




The National Council for Human Rights

Together to promote Human Rights

**The National Council for
Human Rights Sixteenth
Annual Report
(December 2020 – June 2023)**

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presentation
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Introduction:

It is with a deep sense of pride that I introduce the National Council for Human Rights 16th annual report, and the first report for the new membership which I am honored to preside over. This report also coincides with the one year anniversary of the new cohort- the performance of which is worthy of assessment. NCHR has been a dynamic player in endeavors seeking to promote, protect and provide human rights in Egypt for nearly 20 years. It was established by Law No. 94 of 2003, amended by Law No. 197 /2017. The new cohort was the outcome of a new democratic path seeking to ensure its independence and compliance with “ Paris Principles;: a set of parameters adopted in 1993 by the United Nations General Assembly to secure efficacy, financial and administrative independence of national human rights institutions NHRIs. On behalf of this seventh cohort, I would like to extend our Appreciation to multiple institutions that contributed to shaping the new team. The selection process came through a free vote by the House of Representatives, the lower house of the Egyptian Parliament, on diverse nominations , and was finally endorsed by the President of Egypt. The selection process signals commitment to the core values of human rights and freedoms. As an Egyptian woman, I feel proud of our achievements in recent years. We are proud to have earned unprecedented 2 rights. women’s agency and activism are acknowledged, our role and struggle in the most challenging stages of our country’s history is finally rewarded. I am grateful and honored to be the first female president of such an esteemed institution, 44% of the members of which being women. The council, founded in 2004 is , ranked , ever since,as a status “A” national independent institution by the Sub-Committee on Accreditation of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI), and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). The council has a diverse and rich representation of civil society, with nearly half of the members coming from civil society organizations. We began our mission at the dawn of 2022, instigating optimism and high hopes, as a historic opportunity loomed for Egypt to make a breakthrough worthy of a nation that embraced the universal declaration of human rights back in 1948. The launch of Egypt’s first ever national human rights strategy “NHRS” in the presence of the President of Egypt in September 2021 set the stage for such optimism.

This optimism became even stronger a few days down the line as president Abdel Fattah El Sisi declared his decision not to seek extension of the state of emergency, followed by his invitation to a national dialogue that leaves no one behind and without discrimination. More importantly the president asserted that difference of opinion does not harm the cause of 3 the nation, undoubtedly such presidential initiatives invites optimism, let alone feasibility of fulfilling human rights as a tangible reality for all Egyptians, without any discrimination. along

with his decision to revive the Presidential Pardon Committee, emphasizing that differences of opinion do not harm the nation's cause. ." Optimists saw such bold moves as a solid guarantee for the right to freedom of expression. To the same vein, it is important to reflect on President Sisi's insights regarding the right to religious freedom; which he aired on the sidelines of the launch of the NHRS. Such insights represent a leap, raising the bar for civil and political rights, namely freedom of belief, religion and, freedom of expression. In fact, the president ventured to rectify a lacuna shaped by the Egyptian Constitution, as it begins with economic, social, and cultural rights, contrary to the established norm set by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights UDHR. which starts with civil and political rights as inherent rights of individuals, such as the right to life, identity, freedom of expression, religious freedom, freedom of assembly, protection against torture, violence, and inhumane and degrading treatment. The wisdom behind this lies in the fact that CPR does not require financial resources for their implementation, unlike ESCR, which states commit to its progressive realization in view of available resources. Nevertheless, it is necessary to acknowledge that there can be no hierarchy between the two 4 categories of rights, as both are interrelated, indivisible, and interdependent. As a global leader with a rich culture and a strong clout, Egypt's constitution presents human rights as the foundation of the state relationship with the people. Egypt has also contributed UDHR formulation and has acceded to nine human rights treaties born out of it, This means honoring the inherent worth of every citizen, as stated by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It also means that all state institutions and civil society organizations must adhere to the basic human rights standards guaranteed by the constitution. There have been what I longed to read as consistent indications of a political "readiness" to recognize the inherent dignity of all citizens and their equal and inalienable rights as the foundation of freedom, justice, and peace These remarkable initiatives still need to be put into action. An action desperately needed to close the deep gap between a present full of a much needed hope and a past that considered human rights as a foreign agenda, that threatened our culture and, hampered the fight against terrorism. We still hold optimism for a future that reflects the President's firm belief that " stability is achieved through the content of citizens." This means that guaranteeing the rights of citizens without any discrimination is the cornerstone of justice, peace, stability, and sustainable development. It is evident that realizing this significant transformation relies on the collaboration of numerous stakeholders, starting with governmental institutions, unions, associations, political parties, universities, research centers, religious institutions among a wide host of civil society organizations. Such collaborative effort will bear fruits when further supported by our National Council for Human Rights, adequately resourced, mandated and empowered as provided for by the law. This is the bare minimum to enable NCHR

to carry out its responsibilities as a watchdog on behalf of over 105 million Egyptian rights holders in a country where its pioneering role is highly anticipated worldwide. Such a critical task calls for an objective evaluation of the first year in action by the new cohort. Such is the standard that we hold.

State's initiatives in establishing a robust infrastructure capable of fulfilling the economic, social, and cultural rights of its citizens is duly appreciated. These initiatives encompass various healthcare programs, notably the successful campaign against Hepatitis C, which has claimed numerous lives, and the ambitious plan to eliminate informal settlements, thereby ensuring the right to dignity for millions of marginalized Egyptians. Moreover, there are diverse housing programs, the "Decent Life" initiative for rural development (Haya Karima), and the ongoing efforts to implement a comprehensive healthcare system. Additionally, the expansion of Egypt's agricultural lands, the exploration of mineral and oil resources ⁶ following the demarcation of borders with neighboring countries, and other endeavors demonstrate the state's commitment to uplifting its people and enhancing their wellbeing.

Notwithstanding its inherent value to the right to dignity, economic, social, and cultural rights such as the right to education, the right to enjoy the best possible state of health and the right to access the best quality available health services, the right to decent work, and the right to adequate housing, among a wide host of Economic, social, and cultural rights ESCR. Such rights remain interdependent and indivisible and interrelated to civil and political rights such as the right to life, to identity, to freedom of expression and protection from torture, violence, inhumane treatment or neglect. Human rights are nevertheless indivisible, interconnected, and interdependent. Protection, promotion and provision of ESCR, depend on the effective enjoyment of civil and political rights CPR especially in a large country like Egypt. This is where the national human rights strategy holds immense value in ensuring the government's commitment to implementing human rights at all levels. It is only natural that it adopts a right based, multidisciplinary approach. The strategy will consequently be guided by recommendations emanating from the Universal Periodic Review UPR and ⁷ accepted by the Egyptian government and those by other treaty bodies. In my view, effective monitoring and evaluation of the actual implementation of the strategy is vital to keeping it relevant to the human rights situation on the ground. Its Implementation warrants transparent regular evaluation. A candid evaluation process should involve viable and transparent consultations with a wide range of stakeholders, including women, children, youth, persons with disabilities, refugees, internally displaced persons, and asylum seekers residing and working in Egypt. This undertaking necessitates the allocation of both financial and human resources. A year has passed since the launch of NSHR, and we have, as

mentioned earlier, seen initiatives that offered a historic opportunity for Egypt to realize and advance its human rights. Aspirations. Commitment to the UN human rights system is however, not measured by the mere signing or ratification of the human rights treaty. The commitment is about fulfillment, or putting these rights into practice (i.e. effective implementation). To help countries do that, each convention provides for the establishment of a treaty body or a “committee” to assist states members implement their commitments under the said treaty or convention. Egypt, as a state party to numerous HR conventions, has a strong presence in most of these 8 committees. This is a testimonial to its dedication to human rights. Egypt in most cases reports regularly to such treaty bodies and engages into a constructive dialogue with experts on such treaty bodies. We have many success stories, and several outstanding challenges are solved. All eyes are on Egypt to lead by example by making human rights a priority based on its constitution and internationally agreed standards. Human rights implementation means that a state takes actions to ensure that all the rights in the human rights treaties it has signed are respected, protected and implemented for everyone under its jurisdiction. This requires, among other things, that the state adopts “all legislative, administrative, and other measures” to enforce such rights. The state bears the primary responsibility to fulfill its obligations under human rights conventions. It also needs the involvement of all segments of the society. To make human rights a reality, there are many steps that need to be taken, such as creating independent national human rights institutions NHRI. These NHRI’s must follow international standards that all countries, including Egypt, have agreed on “The Paris Principles. These standards ensure that NHRI’s have adequate resources, both financial; human and institutional, refunding, staff, and power to do their work well and protect their members from any interference. NHRI’s are regularly rated according to how well they abide by these standards. Egypt’s National Council for Human Rights’ statute gives it a lot of 9 power as provided for by its third article. For example, it is mandated to draft a national action plan for human rights, suggest ways to achieve it, give advice and opinions on draft laws, and receive complaints from citizens about human rights violations. There are also other national councils for specific groups such as for women, children, and people with disabilities. These councils or mechanisms should have adequate resources and power to carry out its mandate. They should also work together with the government and civil society, because human rights need cooperation from everyone to be enforced in all government departments and levels. There should also be careful monitoring of how well human rights are implemented, and this monitoring should be part of how the government works at all levels. There should also be independent monitoring by national human rights institutions, non-governmental organizations, and other entities.

One satisfactory consequence arising from the adoption and near-universal ratification of human rights agreements is the establishment of an extensive array of bodies, structures, and initiatives that prioritize human rights concerns. Such developments entail the establishment of dedicated units within the government, the appointment of ministers, the formation of inter-ministerial committees, and the creation of parliamentary committees specifically addressing human rights issues. Additionally, analyses have been conducted to ascertain the impact of these endeavors on rights holders, and budgetary allocations have been directed towards safeguarding the rights of disadvantaged groups, including individuals with disabilities, children, women, migrant workers, victims of enforced disappearance, and victims of torture. Furthermore, reports on the "status of human rights" have been prepared, coalitions of non-governmental organizations focusing on human rights have been established, and positions of ombudspersons and human rights commissioners have been appointed, among other measures undertaken. The distinctive feature of the United Nations human rights system lies in its transformative impact on the status of vulnerable individuals and those encompassed by human rights treaties. States parties to these treaties have collectively agreed that their role, within the ambit of the agreement, entails the fulfillment of explicit legal obligations towards each rights holder. For instance, it is imperative that the exercise of the rights of persons with disabilities, children, victims of racial discrimination, or victims of torture is not misconstrued as acts of philanthropy or gratuitous benevolence extended to them. Moreover, it is incumbent upon all governmental spheres, including parliament and the judiciary, of each state party to adopt a human rights perspective. This ensures the effective implementation of the entire agreement, particularly in light of the overarching principles of human rights, including the right to life. State parties are duty-bound to guarantee, to the maximum extent feasible, the rights and development of capabilities of rights holders, and their entitlement as individuals to freely express their opinions on "all matters affecting their lives," with requisite consideration accorded to these views. The bedrock of human rights principles includes the entitlement to enjoy all rights without discrimination on any grounds whatsoever. In pursuance thereof, all United Nations human rights committees have reached a consensus on the adoption of the following general measures for the implementation of rights: 1. Examination of the reservations made by the state concerning ratified human rights treaties and the determination of the necessity to uphold such reservations. 2. Accession to other significant international instruments pertaining to human rights, recognizing the interconnectedness and indivisibility of human rights. 3. Legislative measures: Mandating a comprehensive review of all relevant domestic legislation and administrative directives, ensuring comprehensive compliance with the human rights treaties to which the state has acceded. This

review shall be conducted meticulously and continuously, encompassing the entirety of the treaty, rather than individual provisions, to acknowledge the interrelated nature and indivisibility of human rights. The review shall form an integral part of the mechanism of all relevant governmental bodies, be 12 undertaken independently, and involve committees, parliamentary sessions, national human rights institutions, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, and the rights-holders themselves, including women, children, persons with disabilities, victims of torture, migrant workers, and all categories encompassed by the ratified human rights treaties. 4. Similarly, it is of paramount importance to ensure, through suitable means, the legal effectiveness of the provisions of human rights treaties ratified and committed to by Egypt within the Egyptian legal system. This necessitates the dissemination of these treaties among various official and non-governmental entities, along with the training of all personnel engaged in human rights matters within the executive, legislative, and judicial branches, as well as civil society organizations, on the provisions of human rights treaties and their implementation. Furthermore, the rights of the categories addressed by each human rights treaty shall serve as a primary criterion in all administrative, executive, legislative, and judicial endeavors and measures. In the same context, it is imperative to incorporate a human rights perspective within all government departments, as well as in parliament and the judiciary, to effectively implement Egypt's obligations under ratified human rights treaties. This implementation should be guided by the general principles of 13 human rights, foremost among them the right to enjoy all human rights without discrimination for any reason. It is worth noting that the law establishing the National Council for Human Rights has granted the Council all these powers. However, the practical application remains subject to the conviction of decision-making bodies regarding the practical value of human rights in achieving development, peace, and security. In my assessment, the national human rights strategy should have focused on two main pillars: the first concerning civil and political rights, and the second concerning economic, social, and cultural rights. It could have omitted the third pillar, which mentioned certain categories such as women, children, persons with disabilities, and the elderly. It would have sufficed to indicate that all the human rights covered in the first and second axes of the strategy are based on the principles of human rights, particularly the right to non-discrimination in the enjoyment of all rights. This commitment to nondiscrimination requires the state to make efforts to identify and recognize the rights of individuals or groups who may require special measures, including the collection of disaggregated data to determine actual or potential discrimination against vulnerable groups. Addressing discrimination may necessitate amendments in legislation, administration, allocation of financial and human resources, as well as educational measures to raise awareness about the rights of

victims of discrimination. It should be emphasized that the application of 14 the principle of non-discrimination and equal opportunities does not imply identical treatment. A general comment issued by the human rights committee highlighted the importance of taking special measures to reduce or eliminate conditions that give rise to discrimination. Furthermore, the principle of listening to rights-holders and considering their opinions when making decisions that affect them is one of the foundational principles of human rights. Additionally, the best interests of rights-holders should be the primary criterion in all decisions or actions that impact them. Rights gain meaning when effective remedies are available to address violations. Hence, the importance of the role played by the complaints system in the National Council for Human Rights, as it serves as a means for freedom of expression, revealing potential discrimination in the enjoyment of rights and exposing gaps that require implementing measures aimed at addressing complainants' concerns. As part of our commitment to uphold human rights standards, the new cohort of the National Council for Human Rights submits its first report in full compliance with such standards.

Moushira Khattab, PhD May 31st, 2023

Chapter One: The State of Human Rights in Egypt

Pillar I: Legislative Safeguards for Human Rights in Egypt

First: The Constitution

In recognition of the fundamental importance of human rights and freedoms, the drafters of the Egyptian Constitution of 2014 dedicated the third chapter thereof to these matters. The constitution affirms the principle of equality in rights and freedoms in Article 53, which prohibits any form of discrimination on any grounds. Furthermore, the article establishes an independent commission with the mandate to address discrimination and protect the rights of all citizens.

In addition to Article 53, the drafters of the constitution followed a rights-based approach in drafting the majority of the articles. They enshrined fundamental rights and freedoms in the text of the constitution, and whenever appropriate, they incorporated international human rights treaties into the domestic legal order. For example, Article 93 of the constitution states that "international human rights treaties to which Egypt is a party shall have the force of law."

Therefore, the Constitution of the Arab Republic of Egypt, promulgated in 2014, is a comprehensive and progressive legal instrument that enshrines a wide range of rights and freedoms for all citizens in its provisions. The Constitution also creates a number of institutional mechanisms to safeguard these rights, including the independent commission to address discrimination. The Constitution adopts a rights-based approach that reflects the growing recognition of the importance of human rights for the advancement of peace, justice, and development.

The preamble of the constitution sets forth the fundamental values and principles that underpin the Egyptian legal system. It begins with the declaration that the constitution is enacted by the people, reaffirming the principle of popular sovereignty. The preamble then goes on to emphasize the importance of freedom, equality, and social justice, calling for a new human world where these values are upheld.

Moreover, the preamble affirms the people's right to self-determination and their right to shape their own future. It also recognizes the importance of democracy, political pluralism, and the peaceful transfer of power. Finally, the preamble states that the constitution is consistent with the

Universal Declaration of Human Rights, ensuring that the fundamental rights and freedoms of all citizens are protected.

In short, the preamble of the Egyptian constitution is a powerful statement of the country's commitment to human rights, democracy, and the rule of law.

Article 4 of the constitution affirms the principle of popular sovereignty, which holds that the people are the ultimate source of all political authority. Article 5 then elaborates on this principle by stating that the political system is based on political and party pluralism, the peaceful transfer of power, the separation of powers, and the respect for human rights and freedoms.

The constitution, with minor exceptions, prioritizes economic, social, and cultural rights. The right to human dignity, despite its importance, is mentioned late in the constitution (Article 51) and should have been the first right mentioned. Similarly, the right to protection from discrimination is mentioned in Article 53, while in democratic countries' constitutions and international human rights conventions, it is customary to include this right in the second article of the document, as it represents a fundamental value, principle, and support on which all human rights are based. The same applies to the guarantee of the right to physical and psychological safety, which is also one of the civil and political rights that should have been at the top of the constitution, as it was included in Article 52, which states that torture in all its forms is a crime that does not fall under the statute of limitations. The constitution considers it a crime to interfere with the safety of the human body for other than medical purposes. As stated in Article 60, "The human body has a sanctity, and assault on it, mutilation, or representation is a crime punishable by law. Trade in its organs is prohibited, and no medical or scientific experiment may be conducted on it without its free and documented consent, and in accordance with the established principles in the field of medical sciences, in the manner regulated by law." This constitutional text criminalizes acts of material assault on the safety of the human body, including mutilation of the body in any way that leads to the occurrence of a permanent disability or other forms of assault. It is considered that the addition of the word "mutilation" to the word "assault" was intended to include the text of female genital mutilation, even if some do not consider it an assault. This represents an acknowledgment and constitutional guarantee that what is called female genital mutilation actually represents an assault on the physical and psychological safety of women, and a flagrant violation of women's human

rights. This is in line with the Committee against Torture's position that the definition of torture in Article 1 of the Convention against Torture (CAT) makes female genital mutilation a form of torture, so the state is committed to criminalizing it by a clear and unambiguous legal text.

Article 54 of the Constitution guarantees the right to personal freedom, which is a fundamental right that cannot be restricted except in cases of suspicion of a crime or with the permission of a competent judicial authority in accordance with the procedures established by law. The Constitution also prohibits the monitoring or confiscation of means of communication without a reasoned judicial order issued for a limited period.

Article 62 of the Egyptian Constitution guarantees freedom of movement, including the right to travel, reside, and emigrate. No citizen may be expelled from the country, prevented from returning, or prohibited from leaving the country, or forced to reside in a certain area, except by a reasoned judicial order for a limited period and in the cases specified by law.

Article 11 of the Constitution guarantees women's rights to all civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights. The state is committed to taking measures to ensure women's representation in legislative bodies.

The Constitution recognizes the right to peaceful protest, which is regulated by law.

Article 18 of the Constitution guarantees the right to healthcare, including comprehensive health insurance that covers all diseases. The state is committed to providing comprehensive health insurance for all Egyptians, regardless of their income or geographical location.

Article 19 of the Constitution recognizes the right to quality education. The state is committed to allocating a percentage of government spending to pre-university and university education.

Article 22 of the Constitution recognizes the right to culture. The state is committed to supporting culture for all segments of the population, with a special focus on marginalized areas and the most vulnerable groups.

In reference to the rights of individuals who have been deprived of their liberty, although Article 55 of the Constitution does not explicitly employ the term "right," it unequivocally safeguards the rights of every person who has been apprehended, incarcerated, or subjected to restrictions on their

freedom. These individuals are entitled to be treated in a manner that upholds their inherent dignity, and they shall not, under any circumstances, be subjected to torture, coercion, or any form of physical or psychological harm.

It is further mandated that the detention or imprisonment of individuals shall exclusively take place in facilities that have been specifically designated for this purpose and adhere to humane and sanitary standards. The state is under a binding obligation to institute provisions for facilitating access to such facilities for persons with disabilities. Any violation of these stipulations shall be deemed a criminal offense, subject to penalties as prescribed by the law.

Moreover, it is enshrined that the accused retains the right to maintain silence during legal proceedings. Any statement purportedly obtained from a detainee under the influence of any of the aforementioned prohibited actions or threats thereof is rendered null and void and shall not be admissible as evidence.

Second: The Treaties Ratified by the Arab Republic of Egypt:

Treaty/Convention	Signature Date	Ratification Date
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)	July 16 th , 1980	September 18 th , 1981
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	April 4 th , 2007	April 14 th , 2008
Convention on the Rights of the Child	February 5 th , 1990	July 6 th , 1990
International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families	February 1993	February 19 th , 1993
International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination	September 28 th , 1966	May 1 st , 1967
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	August 4 th , 1967	January 14 th , 1982

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	August 4 th , 1967	January 14 th , 1982
Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT)		June 25 th , 1986
Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict	February 2007	February 6 th , 2007 (a)
Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography	July 2002	July 12 th , 2002 (a)

Third: Legal Framework for Human Rights in Egypt

During the period spanning from December 2020 to November 2022, notable advancements were observed in the realm of legislation aimed at upholding and advancing human rights. These developments underscore the government and parliament's commitment to enhancing the legal framework, with a particular focus on safeguarding the rights of various segments of society. Noteworthy legal measures included stricter penalties for offenses such as female genital mutilation, commonly referred to as female circumcision, and sexual harassment, aimed at protecting women's rights. Additionally, measures were taken to support and provide care for individuals with disabilities, ensuring the protection of their rights and imposing more stringent penalties against acts of bullying targeting them. Further legislative actions were taken in the domain of civil and political rights, encompassing the right to life, bodily integrity, the treatment of prisoners and detainees, access to legal recourse, and the reinforcement of fair and impartial trial guarantees. These legal efforts also encompassed counterterrorism initiatives, the right to assemble and establish civil organizations, personal freedom, and the combatting of illegal immigration. Moreover, legislative amendments pertaining to economic, social, and cultural rights were introduced, with a specific emphasis on enhancing the rights to healthcare, education, and employment.

Nonetheless, it remains imperative to exert further legislative endeavors to finalize the requisite legal framework aimed at bolstering fundamental rights and freedoms, while concurrently fortifying adherence to the constitutional provisions and Egypt's commitments emanating from its accession to several international conventions and instruments. The National Council for Human Rights acknowledges the House of Representatives' resolution to amend the Code of Criminal Procedure, with expectations of its dedicated handling of matters such as pre-trial detention and expeditious justice proceedings. Moreover, certain amendments are deemed necessary, particularly concerning Law No. 150 of 2021, which warrants a comprehensive review within the context of the heightened emphasis on the imperative need to institute safeguards for the preservation of human rights, as elaborated upon subsequently. Presented below are the most salient legislative amendments pertinent to the period encompassed by this report:

The Legislations that have been enacted in the field of human rights protection

Women's rights: The political will to support the rights of women and girls was evident in the following ways:

Female genital mutilation:

In April 2021, the Egyptian president signed amendments to the Penal Code that toughened the punishment for FGM. The amendments included:

Raising the minimum penalty from one year to five years.

Eliminating the "medical exception," which allowed FGM to be performed for medical reasons.

Banning institutions and medical providers from providing medical services for a period after being involved in FGM.

Expanding criminal liability to anyone who supports FGM, including members of the victim's family.

These amendments are a significant step forward in the fight against FGM in Egypt. They send a strong message that FGM is a crime and that those who commit it will be held accountable.

Sexual harassment:

Furthermore, in tandem with governmental initiatives aimed at preventing sexual harassment, notable legislative amendments were enacted through Law No. 141 of 2021, dated August 15, 2021. These amendments encompassed the Penal Code and were specifically designed to augment the severity of penalties imposed for acts of sexual harassment. This transformation elevated the classification of such offenses from misdemeanors to felonies. Pertinent modifications encompassed an augmentation of the minimum custodial sentences, which escalated from two years to seven years, as compared to the prior range of six months to five years. Simultaneously, minimum fines were proportionately elevated. Importantly, the revised legal framework introduced a provision stipulating that recidivist offenders may incur penalties of up to twice the initially determined prison term.

The rights of people with disabilities

The Egyptian Constitution guarantees the rights of people with disabilities, including the right to equality before the law, the right to education, the right to employment, the right to health care, and the right to political participation.

The Constitution also prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in all areas of life.

In order to implement these constitutional guarantees, the Egyptian government has enacted a number of laws and regulations, including:

Law No. 157 of 2022, enacted on August 2, 2022, introduces amendments to select provisions of the Law governing the Establishment of the Fund for the Support of Individuals with Disabilities, as originally stipulated in Law No. 200 of 2020. This legislative development underscores the keen interest of the political leadership in the "Differently Able" Fund, spanning various domains, with particular emphasis on the legislative framework securing economic, social, and cultural rights. These encompass the right to education, healthcare, and employment. The overarching objective of this law is to institute a stable legislative foundation that safeguards the rights of individuals with disabilities.

In December 2021, the Egyptian government enacted Law No. 156 of 2021, introducing amendments to specific provisions within the Law governing the Rights of Individuals with Disabilities, as originally promulgated in Law No. 10 of 2018. The primary aim of these

amendments is to address the issue of bullying perpetrated against individuals with disabilities.

Pursuant to this law, the penalty for engaging in acts of bullying targeting individuals with disabilities has been elevated to a minimum of one year of imprisonment, monetary fines, or both penalties concurrently. In cases of recidivism, wherein the offender repeats the offense, the penalties of imprisonment and fines are subject to doubling. Furthermore, the law expressly enunciates the entitlement of individuals with disabilities to vocational training and employment opportunities.

The government's policy has established a stipulated quota, mandating that companies employing over 50 individuals are obligated to maintain a workforce composition wherein individuals with disabilities constitute at least 5% of the total workforce.

Legislations related to civil and political rights

The right to protection against torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment

On March 20, 2022, Law No. 14 of 2022 was enacted, introducing modifications to several sections of the Prisons Act (Regulating Correctional and Rehabilitation Centers). These adjustments are part of the state's strategy to enhance correctional facilities, encompassing their philosophy, objectives, nomenclature, infrastructure, and administration, with the overarching goal of upholding and implementing human rights values and principles. Furthermore, these amendments aim to provide social safeguards for individuals deprived of their liberty, with an emphasis on their rehabilitation to facilitate their reintegration into society and leverage their rehabilitation within the state's programs and development initiatives.

The legislative amendments encompassed the imposition of custodial sentences within correctional and rehabilitation centers, with the primary objective of nurturing and rehabilitating the incarcerated individuals from a social and cultural perspective.

One favorable aspect arising from the enactment of the aforementioned legislative amendment is the stipulation that the management of public correctional and rehabilitation facilities must actively promote and facilitate educational pursuits, including reading and studying, for incarcerated individuals who express a desire to pursue their studies to completion.

The right to life and addressing human trafficking (combatting illegal migration and immigrants smuggling)

The National Strategy to Combat Illegal Immigration (2016-2026) was promulgated with the objective of safeguarding the most susceptible demographics at risk of exploitation by human traffickers and smugglers, which notably encompass youth, children, their respective families, and individuals who enter Egypt through unauthorized means. Additionally, the strategy endeavors to dissuade and penalize those engaged in smuggling and human trafficking activities related to immigration, utilizing stringent measures and sanctions.

Law No. 22 of 2022, issued on April 11, 2022, aims to protect the right to life and fight against human trafficking by modifying some provisions of the Law on Combating Illegal Migration and Smuggling of Migrants. The law imposes harsher penalties for those who smuggle migrants or facilitate or participate in this crime. The punishments include life imprisonment and imprisonment for life, as well as fines of up to (5) million pounds or equivalent to the profit gained by the offender.

Moreover, any person who has knowledge of the commission or the attempt of a migrant smuggling offense and does not immediately report such information to the competent authorities shall be liable to sanctions, which may include imprisonment for a term of not less than one year and a fine of not less than EGP 50,000.

This legislation is part of the state's efforts to align its national laws with the constitution and the international human rights treaties that Egypt has ratified to tackle the issue of illegal migration and its causes, as this issue has become widespread and diverse in recent times. This legislation also conforms to the main goals of the National Strategy to Combat Illegal Migration.

Combatting Terrorism:

Under this framework, the Egyptian government has undertaken a set of measures to maintain security and public order. A number of legislations were enacted in this regard:

On November 11, 2021, Law No. 149 of 2021 was issued to amend certain provisions of the Anti-Terrorism Law No. 94 of 2015. The amendments included a prohibition on photographing, recording, broadcasting, or displaying any events from the trials of terrorist crimes, except with the permission of the competent court. The amendments also authorized the

President of the Republic, in the event of a danger from terrorist crimes or environmental disasters, to issue a decree taking appropriate measures to maintain security and public order, including the evacuation, isolation, or curfew of certain areas, provided that the decree specifies the area to which it applies for a period not exceeding six months.

Article 2 of Law No. 150 of 2021, amending the Penal Code, increased the penalty for disclosing state secrets to imprisonment for up to five years and a fine of up to fifty thousand Egyptian pounds. This penalty applies to:

Any person who obtains a state secret by unlawful means, unless they intended to deliver or disclose it to a foreign country or to one of those who work for its benefit.

Any person who discloses a state secret in any way.

Any person who organizes or uses any means of communication for the purpose of obtaining, delivering, or disclosing a state secret.

"State secrets" are defined as any information that is classified as such by the government of Egypt, including information about military operations, troop movements, weapons systems, or the country's economic or political interests.

The law is designed to protect Egypt's national security by deterring individuals from disclosing sensitive information that could be used by foreign governments or other hostile actors to harm the country.

Section 1bis of Law No. 135 of 2021, amending Law No. 10 of 1972 on dismissal without disciplinary action and the Civil Service Act, provides that employees of the entities referred to in Section (1) may be dismissed without disciplinary action in the following cases:

Serious violation of a public facility or economic interest of the state.

Evidence of committing an act that affects the national security of the country.

Inclusion on the terrorist list in accordance with the provisions of Law No. 8 of 2015 on the regulation of lists of terrorist entities and terrorists.

Loss of confidence or esteem, or loss of one or more reasons for suitability for the position held, except for health reasons.

This law expands the grounds on which employees of the state and public sector can be dismissed without disciplinary action, which is a process that typically involves providing the employee with notice of the alleged misconduct, an opportunity to be heard, and a written decision explaining the reasons for dismissal.

The new law is designed to protect the interests of the state and the public sector by giving employers more flexibility in dismissing employees who are not suitable for their positions or who pose a threat to the country.

The National Council for Human Rights (NCHR) has expressed concern about the recent amendments to the law on dismissal without disciplinary action for employees of the state and public sector. The NCHR argues that the amendments are vague and could be used to violate public rights and freedoms.

Specifically, the NCHR is concerned about the following aspects of the amendments:

The amendments do not define the terms "serious violation of a public facility or economic interest of the state" and "evidence of committing an act that affects the national security of the country." This vagueness could lead to employees being dismissed for political or other reasons that are not related to their job performance.

The amendments do not require a judicial decision for any dismissal without disciplinary action. This means that employees could be dismissed without due process of law.

The NCHR has called for the amendments to be revised to address these concerns. The NCHR has recommended that the amendments should:

Define the terms "serious violation of a public facility or economic interest of the state" and "evidence of committing an act that affects the national security of the country."

Require a judicial decision for any dismissal without disciplinary action.

The NCHR's concerns are valid. The amendments to the law on dismissal without disciplinary action are a significant expansion of the government's power to dismiss employees. It is important to ensure that these powers are used in a way that protects public rights and freedoms.

The NCHR's recommendations are consistent with international human rights law. The right to due process of law is a fundamental human right,

and it is essential for the protection of all other human rights. The right to due process of law includes the right to a fair and impartial hearing before a judicial authority.

The right to organize and form civil society organizations

Pursuant to the constitutional mandate to protect the right to organize and the freedom to form civil society organizations, and in completion of Law No. 149 of 2019 and its executive regulations on the need to reconcile the positions of practitioners of civil work, the following legislative amendments have been issued:

On April 11, 2022, Law No. 23 of 2022 was issued, extending the reconciliation period for civil society practitioners for a period not to exceed six months, with the possibility of extending this period for a similar period by decision of the competent minister after the approval of the Cabinet.

The draft law on the extension of the reconciliation period for civil society organizations is intended to address the practical challenges that have arisen in the implementation of the Law on the Regulation of the Practice of Civil Work. The COVID-19 pandemic has made it difficult for many organizations to hold their extraordinary general assemblies, which is a requirement for registration under the law. The draft law provides an additional six months for organizations to comply with this requirement, ensuring that all civil society organizations have the opportunity to benefit from the benefits and facilities provided by the law.

