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MenaFem Movement for Economic, Development And Ecological Justice



## Joint Stakeholder Submission to the UN Human Rights Council's 4th Universal Periodic Review - EGYPT

48th session (Jan - Feb 2025)

Submitted by:

### Main submitting organization:

[Egyptian Front for Human Rights \(EFHR\)](#) is an independent European organization established in the Czech Republic in 2017. The Front works to improve the human rights situation in Egypt through research, advocacy, and legal work, specifically in criminal justice.

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### Other contributing organizations:

- **The Center for Egyptian Women's Legal Assistance (CEWLA)**, founded in 1995, is a civil society organization that provides legal support and assistance to Egyptian women based on the Egyptian constitution, Egyptian legal framework, and international conventions. CEWLA was registered with the Ministry of Social Solidarity (MSS) according to the new NGO law #84 for the year 2002 under the number 1829 for the year 2003 and reregistered under the same number in 2019. CEWLA was established to combat violations of women's rights and achieve legal,

social, economic, and cultural rights for women through changing discriminatory laws against women in Egypt and building women's capacities and knowledge. CEWLA works on access to justice, combating violence against women, sexual and reproductive health and rights, public participation of women, economic and social rights, and climate change.

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- [MENA Fem Movement for Economic, Development and Ecological Justice](#): MENA Fem is a movement established in 2023. It comprises local and regional organizations dedicated to achieving equitable development and fostering a just, ecologically sustainable feminist economy. MENA Fem works to confront poverty, deprivation, inequalities, and lack of substantive democratic rights by empowering communities and vulnerable groups to resist all forms of injustices and inequalities through the provision of jointly developed tools, support, and strategies.

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- [The Egyptian Commission for Rights and Freedoms \(ECRF\)](#) is an independent Egyptian human rights NGO supporting oppressed persons throughout Egypt. Seeking to establish "a homeland that protects our humanity," ECRF takes peaceful, human rights-based actions in order to raise human dignity and preserve the rule of law in Egypt. It is action on a wide range of human rights issues from enforced disappearances to death penalty, minorities rights, refugees rights, freedom of expression, economic, social and environmental rights

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- [Egyptian Human Rights Forum \(EHRF\)](#) is an independent Egyptian human rights organization founded in March 2018. EHRF aims to promote the implementation and dissemination of international human rights law in Egypt, advocate for a human rights-based approach to democracy and the rule of law and mainstream human rights in public policy. EHRF seeks to achieve this mission through dialogue, networking, policy research, advocacy, raising public awareness, capacity building and the integration of young activists in the work of the human rights movement. EHRF prioritizes dialogue with political, civil, and human rights actors both inside Egypt and in the diaspora. Through dialogue, the Forum aims to achieve a broad consensus on a series of measures and alternatives rooted in shared human rights values. The common ground will serve as a launching pad for constitutional and legal reforms in Egypt.

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- [The Tahrir Institute for Middle East Policy \(TIMEP\)](#) is a policy institute that centers localized perspectives in the global discourse to foster transparent, accountable, and just societies in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. TIMEP works to ensure that the voices of experts and advocates from and in the region are heard, that their work is strengthened, and that they as individuals are protected.

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## **I. Introduction**

1. This joint submission documents Egypt's inability to fully ensure its population's enjoyment of the minimum essential levels of economic and social rights, particularly for some vulnerable and marginalized groups such as women, rural populations, and people living in poverty, as well as certain groups of prisoners and human rights defenders. The information contained in this submission is predominantly based on first-hand information and observations gathered by the submitting organizations and supported by other credible open-source data and research.

