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NGO Law Monitor: Egypt



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Last updated 12 December 2012

Update: There has been an ongoing process to draft a new NGO law since January 2011. The latest draft law was issued by the Ministry of Insurance and Social Affairs in October 2012. Although it would reduce some restrictions on local NGOs, it would require them to obtain permits to receive foreign funding. In addition, foreign NGOs would be required to receive permits to carry out their activities.

Introduction

Egypt is the most populous country in the Middle East, a major United States ally, and regional power whose laws, courts, and social norms often serve as models for emulation by other Arab states. Cairo's decisions influence those taken in capitals throughout the Arab region, and it is no coincidence that the Arab League is headquartered in Egypt's capital city. Although several other Arab states provide a more liberal environment for the operation of civil society groups, Egypt's influence and status as a trendsetter for the Arab mainstream suggests the particular importance of its civil society sector, laws and practices.

Civil society in Egypt is governed by the provisions of the Law on Non-Governmental Societies and Organizations (Law 84 of 2002) and the Executive Statute on Law 84 of 2002 (Ministry of Insurance and Social Affairs [Now Ministry of Social Solidarity] Decree 178 of 2002), which implements and clarifies the provisions of the parliamentary law. Despite the highly restrictive nature of its civil society laws, Egypt has one of the largest and most vibrant civil society sectors in the entire developing world.

It may seem incongruous that so many NGOs and civil society groups can exist in a country whose NGO law is among the most restrictive in the world, but Law 84 of 2002 is not so much restrictive as it is discretionary. Law 84 of 2002 gives enormous discretionary powers to the Ministry of Social Solidarity. In practice, however, the full weight of this authority is brought to bear only against organizations and individuals that cross the government's "red lines" in pushing for social reform and political liberalization. The vast majority of Egyptian NGOs, consciously apolitical and primarily concerned with issues such as the environment, education, and welfare, are generally left to operate without substantial government interference.

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At a Glance

Organizational Forms	Associations, Foundations, and Not-for-Profit Companies
Registration Body	Ministry of Social Solidarity (associations and foundations) Ministry Industry and Trade (not-for-profit companies)
Approximate Number	24,500 (2007 estimate). This number includes associations, foundations, non-profit companies, and unions.
Barriers to Entry	Registration is mandatory; informal (unregistered) associations are prohibited. Grounds for denial of registration are overly vague, inviting the exercise of excessive government discretion.
Barriers to Activities	Requirements relating to the General Assembly meetings invite interference in internal affairs of the association. Grounds for dissolution are overly vague, inviting the exercise of excessive government discretion. Sanctions for legal violations include imprisonment.
Barriers to Speech and/or Advocacy	The law prohibits NGO engagement in "political activities" – which has been used to limit NGO advocacy activity. Criminal defamation laws have been used to silence critics of the Government.
Barriers to International	Advance Ministry approval is required to join or affiliate with a foreign

Venezuela
 Yemen
 Zimbabwe
 African Union
 Association of Southeast Asian Nations
 Council of Europe
 League of Arab States
 Organization of American States
 Organization of Islamic Cooperation
 Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
 United Nations Human Rights Council

Global Trends in NGO Law

Contact	organization.
Barriers to Resources	Advance Ministry approval is required to receive foreign funds or funds from Egyptian individuals abroad.

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Key Indicators

Population	83,082,869 (July 2009 est.)
Capital	Cairo
Type of Government	Republic
Life Expectancy at Birth	72.12 years
Literacy Rate	71.4%
Religious Groups	Muslim (mostly Sunni) 90%, Coptic 9%, other Christian 1%
Ethnic Groups	Egyptian 99.6%, other 0.4% (2006 census)
GDP Per Capita	\$5,400 (2008 est.)

Source: [The World Factbook 2009](#). Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 2009.

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International Rankings

Ranking Body	Rank	Ranking Scale (best – worst possible)
UN Human Development Index	113 (2011)	1 – 182
World Bank Rule of Law Index	51.7 (2010)	100 – 0
World Bank Voice & Accountability Index	13.3 (2010)	100 – 0
Transparency International	112 (2011)	1 – 180
Freedom House: Freedom in the World	Status: Not Free Political Rights: 6 Civil Liberties: 5 (2010)	Free/Partly Free/Not Free 1 – 7 1 – 7
Foreign Policy: Failed States Index	31 (2012)	177 – 1

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Legal Snapshot

International and Regional Human Rights Agreements

Key International Agreements	Ratification*	Year
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)	Yes	1982
Optional Protocol to ICCPR (ICCPR-OP1)	No	--
International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)	Yes	1982
Optional Protocol to ICESCR (OP-ICESCR)	Yes	1957
International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)	Yes	1967
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)	Yes	1981
Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women	No	--
Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)	Yes	1990

International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (ICRMW)	Yes	1993
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)	Yes	2008
Key Regional Agreements	Ratification*	Year
Arab Charter on Human Rights	No	--
African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights	Yes	1984
African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child	No	--
Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community	No	--
Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa	No	--
Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Establishment of an African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights	No	--

* Category includes ratification, accession, or succession to the treaty

Constitutional Framework

The [Constitution of the Arab Republic of Egypt](#) was adopted by referendum on September 11, 1971, and later amended in 1980, 2005, 2007, and 2011.