The Charitable Endowment Fund Law, No. 145 of 2021, was issued on September 3, 2021, to establish a charitable endowment fund for the purpose of encouraging the charitable endowment system to establish and support scientific, cultural, health, social, and other institutions working in the field of charity, as well as assisting government agencies in establishing service and development projects, especially educational ones, and contributing to the development of infrastructure projects, development of slums, and reduction of the phenomenon of homeless children, the homeless, and emergency cases.

On August 15, 2021, Legislative Amendment No. 137 of 2021 to the Law on the Supreme Constitutional Court was issued, adding the jurisdiction to review the constitutionality of international decisions and foreign judgments. This amendment expands the court's powers to include oversight of the constitutionality of decisions of international organizations

and bodies, and foreign court judgments that are requested to be implemented against the state.

The right to access to justice and to strengthen the guarantees of fair and impartial trials

Law No. 71 of 2021 amended the Penal Code by adding Article 309bis, which criminalizes the photographing and publishing of the proceedings of criminal trials without a permit from the presiding judge. The penalty for violating Article 309bis is a fine of up to EGP 300,000.

The Right to Political Participation and Engagement in Public Affairs

The following relevant laws were enacted:

The Law No. 2 of 2021 was enacted, which promulgated the Internal Regulations of the Shura Council, the Human Rights and Social Solidarity Committee shall have the following competencies:

To examine the draft general plan for social and economic development and to express its opinion thereon.

To examine the bills and international conventions related to human rights and to submit its recommendations thereon.

To monitor the implementation of the provisions of international human rights law and to report any violations thereof.

To examine the reports of the National Council for Human Rights and to comment on them.

To monitor the human rights aspects of the reports of the national councils, independent bodies, and oversight bodies and to propose any measures to enhance them.

In addition to complaints about human rights violations, the committee also receives complaints about social issues such as social solidarity, social justice, social protection, family planning, child care, maternity, the breadwinner woman, the elderly, and the protection of women in need.

The committee holds responsibility for matters pertaining to the rights of individuals with disabilities, charitable and social organizations and establishments, social planning, social research, and social advancement, encompassing but not limited to the support and empowerment of productive families through vocational training, managing migration and integration, aiding new and disadvantaged

communities. Moreover, the committee oversees the activities of the National Center for Social and Criminal Research, as well as the welfare of migrants, families of servicemen, homeland martyrs, revolution victims, veterans, families of war missing and those under their care, casualties of security operations, their spouses, offspring, and parents.

During the reporting period, the following legislative amendments were enacted to enhance the protection of economic, social, and cultural rights:

Notwithstanding the challenges and demands arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, the state has largely fulfilled its obligations to protect the rights and interests of its citizens. In particular, with respect to the right to health, the state has faced a significant strain on its healthcare system, which is undergoing a long-term reform process. The state has adopted and implemented various measures to address the public health risks associated with the pandemic, including:

On November 29, 2021, the Egyptian Parliament enacted Law No. 152 of 2021 on measures for confronting epidemics and pandemics . The Law authorizes the Prime Minister to declare a state of emergency in the event of an epidemic or health crisis, and to take any necessary measures to address the crisis, including:

Restricting the freedom of movement of individuals, either in specific areas or throughout the country, for a specified period.

Suspending operations, in whole or in part, for a specified period, in ministries, departments, government agencies, local administration units, public bodies, public sector companies, public business companies, other companies owned by the state, and the private sector.

Suspending classes, in whole or in part, for a specified period, in schools, universities, institutes, and other educational institutions.

Taking necessary measures regarding school year examinations.

Suspending operations in daycare centers.

Specifying opening and closing hours for public establishments, and ordering the closure of all or some of these establishments.

Organizing or banning public gatherings, marches, demonstrations, celebrations, and other forms of gatherings, as well as private gatherings, for a specified period.

Taking other precautionary measures necessary to ensure the safety of citizens during an epidemic or health crisis.

Any person who contravenes any decision issued by the committee shall be liable to imprisonment and a fine or either of these penalties. Any person who wilfully disseminates, publishes, or circulates false or misleading information, statements, or rumours relating to the pandemic that may disturb public order, cause panic among the citizens, or harm the public interest shall also be liable to the same penalties.

Pursuant to the state's obligation to safeguard the rights to health and work, as enshrined in the Constitution and international conventions, the legislative authority enacted Law No. 73 of 2021 on June 16, 2021, which empowers the competent authorities to terminate the employment contracts of workers who are proven to consume narcotic substances.

The executive regulations to Law No. 73 of 2021 stipulate that, in addition to the other requirements set forth in laws and regulations, employees in entities subject to the law must prove that they are not using drugs in order to be hired, promoted, transferred, or to continue in their employment. This proof can be obtained through a random, non-evidentiary drug test conducted by the employer in consultation with any of the entities affiliated with the Ministry of Health and Population or the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research.

Concerning the right to education, the following laws were enacted:

On October 11, 2022, Law No. 159 of 2022 was enacted to amend certain provisions of Law No. 82 of 2006 establishing the National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Education (the "National Authority"). The amendments to the National Authority specified the following objectives:

To promote awareness of a culture of quality in education.

To coordinate with educational institutions to establish a comprehensive system of standards, development benchmarking rules, and performance measurement mechanisms, guided by international standards.

To support the self-capacities of educational institutions to conduct self-assessment.

To develop the foundations and guidance mechanisms for educational institutions to conduct self-assessment.

The National Plan for Education Reform in Egypt relies on the National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Education as a key component. The National Authority aims to foster and enhance a quality culture in educational institutions and society, to establish national standards that align with international ones to restructure educational institutions and improve their performance and outcomes, and to earn the trust of society, increase their competitiveness locally and globally, and support the sustainable development goals in Egypt.

On December 3, 2020, Law No. 213 of 2020 was issued to amend several provisions of Law No. 227 of 1989 establishing the Education Development Support Fund. The Amendment aims to support, finance, manage, and build educational projects, including the establishment, equipment, maintenance, and repair of schools, educational institutions, and productive centers, and the investment of the Fund's assets, including the establishment and foundation of companies within the framework of the State's National Plan for Economic, Social, and Sustainable Political Development in the field of general and technical education, in accordance with the executive regulations of the Amendment.

The legislations enacted during the reporting period:

The law	Date of issuance
2020 legislations	
Law No. 213 of 2020 amending certain provisions of Law No. 227 of 1989 establishing the Education Development Support Fund	December 3 rd 2020
2021 legislations	
Law No. 2 of 2021 issuing the Internal Regulations of the Senate	March 3 rd , 2021
Law No. 10 of 2021 amending certain provisions of the Penal Code. The amendment stiffened the penalty for female genital mutilation.	April 28 th , 2021
Law No. 71 of 2021 amending certain provisions of the Penal Code. The Amendment criminalized the filming and publishing of the proceedings of criminal trials without permission.	June 13 th , 2021

Law No. 73 of 2021, regarding some conditions for holding or continuing jobs, which determines the penalty for dismissal from employment for employees who are proven to have used drugs.	June 16th, 2021
Law No. 136 of 2021 amending provisions of the Internal Regulations of the House of Representatives.	July 28 th , 2021
Law no. 135 of 2021 on Amending Some Provisions of Law no. 10 of 1972 on Non-Disciplinary Dismissal of Public Employees	July 28 th , 2021
Law no. 141/2021 amending some articles of the 58/1937 Penal Law to confront sexual harassment.	August 15 th , 2021
Law no. 137 of 2021 on amending some provisions of the Supreme Constitutional Court Law. This law expands the court's powers to include reviewing the constitutionality of decisions by international organizations and bodies and foreign court rulings to be executed against the state.	August 15 th , 2021
Law No. 145 of 2021 on the establishment of the Charitable Waqf Fund	September 3 rd , 2021
Law No. 149 of 2021 amending some provisions of the Anti-Terrorism Law	November 11 th , 2021
Law No. 150 of 2021 amends the Penal Code in Egypt to increase the penalties for disclosing state secrets.	November 20 th , 2023
Law No. 152 of 2021 on health measures to combat epidemics and pandemics	November 29 th , 2021
Law No. 156 of 2021 amending some provisions of the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	December 2021
2022 legislations	
Law No. 14 of 2022 amending some provisions of the Prisons Act	March 20 th , 2022
Law No. 22 of 2022 amends some provisions of Law No. 82 of 2016 on combating illegal migration and the smuggling of migrants in Egypt	April 11 th , 2022
Law No. 23 of 2022 (Egypt) amends Law No. 149 of 2019 to extend the period for civil society organizations to comply with the requirements of the Law on Regulating the Practice of Civil Society Work	April 11 th , 2022
Law No. 159 of 2022 amending some provisions of the Law on Establishing the National Authority for Guaranteeing the Quality of Education and Accreditation	October 11 th , 2022

Fourth: Judicial principles established by judicial rulings in the field of human rights

During the period covered by the report, the Administrative Court (Council of State) and the Supreme Constitutional Court of Egypt issued a number of judicial rulings that enhanced human rights in areas such as health, education, women's rights, and the rights of persons with disabilities, as follows:

Judicial rulings have been issued to protect women's rights, including the right to work and to hold judicial positions. In January 2021, the Second Circuit of the Administrative Court of Egypt ruled in case No. 12972/73 Q that the government's decision to exclude women from the position of assistant delegate in the Administrative Court was unconstitutional. The court held that the decision violated the principle of equality and the principle of non-discrimination.

The court established several judicial principles in its ruling, including:

The appointment to the position of assistant delegate is an absolute discretionary power that is limited only by the public interest.

The working environment must be prepared in a way that is compatible with the nature of women.

Equality in public rights does not necessarily imply the suitability of women to assume the tasks of some rights, including the assumption of some public positions, as environmental factors and the rules of tradition can play a role in guiding the administrative authority in the direction that it sees as achieving the public interest and consistent with the good order of the public facility.

In a landmark judicial decision, the Administrative Court of Daqahlia has annulled a decision by the director of the prosecution department in the family prosecution in Mansoura that required litigants to pay additional fees to extract and receive judgments and certificates from the family court. This ruling is a significant step towards easing the financial burden on litigants, especially women and children, and ensuring that all members of society have equal access to justice.

In a landmark ruling on June 20, 2021, the Administrative Court of Alexandria held that mothers have the same right as fathers to issue a birth certificate for their child. The court reasoned that the wife shares the husband's right to issue a birth certificate for the child.

On March 5, 2022, Judge Radwa Helmy Ahmed Ali became the first woman to be appointed to the bench of the Administrative Judiciary, the highest administrative court in Egypt. This landmark appointment is the culmination of decades of advocacy by women's rights groups to enable women to serve as judges in Egypt. It represents a significant step forward in the advancement of women's rights and the promotion of gender equality in the judiciary.

In the event that the Constitution promulgated in 2014 undertook significant strides in the direction of enhancing the status of Egyptian women, it is crucial to underscore that the Supreme Constitutional Court, has persistently served as a staunch guardian of rights and liberties.

In a landmark judgment rendered by the Supreme Constitutional Court on the 11th of April 2015, in Case No. 56 of the 27th year, the Court was confronted with an opposition challenging the inclusion of a female expert within the composition of the Family Court's psychological and social experts panel. This inclusion was in conformity with Article 2 of the Law on the Establishment of Family Courts, as stipulated by Law No. 10 of 2004.

The plaintiff in the constitutional case, by means of his lawsuit, sought to refrain from cooperating with the Family Court, which was adjudicating his dispute with his wife. His spouse had initiated legal proceedings before the Family Court, seeking the reimbursement of her dowry, and the plaintiff contended that the requirement for one of the experts to be a woman, as prescribed by the aforementioned provision, would unduly favor his wife.

The Supreme Constitutional Court dismissed these allegations and ruled to reject the lawsuit. The Court's rationale for this decision is delineated as follows:

"The legislative mandate emanating from the impugned provision necessitates, at minimum, the inclusion of one female expert. The rationale for this requirement lies in the fact that family disputes predominantly center on women and children, where the perspective of a woman holds paramount significance, given her innate acumen in this domain." "Furthermore, certain issues pertaining to personal status are only admissible in Sharia law when articulated by women, while the testimony of men is inadmissible, encompassing scenarios such as the waiting period and menstruation. This delineates a subjective principle that substantiates the preference accorded to women in this context."

"Consequently, although the impugned provision distinguishes between men and women in the aforesaid manner, this differentiation, grounded in the aforementioned subjective principle, constitutes a warranted distinction devoid of discriminatory underpinnings."

In summary, the Supreme Constitutional Court has ascertained that the prerequisite for the inclusion of at least one female expert in the Family Court is well-founded and does not contravene the principle of gender equality. The Court has underscored that this requirement is rooted in the recognition that family disputes predominantly involve women and children, with women's perspectives holding particular relevance in these matters. The Court has also highlighted that certain aspects of personal status are governed by Sharia law, which accords women a more prominent role than men in specific domains.

The Egyptian courts have a primary obligation to protect and ensure the rights of people with disabilities in all areas of law. This means that if administrative authorities fail to implement or uphold the rights of people with disabilities, or if they impose conditions that undermine the constitutional and legal rights of people with disabilities, the courts can issue rulings to remedy the situation.

The Supreme Administrative Court of Egypt, Fifth Chamber, ruled in 2021 in Case No. 46175 of Year 61 Administrative that the decision of the Chairman of the Local Unit of the Center and City of Shubrakheit to close the marble workshop owned by the local unit and managed by a person with a disability was illegal and discriminatory. The Court ordered the reopening of the workshop.

The Supreme Administrative Court of Egypt has held that the Constitution of Egypt 2014 guarantees the right of people with disabilities to work and to participate in society. The Court further held that the Constitution establishes the National Council for People with Disabilities as an independent body that advises the government on policies and legislation related to people with disabilities. The Court also held that the Constitution requires the government to take steps to accommodate the needs of people with disabilities in the workplace.

The Alexandria Administrative Court, First Chamber of Al-Bahira, has issued a final ruling in favor of a girl who was forced to repeat first grade in the academic year she was transferred to, despite her success in first grade in the previous year. The Court found that the Ministry of Education's decision to force the girl to repeat first grade was illegal and

discriminatory, and that it violated the girl's right to education. The Court ordered the Ministry of Education to pay the girl EGP 3,000 in compensation for the damages she suffered.

The Administrative Court of Qalyoubiyah has ruled that the Ministry of Health and Social Insurance of Egypt has a legal obligation to include Duchenne muscular dystrophy and its treatment in its protocol. The Court found that the Ministry's decision to exclude the disease was illegal and discriminatory, as it violated the right to health, which is a fundamental human right.

The Court's ruling is a significant victory for the right to health in Egypt. It affirms that the government has a legal obligation to provide all people with access to quality healthcare, regardless of their disease or other circumstances.

The Court's ruling is also a reminder to other governments of their legal obligation to protect the right to health. The right to health is a fundamental human right that applies to everyone, regardless of their ability to pay.

The Administrative Court added that Article 18 of the Egyptian Constitution guarantees the right to health for all citizens.

In the realm of counterterrorism, a significant development occurred in June 2021 when the Supreme Administrative Court conclusively resolved the dispute concerning the authority to issue religious edicts (fatwas) and the rightful entities authorized to dispense religious rulings. This resolution was precipitated by an official document conferred upon the citizen (M.K.K.) residing in Ezbet Hajjaj, Damanhur, Beheira Governorate, in June 2021, which emanated from the docket of the Supreme Administrative Court.

This legal action transpired subsequent to the absence of an appeal against the landmark decision rendered by the First Circuit of the Alexandria Administrative Court, Beheira, which categorically proscribed the issuance of fatwas by non-specialists as a countermeasure against advocates of terrorism. Moreover, it imposed a ban on individuals without credentials from Al-Azhar Al-Sharif or the Ministry of Endowments from occupying pulpits, contingent upon specific conditions.

The ruling comes at a time when Egypt and Arab societies are facing a serious problem of the proliferation of extremist and radicalizing content, including through religious websites, extremist channels, and non-specialist preachers, as well as the use of social media to spread extremist

concepts that are contrary to the principles of Islamic law. This content can incite sedition and violence in society. Additionally, the lack of criminal sanctions for those who misuse the pulpits of mosques and other religious institutions to achieve political, partisan, or financial goals has serious consequences for youth and can lead to the radicalization of religious thought. In light of these challenges, it is important to consider how the Egyptian judiciary can respond to this dangerous social issue and its impact on society and its stability.

Pillar II: The state's public policies to promote human rights:

The National Human Rights Strategy:

On September 15, 2021, the President of the Republic of Egypt issued a decree launching the National Strategy for Human Rights (2021-2026). The Strategy is the first comprehensive national human rights strategy in Egypt. It aims to promote and protect all human rights enshrined in the Egyptian Constitution, domestic legislation, and international and regional human rights instruments to which Egypt is a party. The Strategy also seeks to achieve equality and non-discrimination before the law. The Strategy is a national roadmap for the promotion and protection of human rights in Egypt.

The National Strategy for Human Rights, launched in 2021, is based on four pillars:

Respect for civil and political rights: This pillar covers the rights to life, personal freedom, fair trial, humane treatment of detainees, freedom of expression, assembly, association, religion, and privacy.

Protection of economic, social, and cultural rights: This pillar covers the rights to health, education, work, social security, adequate food, safe water and sanitation, adequate housing, and cultural rights.

Promotion of human rights for specific groups: This pillar focuses on the rights of women, children, persons with disabilities, youth, and the elderly.

Education and capacity building in human rights: This pillar aims to raise awareness of human rights and enhance the skills of individuals and institutions to respect and defend human rights.

Each of the four pillars highlights achievements, strengths, and opportunities for improvement, as well as challenges. Each pillar also ends with clear objectives. The fifth section of this report analyzes the National Strategy for Human Rights.

Ending the state of emergency

On October 25, 2021, President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi issued a decree terminating the state of emergency that had been in place in Egypt for over 140 years. The state of emergency had been authorized by Law No. 162 of 1958, which granted the President broad powers to restrict civil liberties, including freedom of speech and assembly.

The termination of the state of emergency is a significant step forward for human rights in Egypt. It is a recognition by the government that the state of emergency was no longer necessary and that it was impeding the enjoyment of fundamental rights by Egyptian citizens.

The termination of the state of emergency is also a sign of the government's commitment to the rule of law. The state of emergency had been used in the past to justify arbitrary detention, torture, and other human rights abuses. The government's decision to terminate the state of emergency is a welcome step in the direction of a more just and democratic Egypt.

Upon the termination of the state of emergency, the State Security Emergency Courts were abolished. These courts were special chambers within the misdemeanor courts that had jurisdiction over crimes committed in violation of military orders prohibiting travel, as well as any other crimes enumerated in the state of emergency law or in any other general law that were referred to the State Security Emergency Courts by the President of the Republic.

The termination of the state of emergency also resulted in the abolition of the application of the state of emergency law to citizens. This law granted the President of the Republic and the government broad powers, including the authority to take exceptional measures, such as imposing restrictions on individuals' freedom of assembly, movement, and passage in certain places or at certain times, referring violators to the State Security Courts, prohibiting travel in certain areas, monitoring correspondence in all its forms and shapes, monitoring newspapers, periodicals, printed materials, editors, drawings, and all means of expression, propaganda, and advertising before their publication, confiscating, seizing, and closing places of their printing.

The termination of the state of emergency in Egypt on October 25, 2021, represents a substantial development in the realm of human rights within the nation. The state of emergency had been in effect for an extended

period exceeding 140 years, and had been utilized as a rationale for curtailing civil liberties, encompassing the rights to freedom of expression and assembly. This decision is emblematic of the country's current stability and security under the new republic. Furthermore, it signifies that the security landscape no longer necessitates the imposition of a state of emergency, given the remarkable achievements of security forces in combatting terrorism, coupled with the effectiveness of national legal frameworks in addressing transgressions and incidents of lawlessness. This measure constitutes one of the foremost responses by the government to recurring demands from both political and social entities.

Whereas the President of the Republic has issued a decree to terminate the state of emergency, which is a positive and responsive measure to the demands of the Egyptian people, it nevertheless entails many challenges for various institutions that require careful examination and monitoring of the outcomes of this decree. Among the most significant of these challenges are the following:

The initial challenge concerns the capacity of executive agencies and law enforcement authorities to effectively respond to the Egyptian context within the parameters of ordinary legislation. Historically, these entities have been accustomed to employing extraordinary laws that conferred broad authorities for addressing diverse circumstances. With the cessation of the state of emergency, these entities will be compelled to reorient their operations to align with the provisions of regular legislation.

The subsequent challenge pertains to the legislative bodies' ability to enhance national legislation in a manner that harmonizes with the roles and responsibilities essential for governance, all while refraining from invoking a state of emergency. Legislative bodies will be tasked with enacting legislation that grants executive agencies the requisite authorities to manage security threats and other challenges without resorting to exceptional measures.

The need for training and development programs that enhance the skills and capabilities of law enforcement officers and qualify them to work professionally in accordance with the standards and requirements of human rights.

The National Dialogue

In order to promote the right to political participation and freedom of expression, President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi introduced the National

Dialogue Initiative as a mechanism for fostering social discourse. This initiative extended invitations to political parties, civil society organizations, labor unions, and public figures, urging them to put forth recommendations regarding the framework, subject matters, goals, and operational procedures of the dialogue.

The National Dialogue Group was established as the official platform for communication between political and youth leaders of different backgrounds and views. The group's secretariat received (96,532) submissions and requests to join the various dialogues. These submissions shaped the three main themes of the dialogue initiative: political, economic, and social. The first session of the secretariat focused on human rights and was titled "Eliminating all forms of discrimination."

The process of implementing the dialogue experienced an acceleration, commencing with the establishment of a Board of Trustees, operating under the auspices of the National Academy for Training. This board was established as an impartial entity and was presided over by Diaa Rashwan, who concurrently serves as the Head of the Journalists Syndicate and the Head of Egypt State Information Service. It comprised nineteen members drawn from various sectors of public affairs. The board initiated its operations on July 5, 2020, by appointing rapporteurs and assistant rapporteurs for the three main dialogue categories: political, economic, and social. Moreover, rapporteurs and assistant rapporteurs were selected for the nineteen subcommittees, and a consensus was reached on the code of conduct, regulatory guidelines for the dialogue, and the procedural modalities for conducting sessions. Nevertheless, the National Dialogue faces several challenges, which comprise the following:

The National Dialogue can succeed if it becomes a national platform for all political, party, and social forces to freely and openly discuss all issues. This will allow the dialogue to reflect the concerns and priorities of citizens and to develop effective policies to address them.

Addressing the impediments associated with temporal delays and the postponement of actions in the progression toward initiating substantive dialogue. A period exceeding eight months has transpired since the President extended the invitation for dialogue, yet no tangible dialogue sessions involving political and social entities within any of the dialogue categories have been convened. This situation engenders a perception of a lack of commitment among broad segments of the populace.

The challenge of surmounting time-related hindrances and procrastination that hinder the initiation of a substantive dialogue. Despite the President's invitation to engage in discussions more than eight months ago, there have been no concrete deliberations with the involved political and social groups. This has led to the perception that our commitment to dialogue is not earnest.

Ensuring that the dialogue outcomes are translated into concrete and enforceable policies in reality, most notably in light of the concerns of repeating the past experiences where initiatives were diluted and diverted from their original goals.

The Presidential Pardon Committee:

During the Egyptian Family Iftar event, President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi issued a decree to restructure the Presidential Pardon Committee. This decree also extended the committee's purview to encompass debtors in addition to young inmates. The expansion leveraged Article 155 of the 2014 Constitution, which grants the President the authority to issue pardons for prisoners or reduce their sentences. The article outlined specific scenarios where pardons would not be applicable, specifying that "pardons are applicable to non-dishonorable criminal cases, provided that the individuals involved have served at least half of their sentences." However, individuals convicted of intentional homicide, drug-related offenses, or violations of national security, as well as those who have not been convicted in cases of crimes detrimental to government security, corruption, forgery, disruption of communications, weapon and ammunition offenses, drug offenses, illicit gain, and offenses stipulated in building regulations are excluded from the scope of presidential pardons. Furthermore, the presidential pardon does not apply to crimes detailed in the legislation governing investment fund-receiving companies, as well as those delineated in child protection and anti-money laundering laws.

Based on that mechanism, the number of pardon decisions issued during the period from May to October 2022 reached (13) decisions pardoning prisoners, in addition to (4) presidential decisions pardoning civilians. As of the date of printing the report, the number of those released reached 1400 individuals.

The Haya Karima "Decent Life" Foundation, which is in charge of the debtors' dossier, visited 17 facilities in 13 governorates to examine their cases. These facilities included prisons and rehabilitation centers. Most of them were located in Cairo and Delta (40%) and Upper Egypt (38%), while

the rest were in the Red Sea (22%). The foundation, along with other civil society organizations, managed to settle the legal status of 75 debtors who owed a total of EGP 2,861,500. Moreover, the following decisions were taken:

A program to raise awareness and rehabilitate people who owe money or are owed money will be prepared by a joint committee of the Haya Karima Foundation's comprehensive initiatives and development department and the targeted groups department.

The Forsa Karima initiative's work team is developing a plan to help debtors reintegrate into society by providing them with integration and rehabilitation services in collaboration with all the sectors of the Haya Karima Foundation.

The National Council for Human Rights participated in the implementation of the resolution of the President of the Republic by coordinating with the Pardon Committee, receiving requests for pardon, raising lists of those eligible for presidential pardon, and releasing pre-trial detainees to the committee.

Although the pardon mechanism has made a positive and noticeable difference by releasing detainees and reducing some prisoners' sentences, and has improved the state's image and its adherence to human rights principles and standards in international treaties, there is still a need to speed up the pardon process and increase the number of beneficiaries, and to fix the legal flaw that caused the widespread and prolonged use of pre-trial detention and some cases exceeding the maximum penalty.

Pillar III: Coordination with the Authorities "The NCHR's Powers in accordance with its statute, Law No. 94 of 2003, as amended by Law No. 197 of 2017

Pursuant to the NCHR's statutory framework, as delineated in Law No. 94 of 2003, amended by Law No. 197 of 2017, and as enshrined within Article 3 of this legislation, the National Council for Human Rights (NCHR) is entrusted with a set of responsibilities and competencies essential for the fulfillment of its objectives. Foremost among these duties is the duty to engage in coordination with governmental bodies vested with human rights matters and to foster collaboration in this domain with other institutions, including but not limited to the National Council for Women, the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood, the National Council

for Persons with Disabilities, as well as various national councils, entities, and organizations dedicated to human rights.

Furthermore, the aforementioned law has conferred a range of distinct roles upon the Council, and it has expressly and unequivocally underscored the imperative for the involvement of all stakeholders and pertinent entities within the sphere of human rights to collaborate with the Council across all its endeavors. Such collaboration necessitates ongoing coordination between the Council and each relevant entity within their respective domains of operation.

The NCHR has the duty to review and comment on proposed laws and regulations that affect it or its area of expertise. It also examines cases of human rights violations and makes the appropriate recommendations to the state authorities. To do this, it needs to coordinate and cooperate with various entities, such as the Egyptian Parliament's two chambers, the Public Prosecution, the Ministry of Interior, among others.

Moreover, the NCHR's role is to create and implement a national action plan for human rights in Egypt. It also advises the relevant authorities on how to protect, support, and improve human rights. To do this, it works with all the branches of government: legislative, executive, and judicial.

Furthermore, the NCHR is empowered to furnish its viewpoints, suggestions, and counsel concerning subjects pertinent to the safeguarding and advancement of human rights. These matters may be submitted to the Council or referred to it by relevant authorities and competent entities. Undoubtedly, this authority stands as one of the foremost manifestations of the law's explicit endorsement of engagement, collaboration, and coordination.

The NCHR is vested with the authority to accept complaints related to human rights, analyze their merits, and, if deemed suitable, direct them to the relevant competent bodies for examination and resolution. Additionally, the Council is authorized to apprise the complainants of the requisite legal procedures and offer guidance in pursuing them. Furthermore, the NCHR may facilitate the resolution of disputes by mediating or employing alternative mechanisms for dispute settlement in conjunction with the concerned parties.

Furthermore, the NCHR is authorized to engage in collaboration with international organizations and entities dedicated to human rights matters when such cooperation aligns with the achievement of its objectives and

the enhancement of its relations with these entities. This is to be carried out in coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Moreover, the NCHR is tasked with providing its insights for the preparation of reports that the state is obliged to periodically submit to human rights committees and entities in adherence to international agreements. The Council is also responsible for responding to inquiries from these entities on this matter. In addition, the Council is committed to fostering a human rights culture and promoting awareness of human rights principles among citizens. To this end, the NCHR works in conjunction with specialized educational, media, and cultural institutions and bodies, as well as aids in the development of programs related to the dissemination of human rights education.

Under the framework of capacity building, the NCHR is empowered to put forth requisite recommendations aimed at reinforcing the technical and institutional capabilities pertaining to human rights. This encompasses proposals for technical training and capacity development, with the objective of enhancing the proficiency of personnel within state institutions associated with civil liberties, as well as economic, social, and cultural rights.

The NCHR is mandated to conduct visits to correctional facilities, detention centers, as well as therapeutic and rehabilitative institutions. During these visits, the Council engages with inmates, evaluates the conditions of the aforementioned establishments, and ensures that the rights of detainees are respected and upheld. Subsequent to each visit, the NCHR compiles a comprehensive report containing its principal observations and recommendations geared towards ameliorating the conditions of prisoners. These reports are then formally presented to the General Prosecutor and the House of Representatives.

The NCHR may notify the Public Prosecution of any violation of personal freedoms, the sanctity of private life of citizens, or other human rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution, law, and international agreements, covenants, and charters on human rights ratified by Egypt. This is based on accurate information available to the NCHR about the occurrence of the violation or the person who committed it, with notification of the competent authorities. The NCHR may also intervene in civil cases in favor of the injured party, based on its request, in accordance with the provisions of the laws regulating it.

Pillar IV: Civil and Political Rights

First: The National Endeavors aimed to promoting civil and political rights

Vigilantly tracking the tangible progress in the sphere of citizens' fundamental rights, with a central focus on civil and political rights, constitutes a valuable contribution to rectifying the international perception of the situation in Egypt.

Although substantial progress has been made in numerous areas concerning the fundamental rights of citizens, particularly in civil and political aspects, attaining an image that fully aligns with the constitutional provisions, goals, and universal human rights standards remains an aspiration and a complex endeavor. The Council endeavors to identify and address the barriers impeding this goal and is committed to improving its image through necessary corrections and adjustments.

The right to life and protection from torture and ill-treatment

The National Human Rights Strategy used the expression "the right to life and physical integrity." The strategy aims to benefit from a framework for reviewing the most serious crimes punishable by the death penalty, taking into account social conditions and specialized studies, and in accordance with international and regional human rights agreements ratified by Egypt.

The National Human Rights Strategy additionally seeks to persist in the efforts to combat all forms and manifestations of torture, inquire into allegations thereof, and safeguard the rights of victims in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and Egypt's international commitments. It endeavors to restrict any manner of individual conduct that infringes upon bodily integrity, whether it occurs in public or private settings. The strategy also strives to reinforce the protection of individuals residing in social care facilities, orphanages, elderly care homes, mental health institutions, and addiction treatment centers, with the purpose of preventing violations of their rights to a secure life and the inviolability and safety of their persons. Furthermore, it is the objective of the strategy to refer perpetrators to the pertinent investigative authorities, augment and enhance psychological rehabilitation programs for victims of violence, and promote legal awareness regarding practices that entail cruel, degrading, or inhuman treatment. This is to be achieved through the launch of campaigns geared towards countering and preventing violence, along with the enhancement of the awareness and capacities of personnel in all state entities engaged in this domain.

To fortify the entitlements to life, physical well-being, and integrity, Law No. 214 of 2020 concerning the Regulation of Clinical Medical Research was enacted in December 2020. This law is a legislative starting point for establishing the foundations, standards, and controls necessary for conducting clinical medical research and protecting research subjects, whether these studies are preventive or diagnostic, therapeutic or non-therapeutic, interventional or non-interventional. The law is consistent with the main international ethical principles regarding the use of humans in research, including the Nuremberg Code on Permissible Medical Experiments and the Helsinki Declaration, which contains the main ethical principles for human experimentation.

The National Human Rights Strategy aims to enhance the capacity and training of police officers in the area of human rights values and principles. It also aims to strengthen the capacity of prison and detention facility staff in accordance with the law and the Prisons Act, and to benefit from international best practices. The strategy also includes advanced training programs on specialized topics such as women's rights, children's rights, people with disabilities, human trafficking, and irregular migration. Additionally, it aims to integrate codes of conduct within awareness and training programs for law enforcement officers in the police force.

Nevertheless, the NCHR continues to demand that the Egyptian government review and revise the formulation of the legal articles related to the definition of the crime of torture in order to ensure that it is consistent with international law and standards. The Council also demands that the government adopt a more comprehensive approach to dealing with allegations and practices of torture, which includes establishing effective mechanisms for investigation, prosecution, and punishment of perpetrators, as well as providing adequate support and reparations to victims.