## **II. Background and prior relevant UPR recommendations**

2. During the last UPR cycle, Egypt received and supported many recommendations related to economic and social rights, particularly the right to health, education, work, social security, and an adequate standard of living. The recommendations urged Egypt to take all necessary steps to ensure that its population, including vulnerable and marginalized groups, enjoys the minimum standards of these rights.<sup>1</sup>
3. At the end of the review, Egypt confirmed that in line with its Sustainable Development Strategy, it will take steps to "implement major projects to provide employment opportunities, adequate housing, safe drinking water, sanitation, and health care, to promote respect for cultural pluralism, and to improve the quality of education." Egypt also reiterated its determination to "provide a decent life for all citizens without discrimination."<sup>2</sup>
4. Egypt has been facing persistent economic challenges for over a decade. These economic crises led to the Egyptian government turning to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for assistance in 2016, 2020, 2022, and again in 2024. The economic reforms agreed to with the IMF involved deep austerity measures, resulting in cuts to food and energy subsidies, increased fees for government services, and cuts to spending on health, education, and public social protection programs writ large.<sup>3</sup>
5. While the risks austerity programs pose to economic and social rights are well-documented and understood, the OHCHR affirms that "austerity measures should identify and ensure the maintenance of a minimum core content of the rights."<sup>4</sup> However, as will be discussed in this report, Egypt has not put in place effective measures to mitigate the impact of these policies on its population and ensure its enjoyment of fundamental economic and social rights. Furthermore, Egypt has exercised punitive strategies against particular groups, including certain groups of prisoners and human rights defenders, which have exacerbated the impact of the government's austerity policies on these groups and their families, depriving them of the minimum standards of economic and social rights.
6. Since the last UPR cycle, Egypt has not achieved its constitutionally mandated minimum health and education spending. As a result, the public sector has been unable to provide quality services accessible to everyone, pushing people to private sector alternatives, which are unaffordable for those experiencing poverty. The government's austerity policies have also contributed to declining access to just and favorable work conditions, particularly for marginalized women. Additionally, austerity has contributed to increased poverty, accompanied by the government cuts to spending on social protection programs and food subsidies, resulting in the state's inability to

provide the minimum adequate living standards for its population. The situation is particularly dire for certain groups of prisoners and human rights defenders, whose economic and social rights have been severely undermined by the punitive measures imposed by the state and exacerbated by austerity.

7. The following recommendations made during the 3rd review are relevant to this submission and were supported by Egypt. Yet, the state has not been able to fully ensure that the essence of economic and social rights is equally met for its population:

<b>Right to Health</b>	<b>Source of Position</b>
31.273 Continue efforts to provide the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health to its citizens, and to expand the new national health program (Jordan);	A/HRC/43/16/Add.1 - Para.13
<b>Right to Education</b>	<b>Source of Position</b>
31.58 Adopt the necessary measures to eliminate discrimination and to foster access to education for vulnerable groups (Qatar);  <i>See also recommendations 31.278, 31.286, 31.289, 31.291</i>	A/HRC/43/16/Add.1 - Para.13
<b>Right to Work and to Just &amp; Favorable Conditions of Work &amp; Labor Rights</b>	<b>Source of Position</b>
31.224 Continue the ongoing efforts to reduce unemployment levels, as well as to enhance access to affordable housing (India);	A/HRC/43/16/Add.1 - Para.13
31.232 Strengthen efforts to ensure women's employment and appropriate conditions for enjoyment of their right to work (Uzbekistan);	A/HRC/43/16/Add.1 - Para.13
31.235 Continue efforts to ensure equal job opportunities for women (Viet Nam);	A/HRC/43/16/Add.1 - Para.13
<b>Right to an Adequate Standard of Living</b>	<b>Source of Position</b>
31.264 Continue to implement social housing programs and projects, in an effort to realize adequate housing for all citizens (Angola);  <i>See also recommendations 31.268 and 31.269</i>	A/HRC/43/16/Add.1 - Para.13
<b>Right to Social Security</b>	<b>Source of Position</b>
31.256 Continue measures to reduce poverty, in particular in rural and underdeveloped areas (Indonesia);  <i>See also recommendations (31.257 to 31.262, 31.265 to 31.267, 31.270, 31.271)</i>	A/HRC/43/16/Add.1 - Para.13