Relevant constitutional provisions include:

- Article 47: Freedom of opinion is guaranteed. Every individual has the right to express his opinion and to disseminate it verbally, in writing, illustration or by other means within the limits of the law. Self-criticism and constructive criticism is a guarantee for the safety of the national structure.
- Article 48: Freedom of the press, printing, publication and mass media shall be guaranteed. Censorship on newspapers is forbidden. Warning, suspension or abolition of newspapers by administrative means are prohibited. However, in case of declared state of emergency or in time of war, limited censorship may be imposed on newspapers, publications and mass media in matters related to public safety or for the purposes of national security in accordance with the law.
- Article 54: Citizens shall have the right to peaceable and unarmed private assembly, without the need for prior notice. Security men shall not attend such private meetings. Public meetings, processions and gatherings are allowed within the limits of the law.
- Article 55: Citizens shall have the right to association as defined in the law. It is prohibited to establish societies whose activities are hostile to the social system, clandestine or have a military character.
- Article 56: The establishment of syndicates and unions on a democratic basis is a right guaranteed by law, and shall be deemed legal persons. The law shall regulate the participation of syndicates and unions in implementing social programs and plans, raising the standard of productivity among their members, and safeguarding their assets.

National Laws and Regulations Affecting Sector

Relevant national-level laws and regulations affecting civil society include:

- *Civil Code* (Law 131 of 1948)
- *Commercial Register Law* (Law 34 of 1976 as amended by Law 98 of 1996)
- The *Law on Associations and Foundations* (Law 84 of 2002)
- *Executive Statute to Law 84 of 2002* (Ministry of Insurance and Social Affairs Decree 178 of 2002)

Pending NGO Legislative / Regulatory Initiatives

There has been an ongoing process to draft a [new NGO law](#) since January 2011. The latest draft law was issued by the Ministry of Insurance and Social Affairs in October 2012. Although it would reduce some restrictions on local NGOs, it would require them to obtain permits to receive foreign funding. In addition, foreign NGOs would be required to receive permits to carry out their activities and heavy penalties would be imposed on NGOs for minor violations of the law.

There were several worrying developments in 2011:

- On March 23, 2011, the Egyptian Council of Ministers approved a Decree criminalizing promotion of or participation in any assembly that would hamper work at a private or public establishment. Violation of

the Decree is punishable by imprisonment and/or a fine up to LE 500,000. The Council of Ministers said in a statement that the Decree would only be enforced so long as the current state of emergency is in place. With the exception of an eighteen month break from 1980–1981, Egypt has been under a continuous state of emergency since 1967.

- On July 6, 2011, the Egyptian Minister of Social Solidarity, Dr. Gouda Abdel Khaliq, gave a statement to the press that “warned civil society associations and NGOs against applying for foreign grants” and called direct US funding to Egyptian NGOs a violation of Egyptian sovereignty. More worryingly, Dr. Khaliq “said he has decided to form a committee to review civil institutions and NGOs and consider tightening legal controls on foreign funding”. Under Egypt’s Law on Associations and Foundations (Law 84 of 2002), civil society organizations are prohibited from receiving funds from abroad without the approval of the Ministry of Social Solidarity. Violation of this provision of the law is punishable by up to six months imprisonment.
- In November 2011, a report was published in *Al Masry Al Youm* ([English](#)) ([Arabic](#)), indicating that the Ministry of Social Solidarity is preparing amendments to the Law on Associations and Foundations (Law 84 of 2002) that will “tackle loopholes” used by Egyptian CSOs “to obtain foreign funding to serve foreign interests.” The amendments have not been made public. Under Egypt’s current legal framework, all that is required for the Ministry’s proposal to become law is the approval of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF). With elections looming, it is unclear whether or not the SCAF will act on the Ministry’s proposal, or what effect adoption of the amendments might have on election monitoring and other key activities that Egyptian CSOs are planning to undertake.

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Legal Analysis

Organizational Forms

Law 84 of 2002 allows for the creation of associations, foundations (i.e, non-governmental institutions), and unions. In addition, not-for-profit companies can be established by virtue of provisions in the Egyptian Civil Code and Corporate Code.

