



**Egypt – Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 13 April 2016**

**Any media reports regarding treatment of family members /supporters of Muslim Brotherhood.**

An Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada response to a request for information, in a section titled “Treatment of Muslim Brotherhood Leaders, Members, and Suspected Members”, refers to information obtained from a legal advisor at the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights (EIPR) as follows:

“The EIPR legal advisor indicated that formal membership in the Muslim Brotherhood is not necessary for someone to be at risk of arrest. He said that if someone is perceived to be a member or supporter of the Muslim Brotherhood, they face the risk of imprisonment. He added that the risk of arrest even applies to ‘mere supporters’ without any active involvement with the Muslim Brotherhood, and people who do not support the Muslim Brotherhood, but who have demonstrated against the excessive use of force against them. He added that one of the detainees killed by the tear-gas thrown in the vehicle on 18 August 2013 was an active supporter of the removal of President Morsi and opposed the Muslim Brotherhood, but was demonstrating against the excessive use of force against Muslim Brotherhood supporters when he was arrested. The EIPR legal advisor indicated that Muslim Brotherhood membership brings a higher risk than non-membership, but being at the wrong place and the wrong time is ‘sufficient to be arrested.’”  
(Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (4 November 2013)  
*EGY104639.E – Egypt: Treatment of members of the Muslim Brotherhood, including leaders, returnee members and suspected members, by authorities following the removal of President Mohamed Morsi (3 July 2013-30 October 2013)*)

A report published by Human Rights Watch states:

“Since the events of July and August 2013, Egyptian authorities have continued to brutally suppress dissent. While focused overwhelmingly on the country’s largest political opposition group, the Muslim Brotherhood, authorities have also targeted other opposition groups and individuals. Security forces have continued to use excessive lethal force against demonstrators, including killing 57 protesters on October 6, 2013 and 64 on January 25, 2014, according to the FMA. An assembly law passed in November 2013 authorizes the Interior Ministry to forcibly disperse protests that they have not been approved in advance and to arrest demonstrators on vague grounds such as ‘attempt[ing] to influence the course of justice’ or ‘imped[ing] citizen’s interests.’ Authorities have also arrested, by their figures, at least 22,000 people since July 3, many on charges relating to their exercise of basic rights or for membership in the Muslim Brotherhood, which the government declared a terrorist organization on December 25, 2013. Prosecutors routinely renew pretrial detention orders against those detained

on the basis of little evidence that would warrant prosecution, effectively detaining them arbitrarily for months on end, lawyers have told Human Rights Watch. Many of the cases that have gone to trial have been riddled with serious due process violations, including mass trials that have failed to assess the individual guilt of each defendant, yet resulted in sentences of lengthy prison terms or even the death penalty for hundreds of defendants.” (Human Rights Watch (12 August 2014) *All According To Plan: The Rab’a Massacre and Mass Killings of Protesters in Egypt*, pp.17-19)

In a section titled “Mass Arrests” this report states:

“Following the military’s ouster of Morsy in early July, an intense campaign of arrest and detention largely focused on members and sympathizers of the Muslim Brotherhood. According to the government’s own figures, security forces have detained at least 22,000 people since July. WikiThawra, an initiative run by the Egyptian Center for Economic and Social Rights, has determined that authorities have arrested or indicted over 41,000 since July 3, 2013. Many of those detained were rounded up solely as a result of their peaceful exercise of the rights to peaceful assembly, free association, and free expression or membership in the Muslim Brotherhood, including simply displaying signs commemorating the Rab’a massacre. Military officials held Morsy along with nine senior aides in secret military detention for months. Police also arrested the majority of the high-level and much of the mid-level leadership both of the Muslim Brotherhood and of its political party, the Freedom and Justice Party, across the country, including figures exclusively involved in politics and communications.” (ibid, p.27)

A BBC News report states:

“More than 180 supporters of the banned Muslim Brotherhood have been sentenced to death in Egypt over a 2013 attack on a police station near Cairo. The attack took place on the same day as Egyptian security forces broke up protest camps set up by Brotherhood supporters, leaving hundreds dead. Egypt has been fiercely criticised for its crackdown on Islamist supporters of ousted President Mohammed Morsi. Hundreds of death sentences have been passed but none have been carried out.” (BBC News (2 December 2014) *Egypt sentences 188 Muslim Brotherhood supporters to death*)

A report from Reuters states:

“Authorities have cracked down hard on the Islamist, secular and liberal opposition alike since then army chief Sisi toppled elected Islamist president Mohamed Mursi in 2013 after mass protests against his rule. According to the Gazette, the law enables authorities to act against any individual or group deemed a threat to national security, including people who disrupt public transportation, an apparent reference to protests. Loose definitions involving threats to national unity may give the police, widely accused of abuses, a green light to crush dissent, human rights groups say.” (Reuters (24 February 2015) *Egypt’s Sisi issues decree widening scope of security crackdown*)

A report published by Amnesty International, in a paragraph headed “Arrests, Detentions And Crackdown On Freedom Of Assembly”, states:

“Since July 2013, when then-Defense Minister al-Sisi ousted the elected president Mohamed Morsi and his government, authorities have by their own admission detained at least 22,000 people. This includes ‘3,000 top or mid-level members of the Muslim Brotherhood’. Egyptian human rights organizations have credibly documented a much higher number of more than 41,000 persons who were arrested, indicted or sentenced between July 2013 and May 2014, including 300 lawyers.<sup>8</sup> Many have been detained solely on the basis of their alleged membership of or sympathy with the Muslim Brotherhood.” (Amnesty International (2 June 2015) *Egypt: Reporters' guide – Human rights in Egypt*)

See also Amnesty International report which, in a section titled “Actual or Perceived Muslim Brotherhood Supporters”, mentions the treatment of children of Muslim Brotherhood officials as follows:

“The security forces have ruthlessly cracked down on supporters of Mohamed Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood, with anyone connected to the movement or the ousted President at risk of arrest. Some of those who protested against Morsi’s removal did not support the President or the Muslim Brotherhood, but opposed his forcible removal by the military on principle, citing the threat to the rule of law. The crackdown has extended to the children of Muslim Brotherhood officials, as well as student activists who peacefully demonstrated on campus.” (Amnesty International (30 June 2015) *Egypt: Generation Jail: Egypt's youth go from protest to prison*, p.24)

A report from the Turkish state-run Anadolu Agency states:

“The son of a senior Muslim Brotherhood leader was arrested by police, the leader's family has said. The family of Mohamed al-Beltagi, who used to be the head of the Muslim Brotherhood's party's office in Egyptian capital Cairo, said in a statement on Saturday that his son, Khaled, was arrested by policemen. It added that police had raided al-Beltagi's house in Cairo on Friday and arrested Khaled, who is 16 years old. ‘This is a vengeful act against the rest of the family,’ the family said in the statement.” (Anadolu Agency (AA) 924 January 2015) *Egypt police arrests senior Brotherhood leader's son*)

A Human Rights Watch report states:

“A Human Rights Watch review of both prosecution case file summaries found little evidence other than the testimony of military and police officers to support the convictions of Morsy and 130 others for a 2011 prison break, and of Morsy and 35 others for conspiring with foreign powers against the state. The convictions and recommended death sentences were initially handed down on May 16, 2015, and the full written judgments have not yet been made public. ‘These prosecutions show that Egyptian courts are ready to sentence the government’s opponents to death with barely any regard for due process,’ said Sarah Leah Whitson, Middle East and North Africa director. ‘They follow in a line of flawed mass prosecutions brought against the members of the Muslim Brotherhood.’ Although Egyptian criminal law requires establishing individual criminal guilt to convict a defendant, the case files give no indication that prosecutors investigated individual responsibility for the acts included in the charges. The authorities have conducted a series of mass trials since 2013 in which hundreds of members of the Muslim Brotherhood

have been sentenced to death following proceedings that violated due process rights and failed to establish individual guilt, Human Rights Watch said.” (Human Rights Watch (16 June 2015) *Egypt: Morsy Death Sentence Follows Flawed Trials*)

