorial elections resulted in the election of 41 women, 35 young people under the age of 40, and 25 Christians. The presidential election was held in December 2023 with four candidates participating. It was won by His Excellency President Abdel Fattah Al-Sissi, with a turnout of 66.8%, including 60% of women among the voters. The election was conducted under full judicial supervision, with open media coverage and monitoring by a large number of international, regional and local organisations.

Right of access to public office based on fairness and equal opportunities

57. The Constitution makes it obligatory for the State to guarantee equal opportunities for all citizens, without discrimination (Article 9), and considers access to public service to be a right for citizens on the basis of merit (Article 14). The Civil Service Law reaffirms that public employment is a right for citizens. In order to guarantee the principle of equal opportunities in the area of access to public service, the law specifies that the appointment of civil servants shall be made by decree of the President of the Republic or his delegate, on the basis of competence and merit, through a centralised announcement published on the Egyptian government portal, specifying the details of the position and the requirements, so as to ensure fairness and equal opportunities. Any violation of these rules constitutes an offence punishable by sanctions.
58. Appointments to these positions are made through a competitive process organised by the Central Organisation and Administration Authority, via a selection committee. The order of appointment is determined by the final ranking of the competition results. In the event of a tie, priority is given to the candidate with the highest rank in the required degree, then to the candidate with the highest mark in the same rank, then to the candidate with the highest degree, then to the oldest graduate, and finally to the oldest candidate. Furthermore, any decision to appoint someone to the civil service constitutes an administrative act that may be appealed before the competent

court, in accordance with the general rules of the Egyptian legal system, in the event of a violation of the principles of equality and fairness.

(Article 14) Right to Private Property

59. The right to private property is considered a source of wealth and development. The Constitution guarantees the protection of this right, prohibits any infringement of private property, and stipulates that it may only be restricted in exceptional circumstances and in the public interest. Any expropriation for public use must be accompanied by fair compensation paid in advance, in accordance with the law (Article 35). To reinforce this protection, the Constitution prohibits the general confiscation of property in absolute terms and only allows specific confiscation by judicial decision, in accordance with the laws in force (Article 40). Egyptian law provides for precise regulation of private property rights and the restrictions that may be imposed on them. The Civil Code stipulates that "no one may be deprived of their property except in the cases provided for by law and in accordance with the procedures it determines, subject to fair compensation" (Article 805).

(Article 15) Right to Work

60. The Constitution guarantees the right to work and requires the Government to preserve the rights of workers, promote balanced industrial relations between the parties involved in the production process, ensure the means for collective bargaining, and protect workers from occupational hazards by guaranteeing them safe and healthy working conditions. It affirms that public employment is a right for citizens based on merit (Articles 12, 13 and 14). Law No. 81 of 2016 on the civil service governs employment in ministries, government agencies and public institutions, while the unified labour law regulates industrial relations in the private sector. The State guarantees the right to work without discrimination between men and women, and provides services related to night work, such as safe transport and healthcare.

61. The government has succeeded in reducing the unemployment rate from 13% in 2014 to 6.4% in 2024. The minimum wage has been raised several times in both the public and private sectors: in the public sector, it rose from £1,200 in March 2019 to £3,500 in March 2023, then to £4,000 in September 2023, and finally to £6,000 in March 2024. In the private sector, the minimum wage rose from £2,400 in January 2022 to £2,700 in January 2023, then to £3,000 in July 2023, to £3,500 in January 2024, and finally to £6,000 in March 2024.

62. In 2022, the government launched the "National Workplace Gender Equality Promotion Plan". It also developed a national employment strategy aimed at establishing job creation mechanisms and structuring supply and demand in the Egyptian labour market, both nationally and internationally. The "Professional 2030" project was launched to train one million people in occupations that are in demand on the labour

market. More than 30,000 people with disabilities have been integrated into employment over the last ten years, including 14,000 since the beginning of 2023.

63. The government aims to create 900,000 job opportunities per year over the next four years. The Ministry of Labour has launched the National Employment Bulletin, which lists all available jobs in the private sector.

(Article 16) Right to Health

64. The Constitution affirms the right of every citizen to health and integrated healthcare that meets quality standards. It requires the State to preserve and support public health infrastructure, improve its efficiency and equitable geographical distribution, and establish a universal health insurance system covering all diseases (Article 18). The "health" pillar of the "Egypt Vision 2030" strategy aims to guarantee a healthy and secure life for all Egyptians through an integrated, accessible, high-quality and non-discriminatory healthcare system. The government budget reflects this commitment, with an increase in public health expenditure to £496 billion for the 2024/2025 financial year, compared to £73 billion in 2018/2019.

65. The Arab Republic of Egypt's national health strategy for the period 2024–2030 has been launched with the aim of improving demographic characteristics, achieve a total fertility rate of 2.1 children per woman, and promote human development. Egypt has made significant progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals related to reducing maternal and infant mortality. In October 2024, it obtained certification from the World Health Organisation (WHO) attesting to the eradication of malaria. In October 2023, Egypt became the first country to achieve the "gold" level in the process of eliminating hepatitis C, according to the WHO. The country has diagnosed 87% of people living with hepatitis C and successfully treated 93% of them.

66. The number of primary healthcare units and centres in urban and rural areas increased from 4,988 in 2014 to 9,162 in 2021, an increase of 83.7%. The number of dialysis centres increased from 576 in 2014 to 668 in 2022 (+16%). The number of intensive care beds in public and central hospitals increased from 1,634 in 2014 to 2,389 in 2021 (+46.2%). The number of family planning units increased from 5,242 in 2014 to 5,431 in 2021 (+3.6%).

Medical Treatment at the Expense of the Government

67. The state-funded treatment programme is experiencing sustained growth. Between 2014 and 2024, 33.9 million treatment decisions were issued, benefiting 20.4 million citizens, at a total cost of 114.2 billion Egyptian pounds. As part of its support for women's health, the Ministry of Health and Population has recorded more than 50 million visits by women under the women's health support initiative since its launch in July 2019 until June 2024. Seventeen million women have benefited from regular

follow-up services, and more than 637,000 women have received specialised examinations in 3,663 units across all Governorates, with free care.

Public Health Initiatives

68. The government has launched a series of initiatives to promote the right to health under the slogan "100 million healthy lives", with the aim of ensuring universal health coverage and easier access to services. These initiatives include: eradicating hepatitis C and screening for non-communicable diseases, early screening for anaemia, obesity and stunted growth, supporting the health of Egyptian women, supporting maternal and foetal health, screening and treatment of hearing impairment in newborns, and screening and treatment of chronic diseases and kidney failure.
69. More than 50 million citizens have been screened for non-communicable diseases. This programme has treated 1.8 million diabetic patients and 10 million patients with hypertension. As part of the initiative to screen for anaemia, obesity and stunted growth, 22 million schoolchildren have been examined, and care has been provided through 300 clinics connected to the initiative's electronic system. Regarding the screening and treatment of hearing impairment in newborns, more than 1.25 million children have been examined since September 2019, as well as 2,410 foreign children residing in Egypt, through 3,500 health units spread across the country. A comprehensive infrastructure dedicated to early hearing screening has been set up at a cost of £120 million.
70. The initiative to support the health of Egyptian women aims to reduce breast cancer mortality through early screening, awareness-raising, training healthcare providers in accordance with international standards, and strengthening cancer treatment infrastructure. More than 11 million women have been screened since the initiative was launched in July 2019. As part of the initiative to support maternal and foetal health, 683,000 women have received free medical care since March 2020. A comprehensive infrastructure for screening for mother-to-child transmissible diseases has been established at a cost of £31 million, while operating costs and medical supplies have reached £30 million. The goal is to reduce the transmission rate from 45% to 2%. As part of the initiative to screen and treat chronic diseases and kidney failure, 24 million citizens have been examined and treated free of charge. 180 dialysis units have been renovated and 2,600 dialysis machines have been provided, at a total cost of £714 million.
71. The national tuberculosis control programme achieved an 87% cure rate, with more than 2 million citizens receiving treatment in specialised hospitals in 2020. The incidence rate of tuberculosis fell by 20% in the same year. As part of the national programme to combat HIV/AIDS, 13 new treatment centres were opened, bringing the total number to 27.

