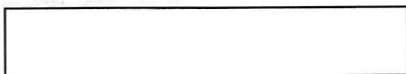




Egypt COI Presentation

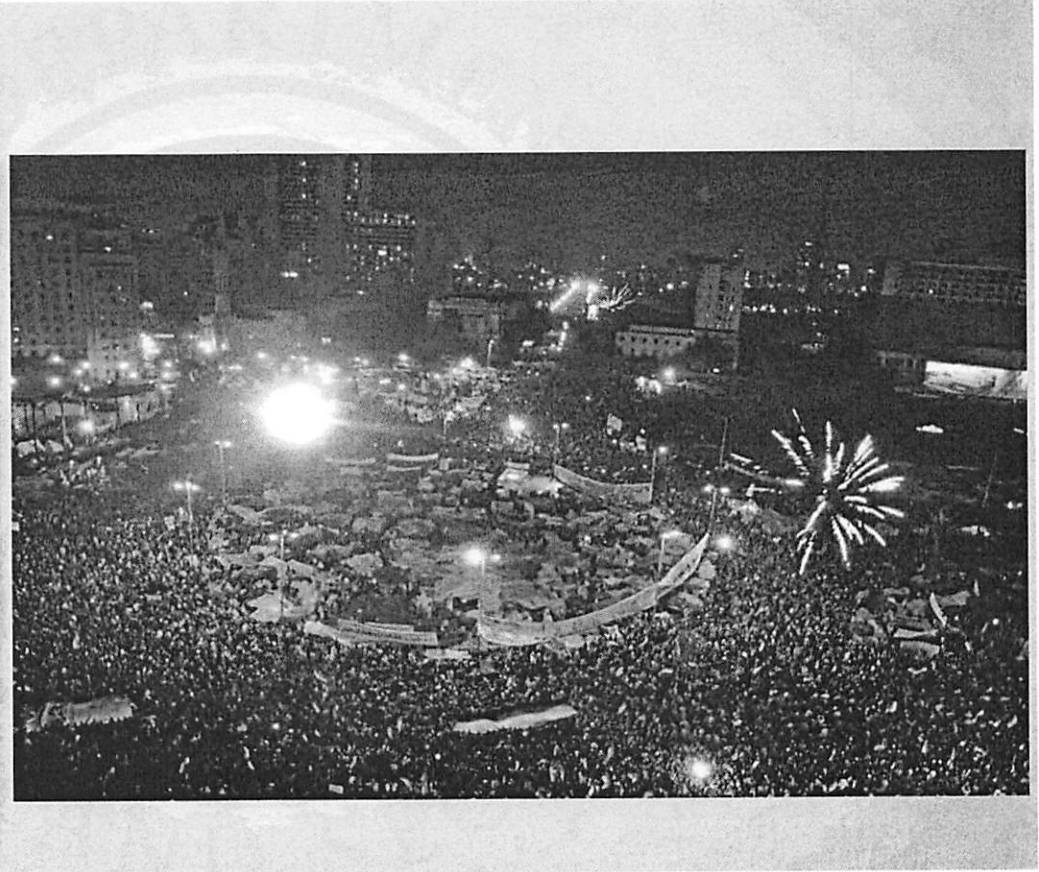
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RAIO

Research Unit

May 5 2020



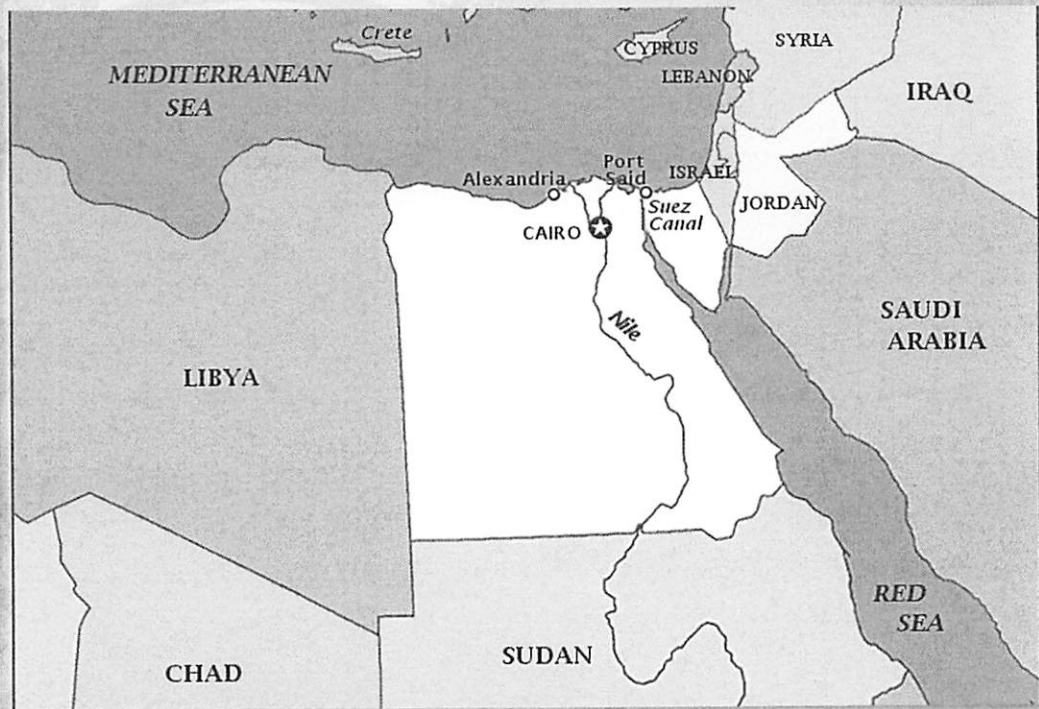
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Disclaimer

- The RAIO Research Unit **cannot** provide legal guidance regarding discrimination versus persecution
- Part of this presentation will cover issues Coptic applicants (b)(7)(e)
- The goal of this presentation is to be neutral so that hopefully it will assist officers with either referrals to an IJ or writing legally sufficient rebuttals of IRFR if they believe that a particular applicant is truly at risk of persecution
- This presentation will provide additional information regarding the situation of Copts and other minorities in Egypt and introduce officers to databases and tools that they can use to easily monitor religious persecution issues in Egypt

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Egypt and Neighboring Countries



FOUO/SBU

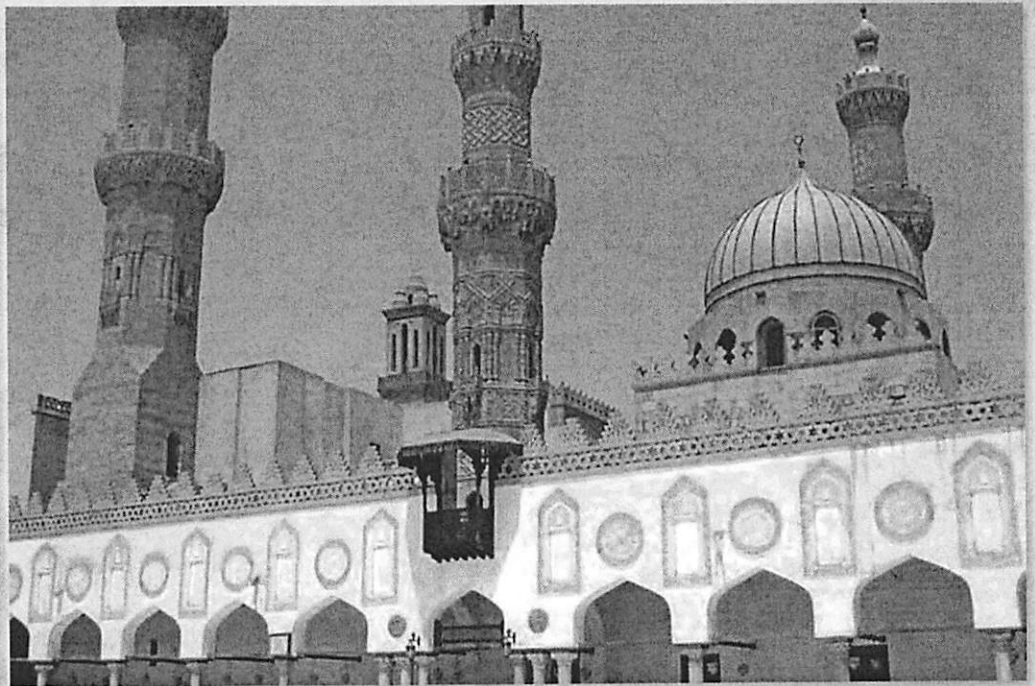
Religion in Egypt: Demography

Religious Demography:

- 85–90% Muslim (predominantly Sunni)
- 10–15% Christian (majority Coptic Orthodox, other Christians include Armenian Apostolic, Catholic, Maronite, Orthodox, and Anglican) *2015 estimate
- The number of Shi'a in Egypt is unknown, estimates range from 50,000 to 1 million
- The number of Baha'i are estimated between 500 and 2,000
- The number of Jehovah's Witnesses is estimated between 1,000 to 1,500
- The number of Ahmadis range up to 50,000
- There are an estimated 18 Egyptian Jews left in Egypt

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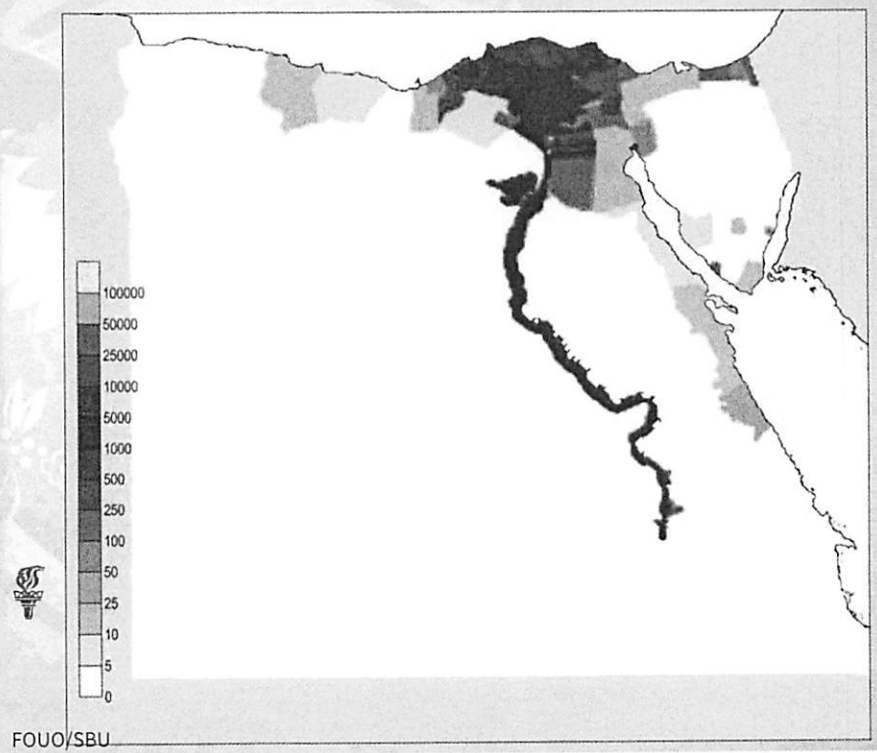
Al-Azhar University



Al-Azhar University is one of Egypt's leading universities and a highly influential source of Sunni Islamic jurisprudence. Founded in 970 CE, it is considered one of the world's oldest degree-granting universities.

Egypt: Population Density

Data from the 2010 Egyptian Census



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Brief Overview of Egypt's Political Situation

Leaders of Egypt

14 November 1954 - 28 September 1970

Gamal Abdel Nasser

15 October 1970 - 6 October 1981

Anwar Sadat

14 October 1981 - 11 February 2011

Hosni Mubarak

11 February 2011 - 30 June 2012

Supreme Council of the Armed Forces

30 June 2012 - 3 July 2013

Mohammed Morsi

8 June 2014 - Present

Abdel Fattah El-Sisi

The Leadership of the Coptic Church in Egypt

Pope of the Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria See of Saint Mark

- Pope Tawadros II of Alexandria (18 November 2012 – Present)
- Pope Shenouda III of Alexandria (14 November 1971 - 17 March 2012)
- Pope Cyril VI of Alexandria (10 May 1959 - 9 March 1971)
- Pope Joseph II of Alexandria (1946 - 14 November 1956)

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Egypt's State of Emergency

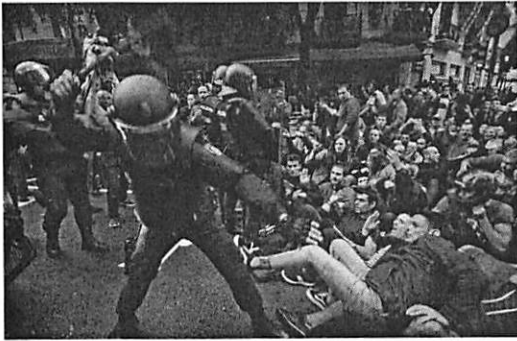
Egypt has been under a state of emergency for a total of 53 years between 1956 and 2017.

Assassination of Sadat

Anwar Sadat was killed on 6 October 1981, shortly afterwards a state of emergency was declared and Egypt's Emergency Law went into effect for the longest continuous period



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Egypt's State of Emergency

The Effects of the Emergency Law

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Egypt's 2015 Counterterrorism Law

In 2015 Egypt published a new counterterrorism law

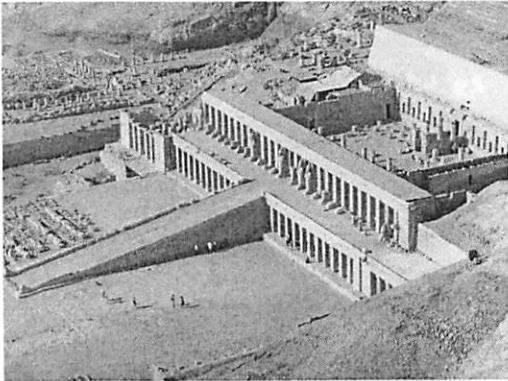
Egypt's 2015 counterterrorism law. The law criminalizes a wide range of acts, including publishing or promoting news about terrorism if it contradicts official statements

In October 2017

Emergency State Security Courts, a parallel judicial system began operating, under the state of emergency that the government claims is being used only against terrorists and drug traffickers. These courts do not guarantee a fair trial and their decisions are not subject to appeal.

22 April 2020- Egypt amended its Emergency law to have much wider power to prevent people from gathering- claiming that Covid-19 made it necessary. It is still too early to see how this may affect citizens

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El Gama'a El Islamiyya

Gama'a el-Islamiyya (Islamic Group - IG)

This group is a **Tier I** Terrorist organization from 10/8/1997 – Today

*Please note there is a second Indonesian terrorist group on the FTO list called Jemaah Islamiya that was designated on 10/23/2002 – these two groups are not related

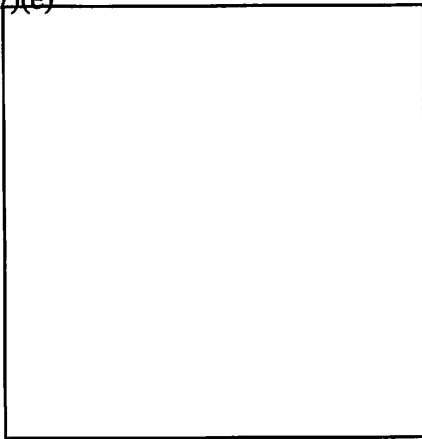
1972-1997

- Muslim-Christian clashes erupting in 1972, following the burning of a church in Khanka
- Increasing conflict culminated in 1981 in communal violence, which included many Gama'a el-Islamiyya members) in the outlying Cairo district of al-Zawiyya al-Hamra, which resulted in at least 10 dead and 60 wounded. Sadat's response included the arrests of numerous Islamist leaders and the banishment of the Coptic Patriarch, Shenouda III from 1981-1985.
- In 1997 Gama'a el-Islamiyya declared that it renounced violence and stopped attacking Egyptian Christians

