

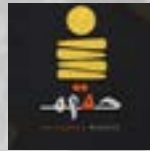


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**Article 55 Coalition Bulletin:
Violations Documented in Egypt's Prisons
and Detention Centers
(October 1-31, 2023)**



الشبكة المصرية
لحقوق الانسان
Egyptian Network For Human Rights (ENHR)



The Article 55 Coalition has released a bulletin highlighting various violations occurring in Egyptian prisons and detention centers. These violations directly contradict Article 55 of the Egyptian Constitution, which stipulates: “Anyone who is apprehended, detained, or has their freedom restricted must be treated in a manner that preserves their dignity. Torture, intimidation, coercion, physical or psychological harm shall not be inflicted upon them. Their detention or imprisonment shall only take place in designated facilities that are suitable, both in terms of humane and health standards...”

Updates on the Situation in October 2023

October 2023 marked the continuation of violations and harassment against those interested in submitting endorsements for opposition presidential candidates Ahmed El-Tantawi and Gamila Ismail. This occurred during the first half of the month, which saw the completion of the phase of collecting and submitting endorsements for the presidential elections.

The violations included arbitrary arrests of officials and members of the Tantawi campaign, on charges of joining an instigative group and spreading false news, and the mobilization of members of the pro-government Future of a Nation party, in front of the public notary offices, which claimed technical issues to deny issuing the endorsements service to citizens, thereby rendering the electoral journey impossible for opposition candidates.

These systematic violations made it nearly impossible for opposition candidates to continue in the electoral race. Hence, Gamila Ismail announced her withdrawal from the candidacy race, as did Ahmed Tantawi, who ended his electoral ambition due to his inability to collect the required number of endorsements and being targeted, along with his campaign members, with repeated threats and assaults.

In a separate development in October, during the escalating hostilities between Israel and Palestinian armed groups, the cutting off of essential supplies such as electricity, water, food, and fuel, and the air strikes that killed thousands of civilians in Gaza, the entry of humanitarian aid from the Egyptian border through the Rafah crossing was blocked, although the area is not under Israeli sovereignty. Meanwhile, several reports emerged about an Israeli plan to forcibly relocate Gaza residents to Sinai.

Additionally, despite the Egyptian regime’s clear policy of suppressing protests and other forms of expression for the past 10 years, there were [sudden](#) calls from the Future of a Nation Party to demonstrate in several governorates on October 20 under the name “The Long Live Egypt Friday”. The protests aimed to reject forced displacement and to give “authorization” to the president to take all necessary measures to preserve Egyptian national security and reject the displacement of Palestinians.

However, an independent demonstration [took place](#) in Tahrir Square in the heart of Cairo, with participants chanting the slogan “This is a real demonstration, not just an authorization.” The demonstrators expressed their rejection of the mass killings taking place against Gaza civilians. Security forces quickly attempted to disperse the protesters, and during the following days, security forces [arrested](#) dozens of citizens from their homes. The total number of those arrested in Cairo and Alexandria alone reached 42 individuals, who were subsequently interrogated by the Supreme State Security Prosecution on charges of joining a terrorist group, vandalism, assembly, and committing a terrorist act.

Regarding judicial developments, the military ruler [endorsed](#) the final sentence against student activist Moaz Al-Sharqawi, sentencing him to 10 years in prison and five years of probation after completing his sentence. This decision was related to the same case in which former presidential candidate Abdel Moneim Aboul Fotouh and others were sentenced to 15 years of imprisonment. This ratification rendered the judgment final and irreversible, leaving presidential pardon as the only recourse for altering or revoking the punishment.

Summary of Violations documented in Egyptian Detention Centers

The Article 55 Coalition organizations documented the following violations within prisons and other detention centers in Egypt during October 2023:

- 4 deaths.
- An appeal regarding poor detention conditions leading to a hunger strike.
- An appeal regarding extended pretrial detention despite a health crisis.

Death cases included:

- The [death](#) of political detainee Alaa Fathallah Abu Hikal inside his cell in the Tenth of Ramadan Prison on October 2, after being held in pretrial detention for three and a half years.
- The [death](#) of political detainee Alhadi Mohmed Mohammed Alhadi inside the Wadi Al-Natrun 430 Prison on October 25, due to high blood pressure and denial of medical treatment at the prison hospital.
- The [death](#) of political detainee Gamal Taha inside his cell in the Shebin El Kom deportation center on October 8, due to the denial of necessary medical care as he suffered from a heart condition.
- The [death](#) of political detainee Ali Abdullah Abdel Ghaffar inside his cell in the Qanater Prison on October 26. He suffered from diabetes, had his leg amputated inside the prison, and subsequently suffered from medical negligence.
- Additionally, there were [appeals](#) from the family of Omar Mohamed Ali regarding poor detention conditions in Badr Prison, which led him to initiate a hunger strike.
- There was also an [appeal](#) from the family of the human rights activist and translator, Marwa Arafa, due to her prolonged pre-trial detention, which has exceeded the legal duration. This situation is especially dire considering her daughter's separation from her, along with Marwa's personal struggles with chronic nerve inflammation and gastroesophageal reflux disease

Details of the violations can be reviewed on the media outlets of the member organizations of the coalition.

Summary of Violations Monitored by the Article 55 Alliance in Egyptian Detention Centers Since the Beginning of 2023 to the Present:

- 34 deaths.
- 56 cases of medical neglect of detainees in critical conditions requiring medical intervention.
- 40 individual and collective appeals related to visitation restrictions, including the complete closure of some prisons and other detention centers.

The Coalition emphasizes that the documented violations within Egyptian prisons and detention centers are not surprising, as they reflect the overall approach of the Egyptian authorities towards detainees, particularly political ones. It is a systematic approach and not just individual violations as promoted by the Egyptian Ministry of Interior.

The policy of impunity employed by the Egyptian authorities towards human rights violators within detention facilities has encouraged and fueled these practices, to the point where they have become standard operating procedures within the Egyptian prison administration. We have not seen any leadership or responsible individuals being held accountable or even reprimanded despite the documented and well-established violations that may have occurred.

In light of these concerns, the Article 55 Coalition calls for an investigation into these violations, holding those responsible accountable in accordance with Egyptian and international law, while adhering to the minimum standards set by the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners and the Egyptian prison regulations. Moreover, it demands an end to their violations and the provision of living conditions that are compatible with the humanity of the detainees.



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