

EGYPT

Human Rights Abuses Mount in 1993

U.S. Policymakers Should Hold President Mubarak Accountable

President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt is scheduled to meet with members of Congress and the Administration, including President Bill Clinton, in Washington, D.C. This will be the Egyptian leader's second visit since April.

In view of the deteriorating human rights situation in Egypt, Middle East Watch calls on policymakers in the White House and on Capitol Hill to hold President Mubarak publicly accountable for his government's poor record. Middle East Watch believes that President Mubarak should be questioned vigorously about policies and actions of his government that violate human rights -- including the continuing state of emergency (in force since October 1981), the ongoing practice of incommunicado detention and torture by security forces, and increasing restrictions on freedom of association and freedom of expression.

Middle East Watch has repeatedly made recommendations to the Mubarak government to address the pattern of human rights abuse in Egypt, including appeals to:

- * Bring the elite General Directorate of State Security Investigation (SSI), the internal-security force attached to the Ministry of Interior, under the control of the rule of law.**

- * Publicly acknowledge that torture is practiced systematically by SSI and take immediate steps to end this gross abuse, including a halt to incommunicado detention and continuous blindfolding of suspects held in SSI custody.**

- * Undertake independent and timely investigations of torture complaints and make the findings public. If investigations uncover law-breaking within the security apparatus, those responsible should be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law in order to send a strong signal that torture will no longer be tolerated.**

- * Immediately suspend the practice of trying civilians in military courts, commute the death sentences that have been imposed on civilians by these courts, and take steps to ensure that all civilians tried in Egypt have the right to appeal their convictions and sentences to a higher tribunal in legal proceedings that include full due-process rights.**

- * Initiate measures that expand, rather than restrict, institutions of civil society, including opposition political groups that do not incite or practice violence. The state should not take actions that limit freedom of association and freedom of expression by dissolving nongovernmental groups for political reasons (such as the Arab Women's Solidarity Association, a women's rights group shut down by decree in 1991), by refusing to legalize independent organizations (such as the eight-year-old Egyptian**

Organization for Human Rights), and by banning books and the sale of newspapers not to its liking.

Middle East Watch views the continuing denials by senior Egyptian government officials of a pattern of rights abuse, despite mounting evidence, as unconscionable. In an interview published in April, then-Interior Minister Gen. Abdel Halim Musa said that reports of abuses by international human rights organizations were "groundless," and added that "human rights are better served in Egypt than in the United States or the United Kingdom." In an interview published on September 28, President Mubarak said: "We are dealing sternly and firmly with this country's terrorist groups but we always act within the law." On October 4, Interior Minister Gen. Hassan el-Alfi stated that reports about torture and other rights violations in Egypt were "mere purposeful rumors that seek to distort Egypt's image."

President Mubarak, in an interview published on September 30, said that "no government agency interferes with any writer." He further stated that "no writer...has been prevented from expressing his views...All legal [political] parties in Egypt are entitled to issue newspapers and publications without restriction or censorship on their reports." These remarks came just days before political leaders from the opposition Labor Party and journalists from the party's newspaper, al-Sha'ab, were questioned and arrested by state security prosecutors in connection with critical articles published in the newspaper. Prosecutors also confiscated the book "Why We Say No to Mubarak," written by Labor Party figures.

Egypt's important role in the Arab-Israeli peace process and its close military relationship with the U.S. are no justification for ignoring or excusing the persistent pattern of human rights abuse. Nor does the ongoing violence by armed Islamist extremists exempt the Mubarak government from respect for human rights codified in Egyptian law and international treaties to which Egypt is a state party. Over \$2 billion a year in U.S. foreign aid provides policymakers with considerable leverage to press President Mubarak to agree to undertake immediate and substantive steps to curb human rights violations. President Mubarak was elected to a third six-year term as president on October 4, in a national referendum in which he ran unopposed. According to results announced by the Ministry of Interior, he won over ninety-six percent of the vote.

This briefing document provides an overview of significant human rights developments from December 1992 through October 1993.

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EMERGENCY LAW IN FORCE FOR 12TH CONSECUTIVE YEAR

Egypt continues to be ruled under emergency law, which was imposed in October 1981 after the assassination of President Anwar el-Sadat. It provides the executive branch with exceptional legal

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powers—including broad discretion to arrest and detain any individual, and the option to try civilians in military courts -- that in effect void the human rights guarantees set forth in Egypt's constitution. In May 1991, emergency law was extended for three more years by the rubber-stamp People's Assembly, Egypt's elected parliament.