According to Law 84 of 2002, an association is a “group with a formal structure continuing for a definite or indefinite period and formed by natural or juridical persons, or both together, whose number is not less than ten in all cases, for a purpose other than gaining physical profit.” (Article 1)

A foundation or non-governmental institution is established where a fund is designated for a definite or indefinite period of time, for the realization of a purpose other than profit. (Article 56)

[The remainder of this report will focus on associations, as the association is overwhelmingly the most common organizational form.]

Public Benefit Status

Associations pursuing “general interest” purposes may be recognized as “associations of public benefit” by presidential decree, upon the request of the association or of the government-controlled General Union for Associations and Non-Governmental Institutions (Foundations). (Articles 48, 49) The criteria for attaining public benefit status are not clearly defined and the President’s decision not clearly guided by objective standards. According to Article 49:

All association visualizing the realization of a general interest upon or after its foundation may be vested with the quality of public benefit, by decree of the President of the Republic, upon the request of the association, or of the administrative authority or the General Union for Associations and Non-Governmental Institutions, and the approval of the association in both cases.

According to Article 51 of Law 84 of 2002, public benefit organizations have access to direct government funding. In practice, many public benefit organizations have close political links to the ruling party or President.

Barriers to Entry

Law 84 of 2002 includes of a number of legal barriers to the establishment of associations. First, the law requires that all associations be registered in order to operate; in other words, informal [unregistered] associations are prohibited. Second, the law includes vague grounds for denial of registration, thereby inviting subjective and arbitrary government decision-making. Registration can be refused if the association’s purposes “threaten the national unity” or run “against public order and public attitude.” As demonstrated recently, the Ministry has used these grounds to deny registration; the associations *Egyptians against Discrimination* and *Old Egyptians for Human Rights* were denied registration in January 2008 and May 2009, respectively. Third, many international NGOs seeking to establish branch offices in Egypt have faced great

difficulty in doing so.

Barriers to Operational Activity

Barriers to operational activity in Egypt take the form of governmental interference in internal affairs, vague grounds for dissolution, the imposition of harsh sanctions, and extra-legal harassment by security authorities.

First, Law 84 of 2002 expressly authorizes the Government to interfere in the internal affairs of associations. Specifically:

- The administrative authority has the right to call a General Assembly meeting (Article 25);
- The association must send a copy of the papers tabled before the General Assembly to the administrative authority at least 15 days before convening the Assembly (Article 26);
- The association must provide the administrative authority with a copy of the minutes of the General Assembly meeting within 30 days from the meeting (Article 26);
- The Minister of Social Affairs may appoint acting members of the Board of Directors where there are insufficient members to hold a meeting (Article 40);
- The Minister may also dissolve the board of directors if the board has not convened a meeting of the General Assembly for two consecutive years (Article 42).

Second, the law includes vague grounds for dissolution, thereby inviting subjective and arbitrary decision-making on dissolution decisions. Vague grounds include:

- Subscribing to or joining any club, organization, society or authority outside Egypt without first information the administrative authority; and
- Threatening the national unity or public order or public attitude.

Third, Egyptian law makes harsh sanctions – including imprisonment – available for violations of the law. Conducting activities as an unregistered association, conducting activities that threaten the national unity, and receiving foreign funds without prior governmental approval are all examples of violations that could lead to the imposition of sanctions, including imprisonment.

Finally, the security apparatus in Egypt is infamous for interfering with associational activity.

Barriers to Speech / Advocacy

Egyptian law prohibits all “political activities” of NGOs. Regulations indicated that prohibited political activities include “advocating the program of one of the political parties, contributing to electoral campaigns, and putting forth candidates for office.” (Regulations to Law No. 84/2002 on Associations and Non-Governmental Institutions (Article 25)). The Egyptian Government, however, does not distinguish between a political campaign for office and public policy activities. One example is the case of the Egyptian Association Against Torture. The Administrative Judiciary Court refused to register the association on December 15, 2005 because the court decided that the group’s mission to pressure the government to eliminate torture in police stations and prisons was “political activity”; consequently, the association was prohibited from launching its activities.

Criminal defamation is also used to silence critics of Egypt’s Government. Saad Eddin Ibrahim, one Egypt’s leading human rights and democracy activists, was arrested, prosecuted and imprisoned in 2000 for, among other things, allegedly “defaming Egypt’s image abroad” – a violation of the Egyptian Criminal Code. His defense team claimed that the real motive behind the Government’s prosecution was his outspoken criticism of President Hosni Mubarak and his administration. Mr. Ibrahim was tried three times but ultimately acquitted by the High Court of Justice in 2003 after substantial international pressure was exerted on the Mubarak regime. Several years later, a series of hisba lawsuits* were brought against Mr. Ibrahim by individual Egyptian citizens, and on August 2, 2008, an Egyptian court sentenced Ibrahim to two years imprisonment for again “defaming Egypt,” this time under the hisba doctrine. At least a dozen additional hisba cases remain pending against Mr. Ibrahim.

