



Home Office

Country Policy and Information Note

Egypt: Muslim Brotherhood

Version 3.0

July 2017

Preface

This note provides country of origin information (COI) and guidance to Home Office decision makers on handling particular types of protection and human rights claims. This includes whether claims are likely to justify the granting of asylum, humanitarian protection or discretionary leave and whether – in the event of a claim being refused – it is likely to be certifiable as ‘clearly unfounded’ under s94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.

Decision makers must consider claims on an individual basis, taking into account the case specific facts and all relevant evidence, including: the guidance contained within this document; the available COI; any applicable caselaw; and the Home Office casework guidance in relation to relevant policies.

Country information

COI in this note has been researched in accordance with principles set out in the [Common EU \[European Union\] Guidelines for Processing Country of Origin Information \(COI\)](#) and the [European Asylum Support Office’s research guidelines, Country of Origin Information report methodology](#), namely taking into account its relevance, reliability, accuracy, objectivity, currency, transparency and traceability.

All information is carefully selected from generally reliable, publicly accessible sources or is information that can be made publicly available. Full publication details of supporting documentation are provided in footnotes. Multiple sourcing is normally used to ensure that the information is accurate, balanced and corroborated, and that a comprehensive and up-to-date picture at the time of publication is provided. Information is compared and contrasted, whenever possible, to provide a range of views and opinions. The inclusion of a source is not an endorsement of it or any views expressed.

Feedback

Our goal is to continuously improve our material. Therefore, if you would like to comment on this note, please email [the Country Policy and Information Team](#).

Independent Advisory Group on Country Information

The Independent Advisory Group on Country Information (IAGCI) was set up in March 2009 by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration to make recommendations to him about the content of the Home Office’s COI material. The IAGCI welcomes feedback on the Home Office’s COI material. It is not the function of the IAGCI to endorse any Home Office material, procedures or policy. IAGCI may be contacted at:

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Information about the IAGCI’s work and a list of the COI documents which have been reviewed by the IAGCI can be found on the Independent Chief Inspector’s website at <http://icinspector.independent.gov.uk/country-information-reviews/>

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Policy guidance

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1. Introduction

1.1 Basis of claim

- 1.1.1 Fear of persecution or serious harm by the state because of the person's actual or perceived involvement with the Muslim Brotherhood (MB).

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2. Consideration of issues

2.1 Credibility

- 2.1.1 For guidance on assessing credibility see the [Asylum Instruction on Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).
- 2.1.2 Decision makers must also check if there has been a previous application for a UK visa or another form of leave. Asylum applications matched to visas should be investigated prior to the asylum interview (see the [Asylum Instruction on Visa Matches, Asylum Claims from UK Visa Applicants](#)).
- 2.1.3 Decision makers should also consider the need to conduct language analysis testing (see the [Asylum Instruction on Language Analysis](#)).

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2.2 Exclusion

- 2.2.1 A minority of Muslim Brotherhood supporters have reportedly engaged in violent acts. Some senior leaders have publicly reiterated the Muslim Brotherhood's commitment to non-violence, but others have failed to renounce the calls for retribution in Muslim Brotherhood statements (see [Muslim Brotherhood: history, structure, ideology and activities](#)).
- 2.2.2 Where a person is accepted as a member of the MB, decision makers will need to consider the person's role and activities on behalf of the group. If there are serious reasons for considering that the person has committed a crime or act contrary to Article 1F of the Refugee Convention then decision makers must consider whether one of the exclusion clauses is applicable.
- 2.2.3 If the person is excluded from the Refugee Convention, they will also be excluded from a grant of humanitarian protection.
- 2.2.4 For further guidance on the exclusion clauses, discretionary leave and restricted leave, see the Asylum Instructions on [Exclusion under Articles 1F and 33\(2\) of the Refugee Convention](#), [Humanitarian Protection](#) and [Restricted Leave](#).

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2.2 Assessment of risk

- 2.2.1 The MB remains the main political opposition to the government despite being banned in 2013, with an estimated one million members. The group has faced a prolonged crackdown by President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi's

government following the ousting of President Mohamed Morsi in July 2013 and its designation on 25 December 2013 as a terrorist organisation (see [Muslim Brotherhood: history, structure, ideology and activities](#) and [Treatment of Muslim Brotherhood](#)).

- 2.2.2 Journalists affiliated with, or perceived to be sympathetic to, the MB have also been targeted by the state. The government has also closed hundreds of civil society groups with links to the MB (see [Muslim Brotherhood and affiliated groups banned](#)).
- 2.2.3 Many hundreds of MB members have been killed or injured during protests, while thousands have also reportedly been detained, some in unofficial places of detention. There are also reports of MB supporters dying in police detention, instances of persons tortured to death and other allegations of killings in prisons and detention centres. Death sentences have been handed down to senior leaders in the MB for charges that include violence, espionage and jailbreak (see [Arrests and trials](#)).
- 2.2.4 Under the Penal Code, the government is able to detain anyone suspected of membership of the MB. However, in practice, arrests and prolonged detentions have primarily been of high- and mid-level leaders, and those taking part in protests against the government which became violent (see [Arrests and trials](#)).
- 2.2.5 The authorities are unlikely to have the capacity, capability or interest in seeking to target all persons associated with the MB given the size and variety of its membership and support base. The evidence does not establish that merely being a member of, or, in particular, a supporter of the MB, or being perceived to support the MB, will place a person at risk of persecution or serious harm.
- 2.2.6 Whether a person is at risk of ill-treatment because of their involvement with, or perceived support for, the MB will depend upon their circumstances, profile, activities, and previous contact and difficulties with the state. The onus is on the person to demonstrate that they are likely to be of interest to the state and subject to treatment amounting to persecution or serious harm.
- 2.2.7 For further guidance on assessing risk, see the [Asylum Instruction on Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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2.3 Protection

- 2.3.1 As the person's fear is of persecution/serious harm at the hands of the state, they will not be able to avail themselves of the protection of the authorities.
- 2.3.2 For further guidance on assessing the availability of state protection, see the [Asylum Instruction on Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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2.4 Internal relocation

- 2.4.1 As the person's fear is of ill treatment/persecution at the hands of the state, they will not be able to relocate to escape that risk.

- 2.4.2 For further guidance on internal relocation and the factors to be considered, see the [Asylum Instruction on Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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2.5 Certification

- 2.5.1 Where a claim is refused, it is unlikely to be certifiable as ‘clearly unfounded’ under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.
- 2.5.2 For further guidance on certification, see [Certification of Protection and Human Rights claims under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 \(clearly unfounded claims\)](#).

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3. Policy summary

- 3.1.1 The Muslim Brotherhood (MB) has been designated a terrorist organisation in Egypt and members may be prosecuted under the Penal Code.
- 3.1.2 Many senior and mid-level leaders of the MB have been arrested and faced prolonged detention, some have also been handed death sentences. Thousands of members and supporters have also been arrested, particularly during demonstrations, by the state security forces. Some members and supporters have also been killed and injured during these protests.
- 3.1.3 Persons with a high profile, who have been politically active or have come to the attention of the authorities, particularly in demonstrations, may be subject to arrest and detention, where they may be at risk of ill-treatment and / or face trial without due process and disproportionate punishment, which amounts to persecution or serious harm. Additionally, persons who are not members but are high profile supporters or those perceived to support the MB, such as journalists, may be at risk of persecution or serious harm.
- 3.1.4 Low-level, non-political or inactive members and supporters, or those perceived to be supporters, are not generally being targeted and it is unlikely that they will be able to demonstrate a real risk of persecution. The onus is on the person to demonstrate that they are at risk of persecution, however each case will need to be considered on its facts.
- 3.1.5 A minority of members of the MB have engaged in violent acts. Exclusion must be considered where there are serious reasons for considering that a person may have committed serious crimes.
- 3.1.6 Neither protection nor internal relocation is likely to be available.
- 3.1.7 Where a claim is refused, it is unlikely to be certifiable.

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4. Muslim Brotherhood: history, structure, ideology and activities

4.1 History

4.1.1 The BBC in its news profile of December 2013 stated:

‘Founded by Hassan al-Banna, the Muslim Brotherhood - or al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun in Arabic - has influenced Islamist movements around the world with its model of political activism combined with Islamic charity work...

‘The movement initially aimed simply to spread Islamic morals and good works, but soon became involved in politics, particularly the fight to rid Egypt of British colonial control and cleanse it of all Western influence...