The independent, Cairo-based Egyptian Organization for Human Rights (EOHR) stated in a July 1993 submission to the U.N. Human Rights Committee that the continuous application of the state of emergency has yielded "another constitution for the country" and "has led to wide transgressions on the part of the security apparatus." The lifting of emergency law has been a longstanding demand of activists across Egypt's political spectrum.

THE UPSURGE IN POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN 1993

The political violence that marked 1992 intensified this year, disrupting Egypt's security and presenting the Mubarak government with a domestic crisis of serious proportions as the death toll and human rights violations mounted. Armed Islamist extremists stepped up attacks on Christian citizens, senior government officials, policemen and high-ranking security officers, causing casualties among intended victims and bystanders. There also were sporadic attacks during the year on tourist sites and vehicles. From March 1992 to September 28, 1993, a total of 202 people lost their lives in the unrest: seventy-one citizens, half of them Christians; three tourists; fifty-seven members of security forces; and seventy-one known or suspected militants killed while allegedly resisting arrest, in raids by and shoot-outs with security forces, and at the scene of planned attacks.

CHRISTIANS TARGETED: Coptic Christians -- the largest religious minority in the country -- continued to live in fear and to fall victim to sectarian-inspired violence by suspected extremists, particularly in Upper (southern) Egypt. On April 19, author Shihatah Aziz Jirjis was shot and injured by two gunmen in his home in Dayrut, a town north of Assyut. On July 22, Dr. Fawzi Mikhail, a gynecologist in his sixties, was shot dead in Manfalout, near Dayrut. In Dayrut, pharmacist Philip el-Komous was killed on August 5, Sami Shawfiq Mounis was shot and killed in his shop on September 3, and professor Edward Nakhou'a Iskandar was shot and killed on his way to work at a local college on September 21 -- he was the thirty-fifth Christian killed since March 1992 by assailants believed to be Islamist extremists.

Extremists have also targeted the Christian community indirectly when they have opened fire on police assigned to guard churches. On March 6, gunmen shot two policemen stationed outside a church in Aswan, killing one of them; on May 9, in Qusiyah, a police officer guarding the Catholic church was killed, and a policeman was shot and wounded at the Coptic church thirty minutes later; and on September 28, gunmen shot at two police guards in front of the Anglican church in Dayrut, killing one of them. All of these attacks occurred in Upper Egypt.

TORTURE AND OTHER ABUSES BY SECURITY FORCES

The government has grappled for responses to the violence, principally by relying on increasingly harsh security measures that have led to human rights abuses on a large scale. In the all-out battle against suspected extremists, security forces have laid siege to militants' strongholds in areas of Upper Egypt and,

beginning in December 1992, in Cairo. Mass arbitrary arrests have been common, with suspects initially held incommunicado at inaccessible camps of the paramilitary Central Security Forces or in offices of the General Directorate of State Security Investigation (SSI), the powerful internal-security force that is part of the Interior Ministry. The torture of detainees held in SSI custody continued unabated, and is cited by the Islamic Group, the principal clandestine organization that has taken up arms against the government, as one justification for its own violence.

CIVILIAN COURT CONFIRMS TORTURE: In an important development, the civilian Supreme State Security Court on August 14 ruled as inadmissible confessions that had been extracted under torture and acquitted the defendants of murder charges, citing the lack of other evidence. Twenty-four Islamist militants (eight of them *in absentia*), accused of involvement in the assassination of People's Assembly speaker Dr. Rifaat al-Mahjoub in October 1990, were acquitted of murder charges, although ten were sentenced to prison terms for other offenses. The president of the court, Judge Wahid Mahmoud Ibrahim, said that forensic medical reports indicated that some of the defendants had been subjected to the "ugliest forms of torture," including electric shocks. In a scathing rebuke to Egypt's security apparatus, Judge Ibrahim observed that the use of torture to obtain confessions constituted "proof of the failure and incapacity of the police to discover the truth."