* [Hisba lawsuits](#) are an early form of Islamic law that enabled “individuals to discuss matters of religion in the public arena” but which have recently been used to “silence dissent and stifle civic engagement.”

Barriers to International Contact

Egyptian law requires advance Ministry approval in order to join any organization or society headquartered outside of Egypt. Egyptian authorities may prevent individuals (including association representatives and civil society activists) from travelling outside Egypt to participate in international conferences and meetings. Authorities may also prevent representatives of international organizations from entering Egypt.

Barriers to Resources

Foreign Funding

Egyptian law prohibits any association from receiving foreign funds – whether from foreign individuals or from foreign authorities (including their representatives inside Egypt) – without advance approval from the Ministry of Social Solidarity. Securing ministerial approval may require a two-month wait during which time the Ministry reviews the request for approval. The failure to secure approval can lead to dissolution. For example, on April 27, 2009, the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights (EOHR) received a dissolution decree, alleging that the EOHR received foreign funding without authorization; the dissolution order reportedly came soon after EOHR published its 2008 Annual Report, criticizing the Egyptian Government. It should be noted, however, that an Egyptian administrative court found in a prior case involving another association that dissolution of an organization based on receipt of foreign funds without prior approval is unconstitutional.

Sending funds from an Egyptian NGO to a natural or legal person abroad also requires advance approval from the Ministry of Social Solidarity, except for scientific and technical books, magazine, publications, and brochures. Law 84 applies the same sanctions for sending and receiving foreign funding without government approval.

Domestic Funding

The barriers against foreign funding also apply to some categories of domestic funding. Specifically, the law requires that associations seeking funds from Egyptian individuals also secure advance approval from the Ministry. Presumably, the failure to do so carries with it the same risk of dissolution.

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Reports

UN Universal Periodic Review Reports	Not available
Reports of UN Special Rapporteurs	Not available
USIG (United States International Grantmaking) Country Notes	Not available
U.S. State Department	Advancing Freedom and Democracy Report 2008: Egypt 2008 Human Rights Report: Egypt
Failed States Index Reports	2012 Foreign Policy Failed States Index
IMF Country Reports	Arab Republic of Egypt: Selected Issues: 2007 Arab Republic of Egypt: Selected Issues: 2005
International Commission of Jurists	ICJ Submission to the Universal Periodic Review of Egypt August 2009 Egypt – ACJILP Organizes the First Activities of its Campaign "Empowering Women to Hold Judiciary Positions in Egypt": 2006
NGO Regulation Network Reports	Egypt – Fast Facts
CIVICUS Civil Society Index Reports	Civil Society Index – Country Report for Egypt
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News and Additional Resources

While we aim to maintain information that is as current as possible, we realize that situations can rapidly change. If you are aware of any additional information or inaccuracies on this page, please keep us informed; write to ICNL at ngomonitor@icnl.org.

General News

[NGOs reject Morsi's constitutional declaration](#) (December 2012)

Twenty-five Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) filed a lawsuit at the Administrative Court on Saturday, demanding the constitutional declaration President Mohamed Morsi issued on Thursday be revoked. The

president's constitutional declaration stated, among other things, that Morsi's decisions were above judicial review. The NGOs explained in a statement that what Morsi released is not a constitutional declaration, but an administrative decision, which thus falls under the jurisdiction of the administrative judiciary.

[Demonstrations in Tahrir Call for Annulling Constitutional Declaration](#) (November 2012)

Political powers rejecting the recent constitutional declaration organized demonstrations in Cairo and governorates calling for annulling the constitutional declaration. Thousands massed in Tahrir Square in protest under the rubric "the Revolution has people to protect it." Demonstrations called for renewing the formation of the constitution drafting panel and issuing a new legislation organizing a retrial of the icons of the deposed regime without any sort of protection or immunity.

[Commissioner Füle in Egypt: Civil society has key role in delivering reform](#) (November 2012)

There is hardly an area of public life where Civil Society does not offer an added value, the EU's Commissioner for Neighbourhood Policy Štefan Füle has told the Civil Protection Civil society roundtable in Cairo, ahead of the meeting of the EU-Egypt Task Force today. "I think the role of the Civil Society lies in generating ideas, being a bridge between society and the authorities, having an important role in monitoring and delivering on the reform process," he told his audience.