‘While the Ikhwan say that they support democratic principles, one of the group's stated aims is to create a state ruled by Islamic law, or Sharia. Its most famous slogan, used worldwide, is "Islam is the solution."¹

4.1.2 In the published main findings of the UK Government's review of the Muslim Brotherhood, it was noted that the group was dissolved in 1954 ‘which led to the arrest, torture and execution of many members and the co-option of others’. The MB were, however, rehabilitated under President ‘Sadat 20 years later. In the 1970s the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt expanded, established a foothold within the Egyptian political system and took a firm hold on student organisations, professional syndicates and trades unions. It also developed a large, sophisticated and often clandestine network of commercial enterprises, small businesses and charities.²

4.1.3 The Council for Foreign Relations noted in January 2014: ‘The MB... has spawned Sunni Islamist groups throughout the Arab world. Banned from politics for its early aim of overthrowing the Egyptian government, the Brotherhood renounced violence in the 1970s and earned popular support by providing social services such as pharmacies, hospitals and schools.’³

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4.2 Size, structure and ideology

4.2.1 The MB stated in 2013 that its members number over a million. The majority rank-and-file are said to be lower-middle-class, but leaders are often doctors

¹ BBC News Profile, ‘Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood’ 25 December 2013, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-12313405>, Accessed: 16 May 2016

² UK Government, Muslim Brotherhood Review: Main Findings, para 10, 17 December 2015, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/486932/Muslim_Brotherhood_Review_Main_Findings.pdf. Accessed: 22 March 2017

³ Council on Foreign Affairs - CFA Backgrounder, ‘Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood’ January 2014, <http://www.cfr.org/egypt/egypts-muslim-brotherhood/p23991>, Accessed: on 23 May 2016

and businessmen. Each pays a portion of their income to help fund the movement.⁴

4.2.2 Janes provided a brief description of the Muslim Brotherhood's activities:

'Muslim Brotherhood (al-Ikhwan al-Muslimoon)

'The Muslim Brotherhood's activities are social, economic, charitable, and political. Indeed, its supporters often refer to the Muslim Brotherhood's "society" and its plan to "enable" itself to govern starting at a grassroots level. The group emphasised the building social acceptance of Islamist ideas and its own soft power until it is in a position to govern. Its relationship with the state historically swung among direct military conflict, support, and silent opposition... [the Muslim Brother gained power in 2011 but were subsequently ousted by the military in 2013 which] triggered an ongoing confrontation between the state and the Muslim Brotherhood, with the youth wing adopting terrorist tactics against the state and foreign interests allied to it, and the older generation adhering to mostly peaceful unrest. The organisation is now banned. Its members cannot participate publicly in political life, and their assets are targeted for expropriation. The Al-Wasat Party and Strong Egypt Party are both offshoots of the Muslim Brotherhood. Proponents of the violent approach to opposition are likely to continue with a campaign of targeted assassinations against state officials for as long as the military remain opposed to negotiation.⁵

4.2.3 Khalil al-Anani, Associate Professor of Political Science at the Dohar Institute for Graduate Studies, writing in Al Jazeera⁶, observed:

'Since the coup of 2013, the Brotherhood has seen myriad organisational, political and ideological divisions. [President al] Sisi's repression has divided the movement and created significant differences among members over several issues, ranging from the position towards the regime to its political, ideological and religious views.

'These divisions have shaped the Brotherhood's strategy and tactics on how to respond to Sisi's repression. Organisationally, with many of its senior members in prison and exile, the Brotherhood is facing a crisis of leadership. The gap between the older and younger leaders is increasing and affecting the movement's strategy.

'Over the past three years, the Brotherhood has been divided into two camps: the old and conservative leaders versus the young and revolutionary

⁴ The Guardian, 'Who are the Muslim Brotherhood?' 2 April 2013, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/apr/02/who-are-the-muslim-brotherhood>, Accessed: 31 March 2014

⁵ Janes, 'Sentinel Security Assessment – North Africa', Egypt, Internal affairs, updated 14 June 2017, <https://janes.ihs.com/NorthAfrica/Display/1303682> (subscription only). Accessed: 15 June 2017

⁶ The Egyptian authorities consider Al Jazeera and Qatar, the state in which the media organisation is based, to be sympathetic to the Muslim Brotherhood. See for example, AlAraby, 'Muslim Brotherhood denounces Egypt church bombings, blames Sisi regime', 10 June 2017, <https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/news/2017/4/10/muslim-brotherhood-denounces-egypt-church-bombings-blames-sisi-regime>; The Economist, 'Saudi Arabia cuts off Qatar', 10 June 2017, <http://www.economist.com/news/middle-east-and-africa/21723018-kingdom-raising-tensions-its-immediate-neighbours-well-iran>. Both accessed: 15 June 2017.

members. The latter have gained influence over the movement because of their tendency to confront the regime... The new and relatively young leadership formed a committee called "The High Administrative Committee" and was led by Mohamed Kamal, a former member of Brotherhood's Guidance Bureau who was assassinated by security forces last October.

'The new committee claimed leadership over the movement against veteran leaders such as Mahmoud Ezzat, the acting General Guide of the Brotherhood, who is believed to be hiding in Egypt, Mahmoud Hussein, the secretary-general of the movement, and Ibrahim Munir, who was appointed Deputy of the General Guide and has been in London since the late 1980s.

'In December [2016], the High Administrative Committee was dissolved and the formation of a new Guidance Bureau declared, which was rejected by the old leadership.

'Also, for the first time in its history, the Brotherhood is divided between internal and external leadership. Senior members who fled to Turkey after the coup have formed a new office called the External Office to run and supervise the Brotherhood's members and activities overseas.'⁷

4.2.4 Professor al-Anani further observed in regard to the MB's strategies that:

'Politically, the Brotherhood is divided on how to deal with regime repression and which strategy it should adopt to remain relevant.

'While the new leadership has adopted a confrontational and non-compromising position, the old leadership tends to accommodate regime repression and keeps the door open for bargaining and reconciliation with the regime.

'The new leadership of the Brotherhood finds support and appeal among young members, as they see it as more revolutionary and willing to challenge the regime.'⁸

4.2.5 Alaraby reported in an article following the Palm Sunday Bombings of a Christian church and cathedral in April 2017 that, at least, some elements of the MB accused the government of being responsible for the attacks and ongoing violence generally:

'The Egyptian regime had a hand in the twin church bombings that killed dozens on Palm Sunday, the blacklisted Muslim Brotherhood has said.

'The Islamist group accused Egyptian authorities on Sunday of complicity in the deadly bomb attacks in the Nile Delta cities of Tanta and Alexandria, which killed at least 44 people.

⁷ Khalil al-Anani, Associate Professor of Political Science at the Dohar Institute for Graduate Studies, writing in Al Jazeera 'What happened to Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood?', 15 February 2017, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2017/02/happened-egypt-muslim-brotherhood-170212130839987.html>. Accessed: 19 April 2017

⁸ Khalil al-Anani, Associate Professor of Political Science at the Dohar Institute for Graduate Studies, writing in Al Jazeera 'What happened to Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood?', 15 February 2017, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2017/02/happened-egypt-muslim-brotherhood-170212130839987.html>. Accessed: 19 April 2017

"Fascist regimes have taken a unified approach in their struggle to ensure their survival by creating an imaginary enemy called terrorism to cover up their failure and garner the sympathy of ordinary people," the banned group said in a statement.

"We accuse the...regime of orchestrating or facilitating the two incidents," it said.

"The Muslim Brotherhood condemns this painful incident and professes its innocence of the innocent blood that has been spilt," the statement added.

'Qatar-based prominent Muslim theologian Yusuf al-Qaradawi, who is close to the Brotherhood, also denounced the Palm Sunday attacks.

"We condemn all attacks on peaceful souls and confirm that these crimes are inconsistent with religious laws, ethics and customs. Those who have done this will face great torment," Qaradawi tweeted.⁹

4.2.6 An information response by the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRBC), compiled using a range of sources mostly dating from 2014 and 2015, reported:

'Sources indicate that the following individuals occupy leadership positions in the Muslim Brotherhood:

- 'Mohamed Badie, supreme guide of the Muslim Brotherhood (Daily News Egypt 21 June 2014) or the group's "spiritual leader" (Al Jazeera 22 Aug. 2015);
- 'Safwat Hegazi [Hegazy], a Muslim Brotherhood leader (Amnesty International 24 June 2014) or "conservative preacher" (Daily News Egypt 21 June 2014; Middle East Eye 22 June 2014);
- 'Mohamed El-Beltagi [El-Beltagy], a senior Freedom and Justice Party member (Daily News Egypt 21 June 2014; Middle East Eye 22 June 2014);
- 'Bassem Ouda, the former Minister of Supply and Interior Trade during Morsi's administration and member of the Muslim Brotherhood (Middle East Eye 22 June 2014);
- 'Essam El-Erian, the Freedom and Justice Party's deputy chairman (Middle East Eye 22 June 2014).'¹⁰

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4.3 Involvement in violence

4.3.1 In the published main findings of the UK Government's internal review of the Muslim Brotherhood, Sir John Jenkins considered 'the use of violence and

⁹ AlAraby, 'Muslim Brotherhood denounces Egypt church bombings, blames Sisi regime', 10 June 2017, <https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/news/2017/4/10/muslim-brotherhood-denounces-egypt-church-bombings-blames-sisi-regime>. Accessed: 15 June 2017.

¹⁰ Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Research Directorate, 'Egypt: Treatment of members of the Muslim Brotherhood, including leaders, returnee members and suspected members, by authorities, following the removal of President Mohamed Morsi (2014-May 2017)', 12 June 2017, <http://irb-cisr.gc.ca/Eng/ResRec/RirRdi/Pages/index.aspx?doc=457079>. Accessed: 20 June 2017.

terrorism in the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood and other national chapters. He found a complex and situational relationship, in a region where political violence was and is common.' He observed that:

- 'Hassan al Banna [the organisation's founder] accepted the political utility of violence, and the Brotherhood conducted attacks, including political assassinations and attempted assassinations against Egyptian state targets and both British and Jewish interests during his lifetime;
- influenced by his personal experiences in 1940s Egypt, in the US and in prison under Nasser, the key Muslim Brotherhood ideologue, Sayyid Qutb, drew on the thought of the Indo-Pakistani theorist, Abul Ala'a Mawdudi, the founder of the Islamist party Jamaat-e-Islami, to promote the doctrine of takfirism. This has consistently been understood as a doctrine permitting the stigmatisation of other Muslims as infidel or apostate, and of existing states as unIslamic, and the use of extreme violence in the pursuit of the perfect Islamic society. Qutb argued that a self-appointed vanguard of true believers was essential to create an authentically Islamic community and state. Jihad was neither solely spiritual nor defensive. Many contemporary Islamic states were regarded as 'Un-Islamic'; confrontation with their 'unjust' rulers was legitimate and inevitable.
- 'Qutb's views have at times been reinterpreted by some in the Muslim Brotherhood. But they have never been institutionally disowned. They continue to be explicitly endorsed by many senior Muslim Brotherhood figures, including leaders of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. They remain central to the Muslim Brotherhood's formational curriculum. Qutb's thinking led to a resurgence of takfiri ideology, and has inspired many terrorist organisations, including the assassins of Sadat, Al Qaida and its offshoots. Qutb was executed in Egypt in 1966;
- 'in return for freedom to reorganise politically and socially in Egypt in the 1970s, the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood officially disowned violence;
- 'however, the Muslim Brotherhood at all levels have repeatedly defended Hamas attacks against Israel, including the use of suicide bombers and the killing of civilians. The Muslim Brotherhood facilitate funding for Hamas. The leadership of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, its Jordanian counterpart and Hamas are closely connected. There are wider links with Muslim Brotherhood affiliates throughout the region. Senior members of the Muslim Brotherhood routinely use virulent, anti-Semitic language;
- 'senior Muslim Brotherhood figures and associates have justified attacks against coalition forces in Iraq and Afghanistan;
- 'some members of the Muslim Brotherhood (mainly in non Muslim countries) have strongly criticised Al Qaida. But leaders in the Muslim Brotherhood have claimed that the attacks on 09/11 were fabricated

by the US, and that the so called 'war on terrorism' is a pretext to attack Muslims.¹¹

4.3.2 In the same report, Sir John Jenkins concluded:

'... the Muslim Brotherhood have preferred non violent incremental change on the grounds of expediency, often on the basis that political opposition will disappear when the process of Islamisation is complete. But they are prepared to countenance violence – including, from time to time, terrorism - where gradualism is ineffective. They have deliberately, wittingly and openly incubated and sustained an organisation - Hamas - whose military wing has been proscribed in the UK as a terrorist organisation (and which has been proscribed in its entirety by other countries). The writings of the leading Muslim Brotherhood ideologue have been used to legitimise AQ-related terror. Some leading Muslim Brotherhood members and supporters have endorsed attacks on western forces.'¹²

4.3.3 In a statement made on 17 December 2015 following the release of the main findings of the UK Government's internal review of the Muslim Brotherhood, former Prime Minister David Cameron observed:

'Parts of the Muslim Brotherhood have a highly ambiguous relationship with violent extremism. Both as an ideology and as a network it has been a rite of passage for some individuals and groups who have gone on to engage in violence and terrorism. It has stated its opposition to al-Qaida (AQ) but it has never credibly denounced the use made by terrorist organisations of the work of Sayyid Qutb, one of the Brotherhood's most prominent ideologues. Individuals closely associated with the Muslim Brotherhood in the UK have supported suicide bombing and other attacks in Israel by Hamas, an organisation whose military wing has been proscribed in the UK since 2001 as a terrorist organisation, and which describes itself as the Palestinian chapter of the Muslim Brotherhood.

'Moreover, despite the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood's public condemnation of violence in 2012/13 and afterwards, some of their supporters have been involved in violent exchanges with the security forces and other groups. Media reports and credible academic studies indicate that in the past 12 months [January to December 2015] a minority of Muslim Brotherhood supporters in Egypt have engaged alongside other Islamists in violent acts. Some senior leaders have publicly reiterated the Muslim Brotherhood's commitment to non-violence, but others have failed to renounce the calls for retribution in some recent Muslim Brotherhood statements.

¹¹ UK Government, 'Muslim Brotherhood Review: Main Findings', para 16, 17 December 2015, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/486932/Muslim_Brotherhood_Review_Main_Findings.pdf. Accessed: 22 March 2017

¹² UK Government, 'Muslim Brotherhood Review: Main Findings', para 17, 17 December 2015, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/486932/Muslim_Brotherhood_Review_Main_Findings.pdf. Accessed: 22 March 2017

‘... The main findings of the review support the conclusion that membership of, association with, or influence by the Muslim Brotherhood should be considered as a possible indicator of extremism.’¹³

4.3.4 Janes observed that:

‘The MB has informally divided into competing factions since 2013 over differences in strategy for confronting the military regime. A majority faction advocates a peaceful approach to avoid repression from the security forces. Opposed to this is a relative youth wing of the group that had coalesced around Mohamed Kamal before his killing in October 2016. Smaller in numbers, there is a strong probability that its members will increasingly engage in high-profile and targeted assassinations.’¹⁴

4.3.5 Janes also observed that:

‘Terrorist incidents were until mid-2013 largely concentrated in the Sinai peninsula but have spread into Egypt’s mainland, as Muslim Brotherhood supporters turned to violence instead of peaceful protest and the Islamic State has managed to establish cells beyond Sinai. Smaller, crude improvised explosive devices (IEDs) are regularly discovered or explode, including in Cairo, Giza and Delta cities. Targets include government or security force assets, courts, public spaces including transport hubs such as metro and railway stations, and assets associated with groups or individuals seen as pro-Army, for instance Copts, liberals, judges, unionists, or Western governments and companies. Increasingly, militant groups in Cairo have moved towards more targeted assassinations of high-ranking officials over indiscriminate killings of security forces.’¹⁵

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5. Muslim Brotherhood in power: 2011 to 2013

5.1.1 The Council on Foreign Relations backgrounder, January 2014, explained:

‘The Brotherhood emerged as a dominant political force in Egypt following Mubarak’s removal from office amid mass protests in February 2011 in part because its organisational capacity was unmatched, but the group’s electoral victories were tarnished by power struggles with the judiciary and the military. Battles over the drafting of a new constitution were a particular flash point.’

‘In winter 2011–2012 parliamentary elections, the Brotherhood’s Freedom and Justice Party (FJP) won nearly half the seats in the lower house (People’s Assembly), and Islamists took 84 percent of the seats in the upper house (Shura Council). Pushing back against the Brotherhood’s increasing power, in June 2012 the Mubarak-appointed Supreme Constitutional Court

¹³ UK Government, ‘Muslim Brotherhood review: statement by the Prime Minister’, 17 December 2015, <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/muslim-brotherhood-review-statement-by-the-prime-minister>. Accessed: 19 April 2017.

¹⁴ Janes, ‘Sentinel Security Assessment – North Africa’, Egypt, Internal affairs, updated 14 June 2017, <https://janes.ihs.com/NorthAfrica/Display/1303682>. (Subscription only) Accessed: 15 June 2017

¹⁵ Janes, Sentinel Security Assessment – North Africa, Egypt, Security, updated 1 June 2017, <https://janes.ihs.com/NorthAfrica/Display/1303682>. (Subscription only) Accessed: 15 June 2017

dissolved the People's Assembly and revoked a law that would have barred former regime officials from holding office, allowing Mubarak-era prime minister Ahmed Shafiq to vie for the presidency. Following a first round of voting in May, MB candidate Morsi won a narrow majority (51.7 percent) in a June runoff against Shafiq.'

'After his election, Morsi ordered the military, which had been acting as an interim government, to its barracks, a move welcomed by much of the officer corps, which was conscious of growing public resentment during its nearly one-and-a-half years at Egypt's helm.'

'With the lower house of parliament dissolved, Morsi had both executive and legislative control of the government. In late November 2012, Morsi declared himself, the Shura Council (previously a consultative body without legislative authority), and the constituent assembly immune from judicial review. The move provoked an immediate backlash, including public demonstrations against what opponents called a power grab. Though Morsi argued that the judiciary and much of the bureaucracy was dominated by feloul, or remnants of the Mubarak regime eager to impede the revolution's goals, intense popular opposition led him to annul the decree a month later.'

'... Though the 2012 constitution was approved with a 64 percent majority in a nationwide referendum, just a third of the electorate voted in the December referendum. Opponents were concerned about the role of Islam as the basis of law, feared insufficient protections for women's rights and freedoms of speech and worship, and distrusted the broad power accorded to the presidency.'

'The conflict between Morsi and the judiciary continued in March 2013 when the Supreme Administrative Court overturned a presidential decree calling for April parliamentary elections, questioning the constitutionality of election law provisions. The secular opposition had previously called for a boycott of the vote.'

'Many analysts criticize Morsi's tactics as heavy-handed. Middle East expert Robin Wright referred to his style of governing as "majoritarianism," meaning "autocratic rule by the largest party." Opposition to Morsi's rule came to a head in June 2013 with his appointment of seventeen Brotherhood-affiliated provincial governors, including a member of the former militant group Gamaa Islamiya as governor of Luxor, where the group massacred dozens of tourists in 1997.'

'Following a new round of mass protests, the army, now led by General Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, ousted Morsi on July 3, 2013, and suspended the new constitution. A fifty-member committee that convened to amend the constitution included just two Islamists, neither of whom represented the Brotherhood. Egyptians voted on the new constitution January 14 and 15, 2014.'¹⁶

5.1.2 The same source noted:

¹⁶ Council on Foreign Affairs – CFA Backgrounder, 'Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood' January 2014, <http://www.cfr.org/egypt/egypts-muslim-brotherhood/p23991>, Accessed: 23 May 2016

'...Morsi's tenure was marked by widespread frustration with economic mismanagement and poor governance, and his administration was ousted by the military in July 2013. A violent crackdown followed in which Morsi, much of the Brotherhood's leadership, and thousands of its supporters were arrested, and more than one thousand supporters were killed, according to rights groups. The military-backed government banned the Brotherhood once again at the end of 2013, excluding it from mainstream political channels.'¹⁷

5.1.3 The Washington Institute in their Article entitled Egypt Two Years After Morsi – 20 May 2015 observed that:

'Yet the manner in which Morsi was removed from power had significant consequences for Egypt's democratic prospects. By toppling Morsi, the Egyptian military locked itself in a kill-or-be-killed struggle with the Brotherhood. The Generals and their supporters believe that they must destroy the Brotherhood, or risk the Brotherhood remobilizing, returning to power, and seeking vengeance for Morsi's overthrow.'¹⁸

'By the same token, the Brotherhood seeks to destroy the current government. In this vein, Brotherhood leaders openly call for Sisi's death, and the Brotherhood released a statement in January 2015 calling on its followers to embrace "jihad" and "martyrdom" in fighting the current regime. So after removing Morsi, Egypt's military-backed government launched a brutal crackdown on the Brotherhood, repressing its protests with deadly force while decapitating the Brotherhood's hierarchical command-chain through a massive arrest campaign.'¹⁹

5.1.4 [A research briefing produced the House of Commons Library](#) released in February 2016 provides a useful overview of events between 2011 and 2014, and political events subsequent to this leading to the election of the current Parliament and President Al Sisi.

