



 [article55egypt](https://www.facebook.com/article55egypt)

Violations Documented in Egypt's Prisons and Detention Centers (September 1 to September 31, 2024)



الشبكة المصرية
لحقوق الانسان
Egyptian Network For Human Rights ENHR



Article 55 of the Egyptian Constitution states: “Everyone who is arrested, detained or has their freedom restricted shall be treated in a manner that preserves their dignity. Torture, intimidation, coercion, physical or psychological harm shall not be inflicted upon them. they shall not be detained or imprisoned except in places that are suitable, humane, and healthy...”

Updates on the Egyptian situation in September 2024

In September 2024, Egypt is still in a critical phase marked by escalating political, social, and economic tensions, compounded by regional instability and the looming threat of war. This followed Israel's announcement of military operations in Lebanon, which further heightened concerns. Meanwhile, domestic issues, particularly the human rights situation in Egyptian prisons, continued to deteriorate. Protests persisted amid ongoing security crackdowns, with political opponents being arrested, pretrial detention extended, and prison conditions worsening to alarming levels, potentially heralding a deeper humanitarian and human rights crisis.

In late August, eight workers—both men and women—were arrested for participating in a strike at the Wabaryat Samanoud factories, demanding the implementation of the minimum wage. They had forcibly disappeared for four days before being brought before the prosecution. Seven were released on bail, but labor unionist Hisham al-Banna remained in detention, underscoring ongoing restrictions on workers' and trade unionists' rights to advocate for their demands. Security intimidation continued, with workers being repeatedly summoned to national security offices, leading to the strike's [end](#) on September 20, after four female workers collapsed and were hospitalized due to pressure.

In another concerning incident, [press](#) and human rights organizations reported the mysterious death of a young man named Diaa Al-Shami, who fell from his ninth-floor balcony in the Faisal area of Giza. His family accused security forces from the Qasr al-Nil Police Station—including an officer and two police secretaries—of causing his death through torture and intimidation during an interrogation at his apartment. While the Haram prosecution announced an investigation, the Ministry of Interior, through an anonymous security source, [denied](#) any involvement. The ministry stated that Diaa had jumped from the window upon learning that a security force had arrived to arrest him on fraud charges. His family, however, maintained that the officers had been in the apartment for three hours before his death.

Elsewhere, clashes erupted on Warraq Island between residents and security forces after locals gathered near a police post to protest an officer's assault on three Warraq residents. Security forces responded with birdshot and tear gas, causing injuries from both birdshot and suffocation. Some residents suffered wounds and abrasions, while others hurled stones in response.

Amid these tensions, discussions surrounding a draft of the new Criminal Procedure Code sparked concern among legal experts, journalists, and lawyers. This law, often described as Egypt's “second constitution” and foundational to its criminal justice system, faced opposition, particularly from journalists and lawyers. They argued that the draft law undermines defense rights in favor of the prosecution and judiciary, and contains provisions that effectively impose a legal ban on journalistic work and publishing. In response, the House of Representatives issued a [statement](#) criticizing those opposing the law, including the head of the Journalists Syndicate, Khaled Elbalshy. The statement warned that it would not tolerate what it called “malicious claims” aimed at sowing confusion and undermining public trust in state institutions, even if they came from individuals “hiding behind the veil of freedom of expression.”¹

1 For more information and legal opinions on the draft new Code of Criminal Procedure : <https://www.cfjus-tice.org/ar/%d9%85%d8%b5%d8%b1-%d9%84%d8%ac%d9%86%d8%a9-%d8%a7%d9%84%d8%b9%d8%a>

Internationally, the United States, for the first time since 2020, decided to [grant](#) Egypt its full annual military aid without withholding a portion due to human rights concerns. This decision appears to be linked to Egypt's ongoing—though yet unsuccessful—efforts to mediate a ceasefire agreement. Meanwhile, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu [reiterated](#) his commitment to retaining control over the Philadelphia Route, asserting, “We ensured not a single pin entered Gaza from our side, but they armed themselves through Philadelphia and Egypt.”

Concurrently, 34 Egyptian and international human rights organizations called for the release of detained journalists and an end to the torture and abuses they face in prison. These organizations also demanded an end to the targeting of journalists' families, the censorship of news websites, and the persecution of civil society activists. Adding to the pressure, Sindafin, the company employed by the Egyptian government to block websites, [announced](#) its withdrawal from dealing with Egypt by March 2025, as part of a broader exit from authoritarian countries.

On the judicial front, the Cairo Criminal Court's Third Terrorism Chamber [rejected](#) appeals by Hossam Bahgat, director of the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights; Azza Soliman, chairperson of the Egyptian Women's Legal Assistance Foundation; and Mustafa Al-Hassan, director of the Hisham Mubarak Law Center. The appeals had sought to lift asset freezes imposed in connection with the foreign funding case, despite the case having been closed since March 2024.

The Third Circuit of the Criminal Court also issued [death sentences](#) by hanging for two defendants in Case No. 31369 of 2023 (Al-Marj Felonies), widely known in the media as the “First Grace Church Bombing Cell in Al-Marj.” Two other defendants were sentenced to life imprisonment, while four received ten years of rigorous imprisonment. Six female defendants were sentenced to five years of rigorous imprisonment, and all defendants were added to the lists of terrorist entities and individuals.