MASS ARRESTS, "HOSTAGE-TAKING," AND TORTURE: Mass round-ups of suspected militants, the arrest and detention of family members to force wanted suspects to give themselves up, and torture during incommunicado detention remain hallmarks of security forces' policy. Thousands of security forces began a weeks-long search-and-arrest operation on December 8, 1992, in Imbaba, a neglected neighborhood of one million in metropolitan Cairo that had become a stronghold virtually controlled by Islamist militants. The Egyptian Organization for Human Rights (EOHR) noted that there were widespread arbitrary arrests during the campaign, with residents detained on mere suspicion or because they had beards; periods of detention typically ranged from fifteen to thirty days. Security forces "entered the homes of suspects who belonged to Islamic militant groups in the late hours of the night and occasionally destroyed furniture and terrorized the inhabitants, assaulting and insulting them," EOHR wrote in a March report. Relatives of wanted suspects -- including mothers, sisters and wives, and children as young as eight years old -- were taken hostage, arrested "to force [suspects] to give themselves up or to obtain information from victims as to their whereabouts." EOHR reported that some of the women were tortured by officers at the Imbaba police station. These female victims were beaten with rods, forced to undress and sexually molested.

After arrest, numerous detainees were moved to security police camps on the Cairo-Alexandria desert road, where they were held incommunicado, blindfolded, and questioned by SSI officers. EOHR reported that torture methods during interrogation included beating with coiled wires, beating on the soles of the feet with the body held in awkward positions, electric shocks on sensitive areas, and standing outdoors while naked, followed by dousing with cold water.

A DEATH IN DETENTION: Among those from Imbaba held incommunicado at these camps was twenty-three-year-old Ahmed Hamido al-Sawi, who was arrested on December 9, 1992. His family was informed on December 19 that al-Sawi was dead. His brother, who was brought to the police hospital morgue to identify the body, was asked to sign a statement that al-Sawi had committed suicide. EOHR believes that al-Sawi died under "severe torture" and submitted a written complaint to Prosecutor General Ragaa el-Araby, whose office is responsible for investigating such allegations. As of this writing, EOHR has received no reply to its complaint; it is not known if there has been an official investigation into the circumstances of

al-Sawi's death.

THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE: The Islamic Group claimed responsibility for numerous acts of violence, stating that it was avenging killings and torture of its members by security forces. On March 3, for example, Lt. Col. Mahran Abdel Rahim, an intelligence officer in Dayrut in Upper Egypt, and his eight-year-old son Muhammed were killed when assailants fired at their car. The Islamic Group claimed responsibility, stating: "Bullets against bullets, according to the law of retaliation."

Security forces responded to the violence in kind. On March 10, the government-owned Middle East News Agency (MENA) reported a series of coordinated raids in and around Cairo, and in Aswan, Egypt's southernmost city. MENA said that the raids were part of "a plan for an all-out confrontation to apprehend the fugitive leaders of the terrorist elements" and were "prepared and planned at a high level," involving all of Egypt's internal-security forces. The operations left a reported fifteen suspected militants and five members of security forces dead. In one of the raids in Giza, the fatalities included the wife and child of Khalifa Mahmoud Ramadan, a suspected militant who was himself killed. Eight militants and one policeman were killed in Aswan on March 9, when security forces raided the Rahman mosque, which was frequented by members and supporters of the Islamic Group. Security sources cited by MENA said that the mosque was being used to store weapons and explosives, and to harbor gunmen believed to have killed one local policeman and wounded another three days earlier, on March 6. MENA reported that "terrorists opened fire on police, who retaliated in kind." Eyewitnesses interviewed by foreign journalists disputed the government's version of events, claiming that those inside the mosque were unarmed and that the assault, with tear gas and automatic weapons, began without warning.

Despite the aggressive pursuit of suspected militants, anti-government violence only escalated. There were attempted assassinations in Cairo of Information Minister Safwat el-Sherif in April and Interior Minister Hassan el-Alfi in August. Policemen and security officers, including high-ranking commanders, were shot, injured and often killed by assailants.

"HOSTAGE-TAKING" AND TORTURE PERSIST UNDER NEW INTERIOR MINISTER: The dismissal in April of Interior Minister Musa -- and his replacement by Gen. Hassan el-Alfi, who had been serving as the governor of Assyut province in Upper Egypt -- did not bring an end to arbitrary arrests, incommunicado detention, and torture. These abuses continue to be reported by Egyptian lawyers and human rights monitors.

Despite public pledges¹ by Gen. el-Alfi, the practice of "hostage-taking" and torture continued. In one particularly shocking case, the parents and twelve other relatives of Ahmed Farouq, a thirty-year-old construction worker, were detained between August 20 and September 4, to put pressure on Farouq to give himself up. Farouq's father told EOHR that he was detained at SSI headquarters in Giza, where he was severely beaten while bound at the feet and wrists. His wife was beaten in his presence and suffered wounds to the head when thrown against a wall; officers also threatened Farouq's parents and other family members with sexual assault.