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The Status of Coptic Christians under the Mubarak Period

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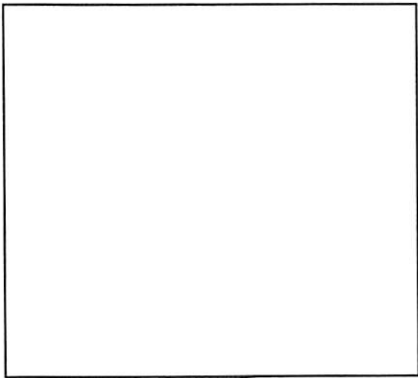


Common Criticisms of the Mubarak Regime regarding the treatment of Coptic Christians

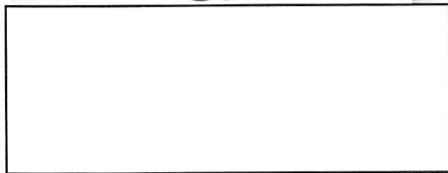
Hosni Mubarak ruled Egypt from 1981-2011

- During this time:
- The majority of those who attacked Coptic Christians or their places of worship were tried in closed military court
- A single individual, Hammam Al-Kamuni, was tried in open court for attacks against Copts in the Nag' Hammadi church attack on 16 Jan. 2011
- Mubarak issued 3 decrees (1998, 1999 & 2005) on church reconstruction and repair that decentralized petitions by Copts and made the 26 individual governors responsible for authorizing church repairs and construction

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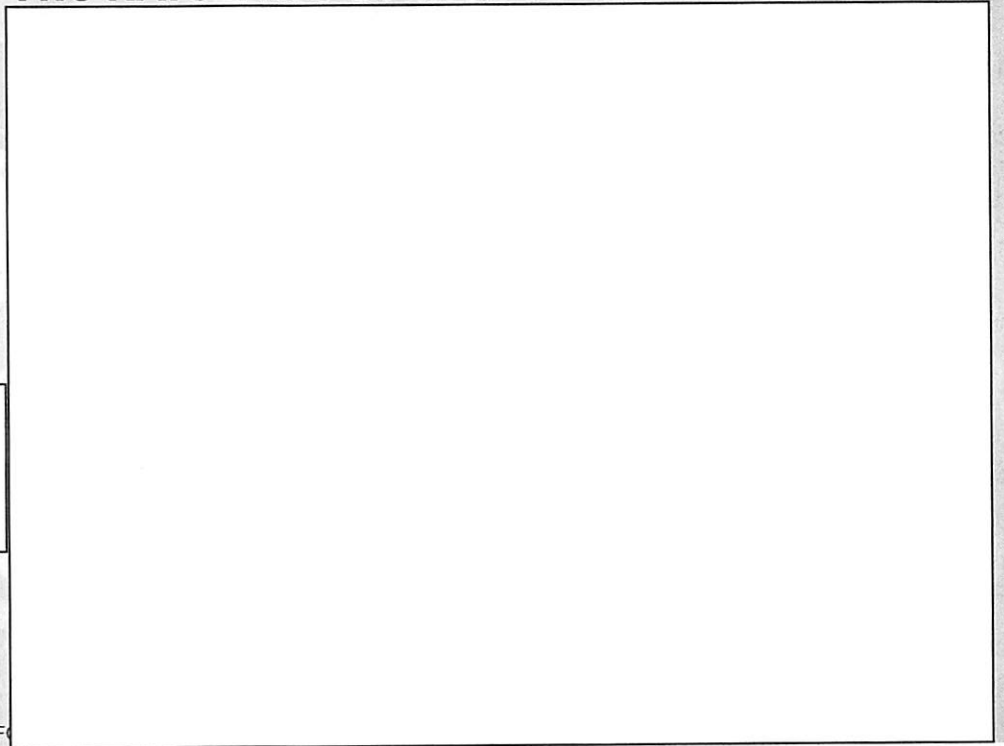


The Egyptian



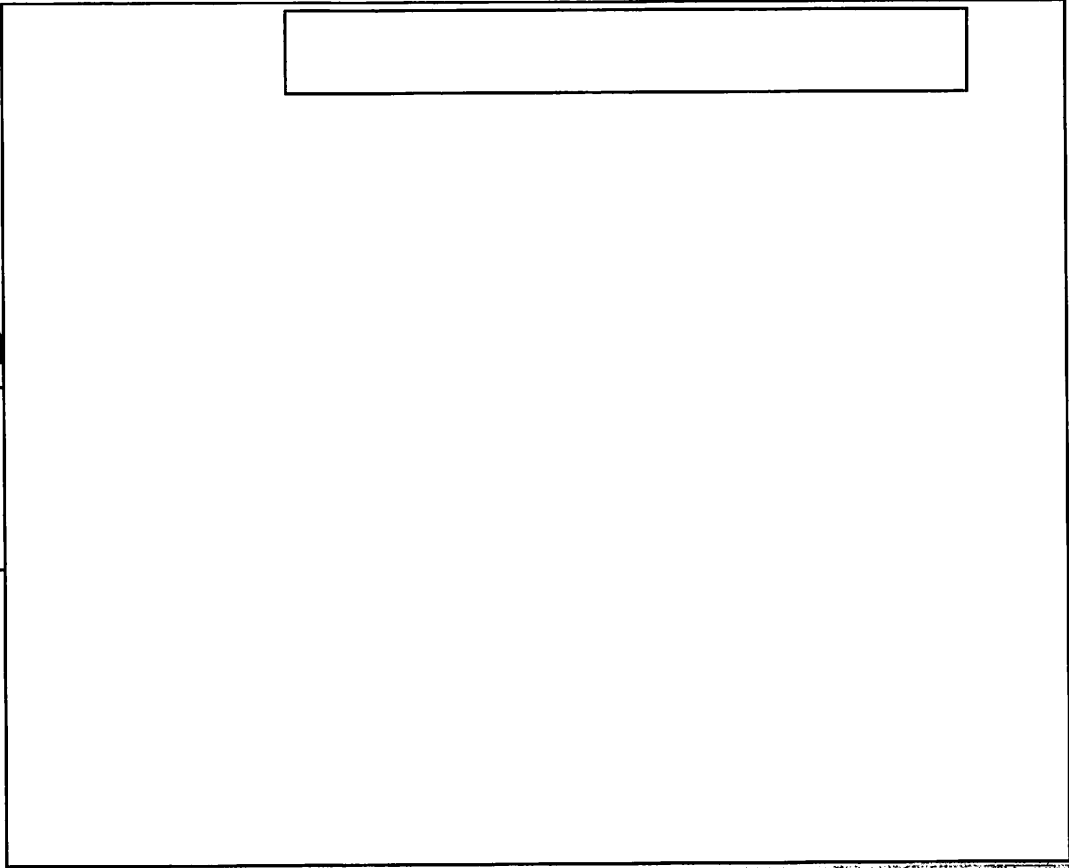
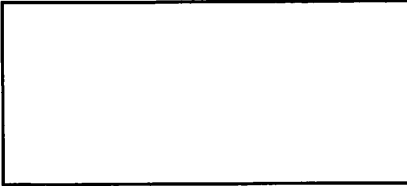
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The RAIO TRIG Branch Timeline



