



**The Arab Republic of Egypt**

**Speech of  
Head of the Egyptian delegation  
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President of the National Council for Women**

**Session:  
Presentation of the report of the Arab Republic of  
Egypt**

**on the achieved progress in implementing  
Articles of the Convention on the Elimination of  
All Forms of Discrimination against Women  
(CEDAW)**

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## **Ladies and gentlemen, members of the esteemed committee**

I would like to express my pleasure today for presenting Egypt's report after an absence of more than ten years, during which, Egypt witnessed many political, social, economic events and developments,

I affirm that my presentation is complement to what was stated in the report and the responses we provided to the questions received to Egypt

## **The esteemed Committee**

Egypt witnessed the January 25 revolution of 2011 followed by a dark year due to the rule of the Muslim Brotherhood, during this year women's achievements were subjected to a setback, the percentage of representation in Parliament dropped to 2%, while it was 12% before the revolution , there were demands in Parliament to amend personal status laws with the repealing of the law of khul' (which is a woman's right to divorce herself), the reduction of the age of child custody from 15 to 7 years, the reduction of the age of marriage, the repealing of the law on female genital mutilation "FGM", directions appeared to exclude women from leadership and executive positions, and The history of the Egyptian women's struggle was obliterated in the school curricula.

That period also witnessed the adoption of the 2012 Constitution, which represented a major setback to the rights of Egyptian women, where it dealt with woman from the perspective of the family only, not as a partner in the country, through only one article moreover the only female judge of the Supreme Constitutional Court was excluded, this deprived right, which was recovered in December 2020 with the appointment of a woman judge at the Supreme Constitutional Court.

It is worth noting that the premises of the National Council for Women was completely burnt down during the events of the January 2011 revolution, But it gathered its strength thereof, and continued its work until the reformation in 2012 to face a greater challenge during the rule of the Brotherhood, which fought NCW with all its might through deliberate malicious campaigns to intimidate and prevent it from defending women's rights, and expressing their hopes.

Then the June 30, 2013 revolution commenced, where women led and proved to be the primary and 1st line of defense for their rights, the 2014 constitution was issued and included more than 20 articles regulating the issues of citizenship, equality and criminalizing violence and non-discrimination.

### **Esteemed Committee**

2016 witnessed the re-formation of the National Council for Women, to include for the first-time representation of women with disabilities, rural, and young women.

I now proudly stand before you, , as the third and youngest elected president of the National Council for Women, to assure that the Council, by virtue of the constitution and the law, has become a firm national mechanism with a strong and active presence, as the law regulating its work issued in 2018 becoming an independent national council, where its president holds the rank of minister, reporting directly to the President of the Republic, as he is the supreme executive authority in Egypt, and to both government and parliament.

The number of women beneficiaries of the activities increased to more than 28 million beneficiaries in 2020 , while it

was 393 thousand in 2014 , and the budget allocated to NCW multiplied by nearly five times.

### **The esteemed committee**

The Egyptian government composes of 264 units in its central and a local structure that includes public units and departments to achieve equal opportunities for the empowerment of women in all ministries and the affiliated bodies and directorates in 27 governorates.

### **Esteemed committee**

In June 2014, a new era began, when the President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi assumed the presidency, a conscious and enlightened political will that respected and valued women was born with the belief that empowering them is a national duty and an inherent human right.

This was embodied in a historical precedent by declaring 2017 a “year of Egyptian Women, and the “National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030” was launched, within the framework of the sustainable development goals, in line with Egypt’s Vision 2030, and in a participatory approach with all concerned parties and civil society.

The United Nations declared that Egypt is the first in the world that launches the national strategy within the framework of the sustainable development goals.

In parallel, the "Egyptian Women's Observatory" was established as an independent observatory to ensure the follow-up of the implementation of the strategy through the accurate and continuous application of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

## **The esteemed committee**

The National Human Rights strategy was recently launched, where women is a main focus area, in consistent with the objectives of the National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030

With regard to planning responsive to the needs of Egyptian women, a national review of the statistics was conducted; to set priorities and produce accurate data.

The Ministry of Planning and Economic Development prepared the first follow-up guide for women-sensitive planning, and Egypt has also begun to implement participatory budgeting

The allocations directly related to women in the state's general budget multiplied this year, For example, within the framework of health programs, they reached 202 million EGP, 19 billion EGP for social protection, 179.3 million pounds for health insurance for women heads of households , 1837 billion EGP to spend on services provided to women and men without discrimination , half of them are directed to women , and 2.9 billion EGP for women in the family development plan to be launched soon

Microfinance balances have grown to reach 9 billion EGP, at a rate of 11%, and the percentage of women benefiting therefrom has reached 62%, while 4.3 billion EGP in loans have been provided to women entrepreneurs during the past two years.