¹In an interview published in *al-Musawwar* on May 7, 1993, shortly after assuming office, Gen. el-Alfi said that he had issued "clear orders that everything should take place within the law." He further stated: "My instructions are that inhumane and illegal actions should never take place. When we have to take action against someone because he erred, we should not penalize his wife or any other members of this family."

The treatment of this security suspect's family calls into question the assurances provided earlier this year to Middle East Watch by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In a document prepared for Middle East Watch dated June 9, 1993, the ministry affirmed that Interior Minister el-Alfi "immediately upon his appointment on April 18, 1993, stated that the security forces have not and will not arrest the relatives of any suspects in cases of terrorism as a means of applying pressure on them to turn themselves over to justice." The ministry added that allegations of the arrest of female family members were merely a propaganda ploy by anti-government groups designed to "arouse popular sentiment against security operations."

ANOTHER DEATH IN DETENTION: Ahmed Farouq surrendered to authorities on September 2. Police sources were reported as saying that he confessed to involvement in three bombing attacks in Cairo, including the one on August 18 that injured the interior minister and killed five people. Farouq died in custody the day after his arrest; he had been held at Lazoughly, the Cairo headquarters of SSI where torture of political and security detainees is routinely practiced. The death certificate noted that there were several bruises on Farouq's face, suggesting that he may have been tortured during his interrogation.

Farouq's father was released from detention on September 4, the day after his son died. The subsequent behavior by security forces raises additional suspicions about Farouq's death. The father was not allowed to identify his son's corpse at the morgue, and was told that no one could accompany him to receive and bury the body. Funeral rites were barred. In a press release about this case, EOHR noted that Farouq's was the fourth death in detention since May 1993 believed to have been caused by torture.

MEW APPEALS TO PRESIDENT MUBARAK TO CONTROL SSI: Following Farouq's death, Middle East Watch called on President Mubarak to take steps to bring SSI under control of the rule of law. In a letter dated September 24, Middle East Watch said that the time was long overdue to stop the torture of detainees held in SSI custody, and to hold accountable and prosecute those responsible for violations of Egyptian and international law. The letter was copied to the Minister of Justice, the Egyptian Ambassador to the United States, and the newly created human rights department in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Middle East Watch called upon President Mubarak to order an independent investigation into the circumstances surrounding the death of Ahmed Farouq, and to instruct that this investigation be carried out in the most timely fashion and the conclusions made public. If the inquiry uncovered law-breaking within the security apparatus, Middle East Watch recommended that those responsible be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law in order to send a strong signal that torture and related abuses would no longer be tolerated. Middle East Watch also called for a halt to the practice of detention and mistreatment of the family members of suspects wanted by authorities, and recommended that an investigation be conducted concerning the detention and alleged mistreatment of Farouq's family.

A FURTHER CHILL ON FREE EXPRESSION

Freedom of expression -- already circumscribed in Egypt by provisions in the emergency law, other legislation and the penal code -- has been damaged further by an apparently concerted drive against the legal Islamist opposition.

RECENT ARRESTS AND A BOOK CONFISCATION: Earlier this month, the government arresting a leader of the Labor Party, a legal political party which is allied with the Muslim Brotherhood, and two journalists who write for

the party's twice-weekly newspaper, *al-Sha'ab*. The arrests were prompted by articles in *al-Sha'ab* that were critical of the Mubarak government.

On October 7, state security prosecutors questioned and then arrested Salah Bedaiwy and Ali el-Qammash, journalists from *al-Sha'ab* and party vice president Dr. Muhammed Helmi Murad, a seventy-three-year-old former minister who writes for the newspaper. Prosecutors also summoned for questioning Adil Hussein, the secretary-general of the Labor Party and the former chief editor of *al-Sha'ab* and Magdi Hussein, the chief editor of the newspaper, and ordered the confiscation of *Why We Say No to Mubarak*, a book co-authored by Dr. Murad and Adil Hussein.

Dr. Murad was questioned by prosecutors about two of his recent articles in *al-Sha'ab*: one, titled "No to Mubarak," advocated a boycott of the presidential referendum on October 4; the other called upon President Mubarak to disclose to the People's Assembly (Egypt's elected parliament) the details of government arms sales and purchases. The Egyptian government news agency reported on October 8 that Dr. Murad and the two journalists were questioned "for two days concerning their recent articles which contained attacks on the president and their attempts to instigate the public and compromise Egypt's relations with some foreign countries." Among the charges against the two journalists, who recently had written articles critical of security forces and state agricultural policies, were publishing ideas harmful to national unity and social peace (a crime under the broadly worded July 1992 "anti-terrorism" amendments to Egypt's penal code). Prosecutors also commenced questioning of Labor Party leader Adil Hussein on October 9, charging that his writings "incited public opinion, threatened social peace, and offended the state's symbols," according to the government news agency.

