

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

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October 27, 2022

To Prosecutor General Advisor Hamada al-Sawy

CC: Head of the Human Rights and International Communication
Department at the Office of the Prosecutor General: Advisor
Mohamed Khalaf

Your Excellency,

We write to you to seek your comment on the issue of sexual assault
in Egypt in general and specifically assaults against women and
girls who are refugees or asylum seekers. Human Rights Watch is an
independent nongovernmental organization that monitors and
reports on human rights in more than 90 countries worldwide. We
appreciate your engagement with our organization on human rights
issues in the country.

Human Rights Watch will soon publish research we recently
conducted on sexual violence against the refugee community in
Egypt and difficulties faced by survivors in accessing justice. Our
research with survivors demonstrates that serious challenges exist
when they want to file a police report or to communicate to the
authorities the violence against them. Reports by the UN refugee
agency (UNHCR) published in 2021 and 2020 also indicate that
sexual and gender-based violence has been a pervasive problem for
Egypt’s refugee communities.

We would like to reflect your government’s views and incorporate
official government data in our upcoming report, and therefore we
request your response to a few questions:

1. How many rape or other sexual assault cases were referred by
the police to public prosecutors in the years 2021-2022? Is there a
breakdown by gender of the survivor and by location (governorate)?

In how many of these referred cases were the assault survivors refugees or asylum seekers?

2. How many people filed complaints about sexual assault with public prosecutors' offices in 2021-2022? How many of these complaints involved survivors who were refugees or asylum seekers?
3. How many sexual assault cases did public prosecutors proceed to investigate and/or prosecute in court in the years 2021-2022, and how many of these resulted in convictions? For each figure, please specify how many of the cases had involved refugee or asylum seeker survivors.
4. What kind of translation and interpretation services are available for foreign nationals within public prosecutors' offices?
5. What kind of trainings are prosecutors required to undergo to work on rape or other sexual assault cases? Are there any guidelines or protocols for gender-responsive approach at the public prosecutors' offices for survivors of sexual violence?
6. Do the courts and public prosecutors' offices have a referral process to ensure survivors have access to legal aid, medical treatment, counselling, and shelter, where relevant?
7. Are female prosecutors available should survivors wish to speak to them about their case? Please provide information on how many and in which governorates they are available.

We would appreciate the response of the Prosecutor General to this letter at your earliest opportunity. In order for elements of your responses to be reflected in the report we are preparing, we request that we receive the response by November 10, 2022.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this important matter.
Sincerely,

Adam Coogle
Deputy Director
Middle East and North Africa
Human Rights Watch