Treatment of Prisoners:

The Egyptian Ministry of Interior has launched a new strategy for the management of correctional and reform institutions. The strategy a new vision to adopt restorative justice, including:

Construction of new correctional centers with better cultural , medical and rehabilitation facilities
Renaming the Prisons Sector to the Community Protection Sector

Renaming the Drug Control and Organized Crime Sector to the Drug Control, Weapons, and Unlicensed Ammunition Control Sector

Renaming the Specialized Police Sector to the Traffic and Civil Protection Sector

Renaming the Social Security Sector to the Specialized Police Sector

The strategy is based on principles of modern penal philosophy, which focuses on transforming traditional detention facilities into places for the rehabilitation and care of inmates throughout their detention period.

Rehabilitation plans include comprehensive programs that involve a number of specialists in various fields of social sciences and mental health. These programs prioritize education, correcting concepts and ideas, controlling behaviors, and deepening values and ethics. The goal is to protect inmates from committing any further crimes, so that they can become constructive and positive humans of value to their families and the country as a whole.

To implement such a strategy, the Egyptian Ministry of Interior has instituted the Reform and Rehabilitation Center in Wadi Natrun, which is slated to supplant 12 prisons, constituting 25% of the total count of general prisons in Egypt. This center is designed to serve as a cornerstone for the substitution of all Egyptian prisons with analogous facilities adhering to the most stringent human rights standards. These facilities are to be managed scientifically with the aim of reshaping the conduct and rectifying the misconceptions of inmates in accordance with the nature of their offenses. The ultimate objective is to prepare them for reintegration into society. The center integrates a comprehensive array of services, including educational, vocational, and medical provisions, to realize the objectives of the novel reform and penal strategy. Additionally, three supplementary reform and rehabilitation centers have been established in the city of Badr, operating as general prisons.

The state has introduced advanced mechanisms to regulate prison visits by setting up appointments in advance for visitors using an electronic application, and allocating telephone lines to set up these appointments.

The Public Prosecution has taken COVID-19 pandemic into account when issuing pre-trial detention orders. It has expanded the use of Article 201 of the Criminal Procedure Code, which allows the court to impose alternative detention measures such as house arrest, curfews, and travel restrictions.

In 2020, the International Cooperation, Execution of Judgments and Care of Prisoners Department of the Public Prosecution communicated to the Community Protection Sector of the Ministry of Interior the most important measures and procedures that must be followed within prisons to ensure the safety of prisoners. The Public Prosecution also takes into account its role in monitoring and supervising prisons and places of detention in police departments in accordance with the law.

The International Cooperation, Execution of Judgments and Care of Prisoners Department of the Public Prosecution has communicated with the Community Protection Sector of the Ministry of Interior regarding the expansion of the implementation of Article 64 (bis) of the Executive Regulation of the Prisons Act. The article pertains to telephone contact between prisoners and their families during the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The International Cooperation, Execution of Judgments and Care of Prisoners Department of the Public Prosecution addressed the Community Protection Sector of the Ministry of Interior regarding the commitment to vaccinate prisoners with the COVID-19 vaccine.

As for guaranteeing the rights of detainees in regular family visits, on March 10, 2020, visits were suspended in all rehabilitation and rehabilitation centers and prisons in order to preserve public health as a result of the spread of the virus. Visits resumed on August 22, 2020, and are now implemented through the following procedures:

The visits are scheduled according to alphabetical order of the detainees' names and the capacity of the visiting rooms.

A safe distance is maintained between the detainees and their visitors.

Each detainee will be allowed one visitor for a maximum of 20 minutes once a month.

The Ministry has announced the numbers of 118 mobile phones dedicated to rehabilitation and rehabilitation centers on the Ministry's website. These numbers can be used by families to inquire about the date of their visit. The Ministry has also developed an electronic application on its website that allows families to schedule their visits.

Before each visit, the visitation rooms are disinfected and equipped with a wire barrier to ensure a safe distance between detainees and visitors. Visitors and detainees were also required to wear masks during visits.

Furthermore, the National Council for Human Rights (NCHR) , according to its mandate to monitor the conditions of detainees and ensure that their rights are respected and fulfilled, conducted a number of visits to new rehabilitation and rehabilitation centers. NCHR members and technical secretariat staff attended the visits, during which they had the opportunity to listen to the complaints of the families of detainees and assess the level of services provided at the centers.

However, there are still some challenges that need to be addressed. For example, there is a need for more training and awareness of prisoner rights among prison staff. Additionally, there are some systemic challenges, such as overcrowding and understaffing, that can make it difficult to implement a truly rehabilitative approach.

The National Council for Human Rights has prepared a training manual on the rights of prisoners based on the Nelson Mandela Rules, which are a set of international standards for the treatment of prisoners. The Council plans to train workers at rehabilitation centers on the application of these rules. This training will help to ensure that prisoners are treated in accordance with international standards and have the best possible chance of successful reintegration into society.

Fair and Impartial Trial Safeguards:

Amid the global outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the justice system embarked on a transformation marked by a digital shift and the initiation of prospective reforms in pre-trial detention. Furthermore, the realm of electronic litigation witnessed advancements and implementation in economic courts.

In response to the unfolding crisis, the Attorney General convened an exigent meeting of the Executive Committee of the Arab Public Prosecutor's Association. This gathering, held under his leadership via video conferencing on May 13, 2020, aligned with the strategic objectives outlined by the Egyptian Public Prosecution. These measures were set in motion to harmonize with the broader policy framework adopted by various Egyptian state entities for addressing the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, both at the national and Arab levels.

The primary objective of this endeavor was to facilitate the exchange of experiences and insights and to ascertain the best practices employed by the public prosecutions of member states. The objective was to understand the measures implemented to mitigate the challenges

engendered by the pandemic. The overarching aim was to safeguard the health and well-being of inmates, citizens, personnel within the public prosecutions of member states, and their employees, along with pre-trial detainees and incarcerated individuals. This endeavor was undertaken with a firm commitment to uphold the principles of criminal justice and the faithful execution of the law.

The Ministry of Justice has repeatedly affirmed the unwavering commitment of the Egyptian state to upholding the principles of a fair and just trial. It underscores that the national constitution diligently incorporates provisions to safeguard the standards of a fair and just trial, in harmony with international norms, particularly as articulated in Article 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

These guarantees are enshrined in Egypt's judiciary, penal, and criminal procedural laws. Notable among these guarantees are: the assurance of judicial independence, the universal right to access legal redress, the expeditious resolution of legal proceedings, the principle of adjudication solely before one's natural judge, the proscription of exceptional or extraordinary trials, the presumption of the accused's innocence until proven guilty in an equitable trial that affords them all the requisite safeguards for their defense, including the presence of legal counsel.

Most importantly, the Egyptian judicial system does not recognize the concept or occurrence of collective trials, which implies a violation of the rights of individuals who stand trial as a consequence of entanglement in others' actions. This involves attributing blame to some for the deeds of others, a lack of substantiated evidence for the charges attributed to each individual, and a disregard for the fundamental right of defense for each defendant.

Notwithstanding these positive advancements, the present report highlights various challenges that necessitate attention. These key challenges include the following:

Inadequate Efficiency of the Technological System: The proficiency of the technological infrastructure and the competence of those overseeing it pose limitations in streamlining legal processes and facilitating communication, preventing disruptions that may prolong trial durations or hinder the accused's ability to interact with the judicial system. This, in turn, affects their capacity to articulate their perspective and defense effectively, in a manner that aligns with the intended objectives.

Acute Shortage of Judges: A pronounced deficiency in the number of judges impedes the attainment of expeditious and effective justice. It contributes to protracted trial durations and the accumulation of pending cases within the judiciary. Consequently, these factors compel hastiness in issuing verdicts or exceed the appropriate time frames for adjudication.

Mounting Caseloads: The substantial volume of legal cases and disputes heard by the courts annually continues to increase steadily, hindering the opportunities for development and the accumulation of expertise necessary for achieving efficient justice. This issue is particularly pronounced in relation to civil and commercial disputes, and it extends to complications in implementing rulings rendered in these cases.

Limited Legal Awareness among Citizens: There is a scarcity of legal literacy among members of the public, with significant segments of the population remaining unaware of their rights at various stages of legal proceedings. This issue is further exacerbated by the absence of provisions in the Criminal Procedure Code that inform the accused of their right to remain silent.

Absence of a legal framework for the protection of the rights of Witness and Whistleblower: The national legislative framework lacks specific laws governing the safeguarding of witnesses and whistleblowers, rendering their protection a challenge.

4- The Right to Form Associations

In January 2021, the Executive Regulation governing the implementation of the Law on Civil Society Work was promulgated. The legislation, in conjunction with its corresponding executive regulations, enshrines the following provisions:

Ensuring the Freedom to Establish Civil Society Entities: The legal framework guarantees the freedom to establish civil society associations and organizations, fostering an environment conducive to their activities.

Promoting Civil Society Initiatives: The regulations actively encourage the endeavors of civil society entities, aiming to enhance their financial capacities and endowing them with additional exemptions and privileges to further support their operations.

Facilitating Foreign and International Engagement: The legal framework fosters collaboration with foreign entities and simplifies the process for foreign individuals to become members of civil associations.

Expanding the Scope of Voluntary Activities: The legal framework broadens the scope of voluntary activities, opening avenues for increased participation.

The Ministry of Social Solidarity has actively engaged with both local and international non-governmental organizations, conducting meetings to elucidate the implications of the regulatory framework. Moreover, a comprehensive training program was developed to equip all ministry staff with a comprehensive understanding of the law, the corresponding executive regulations, and the procedures for association registration. NCHR has organized a number of training and capacity building activities for professionals of the Ministry of Social Solidarity MOSS.

On March 30, 2022, the Egyptian Parliament approved a bill amending certain provisions of Law No. 149 of 2019 regulating the Practice of Civil Society Work (the "Law"). The bill was proposed by the government and by a group of 66 parliamentarians, including Member of Parliament Talaat Abdel-Qawi. The bill extended the deadline for the legalization of the status of civil society organizations by one year, commencing on the date of expiration of the deadline specified in Article 2 of the Law's issuance provisions, which ended on January 11, 2022. The original deadline required civil society organizations to legalize their status within a period not exceeding six months from the date of the Law's entry into force. The Law allowed for an extension of this period for one additional time by a decision issued by the Minister of Social Solidarity after the approval of the Cabinet. The new deadline was extended until January 12, 2023. NCHR played a pivotal role to ensure the extension of the deadline

In acknowledgment of the contributions made by civil society in advancing sustainable development and in the promotion of human rights awareness, and in the spirit of fostering collaboration between state institutions and civil society, President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi proclaimed the year 2022 as the "Year of Civil Society." Subsequently, the President issued an invitation to civil society organizations and political entities to partake in the endeavor to broadening the sphere of engagement and facilitating constructive exchanges of opinion.

Furthermore, the President mandated the government to intensify its engagement with civil society organizations and extend full support in the effective execution of the Law on the Regulation of Civil Society Work and its corresponding Executive Regulation. This would ensure a hospitable environment for their operations as vital partners in the pursuit of development and the promotion of the human rights culture within society.

According to official statements from the Ministry of Social Solidarity, the number of civil society organizations operating in Egypt exceeds 52,000 organizations. Of these, 32,000 submitted papers to legalize their status before the end of the legal deadline. Twenty thousand organizations requested an extension from the government, and their request was granted.

The National Alliance for Civil Society and Development was established on March 13, 2022, with the participation and membership of major civil society and development institutions in Egypt. It includes 24 associations, civil institutions, and service and development entities, including the General Union of Associations and Civil Institutions, which has 30 sectoral unions and 27 regional unions as members.

The National Alliance for Civil Society has launched several initiatives aimed at supporting vulnerable groups. These initiatives include providing cash assistance, food assistance, and educational supplies.

Freedom of opinion and expression and the right to access information:

NCHR priorities the critical importance of Freedom of opinion and expression. It underlined in many occasions that such a human right represents a fundamental and inalienable human right, expressly codified within both the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. NCHR organized a roundtable consultation on this human rights.

Media coverage of the deliberations was satisfactory and raised awareness about its critical value, it underlined that:

the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as articulated in Article 19, unequivocally guarantees that : , "Every person shall possess the right to freedom of opinion and expression, encompassing the prerogative to maintain opinions free from interference, as well as to seek, receive, and disseminate information and ideas through any media, transcending boundaries."

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, delineated in Article 19, articulates that, "1. Every individual is entitled to preserve opinions without encumbrance. 2. Every individual holds the entitlement to the liberty of expression, encompassing the freedom to actively pursue, acquire, and disseminate information and ideas of all nature, regardless of borders, employing various modes such as oral, written, or printed form, artistic expressions, or any preferred media."

The Constitution of Egypt, too, safeguards the principles of freedom of opinion and expression.

Nonetheless, the existence of specific statutes and regulations within the legal framework of Egypt curtail these rights. Notably, the Law on the Regulation of the Practice of Civil Society Work encumbers civil society organizations in critiquing government actions. The Cybercrime Law criminalizes the propagation of spurious news and information.

Despite these constraints, several entities and individuals within Egypt are actively engaged in the advancement of freedom of opinion and expression. These entities deploy diverse strategies to foster awareness of these rights and to challenge encroachments upon them.

Freedom of opinion and expression represents a fundamental cornerstone within democratic societies, being intrinsically tied to the innate human desire for self-expression. This freedom serves as a paramount conduit for individuals to articulate their thoughts and perspectives across various spheres of life, encompassing the political, economic, social, and cultural realms. It fundamentally contributes to the cultivation of a well-informed public opinion, capable of exacting accountability from those vested with authority, thereby safeguarding the broader interests of society. Consequently, freedom of opinion and expression is rightly acknowledged as a potent instrument for fortifying the fabric of society.

Consistent with prior commitments, Article 65 of the 2014 Constitution explicitly proclaims that "freedom of thought and opinion is guaranteed, and every individual possesses the prerogative to express their views verbally, in writing, through visual media, or via any other form of publication. Consequently, the National Human Rights Strategy endeavors to promulgate a statute governing the right to access, receive, and disseminate information, data, and official statistics. The Supreme Council for Media Regulation has initiated a series of meetings and consultations aimed at reaching a societal consensus concerning a prospective law that regulates the provisioning and dissemination of information, particularly in the wake of the issuance of Egyptian Personal Data Protection Law No. 151 of 2020. This legislation was preceded by Law No. 175 of 2018, dealing with the combating of information technology crimes, collectively creating an environment conducive to the expeditious development of a national law governing freedom of information access and dissemination.

The prevailing challenge lies in the formulation of a comprehensive national statute concerning freedom of information access and dissemination, exposing institutional weaknesses and imperfections, thereby affording an opportunity for remediation and enhancement. It is essential to dispel the paradox whereby discussions center on frameworks for rights and services while lacking a clear, objective understanding of the number of beneficiaries and those adversely affected by their absence. This quandary is compounded by the criminalization of conducting surveys, polls, and social status studies without prior authorization for the deployment of the requisite forms or their resultant findings, as prescribed in Law No. 149 of 2011. Moreover, ongoing grievances pertaining to the arbitrary blocking of certain websites, bereft of cogent legal justifications, further underscore the imperative to address these issues.

6. Freedom of Belief and Practice of Religious Rituals:

The Egyptian government has taken a number of steps to protect the religious freedom of all Egyptians, including Jews, as evidenced by the following:

Law No. 190 of 2020 establishes two endowments bodies, one for the Catholic Church and one for the Anglican Community, to manage the properties and assets of the two churches.

Presidential Decree No. 80 of 2021 forms the Board of Directors of the Catholic Church Endowments Body, headed by the Patriarch of the Coptic Catholics.

Presidential Decree No. 81 of 2021 forms the Board of Directors of the Anglican Community Endowments Body, headed by the head of the Anglican Community and the chairman of the General Anglican Council.

The government has begun implementing a plan worth \$70 million to restore some Egyptian antiquities, including Jewish synagogues in Cairo and Alexandria. The last of these to be restored was the Elijah the Prophet Synagogue, which was opened on January 10, 2020.

The government has also restored ancient Jewish cemeteries in the city of Fustat in Cairo.

The government reviewed the construction plan for the ring road surrounding Cairo to avoid passing through the Jewish cemetery and violating its sanctity.

These actions demonstrate the Egyptian government's commitment to protecting the religious freedom of all Egyptians, including Jews, in accordance with its obligations under international law.

The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research has launched a strategy to confront extremism and takfiri thought in Egyptian universities, 2023-2019. The strategy aims to monitor the most important manifestations of takfiri thought and identify the most important strengths and weaknesses in the work system in this regard.

The Ministry of Education has also reviewed the educational curricula for religious education, Arabic language, values, and respect for others in preparation for the printing of the curricula for the academic year 2022/2023. The review concluded that the aforementioned curricula confirm acceptance of the other, respect for religious freedoms, tolerance, and peaceful coexistence with the other. They are also free of anything that indicates violence, extremism, or rejection of the other.

These steps are being taken in line with the Egyptian government's commitment to promoting tolerance and understanding among its citizens. The government is working to ensure that all Egyptians, regardless of their religion or beliefs, feel safe and respected.

In a parallel context, the Ministry of Endowments issued more than (182) translated authors to publish sustainable Middle Eastern thought, including the series (Vision), and the launch of the electronic endowments portal and the expansion of electronic publishing in more than 23 languages, with the translation of the Friday sermon (Khutba) to more than 18 languages, and its publication in audio and written form. The Ministry also works to consolidate the concept of citizenship through fruitful cooperation with the Egyptian Church, most notably the work programs of the nuns and monks.

Furthermore, in February 2020, the Ministry of Social Solidarity initiated the "Awareness" program with the objective of transforming adverse societal behaviors that impede both economic and human development. The program seeks to achieve this transformation by disseminating legal and religious knowledge on 12 distinct social matters to the citizenry. To this end, Prime Ministerial Decree No. 51 of 2022 was promulgated, establishing a task force led by a representative from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and comprised of various relevant stakeholders. This task force was charged with formulating operational strategies to implement

the National Strategy for Effective Religious Communication Abroad, which had been meticulously prepared by the Egyptian Dar al-Iftaa.

Second: Obstacles to the Advancement of Civil and Political Rights in Egypt

The Egyptian National Council for Human Rights (NCHR) has identified a number of challenges to the protection of human rights in Egypt. These challenges include:

The use of the death penalty: NCHR recommends and is actively advocating that Egypt reviews the crimes punishable by death penalty to restrict its scope and bring it in line with international and regional human rights agreements.

Violations of physical integrity: The NCHR advocates for the prohibition of violations of physical integrity, whether in public, private, or institutional settings.

Abuse of children in institutions: NCHR is actively advocating for prohibiting the placement of children in institutions and expanding the use of alternative family care arrangements (one example is the role played by NCHR in the case of the custody of child Shenouda).

Lack of clear and adequate safeguards for pretrial detention: The NCHR calls for the development of a framework to regulate the conditions and duration of pretrial detention.

Lack of a system for electronic monitoring of pretrial detention: The NCHR recommends the inclusion of a system for electronic monitoring of pretrial detention in the Criminal Procedure Code.

Lack of awareness of human rights law: The NCHR calls for raising awareness of human rights law among the public, including the right to be free from cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment.

The need to generalize the remote review of pretrial detention orders: The NCHR recommends the generalization of the remote review of pretrial detention orders to allow the judge to communicate directly with the detainee in the presence of his or her lawyer, via a closed-circuit television system.

The absence of a provision in the Criminal Procedure Code prohibiting the statute of limitations for crimes of assault on personal freedom committed by public officials: The NCHR recommends the inclusion of a provision in

the Criminal Procedure Code prohibiting the statute of limitations for crimes of assault on personal freedom committed by public officials.

The increase in the number of cases before the courts: The NCHR calls for reducing the length of time it takes to reach a final judgment, including by expanding the use of summary trials.

The need to develop and modernize rehabilitation and reintegration centers: NCHR calls for the upgrading and modernization of rehabilitation and reintegration centers, including improving the living conditions and health care of inmates.

The absence of a provision in the Criminal Procedure Code regulating the right of the victim to directly prosecute in crimes of assault on personal freedom committed by public officials: NCHR recommends the inclusion of a provision in the Criminal Procedure Code regulating the right of the victim to directly prosecute in crimes of assault on personal freedom committed by public officials.

The absence of a legal framework regulating the right to access information, data, and official statistics and their circulation: NCHR calls for the development of a legal framework regulating the right to access information, data, and official statistics and their circulation.

The absence of a comprehensive code of conduct for all aspects of the media and journalism, including print, audio, and visual media, that defines the limits of freedom of expression while ensuring that it is exercised without prejudice to the rights of others.

The absence of an updated framework regulating the work of professional unions.

The persistence of extremist religious discourse despite efforts to address it.

The absence of a law to protect the data of victims, witnesses, defendants, and whistleblowers, which could be considered an invasion of privacy.

The NCHR has called on the Egyptian government to take steps to address these challenges in order to promote and protect human rights in Egypt.

Fifth Pillar: The State of Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (Government Efforts, Improvements, and Challenges)

The period between December 2020 and December 2022 was marked by two significant global crises with substantial implications for economic growth and the ability of nations and governments to uphold social rights. These crises are the COVID-19 pandemic, which emerged in early 2020, and the Russian-Ukrainian war, which began in early 2022.

Egypt, like the rest of the world, was not immune to the global challenges and consequently experienced severe economic and social repercussions. Despite the government's efforts to provide support in the form of aid packages for select public services and commodities, Egypt grappled with soaring inflation rates, disruptions in supply chains, increased fuel costs, and a depreciation of the national currency. These factors collectively had adverse effects on the enjoyment of economic, social, and cultural rights.

The country's susceptibility to global crises was exacerbated by its reliance on industrial structures, as well as the significant gap in previously imported food commodities. Moreover, the mounting costs of government subsidies imposed considerable pressure on the state budget and, consequently, the purchasing power of citizens.

Nevertheless, Egypt persisted in its commitment to advancing and completing numerous national projects in areas such as infrastructure, new urban centers, and public services, with substantial investments. Among the most notable of these endeavors is the "Karima Hayat" program (Egypt's Rural Development Program), which targets around 58 million Egyptians residing in rural areas, encompassing approximately 4,600 villages. This comprehensive development program seeks to enhance a wide range of economic, social, and cultural rights for the nation's citizens.

Government Initiatives to Promote Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights

The government's approach to improving economic, social, and cultural rights has focused on enhancing availability by injecting significant investments into infrastructure development, urban expansion, informal settlements resolution, road construction, development corridors, and the provision of sanitation and natural gas services. It has also made notable strides in health-related development programs, such as the comprehensive health insurance system and health campaigns, albeit to a lesser extent in the field of education, through the establishment of civil private universities and expanded school construction.

Over the period covered by this report, Egyptian efforts also encompassed steps to create an attractive investment climate and offer incentives to draw both foreign and domestic investors. This involved channeling investments into infrastructure-related sectors through the refurbishment of industrial zones and the establishment of industrial complexes in various areas. Furthermore, Egypt embarked on the ambitious "Tawheed" project, aimed at reclaiming and cultivating approximately 1.5 million acres (feddans). Despite global crises and challenges related to water resources, which posed significant hurdles to investment attraction and economic structural development, the government persevered with the execution of various national projects aimed at raising the quality of life.

One of the most comprehensive development programs aiming to enhance various economic, social, and cultural rights for citizens is the "Haya Karima" (Egypt's Rural Development Program). Therefore, this annual report dedicates a dedicated section to outline its key features:

Egypt's Rural Development Program "Haya Karima"

The years 2021 and 2022 witnessed the initiation of the Egypt's Rural Development Program "Haya Karima," heralding the launch of the initial comprehensive development program dedicated to uplifting the rural sector—a segment considered one of the most vulnerable and marginalized within Egyptian society. Approximately 55% of Egyptians (about 58 million individuals) reside in rural areas, historically marked by a lack of infrastructure coverage, social development facilities, and conducive investment environments. Consequently, these areas have endured multidimensional poverty, growing social grievances, and fostering an environment prone to extremism.

Goals and Objectives of the Program

The program aspires to accomplish the following objectives:

Enhance the quality of life for rural residents.

Alleviate poverty and inequality in rural areas.

Generate employment opportunities and boost small and micro-enterprises in rural areas.

Cultivate the human capital of rural locales.

Conclusion:

NCHR acknowledges a number of steps taken by the state to honor its constitutional guarantees and international human rights obligations. However, more could be done to expedite the pace. The benefit of honoring human rights are still not very salient to some key players. The new cohort of NCHR has however, emerged as an effective player and enjoys the confidence of the masses and development partners. Many programs are ongoing and results are very encouraging. More and more simple citizens know about NCHR, many frequent our premises, some have posted on social media their satisfaction with our endeavors. More simple citizens are grateful for our assistance. The growing number of complaints is an indication of such confidence. We are determined to raise the bar.

2. Urban housing and slum development:

In the reporting period, notable emphasis was placed on housing development in Egypt, marked by governmental interventions employing various approaches. Foremost among these efforts was the sustained implementation of the subsidized social housing program, which extended to diverse urban centers and emerging communities. This program aimed to make housing accessible to individuals of limited financial means, offering favorable terms and cost structures. Additionally, the state undertook housing initiatives tailored to middle- and high-income strata, exemplified by the "Sakan Masr," "Dar Masr," and "Janna" projects. These housing units were designed to match the standards and finishing quality typically found in the private sector.

As per the 2021 annual report delineating performance metrics for the Social Housing and Real Estate Financing Support Fund, a noteworthy cohort comprising over 54,000 Egyptians garnered benefits from securing subsidized housing units, a pivotal facet of the Housing for All Egyptians Program. This initiative catered to the housing needs of low-income individuals, encompassing both the Social Housing Program and the broader Housing for All Egyptians Program. It is imperative to note, however, that a discernable geographical variance emerges amongst beneficiaries. Notably, nearly half of the beneficiaries are concentrated within urban centers proximate to the Greater Cairo region, whereas the proportion of beneficiaries within Upper Egypt cities, the Delta region, and border areas remains considerably lower.

The Slum Upgrading Program has been an important part of the national efforts to promote the right to housing. The state has adopted an ambitious plan to relocate residents of unsafe areas. According to data from the Egyptian Cabinet,

as of the end of 2021, 1 million citizens who lived in 357 unsafe areas in 25 governorates benefited from this plan. A total of 246,000 replacement housing units have been built at a cost of 63 billion Egyptian pounds, which includes the cost of the projects and the estimated value of the land. This includes 33 unsafe areas of the first degree, 269 unsafe areas of the second degree, 34 unsafe areas of the third degree, and 21 unsafe areas of the fourth degree. In parallel, the state is adopting a plan to develop unplanned areas that will end in 2030.

According to data from the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics, the number of housing units implemented by the government that are classified as economic housing during the fiscal year 2021/2020 was approximately 104,700 units. The number of units targeting middle-income groups was approximately 48,000 units.

From 2014 to the present, the total number of housing units implemented in the Social Housing Project (1 million units) has reached 453.6 thousand units, of which 78.4 thousand units were implemented in 2021/2020. Of these, the Central Agency for Reconstruction implemented 1.3 thousand units, representing 1.7%, with investments of EGP 180 million. The Housing Directorates implemented 12.2 thousand units, representing 15.5%, with investments of EGP 1,827.8 million. The New Urban Communities Authority implemented 64.9 thousand units, representing 82.8%, with investments of EGP 13,389.2 million.

The number of units implemented in the Dar Misr Housing Project (Middle Income Housing) has reached 37.7 thousand units in the new cities, of which 9,000 units were implemented in 2021/2020. The number of units implemented in the Sakan Masr Housing Project (Middle Income Housing) has also reached 37.9 thousand units, of which 32.7 thousand units were implemented in 2021/2020.

Data from the fiscal year 2021/2020 underscores the predominant role of the state in the construction of housing units within Egypt. Over the course of this fiscal period, the aggregate number of housing units executed amounted to approximately 336,000 units. A substantial portion of these units, specifically 166,500 units, representing 49% of the total, were spearheaded by the government and the public sector. This governmental housing portfolio was distributed across distinct categories, including 104,700 units designated for economic housing, constituting 63% of the government's efforts. Additionally, 47,700 units were allocated for middle-income housing, encompassing 28.6% of the government's housing endeavors, while 14,100 units were designated for luxury housing, contributing 8.5% to the government's housing initiatives.

3. Universal Healthcare System

In early 2018, Egypt enacted Law No. 2 of 2018, establishing the Universal Healthcare System (UHS). This system mandates a comprehensive social solidarity health insurance framework, encompassing all participating citizens. The state shoulders the financial responsibility for individuals unable to contribute, as determined by criteria specified in a decree issued by the Prime Minister.

At the core of the UHS is the family, constituting the primary unit for insurance coverage within the system. This innovative healthcare approach is rooted in the fundamental principle of segregating financing from service provision. Three distinct entities are entrusted with the management of the Universal Healthcare System:

The General Authority for Healthcare, charged with the provision of insurance-based health services.

The Comprehensive Health Insurance Authority, responsible for the oversight, financing, and procurement of health services.

The General Authority for Accreditation and Health Control, vested with the responsibility of establishing quality standards, accrediting health facilities, and ensuring health facility sustainability and quality maintenance.

The UHS cost is estimated to be between EGP 80 and 120 billion (according to estimates in 2018), and it will be implemented in all governorates in a gradual manner over 15 years. It will be funded from various sources, such as contributions from Egyptians, general government allocations, tobacco taxes, and tolls on highways across the country.

The anticipated expenditure associated with the Universal Healthcare System (UHS) is estimated to range from EGP 80 billion to EGP 120 billion, as per 2018 projections. The implementation of this system is envisaged to unfold incrementally across all governorates, encompassing a timeframe of 15 years. To ensure its financial sustainability, the UHS is designed to draw resources from diverse channels, including contributions from Egyptian citizens, allocations from the general government budget, revenues generated from tobacco taxes, and tolls collected from highways spanning the entire nation.

The Universal Healthcare System (UHS) was supposed to cover six governorates in its first phase from 2018 to 2020, and another five governorates in its second phase from 2021 to 2023. Nevertheless, the first phase has been delayed and will

not be finished until June 30, 2023, according to the Health Insurance Authority's Executive Director. This means that the second phase will also be postponed until a later date.

Within the reporting period, a comprehensive implementation of the Universal Healthcare System (UHS) was initiated in three governorates: Port Said, Ismailia, and Luxor. The UHS witnessed significant registration, with over 4.5 million individuals enrolling in the system via electronic and written means. The medical services rendered in these governorates were substantial, amounting to nearly 13 million services. Notably, more than 196,000 surgical procedures were conducted, accompanied by the provision of family medicine services, which accounted for nearly 6 million services. These services were extended through a network comprising 21 hospitals, 134 health units and centers, and a clinic complex.

Construction, procurement of medical and institutional equipment, and associated processes remain ongoing in the governorates of Suez, South Sinai, and Aswan. These efforts are directed towards aligning with the initial phase of the implementation schedule, and are expected to be completed in the ensuing months. These endeavors are in accordance with the meticulously coordinated plans outlined by the Ministry of Health and the relevant entities responsible for the Universal Healthcare System.

4. Development of university and pre-university education

The reporting period witnessed the ongoing progression of steps involved in the establishment of a novel framework for enhancing pre-university education, an initiative initially undertaken by the state in 2017. The measures executed during these intervening years have been subject to extensive social discourse, evoking significant disparities in their appraisal between proponents and detractors of the new educational directions. Nonetheless, the Ministry of Education and Technical Education has persistently advanced with the implementation. NCHR is of the opinion that it remains premature to make a definitive assessment regarding the system's efficacy in realizing sustainable development concerning the quality and outcomes of the educational process and the actualization of the right to education.

Concerning educational accessibility, reports issued by the Cabinet's Information and Decision Support Center (IDSC) have highlighted overall improvements in the pre-university education sector. Notably, there was an 8.5% increment in the sector's expenditure, reaching EGP 157.6 billion during the fiscal year 2021/2020, in contrast to EGP 145.2 billion in the fiscal year 2020/2019. Additionally, the total student enrollment in schools experienced a 3.4% upsurge, culminating in

24.4 million students during the fiscal year 2021/2020 compared to 23.6 million students in the fiscal year 2020/2019. Furthermore, the number of schools saw a marginal increase of 1.9%, totaling 57.7 thousand schools during the fiscal year 2021/2020, in contrast to 56.6 thousand schools in the fiscal year 2020/2019. Likewise, the number of classes displayed a 1.8% rise, reaching 518.6 thousand classes compared to 509.5 thousand classes in the fiscal year 2020/2019.

As per reports from the Cabinet, it has been observed that 409.8 thousand individuals grapple with illiteracy across diverse governorates. Simultaneously, 656 schools achieved accreditation and quality certification across all educational tiers. Furthermore, a commendable outreach was noted in school feeding programs, benefiting 12.2 million students at varying educational levels.