### **Esteemed committee:**

The constitutional rights of women have been translated into laws, strategies and executive programs, a constitutional quota that guarantees the presence of 25% of women in Parliament, 25% in local councils, 10% in the Senate, and tangible representation in the boards of directors of financial companies and the banking sector.

At the same time, several campaigns were launched; Empowering women and protecting them from all forms of violence, combating information technology crimes, safe transportation for them, making them aware of their rights and the services provided by the state to them, inclusion of men and young people, from these campaigns; the "*Taa' Marboota*", the *Secret of Your Strength*" campaign, which succeeded in achieving 135 million outreach, knocking-doors campaigns achieved 42 million visits, the "ethical code for women in the media" was launched, and a media observatory was established to follow up on the implementation thereof.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, a program was adopted to raise awareness of the repercussions of Covid-19, and the development of referral systems and hotlines to provide economic and psychological support in addition to electronic awareness campaigns, moreover, campaigns to combat cybercrime were launched in partnership with Facebook and Instagram platforms.

The National Coordinating Committee for Combating and Preventing Illegal Migration and Trafficking in Persons was established and headed by a woman, the first hosting shelter for victims of human trafficking was established, lines were allocated to report these crimes, a presidential campaign was launched to raise awareness on the dangers of illegal immigration led by the Ministry of Migration, and Specialized criminal departments were established within the courts of appeal at the republic level for these crimes .

A significant study is also undergo on the issues related to the situation of domestic workers, to provide protection with a legal and legitimate framework for them, a draft contract to improve the conditions of female workers in this sector was also presented.

## **The esteemed committee**

Egypt is the first Arab country to launch a survey "The Economic Cost of Violence against Women in Egypt.

During the covid-19 pandemic, several opinion polls were launched for Egyptian women about the covid-19 and the consequences on the family, it started in April 2020 and the results showed a 19% increase in violence rates among family members, 7% the rate at which wives were exposed to violence by their husbands, this data is periodically updated.

Egypt has also recently adopted a set of important executive procedures and policies in the field of women's protection, including the decree of the Prime Minister to create the first one stop center for the protection of women victims of violence, where a consolidated headquarters is established for the services of the concerned authorities and ministries in one place to facilitate the procedures followed, a code of conduct has been adopted in the transportation sector to promote the safe movement of women, an ethical code to promote a safe work environment for women, 26 units were established to combat harassment and violence within universities, four medical response units within universities hospitals, a unit to combat violence against women in the Ministry of Justice, units in directorates of The Ministry of Interior, and 27 digital offices for family offices in the Public Prosecution

The complaints office of the National Council for Women includes a network of legal supporters, where there are in the administrative structure 80 lawyers and case managers, and 450 volunteer lawyers, provides legal, psychological and social support services and referrals to the concerned authorities.

With regard to the executive procedures and the practical application of the law during the period from January to

September 2021, the Complaints Office succeeded in obtaining judicial rulings in favor of the complainant woman in 1,367 cases.

Reporting lines were also provided to assist victims of violence in all its forms in the National Council for Women, the Ministries of Interior and Transport, the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood, the General Secretariat for Mental Health, and the Attorney General's Office.

While the women's support offices in the courts received 552 cases, the number of women attending the offices of persons with disabilities in all courts was 1,177, in addition to the family dispute settlement offices in the family courts and the legal aid offices in the courts of first instance, 3 forensic clinics were established to medically examine the victims of women in crimes of violence and sexual assault, and the Forensic Medicine Department participated in the protocol for establishing women safety medical units in Egyptian universities

Egypt was chosen from the first ten countries in the Arab States region to implement the Essential Services Package model for the United Nations Population Fund "UNFPA" and the United Nations Women" UN Women", for the efforts regarding policies related to empowering women and protecting them from all forms of violence, gender equality and women's empowerment, and enacting legislations that addresses all forms of violence ,the first national referral system was prepared to report cases of violence against women, the essential services package targets the ministry of justice, public prosecution, ministry of interior, ministry of health, ministry of social solidarity and other concerned ministries.