<https://www.egyptianinitiative.org/en/press-releases/2024/09/30/egypt-grants-full-military-aid-without-withholding-portion-due-to-human-rights-concerns>

Article 55 Coalition monitoring data summary of violations inside Egyptian detention facilities September 2024

During September 2024, ARTICLE 55 coalition organizations in prisons and other detention facilities in Egypt monitored the following violations:

Throughout the month, we documented the deaths of four detainees in various Egyptian prisons and detention centers. [Two](#) of these deaths occurred at Belbeis Police Station in Sharkia Governorate on September 2. The first victim, Abdullah Siam Ibrahim Siam, died as a result of severe torture and beatings, compounded by being denied medical care, including the liver medication he urgently needed. Despite his deteriorating condition, authorities refused to transfer him to a hospital. The second victim, Saeed Al-Ajrudi, was also denied medical care after being diagnosed with HIV/AIDS.

On September 4, we recorded the [death](#) of Judge Sami Mahmoud Ali Abdel Rahim, the former president of the Port Said Criminal Court, who had been serving a 15-year sentence at the Badr Correction and Rehabilitation Center. His death was the result of his worsening health due to illness. We also documented the [death](#) of Major Tarek Abu Al-Azm, a former officer in the Armed Forces, who had been detained in connection with a political case. His death followed years of physical and psychological torture, as well as serious violations during his detention since 2012. His dire conditions led to a high fever and a coma in the days before his death, yet he was neither treated nor transferred to a hospital.

Amid these distressing incidents, coalition organizations also reported the [plight](#) of prisoner Muhammad Najm Ali Muhammad Badr, held in Gamasa Maximum Security Prison 4. He has suffered repeated physical and psychological abuse at the hands of the deputy warden, Officer Muhammad Al-Hadi, and other prison staff. These abuses have severely affected his physical and mental well-being, leading him to attempt self-harm on several occasions, including burning his arm and breaking his foot in desperation to escape his torment.

We also monitored the [distressing](#) case of Ismail Alaa Abdel Azim Tawfiq, held in Liman Minya Prison. He was isolated in solitary confinement after his health deteriorated from tuberculosis. Rather than transferring him to a specialized hospital for treatment, the prison administration isolated him, putting his life at serious risk. During a recent family visit, Ismail reported that many other inmates are also infected and not receiving medical care.

Additionally, coalition organizations received reports of serious abuses occurring in Borg El Arab Prison, perpetrated by a national security officer known as "Hamza al-Masri." Political detainees have been arbitrarily transferred, placed in disciplinary cells without legal cause, and subjected to power outages in their cells. Detainees have had their personal belongings, including food, medicine, and mattresses, confiscated, leading to suffocation cases due to the lack of ventilation. These harsh conditions have driven some prisoners to attempt suicide and others to go on hunger strikes, which were forcibly ended by the officer.

On September 10, we documented the initiation of [investigations](#) by the Sidi Gaber prosecution into the torture and sexual assault of prisoner Rabie Said Hassan Mohamed Nasr. Detained in Sidi Gaber police station pending a criminal case, Rabie had previously reported to the prosecution that he was subjected to beatings, electric shocks, and rape by officers at the station in an attempt to coerce him into becoming an informant. After filing the report, he faced further pressure to withdraw it and was placed in solitary confinement upon his return from the prosecution session.

Furthermore, we [monitored](#) the case of Abdel Moneim Aboul Fotouh, the politician and head of the Masr el-Kawya Party, who is currently detained in Badr Prison. His son announced that Aboul Fotouh refused to attend a scheduled visit in the “glass cabin,” demanding a normal visit instead. He described the cabin as a “glass cemetery” due to the extreme heat and lack of ventilation or even a fan. Aboul Fotouh and his family have been deprived of direct communication for five years.

Lastly, coalition organizations reported that for the second time, the Ministry of Interior and the Prisons Authority [rejected](#) a request from “Marwa Arafa,” who has been in pretrial detention since April 2020, to take her postgraduate exams for a public law diploma. Her family had submitted a request to the prosecution for her to sit for the exams, but the prison refused, citing a decision to suspend postgraduate exams for detainees.

Given these alarming incidents, the organizations in the “Article 55” coalition assert that the conditions inside Egyptian prisons and detention facilities are not isolated incidents but part of a broader, systematic approach by the Egyptian authorities towards detainees, particularly political prisoners. These abuses are not merely individual acts of misconduct, as the Egyptian Ministry of Interior often claims, but rather indicative of a wider policy of impunity within the Egyptian Prisons Authority.

This culture of impunity has enabled and perpetuated human rights violations within detention facilities, allowing such practices to become entrenched. As a result, the organizations in the “Article 55” coalition express deep concern for the welfare of detainees, particularly in light of the rising number of deaths and the worsening conditions inside these facilities.

In response, the coalition calls for an immediate investigation into these violations and demands accountability for those responsible, in accordance with both Egyptian and international law. The coalition also urges authorities to adhere to the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, as well as Egypt’s own prison regulations, ensuring that detainees are treated with the dignity and respect owed to their humanity.

Article 55 Alliance <https://www.facebook.com/Article55egypt>.



 [article55egypt](https://www.facebook.com/article55egypt)

Article 55 Coalition

(Committee for Justice (CFJ), El Shehab Center for Human Rights (SHR),
Egyptian Network for Human Rights, Arab Foundation for Civil and
Political Rights-Nedal)