Concerning the enhanced educational frameworks, the Ministry of Education and Technical Education reported the successful culmination of the high school system's modification in 2020. The new system was initiated, commencing with the first-grade students in the secondary school during the academic year 2021-2022. It is noteworthy that the core curriculum for high school remained unaltered, with the primary changes manifesting in the evaluation and examination processes. In this context, students were required to undertake 12 examinations distributed across a span of three years.

In the realm of higher education, reports disseminated by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research have shed light on a noteworthy "quantitative" expansion in the proliferation of universities and educational institutions. The Council observes that this expansion has been concomitant with a discernible shift towards a predominantly fee-based university education model, as opposed to being entirely cost-free or partially subsidized.

Government universities have undergone a transformation, growing from 23 universities in 2014 to 27 universities in 2022, marking a 17.4% increase. This expansion entailed the establishment of four new universities, namely Al-Wadi al-Jadid, Marsa Matrouh, Luxor, and Al-Arish.

Furthermore, the landscape of both public and private universities has experienced a substantial surge, increasing from 26 universities in 2014 to 40 universities in 2022, denoting a remarkable 53.8% expansion. Simultaneously, the number of private university colleges surged from 132 in 2014 to 310 in 2022, demonstrating a remarkable growth of 210%. Additionally, the count of private institutes escalated from 158 in 2014 to 196 in 2022, underscoring a notable 24.1% increase.

The reports also indicate that 4 international-level private universities have been established (Al-Jalala, King Salman International with its three branches "El-Tor, Ras Sedr, Sharm El-Sheikh", El-Alamein International, and Mansoura New), and work is underway to establish and equip 12 new private universities stemming from the government universities, namely: (Assiut Private, Beni Suef Private, Ain Shams Private, Helwan Private, Zagazig Private, Banha Private, Ismailiyah New Private, East Port Said Private, South Valley Private, Menoufiyah Private, Minya Private, and Mansoura Private).

Furthermore, Egypt's higher education system has ushered in a novel educational track entailing integration with technical and technological education. This pioneering endeavor commenced with studies underway at three technological universities, namely: New Cairo Technological University, Beni Suef Technological University, and Delta Technological University. Concurrently, there is ongoing progress in the construction and provisioning of equipment for six additional technological universities in the second phase. These universities include Gharbia Technological University, October 6th Technological University, Burj Al Arab Technological University, East Port Said Technological University, New Assiut Technological University, and New TIBA Technological University.

5. The National Vision for the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals

Egypt had made substantial advancements in structural fiscal reform up to 2019, facilitated through collaboration with international financial institutions, most notably the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Nonetheless, the global crises spanning the period from 2020 to 2022, notably encompassing the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, wrought adverse impacts on the foundations of the national economy. These crises also somewhat decelerated the rate of economic expansion. In 2022, the year bore witness to an escalation in inflation rates and import-related expenditures. Banks found themselves compelled to enact interest rate hikes on multiple occasions, thereby compounding the predicament of mounting external debt and an augmented allocation for debt servicing within the state budget.

Notwithstanding these challenges, the government has undertaken measures to invigorate the economy, encourage investment, and foster robust economic growth and job creation. Foremost among the government's initiatives in this realm is the sustained enhancement of infrastructure supportive of investment activities. This includes substantial investments in road networks and regional

thoroughfares, the expansion of modern transportation, particularly those leveraging electric traction technologies, and the augmentation of ports and logistics services.

One of the most noteworthy accomplishments of the state's investments in this sector encompasses the establishment of 7,000 kilometers of new roads, which have augmented the aggregate extent of free-flowing, high-speed, and principal road networks to 30,000 kilometers. Simultaneously, significant improvements have been introduced to an additional 10,000 kilometers of the existing road network. Additionally, there has been an extension of the construction of cross-axes along the Nile, increasing their number from 38 to 59 axes. These collective endeavors have culminated in a notable enhancement in Egypt's ranking in the global road quality index, positioning it at 28th place worldwide.

In terms of bolstering fundamental economic sectors, the government has consistently injected substantial investments into the agricultural domain over the reporting period. This has been facilitated through the implementation of several key presidential initiatives designed to drive agricultural development, ensure food security, establish urban communities, and generate employment opportunities for the youth demographic. These initiatives involve the allocation of land to young individuals and the facilitation of investor engagement.

Prominent facets of the state's endeavors in the agricultural sector encompass the National Seed Project. This project has been instituted with the aim of augmenting the production efficiency of Egyptian agricultural crops and fostering the cultivation of high-quality local seeds characterized by resistance to pests and adaptability to climate variations. Additionally, the government has initiated the reclamation of one and a half million acres. This ambitious undertaking seeks to serve as a model for the modernization of the Egyptian countryside, expand the agricultural area by 20%, and diminish the food deficit. The scope of this project encompasses extensive areas distributed across Upper Egypt, Sinai, the Delta region, and the South Valley.

The state has also undertaken various initiatives in the agricultural sector, such as:

- The establishment of 100,000 greenhouses for agricultural production
- The development of North and Central Sinai by reclaiming and cultivating 500,000 acres of land
- The New Delta Project, which comprises two sub-projects: Future Egypt on 400,000 acres and South axis of Dabaa on 500,000 acres. The mining and petroleum sectors have also experienced a major growth in the period

covered by the report, especially after Egypt became a natural gas exporter instead of an importer and improved its global ranking from 19th in 2015 to 13th in 2021. The gas prices also increased significantly due to the Russian-Ukrainian war, which helped create a surplus in Egypt's petroleum trade balance.

In the field of industry, the government has undertaken several initiatives, including:

The establishment of various industrial zones.

The provision of fully equipped industrial complexes to attract investment.

The ongoing commitment to investments in emerging economic zones, such as the Suez Canal Zone.

Regrettably, the outcomes of these endeavors have fallen short of the anticipated results. The industrial sector has not experienced the significant growth that aligns with the extensive opportunities and potential available in Egypt.

This observation also extends to the small and micro-enterprise sectors. Although the government has offered substantial support through a range of adaptable and diverse financing programs, and has implemented an advanced regulatory framework for such enterprises, the growth rates in this sector continue to lag behind the desired benchmarks.

In the domain of tourism and services, the government's commitment to a comprehensive urban renaissance, encompassing the construction of several new cities adhering to international standards, along with incentive packages for the tourism sector, has been instrumental in facilitating the substantial recovery of the tourism industry. This resurgence has been particularly noteworthy considering the significant challenges the sector faced in recent years. These challenges included political instability, acts of terrorism, as well as the repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to data from the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics, the number of tourists visiting Egypt witnessed an impressive upsurge of 85.4% during the first half of 2022, reaching a total of 4.9 million tourists in comparison to 2.6 million tourists in the same period of 2021. Furthermore, the number of global tourists who visited Egypt totaled 8 million in 2021, reflecting a substantial increase from the 3.7 million tourists in the preceding year, 2020.

Nonetheless, it is crucial to underscore that the economic policies in place require comprehensive enhancement, as the endeavors thus far have not yielded the development of robust economic structures capable of withstanding shocks.

While the Egyptian economy has indeed weathered the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, it experienced considerable setbacks due to the repercussions of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict. This is manifested, for instance, in the 13.7% rise in the non-oil trade deficit, which reached approximately 47.8 billion dollars by the conclusion of the fiscal year 2021/2022. This marks a substantial increase compared to the 42.1 billion dollars recorded in the preceding fiscal year, as per data released by the Central Bank of Egypt.

There is a palpable recognition among political and societal stakeholders, whether in positions of authority or within opposition factions, regarding the imperative need to reevaluate the current economic policies. This impelled the President of the Republic and the government to convene an economic conference in October 2022, incorporating the economic dimension into the goals and facets of the national dialogue, which commenced its phases in the latter half of 2022.

Second: Economic, social, and cultural rights in Egypt during the report period: a critical assessment of strengths and weaknesses

In the subsequent sections, we will delineate the key indicators of progress and regression pertaining to the array of rights outlined in the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights:

1. The right to decent work

Decent work is characterized as labor that upholds the fundamental rights of individuals as human beings, as well as the rights of workers, within a framework of safety regulations and standards to establish equitable remuneration. This encompasses the consideration of the physical and mental well-being of the worker while executing their duties.

A more in-depth examination of Egypt's labor market and its workers in 2022 uncovers several challenges that demand attention in order to enhance decent work conditions. These key challenges, drawn from reports by the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics, include:

Perpetuation of Gender Disparities in Employment Rates: The gender gap in employment persists, with a rate of 65.2% for male workers as compared to a mere 12.8% for female workers.

Challenges Associated with Employment Continuity: Over 30% of the workforce is engaged in precarious, temporary employment, thereby rendering them susceptible to rapid reentry into unemployment.

Substantial Reduction in Social Insurance Enrollment: A significant decline is noted in the proportion of individuals subscribed to the social insurance system, encompassing merely 55.7% of all wage earners. This percentage ascends to approximately 90% when considering private sector workers who are not affiliated with formal establishments.

Marked Reduction in Health Insurance Subscription: A pronounced decline is observed in the percentage of wage earners subscribing to the health insurance system, with more than 60% remaining uninsured. This figure escalates to over 96% among private sector workers outside registered establishments.

The aforementioned statistics underscore the imperative need for a comprehensive evaluation of labor quality and suitability in relation to its availability. Furthermore, these figures underscore the existing deficiencies in the organizational legal frameworks, most notably the labor laws and regulatory mechanisms governing formal and informal private sector enterprises. In Egypt, the year 2022 witnessed the administration of trade union elections for the 2026-2022 cycle, a process that extended over nearly three months, commencing from the issuance of ministerial decrees stipulating their schedules and procedures in April 2022, up until the submission of documentation by the General Federation of Egyptian Trade Unions in June 2022. While the trade union elections did not encounter significant breaches during the electoral proceedings, as attested by the reports from organizations and entities overseeing these elections, they did not garner the essential attention and media coverage commensurate with their role in upholding the right to employment and safeguarding the rights of laborers.

The Egyptian labor market faces a number of challenges, including low wages, unemployment, informality, and discrimination. These challenges have led to a significant loss of foreign direct investment (FDI). However, the government has taken some steps to address these challenges, such as raising the minimum wage, expanding social protection, and improving the legislative framework for labor unions. As a result of these efforts, Egypt was removed from the International Labour Organization's (ILO) blacklist in 2021 and 2022. This is a positive development, as it will help to attract more FDI and create more jobs.

2. The right to social security

Social safety net programs in Egypt are playing an increasingly important role in protecting the poorest and most vulnerable groups from the impacts of economic shocks and poverty. The "Takaful and Karama" cash assistance program, in particular, has been successful in expanding coverage and increasing benefits to reach millions of Egyptians in need.

According to the Ministry of Social Solidarity, as of June 2022, the "Takaful and Karama" program was benefiting 4.5 million families, including 17 million citizens. Women and children make up a significant proportion of the program's beneficiaries, with 75% of beneficiaries being women and 4.2 million children being covered by the program.

The program's budget is also set to increase in the 2023 fiscal year, with allocations rising from EGP 19.5 billion in 2021/2022 to EGP 22.5 billion. This will allow the program to expand coverage to an additional 450,000 families, bringing the total number of beneficiaries to nearly 20 million.

Despite the progress made in expanding social safety net coverage, there are still significant challenges in ensuring that all Egyptians have access to adequate social protection. In particular, the number of workers contributing to the social insurance system remains low, at less than 14 million out of a total of 27 million workers. This puts a strain on the existing social insurance system and threatens its sustainability.

During the reporting period, there were notable social and parliamentary calls for the revision of certain provisions governing the regulations and criteria for early retirement within the framework of the Social Insurance and Pensions Law, as outlined in Law No. 148 of 2019. This law came into effect on January 1, 2020. Article 21 of the aforementioned law established conditions that were perceived as impractical and inequitable for those considering early retirement, leading to challenges in this regard. Specifically, the article stipulated that in the event of the termination of an insured individual's service, employment, or occupational activity for reasons other than attaining the retirement age, experiencing disability, or passing away, certain requirements had to be met to be eligible for early retirement. These prerequisites included a participation period in the old-age, disability, and death insurance that warranted a pension equal to or exceeding 50% of the wage or settlement income. Moreover, the actual participation duration had to be no less than 240 months, with an extended requirement of 300 months of active participation after five years of service. Furthermore, the insured person should not be under coverage for old-age, disability, and death insurance at the time of submitting their early retirement request.

Notwithstanding the governmental initiatives aimed at augmenting the value and allocations of pensions during the preceding biennium, the concomitant escalation in inflation rates and the depreciation of the Egyptian pound have collectively engendered an erosion of the augmented pension incomes.

In particular, the primary objective for the enactment of the new legislation, which was to ameliorate the disparity between pre-retirement and post-retirement

income, appears to be a goal yet unrealized. The intended benefits of this legislation seem deferred, primarily to be realized by future generations.

3. The right to an adequate living standard

The right to an adequate standard of living includes the entitlement of every individual to a standard of living that is adequate for their own well-being and that of their family, encompassing provisions for their essential needs, including sustenance, attire, and habitation. Furthermore, it encompasses the entitlement to the continuous enhancement of one's living conditions. Consequently, the state's policies in domains such as housing, infrastructure, social services, and food security bear substantial influence in either advancing or compromising the citizens' living rights.

National projects in the fields of infrastructure, housing, healthcare, and education have significantly elevated the living standards of citizens, notably concerning the right to adequate housing.

Egypt's approaches to slum development and social housing programs serve as commendable models that can be adapted in various communities.

Nevertheless, the primary challenge related to the right to housing consistently stems from certain segments of society being unable to access available housing options due to the high costs set by the private sector, and their inability to meet the requirements or provide the necessary documentation to benefit from subsidized housing offered by government agencies.

Furthermore, issues regarding property expropriation for public purposes, including concerns about inadequate compensation and the complexities of obtaining it, remain a challenge that necessitates comprehensive legislative and social remedies. This entails streamlining property expropriation procedures and implementing effective resettlement plans.

During the reporting period, the state initiated the process of granting reconciliation opportunities for construction violations, which provided relief to approximately 2.8 million citizens owning 91,000 housing units in urban and rural regions. Nevertheless, concerns have arisen regarding the tardiness of reconciliation procedures, the lack of transparency in subsequent phases, and potential amendments to certain provisions within the regulatory law (Law No. 17 of 2019) to facilitate the regularization of the status of individuals who have submitted reconciliation requests in accordance with the aforementioned law.

In the context of transitioning towards a low-emission development paradigm and the imperatives of climate change adaptation, there exists a pressing necessity for

a comprehensive reassessment of the prevailing building regulations governed by Law No. 119 of 2008. This reassessment should prioritize the amalgamation of environmental considerations into urban planning and execution, with due recognition of regional disparities, particularly in relation to the distinctive climatic characteristics across Egypt's diverse regions. Such a review must underscore the imperative of addressing climate change consequences within the planning framework.

Likewise, the same imperative applies to social housing and state-supported housing initiatives in emerging urban centers. While these programs have indeed achieved significant quantitative milestones, an immediate and meticulous review of social housing policies is warranted. This review should harmonize these policies with the requisites for combatting climate change and adapting to its ramifications. This alignment can be achieved by transitioning towards structures that synergize with the prevailing climatic conditions, adopting the principles of bioclimatic architectural design. Such design methodology is grounded in the tripartite principles of climate, housing, and human factors, facilitating the incorporation of climatic considerations into the design process for all implemented sites. The overarching objective is to construct buildings that meet rigorous energy efficiency criteria.

Egypt has made commendable strides in the extension of safe drinking water and sanitation services across the nation in recent years. This progress is notably attributed to the heightened allocation of investment expenditure towards these critical services, be it through the Ministry of Housing's initiatives or the Hayat Karima program.

The coverage rates for sanitation services have witnessed substantial growth, surpassing 60% at the national level and exceeding 40% in rural areas. This significant increase represents a remarkable enhancement compared to the pre-report period, where coverage lingered at less than 20%. Furthermore, Egypt has effectively generated a surplus in electricity services and has embraced an ambitious agenda to expand the provision of natural gas services to urban and rural locales across the country. These collective achievements have had a discernible impact on the amelioration and fortification of the standards for adequate housing.

In spite of the observed reduction in the national poverty rate, as previously noted and based on 2021 data (collected during the 2020-2019 period), it is evident that conditions characterized by low living standards persist among significant segments of the population.

The statistics provided by the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics underscore that 48% of rural residents continue to grapple with the inability to meet their fundamental living requisites, encompassing provisions like food, clothing, and shelter, placing them below the poverty threshold.

It is noteworthy that the government has endeavored to contribute to alleviating the gap in nutritional needs for eligible demographics through the system of subsidies. The data furnished by the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics disclose that 84% of families nationwide are beneficiaries of these subsidies, denoted as ration cards. This percentage rises to over 91% in rural areas, contrasting with a rate exceeding 74% in urban areas.

Nonetheless, the data also underscores that the overall impact of support in addressing food requirements appears to be considerably restricted. Specifically, the ration card system contributes to fulfilling just approximately 7.4% of the average beneficiary family's food necessities. This emphasizes the pressing requirement for the restructuring, strategic planning, and redirection of the support system, despite its annual allocations surpassing 100 billion pounds.

4. The right to health

Despite the substantial efforts undertaken in the Egyptian healthcare sector, a substantial portion of the population still does not have their health rights fully realized. Although the comprehensive health insurance project carries ambitious aims, initial indicators indicate it will encounter challenges that could temper expectations and prolong the timeline for achieving universal health coverage for all Egyptians. Furthermore, economic conditions and inflation rates are placing strain on both state and household healthcare expenditures, thereby compounding the issue of access to healthcare rights.

Data from the 2021 Egyptian Family Health Survey conducted by the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics highlights various health-related indicators, some of the key findings include:

- The fertility rate remains high at 2.85 births per woman.
- A significant proportion of pregnancies are unwanted, with 20% reported for the five years preceding the health survey.
- The unmet need for family planning services stands at 14% among married women.

These indicators underscore the existence of considerable challenges that need to be addressed to ensure that all Egyptians can access quality healthcare services.

- The infant mortality rate increased from 22 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2014 to 27 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2021.
- There was a significant improvement in child nutritional status, with a marked decline in stunting, obesity, and wasting rates from 2014 to 2021.
- Female genital mutilation (FGM) rates remain high, despite the legislative and institutional measures taken by the Egyptian government in recent years. The survey found that 86% of women who have been married have undergone FGM. However, the percentage of girls who have undergone FGM in the age group 0-19 years decreased from 35% in 2014 to 14% in 2021. In addition, the percentage of mothers who intend to circumcise their daughters has also declined significantly.
- Domestic violence against women is on the rise. The survey found that about one-third of women aged 15-49 who have been married have experienced some form of violence from their husbands in the 12 months preceding the survey.

The health survey reveals various indicators of inadequate health care provision, such as limited access, delayed decisions, poor facilities, and unqualified staff. These are also reflected in the numerous complaints that the National Council for Human Rights has received.

Nevertheless, the state deserves praise for its effective response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its health consequences, as well as for achieving about 90% vaccination coverage among the eligible groups with the necessary doses of vaccines.

The new cohort of the NCHR has paid considerable attention to the right to mental health. It has conducted a number of field visits organized by the Social Committee, headed by NCHR member Dr. Wafaa Benjamin, to a number of mental health and addiction treatment hospitals during 2022 and 2023. These visits were to:

- The Abbasiya Mental Health and Addiction Treatment Hospital in Cairo on Wednesday, May 17, 2023.
- The Khanka Mental Health and Addiction Treatment Hospital on May 23, 2023.
- The Sohag Mental Health and Addiction Treatment Hospital on Sunday, September 25, 2022.

- The Assiut Mental Health and Addiction Treatment Hospital on Wednesday, October 5, 2022.

The purpose of these visits was to:

- Evaluate the medical services provided to patients.
- Meet the patients in the hospital to ensure that they are receiving treatment in its various forms.
- Assess the health and social conditions and learn about the map of mental health and addiction treatment hospitals and centers across the republic.
- Ensure that the care is consistent with the national law for the care of the mentally ill, No. 71 of 2009, as amended by Law No. 210 of 2020, and the United Nations standards for the rights of mental patients.

On May 24, 2023, the NCHR organized an expert meeting on “Supporting the Mental Health Sector and the Rights of the Mentally Ill” at its premises. The meeting was attended by 96 participants from various fields related to mental health and addiction treatment, such as academics, doctors, civil society representatives, and government agencies. The meeting resulted in the following recommendations:

- Launch the presidential initiative to support the mental health of citizens of all ages as soon as possible.
- Increase the number of mental health hospitals and addiction treatment centers at the provincial level.
- Commission the media to develop awareness programs on protecting mental health and changing the negative stereotypes about mental illness.
- Integrate people who have recovered from mental illness into society, and support families in the rehabilitation of people who have received treatment in hospitals for long periods of time, up to and beyond ten years, and train their families to deal with them and meet their needs.
- Increase cooperation and coordination between executive bodies, civil society organizations, and the private sector to support the mental health sector.
- Continue the NCHR’s field visits to the headquarters of mental health hospitals and addiction treatment centers at the provincial level to inspect the conditions and make the necessary recommendations.

5. The right to education

During the reporting period, Egypt's educational initiatives aimed at improving access to education, reducing dropout rates, and addressing illiteracy have achieved some success. However, considerable challenges persist, particularly regarding the quality of education. These challenges are attributed to factors such as insufficient teacher training, low teacher salaries, inadequate school infrastructure and resources, high student-to-teacher ratios, and an elevated average class size.

According to data from the Annual Education Statistics Book for the years 2021-2022, several issues underscore the obstacles in upholding the right to education. One notable concern is the persistently high class density, which saw a slight decline in 2022 compared to 2020. Despite an increase in the total number of classrooms from 509,400 in 2020 to 540,000 in 2022, the number of students rose from 23.6 million to 25.1 million during the same period. Consequently, class density increased from 46.2 students per class to 46.4 students per class.

The Annual Education Statistics Book further highlights a decline in the number of teachers, decreasing from approximately 1.2 million in 2020 to around 988,000 in 2022. Consequently, the student-to-teacher ratio has risen significantly, surpassing the standards observed in countries with robust education systems. It currently stands at 31.5 students per teacher in primary education and 23.6 students per teacher in preparatory education. This disparity is more pronounced in rural regions compared to urban areas.

Moreover, the statistics book reveals relatively low dropout rates in primary education, with an average of 0.2%. However, these rates are higher among male students at 0.23% compared to 0.17% among females. Notably, three governorates, namely Assiut, Matrouh, and Bani Suef, report significantly higher dropout rates, ranging between 0.35% and 0.36%.

Conversely, dropout rates in preparatory education are relatively high, with an average of 0.87%. Among female students, these rates escalate to 1.16%, whereas male students show a rate of 0.66%. The National Council for Human Rights expresses deep concern regarding the conspicuous issue of students dropping out of school and entering the labor market, which constitutes a severe violation of their rights and exacerbates population growth.

In contrast to the aforementioned figures, evidence suggests that the educational system and policies have not aligned adequately with the labor market's requirements. The system's outputs have yet to significantly contribute to producing graduates capable of competing effectively in the dynamic and rapidly evolving job market.

6. Cultural rights

In accordance with relevant international standards, the cultural rights involve :

The right to partake in cultural life, engage in the arts, and contribute to scientific advancement.

The right to safeguard intellectual property, preserve, promote, and cultivate science and culture.

The right to unfettered scientific research and creative activity.

The reporting period observed the Egyptian government's endeavor to introduce the National Intellectual Property Strategy in September 2022. This step is of paramount significance to enhance the legislative and institutional framework for intellectual property in Egypt, aligning it with global advancements in this sphere.

While it is premature to gauge the strategy's efficacy in protecting intellectual property rights and their impact on cultural rights, it encompasses an array of objectives and measures that hold the promise of realizing substantial progress in this domain.

The National Intellectual Property Strategy is grounded in four principal objectives, underpinned by various sub-objectives. In terms of implementation readiness, these are segregated into two categories: the first entails short-term implementation, while the second pertains to medium-term implementation.

The objectives of the strategy encompass:

Enhancing governance and infrastructure development while cultivating the legislative environment for intellectual property.

Adapting intellectual property to accommodate changes and developments.

Activating the economic returns of intellectual property, given its strategic significance.

Enhancing awareness within Egyptian society regarding intellectual property, enabling Egypt to harness its wealth represented in intellectual production and national heritage.

It is essential to underscore that a series of challenges necessitate comprehensive solutions to advance cultural rights in alignment with the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights. The most prominent among these challenges is related to the prevailing societal culture and the emergence of an intolerant religious discourse towards certain intellectual, cultural, and scientific endeavors, along with the continuation of some religious "hisbah" practices.

While the state's stance and many of its actions do not align with these trends in religious discourse, the propagation of such discourse appears to exert a more substantial influence on the popular and grassroots levels, particularly given the low levels of education and the general cultural deficiencies.

Restrictions on some academic freedoms and areas of freedom of expression, as well as the existence of a kind of monopoly in the cultural, artistic, and media production industry in Egypt, also play a role in hindering the promotion of cultural rights for citizens.

Chapter Two

NCHR's Role in Addressing Citizen's Complaints

Introduction:

The National Council for Human Rights (NCHR) has maintained an effective complaints system for over 15 years to address human rights violations. NCHR has benefited from the support of international development partners in building and strengthening the capacities of the teams responsible for receiving and processing complaints and developing related work systems. While addressing complaints and allegations of human rights violations, NCHR relies its mandate granted by 94 of 2003 amended by Law No. 197 of 2017). These powers are defined in paragraphs 2, 6, and 16 of Article 3, which include NCHR's competence to:

- Investigate allegations of human rights violations.
- Submit necessary recommendations to the competent state authorities.
- Receive complaints related to human rights, study them, and refer those that the NCHR considers to be referred to the competent authorities and follow up their response.
- Inform complainants of the legal procedures that must be followed and assist them in taking them.
- Settle and resolve complaints with the competent parties.
- Visit prisons and other places of detention and treatment and rehabilitation institutions. Listen to prisoners and inmates of the aforementioned places and institutions to verify their good treatment and the extent to which they enjoy their human rights.

NCHR is cognizant of the importance of continuously developing its complaints mechanism as a dynamic tool for monitoring reality, identifying gaps, guiding policy, and improving performance in addressing allegations of human rights violations. Since taking office

in 2022, the current cohort of the NCHR has prioritized the development of the complaint's mechanism through the Council's Complaints Committee in accordance with the NCHR's legal mandate and relevant international human rights standards and principles. The development process has included a specific focus on responding to the topics and issues related to the goals of the National Human Rights Strategy, which was launched in September 2021. The NCHR's relevant philosophy was based on three pillars:

Reforming the technical operations of the complaint's mechanism, aligning it with the Council's authority as defined in its founding law and adhering to the Paris Principles while also aligning with the goals and expected outcomes of the National Human Rights Strategy. This reform entails the following steps:

- Incorporating the findings of the complaint's mechanism as a fundamental component in the NCHR's activity planning and those of its technical committees. This will be achieved by activating a referral system to direct cases to the relevant authorities and other NCHR;s committees, enabling each committee to tailor its actions based on the statistical data generated by the complaints mechanism. Prioritizing cases directly linked to specific outcomes outlined in the strategy. These cases encompass a range of issues, such as allegations of torture, violations of bodily integrity, inhumane or degrading treatment. Moreover, enabling residents of care facilities and hospitals to access the complaints mechanism through the deployment of mobile complaint units and teams, addressing complaints regarding the duration of pre-trial detention and case eligibility for clemency, dealing with complaints related to violations of Article 161 of the Penal Code concerning discriminatory practices, addressing grievances related to discrimination in accessing economic and social services, handling complaints of discrimination and violence against women, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. Furthermore, it also covers cases pertaining to the failure to adhere to Egyptian construction codes designed for accessibility and integration of persons with disabilities in residential and public spaces, along with complaints related to the right to access social protection services and cash support programs targeting vulnerable groups.

- "Facilitate coordination and referrals for complaints that extend beyond discrimination, including non-discriminatory medical appeals, employment and financial support access issues, and basic nutritional needs. This is achieved through collaborative efforts with relevant civil society organizations."
- "Creating a centralized database for complaints mechanisms and harmonizing data rules will improve governance, align with international standards, and empower the NCHR to make evidence-based reforms in public policies and legislation."
- The Complaints Committee has been active during the reporting period, handling various complaints related to human rights violations. They engaged in follow-up procedures, visited rehabilitation centres and penal institutions, and facilitated mobile complaints to ensure that vulnerable groups could access the NCHR Complaints Committee.
- The Complaints Committee of NCHR played a significant role in addressing a number of human rights violations during the period covered by the report. These violations were reported to the committee by victims or members of their families through NCHR branches in Giza and the Fifth Settlement, or directly to the President of the Council through her personal mobile phone, which is well known to the public. The committee was also successful in playing a major role in achieving significant progress in some of the human rights cases that had been a major challenge to improving the human rights situation in Egypt in previous periods, particularly those related to the release of detainees from rehabilitation centers (prisons) and pre-trial detainees on bail in cases.

In this chapter, the report addresses the main features of the work of the Complaints Committee through the following pillars:

- Status of complaints received by the Council during the period covered by the report and evaluation of the level of coordination with relevant authorities and concerned stakeholders.
- Council's activity in prison visits (rehabilitation centres).
- Mobile complaint units.

Distribution of complaints and grievances(excluding presidential pardon requests)

Category	December 2020- December 2021	January- May 30th, 2023	Total
Civil and political rights complaints and grievances including rights of prisoners and detainees	1031	2160	3191
Economic, social and political rights	381	568	949
Egyptians abroad complaints	8	20	28
Total	1420	2756	4168

The preceding table highlights that the majority of complaints and requests received by the Council during the report's period pertained to civil and political rights (excluding presidential pardon requests), accounting for 76.5% of the total. Subsequently, complaints and requests concerning economic, social, and cultural rights represented 22.7%. The following section of the report will provide a comprehensive analysis of each complaint category.

Geographically, the NCHR received complaints from all 27 governorates nationwide through various channels. Giza Governorate ranked first with 1,519 complaints, followed by Cairo Governorate with 1,498, Eastern Governorate with 1,115, Minya Governorate with 630, and Qalyoubia Governorate with 511. These five governorates collectively accounted for approximately 55% of all complaints submitted to the Council. The remaining governorates distributed the remaining complaints. Table No. 2 illustrates the distribution of complaints and pardon requests across governorates according to their geographical locations.

Distribution of complaints and grievances received by the NCHR nationwide (including requests for clemency)

Governorates	Number of Complaints	Complaints percentage (%)
Giza	1519	15.9%
Cairo	1498	15.7%
Sharqiya	1115	11.7%
Beni Suef	288	3%
Assiut	199	2%
Daqahliya	493	5%
Damietta	174	2%
Fayoum	212	2%
Gharbeya	268	3%
Alexandria	489	5%
Ismailiya	133	1%
Kafr el-Sheikh	194	2%
Minya	630	6.6%
Menoufiya	292	3%
North Sinai	51	1%
Port Said	119	1%
Qalyoubiya	511	5.4%
Beheira	297	3%
Aswan	70	1%
Qena	79	1%
Sohag	227	2%
Luxor	48	0%
El-Wadi El-Gedid	47	0%

South Sinai	45	0%
Suez	139	1%
Red Sea	25	0%
Matrouh	45	0%
North Sinai	4	0%
unidentified	274	4%
Total	9521	100%

During the reporting period NCHR received 9,389 complaints and 132 requests from different groups of citizens. Of the complaints, 8,399 came from men and 990 from women. The report also shows the distribution of complaints and requests by social gender (male-female).

Complaints and grievances classification according to gender

Gender	Number of Complaints
Male	8399
female	990
combined	132
total	9521

As for the level of interaction of the concerned authorities with the reports submitted to the NCHR regarding citizens' complaints and grievances, NCHR submitted a total of 4,168 reports during the period covered by the report, with 1,420 reports during the period from December 2020 to December 2021 and 2,756 reports during the period from January to May 2023. Taking into account that some complaints required reporting to more than one authority (such as the Public Prosecution and the Ministry of Interior) and that some reports included more than one complaint, the NCHR received 2,059 responses during the period covered by the report in response to 4,168 cases referred to the concerned authorities. The responses constituted 49.4% of the referred reports.