### III. Legal Framework

8. Egypt's Constitution guarantees fundamental economic and social rights. For instance, the Constitution ensures people's right to access quality healthcare and education without discrimination. It specifies that government spending on health and education sectors should be at least 3% and 4%, respectively, of the Gross National Income (GNI).<sup>5</sup> The Constitution also guarantees people's right to just and favorable work conditions. It ensures their right to social protection and adequate housing that maintains human dignity and promotes social justice.<sup>6</sup>
9. According to Egypt's Constitution, the state's economic system "aims at achieving prosperity through sustainable development and social justice so as to raise the real growth rate of the national economy and the standard of living, increase job opportunities, reduce unemployment rates, and eliminate poverty." Furthermore, the state's economic system "shall ensure equal opportunities and fair distribution of development returns, reduce the differences among incomes, and adhere to a minimum wage and pension ensuring a decent life."<sup>7</sup>
10. Economic and social rights are also guaranteed by international and regional instruments ratified by Egypt. The International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) obligates the state party to **respect, protect, and fulfill** these rights progressively and to take all necessary measures to ensure the gradual and effective application of the Covenant.<sup>8</sup> It also obligates the state party to **immediately eliminate all kinds of discrimination, take non-retrogressive measures, and ensure the equal enjoyment of the minimum essential levels of each right.**<sup>9</sup> The same applies to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR)<sup>10</sup> and the Arab Charter on Human Rights (ACHR)<sup>11</sup>, which oblige state parties—including Egypt—to undertake all necessary measures to guarantee the equal enjoyment of rights to health, education, work, social security, and an adequate standard of living.
11. Despite constitutional and international legal commitments, supported recommendations, and voluntary pledges made by Egypt since the last UPR cycle, the government has not put in place effective measures to mitigate the impact of its austerity policies on its population and ensure equal enjoyment of the minimum essential levels of these rights. Moreover, the state applied punitive measures on particular groups, such as certain groups of prisoners and human rights defenders, which exacerbated the impact of austerity on them and their families, resulting in undermining their economic and social rights.

### IV. The dire and disproportionate impact of the government's austerity policies on people's economic and social rights

#### A. *The Right to Health and Education*

12. Egypt has made international and constitutional commitments to ensure people's right to comprehensive and quality health care. However, the government's austerity policies, coupled with the lack of effective measures to mitigate their impact on rights, fail to meet these commitments. While the World Health Organization recommends governments spend at least 5% of General Domestic Product (GDP) on healthcare<sup>12</sup> and

Egypt's Constitution specifies that government spending on health should be at least 3% of GNI, the government health expenditure decreased from 1.66% of GDP in 2017 to 1.39% in 2020, only recovering to its 2017 levels in 2021.<sup>13</sup> As such, the government's spending on the health sector doesn't meet constitutional obligations or international standards in real terms (*for non-technical readers, please see the endnote below*).<sup>14</sup>

13. Government cuts to spending on the health sector have limited the ability of many to access quality healthcare services. Despite Egypt's gradually increasing population, reaching over 100 million in early 2020,<sup>15</sup> the number of hospital beds available per capita fell from 15.6 beds per 10,000 people in 2012 to 12.5 beds per 10,000 population in 2020.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, the government cuts have resulted in poor quality healthcare services provided by public facilities, which are reported to lack medical equipment, qualified personnel, sanitation, and safety measures, especially in rural areas.<sup>17</sup>
14. This capacity shortage, coupled with the low quality of public healthcare services, has pushed more and more people to opt for the private health sector, which is highly expensive. Less than one in ten people is covered by private health insurance.<sup>18</sup> As a result, out-of-pocket (OOP) expenditures became the primary healthcare financing source,<sup>19</sup> making the right to quality healthcare largely unaffordable to many marginalized and vulnerable groups.<sup>20</sup>
15. Despite the government's long-term plans to implement universal health insurance and expand public healthcare coverage, the poor quality of the public health sector fails to fulfill the significant needs of many to enjoy their fundamental right to access affordable, quality healthcare.<sup>21</sup>
16. Access to healthcare is also deteriorating in detention settings. While the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners states that prisoners "should have access to necessary healthcare services free of charge without discrimination,"<sup>22</sup> the state has not met this standard. According to first-hand information collected by the EFHR and the ECRF, the health services provided to prisoners are severely inadequate, which sometimes results in death. For example, prison hospitals often fail to address prisoners' health complaints, usually prescribing painkillers without providing necessary treatment. EFHR documented tens of complaints submitted by prisoners to the Public Prosecution and courts, indicating the deterioration of their health condition and their exposure to deliberate medical negligence as a punitive strategy.<sup>23</sup>
17. The government cuts to spending on the health sector, coupled with medical negligence in prisons, have forced prisoners' families to bear the cost and effort of delivering necessary medicines and healthcare supplies to prisoners during their visits. Doing so, however, is extremely challenging, with families having to pay significant bribes to some prison officers to ensure their loved ones receive the treatments they need.<sup>24</sup>
18. The education sector has also not been spared by the government's spending cuts. Public spending on education in Egypt fell from 3.6 percent of GDP in 2015/2016 to 2.5 percent in 2021/2022,<sup>25</sup> which negatively impacted the quality of public education and deprived many, particularly those experiencing poverty, of their right to access free, quality education services.