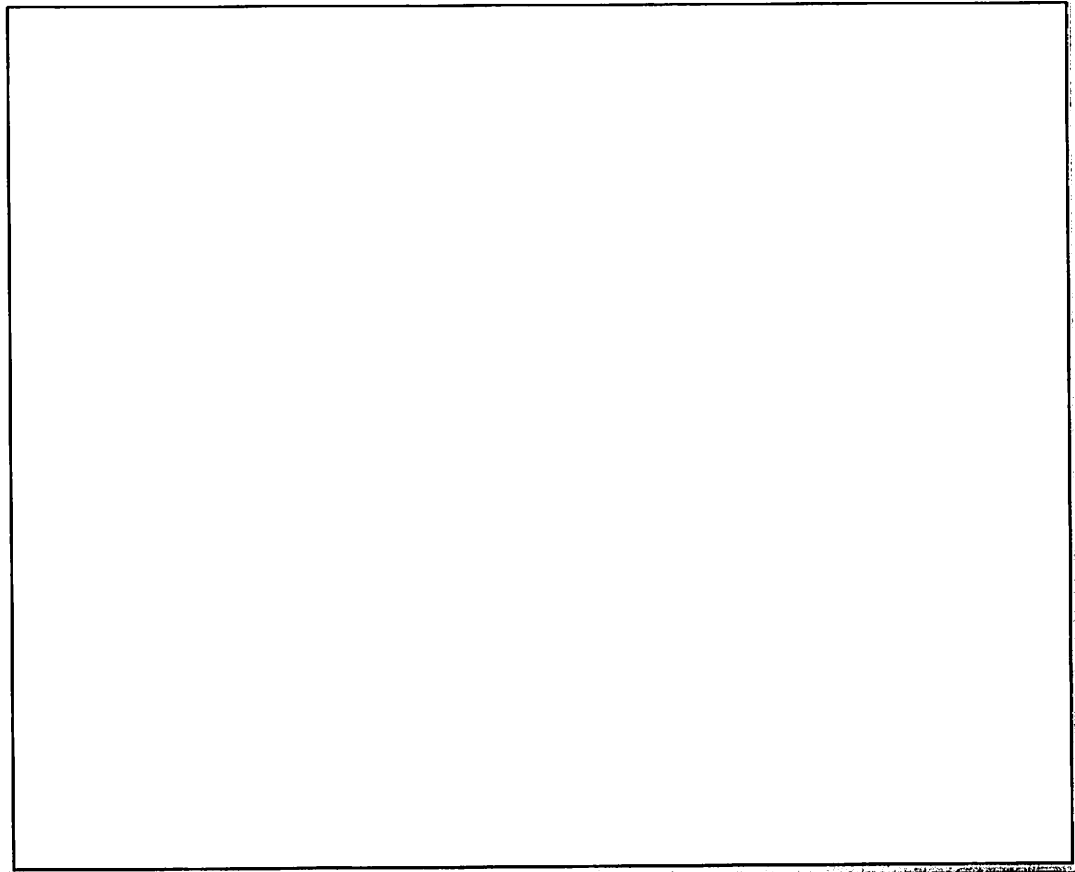
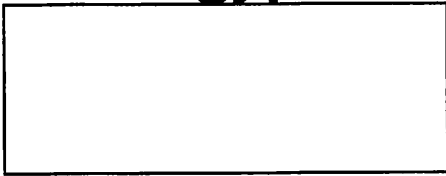
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Statelessness in Egypt

Law 26 of 1975

This law established citizenship rights for Egyptians and prevented Egyptian women from passing citizenship to their children

Decree No 12025 of 2004

Amended Law 25 of 1975 enables Egyptian women to pass citizenship to their children



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Statelessness in Egypt

Terrorism and Law 26 of 1975

- On September 21, 2017, the Council of Ministers of Egypt (the Cabinet) approved an amendment to Law No. 26 of 1975 on Citizenship. The Council has referred the new amendment to the Council of Representatives (Egypt's unicameral parliament) for a vote. The new amendment allows the Prime Minister to strip the Egyptian citizenship of individuals who are seeking to undermine the public order of the state or who have been convicted of crimes related to endangering state security.
- The new amendment will be added to article 15 of Law No. 26 of 1975 and will read as follows: Nationality can be withdrawn, if [a person] joins any group, association, body, organization, gang, or any entity of any nature with the aim of harming the public order of the state or undermining the social and economic order by force or by any unlawful means.

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Confessional laws and personal status

Marriage and Divorce laws are determined by Sect

- Currently Copts are limited to fault based divorce and adultery is the only 'fault' that the church recognizes
- Domestic violence/gender based violence is not legal a ground for divorce in Egypt for Christians currently
- However, Egyptians who convert from Christianity to Islam can file for divorce based on 'conflicting religious denominations' as this is grounds for divorce under Shari 'a law as it is interpreted in Egypt
- Muslim couples do not face so many obstacles because state law on civil matters such as marriage and divorce is already based on their religion's laws. Therefore they only have one layer to go through, just the state, whereas Christians have both the state and their church.

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Coptic Christians and The Egyptian Constitution

The Egyptian Constitution of 1971

For the first time in 1971, the Egyptian Constitution made reference to Islam as the basis of law

The Egyptian Constitution of 2014

Article 2 of both the 1971 and 2014 Constitution State:

“Islam is the religion of the state and Arabic is its official language. The principles of Islamic Sharia are the principle source of legislation.”

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Recent notable Attacks against Coptic Christians

A list of attacks

- **Abu Qarqaas May 2016**
- **Assam Village 2016**
- **Bombing of St. Peter and St. Paul's Church at St. Mark's Cathedral, December 2016**
- **Islamist militants target Coptic Christians in North Sinai, 2017**
- **Palm Sunday Church Bombings, 2017**
- **Minya Bus Attack, 2017**
- **Mar Mina Church Attack, December 2017**
- **Mina Bus attack, 2018**

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Recent notable Attacks against Coptic Christians

Abu Qarqaas May 2016

- The romantic relationship between a Christian male youth and a Muslim woman incited a Muslim mob to attack Christians in the village of Abu Qarqaas in Minya Governorate. A mob of 300 Muslim men attacked Christian homes on 20 May 2016 after rumors of the relationship between Ashraf Abu 'Atiya, a Copt, and a young Muslim woman were spread around the town.
- The mob beat Christians and vandalized and robbed their homes. The Egyptian government later acknowledged the assault on the elderly Christian woman and President Sisi personally telephoned her to assure her that the perpetrators will be brought to justice.
- The woman was the mother of the man accused of having an affair. A group of Christians retaliated by burning down a Muslim owned store house. Egyptian police had reportedly arrested 25 people involved in the attack.

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Recent notable Attacks against Coptic Christians

Assam Village 2016

The Coptic Bishop Makarios issued a statement saying that sectarian violence in the village of Assam in the Minya Governorate left two Christians in critical condition on 12 September 2016. According to a report in Ahram Online, a traffic dispute between a Muslim and a Christian sparked clashes resulting in the torching of several Christian-owned properties. Egyptian security forces arrested 20 Muslims and 17 Christians in relation to the violence. According to the Bishop's statement this same village witnessed similar sectarian violence in July 2016, but there were no arrests involved in the event.

