

**Refugee Review Tribunal
AUSTRALIA**

RRT RESEARCH RESPONSE

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Questions

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RESPONSE

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Reports of travel restrictions being placed on prominent Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood figures have appeared regularly in recent years; with senior or controversial identities associated with the Muslim Brotherhood being prevented from travelling outside Egypt at a particular moment or as part of an ongoing ban. It would not appear from such reports that Muslim Brotherhood figures are regularly denied passports as such (though this has reportedly happened) and it would not appear that Muslim Brotherhood figures are prevented from departing Egypt in all instances (a November 2008 *Agence France Presse* report refers to an incident in which only one member of a Muslim Brotherhood delegation was prevented from exiting the country). No reports could be located which referred to how support or sympathy for the Muslim Brotherhood might affect less prominent Egyptians in terms of their ability to travel outside the country (for reports of the confiscation or stripping of passports belonging to Muslim Brotherhood figures, see: Drummond, J. 2002, 'Special Series September 11 – The Year After The Day – Modern Islam's Pragmatic Voices – Moderate', *Financial Times*, 4 September – Attachment 8; Pugh, D. 1990, 'Islamic opposition feared by the Cairo government', *The Guardian*, 13 September – Attachment 10; for reports which note restrictions upon Muslim Brotherhood figures but which would appear not to suggest restrictions on passports as such, see: 'Muslim Brotherhood leaders grounded in Egypt' 2008,

Daily News, source: *Agence France Presse*, 25 November
<http://www.thedailynewsegypt.com/article.aspx?ArticleID=18060> – Accessed 21 May 2009 – Attachment 16; Salah, Md. 2008, ‘Banned from Traveling’, *Dar Al Hayat*, 31 August – Attachment 6).

In April 2008 the Tribunal received advice from the Cairo post of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade which related that: “We have no information to suggest that a person that has been detained, but not charged, for political activities may be denied a passport”; though: “some interlocutors suggested that, if a person faced a serious criminal charge, including in relation to security or political matters, it may be possible that they would be denied a passport”. The Cairo post also advised that: “Egyptian citizens would be prevented from exiting Egypt if their name appeared on the official ‘alert list’” (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2008, *DFAT Report No. 802 – Egypt: RRT Information Request: EGY33006*, 3 April – Attachment 1; for the Tribunal email which elicited this advice, see: RRT Research and Information 2008, Email to DFAT ‘Refugee Review Tribunal Information Request: EGY33006’, 11 March – Attachment 2)

The research which informs this Research Response was conducted in a very short time-frame (one day). Information was collated through searches conducted online within relevant freely available news and human rights websites on the Web as well as within the Factiva News Database. The submitted search-strings sought to retrieve reports with text detailing mentions of the Muslim Brotherhood (The Society of the Muslim Brothers; or the Muslim Brothers; or *al-Ikhwan*) in connection with terms such as: passport, visa, travel, airport and alike; as well as in connection with: sympathisers, supporters, voters, and so forth. An overview of the available source information follows below under the following sub-headings:

- *April 2008 DFAT advice on the issuance of Egyptian passports;*
- *Egyptian passports and the Muslim Brotherhood;*
- *Further reports on travel bans, departure controls and the Muslim Brotherhood; and*
- *General treatment of Muslim Brotherhood sympathisers.*

Should background to these issues be required, a June 2008 International Crisis Group report, *Egypt’s Muslim Brothers: Confrontation or Integration?*, provides extensive coverage of the historical relationship between the Muslim Brotherhood and the government of President Hosni Mubarak (see pages 3 to 15). The report also provides an overview of the Muslim Brotherhood’s current political platform as it was articulated in a “draft political platform” published in early 2007 (see pages 15 to 20) (International Crisis Group 2008, *Egypt’s Muslim Brothers: Confrontation or Integration?*, Middle East/North Africa Report no.76, 18 June – Attachment 5).

April 2008 DFAT advice on the issuance of Egyptian passports

In April 2008 the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) provided extensive advice to the Tribunal on a range of passport related issues, including whether a person might be denied a passport on the basis of his/her political activities. The advice received from DFAT’s post in Egypt follows below:

A. DFAT Cable CA 139 of 1993 provided information in relation to security checks on passport applicants and whether bribery could enable a person to avoid such checks.

...(ii) Please provide information on whether a person who has been previously detained, but not charged, for political activities may be denied a passport, and whether bribery may be effective or required for such a person to obtain a passport.

Officially, all Egyptian citizens are entitled to a passport. We have no information to suggest that a person that has been detained, but not charged, for political activities may be denied a passport. However, some interlocutors suggested that, if a person faced a serious criminal charge, including in relation to security or political matters, it may be possible that they would be denied a passport. We are unable to confirm this information with Egyptian government authorities due to the sensitive nature of the matter.

