

## **Reports**

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### **The Permanent National Committee on the UPR Mechanism of the UN Human Rights Council**

**Councilor Omar Marawan  
Minister of parliamentary affairs**

The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) is a mechanism aims to review the human rights records of all Member States of the United Nations, 193 countries, once every four years. This mechanism targets the improvement, reinforcement, support and expansion of the scope of human rights through evaluating the human rights status in each country, in addition to addressing the human rights violations in case it happens. It also aims to evaluate the extent of the States' respect and commitment to the rights of humans stipulated in the international conventions and covenants ratified by concerned States, in addition to the provision of assistance and support to uphold States capacity to effectively address the human rights challenges.

In 2010, Egypt underwent the first UPR before the United Nations Human Rights Council. In September 2013, the Egyptian Prime Minister has issued Decree no. 1100 on the formation of the governmental committee to prepare Egypt's report to be submitted to the UN Human Rights Council in its 20th session where Egypt has underwent its second UPR. The Review has been concluded with 300 recommendations; 223 were fully accepted, while 24 were accepted in part, therefore, Egypt has endorsed 82.4% of the total received recommendations.

As part of Egypt's keenness to cooperate effectively with various United Nations organizations and mechanisms relevant to human rights and out of Egypt's strong aspiration to meet with its international commitments, the Egyptian Prime Minister issued Decree no. 37 of the year 2015 that set forth the establishment of the National Committee on the UPR Mechanism, presided over by the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, and the membership of representatives of number of ministries and national councils along with number of public figures.

The Committee is mandated to prepare Egypt's UPR Mechanism report submitted to the UN Human Rights Council, to propose policies and measures contributing to implement the recommendations accepted by Egypt during the second Universal Periodic Review and also to follow up its implementation. The Committee is also responsible for proposing ad-hoc solutions to ensure



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the effective implementation of the recommendations, in addition to monitoring, studying and addressing human rights issues in Egypt. Besides, the Committee is assigned to follow-up Egypt's profile at the international level and to draw up national response. All of these tasks are carried out in compliance with the Constitution of 2014 and Egypt's international commitments in the field of human rights.

The Ministerial Decree has entrusted the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs with the collaboration with relevant government agencies so as to empower the Committee to perform its functions, including holding a community dialogue on issues relevant to citizens' rights and conducting surveys in cooperation with national bodies, signing cooperation protocols with Egyptian, regional and international human rights organizations and holding field visits to inspect the state of human rights, proposing proper bills and bylaws required to improve the performance of government agencies in the field of human rights and ensuring the effective communication with civil society, media outlets and the national bodies to uphold Egypt's human rights profile.

Stemmed out of the Egyptian political leadership belief in the importance of informing the international community of the achievements of the State in the field of human rights and out of its aspiration to fulfill its international obligations through implementing the recommendations accepted during the second Universal Periodic Review before the UN Human Rights Council, the Egyptian government decided to prepare and submit a mid-term report (voluntarily) to the UN Human Rights Council at its 37th session held in Geneva. Consequently, the Committee was keen to prepare the UPR mid-term report in the light of a comprehensive consultative process involving all governmental and non-governmental bodies, civil society organizations and public figures. Accordingly, the Committee has performed the following tasks:

Conducted series of intergovernmental meetings and consultations to follow-up the progress of the implementation of the recommendations accepted by Egypt in 2014.

Held joint meetings with number of civil society representatives to discuss their vision on the human rights situation in Egypt, emphasizing the challenges and achievements in the field of human rights up to the end of 2017.

Therefore, the report is the outcome of the aforementioned national meetings and consultations convened by the Committee since 2015. The report, that included thirteen main pillars, tackled the efforts of the Egyptian State in fulfilling its international human rights obligations represented in the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, along with the Egyptian State's commitment towards women empowerment and the protection of her rights. In addition to the protection of the rights of youth, people with special needs, refugees and expatriates, as well as the fight against illegal migration and smuggling of migrants, human trafficking and corruption, and finally, the need to



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respect human rights while countering terrorism, and to cooperate with international mechanisms.

In this context, the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs proceeded to the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva in 06/03/2018 to submit the voluntary mid-term report of the Arab Republic of Egypt. During his meeting with the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs has presented the key topics of the report, bringing the light into Egypt's efforts to promote the protection and respect for human rights on the ground. Besides, the Minister has highlighted the implementation of more than 75% of the recommendations endorsed by Egypt during the second Universal Periodic Review. At the end of the meeting, the UN High Commissioner thanked Egypt for submitting the mid-term report and called for maintaining the ongoing communication and cooperation between the Egyptian government and the office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in order to support the march of human rights.

The Egyptian Diplomatic Mission in Geneva organized a meeting for 65 ambassadors of different Arab, African, Asian, European and Latin countries accredited to the United Nations in Geneva, where the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs presented the pillars of the report. The attended ambassadors expressed their deep appreciation for the great achievements made by the Egyptian government during the past period. They also hailed Egypt's keenness for cooperation and positive interaction with the UN Human Rights mechanisms and particularly for the pursuit to submit a voluntary mid-term report including the progress achieved on ground in order to implement the recommendations endorsed by Egypt. Besides, the attendees praised the methodology of the report and considered it a model that can guide countries who are willing to highlight the progress of their efforts in the field of human rights.

The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs delivered Egypt's speech at the general discussion session at the UN Human Rights Council and also at the annual interactive debate on the rights of the persons with disabilities, at the Council's premises in Geneva.

Moreover, the Minister held several meetings with the Director of the UN Human Rights Council and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Migrants and the Special Rapporteur on Persons with Disabilities, the Senior Advisor to Amnesty International in the Middle East and the Secretary-General of the World Organization against Torture and the director of the human rights defenders program at the exact Organization, the Deputy Senior Advisor of Article 19 Organization on freedom of opinion and expression and the officials of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. These meetings aimed to explain Egypt's achievements and factual measures taken in the fields of human rights, and to revoke any allegations or fake news spread by the terrorist group and its agents about Egypt.