Training was provided to those who are concerned with providing services to women subjected to violence, judges, female judges, members of the Administrative Prosecution



Authority, forensic doctors, doctors and members of the nursing staff in hospitals, NGOs, Lawyers of the Women's Complaint Office, social workers and psychologists, police officers , representatives of Anti-violence units, universities, the marriage officers , the family prosecutors' auditors and members of the Public Prosecution Office

The First National Committee to eradicate of Female Genital Mutilation "FGM" was formed in May 2019, the committee succeeded, with the cooperation of all partners, in achieving 81 million awareness contacts and outreach until September 2021.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, intensive awareness and media campaigns were organized to raise awareness of the dangers of this crime, Legislative amendments were issued and activated to increase the punishment to prevent committing the crime.

regarding the executive procedures and the practical application of the FGM law during the period from January to the end of September 2021, 132 reports were received, from them, 92 cases were in which the commission of the crime was ceased, while the number of reports related to female genital mutilation, which have already been committed, reached 40, and was referred to the Public Prosecution. Recently, a ruling was issued applying the new law with a severe penalty.

**Esteemed committee:**

The percentage of women's representation in the Egyptian parliament increased to 28%, the President of the Republic multiplied appointments in the Senate to 14%, also, women percentage in the Cabinet increased to 25%, 56% in the diplomatic corps, 27% in the positions of vice- ministers, the deputy governors are 31%, and 44% are members of the National Council for Human Rights.

A woman was appointed as an advisor to the President of the Republic for National Security in (2014) to be the first woman to hold this high position, She is considered one of 12 advisors to presidents of the world

For the first time in the Egyptian history, two women have reached the position of governor, the first female president of an economic court, the first deputy governor of the Central Bank, the first female president of the National Council for Human Rights, and a woman runs the World Youth Forum; as well as a women deputy to the president of the House of Senate.

There are 1,988 women out of a total of 4,635 in the Administrative Prosecution Authority, 677 are women advisors to the State lawsuits Authority, 37 are women advisors to the head of the State lawsuits Authority , and 66 are women judges, The historic step came after 72 years of struggle, with the appointment of 109 women judges and prosecutors to work in the State Council and the Public Prosecution , we are still hoping to increase the number of women judges.

Awareness programs have been launched for women on the importance of participating in elections, the right to vote, and training and mentoring programs, as well as the issuance of national ID cards for women free of charge, amounting to about 965,000 ID. The National Training Academy was established, also led by a woman, aims to achieve human development requirements for youth in all sectors of the state and to improve their capabilities and skills. The principles of equality and women's empowerment have been incorporated into their curricula targeting state employees

### **Esteemed committee**

In addition to what was mentioned in the report, Egypt chairs the Executive Council of Women development Organization of

the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, holds the position of Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations, executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and Director of the International Organization Headquarters.

### **Esteemed committee**

The percentage of women graduates of public and private universities reached 57.8%, 56% of women obtained master's and PHD degrees.

The enrollment rate of girls enrolled in education reached 49.2%, while the rate of girls' enrollment in pre-university education in the rural areas has been close to that in the urban areas in the last three years, the rate of girls' enrollment in education in the rural areas has increased to be more than in the urban in the last two years, a guide has been produced Promoting gender equality and women's empowerment and equal educational opportunities, and the curricula at all educational levels included a section on women and their national role.

Moreover, The enrollment rate of refugee and migrants students in Egyptian schools has increased during the last three years, with an average enrollment rate of nearly 48%.

There was a decrease in the percentage of girls dropping out of school from 4.5% between 2014-2015 to 2.5% during 2019-2020, the illiteracy rate of women decreased to nearly 20% in 2020, while it was more than 30% in 2014.

The "gender gaps " in the education levels in Egypt have vanished.

Thanks to all these achievements, Egypt joined the category of countries with high human development.

### **Esteemed committee**

In the field of economic empowerment and women's work, which is one of the biggest challenges; the unemployment rate of women decreased from 24% in 2014 to 17.7% in 2020, the participation rate thereof in the labor force dropped to 16.8% in 2020, the percentage of women who hold transaction accounts increased to 47.5% Compared to 27% in 2017.

With regard to tools for integrating the principles of women's empowerment, Egypt has implemented international tools in cooperation with the United Nations Development Program, the World Bank, the World Economic Forum and the UN Women.

### **Esteemed committee**

The Presidential Initiative for Women's Health was issued for the early detection of breast cancer and the detection of other diseases. The initiative reached 19 million women, which led to a 50% decrease in the percentage of women with the disease from the third and fourth degree to the first and second degree.

Social empowerment services are provided to women, as 31.3 million women benefited from ration cards, 75% of the total beneficiaries of social protection programs until February 2021, and 64% of women benefited from training programs for the micro, small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency.

