

Report for Germany: Egypt's 2019 UPR Recommendations and Proposed Actions for 2025

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1. Recommendation in 2019 UPR: Take action to improve women's rights by criminalizing domestic violence and amending the personal status law.

Egypt's Response Since 2019:

Egypt's National Report mentions initiatives under the National Strategy for Women's Empowerment 2030, but domestic violence is still not fully criminalized. Existing laws do not adequately address domestic violence, and personal status laws remain largely unchanged, maintaining discriminatory provisions regarding marriage, divorce, and child custody. The lack of legal protections leaves women vulnerable and limits their ability to seek justice.

Proposed New Recommendation for 2025:

Recommendation 1: Egypt should pass comprehensive legislation criminalizing all forms of domestic violence and amend personal status laws to eliminate discriminatory provisions. Specialized training should be provided for law enforcement and judicial officials to handle cases of domestic violence effectively.

Proposed Questions in Advance for 2025 UPR:

- What steps has Egypt taken to introduce legislation criminalizing domestic violence?
- How does Egypt plan to reform personal status laws to ensure equal rights for women?

2. Recommendation in 2019 UPR: Stop restricting and criminalizing the work of human rights defenders (HRDs), politicians, and civil society actors.

Egypt's Response Since 2019:

The National Report discusses Law No. 149 of 2019 on NGOs as a step toward aligning with international standards. However, HRDs, activists, and politicians continue to face asset freezes, travel bans, and arrests under restrictive laws, including counter-terrorism legislation. These measures hinder the ability of HRDs and civil society to operate freely, limiting political participation and advocacy.

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Proposed New Recommendation for 2025:

Recommendation 2: Egypt should revise or repeal restrictive laws that criminalize the work of HRDs, politicians, and civil society actors. Protections should be put in place to prevent asset freezes, travel bans, and arrests that target individuals engaging in legitimate political or advocacy work.

Proposed Questions in Advance for 2025 UPR:

- What actions has Egypt taken to protect HRDs, politicians, and civil society actors from criminalization?
- How does Egypt ensure that civil society organizations and political actors can operate without fear of reprisal?

3. Recommendation in 2019 UPR: Guarantee freedom of expression and of the press, online and offline, by revising respective laws.**Egypt's Response Since 2019:**

Egypt's National Report claims constitutional guarantees for freedom of expression, yet restrictive laws, including the Anti-Cyber and Information Technology Crimes Law and the Media Regulation Law, continue to limit free expression. Journalists, bloggers, and online activists face harassment, prosecution, and censorship, with severe restrictions on online content that challenges government policies.

Proposed New Recommendation for 2025:

Recommendation 3: Egypt should amend the Anti-Cyber Crimes Law and Media Regulation Law to fully protect freedom of expression, both online and offline. Safeguards should be established to protect journalists, activists, and citizens from harassment or prosecution for expressing their views.

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Proposed Questions in Advance for 2025 UPR:

- What steps has Egypt taken to amend restrictive laws that limit freedom of expression and the press?
- How does Egypt ensure that online content and journalism can be conducted without censorship or fear of harassment?

4. Recommendation in 2019 UPR: Guarantee the rights of prisoners to regular family visits, medical treatment, and access to lawyers, including in high-security prisons.**Egypt's Response Since 2019:**

The National Report asserts that prisoners' rights are respected. However, reports indicate that prisoners, especially those in high-security facilities, face significant restrictions on family visits, access to legal counsel, and medical treatment. Human rights organizations report instances of medical neglect, prolonged isolation, and limited contact with family members, which violate detainees' basic rights.

Proposed New Recommendation for 2025:

Recommendation 4: Egypt should establish oversight mechanisms to ensure that all prisoners, including those in high-security prisons, have regular access to family visits, legal representation, and necessary medical care. The government should ensure transparency and compliance with international standards on prisoners' rights.

Proposed Questions in Advance for 2025 UPR:

- How does Egypt guarantee that prisoners have access to family visits, medical treatment, and legal representation?
- What mechanisms are in place to monitor conditions in high-security prisons and ensure detainees' rights are upheld?

5. Recommendation in 2019 UPR: Restrict the excessive use of pretrial detention and police probation measures to the narrow limits outlined in Article 54 of the Constitution.**Geneva office:**

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Egypt's Response Since 2019:

Egypt's National Report claims adherence to fair trial standards, but reports indicate that pretrial detention is frequently prolonged, often for years, and used excessively, especially in cases involving political activists and HRDs. Police probation measures are also widely used without sufficient judicial oversight, raising concerns about arbitrary detention practices that violate Article 54 of the Egyptian Constitution, which protects individual freedom.

Proposed New Recommendation for 2025:

Recommendation 5: Egypt should reform pretrial detention and police probation practices, ensuring they are limited to constitutional standards. Judicial oversight should be enhanced to prevent arbitrary detention and ensure that all detainees are either charged or released within a reasonable timeframe.

Proposed Questions in Advance for 2025 UPR:

- What measures has Egypt taken to limit pretrial detention and police probation practices to comply with Article 54 of the Constitution?
- How does Egypt ensure that detainees are not held in pretrial detention for excessive periods without judicial review?

Conclusion

Germany's 2019 recommendations to Egypt addressed key areas, including women's rights, civil liberties, freedom of expression, prisoners' rights, and pretrial detention. While Egypt's National Report references constitutional protections, gaps in legislation, enforcement, and oversight persist. The proposed recommendations for 2025 emphasize the need for comprehensive reforms to align with Egypt's international human rights commitments and constitutional standards.

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