We are not aware of whether bribery may be effective or required for a person that has been detained, but not charged, for political activities to obtain a passport. Interlocutors noted, however, the pervasive nature of bribery in Egypt. None would be surprised if a degree of bribery did exist in relating to obtaining a passport. Whether bribery could be used to obtain a passport would likely depend on the seriousness of the criminal charge.

B. DFAT Country Information Report No. 418/99 of 1999 provided information to indicate that the Egyptian government maintained tight controls on movements into and out of Egypt, and had begun a seven year project to use sophisticated computer technology to limit passport fraud. DFAT Country Information Report No.116/02 of 2002 provided information on exit procedures for Egyptian nationals.

(i) Please provide information on current exit procedures and security checking for Egyptian nationals.

The Egyptian government maintains strict controls on the exit of all people out of Egypt. All Egyptians citizens exiting Egypt must have a valid Egyptian passport and a valid entry visa for the country to which they intend travelling. State authorities are responsible for checking that passport requirements are met. Airport staff are generally responsible for checking that visa requirements are met.

New machine-readable passports are currently being phased-in. This process commenced in 2008. We assume this is the “seven year project to use sophisticated computer technology to limit passport fraud” referred to in DFAT Country Information Report No. 418/99 of 1999.

Interlocutors agreed that Egyptian citizens would be prevented from exiting Egypt if their name appeared on the official “alert list” (DFAT Country Information Report No.116/02 of 2002 refers). We are unable to clarify with the Egyptian government the exact details of how this alert process operates due to the sensitive nature of the matter. Interlocutors noted that whether or not a person appeared on the list would likely depend on the seriousness of the alleged crime. Any person that may be wanted by the authorities in relation to security matters would likely appear on the list.

(ii) Please provide information on whether bribery may be effective or required for persons wanted by authorities to obtain exit.

As with the answer to A(ii) above, we have no information to suggest that bribery would be effective or required for persons wanted by authorities to obtain exit. Interlocutors noted that bribery existed in many forms in Egypt, and the possibility that bribery can be used to obtain exit from Egypt could not be ruled out. However, it would be difficult to conceive that a person that was on the “alert list” would be able to obtain exit from Egypt by paying a bribe (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2008, *DFAT Report No. 802 – Egypt: RRT Information Request: EGY33006*, 3 April – Attachment 1; for the Tribunal email which

elicited this advice, see: RRT Research and Information 2008, Email to DFAT 'Refugee Review Tribunal Information Request: EGY33006', 11 March – Attachment 2).

The following advice may also be of interest. In May 2007 DFAT advised on the treatment of returning Egyptian citizens who overstay in foreign countries as follows:

When asked whether Egyptian citizens returning to Egypt with a valid passport would be detained and questioned because of overstaying a visa in a country where they had visited, the Department of Passports, Immigration and Nationality in Cairo advised these citizens would usually be questioned upon arrival at the airport. An Egyptian citizen would only be detained if they were suspected of having committed separate, more serious, offences. This information is consistent with anecdotal information we have received (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2007, *DFAT Report No. 638 – Egypt: RRT Information Request: EGY31661*, 7 May – Attachment 3; for the Tribunal email which elicited this response, see: RRT Country Research 2007, Email to DFAT 'Refugee Review Tribunal Information Request: EGY31661', 13 April – Attachment 4).

Egyptian passports and the Muslim Brotherhood

An April 2003 *Agence France Presse* report refers to the Muslim Brotherhood attempting to organise passports for Egyptians wishing to travel to Iraq "to fight the US-British coalition" forces. The report provides no details on the success of the applications:

More than 4,500 Egyptians have volunteered to fight the US-British coalition which is swiftly taking control over Iraq, the national bar association which is organising recruitment said Tuesday.

As the fall of Baghdad appeared increasingly likely, dozens of people still struggled to put their names down on forms which have been available at the offices of the lawyers' grouping since Thursday.

Sayed Shaaban, the association's official responsible for handling the volunteers, admitted however that no one has yet left for Iraq from Egypt.

He said the bar association, which is dominated by the opposition radical Muslim Brotherhood, received the applications and sorted them to ensure candidates met the conditions required, notably a clean criminal record and a passport.

They were then passed on to the Iraqi embassy here to be given visas.

US military officers in Iraq say their troops have encountered fighters of various nationalities, including Egyptians, Jordanians, Saudis and Syrians ('Thousands of Egyptians volunteer to fight in Iraq: bar association' 2003, *Agence France-Presse*, 8 April – Attachment 7).

In September 2002 *The Financial Times* ran a piece on Sheikh Yussef al-Qaradawi relating that: "As a member of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood he was stripped of his Egyptian passport and declared persona non grata" (Drummond, J. 2002, 'Special Series September 11 – The Year After The Day – Modern Islam's Pragmatic Voices – Moderate', *Financial Times*, 4 September – Attachment 8).