[Campaign assembles NGOs against draft constitution](#) (November 2012)

The Civil par Excellence campaign held a press conference at the Egyptian Cultural Club to announce their plans to defend the civil state of Egypt. The campaign rejects the draft constitution and government restrictions on civil society. 230 NGOs have joined the campaign so far.

[Rights groups say excluded from EU talks](#) (November 2012)

More than 20 Egyptian rights groups said authorities excluded them at the last minute from a meeting Tuesday with a visiting European Union delegation aimed at boosting ties with the 27-nation bloc. The rights groups alleged the decision reflects the disregard for human rights of the government of Egypt's new Islamist president, Mohammed Morsi, and a continuation of the policy of the ousted regime of Hosni Mubarak and the country's transitional military rulers. They also lamented the lack of political will to strengthen human rights or involve the groups in decision making.

[The nationalisation of Egypt's civil society](#) (November 2012)

The legal framework governing civil society organisations is restrictive, discussions continue to create a new law but consensus seems unlikely.

[Under new draft law foreign funding still requires permits](#) (October 2012)

The Ministry of Insurance and Social Affairs has drafted a new NGO law to organize and regulate the activities of old and new NGOs working in Egypt, according to Al-Ahram daily. According to the new draft law, local NGOs will not need licensing from the Ministry and will be recognized by notifying the Ministry, whereas foreign NGOs will still need to be registered and take permission from the Ministry to pursue their specified activities.

[Egypt court to hear testimony in NGO foreign funding case in November](#) (October 2012)

A Cairo criminal court is slated to hear testimony on November 3 in the case of dozens of foreign NGO workers accused earlier of operating in Egypt without government permission.

[Fix draft Constitution to protect key rights](#) (October 2012)

The Egyptian Constituent Assembly should amend articles in the draft constitution that undermine human rights in post-Mubarak Egypt, Human Rights Watch said in a letter to members of the Constituent Assembly. The draft provides for some basic political and economic rights but falls far short of international law on women's and children's rights, freedom of religion and expression, and, surprisingly, torture and trafficking.

[Civil society has its own draft law](#) (October 2012)

In Mid-March of 2011, 60 civil society organisations submitted a draft law pertaining to the work of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) under then Prime Minister Essam Sharaf, while Dr Gouda Abdul Khaleq was in charge of the Ministry of Social Solidarity.

[Protection sought for political and non-governmental organizations](#) (October 2012)

Not only does the April 6 Movement reject the draft non-governmental organization (NGO) law, they want the creation of an additional law that would protect their rights as a political action organization (PAO). "The law we are talking about is a political action organization law," said April 6 leader Mohammed Adel. "We do not want to be like a political party, we want no control from the Ministry of Finance and we want the freedom to work with any organization we choose."

[Arab League, OIC proposals out of step with progress on freedom of expression](#) (September 2012)

Human Rights First said that Arab League and the Organization for Islamic Cooperation's (OIC) calls for the

international criminalization of blasphemy mark a step backwards in progress toward tolerance. Such measures were also woven into remarks delivered Wednesday by Egyptian President Mohammed Morsi, who made his debut before the United Nations (U.N.) General Assembly. Human Rights First helped to defeat such measure at the United Nations last year and now says that efforts to reignite this debate are out of step with the basic human right of freedom of expression and U.S. foreign policy. They are also out of step with the positions that OIC States accepted to adopt last year at the United Nations.

[Alarm raised over Egypt constitution](#) (September 2012)

The troubled process of drafting Egypt's post-revolutionary constitution has turned rancorous, as secular-minded politicians and intellectuals forcefully object to what they call hard-line Islamists' efforts to use the document to impose Islamic law.

[Intellectuals and rights advocates blast draft Egypt Charter on Freedoms](#) (September 2012)

Egypt's National Committee for the Defense of Freedom of Expression and Creativity (NCDFE) issued a statement on Monday condemning the manner in which Egypt's new constitution was being drawn up. The committee – a newly established initiative headed up by Novelist Bahaa Taher bringing together a number of political figures, media figures and intellectuals – expressed its "deep concern" over the inner workings of the Constituent Assembly's Freedoms Committee, which, he said, has led to a "crisis." Egypt's Constituent Assembly has been tasked with drafting the country's first post-Mubarak national charter. The NCDFE went on to warn that the constitution, currently in the process of being drawn up, will not be representative of the Egyptian people or their culture.

[Government studies new law to regulate foreign capital](#) (September 2012)

The Minister of Planning and International Cooperation Ashraf Al-Arabi said the government is considering drafting a new law to regulate the flow of foreign capital to Egypt including investments or funding for non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

[Rumors that judge of NGO case was sent to criminal court are false, say officials](#) (August 2012)

Court officials on Monday denied rumors that Judge Abdel Moez Ibrahim has been ordered to appear before the criminal court. He is the former head of the Cairo Court of Appeals who is accused of allowing employees from civil society organizations to leave the country while still under investigation for receiving illegal funds.