An article from the New York Times on alleged forced disappearances in Egypt states:

“For days now, the hashtag #forceddisappearance has spread across Egyptian social media, as family and friends look for missing loved ones, mostly young people from across the political spectrum. Some are members of the Muslim Brotherhood, and others are affiliated with the secular April 6 youth movement, while still others are not attached to any movement or party. All are victims of a war on young people, in a country where more than half the population is under 25. According to the prisoners’ rights group Freedom for the Brave, 163 people have been forcibly disappeared in Egypt since April. The organization says 64 of the disappeared have been returned to their families, but that at least two have been found dead...” (New York Times (15 June 2015) *Egypt’s Vanishing Youth*)

A report from Al Jazeera states:

“Egyptian police raided an apartment in the Cairo suburb of 6th of October on Wednesday and killed 13 of the outlawed group's leading members, including a former member of parliament, Nasser al-Hafy, security sources and a member of the group said. The Brotherhood members were reportedly meeting to discuss sponsoring the families of detainees when the police stormed the building. The victims' families said the men were unarmed and had been taken into custody earlier in the day but were released after giving fingerprints. Egypt's interior ministry, however, said the men were fugitive leaders who were plotting attacks - something the group denies - and said the group included two men who had previously been sentenced to death. In a statement, the ministry said that investigators found weapons, 43,000 Egyptian pounds (\$5,300), documents and memory cards and that the group was plotting attacks on the army, police, judiciary, and media. Pro-Muslim Brotherhood Mekameleen TV said the leaders were detained inside a home and ‘killed in cold blood without any investigation or charges’.” (Al Jazeera (2 July 2015) *Egypt’s Brotherhood calls for uprising after killings*)

See also Al Jazeera report which states:

“Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood says another of its members has been killed by security forces two weeks after the man went missing, the movement has told Al Jazeera. The group on Friday said Egyptian soldiers kidnapped two men, a businessman Tarek Khalil, who was in charge of the Brotherhood's Development Committee, and another man, Mohamed Saad Alioua, on June 17. Muslim Brotherhood members said Egyptian authorities asked Khalil's family to collect his body from a mortuary on Friday. Family members said Khalil's body showed marks of torture. The group did not have information on what has happened to Alioua.” (Al Jazeera (3 July 2015) *Egypt’s Brotherhood says member tortured to death*)

An article published by Qantara, an internet portal founded on the initiative of the German Foreign Office, in a paragraph headed “Not political activists”, states:

“Human rights organisations confirm that arrests and convictions without trial are the order of the day in Egypt under the rule of President Abdul Fattah al-Sisi. By no means all of those who are missing are supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood or the secular, government-critical ‘April 6 Youth Movement’. Sarah Whitson of Human Rights Watch remarks: ‘Some are activists, some have only been seen in the vicinity of demonstrations, and some are taken arbitrarily, such as Esraa and her friends.’ She adds: ‘These are not just a few corrupt policemen – there is a system behind it.’ (Qantara (24 June 2015) *Abducted civilians in Egypt: The disappeared*)

A Human Rights Watch on a new anti-terrorism law states:

“The new law also gives prosecutors greater power to detain suspects without judicial review and order wide-ranging and potentially indefinite surveillance of terrorist suspects without a court order. ‘With this sweeping new decree, Egypt’s president has taken a big step toward enshrining a permanent state of emergency as the law of the land,’ said Nadim Houry, deputy Middle East and North Africa director. ‘The government has equipped itself with even greater powers to continue stamping out its critics and opponents under its vague and ever-expanding war on terrorism.’ The law makes it a crime to publish or promote news about terrorism if it contradicts the Defense Ministry’s official statements and would allow the courts to temporarily ban journalists from practicing their profession for doing so. It also makes anyone judged to have facilitated, incited, or agreed to a vaguely defined terrorist crime – whether in public or in private – liable for the same penalty that they would receive if they had committed that crime, even if the crime does not occur. The law eliminates any time limit for bringing terrorism prosecutions.” (Human Rights Watch (19 August 2015) *Egypt: Counterterrorism Law Erodes Basic Rights*)

The 2016 Amnesty International report on Egypt, in a paragraph headed “Arbitrary arrests and detentions”, states:

“Security forces arrested 11,877 members of ‘terrorist groups’ between January and the end of September, according to the Assistant Minister for Public Security at the Ministry of the Interior. The crackdown was thought to include members and perceived supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood and other government critics. The authorities had previously stated that they had arrested at least 22,000 people on such grounds in 2014. In some cases, detainees in political cases were held in prolonged detention without charge or trial. By the end of the year, at least 700 people had been held in preventive detention for more than two years without being sentenced by a court, in contravention of the two-year limit on such detention in Egyptian law.” (Amnesty International (24 February 2016) *Annual Report: Egypt 2015/2016*)

In an opinion piece published by the International Federation for Human Rights the authors state:

“In January 2016, a security source admitted that the primary targets of raiding 5,000 apartments in downtown Cairo, were pro-democracy young activists. Secular peaceful activists are sentenced on charges ranging from illegal protest or belonging to a terrorist organization to threatening public peace and security. Some are held in pre-trial detention for years, without being charged or seeing a judge. Through the unprecedented crackdown Egypt is witnessing, the regime, with all its apparatuses, is penalizing all forms of peaceful dissent and gradually shutting down public space in Egypt. Secular youth activists, protesters, members, supporters, or alleged supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood, human rights defenders, journalists and average apolitical citizens, are currently languishing behind bars under inhumane conditions.” (International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) (26 January 2016) [OP-ED] *President Sisi in a Crusader Fight with a Generation*)

A BBC News report states:

“A security clampdown by President Sisi initially targeted Brotherhood members and sympathisers, but rights activists now say no one who opposes the government is safe. Interior Minister Magdi Abdel Ghaffar has repeatedly denied reports of 'forced disappearances' and torture in police custody. He says stringent security measures are necessary because of the threat to national security from the so-called Islamic State (IS) group. Rights groups say hundreds of people who have nothing to do with either IS or the banned Muslim Brotherhood have faced abuse including torture, sexual assault, arbitrary arrest, disappearances, prolonged detention, disproportionately harsh sentences, unfair trials and death in custody. Many students, journalists, academics and secular-leaning activists hailed as heroes of the 2011 uprising are now in prison. Rights groups also accuse the government of 'harassing and prosecuting independent lawyers and judges who advocate the reform of the anti-torture legislation'. Of 340 people logged by the Egyptian Commission for Rights and Freedoms as having disappeared between August and November last year, five were found dead, one with signs of torture. Most of the rest ended up in jail. The group has reported 35 disappearances so far in 2016. Two of the disappeared have turned up dead.” (BBC News (15 February 2016) *Italian student's death puts Egyptian abuses back on agenda*)

A Human Rights Watch report on a sentence arbitrarily imposed on a 3-year-old boy states:

“Believing that Mansour was an adult, police went to the family’s home in 2014 to arrest him in connection with a protest, the defense lawyer said. When Mansour’s father, Mansour Qurni Ahmed Ali, told them that the person they wanted was his young son, they did not believe him, so he presented his son, along with a birth certificate viewed by Human Rights Watch. The police arrested the father instead and held him for four months.” (Human Rights Watch (23 February 2016) *Egypt: Life Sentence for 3-Year-Old*)

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research and Information Unit within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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