In March 1996 *BBC Monitoring Middle East* noted an Arabic report from Cairo's *MENA* news agency which related that: "Egyptian State Security detective agents have arrested a member of the dissolved Muslim Brotherhood [MB] named Siraj al-Din Sadiq Mahmud as he was trying to obtain an entry visa to the United States. He held a passport with erased writing

on some pages” (‘Police arrest Muslim Brotherhood member applying for US visa’ 1996, *BBC Monitoring Service: Middle East*, source: *MENA* in Arabic (25 March 1996), 27 March – Attachment 9).

In September 1990 *The Guardian* reported on the manner in which Mr Shukri, Ma’moun Hodeibi, parliamentary leader of the Muslim Brotherhood, and two other top Muslims”, were prevented from departing Egypt; and had their passports confiscated and then re-issued.

In a move which underlines the fragility of political consensus in one of the key Arab states in the US-led coalition against Baghdad, five leaders of Egypt’s mainstream Islamic opposition movement, including two MPs, were blocked by state security from leaving for Amman yesterday, for the second day running.

Their object was to travel on to Iraq at the invitation of President Saddam Hussein, as part of an international Islamic attempt to find a solution to the Gulf crisis.

According to Ibrahim Shukri, head of the Socialist Labour Party, they were stopped from entering the airport by more than 20 security men, despite assurances given on Tuesday by Osama Al-Baz, Egypt’s first secretary of foreign affairs, that although President Hosni Mubarak advised against the trip, it was not forbidden.

In their first attempt on Tuesday, Mr Shukri, Ma’moun Hodeibi, parliamentary leader of the Muslim Brotherhood, and two other top Muslims gave their passports to security staff at the airport.

According to Mr Hodeibi and Mr Shukri, these were returned with pages missing and they were refused the right to leave on the grounds that their passports had been tampered with.

On Tuesday night the Egyptian foreign ministry issued new passports, but apparently Egypt’s powerful ministry of the interior would not accept their permission to travel (Pugh, D. 1990, ‘Islamic opposition feared by the Cairo government’, *The Guardian*, 13 September – Attachment 10).

Further reports on travel bans, departure controls and the Muslim Brotherhood

On 15 April 2009 Egypt’s *Daily News* reported that: “A Cairo court [had] lifted a nine-year travel ban on prominent Muslim Brotherhood (MB) leader Essam Al-Erian”. The report continues:

The State Council Administrative Court ruled Tuesday in favor of Al-Erian, in a lawsuit he filed against both the Minister of Interior and the director of the Travel and Migration Authority.

The ban has prevented him from leaving the country for the past nine years.

Al-Erian previously told *Daily News* Egypt that the ban required him to obtain special permits to travel abroad, which he claims the authorities consistently refused to provide.

As the treasurer of the Doctors’ Syndicate, Al-Erian said the ban has barred him from attending medical conferences and symposia as well as other international political conferences on Arab affairs.

Al-Erian, who is also a former member of parliament, was detained for seven months in May 2006 for participating in protests criticizing the government. He was released in December 2006.

After his release, state security prosecution placed him under house arrest, but revoked its decision one day later (Saleh, Y. 2009, 'Court rules in favor of Brotherhood leader', *Daily News*, 15 April <http://www.thedailynewsegypt.com/article.aspx?ArticleID=21119> – Accessed 25 May 2009 – Attachment 11; Al-Erian's various failed attempts to depart Egypt have been well reported, see: 'Egypt stops Muslim Brotherhood figure travelling' 2007, *Reuters News*, 17 August – Attachment 12; and 'Egypt stops opposition spokesman from leaving country' 2006, *Agence France Presse*, 20 December – Attachment 13).

In November 2004 *BBC Monitoring Middle East* noted a report, dated 31 October 2004, which had appeared in Arabic on the website of the London based *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*. According to this report: "the Egyptian security authorities [had] lifted the travel ban that was imposed nine years ago on [Muslim Brotherhood] General Guide Muhammad al-Mahdi Akif and [had] allowed him to travel to perform the umrah [minor hajj] at the end of Ramadan, despite the fact that there is a ruling banning him from travelling, after he was accused of involvement in the second military case in 1995 in which he was given a five-year jail sentence with a number of MB leaders" ('Egyptian authorities lift travel ban on Muslim Brotherhood leader' 2004, *BBC Monitoring Middle East*, source: *Al-Sharq al-Awsat* website (London, in Arabic 31 October 2004), 1 November – Attachment 14).

In August 2008 the Beirut based pan-Arab newspaper, *Dar Al-Hayat*, reported at length on the manner in which travel bans were being placed on Muslim Brotherhood figures. The report provides a sense of the regularity with which such restrictions are enforced and circumstances which attend such restrictions.