Life Expectancy at Birth and Infant Mortality Rate

72. Healthcare services were provided to pregnant women, accompanied by campaigns to promote and protect breastfeeding and rationalise the use of industrial milk. Children aged 6 to 54 months receive vitamin A supplements. Presidential initiatives include early screening for genetic diseases in premature babies in intensive care units and early screening for hearing disorders. All newborns attending primary care units are examined for congenital abnormalities (vital functions, growth, organ assessment). These efforts have increased life expectancy at birth in Egypt from 70.3 years in 2010 to 71.8 years in 2018, and reduced the under-five mortality rate from 28.8 to 20.8 deaths per 1,000 births between 2010 and 2019.

Universal Health Insurance

73. Law No. 2 of 2018 on the universal health insurance system was enacted. It provides for compulsory coverage for all citizens residing in Egypt, with the option of extending coverage to citizens residing abroad. The law requires the State to provide free public health, preventive, emergency, family planning, disaster and epidemic management services, as well as care related to workplace accidents. The law is being implemented gradually by Governorate in order to ensure financial viability and actuarial balance. The State is required to gradually improve health infrastructure before the system is implemented. The new system is based on a principle of compulsory social solidarity, with the State providing coverage for the poor. Funding is separate from service provision: the General Universal Health Insurance Authority manages and finances the system, while the Health Care Authority provides medical services inside and outside hospitals.
74. The government aims to achieve 100% universal coverage by 2030. The current government programme plans to achieve 85% coverage of the population by 2026/2027. The transition phase between the old and new systems has seen a 35% increase in coverage, including farmers, agricultural workers, informal workers and other priority groups, with a 20% increase in the budget. The roll-out of the second phase of the universal health insurance system covers five new Governorates, aiming to cover 12.8 million citizens.

Efforts to Modernise Health Facilities

75. The national model hospitals project aims to improve the quality of hospital services by establishing a model hospital in each Governorate, pending its integration into the universal health insurance system. Twenty-nine hospitals across the country have been selected to become model facilities offering high-quality medical services to citizens without increasing current rates. The Ministry of Health has adopted a plan to develop health infrastructure, both in terms of equipment and services. Between 2014 and 2023, university hospitals were created, renovated and modernised, bringing their number to 125 in 2023, compared to 88 in 2014. The number of beds reached

36,900 in 2023 at a cost of 27.5 billion Egyptian pounds, compared to 28,900 beds in 2014. The number of intensive care beds increased to 5,030 at a cost of £2 billion, compared to 3,000 in 2014. At the same time, 535 medical caravans were deployed, benefiting 303,500 patients. Thirty model hospitals were equipped nationwide. In 2021, the £142 million fully automated National Serum and Vaccine Complex was inaugurated to support research and the fight against communicable and non-communicable diseases. The VACSERA vaccine production centre was completed in June 2021 at a cost of £347.8 million.

(Article 17) Right to Education

76. The Constitution affirms that education is a right for every citizen, aimed at building national identity, anchoring scientific thinking, developing talents, encouraging innovation, promoting civilisational and spiritual values, and reinforcing the principles of citizenship, tolerance and non-discrimination. It requires the State to guarantee compulsory and free education until the end of basic education for all citizens, without distinction, and to develop higher education by ensuring that it is free in public universities and institutes. It also requires the State to allocate at least 7% of gross national product to public expenditure on pre-university education (4%), higher education (2%) and scientific research (1%) (Articles 19 to 23).

77. The 2014–2030 National Strategy for Pre-University Education Reform was launched, along with the National Education Project in 2018. This strategy is based on fundamental policies, including equal access to education for all school-age children, with a particular focus on disadvantaged areas. It aims to improve the quality of education through programmes that meet international standards and qualified teachers capable of adopting modern teaching methods. It also strengthens institutional governance through decentralisation. The main programmes include information technology, school nutrition and comprehensive curriculum reform.

Integration of persons with disabilities into education

78. Between 2019 and 2023, 139,169 children with disabilities were cared for in specialised nurseries and care institutions. For the 2023/2024 school year, 159,825 pupils are enrolled in various types and levels of education, benefiting from the services of the school integration system, compared to 3,697 pupils in 2012/2013 and 37,519 in 2017/2018. Additionally, 587,000 deaf and hard-of-hearing students have been integrated into 13 universities.

Government efforts to guarantee the right to pre-university education

79. The development of pre-university education is based on a transition from teaching to active learning and understanding. Within this framework, 72,230 new classrooms

have been built, including 20,400 in the most disadvantaged villages and those included in the "Dignified Life" programme. Furthermore, 629,700 early years teachers have been trained in the new education system.

Technical and Vocational Education

80. Technical education in Egypt accounts for more than half of public secondary school students, representing approximately 55% compared to 45% for general education. Egypt has launched a comprehensive strategy to reform technical education, adapting programmes to the needs of the labour market, reforming the curricula of 48 trades according to the skills system in 150 technical schools with 55,000 students, and ensuring the quality of programmes through an independent body. Egypt has risen 70 places in the global index of technical education and vocational training, from 117th in 2017 to 43rd in 2024.
81. The government is working to expand the dual education system, based on workplace learning, in partnership with the private sector and the Ministry of Education. Students are trained four days a week in companies, factories or farms. This system is implemented in 58 vocational schools, with 54,222 students. It includes 22 independent schools, 59 schools integrated into factories and 231 schools attached to technical institutions, for a total of 312 dual education schools.

Literacy and Community Schools

82. The Constitution commits the State to implementing a comprehensive plan to eradicate linguistic and digital illiteracy at all ages. Between 2014 and 2021, 3.3 million citizens were taught to read and write, and 63,600 literacy certificates were issued. The illiteracy rate among people aged 10 and over fell from 25.9% in 2013 to 16.1% in 2023. Universities played a major role, with 22 institutions contributing to the literacy of 302,607 citizens. The government's initiative aims to teach 160,000 people in villages covered by the "Dignified Life" initiative to read and write.
83. To ensure access to education in the most disadvantaged areas, the government has expanded the community school network, with the creation of 200 new schools, bringing their total number to 4,943, catering for 139,772 children. Five applied technology schools have also been established in the areas of agri-food, pharmacy, carpentry and furniture, construction materials, and mechanical and electrical industries.

Public Expenditure on Education and Number of Educational Institutions

84. Budget allocations for pre-university education rose from 98 billion Egyptian pounds in 2018/2019 to 565 billion in the 2024/2025 budget. The number of schools has increased from 49,400 in 2013/2014 to 61,300 in 2023/2024. The number of classes in pre-university education has increased from 466,600 in 2013/2014 to 556,888 in

2023/2024. The number of pupils has increased from 18.6 million in 2013/2014 to 28 million in 2022/2023. The number of teachers rose from 942,800 in 2013/2014 to 958,800 in 2022/2023, an increase of 1.7%. The government is working to address the teacher shortage by allocating resources to recruit 30,000 teachers per year.

85. In recent years, the government has sought to support teachers, improve their material and living conditions, strengthen their skills and train them in the most modern teaching methods, to enable them to perform their duties in the best possible way. In 2022, 315,000 teachers were trained. The annual cost of allowances paid to teachers amounts to £1.8 billion, benefiting 1.4 million teachers. Furthermore, 80,000 general and technical education teachers have been trained in partnership with several international institutions in the most advanced educational methods.