5.1.5 According to an Amnesty International press release:

'By sentencing Egypt's former President Mohamed Morsi and 102 others, including senior Muslim Brotherhood members, to death today, the Egyptian authorities have once again demonstrated the appalling state of the country's justice system, Amnesty International said... In one of two cases the criminal court ruled on today, former President Morsi and 80 others, including senior Muslim Brotherhood members, were sentenced to death for orchestrating mass prison-breaks during the "25 January Revolution", aided by Hamas and Hizbullah.'²⁰

¹⁷ Council on Foreign Affairs – CFA Backgrounder, 'Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood' January 2014, <http://www.cfr.org/egypt/egypts-muslim-brotherhood/p23991>, Accessed: 23 May 2016

¹⁸ The Washington Institute Policy Analysis, 'Egypt Two Years After Morsi' 20 May 2015, <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/egypt-two-years-after-morsi>, Accessed: 16 May 2016

¹⁹ The Washington Institute Policy Analysis, 'Egypt Two Years After Morsi' 20 May 2015, <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/egypt-two-years-after-morsi>, Accessed: 16 May 2016

²⁰ Amnesty International – Egypt, 'Confirmation of Morsi Death Sentence Condemned' 16 June 2015, <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/press-releases/egypt-confirmation-morsi-death-sentence-condemned>,

5.1.6 The Washington Institute in their Article – Egypt Two Years After Morsi noted that:

‘On 30 June 2013, unprecedented millions of protestors descended on the central squares across Egypt to demand President Mohamed Morsi's ouster. While Morsi, a MB leader, had narrowly won the June 2012 presidential elections, he rapidly lost support. Morsi's assertion of total executive power through a November 2012 constitutional declaration alienated a substantial cross section of the Egyptian public, setting off frequent -- and often violent -- demonstrations that continued for months. Meanwhile, as the economy plummeted and the tide of popular opinion shifted further against Morsi, Egypt's state institutions mutinied: bureaucracies became unresponsive to Brotherhood ministers, police refused to guard Brotherhood properties and in some cases uniformed officers even stood alongside anti-Morsi protestors in the streets. As a result, the Egyptian state was on the brink of collapse: by the time the massive 30 June 2013 demonstrations began, Morsi controlled practically nothing on the ground and he was reduced to being a President in name only.

‘The MB, however, utterly misinterpreted the depth of this crisis and refused to negotiate a political solution, such as early elections or a referendum on Morsi's presidency. Instead, it mobilized thousands of its cadres to defend Morsi's "legitimacy", and indicated that it would use violence if necessary [...] Clashes between Muslim Brothers and their opponents erupted throughout the country, in which dozens were killed.

‘This is the context in which Egypt's military, led by then Defence Minister Abdul Fattah al-Sisi, removed Morsi from power on 3 July 2013. Egypt was on the verge of severe civil strife, if not civil war and many Egyptians feared that their country was headed the way of Syria or Libya. Indeed, from the perspective of the Generals and many Egyptians, Sisi's decision to oust Morsi saved Egypt from outright chaos.’²¹

5.1.7 According to BBC News: ‘Mohammed Morsi was Egypt's first democratically elected president, but lasted only one year in power before being ousted by the military on 3 July 2013. The military's move followed days of mass anti-government protests and Morsi's rejection of an ultimatum from the Generals to resolve Egypt's worst political crisis since Hosni Mubarak was deposed in 2011.’²²

5.1.8 In the published main findings of the UK Government's internal review of the Muslim Brotherhood, Sir John Jenkins, who looked at the group overseas, considered:

‘... the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood's experience in power - through the vehicle of The Freedom and Justice Party (FJP) - in Egypt between 2011

Accessed: 16 May 2016

²¹ The Washington Institute Policy Analysis, ‘Egypt Two Years After Morsi’ 20 May 2015, <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/egypt-two-years-after-morsi>, Accessed: 16 May 2016

²² BBC News Profile, ‘Egypt's Mohammed Morsi’ 21 April 2015, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-18371427>, Accessed: 16 May 2016

and 2013, noting the range of views on the complex interplay of events. He concluded that the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood did not do enough to demonstrate political moderation or a commitment to democratic values, had failed to convince Egyptians of their competence or good intentions, and had subsequently struggled to draw lessons for what its failure in Egypt meant for its future.²³

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6. Treatment of the Muslim Brotherhood since 2013

6.1 Muslim Brotherhood and affiliated groups banned

6.1.1 The USSD report covering events in 2016 observed that: ‘The Muslim Brotherhood, the Muslim Brotherhood-affiliated Freedom and Justice Party, and its NGO remained illegal, and the Muslim Brotherhood was a legally designated terrorist organization.’²⁴ The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade report (DFAT report 2017) on Egypt of May 2017 observed that: ‘According to Article 86, membership of a designated terrorist group may incur penalties of up to five years’ imprisonment. Article 86 also criminalises the distribution of materials, in writing or in speech, pertaining to a proscribed organisation or in service of its objectives.’²⁵

6.1.2 According to Amnesty International in their Report 2015-2016:

‘By the end of [2015], the government said it had closed more than 480 non-governmental organisations (NGOs) because of their alleged links to the MB group. On 21 October [2015], security forces raided the Mada Foundation for Media Development, a Cairo-based journalism NGO. They detained all those present and questioned them for several hours before releasing all but the organisation’s director, whom they held without charge on suspicion of “international bribery – receiving foreign funding” and belonging to the MB.’²⁶

6.1.3 The DFAT report stated ‘DFAT understands that most, if not all, NGOs affiliated to the Brotherhood have either been shut down, had their assets seized, and/or had their board replaced with government appointees.’²⁷

6.1.4 According to an article by Carnegie Middle East Centre – The Struggle for the Leadership of Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood – July 2015:

‘The MB incurred significant losses during its confrontation with the state. In addition to the security clashes in the squares that resulted in thousands of

²³ UK Government, Muslim Brotherhood Review: Main Findings, para 11, 17 December 2015, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/486932/Muslim_Brotherhood_Review_Main_Findings.pdf. Accessed: 22 March 2017

²⁴ US State Department, ‘Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2016’, Egypt (section 2b), 3 March 2017, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2016&dliid=265494>. Accessed: 15 June 2017.

²⁵ Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), ‘Country Information Report – Egypt’ (para 3.41), 19 May 2017. Copy on request. Accessed on 15 June 2017.

²⁶ Amnesty International, ‘Annual Report Egypt 2015/2016’ <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/annual-report/2016/> Accessed: 16 May 2016

²⁷ Australian Government, DFAT, ‘Country Information Report – Egypt’ (para 3.41), 19 May 2017. Copy on request. Accessed: 15 June 2017.

deaths and arrests, the interim government froze the assets of 1,055 charitable religious organisations in December 2013, accusing them of belonging to the Brotherhood or being affiliated to it. This move has weakened the organisation's social and religious activities. The government also declared the Brotherhood a terrorist organisation [...] The Supreme Administrative Court then dissolved the FJP, the political arm of the group, and confiscated its assets in August 2014'.²⁸

6.1.5 The article further noted that:

'The escalation of the security confrontation and the arrest of the Brotherhood's leaders dealt a strong blow to the organisation, which was unstable for several months before returning with a new structure and working plan. At the organisational level, the Brotherhood began to develop structures to adapt to changes on the ground, namely the need to work underground and the increased confrontations between its members and the security forces.'²⁹

6.1.6 The USSD report for 2016 stated: 'Over the course of one week in May, the Ministry of Social Solidarity closed 75 NGOs in Beheira Governorate, according to a ministry statement. The ministry alleged all of the 75 had Muslim Brotherhood connections and claimed the governorate was "free" of any NGOs receiving foreign funding as a result of the closures.'³⁰

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6.2 Police use of excessive force, arrests and trials

6.2.1 BBC News in their Article, What's Become of Egypt's Morsi – 16 June 2015 stated that:-

'In May 2015, Morsi and more than 100 other people was sentenced to death after being convicted of colluding with foreign militants - from the Palestinian Islamist movement Hamas and Lebanon's Shia Islamist Hezbollah movement - to organise a mass prison break during the uprising against Hosni Mubarak. Morsi was being held at Wadi Natroun prison in January 2011 when armed men overcame the guards, freeing thousands of inmates. He and his co-defendants, including senior Brotherhood officials, were also found guilty of the murder and kidnapping of guards, damaging and setting fire to prison buildings and looting the prison's weapons depot. In June 2015, a Court upheld the death sentence against Morsi and 98 others after consulting Egypt's Grand Mufti.'³¹