[Status of Muslim Brotherhood legal](#) (August 2012)

Minister of Social Affairs Nagwa Khalil has said that the regularization of the Muslim Brotherhood group in accordance Law 84/2002 regarding NGOs will take time. "The current status of the group does not violate the law," she said, adding that the group is taking actions to adjust its position, refusing to give more details on such procedure.

["We respect right to peaceful protest and demonstration," says Muslim Brotherhood](#) (August 2012)

A day before demonstrations were scheduled against the Muslim Brotherhood, the Secretary General of the Muslim Brotherhood Mahmoud Hussein reiterated the group's commitment to the freedom of opinion and peaceful demonstration guaranteed to all Egyptians.

[US concerned about freedom of speech in Egypt, Bahrain](#) (August 2012)

The United States says it is concerned about new restrictions on freedoms of expression in Mideast allies Egypt. State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland says the Obama administration is "very concerned" by reports that the Egyptian government is moving to restrict media freedom and criticism, including preventing the distribution of a newspaper and suspending a satellite television channel that feature opponents of President Mohamed Morsi.

[Architect of Egypt's NGO crackdown bows out](#) (July 2012)

The architect of Egypt's crackdown on U.S.-funded pro-democracy non-governmental groups – and a holdover of Hosni Mubarak's regime – will not serve in the new cabinet, reports say.

[Funding for NGOs in decline following crackdown](#) (July 2012)

Egyptian NGOs have been seeing their sources of funding decline following a security crackdown on NGOs earlier this year. Donors to NGOs, both in Egypt and abroad are donating less money while some NGOs have been forced to shut down. Rana Gaber, who works for the NGO the Egyptian Youth Federation says there are countries that are "holding their funds waiting to see what will happen in the future".

[NGOs see funding drying up as international donors grow scared](#) (June 2012)

Ibrahim Mamdouh, the international relations director at the local NGO Humanitarian Relief and Rehabilitation, saw a call for proposals on the website of an international donor agency and sent the agency a list of humanitarian projects that needed funding. But his NGO, which supports vulnerable individuals reeling from human and natural disasters, was turned down. "The agency said it had already stopped offering financial support for Egyptian NGOs," Mamdouh said. "They declined to give reasons for this, but I think this agency

and others are afraid to be accused of offering illegal support for NGOs in this country.”

[NGO case ruling could widen crackdown on civil society, says American defendant](#) (June 2012)

The former senior program officer for Freedom House’s Middle East and North Africa programs accused in the NGO funding case expects the Egyptian government to lead a broader crackdown on civil society organizations if the court convicts the suspects. Sherif Mansour, an American citizen, told Al-Masry Al-Youm that after the difficulties of working for an international NGO in Egypt, he is thinking about establishing a local organization to support democracy.

[Draft law will ensure Mubarak re-trial, MP Hamzawy](#) (June 2012)

Liberal MP Amr Hamzawy announced Wednesday on his Facebook page that he has formed a judicial committee made up of NGO workers and members of the Free Egyptian Party political and legal team to draft legislation facilitating the re-trial of ousted president Hosni Mubarak.

[Trial of NGO workers set to resume in Egypt](#) (June 2012)

The trial of nongovernmental organizations accused of operating illegally in Egypt is slated to resume as the case fuels a diplomatic rift between the United States and Egypt. A total of 43 workers are on trial after authorities targeted 10 NGOs in a series of December raids. The defendants include 17 foreigners -- 10 Americans, three Serbians, two Germans, a Norwegian and a Palestinian. The rest are Egyptians.

[NGO dispute means fewer monitors for Egypt vote](#) (May 2012)

Egyptians will go to the polls to choose their first democratically-elected president. A continuing legal dispute over the role of U.S. civil society groups means there will be fewer monitors to observe that vote. Egypt’s historic presidential campaign comes to a close with the first round of voting to choose a new civilian leader. The Elections Commission says there will be monitors from the Arab League, the African Union, and the European Commission. But there will be far fewer Americans observing this vote because of the pending prosecution of members of three U.S. non-governmental organizations charged with improperly using funds and failing to register with authorities.

[EOHR raises critical analysis for the NGO’s draft law made by Muslim Brotherhood](#) (May 2012)

The Egyptian Organization for Human Rights (EOHR) has received the NGOs draft law made by the Human Rights’ Committee of the Egyptian People’s Assembly, which includes many restrictions on the actions of the local and international civil society organizations, especially on funding issues. Mr. Hafez Abu Seada, the head of EOHR, stated that the draft law includes many negative aspects.