It is no longer novel news to hear that a member of the Muslim Brotherhood, an activist, a leader, or even a historical figure has been forbidden from leaving the country by an administrative decision, and without a judicial ruling. Nearly not a month goes by without seeing the Brotherhood's media apparatus moving in every direction, distributing such information to the media at large. Whether the person in question is a college student or professor, a legal activist or prominent union member, or even a government employee, and no matter what their travel destination might be, in most cases the ban takes place with the person not expecting to travel in the first place. In most cases, the car that takes them to the airport waits around, so that it can take them back home. On the way back, the person has only to inform a media official from the Muslim Brotherhood that the incident has taken place. The latter then completes the task.

The same applies for cases of Brotherhood activists or leaders getting arrested if they meet in the same place, whether during a Brotherhood meeting or a leisure excursion, or even while celebrating the birth of a member's child.

Such is the state of chronic tension between the government and the Brotherhood in Egypt, and this has become normal daily behavior that both the authorities and the Brotherhood have gotten used to. The authorities may believe that the person banned from traveling this or that time is on their way to attend a conference or a meeting of the international organization of the Muslim Brotherhood, or is representing them abroad. The authorities may have information that those arrested during a meeting, in a private home or at the beach, were planning some unlawful activity, such as mobilizing people for a demonstration or a sit-in. However, it appears that both sides are waiting for a battle in a more significant arena. Until then, both will seek to secure their bases, gain more supporters and try to shape the future the way that they hope. The arena might be the coming parliamentary elections, or perhaps the

next presidential elections, but what is certain is that indications of its results will become clear by next year, and that each side will only enter the struggle once they are aware of each other's strengths and weaknesses. They have been preparing for such a battle for some time now. Of course, neither side is expected to deliver the finishing blow that would guarantee complete victory, and the complete defeat of their opponents. But it is certain that one of the two will achieve a victory great enough to place the other in the background.

...In the latest parliamentary elections, the Muslim Brotherhood managed to gain 88 seats, which came as a big surprise for both themselves and those in power. However, history is not expected to repeat itself in the coming parliamentary elections, as all signs indicate that the Brotherhood will not obtain such a number of seats in the next Parliament. As for arresting a few of its members here and there, banning this or that Brotherhood leader from leaving the country, or refusing to allow the Brotherhood to hold its annual Iftar meal during Ramadan, an event which, in past years, it had become accustomed to host with the government's approval. All of these are just signs that what had been allowed is now forbidden, that what used to happen will not happen anymore, that international and regional developments may lead the regime to undertake additional internal reforms, and that reform does not at all mean granting the Muslim Brotherhood the license to pursue a public and legitimate activity, as the law will always have provisions preventing it from making its way to the forefront (Salah, Md. 2008, 'Banned from Traveling', *Dar Al Hayat*, 31 August – Attachment 6).

The following reports may give an indication of the level of frequency with which Muslim Brotherhood identities have their travel restricted by the Egyptian authorities:

- On 6 April 2009 *Agence France Presse* reported that: "Egyptian authorities have banned the Muslim Brotherhood's English-language website editor from travel abroad"; relating that: "Khaled Hamza, the editor of Ikhwanweb, was barred from boarding a British Airways flight to London, where he was to undergo medical treatment, the Arabic Network for Human Rights Information (ANHRI) said in a statement" ('Islamist reporter banned from medical travel' 2009, *Daily News*, source: *Agence France Presse*, 6 April <http://www.thedailynewsegypt.com/article.aspx?ArticleID=20884> – Accessed 21 May 2009 – Attachment 15).
- On 25 November 2008 *Agence France Presse* reported Muslim Brotherhood claims that: "Cairo airport authorities [had] prevented two leading members of the opposition Muslim Brotherhood from traveling to Syria to attend a pro-Palestinian conference"; but that: "Airport authorities allowed the rest of the delegation, which included another high-ranking Brotherhood leader, to depart" ('Muslim Brotherhood leaders grounded in Egypt' 2008, *Daily News*, source: *Agence France Presse*, 25 November <http://www.thedailynewsegypt.com/article.aspx?ArticleID=18060> – Accessed 21 May 2009 – Attachment 16).
- On 29 July 2008 BBC Monitoring Middle East noted an Arabic report on the website of Algeria's *El-Khabar* which reported that: "several 'MPs and leading figures in the Movement of Society for Peace (MSP)' have been recently held by security authorities at Cairo's airport for their links with the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood (MB)"; and that: "Egyptian security services were investigating the identity of any visiting Algerians to Egypt suspected of having a link with the MSP or the MB" ('Egyptian security harasses Algerian Islamist MPs – Paper' 2008, *BBC Monitoring Middle East*, source: *El-Khabar* website (Algiers in Arabic), 29 July – Attachment 17).