²⁸ Carnegie Middle East Centre, 'The Struggle for the Leadership of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood' July 2015, <http://carnegie-mec.org/2015/07/14/struggle-for-leadership-of-egypt-s-muslim-brotherhood/idbr>, Accessed: 16 May 2016

²⁹ Carnegie Middle East Centre, 'The Struggle for the Leadership of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood' July 2015, <http://carnegie-mec.org/2015/07/14/struggle-for-leadership-of-egypt-s-muslim-brotherhood/idbr>, Accessed: 16 May 2016

³⁰ USSD, Country Report on Human Rights Practices – 2016', Egypt, section 2b, 3 March 2017, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2016&dliid=265494>. Accessed: 23 March 2017

³¹ BBC News, 'What's Become of Egypt's Morsi' 16 June 2015, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-24772806>, Accessed: 16 May 2015

- 6.2.2 The same source continued that: ‘Morsi was also given a life sentence in May 2015 after being convicted of conspiring to commit terrorist acts with foreign organisations to undermine national security. Sixteen co-defendants, including 3 Brotherhood leaders, were sentenced to death after also being found guilty of leaking state secrets to a foreign state.’³²
- 6.2.3 However, Janes noted that: ‘The judiciary took a conciliatory approach to the MB towards the end of 2016 as the death sentences for former president Mohamed Morsi and other MB leaders involved in a 2011 prison-break lawsuit were annulled on 15 November 2016, but there is no indication that the group will be rehabilitated into mainstream political [sic] activity.’³³
- 6.2.4 Amnesty International reported that:
‘Security forces arrested 11,877 members of “terrorist groups” between January and the end of September [2015], according to the Assistant Minister for Public Security at the Ministry of the Interior. The crackdown was thought to include members and perceived supporters of the MB and other government critics. The authorities had previously stated that they had arrested at least 22,000 people on such grounds in 2014.’³⁴
- 6.2.5 Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty in their Article, Egypt Sentences MB Leader To Death – 11 April 2015 has stated that:
‘An Egyptian Court has sentenced Muhammad Badie, a leader of the outlawed MB and 13 other senior members of the group to death for inciting chaos and violence. A Judge made the announcement during a televised Court session on 11 April [2015]. The Court also sentenced U.S Egyptian citizen, Muhammad Soltan, to life in jail for supporting the group and transmitting false news. The sentences can be appealed before Egypt’s highest Civilian Court in a process that could take years to reach a final verdict. The men were among thousands detained after the ousting of Islamist President Muhammad Morsi in 2013.’³⁵ President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi [...] describes the Brotherhood as a major security threat. The Brotherhood says it is committed to peaceful activism and has nothing to do with recent Islamist militant violence in Egypt.’³⁶
- 6.2.6 The USSD report for 2016 noted:

³² BBC News, ‘What’s Become of Egypt’s Morsi’ 16 June 2015, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-24772806>, Accessed: 16 May 2015

³³ Janes, Sentinel Security Assessment – Egypt, Internal affairs, updated 22 March 2017, <https://janes.ihs.com/NorthAfrica/Display/1303682>. (Subscription only) Accessed: 23 March 2017

³⁴ Amnesty International, ‘Annual Report Egypt 2015/2016’ February 2016, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/annual-report/2016/> Accessed: 23 May 2016

³⁵ Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, ‘Egypt Sentences Muslim Brotherhood Leader To Death’ 11 April 2015, <http://www.refworld.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/rwmain?page=search&docid=5565b9ea15&skip=0&query=muslim%20brotherhood&coi=EGY>, Accessed: 16 May 2016

³⁶ Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, ‘Egypt Sentences Muslim Brotherhood Leader To Death’ 11 April 2015, <http://www.refworld.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/rwmain?page=search&docid=5565b9ea15&skip=0&query=muslim%20brotherhood&coi=EGY>, Accessed: 16 May 2016

'In February 2015 the Court of Cassation ordered a retrial in the second high-profile Minya trial, in which the Minya Criminal Court issued provisional death sentences in 2014 to 683 defendants, including Muslim Brotherhood Supreme Guide Mohamed Badie, on charges of attacking a police station and killing two police officers. On December 28, a judge ordered the release of 13 defendants pending trial. The retrial continued, and the next hearing was scheduled for January 23, 2017.'³⁷

6.2.7 According to Amnesty International in their Report 2015-2016:

'On 23 September [2015], President al-Sisi pardoned 100 men and women, including journalists and scores of activists imprisoned for participating in protests. The pardon did not extend to imprisoned leaders of Egypt's youth movement or MB leaders... 'at least 3,000 civilians stood trial before unfair military courts on "terrorism" and other charges alleging political violence. Many, including leaders of the MB, were tried in mass trials. Amnesty International says "Military trials of civilians are fundamentally unfair" Amnesty International says.'³⁸

6.2.8 A House of Commons Library research briefing of February 2016, based on a range of sources, summarised:

'The Sisi government, supported by the anti-MB Gulf States of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, has conducted a vigorous crackdown on supporters of the MB. The MB was declared a terrorist organisation in December 2013 and its assets were confiscated, while its political wing, the FJP, was later dissolved. Human Rights Watch reported that probably as many as a thousand of its supporters were killed during demonstrations after the toppling of President Morsi...

'Over 40,000 people were detained or indicted in less than a year after the coup and reports of torture and disappearances at the hands of the police and other security forces were widespread... The government has made it much more difficult to hold demonstrations and easier for the police to ban them. Many of the arrests are for violations of the new framework, in place since November 2013...

'In June 2014 three Al-Jazeera journalists were given jail sentences on terrorism-related charges. Al-Jazeera is regarded as being close to the MB. By summer 2014, the human rights group Amnesty International described the decline in the protection of human rights as 'catastrophic'.

'Thousands of MB leaders and supporters have been imprisoned – the group said in 2015 that 29,000 of its sympathisers were in custody.'³⁹

³⁷ USSD, Country Report on Human Rights Practices – 2016', Egypt, section 1e, 3 March 2017, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2016&dliid=265494>. Accessed: 23 March 2017

³⁸ Amnesty International, 'Annual Report Egypt 2015/2016' February 2016 <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/annual-report/2016/> Accessed: 16 May 2016

³⁹ UK Parliament, 'House of Commons Research Briefing: Egypt under Sisi' (Section 2), February 2016, <http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN07146/SN07146.pdf>, Accessed: 23 May 2017

6.2.9 Human Rights Watch (HRW) in their Article – Police Account of Deadly Raid in Question, dated July 2015, commented that:

‘The fatal shooting by Egyptian security forces of nine MB members in July 2015 may have been unlawful killings and could qualify as extrajudicial executions.’ HRW has said that “Independent Prosecutors should investigate the killings and hold accountable any members of the security forces found to have committed any unlawful killings or to have been otherwise responsible for them.”

‘Egypt’s Ministry of Interior apparently said that it had arrested the nine men in a raid before later claiming that security forces killed them in a shootout after the men opened fire on police with automatic weapons from behind a closed door in a Cairo apartment. HRW spoke to 11 relatives and other witnesses with knowledge of the incident who said that security forces had arrested the men, fingerprinted them and tortured them before killing them. The Supreme State Security Prosecution, which is charged with handling cases involving terrorism and national security, reportedly authorised the raid on the apartment and is also investigating the deaths.

‘HRW has documented the security forces’ role in forcible disappearances that ended in death but has not previously documented an incident where security forces appear to have deliberately targeted a group of Brotherhood members with lethal violence outside the context of a protest. Independent Prosecutors under the Prosecutor General should investigate the killings, not Prosecutors from the Agency that authorized the fatal raid, HRW said.’⁴⁰

6.2.10 Amnesty observed in its report covering events in 2016 that:

‘The Ministry of the Interior repeatedly announced that security forces had shot dead suspects during raids on residences, including members of the Muslim Brotherhood and alleged members of armed groups. No police officers were formally investigated, raising concern that security forces may have used excessive force or in some cases carried out extrajudicial executions.’⁴¹

6.2.11 And further noted that: ‘Critics and opponents of the government continued to face arbitrary arrest and detention on charges that included inciting protests, “terrorism” and belonging to banned groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood or the 6 April Youth Movement.’⁴²

6.2.12 HRW has stated in their report, 7400 Civilians tried in Military Courts, published in April 2016 that:

⁴⁰ Human Rights Watch, ‘Police Account of Dead Raid in Question’ 31 July 2015, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/07/31/egypt-police-account-deadly-raid-question> , Accessed: 16 March 2017

⁴¹ Amnesty International Report 2016/17, Egypt, February 2017, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/research/2017/02/amnesty-international-annual-report-201617/>. Accessed: 23 March 2017

⁴² Amnesty International Report 2016/17, Egypt, February 2017, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/research/2017/02/amnesty-international-annual-report-201617/>. Accessed: 23 March 2017

'Military courts have tried at least 7,420 Egyptian civilians since October 2014, when President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi decreed a major new law that expanded military court jurisdiction. A list of civilians tried in military courts, provided by the Egyptian Co-ordination for Rights and Freedom, an independent legal and human rights group, documents for the first time the extent to which al-Sisi's administration has used the military justice system to expedite its harsh crackdown on opponents. Most defendants were sentenced after mass trials that violate fundamental due process rights, and some courts relied on confessions extracted under torture, relatives of the defendants said.'⁴³

'The use of military courts to try civilians violates international law, including the 1981 African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, which Egypt ratified in 1984. The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights has stated that civilians should never face military trial.'⁴⁴