[Representatives of NGOs reject new draft law](#) (April 2012)

On April 23, 2012, the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights (EOHR) held a meeting to discuss the governmental draft law for local and international civil society organizations. The meeting was held at the headquarters of EOHR and leaders of local civil society organizations attended. The Egyptian Ministry of Social Insurance had declared months ago that it was preparing to amend Egypt’s Law no. 94 on Associations, but many local and international civil society organizations have aggressively campaigned against it.

[Egypt bans NGOs using the "State Sovereignty" argument](#) (April 2012)

The Egyptian government has refused to license several US-based civil society groups, including a prominent election-monitoring group, raising questions about the likely integrity of the presidential polls in May. The official MENA news agency quoted a government source saying the Insurance and Social Affairs Ministry rejected the applications because the NGOs’ activities were "inconsistent with the state’s sovereignty."

[Coptic Orphans NGO denied permission to work in Egypt](#) (April 2012)

After recently being one of eight NGOs denied registration with Egyptian government, the humanitarian group Coptic Orphans is speaking out on what many see as an unjust move on behalf of an increasingly Islamic-run government. Coptic Orphans is a nonprofit non-governmental organization founded in 1988 by Nermien Riad which seeks to offer support to Coptic, paternal orphans and their families in Egypt. Today, the organization "works through a network of 400+ church-based volunteers in Egypt," according to its official website.

[Joint press release by 25 Egyptian human rights organizations](#) (April 2012)

25 Egyptian NGOs issued a press release on the draft NGO Law in Egypt. According to the press release, the law in the current form will lead to nationalization of CSOs and transform them into a government institution.

[U.S. pressing Interpol to deny Egypt’s request to arrest NGO workers](#) (April 2012)

The Obama administration is petitioning Interpol to deny Egypt’s request for the arrest of NGO workers accused of illegally operating democracy programs and stirring unrest to prevent further escalation of the worst crisis in U.S.-Egypt relations in three decades.

[Cairo refused LE21 million in foreign NGO funding since January 25th uprising](#) (March 2012)

The Insurance and Social Affairs Ministry has refused the requests of 20 NGOs since the 25 January uprising

to receive about LE21 million from abroad. The ministry refused the requests on the grounds that the requests violated the Law 84/2002, the civil society organizations law. The ministry argued that most of the money was allocated to activities outside the scope of normal NGO work.

[Recent opinions about the restrictions on CSOs in Egypt](#) (March 2012)

Read the opinion on recent restrictions for CSOs in Egypt by [Fayza Abounaga](#), the Egyptian Minister of Planning and International Cooperation, and responses by [David Kramer](#), director of Freedom House and [Kareem Elbayar](#), a lawyer for the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law.

[American activists fly out of Egypt, defusing row](#) (March 2012)

U.S. pro-democracy activists flew out of Egypt on Thursday after the authorities lifted a travel ban, a move that is likely to defuse the worst row between Washington and Cairo in decades. Egyptian authorities had accused the campaigners, including the son of U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood, of working for groups receiving illegal foreign funding and prevented them from leaving the country.

[Amendments to Law on Associations and Foundations to undercut foreign funding](#) (February 2012)

According to a report from *Al Masry Al Youm*, the Ministry of Social Solidarity is preparing amendments to the *Law on Associations and Foundations* (Law 84 of 2002) that will "tackle loopholes" used by Egyptian CSOs "to obtain foreign funding to serve foreign interests." The amendments have not been made public. Read the report in [Arabic](#).

[Egypt: Govt-U.S. standoff could hit 40,000 NGOs](#) (February 2012)

The ongoing crackdown by Egypt's military rulers on a handful of civil society groups accused of receiving illegal foreign funds has far-reaching implications for the estimated 40,000 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) operating in the Arab world's most populous country. Thousands of NGOs – engaged in everything from nature conservation to eradicating illiteracy and sheltering women from domestic abuses – are collateral damage in a row that threatens Egypt's longstanding relationship with the U.S.

[Egypt judges in NGO funding trial resign](#) (February 2012)

The judges in the trial in Egypt of 43 people, including 19 Americans and other foreigners, over the funding of non-governmental groups, have resigned. The case caused a serious rift with the United States after police in Cairo raided several NGOs in December. Some of them are backed by U.S. groups. Egypt says they received illegal foreign funding and stopped the accused from leaving the country. Egyptian media said the three judges resigned in "embarrassment". The precise reasons for the move remain unclear.

[NGO workers could face 5 years in prison, Egyptian judges say](#) (February 2012)

Egypt's prime minister said Wednesday that the government would not drop a criminal probe into U.S.-funded pro-democracy organizations, and officials said the Egyptians and Americans charged in the case could face up to five years in prison. The remarks by the investigative judges handling the case — the most detailed characterization of the government's case against the pro-democracy workers to date — did not suggest that authorities had uncovered nefarious or subversive activities.