The statistics indicate an increase in the percentage of responses to reports submitted during the period January-May 2023 compared to the previous period (December 2020-December 2021, 52.9% versus 42.2%, respectively). The following table shows the distribution of responses received by the NCHR during the period covered by the report from the concerned authorities:

Authorities	December 2020-December 2021			January-May 2023		
	no. of reports submitted by NCHR	no. of authorities responses	% of responses to reports	no. of reports submitted by NCHR	no. of authorities responses	% of responses to reports
Ministry of Interior	980	487	50%	1596	925	58%
Public Prosecutor	217	33	15%	550	310	56.3%
Ministry of Social Security	157	58	37%	196	143	72.9%
Governorates	73	8	11%	41	13	31.7%
Ministry of Manpower	37	7	19%	19	2	10.5%
Ministry of Higher Education	10	5	50%	21	9	42.8%

Ministry of Health	18	1	4%	82	4	4.8%
Minister of Education	17	1	4%	22	-	0
Other ministries	-	-	-	95	21	22%
National Organization for Social Insurance	-	-	-	28	17	60.7%
Other authorities	-	-	-	96	15	52.9%
Total	1420	600	42.2%	2756	1459	52.9%

According to the report, the Ministry of Interior was the most responsive authority to the Council's complaints during the said period, followed by the Public Prosecution, the Ministry of Social Solidarity, the governorates, and the Ministry of Défense. Some line ministries and other entities had a very low response rate.

The Council is working diligently to maximise benefit of the President's initiative to pardon and release prisoners who have been arrested for violating some legal procedures related to political and civil rights. Between April and May 2023, the Council received 5067 requests to benefit from the initiative. The Council examined and shared these requests with the relevant judicial, security, and presidential authorities, who have the power to decide on such releases. The tables below show how the requests were distributed among the different categories of pardon.

Distribution of prisoners and detainees who are the subject of the requests submitted according to category and gender

Category	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	percentage	Number	percentage	Number	percentage
Pretrial	1905	98%	26	2%	1931	38.1%
Convicted	3127	99.6%	9	0.4%	3136	61.9%

Numerical and relative distribution of prisoners and detainees who are the subject of the requests submitted according to age

category	30 years and less		31-45 years		over 45 years		Total	
	number	percentage	number	percentage	number	percentage	number	percentage
Pretrial	601	28%	765	39.6%	565	29.2%	1931	100%
Convicted	805	25.6%	1482	47.2%	849	27%	3136	100%
Total	1406	27.7%	2247	44.3%	1414	27.9%	5067	100%

Relative distribution of prisoners and detainees who are the subject of the grievances submitted according to the length of detention and type of charge

Convicted detainees			Pretrial detainees		
Vandalism/ destruction/ murder/ violence/ar med protests/fire crackers	Joining banned organization s/ spreading false news/ protesting	Other	Spreading false news/ demonstrati ons	Joining banned organization s	other
818	1970	351	360	1375	196

First: Complaints related to Civil and Political Rights

The NCHR received (8,258) complaints and grievances about civil and political rights, including some that were part of the Presidential Pardon Initiative. These complaints and grievances fell into different categories, but the most common and important ones were about the rights of people who were either in rehabilitation centres (prisoners) or in pre-trial detention for various charges. The table below shows the sub-categories of these complaints and requests:

Table 1: Distribution of complaints and requests related to the rights of release from rehabilitation centres (prisoners) and those who are held in pre-trial detention on charges

Sub-categories	Number of grievances	Number of responses
Clemency requests	5067	N/A
Conditional and health release	1425	516
Healthcare requests	307	109
Transfer requests	148	58
Visitation related requests	30	19
Torture and ill-treatment allegations	94	91
Educational related requests/grievances	3	1
Other	91	11
Total except clemency requests	2065	805
Total including clemency requests	8258	-

The previous table shows that most of the NCHR’s complaints and grievances were about granting conditional or medical release to convicts, which made up 69% of the total. The next most common categories were medical care, transfer, and overcrowding reduction, which together comprised 22% of all complaints and requests. On the other hand, only about 9% of the complaints involved allegations of prisoners’ rights violations, such as torture, ill-treatment, and visit denial.

During the reporting period, the NCHR received responses and clarifications from the Ministry of Interior and the Public Prosecution concerning 1,755 cases, which make up about 52.5% of all the complaints and grievances that were sent to them, and 3,343 referrals. Table 5 shows that the Council received answers for 97% of the complaints about torture and ill-treatment, and for 63.3% of the complaints about the right to visits.

The NCHR’s handling of cases of allegations of enforced disappearance:

During the reporting period, the NCHR investigated and responded to 222 complaints of alleged cases of enforced disappearance. The NCHR contacted the Ministry of Interior and the Public Prosecution to follow up on these cases. Table 6 summarizes the responses that the Council received for the cases that it reported.

Table 6: Complaints of Allegations of Disappearance/Forced Disappearance

Forced disappearance grievances categorization	Cases (222)	Percentage
The plaintiff is an inmate in a prison or a detention facility	41	18.5%
The plaintiff has not been detained	73	32.4%
The plaintiff is accused and on the run	8	3.6%
The plaintiff is release and has not been arrested again	7	3.5%
The plaintiff has not been found (due to lack of information)	44	19.8%
The grievance is under scrutiny and awaiting response	49	22%

The NCHR also handled various civil and political issues besides the rights of detainees, inmates, and missing persons. It received many complaints about the following topics: non-implementation of court rulings in favour of the plaintiffs (237), misuse of authority and influence (37), abuse of power (51), violations of privacy and personal security by bullying and discrimination (35), and inaction of law enforcement agencies (45). The table below shows how the NCHR classified and handled these complaints and requests on other civil and political rights topics.

Table No. 7 Complaints received by the NCHR regarding some other civil and political rights

Sub-category	Number of grievances	Number of responses
The right to physical integrity	19	3
The right to privacy and personal security	35	8
The use of public office or position for private gain	42	6
Power abuse	51	18
The right to transportation	6	3
Implementation of a verdict	213	39
Police and legal procedures implementation	42	16
Other	366	27
Total	774	120

On a different note, the National Council for Human Rights diligently monitored the investigations carried out by the Public Prosecution into the demise of Dr. Ayman Hedhoud. Ambassador Moushira Khattab, the Council's President, issued a press statement, urging that the Public Prosecution's inquiries regarding Dr. Ayman Hedhoud's alleged forced disappearance prior to his passing be integrated.

Later on, Khattab further declared that NCHR had scrutinized the statement Ministry of Interior's, and that according to the Public Prosecution's findings, "there were no criminal suspicions surrounding Ayman Hedhoud's demise". This conclusion followed a review of the Forensic Medicine Authority's autopsy report, which confirmed that his death resulted from a pre-existing heart condition. The report of the public prosecutor added that No signs of injuries indicative of criminal violence or resistance were found on his body, and there was no additional evidence to suggest any criminal suspicion in his passing (source: official General Information Service website).

Khattab also emphasized that the Council meticulously oversees pre-trial detention cases and addresses complaints related to alleged forced disappearances. She added that NCHR remains accessible to receive any complaints pertaining to violations and promptly engages with relevant authorities and complainants.

Second: Economic, social, and cultural rights “ESCR” complaints

During the reporting period, the NCHR received 949 complaints falling within the category of economic, social, and cultural rights, encompassing the rights of specific groups like children and persons with disabilities. These complaints were duly presented to the competent authorities.

“ESCR” complaints predominated, totaling 590 (complaints), constituting 62% of the overall complaints in this category. Complaints regarding the accessibility of public services followed, numbering 265 complaints and representing 27.9% of the total complaints. On the other hand, complaints addressing the concerns of special groups amounted to 46 complaints, accounting for 4.8% of the total complaints in this category.

The subsequent table illustrates the primary classifications of topics within the economic, social, and cultural rights complaints, as well as the actions undertaken by the NCHR in response.

Economic complaints:

The information presented in the preceding table underscores that a significant portion of economic complaints pertained to social security. This highlights the pressing necessity for a comprehensive review of the social security system, particularly in favor of a vital demographic group, the elderly. While the new social security law has set the groundwork for mitigating substantial income disparities experienced by retirees, the relatively protracted timeline for realizing the benefits of this law necessitates swifter and alternative measures.

The request to be included in “Takaful and Karama” cash transfer support program, is a major source of complaints received by the NCHR. This program is crucial for many low income group Egyptians who are facing economic hardships, most notably due to the COVID-19 pandemic and global financial crises. The state has increased the program’s budget, which now covers more than 20 million citizens, but there is still a gap between the supply and demand of the program. There are also some issues with the program’s governance that need to be addressed to ensure that the program reaches its intended beneficiaries.

As part of the effects of the economic crisis, the number of requests for employment received by the NCHR has also increased. Despite the decrease in the official unemployment rates, the economic policies, the relative decline in direct investments, and the temporary and seasonal nature of employment in infrastructure projects, all impose the need to review the priorities of economic policies, stimulate labour-intensive production projects, and provide financial, procedural, and tax facilities for small and micro enterprises.

Concerning the labour relations front, NCHR received 237 complaints related to arbitrary transfer, abuse of supervisory powers, and deprivation of financial rights of employees and workers. This reveals the need to review labour legislation and regulations, the capabilities of the regulatory bodies concerned with monitoring institutions and employers, as well as the bodies responsible for applying the Civil Service Law, and to strengthen trade union action to be a key player in resolving and addressing labor problems and ensuring that affected workers have access to mechanisms of justice.

NCHR received responses to the complaints it had raised, and most of them (68.9%) were about the right to social security and cash support from the Takaful and Karama program. The Ministry of Social Solidarity handled these complaints and replied to them. On the other hand, only a few complaints (less than 10%) were about abuse of authority, arbitrary transfer, and denial of financial rights of workers. The Ministry of Manpower was responsible for these complaints.

Social complaints:

The most common complaints related to social grievances were those related to public facilities and environmental issues, with a total of 102 complaints (40% of all social complaints). The majority of these complaints did not involve discrimination or explicit violations, but rather difficulties in accessing public services due to economic challenges and the state of public facilities in general.

Rights of vulnerable groups:

The NCHR received 46 complaints related to the rights of children and persons with disabilities. Although the response rate to these complaints was low, one of the most important complaints that the Council successfully addressed was a complaint about widespread abuse of children in a children's foster home in Giza. NCHR coordinated with the Ministry of Social Solidarity, as the body responsible for oversight and supervision of the home, to take swift and comprehensive action to investigate the complaint, which was found to be true. The NCHR then took urgent measures to dissolve the establishment's board of directors, change the executive administration, and open a comprehensive investigation into the practices that were taking place. The course of this complaint and its implications led the relevant authorities to strengthen oversight and inspection of all children's homes in the Republic to ensure that no similar abuses occur.

Complaints referral system:

NCHR coordinated with several major non-governmental organizations working in the field of economic support and social assistance to establish a referral mechanism for complaints received by the NCHR but do not involve explicit violations of human rights. The referral system aims to build a flexible mechanism that allows those who submit requests and appeals related to health services to obtain financial support or humanitarian assistance from non-governmental organizations that meet their standards of response to these cases. This comes in light of the NCHR's ability to strengthen its ties with a wide array of civil society organizations, on the one hand, and to strengthen its ability to respond to all complaints received by it, on the other hand. The referral system also aims to enable those who have been released and survivors of human rights violations to access opportunities for employment, support, rehabilitation, and social integration in the context of achieving the goals of a comprehensive social defence philosophy.

Rights of Egyptians abroad:

NCHR rarely receives complaints about the mistreatment of Egyptian citizens abroad. This is because there are several agencies that can help the complainant

and their family before they seek assistance by NCHR. Only 28 complaints were received under this category. It is related to seeking redress and resolving the harm.

Table 8: Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Categorization

Main categories	Sub-Categories	Number of grievances	Number of responses
Economic rights	Takaful and Karama program requests	146	37
	Social security requests	119	86
	Job application requests	65	9
	Arbitrary dismissal grievances	46	5
	Arbitrary transfer grievances/ Power abuse grievances	126	11
	Social rights	Public facilities and environmental services related grievances	102
Right to health related		85	5
Right to education related		29	2
Special categories rights		Children’s rights violations	22
	People with disabilities rights violations	24	5
Other	Other	185	15
Total		949	187

Second Pillar: Visits to prisons and rehabilitation centres

NCHR continues its diligent commitment to monitor prison conditions and the application of relevant legal provisions. It collaborated with the Ministry of Interior to organize visits to various prisons during 2022 and 2021, notably after the gradual easing of COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. Joint visits, involving human rights delegations, media representatives, and local and international correspondents, were conducted at the Borg El Arab and Damietta Prisons in Fayum during 2021.

The Council's delegations in 2021 primarily focused on assessing the evolution in the philosophy and conditions of detention centres and reform and rehabilitation facilities. Special attention was given to healthcare services, aligning with governmental efforts to enhance economic, social, and cultural rights. These visits encompassed inspections of detention centres, hospitals, specialized mental health clinics, sick cells, libraries, adult literacy classes, religious education rooms for Christian inmates, recreational areas, and vocational workshops, where inmates are receiving vocational training to produce various goods. NCHR delegations engaged with the inmates to evaluate their conditions.

In 2021, the Council's delegations were informed about the Ministry of Interior's vaccination plan for inmates against COVID-19. Approximately 5,000 doses were received and distributed in the initial phase across all reform and rehabilitation centres. This included vaccination for medical staff (around 1,400 individuals) and prioritized inmates aged over 65 and those with chronic illnesses.

Subsequent visits in 2022 to the reform and rehabilitation centres, newly established within the Ministry of Interior's social protection sector, aimed to gain insight into the development plan for penal institutions, prisons, and detention centres. This was to ensure alignment with legal standards and to address issues previously raised through complaints to the National Council for Human Rights. The visits also assessed infrastructure, equipment, and practices in the advanced penal institutions that the Ministry of Interior initiated in 2021, evaluating compliance with international standards and the rights of prisoners and detainees. Furthermore, the delegations aimed to understand the Ministry of Interior's efforts to upgrade existing prisons.

The collaboration with the Ministry of Interior extended to the establishment of reform and rehabilitation centres outside residential areas, acting as alternatives to conventional general prisons. The first centre, Wadi El Natrun Reform and

Rehabilitation Centre, led to the closure of 12 prisons, constituting 25% of Egypt's total general prisons:

Cairo Court of Appeal
 Port Said
 Cairo Port Said
 Banha
 Alexandria
 Tanta General
 Mansoura
 Sheikh Zayed
 Zagazig
 Old Damanhour

These visits reflect the National Council for Human Rights' ongoing commitment to monitor prison conditions, ensuring the protection and proper treatment of inmates in line with international standards.

Table number 9 shows the visits made by NCHR's delegations to the Rehabilitation and Reform Centers.

	Rehabilitation center	date of visit
1	Borg el Arab	2021
2	Damu prison- Fayoum	2021
3	Wadi el Natroun rehabilitation center	26.02.2022
4	Menya rehabilitation center 1 and 2	19.03.2022
5	Gamasa rehabilitation center, comprising two facilities	26.03.2022
6	Badr rehabilitation center	31.03.2022
7	Wadi el Natroun rehabilitation center	05.06.2022
8	New Damanhour rehabilitation center	20.06.2022
9	Gamasa rehabilitation center, comprising old and new facilities	27.06.2022
10	Borg el Arab rehabilitation center 1 and 2	03.07.2022

11	Qanater rehabilitation center for women	17.07.2022
12	Wadi el Natroun rehabilitation center	11.12.2022

Fourteen visits conducted by the council's delegations encompassed inspections of various facilities, including hospitals, mosques, church halls, conference halls, libraries, kitchens, bakeries, educational and recreational service buildings, workshop areas, and construction projects. Extensive discussions took place with Ministry of Interior officials and rehabilitation centre personnel to assess the status of complaints received from centre inmates. In light of these visits, the council makes the following observations:

Developed rehabilitation centres, exemplified by Wadi Natrun and Badr centers, set a benchmark for Egypt's penal institutions. They boast the necessary infrastructure for law enforcement agencies to implement prisoner treatment protocols, respect inmates' rights, and consider the well-being of their families and visitors. This includes areas for visitor entry, visiting halls, accommodation units, health and rehabilitation facilities, and dining facilities. The centres also demonstrate respect for inmates' rights and dignity in their operations, with excellent facilities aimed at prisoner rehabilitation and reintegration into society through, mental health care, professional training institutions and productive projects.

The new rehabilitation centres contribute to phasing out old prisons that were unable to meet human rights standards adequately.

The council emphasizes the need to expedite the Ministry of Interior's ambitious plan to replace old prisons with advanced rehabilitation centres like Wadi Natrun and Badr centers. The council appreciates the ministry's efforts to accelerate this plan, with three major centers completed and set to join Wadi Natrun and Badr centers. This will significantly reduce complaints related to prisoners' living conditions and fulfill a commitment outlined in the National Human Rights Strategy.

The council commends the Ministry of Interior for completing the vaccination of 100% of prisoners and detention centers with the specified doses to combat the Coronavirus, with the administration of booster doses to some prisoners.

The developed model, notably Wadi Natrun and Badr centers, has resolved the difficulties faced by prisoners' families, alleviating their struggles in poorly equipped areas. In line with this, the council suggests that the Ministry of Interior consider constructing pedestrian bridges above highways leading to these prisons, especially the desert road parallel to Wadi Natrun Rehabilitation Center. This measure would facilitate the movement of prisoners' families and enhance their safety while crossing the road on foot.

The council urges the Ministry of Interior to establish institutional mechanisms that ensure the sustainability and continuity of the quality of existing facilities and systems in Wadi Natrun Rehabilitation Center, Badr Center, and other centers under construction.

Third Pillar: Mobile Units

In line with the National Council for Human Rights' commitment to promoting and protecting human rights and as part of its strategy to enhance the complaints mechanism, NCHR has reinstated the full operation of mobile complaint units within governorates, cities, centres, and villages. These visits serve the purpose of assessing the current state of service provision to vulnerable groups in marginalised and remote areas, as well as groups and those at risk, with a particular focus on reinforcing the protection of residents in care facilities, hospitals, and addiction treatment units against violations, as outlined in the National Human Rights Strategy's objectives for civil and political rights.

The visits seek to shift the approach to handling citizens' complaints, requests, and contacts, moving beyond mere reception to conducting field visits to service institutions in the respective governorates. This assessment helps in understanding the conditions and work ethics and processes related to citizen services within these governorates, linking them to the complaints received by the Council's complaints system. Moreover, the visits aim to raise awareness about the Council's role, objectives, and the mechanisms for receiving and processing complaints.

Another total of six recent visits were carried out in the governorates of Sohag, Assiut, Suez, Ismailia, Beni Suef, Fayoum, and Aswan. The visits included meetings with local authorities, including the governor and their deputies, as well as visits to healthcare and treatment facilities, mental health institutions, care

homes for children and the elderly, and regions facing public service challenges. These visits involved engaging with citizens and stakeholders to identify complaints and assess the legal status concerning public services.

Notably, the governorate of Sohag faces significant healthcare challenges due to a 50% budget reduction allocated by the Ministry of Health. This reduction has resulted in the closure of numerous health units and a decrease in medical staff.

The visits conducted by the National Council for Human Rights' Mobile Complaint Unit resulted in a number of observations, which were reported to the concerned authorities and shared with the Council's specialized committees for further investigation. These observations are used to develop proposals for legislative and procedural amendments that will contribute to strengthening citizens' access to the relevant rights.

Chapter three

Nurturing a culture supportive of human rights and the related activities

This chapter delves into the Egyptian National Council for Human Rights' (NCHR) endeavours to nurture a culture supportive of human rights. It encompasses the activities carried out by all NCHR technical committees and their respective initiatives aimed at fostering a human rights culture. These efforts have been undertaken against the backdrop of significant changes, including the launch of the first ever National Strategy for Human Rights, featuring a dedicated component for advancing human rights culture.

This chapter commences by examining the NCHR's collaboration with the Parliament, highlighting its endeavours to reinforce a human rights culture and recounting its field visits to various governorates towards achieving similar objectives.

Promoting a culture supportive of human rights is a core mission and mandate of NCHR, guaranteed by its statute, serving as a pivotal tool for the realisation of human rights. This chapter outlines the NCHR's initiatives in this context, including:

Evaluating the school curriculum.

Assessing human rights portrayals in television dramas.

Participating in the implementation of the National Action Plan for Promoting a Culture of Human Rights.

The President of the NCHR's engagements with Egyptian university students.

The NCHR's role in educating and enhancing the capacities of governmental and non-governmental entities.

Conducting activities like workshops, conferences, and panel discussions.

First: The NCHR's cooperation with the Parliament's two chambers, the House of Representatives and the Senate

The new cohort of the National Council for Human Rights received valuable support from the parliament, which consists of the House of Representatives and the Senate. The two sides held frequent meetings that were marked by positive interaction and an in-depth dialogue. And communality in points of view. The meetings saw valuable participation of the members of the parliament from different committees, which greatly enhanced the discussion.

Ambassador Moushira Khattab, NCHR's President, led a delegation of the NCHR in practically all meetings that took place over the past year since the new cohort of the council took office:

Invitation by the Committee on Health and Population in the Senate to discuss a study on population growth in Egypt and solutions and proposals, on Sunday evening, January 16, 2022

Meeting between the NCHR's President, Ambassador Moushira Khattab and the Senate Speaker, on Monday, January 17, 2022, attended by NCHR's Vice President ambassador Kareem and , NCHR member Mohamed Anwar Sadat, chairman of the Committee on Civil and Political Rights.

Meeting between NCHR's President and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, on Tuesday, January 25, 2022, attended by the chairman of the Committee on Civil and Political Rights, Mohamed Anwar Sadat.

Meeting of the Committee on Human Rights and Social Solidarity of the Senate to discuss the National Strategy for Human Rights, on Tuesday, February 15, 2022

Meeting of the Human Rights Committee in House of Representatives, Sunday, March 6, 2022

Consultative meeting between NCHR members with the Human Rights Committee of the House of Representatives, at the headquarters of NCHR in New Cairo, on Wednesday, June 22.

Meeting with the Human Rights Committee in the House of Representatives, Sunday, November 20, 2022, attended by the Vice

President of the NCHR, Dr. Mahmoud Karim, and NCHR members, prof. dr. Anas Gaafar, Dr. Wafaa Benjamin, Dr. Hoda Awad, Ghada Hammam , Mohamed Mamdouh, Dr. Nevine Mossad, and the Secretary-General, Ambassador Fahmy Fayed.

Participation of the NCHR's President, upon the invitation of the chairman of the Senate's Human Rights Committee, Mohamed Heiba, to discuss a study on domestic violence.

NCHR's Meeting via Zoom with the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the House of Representatives, Thursday, December 22, 2022, to discuss joint cooperation between the three parties.

Meeting at the Human Rights Committee in the House of Representatives, Sunday, January 29, 2023, to discuss the rights of persons with disabilities, attended by the General Supervisor of the National Council for Persons with Disabilities, Dr. Iman Karim, and NCHR member, Mohamed Mamdouh, NCHR researchers responsible for the unit of persons with disabilities, and a number of members of the House of Representatives.

On April 10, 2023, the Egyptian Senate's Committee on Human Rights and Social Solidarity held a meeting to examine the issue of begging and its impact on human rights. The meeting was joined by Mohamed Mamdouh, NCHR member and head of "the Egyptian Council for Human Rights", and several researchers from the technical secretariat.

Second: The NCHR's efforts to nurture a culture of human rights through education curriculum revision and the incorporation of human rights values into drama series and films

(NCHR) actively promotes human rights education through various endeavours. A significant milestone in this pursuit involves the comprehensive examination of the national curriculum to integrate essential human rights concepts and values.

In 2022, the NCHR concluded an assessment of the primary and preparatory school curriculum. The evaluation unveiled insufficient integration of human rights concepts, prompting several recommendations for enhancement.

NCHR presented the assessment to the Ministry of Education, which pledged to take the recommendations into account. Nonetheless, the ministry has not provided a comprehensive response to date.

The NCHR has also organized workshops and seminars on the topic. Furthermore, a special NCHR committee has been established to examine how television dramas portray human rights.

NCHR is dedicated to promoting human rights education as a way of fostering a culture of respect for human rights among its citizens. NCHR implemented various activities, such as reviewing the curriculum and monitoring TV dramas, to ensure that human rights are adequately integrated, taught and advocated throughout the country.

In 2021, the Committee convened multiple meetings to assess the productions showcased during the year, which encompassed a total of 26 drama pieces and 6 animated works. Following unanimous consensus among all committee members, two animated works, namely "Nour and the Wonderful Book" and "Dream of Space," received recognition. Moreover, three drama productions were honoured in the following order of awards:

The Choice 2: The series portrays the courage and sacrifice of the Egyptian police in fighting against the violent and destructive acts of the Muslim Brotherhood group from 2013 until now. It covers the events of the armed Rabaa al-Adawiya sit-in and its dispersal by the security forces.

Take Care of Zizi: This series explores the challenges of living with ADHD, a condition that affects attention, impulsivity, and hyperactivity. It shows how people with ADHD cope in different settings, such as home, school, or work, and how their personality develops from childhood.

Newton's Game: The series explores various relevant topics, such as the aspiration of many people to go to America and give birth there to secure citizenship. The series portrays this issue and its numerous challenges, and also addresses the problem of verbal divorce.

In 2022, membership of the committee was renewed according to bi laws. Its primary mission was to oversee the drama productions, assessing their

depiction of human rights culture and meticulously scrutinising both their strengths and shortcomings. Prior to commencing its work, the Committee incorporated human rights principles and standards as benchmarks. A comprehensive evaluation of 26 drama productions was undertaken, marking the initial and secondary elimination phases in anticipation of designating the award recipients and disclosing the results of its selections.

On December 17, 2022, the Council recognized and awarded five artistic works that stood out among the submissions. Three of them were awarded prizes, one received the jury award, and one got a special mention, namely the following drama series:

Betoloue el- roh : The series gave a realistic insight into how jihadist groups recruit their members. It also depicted the brutal methods of physical and psychological violence that the people of Raqqa and northern Syria endured under their rule. Director Kamla Abu Zekry and her team managed to create a vivid portrayal of this harsh reality, without compromising on the aesthetic aspects. The actors delivered a powerful performance that touched the viewers' emotions. The series also highlighted the plight of women and how their basic rights to life, dignity, security and freedom were violated.

Faten Amal Harby: The work exposes the plight of Egyptian women who endures domestic violence and struggled to get divorced. It is important because it draws attention to a grave issue that is often ignored and implies that the issue stems from the dominant patriarchal culture.

Who said:A wide audience is captivated by a TV series that tackles human rights issues, such as freedom of expression and the right to be different, and that depicts the drama of its message effectively.

Geziret El Ghamam:The TV series a unique and thought-provoking exploration of religion and religiosity in contemporary society. The series combines religious narratives, folktales, and contemporary social commentary to create a rich and complex tapestry that challenges traditional stereotypes about religion and advocates for the values of diversity, tolerance, and love.

The Choice 3: The committee acknowledges the commendable production efforts put into the series; however, it deems inappropriate to directly compare it to other works of art. Choice 3, aided by valuable archives supporting the NCHR's mission to establish the right to knowledge, skillfully presented a dramatic perspective rooted in a globally recognized artistic form – documentary drama. With its exceptional artistic elements, it sparked inquiries regarding the imperative rejection of violence and the concerted efforts needed to counteract all manifestations of incitement against state institutions, which aimed to intimidate citizens through the propagation of various forms of fanaticism that infringe upon several rights, including the right to life and the right to choice, aligning with the council's core objectives.

Waheed Hamed (Excellence Award): For the first time in its ten-year history, the Ramadan Drama Awards jury has decided to honour the late writer Wahid Hamed. They recognized him as the creator of an intellectual enlightenment project that challenged ideological extremism and aimed to change the environment that fostered it. He did this through thrilling dramas that attracted audiences of all ages and backgrounds, and earned a rare level of public acclaim.

Lobna Abdelaziz (Lifetime Award): The Drama Committee decided to honour the legendary actress Lobna Abdul Aziz this year for her remarkable contribution to the artistic heritage and her diverse roles during her distinguished career. She is well-known for her role as "Auntie Lulu" in the popular radio program for children. She also starred in a number of films that portrayed high human values. She championed social justice as "Nour" in "The Love of the Masters", gender equality as Amina in "I am Free", women's liberation as Samiha in "Ah Men Hawa", and national independence as Shakil in "The Disturbance of the Sharks". She is also famous for her role in "Wa Islamah", one of the most important historical films in Egyptian cinema, which symbolises the resistance to occupation. Her personal life is also inspiring, as she was one of the first women to study at the American University in Cairo and to receive a master's degree from the United States on a scholarship. This influenced her careful selection of her works.

Third: Field visits to governorates as part of the National Campaign to Promote the Culture of Human Rights

As part of the National mandate to Promote Human Rights Culture by the technical Committee for the Promotion of Human Rights Culture eight on-site visits to a number of governorates took place . These visits involved eleven consultative sessions with diverse stakeholders, including governors, executive authorities, municipal council leaders, civil society organisations, specialised national councils, universities, community leaders, labour unions, youth center administrators, and select representatives from the private sector.

These meetings aimed to assess the governorates' needs, their use of all available opportunities, and the optimal ways of cooperation to fulfil the NCHR's mission of fostering human rights culture. The visits and meetings produced several important recommendations that help advance human rights culture.

Governorate	Participants	Visit date	Activity
1 Fayoum	The governor and the executive officials in the Fayoum governorate, officials in national councils, the university and local leaders.	July 6th, 2022	Workshop
2 Beni Suef	The governor and the executive officials in the Beni Suef governorate, officials in national councils, the university and local leaders.	June 8th, 2022	Workshop
3 Ismailiya, Suez	The executive officials in the governorate, officials in national councils, university officials.	August 1st- 4th, 2022	Consultative meetings
4 Sohag	The executive officials in the governorate, officials in national councils, university officials, local leaders, and human rights units representatives.	September 25th, 2022	Consultative meetings
Sohag	Representative of NGOs (human rights- development and charity organizations), National Council of Women (NCW) rapporteurs in the governorate, and young journalists and lawyers.	September 26th, 2022	Consultative meetings

5 Assiut The executive officials in the governorate, officials in national councils, university officials, local leaders, and human rights units representatives. September 27th, 2022 Consultative meetings

Representative of NGOs (human rights- development and charity organizations), and young journalists and lawyers. September 28th, 2023 Consultative meetings

Aswan The executive officials in the governorate, officials in national councils, university officials, local leaders, and human rights units representatives. September 29th, 2022 Consultative meetings

Representative of NGOs (human rights- development and charity organizations), and young journalists and lawyers. October 1st, 2022 Consultative meetings

Kafr el-Sheikh The executive officials in the governorate, officials in national councils, university officials, local leaders, and human rights units representatives. December 17th, 2022 Consultative meetings

Gharbeya The executive officials in the governorate, officials in national councils, university officials, local leaders, and human rights units representatives. September 18th, 2022 Consultative meetings

Within the framework of collaborative efforts to promote economic, social, and cultural rights, (NCHR) conducted field visits to the governorates of Kafr El Sheikh and the town of Burj Al Arab.

On May 18, 2022, a delegation from (NCHR) visited Kafr El Sheikh governorate. The delegation met with Major General Gamal Nour El Din, the governor of Kafr El Sheikh, as well as Parliament members, executive officials, representatives from civil society organisations, and journalists and media professionals. The purpose of the meeting was to coordinate efforts to promote economic, social, and cultural rights, and to develop strategies for family planning (population growth management.)

The meeting addressed cooperation with Kafr El Sheikh governorate on the following areas:

Right to health.

Right to education.

Right to employment.

Social protection.

Population control strategies.

- Mitigating school dropout issues which feeds child labour and child marriage.

- Addressing domestic violence.

- Combating female genital mutilation (the governorate has established a support house for violence victims to provide psychological and social assistance).

The meeting also emphasized the need to strengthen women's empowerment efforts, ensure continued care for specific segments of society, including the elderly , and facilitate the empowerment and inclusion of individuals with disabilities and the homeless.

In accordance with the established work plan of (NCHR) pertaining to the Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights Committees, these committees conducted a field mission to the region of Borg El Arab on October 19, 2022. The primary objective of this mission was to undertake an assessment of the ongoing implementation of the universal healthcare system. It also aimed to address specific concerns identified by the NCHR within the governorate, conduct on-site inspections of healthcare facilities and hospitals operating under the said system, and facilitate consultations through interviews with citizens and healthcare providers.

NCHR also seized the opportunity to explore the training programs offered to doctors and nursing staff to evaluate the investments made to enhance healthcare provider skills.

NCHR's coordination with line ministries

NCHR has succeeded to establish strong engagement, coordination and communication with a number of line ministries. Technical committees have, implemented a number of wide ranging activities with different line

ministries. A number of capacity building activities were implemented. The Committee on Promoting Human Rights Culture, held its inaugural coordination meeting in March 2022, engaging with human rights department representatives from various line ministries. The meeting involved the Ministries of Interior, Justice, Public Prosecution, Planning and Economic Development, Social Solidarity, Environment, Youth and Sports, Endowments, International Cooperation, Education and Training, Central Agency for Regulation and Management, and General Authority for Information. The purpose was to discuss frameworks for cooperation, prepare human rights promotion and awareness programs, and agree on implementation strategies.