Higher Education

86. The higher education system in Egypt comprises 28 public universities, 35 private universities, 20 community colleges, 10 technology universities, 7 branches of foreign universities, 176 public and private higher education institutes, 11 research centres, 125 university hospitals, approximately 3.5 million students, 150,000 foreign students, 122,000 lecturers and researchers, 220,000 postgraduate students, 321,000 teachers, assistants and resident doctors, and 13,505 researchers and their collaborators.

87. In March 2023, the government launched the national strategy for higher education and scientific research, aimed at modernising the education and research system, creating an environment conducive to investment, supporting the diversification of higher education institutions, and aligning scientific research with the priorities of the national sustainable development plan. This strategy emphasises the training of graduates and the acquisition of skills suited to the labour market, in response to technological changes that have given rise to new professions requiring unconventional skills. The Ministry has taken concrete steps to build a training and qualification system, including the creation of professional development centres, digital platforms for managing professional services, and training programmes to strengthen the skills of students and graduates. Career guidance services will be offered to millions of students through the creation of 46 centres in 34 universities by 2026.

Right to participate in cultural life

88. The Egyptian Constitution enshrines the State's commitment to preserving the national cultural identity in all its civilisational richness. It affirms that culture is a right for every citizen, which the State guarantees and supports by ensuring access to cultural resources in all their forms, without discrimination. It also requires the government to protect, preserve, maintain and restore the archaeological heritage. Egypt's cultural and civilisational heritage — Pharaonic, Coptic and Islamic — is considered

a national and universal treasure that the State is committed to safeguarding (Articles 47 to 50). The Constitution also provides for the development of the cultural capacities of young people and children, and requires that economic and urban development plans take into account the cultural and environmental specificities of local communities, particularly in border and disadvantaged areas (Articles 82 and 236).

89. The national human rights strategy has included cultural rights among its priorities. It aims, in particular, to ensure equitable distribution of cultural services throughout the country, especially in remote and marginalised areas, to promote cultural industries and their financing mechanisms, to strengthen support for cultural centres to enable them to fulfil their missions, and to increase support for community cultural activities, thereby contributing to the preservation of cultural identity.
90. The 2018–2022 government programme includes a component entitled "Activating the role of cultural institutions", structured around several sub-programmes and activities aimed at promoting positive values in society, developing cultural institutions, ensuring cultural justice, and protecting and enhancing cultural heritage. This programme has a total budget of £5.56 billion. For the 2023–2024 financial year, public investment of £6.1 billion has been allocated to cultural development, including the renovation of 24 cultural centres, eight children's cultural centres and 14 theatres, as well as the creation and modernisation of libraries at the Governorate level.
91. As part of the promotion of positive values, 85,000 cultural activities were organised, directly benefiting approximately 2.526 million citizens. These activities included 743 theatrical performances, 8,284 conferences and cultural fairs, and 952 concerts at the Cairo Opera House, including 168 virtual events broadcast online in the first half of 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic, viewed by more than 382,000 people. The renovation of several cultural institutions cost £1.28 billion up to June 2020, with 549 projects completed in 18 cultural sites across 11 Governorates, including cultural centres, public libraries and theatres.
92. To promote digital access to cultural resources, an electronic platform has been created, providing access to approximately 5,000 books in Arabic translated into several languages, 100 historical manuscripts, documentary and feature films, plays, artistic and cultural programmes, rare maps, microfilms and catalogues from major libraries.
93. To encourage the promotion of cultural identity and heritage, 740 training workshops on traditional crafts were organised, benefiting 5,622 citizens. 7,129 shows were presented to promote heritage arts, reaching 62,600 people. Two hundred and sixty-two (262) cultural fairs and conferences, as well as 382 exhibitions and shows, were organised, benefiting 354,000 citizens as part of the heritage promotion programme. The State has included traditional "Aragoz" puppetry unto UNESCO's Urgent Safe-

guarding List of Intangible Cultural Heritage and is working with several friendly countries to prepare the inclusion of "The palm tree and its knowledge, practices and traditions" in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

94. In the same vein, the "Artisans of Egypt" initiative was launched to train young people in heritage crafts in areas with high unemployment rates. Between 2018 and 2020, 730 people were trained in 13 Governorates, and nine craft centres were established in the cultural centres that hosted the training sessions.
95. Regarding the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage, Egypt is proud of its universal heritage and works to conserve and enhance its listed sites. Seven Egyptian sites are included in UNESCO's World Heritage List: The Pyramid Plateau, Islamic Cairo, the ancient city of Thebes and its necropolises in Luxor, the Nubian monuments from Abu Simbel to Philae, the Christian city of Abu Mena, the region of Saint Catherine, and recently the Valley of the Whales in the Western Desert. The monasteries of Wadi El-Natroun are currently being listed.
96. Egypt has successfully added seven items to UNESCO's Urgent Safeguarding List of Intangible Cultural Heritage: celebrations related to the journey of the Holy Family, Arabic calligraphy, Hilalian epic poetry, stick fighting (Tahteeb), Aragoz puppetry, palm tree practices, and hand weaving.
97. In the legislative sphere, in order to guarantee freedom of artistic creation and performance, the Intellectual Property Law was amended to create a register for recording acts relating to works, performances, sound recordings and radio programmes, thereby strengthening the protection of these rights. The amendment provides for exemption from registration fees for persons under the age of twenty-one and for persons with disabilities.
98. The Academy of Arts is the scientific institution specialising in the supervision of artistic talent in all disciplines. It is responsible for training qualified artists with recognised diplomas who contribute to the country's artistic troupes and activities. Since 2019, the Academy has expanded its activities by opening branches in four Governorates: Alexandria, Assiut, Daqahliya and Cairo. It comprises seven higher education institutes: theatre, conservatory, ballet, cinema, Arabic music, art criticism and popular arts. It also includes primary and secondary schools, welcoming talented students from an early age to develop their artistic skills.
99. More than 110,000 activities have been organised as part of talent development, including theatre performances, training courses, exhibitions and workshops, benefiting 255,000 citizens. 144 prizes have been awarded to identify and support creators, including the Nile Prize, the Excellence Prize, the Encouragement Prize and honorary prizes. One hundred and five (105) winners were honoured in the areas of arts, literature, social sciences, economics and law. Seven hundred and sixteen (716) residency grants were awarded to artists and writers. Four hundred and ninety-two (492)

works were translated into Arabic, and 2,685 books were printed and published as part of the publishing programme.

100. Between 2019 and 2024, 1,554 cultural caravans were deployed, reaching 649,943 beneficiaries, to provide cultural and community support to families living in remote areas, border Governorates, villages in the western and central delta, and those in the Governorate of Minya. The Ministry of Culture has revived artistic activities in Siwa and established new ones in Nubia, with the aim of documenting the traditions and heritage of Aswan, Nubia and Siwa through pictorial works. The number of children's clubs designed to develop their talents reached 32,631 between 2019 and 2024, with 397,096 children benefiting.