- On 14 November 2007 *Reuters* reported that: “Egyptian police have barred four prominent members of the Muslim Brotherhood, Egypt’s most powerful opposition group, from travelling to Turkey for a conference, sources in the group said” (‘Egypt bars Muslim Brotherhood members from travel’ 2007, *Reuters News*, 14 November – Attachment 18).
- On 20 April 2007 *US Fed News* reported that: “Around midnight on April 14, security forces at the Cairo airport detained ‘Abd al-Monim Mahmud, a 27-year-old journalist for the London-based satellite channel Al-Hiwar and prominent blogger affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood, as he attempted to travel to Sudan to do reporting for an Al-Hiwar segment on human rights in the Arab world. The next day, a prosecutor charged Mahmud with “membership in a banned organization,’ with ‘being an administrator of a banned organization,’ and with funding an armed group” (‘Humans Rights Watch Says Egypt Should Release Journalist Who Criticized Torture’ 2007, *US Fed News*, 20 April – Attachment 19).
- On 11 October 2006 Beirut’s *Daily Star* reported that: “Egyptian authorities on Tuesday banned the head of the opposition Muslim Brotherhood, Mohammad Mehdi Akef, from traveling to Saudi Arabia to perform a pilgrimage, an official from the group said” (‘Cairo bans Brotherhood leader from traveling to Mecca’ 2006, *Daily Star*, 11 October – Attachment 20).

General treatment of Muslim Brotherhood sympathisers

A number of reports were located which mention the arrest of, detention of, or crackdowns upon, Muslim Brotherhood sympathisers. Most recently, on 25 February 2009 *The Economist Intelligence Unit* reported of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt that: “the government’s crackdown on the movement has intensified, with periodic arrests of key leaders and regular police round-ups of sympathisers”. Looking back over reports from recent years it would appear that Muslim Brotherhood sympathisers or supporters have been arrested in a number of circumstances, most notably: in the lead up to, or during, an election period; in the course of public displays of support such as rallies or protests; and where individuals have been identified as disseminating pro-Muslim Brotherhood views online though such activities as blogging. Nonetheless, it should also be noted that there have been reports of peaceful street protests involving thousands of Muslim Brotherhood sympathisers; and that while the surveillance of protesters by state security agents at these events is noted in such reports, no arrests at the scene are detailed. Additionally, it should be noted that the number of persons in Egypt thought to be sympathetic to the Muslim Brotherhood account for a sizable percentage of the population. In May 2005 the *Associated Press* reported that: “the Brotherhood’s base of sympathizers” is numbered “by some estimates” at “a quarter of Egypt’s 71 million people”. In December 2007 *The Houston Chronicle* reported that: “While Egyptian security forces regularly round up dozens of Islamist activists from organized movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood, they’re all but powerless to stop the street preaching that’s now an everyday occurrence on the subway, at the airport, in the workplace and at sidewalk cafes” (‘Egypt politics: Outlook – Political discontent to worsen’ 2009, *Economist Intelligence Unit*, 25 February – Attachment 21; for the arrest of pro Muslim Brotherhood bloggers and other circulators of information, see: Abdel-Latif, O. 2005, ‘Circumventing the state in Egypt, online’, *Daily Star*, 22 January – Attachment 30; for a December 2007 report of the arrest of supporters attempting to attend a court trial, see: Williams, D. 2005, ‘Banned Islamic Movement Now the Main Opposition in Egypt’, *Washington Post*, 10 December

http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/12/09/AR2005120901818_pf.html – Accessed 11 May 2009 – Attachment 24; for the November 2005 pre-election arrests, see: Khan, A. & Perry, T. 2005, 'Police restrict access in Egypt elections', *The Star*, source: *Reuters*, 27 November http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2005/11/27/worldupdates/2005-11-27T003351Z_01_NOOTR_RTRJONC_0_-225160-1&sec=worldupdates – Accessed 25 May 2009 – Attachment 27; “Overall positive” says US’ 2005, *Al-Ahram Weekly*, 8-14 December, no.772 <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2005/772/eg12.htm> – Accessed 25 May 2009 – Attachment 28; for the 2000 election arrests, see: ‘Analysis – Trial of Egyptian activists highlights “double standard” – Islamists say human...’ 2002, *Daily Star*, 10 September – Attachment 31; El Deeb, s. 2000, ‘Amnesty report: Political activists risk detention prior to elections’, *Associated Press*, 19 September – Attachment 34; and: Dawoud, K. 2002, ‘Brotherhood on a leash’, *Al-Ahram Weekly*, 5-11 September, no.602 <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2002/602/eg4.htm> – Accessed 11 May 2009 – Attachment 32; for May 2002 street arrests, see: ‘Anniversary of Israel's creation marked by Arab protests’ 2002, *Agence France-Presse*, 15 May – Attachment 33; for the May 2005 estimates of the Muslim Brotherhood’s support base, see: Murphy, B. 2005, ‘Islamic group caught in “civil war”’, *Times Union*, source: *Associated Press*, 15 May – Attachment 29; for the comments of *The Houston Chronicle*, see: El Naggar, M. 2007, ‘Egypt’s “veil” of piety intrudes on public / Self-appointed morality police urge strangers to follow rigid code’, *Houston Chronicle*, 2 December – Attachment 22).