19. The deterioration in the quality of public education has pushed families to opt for private schooling if they can afford it, leaving poorer families with limited educational opportunities for their children. Private school enrollment in secondary education increased from 7.25 in 2016 to 9.28% in 2021.<sup>26</sup> The state's lack of ability to ensure quality public education often reproduces the disparities between wealthy and poor households, as wealthy households can attain decent private education that provides their children with the skills needed to compete in the private sector, while poor households send their kids to underfunded public schools.<sup>27</sup>

*B. The Right to Work in Just and Favorable Conditions*

20. While the Egyptian government's efforts to reduce the unemployment rate in recent years are notable,<sup>28</sup> the submitting organizations are still concerned about the right of women, particularly those from marginalized groups, to work and enjoy just and favorable work conditions amidst the government austerity policies.

21. Government spending cuts on public sectors, especially education and healthcare, which were significant employers of women in Egypt,<sup>29</sup> and the privatization of public services have disproportionately impacted women's job opportunities, particularly those from marginalized groups. The negative impact of this austerity measure on women's workforce participation is evident in the decline of the women's labor force participation rate from 25% in 2016 to 17% in 2022.<sup>30</sup>

22. Women from lower socio-economic backgrounds face greater challenges in accessing private sector jobs, as they often require higher qualifications.<sup>31</sup> This drives many of these women into the informal sector, where pay disparity is significantly higher and benefits do not exist, increasing their vulnerability to unemployment, poverty, and exploitation.<sup>32</sup>

23. The situation is made worse by the lack of government policies that protect women's right to fair and favorable working conditions in the private sector. The private sector does not offer as much flexibility for women and has a higher level of gender disparity than the public sector. For instance, private sector companies are only required to provide onsite childcare if they employ more than 100 women, while most women in the private sector work in small and midsize enterprises.<sup>33</sup> This in itself disincentivizes companies from hiring women because of the perceived associated costs of providing onsite childcare. It also deepens the discriminatory belief that childcare is the exclusive duty of women, so it should only be provided if women are hired and not men. Moreover, the private sector usually gravitates away from hiring women due to preconceptions about maternity leaves affecting productivity.<sup>34</sup> As such, the state has not been able to protect the rights of women to just and favorable work conditions, especially amidst harsh austerity measures.

24. It's worth noting that the disproportionate impact on poor women's right to work has been severely exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic. A study conducted by CEWLA in May 2020 on the impact of COVID-19 on poor women showed that 84% of the women in paid work in the study were negatively affected, whether by job loss or reduced pay due to the pandemic. A hundred percent of daily wage-earning women surveyed were harmed by the crisis, whether through loss or reduction of wages, with the absence of a strong social protection umbrella for these groups. Eighty-five percent of the total households of non-working women lost their paid work or suffered from

reduced wages as a result of the pandemic. Basic needs were the major concern of women during the pandemic (food, medical treatment, rent, sanitary napkins, milk, and diapers), particularly with increasing prices and the absence of market control.

25. The higher burden of disease stemming from austerity policies has significant gendered impacts on Egyptian women, who often have to take on the role of primary caregiver to sick or elderly family members due to the inability to afford professional health services.<sup>35</sup> Because of the government's lack of investment in healthcare and alternative services during the pandemic, 21% of unmarried women and 41% of married women in Egypt reported that their unpaid care work increased.<sup>36</sup> This is particularly alarming considering the already substantial pre-pandemic gap in unpaid care work, where "women worked on average for 30.25 hours a week in household and care labor, compared to an average of 4.19 hours for men."<sup>37</sup>