(Article 18) Protection of the Family

101. Article 10 of the Constitution stipulates that the family is the foundation of society. The State shall ensure its cohesion, stability and the consolidation of its values. It shall guarantee women the opportunity to reconcile their family and professional responsibilities, and shall undertake to provide the necessary protection and care for motherhood, childhood, female heads of households, older persons and vulnerable women, while ensuring full legal protection against all forms of discrimination. The Constitution sets the age of childhood at eighteen, in accordance with international conventions. National legislation, particularly laws on childhood, criminal law and civil status, covers all forms of violence, including domestic violence, early marriage and forced marriage.
102. The State ensures the protection of the family, and the law guarantees both spouses reciprocal rights to ensure a fair balance. Women have the right to choose their spouse, as marriage is a consensual contract based on offer and acceptance. The law prohibits the validation of a marriage contract if either spouse is under the age of eighteen. Custody of children is entrusted primarily to the mother, in accordance with the best interests of the child. The law allows custody to be extended beyond the legal age if the child chooses to remain with his or her mother. The father is required to provide suitable accommodation for the custodial mother, to cover all expenses related to the children during this period, and to pay custody compensation. Egyptian law also guarantees the financial rights of the child, granting them a share of the inheritance from the prenatal period onwards. The State has created a Family Guarantee Fund, managed by the Nasser Social Bank, to ensure the enforcement of maintenance judgments in favour of the wife, ex-wife and children in the event of non-payment by the debtor.
103. This Family Guarantee Fund aims to ensure the enforcement of court decisions relating to maintenance payments. The Ministry of Social Solidarity offers family support services through counselling and guidance offices, while the National Council

for Women and the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood offer psychological and legal counselling services via dedicated telephone lines.

104. The Ministry of Social Solidarity is implementing the national "Mawadda" (love) project to preserve the Egyptian family structure. This programme provides training for students at public universities and institutes, engaged couples, and young people with disabilities. It offers marriage counselling offices designed to prevent crises and conflicts between spouses, in order to preserve a relationship based on spiritual values, a sacred and solid bond, imbued with love, tenderness and security. There are 123 marriage counselling offices nationwide, which served 10,426 beneficiaries in 2022 and 4,342 in 2023.

Elimination of Discrimination against Women

105. The Constitution guarantees equality between women and men in terms of rights, freedoms and public obligations, as well as equal opportunities, in 22 of its Articles, notably Articles 11 and 53. Egypt is committed to providing the necessary conditions for improving the status of women in society. The country has made unprecedented progress in the area of women's empowerment and gender equality, thanks to strong political will. In 2017, the President of the Republic proclaimed this year as the "Year of the Egyptian Woman", a historic initiative reflecting the central place of women in society. Egypt has also launched the National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women by 2030, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. This strategy, adopted in 2017 as a government roadmap, is based on four pillars: political empowerment and strengthening female leadership, social empowerment, economic empowerment, and protection, complemented by legislative and cultural components.
106. On the legislative front, new laws and amendments have been adopted to guarantee protection, empowerment, equality and equitable access for women in all spheres. The National Council for Women has created the Egyptian Women's Observatory, which is a tool for monitoring objectives related to the status of women for the period 2017–2030. The Council uses this observatory to monitor the indicators of the national strategy for women's empowerment and publishes numerous reports on women's issues and related public policies.
107. In accordance with the constitutional right to equality and non-discrimination in appointments to judicial institutions, as provided for in Article 11 of the Constitution, women have been integrated into the judiciary and the Council of State. Thus, 137 women have been appointed to the Council of State and 20 to the Public Prosecutor's Office. The first woman was appointed as a judge in the criminal courts, another was appointed Vice-President of the Supreme Constitutional Court, and a third was appointed President of the College of Commissioners of the same Court. Furthermore, 11 women have been appointed to the ordinary judiciary, bringing the total number of women judges to 147. Women represent 20% of the members of the State Affairs

Authority, or 1,289 magistrates, and 43% of the members of the Administrative Prosecution Authority, or 2,363 counsellors. Several women have chaired this authority and also hold senior management positions.

108. Following the constitutional and legislative reforms of 2019, women's representation in the House of Representatives reached an unprecedented level in Egypt's history: 164 seats, or 27.7% of the total, including 15 seats on specialised committees. Although the Senate Act provides for a minimum representation of 10%, the President of the Republic appointed 20 women, bringing their representation to 14%. Egypt has also made remarkable progress in the index of women's representation in local parliaments published by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, rising from 137th place in 2019 to 69th in 2021. Additionally, Presidential Decree No. 616 of December 2021 renewed the composition of the National Human Rights Council, which is chaired by a woman for the first time. Women represent 44% of its members.
109. Egypt has improved its ranking in several international indices relating to women's empowerment. It has risen 47 places in the Gender Empowerment Measure of the Global Gender Gap Report, reaching 78th position in 2022 compared to 125th in 2012. It also rose 65 places in the Women's Parliamentary Representation Index, from 128th position in 2012 to 63rd in 2022, and 29 position in the Ministerial Representation Index, reaching 66th place in 2022 compared to 95th position in 2012.

Children's Rights

110. Egypt strengthened its institutional framework for child protection by enacting a law in 2023 reorganising the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood to ensure its independence as a national mechanism dedicated to the protection of children and mothers. The Council acts as the legal representative of unaccompanied children, receives complaints, provides legal assistance to victims of violations, and coordinates emergency interventions. It operates an emergency hotline, child protection committees and units in the Governorates, and ensures the social, psychological and legal processing of reports, in coordination with the competent authorities, including the Public Prosecutor's Office.
111. The Constitution and the Penal Code prohibit all forms of physical violence against children. The Children's Act provides for aggravated penalties for offences committed by adults against children. In juvenile justice, children under the age of 12 are exempt from criminal responsibility. Children under the age of 15 are subject to educational measures, with no possibility of pre-trial detention. For minors aged between 15 and 18 at the time of the offence, the law prohibits the death penalty, life imprisonment or severe detention, and provides for alternative measures. Cases involving children are dealt with by specialised courts: 33 juvenile courts and four "child-friendly" courts have been established.

112. In accordance with the principle of the best interests of the child, several court decisions have favoured alternative measures to custodial sentences for minors in conflict with the law. The law on nationality has been amended to guarantee equality in the transmission of nationality by both parents. Penalties for failure to register births have been made tougher, and the minimum age for obtaining an identity card has been lowered to 15. Reforms are underway to strengthen the law on children.
113. Egypt has launched the National Strategy for Children and Motherhood (2018–2030) and the National Plan for Children and Motherhood (2018–2022), aimed at improving the living conditions of children and mothers, in accordance with the best interests of the child. Egypt defines a child as any person under the age of 18.
114. Children's rights have been integrated into development policies, particularly in Egypt Vision 2030, which places child protection among its priorities. The objectives include universal access to preschool education, the development of early learning skills for children under the age of six, access to education for all children, a 50 per cent reduction in neonatal, infant and under-five mortality rates, and the elimination of all forms of malnutrition, stunting and wasting in children under five.
115. The Ministry of Labour, in cooperation with the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood, has launched the National Plan to Combat the Worst Forms of Child Labour (2018–2025), which aims to completely eradicate child labour by 2025. Unannounced inspections were carried out in establishments employing children to check working hours and safety conditions and to take the necessary legal measures in cases of non-compliance with the law.
116. A total of 44,388 establishments were inspected, of which 31,850 were found to be in compliance. 11,339 warnings were issued and 997 reports were drafted. These campaigns have protected 50,549 children. Between 2019 and 2023, the child help-line received 973 reports of child labour, including 278 cases of hazardous work and 695 cases of ordinary work. A unified operational guide has been developed to combat child labour, and officials from the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood and representatives of protection units in several Governorates have been trained in its use. The rate of children aged 5 to 17 involved in economic or domestic activities fell from 7 per cent in 2014 to 4.9 per cent in 2021.
117. The government has launched the National Strategy for the Alternative Care of Children and Young People (2021–2030), which aims to provide the best forms of alternative care for every child and young person, improve the quality of life of Egyptian children and young people, and define priorities for action in the coming years in the area of alternative care. This strategy focuses on the health, survival, development, education, protection and active participation of children in society. The total number of approved foster families is approximately 19,800.