Examples of the available reportage follow bellow presented, for the most part, in reverse chronological order.

- On 25 February 2009 *The Economist Intelligence Unit* reported of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt that: “the government’s crackdown on the movement has intensified, with periodic arrests of key leaders and regular police round-ups of sympathisers” (‘Egypt politics: Outlook – Political discontent to worsen’ 2009, *Economist Intelligence Unit*, 25 February – Attachment 21).
- On 2 December 2007 *The Houston Chronicle* reported that: “While Egyptian security forces regularly round up dozens of Islamist activists from organized movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood, they’re all but powerless to stop the street preaching that’s now an everyday occurrence on the subway, at the airport, in the workplace and at sidewalk cafes” (El Naggar, M. 2007, ‘Egypt’s “veil” of piety intrudes on public / Self-appointed morality police urge strangers to follow rigid code’, *Houston Chronicle*, 2 December – Attachment 22).
- On 31 December 2007 an *Associated Press* article reported that: “Egyptian police arrested 35 members and sympathizers of the opposition Muslim Brotherhood organization as they tried to attend the trial Sunday of some members of the movement, a police official said” (Youssef, M. 2007, ‘Egypt arrests 35 members and sympathizers of opposition Muslim Brotherhood’, *Associated Press*, 31 December – Attachment 23).
- On 10 December 2005 a *Washington Post* article reported of the Muslim Brotherhood and “Egypt’s just-concluded parliamentary elections” that: “The organization was forced to run its candidates as independents because of its outlawed status, and police rounded up 1,300 members and sympathizers during the election” (Williams, D. 2005,

‘Banned Islamic Movement Now the Main Opposition in Egypt’, *Washington Post*, 10 December http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/12/09/AR2005120901818_pf.html – Accessed 11 May 2009 – Attachment 24).

- In November 2005 Egypt’s national parliamentary elections took place and a number of sources reported that the authorities had prevented Muslim Brotherhood supporters from voting by preventing access to polling stations in certain locales. There were also reports of arrests that may have involved Muslim Brotherhood sympathisers as well as members. *Reuters* reported that: “police had detained 860 Muslim Brotherhood supporters”; and Egypt’s *Al-Ahram* referred to “the alleged arrest of hundreds of Muslim Brotherhood supporters” (for the blockade of Muslim Brotherhood supporters, see: Mojon, J.M. 2005, ‘Tempers flare as final Egypt election showdown kicks off’, *Middle East Times*, source: *Agence France Presse*, 20 November http://www.metimes.com/International/2005/12/01/tempers_flare_as_final_egypt_election_showdown_kicks_off/3456/ – Accessed 25 May 2009 – Attachment 25; ‘Hot spots revisited’ 2005, *Al-Ahram Weekly*, 1-7 December, no.771 <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2005/771/eg1.htm> – Accessed 25 May 2009 – Attachment 26; for the arrest of Muslim Brotherhood Supporters, see: Khan, A. & Perry, T. 2005, ‘Police restrict access in Egypt elections’, *The Star*, source: *Reuters*, 27 November http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2005/11/27/worldupdates/2005-11-27T003351Z_01_NOOTR_RTRJONC_0_-225160-1&sec=worldupdates – Accessed 25 May 2009 – Attachment 27; “‘Overall positive’ says US’ 2005, *Al-Ahram Weekly*, 8-14 December, no.772 <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2005/772/eg12.htm> – Accessed 25 May 2009 – Attachment 28).
- On 15 May 2005 an *Associated Press* article reported that the once radical Muslim Brotherhood was running the risk of losing its support base taking a more moderate position. Noting that: “The Brotherhood spent decades constructing a grass roots network around the world”; and that, “in the 1990s, the group took a momentous turn – publicly scorning any support of violence against Muslim governments and reaching a tacit pact with Egyptian authorities, who officially still ban the Brotherhood but allow it some breathing room”, the *Associated Press* article reports that: “Other factions – willing to take greater risks – are chipping at the Brotherhood’s base of sympathizers, which by some estimates account for a quarter of Egypt’s 71 million people” (Murphy, B. 2005, ‘Islamic group caught in “civil war”’, *Times Union*, source: *Associated Press*, 15 May – Attachment 29).
- In January 2005 Lebanon’s *Daily Star* reported that the Muslim Brotherhood’s website (<www.ikhwanonline.com>) has “reported police crackdowns on the group’s sympathizers and disseminated electoral results and propaganda” (Abdel-Latif, O. 2005, ‘Circumventing the state in Egypt, online’, *Daily Star*, 22 January – Attachment 30).
- A September 2002 report published by Egypt’s state-administered *Al-Ahram* refers to the treatment of Muslim Brotherhood sympathisers during the “2000 general parliamentary elections” in: “The battle over the two seats designated for Al-Raml district – the largest in Alexandria”. According to this report: “Thousands of anti-riot police were deployed on nearly every street in Al-Raml and surrounded all polling