Three meetings were also convened between NCHR and the Ministry of Social Solidarity in June 2022. The discussions revolved around areas of cooperation and coordination, including technical support for ministry staff in applying human rights principles. The outcomes featured the signing of a memorandum of understanding between NCHR and the Ministry of Social Solidarity. This MoU encompasses training and awareness initiatives for staff in closed and open care institutions, media, and the immediate organization of training courses for ministry general secretariat employees on fundamental human rights principles. Coordination between NCHR and the Ministry of Social Solidarity MOSS extended to a meeting of the Advisory Coordination Committee responsible for overseeing civil society organizations' status harmonization procedures.

Fourth: Youth Meetings:

NCHR President, Ambassador Moushira Khattab, conducted 13 meetings aimed at launching an engaging open dialogue with university students to boost their interest and understanding of human rights concepts. The objective was to establish a solid and engaging foundation for human rights awareness. These meetings included three consecutive sessions with Ain Shams University the second biggest national University , in the presence of the university chancellor , faculty members, and NCHR members. Furthermore, meetings took place with youth from Sohag University located in upper Egypt, 6 October University, New Giza University, Cairo University's Faculty of Arts, and the Egyptian Private

Education University. Khattab also convened three meetings with university students, hosted at NCHR covering a wide range of topics. Nearly 7000 students were actively engaged in such conversation around human rights. They have become very interested in championing human rights.

7000 students from different Egyptian universities joined many academic experts, professors, and researchers in a series of meetings. They agreed on the pivotal role of young people as human rights advocates. Youth recognized their power to spread and embody human rights values and culture. They also created a wide platform for youth-led dialogue and discussion. The meetings triggered the enthusiasm and motivation of the youth to participate in activities that interest them and empower them to make a positive change. Moreover, the meetings highlighted the need for a strong collaboration between the National Council for Human Rights and Egyptian universities at a larger scale.

A new partnership between the National Council for Human Rights and Cairo University was established on April 3, 2023. The NCHR's President and Prof. Dr. Mohamed Osman Elkhosht, the president of Cairo University, signed a cooperation protocol in the presence of several officials and students. Dr. Anas Gaafar, NCHR member and chairman of its legislative committee, who has been instrumental in achieving such a step, Mohamed Mamdouh, NCHR member and chairman of the Egyptian Youth Council, the head of the Cairo University Students Union and some of its members, the vice presidents of Cairo University, and the university's secretary-general. The participants had a dialogue with the students and agreed on the main points of the joint work plan and cooperation. They also discussed how young people can contribute to reviewing human rights curricula to make them more appealing and engaging for students and to promote human rights in Egypt.

Fifth: Capacity Building and Training

NCHR is dedicated to promoting the culture of human rights through various activities. These include training, capacity building, and technical support for both government and non-government professionals , as well as developing educational materials. NCHR organizes workshops and

training programs that teach the basic concepts, standards, and values of human rights. They also explain the role and importance of national human rights institutions and the mandate and mechanisms of the National Council for Human Rights.

NCHR's activities target strengthening the human rights units in various ministries and government agencies. These units received training and guidance from NCHR to handle human rights complaints and to play an active role in serving the society.

To ensure consistency and quality in its training programs, NCHR developed training manuals and papers on human rights with the assistance of OHCHR. These resources aimed to help NCHR's trainers and trainees learn about human rights and the role of the National Council for Human Rights, the UN human rights system and its main features and obligations, the international human rights instruments and , the national human rights institutions, and the human rights provisions in the 2014 Egyptian constitution.

Training programs carried out by NCHR:

Training program	Target groups	Date of implementation
Foundations of human rights and strengthening complaint-handling	Governorates' human rights units representatives, and NGOs representatives in 10 governorates	September 2021
Matrouh governorate employees training course	65 employees in Matrouh governorate	March 7th-8th, 2021
Training course for youth in the Matrouh governorate on the foundations of human rights	Youth from different age groups	March 9th- 10th, 2021
Training course for government employees in the El Wadi El Gedeed governorate	Government employees in El Wadi El Gedeed governorate	March 11th- 12th, 2021

March 11th- 12th, 2021

Series of training course in collaboration with the National Coordinating Committee for Combating and Preventing Illegal Migration and Trafficking in Persons, as well as boosting researchers capacities to address human trafficking complaints via the complaints hotline 31 NCHR researches (in NCHR branches nationwide) 2022

Sixth: Workshops, symposiums, and panel discussions

The National Council for Human Rights (NCHR) has engaged in dialogue with various stakeholders on the key human rights issues, involving executive, legislative, and specialized bodies, as well as civil society organizations, associations, parties, and unions.

The report covers a period in which the NCHR organized 9 events on various topics. These topics explored how the state and civil society can deal with an array of issues such as:

Fighting the COVID-19 pandemic, monitoring the progress of the National Human Rights Strategy by civil society, legislative outlook in the context of the National Human Rights Strategy, anti-corruption measures, the challenges of irregular migration and human trafficking , the rights of specific groups, such as people with disabilities, child marriage, and the population outbreak problem, innovation and academic freedoms, climate justice , the 15th Annual Meeting of Civil Society Organizations, and the roundtable on medical liability.

The table below shows the workshops, symposiums and events held by the NCHR:

Topic	Date of implementation	The NCHR committee/ unit in charge of implementation
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“The prospects of the National Human Rights Strategy and Alternative Penalties” workshop	October 6th, 2021	NCHR’s legislative affairs committee in collaboration with the Arab Organization for Human Rights (AOHR)
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“ Addressing the COVID-19 pandemic: State’s role and civil society efforts” workshop	December 10th, 2021	NCHR’s social and economic rights committee
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“Raising awareness on illegal migration and trafficking in persons risks” workshop June 6th-8th 2022 The National Council for Human Rights (NCHR), the Ministry of Youth and Sports and Kafr el-Sheikh governorate

“Civil society and the rights of persons with disabilities: Challenges and opportunities in the Year of the Civil Society 2022” workshop June 28th, 2022 NCHR’s unit on the rights of persons with disabilities

Panel discussion on “Freedom of Innovation and Academic Freedoms” August 1st- 2nd, 2022 NCHR’s committees on cultural rights and civil and political rights

“Climate Justice and Human Rights” symposium September 20th, 2022 NCHR’s committee on sustainable development and climate justice

“Child Marriage: Human Rights Violation and Legislative Gaps” symposium October 24th, 2022 NCHR’s legislative affairs committee, and the unit on legislative research and development

“Legal frameworks for mitigating and adapting to climate change” symposium October 26th, 2022 NCHR’s legislative affairs committee, in collaboration with the civil and political rights committee

“The role of statistics in addressing population growth” symposium November 16th, 2022 NCHR’s committees on social and economic rights

“The national human rights strategy: vision, challenges and implementation” workshop November 23rd, 2022 NCHR’s civil and political rights committee

“The role of political parties in monitoring the implementation of the national human rights strategy” workshop December 4th, 2022 The NCHR’s committee on the promotion of the culture of human rights, in collaboration with with committee of the civil and political rights

Furthermore, the NCHR’s Civil and Political Rights Committee conducted a trilogy of interactive sessions throughout the year 2022. The inaugural session entailed an open discussion with human rights activists and

representatives of various Egyptian human rights organizations embroiled in contentious matters within the Egyptian human rights milieu, notably the prominent lawsuit No. 173 known as “foreign finance case “. Subsequently, the second dialogue session transpired with representatives and chief editors of several newspapers and online platforms that raised grievances about censorship and blocking issues. The third and final session unfolded in consultation with members of political parties who either possess limited parliamentary representation or none at all.

The purpose of these dialogues was to learn about the views and opinions of these groups on human rights and democracy issues in Egypt, and to explore how to overcome the challenges and problems that these organizations, parties, and media platforms raised. NCHR has succeeded to position itself as a catalyst trusted to ensure freedom of expression and that can gather opponents around the table and engage into constructive dialogue.

Chapter Four

International Cooperation

Introduction

The National Council for Human Rights (NCHR) has consistently engaged in cooperative efforts, consultations, and coordination with international stakeholders. These include the relevant United Nations bodies, diplomatic missions, regional and international coalitions of national human rights institutions, where the NCHR maintains membership, and human rights organizations in several Arab and foreign nations.

The new NCHR cohort has garnered significant interest and optimism from these stakeholders. This is unequivocally manifested through the extensive number of interviews and dialogues sought by various parties with the NCHR President and members throughout 2022. These extensive interactions, totalling 168 meetings and presentations with the NCHR's President since the instatements of the new cohort, encompassed dialogues, the exchange of perspectives and insights, and deliberations regarding collaboration and coordination frameworks on diverse human rights concerns and subjects addressed by the Council.

Pillar I: Collaboration with partners

First: Collaboration with relevant UN bodies:

During the reporting period, NCHR further solidified its collaboration with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). Key cooperative activities, capacity building and consultations between the Council and OHCHR encompassed:

Hosting a delegation from OHCHR at the Council's headquarters in November 2021 during the delegation's visit to Egypt, including meetings with various organizations.

In June 2022, NCHR's President , and Vice President, of NCHR visited OHCHR's Geneva headquarters. They had a cinstuctive engagement

and extensive consultations with Ms. Michelle Bachelet, the then High Commissioner for Human Rights, and various OHCHR officials.

In July 2022, the NCHR received a high-level delegation consisting of OHCHR deputy high commissioner Ms Nada Nashef leading a delegation comprising officials and experts, featuring, Mohamed Al-Nassour, and Rim Al Mazzawy. This meeting was also attended by Elena Panova, the Resident coordinator of the United Nations in Egypt.

The collaborative framework between the Council and OHCHR encompassed OHCHR experts conducting an advanced training workshop for Council members and researchers in October 2022.

Furthermore, the Council conducted various collaborative activities and meetings with several international organizations and other United Nations partners, the most notable of which included:

Engaging with the technical team from the European Union delegations and non-EU European countries accredited to Cairo.

A meeting held between the President and Vice President of the NCHR with the ambassadors of the European Union in Geneva.

Collaboration with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), which comprised two meetings chaired by Khattab, President of the NCHR with ICRC officials at the Council's headquarters in February and March 2022. Moreover, a meeting was convened with the President of the ICRC at the ICRC team at their headquarters in Geneva. The NCHR and the ICRC jointly organized a seminar in June 2022, focusing on the ICRC's role in advancing the culture of international humanitarian law and promoting its adherence.

The framework for cooperation between the NCHR and UN bodies also included a number of meetings and discussions led by the NCHR President, Ambassador Moushira Khattab, with representatives of these bodies. The most prominent of these were:

A meeting with a delegation from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in January 2022

Participation in the virtual seminar organized by the Permanent Mission of Egypt to the United Nations in Geneva in March 2022

A meeting with a delegation from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in March 2022

A meeting with a delegation from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in March 2022

A meeting with Mr. Laurent de Boeck, representative of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), in Cairo in July 2022

In addition to an extensive meeting of the Council with the United Nations Resident Representative, representatives of UNICEF, and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Please refer to list of meetings conducted by the president of NCHR

Second: Collaboration with the European Union (EU) and other European partners

The report covers a period when the Council sought more consultation, coordination, and cooperation with European partners. This was due to challenges that affect human rights in Egypt and Europe, the Egyptian-European Partnership Agreement that calls for promoting democracy and human rights, and the need to address and correct some views on how European countries deal with human rights in Egypt. The report also highlights how the NCHR benefited from technical support and experience sharing with the European side to enhance its role as an independent national human rights institution that helps protect and promote human rights standards and support national efforts in line with the National Human Rights Strategy.

During the reporting period, the NCHR President was engaged in numerous meetings and events with European counterparts. These encounters often included the participation of the NCHR Vice President and various NCHR's members based on the meeting's focus and subjects. Notable among these interactions were:

- A meeting with a European Union delegation, attended by Christian Berger, the Ambassador of the European Union to Cairo, Marina Faria, Head of the Policy, Press and Information Department of the European Union, Graziella Rizza, Human Rights Advisor, and Ilaria Betti, Human Rights Attaché of the European Union, held in January 2022.

- Cooperation between NCHR and the European Union in organizing a seminar at the NCHR's headquarters in April 2022. The event was attended by EU HR commissioner, Eamon Gilmore, the European Union's Human Rights Representative during his visit to Egypt, Christian Berger, Ambassador of the European Union, as well as members of CSOs, and a group of university students, members, and NCHR researchers.

In December 2022, NCHR and the European Union signed a co-funded cooperation project to support the National Council for Human Rights, which was the result of consultation and coordination between the Council and the European Union. The project's goal is to help build the capacity of NCHR and enhance its role to promote, protect and monitor the provision of Human Rights in Egypt along with the implementation of Egypt's First Strategy for Human Rights and support the implementation process through an action plan that covers all the Council's committees and mechanisms.

Simultaneously, the NCHR responded to multiple invitations extended by European ambassadors and representatives of diplomatic missions throughout the reporting period. To exchange views around human rights. NCHR President has engaged in several meetings with distinguished European officials, including:

A meeting with the Austrian Foreign Minister in June 2022.

A meeting with the Canadian Minister of Parliamentary Affairs during his visit to Egypt.

An engagement with the Director of the Middle East and North Africa Department at the Dutch Foreign Ministry in September 2022.

Meetings with the ambassadors of France, Italy, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Norway, Austria, Spain, Sweden, Denmark, and Cyprus.

A session with the former Italian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs for Cultural Affairs, Mr. Paolo Sabbatini.

An interaction with Antonio Lopez-Isturiz, a member of the European Parliament and chairman of the Committee on Neighboring Countries.

The NCHR also hosted two meetings with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation. The first was with the foundation's regional representative in Egypt, Mr. Richard Probst, in September 2022. The second involved Mr. Martin Schulz, the foundation's president, whom the NCHR President met at his invitation during his visit to Egypt, as a follow up to their initial meeting at his office in Germany in March 2022.

Moreover, Khattab, President of NCHR received Christine Durival, a member of the French Senate and president of the Egyptian-French Friendship Association, at the NCHR headquarters. This interaction followed a prior meeting at the French Senate headquarters in Paris earlier on.

In addition to meeting with European diplomatic missions in Egypt, the NCHR President participated in a seminar on freedom of the press held at the Dutch embassy in Cairo in September 2022. The NCHR also cooperated with the Dutch embassy in organizing an extensive workshop in November 2022, with the participation of party and political leaders to discuss the National Human Rights Strategy.

A new cooperation project was launched in 2022 by the National Council for Human Rights and the Swiss embassy in Cairo. The project aims to “Strengthen political participation and democratic mechanisms in Egypt.” To achieve this goal, the project supports the Council in organizing various activities, such as workshops, forums, and dialogues with different stakeholders, including civil society organizations, political parties, political forces, and others. These activities are meant to monitor and enhance the implementation of the National Human Rights Strategy.

Third: Consultation with American and Asian partners

Upon assumption by the new cohort of the National Council for Human Rights in December 2021, the Council garnered a series of requests for meetings with delegates from diplomatic missions and human rights authorities in the United States, Canada, and Japan. Additionally, requests came from representatives and authorities of select parliamentary entities, non-governmental organizations, and Egyptian collaborative forums with these nations.

In January and February 2022, the NCHR headquarters hosted several meetings with high-level US officials. The first one was on January 23, when the NCHR President welcomed the US Ambassador to Cairo. The second one was on February 2, when the NCHR met with Christophe Le Moon, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy and Human Rights, and his delegation as a follow up to their meeting in Washington DC in October 2021. The third one was later that month, when the NCHR President was received by assistant State secretary of State of the United States Barbara Leaf, the Assistant Secretary at the American Embassy headquarters.

In the framework of communication with American officials President of NCHR , received a delegation of officials from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in January 2022, in addition to holding two extensive meetings between members of the National Council for Human Rights and a group of Congressional staffers in 2022.

Moreover, the NCHR President and members met with a US delegation of experts and officials from the CNA Center, a research institute based in Washington, D.C. They discussed how to reduce the risks faced by civilians in conflict zones. The President also had meetings with the Canadian and Japanese ambassadors to Cairo at the NCHR's headquarters. The NCHR President also accepted invitations to attend an event with a Canadian minister and to give a lecture at the Egyptian-Canadian Business Council in May 2022. A meeting with the Japanese ambassador took place in July 2022 to discuss possible areas of cooperation.

Fourth: Collaboration with regional networks and national human rights institutions

As part of NCHR's ongoing engagement with regional and international networks of national human rights institutions, the reporting period featured notable events. The NCHR played a pivotal role in hosting the General Assembly meeting of the Network of the African National Human Rights Institutions (NANHRI) in November 2021. NCHR actively participated in the meeting of the Francophonie Organization in the same month. Furthermore, the President of NCHR took part in the fourth edition of the World Youth Forum held in January 2022, She addressed a simulation session of the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva attended by the president of Egypt. The debate focused on new threats to international peace and security, such as pandemics, climate change and population explosion.

During the reporting period, the NCHR President received in January 2022 Dr. Adel bin Abdul Rahman Al-Assoumi, the Speaker of the Arab Parliament and the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Arab Observatory for Human Rights,. She also participated in a seminar organized by the African Union for Human Rights in partnership with the International Organization of La Francophonie and the French Development Agency (AFD) on the role of national human rights institutions in the field of fighting corruption in March 2022. The NCHR also participated in a seminar held by the African Network on pre-trial detention in April 2022. Furthermore, NCHR also implemented a side event at The 2022 United Nations Climate Change Conference or Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC, (COP27) in Sharm El-Sheikh (November 2022) entitled Climate Change and Children's Rights with a special focus on children in Africa. The side event was in cooperation with UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the child. Vice chairs of the two treaty bodies were panellists at the side event that was well attended. Participants engaged in a conversation on the rights of children globally.

Under the framework of the NCHR's collaboration with the Arab Network for National Human Rights Institutions (ANNHRI), NCHR played an active

role in furthering the objectives of the network. Notably, the NCHR hosted the International Conference on Solidarity and the Sustainable Development Agenda in March 2022. This significant event was organized by the National Council for Human Rights in partnership with the League of Arab States, the Arab Network of National Human Rights Institutions, the National Human Rights Committee in Qatar, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the United Nations Development Programme.

Furthermore, NCHR actively participated in the activities of the Network's General Assembly, which took place in Nouakchott, Mauritania. In addition to these contributions, the Council hosted the 161st training course organized by NANHRI in December 2022. This training course was named in honor of Mr. Mohamed Fayek, the former chairman of the NCHR, acknowledging his dedication and commitment to the promotion of human rights.

During the reporting period, the Council engaged in extensive interactions with representatives of national institutions and human rights organizations, both from the Arab and other countries. Ambassador Moushira Khattab, NCHR President, convened two separate meetings during the COP-27 held in November 2022. These meetings involved delegates from the Norwegian Human Rights Council, the Moroccan National Human Rights Committee, and the Secretary-General of Amnesty International. Moreover, she participated in interviews with journalists from prominent news outlets, including The New York Times, Reuters, and the British Broadcasting Corporation, during the Climate Change Conference in Sharm El-Sheikh. Prior to these events, the Council had also received several delegations from national institutions within the Arab region.

In March 2022, the President of the NCHR received Engineer Ali Al-Darazi, President of the National Institution for Human Rights in the Kingdom of Bahrain. A memorandum of understanding between the National Council for Human Rights in Egypt and the Bahraini National Institution was signed in June 2022. Furthermore, in July 2022, the NCHR hosted a delegation from the National Human Rights Authority in the

United Arab Emirates, led by Mr. Maqsoud Cruz and featuring several key figures from the Authority.

In the context of its advocacy for the legitimate rights of Palestinians and its monitoring of human rights violations faced by the Palestinian, the National Council for Human Rights received three visits from Palestinian delegations and high-ranking officials during the period outlined in this report. The first visit took place in November 2021, led by the Minister of Palestinian Affairs in the Palestinian Authority. The second visit was the 162nd meeting, presided over by the Minister responsible for the Separation Wall in the Authority. The third meeting, held in September 2022, involved the Chairman of the Palestinian National Commission for Human Rights in the Palestine Liberation Organization, along with several members of the Commission's leadership and staff.

Pillar II: Main topics discussed with the representatives of UN bodies and stakeholders

The discussions predominantly focused on matters related to civil and political rights, encompassing topics such as pre-trial detention duration, enhancements to the judicial system, and safeguards for the rights of individuals with diverse religious or ideological beliefs. Additionally, certain meetings delved into the conditions experienced by prominent activists who claim to be subjected to mistreatment and torture. Furthermore, considerations included the application of the death penalty and the efforts of National Council for Human Rights' role in conducting prison visits.

Several heads of diplomatic missions voiced apprehension regarding the ongoing refusal to grant permission for their mission representatives to attend the hearings of certain dual-national defendants, former human rights advocates, or defendants involved in cases of significant interest to both the Egyptian and global communities. This concern extended to defendants holding European citizenship.

The NCHR President and other members involved in these discussions, primarily focused on highlighting the NCHR's perspective and the measures undertaken in this regard. They noted that the NCHR is diligently executing its mandated responsibilities concurrently with the

launch of the National Human Rights Strategy sanctioned by the State. The NCHR firmly asserts that this strategy raises expectations and the anticipated outcomes concerning the advancement and realization of human rights commitments, signifying the State's unwavering commitment to fostering the principles of accountability. NCHR has articulated its stance on critical human rights matters to the international and foreign entities, as outlined below:

NCHR values the decision not to extend the state of emergency and counterterrorism measures. NCHR is of the opinion that the swift termination of the state of emergency, shortly after the inauguration of the National Strategy for human rights, signals a firm commitment to advancing human rights. The conclusion of the state of emergency has resulted in the discontinuation of the State Security Emergency Courts, which constituted specialized segments within the misdemeanour courts responsible for adjudicating offenses arising from breaches of military orders pertaining to curfew and any other violations specified in the state of emergency law or general legislation. Moreover, the cessation of the state of emergency has also led to the abandonment of its application to citizens, a provision that previously conferred broad authority upon law enforcement agencies to institute extraordinary measures, including restrictions on assembly and movement, referral of offenders to State Security Courts, surveillance of various forms of communication, and monitoring of print materials, publications, and newspapers.

NCHR is of the view that the termination of the state of emergency is emblematic of the prevailing state of security and safety throughout the nation. It also signifies that the security landscape within the country no longer necessitates the invocation of a state of emergency. Nevertheless, the government has instituted precautionary measures and protocols to uphold national security and public order, prompting the issuance of several legislations in this context. NCHR has identified certain provisions within these legislations that warrant scrutiny. It has affirmed its engagement with national executive and legislative bodies to convey its reservations regarding specific provisions within extant anti-terrorism statutes and legislations.

Pre-trial detention and the incarceration of certain activists and public figures as a result of judicial verdicts rendered against them

NCHR's interventions during the aforementioned meetings focused on articulating its perspective on the necessity of building upon the presidential pardon initiative. Furthermore, NCHR emphasized its role in the identification of individuals suitable for this initiative, encompassing those who have been convicted and those subjected to preventative detention through its complaints mechanism. NCHR's activity and involvement in advocating for the revision of criminal procedure and penalty legislation to curtail the scope of pre-trial detention and promote the utilization of alternative sanctions were also highlighted.

The meetings also covered complaints lodged by a number of inmates, as per the requests of foreign diplomatic missions. For instance, the case of Alaa Abdel Fattah was deliberated. NCHR delineated the measures it undertook to receive and address his grievance, including liaising with the competent authorities. These actions culminated in his relocation from Tora Prison to the new better equipped Wadi El-Natrun Rehabilitation Centre, primarily attributable to the latter's well-equipped medical facilities and to facilitate improved visitation conditions for his family. The Council also explained its multiple efforts to respond to his complaints scrutinize his medical records during a visit to the centre lead by the president of NCHR along with a medical professional member of NCHR during the same visit . she examined test results conducted in his new detention facility at Wadi El-Natrun. Furthermore, the Council reaffirmed that its endeavors complement the initiatives of the Public Prosecution in this context, which provided the Council and the general public with information pertaining to the submitted complaints and maintained a transparent rapport with the detainee's family.

During these meetings, the issue of complaints filed by several incarcerated individuals, as requested by foreign diplomatic missions, was addressed. Furthermore, the Council reiterated that its initiatives complement those undertaken by the Public Prosecution in this context, which has provided the NCHR and the general public with information

regarding the submitted complaints and has maintained transparent communication with the detainee's family.

The penal system, prison visits, and combating torture

NCHR has undertaken substantial efforts to combat instances of torture. The Council's primary focus has centered on the implementation of educational programs aimed at instructing law enforcement and investigative agencies in the prevention and investigation of torture. Concurrently, NCHR advocates for Egypt's ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture. Furthermore, the Council has exhibited keen interest in closely monitoring and supporting the Ministry of Interior's comprehensive plan to replace old run down prisons with modern rehabilitation centres that conform to human rights standards for incarcerated individuals. NCHR has called for the broadening of prison visitation access for its members and various civil society organizations. Additionally, it has advocated for the pursuit of comprehensive legislative amendments, capitalizing on the opportunity presented by the introduction of amendments to the Criminal Procedure Code and the Penal Code in Parliament. The objective behind these amendments is to align these legal frameworks with Egypt's international human rights obligations, through its ratification of various human rights conventions. This includes promoting alternatives to custodial sentences and restricting the application of deprivation of liberty penalties.

NCHR affirmed, during its consultations with international and national parties, the positive developments that have taken place in the Prisons Act and its bylaws, both in terms of consolidating a new philosophy for the penal system and in terms of regulating the rights of prisoners, including freedom of opinion and expression, religious freedoms, the rights of minorities, and combating discriminatory practices.

Freedom of expression, religious freedoms, rights of minorities, and combating discriminatory practices

NCHR conveyed its perspective on the significance of endorsing the objectives set forth in the national human rights strategy concerning this matter. This included the organization and facilitation of numerous

meetings and workshops aimed at engaging with journalists, independent website administrators, civil society entities, and political factions. The primary objective was to solicit their insights on enhancing an environment conducive to sustained freedom of thought and expression.

NCHR prioritizes the promotion of the rights of religious minorities, ensuring their legal recognition, and preventing any form of discrimination against them, whether by government entities or other segments of society. NCHR highlighted notable positive developments to serve as a foundation for further progress, including:

Considerable progress is achieved due to efforts to promote the rights of Egyptian Christians, and facilitate construction and restoration of their places of worship.

- The commendable political discourse that underscores the freedom of belief and linking human rights to citizenship.

- Unprecedented involvement and sharing Egyptian Christians in their celebrations and festivities, in contrast to past political administrations. The president of Egypt attends every Christmas prayers in the Cathedral

The NCHR is steadfast in its dedication to upholding the rights of all Egyptians, irrespective of their religious beliefs or affiliations. The Council strives to ensure that every Egyptian enjoys equal rights, opportunities, and protection from discrimination.

NCHR's role in addressing complaints.

The aforementioned discussions addressed the enhancements instituted by the NCHR in its complaint mechanism, designed to foster efficient and effective handling of an increased volume of human rights-related complaints and challenges. These modifications encompass the digitalization of the system, as well as the strengthening communication with the competent executive and judicial authorities. Furthermore, the activation of mobile complaint units is strongly operational , enabling vulnerable individuals' easy access to complaint mechanisms to lodge human rights complaints and report violations to access NCHR's complaint system.

The NCHR, in its meetings with partners, presented the positive outcomes stemming from the complaint mechanism's performance since the council's new cohort took office, in light of these developments. Foremost among these developments is the doubling of the complaint volume received by the NCHR, a direct result of the removal of obstacles and the augmentation of the Council's credibility. The NCHR has also achieved a twofold increase in response rates from the relevant authorities. Furthermore, it has succeeded in addressing a considerable number of complaints and structural human rights challenges, whether related to civil and political rights or economic and social rights. Moreover, Ambassador Moushira Khattab, the NCHR President, is constantly receiving substantial number of complaints on her personal mobile phone, with immediate referrals to the competent authorities, including those directed to the complaint system.

Conversations with foreign partners and international entities in this context primarily centred on specific practices that have attracted a significant number of complaints and have gained substantial media coverage and human rights scrutiny, both at the national and international levels. These concerns have been the focal point of numerous meetings involving Egyptian activists , international as well as foreign officials. NCHR highlighted its clear and distinct position and the actions it has undertaken in response to these complaints. It was emphatically stressed that the forthcoming annual report will comprehensively outline all measures taken concerning allegations of enforced disappearances, charges of torture, and incidents of fatalities occurring within particular detention facilities. These matters have been brought to the attention of NCHR either through formal complaints or have been addressed through the "monitoring mechanism,".

Violence against women

The President of the National Council for Human Rights (NCHR) played a pivotal role during these meetings in presenting the advancements achieved in the sphere of women's rights. Noteworthy progress was made in addressing issues related to sexual harassment, including the introduction of harsher FGM penalties, reclassifying it as a criminal

offense rather than a misdemeanour. This transformation was realized through the amendment of the Penal Code under Law No. 141 of 2021.

Furthermore, Khattab underscored the NCHR's unwavering commitment to fostering collaboration with other national institutions, specifically highlighting the National Council for Women and the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood. It is worth mentioning that both councils have now restored their constitutional status fully. Both are independent and report directly to the president of Egypt. Such developments fortify the promotion, protection and provision of human rights. It promotes a secure and supportive environment for women and children, ensuring their protection against all forms of violence and discrimination, whether enshrined in legislation or manifested in practice. To formalize this commitment to cooperation, a protocol of collaboration was signed between the NCHR and the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM), outlining the framework for their joint initiatives in this endeavours.

Chapter Five

NCHR Strategic Vision and General Approach

2022-2025

Introduction:

Pursuant to the statute of NCHR (Law No. 197 of 2021 amending some provisions of Law No. 153 of 2017), the House of Representatives elects the President, Vice President, and members of the Council for a term of four years renewed only once, the new cohort is elected for a term(2021-2025) by voting in a plenary session from among the nominees submitted by academic institutions, civil society organizations, unions, specialized councils, and committees of the House of Representatives and the Senate. The President of the Republic ratified the election results and issued his decree No. 616 of 2021 completing the appointment process for the new cohort of NCHR.

The recent cohort started its mandate coinciding with a number of significant developments in the field of human rights in Egypt. These developments include the decision not to extend the state of emergency, the launch of Egypt's first ever National Strategy for Human Rights, the reestablishment of the Presidential Pardon Committee, the presidential invitation for a national dialogue that excludes none and without discrimination, on political, economic, and human rights issues, and the adoption of a variety of national programs and projects related to economic, social, and cultural rights.

NCHR's current cohort has been instrumental in shaping its vision to promote, protect and monitor the provision of human rights obligations. Pursuant to its constitutional and legal mandate, the Council promotes compliance with international and regional instruments and their respective provisions, to which Egypt is a party. NCHR also advocates for Egypt's accession to additional international instruments and actively engages with emerging human rights issues. NCHR's efforts are guided by an evaluation of its strengths and opportunities, as well as the identification of weaknesses and challenges that require attention.

Accordingly, the NCHR's follows a comprehensive set of strategic directions in its actions during the current legal term.

NCHR's general vision:

The NCHR's perspective concerning its role in the domain of human rights within Egypt is constructed upon two interconnected pillars. The first pillar being the institutional status. The second pillar revolves around full implementation of its statute with a view to improving the status of human rights, besides making substantive contributions toward the realization of its goals at the national level, as delineated below:

(NCHR) is an independent national institution that operates in full accordance with the Paris Principles. It possesses the capability to actively foster an environment supportive of the full implementation of human rights.

Egypt, in accordance with its civilizational and cultural heritage, as well as the provisions of its constitution, and international human rights instruments ratified, protects, promotes and fully provide human rights to every citizen without any discrimination on any ground. Egypt also contributes to the advancement of human values and the promotion of global peace and security. Egyptian citizens are aware of their rights and have the ability to access them. They are also aware of and committed to their duties to respect human rights of others.. Egyptian citizens also contribute effectively and freely to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals and the equal enjoyment of its benefits.

NCHR's mission:

The National Council for Human Rights (NCHR) seeks to build on the confidence and optimism generated by the new composition by:

Fine-tuning its alignment with the concepts of the global movement for human rights by updating its tools and using its constitutional and legal powers.

Benefiting from the diversity of experience of its members.

Building on its accumulated wealth of knowledge, institutional experience, and outstanding international ranking, in addition to its multiple partnerships at the international, regional, and national levels.

NCHR aims to achieve these objectives through:

Assisting national executive and legislative bodies in implementing the Egyptian state's obligations related to human rights.

Nurturing a culture supportive of human rights across all segments of the Egyptian society.

Strengthen its institutional capacity to guarantee the protection, promotion and monitor the provision of human rights.

Strengthen cooperation with international and regional partners and mechanisms working towards promotion, protection and, provision of human rights.

Empower victims of human rights violations and enable them to access mechanisms for redress and compensation.

