



**ONE YEAR OF ISRAEL'S  
GENOCIDAL WAR ON GAZA**

**ONE YEAR OF REPRESSION  
OF EGYPTIAN SOLIDARITY  
WITH PALESTINE**

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## One year of repression of Egyptian solidarity with Palestine

150 facing terrorism charges for acts of solidarity with Palestine and 108 in pretrial detention, including children and people with disabilities

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The Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights (EIPR) has been working since 2002 to strengthen and protect basic rights and freedoms in Egypt, through research, advocacy and litigation in the fields of civil liberties, economic and social rights, and criminal justice.

For more information see <https://eipr.org/en>

One year has passed since Israel launched its genocidal war on Gaza and the Israeli war on the Strip, which spread to the West Bank and, more recently, Lebanon. During that year, [more than 42,000](#) people have been killed and 10,000 have gone missing. In the meanwhile, Cairo - a five-hour drive from the Gaza border - and other governorates witnessed systematic repression of any attempt to express public solidarity with the Palestinians and the Lebanese besieged under Israeli bombardment.

Since October 2023, at least 150 people have been arrested and questioned before the Supreme State Security Prosecution, after peacefully expressing their stance against the genocide waged by the Israeli occupation against Palestinians. All of those supporters still face charges under the Anti-Terrorism Law, while some face charges stipulated in Assembly Law No. 10 of 1914, the colonial-era law that was not repealed (in contrast with other laws governing assemblies) by the later Law No. 107 of 2013 regulating all forms of assembly and peaceful protest.

Based on legal assistance provided, EIPR reported that at least 150 people were charged with terrorism charges in connection with 12 distinct cases. Of the 150 above, 108 remain in open-ended pretrial detention, including at least two children and a man in his twenties living with a disability. Of those detained, 41 were arrested at the beginning of the war, thus remaining behind bars for a whole year over their solidarity with Palestine. Their detention has since been renewed without legal basis. Simultaneously, EIPR documented the arrest of others who were arrested but later released without investigation.

Egyptian authorities disregard the constitutional right to peaceful expression of political views. They have effectively criminalised all forms of protesting, even if and when they adhere to all procedures and conditions under the protest law issued in November 2013. Over the past year, the authorities obstructed all solidarity activities even when minimal or symbolic. They also cracked down on people who voiced solidarity with the Palestinian people, denounced Israeli crimes, or opposed Egypt's official stance on the war. This included criminalization of acts that fall short of acts punished under the heavily repressive standards of current assembly and protest law.

## Protests and rallies

Over the past year, Egyptian authorities dispersed several protests and solidarity rallies and arrested various protesters. They also denied protest permits, and deported non-national activists, some of whom requested permits to organize a convoy to the Rafah crossing, while others were deported after being arrested for holding banners in solidarity with Palestine and Lebanon.

The most recent pro-Palestine protest which ended with the arrest of all participants took place on 7 October 2024, marking the first anniversary of the Israeli war on Gaza. Several people showed up [to a small and spontaneous protest](#) on the 15th of May Bridge in the vicinity of the Zamalek, carrying banners and chanting in support of the Palestinian people. Within minutes, a police force arrived and detained six of the protesters. Later police stations continued to deny their presence for more than 36 hours. Their whereabouts were only known on 9 October, when four Egyptians appeared before the Qasr al-Nile Prosecution in connection with Case No. 7331 of 2024. They were charged with demonstrating without a permit and inciting citizens to demonstrate and shout. Their lawyers learned that the day before a decision was taken to deport two foreign women who participated in the same protest. The prosecution presented the defendants with the evidence of their charges, including Palestinian flags and banners carrying phrases such as “An olive branch does not bend, a cedar tree does not break” and “Down with the occupation”. After three days of detention on 10 October 2024, the prosecution ordered their release on 5,000 EGP bail each.

During the first days of the attack on Gaza, Egyptian security forces arrested dozens of participants in pro-Palestine protests held in several governorates in response to calls made by parties associated with the government. This came after [President Sisi stated in a joint press conference](#) with the German Chancellor that millions of Egyptians were ready to demonstrate their refusal to the displacement of Palestinians from Gaza. EIPR [documented](#) the arrest and interrogation of 42 individuals from Cairo and Alexandria in separate protests on the same day. On 20 October 2023, 28 people were arrested near Tahrir Square in Cairo following the dispersal of another protest. They were

prevented at that time from informing their families or communicating with their lawyers. The prosecution ordered their detention and charged them under Article 40 of the Terrorism Law No. 94 of 2015. Since then, the majority remain in detention pending investigation into Case No. 2468 of 2023.