C. The Right to an Adequate Standard of Living and to Social Security

26. The government's austerity policies have also disproportionately affected people's right to an adequate standard of living, including adequate housing and food, as well as social security.
27. The government has reduced spending on affordable housing projects,<sup>38</sup> resulting in a housing shortage and forcing many families into substandard living conditions. While this policy generally affects people in Egypt, the submitting organizations are concerned that it will disproportionately impact women's right to adequate housing due to the following factors:
28. The ownership of some housing units that the Ministry of Housing offers youth is conditional on providing proof of income.<sup>39</sup> This poses a challenge for women, given that the rate of Egyptian women's participation in official work is low, and women from marginalized groups often work in informal sectors, where providing proof of income is challenging. The situation is further exacerbated by discriminatory practices and traditions that often give men control over land and properties. While there are no laws that prevent women from ownership, the lack of state policies to protect women's right to ownership makes them more vulnerable to homelessness and inadequate housing. This means that women are disadvantaged and less likely to secure adequate housing due to austerity measures, gender-based discrimination, and the absence of effective policies to adequately protect their right to adequate housing.
29. Government spending cuts have also affected people's right to social protection, resulting in significant reductions in social protection coverage for unemployment, maternity, disability, and other situations. According to the International Labour Organization, only 34.7% of the population is covered by at least one social protection scheme (the statistics exclude health coverage).<sup>40</sup> Around 40% are not covered for old age.<sup>41</sup> Unemployment schemes only cover 0.1% of the population, while only one in three people are covered by work injury insurance, and likewise for disability coverage.<sup>42</sup> These coverage rates are also highly gendered; five out of six women are not covered by maternity schemes, women are four times less likely to be covered for unemployment or work injury, and more than three times less likely to be covered for disability and old age.<sup>43</sup>



30. Moreover, the government's reduction in food subsidies as an austerity measure has contributed to extreme poverty and heightened food insecurity. Spending on energy subsidies fell 4.3 percentage points between 2014 and 2021, while spending on food subsidies relative to GDP declined from 1.6 percent to 1.3 percent, leading to a deterioration of the right to food and its accessibility.<sup>44</sup> The government undertook these cuts to food subsidies despite extraordinary levels of inflation, further intensifying food insecurity. Inflation on food was 50.9% year on year in February 2024.<sup>45</sup> As a result of increasing food costs and a declining standard of living, the prevalence of severe food insecurity went from 6.7 percent of the population in 2019 to 8.8 in 2021. The prevalence of undernourishment as a percentage of the population also increased from 4.9 in 2011 to 7.2 in 2021.<sup>46</sup>
31. Food insecurity is particularly dire for some vulnerable groups. Women interviewed by CEWLA reported having to resort to borrowing and buying very limited quantities of low-cost, low-quality basic foods. Some reported selling their furniture or personal belongings in order to buy food. Members of these families face many risks, whether health risks due to the inability to buy necessary medicine or nutritional risks due to the reduction in protein consumption and some types of essential food. Moreover, they face the threat of losing housing and basic services due to accumulated rent, as well as water and electricity bills.<sup>47</sup>
32. The situation is even more alarming in prisons. The austerity policies, coupled with the punitive measures applied to prisoners by prison officials, have a severe impact on their right to adequate living standards, specifically regarding adequate food. The UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners states, "[e]very prisoner shall be provided by the prison administration at the usual hours with food of nutritional value adequate for health and strength, of wholesome quality and well prepared and served."<sup>48</sup> The Minister of the Interior's Resolution No. 691 of 1998 also outlines the type and number of meals that must be provided to prisoners. However, ECRF has monitored that prisoners receive small quantities of poor quality food.<sup>49</sup> This pushes them to purchase expensive, better quality food from the prison cafeteria at their own expense or to have to wait for their families to bring them food during visits. According to interviews conducted by the ECRF with a group of prisoners' families, the families expressed that the prison officials may prevent the entry of food that families bring during visits and deliberately provide poor quality food to prisoners to push them to buy food from the prison cafeteria at exorbitant prices.
33. Prisoners' right to an adequate standard of living is further impacted by the state practice of making family visits challenging and arduous as an additional punitive measure against prisoners, reducing how often they see their loved ones and receive quality food and healthcare supplies. This is done, for example, by deliberately placing prisoners in prisons very far from their place of residence, which imposes hardship and a very high cost for the families visiting the prisoners.<sup>50</sup> This violates the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, which states that "[p]risoners shall be allocated, to the extent possible, to prisons close to their homes or places of social rehabilitation."<sup>51</sup>
34. Another reason for the high cost of prison visits is that families often have to pay bribes to ensure food and medicine are delivered to the prisoner. The ambiguity in Egyptian law regarding visit bans and the list of prohibited items for prisoners from abroad exacerbates the situation. According to ECRF's observations, prison authorities use