stations, in what was viewed as an attempt to prevent Muslim Brotherhood supporters from casting their votes”; and: “The result was violent clashes between Muslim Brotherhood supporters and police, and a landslide victory for NDP candidates. More than 150 suspected Brotherhood sympathisers were arrested that day, but only 101 were referred to trial” (for further details, see: Dawoud, K. 2002, ‘Brotherhood on a leash’, *Al-Ahram Weekly*, 5-11 September, no.602 <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2002/602/eg4.htm> – Accessed 11 May 2009 – Attachment 32).

- On 15 May 2002 an *Associated Press* article reported that: “In the Mediterranean city of Alexandria, 5,000 Egyptians, mostly sympathisers of the banned Muslim Brotherhood, assembled and shouted anti-Israeli slogans amid tight security. They held up a banner saying ‘Jerusalem is ours’” (‘Anniversary of Israel's creation marked by Arab protests’ 2002, *Agence France-Presse*, 15 May – Attachment 33).
- A subsequent article in Lebanon’s *Daily Star* in December 2002 appears to report on the situation of those Muslim Brotherhood supporters who were arrested during the 2000 general elections in Alexandria and whose cases did go to trial. The report relates that: “Supporters of the accused in Alexandria pointed out that, aside from this being a clear-cut case of the government harassing **ordinary sympathizers** [emphasis researcher’s] of the Muslim Brotherhood, the overbearing silence by the same human rights activists and foreign embassies that clamored, just two weeks ago, for the release of Saadeddine Ibrahim proves that the West operates a double standard when dealing with Arab countries and, in particular, Muslims”. A September 2000 *Associated Press* article reported on the elections of the 2000 period relating that: “Muslim Brotherhood leaders said Monday that 200 of their activists and sympathizers have been detained in the last three months across the country” (‘Analysis – Trial of Egyptian activists highlights “double standard” – Islamists say human...’ 2002, *Daily Star*, 10 September – Attachment 31; El Deeb, s. 2000, ‘Amnesty report: Political activists risk detention prior to elections’, *Associated Press*, 19 September – Attachment 34).

The US Department of State’s most recent report on human rights in Egypt provides the following assessment of the status of the Muslim Brotherhood noting that the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) “remained an illegal organization; however, independent members of Parliament linked to the MB continued to participate actively in Parliament”. The report notes the arrest or detention large numbers of MB activists in recent years as well as several press or blogging personalities who have been members of the MB. According to the US Department of state: “government held detainees, including many MB activists, for several weeks to several months or longer, and did not permit international humanitarian organizations access to political prisoners”; and: “During the weeks leading up to April 8 local council elections, police detained an estimated 1,000 MB members, 148 of whom were potential candidates”. It is also reported that: “On November 20, State Security arrested MB-affiliated blogger Mohammed Adel and allegedly tortured him”; and that: “On November 11, Egyptian authorities banned MB-affiliated doctors Essam Al Eryan and Mohamed Gamal Heshmat from traveling to Damascus to attend a conference on ‘The Right of Return for Palestinians’”. Pertinent extracts follow:

On April 15, a closed military tribunal sentenced Muslim Brotherhood (MB) Second Deputy Chairman Khairat El Shater and 24 other civilian MB members, seven in absentia, to prison terms ranging from three to 10 years on charges including money laundering and planning

terrorist activities. The tribunal acquitted 15 others. A Cairo civilian criminal court had acquitted 17 of the defendants of all charges in January 2007, but police rearrested them immediately after the verdict, and President Mubarak transferred their cases to the tribunal along with 23 others. This marked the first use of a military tribunal against civilians since MB trials in 2002. The tribunal regularly barred press and observers from human rights organizations and occasionally excluded defense attorneys and family members. AI described the verdict as a “perversion of justice,” and Human Rights Watch (HRW) described it as a “transparently political verdict from a court that should have no authority to try civilians.”

On June 3, MB lawyers filed a complaint against the government regarding the validity of the trial; a military judge confirmed the verdicts on July 13. The Administrative Court postponed the appeal court session to March 2009.