118. As part of the government's policy to invest in early childhood (under four years of age) and ensure access to expanded, high-quality educational and pedagogical services, the National Early Childhood Development Programme was launched in partnership with 11 civil society organisations. This programme has helped to renovate 3,324 rooms in 991 nurseries located in 25 Governorates, as well as the creation of 21 centres, at a total cost of 150 million Egyptian pounds, with an implementation rate of 86%. Approximately 67,725 children have been enrolled in these nurseries. Furthermore, 2,179 educators and 724 administrative staff members have been trained according to the new quality standards. Additionally, 224 executives from the Ministry of Social Solidarity and partner associations were certified as trainers by Ain Shams University. Provisional authorisations were issued to 10,800 nurseries that were not accredited or whose accreditation had expired, for a period of three years, pending finalisation of the procedures by the relevant national commission.
119. The total number of early childhood nurseries stands at 19,725. There are 43 nurseries for children under the age of six who are deprived of family care, while there are 425 care institutions for children over the age of six. Regarding homeless children, 7,832 children have been taken off the streets and reintegrated into their families or into specialised institutions. Five presidential initiatives have been launched under the "100 million healthy lives" programme, focusing on the screening and treatment of hearing impairment in children, early detection of disability, support for maternal and foetal health, screening for anaemia, obesity and stunted growth, and treatment for muscular atrophy. The Ministry of Health and Population has fully digitised the system for monitoring births, deaths and childhood vaccinations.
120. To protect homeless children, 5,965 cases were taken into care, 68% of whom were reunited with their families or placed in institutions. Likewise, 11,774 working children living mainly on the streets have benefited from a range of services including healthcare, education, meals, blankets, psychological and social support, through 17 mobile units and 19 institutions renovated over the last three years.
121. As part of the adaptation to the digital age, awareness campaigns and educational programmes have been launched for families and schools to promote safe use of the Internet and protect children from abuse. To strengthen children's right to participation, national initiatives have been implemented to empower them, including a specific initiative for girls, as well as forums and the Egyptian Children's Parliament.

Rights of Older Persons

122. Article 83 of the Egyptian Constitution guarantees the rights of older persons in the areas of health, the economy, social affairs, culture and leisure, as well as the right to a decent pension ensuring a dignified life. The State is committed to enabling them to participate in public life and to taking into account their needs in the area of infrastructure planning.

123. In accordance with this Article, the Law on the Protection of the Rights of Older Persons was enacted in 2024. The quality-of-care services and facilities have been improved. A rapid response team has been set up to rescue homeless older persons and refer them to shelters. Complaints can be made via the Ministry of Social Solidarity's telephone hotline or its official social media accounts. A "gratitude card" has been created for older persons, with a return of up to 17%.
124. A decision has been made to exempt people over the age of 70 from public transport fees, and those over 65 receive a 50% reduction. The "Senior Companion" programme, launched in 2019, aims to provide home care as an alternative to institutional accommodation, including medical, psychological, social and economic care. The Ministry manages 175 retirement homes and 191 clubs for older people, benefiting around 46,000 people.
125. As part of its support for older persons, the fourth phase of the "Life is Hope" initiative has been launched. The amount of cash transfers under the "Karama" programme for older persons has been increased, with nearly 524,623 beneficiaries. Medical services are provided to them, and more than 742,000 people over the age of 65 have been examined under the continuous care programme since October 2021. The Ministry has also developed a strategy earmarked for older persons, set up a social protection network with specialised associations, and provided assisting equipment.

Rights of Persons with Disabilities

126. Article 81 of the Constitution guarantees the rights of persons with disabilities and persons of diminutive stature in the areas of health, the economy, social affairs, culture, sports and education. It provides for their integration into society, their political participation, the adaptation of infrastructure and the environment, and access to employment with a reserved quota. The national human rights strategy aims to strengthen these rights, in particular through the creation of a unified and updated database, the application of the legal quota of 5% for employment, and the implementation of adapted vocational training programmes.
127. Law No. 157 of 2022 amended certain provisions of the Persons with Disabilities Support Fund, strengthening its capacity to provide services in all areas. The State provides annual financial assistance of 5.2 billion pounds to 1.5 million persons with disabilities. A project to establish a factory for prosthetic and orthopaedic devices has been launched. Integrated service cards have been issued to approximately 1,500 people. Law No. 161 of 2023 allocated £11 billion to the "Capable in Different Ways" Fund.
128. The Central Public Mobilisation and Statistics Agency is developing a unified and updated database on persons with disabilities. It conducted a national survey on their social and economic conditions, employment, training and integration opportunities over a four-month period in 2022.

129. In the area of health, the government is implementing several national screening and early intervention programmes for children at risk or with disabilities. One initiative aims to screen premature babies for 19 genetic diseases, under the supervision of the Egyptian Centre for Disease Control. Forty-nine specialised centres have been set up to provide free treatment for genetic diseases in newborns. The national programme for the screening of diseases causing disability provides for the free distribution of therapeutic milk, medicines and nutritional supplements. Early screening for hearing impairment is also provided free of charge, with psychological support and nutritional advice.

Rehabilitation and Integration Services for Persons with Disabilities

130. Care and rehabilitation services for persons with disabilities have been expanded through 805 specialised establishments offering services such as physiotherapy, speech therapy, comprehensive rehabilitation, accommodation and others. The number of beneficiaries has reached 305,900 persons. The number of civil associations active in this focal area has also increased to 4,500. Specialists and nursery educators have been trained, and 21 rehabilitation centres have been set up in the most disadvantaged villages. A workshop for the manufacture of orthopaedic devices and prostheses has also been established.
131. In terms of professional integration, more than 14,000 job opportunities have been offered to persons with disabilities between January 2023 and today. From October 2023 until the first half of 2024, the Ministry of Labour has been implementing a plan to identify, train and employ persons with disabilities in order to accelerate the application of the legal quota of 5% employment in public and private institutions with 20 or more employees.
132. Regarding the exercise of political rights, nine seats have been reserved for persons with disabilities on the electoral lists for the House of Representatives. Their participation in the December 2023 presidential elections was facilitated by awareness campaigns, Braille ballot papers and sign language guidance facilities in all polling stations.

(Article 19) Right to Dignity

133. The preamble to the Constitution affirms that freedom, human dignity and social justice are fundamental rights for every citizen. Article 51 enshrines the right to dignity for every human being, prohibits any violation of this right, and imposes on the State the duty to respect and protect it. The State also guarantees its citizens the right to adequate, safe and healthy housing, with respect for human dignity and social justice.

(Article 20) Right to self-determination

134. Throughout its modern and contemporary history, Egypt has supported Arab peoples and nations fighting against occupation in Africa and Asia. It participated in the founding of the League of Arab States, the United Nations and the African Union. The Egyptian State has always defended, in international forums, the rights of the Palestinian people to have an independent and sovereign State on the territories occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem, in accordance with the resolutions of the Security Council, the United Nations General Assembly, the principles of international law and the Arab Peace Initiative.
135. The Constitution recognises the right of the people to shape their future. It affirms that sovereignty belongs to the people, the source of all powers, and guarantees national unity based on equality, justice and equity among all citizens. It also enshrines the right of the people to choose their political system through participation in public life, through voting, standing for election and expressing their views in referendums, which are considered a national duty.

(Article 21) Right to dispose of natural resources

136. The Constitution affirms that the natural resources of the State belong to the people, who have the right to dispose of them freely. The State is required to preserve them, exploit them responsibly, not deplete them, and respect the rights of future generations. Any authorisation for exploitation must be in accordance with the law. The people also have the right to pursue the development of their economic, social and cultural resources.