After his release on bail on October 8, Dr. Murad defended his writings at a press conference, stating that President Mubarak "is not a king whose status is untouchable...Are we supposed to keep our mouths shut? If that is the case, let them abolish the constitution and announce a dictatorship. That we can accept, but we cannot accept to be cheated and exploited by telling us we are a democratic country." In an interview on October 11, President Mubarak commented that Dr. Murad and the two journalists were "supporting terrorism" and, reported *The New York Times*, the Egyptian leader "attacked the reporters for inciting violence" in their articles.

PRESSURE ON A UNIVERSITY FACULTY CLUB: In another troubling development this month, the state expressed apparent displeasure at free expression in a university setting. State security prosecutors summoned Dr. Muhammed as-Sayyid Habib, the chairman of the independent (nongovernmental) Faculty Club at Assiut University, for questioning after he had invited Labor Party president Ibrahim Shukri to speak at the club on September 27. In two hours of interrogation in Cairo on October 12, Dr. Habib was asked about his relationship with Mr. Shukri, why the opposition political leader had been invited to speak, and why the event was scheduled for a date just prior to the presidential referendum on October 4. Dr. Habib also was questioned about the faculty club's activities and was asked to explain why certain subjects, such as unemployment and other economic problems, had been discussed at the club.

RESTRICTIONS ON FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION

The government signalled its intention in 1993 to clamp down on other independent spheres of activity within civil society by narrowing the political space available to opposition groups lacking legal status, such as the Muslim Brotherhood; by announcing a plan to phase out independent private mosques;

and by establishing uniform requirements under which the leaders of the country's nongovernmental professional associations could be elected.

POLITICAL ACTIVITY BARRED BY GROUPS WITHOUT LEGAL STATUS: Under the 1977 political parties law, parties do not have an automatic right to form themselves, but must apply for and obtain legal status from a committee dominated by the ruling National Democratic Party. EOHR noted this year that "no single political party has been formed through the approval of this committee. Instead, a court decision has always been required to legitimize any political party." In December 1992, the People's Assembly passed an amendment to the law that further restricted independent politics. The amendment prohibits political activity by groups that lack legal status (such as the Muslim Brotherhood) and by groups in the process of obtaining status. It bars political alliances between such groups and legal political parties.

The Muslim Brotherhood, by most accounts the largest and most vigorous opposition group in Egypt, is excluded from formal participation in the political process, although previously the government had tolerated its working in cooperation and electoral alliance with legalized opposition political parties, most recently the Labor Party. The Brotherhood's spokesman, Maamoun Hudaibi, noted in a July interview that the group, which long has eschewed advocating the use of violence to achieve political goals, had submitted numerous requests for a meeting with President Mubarak "to demand from him that the state stop denying official recognition to the Brotherhood as an entity which has the right to operate and contact the masses, just like any other political group."

PLANNED TAKEOVER OF 140,000 PRIVATE MOSQUES BY THE STATE: In another development with serious implications for freedom of association and expression, the government announced in December 1992 that the state would gradually assume control over all of the country's mosques, in an apparent attempt to eliminate the influence of militant Islamists at private religious institutions. Only about 30,000 of Egypt's estimated 170,000 mosques were built and are administered by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Sheik Ahmad Hindi, a ministry official responsible for Minya, Assyut and Sohag provinces in Upper Egypt, where militants have a strong base, said in February that the 2,835 private mosques in the area (of a total of 4,950) would be brought under government control over the next three years. *Al-Ahram Weekly* newspaper reported in March that the ministry planned to dictate topics for the sermons by imams at Friday noon prayers.

The Muslim Brotherhood denounced the plan as a violation of freedom of expression, while the head of the ministry's Mosques Administration, Sheik Mansour al-Rifa'i Obeid, defended it. "Exercising control over all mosques is meant to guarantee that the sermons delivered therein are in strict compliance with true Islamic teachings," the sheik said. Dr. Muhammed Ali Mahjoub, the minister of religious affairs, said in an interview published in April in the semi-official *October* weekly magazine that "the government respects freedom of speech," but added that "if the word is poisonous and subversive, it must be stopped. The ministry pays great attention to the pulpit, which is a place for public address that greatly influences the people. Therefore, we want only qualified people who carry a license to use the pulpit. It is known that the ministry is earnestly working to annex all private mosques to control the Islamic call and secure the people ideologically."