The SWOT analysis of the National Council for Human Rights (NCHR) and the human rights situation in Egypt is as follows:

First: Opportunities and points of strength:

On the national level On the institution-level

The Constitution of the Arab Republic of Egypt provides for extensive safeguards for the protection, promotion and provision of human right, both at the level of civil and political rights, as well as economic, social and cultural rights. It commits the state to enabling citizens to access their rights. It also establishes a robust separation of powers, consolidates democratic practice, guarantees the independence and effectiveness of national and independent institutions, and requires compliance with the provisions of international human rights instruments to which Egypt is a party to.

The adoption of a national strategy to promote and protect human rights is a pioneering initiative that promises a wide spectrum of outputs and

outcomes directly related to addressing human rights challenges and concerns.

The launch of a comprehensive and institutional national dialogue to deliberate on the future of the political, economic, and social conditions and the environment of human rights and freedoms.

The enactment of a several public policies and legislation that contribute to the advancement of the rights of vulnerable and marginalized populations, particularly women and persons with disabilities.

The Egyptian government is implementing a wide range of national projects to address structural imbalances and challenges in economic, social, and cultural rights to ensure the provision of essential infrastructure to enable the access to and enjoyment of quality services closely related to economic, social, and cultural rights.

These projects include, inter alia:

Projects catering for the right to decent housing. It includes demolition of slums and replacing it with improved living conditions for the poor and most marginalized. This may involve, for example, the construction of new affordable housing units, the renovation of existing housing units, and the provision of basic services such as water, sanitation, and electricity to slum communities.

Health care programs to improve access to the right to enjoy good health and to access the best available health services and quality health care for all Egyptians. This involved, for example, the construction of new hospitals and clinics, the expansion of existing health care facilities, and the provision of free or subsidized health care services to the poor and most vulnerable.

The national program to develop and improve the infrastructure of rural areas and improve economic opportunities. This involved, for example, the construction of new roads and bridges, the improvement of irrigation and drainage systems, and the development of agricultural and non-agricultural industries.

Transportation and road networks to improve connectivity and mobility. This involved, the construction of new highways and railways, the expansion of existing transportation networks, and the improvement of public transportation services.

Expanding the agricultural area and reclaiming new lands to increase food security. This involved for example, the development of new irrigation systems, the reclamation of desert land, and the provision of subsidies to farmers.

Maximizing the utilization of oil and gas resources and wealth to achieve energy independence. This involved, the exploration and development of new oil and gas reserves, the construction of new power plants, and the promotion of energy efficiency measures.

The implementation of these projects is essential to achieving sustainable development and improving the lives of all Egyptians targeting the most vulnerable.

Egypt's accession to nine international human rights instruments

Adopting a set of national strategies that contribute to supporting public rights and sustainable development efforts (Egypt's Vision for Sustainable Development Goals 2030 - Climate Change Strategy, Intellectual Property Protection Strategy - Anti-Corruption Strategy - State Ownership Document)

There has been a significant increase in the number of civil society organizations and entities operating in Egypt in recent years. These organizations work in a variety of fields, including economic and social development, such as labour policies, and civil and political human rights. The Egyptian government has also enacted legislation regulating the formation of civil society organizations and trade unions.

fighting terrorism and restoring a climate of security and stability, along with the suspension of the state of emergency for the first time in six decades.

Expansion of the base of those covered by the social protection network, whether through cash support programs (Takaful and Karama) or through

in-kind support, which is represented in obtaining subsidized food commodities.

Ministry of Interior has developed a plan to replace old prisons with new ones that meet international human rights standards for the infrastructure necessary to enhance the rights of prisoners.

Pursuant to the provisions of the Egyptian Constitution the Government has duly constituted the House of Representatives and the Senate, the two chambers of the Parliament of the Arab Republic of Egypt. The Egyptian Council of Human Rights (the Council) has the technical and organizational capabilities to address complaints and issues related to detention centers and prisons.

NCHR's membership in a number of important regional networks, such as the Arab Network for National Human Rights Institutions (ANNHRI) and the Network for African National Human Rights Institutions (NANHRI).

NCHR's international relations, its mastery of the contemporary language of human rights, and the current opportunities for cooperation between the Council and a large number of donors, international development partners, and United Nations and regional bodies concerned with supporting independent national human rights institutions.

Second: Challenges and Points of Weakness

On the national level On the institution-level

Continued security regional security threats

Social and economic, impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Egypt.

Cross-border climate change and its negative impacts on economic and social rights, as well as water poverty and the potential negative implications of the Ethiopian Renaissance Dam.

Negative impacts of international conflicts, especially the Russian-Ukrainian war, on the global economy.

Uneven population growth that entails violation of the rights of the child in poorer households Family send their children to the labour market instead

of sending them to school despite the fact that primary education is free and compulsory. This feeds a population explosion localised at the poorest quintile that uses children as breadwinners.

Increased cost of servicing external debt and expansion of borrowing

Cultural heritage of customs and traditions and religious discourse that is hostile to human rights standards

Challenges related to freedom of expression, lack of diversity in media platforms, and the need to develop legislation governing the right to peaceful assembly.

Failure to hold local council elections To align with the National Council for Human Rights' strategic objectives and cope with the growing demands, the Council requires enhanced financial resources that are not sufficiently covered by the state's general budget.

It is imperative to empower the National Council for Human Rights and grant it the authority to intervene as an amicus curiae in civil litigation on behalf of the aggrieved party.

The need to support the National Council for Human Rights in the areas of digitization.

Third: NCHR's strategic trends (2022-2025):

NCHR has adopted a set of strategic directions to guide its work in the coming period. These trends are based on the NCHR's vision, mission, and the results of a SWOT analysis of its local and global contexts.

The four strategic trends are as follows:

To develop the NCHR's institutional, capabilities communication, and coordination and monitoring and to enhance the exercise of its constitutional powers. This includes investing in human resources development, strengthening partnerships and outreach with other stakeholders.

To strengthen the NCHR's role in promoting a culture supportive of human rights. This includes conducting awareness-raising campaigns,

developing educational materials, and working with local, regional and international civil society organizations.

To monitor the implementation of Egypt's first ever National Human Rights Strategy and to support it. This includes conducting assessments of the implementation of the strategy, providing recommendations for improvement, and working with government agencies to implement the strategy.

To support the National Dialogue Mechanism and to contribute to maximizing its outputs related to improving the human rights situation. This includes participating in the dialogue, providing recommendations, and working with other stakeholders to ensure that the dialogue is inclusive and results in meaningful reforms.

The following is a general description of each of these trends, the related objectives, and the key interventions/activities that will be focused on during the period 2022-2025:

Strategic trend I: Develop NCHR's institutional, communication, and coordination capabilities and enhancing the exercise of constitutional powers, with special emphasis on capacity building

Objective Priority activities

Developing the institutional structure and tools of the National Council for Human Rights

Increase funding for the NCHR's activities through expanding cooperation with donors and development partners, and good governance of financial and operational practices.

Restructure NCHR to make it more effective, flexible, and adaptable, and able to meet the challenges of the human rights file at the international, regional, and national levels.

Develop the Council's complaints mechanism, take advantage of digital transformation technologies, extend the scope of assistance to complainants and victims of violations to access mechanisms for redress,

compensation, and reparation, and revive the activity of mobile complaint units.

Strengthen NCHR with the required expertise and professional cadres in various fields, and expand the provision of training and continuous development opportunities.

Adopt a communication strategy for NCHR and develop digital platforms and social media channels.

Propose legislative amendments that contribute to enhancing the Council's ability to monitor allegations of human rights violations, verify them, and assist victims. To receive remedies

Cooperate with the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics, research institutions, and national academies in developing centralised data system, disaggregated in manner conducive to targeting most marginalised and generating information related to monitoring the situation of human rights.

Boost cooperation with national, regional and international stakeholders
Establish a mechanism for coordination and active communication with the two chambers of parliament and the relevant committees on human rights and legislation, in accordance with the Belgrade Principles 2012 on cooperation between national institutions and parliaments.

Ensure the Council's permanent participation in meetings and events of the relevant international and regional mechanisms, and activate efforts to interact with the treaty bodies through shadow reports, the Universal Periodic Review mechanism, and the Special Procedures mechanism.

Strengthen consultation and activate dialogue with diplomatic missions accredited to Egypt as well as UN agencies, parliamentary councils, and think tanks.

Expand the platforms for dialogue between the National Human Rights Council, on the one hand, and political parties, civil society organizations, trade unions, and media platforms, on the other.

Continuous consultation with the Supreme Standing Committee for Human Rights at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the ministries concerned with human rights issues.

Strengthen and institutionalize cooperation with the corresponding national councils.

Update the Council's issue agenda and integrate new human rights topics

Incorporate issues of climate justice, sustainable development, and water rights into the Council's work priorities in the coming period.

Prioritise the issues related to business and human right

Clarify and enhance the Council's interest in the implementation and promotion of the United Nations Framework for Business and Human Rights.

Coordinate and advocate at the level of international and regional mechanisms to address the issue of the impact of international debt on human rights.

Enhance respect for the rights of persons deprived of their liberty,

Endeavour to harmonise the penal system with international human rights standards, and enhance the guarantees of a fair trial.

Follow-up and support the Ministry of Interior's plan to replace old prisons and transition to the establishment of rehabilitation centers that comply with internationally recognized standards.

Expand visits to detention and rehabilitation centres and develop the Council's tools used to monitor and evaluate the conditions of these centres.

Contribute to the development of legislation governing alternative criminal procedures and penalties, and to support the transition from punitive penalties to alternative penalties in some crimes, and to narrow the scope of pre-trial detention and improve its conditions.

Advocate for the restricting the scope of the use of the death penalty and to contribute to the amendment of the relevant legislative provisions.

Strategic trend II: Strengthening NCHR's role in the nurturing and promoting a culture supportive human rights

Objective Priority activities

Enhance human rights component in cultural reform and counter-extremism efforts.

Work with relevant partners to develop a comprehensive initiative for cultural reform and the development of civic values.

Continue and support the Council's initiative to monitor drama works and evaluate them from a human rights perspective.

Complete and support the initiative to review educational curriculum to consolidate and promote human rights values and to purify the curriculum from values that conflict with them.

Support enhancing academic freedoms, and develop an integrated program, and advocate for strengthening legislative and procedural guarantees for scientific research.

Expand NCHR's communication outreach with youth groups.

Broadening the scope of engaging with university youth and various youth groups through interactive dialogue platforms around human rights topics and issues. expand summer camps and training programs for university students utilising units and local branches of NCHR

Build the capacities of government professionals and human cadres concerning human rights core principles. Enhance the outreach of NCHR through visits to governorates, incorporating workshops aimed at enhancing the awareness and capacity building of personnel and senior officials on human rights standards and principles.

Extend collaboration with human rights divisions within line ministries and governorates to facilitate the implementation of comprehensive and specialized human rights training initiatives.

Initiate and enforce cooperation agreements with the Ministries of Justice and Interior for the training of judicial personnel and law enforcement officers in the domain of human rights practices.

Strategic Trend III: Monitoring and supporting the implementation of the National Human Rights Strategy

Egypt's first ever National Human Rights Strategy, launched in September 2021, is a positive step. Drafted by the Supreme Standing Committee for Human Rights, it signals the commitment of the primary duty bearer, the executive authority to enhance the promotion, protection and provision of human rights nationally. The National Council for Human Rights supports the strategy. NCHR avails itself towards capacity building and awareness raising and most importantly monitors its implementation. NCHR also offers coordination, assistance, and technical support to the institutional mechanisms towards the implementation of the strategy.

The foundation of the National Strategy rests upon a framework and principles drawn from both the domestic context, encompassing the 2014 Constitution and 'vision for SDG's Egypt- 2030, as well as the international human rights conventions to which Egypt is a party. The strategy is further guided by a series of challenges, which encompass nurturing a stronger human rights culture, fostering stronger provision of civil and political rights, civic engagement, advancing economic and social progress.

Drafters of the strategy outline that it was developed through a wide-ranging consultation process with various stakeholders from civil society, national councils, and government agencies, taking into account the relevant national plans, documents, and visions. The strategy also specifies methods of its implementation through legislative, institutional, and educational and capacity-building measures,. the strategy stipulates that its drafter the Supreme Standing Committee for Human Rights is its monitoring mechanism,

From a substantive perspective, the strategy's formulation is grounded in nine fundamental principles outlined within the core pillars, which encompass:

Anchoring human rights in the fundamental tenets of human dignity, characterized by their universality, interrelatedness, interdependence, and indivisibility, and their interplay with democratic principles.

Leveraging the framework for reviewing the gravest crimes subject to the death penalty.

Ensuring rights within a framework founded on equality, equity, and non-discrimination.

Affirming both the rule of law and judicial independence as the bedrocks of governance, fostering good governance, combating corruption, and upholding the values of integrity and transparency.

Recognizing the right to development.

Emphasizing the shared responsibility of all members of society in respecting the human rights of others.

Nevertheless, acknowledging the paramount importance of systematic review of the Strategy. NCHR urges the standing Committee for Human Rights at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other relevant entities to consider addressing a number of challenges encompassed within the strategy's framework or specific components. These challenges are primarily elucidated as follows:

The strategy should establish clear mechanisms for measuring progress in the implementation of its objectives and results. This will help stakeholders, as well as the strategy's own authors, to track the strategy's progress, identify gaps or weaknesses, and take steps to address them.

The strategy's reference to the inclusion of a number of human rights and independent figures and national institutions in the consultation phase during the development of the strategy requires further clarification of their role in the follow-up phase, which the strategy indicates will be limited to the standing Committee with an executive character.

The strategy should shed more light on the comments and concluding observations of the UN treaty bodies concerning the human rights situation in Egypt, as well as reports and statements of the relevant

rapporteurs and mandate holders, as well as UPR recommendations emerging out of the Universal Periodic Review cycles prior to preparation of the strategy.

The reference to the implementation paths of the strategy (legislative, institutional, and educational) requires further clarification of the strengths and weaknesses of the legislative, institutional, and the cultural framework.

The results included in the strategy under its four pillars requires indicators to measure its progress and ensure the achievement of its objectives. This can be done by providing a logical framework for the results, targets, and expected outcomes, which will help to achieve tangible progress in the legislative, institutional, and societal frameworks for promoting and protecting human rights.

The strategy should address the main challenges and concerns that have been the subject of criticism and comment from national and international institutions, especially those related to the abuse of discriminatory practices, freedom of expression, the right to bodily integrity, the rights of prisoners, penal institutions, detention centres, and rehabilitation centres, and the right to peaceful assembly.

The strategy should focus on the challenges related to the performance of the executive authority, law enforcement agencies, policies, and weaknesses in the legislative and institutional framework. These are pillars not to be underestimated as a key requirement for protection, promotion and provision of human rights.

The strategy should be linked to the legislative agenda of the parliament in order to ensure , systematic harmonisation of domestic laws with Egypt's international human rights commitment as guaranteed by the Egyptian constitution. Such an exercise must a component of an action plan for harmonisation of legislation. It should cater for Egypt's commitment under UPR and other reporting obligation under human rights treaty bodies, or as part of the Targeted Results pillar within the strategy.

The strategy should include specific elements for coordinating the efforts and initiatives that all parties and institutions can adopt within the

framework of implementing the strategy's targets, especially the specialized national councils (NCHR, the National Council for Women, the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood and the National Council for Persons with disabilities.) and civil society organizations, with the establishment of a regular mechanism for the free flow of information, exchange of experiences, and coordination of efforts within the framework of the constitutional mandate of each entity.

Considering the prospects presented by the National Strategy for Human Rights and its anticipated outcomes, offering the executive and legislative authorities an avenue for institutional reforms concerning rights and freedoms, and aligned with the modifications NCHR's 2020-2026 strategy objectives, it is essential to examine, within this report, the overarching directives of NCHR (outlined in its operational plan) pertaining to the goals of the National Strategy:

NCHR’s plan’s general trends 2022-2025 aimed at supporting the National Human Rights Strategy

Strategy’s main pillars	Sub-pillars	Expected outcomes	NCHR’s role/activities to support outcomes achievement
Civil and political rights	The right to life and physical integrity	Ensure that only the most serious crimes are subject to the death penalty by reviewing the framework of capital offences, and waive the fee for appealing to the Court of Cassation for those who cannot afford to pay.	Drafting policy documents, facilitating community dialogue aimed at producing recommendations for the amendment of capital punishment-related laws, securing the endorsement of parliament and competent authorities for the adoption of these proposed revisions, and advocating for the examination of accession to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.
		Continue to combat torture and reduce individual practices	Receive complaints of torture practices and support victims' access to mechanisms of redress.

		Enhancing the protection for people living in care homes, hospitals, and drug treatment units against violations.	enable the aforementioned segments to file complaints and seek justice. To do this-field visits to these places and draft reports to be submitted to the Public Prosecution, Parliament, and the government.
		Raising awareness of the immorality of violent acts and the promotion of a culture of resistance and opposition to such acts.	Coordinating awareness initiatives and bolstering the involvement of civil society in their execution.
	The right to personal freedom	Revising the statutory provisions governing the imposition of pretrial detention measures (safeguards - alternative mechanisms - remote examination of pre-trial detention orders)	Providing assistance to aggrieved parties who allege violations of statutory or constitutional rights arising from the duration or conditions of pretrial detention.
		Strengthening legislative policies that adopt alternative penalties in relation to contractual obligations and reduce deprivation of liberty penalties for minor offenses.	Draft policy papers and manage a community dialogue that results in proposals to amend legislation to allow for the use of alternative penalties.

			Gain the support of Parliament and relevant bodies for the adoption of the proposed amendments.
		Amend legislations to proscribe the statute of limitations for cases involving violations of personal liberty and ensure that victims retain the right to initiate criminal proceedings and receive equitable reparations.	Drafting policy papers and managing a community dialogue that results in proposals to amend the legislation governing lawsuits for assault on personal freedom – gaining the support of Parliament and relevant bodies to adopt the proposed amendments.
		Enabling detainees in private addiction treatment clinics to appeal their detention decision	Enabling residents of addiction treatment clinics to access complaint mechanisms and providing legal assistance to support their access to mechanisms of redress
		A written mechanism to inform detainees of their rights	Coordination with the judicial and police authorities to regulate the notification of detainees of this right.

	<p>The right to litigation and the safeguards of a fair trial</p>	<p>To introduce and develop legislation and regulations to enable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appealing criminal convictions • Protecting whistleblowers and witnesses • Children as witnesses • The right of the accused to remain silent • Restricting the jurisdiction of emergency courts • Making the reasoning of the opinion in the examination of appeals mandatory • Informing the concerned parties of the results of the examination of appeals 	<p>Draft policy papers and manage a community dialogue that results in proposals to introduce/amend the relevant legislation – gain the support of Parliament and relevant bodies to adopt the proposed amendments.</p>
		<p>The utilization of information and communication technology (ICT) in the judicial system, particularly in the modernization of litigation procedures, the interconnection of judicial authorities, and the enforcement of commercial, civil, and administrative judgments</p>	<p>Developing relevant policy proposals and sharing them with stakeholders with a focus on international best practices – Managing a dialogue with judicial authorities and law enforcement agencies to gain support for the adoption of these systems.</p>

		Enhancing public knowledge and understanding of the law, including the crime of discrimination as defined in Article 161 of the Penal Code.	Develop and adopt a general plan for community awareness and work with civil society organizations to participate in its implementation.
	Treatment of prisoners and detainees	Enhancing the plan to modernize and improve prison facilities and the standard of living and care for inmates. Expanding the visits of the Human Rights Council and civil society to prisons Expanding the activities of rehabilitating prisoners (culturally and religiously – illiteracy – joining technical schools – rehabilitation workshops – transition abroad)	Receive complaints from prisoners regarding ill-treatment or living conditions, discuss them with the relevant authorities, and support access to mechanisms of redress for those whose complaints are found to be valid. Expand prison visits, prepare reports, and share them with the Public Prosecution, Parliament, and the Ministry of Interior. Monitor the Ministry of Interior's plan to update prison facilities, evaluate it, and prepare annual reports on it.
		Raising awareness of the role of the Post-Release Care Administration	Coordinate with the Ministry of Interior and civil society organizations to ensure that released

			<p>prisoners and their families are aware of the role of the administration and the mechanisms for benefiting from its services. Receive complaints and requests related to benefiting from the administration's services and support their owners to obtain their legal rights</p>
	Freedom of expression	<p>Development of legislation to protect the right to information, freedom of expression, and the protection of journalists.</p>	<p>Development of policy papers and amendments to regulatory legislation</p>
		<p>Promotion of diversity, public awareness, and media training</p>	<p>Developing and implementing a national awareness plan for the right to freedom of expression, encouraging and supporting civil society organizations to participate in its implementation, as well as holding training workshops and issuing awareness booklets targeting journalists</p>

	Peaceful assembly	Promoting awareness of the culture of the right to peaceful assembly and its practice	Developing a national awareness plan for the culture of exercising the right to peaceful assembly, implementing it, and encouraging civil society organizations to participate in it
	Right to form associations	Promoting coordination and communication between civil society, government, and the private sector	Conducting an annual forum for non-governmental organizations and civil institutions - receiving grievances from civil society organizations pertaining to interactions with the government and facilitating the identification of resolutions for these issues.
		Strengthening the capabilities of associations, most notably in relation to Egypt's Vision 2030	Implementing an annual program to train civil society associations
		Encouraging volunteer work culture	Proposing measures to support voluntary work, sharing them with the relevant authorities, and following up on their implementation

	Trade unions	Strengthening the capabilities of trade unions and enabling them to participate in negotiations and formulate relevant policies	Coordinating with trade union federations to develop and implement specialized training programs – receiving relevant worker complaints and supporting their processing in coordination with the relevant authorities
		Increase the financial resources of trade unions	Proposing measures to support the resources of trade unions, sharing them with the relevant authorities, and following up on their implementation
	Professional Unions (syndicates)	Revising the statutes that oversee the functions of professional unions	Developing policy papers and managing a community dialogue to produce proposals for new or amended legislation – gaining the support of parliament and relevant authorities to adopt the proposed amendments

		Ensuring the regular holding of elections for professional unions	Monitoring professional unions elections, submit reports about them
		Engaging Professional Unions in drafting laws enacted for their regulations.	Monitoring the procedures of engaging Professional Unions in the discussions related to drafting the legislations regulating their work.
	Political Parties	Capacity building of Political Parties leaders and personnel	Implementing an annual training program for political parties personnel - monitoring parties' elections
		Enhancing the cultural and social environment that supports political party activities	propose policies that gain support for measures to improve the systems and procedures that support the work of political parties (including electoral systems) and to monitor general elections.
	The right to belief	Promote awareness and education initiatives in the fields of tolerance and coexistence.	a plan for awareness, support, and encouragement of civil society organizations, media institutions, and religious institutions

			to implement initiatives in the fields of tolerance and coexistence.
		Modernize curricula and reinvigorate the religious discourse	Review the curriculum and issue specific recommendations for the required amendments, share them with the concerned parties, and call for the adoption of the amendments.
		Monitoring and addressing discriminatory media content	The complaints mechanism' monitoring unit will review the relevant materials and report any issues or grievances to the competent authorities.
		preservation and legal regularization of the status of religious archaeological sites and churches.	Monitoring the performance of the relevant authorities in these areas, draft reports, and share them with the parliament and the government.
	The right to privacy	Amending the Code of Criminal Procedure to strengthen the protection of the right to privacy	Developing policy papers and conducting a community dialogue to produce proposed amendments to the

			law – advocating for and gaining the support of the parliament and relevant entities to adopt the proposed amendments.
		Strengthening the role of the Supreme Council of Media Regulation in protecting the right to privacy.	Coordinating with the Supreme Council of Media Regulation to develop a plan for monitoring, awareness-raising, and follow-up on its implementation.
		Emphasizing the need and scope of honoring the right to privacy.	Developing a national plan and supporting civil society, media, and religious institutions and encouraging them to participate in its implementation
Economic, social and cultural rights	The right to health	Strengthening the infrastructure, organization, and resources of the health sector (coverage, service quality, health insurance, physician training, drug adequacy, speed of receiving treatment at state expense, mental health treatment platform)	receive and investigate complaints of violations of the right to health, support individuals who have filed complaints, coordinate with the government's complaints system, especially the Medical Appeals Committee, and

			activate the referral system to the committee. In addition to monitoring the efforts aimed at developing health services and issue reports and recommendations, and follow up on their implementation.
		Strengthening environmental and climate aspects (developing environmental protection legislation – biodiversity conservation measures – sustainable resource management – waste management – and mitigating the effects of climate change)	Monitoring efforts to improve environmental aspects, issuing reports and recommendations, and following up on their implementation.
		Strengthening awareness of environmental and health aspects	Developing a national plan, supporting civil society and media institutions, and encouraging them to participate in its implementation
	The right to education	Reducing illiteracy and dropout rates Pre-university education (increasing	Assessing the enhancement of educational and research services,

		<p>school coverage – quality of education – developing technical education – training teachers)</p> <p>Improving university education to conform to international standards, respond to the needs of the labor market, and advance the scientific research system.</p>	<p>generating reports and recommendations, and monitoring their implementation.</p>
		<p>Formulating legislation and procedures (encouraging creative thinking – the right to knowledge)</p>	<p>Proposing legislative and procedural amendments related to it and following up on their implementation</p>
	The right to work	<p>Expanding employment opportunities via (employment policies – the role of the private sector – vocational training)</p>	<p>Evaluating government efforts and relevant private sector practices, generating reports and recommendations, and monitoring their implementation.</p>
		<p>Organizing the informal sector and domestic workers and integrating them.</p>	
		<p>Promoting decent work standards and workers' rights.</p>	<p>Addressing complaints of violations of the right to work and</p>

			supporting the complainants in securing their rights – proposing procedures and overseeing their execution.
	The right to social security	<p>Enhancing the social protection and security system (bridging gaps – extending Takaful and Karama support – improving the insurance and pensions system – offering emergency assistance in case of emergency)</p> <p>Raising the awareness of the recipients of social protection programs about the benefits of family planning.</p>	<p>Monitoring the related government efforts, issuing reports and recommendations, and following up on their implementation.</p> <p>Receiving complaints of violations of the right to social security and supporting the complainants in accessing their rights.</p>
	The right to food	Advancing the systems related to the production and transport of bread, food cards, the supply of strategic reserves of goods, and market monitoring.	Monitoring the related government efforts, issuing reports and recommendations, and following up on their implementation.
		Updating food safety standards legislation	Developing policy papers and conducting a community dialogue with the aim of

			proposing legislative amendments and calling for their adoption
		Increase in the number of associations working in the field of food safety and consumer protection.	Collaborating with civil society organizations, empowering them, and training their personnel to include consumer protection and food safety issues into their strategies.
	The right to clean water and sanitation	provision of adequate drinking water to its citizens. This includes increasing the number of water treatment plants, improving the efficiency of groundwater use, reducing water losses, and raising awareness of water conservation	Evaluating government efforts and relevant private sector practices, generating reports and recommendations, and monitoring their implementation.
		Expanding and completing the provision of sanitation services	Addressing complaints of violations of the right to drinking water and sanitation and supporting their owners in securing their rights

	<p>The right to housing</p>	<p>Supplying (increasing the number of units, simplifying real estate financing, improving the efficiency of infrastructure and services in new cities, and expanding the establishment of new communities in the desert)</p> <p>Developing informal and unplanned areas, and tightening and activating the penalties for violating the conditions for benefiting from social housing.</p>	<p>Monitoring relevant government efforts, issuing reports and recommendations, and following up on their implementation.</p> <p>Receiving complaints of violations of the right to housing and supporting their owners in developing areas to obtain their rights</p>
	<p>Cultural rights</p>	<p>Promoting cultural justice (providing cultural services, most notably in remote areas – supporting civil cultural activities – supporting culture palaces – supporting cultural industries and financing them)</p> <p>Safeguarding cultural heritage and overseeing the processes for reimbursing damages. And reviving it (preserving archaeological sites – advancing traditional crafts)</p>	<p>Monitoring relevant government and civil efforts, issuing reports and recommendations, and following up on their implementation. Monitoring violations of cultural rights and reporting them to the competent authorities. Protecting cultural heritage and following up on damage compensation procedures.</p>

<p>The rights of special categories (women, children, ageing persons, people with disabilities)</p>	<p>Women's rights</p>	<p>Creating a supportive environment by (remediating the adverse cultural heritage – adopting a gender-based planning approach – gathering information and monitoring gaps).</p>	<p>Coordination with the National Council for Women (NCW) to develop a national plan for awareness and education, follow up on its implementation, receive complaints from women who have been victims of violations and address them – as well as proposing policies, amending legislation or introducing them and adopting a campaign to gain support for their adoption.</p>
		<p>Political empowerment through legislative, regulatory, and educational measures</p>	
		<p>Social empowerment through legislative, regulatory, and educational measures</p>	
		<p>Economic empowerment through legislative, regulatory, and educational measures</p>	
		<p>Protection from all forms of violence through legislative, regulatory, and</p>	

		educational measures	
	Children's rights	<p>Protection from all forms of exploitation, violence, and the worst forms of child labor, and reducing the phenomenon of street children – and expanding the foster care system</p> <p>Increase community awareness of children's rights</p> <p>Legislative and regulatory development (amendment of the provisions of care for children with legitimate lineage by the Child Law - entrenching the principle of the best interests of the child - strengthening the role of associations concerned with protecting the child - protecting the right of children to express themselves - strengthening mechanisms for accessing health care)</p>	<p>Coordination with the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM) to develop a national awareness and education plan, follow up on its implementation, receive related complaints from victims of violations and address them, propose policies and amend legislation, and adopt a campaign to gain support for their adoption.</p>
	The rights of persons with disabilities	<p>Providing a supportive environment (community awareness,</p>	<p>Coordination with the National Council for Persons with Disabilities to</p>

		<p>identification and databases, developing and activating the integrated services card system, completing the legislative infrastructure)</p> <p>Ensuring access to educational, health, and social care services and promoting the right to work</p> <p>Empowering people with disabilities to participate in political, cultural, media, and sports activities</p>	<p>develop and follow up on the implementation of a national awareness and education plan, receiving and addressing complaints from persons with disabilities who are victims of violations - proposing policies, completing the legislative system, and adopting a campaign to gain support for their adoption</p>
	Youth	<p>Youth economic development (reducing unemployment, vocational training, and supporting small businesses)</p> <p>Political empowerment (participation in public life - assuming leadership positions)</p> <p>Providing services for youth, most notably in remote areas - increasing youth-focused associations - improving youth health and fitness</p>	<p>Monitoring government efforts related to youth empowerment, issuing reports and recommendations, and following up on their implementation.</p>

	Ageing people	<p>The issuance of a comprehensive legislation that enhances the rights of ageing people</p> <p>Empowering ageing people to participate in public life.</p> <p>Strengthening care and support for ageing people (expanding care programs, strengthening the role of associations, providing health care, and providing legal assistance)</p>	<p>Facilitating ageing people's access to the NCHR's complaint mechanism and supporting their access to mechanisms of redress.</p>
Human rights education and capacity building	Promotion of a human rights culture	<p>Expanding educational programs, using modern technology, and working with the private sector, parliament, and stakeholders.</p>	<p>develop a national plan to promote a culture of human rights and support and encourage different entities (government, civil society, and media) in its implementation.</p> <p>monitor international and domestic performance from a human rights perspective and address it.</p> <p>call on the parliament and government to align legislation with human rights obligations and to</p>

			join conventions and instruments to which Egypt has not yet acceded.
	Integration of the human rights component in different education stages	Develop a national plan to align curricula and develop teaching systems in the field of human rights	Monitoring the performance of relevant entities in terms of their training plans in the field of human rights, preparing reports and recommendations, and following up on their implementation.
	Police personnel training	Expanding training programs, including prison officials, and integrating codes of conduct and specialized issues into training activities.	Participating in providing specialized training, training trainers, and providing training manuals for different entities.
	Judicial authority members capacity building	Expanding training activities and developing the training centers affiliated with the judicial bodies.	Developing national indicators to measure the effectiveness of training and its reflection on the practices of different entities, and including the results of the measurement in the annual report of the council.
	Strengthening training programs	enhance the skills of employees in human areas, create measures	Organizing regular group visits to Egyptian

	<p>for government employees and promote their human rights awareness</p>	<p>to evaluate the effectiveness of training, assist the entities involved in training, and offer platforms to educate staff in provinces and ministries on human rights issues.</p>	<p>governorates aimed at increasing the interest of government leaders in human rights issues, introducing the complaint mechanisms of the National Council for Human Rights, and evaluating the extent of compliance with human rights standards in the delivery of public services, including police services. Organizing an annual meeting for human rights units in ministries and governorates.</p>
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Strategic Trend IV

Supporting the national dialogue mechanism and contributing to boosting its outputs related to improving the state of human rights

On April 26, 2022, the President of Egypt extended an invitation for a national dialogue during the Egyptian Family Iftar event. Subsequently, the National Council for Human Rights (NCHR) conducted a comprehensive examination of the Presidential directive and formulated its perspective. The perspective is emblematic of the aspirations of Egyptian society for an improved quality of life across all spheres. The NCHR duly conveyed its perspective to the National Dialogue Board, encapsulating the following primary elements:

a. The economic pillar:

- Economic repercussions of the Russian-Ukrainian crisis on Egypt, its impact on price hike , and proposing the most appropriate solutions.

