



CAIRO INSTITUTE  
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS STUDIES  
Institut du Caire pour les études des droits de l'homme  
مركز القاهرة لدراسات حقوق الإنسان

United Nations Human Rights Council, 20<sup>th</sup> Session  
Oral Intervention: General Debate Item 3  
Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS)  
26 June, 2012  
Delivered by: **Ms. Dalia Abdelhameed**

**Thank you Madam President,**

Two days ago marked Egypt's presidential elections, a memorable event which Egyptians celebrated as a step towards a democratic state. Yet, current events threaten to shift Egypt towards an entrenched military dictatorship.

The Supreme Council for Armed forces (SCAF) issued [unilateral constitutional amendments](#) stripping the president of many of his core powers, and entrenching military control over Egyptian political life. Additionally, officers from military intelligence and the military police are now [sanctioned](#) to arrest civilians for penal offences, most of which constitute repression of the freedoms of assembly, association and expression. In absence of an elected Parliament, CIHRS fears that similarly rights restrictive decrees are likely to increase in the coming months.

Recent elections cannot also be viewed in separation from severe rights violations being committed over the last 18 months. More than one hundred individuals [have been killed in peaceful protests](#) and several hundreds have been injured through the systematic use of force by security forces. The practice of referring civilians to exceptional and [military courts](#) continues, with the numbers rising above 12,000. In addition, documented cases of torture and other forms of degrading treatment against activists [remain unpunished](#). A severe crackdown on civil society organizations continues, with many NGOs denied access to funding. Additionally, the trial of 43 national and foreign workers belonging to human rights organizations continues.

[Freedom of expression](#) in Egypt continues to be violated, with media workers, bloggers and artists being subjected to several forms of limitations varying from forcing them to practice self censorship to physical harassment and, in a couple of cases, imprisonment following military trials.

CIHRS urges the new President of Egypt to ensure full cooperation with the UN Special Procedures, including allowing pending country visit requests, signing the Optional Protocol of the Convention Against Torture, and allowing the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to open a regional office in Egypt. We remain concerned that the President's ability to carry out acts aimed at addressing large scale rights violations are likely to be limited within the current military control over government institutions.

**Thank you Madame President.**