(Article 22) Right to Economic, Social and Cultural Development

137. In accordance with the Constitution, the State is required to develop and implement a comprehensive economic development and planning programme for border and disadvantaged areas, such as Upper Egypt, Sinai, Matrouh and Nubia, involving local populations in development projects and guaranteeing them priority in the benefits, while respecting local cultural and environmental specificities (Article 236).
138. In line with this constitutional right, the State conducts ongoing consultations with local communities. The Ministry of Planning, Economic Development and International Cooperation is strengthening mechanisms for citizen participation, transparency and accountability through the "Citizen Plan" programme, which provides detailed information on public investment by Governorate and sector. In 2019, the Ministry launched the "Sharek 2030" application, an interactive platform between citizens and the government, allowing priority projects to be proposed according to local needs.

139. The government continues to consult with local communities as part of the work of several public institutions responsible for sustainable urban planning (Higher Urban Planning Council, General Urban Planning Authority, National Urban Coordination Agency). In accordance with Law No. 119 of 2008, development plans are drawn up with the participation of local units, people's councils, executive authorities and civil society (Article 11). Citizens can submit their comments on the strategic plans of each local unit, which are updated at least every five years to take into account economic, social and environmental developments (Article 12).
140. The government is implementing the Local Development Programme in Upper Egypt (2016–2021), which aims to promote sustainable development and create productive jobs to reduce poverty in the Governorates of Sohag and Qena. The total budget for the programme is US\$957 million, with citizen participation in all aspects of public services at the local level.
141. The government is continuing its efforts to ensure equitable distribution of the benefits of development. Egypt has risen 19 places in the United Nations Human Development Report 2021/2022, reaching 97th place, up from 116th in 2020, and thus remains classified among countries with high human development.
142. For the first time, the National Human Rights Strategy has been integrated into the economic and social development plan for the 2022/2023 financial year, linking projects and programmes to the strategy's priorities and objectives. At the same time, human rights have been included in the annual economic and social development plans, and the overall government budget for 2023/2024, for the first time, is based on the principles of this strategy.
143. Convinced of the importance of international cooperation for development, Egypt has established the Egyptian Agency for Development Partnership, which aims to strengthen the country's efforts in this area, particularly South-South cooperation. The agency supports the priorities of beneficiary countries and backs the efforts of African States in implementing the African Union's Agenda 2063.

International Cooperation and Sustainable Development

144. The Ministry of International Cooperation's current development portfolio with bilateral and multilateral partners amounts to approximately \$25 billion, spread across 377 projects in various development sectors. These projects support the implementation of the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with a direct impact on 14 of them, including:
- SDG 9 (infrastructure, industry and innovation),
 - SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities),
 - SDG 6 (clean water and sanitation),
 - SDG 7 (affordable and clean energy),

- SDG 12 (responsible consumption and production),
- SDG 13 (climate action).

145. In order to preserve economic, social and cultural rights, particularly for the most vulnerable groups, Egypt emphasises that its economic reform programme, developed with the support of international partners, is based on a vision focused on development challenges. This programme is structured around three main areas, including strengthening the social safety net and providing comprehensive protection for the poorest populations through a more effective and targeted system to reduce poverty and improve living conditions. It also aims to ensure sustainable economic growth that generates decent jobs and reduces unemployment. An analysis of the provisions of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, particularly Article 9, highlights national efforts in the area of social protection. The economic reforms undertaken since 2016, following the agreement with the IMF, as well as progress in leveraging State assets and developing infrastructure, have helped to address the repercussions of global crises and mitigate their effects. Social protection measures have also helped to provide security for the most affected groups.

146. The formulation of the national strategy between the Arab Republic of Egypt and the World Bank Group for the period 2023–2027 was characterised by transparency and the active participation of all stakeholders. It resulted in a strategic framework aligned with national priorities, in accordance with Egypt Vision 2030, government programmes, the national structural reform programme, and sectoral strategies. This strategy aims to support Egypt in eradicating poverty, promoting inclusive prosperity, improving the living conditions of the most vulnerable groups in a manner consistent with the principles of sustainable development, and creating an environment conducive to green, comprehensive, and resilient development.

(Article 23) Right to Peace and Security

147. Egypt takes a comprehensive approach to combating terrorism, based on legislation that complies with its regional and international commitments, including the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. These laws are intended to effectively combat terrorism in a multidimensional manner, including new methods of financing. The State also acts through prevention and ideological struggle.

148. Egypt actively participates in international efforts for peace and security, particularly under the auspices of the United Nations. On 15 February 2021, the United Nations Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations opened its annual session, during which Egypt was re-elected as rapporteur, confirming its active role in peacekeeping operations, both in terms of the volume of its military and police contributions and its involvement in the development of policies and concepts for these operations.

149. At the African level, Egypt has contributed to the reform and improvement of peacekeeping operations by launching the "Cairo Roadmap for Improving the Performance of Peacekeeping Operations: From Mandate Formulation to Mission Exit" Initiative. This roadmap was adopted as a common African position during Egypt's presidency of the African Union Peace and Security Council in October 2020.
150. Egypt ranks 10th among countries contributing to United Nations peacekeeping forces, with a total of 1,607 personnel, including 105 women and 1,502 men. These contributions include :
- 43 military experts (41 men, 2 women),
 - 460 police officers in formed units (414 men, 46 women),
 - 73 police officers,
 - 37 staff officers (17 men, 20 women),
 - 988 soldiers (958 men, 30 women).
151. The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) represents Egypt's largest contribution with 1,209 personnel (1,142 men, 67 women), followed by the United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) with 350 participants (318 men, 32 women). Egypt also participates in:
- The United Nations Mission in South Sudan (21 participants, including 17 men and 4 women),
 - The United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (21 participants, including 19 men and 2 women),
 - The United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (6 men).
152. In recognition of Egypt's major role in the fight against terrorism at the regional and international levels, the country currently co-chairs the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum, alongside the European Union. Egypt actively participates in international forums for the exchange of best practices, including the periodic review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in New York. It is also co-author, with Mexico, of the periodic resolution on terrorism and human rights, presented in New York and Geneva. In 2022, this resolution was updated to emphasise fair trial guarantees and victims' rights.

(Article 24) Right to a Healthy Environment

153. The Egyptian Constitution recognises the right of every individual to a healthy environment. It considers its protection to be a national duty and requires the State to take the necessary measures to preserve it, prevent any damage to it, and ensure the rational use of natural resources, while respecting sustainable development and the rights of future generations (Article 46).

154. Law No. 202 of 2020 on waste management, together with its implementing regulations, constitutes the first legislative framework in this area. It is based on the principle of the circular economy, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities, and effective inclusion of the private and informal sectors into the integrated waste management system.
155. The National Climate Change Strategy 2050 was launched to reduce pollution, manage waste sustainably, preserve natural resources and address global environmental challenges. It is based on an enabling framework that includes legislative, policy and institutional reforms, thereby supporting the ecological transition towards sustainable development. In 2021, the Ministries of Environment and Planning published the first "Guide to Environmental Sustainability Criteria: A Strategic Framework for Green Recovery" aimed at raising awareness of sectors with a direct positive impact on the environment and directing public investment towards these areas. The Ministry of Environment has also organised specialised training for relevant public institutions and developed practical guides.
156. The Arab Republic of Egypt has acceded to the two main international conventions relating to the environment — the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change — marking a significant step forward in the history of global environmental action. As a continuation of this commitment, Egypt hosted the 27th Conference of the Parties to the Climate Change Convention (COP27) in November 2022.
157. In collaboration with its international partners, Egypt drew global attention to water and climate issues at COP27. A pavilion dedicated to water was set up, and a "Water Day" was organised for the first time in the history of the COP. On this occasion, the international AWARE initiative was launched to adapt the water sector to climate change, with a particular focus on developing countries, which are most vulnerable to the effects of climate change. This initiative marks the beginning of concrete actions and projects in this topical area.
158. As part of this initiative, the Pan-African Centre for Water and Climate Adaptation (PAN AFRICAN) was created. One of its areas of focus is capacity building in water-related matters, with the support of the Regional Training Centre for Water Resources and Irrigation provided by Egypt.
159. The Egyptian government has adopted an ambitious strategic vision in the area of transport, aiming to improve services while preserving the environment. The development of sustainable green transport is seen as a pillar of sustainable economic development and the fight against climate change. By dint of the collection and compaction of 99% of rice residues, the phenomenon of the "black cloud" has been eradicated, thus avoiding the emission of nearly 25,000 tonnes of air pollutants per year.