Simultaneously, 14 individuals were arrested in Alexandria. They subsequently appeared before the Supreme State Security Prosecution in Cairo, which remanded them in custody pending investigation into Case No. 2469 of 2023 (Supreme State Security), on charges of collaborating with a terrorist group to attain its goals, spreading false news, and participating in a gathering. After a year, 41 of the 42 arrested on that day still remain in pretrial detention without legal basis.

In November 2023, the **Palestinian death toll from the Israeli onslaught rose to 10,000**, prompting the Egyptian Journalists Syndicate to release [an appeal](#) to participate in the “World’s Conscience” convoy. The convoy aimed to head from Cairo to the city of Rafah to break the siege of the Palestinians and stop the attempts to displace and exterminate them. The syndicate and other parties called on local and international civil society to engage with the Egyptian authorities to secure approval for the convoy; the convoy was ultimately cancelled due to “security pressures”.

In December 2023, Egyptian security forces [arrested](#) and deported four non-national activists for staging a protest in front of the foreign ministry headquarters in Cairo. The activists had requested to enter the headquarters to submit a letter to Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry to obtain the necessary security clearance for the “World’s Conscience” convoy to move to the Rafah crossing and enter the Gaza Strip to deliver humanitarian aid. The foreign ministry did not receive the letter and refused to meet the four activists who were detained at Bulaq Abu Ela police station for 24 hours before being informed that they were not welcome in Egypt and they had to return home.

In April 2024, the crackdown on pro-Palestine protesters intensified. Thirty people were arrested and charged with terrorism for participating in various peaceful protests in support of Palestine. Fourteen of those were arrested from their homes in early April after they participated in a protest in front of the Journalists Syndicate in support of Palestinians and denouncing the reported news of “war profiteering” to allow Palestinians to cross the Rafah borders to Egypt. The arrested protesters appeared before the Supreme State Security Prosecution, which questioned them in connection with Case No. 1277 of 2024. The prosecution remanded them in custody for 15 days but released them a few days later.





In conjunction with the 200th day of the Israeli war on Gaza, security forces [arrested at least 18 individuals](#) outside the doors of the headquarters of the regional UN Women office in Maadi for participating in a peaceful protest, in which a group of women researchers, lawyers and journalists stood in solidarity with women in Palestine and Sudan. The protesters demanded that the UN assume its responsibilities towards the war in Sudan, to provide protection for displaced Sudanese women in Egypt and work to stop the war of extermination in Gaza. The next day, 16 of those arrested appeared before the State Security Prosecution for interrogation in connection with Case No. 1567 of 2024 (Supreme State Security) on charges of “joining an illegal group and participating in an illegal gathering”. The prosecution ultimately ordered their release on bail between 5,000 and 10,000 EGP each, while the rest of those arrested were released without charges.

In June 2024, former undersecretary of the Medical Syndicate Mona Mina, and lawyer Wafaa al-Masry submitted a request to Qasr al-Nile police station to obtain a permit to hold a an hour-long protest in front of the House of Representatives to express refusal of the Israeli war on Gaza, which by the time had extended to Egyptian soldiers, as soldier Abdullah Ramadan, 22, was killed on the border with Gaza at the time. The Egyptian military [announced](#) that it was investigating the death of “one of the security elements”, without mentioning his name. The outcome of the investigation has not been announced to date.

Mina and al-Masry waited for four hours to submit their request. The request adhered to Protest Law No. 107 of 2013 which requires protest organizers to inform the authorities at least three working days in advance while allowing the Minister of Interior to prohibit any demonstration if it would pose a potential “threat to security”. The law does not call for permits or requests, but simply informing the authorities. Mina and al-Masry were later informed that their “request” was denied.





## **Raising Banners**

EIPR documented the arrest of people who tried to raise banners or draw graffiti in support of Palestinians. Others, meanwhile, were investigated for using these tools to express solidarity and then released. Thirteen people are still held in pretrial detention in connection with three cases.