these ambiguous regulations to either punish prisoners by denying visits or to prevent the entry of items such as medicines and food brought by their families from outside.<sup>52</sup> These practices have made prison visits unaffordable for many families, reducing the prisoners' opportunities to enjoy a minimum adequate standard of living.

35. It is also worth noting that the state pursues punitive strategies that undermine Egyptians' economic and social rights abroad. Egyptian authorities have weaponized the Terrorist Entities Law to designate certain political activists and human rights defenders abroad on terrorist lists, a strategy of transnational repression.<sup>53</sup> According to interviews conducted by EHRF with human rights defenders abroad, this punitive strategy exposes them to significant challenges in opening bank accounts and conducting financial transactions. In addition to that, the state often punishes certain human rights defenders by depriving them of consular services, such as obtaining or renewing identification documents. All of these practices implicate their access to fundamental economic and social rights, such as the right to work, the right to access healthcare and educational services, and the right to an adequate standard of living. Moreover, these punitive policies by the state result in freezing their financial transactions with their families and prevent them from managing their assets in Egypt.

## **V. Recommendations**

In light of the aforementioned findings, the submitting organizations call on states participating in the UPR process to make the following recommendations to Egypt:

1. Egypt should respect, protect, and fulfill the rights to health, education, work, social security, and an adequate standard of living for its population, particularly vulnerable and marginalized groups.
2. Egypt should respect its obligation to equally provide the minimum standards of economic and social rights to its population by implementing effective measures to mitigate the impact of austerity policies on the vulnerable and marginalized population and ensure their enjoyment of fundamental economic and social rights.
3. Egypt should fulfill its obligations to ensure people's equal enjoyment of their right to health and education by increasing public spending on these vital sectors.
4. Egypt should fulfill its obligations to equally provide its population with the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health by taking all possible procedures to abide by the percentage laid out in the Constitution. This is to improve the quality of the public health sector in order to respond effectively to the population's needs, particularly in rural and marginalized areas, as well as increasing access to affordable, nutritious foods.
5. Egypt should accelerate coverage of all provinces and citizens with universal health insurance, and find alternatives to fund the contributions of the most vulnerable groups, including women.
6. Egypt should increase investment and government spending on the health sector, thus improving service delivery and access for the most vulnerable groups, including women.

7. Egypt should revise labor laws and related health and social insurance laws to include new provisions and protections, specifically to cover those working at a distance work, flexible working hours and the related rights and duties of workers and business owners.
8. Egypt should amend and draft the proper legal frameworks to establish strong, independent labor unions that support women in line with the Constitution.
9. Egypt should fulfill its obligations to ensure people's access to good-quality education by taking all possible procedures to abide by the percentage laid out in the Constitution to improve the conditions of the public education sector and ensuring all children's equal access to quality education.
10. Egypt should protect women's rights to work and to just and favorable work conditions by implementing regulations safeguarding women's labor rights in the private sector and actively monitoring women's work conditions.
11. Egypt should fulfill its obligation to ensure people's right to adequate housing by implementing policies that ensure equal access to affordable housing, as well as ensuring the right to own property, especially for women who have faced gender-based discrimination in this regard.
12. Egypt should fulfill its obligation to ensure people's rights to an adequate standard of living and to social security by restoring food subsidies and increasing spending on social protection programs to protect the population against poverty and its different risks, such as unemployment, sickness, work injury, maternity, disability, and old age.
13. Egypt should respect prisoners' rights to health and adequate standards of living by halting unfair, punitive strategies against them and their families, investigating their complaints of medical negligence and denial of visits, and facilitating their access to fundamental economic and social rights.
14. Egypt should abide by the prisons' bylaws to allow prisoners' families to provide affordable food and clothes. Moreover, the state should reduce the prisons' food pricing to ensure accessibility of food to all prisoners.
15. Egypt should respect the rights of human rights defenders and their families to adequate standards of living. This can be done by halting transnational punitive strategies against them, facilitating the issuing and renewing of their identification documents, ensuring their full access to consular services, and facilitating their ability to manage their properties and financial transactions in Egypt for the benefit of their families.

