



Oral Statement – UPR outcome of Iran (Islamic Republic of)

Mr. President,

Lawyers for Lawyers and the Law Society of England and Wales welcome Egypt's support for several recommendations concerning the protection of lawyers and the independence of the judiciary. We urge the authorities to implement these commitments swiftly and in full.

However, we remain deeply concerned that Egypt has not supported recommendations addressing the misuse of criminal and counter-terrorism laws to silence lawyers, notably those working on politically sensitive or human rights-related cases. Furthermore, we are particularly concerned about the new Code of Criminal Procedure, recently approved by Egypt's parliament and awaiting presidential signature, which would expand prosecutorial powers over pretrial detention, surveillance, and travel bans, and risks further undermining fair trial rights and legal accountability.

Lawyers are essential defenders of justice and the rule of law. Their independence must be respected and protected, in line with international human rights standards. However, lawyers in Egypt face serious and ongoing threats, including arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearances, prolonged pretrial detention, and prosecution before emergency and terrorism courts. They are also prevented from effectively representing clients, often being denied access to case files, and confidential communication.

One emblematic case is that of 66-year-old human rights lawyer Hoda Abdel Moneim, arbitrarily detained since 2018 following her enforced disappearance. Her case has been "recycled" through repeated re-sentencing on similar charges.

Lawyers also face reprisals for exercising their right to speech and engagement in civil society, including travel bans, asset freezes, and disbarment. We are further alarmed by reports of transnational repression targeting exiled lawyers, who face in absentia convictions, terrorism designations, surveillance, and harassment of family members.

We urge Egypt to revise this new Code of Criminal Procedure, end all forms of interference and reprisals against lawyers for their professional duties, and ensure prompt, independent investigations into all violations.

Thank you.

This statement was delivered by:

Juliette Auffret
Junior Programme Officer
Lawyers for Lawyers
j.auffret@lawyersforlawyers.nl