- Discussion of the state's economic reform strategy.
- The role of the private sector in economic activity.
- The state's policy towards the agricultural economy and climate change.
- How population growth affects different aspects of life and hinders the development process.
- Examine the laws that affect investment opportunities and suggest a general vision that creates a favorable environment for investment.

b. Civil and political pillar

Undertake a comprehensive evaluation of the cases of individuals currently incarcerated due to their participation in political incidents in Egypt. The specific aim is to discern those individuals who were not involved in acts of violence or acts of a terrorist nature. Scrutinize the conditions of detainees and individuals held in pre-trial custody, to establish precise criteria for the application of pre-trial detention, and to implement a novel criminal procedure legislation that guarantees the non-utilization of pre-trial detention as a punitive measure or as a means of impinging upon the rights of the accused. In addition to exploring alternative strategies to pre-trial detention and to incorporate advanced technology within this domain.

Conduct a comprehensive review of the legislative framework governing the right to assemble and engage in public demonstrations, encompassing administrative regulations pertaining to the exercise of this right, as well as the procedural requisites for obtaining authorization for its exercise, all while preserving public order and safeguarding property.

Undertake the formulation and enactment of multiple statutes pertaining to the liberty of accessing and disseminating data and information, the freedom of opinion and expression, and the protection of individuals who disclose information and serve as witnesses.

Bolster the operational capacities of civil society organizations by streamlining the registration processes, administrative procedures, and access to the financial resources stipulated in Executive Regulation No. 104 of 2021.

Promulgate a municipal governance law to serve as the foundation for the conduct of local council elections, culminating in the reinforcement of state institutions and the establishment of oversight mechanisms to scrutinize the performance of the executive authority, thereby ensuring the efficiency of service delivery to citizens and combating corruption and resource mismanagement resulting from the dearth of popular oversight.

c. Cultural pillar

Cultural Justice: This encompasses the provision of cultural services to all strata of society, with particular focus on regions that experience a dearth of such services.

Embracing Cultural Diversity: This pertains to the promotion and recognition of the cultural diversity present within all sectors of Egyptian society.

Cultural Discourse Renewal: This involves the adaptation of cultural discourse to align with contemporary language and includes all facets of Egyptian culture, encompassing media, religious discourse, and cultural institutions. Moreover, it pertains to the issue of fostering a sense of belonging to solidify the Egyptian identity and to enhance the understanding of its diverse components.

E. Social pillar

- Protecting and promoting the right to health care, as well as ways to implement a comprehensive health insurance system and provide high-quality treatment services that take into account the health rights of citizens and the rights of doctors.
- The constitutional rights of citizens to quality education, and ways to reduce the dropout rate and to implement literacy programs seriously.
- Conducting a dialogue on the constitutional rights of citizens, and the duties of the state towards their implementation, taking into account the geographical coverage and the important budget available, as well as the implementation timeline and implementation measurement units.
- The right to social security and social insurance and providing subsidized goods and services to eligible citizens.

- Discussing a mechanism to control population growth in different ways and providing reproductive health services in a fair manner for all.
- The right of the Egyptian citizen to adequate housing.
- Addressing the rights of people with disabilities.

F. Legislative pillar

- Guaranteeing the freedom of expression, which includes freedom of the press, freedom of artistic and literary expression, freedom of petition, freedom of assembly, freedom of religion, and freedom of conscience. It is also important to respect the opinion of others and not to stifle dissent.
- Considering the abolition of the death penalty or limiting it to the most serious crimes, such as premeditated murder and crimes against the state.
- Reviewing legislation to ensure that it is in line with international human rights standards. This includes drafting new laws or amending existing laws to protect human rights.
- Studying the possibility of reducing the use of imprisonment as a punishment, especially for minor offenses. This could be done by increasing the use of fines or alternative punishments.
- Establishing a legal framework for the protection of personal freedoms from abuse by officials. This could include laws that protect people from discrimination, harassment, and arbitrary arrest.
- Examining the possibility of enacting legislation to address violence against women and to protect the rights of ageing persons.
- Strengthen the role of civil society organizations in supporting initiatives that help debtors and people in debt to get out of prison. The project also aims to provide social care for the families of prisoners and to include them in the presidential pardon.

G. Promotion of a human rights culture

- Evaluate the curricula at all levels and make sure they include topics on human rights.

- Encourage universities to include specialized courses on human rights in their curricula.
- Encourage colleges with a focus on human rights (law, economics, political science, and police academy) to make human rights courses a core part of their curricula, and to offer a specialized diploma in human rights and make it a major subject in master's and doctoral programs.
- Study how to train law enforcement officers (judges, prosecutors, and police) on human rights topics, and make this training a part of their cultural and professional development.
- Organize courses and programs to teach and promote the culture of human rights among state employees.

H. Mechanisms for implementing the NCHR recommendations

Dialogue stands as one of the fundamental instruments of democracy. It affords participants the unfettered freedom to openly exchange their viewpoints, free from impediments that might curtail their perspectives and stymie their endeavors. Consequently, the effectiveness of dialogue hinges significantly on the judicious administration of the dialogue process, commencing with its inception, proceeding through its various stages, and culminating in the issuance of actionable recommendations. In this context, the National Council for Human Rights (NCHR) holds the following perspectives concerning the methodologies for executing dialogue:

Enhancing Inclusivity: There is a pressing need to broaden the participation of representatives from all political factions within Egyptian society to actively engage with the National Academy for Training. This engagement encompasses the formulation of the dialogue, including its agenda, scheduling, and the strategies employed for its administration, which may involve listening sessions, roundtable discussions, and the like.

Fostering Consensus: It is paramount to foster a degree of consensus among divergent positions regarding the topics addressed within the dialogue. The dialogue's foundation should be grounded in shared ground or commonalities. Achieving this necessitates skill and expertise on the

part of the dialogue's organizers to facilitate the cultivation of a unified perspective among the participants.

Prioritizing Dialogue Topics: Identifying the dialogue's priorities is imperative, commencing with the most universally agreed-upon subjects. Subsequently, the dialogue can explore more contentious issues that may otherwise jeopardize its success.

Delivering Actionable Outcomes: The dialogue must culminate in precise and enforceable outcomes. The entity responsible for executing these results should be clearly identified, and the mechanism for their implementation should be articulated.

Comprehensive Participation: It is essential to underscore the significance of involving all segments of society, including those with dissenting viewpoints, whether they are internal or external stakeholders. This should be contingent upon establishing credible evidence that such individuals have not engaged in hostile actions against the state.

Chapter Six: Recommendations

1-: Enhance the NCHR capacity, powers and its compatibility with the Paris Principles: Greater guarantees for the NCHR with regard to visiting prisons and detention centers through notifications, increasing financial allocations, applying an effective, fast and flexible coordination mechanism in the NCHR, the Public Prosecution and the Ministry of Interior with a view to ensuring prompt intervention in handling complaints and investigating allegations of human rights violations. 56

2-: Enhance legislative guarantees of human rights: through adopting new legislation for codes on Criminal Procedures and the Penal Code, protecting whistleblowers and witnesses, regulating the right to free flow of knowledge, and reviewing Law No. 135 of 2021, by amending some provisions of Law No. 10 of 1972 concerned with dismissal without a disciplinary method and the Civil Service Law, review legislation to restrict the application of death penalty to the minimum possible. Amend the law regulating early retirement controls and rules included in the Social Insurance Law and adopting comprehensive legislation to regulate the elderly access to their rights. - Issue a comprehensive law to define, criminalize and combat all forms of violence, torture, inhumane treatment and neglect.

3-: Allocate adequate human and financial resources to NCHR in a manner commensurate with the Paris Principles.

4-: Ensure the actual enjoyment of CPR: Expedite the national dialogue and its arrangements, continue the reform of places of detention attached to security directorates and police stations, continue training for officers and professionals with a view to raise the level of commitment to human rights responsive practices. The Ministry of Interior is encouraged to 57 continue to implement the reform of penal institutions and its development plan and expedite the current pace to complete it within a reasonable time frame, with an emphasis on taking into account the geographical distance and reducing alienation during the distribution of inmates to the new centers, ensuring the availability of statistical information on correctional and rehabilitation centers and their inmates, accelerate the pace and scope of presidential pardons and increase the number of those eligible for pardons to include all imprisoned and detained in cases that do not involve any

practice of violence, and adopting a clear strategy within a specific time frame to address the logistical challenges facing the justice and penal system.

5-: Enhance the actual enjoyment of ESCR: “Decent Life Initiative” needs a package of procedures related to the operation and maintenance phase to ensure that the intensive projects and facilities that are being constructed contribute to enabling the rural population to obtain and sustainably enjoy their economic, social and, cultural rights. - reconsider the timeline for covering the governorates with comprehensive health insurance to remedy the delay at the end of the first phase and the start of the second phase, reviewing economic policies in the field of industry to create strong and resilient economic structures, addressing issues of work quality or suitability in relation to available jobs, and reviewing legal regulatory tools, limiting the scope of resorting to expropriation procedures for the public interest, meeting the 58 urgent need to reconsider the current requirements for construction to ensure the integration of the environmental component in urban planning and implementation, meeting the urgent need to restructure the subsidy system, reviewing the outputs of the educational system and educational policies that are still far from meeting the requirements of providing the learner with life skills or the needs of the labor market.

6- Nurture a societal culture supportive of celebration of diversity, respect for human rights and address intolerant religious discourse of some intellectual jurisprudence and cultural and scientific achievements, address religious "HISBA" practices, and enlarge the scope of academic freedoms and freedom of expression, to ensure diversity of the cultural, artistic and media production industry in Egypt. .

7-: Strengthen the commitment of the Egyptian government to the reporting UN system and to submit its reports under United Nations human rights conventions in a timely manner, updating the national strategy for human rights so that it reflects in its conclusions Egypt's voluntary commitments to the UPR mechanism and the recommendations issued by treaty committees and special rapporteurs. 8- : enhance international cooperation with international and regional mechanisms for the protection, promotion and provision of human rights.

**Ambassador Moushira Khattab, PhD, President of the National Council
for Human Rights (NCHR), Activity schedule**

	Activity	Date	Comments
1	Chairing the general assembly meeting of the Network of the African National Human Rights Institutions (NANHRI), presidency handed over to Egypt	November 2 nd , 2021	
2	Meeting with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) representative	November 14 th , 2021	Held at new NCHR's headquarters, attended by May Naguib
3	Meeting with the "Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie" representatives	November 15 th , 2021	
4	Meeting with Palestinian delegation		
5	Interview for Ahram newspaper, dated January 2 nd 2022		
6	Simulation of the Human Rights Council, World Youth Forum 2022 (WYF)	January 13 th , 2022 (Sharm el-Sheikh)	Human Rights Council simulation
7	Attending the Senate's health and population committee meeting	January 16 th , 2022	Discussing study on population growth in Egypt
8	Meeting with Dutch Ambassador	January 17 th , 2022	
9	Meeting with the Senate's Speaker-Counselor Abdel Wahab Abdel Razek	January 17 th , 2022	Attended by Ambassador Mahmoud Karem, Mr. Mohamed Anwar El Sadat
10	Meeting with UNDP delegation	January 18 th , 2022	

11	Meeting with Congressional staffers delegation		Meeting report by Yara Kassem
12	Meeting with EU delegation, comprising EU Ambassador Christian Berger, Marina Varela, head of the European Union Politics, Press and Information Department, Graciella Riza, Human Rights consultant, Illaria Beattie, HR attaché.	January 20 th 2022	Attended by Ambassador Ahmed Ismail
13	Meeting with US Ambassador, Jonathan R. <i>Cohen</i>	January 23 rd , 2022	Meeting report by Yara Kassem
14	United holocaust memorial museum delegation meeting	January 23 rd , 2022	Meeting attended by Islam Rihan
15	Meeting with Parliament's Speaker, Counselor Hanafy el- Gebaly	January 25 th , 2022	Accompanied by Mr. Mohamed Anwar El Sadat
16	Meeting with H.E Adel Al Assoumy, Arab Parliament Speaker and Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Arab Human Rights Observatory	January 26 th , 2022	Meeting report by Yara Kassem
17	Meeting with Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Rights in Egypt Ambassador Khaled El-Bakly	January 30 th , 2022	Attended by Ambassador Mahmoud Karem
18	Seminar organized by Al-Azhar at the Cairo International Book Fair	January 31 st , 2022	
19	Seminar at the military college		
20	Interview with Frank Wisner, former US Ambassador		TV interview- Al Hurra channel
21	Meeting with <i>Christopher Le Mon</i> , Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor at the U.S. <i>Department of State</i> , and accompanying delegation	February 2 nd 2022	Attended by Ambassador Mahmoud Karem, Mr. Mohamed Anwar El Sadat Meeting report by Yara Kassem
22	Phone interview with Sada el-Balad channel	February 2 nd 2022	With TV presenter Azza Moustafa

23	Meeting with Italian Ambassador Michele Quaroni	February 3 rd 2022	Meeting report by Yara Kassem
24	Roundtable “NCHR and Civil Society Year 2022”	February 6 th , 2022	Zoom event
25	Lunch with French Ambassador, Stéphane Romatet	February 6 th , 2022	
26	Meeting with Jerome Fontana, ICRC head in Egypt	February 7 th , 2022	Meeting report by Yara Kassem
27	Phone intervention with Journalist Ahmed Moussa- Sada el-Balad channel	February 9 th , 2022	
28	Participation in a workshop on NCCM plan of action	February 14 th , 2022	Agreement on a cooperation protocol between NCHR, NCCM
29	Meeting with Spanish Ambassador in Egypt, Ramón Gil-Casares	February, 14 th 2022	At the Spanish ambassador’s house
30	Meeting of the Senate’s human rights and social solidarity committee to discuss the national human rights strategy	February 15 th , 2022	
31	Meeting with the British Ambassador in Egypt, Gareth Bailey	February 16 th , 2022	Attended by Ambassador Mahmoud Kareem, Ambassador Ahmed Ismail Meeting report by Yara Kassem
32	Meeting with counselor Adly Hussein	February 17 th , 2022	Attended by Ambassador Mahmoud Kareem, Ambassador Ahmed Ismail
33	Participation in the panel discussion held by the Ministry of Youth and Sports on human rights	February 19 th , 2022	As part of the 4 th edition of the Nile Valley Dialogue project

34	Meeting with the Canadian Ambassador, Luis Dumas	February 23 rd , 2022	
35	The International conference on international solidarity and 2030 sustainable development plan- Goal 16 peace, justice and resilient organisations, organised by NCHR	February 27 th , 2022	
36	Virtual seminar organised by Egypt's permanent mission to the United Nations in Geneva	March 2 nd , 2022	
37	Meeting of the Complaints committee	March 6 th , 2022	At NCHR's Giza branch – attended by Dr. Walaa Gad, Mr. Mohamed Anwar El Sadat
38	Parliament's human rights committee meeting	March 6 th , 2022	
39	Meeting with NCHR's committees' heads	March 7 th , 2022	At NCHR's Giza branch
40	NCHR's monthly meeting	March 7 th , 2022	At NCHR's Giza branch
41	International Women's Day celebration	March 8 th , 2022	
42	Civil society organisations event	March 10 th , 2022	At NCHR's headquarters, organised by the civil and political rights committee
43	Travel to Germany	March 13 th - 17 th	
44	Youth and National Human Rights Strategy session- organised by the Ministry of Youth and Sports	March 19 th , 2022	Tolip hotel, 5 th settlement
45	Dialogue session with political parties representatives- organised by the civil and political rights committee	March 20 th , 2022	At NCHR's headquarters

46	Participation in a seminar organised by the African Human Rights Association and the Francophonie organisation	March 21 st , 2022	Zoom meeting
47	Meeting with Danish Ambassador in Egypt, Svend Olling	March 22 nd , 2022	At NCHR's headquarters
48	Cairo governorate's celebration of Egyptian women's day	March 23 rd , 2022	
49	Meeting with Dr. Mohamed Anas Gaafar, head of the legislative affairs committee at the NCHR	March 28 th , 2022	Giza branch
50	Meeting with ICRC delegation	March 29 th , 2022	Attended by Ambassador Mahmoud Karem, Ambassador Ahmed Ismail Meeting report by Yara Kassem
51	Panel discussion with a number of media websites under the theme "Freedom of Press- Freedom of expression and access to information", organised by the civil and political rights committee	March 30 th , 2022	
52	The 2 nd coordination meeting with representatives of universities in Greater Cairo- organised by the committee of dissemination of the culture of human rights	March 31 st , 2022	
53	Meeting with Eng. Ali Al- Derazy, President of Bahrain's national human rights institution	March 31 st , 2022	Attended by Ambassador Mahmoud Karem, Ambassador Ahmed Ismail, Dr. Ismail Abdel Rahman

54	Meeting with the Norwegian ambassador to Egypt, Hilde Klemetsdal	April 3 rd , 2022	Attended by Ambassador Mahmoud Karem, Ambassador Ahmed Ismail, Mr. Mohamed Anwar El Sadat Report meeting by Yara Kassem
55	Meeting with the State council's president	April 5 th , 2022	Attended by Ambassador Mahmoud Karem
56	NCHR's 6 th monthly meeting	April 6 th , 2022	Selection of NCHR's Secretary-General, Ambassador Fahmy Fayed
57	Meeting with high-level US delegation	April 7 th , 2022	NCHR's headquarters
58	Lecture by Eamon Gilmore and Christian Berger, EU ambassador to Egypt	April 8 th , 2022	Attended by AUC, Cairo University students
59	Iftar with EU ambassador	April 13 th , 2022	
60	Sohour with Minister Nevine El Kabaj	April 13 th , 2022	
61	Refugees and immigrants rights in Egypt workshop- organised by the economic and social rights committee	April 17 th , 2022	
62	Meeting with Ahdaf Soweif	April 18 th , 2022	NCHR's headquarters
63	Iftar at Ramona Canaan	April 20 th , 2022	
64	Seminar on pretrial detention by NANHRI	April 25 th , 2022	Zoom meeting
65	Egyptian family Iftar with Egypt's President	April 26 th , 2022	Al Masa hotel
66	Meeting with Ramona Canaan, Illaria Beattie, EU HR attaché	April 27 th , 2022	NCHR's headquarters

67	Meeting with UNICEF's resident representative and delegation	May 8 th , 2022	Meeting report by Yara Kassem
68	Signing of cooperation protocol with Ministry of Justice- Minister Omar Marwan	May 9 th , 2022	MOJ headquarters
69	Lunch with Canadian ambassador	May 9 th 2022	Along with Mr. Mohamed Anwar El Sadat
70	NCHR 7 th monthly meeting	May 11 th , 2022	NCHR's headquarters
71	Mother of Ambassador Khaled el-Bakly's funeral	May 15 th , 2022	
72	Meeting of the cultural rights committee and the legislative affairs committee to discuss CEOSS proposed law draft to address hate speech	May 16 th , 2022	To exchange views on the law draft before submitting it to the parliament
73	Participation in NCCM's workshop on the national plan of action 2018-2022	May 16 th , 2022	
74	Field visit to Kafr el-Sheikh governorate, meeting with the governor	May 18 th , 2022	
75	Meeting with UNFPA resident representative	May 19 th , 2022	Meeting report by Yara Kassem
76	Meeting with EU representative and Ramona Canaan	May 22 nd , 2022	
77	Meeting with Arab Academy's students	May 23 rd , 2022	
78	Meeting with British Ambassador, Gareth Bailey	May 26 th , 2022	Meeting report by Yara Kassem
79	Meeting with Ambassador Khaled el-Bakly		
80	Meeting with Swedish Ambassador, Håkan Emsgård	May 29 th , 2022	Meeting report by Yara Kassem
81	Egyptian-Canadian business council seminar	May 30 th , 2022	

82	Swiss embassy's delegation meeting, along with Mr. Mohamed Anwar El Sadat	May 31 st , 2022	
83	Egyptian's ministry of foreign affairs in 100 days conference – Middle East research center	May 31 st , 2022	
84	NCHR's 8 th monthly meeting	June 1 st , 2022	
85	Meeting with Christine Durival, French Senate's member	June 2 nd , 2022	Meeting report by Yara Kassem
86	Meeting with IOM's resident representative	June 2 nd 2022	Meeting report by Yara Kassem
87	MoU signing with Bahrain's NHRI	June 2 nd , 2022	Via zoom
88	Lecture to African diplomats at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs	June 5 th , 2022	
89	Visit to Wadi el-Natroun rehabilitation facility	June 5 th , 2022	
90	Travel to Geneva to meet with Michele Bachelet, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights	June 6 th -10 th , 2022	
91	Meeting with committee in charge of assessing drama series	June 12 th , 2022	
92	Seminar on the promotion of the international humanitarian law culture, in collaboration with ICRC	June 13 th , 2022	
93	NCHR's 9 th monthly meeting	June 19 th , 2022	
94	Meeting with Parliament's human rights committee	June 22 nd , 2022	NCHR's headquarters
95	Meeting with Austria's minister of foreign affairs	July 3 rd , 2022	Sofitel Gezira's hotel
96	Meeting with Sohag university's students	July 4 th , 2022	
97	Meeting with Administrative Control Authority's representative	July 5 th , 2022	Meeting attended by NCHR's Secretary-General

98	Meeting with actor Ahmed Amin	July 5 th , 2022	Meeting report by Yara Kassem
99	Meeting with Hoda Badran and Egyptian Feminist Union delegation NCHR's 10 th monthly meeting	July 6 th , 2022	
100	Meeting with Japan's ambassador, Oka Hiroshi	July 6 th , 2022	Meeting report by Yara Kassem
101	Field visit to Qanater rehabilitation facility for women	July 17 th , 2022	
102	Receiving young researchers taking part in the research summer camp in Egyptian universities organised by the Egyptian Youth Council	July 24 th , 2022	Organised by NCHR member, Mohamed Mamdouh
103	Meeting with OHCHR delegation led by Nada al- Nashif, the delegation includes Mohamed al-Nassour, Elena Panova, Reem al-Mazzawy	July 24 th , 2022	Meeting report by Yara Kassem
104	Meeting with UAE national human rights institutions	July 24 th , 2022	Meeting report by Zeinab Safwat
105	Delivering a speech in a seminar on the national human rights strategy in Ain Shams University	July 27 th , 2022	Accompanied by Ahmed Nasr, Khaled Maarouf
106	Meeting with NCHR General Secretariat, attended by NCHR Secretary General, Ambassador Fahmy Fayed	July 27 th , 2022	
107	Attending the inauguration of the NCHR's seminar on freedom of creativity and academic freedoms	August 1 st , 2022	Organised by the cultural rights committee and the civil and political rights committee
108	Attending the World Human Trafficking Awareness Day celebration	August 1 st , 2022	Attended by Ambassador Naela Gabr

109	The signing of a cooperation protocol with the Ministry of Youth and Sports	August 1 st , 2022	Attended by Minister Ashraf Sobhy, and NCHR Secretary General
110	Interview with Doriya Sharaf eldin	August 1 st , 2022	Maspiro
111	Euro-mediterranean academy students meeting- organised by the Ministry of Youth and Sports	August 18 th , 2022	Attended by training, projects units
112	Delivering a lecture on “Egypt and human rights issues”, organised by the Ministry of Youth and Sports	August 30 th , 2022	Olympic center, Maadi
113	Attending a MoU signing to launch the professional international teaching certificates, upon an invitation from the Ministry of Higher Education and the Egyptian National Education, Sciences and Culture Committee	August 30 th , 2022	Four Seasons hotel, Garden city
114	Meeting with Richard Probst, Resident Representative of Friedrich Ebert Stifung organisation	September 5 th , 2022	Meeting report by Yara Kassem
115	Meeting with Ambassador Wafaa Basseem, member of UN Human Rights Committee	September 5 th , 2022	
116	Meeting with European Parliament member Antonio Lopez Istorriz White	September 17 th , 2022	Attended by Ambassador Ahmed Ismail, MP Tarek Radwan, head of Parliament’s human rights committee Meeting report by Yara Kassem
117	Meeting with high-level Palestinian delegation	September 19 th , 2022	Meeting report by Yara Kassem
118	NCHR’s seminar on climate justice and human rights	September 20 th , 2022	
119	Discussion on freedom of press at the Dutch embassy	September 20 th , 2022	Accompanied by Mr. Mohamed Anwar El Sadat

120	Attending panel discussion on youth achievements in light of the national human rights strategy	September 22 nd , 2022	Organised by Egyptian Youth Council
121	Discussion on “One Year after the launch of the National Human Rights Strategy” at the coordination committee your young politicians	September 25 th , 2022	
122	Meeting with the Dutch ambassador in Egypt	September 28 th , 2022	Meeting report by Yara Kassem
123	Attending the launch of the 3 rd national strategy to combat human trafficking	September 29 th , 2022	Four Seasons hotel Accompanied by Ahmed Abdel Gayed (from the NCHR’s anti-human trafficking unit)
124	Meeting with Martin Schulz, Chairman of Friedrich Ebert Stiftung	October 3 rd , 2022	Friedrich Ebert’s headquarters
125	NCHR’s 12 th monthly meeting	October 5 th , 2022	
126	Meeting with Ms. Baheya Tahzeeb Lee, Dutch human rights ambassador	October 5 th , 2022	Meeting report by Yara Kassem
127	Meeting with Congressional Staffers	October 5 th , 2022	Meeting report by Yara Kassem
128	Meeting with <i>Barbara A. Leaf</i> , US Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs	October 10 th , 2022	At American Embassy Accompanied by Mr. Mohamed Anwar El Sadat
129	Roundtable on climate legislations	October 11 th , 2022	Sadat association in collaboration with Friedrich Ebert
130	Meeting with Prof. Paolo Sabbatini, - Advisor to Italy’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs	October 12 th , 2022	Meeting report with Yara Kassem

131	Meeting with “Terre des Hommes” Swiss organisation, chaired by Laure Baudin	October 13 th , 2022	Meeting report with Yara Kassem
132	Parliament’s discussion on child’s marriage	October 16 th 2022	
133	Meeting with Cyprus ambassador in Egypt	October 18 th , 2022	Also attended by Ambassador Ahmed Ismail, Yara Kassem
134	OHCHR training session to NCHR members, employees	October 20 th -21 st , 2022	NCHR headquarters
135	Meeting with UNICEF, UNODC, OHCHR representatives	October 20 th , 2022	NCHR headquarters
136	NCHR workshop on child marriage	October 24 th , 2022	NCHR headquarters
137	Meeting with Coptic Evangelical Organisation for Social Services (CEOSS) delegation	October 25 th , 2022	NCHR headquarters
138	50 th anniversary of Egyptian-UAE relations	October 26 th , 2022	Ritz Carlton
139	NCHR’s 13 th monthly meeting	November 2 nd , 2022	NCHR headquarters
140	Meeting with Maj. Gen. Khairy Barakat, CAPMAS Chairman	November 2 nd , 2022	NCHR headquarters
141	NCHR’s seminar on the role of statistics to plan addressing population growth	November 2 nd , 2022	NCHR headquarters
142	Meeting New Giza University students	November 3 rd , 2022	Attended by training unit
143	Delivering lecture on sustainable development plans to diplomats from Comoros	November 6 th , 2022	
144	COP-27 side event “Climate Change and Children’s Rights”	November 10 th , 2022	COP-27, Sharm el-Sheikh

145	Phone intervention with TEN channel	November 11 th , 2022	
146	An open dialogue with the National Egyptian University for Electronic Education students	November 14 th , 2022	University headquarters
147	Meeting with Mrs. Sabine Kroissbrunner – Austrian deputy ambassador	November 15 th , 2022	11 am
148	Event in cooperation with OHCHR via Zoom	November 15 th , 2022	
149	Discussion of a study on domestic violence in the human rights committee in the Senate	November 16 th , 2022	3pm – the Senate
150	Children’s day celebration, and cooperation protocol signing with the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM)	November 17 th , 2022	11 am
151	Meeting at the human rights committee in the House of Representatives	November 20 th , 2022	3 pm- Parliament headquarters
152	Travel to Lesotho to participate in the The African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) meetings	November 20 th - December 3 rd 2022	
153	Joint workshop organized by the Committee on the promotion of the culture of human rights and the Civil and Political Rights Committee on the Role of Political Parties in the implementation of the National Human Rights Strategy	December 4 th , 2022	Attended by NCHR members: Mohamed Anwar El-Sadat, Saeed Abdel Hafez, George Isaac
154	Dinner with James Moran, Christian Berger (EU Ambassador to Egypt)	December 5 th , 2022	
155	NCHR’s 14 th monthly meeting	December 7 th , 2022	NCHR headquarters

156	World Human Rights Day Celebration, Centennial of the late Prof. Boutros Boutros Ghali, and the cooperation protocol signing between the NCHR and the EU	December 11 th , 2022	NCHR headquarters
157	Receiving a delegation of students from Literature Faculty, Cairo University	December 14 th , 2022	NCHR headquarters
158	NCHR's first extraordinary meeting	December 15 th , 2022	NCHR headquarters
159	Awards distribution ceremony for the distinguished drama works supportive of human rights standards	December 17 th , 2022	NCHR headquarters
160	The launch of the project "Encouraging the efforts of supporting political participation and democracy mechanisms in Egypt", and signing a cooperation protocol with the Embassy of Switzerland	December 19 th , 2022	NCHR headquarters Attended by Yvonne Baumann, Swiss ambassador to Egypt
161	Zoom meeting between the NCHR, OHCHR and the human rights committee in the House of Representatives on the Universal Periodic Review mechanism	December 22 nd , 2022	NCHR headquarters
162	NCHR's executive committee second meeting	December 22 nd , 2023	NCHR headquarters
163	Seminar on "The Role of Youth in Promoting a Culture of Human Rights" Signing a cooperation protocol with Ain Shams University	December 26 th , 2023	Ain Shams University
164	NCHR's 15 th monthly meeting	January 4 th , 2023	NCHR headquarters
165	The conference: "The National Human Rights Strategy; Vision and Implementation"	January 17 th , 2023	Steinberger hotel – Down Town
166	The 15 th annual NGOs forum, entitled "The Civil Society and the Implementation of the National Human Rights Strategy"	January 17 th , 2023	NCHR headquarters

167	Signing a cooperation protocol with the Ministry of Social Solidarity	January 17 th , 2023	NCHR headquarters
168	Workshop on the Medical Liability, organized by the NCHR's legislative affairs committee	January 18 th , 2023	NCHR headquarters
169	Seminar on promoting values of tolerance, global peace and human rights Signing a cooperation protocol with the Global Tolerance and Peace Council	February 19 th , 2023	NCHR headquarters
170	Meeting Saudi embassy labour mission delegation	March 9 th , 2023	NCHR headquarters
171	Signing cooperation protocol with Cairo University	April 3 rd , 2023	Cairo University
171	NCHR's 17 th monthly meeting	April 12 th , 2023	NCHR headquarters
172	Participating in the meeting of the Senate's committees on human rights and human rights, and defense and national security	April 10 th , 2023	Senate's headquarters
173	NCHR's meeting to discuss draft internal regulations amendments	April 19 th , 2023	NCHR headquarters
174	Meeting to discuss NCHR's action plan	May 1 st , 2023	NCHR headquarters
175	The Workshop "Dialogue with Youth on human rights concepts and challenges", organized by the Swiss project in the NCHR	May 2 nd , 2023	Triumph hotel- Heliopolos
176	National Dialogue session	May 3 rd , 2023	
177	Seminar on the role of NCHR in light of the Egyptian Constitution	May 3 rd , 2023	At the headquarters of the Republican Population Party

178	Meeting at the human rights committee in the House of Representatives to follow up on the implementation of the objectives of the National Human Rights Strategy	May 9 th , 2023	Parliament's headquarters
179	Meeting with Delphine Borione, France human rights ambassador	May 9 th , 2023	Diplomatic club
180	NCHR's 18 th monthly meeting	May 10 th , 2023	NCHR headquarters
181	National Dialogue session	May 14 th , 2023	
182	First cultural salon on children and human rights – organized by the NCHR's cultural rights committee	May 15 th , 2023	NCHR headquarters
183	Meeting with Sweden's human rights ambassador	May 16 th , 2023	NCHR headquarters
184	Field visit to mental health hospitals – organized by the NCHR's social rights committee	May 17 th , 2023	Abbasseyah mental health hospital
185	Lecture to diplomats from the Republic of South Sudan on UN Human Rights System	May 28 th , 2023	Institute for Diplomatic and Consular Studies, Ministry of Foreign Affairs- Cairo. Egypt