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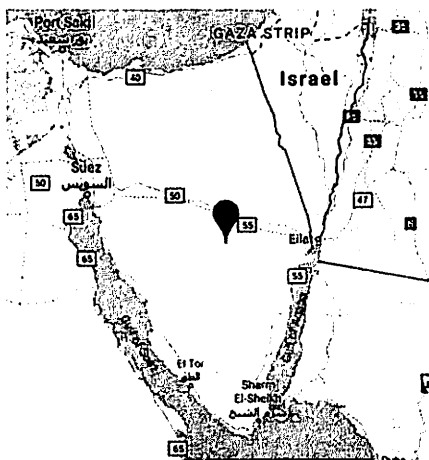


Recent notable Attacks against Coptic Christians

Bombing of St. Peter and St. Paul's Church at St. Mark's Cathedral, December 2016

- December 2016, a bomb was detonated in the chapel of St. Peter and St. Paul's church at St. Mark's Cathedral killing 25 people and injuring 49 more. The attack occurred as worshippers were gathering for Mass. Shortly after the attack there were conflicting reports on the nature of the attack.
- The GoE blamed the Muslim Brotherhood in the attack immediately afterwards, but two days after the attack ISIS took responsibility for the attack

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Recent notable Attacks against Coptic Christians

Islamist militants target Coptic Christians in North Sinai, 2017

- In late February 2017, hundreds of Coptic Christians fled the Sinai Peninsula to Ismailia city after the release of a threatening ISIS video and a series of attacks on Christians in North Sinai Governorate
- In al-Arish, the capital of North Sinai, at least seven Christians were killed in separate attacks between 30 January and 24 February 2017
- ISIS's Egyptian affiliate, which is based in northern Sinai, released a video on 20 February 2017 vowing to step up attacks against Christians, whom it described as "infidels" that should be killed
- According to church officials roughly 100 families, out of around 160 in North Sinai, had fled the area

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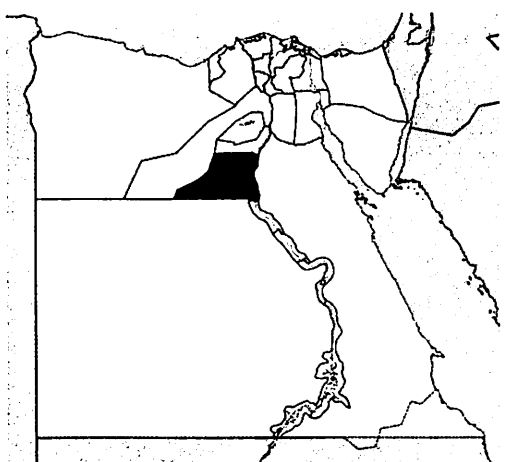
Palm Sunday Church Bombings, 2017

On 9 April 2017, Palm Sunday, suicide bombers attacked two Coptic Christian churches, one in Tanta and the other in Alexandria, killing 44 people and injuring another 126. ISIS claimed responsibility for the attacks. The first attack targeted St. George Church in Tanta where a bomb exploded in the church killing 27 and wounding another 78. The second attack occurred a few hours later at St. Mark's Cathedral in Alexandria, the historic seat of the Coptic Orthodox church in Egypt, and killed at least 17 people and wounding another 48

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Recent notable Attacks against Coptic Christians

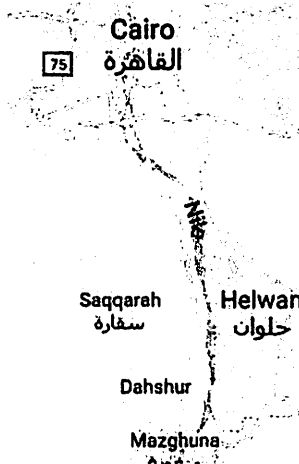


Recent notable Attacks against Coptic Christians

Minya Bus Attack, 2017

- On 26 May 2017, militants associated with ISIS attacked a bus filled with Coptic Christians on a desert road in Minya Governorate killing 30 people and wounding 26 more
- ISIS claimed responsibility for the attack via the social media platform Telegram on 27 May and claimed that it killed 31 Christians in the attack
- Then the militants, wearing military uniforms and masks, entered the bus and ordered all the men off the bus before confiscating the women's jewelry. The men were then given the option to live if they converted to Islam before they were executed

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Recent notable Attacks against Coptic Christians

Mar Mina Church Attack, December 2017

- On 29 December 2017, two gunmen opened fire on the Mar Mina Church in Helwan
- At least nine people were killed in the attack
- Among the dead were three police officers, who had reportedly been patrolling the church
- In a statement issued shortly after the attack, ISIS claimed responsibility for the Mar Mina Church shooting, saying that one of its "security detachments" had carried it out
- An hour after the Mar Mina attack, a Coptic-owned shop in Helwan was also attacked, leaving two dead

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Recent notable Attacks against Coptic Christians

11 August 2018

Omar Mostafa attempted an unsuccessful attack on the Church of the Virgin Mary in Qaliubiya Cairo

Attack was scheduled around the feast of the Assumption of Mary

- The attacker has been identified as Omar Mostafa
- He supposedly belonged to a small terrorist cell inspired by Sayyid Qutb of the Muslim Brotherhood
- Bomber was wearing an explosive vest and killed only himself with approached by Egyptian security

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Recent notable Attacks against Coptic Christians

2 November 2018

Seven Coptic Christians were killed and 20 injured in an attack on two buses after leaving a Monestary in Fayoum

- The Islamic State has claimed responsibility for the attack
- The attack occurred while the pilgrims were on the way to the Monastery of St Samuel the Confessor in Fayoum
- That same monastery was the site of a deadly attack in May 2017, when armed militants attacked a bus traveling on the road leading to it, killing 28 Coptic Christians, most of whom were children, and injuring 26 others.
- The Egyptian Government claimed that they had killed 19 militants in response on 4 November

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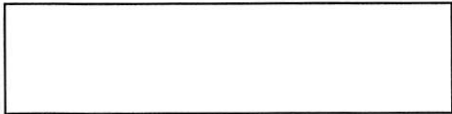
**Documenting
discrimination
and persecution
of religious and
ethnic minorities
in Egypt**

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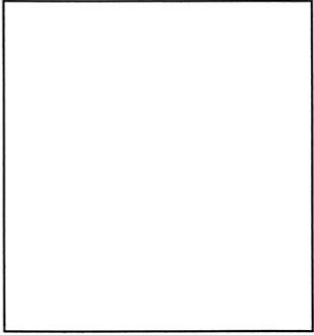
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**Coptic Christian
Community**

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Liwa al-Thawra
لواء الثورة
Revolution Brigade

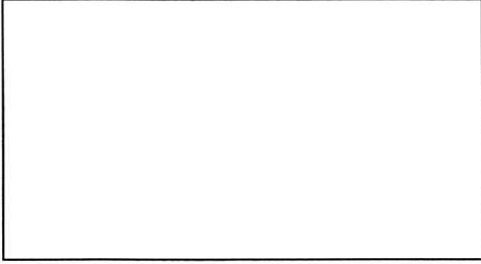
Liwa al-Thawra

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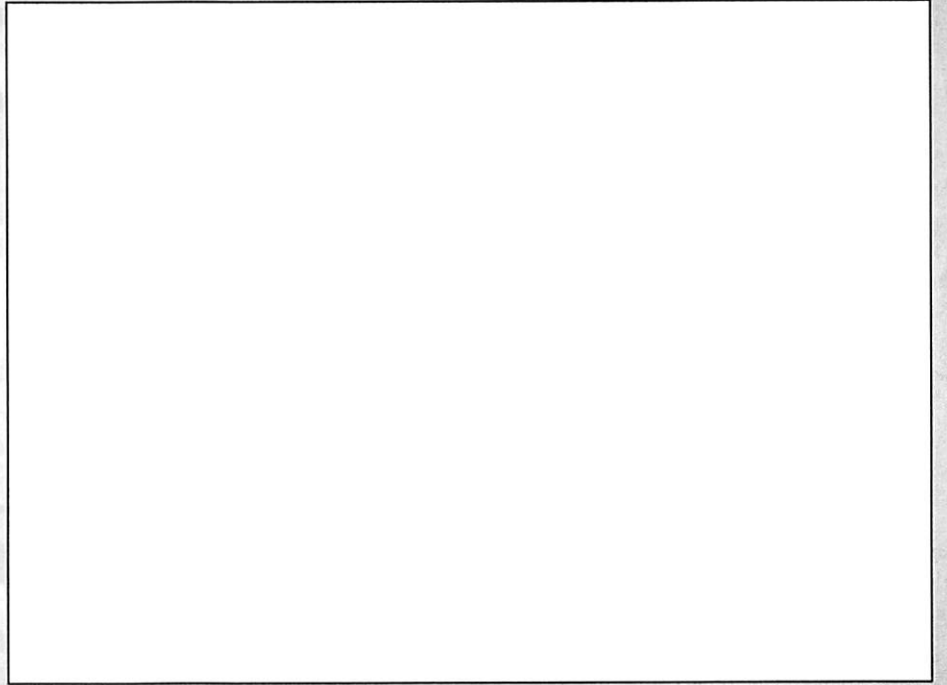
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حركة سواعد مصر

