

ACHPR71- Oral statement - ITEM 6: SR on Prisons, Conditions of Detention and Policing in Africa

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Despite the [repeated](#) calls by the UN Special Procedures and UN Treaty Bodies over [inhumane prison conditions](#), including denial of family visits and legal consultation [and denial of medical care](#) that contributed to the deaths of many prisoners, Egyptian authorities refuse to address these urgent concerns.

Egyptian human rights organizations have documented an increase in the number of deaths in detention, and in some cases, prisoners are released in serious health conditions that lead to their death a few days after their release. The Committee for Justice [documented](#) the death of 958 detainees, including 9 minors, during the period between 30 June 2013 and 1 December 2019.

ISHR and CFJ *would like to take the opportunity to express significant concerns regarding the death of economic expert and economic advisor and member of the liberal Egyptian Reform and Development Party, Ayman Hadhoud. He died in the custody of Egyptian security forces following his forced disappearance over two months ago.*

His family reported that Hadhoud's body had signs of beatings and torture, and leaked photos of his corpse "strongly suggests that Ayman Hadhoud was tortured or otherwise ill-treated before his death". The Public Prosecution stated that Hadhoud had died on 5 March of "hypotensive shock and cardiac arrest," following its investigation of the case and an autopsy of the body. The family's lawyer stated that the prosecution is preparing to close the case without further investigations after denying to allow them access to a copy of the case file and the forensic medicine report.

Despite the immense risk of COVID-19 outbreaks in Egypt's detention facilities, authorities have continued to arbitrarily arrest and detain thousands of persons in crowded detention facilities. *Cells in Egyptian detention centres are small, overcrowded and lack ventilation and hygienic facilities. Families are allowed to deliver life necessities, including food, clothing, medications, etc, to their loved ones in prison but under severe restrictions.*

Egypt has failed to provide transparent information on vaccinating the prison population. In June 2021, and after Abdulmoneam Abu El Fotouh's lawyer filed a case before the State council to demand vaccination for his client, the State lawyer provided to the court that prison administration vaccinated only 5000 detainees. Covid-19 is still impacting detainees since the prison administration has imposed policies limiting the right to receive visits and imposing a violation of the right to judicial review.

Prisons authorities use solitary confinement systematically to punish prisoners detained on political grounds. Some defendants are confined to solitary immediately upon admission, such as *the vice-president of the Strong Egypt Party*, Mohammed al-Qassas, who has been held in solitary confinement since his arrest in 2018, human rights lawyer Amr Imam who was arrested in 2019, and writer and poet Ahmed Douma, who spent 5 years in solitary confinement.

Recently, many Egyptian detainees entered a hunger strike to object to the inhuman treatment, detention conditions and the excessive use of solitary confinement.

In [Al-Qanater female prison](#), women detainees face torture and gender-based violence in custody with impunity, including humiliating vaginal searches, sexual harassment, and also [forced genital examinations](#) for transgender women. Authorities don't provide any sanitation products or sanitation pads free of charge, and since sanitation pads are sold in prison at twice its market price, women who are unable to pay for them cannot obtain them. Women [are kept in](#) overcrowded cells, receive inedible food and water, and denied access to medical treatment. *The CEDAW Committee expressed its deep concern over gender-based violence and “the lack of medical care and unhygienic conditions in prisons, in which women prisoners are reportedly subjected to strip search and to prolonged solitary confinement as a punishment” and about the detention conditions for transgender women. The UN Special Procedures raised as well as “the lack of redress mechanisms and accountability for victims of sexual violence” and urged Egypt to “promptly address its prison conditions and reverse what appears to be deeply entrenched practices that are severely infringing on people’s right to life, the right not to be subjected to arbitrary detention, the right not to be subjected to torture or ill-treatment, the right to due process and a fair trial, and adequate medical care.”*

We call on the Special Rapporteur to issue public statements condemning the violations detainees in Egypt face and to request a visit to Egypt including detention centers while ensuring no reprisals against those who engage with the SR.