NEW RULES GOVERNING ELECTIONS AT PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS: The government has laid down controversial rules regulating elections in all the country's professional associations, which have about 1.2 million members nationwide. In the past, low voter turnout has facilitated victories by well-organized Islamists. In February, professionals across the political spectrum joined in vocal opposition to Law No. 100 of 1993, which

provided for what the state termed "guarantees for the democracy of professional associations." Without consultation with the associations, the bill was quickly passed by the People's Assembly on February 16 and signed into law by President Mubarak the next day.

The law's purpose was believed aimed at reducing the likelihood of future electoral sweeps of these professional bodies by the Muslim Brotherhood, by mandating quora for elections to be valid. The law was thought to have been motivated, in part, by Islamists' capture of the influential Lawyers Association in a September 1992 election. President Mubarak said on February 21 that Law No. 100 was intended to prevent "a minority from imposing its dictatorship over the majority." The law mandates that fifty percent of the registered members of an association must cast ballots in an election; if this turnout falls short, a quorum of thirty-three percent must be met in a second round of voting. In the continued absence of the required number of voters, the law provides for the appointment of a panel of judges and senior association members to administer the organization for a six-month period until new elections can be organized.

UNFAIR TRIALS OF CIVILIANS IN MILITARY COURTS

Using his powers under the emergency law, in October 1992 President Mubarak began to refer cases of civilians accused of "terrorism" offenses – some of which carry the death penalty – to three-judge military courts; the hanging of those condemned to death by such courts commenced in June 1993. The president maintained that military court trials were necessary in cases where "quick measures" were required, and the national interest permitted "no room for extended procedures." In December 1992, the Supreme Military Court in Alexandria handed down judgments in two trials, sentencing eight militants to death (seven of them *in absentia*). The condemned man in custody was hanged on June 13. Other military court trials of civilians followed; between December 1992 and October 14, 1993, military courts issued thirty-one death sentences against civilians and fourteen men have been hanged.² Several mass trials, with over fifty civilian defendants each, currently are in progress before military courts.

The trials violate human rights standards on three counts. First, the verdicts cannot be appealed to a higher tribunal, as required by Egypt's obligations under international law. Civilians sentenced to death by military courts are denied the right provided to civilians given the death penalty by regular criminal courts, who may appeal verdicts by applying for review by the Court of Cassation, Egypt's highest appeal court. Second, the military justice system – as part of the executive branch of government – lacks the fuller independence of Egypt's civilian judiciary. Last, the treatment of defendants and the court proceedings have raised serious concerns about denials of due process and fair trial. Defense lawyers have repeatedly complained that they are afforded insufficient time to review case files and prepare adequate defenses. They have also said that some of their clients had been tortured and denied access to legal counsel during the initial days of custody and questioning.³

Amnesty International, in its monitoring of one military court trial that concluded in September 1993, reported that "defense lawyers withdrew on 7 September following the military judge's refusal to

²In addition, another death sentence, handed down by a civilian state-security court in Fayyoun in May 1993, was carried out on July 20.

³For additional information, *see* Middle East Watch, "Egypt: Trials of Civilians in Military Courts Violate International Law," Vol. 5, Issue 3, July 1993.

allow cross-examination at a certain point in the proceedings. Rather than adjourning the case and allowing the Bar Association to arrange for the appointment of new lawyers, the military judge immediately appointed former military lawyers to be the defense lawyers, against the wishes of the defendants. Two of these defendants were subsequently sentenced to death on 15 September."⁴

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This newsletter was written by Virginia N. Sherry, associate director of Middle East Watch. It was edited by Andrew Whitley, the executive director of the organization.

⁴Amnesty International, "Egypt: Grossly Unfair Mass Trials and Death Sentences are a Travesty of Justice," September 23, 1993, AI Index: MDE 12/WU 06/93.

Middle East Watch was created in 1989 to monitor human rights practices in the Middle East and North Africa and to promote respect for internationally recognized standards. The chair of Middle East Watch is Gary Sick, the vice chairs are Lisa Anderson and Bruce Rabb. Andrew Whitley is the executive director; Eric Goldstein is the research director; Virginia N. Sherry and Aziz Abu-Hamad are associate directors; Suzanne Howard is the associate.

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