**Harikat Souaid
Misr**

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ISIL Sinai
Province

ولاية سيناء

(formerly Ansar
Bayt al-Maqdis)

Tier I Terrorist Organization

Designated on 4/10/2014 as Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis

Sinai Province

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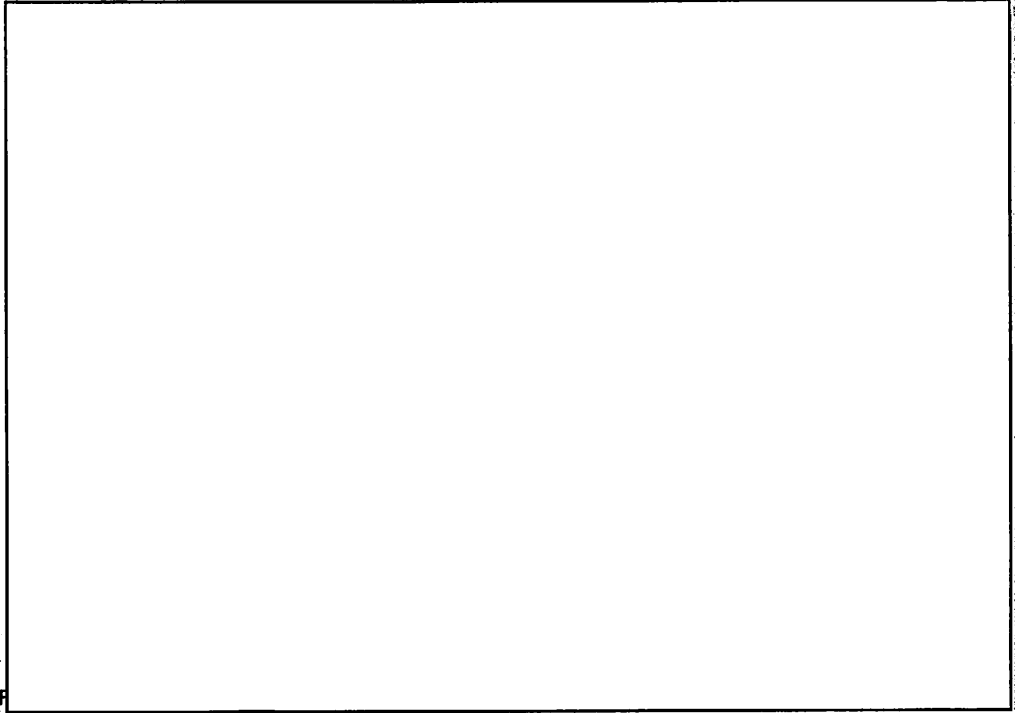
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AL-MURABITUN
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The Guardians

Al-Murabitun

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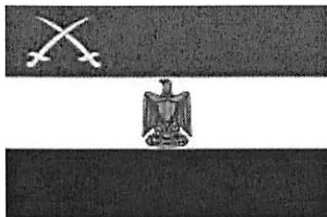


Military Service in Egypt

Military Conscription

- According to Article 3 of Law No. 127 (1980), men aged 18-30 were subject to conscript military service but that voluntary enlistment [was] possible from age 16. ' the government also required all males to register for the draft when they reached age sixteen
- National service, which lasts from 18 to 36 months
- The service obligation is 18-36 months, followed by a 9- year reserve obligation
- After 30, men are no longer obligated to enter the military
- Women were not subject to conscription
- Conscripts with degrees from institutions of higher education had to serve only eighteen months

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Military Service in Egypt

Exemptions and Deferrals

Exemptions are permitted for:

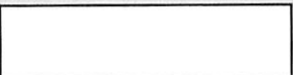
- Certain medical conditions
- Men employed in permanent government positions, sons whose brothers had died in service, men employed in essential industries, and family breadwinners were all eligible for exemptions
- An only son whose father is deceased or permanently incapable of earning a living
- For the oldest son after immigration of his brothers or obtaining dual citizenship
- Deferral for education purposes are granted for university students up to the age of 28, at which time they are expected to enter the military (unless they are granted a further deferral)

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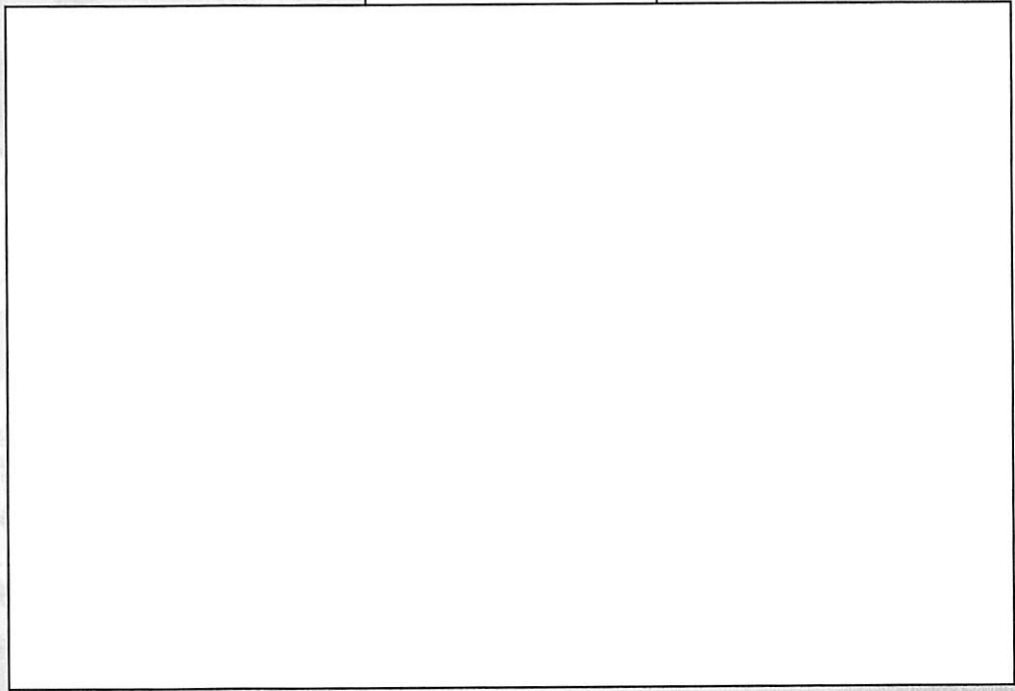


Military Service in Egypt

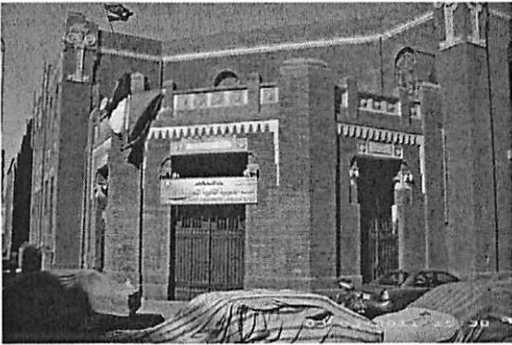
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Applicants with Jewish Ancestry

Although there are very few Jewish people in Egypt today, there are many that have ancestors (mainly grandparents and great-grandparents) who were Jewish

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Jewish Ancestry in Egypt

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Egypt's Apostasy Laws

- While Egypt **does not** have a statutory ban on apostasy, article 98(f) of Egypt's Penal Code, as amended by Law 147/2006, states that "whoever makes use of religion in propagating, either by words, in writing, or in any other means, extreme ideas for the purpose of inciting strife, ridiculing or insulting a heavenly religion or a sect following it, or damaging national unity" is punishable with six months to five years' imprisonment, and/or a fine of five hundred to one thousand Egyptian pounds (approximately US\$71 to \$142)