6.2.13 The Freedom House report covering events in 2016 stated:

'The government systematically persecutes opposition parties and political movements, disrupting their operations and constraining their ability to organize. Large numbers of Muslim Brotherhood members and supporters, including nearly all of the organization's senior leadership and Morsi himself, were arrested following the coup, and arrests continued through 2016. Some Brotherhood members have been killed under unclear circumstances, with police reporting gun battles during attempted arrests and the group claiming summary executions. Civil society organizations estimate that as many as 40,000 people were being detained for political reasons as of 2016, most of them for real or suspected links to the Muslim Brotherhood. Authorities declared the Brotherhood a terrorist organization in December 2013, which allowed them to charge anyone participating in a pro-Morsi demonstration with terrorism and laid the foundation for the complete political isolation of the Islamist opposition.'⁴⁵

6.2.14 The US State Department observed in its report covering 2016 that:

'According to a May 10 [2016] report by the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights, at least 1,464 persons in four governorates remained in detention without bail for more than two years without a conviction and at various stages in the legal process. According to a May 2015 report by the NCHR, citing Interior Ministry figures, at least seven thousand persons remained in detention without a conviction at various stages in the legal process on charges related to incidents after June 2013, including approximately 300

⁴³ Human Rights Watch, '7,400 Civilians Tried in Military Courts' 13 April 2016, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/04/13/egypt-7400-civilians-tried-military-courts>, Accessed: 27 June 2016

⁴⁴ Human Rights Watch, '7,400 Civilians Tried in Military Courts' 13 April 2016, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/04/13/egypt-7400-civilians-tried-military-courts>, Accessed: 27 June 2016

⁴⁵ Freedom House, 'Freedom in the World 2017 – Egypt' (Political Pluralism and Participation), 15 April 2017, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2017/egypt>. Accessed on 15 June 2017.

“activists.” Most others were affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood, according to the NCHR.’⁴⁶

6.2.15 The same source noted:

‘The constitution gives the president the power to grant a pardon or reduce a sentence, after consulting with the cabinet. The president used this authority to pardon hundreds of prisoners--generally those who had served the majority of their sentences during the year, including secular activists, student protesters, Muslim Brotherhood members, and others. According to press reports, the president had pardoned more than one thousand prisoners as of September [2016].’⁴⁷

6.2.16 Amnesty reported in its July 2016 report focussed on disappearances and based largely on interviews with 70 persons directly or indirectly affected by disappearances but also citing other sources, that:

‘Thousands of people in Egypt are currently detained without trial or serving lengthy prison sentences imposed after unfair trials on account of their real or perceived opposition to the government of President al- Sisi. Supporters of ousted president Mohamed Morsi as well as leaders and members of the MB continue to be particularly targeted.

‘According to the government, its security forces arrested almost 22,000 suspects in 2013 and 2014, including some 3,000 top and middle-level MB leaders and members. In 2015, according to the Ministry of Interior, the security forces arrested almost 12,000 further suspects, mostly MB members and supporters of Mohamed Morsi, including students, academics, engineers, medical professionals. Hundreds more are held under sentence of death, including former President Mohamed Morsi, his supporters and leaders of the MB.

‘Some rights groups estimate that as many as 60,000 people have been detained for political reasons since July 2013. Ten new prisons are reported to have been built or planned between 2013 and 2016 to accommodate the rising numbers of detainees.’⁴⁸

6.2.17 Human Rights Watch noted in an article dated 24 January 2017 observed that:

‘An Egyptian criminal court decision on January 12, 2017, designating about 1,500 citizens “terrorists” for their alleged assistance to the Muslim Brotherhood reflects the authorities’ indiscriminate use of broad counterterrorism laws... Among those placed on the list were former President Mohamed Morsy and his sons; senior Brotherhood leaders and

⁴⁶ USSD, Country Report on Human Rights Practices – 2016’, Egypt, section 1d, 3 March 2017, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2016&dliid=265494>. Accessed: 23 March 2017

⁴⁷ USSD, Country Report on Human Rights Practices – 2016’, Egypt, section 1d, 3 March 2017, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2016&dliid=265494>. Accessed: 23 March 2017

⁴⁸ Amnesty International, Egypt: “Officially, You do not exist” Disappeared and tortured in the name of counter-terrorism’, p19, July 2016, (accessed via refworld) <http://www.refworld.org/country,,AMNESTY,,EGY,,5786348e4,0.html>. Accessed: 23 March 2017

their sons and daughters; Safwan Thabet, a businessman; the former soccer star Mohamed Abu Trika; Mostafa Sakr, a newspaper publisher; and Hisham Gaafar, a journalist. At least five deceased individuals were placed on the list by the decision, Human Rights Watch confirmed.⁴⁹

6.2.18 Janes reported in an update of 14 June 2017 that:

'The Muslim Brotherhood (MB) and its Freedom and Justice Party were banned in 2014. The authorities arrest people for alleged MB ties on a regular basis. Some dissidents will probably attempt to run in elections along with Salafi counterparts.

'MB supporters are likely to attempt to capitalise on the growing popular anger resulting from economic austerity policies, but there is very little public support for a renewed MB presence in politics. The judiciary took a conciliatory approach to the MB towards the end of 2016 as the death sentences for former president Mohamed Morsi and other MB leaders involved in a 2011 prison-break lawsuit were annulled on 15 November 2016, but there is no indication that the group will be rehabilitated into mainstream political activity.'⁵⁰

6.2.19 Janes assessed in March 2017 that:

'The security services' decapitation of the Muslim Brotherhood's organisational structure has undermined discipline and coherent strategy within the organisation. Violent, albeit small-scale, Islamist protests in Greater Cairo and the Nile Delta are nevertheless unlikely to subside in 2017, particularly as reductions in basic commodity subsidies come into effect. The army-backed government's zero-tolerance for any protests indicates that, when Islamist protests do occur, they turn violent, with police intervening with baton charges, tear gas, mass arrests and often, lethal force. Protesters typically retaliate using Molotov cocktails or improvised projectiles, raising injury and death risks for bystanders as well as collateral property damage, particularly to vehicles, shop fronts and public property. In Cairo, Islamist supporters have been pushed out of downtown areas by a heavy security presence. University campuses and nearby roads are the main hotspots. Violent protests are likely in areas with strong support for the Muslim Brotherhood, including Cairo's Mataria and Alf Maskan areas, Giza's Haram and Mohandessin neighbourhoods, Fayoum, Alexandria, Qalyubiya, Damietta, Mansoura, Tanta, Sharqiya, Beni Suef, and Zagazig.'⁵¹

6.2.20 Some sources have also asserted that following the ouster of President Morsi in July 2013 by the military some individuals have come under suspicion even harassed because of their overt Islamic appearance.^{52 53} One

⁴⁹ HRW, 'Egypt: Court Names 1,500 to Terrorist List', 24 January 2017, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/01/24/egypt-court-names-1500-terrorist-list>. Accessed: 23 March 2017

⁵⁰ Janes, 'Sentinel Security Assessment – North Africa', Egypt, Internal affairs, updated 14 Junr 2017, <https://janes.ihs.com/NorthAfrica/Display/1303682>. (Subscription only) Accessed: 15 June 2017

⁵¹ Janes, 'Sentinel Security Assessment', Egypt, Internal affairs, updated 22 March 2017, <https://janes.ihs.com/NorthAfrica/Display/1303682>. (Subscription only) Accessed: 23 March 2017

⁵² Jadaliyya, 'Beard Phobia', 24 August 2014, <http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/19024/beard-phobia>. Accessed: 23 March 2017

source claimed: 'Victims were frequently attacked because of their appearance. Bearded men were singled out under the assumption that a beard signifies a devout Muslim. Ironically, some leftist activists and Christians were beaten up for the same reason. Appearances become an excuse for insults, beatings, or even murder. As a result, some Islamists, and others, shaved off their beards.'⁵⁴

6.2.21 The DFAT report 2017 observed that:

'Tens of thousands of Brotherhood members have been arrested and detained since July 2013 [...], and courts throughout the country have handed down a series of harsh sentences (including the death penalty) in mass trials of those charged with participating in violent protests or riots following the military takeover [...].

'The key Brotherhood senior leadership has been in detention since the July 2013 military detention, and much of the leadership has fragmented. According to his family, Morsi has been held in solitary confinement since being overthrown in 2013. In October 2016, a court upheld a 20-year prison sentence against Morsi for his role in the killing of protesters outside the presidential palace in Cairo in December 2012, and he is currently serving three other lengthy prison sentences, which are under appeal. However, a death sentence imposed earlier on Morsi was overturned in November 2016. In May 2016, the Brotherhood's Supreme Guide Mohammed Badie was sentenced along with 35 others to life in prison over violent clashes in 2013 following the military intervention. Badie has previously had two death sentences overturned, with retrials ordered in both cases.

'DFAT understands that although large-scale arrests of Brotherhood members and supporters continue to occur in the context of counter-terrorism operations, they are no longer being targeted purely based on their affiliation to the organisation. It is generally estimated that up to a quarter of Egyptians still sympathise with the Brotherhood's goals to some degree, although the number of active members and supporters would be considerably less than this.

'DFAT assesses that Muslim Brotherhood leadership figures and members who continue to pursue political activities actively either within or outside the party structure are highly likely to be arrested and prosecuted. Ordinary inactive members, party supporters and those with family links to members face a lower risk of being targeted for arrest, but may be subject to arbitrary arrest during wider security actions. They are likely to come under the close attention of authorities and be subject to surveillance and monitoring of their activities.'⁵⁵

⁵³ Middle East Eye, 'Egypt's Fear of the beard', 23 June 2015, <http://www.middleeasteye.net/in-depth/features/fear-beard-1007632928>. Accessed: 23 March 2017

⁵⁴ Jadaliyya, 'Beard Phobia', 24 August 2014, <http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/19024/beard-phobia>. Accessed: 23 March 2017

⁵⁵ Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), 'Country Information Report – Egypt' (para 3.41-3.44), 19 May 2017. Copy on request. Accessed on 15 June 2017.

