



Refugee Documentation Centre (Ireland)
LEGAL AID BOARD

Egypt - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on Tuesday 9 April 2019

Information on detention/jail/prison conditions

In February 2019 *Human Rights Watch* states:

“The Egyptian authorities’ failure to end or impartially investigate torture and mistreatment in detention facilities reinforces an urgent need for an independent international inquiry...” (Human Rights Watch (14 February 2019) *Egypt: Set Independent Torture Inquiry*, p.1).

This document also states that:

“Torture is carried out in police stations and unofficial security agency detention sites, and detainees are most vulnerable when lawyers and relatives are unable to find out their whereabouts. It involves beatings, stress positions, suspending people by their limbs, electric shocks, and sometimes rape or rape threats” (ibid, p.1).

A report issued in March 2019 by the *United States Department of State* commenting on events of the preceding year notes that:

“Conditions in the prisons and detention centers were harsh and potentially life threatening due to overcrowding, physical abuse, inadequate medical care, poor infrastructure, and poor ventilation” (United States Department of State (13 March 2019) *Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2018 – Egypt*, p.6).

In February 2019 *Amnesty International* issued a report commenting on events of 2018 which including noting that:

“The authorities continued to use torture and other ill-treatment in places of detention, and subjected prisoners to prolonged and indefinite solitary confinement for periods ranging between three weeks and over four years. In some cases, prison authorities detained prisoners in small cells that lacked proper lighting, ventilation or beds, forcing inmates to sleep on the ground, and prohibited prisoners from using toilets when they needed them. They also provided insufficient food” (Amnesty International (26 February 2019) *Human Rights in the Middle East and North Africa: Review of 2018, Egypt*, p.3).

In 2019 *Freedom House* issued a report commenting on events of 2018 which included stating that:

“Prison conditions are very poor; inmates are subject to torture, overcrowding, and a lack of sanitation and medical care” (Freedom House (2019) *Freedom in the World 2019, Egypt*, p.9).

A report published by the *European Commission* in December 2018 states that:

“...ongoing challenges in the field of human rights included reports of torture and ill-treatment in detention, enforced disappearances, mass trials and the use of long pre-

trial detention – in some cases beyond the legally mandated two-year limit” (European Commission (5 December 2018) *Report on EU-EGYPT relations in the framework of the revised ENP (2017-2018)*, p.15).

In October 2019 *Human Rights Watch* states in a report that:

“Human Rights Watch has documented a pattern of systematic torture of detainees in secret National Security Agency detention centers and police stations to collect information about suspected dissidents and prepare often fabricated cases against them” (Human Rights Watch (11 October 2018) *Egypt: An Account of Alleged Torture in Secret Detention*, p.2).

This document also states that:

“Human Rights Watch has previously documented Egyptian prison authorities’ systematic mistreatment of prisoners, including lack of food and opportunity for exercise and denying prisoners hygiene products, mattresses, and beds” (ibid, p.5).

References

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre 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.

Sources Consulted

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