160. Egypt ranks fifth globally in the energy use index, a sub-index of the 2023 Climate Performance Index.

(Article 25) Raising awareness of the Charter and ensuring its provisions are upheld

161. Article 93 of the Constitution confers on international human rights conventions a legal value equivalent to that of the law, stipulating that "the State undertakes to respect international human rights conventions and covenants ratified by Egypt, which acquire the force of law after their publication in accordance with laid down procedures". This provision is in line with Article 27 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties. Thus, compliance with these instruments becomes a constitutional obligation, prohibiting the legislature from adopting texts that contravene the State's international commitments. Any failure or delay in adapting national laws constitutes a violation of the Constitution, as confirmed by the Supreme Constitutional Court in cases No. 131/39 (6 April 2019) and No. 114/29 (14 January 2017). Regarding the dissemination and promotion of the Charter, Egypt has established a programme aimed at integrating human rights principles into educational programmes, both in general education and in police academy training. The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights is a fundamental theme in these programmes. The Permanent National Human Rights Commission promotes the Charter and its provisions among ministries and national institutions.

(Article 26) Guarantee of the Independence of the Courts

162. Article 94 of the Constitution states that "the rule of law is the foundation of the government of the State. The State is subject to the law. The independence, immunity and impartiality of the judiciary are fundamental guarantees for the protection of rights and freedoms." Article 184 confirms that the judiciary is independent, exercised by courts of all categories and levels, which render their decisions in accordance with the law. Any interference in judicial affairs constitutes a crime with no statute of limitations. Article 185 stipulates that each judicial authority manages its own affairs and has an autonomous budget. It must be consulted on draft legislation relating to its functioning. Article 186 guarantees the independence of judges, their irremovability, their equality in rights and duties, and specifies the conditions for their appointment, secondment, retirement and disciplinary responsibility. Article 189 establishes that the public prosecutor's office is an integral part of the judiciary, responsible for investigating, initiating and conducting criminal proceedings with impartiality and independence. Finally, Article 302 of the Code of Criminal Procedure provides that judges shall rule freely according to their personal convictions.

PART II – RESPONSES TO RECOMMENDATIONS

Regarding accession to certain international human rights conventions or their additional protocols, as well as the lifting of the reservation on Article 9,

163. Egypt regularly reviews its treaty commitments in line with its national priorities. It reassesses its position on instruments it has not yet ratified or provisions to which it has made reservations, in the light of constitutional provisions, in order to ensure consistency between its international commitments. For example, steps have recently been taken to accede to the two protocols to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights relating to the Rights of Older Persons and Persons with Disabilities.

Regarding the Commission's observations on the death penalty

164. Please refer to paragraphs (13–19).

Regarding the Commission's observations on the prohibition of torture and inhuman treatment, and the prosecution of perpetrators

165. Refer to paragraphs (20–23). The Public Prosecutor's Office has sole jurisdiction to investigate all criminal cases, initiate proceedings and prosecute them before the courts. It should be noted that crimes of torture and ill-treatment, according to the Criminal Code, do not require a complaint or report from the victim in order to be prosecuted.
166. The Ministry of the Interior examines complaints of torture received from various national institutions, including: the unified complaints system of the Council of Ministers, specialised national councils, the Office of the Attorney General, the Ministry of Justice, etc. It has put in place several measures, including the creation of dedicated numbers to report human rights violations, the rapid and objective examination of complaints, the creation of specialised human rights units in all police stations and posts nationwide, and the appointment of officers to receive complaints from citizens. The Ministry has initiated disciplinary and criminal proceedings against its officers in 1,217 cases between November 2019 and July 2024 for ill-treatment or excessive use of force, some of whom have been convicted by the competent authorities.
167. The Ministry of the Interior is working to promote a culture of human rights by teaching this subject in all training cycles at the Police Academy, in specialised training courses and in higher education. It also organises seminars and conferences on human rights for its officers and teaches the rules relating to places of detention, in particular the Nelson Mandela Rules, to staff at rehabilitation centres. Furthermore, 134 training sessions were organised between 2019 and 2024 in cooperation with the International Organisation for Migration, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and the International Committee of the Red Cross, in the areas of protecting the

rights of migrants, combating trafficking and irregular migration, and raising awareness of international humanitarian law.

Regarding the Commission's observations on the trial of civilians by military courts

168. Article 204 of the Constitution stipulates that military justice is an independent judicial authority. Its members are subject to the same conditions of admission as other magistrates, in accordance with the law on judicial authority. The Military Justice Act guarantees the independence of military judges, their irremovability except through disciplinary proceedings, and their exclusive submission to the law. They perform the same functions as civilian judges and prosecutors.
169. Military justice has sole jurisdiction to try offences relating to the armed forces, their officers, soldiers and equivalent personnel. In accordance with the principle of the natural judge-, civilians may not be tried by military courts, except in exceptional cases defined exhaustively in Article 204 of the Constitution, which refers to the law to specify the offences. National laws strictly regulate the conditions under which civilians may be referred to military courts, according to objective criteria based solely on the nature of the offence, and apply the same rules as civil courts.
170. Proceedings before military courts guarantee the same rights as those before civil courts: the right to defence, access to case files, public hearings, and the right to appeal to a higher court. Civilians tried by military courts have the same levels of jurisdiction as those provided for in the Code of Criminal Procedure. They may appeal against the decisions of military criminal courts before the military court of appeal, and against final decisions of military courts (criminal and correctional) before the Supreme Military Court of Appeal.

Regarding the Commission's observations on conditions of detention and the treatment of detainees

171. Law No. 14 of 2022 amended certain provisions of Law No. 396 of 1956 on the organisation of prisons. It replaced the terms "prison" with "rehabilitation centre", "penitentiary sector" with "social protection sector", and "detainee" with "resident". The law enshrines the rights of residents to take their exams, to receive legal and judicial documents in person, and to forward them to anyone of their choice. These amendments reflect a change in the penal philosophy of the Ministry of the Interior, aimed at strengthening the rights of prisoners, their social protection, their reintegration and their integration into society.
172. The Ministry of the Interior has developed a strategy to create and modernise rehabilitation centres. Centres have been built and operationalised in Wadi El-Natroun and Badr, in accordance with the most advanced international standards, with infrastructure that complies with human rights standards: sanitary capacity of rooms,

lighting, ventilation, medical equipment. The Ministry plans to roll out the Wadi El-Natroun model nationwide. Other centres are under construction in different regions. The Public Prosecutor's Office has taken into account the circumstances related to the COVID-19 pandemic by expanding alternatives to pre-trial detention, such as house arrest, regular reporting to the police station, or bans on visiting certain places.