In March 2024, a non-commissioned police officer was arrested for climbing a billboard to raise the Palestinian flag. He appeared before the State Security Prosecution, which questioned him in connection with Case No. 717 of 2024. He has since been held in pretrial detention. In April 2024, the Supreme State Security Prosecution [interrogated](#) at least six other people – including two children – who are still detained in connection with Case No. 952 of 2024, simply for writing graffiti in support of Palestine on top of Dar al-Salam bridge in Cairo. Later that month, a group of young people in Alexandria raised a banner reading “Break the siege on Palestine, release the detainees and open the Rafah crossing”. In response, security forces in Alexandria arrested Shady Mohamed, a trade unionist and founding member of the Permanent Congress of Alexandria Workers, in front of his house. The same happened to five other young men involved in the activity of the Popular Committee for Solidarity with the Palestinian People. The six men appeared before the Supreme State Security Prosecution in Cairo in connection with Case No. 1644 of 2024 (Su-

preme State Security). The six are still held in pretrial detention. According to an EIPR lawyer, the prosecution accused Mohamed of establishing a terrorist organisation, inciting people to overthrow the regime, gathering and calling for it, and spreading false news to disturb public peace. Mohamed has since been incarcerated at the 10th of Ramadan Prison, which adds further burden to his family that lives in Alexandria, forcing his wife to commute to visit him.

## **Press and social media**

In 2023, the Supreme Council for Media Regulation (SCMR) filed a complaint with the Public Prosecution against MadaMasr website over a report published on the scenarios of displacement of Palestinians from the Gaza Strip. Following this complaint, the Cairo Appeals Prosecution summoned journalist Lina Atallah for investigation in November in connection with Case No. 22 of 2023 without informing her of the reason. However, the investigation was postponed indefinitely.

In February, Mada Masr published a report that addressed the entry of Palestinians to Egypt via the Rafah crossing in exchange for a fee as well as the entry of goods to Gaza for sale instead of as aid. Two days after the publication, Atallah – as editor-in-chief – [learned that](#) the date of her postponed investigation had been set for 20 February 2024. She complied with the investigation request and the prosecution [released](#) her on bail of 5,000 EGP, after being interrogated on charges of spreading false news and operating a website without license.

On 13 May, students Ziad Bassiouni and Mazen Draz [appeared](#) before the Supreme State Security Prosecution, which interrogated them in connection with Case No. 1941 of 2024, and charged them with joining a terrorist group and spreading false news, after which they were remanded in custody for 15 days. The students appeared before the State Security Prosecution five days after their arrest, during those days they were forcibly disappeared, and neither their families nor their lawyers knew their whereabouts. The two were arrested for their connection to the “Students for Palestine” movement, whose activity is limited to supporting the Palestinian cause by calling for boycott

of products that support the Israeli occupation. The movement also supports Palestinian students studying in Egypt and demands that they'd be exempted from tuition fees. Two more students were involved in the case. They remained in pretrial detention without being allowed to take their exams. They were released nearly two months later.

This case is not the only case based solely on published content, as Case No. 2526 of 2023 involves 11 defendants who have been held in pretrial detention for publishing pro-Palestine posts on social media. **In late May, some friends in a closed group on a messaging platform were arrested for expressing their solidarity with Palestine, for merely trying to collectively donate to relief efforts in Gaza. The number of those arrested exceeded 50, 23 of whom appeared before the Supreme State Security Prosecution, which interrogated them in connection with Case No. 2627 of 2024 on charges of joining and financing a terrorist group. Their detention has since been renewed without further investigation or presenting serious evidence. Most of the remaining were released, while nine are still unaccounted for and have yet to appear before the prosecution, according to the information available at the time of releasing this statement.**

## **Does anyone respect the law?**

While authorities are arresting and detaining people for their solidarity with Palestine and Lebanon for allegedly violating the law, these authorities did not only infringe on people's constitutional rights to peaceful expression and assembly but also committed a list of violations of the current Criminal Procedures Law. As Egyptians await the promulgation of a new criminal procedures law, we pose questions as to whether the issues actually lie in the letter of the law or the practices of the authorities responsible for its implementation.

The situation of those detained for expressing solidarity with Palestine is no different than that of hundreds of other defendants. Throughout this year of war, Egyptians' solidarity with Palestine was met with assault, indiscriminate

arrest, illegal detention, and arbitrary imprisonment without valid legal basis.

