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Online Seminar: Stop Executions in Egypt

On Thursday, June 24, 2021, Arab Organisation for Human Rights in the UK ([AOHR UK](#)) held a [seminar](#) entitled “Stop Executions in Egypt”, to discuss the ongoing issuance of death sentences against members of the opposition, and the recent confirmation of 12 [death sentences](#) outside the frame of law.

The Egyptian Court of Cassation issued a final [death sentence](#) against 12 prominent opposition leaders in the Rabaa Dispersal case, two months before the eighth anniversary of the August 14, 2013, massacre.

The sentences were issued after a politicized trial that lacked minimum standards of justice, during which the defendants were subjected to various types of human rights and legal violations, like the unfair trials of the Egyptian judiciary under the current regime of [Abdel Fattah al-Sisi](#).

The death sentence for those detainees who survived the [massacre](#) is a new crime added to the mass killing perpetrated by the Egyptian army and police against more than a thousand Egyptian citizens on that day.

A number of human rights activists and defenders, as well as families of the victims, participated in the seminar to discuss the unjust judicial decision and possible solutions to stop the implementation of these decisions.

Mohamed Ismail, human rights defender, and Co-Founder of Egypt’s Hope Party moderated the seminar and affirmed his total rejection of decisions issued from [unfair trials](#) amounting to the death penalty.

Massimo Ungaro, Italian MP, highlighted the importance of this discussion, saying “it is important to make our voices heard by the [Egyptian regime](#) to say loudly that as a



European Parliament, we refuse their constant violations of human rights and their use of torture against the Egyptian people”.

Ungaro also pointed out that “violating human rights is an international matter, and we need to stop the use of death penalty in Egypt”.

In response to the Egyptian authorities’ continuous violations of human rights in Egypt, he added that the Italian Parliament will not hesitate to make a statement against the Egyptian authorities’ illegal executions.

He also said, “*The Italian Parliament has stopped diplomatic relationship with the Egyptian Parliament two years ago, and it absolutely possible that it will sign any declaration to demand the stop of executions in Egypt”.*

Mr. Ahmed Osama Yassin is the son of Dr. Osama Yassin, the former Minister of Youth in Dr. Mohamed Mursi’s government in 2012, and one of the 12 leaders who are facing the death penalty after false accusations.

Mr. Ahmed Yassin believed that the order of his father’s execution is politically motivated to punish him for his role in the revolution, and for being cited by the protesters as “the Minister of Defense of Tahreer Square”. He added that “*these executions are an act of revenge against all the revolution’s leaders, not only Osama Yassin”.*

He highlighted that the case includes more than 700 detainees who were put in a soundproof glass cage where nor their families or lawyers can hear or see them. Moreover, the lawyers were forbidden to visit the detainees in the Scorpion Prison, where his father has been detained for the last 8 years in a solitary confinement.

Lastly, he called on all activists and parliamentarians who defend human rights and justice to “*rapidly interfere to stop this atrocious sentence*”. He also demanded the urgent intervention of the UN and the European Parliament and even the Egyptian government to stop this [atrocious sentence](#).

Medea Benjamin, Co-Founder of CodePink in the USA, expressed her sympathy with those who received the unjust execution sentences, wondering “*why those who killed many people in Rabaa Square, have not been subjected to any kind of accountability!*”



She added, “I thought that *under the Biden administration we might be getting some sense of not treating Al-Sisi as legitimate statesman*. He said there would be not blank check for Trump’s favorite dictator, and yet he was very warm in his interactions with Al-Sisi. He did not only talk about the U.S. – Egyptian partnership but he also did go ahead with that blank check of 1.38 Billion Dollars for Egypt. *And it is something that we absolutely might not gives the green light for*”.

She added that Sisi gained more status after negotiating the ceasefire between Hamas and Israel as a pace forward justice, *however, we cannot see justice in the continuation of violating human rights in Egypt and the detention of tens of thousands of political prisoners in jail and these latest death sentences*.

She emphasized that her organisation works with congress to stop the increasing Egyptian military crimes. They also try to put out letters of condemnation for these latest death sentences, and *to condemn Egypt for being the world’s top executors for having in just the first half of this year executed 51 people*. In addition, she said they are trying to put pressure on the Biden administration so that he, in return, puts pressure on Sisi to stop the continuous violations of human rights in Egypt.

Maha Azzam, Head of the Egyptian Revolutionary Council, stated that “This is an urgent matter, as *we may wake up tomorrow or at any moment and find out that the executions have taken place*.”

“Since 2013, executions, [disappearances](#) and torture have taken place in Egypt, and the human rights record of Egypt is appalling according to human rights organisations. The tragedy is that the violence of Sisi and his regime has continued to escalate”.

She added, “Our president died of negligence and torture. Over a thousand people died in Rabaa, [massacres](#) occurred elsewhere, members of the parliament died of deliberate medical negligence in Egypt’s prisons, and the young disappeared. *What we have is a fascist regime in a military dictatorship of the worst kind and what we have seen is the silence of the West*”

“Sisi, his regime, his ministries and his operators have carried on the ugly work with impunity ... There is no freedom of assembly or freedom of speech. *They want to make sure that January 25th won’t be repeated, and under the guise of security and stability it still kills the innocent, Egyptians and non-Egyptians.*”



“The crimes are not going to stop here if the U.S. and the democratic governments don’t speak out but take serious measures against this regime. All the governments that support Sisi are complicit in his crimes and gives the green light to his allies in the world to continue with their violence and violations of human rights”.

Missy Crutchfield, Co-Founder of Gandhi Global Center for Peace in the USA, emphasized the fact that *if the West stays silent to the human rights violations in Egypt, they will meet the same destiny*, today the violence is taking place in Egypt but tomorrow it could happen in the U.S. and Europe.

“The money that the U.S. sends to Egypt every year is supposed to be an economic aid, but people are starving there, this money is not going to the people, and yet, if you look up you see Egypt is a safe place to visit because the Egyptians are living in fear”.

“We should pressure on Biden to stop supporting Sisi with money. If the US wants to stand on integrity and honor and all these wonderful values, then why are we helping a corrupt dictator.”

Mohamed Ismail concluded the seminar saying that they sent a letter signed by different organizations to President Biden. He stressed that *Sisi was afraid of Biden, however now as he enjoys impunity, he knows that Biden will not retaliate.*

“Despite the violations of human rights that Sisi acts against his people, the US keeps sending money to Egypt, so what leverage does Sisi have over Biden?! Why does Biden stay silent no matter what Sisi does?”

“Trump’s favorite dictator appears to have become Biden’s favorite dictator”.

Arab Organisation for Human Rights in the UK (AOHR UK)