6.2.22 An information response by the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRBC), compiled using a range of sources and dated 12 June 2017 covering events between 2014 and 2017 provided details of a number of reported incidents including:

- Court cases brought against senior MB figures
- Mass trials of MB members/supporters
- Incidences of violence against MB supporters
- Arrests of MB members/supporters⁵⁶.

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6.3 Disappearances

6.3.1 Amnesty observed in its report covering 2016 that:

'The [National Security Agency] NSA abducted hundreds of people without judicial order and held them incommunicado for prolonged periods, outside of judicial oversight and without access to family members or legal representation... The authorities continued to deny that such enforced disappearances occurred. The security forces targeted suspected supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood and activists with other political affiliations. Some enforced disappearances were carried out by Military Intelligence officials.'⁵⁷

6.3.2 Amnesty also stated in its detailed report on disappearances in Egypt, based on interviews with more than 70 interviews with lawyers, NGO workers, released detainees and family members of victims of torture and enforced disappearance, released in July 2016, that:

'In most cases known to Amnesty International, those subjected to enforced disappearance by the NSA were perceived supporters of Mohamed Morsi and/or the MB. They were mostly males ranging from adults in their fifties to boys aged 14. They include students, academics and other activists, peaceful critics and protesters, and family members of perceived government critics. According to lawyers involved in their cases, around 90% of those who are subjected to enforced disappearance are subsequently processed through the criminal justice system on charges such as planning or participating in unauthorized protests or attacking members of the security forces.'⁵⁸

6.3.3 The same report stated:

⁵⁶ Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Research Directorate, 'Egypt: Treatment of members of the Muslim Brotherhood, including leaders, returnee members and suspected members, by authorities, following the removal of President Mohamed Morsi (2014-May 2017)', 12 June 2017, <http://irb-cisr.gc.ca/Eng/ResRec/RirRdi/Pages/index.aspx?doc=457079>. Accessed: 20 June 2017.

⁵⁷ Amnesty International, 'Report 2016/17', Egypt, February 2017, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/research/2017/02/amnesty-international-annual-report-201617/>. Accessed: 23 March 2017

⁵⁸ Amnesty International, Egypt: "'Officially, You do not exist" Disappeared and tortured in the name of counter-terrorism', (p20), July 2016, (accessed via refworld) <http://www.refworld.org/country,,AMNESTY,,EGY,,5786348e4,0.html>. Accessed: 23 March 2017

'The past 18 months have also seen the emergence of a new pattern of human rights violations against political activists and protesters, including students and children, hundreds of whom have been arbitrarily arrested and detained and subjected to enforced disappearance by state agents. Those detained in this way did not have access to their lawyers or families and were held incommunicado outside judicial oversight.

'Local NGOs allege that an average of three to four people are abducted and arbitrarily subjected to enforced disappearance each day...'⁵⁹

6.3.4 Amnesty International further stated:

'Most of the victims of enforced disappearance have been supporters of former President Morsi, whom the authorities continue to target, but they also include supporters of other political movements including advocates perceived to promote a secular state. Some appear to have been detained and subjected to enforced disappearance for up to several months by security officials solely or mainly because of their family connections. They were being used as leverage against relatives targeted by the authorities... Some detainees were subjected to enforced disappearance for a few days, but others remained missing and were denied all the time contact with their families for weeks or months – up to seven months in the most extreme cases known to Amnesty International.'⁶⁰

6.3.5 The report continued:

'Amnesty International is not able to say precisely how many people have been subjected to enforced disappearance by the Egyptian authorities since the beginning of 2015 or to specify the current number. By their nature, cases of enforced disappearance are particularly difficult to identify and document due to the official secrecy that surrounds them and some families' fears that they might inadvertently place detainees in greater jeopardy if they report their enforced disappearance to human rights NGOs, the media or others.

'However, through documentation and figures provided by different Egyptian NGOs and rights groups, it is evident that at least several hundred Egyptians were disappeared since the beginning of 2015 with a reported average of three or four people subjected to enforced disappearance each day since the beginning of 2015. Three criteria were used by Egyptian NGOs to determine whether an individual was subjected to enforced disappearance: they were arrested by state agents; they were held in an undisclosed location for a period exceeding 48 hours without referral to the Public Prosecution, and outside of the oversight of the judiciary; and the authorities denied that the individual was in their custody when the family inquired about them.'⁶¹ p19

⁵⁹ Amnesty International, 'Egypt: "Officially, You do not exist" Disappeared and tortured in the name of counter-terrorism', (p7), July 2016, (accessed via refworld)

<http://www.refworld.org/country,,AMNESTY,,EGY,,5786348e4,0.html>. Accessed: 23 March 2017

⁶⁰ Amnesty International, 'Egypt: "Officially, You do not exist" Disappeared and tortured in the name of counter-terrorism', (p7-8), July 2016, (accessed via refworld)

<http://www.refworld.org/country,,AMNESTY,,EGY,,5786348e4,0.html>. Accessed: 23 March 2017

⁶¹ Amnesty International, 'Egypt: "Officially, You do not exist" Disappeared and tortured in the name of

6.3.6 Human Rights Watch reported on events in 2016 that: 'Officers of the National Security Agency routinely tortured and forcibly disappeared suspects with few consequences. Many of the detainees who suffered these abuses were accused of sympathy with or membership in the Muslim Brotherhood, which the government named a terrorist group in 2013 but has remained the country's largest opposition movement.'⁶²

6.3.7 An information response by the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRBC), compiled using a range of sources mostly dating from 2014 and 2017, stated:

'A news article published on 13 July 2016 in the Daily News Egypt cites a statement from the Egyptian Foreign Ministry as stating that Amnesty International was "not impartial. Distorting Egypt's image is in its personal interests" (Daily News Egypt 13 July 2016). According to the same source the Foreign Ministry's statement further stated that, "anyone who read the report will promptly know that the organisation is biased, tackling issues from only one point of view and talking with people who are hostile towards Egypt" (Daily News Egypt 13 July 2016). The Daily News Egypt indicates that Egyptian authorities have responded to the accusations of enforced disappearances by stating that "all allegedly disappeared people are either detained pending trials or by deny[ing] knowing any information regarding their whereabouts" (Daily News Egypt 11 Dec. 2016). In January 2016, The New York Times reported that "after months of flatly denying that anyone had disappeared in Egypt, the [Ministry of the Interior of Egypt] in early January said it was investigating the cases of 101 missing people. Last week, officials raised that tally to 130" (The New York Times 26 Jan. 2016).'⁶³

6.3.8 The same IRBC response also stated:

'In an annual report documenting cases of enforced disappearances in Egypt from 1 August 2015 to 15 August 2016, the Stop Enforced Disappearances Campaign of the Egyptian Commission for Rights and Freedoms (ECRF), "an advocacy group based in Cairo" (The New York Times 26 Jan. 2016), stated that "victims [of enforced disappearances] are usually forced to admit that they committed crimes related to their belonging to extremist groups... most notably belonging to the Muslim Brotherhood" (ECRF 30 Aug. 2016). ECRF indicates that it documented a total of 912 cases of enforced disappearances: 20 cases in 2013, 16 in 2014, 530 in 2015 and 346 in the period of January 2016 to August 2016 (ECRF 30 Aug. 2016). The same source indicates that, of the 912 cases documented, "[t]here were 891 males and 21 females" and that 321 were students, 192 had "other occupations" (such as "freelancer, marketer, accountant, physician, engineer, translator,

counter-terrorism', (p20), July 2016, (accessed via refworld)

<http://www.refworld.org/country,,AMNESTY,,EGY,,5786348e4,0.html>. Accessed: 23 March 2017

⁶² Human Rights Watch (HRW), 'World Report 2017', Egypt, January 2017,

<https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2017/country-chapters/egypt>. Accessed: 23 March 2017

⁶³ Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Research Directorate, 'Egypt: Treatment of members of the Muslim Brotherhood, including leaders, returnee members and suspected members, by authorities, following the removal of President Mohamed Morsi (2014-May 2017)', 12 June 2017, <http://irb-cisr.gc.ca/Eng/ResRec/RirRdi/Pages/index.aspx?doc=457079>. Accessed: 20 June 2017.

technician, lawyer, pharmacist and researcher"), 86 were government workers, 16 were unemployed, and 2 were conscripts of the armed forces (ECRF 30 Aug. 2016). The same source stated that "sometimes some of the victims of the enforced disappearance appear in videos published by [Egypt's] Ministry of the Interiors [sic] or the Ministry of Defense confessing that they committed crimes of overthrowing the regime, belonging to terrorist groups, and other charges" (ECRF 30 Aug. 2016).⁶⁴

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7. Journalists/media

7.1.1 According to the USSD's Country Report on Egypt covering 2016:

'Some activists and many journalists reported privately they self-censored criticism of the government or comments that could be perceived as sympathetic to the Muslim Brotherhood, due to the overall anti-Muslim Brotherhood and progovernment media environment. Publishers were also wary of publishing books that criticized religious institutions, such as al-Azhar, or challenged Islamic doctrine.'⁶⁵

7.1.2 According to the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom 2016:

'During the past year [2015], the government's efforts to combat extremism and terrorism had a chilling impact on human rights and civil society activities in the country. Despite some political prisoners and other dissidents being released from prison in 2015, the government continues to crack down on all forms of dissent. Sympathizers and members of the MB, journalists, secular and liberal activists, and opposition figures have been harassed, jailed, and given harsh prison terms, including death sentences for Brotherhood members and other Islamists, sometimes on legitimate, but also on unfounded, security charges.'⁶⁶

7.1.3 The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) reported that:

'[In July 2015] Egyptian authorities [...] arrested the head of a journalist syndicate and accused him of belonging to the MB... The CPJ condemn[ed] the arrest and call[ed] on the Egyptian Government to release Aboubakr Khallaf immediately. Khallaf [was] the founder and head of the independent Electronic Media Syndicate (EMS), which trains and supports journalists who

⁶⁴ Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Research Directorate, 'Egypt: Treatment of members of the Muslim Brotherhood, including leaders, returnee members and suspected members, by authorities, following the removal of President Mohamed Morsi (2014-May 2017)', 12 June 2017, <http://irb-cisr.gc.ca/Eng/ResRec/RirRdi/Pages/index.aspx?doc=457079>. Accessed: 20 June 2017.