The Ministry of Interior has repeatedly violated the constitution and the Criminal Procedures Law. It failed to promptly produce all those arrested before prosecution within 24 hours, as per Article 36 of the procedures law. Additionally, some of those arrested were detained illegally for sometime before being brought before the prosecution. Moreover, the ministry did not comply with Article 40 of the law, as it did not treat all those arrested decently. Some of those arrested were subjected to “physical or psychological violence” either during or after their arrest. No one informed any of them of the reasons for their arrest. EIPR reported that none of those arrested was permitted to inform their families of their whereabouts, although these minimum rights are guaranteed by Article 139 of the same law.

The Supreme State Security Prosecution arbitrarily and selectively applied the Criminal Procedures Law, as most of the solidarity activists were held in pre-trial detention even if they were children or sick, despite the lack of legal basis that necessitates the restriction of their freedom, and despite the availability of alternative precautionary measures.

At least 108 detainees continue to appear in front of prosecutors and judges via video conference, without serious review of their case. This turned their pretrial detention into an open-ended pre-emptive punishment.

Authorities commonly refuse to adhere to the legal maximum limit of pretrial detention in the case of other defendants. So even if the proposed criminal procedures law reduced the period of pretrial detention, this would not guarantee compliance. Defendants continue to be held in pretrial detention, and are being denied legally-mandated weekly family visits. The Ministry of Interior continues to apply the reduced visitation schedule implemented as part of the measures taken to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, which allows only one monthly visit for all detainees with reduced visitation time. This is virtually the only pandemic-era measure that is still in place across government departments and possibly the whole country.

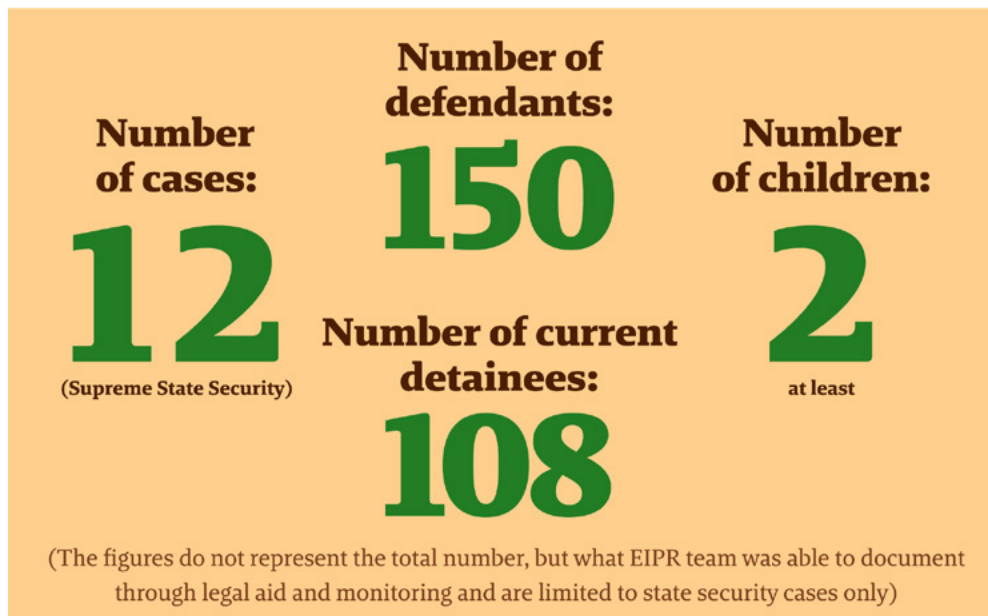
The violations extended beyond non-compliance with the Criminal Procedures Law and included the misuse of other laws, such as the counterterrorism

law and the penal code, as well as the assembly law, which has been in effect for over a century. Supporters of Palestine were detained as terrorists, then accused of joining terrorist groups, and face charges without serious evidence.

## **Release Palestine supporters**

EIPR reiterates its call for the immediate release of all defendants who were arbitrarily arrested for expressing their solidarity with Palestine, and for all charges against them to be promptly dropped. It stresses that the continued arrest and detention of dozens for expressing their solidarity with Gaza, even in the form of small and symbolic protest, gives perplexing signals regarding the Egyptian government's stance on the Palestinian question.

After a year of escalating aggression on Gaza, the West Bank and Lebanon, during which Egyptians were unable to show a minimum of their solidarity, we are convinced that we are facing a structural problem, which extends beyond legislative amendments, to established practices that allow for repression and abuse, which would continue regardless of the legal framework , if not addressed.



## **The key cases of suppression of solidarity with Palestine throughout a year of war**