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<sup>1</sup>Universal Periodic Review (UPR of Egypt) (3rd Cycle - 34th Session) (November 2019), [Available [here](#)].

<sup>2</sup> UN General Assembly, "Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review - Egypt", UN Doc A/HRC/43/16/Add.1, Para 13 (March 5, 2020) [Available [here](#)].

<sup>3</sup> Sahar Mechmech, 'Bretton Woods Institutions Turn 80: Time to Retire Their Failed Economic Recipes in MENA?', Tahrir Institution for Middle East Policy (TIMEP) (July 2, 2024) [Available [here](#)].

<sup>4</sup> United Nations, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) "Report on Austerity Measures and Economic and Social Rights", Para 20 [Available [here](#)].

<sup>5</sup> Egypt Constitution amended in 2019, Articles 18, 19.

<sup>6</sup> Egypt Constitution amended in 2019, Articles 12, 13, 17, 78, 79.

<sup>7</sup> Egypt Constitution amended in 2019, Article 27.

<sup>8</sup> International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, ICESCR, articles 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13.

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- <sup>9</sup> OHCHR, Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, "Obligation of the State" [Available [here](#)].
- <sup>10</sup> African Charter on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR), Articles 2, 15, 16, 17.
- <sup>11</sup> Arab Charter on Human Rights, which Egypt (ACHR), Articles 3, 34, 36, 38, 39, 41.
- <sup>12</sup> Savedoff, William, "How Much Should Countries Spend on Health?", World Health Organization, Discussion Paper no.2, (2003) [Available [here](#)].
- <sup>13</sup> The World Bank Group, "Domestic General Government Health Expenditure (% of GDP) - Egypt" (2021) [Available [here](#)].
- <sup>14</sup> Note for non-technical readers: Spending as a percentage of Gross National Income (GNI) is necessarily equal to or less than spending as a percentage of General Domestic Product (GDP). So, if the state does not meet the GDP spending threshold, it will necessarily not meet the GNI spending threshold.
- <sup>15</sup> Amy Olassa, "7 Facts about Healthcare in Egypt", The Borgen Project, (August 18, 2020) [Available [here](#)].
- <sup>16</sup> World Health Organization, Eastern Mediterranean Health Observatory [Available [here](#)].
- <sup>17</sup> Amy Olassa, "7 Facts about Healthcare in Egypt", The Borgen Project (August 18, 2020) [Available [here](#)].
- <sup>18</sup> Abbas Y.M., Abul-Magd E., Elmekawy A., Abaza S., "The Evolution of Private Health Insurance in Egypt Within the Implementation of Universal Health Coverage", Value In Health 19, A1-A318, PHP 196 (May 2016) [Available [here](#)].
- <sup>19</sup> Nagui Salama. "Health Equity in Egypt: Reflections in 2022", Alternative Policy Solutions, (May 17, 2022) [Available [here](#)].
- <sup>20</sup> Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health, "Egypt: Summary" (January 31, 2023). [Available [here](#)]
- <sup>21</sup> Nagui Salama. "Health Equity in Egypt: Reflections in 2022", Alternative Policy Solutions (May 17, 2022) [Available [here](#)].
- <sup>22</sup> United Nations, General Assembly, "UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners states that prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules), Rule 24 (2016), [Available [here](#)].
- <sup>23</sup> Egyptian Front for Human Rights, "Save the lives of detainees: The Egyptian Front condemns the escalation of deaths in places of detention as a result of medical negligence"(title translated from Arabic) (September 13, 2020) [Available [here](#)].
- <sup>24</sup> Egyptian Commission for Rights and Freedoms, "The Queue: a Report on the Conditions of Prison Visits from the Families' Perspective" (title translated from Arabic) p19 [Available [here](#)].
- <sup>25</sup> Alternative Policy Solutions, "Education for Some.. Implications of Government Spending for Access to Education" (October 1, 2023) [Available [here](#)].
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