[Egypt names 19 Americans to face trial on NGO funding](#) (February 2012)

U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood's son is among 43 people charged in Egypt after a probe into foreign funding of non-governmental organizations. Sam LaHood, who works for the International Republican Institute, and Julie Hughes, the Egypt country director for the National Democratic Institute, another Washington-based group, are among those who face prosecution, Judge Ashraf el-Ashmawy told reporters in Cairo today.

[Egypt officials see end to U.S. NGO stand-off](#) (February 2012)

Egypt's government will back down in a stand-off with Washington over U.S. funding for civil society groups because allowing the dispute to drag on could jeopardize aid worth billions of dollars, two Egyptian officials said. Nineteen Americans are among 40 foreign and local activists banned from leaving Egypt and referred to a criminal court, accused of managing unlicensed non-governmental organizations and receiving foreign funds without official approval. Some of the U.S. citizens, belonging to the U.S.-funded National Democratic Institute (NDI) and International Republican Institute (IRI), sought refuge in the American Embassy.

[EOHR submits the NGOs draft law to the Parliament](#) (January 2012)

On January 31, 2012, the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights (EOHR) submitted the draft law of the civil society organizations to the Egyptian government and the parliament instead of law no. 84, year 2002. EOHR held an open discussion meeting for the Egyptian civil society organizations on January 19, 2012 in order to launch the "Free Civil Society" campaign, which aims at drafting a new code for NGOs instead of code no. 84, year 2002. The meeting, held at the headquarters of EOHR, was participated by political and human rights activists, representatives of civil society organizations and political parties and professors of law.

[NGOs reject draft law regulating their activity](#) (January 2012)

Former Mubarak regime figures are leading the ruling Supreme Council of the Armed Forces into "more confrontations" with civil society, Egyptian NGOs said in a joint statement Wednesday. "We will allow the Ministry of Social Solidarity and security bodies to exercise control over civil society activity ... the SCAF must realize that its support for or failure to curb the defiance of these Mubarak regime loyalists will intensify the clash between it and democratic and popular forces in Egypt, at the heart of which is civil society," the statement, signed by nine rights groups, reads.

[Harassment in Egypt](#) (January 2012)

On December 29, Egyptian security forces and troops launched an unprecedented raid on 17 offices of American and U.S.-funded civil-society groups, including stalwarts of democracy promotion such as the National Democratic Institute, the International Republican Institute and Freedom House. Computers and other equipment were confiscated, and local staff members were issued summons for interrogation. Egyptian officials seeded local media with stories that portrayed the nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) as part of an international conspiracy to interfere in the country's politics.

[HRW Statement: Dismantle Tools of Repression](#) (January 2012)

Egypt's newly elected parliament should urgently reform the arsenal of laws used by the Mubarak government to restrict freedoms, Human Rights Watch said in a report released today outlining priority areas for legislative and institutional reform. These laws were used to curb free expression and criticism of government, limit association and assembly, detain people indefinitely without charge, and shield an abusive police force from accountability.

[Egypt's NGOs must be protected](#) (January 2012)

Civil society organizations working in Egypt have been raided because of their funding sources and activities in recent days. On December 29th, Egyptian officials raided the offices of about ten international Egyptian non-governmental organizations, or NGOs. The United States has called for the Egyptian government to immediately end the harassment of NGOs, NGO staff, return all property, and resolve this issue immediately.

[U.S.-funded NGOs in Egypt 'shocked' by raid on offices, deny funding parties or groups](#) (January 2012)

A raid by the Egyptian security and military troops on offices of some local and international non-governmental organizations a week ago came as a shock to some of these organizations. The United States reacted sharply when Egyptian authorities swooped in on some 17 non-governmental groups last week, including the U.S.-funded National Democratic Institute (NDI) and International Republican Institute (IRI), both loosely affiliated with the leading U.S. political parties. The U.S. government hinted it could review the \$1.3 billion in annual military aid to Cairo if the raids continued, underscoring Washington's concern over political developments in a country seen as the lynchpin of the Middle East.

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[Egypt's NGOs receive \\$167m from abroad](#) (October 2011)

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[NGOs face smear campaign ahead of elections](#) (October 2011)

[Minister rejects US funding of unregistered NGOs](#) (October 2011)

[The Egyptian authorities should bring an end to attacks against civil society organizations](#) (October 2011)

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[Egypt ups pressure on foreign funding to NGOs](#) (September 2011)

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[US defends aid as Egypt probes NGO foreign funding](#) (August 2011)

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The foregoing information was collected by the ICNL NGO Law Monitor partner organization in Egypt.