Rural women receive the attention of the Egyptian state, as the percentage of women in the informal sector who benefited from cash support reached 47.4%, the value of the monthly income of rural women leaders increased.

Rural women have also been participated in savings, loans and financial inclusion programs in partnership with the United Nations and the Central Bank, targeting 500,000 women, the

allocations for women in the family development plan amount to 2.9 billion pounds.

And recently, in 2021, the "Hayah Karima Decent Life" program was launched, which aims to enhance infrastructure, and includes programs for economic and social empowerment, the program is the largest development program in Egypt and around the world that includes women and considers planning for their needs, this program includes allocating 800 billion pounds to 58 million citizens, and 50% of them are women, in 4584 Egyptian villages.

### **Esteemed committee**

In addition to what was stated in the report, the Financial guardianship act, the bullying law, the protection of victims of sexual harassment and assault crimes law, the Personal Data Protection online law , were issued, the amendments to female genital mutilation for the third time.

Although the Personal Status Law is still in the process of preparation, there are many amendments that have been approved and are related to personal status issues.

There are laws that we still hope to be issued, such as the issuance of a law to prevent child marriage, the strengthening of procedures to prevent forced and temporary marriage, the proposal of a draft regulating domestic workers, the issuance of an alternative penal code for male and female debtors imprisoned "replacing freedom-depriving penalties with public service" , making further legislative amendments to the code of Criminal Procedure for the Protection of Witnesses and reporters, a new Personal Status Law that guarantees the best interest of the child and promotes women's rights, and we are seeking to issue a comprehensive law to protect women from violence, including amendments to the Penal Code and the Code

of Criminal Procedure with regard to discriminatory articles, and criminalizing all forms of discrimination against women.

### **Esteemed committee**

The constitution paid attention to persons with disabilities and allocated a percentage for them in Parliament.

The Ministry of Social Solidarity also provides a variety of services to women with disabilities, including: rehabilitation, physical therapy, day and night hosting, training, and scholarships for blind female students.

Periodic visits to the women's prison are organized, providing awareness-raising meetings about public health, health care, basic services such as literacy classes, a comprehensive library, and the possibility of female prisoners to complete their studies, in addition to providing production units.

Female prisoners are paid a fee for selling their products, in addition providing yards for sports activities.

The imprisoned mother has the right to keep her child with her until he reaches the age of four, and to obtain the right of visitation after that age.

### **Esteemed committee**

Egypt places the agenda of women, security and peace at the heart & center of its international and regional efforts to achieve peace, in light of the strong political will and sincere commitment to empowering women and girls, Egypt is one of the largest contributors countries to United Nations peacekeeping operations, Egypt's first national plan for women, peace and security is being prepared.

With regard to climate and environmental change, environmental camps were set up, aimed at training women and

encouraging them to engage in environmentally friendly industries such as waste recycling projects, organic farming, biogas production and alternative energy, awareness was raised on the sustainable management of torrents, and an initiative was launched to reduce greenhouse gas emissions

### **Esteemed committee**

Egypt was the first country in the world, with the testimony of the United Nations, to issue a quick response policy towards the situation of women during the Covid-19 pandemic, and the first country in the world to issue a tracker to monitor the measures taken by the state in response to the needs of women.

The United Nations Development Program and United Nations Women have issued a report confirming that Egypt is the first in the Middle East and North Africa and Arab countries to take measures that take into account the needs of women in light of the pandemic.

The United Nations General Assembly unanimously adopted an Egyptian resolution on strengthening a rapid national and international response to the impact of COVID-19 on women and girls.

Five reports were issued that monitored 165 supporting policies and preventive measures for Egyptian women from March 2020 to January 2021.

### **The Esteemed Committee**

Despite the great achievements and gains mentioned, and the preservation of previous achievements, which have been

achieved for Egyptian women in the field of equality and non-discrimination, there are still challenges that we are working on in partnership with concerned ministries, entities & civil society organizations, including: the persistence of some negative cultural legacies that entrench discrimination against women, and the low percentage of females in the labor force, which is the main challenge facing Egyptian women now.

### **Finally**

I affirm Egypt's constitutional and legal commitment to the principles of non-discrimination, equality and equal opportunities, and that human rights and freedom under the constitution, are a supreme value that includes rights that shall not be waived, divided or disposed of, and the principles shall be deemed as constitutional texts that the legislator is bound by, shall not be deviated, violated, prejudiced, or disrupted, except by the rules and procedures stipulated in the constitution and under the supervision of the judiciary.