173. The Public Prosecutor's Office inspects and monitors rehabilitation centres according to organised and supervised procedures. Prosecuting inspectors have access to all detention areas, meet with residents, collect their complaints, consult the centre's records, verify their regularity and compliance with the legal and constitutional rights of detainees. Minutes are taken and a detailed report is prepared, including all observations. The Public Prosecutor's Office has distributed a practical guide to its members specifying the elements to be inspected and the evaluation criteria in accordance with legal and international standards.
174. Periodic visits are organised with the participation of representatives of national institutions, specialised councils, the National Human Rights Council, civil society, diplomatic missions and the media to examine the centres and conditions of detention, including those of women, particularly mothers. Between January 2019 and June 2023, 52 visits were carried out in this context, in addition to 1,238 consular visits by representatives of foreign diplomatic missions to inquire about the situation of their nationals.

Freedom of Opinion, Expression, Access to Information and Freedom of Journalists

175. See paragraphs (34–38).

Regarding the Censorship of Websites

176. Law No. 180 of 2018 on the organisation of the press, media and the Supreme Media Regulatory Council defines the powers of the latter. Article 69 stipulates that the Council aims to guarantee and protect freedom of the press and media within the framework of free competition. Article 71 gives the Council the right to establish a system for receiving complaints from the public about media services, to investigate them and to follow up with service providers. These provisions aim to strengthen the right to freedom of expression, to respect the rights and reputation of others, and support the professionalism and independence of the media, enabling them to produce constructive and respectful content for the public.

Regarding the Protection of Women against Violence and Harassment

177. The Criminal Code guarantees legal protection of the right to physical integrity for women and men against all forms of violence. It criminalises rape and provides for

severe penalties. Article 242 punishes assault resulting in injury, regardless of its severity, and Article 377 punishes minor acts of violence without injury. No legal provision or case law exempts the aggressor from liability, regardless of their relationship with the victim. According to the Supreme Court, Article 60 of the Penal Code can only be invoked for acts that are generally permitted by law and cannot justify exemption from liability for punishable acts.

178. The National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women by 2030 includes a focus on protection from violence, as well as an independent observatory responsible for monitoring national indicators. Among the measures adopted is the Prime Minister's decision in 2021 to create the first integrated unit for the protection of women against violence, aimed at speeding up procedures and centralising services. This decision introduces for the first time an explicit definition of violence against women: "any act, behaviour or omission contrary to the Constitution and the law, causing harm or suffering to women, whether physical, material, moral, psychological, social or economic, or infringing on their rights and freedoms guaranteed by law, in public or private life, including threats, coercion or arbitrary deprivation, in breach of international commitments". The Egyptian Penal Code covers sexual offences and violence against women, such as sexual harassment, assault, rape, non-consensual intercourse, indecent assault, genital mutilation, abduction, indecency, obscene acts, as well as harassment, discrimination, deprivation of inheritance, electronic offences, forced early marriage, and the protection of victims' data.
179. The National Women's Council is responsible for receiving and examining complaints relating to violations of women's rights and freedoms, forwarding them to the competent authorities, and resolving them in collaboration with the parties concerned. It provides free legal assistance. The Council's complaints office receives reports through interviews, via the 15115 hotline and other means of communication, and offers legal, psychological and social services. Between 2018 and 2023, it served approximately 182,827 women and handled 255,630 complaints.
180. The complaints office has published six practical guides for dealing with different cases of violence against women. The Council continues its awareness-raising campaigns on all forms of violence, including digital violence, reporting methods and applicable laws. The State has conducted several studies, including the first in the Arab world on the economic cost of violence against women, the 2021 demographic and health survey, surveys during the COVID-19 pandemic, and a survey on violence against women with disabilities. Furthermore, 42 units to combat harassment and violence have been set up in universities, one unit in the Ministry of Justice, sections in the departments of the Ministry of the Interior, 12 "Women in Safety" units in university hospitals, 18 medical response units in primary care centres, three forensic clinics for victims of sexual assault, digital family offices within the Public Prosecutor's Office, and 12 shelters for women victims of violence. In November 2020, the first shelter dedicated to victims of human trafficking was inaugurated. This centre

aims to respond to the specific needs of people who have suffered serious forms of exploitation by providing them with specialised, trauma-sensitive care tailored to their particular circumstances.

181. Regarding the development of the first national model for reporting cases of violence against women, based on the international model, and institutionalisation of training programmes for service providers and competent authorities, the individuals concerned — judges, members of the public prosecutor's office, police officers, medical teams, representatives of units combating violence — have been trained, with 5,405 trainees over the last few years. Several guides have been published, including:

- Guide for forensic doctors;
- "Effective police response to crimes of violence against women";
- Medical guide for healthcare providers;
- Guide for prosecutors: "The effective judicial response to crimes of violence against women";
- Guide to case management and psychological support;
- Guide to standards and criteria for judges;
- Guide for the creation and activation of units to combat violence against women in universities;
- Guidance guide for women's protection units in university hospitals.

182. The National Women's Council has launched an initiative to support the creation of permanent committees for the elimination of violence against women at the Governorate level. These committees are responsible for coordinating multisectoral efforts between the various guidance and care services, as well as developing common policies and protocols at the local level to protect women from all forms of violence.

183. The judicial authorities, in coordination with the Ministry of Health, the General Secretariat for Mental Health, the National Council for Women and the National Council for Childhood, provide psychological and community support services to women victims of violence. Between November 2019 and October 2023, 1,241 cases of arrest for sexual harassment and assault were recorded.

Regarding the Fight against Child Marriages and Female Genital Mutilation

184. Concerning the eradication of child marriage, the law provides for imprisonment or fines for any person who has made false statements to the competent authority in order to prove that one of the spouses has reached the legal age required for marriage, when the contract is prepared based on these statements or documents. The same penalty applies to any person authorised to register a marriage contract knowing that one of the spouses has not reached the legal age (Article 227 of the Penal Code). The law prohibits the legalisation of marriages for any person, male or female,

who has not reached the age of eighteen. The Criminal Code also punishes any person who has provided false information or documents for the purpose of proving that a marriage has been performed in violation of the legal age. The law on combating human trafficking criminalises cases of child marriage when they are carried out for the purpose of exploitation, and considers such cases to be a danger to the child in accordance with the law on children. The National Council regularly launches awareness campaigns against child marriage.

185. To eliminate the practice of female genital mutilation, a national commission was established in 2019 under the joint chairmanship of the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood and the National Council for Women. The National Strategy for the Eradication of Female Genital Mutilation (2022–2026) was launched, including awareness-raising campaigns. The Penal Code has been amended to increase penalties for anyone involved in this practice, with tougher sanctions for health professionals. The rate of mutilation among girls under the age of 17 has fallen from 18 per cent in 2014 to 12 per cent in 2021.

186. The total number of cases of female genital mutilation investigated by the Public Prosecutor's Office between 2019 and 2024 amounts to 111 cases, resulting in 23 convictions. Concerning cases of child or underage marriage during the same period, a total of 95 investigations were conducted, 23 of which resulted in convictions.

Regarding the Strengthening of Women's Representation in Decision-making bodies

187. See paragraphs (106–109).

Regarding the Protection of Children from Forced Labour and Exploitation

188. See paragraphs (115–116).

Regarding Improving Access to Education for Children in Rural Areas

189. See paragraphs (76–87).

Regarding the Detention of Migrants and Refugees

190. There are no detention centres for refugees and migrants in Egypt. Egyptian policy is based on respect for the right to freedom of movement and the refusal to create detention centres for these populations. It also guarantees equality before the law and the absence of discrimination. Egypt respects all the rights of refugees and asylum seekers in accordance with international conventions, ensuring that they enjoy complete freedom of movement. It cooperates with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) under a memorandum of understanding signed in 1954. There is ongoing coordination between the government and the UNHCR to ensure

protection and support for refugees and asylum seekers, including access to the UNHCR.

Regarding the rights of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, and the guarantee of non-refoulement

191. See paragraphs (49–51).