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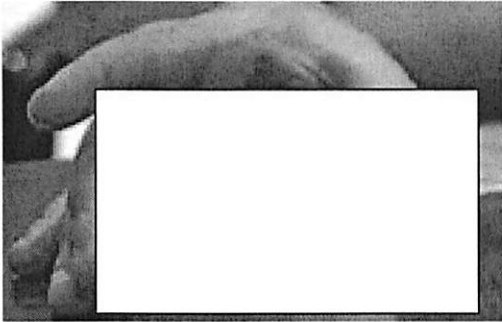
Atheism in Egypt

Atheism in Egypt

- On December 24, 2017, the Committee on Religion of Egypt's Council of Representatives discussed a bill that would make atheism a crime punishable under the Egyptian Penal Code
- the Committee head and a sponsor of the bill, calls the "phenomenon" of atheism in Egyptian society, which he says must be "criminalized and categorized as contempt of religion because atheists have no doctrine and try to insult the Abrahamic religions."
- The concept of "contempt for religions" (*izdira' al-adyan*) is contained in article 98(f) of the Penal Code. This article provides for "imprisonment for a period of not less than six months and not exceeding five years, or paying a fine of at least 500 Egyptian pounds [about US\$28]" on "whoever makes use of religion in propagating, either by words, in writing, or by any other means, extreme ideas for the purpose of inciting strife, ridiculing or insulting a divine religion or a related sect, or damaging national

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Conversion to Islam



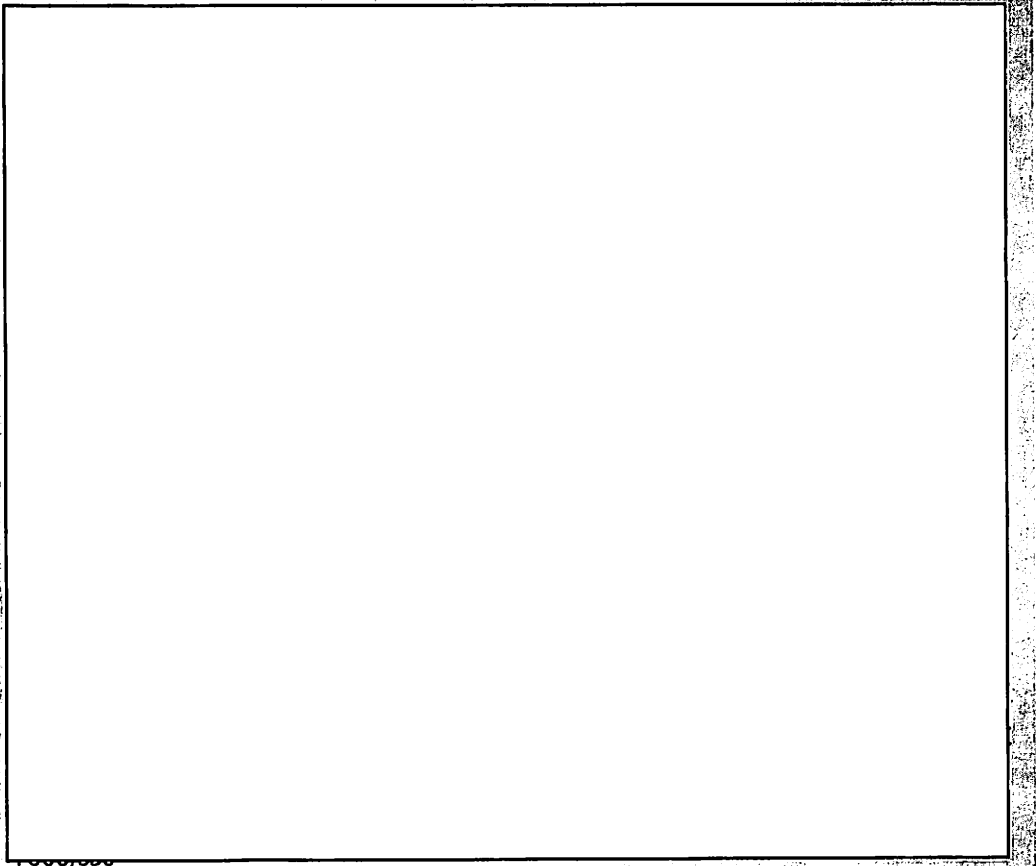
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Conversion and Re-Conversion



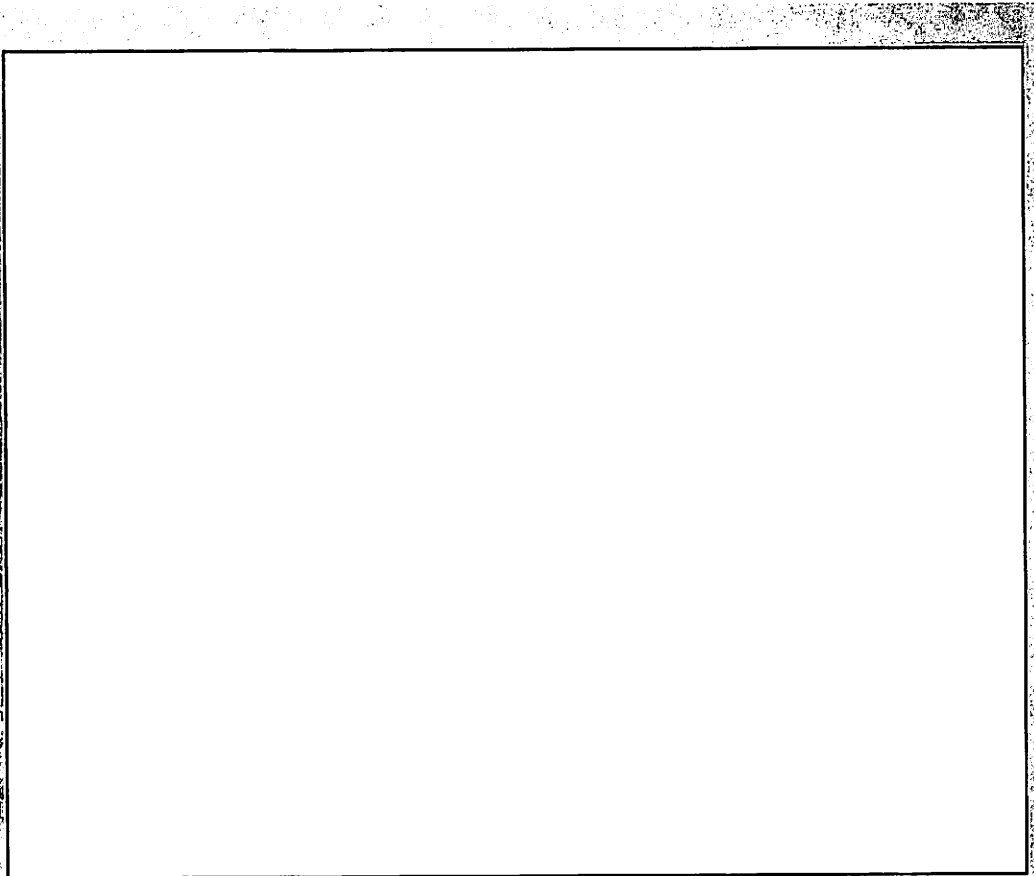
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Egyptian Coptic Christian Baptism Certificates



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**Liberal
interpretation
of Islam**



Ahmadi's in Egypt

Ahmadi

- The Ahmadiyya Movement was founded in British India by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1836-1906), an Islamic reformist and mystic who in 1891 claimed that he was a prophet, revivalist (*mujaddid*), and the messiah (*mahdi*) anticipated by Muslims.
- Ahmadi's are not formally recognized by the Government of Egypt as a religion
- In 1962 Al-Azhar released a fatwa declaring that Ahmadi's had deviated from Islam
- In 2010 there were numerous reports of persecution of Ahmadi's in Egypt

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Banned Religions in Egypt

The Baha'i and Jehovah's Witness faiths have been banned since 1960 by presidential decrees.

