

EGYPT'S CAMPAIGN AGAINST CIVIL SOCIETY

DEMOCRACY WORKERS PUT ON TRIAL

In the notorious “Case 173,” a court convicted **43** American, Egyptian and other staff of **5** U.S. and German NGOs in 2013 of operating illegally and using foreign funds to “foment unrest.” The trial was marred by flagrant inaccuracies and loose evidentiary standards, and appeals still have not been heard.

CIVIL SOCIETY LEADERS REPRESSED

Human rights defenders and civic activists are among the **tens of thousands** of Egyptians subjected to security harassment, arrests, imprisonment, and enforced disappearance.

In a new phase of Case 173, the state is investigating the funding and operations of **at least 37** Egyptian civil society groups on spurious grounds of “threatening national security.” More than **50** human rights defenders and civil society activists have been summoned for criminal interrogation. The authorities have banned at least **27** human rights defenders from travel and frozen the assets of at least **10** such individuals and **7** civil society organizations. Dozens more have been banned from travel outside of this case.

MEDIA ATTACKS

The pro-state media attacks civil society activists as “**conspirators**,” “**agents**,” and “**supporters of terrorism**,” and has called human rights defenders forced to move abroad for safety “**traitors**” who should be returned home “in coffins.”

WEBSITES BLOCKED

Security agencies have **blocked 400+** websites of Egyptian civil society groups, media outlets, and international organizations—including Human Rights Watch and Reporters Without Borders—with no official explanation given.

HARSH NEW NGO LAW ENACTED

In May 2017 Egypt enacted one of the **most restrictive** NGO laws in the world. The **new law** criminalizes many legitimate civic activities, severely curtails NGO funding, and tightens state control over civil society work.

NGOS SHUT DOWN, PRESSURED

Prominent anti-torture organization al-Nadeem Center was **closed down** earlier this year and other leading human rights groups have had to shrink their activities or relocate outside the country. Egyptian authorities have also **shuttered 1,000+** charitable groups citing alleged ties to the Muslim Brotherhood.

Numerous international organizations have had to close their Egypt offices, including Human Rights Watch, the International Crisis Group, the **Carter Center**, the **Friedrich Naumann Foundation**, the **Konrad Adenauer Foundation**, **RTI International**, the **National Democratic Institute**, the **International Republican Institute**, **Freedom House**, the International Federation for Human Rights, the International Commission of Jurists, the **International Center for Journalists**, and **Ipsos**.

“A strong human rights community and healthy civil society are anchors of stability and a firewall against intolerance, extremist religious discourse, and conflict. In his crackdown on civil society, President al-Sisi is eroding the pillars of stability he claims to be preserving.”

—Bahey eldin Hassan
co-founder, Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies

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