⁶⁵USSD, 'Country Report on Human Rights Practices – 2016', Egypt, section 2a, 3 March 2017, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2016&dliid=265494>. Accessed: 23 March 2017

⁶⁶ United States Commission On International Religious Freedom, 'Annual Report 2016 Egypt' 2 May 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/rwmain?page=search&docid=57307cf015&skip=0&query=muslimbrotherhood&coi=EGY&searchin=title&sort=date>, Accessed: 16 May 2016

work online in Egypt. The syndicate operates independently from the state-recognized Egyptian Journalists Syndicate.’⁶⁷

‘Khallaf was arrested and accused of belonging to the MB [...] according to the news website Dot Msr. The local press freedom group Journalists Against Torture and the local Association for Freedom of Thought and Expression (AFTE) said Khallaf was also accused of "taking pictures and displaying artistic works without a licence," among other allegations. A 1998 executive order states that individuals conducting audio and audiovisual work must have a licence from the Ministry of Culture. According to AFTE, the accusation is in connection with Khallaf photographing the funeral of Hisham Barakat, Egypt's Prosecutor General who was assassinated [in June 2015].’⁶⁸

7.1.4 According to an Article by the CPJ - Egypt Sentences Journalists to Prison for 'Publishing False News' January 2016 :

‘Police arrested Adly, Mokhtar, and Ashraf on 1 July 2015, outside of Cairo's Zeinhom Morgue, where they were reporting on the deaths of nine MB members killed by security forces that day... The journalists were held for two months on charges of belonging to the banned MB group and spreading false news, then each released on 10,000 Egyptian pounds' (US\$1,277) bail on 31 August [2015]. The three journalists are not in police custody and will appeal the verdict, according to reports.’⁶⁹

7.1.5 HRW has stated that:

‘Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi should condemn recent televised remarks by his Justice Minister that appeared to advocate the mass killing of MB supporters, HRW said [...] in a letter to the President. In a 28 January [2016] interview with a satellite television news show, Justice Minister Ahmed al-Zind said that he would not be satisfied until 10,000 MB members were killed for every slain member of the armed forces.’

The same source continued that:

‘President al-Sisi should clarify that his government will ensure the prosecution of anyone who commits, orders or assists in murder or other crimes against Brotherhood supporters or any other group because of their political or ideological affiliation... The Egyptian Government should forcefully dissuade others from engaging in hate speech.’⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Committee to Protect Journalists, ‘Egypt Arrests Press Advocate, Accuses Him of Belonging to Banned Group’ 24 July 2015, <http://www.refworld.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/rwmain?page=search&docid=55d6eba24&skip=0&query=muslim%20brotherhood&coi=EGY>, Accessed: 16 May 2016

⁶⁸ Committee to Protect Journalists, ‘Egypt Arrests Press Advocate, Accuses Him of Belonging to Banned Group’ 24 July 2015, <http://www.refworld.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/rwmain?page=search&docid=55d6eba24&skip=0&query=muslim%20brotherhood&coi=EGY>, Accessed: 16 May 2016

⁶⁹ Committee to Protect Journalists, ‘Egypt Sentences Journalists to Prison for Publishing False News’ 13 January 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/rwmain?page=search&docid=56c1eb6c15&skip=0&query=muslim%20brotherhood&coi=EGY>, Accessed: 16 May 2016

⁷⁰ Human Rights Watch, ‘Egypt: Condemn Justice Minister's Hate Speech’ 8 February 2016,

7.1.6 According to an Article by the CPJ - Egypt Arrests Press Advocate, Accuses Him of Belonging to Banned Group – 24 July 2015:

'[In July 2015], authorities arrested Yahya Khalaf, the director of Yaqeen news network, and raided the outlet's offices after the government-aligned Egyptian news website Al-Watan reported that the network had employed members of the MB. Khalaf remains in custody. On 16 July [2015], the Egyptian Ministry of Interior released a statement on its Facebook page saying the raid on Yaqeen's offices was part of a crackdown on the banned MB group. [Shortly afterwards,] the network announced on its Facebook page that it was shutting down.'⁷¹

7.1.7 CPJ also stated in their Article – 2015 Prison Census that:

'Albarbary, the Administrative Manager of Misr 25, a TV channel affiliated with the MB, was arrested in Beirut, where he had gone to re-open and manage another satellite station, Ahrar 25, on behalf of the MB... Albarbary was arrested near Rafik Hariri airport while he was waiting for the arrival of Mokhtar al-Ashry, head of the Legal Department of the MB. Al-Ashry was detained first and, when Albarbary inquired about him with airport authorities, he was also arrested. Both were detained for five days by Lebanon's National Security, after a request by the Egyptian Government, then were deported to Cairo with Egyptian security agents. Lebanese authorities said Albarbary had been extradited based on a bilateral extradition treaty between the countries... Ahrar TV staff members fled Lebanon after Albarbary was arrested...'

'...Al-Ashry was charged with using a false passport ... [and with] "publishing false news" in order to support the Brotherhood's alleged Operations Room during the dispersal of the August 2013 sit-in at Rabaa Al-Adawiya in Cairo, where Egyptians had gathered to protest the ouster of President Mohamed Morsi. The dispersal left hundreds dead... He was also charged with "spreading chaos" and "forming an Operations Room to direct the MB to defy the government" during the dispersal...'

'Albarbary was tried along with 50 other defendants, including prominent leaders of the MB, who faced similar charges. Albarbary's lawyer, Mahmoud Amer, told CPJ that Albarbary was added to the Rabaa Operations Room case after it was referred to Court in March 2014. 'On 11 April 2015, a Cairo criminal Court sentenced Albarbary to life in prison.'⁷²

7.1.8 In their 2016 Report Freedom of the Press noted that:

<http://www.refworld.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/rwmain?page=search&docid=56ba05cf4&skip=0&query=muslim%20brotherhood&coi=EGY>, Accessed: 16 May 2016

⁷¹ Committee to Protect Journalists, 'Egypt Arrests Press Advocate, Accuses Him of Belonging to Banned Group' 24 July 2015, <http://www.refworld.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/rwmain?page=search&docid=55d6eba24&skip=0&query=muslim%20brotherhood&coi=EGY>, Accessed: 16 May 2016

⁷² Committee to Protect Journalists, '2015 Prison Census – Egypt' 14 December 2015, <http://www.refworld.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/rwmain?page=search&docid=56701f8d2b&skip=0&query=muslim%20brotherhood&coi=EGY>, Accessed: 16 May 2016

‘President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi’s efforts to silence dissent and shutter outlets affiliated with the MB have produced a media environment in which most public and private outlets are firmly supportive of the regime. In 2015, authorities continued to employ a variety of tools against journalists and media outlets that strayed from officially sanctioned narratives, including legal prosecution, gag orders, and the outright halting of operations. Dozens of journalists were physically assaulted during [2015] by both security agents and civilians...’

‘In January 2015, an appeals court granted a retrial to three employees of Qatar’s Al-Jazeera television network who were detained in late 2013 and subsequently sentenced to lengthy prison terms for supposedly spreading false news and aiding the MB. One of the reporters, Peter Greste, an Australian citizen, was deported in February 2015. The others – Mohamed Fadel Fahmy, an Egyptian-born Canadian citizen, and Baher Mohamed, an Egyptian national – were released on bail later that month but convicted again at their re-trial in August 2015, along with Greste in absentia. In September [2015], Fahmy and Mohamed were released under a presidential pardon.

‘Following the 2013 coup that brought al-Sisi to power, the authorities began to purge the media of any support for the MB. Any strong criticism of al-Sisi was also sidelined or suppressed. This process continued in 2015, with public and private outlets broadly embracing pro-Sisi and anti-MB narratives and expressing strong support for the security forces. Al-Sisi himself frequently convenes private meetings with prominent newspaper editors and television presenters, during which he has discouraged critical reporting and called on journalists to produce material aimed at inspiring national unity.’

‘There are virtually no private stations based in Egypt that oppose the government. The MB and other Islamist opposition elements have moved their affiliated media operations abroad, primarily to Turkey, where they established satellite television and online outlets.’⁷³

7.1.9 [Reporters without Borders](#) and [UN’s refworld](#) provide updates of the situation of media workers.

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⁷³ Freedom House, ‘Freedom of the Press 2016 – Egypt, 26 April 2016, http://www.refworld.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/rwmain?page=search&docid=57220da415&skip=0&query=muslim_brotherhood&coi=EGY, Accessed: 16 May 2016

Version control and contacts

Contacts

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Clearance

Below is information on when this note was cleared:

- version **3.0**
- valid from **20 June 2017**

Changes from last version of this guidance

Updated country information as per suggestions of IAGCI review, plus relevant country information released since the last version.

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