...Egyptian human rights organizations estimated in 2007 that 4,000 to 5,000 people remained in prolonged detention without charge under the law, though Minister of Interior Habib Al Adly stated that the total number of political prisoners and detainees does not exceed 1,800. There were varied and conflicting estimates of the number of “extraordinary detainees” (citizens held by the government, often without trial, for alleged political crimes). In 2006, credible domestic and international NGOs estimated that there were between 6,000 and 10,000 such detainees in addition to the prisoners in the ordinary criminal justice system. The government held detainees, including many MB activists, for several weeks to several months or longer, and did not permit international humanitarian organizations access to political prisoners.

As in previous years, the government arrested and detained hundreds of MB members and supporters without charge or trial. The precise number of MB activists in detention at year’s end was unknown, but the MB estimated that 250 members remained in detention.

During the weeks leading up to April 8 local council elections, police detained an estimated 1,000 MB members, 148 of whom were potential candidates. On July 9, SSIS reportedly arrested at least 38 MB members in advance of the July 13 parliamentary by-elections for four open parliamentary seats. At year’s end the government had allegedly released most of the MB members who had been arrested before the local council elections.

...During the year a number of opposition political activists, journalists, and NGOs continued to advocate for political reform and openly criticized the government. A number of government actions including wide-scale detentions of MB members, lawsuits against independent journalists, and government restrictions on civil society organizations led many observers to charge that the government sought to curtail criticism and activism.

...During the year the Supreme Press Council revoked the licenses of at least 14 news publications. It revoked the licenses of 12 of the 14 newspapers according to council guidelines because the newspapers were not regularly published. It revoked the license of the magazine Al-Zuhour at the behest of SSIS after MB member Salah Abd-al-Maqsud was appointed editor-in-chief, and the newspaper Al-Shuruq Al-Gadid on the grounds that some of the journalists were shareholders, in violation of Press Syndicate regulations. By year’s end, Al-Shuruq Al-Gadid received a new license, though the others remained closed.

...On November 20, State Security arrested MB-affiliated blogger Mohammed Adel and allegedly tortured him. On November 21, SSIS seized many of his books and CDs from his home. Adel’s blog called for MB detainees to be released. At year’s end, Adel remained in custody.

...On November 11, Egyptian authorities banned MB-affiliated doctors Essam Al Eryan and Mohamed Gamal Heshmat from traveling to Damascus to attend a conference on “The Right

of Return for Palestinians.” In September the government refused to grant the MB permission to hold its annual Ramadan “iftar” dinner for hundreds of guests.

...On April 1 and 2, MB members demonstrated across the Delta area (Gharbeya, Qalyubiya, Zagazig and Alexandria) against government efforts to prevent the MB from running in the April 8 local elections. Authorities arrested hundreds of MB members and injured approximately 10 persons.

...On May 1, SSIS prevented MB member and blogger Abdel Moneim Mahmoud from traveling to Morocco to participate in a conference on press freedom.

...Many opposition candidates from registered political parties and the MB reported difficulties registering and alleged a government campaign to prevent opposition candidates from participating in the elections. More than 3,000 MB candidates prevented from registering sued the government. Although the courts ruled in favor of the MB candidates in 2,664 suits, the majority of the rulings were not implemented. The government arrested and detained an estimated 1,000 MB members prior to the elections. On March 30, HRW issued a statement noting that government arrests of MB-affiliated candidates “put the legitimacy of the election in serious doubt.” AI also expressed concern over the arrests and called for the government to release the detained individuals.

On April 7, following weeks of arrests and official hurdles placed in the way of candidate registration, the MB called on citizens to join it in “boycotting this fraudulent process.” Only 20 MB candidates registered and none ran for office after the MB announced its boycott.

... On July 3, Minister of Interior Habib Al Adly set parliamentary by-elections for four vacant parliament seats in Kafr Al Sheikh and Alexandria for July 13. The four seats had been vacant since a legal challenge during the 2005 parliamentary elections. The NDP won the four contested seats. MB-affiliated candidates ran for three of the seats, and the MB accused the government of rigging the vote to favor the NDP.

...The NDP continued to dominate national politics by maintaining an overriding majority in the People’s Assembly and the Shura Council. It also dominated local governments, mass media, labor, and the public sector, and controlled licensing of new political parties, newspapers, and private organizations. The law prohibits political parties based on religion, and the MB remained an illegal organization; however, independent members of Parliament linked to the MB continued to participate actively in Parliament. The government refused to grant official registration to 12 political parties that had filed applications in the past. At year’s end, none of the 12 parties had reapplied to the Political Parties Affairs Committee (US Department of State 2009, *2008 Human Rights Report: Egypt*, 25 February <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/nea/119114.htm> – Accessed 11 May 2009 – Attachment 35).

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