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**Report on Violations Monitored by
the “Article 55” Coalition in Egyptian
Prisons and Detention Facilities
Period: May 1–31, 2025**



Article 55 of the Egyptian Constitution:

“Anyone who is arrested, imprisoned, or whose freedom is restricted shall be treated in a manner that preserves their dignity. They shall not be tortured, intimidated, coerced, or subjected to physical or psychological harm. Detention or imprisonment may only occur in legally designated places that meet humane and sanitary standards...”

Key Updates from May 2025

May 2025 was a turbulent month in Egypt, marked by significant political, economic, and social developments that underscored the complexities of the country’s domestic challenges and its entanglement in regional and international dynamics. Among the most contentious issues was speculation, fueled by press [reports](#), about a potential US military base on the islands of Tiran and Sanafir. This proposal, reportedly initiated by Saudi Arabia as part of new security arrangements in the Red Sea, has raised eyebrows amid intensifying US pressure on Egypt to take a more active role in regional military alliances, particularly in the ongoing war in Yemen against the Houthis. Despite this pressure, Cairo has maintained its stance against direct military involvement. The situation was further complicated by U.S. President Donald Trump’s statements about free passage for warships through the Suez Canal, and by repeated Israeli [allegations](#) of arms smuggling from Egypt to Gaza, accompanied by the deployment of Israeli [tanks](#) along the border.

Domestically, the month witnessed continued crackdowns on citizens and human rights defenders. Journalist Rasha Qandil was [summoned](#) by the Supreme State Security Prosecution on May 25, facing an eight-hour investigation over her reporting on Egyptian military procurement deals. She was released later that day. Meanwhile, Mohamed Abdel Salam, the Executive Director of the Association for Freedom of Thought and Expression, was [detained](#) at Cairo International Airport on May 20 upon returning from Berlin. Security forces subjected him to an unofficial interrogation about his work, travel, and potential legal issues—a move denounced by rights groups as a blatant violation of the law.

Professional and social unrest also surged, reflecting widespread dissatisfaction with government policies. On May 21, the East Tanta Bar Association of lawyers launched an open [sit-in](#) to protest increased judicial fees. This followed a demonstration by lawyers at the Mahalla al-Kubra Courts Complex, highlighting the financial burdens these fees impose. Similarly, the Journalists Syndicate ramped up its [campaign](#) to amend restrictive media laws, arguing that these laws violate Egypt’s international commitments and stifle press freedom.

On the legislative front, the Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee of Parliament [approved](#) amendments to the electoral law and redistricting proposals, championed by majority leader MP Abdul Hadi Al-Qasabi. These changes were supported by several pro-government factions, aiming to consolidate their influence in the upcoming elections.

In the judiciary, a noteworthy development came when the State Commissioners Authority [recommended](#) a ruling to compel the Ministry of Interior to facilitate medical procedures for the wife of an imprisoned man. This case, involving her right to access medical samples for in vitro fertilization, was hailed as a victory for prisoners’ family rights, reinforcing constitutional protections for health care and motherhood.

Meanwhile, Egypt’s human rights record faced renewed international scrutiny. The UN Committee Against Torture [raised](#) concerns about ongoing violations of international law, while acknowledging the lifting of the state of emergency. However, criticisms lingered over laws granting exceptional powers and reports of dire detention conditions for prisoners and detainees, which continued to stir outrage both domestically and abroad.

ARTICLE 55 Coalition monitoring data summary of violations inside Egyptian detention facilities May 2025

During May 2025, Article 55 coalition organizations inside prisons and other detention facilities in Egypt monitored the following violations:

In May 2025, our organizations documented three deaths inside Egyptian detention facilities, shedding light on the dire conditions and systemic neglect within these centers.

The [first](#) victim was Bilal Raafat Muhammad Ali, who passed away in the Minya al-Qamh police station in Sharkia Governorate due to medical negligence. Bilal, who had lived with polio since childhood, received no medical care during his detention, causing his health to deteriorate fatally.

The [second](#) death was that of Abdel Rahman Mohamed Hassan, who died under harrowing circumstances in the Investigation Unit of Sayeda Zeinab Police Station on May 19, mere hours after his detention. Eyewitnesses recounted that security forces, led by Captain “Krolles,” brutally beat Abdel Rahman in the street before detaining him without cause. Reports state that he endured over two hours of physical torture in the interrogation room, meant to extract information about his companion. Abdel Rahman succumbed to his injuries before seeing a prosecutor, and his body was secretly transferred to a morgue without notifying his family. The authorities’ claim that he died from swallowing a drug bag was vehemently denied by his family, who have called for an autopsy to uncover the truth.

The [third](#) death was Ahmed Abdel Aal El-Gendy, a 62-year-old English teacher and former political detainee, who died on May 11 inside Wadi Al-Natroun prison. Ahmed had been imprisoned under dire conditions since 2013, following earlier detentions between 1995 and 2011. His passing was a direct result of severe health negligence and the inhumane living conditions in detention.

Tragic stories of detainee abuse continued to emerge throughout the month. At Belqas police station in Dakahlia Governorate, detainees reported appalling mistreatment and neglect. Among them, political detainee Mustafa al-Najjar began a hunger [strike](#) to protest his prolonged arbitrary detention, even after multiple release orders. In a moment of despair, Mustafa attempted suicide by cutting his wrists, resulting in emergency medical intervention. Rather than addressing his suffering, authorities transferred him to the harsh conditions of Gamasa maximum-security prison.

At Borg al-Arab prison, a brutal campaign [stripped](#) detainees of all basic necessities, including clothing, food, and even medical supplies. The yard and ventilation were closed off, further deteriorating living conditions. The campaign, allegedly ordered by a National Security officer, “Hamza Al-Masri,” and supervised by an officer named “Amr,” left detainees in a state of profound despair and deprivation.

In the judiciary, the Second Terrorism Circuit at the Badr Courts Complex convened a session on May 14 for the trial of Hoda Abdel Moneim, a lawyer and human rights advocate. Suffering from serious [health](#) issues due to prolonged medical negligence in detention, Hoda was transported to court in an ambulance. The session was postponed to July 14, adding further uncertainty to her case.

For all of the above, the organizations in the “Article 55” coalition believe that the conditions inside prisons and detention facilities are not surprising, and do not deviate from the general framework of the Egyptian authorities’ handling of the file of detainees - especially politicians - as the matter is systematic and not just individual violations as promoted by the Egyptian Ministry of Interior.

The policy of impunity used by the Egyptian authorities to deal with human rights violators inside their detention facilities has encouraged, fueled, and spread these practices, until they became a method of action by the Egyptian Prisons Authority.

Therefore, organizations in the “Article 55” coalition confirm that these practices, which take place inside prisons and detention facilities inside Egypt, raise serious concerns about the fate of detainees, especially after the recent increase in the number of deaths inside detention facilities and the deterioration of living conditions inside.

Therefore, the organizations in the “Article 55” coalition call for an investigation into these violations, and to hold those responsible accountable in accordance with Egyptian and international law, while applying the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners and the Egyptian Prison Regulations and stopping violating them, and providing livelihoods worthy of the humanity of detainees.

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Article 55 Coalition

(Committee for Justice (CFJ), El Shehab Center for Human Rights (SHR),
Egyptian Network for Human Rights)