Jehovah's Witnesses

- In Oct 2017, there were an estimated 1,000-1,500 Jehovah's Witnesses living in Egypt
- Despite being a form of Christianity, the faith is not officially recognized
- Congregations were formally established in the country from the 1930s and were able to practice with relative freedom until the 1950s. However, in Cairo in 1951 and then in Alexandria in 1956, the Jehovah's Witnesses suffered an increasing wave of hostile rumors accusing them of being covert Zionists and a threat to national security.
- In 1959 they were obliged to halt their activities and in 1960 they were banned
- The Coptic Church has said that Jehovah's Witnesses have "no relation with Christian denominations"

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Banned Religions in Egypt

Baha'i

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- In 1960, the Egyptian government passed Law No. 263 which recognized only Islam, Christianity, and Judaism excluding Baha'i for protected legal rights of worship

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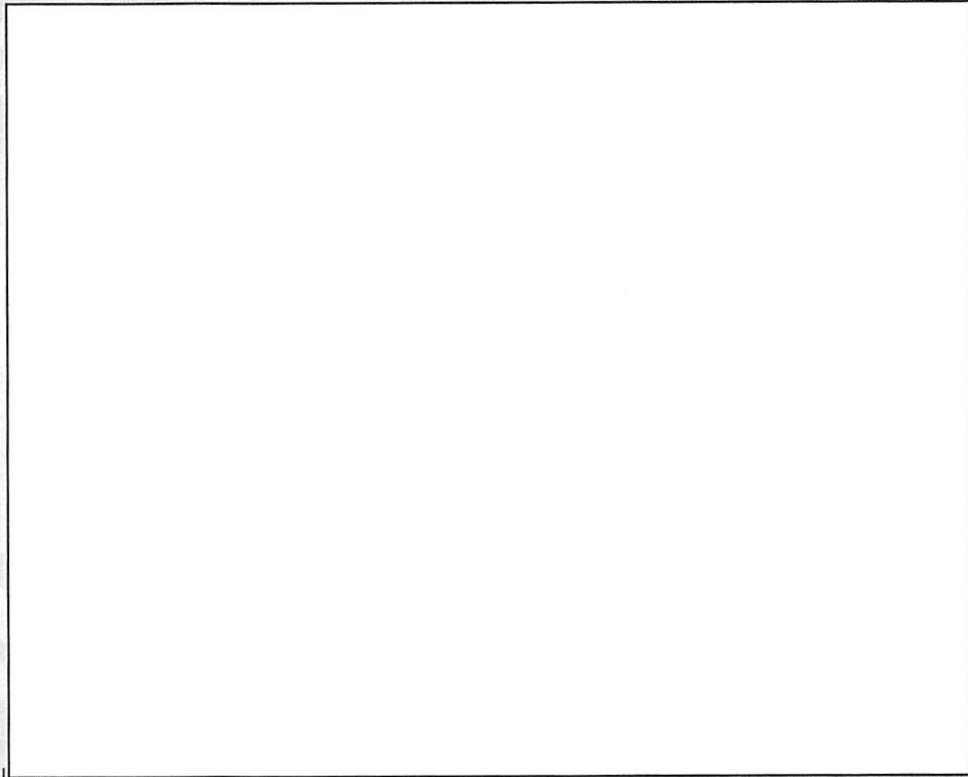
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Baha'i Identity Cards/Documents

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Banned Religions in Egypt

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Female Genital Mutilation

FGM was banned in Egypt in 2008 and criminalized in 2016

Despite these laws it is still occurring. It is not associated with religion and happens to members of all faiths in Egypt

The Practice is starting to be performed more by Medical professionals since the ban/criminalization

- A 2016 survey by the U.N. Children's Fund showed that 87 percent of women and girls aged 15-49 in Egypt have undergone the procedure.
- Traditionally performed by a *Daya*
- Egyptian doctors increasingly carry out the cut in secret in the early morning or late at night -- charging the parents large amounts for the procedure

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On 22 September 2017 Mashrou' Leila played a concert in Cairo

The photo below was taken at the concert

LGBT Issues in Egypt



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Sexual Harassment in Egypt

Sexual Harassment

- According to a 2013 study by the United Nations, more than 99 percent of all Egyptian women have been the victim of harassment -- which is to say, basically all of them.
- According to the Thomson Reuters Foundation, Cairo is the most dangerous megacity in the world for women
- Mob rapes are often more brutal and dangerous than assaults by individuals, and experts say that opportunistic crowds often participate in these assaults
- According to Article 306 (amended in 2014) of the penal code, sexual harassment is punishable by up to 50,000 Egyptian pounds (about 2,400 euros) and a prison sentence ranging from six months to five years

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Treatment of Human Rights Activists in Egypt

Case 173 of 2011 - known as the "foreign funding" case

- Case No 173 is commonly referred to as the "case on foreign funding of civil society." In July 2011, the cabinet ordered the Minister of Justice to set up a fact-finding committee to look into foreign funding received by civil society groups and to determine which of those groups are registered under Law 84. The report was completed in September 2011 and was included as part of the evidence brought by prosecutors against the international NGOs in the 2012-13 prosecution which is why it is now publicly available. The document includes a report from the National Security Agency and another from the Egyptian General Intelligence Agency that lists almost every independent human rights organization in Egypt as well as the international NGOs who were subsequently prosecuted and sentenced.

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Labor Unions

The Status of Labor Unions

- Egypt's 1976 Trade Union Law does not recognize any trade unions except the official government-controlled unions affiliated with the Egyptian Trade Union Federation (ETUF). Independent trade unions proliferated after the 2011 uprising, but the government has not officially recognized them, even though the 2014 constitution guarantees freedom of association.
- According to activists, once Manpower Minister Gamal Sorour took office in September 2015, no new independent unions have been able to register. Activists also expressed fears that members of independent unions might face prosecution after an official newspaper on April 17, 2016, said that an investigation is being conducted that could lead to charges against leaders and members of these unions.

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Protests in the Fall of 2019

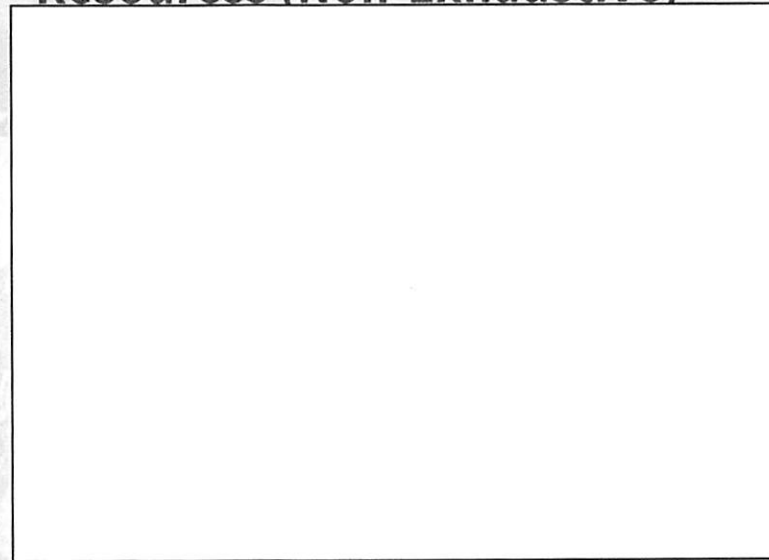
Mohamed Ali- Movie Star, Businessman and Voice of Egypt's Protest Movement

- In September of 2019- Egypt embarked on its largest protest movement during the Sisi era
- It was sparked by a series of viral videos that were made by Mohamed Ali
- Mohamed Ali was a notable actor who also worked in real estate development who was a member of Egypt's upper class
- He used his insider knowledge of how Egypt's ruling class operated under Sisi to pull back the curtain
- The protests lasted approximately one week Sept 20-27th
- The Egyptian government responded with violence toward and arrests of peaceful protestors and increased internet censorship for all citizens

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**Helpful
Resources for
future use**

Resources (Non-Exhaustive) ^{(b)(7)(e)}



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